

# NEW BAPTIST PASTOR

After nearly two years interregnum Caversham Baptist Free Church are all set to welcome their new Pastor the Rev. Peter Edwards whose service of induction is at 3pm on Saturday 4th February.

\* \* \*

Peter began his working life as a secondary school teacher but comes to Caversham after twenty seven years in the Baptist ministry. He was trained at Spurgeon's College in SE London and has since served in an inner city situation in Hull, a suburban area in the borough of Bromley, Kent and for the last fourteen and a half years in the small country town of Cirencester in Gloucestershire.

\* \* \*

Peter was brought up in Wallasey, Merseyside but had no contact with the Christian Church as a child. But at the age of seventeen he was brought face to face with the claims of Jesus Christ at a Crusaders' Union house party. This conversion experience proved to have a profound effect on the meaning and direction of his life from that point on. His introduction to things

Baptist came while doing his national service with the RAF. While stationed out in Habbaniya, Iraq he was baptised as a believer by the Baptist padre of the time, Murray Raw, in the only RAF chapel in the world to have a baptistry!

\* \* \*

As for his Christian convictions, Peter describes himself as an evangelical with a strong confidence in the contemporary power and relevance of the Bible as God's Word written. This conviction has shaped and influenced his ministry in many ways. He believes in the power of the good news of Jesus Christ to change lives, the importance of the local church as a community of believers called to share together as the family of Christ, loving, supporting and encouraging one another and co-operating together to spread the Gospel to those round about.

Peter has always been a strong supporter of the ministers' fraternal and looks forward to meeting and sharing fellowship with the other clergy in Caversham.

\* \* \*

Peter is married to Shelagh who was also a secondary school teacher

but has for many years devoted herself to bringing up their three children and using her gift in the ministry of the church. She is a great reader, a fan of C S Lewis and the Narnia books and as a church book agent always encouraged others to avail themselves of the riches of Christian literature. They have three children - Mark, 24, who is manager of Dunn's, the men's outfitters in Abingdon, Derek, 20, studying computer science at Swansea University and Sandra, 18, who has just completed a three months training course in evangelism with Operation Mobilisation in Birmingham and who is hoping to pursue a career in social work in Reading.

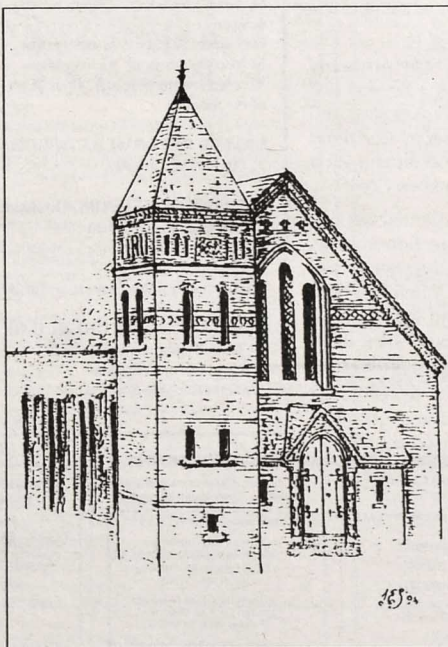
\* \* \*

Peter's hobbies include caravanning holidays, video photography, D.I.Y. and snooker but complains of lack of time to indulge in them as he would like!

Peter and Shelagh are eagerly looking forward to commencing their ministry in Caversham and getting to know the members and friends at the Baptist church in the months ahead.



• Peter and Shelagh Edwards



• The Baptist Church.

## SLEEPING OUT

There are many homeless who are known to sleep out near to the centre of Reading, and for one night in December a small "cardboard city" could have been seen in the centre of Caversham. Young people from the Baptist Church agreed to experience something of the life of the homeless by sleeping outside the Church from 8.30 p.m. on the Saturday evening until 8.30 a.m. on the Sunday morning.

Nine volunteers took part, and they sought sponsorship with the result that £400 was raised, and this will be shared between the Drop In Centre and the Y.M.C.A. Hostel. They brought cardboard boxes, sleeping bags and other covers for protection. Fortunately it was not one of the very frosty nights that came later in the month, but they got little sleep. Most of the night was spent in the Church car park where they found a little shelter from the cold wind that always seems to blow around the front of the Church, but they moved back to the Church steps in time to welcome worshippers to the morning service, and then to move in and share in the service before going back to their homes to catch up with lost sleep.

A police patrol visited during the night, but when they were satisfied that all was well they gave their good wishes, and a man who stopped to speak seemed to have experience of sleeping rough and offered some advice. Caversham was quiet that night and there were not many to witness the event but the young people involved now know at first hand something of the life of the homeless, and the money raised makes a small but valuable contribution to easing their lot.

## TALKING POINT

by  
THE REV. PHIL ABREY  
Caversham Park Church



# THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST?

Well, it's all over now. The tinsel and artificial tree have been put away, the real, environmentally friendly tree chopped up or planted in the garden and life has returned to normal (whatever that may be) and all we are left with is memories. As you look back what are your recollections, or don't you have any? I have a number and I share them with you as positively the last word on Christmas 94. Each memory gives a different insight into what Christmas is all about. I leave you to reflect on what they might be saying.

Firstly there was the lady in a large town centre store who was queuing to pay for her goods. The queue was long and all she could do was moan about the time it was taking her to get to the front. "I'll be glad when Tuesday gets here and it's all over", she said. The lady behind her, hearing her moans spoke to her and looking her straight in the eye said "And a merry Christmas to you too".

One of the highlights of Christmas is always the visit to the local Playgroup party. Father Christmas arrived at his appointed time and one three year old boy went forward to meet him. He sat on Santa's knee and began telling him what he wanted for Christmas. Santa listened carefully and chatted with him. During the conversation the boy said, (and I modify the colourful language a little) "And if you can't bring me what I want then you needn't bother coming".

One grandmother was being visited by her family on Christmas Day. Early in the morning she put up the artificial tree, the cards and the decorations; placed the presents around the tree, prepared the lunch and waited for everyone to arrive. Her daughter and son-in-law came along with two very excited grandchildren. Everything seemed fine. The presents were opened, lunch and tea eaten, games played. After tea the family left and grandma was on her own. Quickly she took down the decorations and tree and everything which reminded her of Christmas and put them away in the garage. She had fulfilled her duty and been a cheerful grandmother to her family. When asked why she only had the decorations out for such a short time she replied that her husband had died at Christmas and it was not therefore a happy time for her. She kept up appearances for the sake of her grandchildren.

The highlight of our Christmas morning service was probably Rhondda, one of God's extra special people, opening the Russian doll type present (six in one, now I know why my wife keeps boxes) and after unwrapping each one she looked up and said "Happy Christmas everybody". One present contained a mince pie and she sat and ate it without embarrassment as the service proceeded around her. Great.

Finally there was the lady in one of our local residential homes. Nobody had been to see her from her family because nobody was alive, apart from her daughter-in-law who was visiting her blood relatives in the north. She can't walk very well and yet when I went in, on Christmas Day she told me about her presents, and that she had been given far more than she could ever use so she would share them with other residents. She was so cheerful and thankful for all she had, her book, her music and her television. That was enough. She was content.

