



THE STORIES BEHIND THE HEADLINES



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid Week is the country's biggest fundraising week, raising millions to help the poor around the globe. But what is it spent on? Christian Aid's Director, Michael Taylor, explains how it not only helps in emergencies, but in the long term too.

From May 14 to 20, 300,000 churchgoers in the United Kingdom and Ireland will be on the streets. Sometimes they'll be made to feel unwelcome. They'll be going to almost every door in the land. Usually they'll get a friendly reception. They'll come away with the famous red envelope we use in Christian Aid Week. They'll raise the best part of 10 million pounds for the poorest of the poor. Yet not a penny of it will be spent in Rwanda.

Do you think that's defensible after all we've heard about Rwanda over the last twelve months? Surely if there's desperate human need anywhere in the world it's there. Thousands mourn their dead. Millions have become refugees. Most have seen horrors beyond their imagining.



Belancila Nyirabagaruka, a refugee with one of her children in Gitinda Commune, near Rugengeri, northern Rwanda.

Christian Aid Week this year is from 14th-20th May. Collectors for the street collection which takes place during that week are always needed. If you could help in this way please contact your own church Christian Aid representative. The Christian Aid Sponsored Walks are on Saturday 20th May. These are over the usual courses but the distances this year are 5, 10 and 20 miles. The start this year is changed to Bix Village Hall. Last year in appalling conditions some 40 people (young and old) from Caversham and Mapledurham took part in raising £1,403 towards the Reading area total of £14,500. If you would like to take part in this very pleasant way of raising money for Christian Aid please obtain an Application Form from your church representative or direct from Keith Stephen-Evans (473619).

The annual Christian Aid Service takes place this year at St. Barnabas for the first time. This is a united service for the whole of Caversham and Mapledurham and all are warmly invited to come along at 6.30pm on Sunday the 14th May.

Clearly, Rwanda needs our help and will continue to receive it. We issued a special appeal with other British organisations like CAFOD and Oxfam last summer. The public gave over £30 million. Christian Aid has already spent over three million pounds helping the churches help their people with food, water, medicines, seeds, tools, and rebuilding schools and homes and shattered relationships.

This work will go on. But what of the quieter, often silent tragedies of the world that rarely hit the headlines – where the TV cameras never go? Like the landless women in Tamil Nadu, the forgotten Palestinians in Lebanon, those injured by

landmines in Cambodia and children living in slavery or on the streets.

And what of those who have left the worst of their tragedy behind but need all the encouragement they can get to make the most of what they have? Peace of a sort has come to Mozambique. Apartheid has come to an end in South Africa. The war is over in Eritrea and the exiles are going home. But what a lot there is to be done. And what a lot of expectations there are to meet and hopes to keep high. There are farmlands to make productive. Trees to plant. Irrigation canals and roads to build. Schools to open. Shanty towns to pull down and replace with decent homes.

There will never be a big public appeal for these, the hidden poor, and if we launched one it wouldn't raise much money. That's why what you collect in Christian Aid Week will be used to help them. It's what we rather boringly call 'general income'. We treasure every penny of it because we're free to use it where the need is greatest whether the media is interested or not.

I hope you won't mind spending a few hours in Christian Aid Week on the streets, knocking on the doors. It could help make a life-times difference to someone, somewhere, whose face will never appear on News at Ten.

TALKING POINT

by
Father Tony Jones
Parish of our Lady and St Anne



HOW MANY CHURCHES

Just how many churches are there in Caversham? As one of the 'new boys' on the local ecclesiastical scene I haven't had a chance yet to count them all, but it seems to me that all the denominations are well catered for. I know that there are Roman Catholics (my lot!) Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Free Churches, and probably others I haven't come across yet. I'm writing this in the middle of Holy Week, so all these churches will be geared up for their busiest time of the year, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. We will all be doing everything we can to 'pull in' as many people as possible at this sacred time. But do we ever think of encouraging 'our' people to go to a different church to see how 'they' keep the most important of all Christian festivals.

All the Christian churches of this area are very friendly towards each other, and we co-operate in all sorts of good works (not least this splendid local paper!), but do Christians really get an opportunity to understand what it is like to be a member of another denomination? We have our joint ecumenical services at the appropriate times, but they are 'one-offs' that are supposed to suit everybody. But in fact we are so different. Anglicans and Free Church members are often disturbed, even hurt, because they are not able to receive Holy Communion in a Catholic Church, but when do they get to know the reasons why? And do Catholics really worship Mary? Catholics and Free Church members are as amazed at the diversity of practice within the Anglican Church and wonder how can they all live together under one roof? Why does one vicar marry divorcees and another will not? Why don't Anglicans and Methodists unite? Why are there so many Free Churches which seem to be so similar yet insist on being independent? How can Roman Catholics live in a Christian faith under such a suffocating authoritarian structure? These are the questions that Christians on the 'outside' would like to ask, but are usually too polite to put the question.

Yet it seems to me that these are the essential ecumenical questions. It is only when we get under the skin of our neighbouring Christian churches to see what makes them tick, that we can begin to appreciate what their true charisma and graces are, and where we really differ from one another. Jesus said that there is to be one flock with Himself as the one Shepherd; he prayed that his disciples should be 'one'. But just how far do Christians want to go towards a more visible unity? For some it seems enough to recognise that we are one body in the common bond of baptism, others look for a much more visible structured church body that embraces more and more believers. Pope John Paul in his recent book, 'Crossing the Threshold of Hope', states unequivocally that a plurality of ways of thinking and acting is the work of the Holy Spirit, but he then goes on to say, "Nevertheless, this cannot be a justification for the divisions that continue to deepen. The time must come for the love that unites us to be manifested! Many things lead us to believe that that time is now here and, as a result, the importance of ecumenism for Christianity should be evident."

So how are the Christians of Caversham going to find out what makes their neighbours tick? I don't have any particular suggestions for what we should do, but I do think that at some time we should address ourselves to the question, Unity is Christ's will for His Church, but at present it seems hard to see where it begins and where it ends.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE 'GOD AT WORK' LENT COURSE

*Glory be to Thee O Lord for the beauty of Thy creation,
Grant that I may not tarnish its radiance.
Glory be to Thee O Lord for the joy of human love,
Grant that I may not defile its purity.
Glory be to Thee O Lord for the serenity of a contented mind,
Grant that I may not disturb the tranquillity of any Christian soul.
Glory be to Thee O Lord for the promise of eternal life,
Grant that in my weakness I may reach out to grasp Thy strong hand.*
Eric Smith

*Freedom is like a bird on the wing.
The tree that survives the storm declares its freedom to leaf and bloom and fruit in season.
The fish in the sea that dive and swim, that provide nourishment and a livelihood for their captors, they flash and glide, their phosphorescence the flag of their beauty.
The deer in the highlands, with antlers poised in struggle, protect their freedom to roam untouched.*

*But man - where is his freedom?
Yes, he may choose, but not always wisely;
His choice may bring him exploitation
Happy the man whose service is perfect freedom.*

Lily Allies

How to know you're growing OLD!

