

“VALE”



● *Bugs Bottom from Gravel Hill Looking South-West*



● *Bugs Bottom Looking South*



● *Bugs Bottom Looking North*



● *Bugs Bottom Looking North*

Jonathan Farmer L.R.P.S., a local professional photographer, who was walking in the area with his daughter, took these lovely pictures of Bugs Bottom as it was this spring, and is kindly allowing us to use them.

**See also
page 4 for
further comment**

TALKING POINT

By Chris Justice
Pastor of Caversham Hill Chapel



SCRATCHING THE SURFACE

"SCRATCHING the surface" – a phrase that has been coming and going in my mind over the past few months, for a number of reasons. At the end of February this year I went with Phil Cheale, the pastor of Peppard Congregational Church, to visit Sierra Leone in West Africa. Some readers may remember that Phil and I made a similar visit in November 1989, when we also went into neighbouring Liberia. Just a few weeks after we returned from that first trip, a civil war erupted in Liberia, that has brought devastation and misery to thousands of people. Of the people we visited in Liberia in 1989, some have been mercilessly slaughtered, and others have been driven out of their homes and communities, and forced to seek asylum as refugees in neighbouring Guinea, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone. It's hard to imagine what all that can mean to a family. Stranded in a foreign land, treated with suspicion and without a home or any means of obtaining one.

Our purpose in going to West Africa in the first place was to explore ways in which we, as a local church, could "get alongside" the local churches there and offer whatever help we could by means of material aid, educational supplies, farming implements and, eventually, with personnel on a temporary basis. We recognised that our contribution was going to be limited, but it would mean that our people in Caversham would feel closely involved with the people there, in a way that doesn't always happen when we send donations to aid agencies.

And so, on our return in 1989, under Phil's supervision, we began a project, which we called "Liberaid". Through this people in the church, and many of our friends and neighbours, were encouraged to bring unwanted clothes, tools, household utensils, books, beds, even a minibus! – which were all eventually loaded into two shipping containers, and transported to Sierra Leone where they could then be distributed to the refugees. We were astounded at the generosity of the people, who gave – and, as the word got around, other churches and individuals in Britain asked if they could help, and essential finances started to come in. And as news came to us of the horrors and suffering that the people out there were experiencing, our people here felt they were, in some way, sharing in that suffering, or at least alleviating it a little.

During these last two years Phil has made regular visits to West Africa, and has brought us reports of any progress that was being made. Sadly, some of the reports were not encouraging. One project that our friends set up in Sierra Leone, near the border with Liberia, was lost to rebels who came over from Liberia. It was a small community and farm that we had helped set up and equip. But our disappointment could in no way have matched the devastation that our friends there must have felt, as they fled, knowing that the results of all their hard work was now feeding their oppressors.

When Phil and I went out there this year, it was to meet with these dear men, women and children again, and to try and assess again how we might help them. And it was when I came home, and tried to sum up what I saw, that well-worn phrases like "a drop in the ocean" and "only scratching the surface" came to mind. How could a relatively small group of people in Caversham make any real impression on the vast need that we saw? Surely we were kidding ourselves to imagine that we could change anything for anyone! But when you see the people there, and their eagerness to welcome you; and their gratitude to think that "someone out there" has heard of them, and wants to help; you just know that you can't give up. It may be scratching the surface, but if that's what it takes,

then scratch we must!

You see, scratching the surface is not always as hopeless and superficial as it has come to sound. I'm not sure where the phrase originated, but in my mind it conjures up a picture of someone scratching on dry, hard-packed soil, looking for somewhere to plant seed. Perhaps the whole thing seems hopeless, and hardly worth the effort, but when you're hungry, and your life depends on it, you scratch as deep as you can! And you plant your precious seed, and feed it with what water you can find, hoping upon hope that something will happen. Maybe the seed will produce a plant, and eventually provide food for you and your family. So, scratching the surface then takes on a different meaning. It's not just some superficial, hopeless gesture – it can be the start of something big!

I'm encouraged also by the fact that I serve One who could feed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. Our small efforts actually have untold potential when they are placed firmly in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that for me is the key to the "success" of this African project, or for that matter, every other aspect of life. Putting everything, heart and soul, firmly in the control of the One who made us and gave us life.

Let me give you one more example. Some people will have recently paid one of their occasional visits to the church. You may feel that Easter provides that opportunity to express the fact that faith has not completely gone, and that it plays some part in the overall business of living. But may I suggest that, like me after my visit to Africa, now's the time to assess why you made your visit, and what impression, if any, it is actually making on your life. Was it scratching on the surface of faith in a hopeless, aimless sort of way? Wondering in a half-hearted way, if there might be something in this religion business? Perhaps that's how you feel as you put your Easter visit behind you, and forget about it all until Christmas comes around.

But, what if you began to see your scratching on the surface in a different light! Could it be the start of something deeper? Something that could actually make a profound impact on the way you live? Don't misunderstand me – this is not a church recruitment plug! I am not simply trying to persuade you to make more than two visits a year! What I'm saying is that beneath the surface of Christian religion – what may seem hard and impenetrable to you – there is the potential for you to find a living faith in a real, living Person – the Lord Jesus Christ. And the key to this is, like me and the Africa project, to put everything firmly into his hands.

The seeming hopelessness of the situation in Sierra Leone could make me throw up my hands in defeat, and walk away from it. But something – or Someone – won't let me. And I'm spurred on by the belief that this small seed will eventually produce something bigger. At this point it feels like hard work, and it requires dogged determination – and limitless commitment; and that doesn't come easy. I'm reminded of the story of the pig and the chicken who were discussing the possibility of providing egg and bacon breakfasts. The chicken thought it was a great idea, but the pig has serious reservations. "For you" he said to the chicken, "it means an occasional donation. For me it means **total commitment!**"

For me "scratching the surface" has taken on new meaning. I am committed to putting what little I have, and what others will give, into the hands of the Lord Jesus, trusting him to make more of it than I can see at present. Perhaps you should consider putting your life into those same hands.

BRIDE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION



Left, Julie Williams, the winner, and right Donna Gould who won second prize. – Courtesy, Reading Chronicle

TWO BRIDES FROM ST. PETER'S PARISH won first and second prizes in the "Reading Chronicle" competition 1992, in conjunction with The Springs Hotel and The Bermuda Tourist Board.

Julie Williams, *Bride of the Year*, will jet off with

husband Andy Askins to a free Bermuda honeymoon after 5 September wedding, one of three at St. Peter's on the Rector's own anniversary!

Donna Gould and Dean Cleall will celebrate their marriage on 27 June, Donna won second prize

– superb watches for the couple, gifts of The Bermuda Tourist Board.

Our congratulations and best wishes, not only to Julie and Andy, to Donna and Dean, but to all who are to be married this Leap Year.