## SUNDAY SERVICES

### ANGLICAN

#### St Peter's

8.00am Holy Communion  
9.15am Parish Communion  
11.15am Matins  
6.30pm Evensong

#### St John's

8.00am Holy Communion  
10.00am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School  
6.30pm Evensong (1st Sunday)  
6.30pm Informal Worship (3rd Sunday)

#### St Andrew's

8.00am The Eucharist  
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)  
First Sunday, Family Eucharist  
11.15am The Eucharist (with hymns)  
6.30pm Evening Prayer  
An up to date list of weekday Services will be found on the Church notice boards.

#### St Barnabas'

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

#### St Margaret's, Mapledurham

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

#### CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH

(Caversham Park Primary School)  
11.00am Family Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)  
Morning Worship (2nd Sunday)  
Triple F Family Service (4th Sunday)  
6.30pm Evening Worship (1st 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)

#### 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 Anne's Saturday 5.30pm, Sunday 10.30am and 6.30pm  
Our Lady of Caversham 9.00am  
St Martin's School 9.15am Mass  
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

#### UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, York Road

11.00am every Sunday

#### SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading 10.30am

Caversham Church House - Meeting for Worship 7.30pm. (last Sunday)  
House study groups Sept-June Tel: 475783.

#### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

9.30am Sunday School  
11.00am Divine Worship  
7.00pm Evening Service

## POEMS, PLAYS AND PROSE

Caversham Players present an evening of readings at St Andrew's Church, Albert Road, Caversham Heights, on 4th February at 7.30pm.

The event is dedicated to the memory of Jessica Gilbert, whose involvement with the Players spanned almost a decade.

There will be no charge, but donations are invited to the Sue Ryder Home in Nettlebed. Refreshments, including wine, will be served in the interval.

## MISTLETOE SURVEY

Do you have mistletoe growing in your garden, or have you seen it in a park or the countryside nearby? If so, will you please help BBONT (Berks, Bucks and Oxon Naturalist Trust) to survey the area as part of an investigation into the apparent decline in growth as there appear to be fewer apple orchards. Please say on which host tree the mistletoe grows, i.e. apple, pear, etc, and, if possible, how old the tree is or how long you have known the mistletoe to be growing there, and how many bunches there are. Please give the OS grid reference or address and write to Mistletoe Survey, c/o Church House, Church Street, Caversham, Reading RG4 8AX. Your help would be appreciated.

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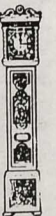
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The newspaper produced by members of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

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

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 30 January.

The dates for April will be Monday 6 March and Wednesday 8 March.

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

Published by Caversham Christian News Ltd, Church Street, Caversham, Reading. Tel: 01734 471703.

Typeset by Right Image Graphics Co. Ltd, Unit 1, 151-155 Cardiff Road, Reading. Tel: 01734 390332.

Printed by Chiltern Offset, Amersham, Bucks.

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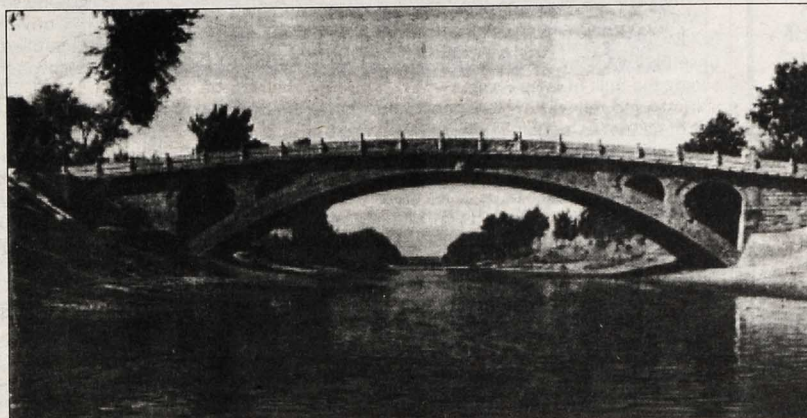
478502 or 475696

# KUNG HEI FAT CHOY! TO CELEBRATE CHINESE NEW YEAR

## CAVERSHAM'S CHINESE BRIDGES

And Our Debt to China

by Nigel Hardcastle



The Great Stone Bridge spanning the River Chiao Shui.

To my surprise, I thought I recognised a picture of Caversham Bridge in my book about Chinese science and technology. A closer look showed it was the original bridge of this type, the Great Stone Bridge spanning the river Chiao Shui. It was built in 610 AD by the architect Li Ch'un. (I think his name is pronounced almost like "Legion"). He invented the two techniques that give Caversham Bridge its distinctive look. This is only one of the many debts Caversham, and western society generally, owe to China. We live in a world full of Chinese inventions. Take away the Chinese inventions of paper and printing and this newspaper, that other Caversham Bridge, would disappear as well.

#### TWO KEY IDEAS FOR OUR BRIDGES

Until Li Ch'un thought about the question, everyone assumed that round arches had to be a full semi-circle. This was fine for a bridge over a small river but as arches got wider they also got higher. The Chiao Shui is one hundred and twenty-three feet wide which would mean an arch over sixty feet high! He realised that you could just use a part of the circle, a segment, providing you made suitable foundations on the bank. The idea of these segmental arch bridges came to Europe in the time of Marco Polo. This was the 13th century, six hundred years or so after the Chinese first used them.

Secondly, Li Ch'un realised that it wasn't necessary to build a solid wall between the almost flat road and the arch. He simply filled the space with another couple of arches to

carry the weight. This had three advantages: it was lighter and needed less support from the arch, you needed less stone to build it, and in flood time, the flood waters could flow through the gap.

#### CHINESE INVENTIONS

Our modern world is full of Chinese inventions:-  
 ● *The suspension bridge is Chinese. By the 1st Century AD they had true suspension bridges hanging from wrought iron chains. The widest span was over four hundred feet.*

Our modern world of information is full of Chinese inventions:-

- *Printing, 8th Century BC*
- *Paper, 2nd Century BC*

Our modern military power is based on Chinese inventions:

- *Gun powder, 9th Century*
- *Rockets, 11th Century*
- *Flame throwers, 10th Century*
- *Guns and cannons, 13th Century*

As three hundred ton Portuguese boats explored down the west coast of Africa in the early 1400s, fleets of fifteen hundred ton Chinese ships with a force of twenty-seven thousand men explored down the east coast of Africa. Even these tiny western ships would never have been good enough to "discover" China without Chinese nautical inventions:-

- *Magnetic compass*

- *Rudders instead of steering oars*

The Chinese also invented:

- *Water tight compartment on ships 2nd Century AD*
- *The canal lock, invented by Ch'iao Wei-Yo in 983 AD*
- *Paddle-wheel boats, 5th Century AD*

We could never have had knights in armour without the Chinese invention of:

- *Stirrups*
- *All efficient forms of horse harness are Chinese.*

Kitchens would be different without natural gas and there would be no cars without oil drilling techniques:

- *Drilling for natural gas, 1st Century BC. Traditional methods could drill four thousand, eight hundred feet deep. Chinese workers introduced the technique to America in the last century.*

Although Chinese Doctors often killed their patients with poisonous drugs that were not tested scientifically, modern medicine owes much to China:

- *Vaccination, in the 10th Century Chinese had a system of putting weakened small pox material up the nose. Jenner derived his technique from this.*

- *The Chinese seem to have used thyroid hormone from 643 AD*

- *The Chinese knew about the circulation of the blood long before Europe "discovered" it. Taking of the pulse is a typically Chinese technique*

Cheap, good quality iron and steel existed in China long before Europe.

## CAVERSHAM CLERGY

#### ANGLICAN

Canon Richard Kingsbury, Caversham Rectory, Church Road. Tel: 479130.  
 (Parish Office: Monday-Thursday 9.30-12.30 Tel: 471703)  
 The Rev Bill Carpenter, St Andrews House, Harrogate Rd. Tel: 472788.

(The Rev. Andrew Tyler, Hon. Asst Priest)  
 The Rev Nigel Hardcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road. Tel: 478239.

The Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe,  
 The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 471814.  
 The Rev Sheila Nunn, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.

**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.

#### BAPTIST

The Rev Peter Edwards

#### CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.  
 The Rev Michael Holmes, 13 Carlton Road. Tel: 474138.

#### ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev Anthony Jones, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel: 471787.

(For Caversham Park Village)

The Rev John Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common. Tel: 723418.

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Rev. A. N. Lawrence, 6A Hemdean Road. Tel: 470816.

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# REDWINGS ABOVE – OBLIVION BELOW

Mild weather up to the New Year has ensured plentiful supplies of food for residents and migrants alike.

October/November nights were thrilling as always with heavy migration of Redwing thrushes. A number of five-hourly watches on clear nights produced an assessed minimum 'fly-past' of some ten thousand on most occasions, going S.W. above the Hemdean Valley corridor. On a wider front the numbers must have been considerable.

'Contact' flight-calls alone, averaged at one per four seconds, whilst estimates had to allow for 'non-callers'.

Many of these North European birds would not have set foot in Britain, being en route to Spain and North Africa. South-westerlies with unsettled weather prevailed, the occasional clear and windless nights seeing the bulk of the passage.

It is sad to reflect how few people may be aware of this annual wonder of nature, so audible above their own homes.

The thin, high-pitched call can be learned within seconds during winter nights, and be instantly recognised even above the din of daytime traffic. Open the back-door to let the cat in last thing and spare a few moments listening to the Redwing migrating overhead.

On the ground our natural environment continues to be ravaged. So many 'Bug's Bottoms' being hopelessly fought for, right now.

When recently visiting woodland above Bug's Bottom for the first time since its destruction began, the experience was literally devastating. progress was blocked, and any lingering hope of seeing just a trace of the peace which existed here, came to an abrupt cessation by man,

machinery and noise. The brutal despoliation of this lovely valley is so utterly out of context, it defies belief that ANY authority could have permitted such gross annihilation of meadowland and hedgerow and the obliteration of a complete eco-system. Can nothing assuage man's thirst for the purse with this perpetual demand to slap bricks and mortar upon ground so desperately required by wildlife?

Conversion into a natural reservoir with controlled water-amenities may more generally have served our local community!

Now a third Thames Bridge looms with yet more noise and pollution – 'In the interests of the motorist' – we are told, whilst the construction of an M4 service-station at Burghfield noisily erodes more vast acreage of natural habitat.

Jesus found it necessary to seek a quiet place AWAY from humanity, 'for where to lay His head'.

Are we to sacrifice ALL such 'quiet places' simply to satisfy the lust to build?

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## COULD YOU HELP US AT OUR CHARITY SHOP?

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Where is God on a Monday morning?

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Further information from Rev. Phil Abrey on Reading 475152

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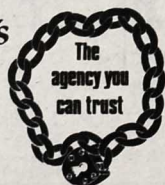
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## POSTBAG

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## DECISION MONTH FOR HIGHDOWN SCHOOL HALL

February is decision time for the next stage of the promised new sports hall/assembly hall facility at Highdown School. As reported in the January issue of the *Caversham Bridge*, details of the outline proposals for the £1.5 million investment by Berkshire County Council for this much needed facility were revealed by the school in December. It is hoped that the major building work will occur during the 1996/1997 financial year. However, most people will be aware that capital projects financed out of the public purse can never be certain until the money is earmarked in the budget for the financial year in which the expenditure occurs. We understand from a spokesman of Berkshire County Council that this proposal has been registered in the list of forthcoming capital projects, for which the County Council have a three year rolling list. In 1994 it was included in the list of projects for 1996/1997; this list will be reviewed this February and, on the assumption that it remains in the list, a final decision on the expenditure will be made in early 1996.

The fact that the proposal is now on the capital projects' list is indicative that, after more than 20 years without such a facility at the school, the new hall is regarded as a priority. Like all proposed capital projects any shortfall in County Council funding could cause slippage into a future financial year, but it must surely be a continuing priority. The policy of the school governors is to build a facility which may be shared with the local community; the long history of shared facilities at Highdown



- O. Jewiss

From right to left: Mr Alan Furley (Headteacher designate), Mr Andrew Clarke (Headteacher), Caroline West (Berkshire County Council architect), Mr Geoff Mander (Chairman of the Governing Body) and Mr George Allen (Governor responsible for site and buildings).

School has the ongoing financial support of Reading Borough Council. Although any slippage into the future could take the development beyond the life of the present County Council into the responsibility of the proposed new Unitary Authority, past performance by Reading Borough Council would suggest continuing support for the project.

In addition to the very considerable needs of the School, it must be recognised that there is no large hall in Caversham available for community use. The present proposal would remedy a long outstanding omission. The Headteacher's invitation for members of the local community to comment on the proposals and on what facilities might be included for community use should not be ignored. Mr Clarke, the Headteacher at the School (Tel. No: 01734 475022), would be pleased to hear comments from interested parties. OWEN JEWISS

## GOLDEN WEDDING

Charles, in the back row of the choir stalls, and Lyn, in her customary seat, are familiar figures to the 9.15 congregation at St. Peter's.

They met during the war, at Cosford R.A.F. camp; Lyn was a dental hygienist and drum major, Charles an instructor in the officers' school. At the end of the war Charles returned to his teaching post at E.P. Collier school and Lyn became a school dental nurse. In 1949 they moved to Emmer Green, and soon after this Charles obtained his first headship, of Redlands School. He moved subsequently to Wilson Secondary and then became the first head of the newly created Meadway School, from which he retired in 1977. During this time Lyn spent 15 years running the garrison nursery school at Arborfield, retiring in 1975 to 'spend more time with the grandchildren'.

In 1957, with their two children, they came to Balmore Drive where they still live. It was at this time that the family connection with St. Peter's began. Charles and three of their four grandchildren are long standing members of the choir, and Lyn has been the Welfare visitor for the Almshouses for over 25 years. During the 60s a generation of teenagers gathered at their house after the 9.15 service; this proved such an important institution that Balmore Drive was always a port of call for members of



Lyn and Charles Lorenc

- O. Clamp

the 'Sunday Morning Crowd', and many of them were present at the Golden Wedding festivities nearly 30 years later!

Over 70 family and friends gathered in Mapledurham Pavilion on this occasion; it culminated in a recital, by the three chorister grandchildren, of 'Memory', which prompted several 'lumps in throats'. It is typical that this was the way they chose to celebrate; people, particularly their family, have always been of prime importance. It was a joy and privilege to be able to share it with them.

