

THE BRIDGE SCHEME

Another busy year

TWELVE YEARS OLD

Mrs Besley, the Central Organiser, was able to present a most encouraging report. From what she had to say it is clear that the Bridge Scheme is meeting a very real need in Caversham. Mrs Besley reminded the meeting of the aim of the scheme, which is now 12 years old; NEIGHBOURLINESS, and ENCOURAGEMENT TO PEOPLE TO HELP OTHERS IN NEED. It is not the intention of the Bridge Scheme to compete with any of the statutory bodies, but rather to cooperate and complement them.

EMERGENCIES

The work consists of roughly three types, Emergency transport, Emergency calls and routine visits to comfort, shop and help on a regular basis.

Mrs Besley paid tribute to the District Organisers without whom the work of the Scheme could not continue and also the many people who give of their time so freely and willingly, often at very short notice. Dr James Rothwell paid tribute to the hard work that Mrs Besley herself puts into the Scheme and proposed a vote of thanks to her.

SURVEY RESULTS

After refreshments had been served by members of Caversham Park Church, the Chairman, the Revd Stephen Bartlett, introduced Dr P. Anderson, who spoke of

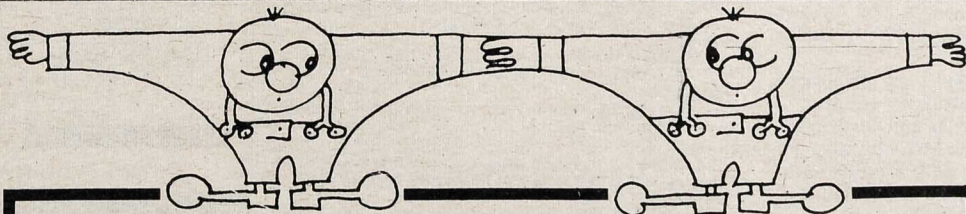
THE Bridge Scheme broke new ground this year by going to Caversham Park School, the home of Caversham Park Church, for the Annual General Meeting held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity last January. Contrary to many annual meetings this one was well supported, despite the rather cold and uninviting evening.

the need of not only old people, but also of people of all age groups who at times desperately require help on being discharged from hospital, often before they are well enough to cope on their own. In particular mothers who have to cope with young children immediately on discharge from hospital following an operation.

Dr Anderson felt that there was a great need, as yet not fully appreciated, with this type of case. He felt sure that if only the aims of the Bridge Scheme could be made more widely known many more would use its resources. Dr Anderson obviously took the work of the Scheme very seriously for he kindly arranged and conducted a survey of a random sample of people with various needs. The result of the survey proved two things, first the need of the service offered, and secondly, the need for better publicity.

Following Dr Anderson's talk a discussion took place which mainly centred on the problem of communication.

The Chairman then expressed the gratitude of the meeting to Dr Anderson for not only giving up his time to come and speak to the meeting but also for arranging such an interesting and useful survey.



CAVERSHAM BRIDGE SCHEME OF SOCIAL SERVICE

WHOM TO CONTACT

Central Organiser:

Mrs K. P. Besley, 10 Ashcroft Close. Tel. 472374

Area Organisers:

Mrs A. M. Russell (North Caversham), 31 Brooklyn Drive, Emmer Green. Tel. 472934

Mrs M. Coombs (South Caversham), 5 Kidmore Road. Tel. 472689

Mrs E. B. Evans (East Caversham), 50 Grosvenor Road. Tel. 473596

Mrs A. Voase (West Caversham), 40 Matlock Road. Tel. 472490

Mrs C. Pynn (Mapledurham), 42 Geoffreyson Road. Tel. 476065

Mrs D. Davies (Caversham Park), 81 Galsworthy Drive. Tel. 476181

HOW TO HELP

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1. Visit the sick, lonely and disabled
2. Provide transport for elderly or disabled
3. Look after children
4. Assist in the home

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The Editor's Column

A TIME TO STUDY

House groups have for many years been a prominent feature of church life in Caversham and Mapledurham, and because of the good relations that exist between the members of local churches these groups have mostly been arranged ecumenically. They have usually been held in Lent but in 1975 and 1976 other Lenten arrangements were made. This year, with the publication by the diocese of Oxford of a number of different courses of study it is planned that house groups should again be held.

We therefore publish this month the arrangements that have been made up to the time of going to print: there will, however, almost certainly be some additions and alterations to this list. Detailed arrangements are in the hands of the Rev Dr Michael Kitchener and all queries should be addressed to him.

NOT JUST CAVERSHAM

These groups are not just the latest idea of the clergy of Caversham to give overworked lay people something else to do. They are part of a carefully thought-out plan by the diocese of Oxford. What we shall be doing in our groups is only part of what hundreds of parishes are doing throughout the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. We are, however, continuing to arrange them ecumenically for there is little in the material which is specifically Anglican. The studies are not complete in themselves.

When the groups hold their last meeting towards the end of Lent that will not be the end of the matter. They are only the first stage of a three-year period of renewal which will culminate in the Bishop of Oxford's Visitation in 1979. In May this year several hundred clergy and laity throughout the diocese will attend a conference at Swanwick in Derbyshire and at that conference we shall be able to learn about the findings of the Lent groups and we can then later in the year expect to hear further plans regarding the work of renewal.

ACT NOW

Act now if you have not already joined up with one or other of the groups. The first meetings will be held early in March. There are many people in Caversham who are grateful to the fact that some years ago they joined a house group: they went at first perhaps with some hesitation but quickly realised the value of meeting other Christians in this way. On Sundays we gather together for worship as members, for the most part, of large congregations.

In the week much can be gained by Christians of different traditions coming together in small groups of not more than a dozen people — perhaps just nine or ten. Not only do we gain a more intimate sense of fellowship in such groups but we can also share our problems, doubts and difficulties and learn from each other. We thus become better equipped to witness to Christ and the Christian Faith as we go about our daily business.

Even as I write this I know that some groups have already got as many members as can be managed, but more groups can be arranged. The clergy will not themselves go regularly to any one group but hope that all groups will have one visit from one or other of them and that on that occasion a simple celebration of Holy Communion can take place at that particular session.

Ash Wednesday falls on February 23. This year I hope we shall look back on Lent as a time when through study in a house group we deepened both our commitment to Christ, our knowledge of Him and our Christian fellowship in Caversham and Mapledurham.

John Grimwade

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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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TIME TO LIVE

DURING Lent ecumenical house groups are meeting to study the Oxford Diocesan Study Group Course "Time to Live". Each group is choosing whichever of the five themes it prefers. Each group will hold four meetings.

Theme 1: TIME TO BE HUMAN

— What is being "Truly human"? What is "human nature"? Is our humanity a help or a hindrance? What are our human needs? What about the humanity of Jesus?

Theme 2: TIME TO BE SAVED

— What do Christians mean by "salvation"? Who is "saved"? Saved from what? Saved for what? Saved by what means? Salvation, wholeness and healing. Salvation in society.

Theme 3: TIME TO SERVE TOGETHER

— Ecumenism — Christian unity. Where are we going? What stops us from progressing further? What risks should we take? What are the next steps forward?

Theme 4: TIME TO CHANGE: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

— Christian lifestyle and responsibility — to the world's resources, to the world's poor, to our own spiritual life. World poverty, our affluence, and our own spiritual poverty.

Theme 5: TIME TO PROCLAIM AND MAKE DISCIPLES

— Christians and non-Christians. What should be our approach to a conscientious non-believer, or the adherent of another religion? Do we still intend to convert the world? Are all responsible beliefs and ways of life equally valid?

LIST OF GROUPS

Area A: Mapledurham (rural) and the Heights

Theme 1:
86 Kidmore Road (Mr and Mrs Parmenter). Tel. 474453. (Leader Thursday evenings Mr Parmenter.)
St Andrew's House, Harrogate Road. (Mrs Gardiner). Tel. 472788. (Leader Wednesday evenings Mr Aspden. Tel. 473618.)
47 Matlock Road (Mr and Mrs Goodrich). Tel. 472509. (Leader Friday evenings Mr Handford. Tel. 476977.)

Theme 2:
26 Ashcroft Close (Mrs Hickocks). Tel. 473239. (Leader Mr Beek, Thursday evenings. Tel. 477428.)

Theme 3:
42 Geoffreyson Road (Mr and Mrs Pynn). