

READING BOSNIAN REFUGEES

THE 'Men of St Andrew's' gathered together for their monthly meeting in January at St Andrew's Hall, where they were delighted to meet sixteen of the Bosnian Refugees, along with David and Sheila Masters, Officers of the Reading European Refugee Project.

Dave Masters first gave a brief account of how he came to be involved in the project. Inspired by the plight of the Bosnians, he wondered how he could helpfully be involved. Being suddenly made redundant from his employment, he felt was an indication from God telling him where his path lay. He made contact with the original pioneer project in Leeds, where paperwork and arrangements had been perfected for the Bosnian Rescue.

After gathering a team together, it was calculated that at least £3,500 would need to be raised to launch the expedition and this had to be done within a week. Letters were sent out to Reading churches requesting financial help by October 3rd. A contribution raised and sent by St Andrew's was acknowledged and warmly appreciated. As all the money became available by September 30th Dave felt that this was a further indication that he was doing God's work.

Keith Horseman had generously loaned a large coach and on October 12th, Dave Masters, together with an interpreter, doctor, nurse, a reporter and two drivers, drove two thousand

miles non-stop in twenty-three hours to Vilac on the Austrian and Slovenian borders. Twenty-eight Refugees gathered by the Red Cross were then transported non-stop to Sheerness, where U.K. Immigration authorities granted them leave to enter. They arrived at St Saviour's Hall, Coley, on October 15th, very traumatized, but relieved to be delivered to safety.

There followed the task of assimilating them into the English life and Margaret Horne did trojan work as accommodation officer. English lessons were arranged, provided by qualified teachers.

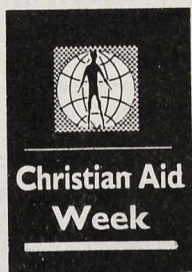
Rodney Oliver, Chairman of the 'Men of St Andrew's', was involved with advising and helping the refugees with their applications for political asylum and other complicated legal matters. Rodney, on behalf of the members of St Andrew's, extended admiration and thanks to Dave and Sheila Masters and their team for their unswerving devoted support to the Bosnians, then members were able to chat individually over a 'cuppa' and were surprised how well some of them had already mastered the English language. Many said they would like to meet again and, as a result, it is planned to invite individual groups to travel with some of the members to places of interest in and around Reading sometime in late April, early May. Anyone wishing to help or be involved with this should contact Rodney Oliver, Tel. 478920.

Michael Paxton Honoured



Major Michael Paxton has been awarded a rare and unique honour by the Chief Scout, **The Silver Acorn**, in recognition of his outstanding service to the Scouting Movement. This prestigious award, when made, coincides with St. George's Day. Caversham – and St Peter's especially – salutes Michael on receiving this well deserved and distinguished accolade for his leadership in Scouting.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK



CHRISTIAN Aid Week this year is MAY 17th–22nd. As well as the usual house-to-house collections this year there will be a street collection in the Reading Town Centre.

The Christian Aid Walk is on Saturday 15th May over the usual 6, 11 and 20 mile courses at Henley.

If you would like to help in the collections or take part in the Walk please contact your church representative.

There will be a united Christian Aid Service for everyone at Caversham Heights Methodist Church on Sunday 16th May at 6.30 p.m. The speaker will be Mr. Clive Robinson, Christian Aid's European Community Officer.



Flying to the rescue

As the world watches the unfolding tragedy of Somalia on the television, Christian Aid has been assisting in the relief effort in a very practical way.

Emergency supplies have to be flown into Somalia as the land routes are too dangerous. Airlifts are vital if the relief items are to reach those in need quickly enough to save lives.

Christian Aid has been funding flights from Kenya to Somalia. The Hercules planes fly to Mogadishu, Badera and Baidoa, the worst-affected towns, where people are flocking in search of food.

Christian Aid has put over £750,000 into these airlifts, including a recent government Overseas Development Administration grant of £500,000.

The planes are met by an articulated lorry for immediate offloading. The speed of the operation helps to ensure that there is no pilfering. The food, often 'Unimix', a high protein diet for severely malnourished children, is taken to warehouses and then transported to kitchens and feeding centres.

The food is for the various agencies working on the ground. One church agency worker said: "Without these airlifts, our work would come to a stop. These airlifts literally make the difference between life and death for the people of this town."

Ama Annan

TALKING POINT

by

The Rev. David Moody
Minister, Caversham Heights
Methodist Church



COMPETITION AND LOVE

WE live in an increasingly competitive world: a world in which we have to fight for our survival. If we do not succeed the UK will no longer be able to maintain our standards of living. Our economic performance must therefore be geared to meet international competition with lean well-muscled commerce and industry to claim our share of the world's economic cake.

The question is, 'How far can we allow competition to govern all we do?' Competition may be fine when we all line up with the same basic advantages, like athletes at the 100 metres start line: the muscular youth, the one-legged man, the arthritic woman, the energetic child, the man-off-the-street, the pensioner, and the hospital patient?

I often wonder whether we are sometimes only too pleased to misunderstand Christianity as we shelter behind half digested truths. 'Happy are the poor' we quote. "That's what Jesus said. And here am I weighed down with the responsibilities of a demanding job, a heavy mortgage, a spouse I seldom see and three difficult children! Aren't the poor to be envied?"

If we really don't understand Jesus then we are truly poor. And if we live our lives without really taking any notice of Jesus, riches are ashes. If we do turn our backs upon God to do things our own way - which by definition must then be a life without love - we must really be impoverished. Not only have we failed to grasp what Jesus meant by 'Happy are the poor', but we have not understood the Easter message of life in Christ.

Before God we all line up equal, whatever we have done and whatever our condition. The metaphor changes from commerce to family. The children are all loved the same, but sometimes more attention is given to one than the others when the need arises: and all the family understands that. Each is loved according to their needs.

The love of God requires us to be brothers and sisters together. Jesus said, 'This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you' - a binding together in love not a tearing apart in competition.

Competition may be all very well for commerce, but that does not mean that it makes sense in the way we run our health service, schools and social work, nor how we respond to the unemployed, unhoused and disadvantaged. Welfare does not depend upon charity. Welfare is the concern of the state for all its citizens whatever their condition, and is based on a clear understanding of Christian principles of the love of God.

However, the Christian message is not just so many words. It is underlined by action. Jesus did not just preach love, he practiced it. He heavily underscored what he said by his death on the cross. By his death he not only showed us that there are no limits to the self-sacrificing love of God, but that he also brings us into a personal friendship with God.

In his gospel John brings this all together in a logic circle. Jesus speaking to his disciples: "This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this, that someone should lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you".

There is an alternative way of life to that of self-centredness and competitiveness.

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)
9.30am Family Service (3rd 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)

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SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading

10.30am Caversham Church House - Meeting for Worship 7.30pm. (last Sunday)
House study groups Sept-June
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POSTBAG

Dear Editor,

As many of your readers are aware, the Mapledurham Estate has put in a planning application for a second golf course. The Planning Authority have failed to determine this application having had it before them for almost a year. The Estate have now decided to have it determined by the Appeal Procedure.

We are well aware that the residents of Caversham and beyond appreciate this unique rural setting of the Parish of Mapledurham. Where else can you find such a setting immediately outside a large conurbation?

We are anxious that the unique rural setting of the Estate, on the Borough Boundary, be maintained for the enjoyment of future generations. We believe that the continued demands and economic strains will inevitably put pressure on this particular part of the countryside, resulting in the loss of this outstanding setting.

