

AN UNFORGETTABLE YEAR

by

Robert Dimmick, Mayor of Reading 1991-2

Every year, the Council chooses one Councillor to be Mayor. In Reading each party gets a chance to nominate the Mayor, depending on its number of Councillors, so everyone can get a turn. The Mayor is unpaid, but gets an allowance for entertaining and other expenses.

I have just completed a year I shall certainly never forget, when I had the privilege of serving as Mayor of Reading. It was certainly a busy year – one event a day on average – and full of variety and enjoyment. But there were also many opportunities of serving people.

Take the last full week of my year. It was busier than most, but it included many events typical of the year.

On Monday morning, I went to work in Bracknell. My employers, ICL, very generously let me take off as much time as I needed for Mayoral duties. On average that was about one day's worth each week.

After lunch I was picked up by hired car and taken to the Civic Offices, where I presented food safety awards to fifty or so restaurants, pubs and other businesses. Later on a group of young people from a school in Vienna visited the Parlour; in return for a talk (in my best German) about Reading and the Mayoralty, they gave me a delicious and genuine Sachertorte – that's a chocolate cake. I went home for tea, and in the evening Margaret and I visited the police station for the annual meeting of Victims Support. A few refreshments, and talking to volunteers and police officers.

On Tuesday morning, work again; in the afternoon, a meeting with charities for the homeless and some leading local shops – they are now working together quietly and



Courtesy, Reading Chronicle

successfully. In the evening we gave a supper party for various people who are active in the community, encouraging them to mix and meet.

Wednesday was an unusual day – I was up early and flew to Germany with Martyn and Lily Allies of the Reading-Düsseldorf Association (and Caversham Heights Methodist Church). We met the Oberbürgermeister, had lunch, and attended the presentation of a decoration to Martyn by the Land government of North Rhine-Westphalia. In the evening we dined with the committee of the Düsseldorf-Reading Friendship Circle. Meanwhile Margaret went to a concert at the Hexagon as the guest of Thames Water, who sponsored it.

On Thursday we caught an early plane back, and I joined the Chamber of Commerce for their annual lunch. I left promptly to go to the Matriculation ceremony at Gyosei College, the Japanese Christian college which now occupies most of the London Road campus. After hearing speeches in German on Wednesday and Japanese on Thursday, I got a little confused!

Back to work on Friday, leaving punctually to go to an evening reception to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Reading Amateur Regatta – I won a book in the raffle.

On Saturday morning, went to the Model Engineers exhibition at Rivermead – fascinating – and also dropped in on the Park Rangers at Caversham Court. The afternoon was spent making sure that the Parlour was tidy for next year, and sorting out our own mementoes from gifts that should stay there.

And on Sunday we went to Caversham Park Church – almost as usual, but Phil Abrey offered us the chance to give thanks for our year as part of the service, and we were delighted to take up his offer.

In between times, we did what everyone else does – looked after the house and our children, particularly helping our daughter to prepare for GCSE the next week.

No week is typical. Many would have included a fund-raising or publicity event for charity or an official opening. Few were quite so busy or included so much eating.

What's it all for? It is not just a chance for a lucky Councillor to have a good time – although I did! It's all about representing the people of Reading, and helping and encouraging them to work together as one community. It was a great privilege to meet so many people who give up their time to help others.

The Mayor also represents the historic continuity of Reading. Hamza Fuad is now the 391st Mayor since Walter Gerard in 1301. Like every Mayor, he will have a great deal of work to do. Most of it will be very enjoyable. The position he holds deserves support and respect from the whole community, regardless of their political views. I hope he will have your support as Mayor.

TALKING POINT

On Communication(s)
 Father Thomas Meagher
 ST. ANNES R.C. CHURCH



IN recent years the Sunday after the Ascension has, for us, been dedicated to the idea of Catholic Communications, which presumably means that we want this aspect of our faith to be improved. But what do we mean by Communications? When we think of the 'mass media' we seem to have become confused between the messenger and the message. What exactly is communicated now?

It is appropriate that the Feast of Pentecost comes hard on the heels of that particular Sunday. It reminds us of how the Holy Spirit seized the disciples to become Apostles, and they in their turn seized the means of communication available to them; the synagogue, the market place, the Roman road. This capture by the Holy Spirit gave the Apostles God's love and a conviction until death (even violent death) of the Truth of God. This was achieved not only by the extraordinary gifts of tongues and miracles, but also by those classic gifts, the seven mentioned by Isaiah, which come to all at Confirmation. That is what made them Apostles.

What would the Apostles expect of us? What would they say? Surely they would expect us to show our love in Christ for our fellow-men, by our witness, by our conviction and by our lives. It must, then, be necessary for us to use television, the radio and the press, to present something other than the anodyne type of religion which suits none rather than all. How often have we heard Christ's teaching propounded in a definite, non-anaemic way? when the Apostles spoke, they spoke fearlessly, with the courage of the Holy Spirit. They had been commanded to teach all that Our Lord had taught them, and they did so out of love for God and neighbour, wanting all to share their knowledge and love.

What do we find now? Far from our using the media to promote the truth, communications are being used to provide us with misrepresentation of what the Church teaches. Mindful of the last of the Beatitudes, I am by no means unhappy that the Church is attacked; this is to be expected. Let it be attacked for its truth however, not for a caricature of the truth.

While eschewing the temptation to give the full teaching of the Church here (not the time or place) it might help to look at two issues which seem to be engaging an abnormal amount of interest. Both are given airings from time to time, and are given in a confused and often prejudiced way.

The Celibacy of the Clergy has 'enjoyed' a notorious nine-days-wonder, and is presented with a breathtaking lack of understanding. It is not a man-made idea, and it has its roots, in one form or another, in Apostolic times. However difficult it may prove to some, that is no reason for changing a way of life that can and should be a jewel in the crown of the Church. Once again, do we 'throw out the baby with the bath water'? No criticism is intended of any other denominations and their priests or ministers; they have their own understanding of priesthood which may be different from ours - hence the debate in other denominations about women priests. It is not our business to enter this particular discussion, except that it may be necessary on occasion to state very clearly our own position in all charity.

Perhaps the greatest piece of misrepresentation comes about whenever the alleged overpopulation of the world is discussed. Because the Church condemns artificial contraception, the confusion (is it deliberate?) is made between that and birth control. Nowhere does the Church condemn birth control; indeed it was the first in the field in respect of 'planned parenthood'. Its teaching on the subject is clear, practical and very much in accordance with the purpose of marriage, the sacramental, mystical union between man and woman, and in accordance with the Church's teaching on life.

Illogical statements on many other subjects abound, which simply show how easily truth can become twisted. We should not become too worried by this; St Paul and St John the Evangelist had to clear up confusion even in their day. It has gone on ever since.

It all indicates that a return to logical thinking is imperative; before any discussion a definition and even an understanding of terms is essential and any programmes or articles about religion should be as objective as possible, or at least not too biased. (A classic example of what should be avoided would be the recent outburst on celibacy, which was almost funny).