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 Communion
10.00am Sunday School

St Andrew's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am Family Eucharist
11.15am Holy Communion (not 3rd Sunday)
11.15am Matins (3rd Sunday)
6.30pm Evensong

St Barnabas'

8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Family Communion (apart from 2nd Sunday)
9.30am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

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

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH

(Caversham Park Primary School)
11.00am Family Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
Family Service (5th Sunday)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST

FREE CHURCH

10.30am and 6.30pm

NORTH CAVERSHAM

BAPTIST CHURCH

10.45am and 6.30pm

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

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

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

10.45am Worship at Mapledurham Pavilion

METHODIST

Caversham, Gosbrook Road

10.30am and 6.30pm

Caversham Heights

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

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Annes Saturday 5.30pm, Sunday 9.45am and 6.30pm

Our Lady of Caversham 8.30am and 11.15am

St Martin's School 9.15am Mass

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (1st Sunday)

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House study groups Sept – June Tel: 475783

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All contributions for June issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 6 May.

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

The dates for July will be Monday 1 June and Wednesday 3 June.

The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

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POSTBAG

WATER FOR GOLF COURSES

Dear Editors,

I was concerned to read in the "Bridge" that the umbrella plan for Mapledurham Estate includes "further golf courses".

As a former golfer, could I remind readers of something about golf courses that I have not yet seen mentioned. Golf courses demand large amounts of water; in the summer, greens have to be watered regularly if they are to stay in top condition and attract people to the course.

In this area we have experienced water shortages in the last few years. Given normal domestic demands, it seems likely that these shortages will get worse, as hotter summers and drier winters seem quite likely. Golf courses compete with households for water. I would suggest that they are not right for this area.

One golf course is already under construction along the Upper Woodcote Road; this will I fear cause further water problems. Our taps could be reduced to a trickle if even more courses are built. There are alternative leisure activities that do not require as much water.

Yours sincerely,
John Madeley

Dear Editors,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to reply to Mr John Madeley's letter about the water shortage which has sadly been experienced in Caversham homes for some years.

I am happy to assure all your readers that no water will be taken from the mains for the greens, and that the golf course will be entirely self sufficient for irrigation.

Yours etc.,
John Eyston,
Mapledurham House,
Reading

SPIRITUALISM

Dear Editors,

Having only recently been introduced to your interesting paper, initially I thought it would be premature to contribute, however readers' comments have been invited to respond to April's 'Postbag', I feel justified in reacting to views expressed on spiritualism.

It is not surprising that these do not conform with the views of mainstream churches whose common belief is based on the integrity of Holy Scriptures and their commitment to them. This markedly contrasts with spiritualism which is the science, philosophy and religion of continuous life, based on the demonstrated fact of communication, by means of mediumship, with those who live by the spirit

world. This conflicts wholly with the teaching of Scripture, for example Deuteronomy 18 verses 10/11 specifically refers to mediums or spiritualists or those who consult the dead. The writer, inspired by the unchanging God in verse 12 asserts that these practices are wholly detestable to Him.

The Bible teaches that all have sinned (Romans 3.23) and if we disclaim that, we are calling God a liar (1 John 1.10). Romans 6.23 declared 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Spiritualism on the other hand maintains, 'whatever is, is right', Evil does not exist. (Childs: Whatever is, is right). A lie is the truth intrinsically, it holds a lawful place in creation, it is a necessity. (Andre: The True Light) Death is not a violent result of sin, it was neither friend or enemy. It is, part of the divine purpose (ISM 1940).

Spiritualism debases Jesus Christ when it relegates Him as a medium of high order, that He was not divine although He is now an advanced spirit. The miraculous conception of Christ is regarded as a fabulous tale (Weisse 'Spiritualism P.234). Spiritualism accepts Him as one of many Saviour Christs, who at different times have come into the world to lighten its darkness and show by precept and example the way of life to men. It recognises Him as a world Saviour (The ABC of Spiritualism) but not as 'the name, given under heaven by which men can be saved (Acts 4.12).

It is no concession for the spiritualist to acknowledge his belief in God. It is easier to have faith in God than not to have! The evidence is around us and within born again Christians. Even the devils believe in Him (James 2.19) and they SHUDDER. It seems to me an empty boast that spiritualists claim unique belief of an after-life. The whole point of the death of Jesus was that HE ROSE AGAIN - that's what Easter should be all about. Furthermore by HIS SPIRIT, He lives in all true believers. And that's not all - HE IS COMING AGAIN to claim His own. Revelation 1.7. says that 'every eye will see Him, even those who have pierced (or in life rejected) Him.

One could go on, suffice to say that spiritualism if not in direct conflict, has little in common with the major doctrines of the Bible, the foundational truths of Christian churches worldwide. How then can any affinity with them be claimed?

It is not the first time that spiritualists have suggested that the prophets, apostles and disciples were mediums just like their Master. Nor do they consider it illogical to associate fore-knowledge with spiritualism. They cannot conceive that Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe is not only omnipresent but omniscient, knowing all things - ever present. Never can they accept that the only way to God is by way of Jesus Christ (John 14.6) and that salvation comes through simple trusting faith in Him (John 3.36) (John 3.16).

It is not new for Spiritualists to claim that their belief is

an ally to Christianity since it has proved survival after death - mere survival is not what concerns the Christian. The good news of Jesus Christ was not that everyone survived death, but that the new quality of life of God, eternal life could be found in Him here and now (John 10.28). And Scripture clearly teaches that all can have this assurance, but only if they come in faith the 'JESUS' way. (Romans 10.9).

Yours etc.,
John Horal,
Ashcroft Close, Caversham

Dear Sirs,

In reply to Sylvia Brown's letter in April's Caversham Bridge, I am a Christian and if as Sylvia says, we both believe in the same God, I would like to draw her attention to what God says in the Bible about mediums. In Leviticus 19:36 (the Lord said to Moses) 'Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritualists, for you will be defiled by them'. And in Deuteronomy 18:10-12 abbreviated: 'Let none be found among you . . . who practises divination or sorcery . . . or who is a medium or spiritist or consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord your God'.

Yours etc.,
June DeVillie,
Carlton Road,
Caversham, Reading

FREE THINKING

Dear Sirs,

I do not have February Caversham Bridge to read the original 'Talking Point' but as you have asked for readers' comments in the April issue, I would like to give you mine.

One of my objections to any religion is that we are told what to believe, when in fact no one will ever know the true origin of life or the life force which we call God. If you ask a Christian "What is your definition of God"?, what would he say? No one truly knows, and yet the church is always telling people what they should believe, and bending the rules for their own benefit, usually to have power and control over others.

I think people should be more free thinking instead of believing what others tell them to. A person can be just as spiritual without belonging to any particular church and usually more deeply thinking.