Everything hurts, and what doesn't hurt doesn't work.
The gleam in your eye is from the sun hitting your bifocals.
You feel like the morning after and you haven't been anywhere.
Your little black book contains only names ending in MD.
Your children begin to look middle-aged.
You finally reach the top of the ladder and find it leaning against the wrong wall.
Your mind makes contracts your body can't meet.
A dripping tap causes an uncontrollable bladder urge.
You look forward to a dull evening.
Your favourite part of the newspaper is "20 years ago today."
You turn out the lights for economic rather than romantic reasons.
You sit in a rocking chair and can't get it going.
Your knees buckle and your belt won't.
You regret all those mistakes you made resisting temptation.
You're 17 round the neck, 42 round the waist and 96 round the golf course.
Your back goes out more than you do.
A fortune teller offers to read your face.
Your pace-maker makes the garage door go up when you see a pretty girl.
The little old grey-haired lady you help across the road is your wife.
You sink your teeth into a steak and they stay there.
You have too much room in the house but not enough in the medicine cabinet.
You know all the answers but nobody asks you the questions.

The above is taken from Church Magazines at Castle Donnington and Swindon.

BEN ARCHER

The editors have learned, with great regret, of the death of Ben Archer, who for many years provided most of this paper's photographs. An appreciation of his life will appear next month.

St John's Church

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EDITORS: Mrs Margaret Baily, Mr Eric Chappell, Mrs Marjorie Tillman, Mr Kevin Corrigan, Mr Bernard Miller, c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham. Tel: 471703.

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

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

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

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER: Miss E. Stark, 14 The Cloisters, Priest Hill, Caversham RG4 7HQ. Tel: 473045.

All contributions for June issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 3 May.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 1 May.

The dates for July will be Monday 5 June and Wednesday 7 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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SILVER JUBILEE FOR PEGGY MAULE

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When Peggy Maule first came to Caversham in 1962 she was Miss Peggy Stark. She and her sister Betty moved here from Maidenhead and both worked at Barclays Bank, King Street. Right from the start they worshipped at St. Peter's and quickly became involved in the local community. Peggy was soon treasurer of St. Benet's home and when after seven years in office she resigned, barely a week had passed before the Revd John Grimwade was at her door to announce that he had found another job for her. Not long after that John Hargreaves, the first Advertisement Manager, came up her drive staggering under the weight of a large cardboard box and so it was that Peggy took on the duties of Advertisement Manager for the Caversham Bridge.

She says she has enjoyed every minute of her association with the paper and has always had an excellent relationship with her colleagues. She is proud in the knowledge that the paper could not

survive without the revenue from the ads and likes to feel that readers can rely on the advertisers, professing herself "tickled pink" at the good feedback she receives.

Peggy and her sister were born and brought up in Clapham, South London, in a loving Christian home. They recall that their parents used to take them by bus on Sunday mornings to worship at St. Paul's Cathedral where their father had been confirmed. The girls and their mother were suitably attired in hats and gloves, their father wore his morning-coat and top-hat.

They left Clapham when Peggy was eighteen, their home having been wrecked in the blitz by a landmine. The family settled in Maidenhead and in 1942 Peggy was called up and joined the ATS. By the time she was twenty-four she was a Company Sergeant-Major in charge of five hundred girls. She still goes to reunions although the number of "girls" attending grows fewer. After the war the sisters settled in Maidenhead with their

mother. To their great sorrow their demob coincided with the death of their beloved father. They both took up posts in Barclays Bank and after the death of their mother moved to Reading and bought a house together in Albert Road.

During the three years that followed romance developed between Peggy and a neighbour across the road, Eric Maule, who was also a colleague at the bank. In 1965 Peggy married Eric and became stepmother to his family of four children. Eight months later she became a grandmother when Eric's eldest son and his wife had their first child.

Peggy had always loved children and had dreamed of marrying and having a family, so at the age of forty-four she gave up her career in the bank and entered into her new role with joy and enthusiasm. Now, thirty years later, she and Eric have nine grandchildren and one great grandchild and their home is a focal point for their family and a wide circle of friends.

Eric has lived in Caversham most of his



life, apart from when he served abroad during the war, and has strong links with Reading School and the Territorial Army. He has always been a great sportsman and played both rugby and cricket for the county. Both Peggy and Eric love their home which has a warm, cherished feel about it, preferring to welcome people there rather than travel far afield.

Ask Peggy and Eric what their hobbies in retirement are and they

will say "people". They are interested in people, care for them and enjoy helping them. Peggy's other voluntary work has been with the Red Cross, on the Council of Management of Hemdean House School and a close involvement with Buscot ward at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. This association came about through her daughter-in-law who was aware of the need for baby clothes for the premature babies born

on Buscot. Three times a year Peggy and Betty take a pile of babyclothes made by themselves and their friends to the ward so that the tiny patients there will have pretty things to wear. Many parents who were taken unawares by a premature birth or who in any case had not laid in clothes sufficiently small have reason to be grateful for this endless supply of dainty and attractive clothing. Peggy has now been Advertisement Manager

of the Caversham Bridge for twenty-five years and is happy to continue as long as she "can do the job properly." Peggy doesn't believe in giving things up while she can still do them and she so obviously enjoys the work and does it with such charm and efficiency that all of us associated with the Bridge thank her for her efforts in the past and wish her many more happy years presiding over our advertising columns.

HELIUM AIRSHIPS

On Thursday evening, 23rd March, the Berkshire Royal Observer Association held a meeting at Church House to hear a lecture on modern air-ships by Arnold Naylor of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

Older readers of the

"Bridge" will remember the disastrous fate of most of the hydrogen airships of the twenties and thirties, and also the barrage balloons of World War II which were filled with helium, an inert gas.

After the War the

interest in airships continued by substituting helium for the earlier use of highly inflammable hydrogen gas.

Today there are twenty-one helium airships in service worldwide, most having been built in the UK by Airship Industries using the vast airship hangers at Cardington in Bedfordshire. Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Japan and Russia have one each, whilst the UK has two, and the USA thirteen.

Briefly a helium airship consists of an envelope of helium gas, under which are two smaller airbags, one fore and one aft. Expelling air from one of the airbags causes the helium to expand and lift either the fore or aft part of the airship depending upon which of the airbags the air is expelled from — if the fore bag then the nose rises, whilst the aft raises the tail. The

maximum height a helium airship can expect to reach is four thousand feet above which, with the airship being filled with almost one hundred per cent helium, some of the helium has to be expelled whilst an equal amount of air is impelled into the airbags. This causes the airship to descend.