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### CAVERSHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWS

The New Year begins with the opening of The Trading Shed at the foot of the Oakley Road hill on Sunday, February 5th from 10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and thereafter on alternative Saturdays and Sundays at the same time right through to November.

We expect to have seed potatoes on sale, onion sets and shallots together with a restricted range of Marshalls vegetable and flower seeds, plus composts, pot plant composts, fertilisers, insecticides, fungicides, lawn care and many other items all competitively priced.

The first talk to members 'Photographing Plants and Gardens' will be given by Mr. Clive Nichols. This talk, illustrated by slides, will be given at the Arthur Legge Centre, Wolsey Road Caversham at 7.30 pm on Friday, 24th February. This promises to be an extremely interesting evening for Mr. Nichols' photographs are used to illustrate books and periodicals in the U.K. Europe, U.S.A. and Australia and a major article in the R.H.S. publication 'The Garden' was featured in the November 1994 issue.

Membership of the society is open to all local residents and the annual subscription is only £2 for a husband and wife, reduced to £1 for Senior Citizens. This must be one of the best gardening bargains available for it includes free entry to regular talks, two plant and vegetable shows, Spring plant sale and an organised outing in June.

New members are always most welcome and the membership Secretary, telephone 473441, will be pleased to provide further details.

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# FOCUS ON AFRICA

Early in December the attention of some Caversham church people was sharply focused on Africa by two events. First at St Barnabas the annual Christmas Fair and then in the Reading Churches Together Service for Africa held in St Agnes Church, South Reading.

## St Barnabas Christmas Fair

For many years St. Barnabas Church has supported the work of Dr Guy Daynes, a septuagenarian Christian medical doctor engaged in psychiatric work in the Kwa Zulu region of South Africa. Latterly the money raised, this year over £850 at the Christmas Fair, has been channelled into the Guy Daynes' Educational Trust, which supports the continuing education of black South Africans. The current recipient, Sibongile (Patricia) Zungu, is a young Christian lawyer studying for a Bachelor of Law degree at the University of South Africa whilst being an articled clerk to a firm of African solicitors. She lives in the Kimberley and Kuruman Diocese with which the Oxford Diocese is twinned.

## Churches Together in Reading Service for Africa

Until the achievement of majority rule in South Africa this annual ecumenical service concentrated on South Africa and its problems, but it has now been widened to cover the countries and peoples of Africa as a whole, rejoicing with them in their successes and being with them in their struggles. Thus in a service led by the Revd Dennis Brazell, Vicar of St. Agnes with St Paul's there were contributions from Patrick Mutia from Kenya, Leonard Chandi from South Africa, Dinah Kojo from Southern Sudan and Norton Dhillwayo from Zimbabwe. Prayers used material adapted from that prepared for the South African elections and from that contained in an Advent message for Africa from Archbishop Desmond Tutu to Christians in Britain and Ireland. After the service there were further opportunities in an open forum to talk and question the African contributors about conditions in their countries. Representatives from each church were sent back to their churches with a poster bearing a picture of President Nelson Mandela with two school girls at an ANC Rally and the following prayer:

### A Prayer to guide our lives, by a South African (adapted)

You asked for our hands  
that we might use them for Your purpose.  
We gave them for a moment then withdrew  
them for the work was hard.

You asked for our mouths  
to speak out against injustice.  
We gave You a whisper that we might not  
be accused.

You asked for our eyes  
to see the pain of poverty.  
We closed them for we did not  
want to see.

You asked for our lives  
that you might work through us.  
We gave a small part that we  
might not get too involved.

Lord, forgive us for our  
calculated efforts to  
serve You  
only when it's convenient for us  
to do so,

only in those places where it's  
safe to do so, and  
only with those who make it  
easy to do so.

Father, forgive us  
renew us  
send us out  
as a usable instrument  
that we might take seriously  
the meaning of Your cross.

"Blessed are those who keep my ways".  
Proverbs 8. v.32.



— O. R. Jewiss

The craft stall at the St. Barnabas Christmas Fair with stall holders (from left to right) Edna Barnes, Jane Stockill and Susie Downer and Overseas Group Secretary Ken Heale immediately before the arrival of the customers.



— O. R. Jewiss

Leading contributors to the Churches Together in Reading Service for South Africa; the Revd Dennis Brazell, who led the service, is centre back and Sue Errington, the organiser, is front right.

## THE WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The Women's World Day of Prayer is on the first Friday in Lent of every year, when women all over the world have the opportunity to take part in a service which is written by women from another country. Each year women from a different country will write the service on a specific theme.

Throughout the world groups of women meet together to prepare for the service, which they will hold in their area. The Caversham Committee of Ladies normally have two meetings and a rehearsal. The committee is an ecumenical one made up of one or more representatives from most of the Churches in Caversham. One of our aims is to encourage people to support and attend the service. Publicity is one way of letting people know about the day and hence this article! I am hoping that having read a little about the service you might feel inquisitive enough to attend this year's service. Everyone (including men) is welcome to share in the service and fellowship over refreshments after the service.

This year the service has been written by the women of Ghana and reminds us that we are members of one household and God has provided a home on this earth for all his people. Something I find very special each year is that over a twenty-four hour period throughout the world men and women are taking part in the same service which has been adapted to suit the needs of their community. I am sure any event which unites people around the world can only benefit everyone!

The services for this year are as follows and I hope you might be able to attend one:

2.00pm The Minster Church of St Mary in Reading (formerly St Mary Butts Church)

8.00pm St John's Church, Caversham.

As yet the speakers for these services have not been confirmed, but for further information look on the posters which will appear in the area nearer the time.

Karen Rees

### CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

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## NEWS OF PAST CLERGY

News has reached us that the Rev. Dr. Michael Kitchener is to be Warden of Rydal Hall and Leader of the Community there. Rydal Hall is the Carlisle Diocesan Retreat House. The same letter tells us that Clare is in her 3rd of four years at Edinburgh doing the English Literature Honours Course.

Very best wishes to the family.

## OBITUARIES

### MR. JOHN SHOLL

There was not an empty seat in Caversham Heights Methodist Church when his large family and many friends paid tribute to John Sholl, the well loved Caversham resident who died recently, seven months after his 90th birthday. His sons Colin, Geoffrey and Keith all took part in the Thanksgiving Service on 30th December 1994, when the Revd. David Moody recounted John's early life before he came to Reading.

John's grandfather was a Cornish tin miner, but his father settled in Manchester where John grew up and secured his first job as an office boy to the London Oil Refining Company. His boss recognised his potential as a salesman, a vocation which John relished and from which he gained the facility to relate to all he met with uninhibited warmth and candour.

When Lorco moved its head office to Reading in 1966, John and his



wife Mabel settled in Caversham and he became a keen member of the Reading Rotary Club and a key figure in the life of the Methodist Church. For many years - until the Sunday before his death - he was the church's 'welcome steward' and his introduction, a firm handshake and "How-do, I'm John Sholl" impressed all newcomers with its

patent sincerity. John loved all people, young and old. Even in his 80s he was running a youth club at the church and for the past 20 years he has been the doyen of Stay Awhile, the church's lunch club for the over-60s, welcoming newcomers and enhancing the friendly atmosphere. He was the epitome of a good neighbour,

assiduously visiting the sick and those living in homes for the elderly. At the Thanksgiving Service his son Colin read St Paul's commendation of faith, hope and love in the Epistle to the Corinthians. John Sholl had firm faith, fervent hope and, above all, a love of his fellow beings which he demonstrated every day of his long life.

