

# MAGIC FOR GOD'S SAKE

**W**ellknown local figure, Norman Kent, retired from his tailoring business in Church House at the bottom of Prospect Street, Caversham, in December 1994. However the name of Kent goes on as his son has bought out his father's share and is continuing with the business. Norman is, in fact, even better known in the area for his reputation as a magician and a puppeteer as well as his expertise as a fundraiser par excellence for the charity, Save the Children Fund.

Norman was born in Birmingham but came to the area at the age of two or three. He attended several schools in Reading as his mother had "itchy feet" and liked to move house. At the age of sixteen he entered the National Fire Service as a messenger and dispatch rider and from there he went on to join the Army Reconnaissance Corps. He then proudly served in the 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars.

After his demob in 1947 Norman went to work for the Ministry of Agriculture and it was not long before he met Betty who was to become his wife after a four-year engagement. Their first meeting was not auspicious, it started with a row but Betty was soon won over by Norman's charm. He quickly decided that he couldn't afford to take her out on the pay he was receiving and so he moved jobs and joined Album Bros (Tailors) in the Oxford Road. This was Norman's first experience of the 'rag trade', and it was here that he learned some of the skills which enabled him to start his own tailoring business later on in life.

After their marriage the newly-weds moved to London where they enjoyed a "four-year honeymoon". By all accounts during those four years they painted the town, attending the Royal Tournament, going to dinners and shows and, as they explored the city, developing a keen interest in the history of the capital.

By 1954 Betty was pregnant with their first child, Roger, and they moved back to Reading to settle in the house which they still occupy today. However, at that time they had only the ground-floor flat and another family lived upstairs. As time passed the size of the Kent family increased and soon they had five children, four sons and a daughter. When the family in the upper flat moved out the Kents took over the whole house.

As soon as the children were old enough they started going to Sunday School at St Andrew's Church. It was when the children missed attendance for a few weeks that the

Vicar called. In the ensuing conversation the Vicar admonished the young couple. "Don't send them. Bring them", and so the whole Kent family started going to Church.

By 1960 Norman was teaching in Sunday School and by 1964 he was Sunday School Superintendent. In the late 1960's he was Superintendent of the combined St Andrew's and St Margaret's Sunday Schools.

It was during this period of bringing up the



Norman and friend Clyde.

- Roger Kent

family that Norman became interested in magic. It started with entertaining his own children and such was his popularity at their birthday parties that other parents started booking him to entertain their young guests. As he became more ambitious he started to make the props for his shows and such was his skill that it was not long before he was asked to make props for other magicians. When Norman was asked to repair some Punch and Judy puppets he studied the original designs and such was his success that he was asked to produce a set of puppets for Betty Davenport, proprietor of a shop in London selling puppets and props for magicians, and grand-daughter of Louis Davenport, the Great Magician.

It was not long before Norman realised that magic could be used to get across the message to the children in Sunday School. He instigated a project "Magic for God's Sake", once again making all the props and models himself. Now he was able to use his talents and creativity in his work for God.

Norman feels that magic, puppets, and marionettes are a wonderful way of communicating with children and are of particular benefit to children with special needs, especially where other methods of communication might fail. Norman is a real family man and obviously has a great empathy with young people. It is quite apparent that among his warmest memories are those of the delight that his performances have given to so many children over the years.

continued on page 2



MR. PUNCH



# TALKING POINT

by  
The Reverend David Moody  
Caversham Heights Methodist Church



## NEEDLING

I'm not sure that Jesus was at all mistaken in his observation of how difficult it is for a rich person to know God. What he actually said was, "How hard it is for the wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God".

Like motorists who think that if everyone went on the bus we'd improve air quality, 'but not me'; people seem to think that Christianity is for everyone but them. Christianity, so they say, should be about redeeming (now there's a good theological word) the failures of this world. Only when you know you are a failure, have reached the depth of degradation, do you need to turn to God. Just like sick people who become earnest in prayer for the first time when the doctor tells them there is nothing more that can be done. After all, wasn't Jesus concerned about the poor, the sick, the unfortunate, the maladjusted.? Otherwise you don't need God.

We might not say that in so many words but we do by our actions. We who are prosperous and well off vote with our feet. We're all right. We've made it in life with job, home and family. What do we want with God?

Not much, I would think, if you keep your nose to the grindstone of materialism and the 'here and now'. After all you have made it - and you even have a little space and a few pennies for those who haven't.

However, the trouble with Christianity is that it asks awkward questions. Do you really live just for your work? Is all that matters in life your own personal achievements and comforts? Is your dearest time consuming hobby that important? That's what life is really all about! You've stopped and closely examined the great questions of life - Who am I? What am I?

People want to define sin in terms of wickedness and evil - especially when they think it doesn't apply to them. Nice try! Sin is much more insidious. When you turn your back on God and think you can do without him. It's an old chestnut - a three thousand year old Psalm has 'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God" '.

It may be that we can do without God some of the time, but we are here speaking of ultimates. Our total happiness and satisfaction and what we are about in life is bound up with God. Sometimes we have to look to the far horizons, the eternity. We do this in Jesus. Through him we see God and find ourselves.

That's what the churches in Caversham are about. Come to church and by persistent searching find life's answers. It's not easy. Nothing worthwhile is. But don't get so far from Jesus that you can never claw your way back. At the end of the day 'It's down to you'. Don't let your present success and achievements blind you to the truth about yourself. That's what Jesus was speaking about when he referred to camels and needles.

## MAGIC FOR GOD'S SAKE - cont'd from p.1

Of course, Betty supported Norman and they worked together raising the family and putting on magic and puppet shows. Then when Betty decided that she wanted to qualify as a nurse it was again a shared enterprise and Norman gave her all the support she needed.

During those busy years Norman became involved in yet another enterprise, something that was to take up a great deal of his time, energy and talents. It all began with a Cheese and Wine Party at the University. So impressed was he by a report given by someone who had been working in a war-torn part of the world that he decided to throw himself into helping to raise money for the Save the Children Fund. With characteristic enthusiasm he founded the Caversham branch of SCF and was its first Chairman.

Norman is quick to stress that he was just one of the many who helped to raise thousands of pounds, nevertheless in 1988 his efforts were recognised with a Certificate of Appreciation for "22 years of tireless fundraising" presented by the President of the Caversham branch, Air Marshal Sir Allen Davies KCB, CBE.

In 1968 Norman masterminded what he believes to have been the first sponsored walk ever to be held in this country and that was only the beginning. There have been Sponsored Silences, Sponsored Slims and Sponsored Psalm-singing. In 1984 there was even a Sponsored Sermon when the Revd Richard Kingsbury preached for nine hours non-stop and raised £2,000. There have been parachute jumps, concerts, parties and quizzes and, of course, magic and puppet shows. At carnivals and fetes Norman, Betty and the family publicised the work of SCF with a special SCF stand which Norman had constructed from scrap timber and materials. Norman is no longer actively involved in this work although his interest in anything which contributes to the welfare of children remains.