One of our perceptive parishioners (of which there are many) thought that it was time that we had someone who could speak authoritatively and simply on all current matters to show that intelligence and faith should go hand in hand. For the true intellectual theologian is one who has the deepest faith. True theology starts from the infinite plane of God and His Truth and it stays there, gaining ever greater insights; whereas the 'theologian' who uses his own opinion goes into an ever-narrowing spiral of self-doubt.

Even the greatest of exponents can be only the messenger of the Truth; it is God who inspires the reader and listener by the witness of the messenger and by His grace. Faith is a precious treasure given to us by God and we should be very careful to keep it alive in ourselves by practising it. We do not do it by burying it, nor do we tarnish it with our own opinions.

In conclusion, a repetition should be made of what was said about those who attack the Church. These attacks should be borne with patience and understanding. We should be prepared to help those who persist in confusing the Church's teaching to show them what it really is. Our Faith, like any virtue is 'perfected in infirmity'.

On the positive side again, it is very interesting that some kind of religious idea, however wrong, is awakening around us. It may well be that the apathy of recent years has made people look for something else. Now more than ever it may be that an opportunity is being given to us to turn negative ideas into something positive, to help others to understand, because a real understanding of the Faith leads to, and is accompanied by, the love of God. If we love our neighbour, we will want that neighbour to share the knowledge and love of God. Our Lord prayed that the Holy Spirit would lead the disciples into all truth.

This he did at Pentecost. This is our task too, this is the message that we have to communicate, and we do it as much by our lives as by our words.

CAVERSHAM ACADEMY OF ART CENTRES

Mr Burnell, the Tutor, tells us that he is moving his St Mary's Reading Centre class to Caversham in the autumn where it will meet on Monday mornings from 10-12 noon, beginning on September 28th.

His other Tuesday evening class in Thameside School will continue as usual.

LATE NOTICE!

Caversham Horticultural Society
 SHOW AT ARTHUR LEGGE CENTRE
 27th June from 2pm

POST BAG

Dear Friends,

Many of you have heard of Jake Elson, in fact many of you have at some time or other helped exercise him. I would like to thank you all very much on Jake's behalf. The exercising has kept him happy and healthy over the ten years he has been doing it.

We want to continue to exercise him as long as possible but need more volunteers! If you can spare one hour a fortnight, please contact me! We would be very grateful for some men volunteers to help in the evenings!

Thank you
 Iris Elson
 478136

19 Albert Road,
 Caversham.

SPECIAL LECTURE

Tuesday, 14th July at 8pm
 Illustrated talk on the History of Caversham Court by H. Godwin Arnold
 Baptist Free Church, Prospect Street

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 (last Sunday)

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, York Road
 11am every Sunday

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading 10.30am
 Caversham Church House - 3rd Sunday Meeting for Worship 7.30pm.
 House study groups Sept - June Tel: 475783

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

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

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

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mr. M. Staunton, 23 Albert Road, Caversham, RG4 7AN. Tel: 472389.

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

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

All contributions for August issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 1 July.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 29 July.

The dates for September will be Monday 3 August and Wednesday 5 August.

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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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

I usually save my appeals to the end of the column. This time I'm starting off with one which, I think, is important if we don't want this paper to degenerate into a collection of reports.

A local paper – and this one should be a good example – ought to contain a lot of news about local people, even those who have now left the area because one of the objects of the 'Bridge' is to keep people in touch.

Last month somebody handed me a note of the death of Canon Donald Vile, who many years ago was curate at St. John's Church. Though he and his wife left Caversham, I believe, during the war, it is obvious from a copy of a letter sent by Mrs. Vile some time ago to somebody in this area, that they maintained a keen interest in Caversham. I've been given several names of people who 'might' know something about them but honestly I am just not up to roaming the streets as I once did gathering

news and it would help very much if some of our readers would find time to write a few lines themselves concerning old friends – we can cope with typing and even tidying up an article (though I do know a lot of people are more capable than I am of putting something together).

But let's face it, most of us who started with the 'Bridge' nearly 30 years ago are badly in need of help if we are to keep this a lively paper, so please don't hesitate to leave a note, probably c/o Church House, if you come across an item you think might be useful. It's amazing how many people have lived in the area for years and I know of one reader, now well over 90, who scans the paper eagerly for news of old friends.

THE PLATES

But I did have a stroke of luck while making a few phone calls about Mr. Vile. A reader reminded me of the death of Elsie Platt. Now the Platt family were

well known in this district for many years as grocers and Elsie was, at well over 90, the last surviving child of Thomas Platt. Anyway, the outcome of this phone call was that our reader hopes to put together something about the family to be published in the

pleasure that we read that this much loved Home has been awarded the sum of £300,000 under a government grant. It will go a long way to help now that West Berkshire Health Authority have withdrawn their funding, but it must be said that this is a one-off grant and this

and so on, which have raised funds. So, while there's no need for anyone to be complacent about this government grant, it is hoped that local people have given ample evidence of their determination to pull out all the stops to keep this wonderful Home running.

Cusden, who started the association and was herself the proud owner of a similar decoration, at that time being the only person outside Germany, apart from the Queen, to hold such an award, would have been very pleased to know that her work has been so faithfully carried on. And it's good to have such people in Caversham.

FLOWERS IN WATERCOLOUR

I've been having a chat to Judith Milne, whose book 'Flowers in Watercolour' is currently on sale in the local bookshop, together with postcards, prints and even some of her original paintings. It should be said that this book, though partly intended to encourage other budding artists, would serve as an admirable coffee table gift for someone special. The book itself contains something like 100 prints, but if you can't afford the £17.99 for it, some of the smaller prints, which also make lovely gifts, sell from £5. They are all quite charming.

Judith, who has figured in these pages before is highly involved in the art world and tells me she is about to hold an inaugural meeting of the Woodley and Earley Art Group. She also teaches and many of her pupils have come from Caversham.

So do give her a ring if you would like to know more about her work, particularly art in nature, 690388.



Anemones from Judith Milne's book

MAYORS, PAST AND PRESENT

It has been interesting this past year to see so many pictures in the local press of Robert Dimmick, the retiring mayor, and his wife. Nobody can say they have spared themselves in their year of office. Perhaps somebody will find time to write a fuller appraisal of all Robert has done and of his connection with the Caversham Village Church.

At the same time, we would like to welcome Hamza Fuad, our new mayor, also from Caversham. This area certainly does its share with regard to local events, associations and so on.

MARTYN ALLIES

It was good to see that Martyn, who has been chairman of the Reading-Dusseldorf Association for 15 years, has been awarded a German Order of Merit decoration, the first Englishman ever to be awarded it. Our old friend, Phoebe

next issue. This is the sort of thing we would like to encourage. After all, Mary Kift's articles about old Caversham and its inhabitants, have been a great success.

SUE RYDER HOME SAVED

It was with great

time next year the Home could again be in financial difficulty. On the other hand, the response to recent appeals, thanks largely to the efforts of the 'Evening Post', has been magnificent. Almost every week the local press brings more news of efforts by local people schoolchildren, clubs

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local Christian Aid collections?

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Would a Southern B S have been as kind? asks our Bradford correspondent.