Forward and backward propulsion is achieved by the use of small four stroke petrol engines, usually one on the port and the other on the starboard sides, each engine driving a propeller which displaces the air thus causing the airship to be propelled forward or backwards. Most airships have horizontal and vertical fins to assist steering.

Mr Naylor kindly provided colour slides to illustrate the various airships in service today, their shapes ranging from

the elongated sausage to a large ball, and the lecture was completed with the showing of two small videos of airships.

As a small boy, the writer vividly recalls looking up and seeing the earlier British R100 slowly and majestically floating overhead across the skies above West London in the late twenties, and it is good to know that airships are once more gaining popularity.

Pete Littlewood

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

IRRATIONAL BOUNDARIES

The Secretary of State has confirmed the findings of the Local Government Commission for the setting up of unitary authorities in place of Berkshire County Council and leaving Reading's boundaries as they were. This means that the present meanderings of the boundary line, which may have made sense sometime in the past but now, for example, splits Tilehurst in a totally irrational way and divides the University through the middle, even through one hall of residence, will remain as they were, in spite of the opportunity there was to iron out these anomalies. Did the Commissioner not notice this, or did he think it did not matter?

As for Caversham, that very small but highly controversial bit of Eye and Dunsden is to remain in the care of South Oxfordshire. This means of course that they are able to continue to veto proposals for a third river bridge. This will be regarded as a victory by some, and as a

defeat by others.

The only way now for the authorities on the Berkshire side of the River (except that Berkshire will soon cease to be) to get a bridge will be to put in a planning application to South Oxfordshire, which will of course be refused, and then go to appeal and see what happens. In the meantime perhaps Oxfordshire could refrain from doing anything more to the A4074 that would attract more traffic which would end up in Caversham where it would no longer be their responsibility.

TOO MANY CARS

The problem with the whole of this part of the country is that it has far too much traffic, which is particularly noticeable at peak hours and no matter how much it might be shifted around it will only be a case of moving and not getting rid of the problem. 'O.K. It's not a problem as long as it isn't in my backyard' is no solution.

Of course there is too much traffic on the A4074, particularly at the morning peak hour, and it appears that some drivers from South Oxfordshire turn left into Shepherd's Lane and 'rat run' through the residential roads, particularly Kidmore Road, to avoid the queue they know lies ahead of them. It cannot give them much of an advantage as they have only got to join another queue to rejoin it later, with no right of way to help them.

To avoid all this, a temporary ban on turning into Shepherd's Lane from Woodcote Road is to be imposed for a month. If it works it will stay; otherwise it will be withdrawn. Objections that can be seen at once

are that, as this will be a twentyfour hour ban, those living in Shepherd's Lane and the north end of Kidmore Road and roads off, will, if they are returning from Oxfordshire, always have to wind all down Woodcote Road to Woodcote Way or Richmond Road before turning off and making their way back to where they want to be, a longer journey that will bring traffic to even more roads. The real 'rat-runners' being rats, will probably turn along Rokeby Drive and down the narrow Tokers Green Lane, or else make their way via Richmond Road to carry out their tactic. The last state could be worse than the first.

NO TO A ONE-WAY SYSTEM

It is almost certain that when the revised proposals for central Caversham's traffic problems are published, the one-way system for Prospect Street - Westfield Road and Gosbrook Road will be abandoned, as a large majority has indicated its opposition to the idea.

This is fine, in that it indicates a willingness to listen to residents' views rather than imposing something on them against their will. It does not, however, do anything to improve conditions in these streets. Prospect Street in particular needs upgrading as a shopping street. It is now time for everyone concerned to get together and work out some way of improving the quality of life for all, without making it worse for others.

WHEELED BINS ON THE SCENE

Wheeled dustbins are making their appearance in Caversham as dis-

tribution in the area gets under way. Advantage is being taken of the choice to have one of the smaller bins, but in most cases they are still too large to move without causing damage through a terraced house, so bin lined streets are becoming the order of the day. A count of all houses in streets where these bins have not yet appeared, shows that fewer than 7% are in the habit of leaving their bins or black bags in the front garden. This rises to well over 90% where wheeled bins have been introduced to terraced streets.

In at least one such street, many residents declined to have them in their small well-kept gardens, and left them on the pavement. In another case it was sad to see the bin dumped on top of a bed planted full of wallflowers, and in yet another, to avoid squashing the flowering spring bulbs, the bin was on the garden path, partly blocking the entrance to the front door.

This kind of thing is totally unacceptable and no kind of cheery re-assurances emanating from the Civic Offices is going to convince people otherwise. Of course there are properties where these bins are either an improvement or make very little difference one way or another, but there are too many where occupiers have been made either unhappy or angry, or both.

All terraced houses, unless they have an easily approachable rear entrance, are inappropriate for the use of wheeled bins. It was not made clear at the outset that they were going to have them anyway. At no point in the explanatory leaflets does it say 'You'll have to keep

in your front garden.' It should have been honest and said so.

GREEN DAY

This year the Borough Green Day has been moved to fit in with the Civic Trust and B.T. National Environment Week. It, or rather they, as there are two of them, will take place on 20th May at Waterloo Meadows where the emphasis will be on children's activities and on 21st May at Caversham Court from midday on, where there will be family entertainment and environmental groups' presentations. Most Caversham people will be able to walk there, a 'green' mode of transport, but for those from its far flung borders or from other parts of the town, there will be a free ferry to carry them across the river from the Thames side car park.

There will be plenty going on. Beekeeping, handweaving, natural dyeing, and wood turning are always interesting to watch even if they are not activities to which the majority are likely to aspire to save the environment. But perhaps they will lead some to ask themselves questions, such as 'Do I always need to use the car?', 'Which everyday products that I buy are damaging to the environment?' or 'How can I reduce the impact of daily living on the environment?'

The Reading bus which runs on natural gas and does not cause pollution will be there to point the direction in one practical way. Reading Transport are leaders in the field of providing a method of transport that is able to woo some of the people for some of the time from their cars.

"AN INTIMACY THAT SURPASSES YOUR DREAMS"

by John Madeley

This year's Day of Prayer at Westminster Abbey took as its theme "Prayer in the Spirit of Jesus", and was led by Rt Rev Rowan Williams, Bishop of Monmouth, and Sister Carol of the Community of the Holy Name, who works at Lee Abbey.

Five members of Caversham Churches heard Bishop Rowan say that Jesus was not chiefly a friend or a teacher but "a new experience of God". It is what Jesus "makes possible in you" that is important, he said; "what is new in Christianity is that we occupy a new point of view — Jesus's point of view."

"We are anchored in God", he said, "I am because God wants me to be and nothing can take that away. My security does not depend on my stock credit with God — He and I are not in competition! God's desire for us cannot be turned aside no matter what we do."

Jesus has cleared the space in which we stand. "Enter that space", he urged,

"and make contact with God's created world". He spoke of the "sheer welcome of God, a welcome which opens a space. If we are aware of our being resting on God there is a certain liberty that comes with it. Freedom means being free to do God's work, to offer all to God."

Prayer in the Spirit of Jesus is growing in the mind of Jesus, said the Bishop, and resting "in the generosity of God. It gives us a share of God's Lordship, the authority to forgive and to heal. God pours out what he is in our flesh and blood."

In prayer, come before God in silence, he suggested, with nothing except "I want you there."

Sister Carol spoke about the importance of silence. "We all have within us a centre of stillness, open to the infinite lands of thought and prayer. To be still and silent and to hear God speak is the best thing that can happen to

you. Waiting on God allows what is in us to surface."

Prayer in the Spirit of Jesus is costly, said Sister Carol, "it costs time and energy. It is costly to bring in the new humanity but it gives joy and fulfilment. And the more we pray, the more we will want to pray. No one has a PhD in prayer. Be poor enough to ask for the Spirit of Jesus to be given to you."

"Prayer centres us beyond ourselves, it is aligning our purposes with God", she said, "when you pray, breathe in the Spirit of the Living God. Go past the houses, past the headline and into the deep to a limitless God. Let go into that living God."

"We are filled with God more than we can c o n c e i v a b l y understand", said Sister Carol, "how happy God is to love us! God loves you with an intimacy that surpasses your dreams. The saints are, above all, people who know how much

of prayer."

"The Holy Spirit can overcome blockages in us, that arise by either nature or nurture", she said; "prayer will affect all of you, mind and body. Tears, laughter, feeling warm can all be part of the agenda

"We have a foothold into where all joy is complete", said Sister Carol, "people ask 'can I live without prayer?' If you do, you are cheating yourself of what life can offer — the joy and ecstasy that is possible."

ROSALIND RUTHERFORD ADDS....

Before the final act of worship, everyone gathered to hear the two speakers answer questions... rather like anything you wanted to know about God, the world, the universe, in 30 minutes! Here are a few examples of their answers:

"You ask how we can resolve the conflict between growing into mature Christians, but still 'being as little children'. We must try to recover the unself-consciousness and direct vision of childhood, its openness and trust. But we must stop making the childish choice of spiritual dependence when we have the resources to grow into something greater."

"We say 'We are the body of Christ' — by sharing the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper, we become signs of Christ's hospitality and welcome to the world. We celebrate the Eucharist in order to become the Eucharist."

"The purpose of God is to say something unique in each of us. What distinctive bit of the whole will come through me?"

"We must be glad that God is God."

Details about the 1996 Day of Prayer, are available from "Day of Prayer," Westminster Abbey, London SW1P 3NZ

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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)

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OXFORD DIOCESE SETS COURSE FOR THE FUTURE

Representatives from almost all the parishes in Caversham and Mapledurham were among the 1,300 Anglicans from the Oxford Diocese who spent three days in conference at Butlin's in Bognor towards the end of March. Every three years the clergy meet at a residential conference; this time they invited the laity to join them and they responded in large numbers. Under the theme title "2001 — Setting Course for the Future" the Conference divided into 30 seminars and 90 workshops of our own choosing to consider topics ranging over practically every aspect of church life and outreach; in fact it was only possible to go to four of them. Each morning members of conference joined together in larger numbers in a wide range of worship, again with plenty of choice. We also met on three occasions as a whole conference for plenary sessions with a distinguished speaker. On the last morning we all triumphantly joined together in the Final Eucharist.

Forebodings

Some of us went with some misgivings; in our case this was not helped by the failure of the Conference Handbook to turn up beforehand, nor the keys to our accommodation when we arrived. However, these and other teething troubles paled into insignificance, so good was the conference when it settled down.

Filled full!

Each day was very full, perhaps too full. We started with worship and prayer in Base Groups at 8am; ours was a mixture from our own Deanery: Greyfriars, St Agnes with St Paul, St John and St Stephen, Mapledurham and Emmer Green. The really keen had risen at 7am for a dip in the swimming pool beforehand. Mornings were divided into two; there was first a choice between seminars and workshops, followed by a choice of worship, usually in the unusual setting of the subdued lighting of the various bars at Butlins. In the afternoons there were more seminars and workshops, followed this time by the plenary sessions. Various fringe activities occupied the evenings. Meals provided an opportunity to get to



The Right Revd Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, caught informally in the High Street at Butlin's 'South Coast World', Bognor, after the final Eucharist. (Photo: Daphne Jewiss)

know those with whom we shared a set table. The whole programme was enhanced by four days of unbroken Spring sunshine and enriched by the daily appearance of a two page issue of the *Door*; not to be outdone the children produced their copy of the Little Door, known as the *Catflap*.

Appraisal

So what were the highlights? Were the Conference aims of deepening our faith, enlarging our vision for the Diocese, and developing the gifts of God's people for mission and ministry realised? What effect will it have on the rest of the Diocese who were not there?

Worship

To be away at a good Christian conference is like being on top of the mountain. It provides the ambience for a spiritual high. For us it came in the opportunities of worship. There was the life in the Eucharist for the World Church which was celebrated according to the Kenyan rite and then there was the more reflective celebration by the Iona rite and the memorable spontaneous singing of "When I survey the wondrous cross" during the communion.

Main Speakers

The plenary sessions widened our vision. Sara Maitland, author and theologian, started on the first night by putting our teeth on edge with a feminist approach. When she suggested that we divest ourselves of some of the baggage that burdens us on our pilgrimage, it seemed like throwing out a good deal of what we value. Had we really come to Bognor for this?

The gentler and reconciling approach of the new Bishop of Rochester, Bishop Nazir-Ali, on day 2 showed us how to deal with conflict. He spoke of the roles of co-existence, co-operation, justice, mercy and peace and the movement of the Holy Spirit in the world today. "A u t h e n t i c evangelism pointed away from ourselves to God and his Kingdom."

Bishop Richard Holloway, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church,

was billed as one of the most powerful communicators of Christian truth today and so he proved to be. In a stirring speech he spoke of a church trapped in its buildings, a church needing to go out like the heralds of old. The church is a community that is supposed to reflect God but reflected the world. It is no longer gathering people but a gathered people. "The church had become the spiritual arm of the National Trust". We need to move from uniformity to variety of ministry. We need to take risks and experiment. We need to move from the settler to the pioneer model. It was a stirring and stimulating final plenary that produced a standing ovation.

Seminars/Workshops and the Fringe

Any comment on the Seminar/Workshop part of the programme would not do justice to the vast range; any one of us could only experience about 3% of what was on offer. However, if other sessions were like those we attended on The Challenge of Science to the Thinking Church, the Churches and the Environment, the Encouragement of Ecumenism, the Church and the Media, and even Stress, they widened our vision and have given us new insights and ideas with which to work here in Caversham.

Among the fringe activities you could 'Sing for Joy', listen to 'Question Time', hear Bishop Winston of the twinned Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman being interviewed, watch the clergy (mainly) let their hair down, including the Bishops and Archdeacons in a Revue, or visit the Christian Resource Exhibits at the 'Oxmart'.

The Final Eucharist

It was good to see Caversham and Mapledurham folk taking leading roles, particularly in the various worship sessions. Among them our Caversham and Mapledurham deacon, the Revd Sheila Nunn, was pre-eminent having the honour and privilege of serving in that role in the great and joyful final Eucharist. This was also splendidly assisted by the musical contribution of a 'Song of Praise' type orchestra and choir under the direction of Wanda Adams. Particularly moving was the entry procession where the four Bishops of the Diocese were led in by hand by four members of the young church present at Bognor. At the end of that Eucharist we were bidden to return to our Parishes taking with us our shared hope for the future and greetings of grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This, members of conference have gladly done bringing back a Prayer Card for each parish.

Postscript

We returned from Bognor refreshed and spiritually uplifted. We judge that others were similarly affected. We believe that for the majority of people there, the Conference achieved its aims. Congratulations are due to the Organising Committee for much hard work in seeing through a mammoth undertaking with few apparent hitches. The effect on the rest of the Diocese will continue to be felt through the renewed enthusiasm of those who went. However, the level of effectiveness will inevitably depend on the degree of interest from those who did not go. The main contributions are available on tape, and hopefully the Diocese may also make them available in hard copy. They will then be a resource for further study and discussion. Let us not waste the opportunity this provides.

Owen and Daphne Jewiss

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

CAVERSHAM MU MEMBERS COMMISSIONED AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

On Wednesday the 15th March, coaches full of Mothers' Union members descended on Oxford from all over the Diocese for the Festival Eucharist and Commissioning Service at 11am in Christ Church Cathedral.

A full coach from Reading brought members from the Reading Deanery and stopped in Caversham to pick up members from the three flourishing branches of St Andrews, St Peter and St Margaret and St John.

Those commissioned were:

Diocesan President:	Barbara Teague
Diocesan Chaplain:	Christine Rowe
Unit Co-ordinators	
Prayer and Spirituality:	Connie Uren
Action and Outreach:	Primrose Gallimore
Marketing:	Margaret Hill
Diocesan Secretary:	Jackie Walker
Diocesan Treasurer:	Cynthia Dales
Diocesan Trainer:	Felicity Randall
Convenanting Secretary:	Sue Walker

In addition, all the members of the new units which have come into being in the recent reorganisation of the Mothers' Union were commissioned.

There was quite a buzz of conversation as the congregation waited for the service to begin as was inevitable when so many friends were united together on such a joyful occasion. The impressive procession of banners from the deaneries in the diocese of Oxford preceded the Bishop of Oxford, resplendent in his full regalia. Although the Bishop wore his mitre it was noticeable that, in contrast to their popular image, very few MU members were wearing hats! The sermon was delivered by the Revd Christopher Neal, Vicar of Thame, the immediate past Chaplain.

The singing was led by a choir composed of choirs from Burnham and Reading. Several members of the Reading deanery choir are members of Caversham MU branches. They rehearse on Monday afternoons from January to May at St Mary's House and would welcome new members. Their next engagement is the Deanery Festival to be held at St Mary's the Butts on 16th May. This year they also sang at the Women's Day of Prayer service at St Mary's.

Among the officers commissioned were two MU members from Caversham branches: the Reverend Christine Rowe is a non-stipendiary minister at St John's. She became a member of the Mothers' Union in March 1986, about the same time as she began her ministry in the church; Sue Walker is branch treasurer of St Peter's and St Margaret's MU. She was enrolled as a member of the Mothers' Union in October 1991 when the present branch opened. For a short time Sue assisted the late Enid Treharne in administering the MU covenants for the whole diocese. When Enid died in 1993 Sue took over this task.

Both Christine and Sue decided to join the MU because they were attracted by the Aim and Objects of the Mother's Union which is a world-wide society whose Aim is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life.

Almost all those commissioned have been guests at branch meetings in Caversham. Primrose Gallimore is to be the guest speaker at the next St Peter's and St Margaret's branch meeting on Wednesday the 26th April at 8pm.



Sue Walker, recently commissioned as MU Convenanting Secretary for the Oxford Diocese. (Photo by: Walton Adams).

READING FREE CHURCH WOMENS COUNCIL

60 YEARS' CELEBRATION

60 people sat down to a celebration lunch at the Reading Technical College on 31st March to give thanks for sixty years of the work of the Reading Free Church Women's Council. Captain Mrs Ann Holt from Northampton was the guest speaker after lunch, then Mrs Joan Moody (of Caversham Heights Methodist Church), this year's President, recalled past Presidents and honoured them. Many past Presidents were present and messages from others were read out. The event closed with everyone joining in the singing of 'Give Thanks'.



Past and present Presidents of the Free Church Women's Council at their luncheon.

THE LINK GROUP

On March 27th Sheila Goldsmith spoke to Link Group members about The Churches in Reading Women's Centre. It began in November 1992 as a drop-in for women in need of friendly care and has progressed to provide a skills exchange as well. A gentle approach is needed to help women to regain self esteem and to feel loved, wanted and accepted. Personal dignity as well as informal training in crafts such as knitting and dressmaking, painting and doughcraft comes with a philosophy of partnership. There are Helper Partners (Volunteers) and Prayer Partners, and Partners Meetings so that all have a part to play.

Sir Gerry Vaughan is the President, Revd Tom Stuckey Vice President. The Centre costs £300 per month to run, and hopes to go for charitable status. There is a money grant to help but support is always needed. CIRDIC provide some food to help with lunches for 25-30 a week. Link Group felt this to be a very worthwhile centre and are glad to pass on a request for knitting wool and lengths of dressmaking material. Do go and see them at the Wesley Church Hall, Queen's Road; perhaps you can help them.

ST ANDREW'S FELLOWSHIP

St Andrew's Fellowship members were joined by friends from the congregation and friends of the New Elizabethan Singers for their concert in St Andrew's Church. It was a sad occasion in some ways as this was the last time Frank Terry would visit the Fellowship with the Singers, but the audience was treated to some delightful music which they obviously appreciated. All too soon the singing ended, and the party repaired to the Hall for tea and biscuits. It is sad Frank Terry will not conduct the Singers any more, but they hope to return to St Andrew's under their new conductor.

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

You might be surprised at what goes on in some churches. At Caversham Heights Methodist Church it's seven days a week, not just Sundays.

On 13th May, 10am to 4pm, Caversham Heights will be holding an OPEN DAY with an exhibition and demonstrations of what takes place on the premises. There will be over thirty stalls varying from Toddlers' to adult activities, worship to finance, dance to house groups: information and demonstrations, literature handouts and people to chat to at the stalls, refreshments and ploughman's lunch.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church has a worshipping community of some five hundred people and is home to many activities — church and non-church. It is anxious to play its part in the community as it shares its resources and goodwill, as well as to further its primary purpose of telling people of the benefits of the Christian faith.

You are very welcome to see what the Methodists get up to and have a chat over a cup of tea. The church stands on the corner of Woodcote Road and Highmoor Road with the hall entrance off Highmoor Road.

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TO KAZAKHSTAN WITH EQUIP TRUST

by Jean Sawyer

Friday, March 17th arrived all too quickly. Most of the ten teachers who had been recruited by Equip Trust to run an Education Conference in Shymkent, met together at Henley Baptist Church before leaving for Heathrow. The traffic jams en route were interminable and then there was more delay waiting for confirmation of the extra baggage allowance which had been promised. The plane was boarded quickly and was less than half full. This meant several of us had the luxury of lying flat during the short time between dinner and breakfast. It was difficult to believe that Tashkent Airport is an international one as the facilities are minimal. The bus driver was found, the cases piled in and the journey to Shymkent begun. As the day progressed and the temperature rose everyone decided the wrong clothes had been brought. The first impressions of both Tashkent and Shymkent were that they were very depressing places. Most of the blocks of flats were drab, everywhere was grey and dusty and there was little variety.

After a day or two

impressions changed, as the Kazakh New Year was celebrated on March 22nd. Festivities began in the schools the day before with traditional houses being erected and tables laid with local dishes including a sheep's head. A concert was produced in the school's forecourt and exhibitions of handiwork arranged. Important guests were entertained in the School Director's room and it was really difficult to eat only a little. At least there was plenty of tea to drink. For the town celebrations, festivities took place on a much grander scale in Lenin Square. People were dressed in their best and many were very colourful. School 64 had a tent and while I was there drinking tea, a whole crowd of 'patriarchs' — war veterans — piled in and ate heartily. There was quite an atmosphere. After exhausting the activities my hostess took me to the house of another English teacher where we seemed to be eating from 3pm-6pm. It is the custom for friends to drop in and greet each

other on New Year's Day so the door bell rang quite often.

By this time schools were closed for the holiday so chances of watching lessons and discussing teachers' interests or needs were over. So much for trying to gear the seminars and lectures at the conference to the situation as it is in schools! There was a bonus to this, however, as the education authorities organised a trip to the foothills. The group was driven to a steep sided valley which was well populated with buildings for summer camps. Some were permanently shut as there was no money available to run them. At about 11.00am we were given a 'snack' after a hand-washing ceremony. There was bread, cheese, cold meat (including horse meat), bread and grated carrot, followed by fruit. The party was then taken to the end of the valley road where some people scrambled up the hillside to get better views. Some beautiful wild flowers, including golden anemones were seen. After more exploration the group

was taken back to the first camp site where another meal had been prepared. We thought we had finished after soup, a meat course and fruit, but then kebabs appeared. That was not the end, however, as these were followed by pilau. At last we left, but two hours later, were sitting in front of our hostesses' evening meal!

A couple of days at a hotel in the mountains had been promised before the conference, but money didn't run to it, so the group had a retreat in the lead works 'hotel'. The setting was more rural than that in central Shymkent and a river ran by. The rooms were quite comfortable but the food consisted mainly of gristly meat. It was good to have time for prayer, planning and relaxation before leading seminars.

Monday, and the start of the Conference arrived at last. Would teachers actually go? Had we prepared the right material? The Conference got away to a late start (the administration was a bit chaotic) but people were there. Each morning there were two lectures followed by a choice of up to eight seminars in the afternoon. The latter included Personal Social

and Moral Issues, Teaching 3-7 year olds, Teaching a Foreign Language, History, Needs of the Whole Child, Science and Special Needs. They were well attended, many questions were asked and the teachers were most appreciative. After the last session farewells were said in the hall and both the English team and some Kazakhs sang some songs. After these we were hurried upstairs where a meal was set out. Seating was important, but the organisers did not always agree as to where we should sit — it could take three attempts before we were settled. The Education Officers were the hosts and the Director handed the traditional sheep's head to the chief guest, who had to cut off pieces first for the hosts and then the other guests. During the meal there were many speeches.

Once the meal was over the group was taken by car to the Administration headquarters for another banquet! At this there was no sheep's head but there were many toasts. Glasses were clinking

Continued on Page 9

METHODIST PRESIDENT OF CONFERENCE VISITS READING

The 22 churches of the Reading and Silchester Circuit came together on 11th March to welcome the Rev. Dr. Leslie Griffiths, currently President of Conference (equivalent to an Archbishop in Anglican terms) and head of the Methodist Church, as part of his visit to the Southampton District.

The theme for the day was "Signs of Life" and began with a coffee morning and ploughman's lunch at Tadley Main Road Methodist Church where the President and his wife Margaret saw plans for redevelopment — to house a growing church, resulting from opening a Sunday School and then a youth club under the ministry of the Rev. Veronica Faulks.

Dr. Griffiths then moved on to Hugh Faringdon School where each of the churches had an exhibition stand — from the very new ecumenical church-planting at Woodley Airfield to the town centre churches, Tilehurst and the two Caversham churches, and country chapels spread far and wide around the outskirts of Reading. That afternoon the President spoke on "Christianity and Contemporary Culture."

In the evening there was a Circuit Rally at Wesley Church, Queen's Road, where the President was introduced by the Superintendent minister, Rev. Tom Stuckey, as 'our Leslie' (since he had been a Circuit minister here in the seventies with responsibility for the two Caversham churches). The Chairman of the Southampton District, Rev. Nigel Collinson, was present for this important occasion. The Hannington Brass Band, conducted by former Grenadier Guardsman Tony Wythe, led the singing, a circuit orchestra played Prokofiev's "Troika" and Purcell's "Rondeau" and the West Indian Gospel Choir thrilled us with their joyful singing of two songs.

Dr. Griffiths spoke on the text "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" with great emphasis on "SEEK", pointing us to a HUNGER and THIRST for God in our lives and witness.



Dr Leslie Griffiths talks to members of Caversham Heights Methodist Church at the Exhibition.



Display of Gosbrook Road Methodist Church at the Exhibition.

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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

MUSICAL CHAIRS

By the time you read this there won't be many people in central Caversham unaware of the battle taking place between traders; it is only a pity that the new Traders' Association, under the leadership of Pat Howard, has not had time to tackle the question, as far as I know, of seeing that shopkeepers here have at least some measure of security. It can't be all that long ago that a trader setting up in the district had to show that nobody else within, say, several hundred yards, was selling the same kind of thing already. Cigarettes, newspapers etc - typical examples of what I mean. There really isn't any need for me to go into great detail about what has been happening here recently, particularly concerning flower shops. Heaven knows our shopkeepers are having a difficult time at present and anything which encourages them to battle it out with each other is surely self-defeating.

In a letter to the Henley paper, our good friend Pat Taylor asks what happened to the law preventing such situations occurring. Briefly, it was scrapped a long while ago. She also asks what of people selling leases - and there, I think, she has touched on a very

important aspect of the whole business. A few of our shops are individually owned but, alas, too many seem to be in the hands of a few landlords whose main concern is for finance.

Yet I cannot avoid saying how very pleased some of us were to see that our long-term traders are getting a great deal of support from their old customers, people who value good service and are not merely anxious to walk the streets looking for someone who is selling something for 'Tuppence cheaper'.

PAVEMENTS AND ROADS

One point Pat Howard and her colleagues are anxious to bring to the attention of the powers-that-be is the state of pavements and roads which are being dug up at such a rate and often so inefficiently relaid that walking round the shops is just not funny. A bit of competition no doubt is good for everyone and there are times when one sees the advantage of private tendering, but when the result ends in the kind of swimming pool we have in South Street on a wet day (I believe the firm that did the work there are now out of business, so there is no come-back for the Council even if they wished), then there's something seriously wrong.

Just a few thoughts for you to mull over in the coming months.

TALKING CATS

I was fortunate enough recently to spend a few hours at the Cedarwood Cattery at Checkendon - friends of mine were holding the fort while the owner spent a few days away. My, was I impressed - I knew it was reckoned to be a very good and caring establishment where, for comparatively small sums one's feline friends were taken care of, but I'd no idea just how much the owners really cared for their charges until, browsing through instructions left for my friends, I found notes not just detailing what particular food and when, was to be given to any particular cat, but the added note of comment such as 'likes a cuddle' made me realise just how much Val and Brian Bates really involve themselves in the work.

So, with holidays in the offing, why not give them a ring at their home in Deers Lane, Hook End, Checkendon (Phone Checkendon 687373) and make arrangements for your cats to be cared for as well, if not better, than you would care for them.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE

I wonder how many of you remember young Guy Brown from the Prospect Street Pet Shop, when he appeared in a short TV series many years ago. At the time none of us really knew just how far Guy would go in his chosen profession. I had to tear myself away from the shop recently when Jill and Jerry produced a pile of photos taken on the Oriana when it docked in Southampton.

Guy is now an entertainments officer and very smart he looks in his uniform. I understand he still takes a very active part, particularly in dancing - I'd love to see him but somehow I can't see myself taking a cruise. Good on you, Guy.

WINE TASTING

Knowing what an increase there has been in this activity recently, I was interested, when on a visit to the Fondue Pot in Prospect Street recently, to see that the owners run wine-tasting evenings where for something like £10 a time, one can learn a lot about wines and enjoy some excellent nosh at the same time. Apparently they often have bookings from clubs and business groups, so it would be a good thing to ring up beforehand if you want to make a booking. (Phone 463400).

BEN ARCHER

Just before going to print we heard the very sad news that our dear friend Ben who, among other activities, has faithfully photographed so much for the 'Bridge', passed away after a comparatively short but painful illness. It is probably a bit late for this issue (tho' I could be wrong) but if it is then I'm sure next month's copy will contain a very full obituary of one who, with his wife, Joan, has served this community so well for so long. Ben was a real gentleman in all senses of the word and I really cannot say more than that he is going to be very much missed in Caversham and all of us who have anything to do with the production of this paper are feeling very sad at the moment. Our love and prayers are very much with Joan.

Continued from page 8

continuously. Some of the party found yet more food waiting for them when they returned to their hosts.

Many in Kazakhstan are without hope for a better future. At least under Communism there was a structure, people had jobs and food and they were paid. The present administration

does little to help the ordinary person, unemployment is widespread, there is tension between the Kazakhs who are not in power and the remaining Russians, salaries are not always paid and factories are closing. Kazakhstan has many raw materials and could have a thriving economy

with efficient management. The people are so hospitable, the extended family is all important to them and they are generous to a fault. We need to pray that they will be given a vision of a better future and that each of them realise that they can help to make the vision a reality.

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BALLET IN THE AIR

We stopped the car on a lonely Pembrokeshire road to observe a distant Buzzard and Red Kite soaring together. Soon the Kite left its 'mate' to fly towards us then resumed soaring and lost height, constantly turning its head to look down, as if in greeting. We instinctively waved and spoke to it as 'landing' looked imminent. It was an

unforgettable but undeserved, act of rapport, in view of man's persecution of these rare raptors for generations.

A recent late-afternoon visit to the venue of my kite-flying club sharply reminded me of the above incident.

Most of the kite-flyers had departed as the light, north wind was insufficient for their 'stunters' and I declined to parti-

cipate due to a heavy cold.

As a final effort, one of the two remaining Members put aloft an eight foot, green, rectangular 'Flexifoil' which although capable of 100mph and lifting a heavy man off his feet, (definitely NO 'toy for a child'), performed gently and gracefully in the hands of the skilled flyer.

Unbelievably, the

flexifoil was shortly accompanied by a real, live, Red Kite, which soared alongside, adjusting its forked, red tail to the air-currents.

Although the 'flexi' was held stationary to give the Kite confidence, it instantly seemed to 'know what was required' and aped its 'companion's' movements. They followed each other slowly along straight lines, gaining or losing height together whilst soaring side by side and performing as if carefully rehearsed.

Variations of manoeuvres continued for quite fifteen minutes, until the wind dropped, and as the flexifoil was brought to hand, the Kite glided away into the sunset.

One reflected how long the show might have continued - with

encores, had the wind persisted. I felt very privileged to witness this unique spectacle. What a pity it could not have been filmed, for all to see.

The Red Kite is a truly elegant creature, with its gentle flight behaviour and - if permitted - proved rapport with man. Thankfully, they appear to have been saved from near-extinction in Britain by re-introduction into well-protected areas, one being within fairly easy reach from Caversham.

We continue to be tight-lipped about their locations and trust that in future the Kites will remain, as they now are, fully protected by law.

From now on Red Kite can do without its shotgun toters and poisoners.

SCOPS OWL

the CLUBS**Caversham Ladies Club**

It was good to see so many members attending this AGM; it showed their interest in their Club. Mrs Brenda Strong, Chairman, opened the meeting with her usual warm welcome, and thanked them all for coming, with a reminder that the outing to Bourton-on-the-Water was arranged for May 18th, leaving at 9.30am.

It was now time for the event of the

afternoon, reports from the Committee for the past year, financial and otherwise. These were all well accepted by members who showed their appreciation in the usual way. It was then time for the present committee to retire and a new one to be chosen but members asked if the retiring Committee were agreeable to return en bloc, and there was a full show of hands to their request, so the retiring Committee accepted with thanks for the members' confidence, and a promise to serve them to the best of their ability.

It was now time for the sale of Bring and Buy Stall products and in the capable hands of Mrs Phil Weston, assisted by the Committee, things were fast disappearing and tables looking very bare. At last it was time for that very welcome 'cuppa' before the closure of a happy and interesting afternoon of the 1995-96 AGM.

Caversham Heights T.G.

The chairman welcomed those present at the annual general meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild in March, mentioning that there are 69 members, who include 14 new members; there have been evening meetings

during the year. Mrs Sylvia Robinson from Federation announced that Margaret Mellin remained as chairman, Heather Richards from the drama group was to be vice-chairman, while Pat Read continues as treasurer and Jancis Brown would take over as secretary. An effective committee has been formed with an assistant for the secretary and a member who will organise outings. The retiring secretary's report described among other items some of the speakers' talks. For instance, there was one about tracing a family tree, Mr Heron's talk about the welfare of swans on the Thames, Mr Noyes' "Changing Face of Reading", Mr Minchell's visits to Moscow and St Petersburg and Mr Arnold's "Celebration of Chairs." Dorothy Moore had organised the summer outing to Brighton, as well as the rest of the social studies programme. Help had been given at the British Apple Fair.

The treasurer reported that owing to some successful events during the year worries about the balance have been dispelled. Money was raised for charities, including the Stroke Association, Feed the Children and the Rwanda Emergency Appeal. Sick members had been visited and a tribute was paid to founder member Audrey Denning, who has died. A donation at her funeral was given to the Multiple Sclerosis Society, as Audrey's son suffers from this disease.

Spirits were lifted by the birthday celebration in honour of another founder member, Clarice Lott. Charming baskets of flowers were given to the retiring officers and committee

Turn to page 11**Friends of the Reading and District Cancer Care****COULD YOU HELP US AT OUR CHARITY SHOP?**

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the CLUBS

From page 10

members. An unusual note! A session at a workshop in a garage in Reading had been arranged. Members at social studies later in the month had a treat when Mrs Meryl Beek gave an account with slides of her walk "Over the Top". The walkers came "out of the grime into the green" at Ilkley in Yorkshire and found the Dales Way which leads to Bowness. Following the course of the river Wharfe at first, they passed through Bolton Abbey, Linton, Kettlewell, Buckden and Gayle, where there was a free day. Dentdale followed, then Sedburgh and the river Lune were reached. The Kent which flows north of Kendal led them on to Windermere and by steamer and open-top bus they eventually reached Grasmere, where they stayed three days. This talk should be heard to be properly enjoyed!

Chazey WI

On Tuesday 4th April Chazey WI celebrated its 13th birthday. Mr Bob Aggis gave a talk

with slides on Container Gardening. Having started by disclaiming any professional gardening or photographic abilities, he proved to be an expert on both! Mr Aggis raises his plants in a greenhouse which is heated to encourage growth and then displays them in a north-facing conservatory where the temperature is maintained at 45°F. Cyclamen especially do well and some, grown from bought seedlings, have been in flower since January. For other early displays, narcissus, tulips and lily-of-the-valley in 5 or 6 inch pots flower well and later on chrysanthemums provide 2 foot wide cushions of small flowers. It was a half hour of gorgeous colour photography and practical ideas. One thing is clear - people prefer a warm 68°F to 70°F and flowering plants like a cool 45°F, so no lolling about in chairs in a real plant conservatory!

The Resolutions meeting is on 2nd May at Mapledurham Pavilion at 8pm. Members ordering bulbs need to bring their order forms and

cheques and to pay for the cruise on the Kennet & Avon Canal which will replace the meeting on June 6th.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

The Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild held their Annual General Meeting in St Barnabas Hall on Tuesday evening March 14; the Chairman Mrs Avis Dalzell thanked the retiring committee for a year's work and welcomed the new committee members wishing them well for the coming year. The retiring Chairman Mrs Dalzell was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

Mrs Madge Sutherland gave a talk and slide show on "My Impressions of America" gained over two visits. A vote of thanks was given to the speaker by Mrs L Nicholson for this excellent talk.

St Peter's Wives Group

At the February meeting Susan Barry provided creative ideas aplenty for occupying the long winter evenings and producing attractive and lasting decorations for the home. In her talk entitled "Through the eye of my needle", Mrs Barry described how her interest in needlework had developed through her life, from early school day memories of using transfers, to gradually trying out various techniques including embroidery and tapestry. She also explained about stretching and framing the finished articles. Mrs Barry brought along a wide range of her work which was much admired by an appreciative audience. The talk was enlivened with anecdotes associated with her hobby.

By the March meeting thoughts were turning towards summer and the outside of the home. Martin Sheldrake, from the Toad Hall Garden Centre, came to talk about hanging baskets. He showed a varied selection of baskets, liners and compost and advised on their merits before expounding on fertilisers and watering. Then to the plants themselves: numerous suggestions on what might be used, lots of tips on plant preparation and care with a few myths demolished along the

way. Martin was clearly a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic gardener; he had laid out a large display of his products and generously gave samples to the Group. As he talked, his assistant, Lyn, ably demonstrated how to fill a hanging basket from the array of plants brought along for the talk. We look forward to a brighter Caversham this summer.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

The March Annual General Meeting was well attended. After a ballot (the first for some years) Mrs Livingstone, the Returning Officer, announced the new Committee and the new chairman, Mrs Doris Smith.

Mrs E. Odey was invited to continue as President for the coming year and delighted members by accepting. Mrs Odey then thanked the retiring Chairman, Mrs Joan Spall, for her hard work during the past two years and also made a presentation to Mrs Spall on behalf of the Guild. Two new members, Mrs Penny and Mrs Allum, were welcomed and will both serve on the new Committee.

An Easter Bonnet was the subject for the March competition and some very enterprising creations were displayed. Mrs E. Hodgkinson's entry was judge the winner. Mrs Doris Smith was presented with the competition cup, having won the most competitions over the year.

Tea, with delicious home made cakes, provided by Mrs Spall, brought the AGM to a close.

A varied and interesting programme is prepared for members' enjoyment during the coming months and new members/visitors are always most welcome. Meetings are held at Church House, Caversham, on the third Thursday of each month at 2 o'clock.

Caversham W.I.

At the annual meeting of Caversham W.I. the VCO, Mrs Collinge, was welcomed and conducted the election of the officers and committee. Miss M. Cameron was re-elected to the Committee, Mrs S. Taylor as Secretary and

Mrs S. Myszor as Treasurer. Members contributed to a lively discussion on the current state of the W.I. and possible developments in the future.

The President gave her report on the previous year's activities and the financial report was adopted. Mrs Sue Taylor gave the vote of thanks and the raffle was drawn. Miss M. Cameron won the competition cup.

Members are looking forward to another busy year with some interesting speakers lined up.

New members are always welcome at Church House on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30pm.

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