

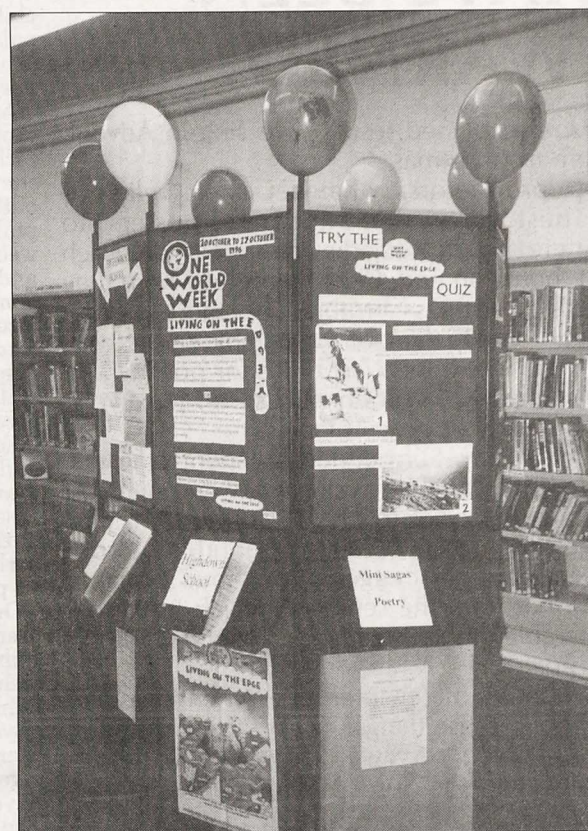
ONE WORLD WEEK IN CAVERSHAM

From 19th to 26th October 'One World Week' held the attention of many of the inhabitants of Caversham. The Caversham One World Week Group had responded to the national theme, 'Living on the Edge', the intention being to show that in our one world there were vast numbers, both here and abroad, who were living on the knife edge of destitution, whilst others on the leading edge of society were striving to ameliorate the grim situation.

Library Exhibition

To drive this home, an exhibition was set up in Caversham Library which gave space not only to communities obviously at subsistence level, as in Reading's twin town in Nicaragua, but also, and indeed particularly, to the problem of people in our locality who live on the knife edge of society where any change could be disastrous - people, for example, who are homeless or face homelessness, people who feel maligned, people who face drug problems or who are undergoing a personal crisis.

There were folders of essays by pupils of Highdown School on 'A Day in the life of a homeless person...a man in a wheelchair...an intending suicide... an HIV victim'. Some of the essays showed a remarkable talent for conveying the dirt and despair of poverty and unemployment. One boy displayed dry humour in his story of a tramp who sat in the library reading the Financial Times and flicking through books such as 'How to get on in Electronics!' An equally interesting folder, called 'Mini Sagas and Poetry' had further insights to offer. The whole exhibition was festooned by One World Week balloons so that nobody would miss it.



- O. Jewiss

The One World Week Exhibit in Caversham Public Library was a striking reminder of 'Living on the Edge'. The display of work by pupils from Highdown School is pre-eminent.

To a Wide Audience

On Friday, 25th October, the message was reinforced at a meeting in St Andrew's Church Hall. Over 50 people, mostly from local churches, gathered to hear representatives of seven local agencies speak on how they were helping people living on the edge and then to discuss what both the Government and people in the churches might do to reduce the need for such assistance.

Talking of a Bleak World

The representatives were Sally from the Samaritans, Sheila Goldsmith of the Churches in Reading Women's Centre, Eileen Preston of Christian Community Action, Bob Sadler from the YMCA, Philip Knight of CommuniCare in Newtown, Christine Ranaldo from Berkshire Women's Aid and Steve Coleman, Manager of the Churches in Reading Drop-In Centre. Between them they projected an almost three dimensional image of a bleak world inhabited by a surprisingly large number of the inhabitants of Reading.

It was a world very different from that of the audience. Bob Sadler asked if any of those present were or had been unemployed. Only a small minority of hands went up. The exact reverse would have happened in the YMCA. Steve Coleman emphasised how young many of his 'guests' were and how poor their prospects, saying "they've got nothing and they've got little to look forward to".

An account of domestic violence and how BWA helped the victims was given by Christine Ranaldo, and this dovetailed with Sheila Goldsmith's description of how life-crushing experiences often undermined the self-confidence, stability and earning power of women. CommuniCare's struggles to get the best for their clients out of the benefit system was the subject of Philip Knight's talk, whilst Eileen Preston told of how Christian Community Action's aim of 'equipping the church to serve' was being put into practice. Sally of the Samaritans concentrated on the difficulty of getting people to talk when they were depressed! None of the panel were depressed enough to give up, though! "It's wonderful what you can do with a lap-top computer and a cup of tea to help people" said Philip Knight.

Group Discussion

Then, after cups of Fair Trade coffee, the meeting split into five groups, each containing one of the speakers and a member of the One World Week Group, to consider what they had just heard in relation to Mrs Frances Lawrence's manifesto for a better society. There was deep disquiet about the effects of the Job-Seeker's Allowance and widespread agreement on the need for a minimum wage, fair contracts and the abolition of huge salary differentials within the same firm.

Some wanted taxation to bear less heavily on the poor and for larger 'ring-fenced' sums to be allocated to the NHS. An education system offering hope and dignity to all its users was another priority and classes in citizenship and parenthood should be given. The group led by Owen Jewiss insisted that the re-vitalisation of family life was basic to all improvements in society, and Sheila Hodson concluded by stressing the view of her group that Christians should not only set a good example but involve themselves vigorously in facing the problems of the wider world.

The Hope - One World

On this challenging note the meeting ended. "I hope that it has made us all aware of the situation in our own town" was the summing up of John Madeley of St Peter's Church. Now that the recession has brought the problems of the Third World to the doorstep of Caversham, the exhibition and the meeting contributed to increasing the consciousness that there was just 'One World'.



- O. Jewiss

Some of the speakers at the One World Week Meeting in St Andrew's Hall are (from left to right) Mr Steve Coleman (Churches in Reading Drop-In Centre), Mrs Eileen Preston (Christian Community Action), Mr Bob Sadler (YMCA), Mrs Sheila Goldsmith (Churches in Reading Womens' Centre) and Mr Phil Knight (CommuniCare).

A JOYOUS CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

TALKING POINT

by

Revd Canon Richard Kingsbury
Rector, St. Peter's and St. Margaret's



CHRISTMAS - YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

'Come, thou long-expected Jesus...' we sing in Advent, looking forward to Christmas.

Corner-shop proprietors, whatever their religious convictions, dust down holly-and-bells posters to decorate their grottos. Flower-ladies disappear to church and chapel for hours on end. Clergy wonder where they filed last year's Christmas sermon. The more devout among us might ruefully think of the parable of the wise and foolish virgins as we miss last dates for posting and race round Marks & Sparks on Christmas Eve. 'Next year, I promise, I'll be ready on time.' Oh yes?