We consider that a golf course, as proposed, should be given careful consideration, believing that this will have the least effect on this rural setting (in fact it may improve it) and will provide employment and some financial stability for the Estate, its conservation area and listed buildings.

It is hoped that many of your readers will, after careful thought, support our views and forward them to the Inspector of Appeals whose address is Department of the Environment, Room 10/02 Tollgate House, Houlton St., Bristol. BS2 9DJ. Appeal Ref. No. APP/Q3115/A/93/221244.

The alternative could lead to another "Bugs Bottom Episode".

Yours faithfully,

Alfred Martyn-Johns
(Greendene Farm)

R. H. Beacroft
(Lilley Farm)

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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 Bailly, Mr Eric Chappell, Mr John Mullaney, Mr Kevin Corrigan, Mr Bernard Miller, c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham. Tel: 471703.

ADVERTISEMENTS 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 May issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 5 May.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 3 May.

The dates for July will be Monday 31 May and Wednesday 2 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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MOTHER TERESA

I was on a week's holiday in Hong Kong recently when I read in the morning paper that Mother Teresa was also there to receive an honorary degree from the Hong Kong university. I felt rather privileged to be in Hong Kong at the same time as Mother Teresa and I read the article of all that she had said with great interest. Two days later I happened to see pinned to a notice board in a small chapel a leaflet saying that she was giving a talk the following day at 4 p.m. in a school.

It was the Women's World Day of Prayer and I had been hoping to find a church where there was a service taking place. The talk however seemed far better! Having found out directions I duly set off by bus the next afternoon by myself. I was a bit apprehensive - not really knowing where I was going or what I would find when I got there. The bus journey took an hour which was far longer than I had anticipated and which also meant I was going to be late as I had only allowed 45 minutes to get there and I still had to find the school! I needn't have worried though. When I finally got off the bus there were pink handwritten notices all the way down the road leading me to the school and the chapel where the talk was taking place. Also, it was obvious that Mother Teresa had not yet arrived either (perhaps she too had travelled by bus!) The chapel was quite small and was packed but I made my way down the aisle in the hope of finding a place to squeeze into. Amazingly as I walked down someone near the front signalled that there was a seat next to her - 3 rows from the front! She told me that I was very lucky and I agreed but actually I felt totally overwhelmed by God's amazing planning. He had led me here, safely and apparently on time, and had even reserved a seat for me!

Mother Teresa arrived in the next 5 minutes and I will never forget that moment - it was so emotional. One could not fail to be moved by the presence of that

frail, lined, stooped, tiny, wonderful old lady. I actually feared that she would not be able to speak she seemed so frail but that was looking at the human side of her. When she spoke (in English which was translated into Chinese) she spoke with a strength and authority which was God given. She was amazing. I cannot tell you here all that she said - in fact I myself cannot remember all that she said. Some things I will never forget, but the thing that will most stick in my memory was just being there. I felt truly honoured to have been a part of such a wonderful occasion. It was as if I had been invited. I think perhaps I had!

IN THE STEPS OF WILLIAM CAREY

A tour of Bangladesh and India to mark the Bicentennial of the Baptist Missionary Society.

Part One BANGLADESH

At the end of the proposed itinerary handed to the party on its arrival in Dhaka, Christine Preston had written "In Bangladesh, remember plans are made to be changed". How true that proved to be. At the end of the first morning the party was heading for the Fort, one time the most Eastern stronghold of the Mogul Empire, when suddenly the engine of the bus was enveloped in steam - a flexible pipe connected to the radiator had split. After a moment or two to assess the situation the passengers were told to hold on to their possessions tightly, get off the bus and cross the road. Christine then hailed two tempos - covered mini trucks - into which the party clambered and it was back to the hotel. The following morning a strike was scheduled, so the programme was suspended, but everybody was taken in cycle rickshaws to Christine Preston and Valerie Hamilton's flats for coffee.

Chittagong was reached on schedule but the visit to Chandragona was delayed by three hours as students had set up a road block at the half way stage in protest against a shooting incident a day or two before. Next day the party was at the station just after 6 a.m. ready to catch the 7 a.m. train to Dhaka. It was said to be an hour late, but later it was scheduled to arrive at 7.15 a.m. At 7.30 the party was back in the bus heading for the hotel. The jute workers were protesting about low wages and were preventing travel between towns. It was not till about 6.30 p.m. that the airline, Biman, had been persuaded to send a bigger plane for the evening flight to Dhaka so that there was room for the party. The hotel manager who is an adviser to the government on tourism had contacted the highest authority!

Despite all the problems, none of the party would have missed the tour. The sight of thousands of colourful cycle rickshaws, particularly in Dhaka, was incredible. Added to these were the motorised rickshaws and numerous crowded buses. The streets were packed, the rules of the road seemed non-existent, the constant blowing of horns produced a cacophony of sound and near misses occurred every second. The bus driver always had two assistants. The job of one was to get out and bang on the back of the bus when it was safe to move in a tight situation.

Memories crowd in of visits to various churches starting with the three oldest in Dhaka - St Thomas' of the Anglican tradition, the recently renovated Armenian Church and the Sadarghat Baptist Church. At the latter apologies were made for the state of the buildings but projects funded by World Vision such as dressmaking, a nursery school and coaching for examinations were in progress. Khulna was reached after a long and very bumpy journey with extensive views of rice fields and the sight of many brickworks. The trip was enlivened by an hour long ferry ride. The reception given to the party at the village church at Barashapur and the Sonadunga town church made the journey well worth while. Refreshments were always provided, which usually included sweet tea

and local sweetmeat delicacies and there was always the singing of worship songs. Flowers or garlands were given to each member of the party. At Sonadunga a cultural programme had been arranged which included dances in costume and in the village visits were made to homes and cooking facilities were demonstrated.

The visits that made perhaps the deepest impression on the group were to the School for Blind Girls and the Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled. At the former the dormitories and some lessons were seen, so were weaving projects and stoolmaking. The lessons included the use of the abacus in teaching arithmetic.

At the concert there was singing accompanied by a small organ which was played with one hand while the other was used to supply air by moving the back in and out. The finale was a sketch in which Bangladeshi humour featured. Visits were also made to the headquarters of the Baptist Sangha where the group met the General Secretary, the Rev. Martin Adhikary, and the rest of the staff. The activities of the Sangha are wide ranging and include many projects for help and development. Those that visited the ecumenical College of Christian Theology were shown course books prepared for students studying for the Theological Certificate and Diploma. Apart from short courses, the students studied at home with the help of a tutor, but they were in residence if studying for the Bachelor's degree.

After the trials of the journey to Chandragona the group was much relieved to arrive in time for the lunch Sue Headlam had prepared. It was lovely sitting under the trees above the hospital, looking out into the hills. Everyone was disappointed to have missed the service but the rest of the programme was fitted in. Dr and Mrs Chowdhury entertained the group to tea, the hospital was visited and so was the weaving centre. Numerous purchases were made in the shop and these included shirts, dresses and material. The proceeds from the sales help to finance the Community Health Project. At the end of the afternoon Phil Commons took the party round the Leprosy Hospital and she explained how Physiotherapy helped to restore movement in many instances. The patients seemed cheerful, encouraged each other and some were knitting or doing other handcraft. The hospital has a splendid reputation throughout Bangladesh and beyond.

Although Christians are very few in numbers compared with the very large numbers of Muslims in Bangladesh, the Church is very much alive. It faces numerous problems from opposition without to lethargy within but it has able leaders committed to Christ and working to establish His Kingdom on Earth. Through personal witness, literature and teaching, Jesus is introduced to individuals and it is remembered that God cares for the whole person - body, mind and spirit. Most Churches seen had an ongoing social programme in which help was given to the poorest in the form the education, health care and instruction in handcrafts. Please pray for the Church in Bangladesh. J.S.

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The Rev Bill Carpenter, St Andrews House, Harrogate Rd. Tel: 472788.
The Rev Nigel Hardcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road. Tel: 478239.
The Rev Christine Allsopp, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.
The Rev. Stephen Rowe, The Rev. Christine Rowe, The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 471814.
CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PROJECT
The Rev. Philip Abrey, 51 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village. Tel. 475152.

METHODIST
The Rev David Moody, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 472223.
The Rev John Boakes, 9 Woodlands Grove, Caversham. Tel: 482530.
UNITED REFORMED
The Rev David Clark, 41 Highmoor Road. Tel: 471909.
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The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.
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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

MANY readers will, I'm sure, have seen in the local paper about the fairly recent death of a recluse in Hampden Road. Now I really don't want this to be taken in any way as a complaint about local residents; at one time I had dealings with a similar recluse and I do know how very difficult it can be to help such people or even make real contact with them.

But I do think we should give thanks to people like Mr. and Mrs. Hargun, the fairly new owners of the corner shop in Westfield Road, the one place Mrs. Filbee would visit after dark for the few things she lived on. On occasions they would either call a taxi to take her the short distance home or even drive her there. Realising that they had not seen her for some time, they made enquiries and eventually alerted the police who investigated and found the body of Mrs. Filbee. A small matter you might think but without their action goodness knows how long it would have been before the truth was discovered.

I suppose one shouldn't be really

surprised. Our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hargun have made a real difference to the shop since taking over and it is now returning to the kind of shop it used to be, one which, as much as limited space and stock would allow, endeavoured to serve local needs, always with a friendly word.

PLEASE WRITE

We really can't do without these corner shops. Similarly it wouldn't do any harm for as many people as possible to write to the appropriate authorities condemning the very idea that pensions should be paid into a bank, thus forcing, in many cases, the demise of the village post office which is sometimes the only shop in the area.

FAREWELL TO OUR FRIENDLY NEWSAGENTS

Those of us who use the Prospect Street shop were sorry to lose the family who have been so friendly in recent years. Alas I suppose it will happen increasingly that shopkeepers just disappear, but I do hope somebody will pass on to them our thanks for their very

good service. And of course we offer our best wishes to the people who have taken over. It will take some time before they get to know the people they serve but eventually they will discover what a pleasant area this still is.

MR. & MRS. WELLER

I was glad to see details of the work these two friendly people did during their fifteen years in Caversham. New-comers to the district probably won't have realised just what a difference they made to Caversham, making the most of the site the Baptist Church occupied. Many of us have at some time or other taken advantage, for instance, of the Friday lunches as an opportunity to share a very inexpensive meal with friends. Both Dennis and his wife took a keen interest in the work of the 'Bridge' and we shall miss them very much. We hope their replacements will carry on the good work once they are appointed.

We will certainly miss Dennis's warm smile which never failed to cheer us up.

WORK OF ARMS

A happy band turned out one cold Saturday in March to collect for the work of the ARMS Centre in Patrick Road. I'm told they raised in total £4,375, of which £1,200 was raised in Caversham alone. I think a special mention should be made of the lady in a wheelchair, obviously not a local lass, who spent a couple of hours outside the back of Waitrose. I do hope local people will continue to support the work of this Centre and, if possible, attend the frequent fund-raising events there.

GOOD PEOPLE ALL

A number of Caversham people took part in the Half Marathon and are now busy collecting up the takings. But I am sorry more Caversham people didn't support the Green Day at the Town Hall. If you missed it this year, don't miss it next. The carnival atmosphere

outside the building was lovely, very reminiscent of Covent Garden. Unfortunately the only Caversham organisation involved was the Residents' Association, but they did put on a very good show, with some fascinating photographs on display.

CHILTERN NURSERY TRAINING COLLEGE

I was pleased to see the article about the college principal in last month's 'Bridge'. Today I accidentally ran into the mother of one of the young nurses in training there. She was very enthusiastic about the standard of the College and also told me the performance of 'Godspell' which they all put on in March was a great success. And I'm so glad to hear that a new primary school is shortly to be opened there; I have happy memories of the nursery school which a young relative of mine attended years ago.

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The following Obituary, written by Liz Cheyney of ARMS, tells of the life of one sufferer of Multiple Sclerosis. Mention of the work of ARMS can be found in Katy's column above.

MY PERSONAL OBITUARY FOR JIM MATTHEWS

I thought I would like to say a few words about Jim.

Jim did his National Service in the Royal Green Jackets and served in the Korean War. After this, he moved to Hong Kong and became a member of the Hong Kong Military Police.

After returning from Hong Kong, his movements were a little unclear because he rarely said much about his personal life.

He was a very courageous man, never ever complaining about his illness.

It has been a tremendous shock to lose Jim so suddenly, but as a result of two major operations over the past month, I do not think that he could have coped with his Multiple Sclerosis and would have had to have had constant care. And this was just not Jim — he was a person who liked his own little domain — even though, of course, he relied so heavily on the marvellous ladies who got him up and put him to bed, his super luncheon club at Emmer Green and the Acorn Resource Centre that he went to every week.

During his stay in Benyon Ward at the Royal Berkshire Hospital and Castle Ward at Battle Hospital and the two Intensive Care Units at both hospitals, I cannot speak too highly of the care and love that the nursing staff gave to Jim and the tremendous support they gave to me.

Very sadly, although the ARMY Records Dept. in Leicester and others — too many to mention — have searched for Jim's stepson — we were not able to find him before Jim's untimely death on Sunday, 7th March. Jim will always remain very special in my heart and I shall not forget him.

It has been a privilege to know such a brave and courageous gentleman, who never complained even when he was so critically ill.

A true man of great guts!

This was the Jim I knew . . .

THE MOST FASCINATING PERSON I EVER MET

"And this is Cesar", said Alexandra, "but I'm afraid he doesn't speak any English".

"Hello Cesar", I said, "Alexandra, please give Cesar my apologies that I don't speak any Spanish". Our languages did not match but Cesar turned out to be one of the most fascinating people I have ever met.

Let me explain. I met Alexandra and Cesar in Colombia in February this year. I was there to see some agricultural research - chiefly an exciting project that means rice can grow in savanna lands which have previously only been suitable for grazing cattle.

The research was being conducted by the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, one of the world's foremost agricultural research stations. Alexandra spoke several languages and was the Centre's public relations official; as I was there for 2 weeks with a weekend in the middle, she asked me if I would like a trip on the Sunday. "Yes, thank you very much", I said, "but you couldn't find me an Anglican church first, could you?"

Bless her, she did. At 9.45 I joined worshippers, mostly American, at Trinity Church in Cali, Colombia's third largest city, where the research centre is

based. The church is small, has no minister but was full of children and the informal service was superb. It was childhood that turned out to be the theme of the day.

Alexandra had arranged to pick me up at 11.00 to take me to a small town called Silvia, some 3 hours drive away. Silvia is home to Indian communities, I was told, and they walked around the town and sang songs in Indian dress.