M.A.

### DIANA BEAN

Checkendon Parish Church was full to overflowing for the thanksgiving service for the life of Diana Bean. Her family and friends were there to salute her Christian faith reflected in her courageous 12 year fight against cancer and to remember and rejoice in her

enthusiasm for life up to the last.

Diana grew up in Kintbury and then trained to be a teacher at Salisbury. She and her husband Peter came to Caversham some thirty years ago. For many years she taught in south Oxfordshire and particularly at

Sonning Common Primary School. By the time she took early retirement 2 years ago she was Deputy Head there. Her love of science was shared with Peter and with the children she taught, enthusing them often in original ways.

A musically gifted person, she sang in local choirs, was a member of the team of organists at Caversham Heights Methodist Church and also for some years was organist and choirmaster at Checkendon parish Church. She regularly organised an annual carol service at Caversham Heights Methodist Church which was led by her choirs from Checkendon. That she

was able to play at her daughter Sarah's marriage to Richard last May gave her much pleasure.

Diana loved to travel, visiting in particular places round the world which reflected her scientific interests. In the last few months of her life, although confined to a wheelchair, she was able to achieve a long outstanding ambition to visit the Holy land.

Diana will be sadly missed by her family and friends and by both church communities at Caversham Heights and Checkendon. We extend to Peter, Sarah and Bridget our love and sympathy in their loss.

E.C.

### St. Andrew's Fellowship

St. Andrew's Fellowship enjoyed their usual Christmas Party in December when they were fortunate enough to be entertained by members of the Caversham Evening Townswomen's Guild who presented a most amusing sketch. After coffee, sausage rolls and mincepies Mrs Davage played the piano for a selection of carols, which were sung with enthusiasm, helped by the cast from the play, who formed an impromptu choir.

### ST. ANNE'S NEWS

The Archbishop of Birmingham, the Most Rev Maurice Couve de Murville, has appointed Father Tony Jones to be Dean of South Oxfordshire. The Deanery comprises the parishes of Caversham, Sonning Common, Henley-on-Thames, Goring-on-Thames, Dorchester, Watlington and Thame. The Dean has an administrative role in seeing that things run smoothly in the parishes of the deanery and is required to attend regular meetings with the Archbishop. Meanwhile, Father Tony's induction as Parish Priest of St Anne's will be conducted by Auxiliary Bishop, Terence Brain at a ceremony to be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 2nd February.

### ST. ANNE'S SCHOOL

At the end of the Christmas term, St Anne's said goodbye to Mrs Mary Hardiman who has taught Class 3 and Class 5 for the last three years. Mrs Hardiman, who has retired, is succeeded by Mrs Patricia Boucher for the next two terms until a permanent appointment is made by the governors for September.

### DAVID MILLING AT ST ANDREW'S DAY



- O. Jewiss

Visitors photographed on St. Andrew's Day with the vicar, the Revd Bill Carpenter (right) are from right to left the Revd Dr David Milling, Mrs Bernice Milling and Mr Alfred Martyn-Johns.

St Andrew's Patronal Festival last year was notable for the return, as special preacher at the Eucharist, of the Revd Dr David Milling. After the service a large congregation were pleased to be able to meet him and his wife Bernice again, over refreshments in St. Andrew's Hall. David will be remembered as Priest-in-Charge at St Margaret's, Mapledurham, from 1977 to 1981 and then subsequently at St Andrew's until 1986. In his sermon he suggested that although we may not be evangelists we could still emulate St. Andrew by bringing others to Jesus, as he had done with his brother Simon, with the boy with the loaves and fishes and with the Greeks.

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# KATY IN CAVERSHAM

I don't want to stand accused of dragging out the Christmas season - heaven knows we had more than enough of it before the festival and I'm not the only one who complains about Christmas starting in the summer. But I can't let the occasion pass without one or two comments.

First I would like to mention the many many people I met who, whatever their own problems, yet found time to call on and care for those, mostly elderly, who are entirely alone. It's not easy and I take my hat off to some of the home carers, as they are now called, who gave more of their time than paid for, including the lady who understood and found time to comfort the old lady who found the festivities all too much and, unusually for her, dissolved into tears on two occasions.

### THOSE WHO HELP US

It is a pity that we are not quite so fussy as we used to be about trying to find some small reward to those who serve us throughout the year. When we heard that refuse clearance service was threatened by outside contractors we worried a little lest the work be sloppy or late. I don't know what happened about that idea but coming up behind a lorry in a narrow road full of cars on both sides and having to crawl along behind it we were quite literally amazed at the efficient way the gentleman ran down the road and tackled the job at speed trying to clear the road for us to drive down. Somebody really should award a prize for the willing efficiency of these particular dustmen. We had to do our own running down the road to catch them for their Christmas 'box' after the festivities.

I was lucky enough to catch the postman who

has delivered in our area for some years - our bowls-playing postman we call him. He told me there was a possibility that due to reorganisation he might have to hand over our road and adjoining ones to somebody else. He was sorry as he said he'd got to know everyone so well - and so will we be if this move actually takes place for he really is a great help involving himself in the life of the community.

Milkmen too had a hard job over the holidays and they too coped admirably.

And I've been asked to mention a reader's favourite garage, J & P Motors, who pulled out all the stops to get her completely mobile just before Christmas. Please can we have other praises for people like this.

### THE BOOKSHOP

This place was a source of suggestions for Christmas gifts. Lindsay has a way of knowing what we - and our friends - like and between us we seldom make a mistake. Watch her on the computer tracing a book of which one knows neither the author nor the publisher and with only a vague idea of the title - it's a revelation in modern technology.

### ANNE HARVEY

I wonder how many people remember Anne who worked for some time with the BBC Monitoring Service. Just before Christmas the 'Post' featured her as the writer of a collection of poems entitled 'Epitaph for Narcissus'. I would like to head this paragraph 'A Love Story' because I've seldom come across anything quite so moving. We knew Anne as a highly educated and intelligent young woman and that she had to fight various physical disabilities, including diabetes, before taking her own life nearly ten years ago. But she wasn't one to boast of her achievements or to bewail her misfortunes, so I'm sure many of us didn't know the half of what made Anne tick. It was left to her partner, Roland Challis, another BBC employee, to allow us a glimpse of the real Anne and all she enjoyed and all she suffered, for after her

death he must have spent ages going through the mass of unpublished poems she had written, to say nothing of paying for and arranging privately for the printing of this book. I would like to see all her old acquaintances buying it. It isn't exactly easy reading, but very rewarding as, through her poetry, one tries to follow the pleasures and torments of her very short life. I knew she was a devotee of the Brontes and understand that, having asked to be buried as near Anne Bronte in Scarborough as possible, a small party escorted her there after her death. I'm not very good at expressing my own thoughts on this occasion, but I do so much wish I'd known her better.