Yours etc.,
Una Warren,
Albert Road, Caversham

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

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The Rev. Philip Abrey, 51 Galsworthy Drive, Caver-
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VANDALISM THAT CAN NEVER BE UNDONE

Bugs Bottom, unchanged over timeless centuries, is about to be vandalised out of existence in order to line the pockets of people who can walk away from it and never feel the consequences of their avarice. On 1st April 1992, a date to be graven for ever on Caversham's memory, the Borough Planning Committee was forced to agree to Higgs and Hill's application to build their unwanted housing estate in the valley.

Armed with their outline consent, finally confirmed by Nicholas Ridley in January 1989, they had been unsuccessfully seeking detailed permission ever since, something the Borough has refused for sound planning reasons. Higgs and Hill then made concession after concession until there were virtually no grounds left on which the Council could withhold consent.

By then it was a race against time. The firm's outline consent was about to run out when the whole case could be looked at again at a public inquiry, already put in place for May by the Department of the Environment. There was at least a reasonable chance that the application for an extension of time would not have been granted. With new guidelines already coming from the D of E on greenfields development and a general election only a week away, which, whatever its result, was likely to produce an administration more sympathetic to environmental issues than the one that had hitherto presided over the case, Higgs and Hill wanted a firm decision at that month's meeting of the Planning Committee.

They therefore insisted on being given consent on 1st April, stating that if they did not they would go to appeal on the detailed plans and if Reading lost, which was almost certain to happen, they would be seeking both compensation and costs. Reading Borough Council already charge-capped, could take no such risks, for that sum, together with their own costs would be huge, and there was even a strong possibility that Higgs and Hill's bill would devolve upon individual councillors, which for most of them would have spelt financial ruin.

In the tense atmosphere of the Council chamber, members found themselves, against their own judgement and against the best

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT by WATCHDOG

interests of the whole of their electorate, agreeing to something that went against all they stood for. Blackmail was the word that sprang to mind at that meeting.

It seems incredible that such a process should be legal. It is ironic that if the opposition could have held out for a few more weeks the chances of saving the valley would have been much higher. A change in the planning laws cannot be far off, but it will be too late to save Bugs Bottom.

There is unfortunately little that can be done at this stage. An appeal to the Ombudsman is likely. There is no doubt that anything lawful that can be done to hinder the development and discourage prospective purchasers will be done. The Residents' Associations and Action Group cannot however condone or be held responsible for any unlawful actions.

Meanwhile Higgs and Hill's shares have reached an all time low and there must be doubts about their ability to finance an estate where the planning conditions imposed will make it very expensive to develop. Sadly though, once they move their earth moving equipment into that valley, its fragility will be damaged and once building starts, the existing community will have to put up with the disruption.

Keep those green stickers in your windows and cars, to show that the protest is by no means over yet against a development

which the Planning Officer described as 'the poorest to come out of Marsham Street in many years'.



ROADS

With the bad news of Bugs Bottom overshadowing everything else, it is difficult to work up an interest about everything else that is going on in Caversham. There is though, as usual,

PEACEFUL PROTEST

It is possible that in the near future Higgs and Hill's bulldozers will be moving in to start the destruction of Bugs Bottom. If this happens we would like to organise an immediate peaceful protest. We need to compile a list of those who would want to participate in this. We would be especially grateful to hear from those people who are likely to be immediately available during the day. If you would like to help please contact Doris Thomas on 472864 or Molly Casey on 472300.

plenty to report, though I propose to leave the Election alone, because at the time of writing the result is not far off but still to come.

In Caversham Road, the contractors have been far from considerate on a number of occasions. Their shortcomings have been pointed out and the County Council has reminded them of their obligations under their contract, but nevertheless what has been done has been done. A lasting effect will be on the trees on the shops-side of the road. These were carefully bandaged up to prevent their getting hurt, but when the road works shifted to that side their main roots were completely severed, putting their survival in the gravest doubt. No amount of apologising can put that right.

In the months of its reconstruction alone, that road has caused disruption, delays, damage, severe loss of trade, and some cases of personal injury, and all for what? A few minutes off a car

end to whom requests or complaints are directed, except for Woodcote Road, Henley Road and Caversham Road, when it is the County alone. Cllr. Hamza Fuad, who is a Borough and a County Councillor could indeed deal with the points wearing either or both of his hats.

In passing, congratulations to Cllr. Pam Fuad, shortly to become the next Mayor of Reading, yet another from Caversham. She and Hamza form a little party on the Council all on their own, known as Thames Conservatives, all of which gives a little innocent amusement to unattached onlookers.



A.G.M.

At the Annual meeting of Caversham and District Residents' Association, the Chairman was able to report on an active year. The Association is twenty five years old and will be celebrating with a silver anniversary party in the summer. It is a pity it cannot be a celebration for Bugs Bottom.

After the formal meeting, Mr. John Eyston spoke about the problems facing Mapledurham Estate in these times and his proposals for setting it on a firm basis. There was no doubt that he had convinced his hearers of the magnitude of the problem. Whilst they may not have been enthusiastic about the proposed solutions the general feeling seemed to be that changes were necessary and would have to come.

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YOUTH ROADSHOW

By Roy

Hi again!

First of all I would like to welcome Gill Brookman to Emmer Green Centre where she has taken up her post of Neighbourhood Youth and Community worker employed, as I am, by Berkshire Youth and Community Service. She will be putting articles in the Roadshow column, the first of which I include this month.

Next month I hope to be able to give you details of the Caversham Area Youth Organisation Summer Show and give you a chance to take part in it.

This month however, I am including a new idea called "The Junior Roadshow". It is part of my new column but is aimed at children and young people up to the age of fourteen. So if you are in this age range - or you know someone who is please fill in and return the application form below. Membership is FREE! and we will print their birthdays in the

Junior Roadshow during the appropriate month.

To start you off, there are two competitions both with prizes!

1. A Painting Competition - using paints, crayons or felt tip pens draw a picture of the riverside at Caversham Bridge. All the pictures will be displayed in the Caversham Shopping area next door to Forbuoys Newsagents who have kindly donated the space. There will be a \$5 W.H. Smith's voucher for a prize.

2. Hanley's Library - Jenny Hanley's book prize of "THE GREAT DINOSAUR ATLAS" by William Lindsay will be given to the first correct answer to the following question: "Which was one of the last and surely the most feared Dinosaur which was taller than a double-decker bus and 14m (46ft) long? You must be a member of the Junior Roadshow Club to enter. So fill in the form below and send it

with your entry to:

*Junior Roadshow CPVA
Northbrook Road
Caversham Park
Village RG4 0PF*

or drop it into Church House, in Church Street.

PLEASE NOTE -

You can still join without having to enter the competitions!