Comes the great day. Surrounded by spent crackers, wrapping paper and family if we're lucky, we fight off fatigue and brace ourselves to make it to the Christmas pudding stage. This cosy scene of suburban torpor (certainly repeated in parsonages throughout the land) couldn't be further from the setting in which Jesus told the 'Advent' parable of the five wise and foolish lasses to put us on our guard.

St Matthew rounds it off (chapter 26): 'When Jesus had finished teaching all these things, he said to his disciples - "In two days, as you very well know, it will be the Passover Festival, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified!"

For him, the distant thunder built up. Even as he told the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, the authorities finalised plans to capture and kill him. No time to pack his bags. A hasty meal with his friends in a borrowed upper room. Panic in a moonlit garden, the clatter of the armed guards, and his fate was sealed.

His disciples, who two days earlier nodded wisely at his sensible teaching to 'be prepared', nodded off with exhaustion in Gethsemane, then took to their heels and hid. The nakedness of that young man fleeing from the garden to escape being implicated is the nakedness of Everyman, unprepared for the Messiah for whom we sing 'Come, thou long-expected Jesus.'

In *himself*, he was ready. It didn't lessen the anguish or dull the pain of the spear-thrust. But, to the end, Jesus had the ultimate resource - a disciplined trust in God his Father.

We kid ourselves if we foolishly make 'getting ready' noises and forget that, whether we're ready or not, HE IS COMING! The stark reality of future judgement brings us to our knees now to prepare for the Lord who, lovingly but firmly, will meet us with the words: 'Don't say I didn't warn you.'

WHO'S HEARD OF ST BRIAVEL?

Not a venerated person you will find in many books of Saints but the name of a charity including among its sponsors the Bishop of Monmouth operating from its headquarters in this country in Monmouth - although there is a village not far away from which the centre takes its name and where there is also a Methodist holiday hotel.

The centre provides remedial help to children with severe disabilities (cerebral palsy, partial blindness etc) through a programme of therapy tailored to the needs of each individual child.

An initial session of one week at the centre involves the parents and child and includes an assessment of the history of the child and its problems, lectures outlining the methods used in and the philosophy behind the programme. Our week included Italian, German, Welsh and English parents. The lectures were simultaneously translated (except Welsh) after each few sentences. (We never did find out the German for higgledy piggledy!) Whilst this was going on the children were looked after so we could give our full attention to the lectures.

Following the initial session parents and children attend for two days every four or five months - the first day assessing progress and the following day initiating changes to the programme with perhaps a different emphasis, depending on perceived need.

Our grandchild was born three months prematurely, is virtually blind and suffers from cerebral palsy. Her programme includes visual stimulation by use of a light box and flash cards together with physical stimulation and co-ordination exercises on swings and physio ball etc, together with hand manipulation, other physical stimuli and nutritional advice. The home programme takes two to three hours per day, six days a week in addition to exercises prescribed by Dingley Child Care Centre at Battle Hospital in Reading.

The centre staff have proved extremely helpful and supportive to our family over the past eighteen months and we have no doubt that the programme is proving beneficial to little Alexandra, now just two and a half years old.

Our son-in-law recently organised a sponsored parachute jump in aid of the centre as a thank you for all the support received from them and in an effort to help some other child benefit from the programmes. The magnificent sum of £2769.15 was raised including over £300 from Methodist Churches in Caversham and Reading.

So often parents have said to the Centre staff "if only we had known about this before."

The centre plans to make a presentation in this area next spring - probably at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Details will be available from Dennis Tutty on Reading 947 7384.

Luke 2.10

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

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 advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by Monday 25 November
The dates for February will be Monday January 6 and Wednesday Jan 8th.

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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Tel: 947 2788.

(Rev. Andrew Tyler, Hon. Asst Priest)

Rev Nigel Hardcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road.
Tel: 947 8239.

Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe.

The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 947 1814.

Rev Sheila Nunn, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 947 2070.

Rev Cathy Pynn, 42 Geoffreyson Rd. Tel: 947 6065

Rev Edward Tildesley, 53 Tredegar Rd. Tel: 947 3101

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PROJECT

Rev. Philip Abrey, 51 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village. Tel. 947 5152.

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

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Tel: 947 2223

Vic Downs (Deacon) 9 Woodlands Grove.

Tel: 948 2530

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Rev Peter Edwards, 14 Tredegar Road, Emmer Green.

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CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

22nd 10.30 am Family Service
 6.30 pm Carol Service
 25th 10.30 am Christmas Service

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH

22nd 11.00am Carol Service
 6.30 pm Carol Service (in the Milestone Community Centre)
 24th 11.30pm Communion by Candlelight
 25th 11.00am All Age Christmas Communion
 Jan 5th 11.00am Epiphany Carol Praise

METHODIST CHURCH AT CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS

13th Playgroup Christmas Concert
 14th 3.00 pm Polio Fellowship Carol Service
 15th 11.00am Toy Service: All-age worship
 18th 11.00am Playgroup Carol Service
 22nd 4.00 pm Christingle Service
 24th 11.15 pm Christian Communion at Gosbrook Rd
 25th 10.30am Christmas Service: All age worship
 29th 11.00am Lesson and Carols

METHODIST CHURCH AT GOSBROOK ROAD

1 st 10.30 am Toy Service - All-age worship
 15th 10.30 am All-age Nativity Service with Holy Communion
 22nd 6.30 pm Carol Service

24th 11.15 pm Worship for Christmas Eve to include the Sacrament of Holy Communion (united with Caversham Heights)
 25th 10.00 am Christmas Service. All-age worship

OUR LADY & ST ANNE

24th 7.00 pm Christmas Eve Vigil Mass Procession to the Crib.
 midnight Solemn Midnight Mass (Carol Singing from 11.30 pm)
 25th 10.30 am Christmas Mass

OUR LADY OF CAVERSHAM, Richmond Road

25th 9.00 am Christmas Morning Mass

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

25th 10.00 am-12.00 noon Christmas Service
 31st 9 pm -Midnight Watchnight Service

ST. ANDREW'S

24th 4.30 pm Crib Service
 11.30 pm Midnight Eucharist
 25th 8.00 am The Eucharist
 10.00 am Family Eucharist
 29th 6.30 pm Service of Lessons and Carols

ST BARNABAS, EMMER GREEN

22nd 9.30 am Parish Eucharist Advent 4
 4.30 pm Carol Service
 24th 4.30 pm Crib Service
 11.30 pm Midnight Communion
 25th 8.00 am Holy Communion
 9.30 am Family Communion

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

24th 4.00 pm Carols round the Crib (an informal service for all ages)
 11.30 pm Midnight Mass
 25th 8.00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
 10.00 am Christmas Day Eucharist (for all ages)

ST. MARGARET'S, MAPLEDURHAM

22nd 6.30 pm Carol Service
 24th 2.15 pm Crib Service
 11.30 pm Midnight Mass
 25th 11.00 am Family Communion

ST PAUL'S URC READING

22nd 6.30pm Carol Service
 25th 10.30am Christmas Service

ST. PETER'S

8th 9.15 am 'Toy Service' and Family Communion
 22nd 6.30 pm Carol Service
 24th 4.00 pm Crib Service
 11.30 pm Midnight Mass
 25th 8.00 am Holy Communion
 9.15 am Family Communion
 11.15 am Morning Prayer

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers) READING

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CHRISTMAS IN CAVERSHAM

As we go to press, Caversham Traders are still talking about their Christmas plans. Last year's late night openings on Fridays were not a success, mainly due to abysmally cold weather and lack of anything joyful or colourful in the way of decoration in St. Martin's Precinct where it would be seen to advantage. A small band of carol singers carolled to hardly a soul. However, think positive and keep a look-out for local happenings - our shops at least will do their very best to entice us and we must support them to keep Caversham trade going.