### OUR VETS

I must mention these people who not only collected, in the surgery, food for stray animals but took the trouble after Christmas to post up a list of those organisations they'd been able to help. Good luck to them in all they do.

### CHANGES IN CAVERSHAM

I know that the new year is going to bring further changes in Caversham and hope the new Traders' Association, now being formed, can go some way to recreating the old village atmosphere. Alas, Mr. Asher tells me he will be giving up his shop at St. Martin's precinct as soon as possible as it is getting difficult to meet all competition from the supermarkets. On the plus side, we hear that Warings (Master Bakers of Tilehurst) have put in an offer to open a business where Scotts used to sell their wares. We could do with a really good bakers and I understand that if they do take over, even if they can't bake on the premises, their bread will be brought, freshly baked, from their premises in Tilehurst. I've had acquaintance with Warings in the past and we shall certainly benefit if they can move into Caversham.

### LOCAL PLANNING

Some of you will have seen that there is still a possibility of a one-way

system being adopted in Prospect Street \Westfield Road. It would be a great pity if this should become a reality - we had experience of this fairly recently when Prospect Street was dug up for some time and getting across both roads became a hazardous experience. Another suggestion, for a camera/lights system to give priority to buses at junctions, is well worth consideration. But what pleases the Residents' Association is that this time they, along with other local people, are actually being consulted on a number of traffic problems;

Association is anxious to take advantage of this and suggest that anyone really interested get in touch with Molly Casey and the Residents' Association. Please do so before we get left with something we don't want.

And please, please, can we have news of what is going on in other parts of Caversham - those of us who write regularly can't possibly get around to cover everything, but there is so much we shouldn't miss.

AND A VERY HAPPY  
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# THE ROAD TO SANTIAGO

(MEMORIES OF MY WALK)

By  
Vincent Kelly

It was 7.15 in the morning of Sunday 28th August when I started the long climb out of the pretty village of St. Jean Pied-de-Port in the foothills of the French Pyrenees. I was accompanied by Wilfried and Gerdt, two Belgian brothers, both in their thirties, who had only two weeks' holiday and therefore would not complete the whole of the route. It soon became obvious that we were not to have a good day as the cloud lowered over our heads. Although we walked all day in cloud, and once or twice above it, it did not really rain until late in the day when it was accompanied by a very strong wind.

As I left I was wished "God Speed" by a young rugged Dutchman, who was resting in the village for a few days - he had already walked from Amsterdam. Planning to leave on the following Tuesday he expected to catch up with me at the weekend. Because of my own unexpectedly good progress we did not meet for nearly three weeks and he then presented me with a small and unimportant item of equipment that I had left behind in St. Jean. He had carefully carried it with him in order to return it to me. A small but typical instance of the sense of camaraderie that I found throughout my walk.

After about two hours I met Gerard, a tall strongly built German of about my own age, who had left an hour earlier and was already returning because he could not tackle the ascent. I was struggling at this time and the meeting did little for my self confidence when I compared his size with my rather diminutive 5ft 7in. However, suffice it to say that after some ten hours of hard work, sometimes in driving rain, the objective of Roncesvalles was reached - my first stopping place in Spain.

Any feeling of weariness was dispelled by the welcoming applause of the group of tourists and other pilgrims in front of the Abbey. Disposal of my rucksack and a quick shower followed by attendance at the special Mass for pilgrims in the Abbey was a memorable event at which we, about ten in number, were called up to receive a special Blessing in front of a large congregation at the end of the service.

A good meal in the local restaurant removed any sense of weariness and it was here that I met Manuel and Rogeria. We were destined to become like the three Musketeers as our friendship developed rapidly throughout the journey. He was a stocky 31 year old from Murcia, quiet but with a mischievous grin and a great sense of humour whilst she, a 36 year old Brazilian, was capable of being deeply thoughtful and suddenly changing to being a complete extrovert who, after a particularly exhausting day, enlivened the evening with her chatter. Oddly enough she spoke Spanish (with a charming accent) rather than Portuguese.

On the 31st August I took a short detour to visit the tiny church at Eunate which lies beside the other pilgrim route that crosses the Pyrenees further to the East and joins with "my" route only a few kilometres further on. I had read about and had seen pictures of this building and wanted very much to see it for myself. Situated out in the country far away from any village it is a simple octagonal building surrounded by a wall of arches like an

ambulatory but not connected to the main building by a roof. Arriving somewhat weary, I sat in an oasis of complete and almost overwhelming peace and my one desire that day was that there should be peace, particularly in Northern Ireland. Imagine my feelings when, two days later, in a small bar in a remote village, a local worker came up to me on hearing that I was Irish and, with great sympathy, showed me the local newspaper which gave prominence to the announcement of a ceasefire by the IRA. I still recall that event with a considerable catch in my throat.

The 1st September, the fifth day of my walk, I had reached the monastery of Irache, and it being our 41st wedding anniversary, I dutifully telephoned Mary and then proceeded to invite my companions of the day to celebrate the event. The party of seven (we had been joined by two 20 year old German girls) repaired to the rather comfortable hotel that adjoined the refuge and treated ourselves to a good meal. The other diners were obviously curious about the collection of rather basically attired pilgrims who had appeared and their notions about pilgrims must have received a jolt when I ordered champagne for the celebration.

At San Juan de Ortega, the last stop before Burgos, we arrived in a tiny community to find ourselves without food and that the little bar, contrary to expectations, could provide no more than crisps and peanuts. A kindly lady, hearing of our dilemma brought four of us into her house where she cooked a meal of eggs, chorizo (a kind of black/red sausage) and odds and ends, together with cheese, bread, coffee and wine, which, in the circumstances, was food fit for a king. To my amazement she refused any payment as she regarded it as her duty, and a great pleasure, to look after the needs of pilgrims.

At Burgos we found that we had to proceed to a refuge on the far side of the city and, as always, a few extra kilometres beyond the immediate expectations at the end of the day were something of a penance. However, on arrival at the refuge, which was similar to a temporary classroom building that we would see in England, we were informed that the local OAP group met there every Thursday evening and that they would treat us to an evening meal of soup, chorizo, bread, coffee etc., again at no cost to us. It was served al fresco and about 15 pilgrims benefited from this great hospitality.

Arriving in León very late in the evening we found there was no refuge available. A few frantic telephone calls located a pension in the Puerta del Sol area, which, unlike its counterpart in Madrid, is pretty run-down. However the beds were clean and the charge was reasonable and it was too late to be fussy. All was changed when I threw open the shutters of the room I shared with Manuel. There in front of me was the Plaza Mayor with the floodlit Cathedral opposite whilst below my window I witnessed the closing stages of a pageant celebrating the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, complete with trumpets, drums and wonderful costumes - I would not have had that bonus in the León Hilton.

Reaching the highest point (5,000ft), and not being short of breath brought a great feeling of achievement. Strangely enough this was not in the Pyrenees but at the Cruz de Ferro (the Iron Cross) in the province of León, about the two-thirds point of the walk.

Another experience was my arrival at the tiny hamlet of Santa Catalina de Samosa in darkness but under a bright moon. On finding the house where I could get the key of the refuge I was greeted by a grizzled old Maragato to be told I was very late. I protested that it was only a little after nine. He repeated his comment and then re-phrased it to ask how old I was. I realised then that he had originally commented that I was old to be out walking at night. It was only after my return, when reflecting on the number of times I was asked that same question, that I realised that only a few very, very old Spanish men have hair as white as mine.