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP

SOME ten people from Caversham exercised their rights as shareholders by attending the Annual Meeting of Higgs and Hill at the beginning of June. It is true they only owned one share each but that was enough to gain them admission and not enough to boost the firm's flagging fortunes.

This time they were expected, a large purchase of individual shares not having gone unnoticed by the firm's directors, so security was strict, but there was no valid reason for excluding them, so all were admitted. Their questions centred mostly on the financial wisdom of buying a housing site in a deteriorating market, particularly when that site was going to be very expensive to develop because of the restrictions placed on it as a result of the strength of opposition. Replies, as was to be expected, were somewhat bland, as shareholders were informed that the housing market would shortly be making a recovery.

The Bugs Bottom protesters, and probably Higgs and Hill, were surprised to find they were not the only objectors. They had gone prepared to ask why, if the firm's most prestigious project, the J.P. Morgan headquarters on the Victoria Embankment had led to a financial loss, they should expect the controversial Bugs Bottom to make a profit, but before they could do so, rigorous questioning from another part of the room revealed that there was severe disquiet about the reason for this loss from another group. Another small group also did not appear to be very happy about the returns on their investment.

It cannot be said that any positive results came from this exercise, except that Higgs and Hill now have no doubt about the strength of opposition and, according to their lights, are likely to produce an estate of a high standard. A few seeds of doubt have also been sown in the minds of some of the directors

and shareholders about what they are going to do to this piece of countryside, but too late to bear fruit. It is little consolation to the people of Caversham and the surrounding areas to know that they are unlikely to embark on such an exercise again.

IN THE VALLEY

AS it is highly unlikely, given the problems of the construction industry, that Higgs and Hill will start operations in Bugs Bottom in the course of this year, there is no pressing need to publish here the restrictions that have been imposed by the planning conditions and which it is important to see are not infringed.

A later issue, perhaps in the 'silly season' when real news is usually short, would also have the advantage of being more retrievable when the time comes to check on what was not permitted.

That people are keeping an eye on the valley is no doubt, and that they are prepared to express their opposition in any legal way is apparent from the way practically all the stakes marking out the road system have been uprooted. They were provocative and unsightly and have been spontaneously moved by 'person or persons unknown'.

A summer evening's walk through the valley is still a delight, especially as it is now possible to walk on the valley sides without being shooed off for trespassing, something Higgs and Hill promise us that when they have 'improved' the valley, we shall always be able to do. Urban born, bred and conditioned as they are they cannot see that it is the open space, the quiet and the wide views that are valued and that no one wishes to sacrifice them in order to walk on the valley sides as far as the two metre high walls which will surround the housing areas.

The unavoidable sadness of walking through the valley, unchanged over the passing centuries, is the thought that this is like-

ly to be the last summer it will be possible to do so. It will be defended to the last.

SHOPPING HABITS

I should like to endorse all that Katy said in her column in last month's 'Caversham Bridge' about Waitrose's extra wide trolleys. If the opening of the new Tesco super store has had any effect on the crowds of shoppers at peak periods, and apart from the initial period there is little evidence that this is the case, it has been cancelled out by the extra room the trolleys take up. In a crowded shop apologies are heard on all sides as trolleys get locked in complicated traffic jams or entangle themselves with someone's shopping bag.

There is probably a good reason for having trolleys all of the same size, but it would please those who require something more than a basket though less than a wagon designed to provision a large family for a prolonged siege, if their requirements could be met.

Basket shoppers who use Waitrose much as they would a corner shop, are not as well catered for as it would appear. A long queue of baskets can be slower than a short queue of trolleys, especially if any of the basket carriers are intent on playing the supermarket version of the party game of squeezing as many items as possible into a matchbox. Someone in front of me had managed to pack in thirty items, naturally paying by cheque and not with old fashioned money, something that is particularly annoying if the basket only contains two or three items.

So after that incursion into Katy's territory, I will move back to where this column belongs, adding perhaps as a final thought, that the trolleys that cater for various sizes of babies are a welcome addition.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

In Caversham the local elections held interest, even drama. In Peppard

Ward, Mary Irwin held her seat with a 1,277 majority and a score of 1,960 votes, both the second highest in the Borough. Some of these seem to have been at the expense of her nearest rival, Ian Fenwick for the Liberal Democrats, whose poll was reduced from the previous occasion.

In Caversham Ward, Pauline Palmer, leader of the Conservative Group on the Borough Council, romped back with both the largest majority (1,322), and the highest number of votes (2,044) in the election. The most dramatic result however was in Thames, where, as usual, the highest number of votes was also cast.

Here Pam Fuad, last year's deputy mayor and this year's mayor designate, was defending her seat. Pamela and Hamza Fuad both insist that they are Conservatives, but the official Conservative party has disowned them, and they make up their own little party of Thames Ward Conservatives.

Both have served the ward for several years, have worked hard for it and are popular in the area, something even their political opponents admit. Regardless of urgings from the official Conservative party, Thames voters with Conservative leanings, if not actually paid-up members of the party, have continued to return them. This time however the magic didn't work and Pam lost her seat to the young and inexperienced candidate (well, he had tried first with the Lib-Dems, then with Labour) whom the Conservatives fielded in the determined and concentrated attack they mounted on Thames. Although Pam Fuad got a respectable 1,165 votes, Robert Wilson got 296 more and so became the new representative of Thames.

If this had been all, although a personal blow for Pam Fuad, matters would have ended there. But she was mayor designate and this caused problems. For one thing, the deputy mayor now has a year getting in some practice

for the main job. For another, anyone accepting such a post needs sufficient notice to arrange his or her life accordingly. What to do!

After much unseemingly bickering over what is meant to be a post above politics, Hamza Fuad made what, to a lay person, appeared to be an eminently suitable suggestion, that he should be mayor and Pam mayoress. As a Councillor he already has to attend official meetings so that would cause no problems, and Pam would already be geared up to carry out the more socially orientated duties, when he was unable to do so.

However, this did not satisfy the official Conservative party nor did it much please the Liberal Democrats who felt it was their turn and that they had a fitting candidate. But with the backing of the Labour majority, Hamza Fuad was duly elected.

At this point, Cllr. Pauline Palmer rose and led her fellow Conservative Councillors out of the hall, whether in high dudgeon or to save the cash-strapped Council some money by not partaking of the refreshments normally laid on on these occasions, is not clear. There cannot have been such controversy since the Abbot of Reading refused to accept the townspeople's choice of mayor.

Meanwhile, like it or not, Hamza and Pam are Mayor and Mayoress, and it would be churlish not to wish them a happy and successful year.

STOP PRESS

Higgs and Hill have announced that they intend to start building in Bugs Bottom in July. This news came too late to include the planning consent conditions in this article. They will appear in the next issue.

YOUTH ROADSHOW

IN THIS EDITION OF ROADSHOW!

- Info on Summer Show, Car Boot Sale,
- Five-a-Side Football Competition
- Children's Garden Competition

Hi, again!

Calling Adults as well as children!!

We understand that a lot of young people are not reading our column - perhaps the image of the paper is not right for them! We will try once more in its present format, but should that not work, perhaps we could look at the possibility of making the Youth column a pull-out section, say on a quarterly basis in order to make it worthwhile

What do you think?

Please write in to us - children or adults alike - and tell us what you feel would make the column more attractive..... Perhaps the use of photos and cartoons. If you run a children's or young people's group, please have a chat with them and perhaps look at sending in information about a project

you have been running.

CAVERSHAM AREA YOUTH ORGANISATIONS



SUMMER SHOW Saturday 18th July 1992

It is being held at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road.

In the morning there is a CAR BOOT SALE from 11.00am until 1.00pm. If you want to sell from your boot, or just from a table if you haven't got a car then come along on the morning anytime from ten o'clock on: Cost per boot or table is \$5.

At the same time there is an 11-14 year olds' FIVE-A-SIDE FOOTBALL TOURNAMENTIf you have, or know of, a team

that would like to enter, please write to the organiser, Mark Hale, at the address below with your team name plus a contact name and address/telephone number.

In the afternoon there will be stalls and displays, and hopefully a bouncy castle, as well as a Grand Draw. If your group would like to put on a stall to fund-raise for your group, please contact Mark or us.

JUNIOR ROADSHOW

In the last edition we asked you to see if you could have a patch of garden for yourselves. Originally we were going to look at showing you how to set up a miniature pond with surrounding damp area, and then observing how the pond life and plants developed, but owing to the water shortage at present we felt it probably wasn't a good idea. Perhaps we will come back to that at another time. However, now you have your little plot, don't waste it!!

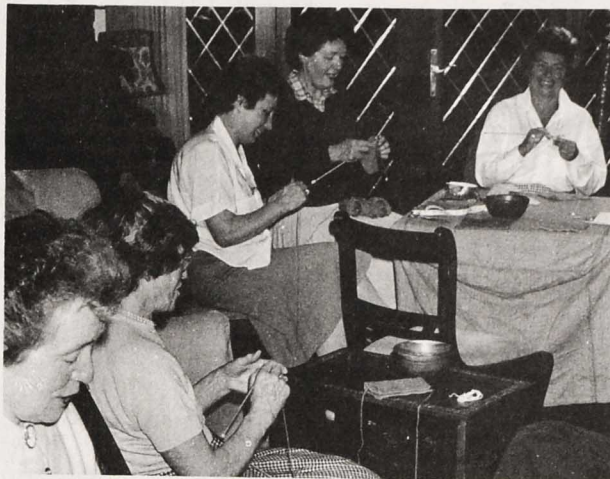
What we would like you to do, if

you are interested, is to take part in our next Junior Roadshow Competition. All you do between now and the end of the summer holidays is to plant your mini-garden with a theme: that theme is your choice but for instance it could be based on colour, a particular sort of flower, setting up a mini vegetable plant, a rock garden etc. We will then visit each garden and there will be a prize for the best one and we will photograph it for the next edition of Caversham Bridge.

All we need from you at present is a postcard or sealed envelope with your name, address, telephone number and date of birth, along with a couple of sentences about what you hope to do with your garden. Parents can help and advise (and, dare we say it, buy the seeds/plants etc.!!) but **you** must do the work. You will also automatically become a member of the Junior Roadshow Club.

Well, that's all for the moment, except to say that if you are a parent reading this, please

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- P.J. Bean

point out the competition to your children.....it's a positive alternative to video and T.V.!! and it is something that parents and children can do together.

Best wishes from Gill and Roy

Please use any of the following to send competition entries or letters to the two of us, or Mark Hale:

- Church House, Church Street, Caversham

- Caversham Bookshop, 18 Prospect Street, Caversham

- Milestone Youth Wing, Northbrook Rd, Caversham Park Village
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AROUND THE CHURCHES

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

The interregnum is now well and truly upon us and we have had to cut the umbilical cord to Alan and Lucy. Although we said our "Good-byes" at the end of April, Alan has remained at our right hand and been helping us with various things while supposedly having a holiday. Our Annual May Fair was held in the hall and many people came to enjoy the bargains on offer. It was particularly nice to see so many new faces. The splendid total of \$450 was realised for church funds. Is there a Mrs S. Turner out there who came to the Fair? If there is please would she contact Mrs A. Deane 473798, who has some property of hers.

Finally, May ended with the Inauguration of the Ministry of the Revd Dr Alan Wilson as Rector of St Michael's Church, Sandhurst, on 29th May. It proved to be a lovely evening in the country after a wet day. The grass smelt beautiful and the sun was large, red and beginning to set, as we walked through the churchyard to the church (each parishioner has his or her area of responsibility in the churchyard, so the competitive nature is put to true test and the end result is very pleasing to the visitor). The church too was beautiful, dressed overall in white and particularly white sweet peas whose scent was glorious. One of the most memorable

spots in the service was the act of welcoming Alan to Sandhurst which was done verbally by his new Rural Dean, the Lay Chairman of the Sonning Deanery, the Mayor, and representatives from the Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and Free churches and his own Churchwardens prior to the Peace.

It was very obvious that if we were sorry to see Alan go, the people of Sandhurst are totally delighted to have him and will hopefully look after him.

Meanwhile back at St John's we are very pleased to have the Revd Terry Lee helping us with most of our services and our ministry.

ST. JOHN'S MOTHER'S UNION

Did the last report say we were resting? Where I wonder! We have in fact had a very busy time organising the Reading Deanery Festival of the Mothers' Union. As we were fifty years young this year we decided that it would be nice to invite everybody to Caversham to help us celebrate. We came about in 1942 when the Mothers' Union in Caversham was split into groups following the death of the then Rector Wood, and his wife felt that she could not carry on, so each of the daughter churches took over their own organisation. Together

with St Andrew's we planned the service and the day and we were particularly pleased to welcome Alan back to take the service, Christine Allsopp to do the prayers, and Bill Carpenter to do the readings. An inspiring address was given by Kate Harris and eighteen banners were on parade to bring a tear to a few eyes. It was a truly wonderful afternoon with beautiful flowers and excellent refreshments on a very hot day. We had our Deanery Vice-President Mrs Enid Trehanne with us in her first public outing and the fellowship felt it was very

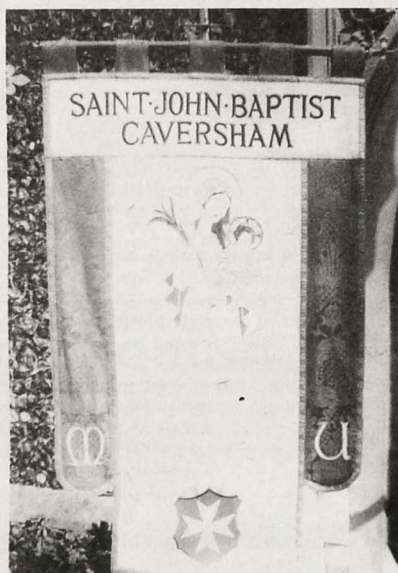
comforting especially as we had lost our oldest member, Miss Platt, earlier, and her funeral had taken place in the morning. Miss Platt, although never enrolled (as she had no children) always supported our aims and came regularly to our meetings until she was forced to have continual care, and there the Revd Bill Carpenter had been ministering to her, so it was a poignant day for all.