Name:

Address:

Tel. No:

Date of Birth:

Age Now:

Parent/
Guardian's Signature:

Date:

Well, that's all from me at present except to say that if you want to write a letter to us, please do so at the address above.

Best wishes,
Roy Burgess.

And now I hand over to Gill.

Gill's Column

My previous job was field officer for Berkshire Association of Young People (BAYP) which involved travelling all over the county visiting Youth Clubs. Now I've settled at Emmer Green I'm looking forward to working with the young people in this area. So if you're aged between fourteen and twenty-one years and have got ideas, would like to be involved in planning or would like to join in with a variety of activities, why not come along on a Monday or Tuesday evening 7.30 - 10pm?

Emmer Green Youth and Community Centre is a very busy place catering for all ages. Playgroup is in each morning except Thursday when Mums and Toddlers take over the hall, where there's lots of space and activities to keep the children happy. Wednesday afternoon there's a keep fit class (with a creche). Monday afternoon and Thursday evening there is the opportunity for older people to join in with a very varied programme.

The hall can also be booked for special occasions at the weekend. It can fit up to 200 people, has a stage and a kitchen.

For further details about any of the activities mentioned ring Gill at the Centre 476794. Monday - Friday mornings.

THEATRE-RESTAURANT

ANOTHER first for Hemdean House Drama Club this year, when in association with the Food Technology Department (cooking to an older generation of readers) the school hall was transformed into a Theatre-restaurant. Tables were set down the length of the hall with the main stage on the opposite side and a smaller stage at either end.

The performance was entitled 'Robin the Hood' and an appropriate meal, including such delights as Robin's Green Salad and Sherwood Dip, was served beforehand and during the interval. Freezers full of individual lasagnes, both vegetarian and meat,

had been prepared for a week of performances.

The play itself, if play is the right word, was a merry romp through medieval England with strange interventions from the lost cast of Calamity Jane, a ladies' bowling club and the sudden transformation of bad King John into the King himself, complete with satin suit and guitar. As one unexpected turn succeeded another, it was difficult to know whether we were in thirteenth century Nottingham, nineteenth century Chicago or present day Caversham. The young actresses entered with zest into the spirit of the evening and there was not a single one

who did not speak or sing her lines with conviction and enthusiasm. The audience, some of whom found themselves hauled on to the stage as participants, equally enjoyed the evening. Nancy Quinnell, who produced and directed, is to be congratulated as are all those who took part in any way.

Neither was it all play. For several of the girls it was part of their GCSE course in Drama and Theatre or Home Economics (Food). This was a senior school production and, one of the advantages of a small school, every girl who wished to had the opportunity of taking part in some way.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

A PASSIONTIDE CONCERT

(Given on April 5th 1992 by the choir of St Andrew's in aid of the Organ Restoration Fund).

"From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony, This universal frame began..."

St Andrew's was full of harmony on this memorable occasion. Jeanne Montague set a high standard with her opening solos, the Handel full of soaring joy and the Thiman full of serene assurance in God's love.

Under the baton of Philip Aspden, the choir, (augmented by singers from St John's) and with David Sidwell at the organ, sang beautifully some well-loved, mainly Victorian

anthems suited to the occasion, together with Mendelssohn's lovely "Lord, I flee to Thee", and Purcell's happy "Rejoice in the Lord always" with Jo Hodson, James Aspden and Ben Deville as soloists. Jo Jordan was the soloist in S. Wesley's "Wash me thoroughly" and partnered Jo Hodson in P. Buck's "O Lord God". A special word of praise is due to the junior girls, some of them very young, whose unwavering devotion to their task was touching.

David Sidwell further contributed two solos, Reger's "Benedictus" and Walton's music for Olivier's film "Richard III"; and later an interesting piece by Herbert Howells on a

theme called Master Tallis's Testament; all these explored the splendid range of the organ with great authority. Philip Aspden, in addition to all his work with the choir, gave two organ solos: the first movement from Bach's second Trio Sonata and Reger's "Passacaglia" which between them displayed the wide-ranging versatility of the instrument.

All too soon the lovely music ended. So, fortified spiritually (and physically - the refreshments were well patronised!) the audience trooped, replete, out of the church into what Browning called, "The C Major of this life".

St. Andrew's Fellowship

A good number met on February 12th for the Fellowship evening when the speaker, Miss Jackson, gave a fascinating talk about the street names in Reading. She said Reading had not altered greatly from the original small triangle which formed the centre. Members were amazed to learn that rows of houses were down the centre of Kings Road, Broad Street and the Butts. Those in Kings Road had to be removed to allow the passage of horse-

drawn coaches.

After she had mentioned many historic roads, and where they got their names, Mr House, a long time member of the Fellowship, was interested to hear about Thorn Street and the Poor Law Institutions which each church maintained. Thorn Street was the site of one such, and Mr House had worked there in his youth.

The audience was reluctant to let Miss Jackson go and urged her to return again at a later date.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CAVERSHAM - LENT '92

During Lent, Christians of different denominations from all over Caversham, gathered together in homes of friends to study the Lenten course "Living the Good News". Alongside worship, living the good news of the Gospel is the hallmark of a Christian life and to discuss the implications from both local and worldwide aspects is enjoyable and rewarding.

Over one hundred and fifty people from different Churches were mixed together in about fifteen groups to study and discuss and pray together, on one day a week for five weeks during Lent, with the option of continuing for a further week or a longer period if this should be the wishes of the group. Study centred on certain passages from St Luke's Gospel allied to stories from life in our own time in Central and South America. The course brought out the hardship being endured by many in these areas and the relevance of the

Gospel to them, particularly our Lord's message of hope for the poor and oppressed. During the twentieth century conditions of poverty and oppression can be found in many areas of the world and our own country is no exception.

We cannot tell where study and prayer will lead us, nor what action will eventually follow but there is no doubt that discussion among friends about the realities of life in our times will lead to unexpected and perhaps dramatic results if we follow in the steps in which Our Lord is leading us. The key is prayer and a willingness to act on what He is saying to us.

Everyone involved in the Lent Groups is invited to a large open meeting on Sunday 10th May 8pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. This is an opportunity for each one to express a view on the course and the pattern for Lent study in future years.

B. Butler

SCF CONCERT
RAF Brize Norton Singers

On 28th March about one hundred and twenty people arrived at Caversham Heights Methodist Church ready to be entertained. The Concert was due to start at 8pm and when that hour was reached the coach had not arrived! One or two of the singers had arrived by car so we knew that the others were on their way. After a few more nail biting moments the coach rounded the corner and within about five minutes the singers had changed and were 'on stage'.

After a short welcome by Revd David Moody we were entertained

with a variety of light numbers including 'It's a Grand Night for Singing'; 'All in an April Evening'; 'Elijah Rock'; 'The Goslings'; 'Don't Dilly Dally' and many more, ending in 'Prom' fashion with 'Rule Britannia'.