For some years puppetry and magic overtook the tailoring as a source of income and Norman can reminisce that he was once called upon to act as puppetry consultant in the film "Mr Tumbleweed" with Sir Harry Secombe, Terry Scott and Lance Percival. He was also very briefly involved with the Generation Game. He also remembers with a chuckle that on one occasion when he had been asked to

make a life-sized Martian, he painted the figure green and left it out on the lawn to dry. Someone saw it and, perhaps thinking that Caversham had been invaded by aliens, telephoned the Evening Post.

Last year Norman was



stage manager for the hit show "Joseph and the Amazing Technicoloured Dreamcoat" produced by the Revd Bill Carpenter at St Andrew's, a great success and a complete sellout.

On a more serious level since Norman suffered and recovered, from cancer ten years ago he has been utterly convinced of the power of prayer. He joined the Guild of St Raphael, a movement in which members pray regularly for and care compassionately about the sick and distressed. Once a month there is a Eucharist at St Andrew's specifically incorporating the Ministry of Healing.

This work is close to Norman's heart and he is secretary of the St Andrew's branch. In addition, every Wednesday there is a prayer group meeting at Betty's and Norman's house.

Life is a little less hectic now although with nine grandchildren one suspects that the magic and the puppets still go on. The family tradition certainly continues for all four sons have their own Punch and Judy shows. Norman says that with retirement "the sense of urgency has been taken away". He looks forward to some leisure time in which he can indulge his passion for painting, making models and gardening. His artistic talent is, he believes, inherited from his maternal grandfather who had the honour to have one of his paintings hung in the Tate.

After all the years of busyness and activity Norman enjoys his home, he has no wish to travel far and has plenty with which to fill his time. He can look back on a life lived to the full in the service of God and others. He will continue that service in what is perhaps a less conspicuous but no less worthwhile way. We wish Norman and Betty many happy years of retirement. M.T.

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

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

The dates for November will be Monday 2 October and Wednesday 4 October.

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 393002.

Printed by Chiltern Offset, Amersham, Bucks.

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# AN ANCIENT CEREMONY AT CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

With the Swan Uppers rowing into Caversham on July 20th for their annual Swan Upping, readers might like to know more about this ancient custom, especially as there is such an interest in swans locally, so I will rewrite and add to an article I wrote about these birds in 1984.

Some six hundred and twenty-five years ago the law forbade anyone who did not possess a freehold of the clear value of five marks to keep swans. They were considered a royal bird in those days and to a certain extent still are now. The right to mark a swan in those early days cost six shillings and eight pence, a lot of money, so long ago. Any person driving away swans in breeding time or stealing eggs risked a year in prison.

Each year on the Thames and some other rivers swans are examined and marked. This was known as Swan Upping. Owners of the birds once paid the swan masters (senior Swan Uppers) for each bird he marked and were duty bound to give him a free dinner and supper for his day's work. First the families of swans were rounded up and the unmarked young in each were caught and a mark cut in the skin of the beak similar to that of the parents. These marks were entered into a register. Any unmarked mature lone swans were seized for the crown and given a royal marking. The young birds (cygnets) were easy to identify as their feathers were a brownish colour.

For the most part markings were simple, but a few were heraldic in design. Each cut in the skin was called a nick. A Thames-side tavern in London is called the Swan with Two Necks (Nicks).

The men who looked after these great flocks of birds were called swanherds and no doubt they had a vocabulary of special words that they used in connection with their work. They certainly referred to the black knob at the base of the beak as a berry. An adult male is called a cob and the female a pen.

Years ago many more people had the right to own swans as the reproduction of beak marks shows. Now only the Queen

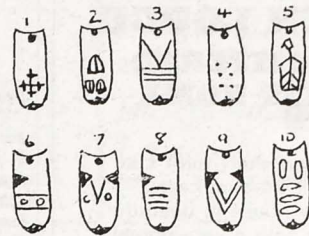
and two London livery companies, the Vintners and the Dyers, have this ancient privilege.

Many centuries ago the senior swan markers must have had very grand uniforms. Today it is a special blazer. The Royal swan upper wears a scarlet one with brass buttons. That of the Vintners' is dark green with a swan design on the collar, whilst the Dyers' is a blue.

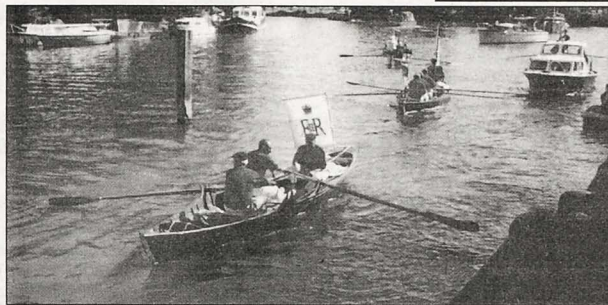
It would be sad if this ancient ceremony were to cease. Their historic progress up the Thames takes the uppers from Sunbury to Abingdon. When I wrote about the swans fifteen years ago there were very few beside Caversham Bridge. Since then the swan markers must have noticed a great difference on their yearly passage up the Thames past Caversham.

M.K.

## SWAN MARKS



- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Oxford             | 6. Dyers' Co. (ancient mark)    |
| 2. Cambridge          | 7. Vintners' Co. (ancient mark) |
| 3. Charles I          | 8. Dyers' Co. (modern mark)     |
| 4. Queen of Charles I | 9. Vintners' Co. (modern mark)  |
| 5. Eton College       | 10. Queen Victoria              |



Swan Uppers in Caversham

J. Hardy

## Why 'Scops Owl'?

Several times I have been asked why I chose 'Scops Owl' as my pseudonym.

My first contact with this small but rare bird was at Dummer (Hants) in 1980.

One memorable night was spent listening to its call as it 'piped' every two or three seconds from a tree above us whilst Chris, my 'mentor' and I drowsed in the car, awaiting the dawn, surrounded by many other equally excited twitchers from far and wide.

At 5.00am were were rewarded with a fifteen second glimpse of the Scops Owl flying rapidly from its roost into a copse on the far side of a field where it remained during daylight hours.

Initially, residents had their electricity and drainage checked for faults, being unaware that a bird was responsible for the peculiar nocturnal noises. The owl, however, continued to disturb their sleep for most of that summer.

Some years later I was using C.B. (Citizens Band) radio, constantly 'vetted' by the authorities, when a young transmitter daily pleaded, "Birdwatcher for a copy" - requesting a contact.

Now we hardened twitchers are usually 'gregarious adults' who speak our own language and have little time for 'fledgling bird-spotters' who could learn their subject within the school's Bird Club, assuming they have one (and many schools worth their salt do so), or join the YOC. (Junior branch of the RSPB).

With time the 'pleadings' became more urgent - "Birdwatcher for a copy - please" (not strictly C.B. terminology). Before greater sacrilege could occur I felt duty-bound to advise the caller, for his own sake, as to correct procedure. I challenged him, "Scops Owl, do you read me Birdwatcher, over?" The reaction was immediate and slightly unexpected. He was obviously genuine, and instantly able to 'reel off' an accurate and detailed description of a Scops Owl, the moment I asked him.

I reflected how few adult birders, let alone younger ones would have been quite so adept. He had passed his 'initiation test' admirably and, with full parental approval, later 'grew his wings' within our group. He was then living at the University with his family.

Coincidentally, my twitcher friend's daughter happened to be friends with the lad's sister, the link with birds not then having been established.