Arrival at Santiago de Compostela on the evening of the thirtieth day of continuous walking brought great joy tinged with a little sadness at the realisation that the firm friendships made were to come to an end in so far as we might never meet again. The next morning we received our traditional Compostellas (official certificates of completion) and mine is now framed and hanging on the wall as a reminder of a tremendous experience. At noon the next day there was the daily Mass for pilgrims at which the arrivals over the past 24 hours were announced to the large congregation. It was with a feeling of great pride (is a pilgrim allowed such a feeling?) that I heard the announcement - "and, from Ireland, a pilgrim who has walked from St. Jean-de-Port."

A few days resting and exploring the lovely city saw sad farewells being made before the return to the normality of life at home. In all it was an experience that will colour my life for the future.

The questions I am always asked are

1. Did it exceed your expectations?
2. Was it as hard as you expected?
3. Would you do it again?

The answer to all three is the same - yes, and in respect of the last, YES

I have only given a flavour of the walk in this article, I have been invited to give a number of talks to different organisations and would be very glad to share my experiences with any group, whether a small "coffee morning group" or a more formal one. Anyone interested is welcome to contact me on 479462. Please note that no fee is expected.

Last, but not least, I cannot let this opportunity pass without thanking all who helped in any way with my charity appeal which has, to date, raised just over £3,150, all of which will be handed over shortly.

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# RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

## By Watchdog

### ALL CHANGE OR AS YOU WERE

Was it done on purpose? The long awaited result of the review on local government changes for Berkshire was delayed till mid-December when just about everyone's attention was concentrated on the run-up to Christmas and anything else was either not noticed or put on hold.

This was very convenient, though whether by chance or design is anyone's guess, as the result, when it came, was not what anyone had expected, nor had it even featured amongst the options on which the public's views had been sought.

Although there had been minor differences of opinion (less minor perhaps for the people most immediately affected) the general consensus had been that the best outcome would be to have four unitary authorities to replace the present system. Wokingham took exception to this and was the odd man out in putting forward an alternative for east Berkshire. Outside the county, Oxfordshire got all het up at Reading's inclusion of a small area of Eye and Dunsden in their preferred options, although in spite of the head of steam it generated, they cannot really have believed that the Boundary Commission's red herring of turning the three rural parishes of Mapledurham, Kidmore End and Eye and Dunsden over to Reading was a serious contender among the

options on offer.

When the result was announced, it was Oxfordshire's turn to throw their hats in the air, as Reading's wish to take over the little piece of Eye and Dunsden was rejected, and Wokingham's turn to raise a cheer as their proposals were accepted. To the dismay of everyone else, it has been recommended that Berkshire should have five unitary authorities instead of four, something to which the whole of the County apart from Wokingham, was opposed.

Reading is to retain its present boundaries, although it will become a unitary authority. This means that all the existing anomalies will remain, such as the University being in two different local authority areas, and indeed having the boundary running through the middle of a hall of residence, and neighbouring streets in Tilehurst being in different areas. More seriously it will also mean that in many fields, particularly education, Reading will be too small to operate efficiently as a unitary authority and that the overall cost of having five instead of four authorities will be more than that of the present system. Four would have cost approximately the same.

When the results were delayed beyond the date expected, rumour had it that there was to be no change at all, which would have been preferable to what is now planned. The authorities affected intend to appeal and even the County Council which was on the point of putting down the shutters, is now advocating a return to the status quo. Public reaction has not been easy to gauge as there was so little media coverage when the result was announced that many people must have been unaware of what was happening, apart from Christmas shopping and parties. Now that the implications of the decision are being realised, it is to be hoped there will be public debate over something that is going to affect the way we live for many years to come.

**THAT CONTROVERSIAL BRIDGE**  
Oxfordshire may well have been right when

they said that the matter of a third Thames bridge should be decided through normal planning channels and not slipped in via the boundary review. The only thing is that they knew, and Reading knew, that they were the body who held the key to the planning decision and they had consistently stated their opposition to any such proposal. Their high-mindedness may not have been entirely disinterested.

It could even be that another bridge is not the answer either. What is certainly not the answer is to leave things as they are or to go on up-grading that A4074 (now helpfully through traffic given that number all the way from Oxford) so that it attracts more and more traffic.

Perhaps the directives now issuing from the Dept. of the Environment that there is to be a presumption against massive road building (even the controversial Newbury bypass has been put on ice) might convince them that no one has plans (and if they had they would not get far) to construct an almighty great motorway from the M4 to the M40 through unspoilt countryside (the subject of another D. of E. directive) and that talk of a local bridge for local needs really means what it says.

### RURAL RETREAT

One of the firms working in Bugs Bottom, David Wilson Homes, recently produced an advertisement describing their development, which they chose to call Caversham Chase, as small and exclusive and showing it surrounded by beautiful undisturbed countryside. It was, they claimed, very accessible to all local facilities and within easy reach of the M4. When Caversham and District Resident's Association drew the attention of the Trading Standards Department to these misleading claims, David Wilson were reported to their local department in Leicestershire, and as a consequence were required to alter their brochures and advertisements. That's why that gullible or imaginary couple no longer appear in their advertisements. Bucolic charm is about the last thing you would look for in Bugs Bottom

these days.

There will be plenty of mud of course, and that will be brought out on the adjacent roads, but to leave it there infringes planning conditions, torrential rain or not. The requirement is that it must be cleared away asap or pdq.

### WHEELIE BINS—YES OR NO

Wheelie bins are already being tried out in parts of Reading and Caversham to see what reaction is. One cannot help getting the feeling that these are coming anyhow, as quite a lot of money must already have been sunk into the scheme.

Caversham and District Residents' Association discussed the matter pretty thoroughly and came to the conclusion that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages. Their reasons were as follows. They are not practical for terraced houses of which there is a large number in Caversham. Where entry to the back garden is through a narrow passageway or a garage, it will be difficult to move these large bins. People with some physical weakness, who live alone, will find it difficult to move them. Because of these disadvantages there will be a tendency to leave these bins in front gardens, which can already be observed in areas where they have been introduced. Even without the foregoing problems, there is a reluctance to move

such a large item. This detracts from the appearance of a street and can lead to problems of bins being wheeled away in the same way that untethered supermarket trolleys are.

However, the Environment Department of Reading Borough Council, which has some claim to green credentials, thinks these objections are unsustainable. What do readers think? It would be interesting to see Post Bag featuring views for or against, next month.

### DR. BASIL HILL

Dr. Basil Hill, who had a distinguished career in the field of anaesthesia, and who died towards the end of the year, was also a well known Caversham figure. He was particularly moved by what was happening in Bugs Bottom and protested and wrote vigorously about what was going on there. Bugs Bottom activists will remember a cold January evening in the valley when he mastered-minded a protest about prematurely placed marker posts. Many a younger person would have found an excuse not to be there in such inhospitable weather, but Basil Hill did not hesitate and even appeared to thrive on it. He certainly did not allow the grass to grow under his feet. He was also a painter of some merit and one of his pictures was of Bugs Bottom in the snow. He had lived a full and useful life.

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# the CLUBS

## Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

The December meeting of the Guild heralded Party Time. The entertainment provided by the play reading group proved to be greatly enjoyed by all members and was preceded by readings from Mrs Kirby's popular repertoire. A delicious Christmas tea with festive fare provided by the Committee followed, Christmas crackers were pulled and the president, Mrs Odey was photographed cutting the splendid cake, baked and iced by Mrs E. Manning.

Members next enjoyed a free raffle with a prize for everyone and tried to make time to test their knowledge in a local quiz. Before reluctantly making their way home in the grey December afternoon members were all agreed that it had been a lighthearted, enjoyable afternoon and looked forward to a full programme of events in the New Year, beginning with a pantomime visit in January.

Meetings are on the third Thursday of each month, 2pm in Church House.

## Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

The December meeting of the Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild took on a festive feeling with a grand Christmas raffle arranged by Mrs P. Young, part of the proceedings going to the charity for the year "Hearing Dogs For The Deaf", and the committee provided mince pies for the members. The Arts and Crafts group have already celebrated with a Christmas evening of fun and games and thanks were extended to Mr and Mrs Perrin for their hospitality. The Words and Music festivities have been postponed until January 30th when there will be a fork and finger buffet followed by an "Afternoon With John Betjeman". It is hoped to take a group of members to the matinee performance of the London

City Ballet's performance of Giselle at the Hexagon on February 1st. The Ramblers have had their Christmas lunch at The Sun, Nettlebed, followed by a short walk and their next ramble will be on January 5th.

The Guild enjoyed a performance by the Henley Handbell Ringers who gave a delightful entertainment entitled "Happiness". Members were taken through the preparations for Christmas in music and song from the gathering of the holly, the decoration of the Christmas tree and the excited anticipation of the children, through the birth of Christ on Christmas Day and the collapse of the adults after Christmas lunch, ending with the ladies wishing everyone a "Merry Christmas". Great concentration and a certain amount of mathematical ability and physical effort are required by handbell ringing and the ladies not only pleased the ears but also delighted the eyes in their smart dresses and lovely Christmas buttonholes. The meeting ended with the Chairman wishing everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year and looked forward to seeing everyone in January 1995.

## Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

December's meeting of the main guild of Caversham Heights Townswomen took the form of a Christmas party, with food provided by members of the committee, and the excellent punch by one member who also belongs to a local wine circle. In the small amount of business at the commencement chairman Margaret Mellin welcomed another new member. Unwell members have been visited. There had been a report from the federation. Sufficient numbers of members must be found to support any motions for the National Council meeting at the Royal Albert Hall in June. It is hoped that new members for the committee will come forward in March.

A successful cheese and wine evening with a bring and buy sale at the chairman's house was held recently to raise funds. The Christmas party for social studies group at Mildred Hutchisons's house was a great success. The committee had met for supper recently also.

The entertainment provided by the drama group preceeded supper and was a play in somewhat melodramatic style with amusing interjections from the producer, much enjoyed. There was also some lively singing and a really good chance for friends to talk. For the New Year a meeting for scrabble was arranged. There will be a coffee morning at Helen Neil's home and a theatre visit, both in February.

The Guild meets on the third Thursday in each month at St Andrew's Hall, Albert Road at 7.30pm. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

## Chazey W.I.

The January meeting should have been a talk on First Aid by Mr S Robinson from St John Ambulance but he was unable to come. Luckily Mr Philip Simpson the hypnotherapist was available at the last moment. He gave an interesting talk on the history and practice of hypnotism and demonstrated his technique. Any misgivings were quickly alleviated - he had brought his own volunteer with him - so everyone could sit back without fear of being made to do humiliating things. In fact, Philip Simpson is very much against hypnotism as a theatrical entertainment. It has a more serious and practical aim, to alleviate the discomfort of certain illnesses, and to help people to overcome addictions such as smoking. There was a lively question and answer session. Mr Simpson uses self hypnosis for dental treatment and, yes, someone had a hysterectomy using self hypnosis. Since pain is a warning of some malfunction in the body, hypnotherapists do not work on the removal of pain without proper medical diagnoses. Fears were expressed about the lingering effects of hypnosis long after the event but Philip Simpson has not had anything of this sort happen to anyone he has treated.

The next meeting is 8.00pm on Tuesday February 7th in Pavilion. Frances Munday who runs the Dolls' House shop in Bridge St will give an

illustrated talk. Members were reminded that subscriptions are due - £12.00 and £7.50 for the "Home and Country" magazine. New members are always welcome, so go along for a sample evening.

## Caversham Community Association

November started with a demonstration of Tupperware given by Sarah Denny. Members viewed the up-to-date containers available and saw a complete microwave meal cooked in one container. A delicious smell soon filled the hall.

The next week saw another of the popular T.V. games, this time 'Play Your Cards Right', the Caversham version. The eventual winners were Colly Usher and Brenda Strong. Bargains were on offer the following week with the popular annual suitcase sale and mini bazaar. Members went home happy with their various purchases.

The month ended in a touch of Christmas with a demonstration of home made crackers given by Mrs Jean Butlin. The basic technique looked reasonably easy and personal variations could be made to the decorations and gifts enclosed. Two members, Dorothy Oxborne and Beryl Latcham, demonstrated their favourite Christmas decoration ideas and gave some members plenty of inspiration to try them out.

December follows a traditional pattern with a popular bingo session offering seasonal prizes. The following week was the carol evening with special guests, the choir of St John's Church. Tuneful singing and a variety of readings warmed the appetite for mince pies in the refreshment interval. Committee members and helpers were busy at the last Monday meeting to prepare for the party; cold meat, salad and potato croquettes were followed by homemade trifles or fruit salad and ice cream. This was followed by dancing and games with plenty of lucky winners. The evening ended with sherry or fruit juice and Maida Feast's lovely Christmas cake, and the raffle draw.

## Caversham Ladies' Club

Christmas Party time was here again and the tables were looking very tempting

and attractive with all the goodies, and a lovely decorated Christmas Cake occupied the centre of the top table.

Mrs Brenda Strong, Chairman, opened the meeting, but before the minutes were read told those present of the death of one of their members, Mrs Perona who had died that week. A minute of silence was observed by members in respect to her memory. Club business was then attended to and completed, after which carols were sung with much 'gusto'.

It was now time for the party and the Chairman said grace while members of the Committee did their job as waitresses, the usual procedure at Club parties. Christmas cards were given out, but a hold-up from the firm delayed the gifts, so at the next meeting in January it is hoped they will have arrived to be given out to members who were reminded of the time and venue of their Christmas lunch.

Time had now caught up so with the air full of good wishes being passed to each other, members left for home after a very enjoyable afternoon.

## Caversham W.I.

The President welcomed members and guests to Caversham's combined Christmas/birthday party. After a brief business section, Mr Jim Plunkett played the piano for a highly enjoyable sing-along. Familiar carols were included and tuneful voices filled the hall in a rousing finale of Jerusalem and Rule Britannia. Appetites were ready for the tempting buffet supper which finished with the President cutting the beautifully decorated cake.

After the raffle, members were reminded about Christmas dinner at the Traveller's Rest and the next meeting in January. Everyone went home with a gift from the bran tub.

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