



Christmas in Caversham

THE 12 DAYS

DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE 106 RETAIL SHOPS IN THE CENTRE OF CAVERSHAM IN AN AREA FROM PROSPECT STREET TO CAVERSHAM BRIDGE AND FROM WOLSEY ROAD TO ST. ANNE'S ROAD? CAVERSHAM TRADERS ASSOCIATION HAVE BANNED TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE THE CHRISTMAS SEASON WITH US AND TO SHOW THAT CAVERSHAM SHOPS HAVE MUCH TO OFFER.



12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS COMPETITION
 There are picture cards of "THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS" in the windows of various shops around Caversham.
 All you have to do is find all twelve pictures and write on the entry form in which shop window they were seen. (All participating shops have entry forms). Once you have filled in all the answers, complete the simple tie breaker and you could win a superb prize.
 Your entry must be handed in to any of the shops taking part by 20th December 1995.

THE FIRST PRIZE DELUXE CHRISTMAS HAMPER will include the usual festive food and drink, but also many more gifts and vouchers from the many interesting shops in Caversham. The hamper will be on display in Waring's the baker's window. The prize for children of 12 and under is a FAMILY TICKET FOR FOUR to the Christmas pantomime "Cinderella" at the Hexagon. The presentation of the hamper will be made by a famous local personality.
WINNER TO BE ANNOUNCED ON 22ND DECEMBER



LATE NIGHT OPENING
 with mulled wine and mince pies. Many of the shops in Caversham will be open until 8pm on Fridays, 8th, 15th and 22nd December.
 Take advantage of this facility and enjoy the festive spirit as well.

CHRISTMAS EVE OPENING
 Almost all the shops in the Caversham Traders Association will open on Christmas Eve (Sunday) from 10am to 4pm. Some shops will also open on other Sundays in December.

STREET ENTERTAINMENT
 Choirs and groups of musicians together with Punch and Judy will be around on late night opening - 8th and 15th December

TO WISH YOU PEACE AND JOY THIS CHRISTMAS - AND TO INVITE YOU TO OUR SERVICES
 from all the Churches in Caversham

- FREE CHURCH**
- NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD**
 25th 10am Christmas Service
- SOCIETY OF FRIENDS 2 Church St Reading**
 25th 10:30am Christmas Worship
- CAVERSHAM BAPTIST Prospect St**
 17th 10:30am Christmas Family Service
 6:30pm Candlelight Carol Service
 24th 10:30am Christmas Eve Service
 25th 10:30am Christmas Day Family Service
 31st 10:30am New Year's Eve Service
- GOSBROOK RD METHODIST**
 3rd 10:30am Toy Service
 10th 6:30pm Adult Nativity
 17th 10:30am Children Nativity
 6:30pm Carol Service
 24th 11:30pm Christmas Evening Service
 25th 10:30 Family Service
- CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH Woodcote Rd**
 10th 11am Toy Service
 16th 3pm Polio Fellowship Carols
 17th 4pm Christingle
 24th 11am Lessons and Carols
 11:15pm Watchnight Communion
 25th 10:30am Family Celebration
 31st 11am Family Praise
- CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL Peppard Rd**
 17th 6pm Candlelit Family Service
 24th 10:30am Christmas Eve Service
 25th 10:30am Christmas Day Service

- ROMAN CATHOLIC**
- St ANNE'S South View Ave**
 24th 6:30pm Mass & Procession to Crib
 11:30pm Carols before.....
 12 midnight Midnight Mass
 25th 10:30am Christmas Celebration Mass
- RICHMOND RD CHAPEL**
 25th 9am Mass
- St MARTIN RC SCHOOL Pendenalls Ave**
 24th 9:15am Mass
 6pm Midnight Mass
 25th 9:15am Mass
- ECUMENICAL CHURCH**
- CAVERSHAM PARK VILLAGE**
 Caversham Park Primary School Queensway
 17th 11am Communion and Carols
 24th 11am All Age Carol Service
 11:30pm Midnight Communion
 25th 11am All Age Christmas Communion

- CHURCH OF ENGLAND**
- St PETER'S CAVERSHAM Church Rd**
 17th 6:30 pm Carol Service
 24th 8 am Holy Communion
 9:15am Said Communion Rite B
 4pm Crib / Christingle Service
 11:30pm Midnight Mass
 25th 8 am Holy Communion
 9 15 pm Sung Eucharist
 11 15 pm Morning Prayer

- St MARGARET'S MAPLEDURHAM**
 17th 6:30pm Carol Service
 24th 2:30 pm Crib Service
 11:30 pm Midnight Mass
 25th 11 am Holy Communion
- St ANDREW'S Harrogate Rd**
 24th 4:30pm Crib Service
 11:30 pm First Eucharist of Christmas
 25th 8pm The Eucharist
 10 am Sung Family Eucharist
- St BARNABAS Emmer Green Rd**
 10th 9:30am Toy Service
 17th 4:30 pm Carol Service
 24th 8 am Holy Communion
 9:30 am Parish Communion
 4:30 pm Crib Service
 11:30pm Midnight Communion
 25th 8 am Holy Communion
 9:30 pm Sung Eucharist
- St JOHN'S Gosbrook Rd Lower Caversham**
 17th 10am Parish Eucharist with Christingle & Nativity
 4pm Christingle Service for the Uniformed Organisations
 6:30pm Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols (Followed by mulled wine and Mince pies)
 24th 8am Holy Communion (BCP)
 10am Parish Eucharist
 4pm Carols round the Crib
 11:30pm Midnight Mass
 25th 8am Holy Communion (BCP)
 10am Parish Eucharist for All Ages

TALKING POINT

by
The Revd Sheila Nunn
St. Peter & St. Margaret



'GOD SURPRISES EARTH WITH HEAVEN'

Preparations for Christmas seem to start earlier each year - at least the practical preparations do. The cooking, shopping, present-buying, inviting of relatives, the seige-like feel to so much of what we do seems like a great barrier between us and Christmas Day. I would like to make a plea to us all to put the Baby back into Christmas.

So often we are urged to do the opposite - to consider the demands of the adult Jesus. It is thought by some serious-minded theologians that the emphasis on the baby is sentimental, 'nice', easy and demands little of us.

Anyone awaiting the birth of a child, especially a second or third child, would refute that idea. Awaiting a child is exciting, frustrating, awe-inspiring and, towards the birth-date, the time seems endless.

A baby demands a love response by its vulnerability, it holds no grudges when you are tired and lack patience. It evokes a desire to protect, to give without cost or consideration. We may feel the need to buy the best pram, cot, clothes, toys but all the baby needs is the warmth of love and care. We can sometimes be so anxious to provide the baby with all the best that money can buy that we miss what is really important. Just like preparing for Christmas, we can be seduced into providing more and more material goods when what the Baby needs is time with us, to be talked to, held, loved just for who it is.

Advent is a time of waiting and preparation, of re-adjusting our lives to include another, of re-evaluating our priorities.

God came to the world as a baby - not in power, with influence - but as a vulnerable, helpless, dependent child. He came to a family without position or power, a family from an obscure part of the country. The love of a child by its parents shows us something of God's for us. He demands our time, our self-giving and the ability to see the world as He sees it.

This Advent time we await the birth of the Christ-child with love, with expectancy, with apprehension (for how shall we cope with having our lives turned upsidedown?) A baby is unpredictable, does not fit in with our image and preconceived ideas. He disrupts and disturbs our well-ordered lives but brings joy beyond our imagining. We learn to let go of things we thought indispensable in our lives.

So when you receive the well-meant cards and see the smiling baby in a neat crib think of the smelly stable, with pain and blood and fierce joy. Think of our God coming to us so gently, asking us to love Him not judging us but holding out His arms. What better image for our God whose love for us is so amazing. We are called as Church to be parent to the Christ child - to await with excitement the birth when

'God surprises earth with Heaven
Coming here on Christmas Day.'
(Iona Christmas Carol)

POSTBAG



Self help is our way of action.

Dear Editors,
The Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre would like to thank the residents of Caversham for their generous support at a collection held in the town on Saturday, 30th September. The total raised was £1,172, which was a fantastic achievement, and this money will go directly to helping all our members who suffer from Multiple Sclerosis.

At our Centre in Patrick Road, Caversham, we offer physiotherapy, counselling, dietary advice - all by trained specialists, oxygen therapy and a range of therapies aimed at limiting the progression of the disease. We also give advice and information in order to help our members manage their symptoms in the best possible way so that they can lead independent and normal lives.

THE CAVERSHAM BRIDGE NEEDS YOU! AND A LITTLE OF YOUR TIME

Our Advertisement Manager, Peggy Maule, has done the job for 25 years. She would now like an "understudy", someone she could work with so that when she retires, as she very well might in the near future, the changeover can be effected easily and smoothly.

WE NEED THE ADS TO KEEP THE
CAVERSHAM BRIDGE GOING

WE NEED YOU

If you can help please ring Mrs Maule 471816

The money raised from our fund raising activities pays for these treatments and the costs of running the Centre and we are extremely grateful for all the support we are receiving from the local community.

This year we have launched an Appeal for £500,000 as we have to move from our current site by the end of 1998 and urgently need to find a half acre plot of land on which to build a new Centre. We will be asking for help from companies, trusts and individuals over the next three years and hope to achieve our target as soon as possible, so that we can start building!

Yours etc

Lesley Dorin - Fundraiser

Bus Services

I have read the correspondence about the bus services. There is one great anxiety about a 'free for all' - has anybody been to Oxford? There, there must be at least five bus companies touting for passengers and Cornmarket is so full of buses, all with a very few passengers, that you could walk on their roofs. Please do not let this happen in Reading - apart from anything else it is not good for the environment.

Yours etc.
(Mrs) P. G. Preece.

Caversham's Rarest Tree?

Referring to M. K.'s article in the Caversham Bridge October edition, this tree was always credited to the vote of Councillor R.C.A. Buckett (Labour Councillor of Tilehurst) which enabled the tree to be planted at Caversham Library. He was also credited with the vital vote to construct the surrounding garden of the statue at Station Square, opposite to the Great Western Hotel.

Yours etc.
Ted Smith

Church Lecterns and Eagles

Dear Editors,
Pete Littlewood's letter (October 1995) on church lecterns and eagles was most interesting. I have always been given to understand that from time immemorial the eagle was known as "the king of birds." The lectern in church takes the form of an eagle because the eagle is the natural enemy of the serpent, the two wings representing the two Testaments. I have also heard it said that this bird is emblematic of St John.

Am I alone in this theory?
Yours etc.
Walter Rose

Does anyone know?

I have recently received a letter from Mrs C.M. Nicholl who is trying to regain contact with a friend who lived at my address in 1956. She was called Gwyneth Hatt-Cook, was trained as a Dietician and worked in Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. If anyone has knowledge of her whereabouts please would they contact Mrs Nicholl at "Corodale", 39 Buckstone Road, Fairmilehead, Edinburgh EH10 6UE, who would be delighted to hear about, or from her old friend.

Yours etc.
Pauline Weston (Mrs)

The Editors thank other correspondents for their letters and regret that owing to lack of space there was not enough room to print them all.

CAVERSHAM CLERGY

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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 Ikley 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

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

Church office 474529

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

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All contributions for January issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 29 November.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 27 November

The dates for February will be Tuesday 2 January and Wednesday January 3.

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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Special Services for Advent, Christmas and the new Year. Please refer to your own church notices for a much fuller programme of services and events than this paper can provide.

A LINK WITH JANE AUSTEN

The Vanderstegens, commemorated in St Peter's by a coat of arms and tablet high on the wall in the choir vestry (see photograph) and a table top tomb on the sloping ground north of the clergy vestry, are of interest not only as landowners for almost two hundred years, but also for their connection with Jane Austen's family.

The first Vanderstegen to settle in England was Henry, a follower of William III, whose family grew rich before his death in 1754. A Mrs Vanderstegen (perhaps his widow) occupied a house in Putney High Street from 1757 to 1763, large enough to be rated at £50 per annum, which was a great sum in those days. One of her four daughters married Sir Charles Asgill, Lord Mayor of London, but her eldest child and only son, William (the first name on the monument) was to begin the family's link with Caversham. He lived from 1734 to 1794.

College Friendships

In 1756 William entered St John's College, Oxford, where among his fellow undergraduates he became friends with Philip and Thomas Powys of Hardwick, just beyond Mapledurham. However, a senior member of the college also impressed him: George Austen, Fellow and Assistant Chaplain, and later to be the father of novelist Jane. At a party given by the Powyses at Hardwick, William Vanderstegen met Elizabeth Brigham, co-heiress of Cane End Manor (then in Caversham parish) and in 1759, the year he left St John's, he married her in St. Peter's. Lavish was his expenditure on clothes and jewels that spring, some ear-rings alone costing £300. Soon after the wedding on May 3 he was busy with plans for enlarging the manor house at Cane End, buying bricks, lead, lime, ironwork and employing numerous workmen whose accounts were not finally closed until 1763. The garden was improved by a ha-ha for which the builders earned £4.13s.6d.

Pupil in the Austen Household

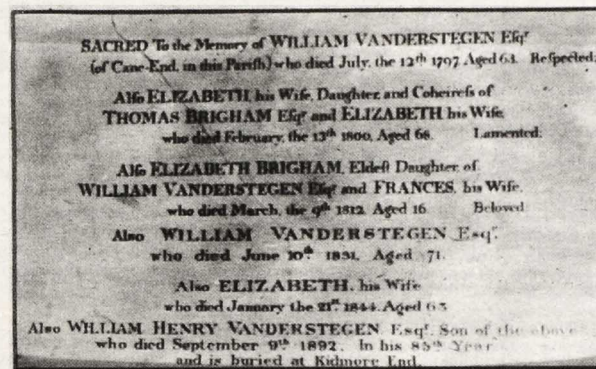
The Vanderstegens' only son, another William, 1760-1831, had a sister, Elizabeth born in 1764. In that year George Austen resigned his fellowship at St. John's to marry Cassandra Leigh, youngest daughter of the rector of Harpsden near Henley, and himself became the Rector of Deane and Steventon near Basingstoke. What education the young Vanderstegens had at Cane End is unknown, but on a November day in 1773, William set out on the journey to Hampshire to be a resident pupil of George Austen's at Steventon rectory. The Austen family, warm-hearted as well as scholarly, were soon to make William feel at home. Before Christmas Mrs Austen was writing that "our new pupil Master Vanderstegen has been with us about a month. He is near fourteen years old; is good tempered and well disposed". It was then cus-

In the Autumn of 1982 Anne Grimwade wrote the following article which was published in the December issue of the Caversham Bridge that same year. With so much interest in Jane Austen at the present time readers may like to read about the Jane Austen link with the old parish of Caversham.

tomary for clergy to augment their incomes by tutoring, and Mr Austen had already in his charge Lord Lynton, aged only five, the eldest son of Lord Portsmouth, and before him the son of Warren Hastings, a sickly child, who died while his parents were still in India. Early in 1775 (the year of Jane's birth) William Vanderstegen, too, must have been ill, for in August Mrs Austen wrote, "Master Vanderstegen is not very well again, and has been with us again these three months; he is gone home this morning for a few holidays". We do not know how long he remained at Steventon but by 1778 he was ready to go to St John's, and took his BA degree in 1782.