It was thus that 'Scops Owl' became my pseudonym.

SCOPS OWL



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## NEW BRIDGE NURSERY SCHOOL

Dear Editors,

Thank you for the support and interest you have shown in our nursery this year. As regular readers will know, the school celebrated one hundred years of education, first as St John's Primary School, and since 1970 as New Bridge Nursery School. We were thrilled to have so many visitors to our open day in February, and Governors and staff felt that all our ex-pupils and staff would like to know about our next event.

To mark the occasion of the nursery Silver Jubilee we will hold an "open week" from Monday 25th until Friday 29th September when visitors are welcome to see the nursery "in action". The morning session is 9 until 11.30am each day, and our afternoons are 12.30 until 3.00pm. Anyone with an interest in the nursery will be most welcome, but do please report to the office on arrival. We have a number of events planned for the week including planting a tree, a family picnic and the sharing of an enormous "birthday cake". Although it's a celebratory week we hope to keep the sessions for our children as "normal" as possible so that everyone can see something of today's nursery education. Do join us.

Yours etc.  
Brenda Grant,  
Headteacher,  
New Bridge Nursery School,  
Montague Street,  
Caversham.

## VE DAY

Dear Editors,

I have admired the articles by Katy for a very long time. However, she was rather dismissive of VE Day in her first paragraphs of the July edition. It was rather like the village parson failing to attend the celebration, and simply arranging for a 'military style' hymn on the Sunday before - a true story.

As an old-timer of seventy-eight I would like to point out that my generation has been affected by two world wars plus a general strike. My father was gassed terribly and wounded in War No. 1, and my wife's father severely gassed, which affected him to his dying day at forty-nine years of age. So bad was he, that copper coins in his pockets still showed signs of gas exuding each evening.

I was a first world war baby, along with my wife, and both those experiences did not help our young days; neither did the strike as regards parents securing jobs.

The second war ended as far as I was concerned on VE Day, and how lucky I was to avoid, along with everyone else in the forces, being

# POSTBAG

despatched to the Far East for the Far East Campaign, this latter far worse than Europe for our forces to undergo. I have spoken with Field Marshal Bill Slim asking him to ensure VJ Day is truly celebrated for the 'Forgotten Army'.

Hopefully Katy will say sorry for her comments where she said - 'So why celebrate'.

Yours etc  
T. Smith,

Toastmaster to the House of  
Commons,  
21 Stuart Close, Emmer  
Green

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON TEA IN ST PETER'S CHURCH

Dear Editors,

The other weekend some of my French friends visited Caversham, and on Sunday afternoon I showed them the gardens of Caversham Court where they were delighted to be able to feed ducks and swans, after which I took them to see St Peter's Church.

Inside St Peter's tea and coffee as well as home-made cakes were being served which were very welcome refreshments both for myself and my French friends. Whilst drinking our tea the French lady remarked that such a service would not be allowed to be provided in her local church as her local clergy would say that her church was a place of reverence and prayer only, so I told her that St Peter's as well as being these things was also for the living, and my friends finally left St Peter's taking with them the

impression that the members of St Peter's had demonstrated that they cared in a practical way for their local community.

So to all those ladies who gave up their Sunday afternoons to provide this very welcome service, on behalf of my French friends and myself I should like to say thank you all, very much.

Yours etc.  
Pete Littlewood,  
11 Moss Close,  
Caversham.

## CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY ACTION

Dear Editors,

Re: The Action Shop, CCA  
in the High Street, trading  
and outreach

As I write, we are in the process of completing a transaction that will provide CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY ACTION with its first 'Charity Shop'. The shop on the Oxford Road has been acquired without one penny changing hands and with a further rent free period of three months. We do know this is the Lord's leading and we are very excited about the opportunities that are being laid before the Church.

The premises are being prepared through the summer recess. The official opening date will be around the second week of September. However the opening is dependent on a sufficient number of volunteers giving their time to assist in running the shop. We would be grateful if you could prayerfully consider this

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The Rev Nigel Hardcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road. Tel: 478239.  
The Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe,  
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The Rev Sheila Nunn, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.

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and inform your friends accordingly of the current requirement. It offers the Church another opportunity to reach out into the community, sharing our faith in Jesus in a practical way.

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Yours etc  
Nick Crowder  
Director, Christian  
Community Action  
Unit 5, Bridgewater Close

## BUSES

Sir,

I always read Watchdog's column with interest, but may I suggest that the apostrophe is in the wrong place in the title. All too often the views are those of Watchdog alone. They are quite valid views which one can respect while disagreeing, but I am sure they do not represent majority opinion.

In your August issue, however, she has gone much further and her piece "Catching the Bus" contains so many errors that I can't let her get away with it this time.

Starting with a throwaway line about railways, I wonder what is meant by improvements making a worse mess of things. There are many different ways of judging a service, but as a regular user of railways all over the world, I can honestly say that in my own opinion our railways are only beaten by Holland and Switzerland (and possibly Japan and Hong Kong) when taking the overall view.

I agree that Reading has one of the best bus services in the country, at least as far as the southern half of it is concerned, but Watchdog is wrong in saying councils cannot own bus services.

They are required to be run on commercial lines as independent companies, but Reading Transport Limited is owned by the Borough Council. 99% of the shares are held by the Council, the other 1% by a nominated chief officer, it being a requirement that a company has to have more than one shareholder.

Councils are not allowed to give blanket subsidies - any subsidy must be route-specific. For instance, Berkshire County Council subsidises some rural routes where there is a proven need. However, Reading Council pays Reading Transport over £2.5m a year for the concessionary fares scheme. This is in effect a subsidy. Without it, their finances would look very sick indeed. In return, Reading Transport pays £300,000 pa to the Council in dividend.

It is true that these concessionary passes may be used on Reading Mainline. The Council is required by law to treat all bus operators equally, and the passes are accepted by all bus operators within the Borough - Bee Line, Chiltern Queens and several others. The bill is NOT passed to Reading Transport. It is passed to the Council.

Reading Buses is a very healthy concern, and a little extra competition will do it no harm - on the contrary there is already evidence that it is keeping them on their toes and shaking them out of their complacency. In the present transport environment, they have no exclusive right to be the sole operator in Reading.

In the final paragraph, Watchdog really goes too far. It is not, Sir, the job of a church newspaper to tell its readers not to buy a product on anything other than moral ground.

Yours faithfully

Fred Pugh,  
Conservative Councillor,  
Thames Ward.

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# RELIGION: A PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE

"Quaker Faith and Practice" (1995)

In the August issue of "The Bridge" Ann Varma reminded us that members of the Religious Society of Friends live and worship in Caversham and Reading as they have done for over three hundred years. Quakers have no stated written creed but they do have a "spiritual guide book", "Quaker Faith and Practice" first issued in manuscript form in 1738 and first printed in 1783. The early editions of "Quaker Faith and Practice" brought together minutes of advice and counsel that had been sent out to the various Friends' Meetings and this collection has been revised and expanded over the years until it is now an anthology of personal and corporate experience of the divine light representing three hundred and fifty years of Quaker life and worship. There are about eight hundred extracts arranged in chapters the topics of which range from "Approaches to God - worship and prayer" and "Living faithfully today" to "Quaker marriage procedure" and "Property and Trusteeship".