Members were able to go to the very moving service at Christ Church Cathedral on 30th May to a Thanksgiving Service to

celebrate the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Diocese of Oxford and the Inauguration of the Anglican Province of Zaire with its five dioceses happening simultaneously in Zaire. The Mothers' Union Choir based in Reading sang for both our service and the one in the Cathedral.

Recently a Jumble Sale was held by St John's, St Peter's and St Margaret's Mothers' Union with excellent results; The picture was taken towards the end of the rush when a cup of tea is so vital.

OUR NEW BANNER



- E.S. Archer



Mothers' Union Banners

- E.S. Archer

ST. JOHN'S, ST. PETER'S & ST MARGARET'S



- E.S. Archer

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BAPTIST NEWS

Graham Coldman, a member of Caversham Baptist free Church, has been studying for the Ministry at Bristol Baptist College for the last three years. Now, having taken his final examinations in June, he has been called to be the Minister at Rothley Baptist Church, Leicestershire.

At present Graham and his wife Chris live in Chipping Sodbury with

their children - Jamie (12), Dan (9), Hannah (6) and Tom (4), and will move to Rothley in order to take up the new post in the Autumn.

Graham and other students at Bristol Baptist College took part in a Valedictory Service at Tyndale Baptist Church, Bristol, on 20th June to mark the occasion of a number of friends from Caversham attended. Graham

will be ordained as a minister at 3pm on Saturday 18th July at Caversham Baptist Church. Many members of the church will also travel to Rothley Baptist Church for the induction Service which will take place sometime in August.

We take this opportunity to wish Graham and his family God's richest blessing as he begins his first full-time post in the Lord's service.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

ST ANNE'S NEWS

Parish Concert

Our Lady and St Anne's Church, Southview Avenue, held its second annual concert on the evening of Saturday May 16th. As in 1991, this year's concert again featured parishioners of St Anne's singing and playing all the items, to an extremely high standard of performance. All the performers were warmly welcomed and applauded by the audience who were most generous in this respect. Those of the audience spoken to after the concert agreed that it had been enjoyable informal and a wonderful evening's entertainment. The organiser of the concert would like to add that it is remarkable that there are so many highly talented people within St Anne's Parish and sends his sincere thanks to those who took part, giving so freely of their time and abilities.

Next year's concert will again be held around May; anyone will be most welcome to come along and witness what hopefully will be another memorable and entertaining event.

Parishioners taking part, in programme order, were: Hilary Moss (Piano), Agnes Lau (Soprano), Victoria Naxton (Oboe), Karen Ip (Piano), Agnes Lau (Piano), Patrick Ashcroft (Violin), Berna Macdonald (Mezzo-

Soprano), Michael Offen (Organ), Karen Ip, Agnes Lau and Lousia Lau (Piano duets and trio), Terry Bryanton (Classical Guitar), Patti Nixon (Mezzo-Soprano), John Patrick Smith (Narrator), Hilary Moss (Trombone), Berna Macdonald and Patti Naxton (Vocal Duet), St Anne's Choir - Soloist T. Meagher (Choral).

Special mention must go to the Parish Priest for his supportive interest and to Fiona Stansbury, as ever the capable, helpful and enthusiast accompanist. God Bless and many thanks to all.

FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

St. Anne's R.C. Primary School football team won the Reading Schools 'A' League this season. This was especially pleasing for themselves and it marked the last season for Mr. Ray Hughes, the school's Deputy Head, who has run the team for many years. The school has a strong sporting tradition, running both football and netball teams in the Winter Term and cricket in the Summer Term.

The school is open to baptised Catholic children, although there are now a number of places available for children of other Christian traditions whose parents wish for a Christian education.



Jesus says "I am the True Vine"

The Vine

A place of Christian Listening

LOST IN W.L.P.!

"We are all lost in W.L.P. (wonder, love and praise) at what God has done in this place!" These were the words with which Bishop Morris Maddocks began his address at the official opening of No.4 The Mount, as The Vine, a place of Christian Listening, on Thursday 21st May. Truly it was a day to marvel at God's lavish generosity - at the beautifully landscaped garden, at the conservatory chapel with the liv-

ing vine growing overhead and seemingly continued in the lovely stained glass window, inscribed "I am the true Vine", at the comfortable old house with its listening room and bookstall, and most of all at the army of loving and willing helpers, whose offering of themselves and their talents was evident wherever one looked. "Everything one touches is a gift" said the Bishop "and this is how it

look, ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls". Today's thirsty pilgrims are invited to come and drink living water at the new well, at a new oasis of God's presence, and to find refreshment and healing. "Come in and taste the new wine ... Here is healing and forgiveness" we all sang, and proclaimed to all who would hear.



Opening ceremony at The Vine

- E.S. Archer

St Andrew's Fellowship

On the first really summer's day of the year St Andrew's Fellowship and friends had a most enjoyable outing to Exbury Gardens. The rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias were all in full bloom and at times the colours were so dazzling they really hurt the eyes. Good lunches and cream teas were all available after a bit of a wait, and there was a splendid shop and garden centre as well. It was a most happy day.

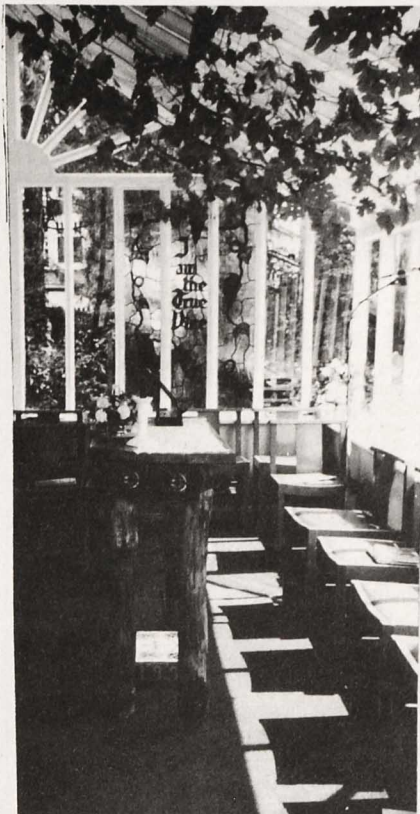
Those who went to the gardens and are readers of the Telegraph will doubt have been interested to read the article about them in a recent edition of the colour supplement.

should be".

Over seventy guests were squeezed into the house and chapel and spilled over into the garden for the service of dedication, which was followed by a buffet lunch. These guests had come from near and far and from a great variety of backgrounds, just like the pilgrims who flocked to Caversham in the middle ages to seek healing at the Holy Well of St. Anne, which stands just a few hundred yards from The Vine. Quoting from Jeremiah 6 v 16 Bishop Morris said "This is what the Lord says, stand at the crossroads and

But what of those who seek to minister in Christ's name, both at The Vine and elsewhere. How can they remain an ever flowing channel of God's grace to a parched world? There is only one way, said Bishop Morris, and that is by abiding in Christ. Continuing life needs to be fed by the rising sap at the centre, and this means continuing listening to and feeding on God's word. All effectiveness in service springs from this abiding in Christ, for which there is no substitute. It is not so much a theme for words, but for the "deeper appreciation of silence".