The Thames 200 years ago

His father, meanwhile, had retired fully into the role of an eighteenth century landowner, keeping an ever watchful eye on his tenants, so that fields were well farmed, valuable woodlands kept in good order and their timber sold, as his account book shows. But with estates bordering the river at Pangbourne and



The Vanderstegen Memorial in St Peter's.

— Peter Sear

Caversham and remembering his Dutch ancestry, it is not surprising to find him appointed one of the first Commissioners of the Thames. In 1784 he was one of a committee of three who went to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discuss the London port duty on coals, and to press for a "draw-back" (refund) on that article passing any specified place "the amount to be expended on the improvement of the navigation of the Thames." Finally in 1794, three years before his death, he recorded his thoughts on management and use of the river, its bridges, locks and weirs, in a most informative pamphlet now in the Bodleian Library, entitled "The Present State of the Thames, considered and a Comparative View of Canal and River Navigation". These are not the waterways of today, with their pleasure boats and cabin cruisers, but busy thoroughfares for goods and commerce.

Family of the Younger William

It would be pleasant to record that the younger William also put pen to paper, after his contact with the Austens and his years at St John's, but he was not a writer. Twice married, he had five daughters and one son, William Henry, 1808-1892, names on the monument. One daughter died at sixteen, another in infancy. The baby and her mother were buried beneath the table top tomb. Wind and weather are fast making the inscription invisible, but one can still read the name of Frances, William's first wife. Our last glimpse of George Austen's pupil is a cheerful, sociable one, in a letter written by an uncle of Jane Austen's to his own wife: "Vanderstegen with his son and two Nephews are this Minute come; Van goes with me to Maidenhead, the young people return to Cane End. Van: returns to Scarlets with me tonight and begs a bed; his Young ones meet him here tomorrow at Breakfast - all go back to dine at Cane End. Don't sit up for us as it is uncertain when we may be at Home". Clearly the Vanderstegens and the Austens were good companions, and the friendship between the families which prospered well, provides another interesting facet in the history of St Peter's.

My many thanks are due to Dr A. J. Reed and Mrs E. Fitzeustace for providing some of the material used in this article. A.A.G.

Local Farm Shop "Best in UK"

The Old Dairy Farm Shop, Whitchurch on Thames, has been named as "the best Farm Shop in the UK" in the recently published 1996/7 Food Lovers' Guide to Britain, compiled by food writer and broadcaster Henrietta Green.

Situated at Path Hill Farm, Hardwick Estate, Whitchurch, the shop has gained a reputation for its exceptionally wide range of competi-

tively priced organic meats, dairy produce, fruits and vegetables, the majority of which are raised on the farm and in the market garden.

Having chosen The Old Dairy as best Farm Shop, Henrietta writes:

"The Old Dairy Farm Shop, converted from the old dairy is on the 1,000 acre Hardwick Estate owned by Sir Julian Rose, and as a committed member of

the Soil Association, he farms it organically. Of the produce sold in the farm shop, run by his wife Elizabeth, about 80 per cent is certified organic. If however, you think this means a dreary but worthy selection, you could not be more wrong. There is a riot of temptingly good 'prop-

er' food to indulge in: the fact that it is farmed organically seems almost incidental."

Home raised beef, lamb, turkey and wild game are sold through the shop, as well as a wide range of fresh vegetables and fruits, all produced without chemical fertiliser, pesti-

cides or fungicides. Guernsey milk and cream, free range eggs and Hardwick's own fresh cheeses, made on the farm, are also sold exclusively through the farm shop.

It is open Wednesday to Saturday 10am-5pm.

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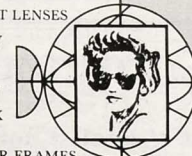
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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

More Houses on Key Site
Considerable stir has been caused by the news that planning permission has been granted for 94 dwellings on the former Queen Anne's playing fields. How much better it would have been if the site had been left as open space. How much worse it would have been had a great superstore with a petrol station and all the rest of the accoutrements been put there.

Unfortunately, once Queen Anne's School had decided to sell this site which had become surplus to requirements, it inevitably meant it would be developed. They could hardly have been expected to present or sell it at a very low price to the Borough as a piece of open land. Although it has always been an open space, it was never open to the public, so it was never a reasonable option to campaign for it to remain undeveloped. A superstore, however, would seriously have changed the character of Caversham, and was vigorously opposed. Houses may not exactly enhance the site, but their impact will be less far reaching and damaging. The only realistic line to take is to seek to modify any undesirable effect the development will have on its surroundings.

Access and egress have already proved contentious, with owners of some good houses being offered sums of money so that their homes could be demolished. The present agreed access will do nothing to improve road safety in Henley Road particularly as it is sited at the dip in the road, which makes it invisible to motorists. Whether there is adequate parking space for visitors and play space for children are also matters that need attention.

Some of the problems

have been caused by the rise in numbers of houses from the fifty agreed in the structure plan to 94, even though it must have been apparent to anyone who gave it a second thought that fifty would have been an unusually low density for that site, and would later be increased. So Caversham is in for another change, but it is never going to be as overwhelming as a superstore would have been.

Crisis for Residents' Association

The body behind the campaign against the superstore was chiefly the Caversham & District Residents' Association. In the twenty eight years of its existence it has been involved with matters great and small which would affect the quality of life of the people of Caversham. From Bugs Bottom (failed) to holes in the road (yes, there are still plenty, but fewer than there would have been without CRA) from lorries to trees, through litter to public notice boards, the Association has been there.

It's future, however, is now uncertain. Molly Casey, the secretary for nearly twenty of those years, gave notice at the Annual General Meeting in April that she would be stepping down at the next AGM. So far no replacement has been found. Rosemary Chapman, who has taken and distributed the minutes of the monthly committee for nearly ten years, has indicated also that she will not be continuing to do so after April 1996.

Without active people prepared to run the Association, it is difficult to see how it can carry on. Finance, membership and planning, are already looked after by other committee members, but someone is needed to keep tabs on the day to day running. It is an interesting job, and if there is anyone who thinks it is worth doing, a call to Reading 472300 would be appreciated.

Slowing down the speedsters

Traffic in Caversham is always in the news, and this time it is the turn of the area bounded by Woodcote Road, Shepherd's Lane and Kidmore Road, where long, often straight, roads, have led to speeding to the discomfort of the residents and the death of cats, few of whom die peacefully in their beds.

Most ideas thrown up for dealing with this problem have been rejected as either moving the problem to another road, or to another part of the same road, or causing further problems. Road markings and road signs

have been found to highlight specific hazards, but their effect is insignificant if used in isolation.

A total package has now been devised for the area concerned, and these, with 'Kill your speed' signs could be effective in helping reduce the problems. The most controversial point is the change of priorities at Albert Road and Richmond Road, largely because old habits die hard, but it would force a halt in what is visually one long straight road, Conisboro' Avenue and Albert Road, which invites speeding.

The majority, 75% of drivers using these roads actually live in the roads concerned, are not, for the most part, rat running rogues from further afield. Is it a case of speeding along these roads while objecting to those who speed by your house? For many driving along at under 30 mph where it is possible to go faster, is regarded as a sign of weakness, whilst a few speed endorsements are a sign of manhood, and the equivalent to winning spurs. A habit so deeply ingrained will not be easy to change.

Save our good Apples

Caversham Court was given over on a Saturday in October to the joys of the English apple and a good time was had by all.

Further afield, the next day an open day was held at Cross Lanes Fruit Farm, on the road to Goring Heath, which attracted a lot of people. The main orchard is delightfully situated, with a beautiful view. The apples, of which there are several varieties, are delicious, come in various sizes, and are only sprayed if the need actually arises. English apples, and particularly Coxes, are the best in the world. Our climate, a source of complaint to those going on holiday or arranging outdoor events, just suits apples. The only thing is, it takes longer to grow them, and requires more care than is the case in countries with warmer and more reliable weather.

Consequently, the market gets flooded with apples which are neither golden nor delicious, selling at a lower price. Moreover EU grants to destroy old orchards with the idea of replacing them with more easily managed ones (climbing up ladders to pick fruit from high trees may look romantic, but is not cost effective) has led to grants been accepted, and whole orchards burnt down, without being replaced.

We are lucky to have one of the diminishing number of orchards growing these lovely apples right on our doorstep. At the risk of incurring Cllr. Pugh's wrath, may I suggest buying English apples in

preference to the imported balls of cotton wool encased in polythene and masquerading as apples which are so widely available in the shops. Like buses, local post offices and small shops, if you don't use them you lose them.

Recovery in Caversham Court

I am pleased to be able to say that the beautiful memorial sundial in Caversham Court has been replaced. In spite of being smashed off its base, it was possible to save it. It is to be hoped that the perpetrators of this disgraceful act have sufficient shame not to repeat it.

The grass in the gardens has made a remarkable recovery from the summer drought and even the top lawn looks green, though closer inspection reveals bare patches.

At the time of writing, at the tail end of October, few of the trees have changed colour. Instead they are a rather dingy green, and it looks as if the leaves will simply fall like that. It seemed a shame when the horse chestnuts beside Caversham Bridge were pollarded before they had turned colour, but it now looks as though they would not have anyway. Perhaps there will still be a last minute blaze of glory in the Chiltern woods before the monotonous of

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GOLDEN WEDDING...THE PILGRIMS

On Boxing Day Margaret and Jim Pilgrim will celebrate their Golden Wedding. Like many others their wedding came at the end of the war, at a time of hope for the future.

Margaret was a nurse at Battle Hospital, and Jim had been serving at Bletchley Park, seconded from the Post Office Telephones with whom he eventually completed 40 years service, to help maintain the Enigma Machines. They were married at Caversham Baptist Free Church where they had both been in membership since 1942, making them now amongst the longest serving members. They have both been very active members, Margaret in the past being a member of the Choir, Sunday School Secretary and one of the catering team and with Jim producing for many years the Church Magazine; she now serves as Secretary of the Women's Own. Until recent years she worked at Battle Hospital in the team running the W.R.V.S. Canteen. Jim has been a Scout Leader, a very practical helper with matters of the fabric and a Deacon. In recent years he worked with the Abbeyfield Society and now as a volunteer in the Feed the Children Warehouse. Margaret's hobbies include needlework and Jim's gardening and photography, and they share a love of caravanning. To all those involved in the production of the "Caversham Bridge" he is a key figure who has been Secretary of the "Caversham Christian News Ltd" for over 30 years, filling this demanding post superbly and dealing with all the complicated paperwork that falls to the Secretary of a limited company.

All their many friends wish them every joy as they celebrate 50 happy years together with their daughters Sue and Gill and their sons in law and their grandchildren.



...AND ANOTHER GOLDEN PAIR B AND D

If I remember rightly Oscar Wilde said "Marriage is an institution. Who wants to live in an Institution?" Well, a couple who recently celebrated fifty years in such a state, lived for more than forty years in Caversham, and raised three children, resulting in

ten grandchildren. They have every reason to be thankful to the Almighty for good health, a loving family and all the blessings of this life. Crossword puzzles figure largely in their pastimes, and so I have left you and raised three children, resulting in

are! (An extra clue from the Editors - helping to produce the Bridge since its inception has clearly done wonders for both couples!)

NEWS FROM HIGHDOWN SCHOOL

Top at Cricket!

The year 8 Cricket Team are the new holders of the prestigious Reading League Cricket Trophy, having batted against three local Secondary Schools to win it.

Students visit Parliament

A trip organised by the Head of Humanities, Keith Bensley, enabled the students studying British Government and Politics to see the proceedings of Parliament at first hand. They had a tour of the House of Commons and took part in a question and answer session led by a Parliamentary Clerk.

The School looks to a promising future

Parents have received an exciting report from the School Governors about future technological facilities, made possible with an award of £190,000 last year. In addition, the Governors have set their priorities within the £1.5m promised by the County Council for a new assembly hall and look forward to an exceptional year of improvement and development under their new headteacher, Mr Alan Furley.

HOME AND AWAY

Regular visits to Sonning Eye proved productive from mid-September to early October, thirty-two species being recorded.

Almost daily a Sparrowhawk and Carrion Crow chased each other, whilst sharp encounters between a Common Tern (summer migrant) and a Cormorant (winter visitor) on 23rd September gave cause for reflection.

Once a Grey Wagtail rose in front of me and towered away with that sharp, di-syllabic call, so like a Pied Wagtail, yet more strident and 'clean'. What a misnomer 'Grey' for an immaculate little bird with lemon-yellow underparts and proportionally longer tail, regularly found near faster waters such as the Test.

Shortly after, a thrilling, fluty call announced an arriving Greenshank, who with its slightly upturned bill and elegantly longer legs, upstages the more common, hump-backed Redshank.

Time moved inexorably onwards. When all self-respecting Swallows and Martins are usually established in winter-quarters, heavy, southward movements battled daily against strong head winds. Even a few, straggling Swifts, notoriously early leavers, passed through with them.

The rains of September gave way to an Indian Summer, the temperature soaring to 74°F on Sunday, 8th October. The following day two Common Terns which should have been long gone, nonchalantly flew around Tesco's at Kings Meadow.

It was all happening - a 'long-lost' twitcher companion, now on the better side of his academic qualifications, conveyed me and my canine-twitcher Scooby to Frensham Common to 'have' his first Dartford Warbler. We used to travel thousands of miles for many 'big' twitches and it was pleasant on this occasion being 'navigator' rather than driver.

The Dartford is Britain's only resident warbler, being more reliably discovered (and less 'nerve-jangling') than a normal twitch. In typical pose atop a 'frosty' gorse-bush it would be a highly photogenic subject for a Christmas card.

Pre-prepared ham and tomato sandwiches with a flask of hot tea provided good cheer at the car park before setting off on foot. A most helpful lady (also accompanied by a 'King Charles' with whom Scooby made great friends) advised us of Dartford Warbler locations.

The day was warm with a gentle, southerly zephyr and we admired Stonechats enjoying life as they grazed the tops of heather tufts and bushes along the way.

Soon our reverie was broken. Two Dartfords commuted between nearby gorse bushes. Smiling with pleasure - and relief, we shook heads.

A Very Happy Festive Season to all. SCOPS OWL

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Having managed to peg the price of this paper for 10 years, the Board of Directors has reluctantly agreed that, because of the substantially increased cost of newsprint, it will be raised to 20p a copy from January 1996.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

CHRISTIAN HEALING WORKSHOP



- O. Jewiss

Speakers and facilitators at the Healing Workshop: from left to right - the Revd Sean Winter (Abbey Baptist Church), Mrs Catherine Hayne (Churches Together in Berkshire Spirituality Liaison Officer), The Revd Father Nicholas Broadbridge (from Alcester), Sister Janet Wilcox (former County Ecumenical Officer), and the Revd Paul Nicolson (Hambleden Group Ministry).

Several representatives from Caversham were among those who attended the Churches Together in Berkshire Workshop on Christian Healing held at St. Luke's Roman Catholic Church, Theale, in mid-October. This new initiative was facilitated by the Churches Together in Berkshire Spirituality Liaison Officer, Mrs Catherine Hayne, and arose out of ideas derived from the former County Ecumenical Officer, Sister Janet Wilcox, for strengthening the spiritual dimension of Churches Together in Berkshire; it was primarily designed to inform and educate those with an interest in this area. The meaning and practice of Christian Healing was introduced by a panel of three contrasting but complementary speakers and was followed by a workshop session of enquiry and sharing, a plenary feedback session and a Service of Healing.

What is healing?
In an introduction to

the subject, the Revd Father Nicholas Broadbridge, OSB, former parish priest at St Luke's, Theale, and now Alcester, said we all need healing and that this came through God's love flowing through us which was prevented by our lack of forgiveness. About a third to a half of the content of the Gospels deals with healing, he said, which might be required at the physical, emotional and spiritual level.

The cross reconciles a broken world
The Revd Sean Winter, Minister at Reading's Abbey Baptist Church, spoke about the Baptist approach to the Bible, to other people and to our understanding of who God is. He said it is arrogant to presume that we know what God wants to do and he was wary about those who expressed certainty about God's will. God spans everything from creation to redemption; complete healing would be at the final redemption. Although we have to find the appropriate context for healing, it should be in

worship that we confess our sins, hear his word and in response ask him to do his will. God is concerned with healing his broken world and Jesus preached good news to the poor. God is pleased to reconcile all things to himself through the blood of the cross.

Laying on of Hands
The Anglican service of Laying on of Hands with Prayer and Anointing was explained by the Revd Paul Nicolson, an Anglican priest from the Hambleden Valley Group Ministry. This is done by the priest in the name of Jesus Christ; God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is asked to make the recipient whole in body, mind and spirit. Through the Laying on of Hands we are given the gift of the Spirit to bear what we have to go through. Anointing with oil, imposed with the mark of the cross, symbolises the inward anointing by the Holy Spirit. At the heart of the healing relationship is the need to be listened to, heard and understood. He

reminded us that through healing the whole of creation is being drawn into perfection; it is caught up with the resurrection of Jesus through which we have a glimpse of eternity and are allowed to hope.

Understanding and experience
The meaning and our understanding of healing was explored further in workshop and feedback sessions during which time there was a sharing of a number of experiences of healing. The day ended with a simple Service of Healing in which the Laying on of Hands in the style of the Iona Community was available to those who desired it. This method involves the whole congregation: two in the centre Lay on Hands and are assisted by others from behind doing likewise.

Local action
Locally there is an ongoing healing ministry: on the last Saturday of every month, except in December, the Caversham Acorn Prayer Fellowship hold a healing service at 7pm in Caversham Baptist Free Church. For further information contact Mr David Beek on 01734 477428. In other churches opportunities also exist, as in the periodic Laying on of Hands during the normal Sunday Eucharist at St Barnabas. In central Reading there is a monthly meeting for ecumenical prayer and healing in the Minister Church of St Mary at 12.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month.

Owen Jewiss

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH
HARVEST SUPPER - CHRISTIAN AID FIFTIETH
BIRTHDAY PARTY

As Saturday, September 30th drew near, preparations for the joint event were in top gear. A modest harvest display of garden produce was arranged on the rostrum, Christian Aid posters were pinned on the back wall of the Church, and these were festooned in Bangladeshi style with a string of small mauve and green triangular pennants. Chairs were removed from the centre of the church to make room for the festivities. At least a dozen volunteers prepared desserts and casseroles. In the late

afternoon a small team prepared salads and cooked rice - nearly four kilograms of it!
To remind members of Christian Aid's wide area of activity it was decided to have dishes from other countries. After much thumbing through recipe books to find suitable ones, the following were cooked - vegetable curry (India), Sweet and Sour (China), Mouss-aka (Greece) and a Chicken with Peanut Casserole (Tanzania).
The evening started with games and barn dances and these were followed by the

supper. Excerpts from three Christian Aid videos were then shown. These highlighted problems facing people in developing countries and showed how Christian Aid was helping some of the poorest of them. The birthday cake complete with the Christian Aid logo and fifty candles was then cut and served with tea or coffee. The evening finished with a brief epilogue and, from reports heard, a good time was had by all. With donations and proceeds from the supper, Christian Aid funds benefited by

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Christ Church Cathedral was packed to capacity on Saturday 28th October for the Annual Service of Admission and Licensing of Readers.

Amongst those being admitted was a Churchwarden from St John's, Stephen Cousins and the wife of a previous Priest-in-Charge of St Barnabas Emmer Green, Ann Sear. The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Richard Harries, admitted the Readers, presided at the Eucharist and preached.

After the Service, luncheon was served in the Great Hall of Christ Church for a majority of those who attended the service.

The number of Readers in the Diocese is greater than the ordained Clergy and it was heartening to

St. Andrew's
Fellowship

Members of St Andrew's Fellowship were transported to Botswana for their first meeting of the winter session when Ken and Marjorie Tillman gave a fascinating account of their three years' stay teaching in the country. Ken who was formerly head of Science at Kendrick School was teaching Physics while Marjorie taught English. They showed a video which thanks to Steve Barden's good offices was projected on to a large screen so that everyone had a splendid view.

They also brought examples of crafts made in the country, but they emphasised more work is necessary if everyone is to be gainfully employed.

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It is regretted that some of the information was omitted from the article in the October issue.

The Prospectus contains seven sections: 'Mission', 'The Environment', 'Caring', 'Worship', 'Management', 'Diplomas' and local Workshops. The address to write for a free 40-page Prospectus is:
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SUNDAY SERVICES

<p>ANGLICAN St Peter's 8.00am Holy Communion 9.15am Parish Communion 11.15am Matins 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 (Song) 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>CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (Caversham Park Primary School) 11.00am Family Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays) Morning Worship (2nd Sunday) Triple F Family Service (4th Sunday) 6.30pm Evening Worship (1st Sunday)</p>	<p>CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH 10.30am and 6.30pm</p> <p>NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH 10.45am and 6.30pm</p> <p>CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL 10.30am (in Chapel)</p> <p>METHODIST Caversham, Gosbrook Road 10.30am and 6.30pm</p> <p>Caversham Heights 9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday) 11.00am and 6.30pm</p> <p>ROMAN CATHOLIC St Anne's Saturday 5.30pm, Sunday 10.30am and 6.30pm Our Lady of Caversham 9.10am St Martin's School 9.15am Mass Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (1st Sunday of the month)</p> <p>UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, York Road 11.00am every Sunday</p> <p>SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading 10.30am Caversham Church House - Meeting for Worship 7.30pm (1st Sunday) House study groups Sept-June Tel: 475783.</p> <p>NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD 9.30am Sunday School 11.00am Divine Worship 7.00pm Evening Service</p>
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AROUND THE CHURCHES

DROP-IN CENTRE CELEBRATES FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

The Churches in Reading Drop-in Centre in St Saviour's Hall was full with representatives from 17 different churches in the town for the Open Evening and Service of Thanksgiving on 4 October to celebrate the fifth anniversary of its opening.

Despite its five years of operation there were many present at the Centre for the first time and they were eagerly shown round by the volunteers. Any who knew the condition of the Hall before the recent refurbishment will be impressed by the present bright and clean appearance and the obvious efficiency with which the catering, clothing, medical and leisure facilities operate by volunteers who are not only willing but expert in their area. Andy Radford expressed thanks to all those who have helped or continue to help at the Centre and appealed for further volunteers to come forward for this

HOW ABOUT FASTING BEFORE THE FEAST?

Christmas is a time of feasting and so it should be! We are celebrating the birthday of God becoming human for our sake.

Advent, which begins this year on Sunday December 3rd, is a time of preparing for the birth of Jesus, God the Son. Fasting in Advent is a Christian tradition that goes back many centuries - going without something can leave space within us for preparation. People who fast often find that it brings something quite unexpected.

So as part of our preparation for Christmas, how about fasting before the feast?

There are many ways to fast. Some who fast go without solid food from dawn to dusk, others give up a meal one day a week during Advent. Others give up alcohol and junk food. It varies a lot and people should give up solid food only if they are physically fit to do so.

If you fast, you could calculate the money you save on food and drink and sent it to Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children, Feed the Children or whatever agency you support.

Possibly at Christmas we shall eat and drink just a little too much. Fasting in the weeks beforehand could just possibly be appreciated by our bodies.

John Madeley



O. Jewiss

Steve Coleman, who has been managing the Churches in Reading Drop-in Centre (CIRDIC) since June, is seen here by the serving hatch from the kitchens.

excellent work of mission and service to the homeless who drop in for refreshment, a 'wash and brush up' and a chat.

HOT OFF THE PRESS FROM C.B.F.C.

Had you passed by Caversham Baptist Free Church between 2.30 and 4.30 anytime during half-term a resounding "Read All About It" coming from within, for the Newshounds Holiday Club was in full swing.

Incorporating many fun activities including craft, games, singing, aerobics and making a video and cassette, the main feature of the club was the production of a newspaper "The Daily Hound". The headline story and backpages were preprinted with a Gospel story and questions to discuss and pray about and the inner pages were filled with the children's own

observations, views, pictures, jokes, puzzles etc., collected and compiled in their very own newspaper - a copy of which they could take home to keep and hopefully treasure and share with family and friends.

The difference between the "Daily Hound" and those papers you can buy in the shops is that this one is full of Good News and the aim was that, amongst other friends made amidst the fun and laughter during the week, the children will have learnt about what it means to have a friend called Jesus.

ST ANNE'S NEWS

The Annual General Meeting of St Anne's Parish was held on Thursday 26th October at which members of the Parish received a series of reports on the varied activities of the year. Attending his first such occasion, Fr Tony Jones said it had been a fast year but a full one; he had been very appreciative of the encouragement and support that he had received following his arrival just under a year ago and most grateful to Fr Meagher for the excellent order in which the latter had left the Parish.

In his own report, Fr Tony gave statistical details of the routine activities of the Parish, figures of Mass attendances, numbers of Baptisms, Weddings etc

and spoke of some of the initiatives he had launched during the year. The introduction of Eucharistic Ministers had been appreciated by the sick and house-bound, the Justice and Peace (CAFOD) group was now up and running and the Morning Prayers were being well supported. On the financial front, he noted that there would be a number of requirements to

be met during the coming year including the extension of the car park and expenditure in connection with the Parish Centenary to be celebrated in 1996.

Other reports covered Parish buildings, St Anne's School and Parents' Association, the Choir, St Vincent de Paul Society, the Sacramental programme, the Justice and Peace group and the Chat & Craft and Toddlers' groups. In conclusion, Parish Committee Chairman, Peter Lennon, renewed the Parish's welcome to Fr Tony and thanked all those who had provided support during the year.

The major item for the coming year was, of course, the celebration of the Parish's centenary and a diary of proposed events had been circulated to all those attending the meeting. The celebrations would start on Low Sunday, 14th April 1996, and continue through the twelve months to Easter 1997.

Noteworthy among them were the Pilgrimage to Rome during the first week of May when the Pope would bless the crown that had been commissioned

for the statue by the Papal Nuncio scheduled for Sunday 21st July, the beginning of the week in which the feast of St Anne falls. The year would also witness a celebration of each of the sacraments in turn. Meanwhile, Diocesan approval had been obtained for the proposed extension of the car park and work on the West doorway. A planning application was being submitted in respect of the former and it was hoped that the new facilities would be in place before Easter; the West door proposals would have to wait for the time being.

Touching on other matters, Fr Tony looked forward to a greater Parish involvement in ecumenical activities in Caversham. He referred to the proposals currently afoot for the establishment of a Diocese of Berkshire and Oxfordshire and explained that a consultative document was in draft. The period of consultation would run from November to March with a view to informing discussion at the Bishop's conference after Easter.

A concluding prayer brought the meeting to a close.

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A THOUGHT FOR CHRISTMAS

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed: and all mankind shall see it.
Isaiah 40.5

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OBITUARY

Appreciation of the life of Frank Baker by Leslie Wilson

When I was a small child in Kendal, my father was a lay reader at St George's Church, but I was too small to understand much of his preaching. One Sunday I did listen hard, because he preached about something I knew. I can still hear the first words of that sermon: 'There are robins at the bottom of our garden'. There was always a youthful note in his voice: I don't think it ever went away.

The sermon was about hope. He said we didn't know what might happen to the robins. A cat might get one of the parents, or the young. All the same, he said, the robins were taking care of their young: they weren't discouraged by all the dangers around them.

Hope was a very important element in Frank Baker's makeup: and that was what gave him his cheerfulness and humour. But he knew the enemies of hope: He'd tended the wounded in the Second World War; before that, in the Church Army, he'd worked in the East End in streets the police were afraid to enter alone. He was a sensitive man, and there were some aspects of life he found so painful he could hardly bear to think about them. But they didn't defeat him. His life was sustained by his deep faith in God.

The stories pull at my sleeve, and it's hard to make choices among them. Frank in the Second World War, risking ridicule by kneeling down in the barracks to say his prayers the first night. Frank falling in love with an Austrian girl, honouring her and marrying her while everyone around was using them and leaving them. My Daddy, in one of my earliest memories getting outraged about the militarism during the Suez crisis. My Daddy singing in the car: 'Come back, Paddy Riley, to Ballyjamesduff', silly gang show songs, teaching us nonsense rhymes, driving fast at hump-backed bridges to get the 'hold onto your tummy' effect.

He and my mother welcomed a constant stream of visitors, especially people from abroad. I remember helping put the Christmas cards up in Kendal, and counting them. There were more every year. When my mother was struggling with her traumatic memories of the Russian invasion of Austria, he suggested we should put up a couple of young Russian women to help her see that Russians were humans, not monsters. He never called himself a feminist, but I remember him telling friends, with great relish, that my mother earned more than he did.

To the Y.M.C.A., to Andrews and Partners, Help the Aged, Voluntary and Christian Service, and Action Aid and Harvest Help, both of which he helped to set up, as well as to the churches he served as a lay reader, to the Dorothy Kerin Trust at Burrswood and the Acorn Christian Healing Trust, he gave faithful and diligent service, which Help the Aged recognised by making

him a Vice-President when he resigned as Vice-Chair. He gave the same to all the individuals whom he visited and counselled in his own personal healing ministry. In the dark days after my mother's death, that service kept him going: and even then he was learning from his own grief: 'I didn't know what it was like,' he said to me of bereavement, 'now I do, and I can use that.'

Happily, he came out of that darkness and had an all-too-brief time of tremendous happiness when he met and married Brenda.

He was a man who strove to grow and develop in his faith, even during his own final illness. Hope didn't fail him then, or faith, and even in his last days he gave those around him that greatest gift of love. But all of us who loved him back are missing him terribly.

But there were the robins. I might not have remembered them if he hadn't put them in the sermon. They raised two broods of babies in the hole in the wall, and I saw them all learn to fly

Franklin Harold Baker, 8th December
1917-4th October 1995.



Frank Baker

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OBITUARY ANDY RADFORD, SPEAKING AT FRANK'S FUNERAL SERVICE...

A Tribute to Frank Baker

Dear Frank, Your instructions were very clear and specific - today was not to be a funeral but rather a celebration of your life - well, we're doing our best to be obedient, but I have to say that it's not easy to celebrate when you miss someone as much as we miss you. And now it's come to my moment to say a few words, to stand in a place which is very strange for me but which for you, in recent years, had become almost a second home. I'm having to read this letter, but I well remember two or three years ago how you felt God telling you to preach without notes. You obeyed - as you would - despite your fear, and what a blessing your sermons have been to those who heard - at St. Peter's, St. Margarets, at healing services, in Portugal at the Evangelical Church of the Algarve, and recently here in Warborough. In one of the many hundreds of letters you received over the past few months, someone said "I loved your sermons, so happy, so heartfelt, so honest."

And in those words Frank, she summed up more than just your sermons - for me she said a lot about your character - happy, heartfelt and honest. Your smile was unique

and radiated the love of God and the love you felt and showed to your fellow man. You beamed and we loved you for it. Another letter, this time from a colleague from the old days when you were a Divisional Secretary for the YMCA, says "He was such a joy to work with - his ready sense of humour always uppermost and making even the dull days brighter for his presence."

Our conversations together were always valuable to me, for I knew you were speaking with the wisdom of long years of experience, but also from the heart and with utter honesty. You were a man of God and a man of deep faith and yet I know that you often struggled with that faith. I know you were a man of prayer and prayed regularly, day in and day out but without the consolation of spiritual experiences such as are granted to some Christians. Maybe God reckoned you didn't need that sort of proof of his existence, for even without it you had a deep assurance of his love and your own destiny in Heaven, an assurance witnessed by many of us who knew you and confirmed recently by a Doctor close to you as you approached your earthly death.

When I reflect on your life, Frank, I genuinely feel inadequate. For yours has been a life of full Christian service throughout, from your early years in the Church Army, through the war in the Army Medical Corps, into peacetime with the YMCA and then on into the unique Business and Charity world of Cecil Jackson Cole. You became Personnel Director of Andrews and as the new Charities were unfolding you had a big role in their development. The achievements of that period were astonishing with the founding of Oxfam, Help the Aged, Anchor Housing, Action Aid and a number of others. You were a key player for many years in this truly historic and groundbreaking work and yet you never received any overt recognition for it in the form of earthly honours. You could have been angry or hurt about this, but if you were you certainly never showed it. Some of those around you, myself included, did want that recognition for you and were thrilled when Help the Aged honoured you with a Vice Presidency.

Then after retiring from Andrews, but continuing as a Trustee of several of the Charities, your concern for others continued, you became very involved with the Centre for Christian Healing at Burrswood and you still had the energy to help set up The Acorn Christian Healing Trust to allow Bishop Morris Maddocks to follow God's calling to him to the Healing Ministry. Your CV really is quite awe-some Frank and very humbling for us mortals!

Through all this great work you have helped many thousands of people whom you never knew. But you also served so many of us on a very personal and private level and the tributes to your wisdom, your love, your integrity have been pouring in. You should be heartily embarrassed! If you're not already then these comments from an ex colleague might do it. "I shall remember many people with fondness - you will be prominent among them... but more than that, I recognise in you a profound goodness that I have encountered in few people. Your ability to offer wise counsel and yet still support people when they ignored it is almost unique in my experience. Your courage now is rare. Thank you so much for everything you have done for me." What a tribute and how about this for a pretty unequivocal opening sentence - "Dear Frank,

I think you are a wonderful man." Many of us say Amen to that Frank.

I want to finish now Frank, since you told me that this was to be a brief address, by quoting from one more letter which you received just three weeks ago. It was actually so eloquent and summed up so beautifully what you have meant in your years on this earth that we printed an extract from it on the front of the Order of Service. It says - "Let me just say that your life is inextinguishable in its manifestation in a host of people, myself included, who have been enriched by your friendship and wisdom: certainly more individuals than you may yourself count, and in many ways you may never know. Allow reflection on these things to give you courage at this present time and assurance that you have multiplied your talents one thousand fold and may the light you have brought to others shine the brighter for you."

Frank - I know I speak not just for Fi and myself, but for countless others when I say God bless you good and faithful servant and may you now be sharing in your Master's happiness. We thank God for knowing you.

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CLERGY AWAY-DAY



(Left to right) Richard Kingsbury, Nigel Hardcastle, John Boakes, Phil Abrey, Sheila Nunn, David Moody, Peter Edwards, Tony Jones.

Eight Caversham clergy spent 24 hours recently at Ashurst Priory in Hampshire. The aim was to deepen friendship and to see what more we can do together. Fr Tony Jones arranged this splendid place for the overnight stay. Revd Phil Abrey synchronised the programme. "Clergy together in Caversham" consultation was a great success, to be repeated next year. Those present were grateful to those who looked after the needs of the churches in colleagues' brief absence from Caversham. RK

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IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

It took a small cri de coeur from our Advertising Manager in last month's copy to remind me just how much we owe to Peggy Maule for all she personally has contributed to the work of the 'Bridge' for well over twenty years. But I don't think I ever seriously thought about the advertising aspect of her work as against making money for the paper, if it hadn't been for something which recently happened to us. Yes, you've guessed it, our washing machine suddenly packed up. At first we thought there was no need to worry, there's always the yellow pages. Alas, many hours later, having gone through every name in the book and being constantly told by washing machine repairers that they only dealt with a particular brand of machine, my sister thought of looking in the 'Bridge'. Such adverts are not always easy to find, but we were lucky and, weekend or no, we got a lovely man who was prepared not only to look for the fault but to

spend part of the weekend trying to replace the necessary parts. We shall always be grateful for the effort he put in. No, I'm not going to tell you his name - look it up in the 'Bridge' or if that fails, give us a ring - I'd willingly pass on all the necessary information - I never enjoyed recommending anyone so much before.

By the same token, we also discovered a plumber - not, I think, in the 'Bridge' this time, but one who, unlike so many others, offered to come, not next month or in six weeks but immediately and not only did a good job of repairing leaking taps but gave us a lot of information as well.

So that's two problems we hope to forget for a while.

OUR VETS

Knowing there was a distinct possibility that by the time you read this the Prospect Street vets would have moved, I popped in to get the latest news. But they tell me I needn't worry; they do expect to move very shortly but all present

customers will be notified and in case you don't know, they will be keeping the same telephone number at their new premises at the top of Hemdean Road. Thank heavens at least they are staying in Caversham.

OUR ILL

It's amazing how easy it is to learn so little about somebody we see so often and yet feel very close to them. I refer to Jill Metherall who, for long, has been a stalwart at the Prospect Street Post Office. I had hoped she would stay on with the new people but it seems everyone has changed. And I shall miss Jill so much. For those who did not already know, Jill actually started work at the Post Office when her parents, Mr and Mrs Humphries, ran it many years ago. Afterwards she went on to do many stints at the same post office, always pleasant, always helpful and a joy to do business with. Now, alas, she has gone - don't quite know what she is doing but she is enjoying life and we hope still to see her around

Caversham. We shall miss her tho' and do thank her for all the years she has served us.

This reminds me that I should have given a warm welcome to the new couple at the Post Office. I understand that this work is fairly new to them and can only wish them joy in getting to grips with the complications that will surely come their way. We must try not to be too impatient. Thanks to the reader who reminded me of this omission.

THE CORNER SHOP

I noticed in one of the Sunday papers there was a whole page devoted to praising the 'corner shop'. True I think it was tied to an advert, but it does give me an opportunity to remind readers just how much we owe our corner shops. It will be a sad day when they disappear from the scene. They can't, of course, compete with the big stores when it comes to discounts and they can't carry such a large range of goods, but, my goodness, what a useful purpose they

serve, particularly when we run out of important items. When Rags left the corner shop in Westfield Road we were very sorry and thought life would never be quite the same again. But she left us in good hands and one is always sure of a bright smile and a helping hand, to deliver things wanted in a hurry if we would like to ring up. I take my hat off to the present staff and wish them well in what must sometimes seem a rather thankless task.

A. AND A. DISCOUNT

I think I mentioned these people a little while ago when they took over Jackson's old shop in Prospect Street. Theirs too must be an uphill job but it's amazing just how many things, often very cheaply, we can find in this shop, and always served so pleasantly. Just now they are doing a good range in Christmas goods, wrapping paper, decorations and so on. Do pop in there whenever you get the chance - you could save yourself a lot.

ONE WORLD WEEK

As detailed in the centre spread of the October issue of the Caversham Bridge there was a range of activities and events immediately prior to and during One World Week. The week was preceded by action in six of the eight local primary schools which culminated in an exhibition of the children's ideas and aspirations for Growing Hope in the Caversham Public Library and although not everyone would agree with all of them (or sometimes with their attempts at spelling) there can be no doubt that, if the world is left to their idealistic minds, there is hope that it will be a better place when they become responsible adults. Subsequently pupils at Highdown School have submitted essays on Signs of Growing Hope; the results of this competition will appear in a later issue.

ODA bus in Caversham
Just before the school half term the Overseas Development Administration Bus toured five local primary schools, Queen Anne's School and Chiltern Edge School in Sonning Common where many local children are educated. The bus was also in Caversham Court on Environmental Apple Day. This worthwhile demonstration, incorporating a video show and exhibits, showed many aspects of the nation's medical, food and technical aid to third world and Eastern

European countries, either as direct aid, or in association with other voluntary agencies.

UN and the Great Balloon Race

In common with Civic Centres throughout the country, the United Nations flag was raised in Reading at 11.30am on 24 October, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. There followed the mass release of balloons, the sale of which raised money for the Methodist Water Aid charity and UNICEF.

The evening of Growing Hope

A good audience assembled in the Pavilion at Mapledurham Playing Fields on the Friday evening to learn about signs of Growing Hope in contrasting parts of the world. As anticipated there was an opportunity for all present to learn a little about the situation in each of five countries, namely in Kenya from Jane Alumira, in

Khazakhstan from Jean Sawyer, in Northern Ireland through the Corrymeela Community from Ann Varma, in Nigeria from Dr Abiodun Adeyemi and in the former Yugoslavia from David Grubb. We subsequently split into groups to explore in greater depth the signs of Growing Hope in each of two of the countries. Another Kenyan Edwin Njiru, on secondment to the UK from Barclays Bank in Nairobi, joined in the final discussion. The only regret from this fascinating and informative evening was that time did not permit us to explore in any depth more than two of the countries represented. Perhaps the most telling comment came from David Grubb of the local based charity 'Feed the Children', who said the only way the conflicts were likely to be resolved completely would be through working with the children.

Report & photos
Owen Jewiss

The Overseas Development Administration Demonstration Bus in the playground of Caversham Park School with Miss Cordery's class waiting to board it.

The One World Exhibit in Caversham Public Library with the tree of Growing Hope decked in leaves bearing aspirations of hope from the Primary School Children.

Speakers at the meeting on Growing Hope at Mapledurham Pavilion: from left to right Mrs Ann Varma (Corrymeela), Miss Jean Sawyer (Kazakhstan), Dr Abiodun Adeyemi (Nigeria), Jane Alumira and Edwin Njiru (Kenya) and Mr David Grubb (for Yugoslavia).

Members of Micklands School examine an exhibit on overseas aid inside the bus. They are from left to right: Collett Harvey, Helen Prestidge, Lisa Gardiner and Claire Herbert with David Day in the foreground.



the CLUBS

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Windsor Castle stands out as one of the magnificent buildings of Berkshire. It was not surprising therefore, that an account of the 1992 fire should attract the close attention of members at the October meeting. Mrs Sheila Rooney, a local historian, was well qualified to discuss the implications of the fire, and her husband, Pat, sketched in the historical background with information on the establishment of the castle and its development to the

present day.

There was an invitation to join the Scrabble, Rambling and Handicraft groups. Before the talk, members experienced the joys of home cooking at a harvest lunch.

Caversham Ladies Club

Mrs Brenda Strong, Chairman, opened the meeting which was the Club's Autumn Fair. It was good to see so many members present, and the Chairman thanked them for all their contributions. The tables were well laden with baked

goodies, plants, groceries, arts and crafts, nearly new, etc. and of course the usual white elephant or bric-a-brac.

Club business was attended to and Madam Chairman also gave out the sad news that Mrs Harwood was unfortunately back in hospital. Christmas lunch names were taken and the menu discussed. Members were reminded that Mr Noyes would be showing more interesting views of old and new Reading at their November meeting.

It was time now to declare the Fayre open and stall minders were soon doing good business with members' bags filling up nicely. All too soon time was catching up, and a welcome cuppa was very much appreciated after the hectic but most enjoyable afternoon. Members left with lots of cheerios and bargains to sort out on return to their homes.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild met in St Barnabas Hall on Tuesday evening October 10th.

Arts and Crafts enjoyed their last afternoon meeting looking at and discussing holiday photographs. The following meeting on October 19th was spent making Pasta Angels for the Christmas tree. Words and Music meeting on 30th October was entitled "Music and Shakespeare".

Ramblers have enjoyed two walks since the last meeting. The first one started in Reading town behind the old brewery with a walk along the Kennet. The second was a circular walk along the riverside around Shiplake with a picnic by the lock. The Ramblers have walked many times but always enjoyed it especially as the

weather was so good. The next walk was to be on Thursday 19th October. The walk on November 2nd was cancelled.

Wednesday October 18th was the Townswomen's Guild forty-third Birthday Party. There was a buffet in St Barnabas Hall. Members were asked to wear hats for a Hat Competition. There was also a Beetle Drive during the evening of celebrations. There is to be a Christmas Table Decoration Competition for the November meeting.

The speaker for the evening was Mr R. Snailham on "China Opens Its Doors". This was an extremely interesting talk on how China has altered in the last seven years. The Chinese people no longer wear the dull grey and blue mandarin collared suits; they dress in modern clothes. They are a very happy race and are so eager to please. Local Chinese guides who know their own area so well are eager to show visitors around and are happy to discuss how their people and their ways have changed. Their Senior Citizens exercise in the parks early in the mornings and seem to like to dance to their radios a lot of the time. There are still more cycles than any other transport in China.

There is also a splendid new Expressway. The Railway has double-decker trains and there is soft and hard travel, the soft travel being the more comfortable. Members would like to have heard more about China but time ran out.

Next meeting Tuesday November 14th with a talk on "BBC Monitoring".

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

Harvest was the theme for the October meeting. A good selection of produce arrived for the bring and buy table making this

both a profitable and successful occasion. The competition "Home Made Preserve" produced some delicious entries and the winner this month was Mrs J. Slatten.

During the course of the afternoon a beetle drive was held, which gave rise to much hilarity. The winner was Mrs I. Stokes and Mrs J. Banks received the Booby Prize.

The group visiting Burnham Beeches and Amersham had good weather for the trip and a very enjoyable time was had by all. The rambles also had a lovely day for their walk, which was the last one for this year.

It was beautiful weather for this year's Apple Day held at Caversham Court and there was a good attendance. The Guild supported the event by serving refreshments and providing a cake stall, as they have done in past years.

Tickets have been obtained for a small group to visit the Pantomime at the Hexagon in January.

It was a pleasure to welcome three visitors to the meeting and the Guild looks forward to welcoming visitors/new members at the next meeting at Church House, Caversham on Thursday 14th December at 2pm.

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