Once in every generation - roughly once in every thirty years - "Quaker Faith and Practice" is revised. The revised "Faith and Practice" for the present generation of Friends was published earlier this year. The new book is a result of a consultative process involving the four hundred and seventy five Quaker meetings in England, Wales and Scotland and lasting for nine years. The Quaker tradition that individual perceptions of "truth" are best tested by

Friends checking their understanding prayerfully together is a process that cannot be hurried. The extent of the revision may be gauged from the fact that about half the eight hundred extracts in the book date from the last thirty years.

Within the book there is a section entitled "Advices and Queries" which is a summary of the whole and serves as a guide to the Quaker life. The main themes are: *always staying open to new inspiration from*

*God the equality of all the search for renewed social order living in a style that takes away the occasion of all wars living religious faith as everyday life in the world.*

The extracts selected for each main chapter are a guide to the main strands of Quaker thought and action. Very early in the section "Approaches to God", George Gorman, writing in 1973, tells how he discovered "the amazing fact of Quaker worship" and came to know that he was not alone "but was held by a love that passeth all understanding". The chapter on "Our Peace Testimony" begins with George Fox recording how, in 1651, he told the Commonwealth Commissioners that he "lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars" and ends with Rex Ambler reminding Friends in 1990 that Quaker witness against war and inequality has been concerned with persuading people that the way to peace lies in finding how much we have in common with the rest of humankind. In the challenging chapter "Living faithfully today", the

Friends, past and present, whose words are quoted in the seventy-five extracts speak of prayer and service, living simply and maintaining high standards of truth and integrity. The forthright query from 1964 is retained asking Friends whether they are maintaining these standards in business and financial affairs and ending with a question which goes back to the days when smuggling was rife but it still relevant today: "are you careful not to defraud the public revenue?"

Each generation of Friends tends to press for a revision of "Quaker Faith and Practice" but the process of revision is

never easy. Some Friends, understandably, cling to the old familiar passages but changes are made as our understanding changes and evolves. This openness is crucial: to Friends the words of "Faith and Practice" are a discipline but, as the Friends charged with the revision say in their introduction: "Words must not become barriers between us, for no one of us can ever adequately understand or express the truth about God". So the last words in the book are left to William Dewsbury writing in 1675 "Therefore, dear Friends, wait in the Light, that the Word of the Lord may dwell plentifully in you".

## CCFF PRESENTATION EVENING

The Mayor and Mayoress of Reading were among the guests at the gathering at the Millers Arms, Paddock Road, on Wednesday 19th July for the presentation to ten local charities of monies raised by the second annual Caversham Charity Folk Festival held in June. Val Jones, the very hospitable landlady of the Millers Arms, together with her staff, laid on a most welcome buffet. A display of photographs of the festival activities and a caption competition caused much amusement. After a successful raffle with further boosted the charity funds, everyone enjoyed a musical entertainment in the form of a singaround.

REMEMBER 14-16TH JUNE 1996

Una Waters

## SUNDAY SERVICES

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>ANGLICAN</b><br/>St Peter's<br/>8.00am Holy Communion<br/>9.15am Parish Communion<br/>11.15am Matins<br/>6.30pm Evensong</p> <p>St John's<br/>8.00am Holy Communion<br/>10.00am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School<br/>6.30pm Evensong (1st Sunday)<br/>6.30pm Informal Worship (3rd Sunday)</p> <p>St Andrew's<br/>8.00am The Eucharist<br/>10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)<br/>First Sunday, Family Eucharist<br/>11.15am The Eucharist (with hymns)<br/>6.30pm Evening Prayer<br/>An up to date list of weekday Services will be found on the Church notice boards.</p> <p>St Barnabas'<br/>8.00am Holy Communion<br/>9.30am Family Communion (apart from 2nd Sunday)<br/>9.30am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)</p> <p>St Margaret's, Mapledurham<br/>8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)<br/>11.00am Parish Communion</p> <p>CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH<br/>(Caversham Park Primary School)<br/>11.00am Family Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)<br/>Morning Worship (2nd Sunday)<br/>Triple F Family Service (4th Sunday)<br/>6.30pm Evening Worship (1st Sunday)</p> | <p>CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH<br/>10.30am and 6.30pm</p> <p>NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH<br/>10.45am and 6.30pm</p> <p>CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL<br/>10.30am (in Chapel)</p> <p>METHODIST<br/>Caversham, Gosbrook Road<br/>10.30am and 6.30pm</p> <p>Caversham Heights<br/>9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)<br/>11.00am and 6.30pm</p> <p>ROMAN CATHOLIC<br/>St Anne's Saturday 5.30pm, Sunday 10.30am and 6.30pm<br/>Our Lady of Caversham 9.00am<br/>St Martin's School 9.15am Mass<br/>Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)</p> <p>UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, York Road<br/>11.00am every Sunday</p> <p>SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading 10.30am<br/>Caversham Church House - Meeting for Worship 7.30pm (last Sunday)<br/>House study groups Sept-June Tel: 475783.</p> <p>NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD<br/>9.30am Sunday School<br/>11.00am Divine Worship<br/>7.00pm Evening Service</p> |
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## AROUND THE CHURCHES

## NEWS FROM ST MARGARET'S, MAPLEDURHAM

No need to worry about where the refreshments would be held on the evening of July 20th; the sun shone all day long for the Patronal Festival, so they were served outside the church porch among the tombstones. As usual, friends from St Peter's and elsewhere were welcomed. Many must have been delighted to meet Derek Spears again as the preacher. Not only did he give the sermon, he also played his recorder. It was good to have a full choir that evening. In the last few years numbers have fallen as several young members have gone away to college, but when they can, some of them still return to swell the voices.

This year the Patronal Festival was rather a special occasion. On July 2nd many from St Margaret's had gone to St Mary's, Reading, to see Sheila Nunn ordained priest, so on July 20th they were delighted to present her with a purple stole, a cheque and a signed card.

Talking of College, two young members of St Margaret's have had their finals with excellent results. Marianne Pynn and Heather Robinson have both been at Sussex University, and done extremely well. Marianne obtained a first class honours in Chemistry with European Studies (German) and Heather first class honours in Biology with European Studies (French). Marianne was also awarded the European prize by the School of Molecular Science. We also hear that David Allsopp obtained a first at Cambridge. All three must have worked extremely hard to do so well. Hearty congratulations to all three.

I'm sure there are other young people in the Parish who have also had good results. I just have not heard on the grapevine!

M.K.

## Caversham Baptist Free Church – A Family Affair

On 24th June a large group of members from Caversham Baptist Free Church congregated at Thatcham Baptist Church for our "Awayday". Led by our, still relatively new, Pastor Peter Edwards, we started the day with a time of worship and then split into groups to study and discuss questions pertaining to our aim, "Our Aim" being "to turn the unchurched into totally devoted followers of Christ" – what did we need to improve upon, start doing within our own 'family', and how were we going to reach out to those we haven't yet attracted within our doors?

Following our individual group discussions we pooled our ideas and found many common features and ideas arising. Having shared a picnic lunch in the church lounge we proceeded to the afternoon session to discuss further issues and then finished with another time of

collective worship.

There was a marvellous family feel about the day and the facilities at Thatcham Baptist Church were excellent. I certainly came away with the impression that it was thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part.

Our diaconate now have the task of sifting through the resulting 'findings' and plan to take their own "awayday" along with Peter to consolidate these and so continue to lead us in our exciting new directions.

We have another family day to look forward to on September 2nd when we go for a day trip to Paultons Park. In the meantime we trust that Peter and his wife Shelagh have had a blessed, happy and well-deserved summer break.

Judy Ruck

## ONE WORLD WEEK CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

### Harvest Festival

Caversham Heights Methodist Church celebrate their harvest Festival on 24 September with a Parade and Family Service at 11am, when the preacher will be the Rev. David Moody, and the 6.30pm Service, which will be conducted by Mr. David Beek.

The theme of this year's One World Week is "Growing Hope". When we are surrounded by so much that is going wrong in our world today, it's good also to look for signs of hope. And many signs are there. Caversham churches are planning a number of activities on the Growing Hope theme. Full details in the October issue of the "Bridge".

In the meantime, please make a note of the date – One World Week runs from October 22nd to 29th. If you have queries or suggestions about the week, contact Martyn Allies, 472007, or John Madeley, 476063.

## WORLD SCOUT INTERNATIONAL JAMBOREE

Among the 36,000 scouts at the International Jamboree taking place in Holland in September are 36 scouts from Oxfordshire, including 15 year-old Tim Peirce of Caversham Heights Methodist Church and the 1st Goring Heath Scout Troop. Tim's father, Robin Peirce, a Scouter at 1st Goring and a church steward at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, is also at the Jamboree on general duties with the service team. The

camp is so large that it takes 1½ hours to walk across the camp site – and bicycles are the only form of transport allowed!

After the Jamboree in Holland, it is customary for each scout (and scouter) to spend a further week living with a scouting family in one of the participating countries. Tim will go on to Denmark with a Danish scouting family, while Robin goes on to Milan, Italy. It is hoped to have an account of their experience in a future "Caversham Bridge" after their return.

## CAVERSHAM BRUMMIES

A fascinating talk by radio personality Dr Carl Chinn on 'Birmingham, the Great Working City', was voted the high spot of this year's Caversham Heights Society 'Mini-holiday' which was centred on the University of Birmingham. This was the eighteenth mini-holiday centred each year on a different university, from Exeter to York and Cardiff to East Anglia.

This year the forty participants not only took a look at the great working city but also visited the stately home of Attingham Park, the battleground of Rugby, scene of bloody conflicts with oval balls, and the Black Country Museum at Dudley.

Here the party embarked on a narrowboat and sailed into the caverns in which ill-paid workers spent their short lives hacking out the limestone to feed Black Country blast furnaces.

The Caversham Heights Society meets fortnightly on Wednesdays during the winter months for a lecture programme that aims to satisfy all tastes and interests. Topics in next season's

programme include the likelihood of robots supplanting humans, the design of postage stamps, plant hunting in China and the war paintings of Stanley Spencer. The programme also offers visits to theatres and places of interest.

This autumn the Society may have a few vacancies, and anyone interested in joining may obtain further information by phoning Reading 472007.

E.M.A.



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## AROUND THE CHURCHES

# THE ST. BIRINUS PILGRIMAGE TO DORCHESTER - 1995

BY VINCENT KELLY

I believe that this annual pilgrimage to the Abbey at Dorchester was revived some 19 years ago and I must admit that this is the first time that I have been present.

Why this pilgrimage? Dorchester-on-Thames has been an important centre of population at least since Neolithic times (2,000-1,500 B.C.) as evidenced by the archeological remains that have survived and was subsequently an important centre of Roman occupation, presumably because of the easy river crossing that existed. After the Romans withdrew the Anglo-Saxons came and by the early 7th century the kings of Wessex ruled in the area.

By reputation England was in need of evangelization and it was this wild land that Pope Honarius sent Birinus (an Italian bishop) as a missionary in 634 A.D. (200 years after St. Patrick had arrived in Ireland). On his way to the North he found such a sorry state of affairs in this area that he decided to stop here and spread the Gospel.

Sunday 9th July 1995 started off just like the several days before, a bright but hazy sky with a hint of possible thunder later in the day. When I arrived at Dorchester at 11.30 the haze had disappeared and together with it the possibility of a storm. Parking spaces were already becoming scarce and small groups of pilgrims stood waiting for the coach to take them to the starting point at Churn Knob.

A pleasant drive through the country-side saw us at the end of the lane leading to the assembly point where the Salvation Army band was already in full flow and we sat around, about 150 in number, taking our first samples from our picnic lunches.

At last the Marshal called us to order and after a short prayer and a hymn we were given our instructions - the usual ones about following the country code. In this way we would be expressing our thanks to the landowners who had willingly allowed our pilgrimage to cross their land, particularly where we deviated from designated rights-of-way.

To these orders was added another one i.e. that each one of us should introduce ourselves, and speak to, at least three total strangers on the way. This order was certainly obeyed with enormous enthusiasm by all and I met (amongst others), an old graduate from "my" university (Dublin), a lady all the way from Brighton and a family from South Bucks.

Having started out at 1.30 the procession gradually spread out like a long snake across a countryside that set itself out to show off just how beautiful it can be whilst at the same time a pleasant breeze tempered a potentially very hot sun which could have been a problem for some. It was great to see (and hear) such a happy gathering of all ages, from quite small children to those of more mature years as we wended our way for about ten miles towards the Abbey.

There were two organised stopping places along the route where hard working ladies provided much needed cold drinks, cups of tea - thank you ladies for the three cups that I had at one stopping place - and also delicious cakes and buns etc. Thanks also to the First Aid crew who moved their ambulance to strategic places as we progressed along the route. I am not aware that their services were called upon but am sure that their presence was a reassurance to some participants.

By 6.30 all were again assembled in the Abbey precincts where the numbers were swelled by many others who had come for the Service and barbecue. We then processed into the Abbey where again the Salvation Army band provided the music in their inimitable style.

Here I must add that for nearly forty years I have lived in Reading, during which time I have passed through the village many,

many times on my way to Oxford. I had never realised that there was such a beautiful and impressive Abbey almost on my doorstep. Perhaps some reader, more qualified than I am, will write an article on the history of the area, and in particular, of the Abbey, in a future edition of "The Bridge".

The Service commenced with a welcome and opening prayers by the Bishop of Dorchester the Rt. Rev. Anthony Russell and the Dean, the Rev John Crowe. Then followed a scripture reading, a hymn and a Gospel reading. The address was given by Father Tony Jones, the recently installed parish priest of St. Anne's R.C. in Caversham. An amusing introduction which referred to similarities in the names of the early saints and which surmised that St. Bede might have invented the Rosary, gave way to the more serious matter of our duties and obligations to our fellow men and that only by co-operation and prayer could we prepare the way for a fuller and better life together. More very hearty singing and the renewal of our Christian commitment brought a very moving Service to its conclusion.

We then moved to the garden of the Presbytery, a short distance away, where all enjoyed a magnificent barbecue which was still going well when I left at 10.15pm.