It was for this pur-



The Vine - Inside scene

pose, this listening to God's healing, life-giving word, that The Vine was created. God is always seeking to draw close to his people in new ways. He knows that it is not easy to hear his voice in our noisy often stressful lives. Often it is hard to spend time with Him at home with all its distractions, yet we have not got the time to go far away to find peace and stillness. Sometimes we need human assistance to hear him, someone to look after the children for an hour

or two, someone perhaps to listen with us, so that our fears subside and our thoughts grow clearer, someone who will pray with and for us. This is what we are attempting to offer at The Vine with the support and prayer of our local churches. If you would like to 'come in and taste the new wine' please phone or write for a programme to The Vine, 4 The Mount, Caversham, Reading RG4 7RU. Tel 483965 (P.S. The 12, 61 & 62 buses stop outside).

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NOTES FROM NANJING

HARRIET Baker is currently doing a "gap" year between school and University. She is teaching English conversation in a Foreign Language school in Nanjing, China. This placement was arranged by the charity GAP Activity Projects, based in Reading. Harriet, and the eleven other GAP students teaching in China, spent the first four days of their placement in Beijing as an "orientation" exercise before travelling on to their various schools. Harriet's GAP partner is called Annabelle. The following is an extract from Harriet's letter home — more may follow!

Feb. '92. We've arrived! Beijing Dong Lu is a busy, noisy street swarming with bicycles, honking vans, pedal carts carrying all manner of goods, buses and taxis. We were surprised to see everything looking so dry and brown and battered — the effect of a long hard and very cold winter. For the next few days we are staying in the University campus and Mr Yu, the representative from the Jiangsu Education Commission will be showing us around.

On our second night Mr Yu took us all out to supper to sample some Beijing cuisine. He chose the dishes for us and the most fascinating (and foul!) were the "thousand year old" eggs. These were sections of eggs — green, blue and yellow in colour, and jellified in appearance — that had been "cooked" by being left in mud for two months. We fared much

better when Mr Yu again treated us — this time to a delicious lunch while we visited the Ming Tombs. Many interesting dishes were served and chopsticks were soon mastered by everyone. We feasted on squid, jelly fish, bean curd, weeds and rather dubious looking meat.

The whole day was very exciting. We spent the morning exploring the tombs which cover a vast area of forty sq.km. and are surrounded by lovely, glacial-looking mountains that help to shelter the site from the very cold North winds. The Ming Dynasty lasted for two hundred years and fourteen Emperors reigned during that time. The approach to the tombs is very dramatic — a large red entrance gate and pagoda, then a long straight road lined with pairs of animal statues — elephants, tortoises, lions, and camels. Legend has it that at midnight every night the animals move and so take turns at guarding the tombs. Each tomb is marked by a small pagoda at the foot of the hill. Inside are stone corridors linking huge chambers into an underground network. Replica coffins, thrones, porcelain jars and other funerary objects are displayed, as many of the valuable originals were removed to Taiwan during the Communist Revolution. By tradition the Emperor's wives, concubines, and eunuchs were all buried in the tombs with them — but they were alive! In the afternoon we all strode along the Great

Wall which was fantastic! We climbed a long way to get beyond the tourists (mainly Chinese) and I couldn't believe how steep the Wall was — in many places the steps are almost vertical. The views from the Wall are astonishing and the scale of it is vast — we could understand why so many labourers died building it.

Now — back to Beijing city. On Sunday we walked into Tiananmen Square. It is awesomely enormous and made me feel about as big as a peanut and about as significant. It was quite busy with Chinese tourists taking photographs of their children beside Mao's portrait or the Monument to the People's Heroes. It was hard to imagine the streets full of tanks and soldiers as it was in June '89. Mr Yu described it as a place of many "political accidents" and we didn't feel we could press him any further.

We walked on, under Mao's portrait and through successive gateways into the Forbidden City. This is absolutely huge (twenty seven thousand sq.m) and very beautiful. The buildings are of different designs but all of the same colour — yellow roofs, red walls and green and blue eaves. In the backstreets are smaller courtyards and lovely gardens with pools of water, beautiful plants and sculptural rocks.

Now for some news about Nanjing and our school. Yesterday was our first day of teaching

and we found the juniors great fun — keen and well behaved. It's not so easy teaching the seniors although their English is good.

They can't be bothered to contribute in class so we'll have to do some careful lesson planning to get them working. We've joined the morning exercise routine at which the whole school lines up in the playground and music blares out while the teacher shouts instructions. We were very bad at it and many pupils giggled at our attempts — hopefully by June we shall have mastered it!

On Tuesday the other foreign language teachers invited us to join them in celebrating the last evening of the Lantern Festival. We were taken through streets thronged with stallholders selling food, paper lanterns and plastic flowers, to a night club where we had a meal. This was followed by a Karaoke session — a real craze in China. Annabelle and I sang Auld lang Syne very tunelessly which they liked (unfortu-

nately) and so we had to sing it again with a backing track in Chinese. The ladies were then invited to go to the toilet. This was a public loo across the street for which we had to pay to get our "napkin", then climb lots of stairs and squat over a tiled channel in a long line with knee-high partitions between us but no door. Quite a surprise and quite a stench!

After this we were led off to see Fuzi Maio, or Confucius' Temple. This was a bit weird. The inside of it resembled a fairground with illuminated moving figures from Chinese legends; models and pictures of Nanjing scenery in fibre optics; and rather tacky plastic models of ponds, pagodas and aeroplanes donated by different companies. We wondered what Confucius would have made of it all! Before we left we were presented with a bright paper lantern each decorated with a Lotus flower to signify good luck, happiness and abundant sons for the New Year — we shall see!

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INTRODUCED TO OUR TWIN!

Ms Sylvia Pierce, Reading Borough Council's new Chief Executive, was keen to know more about how Reading came to be twinned with Düsseldorf when she visited a new exhibition about Reading's partner town which was recently on display in The Hexagon.

Ms Pierce, who is 43, is the only woman of the 81 chief executives in the south of England. She left school at 16, studied 'A' levels at evening classes and obtained a good honours degree at Birmingham University. She then became a college lecturer, teaching industrial rela-

tions and law, and entered local government less than ten years ago. Her first job was in personnel management with the now defunct GLC, and she subsequently became Director of Personnel of both Hounslow and Ealing before securing the top job at Reading.

It was a surprise to Ms Pierce that the link between Reading and Düsseldorf was one of the first town twinnings, celebrating this year its forty-fifth birthday. More than thirty groups with common interests, such as choirs and sports teams, as well as schools and the Reading College of Technology, are engaged

in regular exchanges.

There is a thriving exchange of members of Reading churches. In 1993 the Reading-Düsseldorf churches Interchange, which is an arm of Churches Together in Reading, will be hosting for a week members of Düsseldorf churches. A return visit to the German city will be paid the following year. New participants in the Interchange are always very welcome, and Dr Beldon Bensley, who is Chairman of the Interchange and a member of Caversham Heights Methodist Church, would be delighted to answer enquiries on Reading 345004.