During the interval when tea and coffee were served, the Save the Children sales table did a roaring trade, and a delightful Teddy was on sale to the person making the best offer over £10. He was sold for £20 which, when added to the ticket money and donations, helped to raise the grand sum of £530 (after

minimal expenses) for the Fund.

The Committee would like to thank all those who attended and made the evening such a success; to Revd David Moody for allowing the use of the Church, and to Peter Boardley, James Young, Denis Tutty, Beldon Bensley and Jim Pilgrim for erecting and dismantling the staging (service over and above the call of duty).

Watch out for our Ecumenical Advent Concert on Sunday 6th December 3pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Janet Offord

THE LINK GROUP

Why not come and help?

The Link Group would like you to come and help them raise money for local charities by knitting squares for 'Save the Children'.

The annual 'Knit In' has come round again and more people are needed to help beat last year's target of over £700. On Monday evening 11th May members will be meeting at Anthea Prescott's for a fun evening. All you need to do is knit a 6" square with double knitting wool in one hour and get as many people as you can to sponsor you. Transport can be arranged to and from the venue, and coffee and biscuits will be served during the evening. Do please join the Group; it

is for a very good cause.

The money raised will go towards helping many local charities such as 'National Carers Association', 'Berkshire Women's Aid', 'Sphere' etc, also to taking needy children on outings to Child Beale and the Christmas pantomime. The squares knitted will be sewn together to make blankets and shawls for 'Save the Children'.

If you are unable to knit on May 11th perhaps you could sponsor one of the Link Knitters or donate any double knitting wool you may have and not need.

Please telephone Anthea Prescott on Reading 478865 to offer your help. Thankyou.

NEWS OF PAST CAVERSHAM CLERGY

Congratulations to the Revd. Guy Armstrong, a Chaplain at Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight, who has received the Butler Trust award from the Princess Royal at Buckingham

Palace. Guy Armstrong came to Caversham as a deacon in 1961 and from 1963-65 was priest in charge of St. Andrew's. He has lived in the Isle of Wight since he retired.

POETRY IN MOTION!

(or 'Sic Transit Curate')

The Revd Christine Allsopp, after a double-axel with triple leap and forward roll, at Oxford Ice Rink recently. St Peter's Youth Group ('GODSQUAD') rushed from snack-bar to give maximum points for artistic interpretation.

* * *

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'SAVE THE CHILDREN'

Recently, all over the country, S.C.F. supporters have been working extra hard to raise more money to boost Save the Children's work in Africa as well as in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world. Last year a very successful campaign entitled 'Skip a Lunch and Save Another Life' this year.

Here are a few facts and figures to help readers to decide what they can do:-
20p. - the price of a packet of crisps or a chocolate bar - it will pay for two life-saving

sachets of salts to counter the lethal effects of diarrhoea in a mal-nourished child.

50p. - the price of a small loaf will supply vital supplementary food and vitamins to feed a child for a day.
£1 - the price of a hamburger will provide emergency drugs and medical supplies for one person.

£2 - buys fish and chips, it will also pay for 1,000 water purifying tablets for one person's drinking water for a year.

£5 - a ploughman's lunch for two will buy a hoe, an axe and a bush knife to enable a family made homeless by war to plant crops and become self-sufficient again.

£10 - a pizza and glass of wine for two will provide basic nourishing food for one person for three months.

WHAT WILL YOU DO TO HELP?

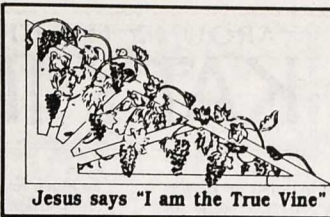
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"Teaching Day" - June 18

This is the first of four sessions on listening in everyday life and is entitled "Listening to God", but each session can stand alone. Teaching will be mainly in the morning with time for quiet in the afternoon. Come prepared to worship, to share, to learn and to listen to God.

"Fellowship Day" - June 24

A day of informal fellowship when we will listen to God through His Word, through worship and through one another. There will be an extended Communion Service, during which we will offer up our prayer concerns for others and ourselves. A gentle ministry of healing will be available. Please arrive before 10.30 a.m.

As numbers are limited on quiet days and teaching days please write or telephone to reserve a place.

THE article in last month's issue of the "Bridge" brought an immediate response as enquirers phoned for more information. Now after months of preparation "The Vine" will be officially opened and blessed on May 21 by Bishop Morris Maddocks and his wife Anne.

Limitations of space have meant that invitations to the opening have had to be restricted, but all are welcome to attend the subsequent days. The full programme up to next December can be obtained from Fl Radford, The Vine, 4 The Mount, Caversham, Telephone 483965, and details of the meetings during the next two months are given below.

"Quiet Days" - June 4 & 10, July 2 & 8

Peaceful days in which to let your thoughts and feelings catch up with your activities. There will be some minimal input at the beginning to help you unwind, and an optional time of sharing at the end, otherwise your time is your own.

SUE RYDER CONCERT

On Saturday 21st March an audience of over two hundred and fifty at St Peter's Church, Caversham, were thoroughly entertained by a concert given by the Reading Phoenix Choir. The programme included items by Elgar, Purcell, Holst and Britten and solo items in French and Russian by Jackie Mouradian and Mike Ananin respectively. The evening ended on a light note with a selection of popular items

from the Phoenix repertoire.

The event was organised by the Inner Wheel Club of Caversham in aid of the Sue Ryder home, Nettlebed and the proceeds amounting to £1,150.00 have been presented to the Matron of the Home.

An expression of appreciation for the high calibre of the choir's performance was given at the end of the evening by Mary Tait, President of the Inner Wheel Club.

DAFFODILS AT CAVERSHAM COURT



- E. S. Archer

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

MAYFAIR

Saturday 16th May at 2pm

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STAN ELDON ON THE RUN

Stan Eldon, for many years the lively sports reporter for this paper, is proposing to run another marathon. This is one with a difference.

It is a multi-marathon of 170 miles from Reading to Meru in the heart of France. It is to highlight a charity with the proposed name of Sports for the Disabled in the South (SDS), and will help the County Activity Officers of the British Sports Association for the Disabled

with special projects and with equipment.

Stan will be the lead runner with the group and will be joined by a selected group of English and French athletes. The Caversham Rotary Club, of which Stan is a member and a past president, is organising the event and would welcome donations or sponsorship. Barclays Bank in Church Road Caversham will accept donations and you can win a prize by guessing Stan's



speed on the run with an entry form from J.J. Van Wijngaarder, Old Yews, Kidmore End, Reading RG4 9AX which must be returned to him by 18th May.

Best wishes to the whole team for this worthy cause.

MAPLEDURHAM MASQUE

Saturday, 20th June

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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

WHAT a pity the weather turned so dreary at the end of March and beginning of April; seldom have I seen such a mass of blooms scattered around Caversham, in parks and open spaces and in gardens. Even in the pouring rain Caversham Court looked a picture, particularly what is known, I think, as the water feature, leading up to St. Peter's Church. It would have delighted the heart of Doreen Mikker who left money for this to be started.

And the bank of daffodils at the beginning of the Warren, also started originally by a small gift for bulbs in memory of Toni Forbes, who worked at the Monitoring Service, was glorious. Many such gifts followed and it would be nice if there was some record of the many lives who are commemorated here.

Not having gone through the recreation ground at the bottom of Westfield Road for some time, I was delighted to see how nicely this had been planted out. And now that the play area has been tidied up and benches in place for a quiet sit-down, it is a joy. It will be even better when the dead trees are replaced.

So Much for the Election

As I write this I guess a good many of us are heartily sick of the whole performance and feeling somewhat despondent about the possible outcome. But there is one good thing, the fact that electors as a whole are no longer being won over by talk of what's in it for them. It does seem a great many people can see beyond the extra pound or two they might or might not gain from tax reforms. But it would have been nice to have heard more about the problems of those living in cardboard boxes, the unemployed and the sick rather than the razzamataz over who or which party intended, hopefully, to do more about taxes.

Bugs Bottom

But enough of this. Anyway, by the time you read this we shall perhaps know something of what is in store for us and possibly thinking it's all a waste of time for there is little we can do. Nowhere was this more clearly illustrated than at the meeting of the local Planning Committee when it was agreed that planning permission for Bugs Bottom would just have to go through. Even the

councillors themselves were in despair to say nothing of the Bugs Bottom Action Group, the Residents Committees and all the other who have fought so hard to keep the valley green.

Sue Ryder Home

The Campaign to try and get the local Health Authority to think again about cutting off their share of funds for the Home, has got off to an amazing start, thanks to the efforts of many and supported wholeheartedly by the 'Evening Post' which lent its pages to dozens of letters from members of the public.

So many have been involved that it is impossible to pay tribute to them all, but I feel that mention must be made of the Freelance Fabric Shop in the Woodley shopping precinct, which donated all its takings (not just profits) to the Home's funds on a recent Sunday.

Although strongly opposed to Sunday shopping but feeling that this was special and being in need of a large quantity of fabrics, we went along and were pleased to see so many people there and the shop doing a roaring trade.

Emmer Green Surgery

And I was pleased to see that fund-raising efforts by patients and members of staff had raised over £5,000 to buy new hi-tech equipment for the surgery.

Now I know this kind of effort must be happening all over Caversham and I do hope somebody will find time to let the editors know when this happens - please!

Doreen Silva

Several readers have asked if we can find space to pay tribute to Doreen who died in February. Though she and her husband lived for many years in Shiplake, they were very close to Caversham and had lots of friends here, all of whom agreed that Doreen was about the pluckiest lass they'd ever met. Doreen and her husband, Ramon, had worked at the BBC Monitoring Service for many years in various capacities. Some years ago, when a branch of the Service was set up in Kenya, they worked there for some years and formed a deep attachment to the country, so much so that they continued to spend holidays there for some years. Alas Ramon died some years ago and

since then Doreen has suffered the kind of illness, amputations etc., which would have defeated most of us. Yet she kept bravely on, keeping up with old friends, renewing her studies, taking holidays away when she could. At a small gathering she gave some time ago it was obvious that she had never forgotten anyone with whom she had worked and took a keen interest in their welfare. So it was with great sadness that we heard of her death.

Among the papers she left behind was a copy of a short verse written by Joyce Grenfell shortly before her own death and it was felt highly appropriate that it should be read at her funeral. I make no apologies for quoting it.

*"If I should go before the rest of you
Break not a flower nor inscribe a stone;
Nor when I'm gone speak in a Sunday voice
But be the usual selves that I have known.
Weep if you must,
Parting is hell,
But life goes on,
So sing as well.*

What fitting words for Doreen herself.

SEEING THE BIRDS BY BOAT

FOR many years I have taken advantage of the Salter's passenger Boat Service, which operates daily, from May to September, irrespective of weather conditions, or number of passengers.

The boat is boarded at Salter's Wharf, on the EAST side of Caversham Bridge, and goes to Henley, leaving at 2pm and returning at 6.30pm, the latter depending upon volume of other river traffic.

All boats are equipped with complete safety-appliances, and are fitted with a comfortable saloon and toilets. Tea, coffee and snacks are very popular "on board" facilities. Even the family dog is permitted, free of charge, if well-trained and properly controlled!

It is usually unnecessary to make prior booking, although in peak season, it is advisable to board the boat in good time for its departure.

I never fail to take my binoculars and tape-recorder as many interesting sounds can be recorded, such as mallards, swans and coots being fed, which invariably approach as the boat awaits entry into a lock.

Riverside gardens are often breath-taking in their beauty, as are the

lock-gardens themselves.

As one relaxes in a seat upon the upper-deck, it is quickly appreciated what a very different perspective of the Thames is gained from this vantage-point.

On passing the Henley Road and Sonning Eye gravel-pits, common terns, grey herons, grebes and numbers of tufted duck and coot can be identified.

The blue-backed bird, with its piping call, dashing low across the water, identifies the kingfisher, whilst flocks of canada geese and sometimes greylag, will be seen on both river and adjacent water-meadow. Occasionally, the smaller, Egyptian goose, about mallard-sized, may also be noted.

Swifts, swallows, house martins and sand martins, the latter usually nearer gravel-pit areas, all grace the summer skies, en route.

I have also recorded common sandpiper, redshank, green and great spotted woodpecker, whilst the

corn bunting, yellowhammer, pied, grey and yellow wagtails, are all added bonuses.

At least four species of warbler will be heard in riverside trees and bushes, if not seen.

This long-established boat-service, so conveniently situated for Caversham residents, is ideal transport for all who may wish to view the Thames and its wildlife at leisure.

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READING GOES GREEN

WELL done, Reading Council! Well done the dozens of voluntary 'green' organisations! Between them they made Reading's first Green day an occasion to remember. If you were among the two and a half thousand, many from Caversham, who thronged the Town Hall and St. Lawrence's Church you already know how good it was, so read no further.

For those of us involved in green issues and sometimes a little disheartened by apparent lack of response, this was a great boost. Such a wide diversity of

groups, united by a common desire to safeguard and improve the environment, be their special interest swans, bats, badgers, butterflies, birds, trees, all manner stalls, all enthusiastic and knowledgeable gives hope for the future especially with the interested children surrounding them - brought by parents or in groups like the large Brownie pack. Many were the beautiful photographic displays but there must be a special mention for the wild plants of the Friends of Clayfield Copse. Their pictures

were sheer delight.