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

Elliotts former site is set to be the subject of a Public Inquiry on 4th February when the Borough and Safeway – the retail giants, will face each other as the latter challenge the former's right to schedule the land for housing with no retail use at all. Caversham and District Residents' Association will be supporting the Borough on the grounds that another superstore is not needed. Because of the additional parking it could offer it would attract custom away from the existing shopping centre to the detriment of the character and tradition of the shopping area of Caversham.

A petition will be circulating which everyone is urged to sign. Better still, letters to the Inspector will make the point even more strongly. The name and address will appear in next month's issue of this newspaper. There will also be a public meeting in January, the date and venue also to be announced next month.

TOO MANY, TOO HIGH, TOO CLOSE TO THE RIVER

Although Caversham and District Residents' Association supports the Borough in its proposal to put housing on the former Elliotts site, set back from the river and already developed, it does not support the application for sixty five flats, some of them four storeys in height on the Abbotsmead site and waste land off Promenade Road. This is a very high density which will exacerbate traffic problems in an already congested area and will have a harmful effect on the riverside scene which is an invaluable asset to Reading's standing.

The Council has deferred its decision until a site visit has been made, something which may have taken place by the time this appears in print. Cllr Richard Stainthorp, who lives in Caversham although he does not represent one of its wards, disagrees with the objectors, because the land is waste land or in private hands, and so cannot be described as open space. Whilst no one expects these two adjacent sites to remain as they are, there is a vast difference between that and cramming sixty-five flats on to it.

When the ninety proposed for Elliotts is added to this, even a five year old could see that the traffic implications would be serious. A minimum of a hundred cars would emerge to struggle out every morning on to already full roads.

Cllr Stainthorp implies that residents are being somewhat unreasonable in complaining that the Borough is destroying all Caversham's open spaces. The Residents' Association is well aware that in many cases the Borough has little choice because they are restricted by the planning laws, but whatever the cause, in saying that open spaces are being destroyed the residents are only stating a fact. Apart from public open spaces there is precious little left in Caversham now and residents have a right to be concerned.

If this application goes through, and all the evidence suggests it will, a traffic strategy will become a priority if everything is not to come to a halt.

FAST FOOD

An application for a takeaway food shop in empty premises formerly occupied by a newsagent cum grocery shop has been turned down by the Planning Committee. Small wonder as the shop is in Bridge Street where a single car stopping to pick up a takeaway would have repercussions right back into Reading in no time. This was the right decision but still begs the question as to what is to happen to that shop and an adjacent one that also stands empty. It does not give a very favourable impression of Caversham when the first sight to greet those approaching it is boarded up and empty shops. Specialist shops, such as the picture shop which formerly occupied one of them and the dolls' house shop on the opposite side of the road, to which people do not mind walking from the nearest car park, are probably the answer, but they tend to be rather thin on the ground.

BUS CHANGES

There have been some alterations to bus routes and timetables as from the end of October. The intention is to improve services to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Parking there is so limited that anyone who can do so is well advised to use public transport. The main change affecting Caversham is the withdrawal of the No. 61 service from Morecambe Avenue to Woodley and its replacement by the No. 41 from the railway station to Tozeland Way, which has been extended to Morecambe Avenue. Tozeland Way, in case anyone is wondering, is buried deep in Lower Earley. It takes much the same route as the former 61 so will serve the hospital. With only two an hour however, it still can mean a long wait. Annoyingly, complete timetables are not yet available but separate sheets can be obtained from the Transport Shop in Duke Street.

APPLES

Apples were celebrated over a weekend in mid October, lovely English ones, not so-called delicious imported ones. Why import apples when England's unpredictable weather produces the best ones in the world? And what a fruit it is: convenient to eat, versatile in use (yum yum, apple pie and cream), good looking and with a range of flavours.

Caversham Court's Apple Day on the Saturday enjoyed Indian Summer weather and attracted many people, though a prior engagement prevented me from attending. Weatherwise, Cross Lanes Fruit Farm, whose turn it was on Sunday, was not so lucky as grey skies and a chilly rainbearing wind prevailed all day, but this did not deter their visitors, who turned up in their hundreds and, clad in wellies and rainwear, enjoyed themselves the hard way as the English are prone to do on their days out.

The displays in the barn and the walks round the orchards, led by Gillian Franklin, gave visitors a good idea of what fruit growing was all about, both taking advantage of and contending with nature as well as being hounded by Common Market regulations. Gillian is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about her work and employs traditional methods where they produce results and devises

new ones where they work better for the particular kind of land and present day requirements.

You will not see picturesque scenes of rosy cheeked yokels up ladders picking apples into wicker baskets. Today's trees are short so that the fruit can be picked from standing.

There was apple-tasting, with several different varieties to try including the lovely Blenheim, a large apple which is an endangered species because it is not commercially popular and of course, the wonderful Coxes. There were apple games for the children, honey for sale from the bees and cooked products. Who could resist apple scones, which must have graced many a tea table that afternoon?

We are fortunate to have Cross Lanes Farm on our doorstep. They still have plenty of apples left after the rush of that weekend and an advertisement in this newspaper tells you when they are open. Other fruit in season is grown there, particularly plums and pears. We are recommended to eat five pieces of fruit a day for good health. It is a pleasure to buy some of it from Cross Lanes.

COLOURFUL DISPLAYS

By the time you read this, the annual spectacular display of colour in the woods on our borders will be over. For six months the trees will be bare but seeing gardeners busily planting their plots with Spring in mind, there will be some colourful gardens long before the first leaves re-appear on the trees.

There have been some very colourful late Autumn gardens about this year. Looking about me, I was wondering which road would qualify for a prize, if there were one, for the highest number of well kept gardens. Hemdean Road must be fairly high in the stakes, where gardens are a reasonable size but not too large and mostly well cared for. There is one that has a most spectacular growth of weeds, but even that must be beloved of wild life.

INCREASED MEMBERSHIP

Caversham and District Residents' Association's membership drive, which has involved the leafletting of every house in Caversham, has brought in a large response, which is being processed as quickly as possible.

