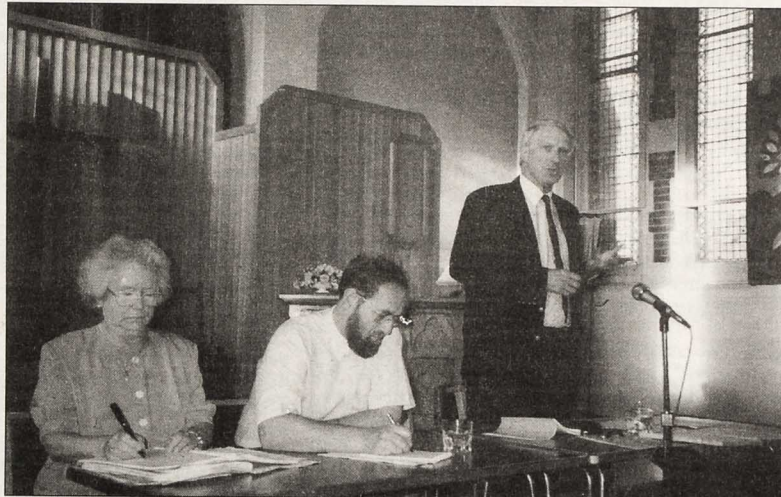


# NEW 'COMMITMENT TO COMMITMENT' NEEDED



— Owen Jewiss

Churches together in Caversham Annual Assembly. The Revd. Roger Nunn speaking, with Mrs Audrey Preston and the Revd. Phil Abrey.

**I**T is now five years since the introduction of the new Ecumenical Instruments. Five years since for the first time Roman Catholics and the Orthodox Churches and Black-led Churches became full members of the new ecumenical group Churches Together in England. It was therefore very fitting that the Revd Roger Nunn, Field Officer for the Southern Area of Churches Together in England, should have been invited to speak earlier in the summer at the Annual Assembly of Churches Together in Caversham on the theme "Ecumenism - the vision and the reality".

## The vision

Jesus, he reminded us, was the source of the vision, when He prayed in the garden on the night of His betrayal, that His followers might be one as He was one with the Father, so that the world might believe (John 17.21). He reminded us of the famous Swanwick Declaration of 1987 which led to the new movement in 1990 and of the context of our pilgrimage beginning with the unity of God and ending with the reconciliation of the world in God. We were moving from occasional co-operation to a deep God-centred commitment to each other in that search for the unity for which Christ prayed and in common evangelism and service of the world.

## - and the reality

Roger Nunn confessed that five years on the reality was like the curate's egg. In some places ecumenism was stuck, in others there were signs of death. Elsewhere exciting things happened such as in York with Churches in Mission Together and in Thames Valley Alive. There were many examples of service together. Sometimes nothing happened because a church was inactive; some churches were so hyperactive in running their own lives that they had no energy left for others. The ecumenical issue was not the only one concerning the churches: there were issues of the ordination of women, the charismatic movement and the increasing secularisation of our society. The more demanding the issues became and the more the numbers in church membership fell, the more we needed to worship and work together. "Where is this all

leading us?" Roger Nunn questioned. There is a search for visible unity, but what kind? This, he explained, is currently being explored with the member churches.

## Recommendations for the future

'Ecumenism - the vision and the reality' was also the theme of the Churches Together in England Forum which subsequently met during the summer. This Forum comprises some 360 people drawn from all the denominations and from all the County bodies similar to Churches Together in Berkshire, who were represented by Maureen Hudd from Newbury and Owen Jewiss from

Caversham, together with the County Ecumenical Officer, Sister Janet Wilcox, SFP. The forum meets every two years over a long weekend in Swanwick. It is also attended by the Church Leaders, which on this occasion included the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Hume, the Revd Kathleen Richardson and Bishop Basil of Sergiovo who are its Presidents. The Forum is the "eyes and ears" of the churches and part of its function is to make recommendations to the Enabling Body which helps Churches Together in England to develop its ecumenical policy, although the Enabling Body is not bound by the recommendations.

After a weekend spent in Bible study, worship and discussion, much of it in small groups, the Forum concluded with a report containing nine priorities, the impact of which is best expressed in the following headlines, highlighted in CTE's bi-monthly bulletin *Pilgrim Post*: "Ecumenism must become second nature to the English churches; there needs to be a new 'commitment to commitment'". These headings reflect the snappy ones that emerged from the small groups. Top of the priority list of recommendations is the affirmation of the need to make prayer together a priority at all levels in our churches. The need to involve young people comes next. There is concern for the Black majority churches who feel marginalised and isolated; we need to show greater openness to them. Other points deal with valuing diversity, facing the challenging questions, better communication, sharing resources, including training, and exploring how ecumenism as second nature might be worked out in practice.

## The context

It is easy to become impatient with the apparent slow speed of our ecumenical pilgrimage but those of us who are older cannot but help notice with thanksgiving the enormous strides taken on the road to ecumenism since our youth. We have moved from co-existence, through co-operation, to commitment and, while many long for full communion with one another, we do need first to have greater commitment to each other as churches so that together we may be more effective in evangelism and service to the world.

Owen Jewiss

## Caversham's Rarest Tree?

There may be several people who have noticed how the area around the bus stop in Hemdean Road, at the side of the library and opposite the bakery, was covered with pale primrose flowers this August. They fell down like snow flakes and dropped from a large tree inside the library grounds and this year, like most trees, it was smothered with blossom. The tree is possibly the rarest in Caversham. There is another splendid specimen in Brooklyn Drive, Emmer Green; that one is multi-stemmed, whilst the one beside the library has only three large trunks.

The tree is *Sophora Japonica* and is known as the Japanese Scholar tree or Pagoda tree. It does not, apparently, originate from Japan in spite of its name but comes from China. In Japan it was given the name Scholar Tree because it was supposed to be planted by the graves of scholars.

In Autumn its Acacia-like leaves (they are rounded leaflets as opposed to Acacia's pointed ones) will turn vivid yellow. Let's hope the drought has not harmed it. At the moment it looks a picture of health. M.K.

# TALKING POINT

by  
The Reverend Christine Rowe  
St. John the Baptist Church



# SUFFERING

**S**UFFERING is a word which often comes into our everyday lives. For Christians, suffering is personified in the life and death of Jesus Christ - Jesus Christ who is the life of the world. Christians are called to be a part of Christ's Body here on earth. We are called to be a part of the suffering community of Christian believers. But how do we understand ourselves as part of the suffering community of Christian believers throughout the ages? Throughout the World? In our locality? How do we begin to participate in the suffering community with Jesus Christ as the head?

Looking at our world we are faced with many many suffering communities around us...Think of Bosnia; relatives divided; women and children maimed and abandoned; homes, roots, lives shattered.

Or Northern Ireland; all the past years of suffering which has turned neighbour against neighbour, leaving a fearful and distrusting people, broken and wounded.

Or think of Rwanda, a small emerging nation, destroyed by the trauma of combat, killing, death, fear, hopelessness.

The list is unending.

But there are so many reasons for suffering in our world. Suffering between individuals, one to one, or between groups of peoples. Selfishness; greed; the desire to be powerful, especially over another person or group of people; jealousy; fear; hatred.

It is impossible not to see and recognize the suffering of our world...

Suffering is so often linked with negative words like hate, fear, injustice, destruction, division etc...

But is this the suffering community which we as Christians are asked, are called upon to participate in? Are we asked to look for situations where we put ourselves purposefully into positions of weakness, or misery, or fear? No. God does not ask us to bring suffering on ourselves. Seeking suffering for its own sake simply feeds a selfish negative desire in ourselves and leads to guilt and unhappiness. God calls us to life, a life which frees the Spirit, not stifles it.

The suffering community we are called to be a part of, is one where actions, thoughts and words, hopes and fears are based on love, selfless love. Lives where God who is Love, motivates and where God's Spirit of love overflows.

Starting from the negative may seem to be a whole lot easier, but living, day by day as followers of the living God means starting, always starting from the creative life-giving force which is love.

From birth to death we are faced with our suffering. It is part of our human lot. Often, but not always, brought about by sin, the inhumanity of one being against another of which, through circumstances, we become a part.

Putting Love at the centre of our lives does not remove suffering...Christ knew that, he died on the cross. Jesus' suffering was not for himself but for the salvation of the world. The crucifixion was not instigated through fear or hatred, through a desire for power or disunity, with any intention of destruction or division, no, Christ's death on the cross put love back in its proper or real or only place in the world...right at the centre. To participate in suffering which aims to follow that example is to begin to participate in the bringing in of God's Kingdom.

So we are called not to invite suffering...but rather we are called to follow the example of Jesus Christ to put love, selfless love, at the centre of our individual lives and the lives of our communities. Suffering will not just go away...nor the pain of illness or bereavement...but into the suffering community comes the longed for dimension of hope, hope enriching, healing, uniting us, as God's life-giving Spirit strengthens and feeds us.

God never starts with a negative.

Destruction, hatred, fear, distrust, hopelessness are not where God starts.

God starts with creation, renewal, wholeness, transformation, unity, life.

But God is always there with us, individually and corporately in those negatives, and many, many more. God has shown us that intimacy through sending Jesus Christ into the world. Jesus who lived on earth as a human and died suffering on the Cross. And so our lives have meaning, hope.

It is valuable to give time to think of ourselves as part of the suffering community in which we live...To remember others near and far who are suffering at this time and whose suffering affects us, and to long that we may try to put things in their proper place with God's unconditional love at the centre, not only of our own lives but of the suffering community of which we are a part.

## THE LINK GROUP - 21 YEARS ON

Do you remember Family Festival 1974? Perhaps you remember fifteen hundred people of different denominations sharing Communion in Caversham Court - hundreds of balloons floating across the sky - Family Day at Highdown - the Festival Shop in Barclay's Bank Annexe - the various events staged throughout the fortnight by ten Caversham Churches?

Perhaps you remember the "Teach-in", and the displays at all the events, when we learned about some of the people who were left outside what many of us consider to be a normal family life - people helped by the Simon Community, forerunner of REAP, mentally handicapped people; homeless people; housebound and disabled people. All with the same needs and rights as anyone else - but not always getting them. The money raised went to help them.

It was from this that the Link Group evolved. And twenty-one years on it still has members from ten different Churches working together - different members now of course! And the four original organisations helped have grown enormously as members have become involved with Berkshire Women's Aid, SPHERE, Multiple Sclerosis Society, Drop-in Centre, Parkinson's Disease Society, and many, many more, bringing the needs of the people concerned to the attention of the Group, for action as required.

The 'Furniture business' - transferring donated household goods to those who needed them - was an early and on-going activity. Twelve years ago, the regular tea parties in members' homes for elderly people started, to be followed by the Pop-in Centre. An open Meeting instigated the local branch of 'Crossroads'.

The needs have to be local, as personal involvement is of prime importance. Financial needs are secondary, but are served by the Annual fund-raising 'Knit-in'. But looking back over the books many thousands of pounds have been raised by this small group.

The Ecumenical lunches, drawing in all our Churches, are important, as is the annual house Communion Service. The present Chairman is a Baptist, Treasurer from the United Reformed Church, Secretary from St John's, tea party organisers St Peter's - and all members have a particular responsibility. It's Ecumenism in action!

So, twenty-one years on, the aims are the same as when the Link Group prayer was first written. The last line goes:-

"Help us to form a link of genuine friendship, which crosses all barriers." We shall be celebrating our birthday in November. Many Happy Returns!

Doreen Bennett.

## CAVERSHAM CLERGY

### ANGLICAN

Canon Richard Kingsbury, Caversham Rectory, Church Road. Tel: 479130.  
(Parish Office: Monday-Thursday 9.30-12.30 Tel: 471703)  
The Rev Bill Carpenter, St Andrews House, Harrogate Rd. Tel: 472788.  
(The Rev. Andrew Tyler, Hon. Asst Priest)  
The Rev Nigel Hardcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road. Tel: 478239.  
The Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe,  
The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 471814.  
The Rev Sheila Nunn, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.

### CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PROJECT

The Rev. Philip Abrey, 51 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village. Tel. 475152.

### METHODIST

The Rev David Moody, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 472223.  
The Rev John Boakes, 9 Woodlands Grove, Caversham. Tel: 482530.

### BAPTIST

Rev Peter Edwards, 14 Tredegar Road, Emmer Green. Tel: 477697

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### ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev Anthony Jones, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel: 471787.  
The Rev John Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common. Tel: 723418

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All contributions for November issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 4 October.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 2 October.

The dates for December will be Monday 30 October and Wednesday 1 November.

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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## LID OFF ST BARNABAS CHURCH

For the want of a nail the roof might have been lost! Rather in the case of St Barnabas Church for the want of hundreds of nails, which held the battens, which held the tiles, the roof might have slid gently onto the lawns surrounding the church during this coming winter. After 66 years the non-galvanised nails originally used had corroded away. Fortunately corrosion was discovered just in time and at the time of writing repairs necessitating stripping the roof, felting, rebattening and replacing the tiles had almost been completed. During the course of this work we have been greatly blessed by one of the driest summers ever.

### Gift Day and Thanksgiving Service

The church happily stands as a witness to the faith in Jesus Christ and his saving grace, which we proclaim. It serves the local community through its clergy and people, being available to all and is used by many. Normally the conviction and commitment of the congregation is sufficient to maintain its pastoral ministry and fabric, but an unanticipated additional bill for £18,500 to repair the roof goes beyond our resources. In the belief that the local population would not wish to see their local parish church go to rack and ruin, and certainly would wish to stay dry when they use it, an appeal has gone to those living in the parish to help raise the money. Opportunities to contribute will be possible at the Gift Day on Saturday, 30 September, and on the following day, Sunday, 1 October, when there will be a Service of Thanksgiving at 9.30am. On both days the Church will be open from 11am to 4pm when there will be an exhibition in the church of its life and work and during which time donations will be gratefully received.

### Sharing the cost

When completed some 24,000 tiles will have been refixed on the roof of St Barnabas Church. This means that, at a total cost of £18,500, it costs 75 pence to refix one tile. £7.50 would pay for 10 tiles to be relaid and £37.50 for 25; £300 would repair half the vestry roof. If every home in the parish were to give enough money to repair 10 tiles, namely £7.50, St Barnabas would be home and literally dry. Anyone missing the Gift Day and Thanksgiving Sunday opportunities to contribute may



Our picture shows work in progress on the nave roof at St Barnabas Church during August J. Hardy

still do so. The fund will remain open for about a year and further donations will be happily received with much appreciation. Cheques should be made payable to "St Barnabas Church Roof and Fabric Fund" and sent to Mr John Sansom at 3 Yarnton Close, Emmer Green, or to the Revd Nigel Hardcastle at St Barnabas Vicarage, 20 St Barnabas Road, Emmer Green.

## BAZAARAID!

The proceeds of this year's bazaar at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, which takes place at 2.00pm on Saturday 11th November, will be devoted to three projects which will benefit people living in the 'developing world'.

A third will go to 'Water, Fountain of Life', an appeal launched by the Methodist Relief and Development Fund as a response to the United Nations' target of clean water for all in the year 2000. The dirty water diseases of cholera, typhoid and dysentery wreak havoc with the poorest people of the world in slums and shanty towns: no less than twenty-five

thousand children die from bad water every day. As many as two hundred and fifty million people in Africa and Asia suffer from bilharzia, the parasitic disease for which contaminated water is responsible. No less than half the world's population lack access to clean water and sanitation. Our contribution will be but a drop - but a valuable drop - in the ocean of the UN's target.

A third will go to Nijera Shikhi (Let's Teach Ourselves). A new People's Movement has started in Bangladesh. About seventy five million of its one hundred and five million population over 5 years

old are illiterate - but education is too expensive.

So Nijera Shikhi says 'Let's teach ourselves'. Every week three hundred NEW volunteer helpers begin, each helping two illiterates to teach themselves. By June 1996 one million people are expected to be enrolled. A year later, two million. The curriculum leads learners into family planning, credit unions, co-operatives, skills development, nutrition, health, child care, their cultural heritage. There can be no real development without literacy.

Every £1.65 subscribed to Nijera Shikhi enables ten more people to begin to gain literacy. THE TASK IS URGENT. You can join this Self-Education Movement to change the future for millions of people by

supporting our Bazaar or sending a donation to Nijera Shikhi, 57 Sherrington Road, Ipswich IP1 4HT, fax via 01473 744254.

And finally a third will go to the Mayor's Special Appeal for the Reading San Francisco Libre Association's projected Youth Exchange. San Francisco Libre is the small municipality in Nicaragua with which Reading is 'twinned'. Most of those who live in 'SFL' are peasant farmers who keep hens, pigs and cows and grow maize and sorghum. They fish in a nearby lake, despite it being polluted, and their only 'cash crop' is firewood, which is transported to the capital Managua, to sell in shops and bakeries. During the past year Sarah Reardon, the teenage daughter of the Revd Martin Reardon, Nat-

ional Secretary for the Churches Together in England, has been living in SFL and teaching English, primarily to adults. The Mayor's appeal will make it possible for ten young people from Reading to visit and experience SFL in 1996, and a similar number of youngsters from SFL to come to Reading in 1997.

Please make an entry in your diary now - 'Bazaaraid Saturday 11th November 2pm Caversham Methodist

### HUGH ATKINS 1906-1995

Rene Atkins, Rosemary and Margaret would like to express their sincere thanks for all the love and support shown to them following the sad loss of Hugh.

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## CHILTERN EDGE ANTIQUES APPRECIATION SOCIETY

There is an interesting programme of illustrated lectures this season organised by the C.E.A.A.S. meeting on Wednesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9.30pm in the Lecture Theatre, Children Edge Community Centre, Reades Lane, Sonning Common. Subjects to be covered are as follows:

October 4th John Singer Sargent (welcoming drink at 6.45pm)  
November 1st History of Playing Cards  
January 10th Reading Bayeux Tapestry  
February 5th Love Jewellery  
March 6th Clocks  
April 17th Annual Meeting and Talk.

Annual subscription £8.50, visitors' fees £2.50. Visits to Museums and Houses are also arranged.

If you are interested, come along to the opening meeting and join then or contact the Membership Secretary, c/o Chiltern Edge Community Centre, Reades Lane, Sonning Common.

## COMMUNITY ART CENTRE

The Reading Community Art Centre which meets at Caversham Church House will hold its Annual Christmas Art exhibition on November 11th from 10am to 5pm in St Mary's Church House, Minster Street, Reading.

It will be opened officially by the Mayor and Mayoress of Reading at 10am.

Admission is free. Refreshments will be available, and paintings will be for sale.



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# RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

## By Watchdog

**WATER SUPPLIES**  
As one hot rainless day succeeded another throughout July and most of August, gardens, grass and cherished plants shrivelled and in some cases died. I could not help taking malicious pleasure at seeing the Japanese knot weed in my garden, which has resisted just about every effort to eradicate it, also shrivelling up and dying.

On the whole there were very few sprinklers or even hoses left on for hours to be seen in Caversham although no actual ban was introduced. The threat however was always there in the background. Yet how ridiculous such a situation is. In the first part of the year there was constant heavy rain and the river was rushing along in full spate, in many places over its banks. Even at Cricklade where I happened to be at the time, where the Thames is little more than a brook, sandbags were in place in anticipation of a flood. Yet a few months later there is a shortage of water. In plenty of countries a wet winter is regularly followed by a hot dry summer without a rush to panic measures.

If it is the case that, except in a few places, the problem is not so much a shortage of water as of distribution and leakage from underground pipes, then it is about time this was rectified. The excuse that relaying pipes would be exorbitantly expensive will not convince the general public when they see the colossal profits made by the water companies, without even taking into consideration the telephone number salaries of their chief executives. Water undertakings are, or should be, in the business of providing an efficient water supply, not of piling up attractive dividends for shareholders. Perhaps in fact they should be publicly owned so that the need to make fat profits to attract investment is not the priority.

**PADDLING AND SKATE-BOARDING**  
The paddling pond at Christchurch Meadows was duly returned to action for the greater part of the school holidays though on the day my young visitor arrived it was temporarily emptied again. He also reported that the 'edges scratched your knees.' During the colder months of the year it will remain empty and will come into use as a skate-board rink which will, it is hoped, attract skate-boarders away from Forbury Gardens where it has become the done thing to skate over, through or into anything that presents itself as remotely suitable, regardless of the damage done.

**FIFTY YEARS ON**  
To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the dropping of an atom bomb on Hiroshima, a gathering took place on 6th August on the banks of the Thames near Holiday Inn. Candles were lit and floated on the water to symbolise the souls of all those who died at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and those who have since died from nuclear related causes. A prayer was said for forgiveness and for the coming of peace to the world.

## THOUSANDS FLOCK TO FESTIVAL

A very different event took place three weeks later when thousands flocked into the town for the annual festival. This year the noise was kept to a far more acceptable level than last year, thanks to better sound control and the direction of the wind. The fireworks on Saturday night set doors and windows rattling but were of short duration. Unofficial noise from the site after midnight disturbed the sleep of nearby residents and this is a problem that needs attention. The sheer weight of numbers makes this difficult.

Something between fifty-five and sixty thousand were there every day, a huge number for a site that size, which could be a safety hazard. John Peel, writing in the

Guardian, said numbers needed looking at as it was difficult to move about on the site because of the crowds.

A piece of simple arithmetic also shows that it would be impossible to supply an adequate number of lavatories and washing facilities as well as litter bins for such large numbers staying overnight. In fact it was the credit of festival goers that they nearly all looked so clean, as well as happy and contented to be there.

## NO TO SUPERSTORE

Now that it is proposed to amend the Borough Structure Plan by including a proposal for a superstore on the former Elliott's site, a consultation exercise has been launched to assess local people's views. It is essential that all those who are opposed to the inclusion of a super store on that site respond to this survey before 6th October. The Borough insists on objections being made on the official form, something of which many objectors could easily be unaware. Reasons for opposing the store were set out in these columns in the July issue of this newspaper.

Cllr Steven Waite's suggestion that part of the land be used for Thameside School would be a much better use of the site. However, regrettably there is much more money in selling the land for a superstore, so this idea is probably not a runner.

## POINTLESS DESTRUCTION

In mid August a very beautiful memorial sundial was placed in Caversham Court along with a commemorative plaque in memory of a family's young daughter. Sadly you cannot go along and look at it for, before the end of the month, it had been smashed right down to its base. It is difficult to imagine the alienated and perverted minds that could have done such a thing. These once beautiful gardens are suffering so much from mindless vandalism that there must be real fears about their future.

It can only be a few,

and probably the same few, who are wreaking this damage and holding hundreds of law abiding citizens who wish to enjoy the gardens to ransom. There must be some way of controlling them instead of giving them free rein to do as they please.

The grieving family can be assured of the heartfelt sympathy of all decent minded people over what has happened.

## A MINORITY OF ONE?

My thanks to Cllr F. Pugh for correcting me on the technicalities of the holdings of Reading Transport Ltd but it made little difference to the point I was making that a bus service run purely on commercial lines is not going to maintain unprofitable but socially desirable services. As for the use of concessionary passes paid for by the local authority, I had already said that it was perfectly legal.

As readers will observe, the apostrophe in the heading to this article still comes after the 's'. I write from the viewpoint of residents (i.e. matters of interest to them) but they are not all going to agree about what they see. To represent all points of view would

be an impossible task and at best would sound like the minutes of the last meeting, laudable but scarcely making for gripping reading. What I do write reflects at least the views of a substantial minority and frequently, on such matters as Bugs Bottom and care of open spaces, that of a very large majority. Cllr Pugh must be aware that I am not the only person to have serious reservations about the merits of bus deregulation.

At any rate, controversial or not, Cllr Pugh seems to find this column readable and even worthy of a reply and it is much more satisfying to be taken to task for one's views than to be ignored. (See Postbag, pages 8-9, Ed.)

In conclusion, I did not tell anyone not to buy anything, on moral or any other grounds. In fact I said it was perfectly understandable for people to catch a Mainline bus if it was going where they wanted when they wanted. I still maintain that if we want to keep Reading Buses on the streets we should use them in preference to Mainline. Come on, Fred, read my article again and you'll see it most mild and reasonable.

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# CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

*The end of one chapter – the beginning of another*

On Saturday the 19th August the members and friends of Caversham Hill Chapel met officially to say farewell to their Pastor, the Reverend Chris Justice and Julie, his wife, and some of their family.

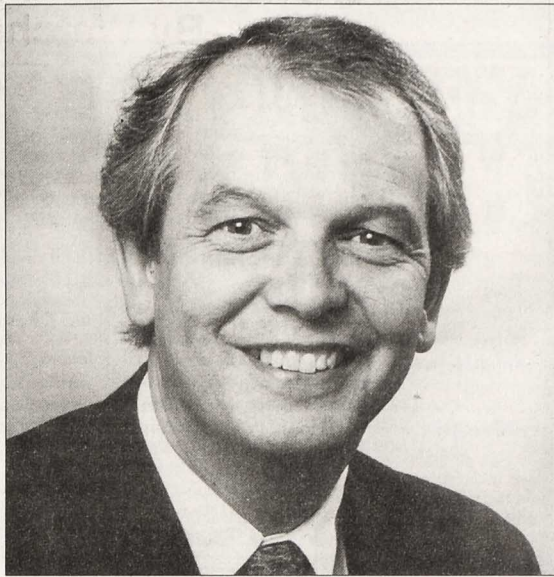
It was an occasion for sharing an evening meal together, rejoicing in fellowship with friends old and new, listening intently to Chris and Julie as they each spoke of past days and future hopes, praying with each other for present needs and commending our dear friends to the loving grace of our Heavenly Father for the days to come.

There was rejoicing and there was sadness, and as we quietly made our way home in the evening twilight it was with subdued hearts at the reality of parting from these two people who had come to mean so much to us.

Chris came to Caversham in January 1979 having received a unanimous call from members of the "Chapel on the Hill" to be their new Pastor, and having accepted the call, believing it to be of God and in the will of God for him at that time. His induction service was conducted at the Chapel on Saturday 24th February 1979, and so commenced a ministry of over sixteen years which brought much blessing to the church and to many

individuals. With Julie, and their children, Matthew, Rebekah and Ruth, Chris had literally to start a new life as Pastor of a small but growing church. In the early 1950's the congregation at the Hill had become much reduced in numbers, but then, under the ministry of three successive godly men, the membership had grown. When Chris arrived there was a solid nucleus of steadfast believers and a sense of expectancy in the purposes of the Lord for the days which lay ahead, even though, as our new young Pastor freely admitted, he himself had much to learn in the role of "Under Shepherd" to which he had been committed. His early training as a Christian had commenced in Oxford when, with Julie, he had become active in the Salvation Army. Later they became members of Woodstock Road Baptist Church and Chris spent two years at London Bible College, as well as serving as an evangelist with Ambassadors for Christ.

In a way, his first coming to the Chapel was a mistake, or so we thought. In the latter half of 1978 a children's mission had been arranged and a well-known missionary from Ambassadors for Christ had agreed to come and speak to the children and conduct the main events. It so turned out that almost at the last minute he was prevented from



Chris Justice

coming and said he would send instead this young man Chris Justice to take his place. Our response was "who is this young man you have wished on us?", but we had no alternative but to accept. In the event, the Mission was a great success, the children were captivated, the church was delighted, and the sequel was that Chris was asked to come to some of our meetings and pray with us and preach the Word, and to bring Julie with him. It was soon obvious that his first visit to us for the children's mission was no mistake, and it was not long before the invitation was sent for him to come as our Pastor. It was almost as if the Lord had said "My thoughts are not your thoughts".

A new chapter in the life of the Chapel started and it was not long before an increase was noticeable in the numbers of people attending the Sunday services (helped also by the birth of Rachel Justice in 1982). By the beginning of 1982 it was

becoming a problem to find seats in the old chapel building for all who wished to attend and plans were made to build a new worship hall on land at the rear. Autumn 1983 and the new building was commissioned and taken into use in the Autumn of 1984, with an increased capacity of up to 170 worshippers. Much of the hard graft of preparatory work and all the subsequent decorating and fitting out was done by church members and our Pastor soon learned how to use a sledge hammer in breaking stones for the foundations! Later the old church hall was demolished and new meeting rooms, kitchen and lounge were built.

So the Church grew, in size, in worship and praise, and the understanding of faith, and now it is as if the Lord has said "This chapter is closed, turn to a new page". Chris has been called to a ministry in Castleford, West

Yorkshire, which embraces an outreach into four other towns around, mainly Pontefract, Knottingly, Normanton and Featherstone. He will go as Pastor to the main church in Castleford, which will be the base for the outreach, and will join with the present leadership there in bringing into reality this vision of planting out churches to the glory of God and the proclamation of the Gospel.

As he says to the church here "the parting is not going to be easy" and to that we say "Amen". We say farewell to true friends in both Chris and Julie, and will miss them perhaps more than we now know. But we give thanks for the past sixteen years, and pray that God's true blessing will be upon them in the years ahead and in the task to which He has called them.

Victor Porter  
Caversham Hill Chapel  
August 1995

## "PHEW, WHAT A SCORCHER!"

*The Caversham Group Holiday*

Sandroyd School's lawnmowers were silent. Dorset hills shimmered in heat haze. Croquet and bowls lawns had never played so fast, swimming pool never so full. "Shade Rage" grew ("Excuse me, you are sitting under my tree"), Sandroyd reeked of sunblock lotion.

A feature of 1995 holiday was the welcome number of "first time" families. They played a key role in the week and we hope they will be back next year.

After first Sunday Eucharist in the cool chapel, a rounders

match brought the week's major upset. Screaming in for a home run, Roger Hopkinson broke his upper femur (top bit of leg) and spent the rest of his week in hospital. We wish him a speedy return to mobility.

The annual cricket match ended in a tie, thanks to astute umpiring. Lily Martin took friends for long walks in noonday sun. John Kavanagh, Nigel Stanbrook, with charming assistants, served a superb barbecue in 90°. Robert the Chef and his team prepared more food than we could devour.

After the farewell Eucharist, presentations were made and an outdoor cabaret enjoyed. Theme was "America". Joy and Colin Blount, wonderfully dressed as Statue of Liberty and a Peruvian Indian, reflected confusion of north or south America. We returned tanned and grateful to the holiday organising team. We thank God for the beauty of Sandroyd and a peaceful week in the sun. Join the holiday next August. Call Frances Hill 483142 for early booking details.

R. Kingsbury

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# ONE WORLD WEEK

## Growing Hope in One World

"Growing hope" is the theme of this year's One World Week which runs from October 22nd to 29th. Sponsored by the churches, One World Week helps us to remember that no matter where we live, or what we do, we are all members of one world, all inhabitants of this planet in the late 1990s.

Read the newspapers and there is a lot of bad and not-so-good news. And it is this that usually captures the headlines. But there is also good news, springing very largely from the efforts of people themselves. People in industrial and developing countries are overcoming obstacles, often against enormous odds, and are "growing hope" for their families and communities. One World Week in Caversham, as in the rest of the country, will this year focus on signs of hope.

Africa is the world's poorest continent in material terms, but there are many examples of growing hope. Take Ethiopia, for example. In October 1984, BBC television showed horrific scenes of famine in Ethiopia. Perhaps the most powerful report came from a refugee camp on a plain just outside the town of Korem in Tigray. Tens of thousands of people had trekked there in

search of food. They were victims, not just of drought, but of war that lasted a generation.

But things have changed. The war ended four years ago. Farmers who once could only work at night for fear of attack, can now plough in the daytime. In Korem life remains precarious for many, but in some areas dramatic changes have taken place. For much of the year the area around Korem is now green.

"I visited that plain outside Korem; there are ripening crops - maize, sorghum and barley stand thick in the fields", says Mark Topping of the aid agency CAFOD, "just two years ago people living around the town of Meki were dependent on food aid. Today they can grow enough food for themselves and have enough surplus to sell at the market".

A local agency called Self Help has helped people to plant drought-resistant trees and crops and develop water systems. Life is still hard for many, but the people of Korem are now literally growing hope.

### Rwanda

The tragic story of the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people in the civil war in Rwanda last year is familiar. Less well known is that in June 1994 a project was

launched by agricultural institutes and non-governmental organisations called "Seeds of Hope". The aim is to help Rwandans get their food production back to normal as soon as possible. As beans are important to the people of Rwanda, bean seed nurseries were set up in neighbouring countries with the aim of distributing seeds to farmers. "Seeds of Hope" is trying to ensure that these seeds reach the farmers who most need them. Significant amounts of both bean seeds and also sorghum (a staple cereal) seeds have now been delivered to them.

### Agroforestry

In many parts of West Africa, the effects of deforestation are severe. Bob Mann, an agriculturist who has worked extensively in

the region over the last 20 years, says he has noticed alarming changes in the environment in this time. Areas where forests once grew are now bare, says Mann, and this has devastating consequences. When trees go, there are no leaves to fall to the ground and enrich the soil. Without trees, soil is less protected and can harden, making it more difficult to grow crops. Without the protection of trees, soil in semi-arid areas can be turned into sand. When trees go, so people have less woodfuel for cooking, rainfall becomes erratic, with droughts and floods occurring more often. In parts of West Africa, rivers that used to flow are now dry. But in a number of countries, including Benin, Cameroon and Ghana, small farmers are now growing hope

Out of the rubble,  
out of the junk  
Out of the darkness,  
out of the funk  
Winds are blowing,  
streams are flowing  
Lights are glowing,  
hope is growing

**GROWING HOPE**

**22-29 OCTOBER 1995**

*One World Week shares the vision of  
Peace with justice for the whole of creation.*

*We believe that wholeness and unity are vital for the well-being of humankind, as individuals and as communities in homes, neighbourhoods, nations and for the life of the whole earth.*

*We believe that diversity need not be threatening but that varieties of culture, colour or creed should be a true enrichment.*

*The Week is offered to all by the churches as a sign of hope, a point of sharing in celebration and struggle, an anticipation of right relationships.*

## One World Week Events in Caversham

**Saturday 21st October, (morning).**

The Overseas Development Administration bus will be in Caversham Court for the Environmental Apple Day. Earlier in the week, the bus will visit a number of local schools.

**Sunday 22nd October**

As a symbol of the way that Christians are moving closer together, and in the hope that this will continue to grow, worshippers at Caversham and Mapledurham churches are asked to attend a church today which is *not their own*. So please - move around!

**Monday 23rd to Saturday 28th October Exhibition, Caversham Library.** An exhibition on the Growing Hope theme, including a Tree of Hope.

**Friday 27th October**

**Mapledurham Pavilion, Upper Woodcote Road, One World Week meeting. 7.30.** Speakers include Abiodun Adeyemi of Nigeria and Jane Alumira of Kenya. Jean Sawyer will speak on Kazakhstan, and Ann Varma on Northern Ireland, also David Grubb, Executive Director of Feed the Children. All will speak about the growing hope they see, and then lead small groups. This will allow people at the meeting the opportunity to explore the growing hope in more depth. Tickets price £1.50 each from Martyn Allies (Tel 472007), John Madeley (476063) or from the member of the One World Week committee in your church. ALL WELCOME!!

**Children's Competition**

Older children have been invited to write short essays on the theme "In a world where so many things seem hopeless, what signs of hope do you see?" Prize-winning entries will be offered to the local press and "The Caversham Bridge". Older junior children are writing their hopes on a leaf sheet to go on the Tree of Hope, while infants are decorating leaves for the tree.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COMPUTER ASSISTED VISION EXAMINATION</li> <li>• GLAUCOMA TESTING</li> <li>• CONTACT LENSES</li> <li>• QUALITY</li> <li>• SERVICE</li> <li>• FASHION</li> <li>• VARILUX CENTRE</li> <li>• DESIGNER FRAMES</li> <li>• COMPETITIVE PRICES</li> </ul>	<p><b>TOTALLY PROFESSIONAL EYECARE</b></p> <p><i>Robin James</i></p> <p>OPHTHALMIC OPTICIANS</p> <p><i>Refr. ZEISS</i> Christian Dior</p>
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**SUNDAY SERVICES**

<p><b>ANGLICAN</b> St Peter's 8.00am Holy Communion 9.15am Parish Communion 11.15am Mattins 6.30pm Evensong</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>St Barnabas' 8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Family Communion (apart from 2nd Sunday) 9.30am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)</p> <p>St Margaret's, Mapledurham 8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday) 11.00am Parish Communion</p> <p><b>CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH</b> (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)</p>	<p><b>CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH</b> 10.30am and 6.30pm</p> <p><b>NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 10.45am and 6.30pm</p> <p><b>CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL</b> 10.30am (in Chapel)</p> <p><b>METHODIST</b> Caversham, Gosbrook Road 10.30am and 6.30pm</p> <p><b>Caversham Heights</b> 9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday) 11.00am and 6.30pm</p> <p><b>ROMAN CATHOLIC</b> 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)</p> <p><b>UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, York Road</b> 11.00am every Sunday</p> <p><b>SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading 10.30am</b> Caversham Church House - Meeting for Worship 7.30pm. (last Sunday) House study groups Sept-June Tel: 475783.</p> <p><b>NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD</b> 9.30am Sunday School 11.00am Divine Worship 7.00pm Evening Service</p>
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# ONE WORLD WEEK

Born and raised an Anglican, now a Baptist, Dr Abiodun Adeyemi of Nigeria, who now works at Royal Berkshire Hospital will speak on:

Jane Alumira of Kenya, a student at Reading University and a born-again Christian, asks:

## Signs of hope and restoration in Nigeria

**BACKGROUND** It is said that the Nigerian population is the same as all the other countries in Africa put together. Over 150 million people live there and the country is characterised by a large variety of different ethnic groups. It is a country endowed with abundance of natural resources and intellectuals. Yet in the midst of

plenty, there are tensions and disagreements. There are conflicts between tribes, political instability, economic problems and diseases to mention just a few. In spite of all these, there are signs of hope that the Lord is bringing restoration. **SIGNS OF HOPE** Yes lots. First time in the history of the country, an election

was held on 12 June 1994 and judged by both insiders and outsiders as free and fair. In the past, everyone's desire was to be in a position to control, to dominate, to decide, to impose and if possible, kill and covet to achieve the desire. Today, there are signs that people are dying to selves and empty of self-interests. Instead of conflicts and wars,

they talk of making peace. It is common to see thousands of ordinary peacemakers rising up when there is a problem. Also through the explosive activities of the local churches, thousands of people are coming into personal relationships with Jesus, even among those in high positions in governments.

Declining economic growth rates; increasing annual population growth rates; deteriorating nutritional conditions and persistent nutritional inadequacies; international debt crisis; inability by the governments to influence the international pricing system for their produce yet an increasing dependency on imported food, farm inputs of seeds, fertiliser, machinery and fuel etc; all precipitating increased government expenditure due partly to the overhead costs, the bulk of which is off-loaded to domestic consumers who mainly are the poor. These

may be pastoralists, the landless farm labourers, the near-landless low income earners, widows, orphans, street children...the list is unending. Such indicators of vulnerability as hunger, poverty, ignorance and disease make it easier for us to visualise the cause and effect scenario. Other local factors affecting the well-being of the vulnerable groups include operational policies - who do they benefit? Climatic conditions of poor/unpredictable rainfall patterns, drought, flood, civil strife, greed and obsession by political/economic power leading to

oppression...the list continues. In the midst of all these, are there any signs of hope for the African continent? What is the basis of your hope for Africa as a Christian? Why hope? Needn't we be talking of restoration as well? What is your role as a Christian in God's plan for restoration in Africa? Why 'you' as an individual to begin with? One of the prophecies about the coming of Jesus was that "The Government Shall be on His Shoulders..." Well where do you fit in this? Jane will speak at the meeting in Mapledurham Pavilion.

## "They haven't gone away, you know."

These were the words of Mr Gerry Adams. Sinn Fein said that it was an off-the-cuff response to a comment made by a member of the crowd in Belfast. Mr Adams was speaking in mid August at a street gathering when one of his hearers suggested that the IRA be brought back. Peace is indeed not simply an absence of war.

The work of the Corrymeela Community is still at the forefront of peacemaking in Northern Ireland. And to borrow Mr Adams' words, 'They'...(the gut hatred, the lack of trust, the long history of aggression and so on) haven't gone away, you know.'

A lifetime's work is ahead of the peacemakers if the peace process is to triumph. Corrymeela is returning to its roots. It no longer responds only to tragedy but is fulfilling its original call to find expression in being instruments of God's peace.

Ann Varma, Corrymeela Link



### CORRYMEELA

Lord, make us instruments of your peace  
Where there is hatred let us sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is sadness, joy;  
where there is darkness, light.

### O DIVINE MASTER

Grant that we may not so much seek  
to be consoled, as to console;  
to be understood, as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life,  
in Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord.

Amen circumstances."

## Jean Sawyer and Ann Varma are two of the speakers at Mapledurham on Friday, 27th October

Science teacher Jean Sawyer, now a deacon at the Baptist Free Church in Prospect Street, decided to do something different when she "retired" nearly ten years ago. In 1987 she went to Tonga as a volunteer with VSO and ran the science department in a secondary school for two years.

More recently, in March this year, Jean went to Kazkhstan, formerly part of the Soviet Union, as a member of a party of teachers to run an education conference. "My main task was to run 4 science seminars", she says, "the whole venture was quite a challenge but we believe we are able to encourage the teachers who are working so hard under difficult circumstances."



Elizabeth McAllister

Ann Varma came to Reading from Belfast, in the 1960's. Having been educated mainly in and around Dublin, she retained an interest in the unfolding tragedy of the Northern Ireland situation. She has had close links with the work of the Corrymeela Community for some twenty years. Ann has recently joined the Northern Ireland Committee of the Religious Society of Friends. This membership offers further involvement with the important peace process in the province.

The photograph was taken by Elizabeth McAllister, a member of the Corrymeela Community, in August 1995. The location is at the entrance to Corrymeela at Ballycastle. In the background is Coventry House, the Staff house and a conference centre, built by money donated by Coventry Cathedral at the time when Corrymeela was made a member of the Coventry 'Cross of Nails' Fellowship.

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# POSTBAG

In response to Mr. Russell's letter, regrettably the Editors cannot check all the facts offered by their contributors and it would be quite unrealistic to try to do so. However, "Caversham Bridge" is happy to publish the following letters and the views they express in response to Watchdog's earlier article on Reading's buses.

See also Watchdog on page 4.

Dear Editors,

### Residents' Viewpoint by Watchdog - August 1995

I am responding to the first article, entitled "Catching the Bus" by Watchdog in your issue of August 1995. Whilst I am amongst the first to champion the right of contributors to voice a legitimately held viewpoint, as Editors you have a prime responsibility to ensure that you do not publish as matters of fact statements which are misleading or erroneous. Unfortunately Watchdog's article contains many such faults and it is important that the record be set straight.

Watchdog states that "The bus undertaking (Reading Transport) is independent of the Borough Council as councils are not now allowed to own and run bus services, but the borough is a major shareholder..." Reading Transport Ltd was created in 1986 under the provisions of the Transport Act 1985 as a direct successor to the previous municipal trading undertaking.

The Borough is, in fact, the ONLY shareholder (other than for one share held by a Council nominee) and as such, the company can hardly be said to be independent of the Borough Council. In fact, the Council, through its Policy Committee, appoints all the company directors, many of whom are

political appointees, and by this means continues to exercise control over the company's activities. This is not unlawful, but to state that the company is independent of the Borough Council is wrong, and although the Council itself can no longer directly own or run bus services, this statement is misleading in Reading's case given the high degree of political control exercised over the company since 1988.

Another totally incorrect statement, often repeated but no less wrong for that, concerns the Borough Council's concessionary fares scheme. Watchdog states that "They (Reading Mainline) accept Reading concessionary passes so holders of these can travel on them, probably unaware that the bill is passed, quite legally, to Reading Buses, who are obliged to pay for their use." This statement is completely wrong and a totally false representation of the law. For the avoidance of doubt, we wish to set out very clearly the position with regard to concessionary fare passes.

These are provided under the Transport Act, 1985 and Regulations made thereunder. They can ONLY be provided by a local authority (e.g. Reading Borough Council), who must make them available for use on ANY qualifying bus services of ANY operator within the area concerned. Bus companies themselves (such as Reading Buses) are debarred from providing concessions which are restricted to availability on the services of only one or a selected number of operators. The operators are reimbursed by the local authority concerned for the revenue foregone. The rate of reimbursement is determined by the local

authority according to a formula and is applied equally to all participating operators.

Accordingly, it follows that the amounts paid to this company, received direct from the Reading Borough Council, represent payments for services actually rendered and do NOT constitute a subsidy. Equally it needs to be made very clear that no payment is made to this company by Reading Buses for our acceptance of the Borough Council's concessionary passes. The amounts paid over to each operator, however great or small, reflect the number of journeys actually made by passholders on each operator's buses, exercising their freedom of choice to use any bus service within the Borough as the legislation intended should be the case.

I must also point out that the Borough Council's concessionary fare passes are available for use on the buses of several other operators entering Reading, namely The Bee Line, Wycombe Bus, Chiltern Queens, Horseman Coaches, Tillingbourne Bus Company, in addition to Reading Mainline, and the Council-owned Reading Transport Ltd. All these operators carry Reading Council passholders, several of them within Caversham, and we find it strange that Watchdog should single out the fact that this company receives reimbursement for services rendered (albeit from the Council) when similar arrangements have prevailed with all these other operators for many years.

We are surprised that you chose to publish Watchdog's erroneous views on this matter in view of the fact that this subject has

engendered widespread discussion in local newspapers during the last year, all of whom have been successfully called upon to set the legal position straight.

Finally, irrespective of Watchdog's opinion, it is a matter of fact that the new bus service (H) introduced by this company into Hemdean Road from May has proved very successful and penetrated an area previously unserved. If car usage in the busy urban area of Greater Reading is to be reduced, increased reliance will need to be placed on bus services and this will be encouraged if new and expanded services are introduced into previously-unserved areas, irrespective of whether the operator of the route is privately owned or local authority controlled.

Yours etc.  
M.J. Russell  
Managing Director  
Reading Mainline  
66 Cardiff Road  
Reading

Dear Sirs,

I found "Watchdog's" less than generous views on the arrival in Caversham of the red Mainline buses rather unfair, and particularly puzzling in the light of

the welcome and encouragement normally afforded to new small traders in the village. I would have expected someone so well known for the occasional "wringing of hands" at the state of Caversham's traffic and the impact on traffic of the new housing estate at Bug's Bottom would welcome the initiative shown by Reading Mainline in improving public transport provision. Line H serves a part of Reading Buses. It provides the Bugs Bottom housing estate with a convenient bus service for the first time. It also considerably shortens the walking distance to a bus route in the Sherdan Avenue area thus improving the convenience of bus travel for a significant number of residents.

There is now even less of a reason for Caversham residents to take their cars into Reading.

Mainline have also addressed the difficulties, highlighted by "Watchdog", that some people have in using buses. Mainline passengers encumbered with

turn to page 9

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from page 8

shopping and/or young children or who are not very agile have the services of a conductor to assist them. Whilst I agree that Reading Buses operates one of the best bus services in the country and is at the forefront of technology in many respects I have seen little evidence that they have tackled this particular problem.

Given greater confidence to use buses and providing real choice in operational style, rather than just crude competition, has the potential to persuade people to take the bus rather than the car. The indications are that this is already happening in other parts of the town served by Mainline. This is the battle to win in order to safeguard a comprehensive network of services and to make a real impact on traffic congestion. It is not helped by the type of petty retaliation shown by Reading Buses in retiming their buses to coincide with those of Mainline whose journeys were originally timed roughly half way between those of Reading Buses.

Yours etc.

Peter A. Whitehead  
Woodlands  
337 Peppard Road  
Emmer Green

Dear Sirs,

I feel I must comment on Watchdog's remarks

under the "Catching the Bus" paragraph.

For as long as I can remember, and I have lived in Caversham for sixteen years, Reading Buses has had a monopoly of local transport facilities. During this time the undertaking has moved from a high frequency, low fare operation to a low frequency, high fare one. In other words, it has become complacent and free from the fear of competition.

It remains to be seen whether it can rise to the challenge presented by Mainline, and begin to make a serious attempt to encourage people to use its services and leave their cars at home. A sea change in attitude will be required first, though. Meanwhile, hats off to Mainline.

Yours etc.

John Maguire  
11 Picton Way  
Caversham

Dear Sir,

On the question of Reading and Mainline bus companies (August issue) Watchdog is trying to have his or her cake and eat it.

The article criticises competition in bus services in Reading and urges readers to support Reading Buses in preference to Mainline. But then in literally the next breath Watchdog makes the case for that very competition by talking of the "changes and improvements" that

# POSTBAG

Reading Buses have made in "fighting back" to make themselves more attractive to their captive customers.

As a consumer I am delighted that Mainline are challenging the Reading Buses monopoly and if I had a Mainline bus on my route I would certainly use it in preference to Reading Buses. Since moving to Reading, the frequency of our Reading Buses service has been cut by one third, prices raised by about sixty per cent, and I and my family have been left too often standing at cold, windy bus stops waiting for buses that don't run on time or are cancelled, much to our inconvenience. Watchdog calls into question the profit motive, conveniently overlooking the profit that Reading Buses have been making of about £1m a year, which is a lot of 70p bus fares, and nobody is complaining about that. Watchdog also talks about the extended running hours of Reading buses, glossing over the fact that from 7.00pm Caversham Heights has only one bus per hour - try catching a bus after leaving the office in London later than 6.00pm. And despite all its talk of "green-ness", Reading Buses still let their buses stand at places like Reading Station with their engines continually running, polluting waiting passengers with exhaust fumes and noise.

Watchdog is entitled to his or her opinion about which buses to use, but the internal contradictions in the author's own article rather prove the point that there are good arguments for the other side. However, on a wider basis does Watchdog nonetheless have the moral high ground in preference to me in referring to the service provided by Reading Buses as socially beneficial (i.e. a good thing) whereas Mainline is motivated

solely by profit objectives (i.e. bad)? I don't see it that way. Any public transport system is going to benefit society but we will pay for it one way or another, whether in taxes or fares or both. Competition and profit are a way of providing a discipline to ensure that resources are not wasted (and do not cost consumers more than they should) and I view that as consistent with a Christian belief in God's creation, our stewardship of his world and our attitudes to one another.

Competition gives people more choice and restrains the power of individuals or organisations to exploit others and I would have thought that that is something Watchdog would have welcomed.

Yours etc.

Roger Antell  
82 Albert Road  
Caversham

Dear Sir,

**Kuluva Hospital**

As the co-founder of this Christian Hospital in 1948, developed on two hundred acres of empty land, I would like to thank you for the gift of £200 which you have made to the hospital. And my thanks too to Dr Patrick Anderson for the description of his visit there which you published.

I myself was there two years ago, after a gap of some years, and saw the reconstruction of the hospital with new and larger buildings replacing those which my brother and I erected over the space of several years. Dr Anderson rightly stressed the Christian message which has been at the centre of all the many activities and there is every evidence that, under the blessing of God, this hospital will continue to grow, providing in increasing measure for the medical and spiritual needs of the people in the N. West corner of Uganda.

I would be grateful if you could convey to your readers my thanks

and those from Kuluva Hospital.

Yours etc.

Peter Williams  
(Dr Peter H. Williams)  
78 London Road,  
Reading

Dear Editors,  
**Church Lecterns and Eagles**

It has often puzzled me as to the reason why so many church lecterns are in the form of an eagle with outspread wings. Why not a dove, for peace, or a seagull, seeing as this country is an island surrounded by water?

In the earlier days of the Roman Empire, the eagle was carried at the head of each legion of Roman soldiers, and in more recent times it was used as a symbol of the Nazis' Third Reich.

Strangely enough it was a lady member of Düsseldorf's Anglo-German Club who gave me what I think is the most likely explanation. Apparently when a mother eagle is raising her eaglets, and if there is a shortage of food for her brood, the mother bird will peck at her breast until blood is drawn, and the young eaglets are sustained by her blood.

Is this the real reason or do you know better?

Yours etc.

Pete Littlewood  
11 Moss Close  
Caversham

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## MAYOR LAUNCHES CAVERSHAM'S NEW COTTAGE INDUSTRY

The Rivermark Centre in North Street, Caversham, was officially launched by the Mayor, Councillor David Geary, in mid-August. It is a family business combining on one side a Gallery and Gift Shop and on the other The Telecottage. It is the brainchild of Caversham residents Anne and Stuart McCubbin and as Anne worships with the Society of Friends and Stuart with the Methodists the Caversham Bridge might also claim it as another ecumenical venture!

**Treasure House**  
At the launch of the Mayor, a supporter of fair traded products which are sold by the Gallery and Gift Shop, described it as a "Treasure house". Customers will find it packed with a range of beautiful and often unusual gifts, postcards and greetings cards from major art galleries and museums, and recycled writing papers. A range of classical, folk and world music is also available.

- and Telecottage

The Telecottage is a

computer age 2,500 members, both a computer could do for them. Telecottage managers and individual Teleworkers. If Stuart McCubbin cannot give you the service you want he knows a Telecottage that can and he can liaise with it. Stuart sees the facility being used by local voluntary organisations who will want to book time on the PCs to produce their own newsletters, by small businesses who will use the facilities for some of their office work, and by individuals who will use the centre as a resource to see what

The idea of the Telecottage is that it can become a centre for Teleworkers, that is people working from home on their own computers. The Telecottage Association has over

2,500 members, both a computer could do for them. Telecottage managers and individual Teleworkers. If Stuart McCubbin cannot give you the service you want he knows a Telecottage that can and he can liaise with it. Stuart sees the facility being used by local voluntary organisations who will want to book time on the PCs to produce their own newsletters, by small businesses who will use the facilities for some of their office work, and by individuals who will use the centre as a resource to see what

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**Arts, crafts and computers**

Caversham now has a resource open to all embracing the arts and crafts of the traditional cottage industries, coupled with all the resources and gizmos of the computer age. It is a place where the people of Caversham might go to buy a gift and come out as a computer wizard, or from where the square eyed users of PCs even come home with a gift!

Owen Jewiss

### THE REV KEITH SANDERS

Readers will be distressed at the news of the death of the Rev. Keith Sanders on September 2nd. (An appreciation will follow at a later date). A memorial service for Keith will be held on Tuesday, 10th October at 7.30pm at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church.

## METHODIST COLLEGE AT LUTON

The new, enlarged and much improved Prospectus for 1995/6 is now available FREE to Churches, groups or individuals on request. The topics which are listed below, cover a wide range of interests relating, and inter-relating, both to Church life and to the world outside.

The Charter of Luton Industrial College - its official name but known increasingly as just L.I.C. - calls upon it to "demonstrate the relevance of the Christian faith to contemporary society". Hence the need for a Christian approach to current issues, and a prerequisite for this is the understanding of both people and society.

Although part of the Methodist Church, L.I.C. is truly ecumenical and is used by all. Almost all the consultations and courses, except those for the clergy and other Church staff, take place over part or all of weekends.

The accommodation is in single study bedrooms (except two twin rooms) and the cost, including full board, varies from £15 for a day to £60 for Friday evening to Sunday lunch.

The topics available at L.I.C. are grouped for convenience in the list and the last group contains those which can be arranged locally. These can usually be adapted to suit a local need. The free prospectus is available from L.I.C. and contains all of the following:

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# MESSAGE RECEIVED

Thursday 20th July, I was putting the final touches to a bird-article for 'The Bridge' when my pager 'bleeped' at 12.30pm. Thinking it was another 'up-date' to previous news I casually pressed the 'message-receive' button. "Least Sandpiper, Sidlesham Ferry 11.45am today". I leaped into action. At only 13cms this North American 'peep' is the smallest wader in the world, seldom reaching our 'side of the pond'.

Unfortunately, my car was 'off the road' but an instant phone-

call to a nearby younger twitcher confirmed he would share expenses for a hire-car. By 4pm I was driving a brand new Fiesta home.

We left at 5 o'clock the following morning and had 'ticked the Least' by 7.30am. Sometimes it came very near to us, feeding rapidly with a 'sewing machine' action. Even the small Dunlins dwarfed it.

After an hour or so we visited Selsey for breakfast and watched Sandwich Terns and Eiders down on 'the Bill'.

Returning to Church

Norton side of Paghham Harbour, my friend saw his first Little Egret on British soil, despite having seen several abroad. There has been an influx this year (1995), totalling 80 in some instances.

Before leaving we paid our final homage to the Least Sandpiper, which stayed on for almost a week in a blazing heat-wave.

Our mission was thus accomplished at a total cost of some £40 including petrol and breakfast - '£3 per centimetre' (excluding the Little Egret) - if being mercenary! But

oh, how that BIG twitch for a small bird served us so proudly.

As always, that same old excitement and exhilaration. Could we hire a car at such short notice? Would the bird have gone? Would Scooby, my 12 year old King Charles 'Twitcher' cope with the heat? (In fact, as always, he loved every minute, the new car providing good air-control and ventilation).

The dawn start, the uncluttered roads, our own cross-country route to Chichester, enabling a high average speed.

The thrills, the uncertainty, the spice of a birder's life which makes a 'twitcher' literally twitch; the zest, enthusiasm, the 'get-up-and-go', even into my late sixties, have never abated by so much as one 'Least Sandpiper'.

Yes, most definitely good friends and true about 'out there' and I would recommend it to any person, young or old, but MOST IMPORTANTLY, learn about our regular and resident birds FIRST, before 'jumping off the high-diver'!

Scops Owl



## Chazey WI

The September meeting was one of the friendliest and most intimate ever to take place. A glance through the windows of Mapledurham Pavilion would have revealed about thirty women, laughing and talking,

their hands busy on each other's feet. No, not foot fetishists! Just practising relaxing foot massage under the guidance of Gill Williams, local reflexologist. It really seemed to work well on most people, though those with ticklish feet found it difficult to relax.

Naturally Chazey members arrived with well washed feet and the air was fragrant with the assorted flower scents of soap and talcum powder. It is almost impossible not to relax under such circumstances and the friendly atmosphere engendered cannot be too highly praised. In fact, as an ice-breaker at parties, foot massage could eclipse alcohol altogether! Gill Williams explained the art of reflexology whose practitioners believe that reflex areas on the feet correspond to all the major organs, glands and body parts. Stimulating those areas allows the blood to circulate freely to all the cells, induces relaxation and reduces stress and tension. Even simple foot massage proved beneficial after the day's work.

On Saturday 28th October, Chazey WI are holding a Barn Dance in the Mapledurham Pavilion. The Reel McCoy will play for dancing. A meal of Beans, Bangers and Mash, followed by Fruit Pie and Cream, will be cooked and served by WI members. Friends should ask members for tickets for this very special evening.

## The University of the Third Age

The Open Meeting due to be held on the 25th of September was a members' meeting with displays of the group activities available.

The Association is for the retired and those no longer in gainful employment. It is a University in the original sense of the word; a collective of people devoted to learning through self-help. Contact A. Jones 01734 580085 for further information.

## Caversham Community Association

August started with a popular bingo session involving gifts and money prizes. The following week members welcomed back Mr Copeland who brought some more of his interesting and informative slides with an amusing commentary.

The month ended with Doreen Crawley leading a whistle drive. The friendly competition resulted in George Feast, Dolly Usher, Maida Feast and Doreen Crawley being declared winners and Peggy Freeman getting the booby prize.

## Caversham Heights T.G.

When the chairman opened the month's meeting, she said she was delighted to see so many members had made the effort to come out on such a hot evening. After the usual reports, one was given of the Annual National Council Meeting held in June in the Albert Hall.

The delegate, Mrs Helen Neil, accompanied by Mrs Sheila Hobbs, gave a very clear account of the speeches and general business of the day. All three motions were carried after interesting debate and at the last minute an extra one was entered which showed concern over small charities which lost out on income since the start of the National Lottery. Helen was full of enthusiasm for the wonderful atmosphere generated by delegates attending from all over Great Britain. She found it a terrific experience and was very thankful for the opportunity to be part of such a friendly movement.

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