Alexandra arrived in a 4-wheel drive with a full load of passengers, and it was then I met Cesar - and also Alexandra's 10 and 14 year old daughters, her cousin and another friend. The cousin was a professional musician and had a guitar on board. The idea was to find the Indians and make music with them. It sounded good.

So the party of seven of us set off for Silvia, with Alexandra in the driving seat. With the temperature in the 80s it had all the feeling of the start of a family outing to the sea-side. And it soon became apparent that Cesar would be doing most of the talking along the way. He chatted on and on, the others saying barely a word, except when Cesar broke out into song and some joined in. Not understanding

by
JOHN MADELEY

Spanish, I unfortunately - or maybe fortunately - had no idea what he was saying.

After a couple of hours driving, Alexandra had a idea - "we might find some Indians down here", she said, and started to bump down a rough track. Twice we got stuck, and twice it was Cesar who leapt out and came to the rescue. Shaken and stirred we came to the place where we hoped to find Indians - but alas, no Indians. Not to worry, Cesar - who else - picked up the guitar and played us some happy songs.

An Indian passed by - everyone had gone, he said, to a meeting about half an hour the other side of Silvia. He would be delighted to take us there. Now we were eight - no, nine, the Indian's wife came by and jumped in.

Again we bumped down the lane. And again, twice we got stuck, and twice it was Cesar who leapt out and came to the rescue. A bottle of rum appeared - and rapidly disappeared, mostly due to Cesar's unflagging efforts.

"Doesn't your religion allow you to drink?" Alexandra inquired. "Well it gives me the choice", I replied, only narrowly resisting the temptation to add that neat rum bouncing along in a hot car on a baking February day just did not happen to be part of that choice.

By now Cesar was in fine form. He reminded me of my daughter, just before she was 2 years old, when she had a spell of talking uncontrollably in church. Nothing, absolutely nothing, would shut her up.

And certainly nothing would shut up Cesar - I would just love to have known what he said. Alexandra occasionally responded, the others seemed to just let it float over them. Every 20 minutes or so we had to stop the car so that Cesar could visit "the



Alexandra (second left) and daughters, Cesar (second right) and Indian.

restroom" as they call it in the Americas.

Just after 3, we arrived at the place where the Indians were meeting; they were just breaking for lunch. They trooped out, we smiled at them, they smiled at us - but no music in sight. We went to Silvia and had lunch, with Alexandra's daughters and I opting for Western-style toasted sandwiches, while the others went off to get a bowl of traditional Colombian soup - which is not so much a soup, more a meal in soup bowl. It was so quiet without Cesar.

We finished first and watched the Indians as they walked around doing their knitting. Ah, yes, Silvia is famous for its Indian-spun woollens. The girls helped me to buy a couple, we had our picture taken with the Indians - for a price - and trooped back to join the others. The girls pointed to my woollens. In any language, it was clear they hoped for a similar deal from someone. Cesar beckoned them to go with him and minutes later they appeared not just in smart woollies but with Indian knapsacks on their backs.

It was getting dark; we left for home. The pattern was much the same as before, with Cesar continuing to make full use both of his voice and the nation's restrooms. We stopped to buy fruit and Cesar danced with the fruit-stall assistant. By now he was clearly in a dancing mood.

When Alexandra, in need of a freshen up on a sticky day,

noticed water flushing out of a roadside pipe, she stopped the car, got out and put her head under it. Which was far too good for Cesar to miss. Leaping out of the car he splashed and danced with Alexandra in the water, giving her a more all-over freshen up than she bargained for.

We dropped off the Indians, saying many thanks for their help. Except that Cesar did more. He whipped off his shirt and gave it to them. Back in the car it was pitch black - and suddenly, for the first time that day, the car was quiet. Cesar was asleep. It was a sleep of the innocent that continued all the peaceful 2 hours back to Cali.

Daughters and friends were dropped off and I took Alexandra and Cesar for a pizza. Over the pizza we talked about childhood. "Cesar is just the same, drunk or sober", said Alexandra, "he's just like a small boy who has never grown up".

I said that in my religion we were followers of a man called Jesus who said that unless we become like little children we shall not enter the Kingdom of God. "It seems to me Cesar", I said, "that you cannot be far from the Kingdom of God". Alexandra translated and Cesar nodded thanks; he seemed to be fighting back the tears.

The day was over and I travelled back to the research station, humming the tune "didn't we have a lovely time the day we went to Silvia". I was sore, bruised and tired - and this was my day off. But meeting Cesar made it so worthwhile.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

St. Andrew's Fellowship

A large audience was present for the St Andrew's Fellowship 'Any Questions' evening on 11th March. The panel consisted of Peter Handy, Detective Superintendent, Mark Burton, Schoolmaster, Geoffrey Udall, Assistant Rural Dean and Dr Rod Smith, local GP. The Question Master was the Vicar and Fellowship President, the Revd Bill Carpenter, who had arranged the evening. Questions included the matter of child violence, school ability testing and the National Health Service, which all received comprehensive and thoughtful answers. The members listening and sometimes joining in were all surprised when the clock reached nine, and it was time for a cup of tea and home.

SUE RYDER SUPPORT GROUP

The group has held a successful Jumble Sale when over £100 was raised and on a more nourishing note a chocolate party was staged at the Home in Nettlebed when Easter shapes and ideas were on display to entice the connoisseurs.

The next project is to prepare goods for the stall at Highdown School Fair on May 2nd, followed by the Summer Fair at Nettlebed on July 10th.



Jesus says "I am the True Vine"

The Vine A place of Christian Listening

Listening to God Through Painting

There are still some places left on this teaching day at The Vine on Thursday 24 June. The day will be led by Joy Seaton who writes:

Ever since I can remember I seem to have prayed and painted, so meeting with the Eternal's creation in all its moods and changes - not least my own. Wrestling with God, with self, and with picture creating may be sharply painful or pure delight - my hope is that all who embark on this voyage will find it deeply moving and enormous fun! Come, we are all beginners; this is not an 'art class' - you need never have held a paintbrush in your life before.

If the thought of sitting in the sun painting and listening to God appeals to you contact Fi Radford on 483965. Cost \$7.50.

For information on other "Vine" days during May & June contact Fi Radford, as above.

Time for Reflection at Highmoor Hall.

There are twelve days during May and June when Highmoor Hall is open - the programme is varied and includes four led quiet days. The full programme can be obtained from Ann Persson at Highmoor Hall, Highmoor, Henley on Thames - Tel: 0491 641543.

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THAMES VALLEY ALIVE - GOOD NEWS '94



Our picture shows from left to right Mr Martin Cavender, Mrs Rosemary Green, the Rev David Clark (Chairman, Churches Together in Reading), Mr Wilfred Dyer (Lay Chairman, Anglican Deanery Synod), Bishop Michael Marshall, Canon Michael Green at the meeting of clergy and lay leaders at Trinity Church, Lower Earley, in March.

THE churches in Reading and the surrounding area are now on course to engage in a major Mission when just over one third of the way through the Decade of Evangelism. Seized with a concern that many of us have lost sight of our missionary role and convinced that our country is in dire need of the Gospel of the risen Lord (a Gospel which has become stale news to some, no news to others and is not heard at all by still more) an ecumenical Steering Group has been laying plans whereby the people of Reading may be brought into a real and living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ so that they may grow in His discipleship within the universal Church.

During February and March the Deanery Synod and representatives from 70 churches of virtually all the denominations throughout the area have been considering the plans so far and in an unprecedented display of unity have affirmed their support for the principle of the Mission, full details of which remain to be worked out. An ample budget (and at least half the income already promised) has been approved that will make demands on all churches and in turn will ensure that nobody in Reading is not in some way confronted by the Mission. Locally Churches Together in Caversham have backed the Mission.

The Mission Team seems likely to be drawn from members of "Operation Springboard" an initiative set up by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to work ecumenically for the Decade of Evangelism. Members from

this team, led by Mr Martin Cavender and including Bishop Michael Marshall, Canon Michael Green and Mrs Rosemary Green, visited Reading in March to meet the clergy and lay leaders to discuss plans. The Mission will probably be at the end of September and the beginning of October 1994 and the main thrust of the action will be at local level. The "Two Michaels" seem likely to be the spearhead of the Mission. Churches Together in Caversham are looking into the best way forward for Caversham.

Any Mission depends not only on the period of the Mission but also the preparation and the follow up. We have less than 18 months to prepare ourselves to be ready for Mission. Some 10,000 prayer cards are being distributed to the churches and the Revd Jeremy Anderson, the Anglican Evangelism Enabler can give more advice (Tel No. 0734 483396).

Further information about the Mission will be announced as the plans are finalised, so watch this space!

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

OF MICE AND MEN

- A DAY WITH METROPOLITAN ANTHONY

THE fifth annual Day of Prayer at Westminster Abbey was led this year by Metropolitan Anthony, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church in Great Britain and among the two hundred plus attending there was a small party from Caversham. It was quite an experience sitting at the feet of this bearded patriarch of the church, and then coming out into the brilliant spring sunshine amid the puzzled stares of the Japanese tourists.

So what did he tell us? There was so much that it is hard to know where to begin. In many ways he gave us more questions than answers, questions which we had to take away and answer with as much honesty as we could, so that we could draw closer to God.

'Unless the arrow first reaches your heart it will never reach its target,' was something he said that really struck me. He was speaking here about our own prayers to God (but this must also apply to our words about God to others), for unless these are truly our words, then they are bound to fall short of the mark. So we must begin where we are, by asking ourselves such questions as - why am I praying, what kind of God do I believe in and what do I expect from Him? When we have some kind of an answer to these questions then we can approach God honestly, which may even mean saying something like 'I don't really believe that you can do this God, but you are the only hope I have.' Far better to pray in this way than to use any amount of pious sounding words, which do not come from your heart.

To illustrate this point Metropolitan Anthony told a delightful little story against himself. One day on finding his home overrun by mice, and not wanting to put down traps or poison, he found an ancient prayer of the church directed against all kinds of pests. Although he did not really believe that it could work, he donned his prayer shawl and waited for the first mouse to appear. Since he could not himself say the prayer with any sincerity, he addressed himself to the author of the prayer, who presumably did believe it, asking him to bring it to God whilst he read it to the mouse. The mice disappeared for good!

The point of this little saga is that whenever we use prayers written by others, we can share in them only as far as we can share the feeling and thoughts that forced them onto the human soul. We should therefore use only those words with which we can identify, for if we cannot say them in all honesty then it is better to refrain until we have the understanding to do so. Ideally we would meditate on all such prayers beforehand so that, when we do use them, all that we have understood will flood into them and make them a reality. For we must always remember that God does not want our prayers but our hearts.

What if all our hearts contain is anger, bitterness, pride, confusion and doubt? Then that is what we must give him, praying 'Heal me, O Lord, before I can pray to you with an open and contrite heart.' However we come, God longs for our approach and loves us with a crucified love. When we approach Him in this way, with honesty and integrity, then we become the unique lost sheep to find which, He is prepared to leave all the rest.

I will close with one more story which he told to describe the ultimate aim of prayer. There was a small village high in the Andes, perched on the side of an abyss, on the opposite side of which was a magnificent sculpture of their god. The legend was that one day their god would come and live in the midst of them. One day a child was born who was so fascinated by the face in the rock that he spent many hours just gazing upon it. The more he looked, the more the features of the divine face became imprinted on his, so that people said 'Our god has come to live with us.' Prayer has achieved its goal when others see 'the shining of eternal life' in our eyes and become aware that we have been with Christ.

Fi Radford

ANTIQUES FOR ALL



E.S. Archer

"Antique Roadshow" at Mapledurham Pavilion.

AN Antiques Evening sponsored by St Margaret's Church, Mapledurham, on March 31st raised £154 for St Saviour's Drop-in Centre and gave about seventy-five people a most interesting and informative couple of hours. Thanks to all who made it such a worthwhile and enjoyable occasion.

BAPTIST NEWS

The Rev. Dennis Weller completed his 15 years as Minister of Caversham Free Church with his final services on the 21st March. On the previous Wednesday, 17th March, a farewell supper was held in the church to celebrate and give thanks not only for 15 years at Caversham, but also for 40 years full time ministry from which he was now retiring. Over 150 friends from past and present gathered with Dennis and his wife Rhoda, including representatives from previous pastorates at Huddersfield and Margate, ministerial colleagues in Caversham and the Berkshire Baptist Association.

After a buffet supper provided by the church family many greetings and tributes to Dennis' and Rhoda's faithful service to six pastorates were given. A letter was read from Mr. Weller's first pastorate at Ponciau, Wrexham where he commenced his ministry in 1953, and representatives from Huddersfield and Margate brought messages in person. Then followed greetings from representatives of the Caversham churches: Rev. Phil Abrey on behalf of Churches Together in Caversham, Canon Richard Kingsbury, The Rector, Father Meagher from St. Anne's and Rev. Mike Holmes from Caversham Hill Chapel. Mrs. Ann Knee-Robinson, the Secretary of Women's World Day of Prayer in Caversham paid a special tribute to Mrs. Weller for her commitment and support over the years. Greetings were then brought by Baptist colleagues: Rev. Gordon Thomas, the BBA Pastor/Secretary, Rev. Graham Coldman a former Reading policeman who trained for the ministry during Mr. Weller's last years at Caversham, and Rev. Phil Egglestone the Associate Minister at Caversham Free from 1986-89. The church secretary then read a moving letter from the Rev. John Gladstone, a personal friend, who commenced his own ministry at Caversham in the early fifties and recently retired as senior minister of Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, Toronto, Canada.

The church secretary on behalf of the church then presented a television set and video recorder as farewell gifts from those present and many others who had been unable to come along that evening. After being presented with a bouquet of flowers Mrs. Weller then presented to the church a lovely banner which proclaimed in gold lettering on red velvet "Praise the Lord". This was indeed a very happy evening and one to be remembered by all present for a very long time.

At the morning service on the 21st March, Mothering Sunday, Mr. Weller gave his last message to the church family which again included many friends from the past and Mr. Weller's brother and sister who had travelled from Brighton and South Wales. In the evening Communion service the final message to the church and retiring minister was given by the Rev. Arthur Gray, who used the text from Joshua chapter 3 "you have never been this way before".

Dennis and Rhoda moved to Stafford on 21st April and once again all their many friends wish them a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.

NEW HEAD FOR QUEEN ANNE'S

Mrs. Deborah Forbes MA, presently Head of English at Cheltenham Ladies College, has been appointed as the new Headmistress of Queen Anne's School. She will take over from Miss Scott on September 1st. We wish her well in this new appointment and all good wishes go to Miss Scott in her retirement.