This boost in numbers will be a great help when it comes to putting the case against another superstore in Caversham. All members will shortly be receiving a newsletter, setting out the present position.

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LOCAL NEWS FROM 100 YEARS AGO

In an earlier issue of this newspaper extracts were printed from a diary kept by the Reverend Francis Thackeray, Vicar of Mapledurham 1883-1919. Most of the following and last entries of his diary cover the years of Edward the Seventh's reign and the beginning of George the Fifth's succession. Thackeray was well in his nineties and still serving the parish of Mapledurham when he died.

It will be remembered that after the death of his wife, Francis Thackeray moved from Eton where he was a master. He took up the living at Mapledurham, moving there with his three daughters, Lily, Ada and Theo. As already mentioned he was deeply interested in antiquities and one of his hobbies was to collect fossils. He did this with great enthusiasm, often travelling to Europe to find them and look at rock formations.

A great deal of his time seems to have been spent on travelling to London and Eton for various activities and taking holidays abroad and at home.

Once again, I have only picked out entries that seem to be of interest and my own comments on these appear in brackets. M.K.

1896

September 1st: A very successful choir treat to Windsor.

December 17th: I was awakened at 5.25am by the rattling of the shutters and a distinct vibration of the room and bed. Lily our cook and gardener also heard it. Later in the day I learnt that an earthquake had extended over much of Wales and the Midlands. (My mother also recounted this happening and said that pictures on the walls hung crookedly after the tremor).

1897

June 21st: We had a bonfire at Mapledurham on one of the hills (Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee).

December 31st: The bells at midnight seemed to roll over the old year like the waters of death. A very interesting year with many reasons for thankfulness.

1898

January 7th: I picked the first snowdrops.

1899

June 4th: The garden is superb. The mays begin to go off but iris, pinks, snapdragons, syringa and roses are coming out.

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December 14th: Very cold - 22 degrees of frost.

December 28th: Harry (his son) has gone back to Town. He has had some tennis at Hardwick (Hardwick House had two covered tennis courts similar to the one at Hampton Court).

December 31st: Lily brought me my hot water at 7.30. The two servants Dora and Florence both have influenza.

1902

October 27th: The old pollard elm by the almshouse came down and blocked the road for a time.

December 29th: A schoolchildren tea and tableau of the Virgin and Child in our hall, very prettily done.

1903

January 8th: Christmas tree for all the schoolchildren. All went off happily.

February 3rd: The river is very high. The fifth flooding in nine months.

April 8th: Lily had some children to tea, one of whom fell into our fountain. She went in herself to get her out. (The ornamental pond is now filled in and is a flowerbed).

April 20th: A colt of Mr Moise's got out of the glebe field.

1904

December 31st: Fine sunshine after a ghastly catastrophe when Bozedown was burnt down. (Bozedown was a large house between Crays Pond and Whitchurch Hill. It was rebuilt).

1905

June 22nd: A glorious summer. We sat on the terrace this evening and saw a white owl fly across the lawn several times.

September 20th: Miss Hearne has just completed her hundredth year. We went to Rokeby Hall and heard an address by Mr Farlow. Her "Old Boys" gave her a pony and pony chaise. (She was a great Mapledurham character).

October 26th: The first Lads' Recreation Evening. There were 25 at tea. I read Sir Patrick Spens.

December 2nd: Tommy (the pony) got off the road, frightened by a large piece of paper, and the trace was broken.

December 10th: Poor Collard the shepherd, was brought in ill from the field and is dead. He has had a hard life.

1906

January 5th: We have a new pony cart which is a great comfort. A terrible wild night with a gale which kept me awake.

January 7th: Today the ringers struck. The only reason appears to be that others besides were asked to the supper.

January 8th: Ada and Lily gave a nice little concert in the servants' hall.

January 18th: The new bell-ringers had a satisfactory meeting at the Vicarage.

January 20th: A marvellous good deed of Ada and Lily. The front door rang about 11pm as I was going to sleep. Ada thought it was a tramp. It was Brown of the Pit House wishing to have his infant baptised. I was getting up, but they actually went themselves with Charlie Frankum and administered private baptism. The child died at 6am.

May 19th: At twelve o'clock the pony, while mowing, was neglected for a moment, got loose, dashed about the lawn and broke two rose trees.

July 8th: A pleasant party of two hundred people at Hardwick. A Viennese band.

August 21st: Ada and Lily took the choir to Goring by steam launch. On their return they sang glees on the terrace.

August 31st: One of the hottest days this year - 76F in my bedroom at night.

By 1906 Thackeray was in his eighties and does not seem to have kept a diary in his last years. His grave, and that of his son Harry, can be found in Mapledurham churchyard on the right of the path towards the water tap. M.K.



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AROUND THE CHURCHES

CANON ROBERT WARREN AT CAVERSHAM PARK



- O. Jewiss

Canon Robert Warren photographed outside Caversham Park School with (right) the Revd Sean Winter (Abbey Baptist Church and Chairman for the day) and Caversham Park's Revd Phil Abrey.

To have secured a day at Caversham Park School with Canon Robert Warren, the much sought after National Officer for Evangelism of the Church of England's Board of Mission, was a triumph of prayer and foresight by the Churches Together in Reading Mission and Evangelism Group. To sustain single handedly an audience from 10am to 3.30pm with only brief breaks for coffee, lunch and tea is a test of anyone's ability. To do so and to retain everyone's attention to the end shows great distinction, a tribute to the man and the message. It was a day not to be missed but a pity that so many did; the 50 who were there had an excellent day.

Building missionary congregations

The theme was 'Building Missionary Congregations'. Each of the churches in Reading had been invited to send four of its leaders: some did, others had just a token representation. Are the rest caught up with 'morphological fundamentalism', as Robert Warren described it; caught up with maintaining the present shape of things - a this-is-how-we-did-it syndrome? This was not a day when we were given simple recipes or remedies. It was a day when we were shown many alternatives. We were told that a missionary congregation is not one that has added 'mission' to its agenda; it is not just a growing church, it is one that is engaging in God's mission in the

world around us - in small things, in fragile situations, at the margins. The birth of Jesus was like that.

An MoT for the church

Canon Warren talked about taking the church in for a service (the MoT type); it had been going for a long time and had forgotten its purpose. He talked about the shape of the church after that service: how we might change from inherited roles to emerging roles, where structures would change from being fixed and primary to being light and secondary, where our leadership would change from clerical and controlled to a collaborative and creative mode and the focus would change from church life to whole life. The pastoral gain would change from keeping people happy to making them holy, and where the church's expression would change from a single form to diverse forms.

Spirituality and engaging with the world

With this type of challenging material the day evolved, illustrated by memorable anecdotes. He gave examples of how churches are moving into the mission mode by reviewing and energising structures that had become stuck. When mission engages with the concerns and needs of the world around us it puts evangelism into context, he said. Spirituality should be at the centre and

would improve when there is a critical mass of people in public worship with an expectant faith. There is a need for initiation to be distinctive; few Christians are fully evangelised - it takes a whole life.