There was something for everybody - Face Painters, Punch & Judy Shows and Juggler/Unicyclist kept the little ones amused. Outside on the pavement, braving a very chilly day, were wood turners and hurdle makers; there were walks organised by the Civic Society and workshops on green gardening transport and shopping and on wildlife gardening.

Caversham was well represented. Although only allocated a small corner of the church, there was a colourful

display of photographs and information material by Caversham & District Residents' Association, Emmer Green Residents' Association, the Warren Residents' Association and the Bugs Bottom Action Group were there with their postcards, badges and stickers.

Space does not permit a description of all the other attractions. Johnny Morris, who opened the event was undoubtedly one of them and we are grateful to him, but the crowds continued to pour in throughout the day until we literally locked them

out. There were displays by the Council on S.W.A.G., the Museum and Environmental Health, by many Conservation and Wild Life Groups and by 'Friends of the Earth' and of a number of local beauty spots. These and many others made the Green Day one of the most worth-while events ever organised in our town.

It must become an annual event and when, at last, there is money to refurbish the main hall it will be bigger, but it can't be much better. Whether or not you went this year, don't miss it in the future.

SWAN LIFELINE

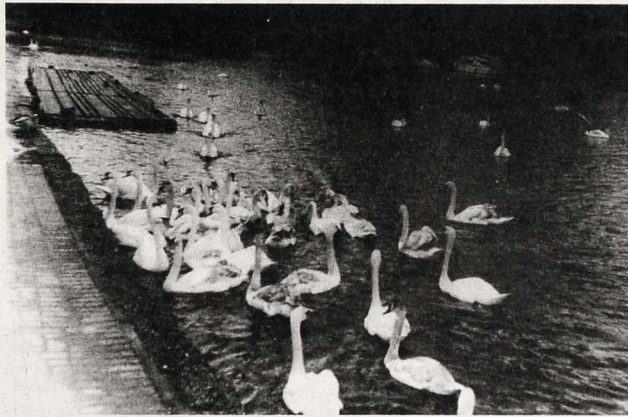
PRIZE-WINNERS in the recent Swan Lifeline Raffle, which on this occasion was countrywide (not local as the previous raffle) included a lady from Caversham, who won a dinner for two at The Swan, Streatley. It is interesting to note that the first prize of a flight along the Thames, was won by a Mrs. Swann of Birmingham!!!

Swan Lifeline continues its good work looking after the Thames' (and other) swans. There have

been the usual number of rescues following accidents, and, sadly one death, but their last report contains news of many new families!

Many thanks to all the people who continue to put bread in the sack in St. Peter's Church porch - please keep it coming - supplies are urgently needed! NOTE: Swan Lifeline will have representatives and goods for sale at the Riverfest, Kennet Path, Reading on Saturday, 4th July.

J.A.



Swans at Caversham

- E. S. Archer

THE CHRISTIAN AID WALK

It is believed that the first Reading Christian Aid Walk was in 1960. In those days the adventurous souls marched in darkness and a considerable amount of hard tarmac was covered in urban Reading.

In 1971 the Walk moved into the Chilterns and every year since then at least 400 walkers have enjoyed scenic views, leafy paths and good exercise in generally beautiful Spring weather. The total raised on the Chiltern Walk is now £178,380 over 21 years. The 1991 total was £18,000, with Caversham contributing £813 from only 19

walkers.

The Walk now consists of three routes of 6 miles, 11 miles and 20 miles starting and finishing at the Henley Rugby Club. All grades of walkers (and joggers) are able to take part, but children have to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

You have a chance to take part this year on May 16th - look for the publicity in church.

Application forms are available from your Christian Aid church representative or direct from the Walk Organiser for Caversham Keith Stephen-Evans (473619).

Reading Caversham Arts Centre

We are asked to draw your attention to the following dates:

May 8th-17th

Art Exhibition in the Studio Gallery, Reading Town Hall. Admission free.

May 14th, 15th, 16th

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Saturday, 9th May 10.00am-12 noon St Barnabas Church Hall, Grove Rd, Emmer Green, Annual Householder & Handyman Sale.

Sunday, 10th May 8pm Caversham Heights Methodist Church: Meeting for all Lent Group participants.

Saturday, 16th May 2pm Caversham Hall, St John's Road: May fair.

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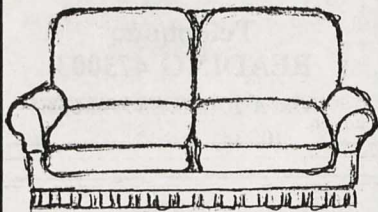
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Caversham Community Association

THE month's meetings began on March 2nd with a contest between four married couples, all club members, in a game based on the television programme 'Mr & Mrs'. Ted and Olive Howard, George and Maida Feast, Peter and Catherine Snaith, Dorothy and Alan Osborne were the participants. Questions were asked to the husbands and wives, the couple who gave the same answers gained a point. Dorothy and Alan Osborne were the winners but all the contestants received a small prize. The evening ended with a guessing game. As it was the first Monday in the month, the nearly new stall was available with Evelyn Cook in charge.

Mrs. Helen Maskell visited the club the

following week to lead the members at a Keep Fit evening. All the movements were performed to pleasant music and many of the members came prepared to take part in the exercises. Anybody not wishing to take part watched with interest.

On the 16th March Mr. Charles Moss was welcomed to the club again, this time his subject was 'The London River including the Docklands Development'. Mr. Moss gave a comprehensive guide to the river Thames and its many bridges through the London area by showing his excellent photographs on slide film. He also explained, with a well informed commentary, the history of the bridges and buildings verging the river, commencing with Hanpton Court and ending with the Thames Barrier. George Feast, the Vice-Chairman, thanked Mr. Moss for an interesting evening.

There was a good attendance on the 23rd March when the members met for a social evening.

Mr. Bob Aggiss visited the club on the 30th March to give advice on the treatment of house plants and the filling of hanging baskets. Mr. Aggiss brought a wonderful selection of his own house plants from his greenhouse and home to show the members. Some pots of Lachenalia, the Cape cowslip, were splendid specimens and some healthy looking plants of Begonia Rex, with beautiful leaf patterns, were admired by all. Mr. Aggiss gave advice on the best kind of plants to keep indoors and how to pot them to get successful results. The evening ended with a

demonstration on preparing different sizes of hanging baskets to give a blaze of colour throughout summer. Finally, members were given the chance to ask questions on their house plant problems. Mr. Aggiss was then warmly applauded for his informative and helpful talk.

Caversham Heights TG

An Annual General Meeting and Brownsea Island

NOT only was the Bring and Buy sale at the annual general meeting in March of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild successful, but there were also some interesting changes. By the end of the meeting a new chairman, Margaret Mellin, was presiding over a reconstituted committee, aided by the new vice-chairman Mildred Hutchison and secretary Janet Slawson, Pat Read remaining as treasurer. Before this point was reached, however, the retiring secretary gave an interesting report of the year's doings.