I know that I express the wishes of all when I say. "Many, many thanks to all of those ladies and gentlemen who worked so hard and for so long to make it such a great success." It was a great experience in every way and I'm sure that we all made many new friends "across the board" and that none of us will miss next year's repeat performance.

If YOU did not make it this year do make a note not to miss it in 1996. I know it will take a lot to keep me away.

## CAVERSHAM UNITED CHRISTIAN FOOTBALL CLUB

There are now many high profile Christian sportspeople and football is no exception with Glen Hoddle of Chelsea the best known.

What many people don't know is that there is a strong grass roots Christian football following with local leagues in many areas and the Thames Valley is one of these.

The Reading Churches League was first conceived in 1987 when six local teams joined forces and today the clubs compete each season in both league and cup competitions. Christian football has recently been the subject of several alternative comedians, and indeed it may well be a strange sight to see twenty-two players and officials joining together in prayer before each game. However the passion, spirit and commitment of all who take part is high. The difference is that everyone involved is expected to uphold the high expectations of good conduct, sportsmanship and fair play. They can still tackle, push, pull and jostle each other, but with a view to competing, not that you could tell the difference between one league and the other. Members enjoy a good standard of football, but all work to carry out the spirit of their beliefs.

All of the teams who play must have a squad of players, fifty per cent of whom are regular church goers. Guest players are welcome and many join because of the good behaviour and quality of the games.

Caversham United were formed seven years ago and many of the original players were members of Caversham Hill Chapel. They won the league three seasons running, have been in two cup finals at Palmer Park and are well regarded within the league. This season they are looking for more players to join them. Candidates are asked to call as soon as they can so that preparations for the new season on 16th September can be made. The team plays on Saturday mornings at Bulmershe College and will do some pre-season training at Mapledurham. There is usually about one free Saturday each month, and whilst people are not expected to play every week, a reasonable commitment is important.

If anyone would like to join the club please call one of the numbers below. You won't regret it!

Neil Packman 482832. David Gavin 482212.

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Tuesday 12th September 1995


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# RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

## By Watchdog

### WATER, BUT NOT EVERYWHERE

Brown and dried up grass everywhere tells of a hot dry summer broken only by the occasional shower which prevented the declaration of an official drought. Gardeners may have moaned but the organisers of fetes and outdoor events, more conditioned to the expectation of being washed out, were pleased.

Many houses on the higher ground had problems of reduced water pressure at peak periods, in spite of earlier claims from Thames Water that steps had been taken to see that the extra houses being/built would not have an adverse effect on the existing houses. Whether the Mapledurham golf course had any effect is a moot point, for although greens require a huge amount of water the grass there was as brown as anyone else's.

### DISAPPEARING WATER

It will rain again before long and the familiar dampness will return but in one quarter the disappearance of water is likely to remain for much longer. This is not due to a shortage of water but a shortage of money with a dash of vandalism thrown in for good measure. The area referred to is that of public water features which one by one have been vanishing from the town.

It started with the fountains and waterfalls all round the Civic Offices. They may not have been to everyone's taste but when the Civic Offices were newly opened they all gushed away in proud announcement that here was the centre of a town of some standing. Gradually the whole thing was switched off and now all that is left are strange concrete shapes unconvincingly disguised as garden features. Public money is not available for such fripperies as public fountains.

In the Forbury Gardens the fountain, which must have been there since the last century and which gave pleasure to generations of children and indeed their elders, even in these more sophisticated days, has been turned off as the whole thing, including the equipment to keep it running, is in need of a total overhaul at a very high cost, which even with a generous grant from Thames Water, cannot be found in the near future. This also has been turned into a garden, quite a pretty one in fact, but a fountain with water lilies and goldfish is what is called for. Not far off in the Blind Garden the little fountain is also out of action, an object of the mindless vandalism which still plagues the Forbury.

Even the drinking fountain on the wall of St. Laurence's Church, cleaned and restored not very long ago, is no longer flowing. Its gentle tinkle could be heard even above the noise of traffic. Needless to say its basin gets filled with litter which would otherwise be dropped on the ground but would certainly not be put into the nearby litter bin.

### REPEATED IN CAVERSHAM

Coming over to Caversham, the story is repeated. The waterfall in Caversham Court has been the target of so much vandalism or theft of its pump, that it is frequently out of use and has not been functioning for most of the summer. That

doesn't help with the state of the pond. This is all very sad as the rockery and the waterfall were placed there at the bequest of a far from wealthy woman who left her money for this purpose.

Further downstream the paddling pool in Christchurch Meadows was empty for most of the summer and part of the school holidays and in fact still is at the time of writing, so it is to be hoped that 'was' should not have been an 'is'. The new pool is very much smaller than the original one, which will make it easier to maintain to the required health and safety standards. Here the problem was rather different. It was originally constructed as a boating pool. Many an adult in Caversham must remember coaxing a small model sailing boat to cross from one side to the other. However, different days, different ways and it gradually turned into a paddling pond.

Some wonderful water play equipment was put into it which provided hours of fun and teamwork to the kids from all over the town who spent happy summer days there. However this brought with it the need for higher standards of safety in the way of clean water, and in spite of emptying and cleaning every season it had not been possible to maintain the required standard. As a contributor to another Caversham publication commented, what started as a wee

problem turned into a bigger one, and it had to be dealt with.

Nevertheless it is a great pity that the job was not finished in time for the start of the warm weather. Part of the delay was caused by some difficulty over getting the right kind of lining, but that should never have happened. As compensation the kids have been promised a bouncy castle and when I was last there they were having a whale of a time on heaps of sand left by the contractors. Some good water play equipment is also to be provided and my young visitor will want to know the reason why if it is not installed by the time he comes here in mid-August.

### OLE MAN RIVER KEEPS ON FLOWING

Still on the subject of water, one stretch that will always be with us is the Thames, and in the summer it comes into its own, its surface alive with craft and its banks with people, who come from near and far.

WOMAD attracted fifteen thousand and everyone who went there spoke highly of it. Fifteen thousand are a lot of people but not too many to cope with and there were no serious complaints apart from traffic congestion on the Friday when people were arriving. It should be possible with greater attention to traffic management to iron this out so that congestion is reduced to the least possible.

Many more complaints can be expected for the Reading Festival itself, particularly if numbers are allowed to reach the forty-five thousand of last year. This is the equivalent of increasing Reading's population by a third for the

turn to page 9

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# OVERFISHING: A MORAL ISSUE

by John Madeley

The overfishing of the world's oceans - highlighted in the recent dispute between Canada and Spain - has huge moral implications. Most of the world's fishing grounds are being fished without any thought of tomorrow. Young fish are caught before they have had chance to grow, often by trawlers with nets several miles long. The fish don't stand a chance.

This devastating plunder of the seas, a vital part of creation, threatens to turn oceans into deserts, and is hitting hard at people in developing countries.

Boats from Europe, chiefly Spanish, are at least partly responsible for the overfishing. The European Union today has around 40 per cent more boats than it needs to catch fish on a

sustainable basis. European trawlers, are catching fish under licence in the 200 mile fishing zones of developing countries, and often leaving less for local fishermen.