Finally Canon Warren considered aspects of change. Change takes time. There is a task to change the church culture; it involves local creativity and is a costly journey which would only take place by releasing constraints. With heads buzzing we went home armed with a handful of notes and a reading list. We were asked what we were going to do about it; I said pass on the good news. If you want to dig deeper why not try one of Robert Warren's books? *Building Missionary Congregations* by Church House Publishing would do as a starter.

Owen Jewiss

ANGLICAN DEANERY SYNOD MEETS AT ST ANDREW'S

St Andrew's played host to the Anglican Deanery Synod when it met in their Hall in early October. Although it was billed as the Annual Social Evening to which wives and husbands were invited, the two substantial items of business occupied most of the time. A discussion on the principles of allocating the increases in the Parish Share, that is the monies payable by the parishes to the diocese, is always bound to take time. Over 70% of the money now goes to pay the clergy and nobody objects to that. The real debating point is whether the parishes are pulling their weight in raising the money. Opinion is divided but it seems that in the Reading Deanery the principle of the strong helping the weak is supported by an overwhelming majority. So for 1997 the increases will be shared across the Deanery in a percentage fashion according to present perceived levels of ability to give. This maintains the same formula that has been used in the past.

An address by the Revd Canon Bill Andrew of the Bible Society produced both interesting and disturbing facts. Although there are about 120 Bible Societies around the world, most of the money is raised by six. The Christian church is growing by 64,000 each day. The word of God has power; it is not in chains. However, access to it is restricted by the chains of language, persecution, packaging, prejudice and policy. Even in the UK, despite the fact that there are 19 English versions of the Bible and that we are not adversely affected by restrictions that prevail elsewhere, 43% of church members never read the Bible, 15% have never touched it and only 15% are committed to the regular reading of the Scriptures.

The Synod meeting was also the occasion when it said thank you in a tangible form to Mr Wilfred Dyer, who retired in the summer after 9 years as Lay Chairman. A tribute was also paid to his wife, Heather, for the support she had given. Among the highlights reflected on over that period was the 'Thames Valley Alive! Mission'.



- O. Jewiss

Mr Wilfred Dyer, the recently retired Lay Chairman, with his wife Heather, are seen in the centre of our picture flanked by Miss Mary Harward (the present Lay Chairman) and the Revd Brian Shenton (the Rural Dean).

Learning to Listen - an ecumenical course at C.B.F.C.

When was the last time someone listened to you? I mean really listened? How did you know they were listening and how did this make you feel?

These are the sort of questions facing participants in the ecumenical Christian Listeners Mini Course being held at Caversham Baptist Free Church, this Autumn.

Tutors John Edmonds-Seal and Mrs Jane Lane of the Acorn Christian Healing Trust, Whitehill Chase, led us through a variety of techniques and exercises designed to enhance our listening skills. The aim of the course is to teach such skills or bring out natural gifts which can then be used in a church environment as well as in our everyday lives. The hope is that we can become a 'listening Church' and take our place in the Body of Christ.

Listening can be a very healing gift and its use should not be undervalued in society today.

The course lasts for four to five weeks and suitable candidates can follow this with a more intensive three months' course.

The evenings are most enjoyable, informative and creative and we thank Mr Edmonds-Seal and Mrs Lane for giving their time and talents each week.

Judy Ruck.

St Andrew's Fellowship

Following the successful re-introduction of a play-reading in last season's programme, St Andrew's Fellowship recently read the farcical comedy by Brandon Thomas, 'Charley's Aunt'.

Originally produced in the last century, its period flavour and humour provided by the romantic cavortings of the three undergraduates, Jack, Charles and Lord Fancourt, was well received by the audience.

The Fellowship wishes to thank Sheila Hodson for her enthusiasm in providing them with such an enjoyable evening of home-spun entertainment.

Informal

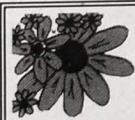
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AROUND THE CHURCHES

THANKSGIVING AT ST BARNABAS

Harvest was a time of great thanksgiving at St Barnabas, first for the fruits of the earth, secondly for our new Deacon, the Revd Edward Tildesley, thirdly for the generosity of the congregation and neighbourhood that enabled the roof repairs to be completed without having to go in debt, and lastly for the final chance to sit on our less than comfortable pews and for the generous benefaction of the donor who has made a large contribution towards the congregation being more comfortably and versatily seated in the future.

The Church was packed for the special early evening Thanksgiving Service at which the newly ordained Revd Edward Tildesley was licensed as Assistant Curate, a role in which he will also double as Chaplain to Shiplake School. Guides, Brownies, the Rhapsody Steel Band, Edward's family, friends and neighbours, as well as the regular congregation filled the church. Among those present were representatives from Shiplake College and Pangbourne School, where Edward Tildesley had previously been chaplain. A slide/tape presentation, English choral and Caribbean music combined to give a lively and thought provoking service.

Special evening services at St Barnabas have become a feature of its church life and an opportunity for those less familiar with Anglican worship to join us. The next ones will be the Christmas Carol Service and the Crib Service.



O. Jewiss

The Revd Edward Tildesley (right) is pictured before the Harvest Thanksgiving Service with the Vicar, the Revd Nigel Hardcastle, and Reader, Mrs Elizabeth Gash.

FAREWELL TO THE WESTWELLS



O. Jewiss

Roy & Pat Westwell with the Revd Nigel Hardcastle after the presentation

Presentation of framed pictures of St Barnabas Church and the Jacqui Binns altar frontal 'St Barnabas in the Spirit' marked the departure at the beginning of October of Roy and Pat Westwell after 22 years at St Barnabas Church. Now that Roy has retired they are moving to near Bakewell in Derbyshire by way of a brief sojourn in Swansea.

During their time in Emmer Green they have been examples of great commitment and service to the local and wider church. Roy Westwell has, among other things, been Church Treasurer, Church Warden, Chairman of the Thanksgiving and Pastoral Link Project, and Fellowship Leader at St Barnabas. He was responsible for overseeing much of the building development work at the Churches in Reading Drop-in-Centre at St Saviour's Hall, where both he and Pat were much involved. Latterly Pat, a Christian Listener, had been working with Christian Community Action in Central Reading. Both supported the regular healing services held at Caversham Baptist Church and back at St Barnabas both served on the Parochial Church Council at various times. Finally Pat will be much missed as a member of the choir. Their three grown up sons had earlier all been servers.

One would imagine that Pat and Roy Westwell will be leaving Emmer Green for a rest. They will in fact be overseeing the building of their new home. One cannot imagine that it will not be too long before they are actively involved in church life in Derbyshire. Their example is hard to follow but a challenge to the rest of us. They leave Emmer Green with the love and good wishes of many friends.

ST PETER'S WIVES GROUP

Mr Noyes returned to the Wives' Group in September with part two of his "Reading Past and Present" series, having previously presented part one. Repeating his earlier success, he again fascinated his audience with reminders of old Reading, evoking many memories. By the ingenious use of two projectors he was able to show past scenes gradually merging into later scenes of the same geographic location, often transformed.