Sylvia Pierce with Martyn Allies — P.J. Bean

SUE RYDER SUPPORT GROUP CAVERSHAM — CALLING ALL QUIZZERS

Last summer the Caversham Sue Ryder Support Group decided that there were many people around, young and old, who would enjoy solving puzzles etc. during their odd moments, and at the same time support a good cause. A number of questions were compiled by our member Gwyneth Walters, with all answers linked to the number nine, and a competition was organised.

The competition proved successful, and with the sale of

quiz sheets with instructions, together with donations, a useful sum of money was raised for the HOME at Nettlebed. It should be reported that some answers returned were quite ingenious, more ingenious than the official ones it was felt. Two clever people namely Mr C. Bentley and Miss M. Jansen, both of Caversham, managed to achieve sixty-two and a half points, with Mr P.J. Cheney of Wallingford close behind on fifty-nine and a

half points. We even had an entry from Australia.

Due to the popularity of last year's competition, it has been agreed a similar competition should be organised for this summer. As 1992 is European Year, the theme of our questions this time will be Europe.

Initially, our Group members will be seeking reliable outlets, accessible to the

general public with the view of having the competition sheets available by the beginning of July.

There will be prizes in the form of tokens for the three sheets returned having the most correct answers, i.e. those corresponding with the master copy. To add more interest, there will also be a random drawn prize for every one hundred competition entries sold. So, for those wishing to test their wits, we shall be pleased to receive returned entries whether five questions, or fifty questions have been completed. The competition will close with no more entries being accepted after 15th September, and

we propose to notify and reward those successful by the week commencing 3rd October.

We in the Caversham Group know that our support for the Sue Ryder Home at Nettlebed is always appreciated, and put to very good use. We trust that by arranging this competition we can obtain your support again, and by so doing, give all who take part a few hours of fun and interest too. We hope to see you all at the Summer Fair at the Home in Nettlebed on Saturday July 11th. Please note the new date at the request of the Police to avoid clashing with the wedding of Lady Helen Windsor.

K.G. Deane.
Group Chairman.

BIRDS — WHERE SHALL WE GO? (Part 2)

Spring and early summer have once again, produced an influx of migrants and exciting rarities in Britain.

This year, due to prolonged northerly winds, migration was several weeks delayed.

Nevertheless, in early May, the twitcher was kept royally busy with news of rarity arrivals.

Over the May Bank Holiday, I had arranged with a friend from Sussex, who was arriving early morning, to

see a very rare North American, pied-billed grebe, at a gravel-pit near Radley, Oxon.

Late the previous night, however, I received a phone-call from another birder to advise me that a lesser short-toed lark had, a few hours earlier, gone to roost in a barley-field at Portland Bill! As this was a "first" for Britain's mainland, my friend and I were sorely tempted to change our plans, but after due deliberation, decided to go to Radley, as arranged.

We were rewarded with close up views of the pied-billed grebe, which neither of us had ever seen, (although not without having disappointedly tried but failed at Kenfig in Wales, a few years previously).

We also saw a very "local" and uncommon, Cetti's warbler, which sang well with apparent, complete disregard for five, actively noisy cuckoos, nearby.

Two hobbies (summer falcons), soared high in a blue sky, later being joined by a goshawk.

As sand martins hawked for flies low over the water, sometimes settling charmingly on small willow-twigs in truly photogenic postures, the song of the willow warbler and chiffchaff emanated from trees and hedgerow, whilst the Blackcap added its own sweet melody.

For the twitcher, further excitement continued well into May with news of eight rare, cattle egrets, in full breeding plumage, having arrived in a field at Rickmansworth.

In spite of some seven-hundred, pre-dawn, birders who sped to Portland Bill, the lesser short-toed lark was not seen again! Many of them came on to Radley — via Rickmansworth — some covering hundreds of miles in the day, as per their "itinerary"!

In case one may erroneously presume that "twitching" is a purely male-dominated activity, I am very happy to number among my closest twitcher friends, ladies whose knowledge, capability — and check lists are frequently equal to the Male Fraternity in this delightfully exciting department of Bird Watching!

For all of us, "The time of the singing of birds is come".
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Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

On Tuesday May 12th a large proportion of members attended the biennial Programme Planning meeting and presented the committee with a wealth of ideas and suggestions for the future meetings.

The three main groups are flourishing with the Arts and Crafts having a full year ahead. They met in small groups during Visual Arts Week and toured the various displays, exhibitions and demonstrations which took place in Reading. These proved varied and interesting and well worth visiting. Several members had their own work on display and one took part in a painting demonstration. The Social Studies group has renamed itself Words and Music and intends to devote the following year to a study of poetry and prose, play reading and music, both taking part and listening and appreciation. The Ramblers continue to walk once a fortnight sometimes locally and sometimes further afield depending on weather and availability of transport. Thirteen members have just returned from an adventurous holiday on the Isle of Arran where they experienced rain, hail, sleet, snow and gales as well as difficult walking on boggy ground. Five received certificates on reaching the summit of Glen Rosa, and all returned looking hale and hearty and undamaged, having thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Mrs. D. Sharman was congratulated as her beautiful knitted shawl has reached the next round of a nationwide knitting competition, and we wish her every success in future rounds. Three large

tables were groaning under the weight of plants for sale and Mrs B. Jepson, Mrs M. Cooper and Mrs I. Dovey were kept very busy all evening. The Guild is flourishing with a large membership and has a very full, varied and interesting year to look forward to.

STAR Reading branch of the University of the Third Age

The Books Group began a new venture in May: a study of the English novel. They read extracts from Richardson and Fielding and then discussed them. The Playreaders group read the Edwardian classic "The Voyage Inheritance", a great draw in its day, but the group doubted whether it would be a success today. The new Technology and Changes group began very successfully; the members were sure that 1750 marked a new beginning in this field which was going to explode in many directions after 1815 - their subject for the next meeting.

Until now the column has not mentioned the meeting of the Luncheon Club which meets on

the second Tuesday of each month at the Hare and Hounds, Sonning Common at 12 and is much enjoyed by all. The Classical Music Group enjoyed a talk by Mr Norman Morris, the Director of the Reading Phoenix Choir. He was most entertaining about the many tours undertaken by the Choir, particularly that to Russia where they visited Russians in their homes and really got to know them.

On July 8th the Classical Music group welcomes Mrs Auriel Warwick who is a leading music therapist and author of "Music Therapy and Autistic Child". Visitors are welcome at the Retirement Centre, Caversham at 2pm.

The Debating Group had an informal debate on whether to close down but it was overwhelmingly defeated chiefly on the grounds that for lonely members STAR meetings are a life-line.

The Travel Discussion Group featured "Alaska" and "Exploring Rivers". The Writers Group became journalists and each member brought his own item of news. Nearly twenty walkers braved the heat and walked from the beautiful Bugs Bottom to Emmer Green via Chalkhouse Green. Lunch and drinks at The White Horse Inn were much appreciated.