In Senegal, for example, one of Africa's chief fishing countries, catches are dwindling in the 6 mile near-shore area reserved for small-scale fishermen, affecting both their incomes and the amount of fish available for local people. While the trawlers cannot fish within 6 miles of the shore, their nets haul up such huge catches of sole, hake and other fish, that less swims into the near-shore area.

Some species have disappeared completely from near the shore because they are being caught by trawlers further out to sea. The

decline in the supply of fish for Senegalese people will have a major impact on local nutrition, warn local fishermen.

Stocks of fish are being further plundered as Europe's trawlers discard large quantities of dead fish - "I've seen boats throw away 90 percent of their catch, keeping only the high-value species", claimed one fisherman.

Worldwide, about 100 million people in developing countries are dependent on fishing. But tens of thousands of fishing jobs are going every year. Fish consumption in developing countries is falling, and the health of many millions of the poorest is suffering. And in Africa and Asia, fish plays a much more central part of the diet than it does in Europe.

In Europe we are however eating more fish, and this is part of the problem. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, the fish catch in the seas of European Union countries has been static for the last 10 years at around 6 million tons a year. But consumption of fish in the EU has risen in this time from 8 million tons to 9.5 million tons a year.

Instead of taking 2 million tons of fish a year from foreign waters, EU boats are now taking nearly twice that amount - 3.5 million tons a year. This is not good news for millions of local fishermen in developing countries who compete with foreign trawlers for fish.

The morality of the South-North fish trade needs to be questioned. Fish is exported by

a hungry South to a well-fed North - it is by far the chief nutritious food the South exports to the North. How can this be justified? Fish eaters in Europe may have to think in terms of eating less fish for several years in order to allow the oceans to recover.

Fishing grounds can recover if given a chance. Five years ago, for example, Namibia's fish stocks lay devastated because of serious overfishing. The government decided to get tough on Spanish and other fishing fleets - it asked them to stop fishing in its 200 mile zone. While some poaching went on, most boats complied. And five years later the fish have come back, giving Namibia one of the largest catches in Africa. Nature can fight back if given the chance.

## WATCHDOG

cont'd from p8

weekend and it is just not possible to put in the necessary infrastructure. Problems are bound to arise, so for those in the firing line it is a case of gritting teeth and bearing it. For

thousands it's what puts Reading on the map.

A quieter event was the annual swan-upping. A procession of boats, standards fluttering in the breeze and rowed by stalwart watermen is

an evocative sight. Unfortunately for spectators, they did not catch and mark any swans in the Caversham reaches, presumably because there were no last year's cygnets about, so apart from stopping at Piper's island for refreshments, something the oarsmen must have been in need of in the hot weather, it was a case of just passing through.

So Reading's rivers and waterways are there and are continuing to be improved, but for a town aspiring to become a city, it should endeavour to look the part and one way is to have a few fountains. Not many places could rise to the heights of Rome, but in Europe just about every city worth its salt has its fountain.

### TELECENTIAL

Telectential appears to have packed up their pneumatic drills and shovels and gone off to dig up someone else's pavements but as some streets have been left only partly done their reappearance cannot be ruled out. In the earlier stages of their work they

made a reasonable job of reinstating the pavement but towards the end they seemed to be in a hurry to get off to make a nuisance of themselves elsewhere, and made a pretty slipshod job of making good the footways. They are responsible for maintaining reinstatement for a period of two years and for repairing anything dangerous as soon as it is pointed out.

How can it be ensured that this is done? How likely is it that Telectential will come round and look at every trench they have dug? How likely is it that cash starved local councils will have the money to pay for their officers to go round inspecting every street? The answer in all cases is 'precious little'.

It is therefore essential that every badly restored piece of work is reported to the Borough, preferably in writing, so that this responsibility cannot be evaded. Caversham Residents' Association is compiling a list of all faulty spots. To report these telephone any of

these numbers with details of the exact place and nature of fault:

(01734) 472300; 472864; 471647. It's no good trying e-mail because none of these is linked into the network.

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# the CLUBS

## CAVERSHAM W.I.

A hot subject for a hot night described the July meeting. The speaker, Mrs Rosemary Maslen from Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services, gave a description of the organisation and working of the brigade and very useful information on safety and fire prevention in the home. Members gave themselves a pat on the back when it emerged they had a one hundred percent record for having a smoke alarm installed and being non-smokers. Mrs Taylor gave the vote of thanks, expressing admiration for the marvellous work of our local fire fighters.

The competition for four biscuits was won by Mrs I. Butcher. A reminder was given of the two August garden parties.

## EMMER GREEN TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

The Guild met in St Barnabas Church Hall on Tuesday evening 11th July. Arts and Crafts spent their last meeting walking around a beautiful private garden. Words and Music enjoyed their last meeting and six books were recommended, one called "Kitchen Blues". Ramblers have had two walks since the last meeting. One was a walk around Arborfield Cross, and the other a Thames Walk around Marlow,

passing three lakes and visiting Little Marlow. A kindly verger showed them around the local church and also took them to her own private garden. They were shown around a local Leisure Centre by the Manager.

Guild members enjoyed their annual outing to Sudeley Castle and Stow-on-the-Wold. The weather was very good and the coach outing was a great success. The Garden Party was held on August 10th. Pam Ridley was very kind in letting the guild use her garden and house for the afternoon. There was a 'Bring and Buy', four different games to try and a raffle and refreshments.

The talk for the evening was by Mr Nick Norman from Trunkwell House, Beech Hill, near Reading, on 'Gardening made easy for the Disabled and the Elderly'. Mr Norman informed members that "Trunkwell Park" is part of a national charity Horticultural Therapy based at Frome. It provides gardening for people with special needs and tools for people with special requirements. Trunkwell Park shows people easier ways to garden and helps to show people how to enjoy their hobby so gardening is still a pleasure and not a burden. Trunkwell Park has one hundred and eighty acres and was left to the charity in 1989. It was handed over to the charity during the recession. The charity had to deal with twenty-five years of neglect of the estate. It was eventually cleared entirely by volunteers. There was even a pond found which they did not know was there.

Mr Norman showed many slides of blind and disabled people gardening and using their special tools. It really was a marvellous talk and

enjoyed by members very much.

## CAVERSHAM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Board games, cards and a fish and chip supper were on the menu for the first meeting in July. Members were on the move for the next Monday with a pleasant coach tour of South Oxfordshire and a welcome supper at the 'Reformation' pub.

Former members were welcomed back for the reunion party which has now become a popular annual event. Party games and a delicious bring-and-share supper contributed to an enjoyable evening with old friends.

A popular speaker, Mr Noyes was welcomed back the following week to show part two of the changing face of Reading series of slides. Many memories were stirred with views of streets and buildings now no longer there.

The month ended with a Quiz evening. On a hot and sultry evening it was difficult to concentrate but several members emerged as winners. Particularly popular was a music quiz of old time TV and radio theme tunes which had many brains being searched - thanks to everyone who set up the quizzes.

## CAVERSHAM LADIES CLUB

At the June meeting a very interesting video was shown to members of disabled people taking part in a water skiing etc. event in Scotland. What enjoyment and determination were shown on their faces as they took part in all types of racing, which would make onlookers hold their breath, and they not disabled. It was a real inspiration to all watching the video: it showed life does go on if one is disabled determined to "Have a go".