The October speaker was Mr Kirby, who first talked about Reading's "Safety Street" with which he was involved. This project, based in a building off Great Knollys Street, has created scenes from everyday life to show primary school children what dangers can lurk in familiar surroundings. The project is very popular and there is a waiting list of children wanting to participate, volunteers being needed to show visitors around.

Mr Kirby then moved to his main subject, which was to show his wife's collection of miniature hats. The hobby had started twenty years previously with a jumble sale purchase of a small hat bearing the crest of Southend-on-Sea, costing 6d. He described hats made from a wide range of materials. Some are crested, some are items of jewellery and some, for example, a bottle opener, are useful. A couple of hats are more than two hundred years old. The talk, illustrated by slides, was enlivened by anecdotes about the collection and how it was built.

THE MEN OF ST ANDREW'S



N. Kent

The Men of St Andrew's enjoying their Fish and Chip Supper.

Re-established five years ago, the Men of St Andrew's held their Annual General Meeting on Thursday 26th September in the Parish Hall. Enjoying the customary 'Fish and Chip Supper' was their President the Revd Bill Carpenter, one or two ladies ("Honorary Men" for the evening) together with other members.

They were honoured to have as their guest speaker Father Tony Jones, of St Anne's, Caversham, who captivated them with a moving history of St Anne's telling of its establishment in 1896 right up to the Centenary Year, and the blessing by the Pope of the Virgin's Crown this summer, and the subsequent 'Crowning' by the Papal Nuncio. Father Jones was a delight to listen to, having such a lovely sense of humour which contributed to a very lively and interesting evening.

Rodney Oliver, a local solicitor, was once again re-elected Chairman and thanks were expressed for his tireless efforts to provide members with a varied and entertaining year of events.

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SCOOBY

20th May 1983 - 21st October 1996

I trust that on this special occasion, readers will forgive me for putting my deep sadness before birds.

Scoby, my sweet and wonderful King Charles Cavalier Tri-colour TWITCHER EXTRAORDINARY, died suddenly in his sleep at 2am this morning.

He loved everybody just as they loved him. He was my ONLY 'son'. His intelligence and inner understanding of almost everything was just incredible.

Two weeks previously, our sole birding companion went up to Cambridge University to study law. On that very day, Scoby showed a 'wobble' by failing to eat his 6pm meal - a unique occurrence. We 'soldiered on' for those two weeks, happily, carefree, but missing our friend.

Perhaps one day, a book will be considered about Scoby's remarkable life - but it could never 'tell all'. He was 'human' love as it should be.

Each night he would place his little head gently between his paws and remain motionless until our prayers were completed. He KNEW - yet had never been taught.

Scoby's dear spirit will forever be with me in all that 'we' do. He would wish that, as so many kind souls have told me.

The week before our friend's Cambridge departure, we all re-visited the Nature Reserve at Bix near Henley, Scoby striding along in fine form, up hill and down. We saw Red Kite, Buzzard, Tree Creeper, Nuthatch, five Tit species and all three Woodpeckers. A Tawny Owl hooted, perhaps disturbed. A Long-eared Owl (Leo) seen 'eye-to-eye' by our friend on a solo visit the day before, was not seen again.

On the very day he left for Cambridge, a rare Pectoral Sandpiper from North America arrived at Slough, a bird I have only seen once, and he, not at all. What a 'send-off' that would have been - to say nothing of yet another 'tick' for Scoby's Check-List!

The final words MUST also go to Scoby, my closest and most cherished companion for so long. Among many things, he has been my 'Personal and sympathetic critic' throughout five years of 'memoirs' for the Caversham Bridge. I know he would, with me, wish to thank any reader who has read them - in particular, those in which he has taken a very real part. We can both vouch for their accuracy and truth.

For now, however, we must say, 'Thank you, Goodbye and God Bless everyone'. We are sorry to leave you.

A Happy Christmas and New Year.

SCOOBY and SCOPS OWL

(The Editors would like to express their condolences to Scops Owl for his loss.)

BACK TO THE SOIL

I make no apologies for returning to the question of composting organic waste from the garden. I have two reasons for doing so. Firstly Watchdog drew my attention to the problem of disposal of excessive amounts of garden debris in her article last month and secondly the whole recycling problem was extensively covered in the latest issue of one of our foremost gardening magazines. Its comments deserve an airing.

The question of recycling will not go away. There are generally problems about where to dispose of the tremendous amount of household refuse arising daily in this country. We are rapidly running out of landfill sites (these can cause problems through the build-up of methane gas produced by organic waste decaying in airless conditions) so we need alternative ways of waste management. The government recently imposed a landfill tax which, while aiming at encouraging moves to recycling, has had the immediate effect of making waste disposal more

costly. For several years now we have been used to making a preliminary sort of household rubbish and 'doing our bit' by taking newspapers and magazines, glass containers, tins, plastic bottles and old clothes to skips in established recycling points. Perhaps it is time to think about extending this idea to the disposal of organic garden waste.

Bearing in mind those householders who have little or no facilities for composting their own green waste, we could do with a Council service which would provide, at local access points, disposal areas for green waste. This could be turned into compost by the Council (or subcontractors) for resale in due course to local gardeners.

Another possibility is the setting-up of community composting schemes where local residents (possibly with local Authority backing) would be responsible for collection of local garden refuse, its composting down and the sale of the subsequent product (to cover running costs).

There is organic waste

BY
HORTUS

which is not easily disposable in any way. Things like cabbage stumps, shrub and tree prunings take some time to decompose and are more manageable when shredded. Shortly after Christmas many of us will be taking our spent Christmas trees to Caversham Court for the Council to shred down. The end result will be used by the Council for mulching or path material as required. I wonder whether the Council could use its shredding equipment to establish a shredding service for local residents where for a fee they could get their larger items of garden rubbish ground down.

I do not think we can expect Local Authorities to carry away and dispose of green waste indefinitely. We must look for ways of recycling which are good and appropriate for the community in which we live. What do you think?

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MUCH LOVED NURSERY SCHOOL TEACHER RETIRES

The last day before half-term arrived brought both joy and sadness to New Bridge Nursery School; it was Miss Miriam Ridgers' birthday and her retirement day. It is difficult to imagine New Bridge Nursery School without Miss Ridgers, because she has been with it in Montacute Street since it moved there 26 years ago from its former home in Bridge Street, Reading. Miriam Ridgers had been a nursery nurse there for six years prior to the move. Before that she had been at St Mary's Church of England School in Hosier Street, a total of 36 years 8 months service to the community.

School says 'Goodbye'

It was no wonder that children and parents past and present, and some fell into both categories, turned out in great numbers to wish Miss Ridgers farewell. Both morning and afternoon groups had a special birthday cake with five candles, (no one has more than five candles in a nursery school!), there were action songs and lots of presents and cards. In the evening there was another retirement party for colleagues and old friends at which Audrey Cook, the Inspector for Nursery and Junior Education from the Education Department at Shire Hall, and the Head Teacher, Mrs Brenda Grant, made presentations of a camera from the staff and a dining room table and chairs from old friends and colleagues.