The Open Meeting in the Kennet Room in the Civic Centre had as its speaker Mr Harold Hill. A life spent amongst art since early childhood has meant that he has emerged as a leading art restorer. Among many interesting points he made was the changing fashion in art prints among the public, ranging from the Dutch School in the early 1950's to botanical prints ten years later. Mr Hill opened the first art gallery in Reading after the war.

New members are welcome. Membership Secretary is Mrs Grace McGregor, Reading 866037.

Maplewood W.I.

The Annual General Meeting was attended by Vice Chairman VCO Mrs

Dianne Lewis who explained that the National Federation of Women's Institutes was now a limited company with a triennial General Meeting, held last year at Birmingham. Intermediate general meetings would be held with one delegate to represent four institutes, thus reducing numbers and allowing movement of these meetings around the country. Mrs Lewis gave background information on the resolutions put to members for discussion and votes were taken by a show of hands.

The flower of the month competition was won by Miss Winifred Simmonds with a rhododendron.

Rosehill W.I.

The May meeting was held on 6th. Most activities are curtailed during the summer except rambling, which is

enjoyed throughout the year. As usual, the VCO came to go through the resolutions so that Chazey WI can go to the AGM with Rosehill's views. Many members went to the recent evening meeting of the group. Mrs. Roberts was complimented on the entry for the competition. The June meeting was on 3rd when the 29th anniversary was celebrated. The President, Mrs. Stockill welcomed everyone including a number of invited visitors amongst them Mrs. Fricker and Mrs. Clayton, the Berkshire Chairman. Get-well wishes were sent to Mrs. Denning, a member for many years and it was sad to hear of the death of Mrs. Wain. The speaker in May was Mrs. M. Wallace, who gave a lively talk with poetry readings. Tea was then served by the

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the CLUBS

from page 10

Committee, and a lovely birthday cake decorated with yellow icing was made by Mrs. Fry. The exhibition was "A favourite poem".

Caversham Heights TG Advice from British Gas

Members of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild were both entertained and informed at their meeting in May at St Andrew's Hall. Miss Jenny Boyd was the speaker, a representative from British Gas, who is one of a team of Home Service Advisers who can visit homes. They give advice on the use or choice of a gas appliance, or on using gas economically. All calls made by the adviser are free and can be arranged through the local British Gas showroom or office. Speaking with a charming Irish accent, she mentioned

that a free gas safety check can be carried out if a person is living alone and is over 60. Some appliance controls, whether for a cooker, fire, gas heater, central heating clock or room thermostat, can be marked in some way for people with poor sight.

There are special adapters available free of charge which enable controls to be used more easily. An interesting film about "The Curious History of British Food" followed, then a quiz to find the person who remembered the details in the film best, and prizes from British Gas.

Chazey W.I.

Chazey W.I. recently celebrated its tenth birthday with a Caribbean evening. Members and their husbands danced the night away to a steel band and enjoyed lashings of good food and drink.

At the AGM Mrs Jean Pugh was elected President for a second year. Mrs Gale Russell and Mrs Mary Cadwallader were made vice Presidents.

Recent meetings have included two excellent speakers.

Mrs Joanna Allaway gave a fascinating illustrated talk about a three week trek in the Peruvian Mountains to learn about the local spinning, weaving and dying. Members were able to look at some of Joanna's interesting "finds".

This month, Mr Tony Handly from Ardington, near Wantage, showed members slides of reed harvesting on the Thames for rush seat making, and described how cane and chair making had started as a hobby and turned into a small business employing seven full time workers.

The Social group recently enjoyed a visit to see and sample the making of Danish pastries at Warings Baker, Spencers Wood. A barbecue and trip on the Basingstoke Canal are planned for the summer.

Meetings are held in the Mapledurham Pavilion at 8pm on the first Tuesday each month. New or potential members are always very welcome.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

The Guild has once again had a very busy month with members visiting the Avenue School and seeing this dedicated school and its staff in action. They are also delighted to see that Reading are to do something about the play area and equipment that are on the two sites of Caversham Park. Two members of this Guild surveyed these sites during a national investigation and found them wanting, particularly the framework and height of the frames at the Farnham Drive site.

The Guild had two speakers for the price of one at their May meeting as the original speaker had to attend a national meeting. Firstly they heard about the formation of "Lodgers", a national organisation started in 1987 in Bury St Edmunds under the Prince's Trust to try to find registered safe accommodation for young people who were forced to work

or be away from their families. All householders are interviewed before joining the register both for their own peace of mind and the safety of the young person. In Reading, the organisation in housed under the roof of "No 5" as they were very sympathetic to the needs of young people.

Secondly, they learned a little more of the work of the youth counselling service that is based, and therefore called "No.5," at 5 Sackville Street, Reading. Here there are trained counsellors who can offer help with personal problems such as low esteem, anorexia, as well as acting as a guide through the minefields of housing benefits and poll tax. They can also offer help with drug problems, homelessness, physical abuse and schooling worries. No charge is made for the service, all the work relies on voluntary contributions.

Members are soon to start on their community challenge in making shoe bags for one of the local schools. The competition this month, won by Mrs Holder, was for the most interesting button. Her button was over one hundred years old.

One thing about being a committee member is that they do get the occasional treat and this month the committee went to Reading College of Technology and enjoyed some of the students' cooking creations. They were made to feel really welcome and the service was excellent.

Caversham Community Associaton

As there were two Bank Holiday Mondays in May it meant that the club met only twice that month.

The first meeting was for the demonstration of flower arranging by Mrs. Ann Haggerty on the 11th of May. The members were advised to condition blooms in preparation for arranging. The stems should be shortened an inch or two with a sharp knife, then placed in water. Mrs. Haggerty began by making an

attractive water arrangement using Solomon's seal and blue iris. Next, a model of a penny-farthing bicycle was used to create a flowing arrangement of alstromeria, lilies, carnations and chrysanthemums. Mrs. Haggerty explained that this design was influenced by the German way of flower arranging - a shower style. She went on to make an arrangement based on the Dutch method, using clear lines copied from the Ikebana method.

This resulted in a lovely design which could be used as a window box as the flowers appeared to be growing from amongst the foliage.

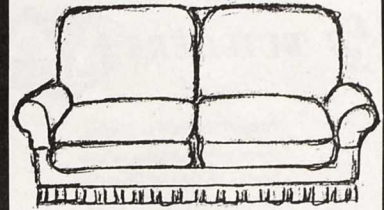
The members were then shown how to make some charming Victorian style wedding posies. After refreshment time Mrs. Haggerty displayed another branch of her art, which was making scented spice posies. Her interest in this was inspired by similar work from Salzburg, Austria. Everyone agreed that the evening had been very interesting as it had been floristry with a difference.

The following meeting on the 18th May was for a games evening. There was a friendly competition amongst the members who played shove ha'penny, scrabble and various card games. There was also the opportunity to play table tennis for the more energetic members.

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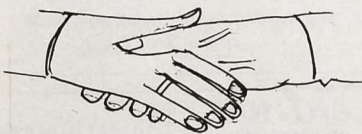
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