This included mention of a clergyman's talk about birds and of attending a concert given by a military band. The treasurer presented a statement of income and expenditure.

Charities which have benefited from speakers' fees this year are the National Children's Home, the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, Radio 210's Give a Child a Chance appeal, and Children in Need.

Chairman Jancis Brown and secretary Joan Purton were thanked for their past work, also vice-chairman Betty Smith, and presented with baskets planted with daffodils. Founder member Audrey Denning becomes president.

At social studies mention was made of a musical performance in May at Broadmoor Hall, and of a forthcoming

outing to Hever Castle in Kent in June. Mr Dear gave a short history of Brownsea Island, which together with other islands lies at the entrance to the enormous expanse of Poole Harbour. There have been many changes there since a monk used to live there who helped shipwrecked sailors, he said. Among the pictures shown was one of an old Poole logboat. The island now has a nature reserve and you may find red squirrels and sika deer there.

Caversham Ladies Club

THE meeting this month was the AGM and Mrs Harwood, Chairman, welcomed the members and reminded them this was their chance to nominate a new committee and suggest any changes they would like in the forthcoming year. Reports were read

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the CLUBS

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out by Mrs Harwood who thanked the committee for their great help over the year, and all members for their support. She also thanked Mrs Leach for her good work in delivering birthday and get well cards, Mrs Beardmore for helping prior to the meeting, Mrs Crawley and Mrs Roddy who came early to put crockery out ready for the usual tea break and all other helpers. Reports were then read out by Mrs Nelhams, Secretary, Mrs Q. Strong, Treasurer, Mrs E. Locke, Nearly New, and Mrs B. Strong, Produce. All were accepted and agreed by members.

It was now time for election of officers for 1992. No nominations were forthcoming. It was voted that the retiring committee be returned en bloc; committee accepted and all members agreed. Mrs Harwood thanked members on the committee's behalf and promised to continue putting the Club's interest first.

It was then time for the Club's Bring and Buy sale, which was again in the capable hands of their own 'auctioneer' Mrs Brenda Strong. Amidst laughing and smiling the table which had been well covered through the generosity of all members, was soon looking barren whilst members' bags were heavier than when they entered. Tea a very welcome respite.

Mrs Harwood told

members the collecting box for Sue Ryder had yielded the fine sum of £21.66 thanks to all members' contributions. Time caught up and the meeting closed with a reminder of the outing in May/June.

Caversham W.I.

AT the March meeting of the Caversham W.I. Mrs Taylor was re-elected as President for another year and a committee of eight agreed to stand. Mrs Drake, VCO, organised the voting and then gave members a general review of the W.I. in the nineties. She pointed out the worrying trend of falling membership.

Miss Margaret Cameron gave the vote of thanks, and she also won the Competition Cup for 1991/92.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

THE ladies of the Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild held their Annual General Meeting in March. Mrs Walker, the Secretary of the Federation, was the Returning Officer. Welcomed onto the new committee were Mrs A. Dalzell, Mrs E. Harris and Mrs B. Jepson.

The Annual Report for the past twelve months showed that all sections had a busy and interesting year. A "nearly New"

sales table was well supported by members and photographs of past events of the guild were also on display.

Since the last meeting twenty-eight members were entertained at St Barnabas' Church Hall by Mr Frank Terry, together with his soprano and pianist, to music and operettas of Franz Lehar. Also the Ramblers had two walks, one of eight miles and one of four miles and are preparing for their annual walking holiday in the Isle of Arran.

Rosehill W.I.

THE April meeting was on the 1st and the new President, Mrs Jane Stockill, opened the meeting. The new Secretary, Mrs Jefferies, read the minutes of the last meeting. Various dates were fixed and ideas for a summer outing were discussed. The delegate for the Council meeting at the Hexagon on 20th March was Miss Vincent. She gave an interesting account of the proceedings.

The speaker was Mrs Huston, who is group Librarian for Reading Library, her area ranging from Newbury to Slough. As most members use the library services at Caversham and Reading, they found all the extra information she gave most interesting.

Members brought posies of spring flowers which were arranged on a table, making a colourful display.

STAR

Reading branch of the Students of the Third Age

THIS month marked the tenth anniversary of the U3A

movement in Britain. The event was recorded by a programme on Woman's Hour featuring the wide diversity of the groups. Here in Reading there was a full month. The highlight was the Study Day on Saturday March 14th at Reading University, London Road. This year the subject was Europe. The morning lecturer was Dr Martin Bond, head of the Information Office of the European Community in London. He gave a history to date of the Community and how it arrived at its conclusions. He accentuated the fact that many newspaper scares are based on proposals, not decisions. Members then divided into groups on European topics. After lunch the speaker was the Foreign Correspondent, Ian McDougal, on Russia. He dwelt at length on the many problems facing it today - he regards the main dangers as conventional weapons (not nuclear) and the vast numbers of discontented army.

The Open Meeting was held at the Town Hall for the last time. Next month it will be held at the Kennet Room, Civic Centre. Star has an 'At Home' where all the groups showed off their activities and appealed for more members. The meeting began with an entertainment. First a display of Esperanto showing how useful the language is and how easy to learn. Then the Writers' Group read out samples of their work, the playreaders read for ten minutes and finally there were two songs from Mrs Kay Eburne.

The Books Group was visited by Mrs Geohegan, the shop manageress at Blackwells, Reading. She spoke at length of the complex structure that lay behind the selling of a book and the responsibilities that went behind the split-second decisions that had to be made to the representatives as to the number of books to be ordered.

The Play Readers this month have read 'The Skin Game' by John Galsworthy and marvelled at its dramatic power. The debating group had for its motion 'That we are all socialists

whether we wish to be or not'. This was massively carried as it was meant to be non-political.

On Saturday March 21st a party from STAR went to the Mill at Sonning. After a very good lunch all enjoyed an excellent thriller 'Veronica's Room'.

This month a new group began on Astronomy. Members were given an introduction to the solar system and planets, backed up by coloured slides. The music group has its speaker Don Lill an instructor on early musical instrument making at West Dene College, Chichester. He demonstrated with a wealth of examples and exhibits the history of woodwind, brass and string instruments from the time of the Crusades to the present day.

The Writers group concentrated on letters to the Press and magazines. Members letters were read out and they were encouraged to persevere and perhaps receive a well-earned cheque. The Travel group had two speakers on 'Hawaii and Barbados. Island Paradise?' There followed a lively discussion on this point.

The walk this month was around the Mortimer area. The weather was atrocious but twenty-one members turned up and enjoyed it.

Membership Secretary for STAR Mrs Grace McGregor, Reading 866037.

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