Past experience

When asked about her experiences Miss Ridgers said the children had not changed over the years and wisely made no comment about their parents. What is clear is that generations of young people in their formative years have been influenced by this loving person whose roots are in Reading. She is the third generation to live in her house in Caversham and was one of the first students to go to the new Reading Technical College in 1954.

- and the future

Miriam Ridgers' first thoughts on retirement were to take a rest for a few months. The hand luggage, with which she was presented, was immediately put to good use as she went on holiday the following day. Miss Ridgers, a Salvationist, thought that after a rest, she would like to spend time visiting the elderly. She is a member of the Reading Central Corps of the Salvation Army and, before it disbanded, a member of the Caversham Corps. Older residents may remember that this used to meet in premises in Prospect Street now occupied by the Indian Restaurant. It seems that Miss Ridgers' life of service to the community may yet be continuing in another form.

Readers of Caversham Bridge will wish to join me in wishing Miriam Ridgers a long, happy and healthy retirement in which she may reflect on the thanks and appreciation of us all for those years of loving service to the young.

Owen Jewiss



Owen Jewiss

Miss Miriam Ridgers with one of her retirement presents while some of the children look on.

LINK GROUP - who are we and what do we do?

The Link Group is essentially an action group made up of members of all ages, drawn from many churches. They work together to fulfil their main aim, which is to extend friendship; this can include personal, practical or financial help as necessary.

There is no committee and decisions are taken by all members. Some members, in addition to representing one of the local churches, may have a link with a particular local organisation, so their activities and the needs of the people in these organisations may be brought to the attention of the whole group. They are delighted to welcome the following new members: Hugh Carter (Caversham Park Church, representing CIRDIC), Barbara Macrae (Caversham Heights Methodist Church, representing Crossroads), Marion Thwaite (St Peter's Church, representing Reading Family Aid) and Lorraine Vallance (St Margaret's, Mapledurham, representing Reading Women's Centre).

The Link Group meet every fourth Monday and plan to be as busy as usual this winter; dates for the diary include:

16th December - Carol singing at Summerfield, Goldendale and Arthur Clarke.

Ecumenical Lunch - Venue/date to be finalised (probably in February).

Knit-in - A provisional date of 28th April has been made and as this is the main fund-raising event, look out for further details.

Telephone Barbara Graham on 482043 for more information.

NEWS FROM QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL

Sixth Form Conference on Human Rights sponsored by Amnesty International (UK)

Sixth formers from ten local schools joined together to explore Human Rights issues at Queen Anne's Centenary Arts Centre on Wednesday 16th October. The day began with workshops led by members of Amnesty International. The sometimes harrowing account of victims' abuses stimulated much discussion and a call for specific action to be undertaken by the delegates.

Joint Art Exhibition

Queen Anne's and Radley College Sixth formers mounted a joint art exhibition at the Sewell Centre, Radley. All forms of art were represented, including paintings, drawings, sculpture and poetry.

Sporting Achievements

No fewer than ten QAS lacrosse players have been selected for the Berkshire County first team and one for the seconds. The under 14 team won their section in the Berkshire Schools Tournament with the under 15s coming second in theirs.

Royal Mail Competition

Jamie Wong has won a prize in the national Royal Mail Young Letter Writers' Competition. The reward - a presentation and tour round the sorting office was followed by lunch for Jamie and two of her friends.

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WARTIME MEMORIES

Personal reflections at the Remembrance Sunday Service at St Peter's

Instead of the sermon members of the congregation shared their wartime experiences.

The 'People's Pantry', a communal restaurant was bombed by a lone low flying bomber which followed up the attack by machine-gunning streets. Miraculously some bullets passed through a room in which a baby was sleeping in a cot without harming its inmate. An office worker at Elliotts, the shopfitters, had a similar experience, when the building was also attacked.

A leading member of the Mothers' Union was so

incensed at the pilot's behaviour that she went into the garden and verbally abused him, not quite ethical, but very therapeutic!

Three children were sent to Liverpool to embark on a ship for Canada. After two days they joined a luxury liner where the brother and his two sisters were separated. Frequent boat drills were held so it was no surprise one dark night to be summoned on deck and put into open boats, but this was followed by being rowed by the crew for three hours before being picked up by a tanker which took them to

Greenock. They were met by their parents who had been alerted, but did not know that the ship had been torpedoed. Their parents refused to let them go on another ship, which sadly was also torpedoed with the loss of many children.

A 'Bevin Boy', sent to work in a coalmine spoke of the initial shock of the cage dropping like a stone to the level of the coalface, and of his work. He spoke movingly of going to the assistance of a fellow worker who was crushed by a sudden roof fall.

A Vicar's wife living in Plymouth at the time had a variety of

guests billeted on her, evacuees and military personnel. One in particular, from Malta, had a dog and occupied an upstairs room. The dog upstairs was 'house trained', but downstairs fell from grace. He became known as 'E.P.' because of his owner's interpretation of his behaviour! An RAF dental hygienist, cycling past a squadron of RAF personnel, was so surprised by the command 'Eyes right', that she wobbled into the squad!

A civilian having just completed his agricultural training in July 1939, volunteered in September and was sent to assist in the national food production needs, helping to rectify the results of twenty years' neglect of the

agricultural industry. A member of the Navy spent some of his service on the notorious Murmansk Convoy route, calling to mind some of the risks: bombs, submarines, warships, but also the weather which could be so treacherous. During the Arctic route the gradual change from the long nights to the longer days became a sign for him of impending victory - From Darkness to Light.

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A RECIPE BOOK WITH A DIFFERENCE

Many local and national celebrities have contributed to a recipe book, published in November.

'Favourite Recipes' is the brain-child of Ralph and Brenda Jenkins and Beryl Levett, and all the proceeds are to go to the **Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund**. It is hoped to raise over £1,000.

Brenda and Ralph serve on the Reading Committee of the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund, and because sponsorship and help with printing were offered so generously, all the proceeds from sales will go to this worthy cause.

Locally, the Reading Committee helps to fund 'The Duchess of Kent House' and supports the Macmillan Nurses in Berkshire. The book is dedicated to Douglas Kerr, former Chairman and President of the Reading Committee, who died in June this year.

'Favourite Recipes' contains 108 different recipes under 5 headings: Starters & Sundries, Main Courses, Vegetarian Dishes, Puddings and Tea-Time Treats. The recipes were contributed by people who have travelled with SelectTourS, hotels and restaurants visited on various tours, supporters of CRMF, friends - and many celebrities. The book will be a fascinating read too, as people were asked to submit interesting background information about their recipes.

'Favourite Recipes' was due to be published on 9th November, and will cost £4. Copies can be obtained from Ralph and Brenda Jenkins (0118 9429665), Beryl Levett (0118 9264312).