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

WHAT'S IN A NAME

NOT content with ripping out the millions of years old sides of Bugs Bottom, Higgs and Hill are now trying to take away its centuries' old name. They are trying to market their unwelcome development under the name of Caversham Farm, with the logo of a stile in a rural setting. Words fail at the effrontery of destroying a farm and its rural surroundings and then using it as a selling point. People who respond with a well-bred shudder to the name of Bugs Bottom should not be seeking a home in the country, let alone on a so-called farm.

WHO SHOULD PAY?

Meanwhile throughout March, not only Hemdean Road, but also Rotherfield Way, one of the through routes between west Caversham and Emmer Green was closed. It affected not only those who lived in the thick of the road-works but many more from a much wider area. Many motorists found themselves with up to two miles added to their daily journeys. Others used the very unsuitable single track Gravel Hill, where more than one accident occurred. Alternative routes experienced extra congestion, and the 24 bus service was unable to follow its route along Hemdean Road and Rotherfield Way. Those living in the middle of this upheaval had to endure the noise, dust, clutter, and a broken up footway and road for weeks on end.

Why should those people who have had to put up with all this, also have to pay for the extra petrol, taxi fares after the shuttle service had ceased to run early in the evening, or if they had luggage to carry, and cleaning costs, in some cases of curtains and carpets, for those who had all this going on outside their windows? Higgs and Hill are required to pay the Borough Council and any other services for work carried on outside the site. Why should they not also pay householders for the expenses they have had to face? The address of Higgs and Hill, p.l.c. is Crown House, Kingston Road, New Maldon, Surrey, KT3 3SL. Why not write to the chairman with a list of your out of pocket expenses?

BREAKING THE CURFEW

Residents of Richmond Road and certain lengths

of Kidmore Road, although affected in a less dramatic way than those around the Oakley Road-Hemdean Road junction, have the prospect of many more years of being used as the access route for construction traffic to the site. Richmond Road has already suffered severe damage to its surface caused by the weight of heavy vehicles for which it was never constructed. This is not all, by any means. Planning conditions required that these vehicles should not enter the site before 9.30 a.m. or after 3 p.m. but they have been clattering along an hour before that and some have even delivered their loads and left before 9.30 a.m.

It would appear that Higgs and Hill were prepared to promise anything before 1st April of last year in order to get their planning permission, whilst knowing full well that if they failed to comply with the conditions the most they could expect would be a reprimand. It is small wonder that people are feeling really angry in the face of what has been going on in recent weeks, and have been buying £1 shares in the company at an unprecedented rate, in order to have the right to express their views at the annual shareholders' meeting and to convey to the company the continuing opposition to this objectionable development.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD REMOVED

Another major property company that looks on Caversham as somewhere to make money with scant regard for the natives, is St. Martin's Property Company who own St. Martin's Precinct. Those who recall pre-Waitrose days will also recall their infamous carpark with its car-bashing bollards, broken drainage covers and potholes. Others will recall the occasion when they poured concrete round an historic Holm oak tree and bricked it in, killing it off in the process.

They have never replaced the Holm Oak although it had a preservation order on it. One excuse followed another until officials dealing with it moved on and they hoped the matter had been forgotten. Now they have paved over the space where it was meant to be replanted, a clear declaration of intent that they regard the matter as closed. An illegal act does not become less illegal

because it was committed several years ago - or does it?

Not content with that, the company has removed the community notice board. They never have liked it and once were asking rent for the space it occupied. Now they have got rid of it without any prior notice.

It was very well used and took away any excuse for pinning notices to trees or flyposting nearby. Caversham Residents' Association looked after it by removing out of date notices and commercial notices which were not permitted. It was not always possible to keep it looking tidy as the wood was so hard it made it difficult to press in pins far enough, so that when it was windy notices flapped about. Some organisations overcame this by pasting on their notices, but then they omitted to remove them. Members of the Residents' Association did their best to peel them off, but often it was not possible.

This provided St. Martin's with the excuse they wanted. The board has gone and the community is that much poorer for its loss. It was a valuable means of contact and there is no other suitable site for it in that part of Caversham. Already notices are being stuck to trees which will not do them any good.

Anyone who feels like writing to object and ask for its return could try writing to the Sites Department, St. Martin's Property Corporation, Adelaide House, London Bridge, London EC24 89DT.

NON PARTY POLITICAL

Local elections are coming up and we can expect election addresses to be dropping through our letter boxes before long, all very right and proper and the very stuff of democracy. When however they appear to claim the support of Caversham and District Residents' Association, or any of the other residents' associations for what they are doing, it must be taken with a certain pinch of salt. Although members of the residents' associations belong to all or no political parties, the associations themselves do not support any one party above another. From time to time they may be in agreement with a particular action a party is taking or a party may be supportive of something a residents' association is doing, but

that does not imply any links between the two. Additionally residents' associations often work through elected councillors, but that is because they are the wards' representatives, and not because they belong to any particular party.

LORRIES ON THE A4074

Let us hope that the newly established Woodcote Road Action Group is successful in its aim of reducing the number of heavy lorries using the A4074. This is no new issue and much hard work has gone into it in the past. At one stage a noticeable reduction was achieved, but traffic has gradually crept up again, a sizeable proportion being Royal Mail lorries, after the move from rail to road. A single issue organisation may be able to concentrate on the problem enough to get some result, but it is part of a much wider problem than simply what comes along the Woodcote Road.

GREEN DAY

Caversham Residents' Association's contribution to the Borough Green Day, of which the theme was 'In our Back Yard' was a display of photographs of those parts of our backyard in Caversham under threat from unsuitable development or negligence. The Town Hall, St. Laurence's Church and Town Hall Square were full of workers from organisa-

tions all over the town seeking to protect, conserve or enhance everything worth protecting, conserving and enhancing. It was an encouraging antidote to the feeling that all is lost and one might as well give up and grow roses - organically, of course.

And talking of roses, the correspondent in last month's Postbag who found three snowdrops in her garden on 20th November must surely hold the record. Mine were only a record for me.

POUNING FEET

Record seekers came pouring over Caversham Bridge for this year's half-Marathon, whilst dyslexic drivers lined up, surprised to find the road closed, while they passed. After the highly skilled wheelchair entrants with their strong arm muscles sped across the bridge, the elite of the main body of runners arrived almost as soon as they had started, one among them to be the winner. The first woman was not too far behind, and on a level with her was an elderly white bearded gentleman looking like an off-duty Father Christmas, whilst a group of coppers with helmets and truncheons kept up a steady pace. There were fewer fun entries this year, not counting a pair of jingling Kennet Morris Men, but a gorilla and a lion did their bit for wild life.

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SWAN SAGA

(Part 2)

It was a keen, crisp, November morning on top of snow covered Ben Hope; a North-easterly was freezing our breath to our lips as we stopped for a 'brew'.

The 'Ben' guards its 3,042ft. summit jealously, with severely steep cliffs and gullies on two of its three flanks.

The weather was anti-cyclonic with exceptional visibility; the panoramic view - a map set out in scintillating relief.

The narrow track meandering through a boulder-strewn terrain to Cape Wrath lighthouse on the North-west tip of Scotland, was so clearly etched that we could see it through our binoculars, almost twenty miles away.

Suddenly, our reverie was broken. Due North, in the Arctic-cold sky, a flock of several hundred swans was approaching, high above Loch Eriboll.

Our hearts pounded - were they Whoopers or Bewicks?

As they dropped into Strath More, far below, our excitement turned to astonishment! Here was a rare migration of Mute Swans, perhaps from Scandinavia or Russia. Our brew finished, we slowly and cautiously descended.