This month Mrs Brenda Strong, Chairman, introduced Major Paxton who had brought along a video of the start of The Peak Freans and Huntley and Palmer Factory in 1906. It was so interesting, and Major Paxton talked and explained all the way through the video (which was the only

one in the country). How hard they had to work, with young lads of ten years working from early morning till late evening, and the workers not talking. There wasn't time, even if it had been allowed. Members watched the stirring, mixing, cooking, all with the old fashioned machinery and the packing into tins. Their hands must have felt like dropping off the way they had to use them. It was also enjoyable to see, as they all came out at the end of the day, the glorious Victorian hats the ladies were wearing. It was a really interesting afternoon with lots more to see on the video, but it would take too long to describe everything.

Major Paxton was an excellent speaker and one member mentioned he had been decorated by the Queen, so he was prevailed upon to tell members about this wonderful event. It was so interesting, with a few happenings which caused lots of laughter, it seemed sad that time had caught up. Mrs Strong thanked him for a lovely afternoon and members showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

## CAVERSHAM AFTERNOON TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

It was good to see so many members at the July meeting,

turn to page 11

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## the CLUBS

from page 10

especially on such a hot and humid afternoon.

Dr J.A. Foley-Fisher was the speaker and his subject "Churches of the Romney Marsh". Slides accompanied his talk which was very interesting. Members learned much about the countryside in addition to the history of the Churches. Few realised just how many there are in that relatively small area.

A small group took part in an enjoyable ramble, and, for those interested, another walk will probably take place in September. A proposed afternoon excursion to Burnham Beeches in October received a good response so a booking will be confirmed.

Preparations were in hand for the annual Garden Party. Members again looked forward to any enjoyable afternoon.

The competition a "Holiday Photograph" was well supported and one depicting Mrs Odey and Mrs James on holiday was judged the winner.

The next Guild meeting will be held at Church House, Caversham on the third Thursday in September at 2pm. New members/visitors will be most welcome.

### CAVERSHAM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The month began with a popular bingo evening with some lucky prize winners going home happy. The following week the club was opened to the public when members held a table top sale - a good chance to make some money from unwanted articles and certainly popular with everyone who attended.

Mr Staines came the next week with slides of an extended trip he and his wife made to New Zealand. Maps and a detailed commentary really brought the slides to life and time ran out before the trip was finished, so a return visit is essential.

A whist drive ended the month and members were pleased to welcome back Mrs Doreen Crawley after her recent eye operation. She guided everyone through their games.

### CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS T.G.

The Chairman began the evening by welcoming everyone. After reports from the secretary, treasurer, drama and social studies, a discussion was held on future theatre trips. The 80th birthday of Margaret Annison was celebrated and to a rendering of Happy Birthday she cut the cake. It will seem very

mundane when the Guild only has biscuits again with their coffee!

The speaker for the evening, Mrs. F. Slade, gave a most enlightening talk, illustrated by beautiful slides, about a specific period in the history of India. In "India of the Mughal Emperors" she explained how India was invaded from Mongolia - mughal being a derivation of mongol - and how starting with the first Emperor Babur in 1526 until the Indian Mutiny, they were responsible for the jewels of architecture to be found in India. But first she started by visiting Benares along with the hundreds of Hindu Pilgrims; one could sit under a cane umbrella and listen to the teaching of the guru, or buy a marigold butter lamp from a young girl to light and float down the river Ganges with a prayer.

Then on to the tour of Jaipur, Agra and Delhi, and whilst learning of some of the history of India, the slides showed not only the great size and majesty of the buildings but details of the exquisite pearl inlay work and carved ivory. Mrs. Slade was not impressed by her first view of the Taj Mahal nor by the fact it was built by the Emperor Shah Jahan for his adored wife, who died in her 14th pregnancy. However, when seen at night under a full moon, it appears to float and is very dramatic and beautiful.

On such a very hot, humid evening India was a very appropriate country to visit and perhaps one could say in the most comfortable way.

### CHAZEY W.I.

On Tuesday 1st August, Mr L Crosier gave an Illustrated talk on the revival of the Kennet and Avon Canal. Clearly a man of forethought he had taken photographs from the early 1960s so as to have a complete range of "before and after" slides. Starting at the Horseshoe bridge, where the Kennet joins the Thames, Chazey members had a refreshing journey down the canal to Bath, and a brief trip to Bristol. The back ways through Reading were the naturally of particular interest; the old Huntley & Palmers

building, before; the Prudential, after, were good examples and showed what a transformation there has been. When the Reading Oracle development takes place the Town's waterways will certainly be a great attraction.

The Kennet and Avon Trust started work in 1963, and, section by section, they have been at work ever since. Stagnant ditches are now flowing, lively canals. Tow paths have been cleared and resurfaced, and as for locks, thousands of hours, and pounds, have made them fully functional again. Narrow boats mainly take people on sightseeing trips but there are a few that carry goods, such as coal. After the Windsor Castle fire Bath stone was transported by water to Windsor. Not only was this ecologically sound but economically equal to road freight. Reading is 75 miles from Bath and 87 miles from Bristol and wildlife now flourishes alongside the canal banks and in the water.

In 1990 the Queen opened a new lock which was named after her. There are still a few unnamed locks - anyone with £75,000 to give the Trust can have their name on the locks gates. Chazey members dreamt of winning the lottery! Seriously though, the Trust needs over a million pounds to raise the water at the Caen Hill Flight, but with such dedication they will achieve this.

The Next meeting is at 8.00pm in Mapledurham Pavilion on September 5th. "Reflexology" will be the subject.

### ST. PETER'S WIVES' GROUP

Two social occasions were recently enjoyed by members and friends. In June a Strawberry Supper was held and provided an opportunity to chat with old friends and to make new acquaintances. In July a Bus Tour round the country lanes was arranged finishing with supper at the Little White Hart in Henley, followed by a stroll by the river. The bus used was a vintage AEC Regent double-decker provided by

Mr. Mike Russell.

For some years now the Wives have been committed to supporting the Sue Ryder Home in Nettlebed and once again at the Summer Fete in July members provided home-made cakes and served teas. The amount taken on teas was about £240, a w o r t h w h i l e contribution towards the overall total which members were delighted to hear was in excess of £10,000.

### ROSEHILL W.I.

After routine business at the July meeting, delegate Mrs Stockhill reported on the IGM at Blackpool. Resolutions calling for more accurate labelling of food and for the introduction of a simple identity card were adopted.

The President welcomed Ms Tina Gower from Caversham Court Environment Centre. Ms Gower explained how activities at the Centre and work with children in schools could promote an awareness of environmental issues. Her slides illustrated how Reading Borough Council contributes to the conservation of nature in the locality. Tea and the drawing of the raffle concluded an enjoyable meeting.

At the meeting on September 6th (St Barnabas Church Hall 2.00pm) Mrs Childs will talk about a journey to the Galapagos Islands. Visitors will be most welcome.

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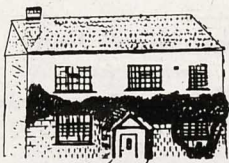
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