AROUND THE CHURCHES CONTINUED

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST NEWS

2ND CAVERSHAM GIRLS' BRIGADE

The 2nd Caversham Girls' Brigade visited Safety Street in September. A team of girls from this Company won the Reading District Swimming Gala on 15th October at the Northcroft Leisure Centre in Newbury.

CAROL SINGING

The Caversham Heights Methodist youth group, Squash, will be out and about on the 20th, 22nd and 24th of December for their annual Carol Singing on behalf of NCH Action for Children.

WOODCOTE METHODISTS

The small Methodist membership meeting in Woodcote Parish Church (and included in the Caversham Team Ministry) invites Caversham people to join them in worship, especially on - Sunday December 8 Bible Sunday at 9.45am and on Sunday December 29 Covenant Service at 3.30pm.

when, on both Sundays, the preacher will be the Rev Rosemary Fletcher. They will be greatly encouraged by such support. Anyone unable to attend the Covenant Service at their own church will be most welcome on December 29.

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Caversham W.I.

Members were 'on the move' for their October meeting when Mr Derek Farrow showed his slides of transport through the Ages. The more leisurely days of canal barges, stage coaches and horse and cart gave way to the age of motoring which began one hundred years ago. Each slide had an interesting commentary showing great expertise, even an early 'charabanc' for W.I. Outings!

The tea interval brought the added bonus of a birthday cake as Daphne Barnard received a card on her special day.

The president, Miss Margaret Cameron, conducted the business part of the evening, reminding members of the Autumn Council meeting, and particularly the Autumn Fair on November 2nd in Caversham Hall. The raffle was drawn and the speaker judged the competition - an item of model transport - before everyone went home.

Caversham Ladies' Club

It was the meeting of the Ladies' Club own Bazaar, and very attractive the tables were looking. Members had very generously brought along gifts to

help swell the tables even more. By the time Chairman, Mrs B Strong, had welcomed the ladies the tables were very tempting to see.

Firstly, Club business was attended to and members were told of the new date for the Christmas lunch. It was unfortunate that it clashed with some members' arrangements. The mix up was caused by dates being altered from 19th to 5th December (Thursday). Business concluded, the Bazaar was officially opened and members were soon buying up the goodies on show. It was a jolly atmosphere and members' bags were getting heavier than when they arrived. That very welcome 'cuppa' was a lovely sight after all the bustle.

Members were reminded that the next meeting would be videos of Australia, and it was then time to bring the meeting to a close after an enjoyable afternoon.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

At the October meeting held at St Barnabas' Hall the following events took place:

WORDS & MUSIC - enjoyed the first act of HMS PINAFORE on video and at the next meeting members will

have the chance to watch the second act.

RAMBLERS - have enjoyed two walks: The first round Lower Assendon of seven miles and the second walk of six miles around Sonning Common and Stony Bottom.

The speaker for the evening was Mr Mark Taylor on "Our Library". Although nearly all Guild members belong to their local library it was a surprise to hear just how many services other than the loan of books the library provides.

The public can borrow videos, cassettes and also Learn a Language Course. There is an "Infobox" which provides information on Sport and Leisure Tourist attractions - Clubs and Associations - What's On in Berkshire - Children's Magazine - Council Information - Welfare Benefits and lots more.

Caversham Community Association

A fascinating collection of miniature hats was the subject of Mr Kirby's talk and slides. The finding of a china hat bearing the crest of his home town led to a collection now numbering in the hundreds made of china, metal, wood and material.

A popular bingo session was on offer the following week with several lucky winners.

Brain power was to the fore for a quiz evening. Muriel Waite organised a Music Quiz, Margaret Cameron a 'faces' quiz and Brenda Strong thought up some general knowledge questions.

Real Hallowe'en weather ended the month with members bravely battling the elements to attend the party. Their efforts were well worth it with Jim Plunkett playing for a popular sing-song ending with much patriotic flag waving. Some very realistic entries in the Witch competition ended with Muriel Waite as the winner with Anne Wright as runner-up. A delicious hot-dog supper gave energy for the wind-blown journey home.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

In August a talk of Kinesiology and a demonstration by Mrs Margaret Summerill intrigued the Guild

quite considerably. Plans are already being made for the New Year as another visit to the Mill at Sonning was arranged for January '97. A coffee morning was held at Jane Slawson's home to raise funds for The Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre.

September's meeting was a social evening with members bringing produce, cakes and bric-a-brac for a Bring and Buy; money raised went to guild funds. On a more serious note, the chairman asked members to consider taking over from many of the existing committee members next year. The Scrabble enthusiast meet regularly as do the Drama group while the Social Studies meetings are greatly enjoyed by many members.

In October the talk was entitled 'Exploring the Waterways of England', when Mr Moir, a very exuberant speaker, set out to prove that one could get away from the stress of the present way of life. For four weeks he and his grandson lived on a narrow boat 5ft by 40ft and along canals completed a circular tour of England. Travelling at 4mph and going through 500 locks and a 3/2 mile long tunnel, they moored outside the towns and the cities they wanted to explore needing only a walk to their destination.

Rosehill W.I.

The October meeting provided members with the opportunity to socialise. A wholesome Harvest Lunch, served by the Committee, provided the setting - after which a postcard competition encouraged members to exchange holiday memories. The Beetle Game ensured that everyone took an active part in the meeting, and the display of 'favourite books' was a further talking point on an enjoyable afternoon.

There will be a Christmas Party with a Lady Clown on 4th December (St Barnabas Hall, 2.00pm). Visitors are welcome.

Chazey W.I.

Mr Duncan Vincent, in fine voice, gave a talk on "The Life of an Auctioneer" at the 5th November meeting. Those who thought that an auctioneer merely stood up at a desk and took their bids in a saleroom had their eyes, and ears, opened. There's much more to it than that. Experience counts a

lot, but an auctioneer and valuer must have a good eye for the unexpected treasure, and know where the best salerooms are. Some things are best sold in London - clocks and watches especially - where collectors are mostly likely to be present. Mr Vincent's eyes have netted his clients several thousand pounds at Sotheby's specialist sales. It certainly seems that the safest way to dispose of any articles of value is through a knowledgeable auctioneer. The least safe way is to allow a dealer, calling house to house, to enter and make an offer and yet people still do it. The householder gets a few hundred and the dealer gets thousands. The truly enthusiastic auctioneer won't mind if your swans turn out to be geese. For him the joy of the unexpected find compensates for a few dull days. Members heard how Mr Vincent discovered a pair of floral chamber pots, which sold for £80, by accidentally knocking one under a bed!

Age Concern and Red Cross supporters brought 50 elderly guests to Chazey's annual tea party in October. As usual the sun shone, the tea and talk flowed, cakes were consumed, and doors and windows had to be opened to keep the temperature down! Theresa and Tony Thomas, with keyboard and guitar, kindly entertained a delighted audience. A joyful afternoon for everyone.

3rd December is Chazey's own Christmas Party. January 7th, a talk on "Apples" with an apple cake competition.

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