Later we observed that these were wild, wary creatures, hungry from their long flight, to whom a human being, or even a crust of bread would have seemed alien as a Man from Mars. I realised then - as I do now - that this was surely how God had intended the proud and dignified Mute Swan to live. These co-habited, bred, migrated, and died - as they should - in their natural environment, well away from mankind's 'Show rooms'.

A mute Swan's main diet consists of aquatic plants, sub-aqueous vegetation, reed rhizomes, molluscs, toads, frogs, tadpoles, fish, insects and larvae.

Just as prohibition of hand feeding wild ponies has proved vital for their restoration to full health and well being, so too it would seem high time to take some similar action for the Mute Swan as a species, in order to wean it back to a safer, well deserved, more natural way of life, thus gradually dispersing artificial congestions created by ever increasing unnatural food supplies.

Perhaps we may then consider training the young and inexperienced in correct angling ways and disciplined, bank side behaviour, reducing still further water fowl casualties.

May we finally, also spare a thought for our feral pigeons which precariously spend their lives beneath Caversham Bridge, and through force of numbers, often helplessly and pathetically, fall into the river and drown, solely because they are lured to remain near their perilous, daily food offerings.

SCOPS OWL

REVIEW

Alan Ayckbourn's legendary Norman may have failed in his attempts at Conquest in Caversham Theatre's production of 'Round and Round the Garden', but the attention of the audience was captured and held by the strong and well chosen cast.

The scene is set in the garden of a house where unmarried Annie, delightfully played by Sheila Hodson, cares for her geriatric mother with little support from her sisters Ruth and Sarah. Mooching around the garden with an eye on a crippled cat is veterinary surgeon Tom, acted with convincing vagueness and indecision by Ken Etherington. Tom's eye is, however, in fact on Annie but being a reticent sort of chap, he cannot bring himself to pop the question which she would dearly like to hear.

In her frustration Annie has agreed to a weekend in Hastings with brother-in-law Norman, who has the little weakness of being incapable of resisting his designs on women. Ray Hammond was in his element, playing Norman with a gangling, Hulotish clumsiness that contributed to the amiable woolly sheep-dog character which still endeared him to his wife Ruth. Yvonne Maynard conveyed excellently the hard-bitten personality of Ruth, patiently resigned to Norman's philanderings but impatient with Tom's failure to be direct with Annie. A particular delight was the scene in which she attempted to demonstrate to Tom how he should court Annie, but herself became the object of his advances when he got the wrong message.

Jim McClure nicely portrayed the cheery and expansive Reg, who was convincingly authoritative when airing his knowledge of highway routes but much less so when in disagreement with his wife Sarah, played assertively by Josie Buck.

Ayckbourn is nothing if not a realist and provided no happy ending: Annie rejects both the wetness of Tom and the wiles of Norman! All the cast entered with panache into the amorous rough and tumble of this entertaining play which was produced by Maggie Stokes. There must be a final word of praise for the effective backdrop painted by Sheila Hodson, Yvonne Maynard and Tim Etherington.

E.M.A.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Hemdean House School had two successes in one week last term. It put on Alice in Wonderland for its annual drama production. Nancy Quinnell, its producer, handled her large cast well, as they popped up from all sides, each pursuing his or her crazy interest in the Wonderland sensible Alice had entered. She was not required to shrink or grow, so was more like a healthy teenager than the little girl of popular imagination. She would otherwise have appeared smaller than the caterpillar, mice and assorted birds. The exuberance of the Mad Hatter's tea party was sometimes lacking in some of the other scenes, but everyone enjoyed themselves whether as participants or audience.

The second success was in being declared overall winner in the Success in Business Project of Thames Valley Enterprise. There was stiff competition from ten other much bigger schools, but once more they showed smallness was no disadvantage, as it allows an opportunity to participate or shine to all who wish or are able.

M.C.

CAVERSHAM BRANCH OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFEBOAT INSTITUTE

The Caversham Branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute held a fish and chip supper on Thursday 25th March at the Baptist Church Hall and seventy-five people attended. After supper a talk with slides about the Goodwin Sands was given by Dr John Foley-Fisher, who has now become the new president of the Caversham Branch. The evening was a great success and £150 was raised for the RNLI funds.

All collectors in Caversham and Emmer Green please note that the annual flag week will be held in August this year.

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the CLUBS

Rosehill W.I.

The March meeting was on 3rd and members were welcomed by Mrs Jane Stockill to the AGM. The were pleased to see Mrs Joyce Burt, who had been ill. After the usual business the annual reports and accounts were presented, then Mrs F. Drakes (V.C.O.) spoke about the way the resolutions for the Central AGM were prepared and decided upon; quite a complicated procedure. Tokens were given to the President, Secretary and officers, and flowers to Mrs Drakes. The new committee was presented and Mrs Stockill was re-elected as President for the second time.

The competition was for a jar of homemade marmalade and was won by Mrs Stockill, second was Mrs Burtenshaw.

Caversham W.I.

The annual meeting started with the president's report, giving

details of the last year's activities which ended on a sad note with the deaths of two members in January. Mrs Forder, V.C.O., gave an interesting talk on the structure of the W.I. movement - even long-standing members were able to learn something!

The election resulted in the present officers and committee being re-elected with Mrs Olive Harris taking on the job of secretary. Mrs Ivy Butcher won the competition cup.

The next meeting in April was to be Mr Bird showing slides of Hawaii.

STAR

Reading Branch
of the University
of the Third Age

March Activities

There was a full turnout for the annual Study Day at Reading University on Reading and its environs. The speakers were Judith Hunter on 'The Bath Road through Berkshire - its towns, travellers and traffic', Pat Preece on the 'History of Local Woodlands' and audio-visual presentation by Douglas Noyes on 'The Changing Face of Reading'. Following this one-day school a Local History group is starting and will meet on the third Friday of each month.

The Open Meeting had Jeff Taylor giving a talk on 'Enjoying Colour Photography'. His beautiful slides of birds, woodlands and all aspects of natural history were greatly enjoyed by all as well as his useful tips on how to produce them. The Playreaders read 'The Importance of Being Earnest' and the

French playreaders read 'L'Allouette'.

The Books Group discussed Graham Greene and their favourite novel by him. The Music group heard Eric George talking on 'Caruso to Pavarotti'. Thirty-one walkers visited Silchester and walked right round the Roman settlement and amphitheatre.

New members are always welcome at STAR. Please ring the membership Secretary, Mrs Grace McGregor, Reading 866037.

Caversham Ladies Club

The March Meeting, which was the AGM, was chaired by Mrs Brenda Strong, the Chairman still being indisposed. After the welcome and apologies for absence, Mrs Strong welcomed Mrs Needs, a new member. Birthday cards were distributed. Mrs Crawley and Mrs Roddy elected to make tea at the appropriate time. The minutes of the February meeting were read by Mrs Brenda Strong. Then came the annual reports by the officers, and the Chairman's report read by Mrs Brenda Strong, this being warmly received. In the absence of the Secretary Mrs Queenie Strong read that report. The Treasurer, Mrs Queenie Strong, then gave her report of the finance for the year, with the result that the monthly subscription would have to be raised by tenpence.

Mrs Phyllis Weston gave a report on the Produce Table and Mrs Edie Lock gave her report on her Nearly New stall. Mrs Leach was thanked for her service in buying and sending birthday cards to members. No nominations were received for officers and committee, hence these were returned en bloc.

After all this a Bring and Buy was held and resulted favourably moneywise. It was agreed a day's outing to Worthing would be on Thursday 20th May and in September a half-day outing to Chelsea Hospital

the date of which has to be confirmed later. Tea was served which ended a busy but happy afternoon.

The April meeting was to be the Easter Party.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

The Annual General Meeting of the Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild was held in March with Mrs Wilford present as the Returning Officer. The Guild is pleased to have a full committee and can look forward to a busy and interesting year. The Secretary's Report was excellent and the retiring Chairman, Mrs J. Smith, thanked her committee for their support and hard work during the past year. She handed over her badge of office to Mrs A. Dalzell and wished her a happy 1993/4 in office. Mrs Wilford was presented with a plant and invited to stay for the remainder of the meeting.

The Quiz Team have won the first round of the Federation Quiz and were congratulated. Arrangements are well in hand for the May ex-

hibition "Spring into Summer". It was heartening to hear that recommendations made by the Townswomen's Guilds in their Playground Survey are to be circulated and some are to be acted upon. All the groups are very busy and full of ideas for the new year's programmes.

Mrs M. Sutherland, a Guild member, gave a fascinating and amusing talk about the Bayeux Tapestry and illustrated it with slides. She told of the history behind the story of the Battle of Hastings and of how the tapestry came to be commissioned. She has a wonderful eye for detail and pointed out many features that members felt they would otherwise have missed and thereby ended the AGM on a very happy note.

Caversham Heights TG

Essential Sales Tables
The annual meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild was held in March at St Andrew's Hall, with a representative from federation present as the Returning Officer

turn to page 11

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the CLUBS

from page 10

Mrs M. Mellin, completing her first year as chairman, thanked her committee and members for their help and encouragement. Secretary Mrs J. Slawson's amusing report of the past year's activities was her first one, too. Mrs P. Read remains as treasurer, and Mrs M. Hutchison as vice-chairman. One new member joined the committee. Members have attended the community lunches organised by Caversham library from time to time, when matters of local interest are introduced and questions invited. Ideas were needed for the May exhibition "Spring into Summer".

Sadly the death of two members has occurred. There has, however, been a birthday celebration for ninety year old Eva Hursey. Mrs M. Holloway was thanked for her management of the sales table, which helps to provide chit-chat of a very welcome sort. Talks and outings are once again being arranged, one being to Hampton Court.

Charities which have benefited from speakers are the Kennet and Avon Trust, the Save the Children Fund and the National Children's Home. Special efforts were made to support Feed

the Children, Great Ormond Street and to raise funds for the drama group.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

The guild met recently to hold their Annual General Meeting - a time when the year is reviewed and members look forward to a new year. Will there be an election? Will we get a committee? Well, No... and Yes. No, we did not need an election but yes we have a committee. Mrs Hilda Adair retired from Chairman having served three years during which time she has worked very hard for the guild. Mrs Joan Spall was elected Chairman and Mrs Ann Deane vice-Chairman - both ladies have served the guild for several years in various capacities - Mrs Manning continues as Treasurer and Mrs Sylvia Froud as Secretary. Mrs E. Odey, Mrs B. King, Mrs Doris Smith and Mrs M. Leach have a further year to serve and Mrs G. Gale, Mrs B. Holder, Mrs M. Siddle and Miss P. Reed were elected to serve two years. A special welcome for Miss Reed as a new member, serving this committee for the first time. We were delighted to greet Mrs M. Fryer as our returning officer even if we did land her in the middle of a bomb scare at Reading Station on her way home! Mrs Alice Smith agreed to serve another year as our

President (she is the serving president for Federation also).

Members ably led by Mrs Joan Spall managed to win the first round of the Federation Quiz and now meet our neighbours Emmer Green in the next round. During last year members had a speaker from Deep Sea Fishermen and learned that they were in need of old jewellery to refurbish and sell in aid of their funds - Members really turned out their cupboards and drawers and then our speaker disappeared and the instruction was to send it all to Headquarters in Scotland. The postage was prohibitive and so Mrs Adair not to be defeated set about repairing it together with her husband and they had some very attractive items. Sales tables were held and eventually £30 was made and sent to headquarters - a very profitable project. Following the business reports the Play Reading Group presented The Guinea Pigs by R. E. Delderfield - a very amusing play. The afternoon finished with tea and cakes "on the house".

The guild have been running competitions through the year as a fund raising item and Mrs Doris Smith was awarded a cup for the most points gained - who will forget her Strawberry sweets?

One of our most fascinating speakers proved to be the last one of the year when Mrs Lynne Wilkes spoke about her work as an acupuncturist. Unfortunately, but with some relief to some members, time did not allow her to do a demonstration.

The social studies group have made interesting visits to the Fire Station and Tesco's store and there are plans for a holiday and for a ramble to keep the fit fit!

The Guild together with all the other guilds in Berkshire are now preparing for a craft exhibition to be held at Twyford's Loddon Hall on May 8th.

The new programme began on

April 15th with entertainment from the Fir-tree choir but the next meeting will be held on May 20th when new members will be most welcome and can contact the secretary on 473218.

Caversham Community Association

The Rev. George Neal visited the club on the first of March. Besides being minister at the Abbey Baptist Church in Reading and Chaplain to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, he is also an expert on ornithology. The title of Mr. Neal's talk was 'Common birds I have known' and he brought with him some beautiful photographs on slide film depicting the many birds he described. The characteristics and habits of tits, sparrows, siskins, the nightingale and cuckoo and many other birds were all discussed by Mr. Neal and he also imitated their bird-song. A fascinating and informative evening was enjoyed by all the members.

The following week an old friend of the club, Mr. Charles Moss, was the speaker. This time his subject was South Devon and he also brought some more of his fine photographic slides to illustrate his talk. Starting with views of Brixham the members were shown the river Dart, Dartmouth, pretty Slapton Sands, Salcombe, Buckfast Abbey, Dartmoor, Haytor Rocks and Plymouth to name just a few of the places discussed during the evening. The audience appreciated the comprehensive slide show of this beautiful county and the well informed talk given by Mr. Moss.

On the 15th March a Quiz evening had been arranged for the members, who found on their arrival that members of the committee had been busy preparing some very good quiz questions to answer. Prizes were awarded for successful contestants. After the interval for refreshments Mrs. Peggy Jefferson spoke

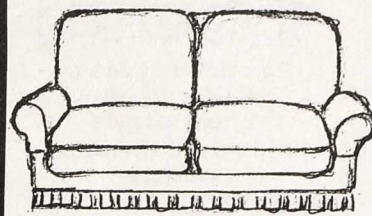
to her fellow members of the memorable visit she made to Israel last year. She described her impressions of Tel Aviv and the ancient city of Jaffa, and told the members of her stay in Jerusalem and her visits to the Holy Places. Mrs. Jefferson remembered the wonderful view of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives and going to Bethlehem. The members were told of the speakers' boat trip on the Sea of Galilee and of the visit to Nazareth. The description of the precarious drive through the Judean desert and of the visits to Old Jericho and the Jordan Valley were of much interest to the members. Mrs. Jefferson, at the conclusion of her talk, invited her audience to look through the very good selection of photographs she had taken on her visit to the Holy Land.

Mrs. Elaine Campbell was invited to the club on the 22nd March to demonstrate Yoga. The members were shown and took part in gentle exercises and, later, were instructed how to give each other neck massage to help with relaxation.

The March meetings ended on the 29th March with a whistdrive. Member, Doreen Crawley, kindly presided over the game. Beryl Latcham had the highest number of points and was awarded first prize.

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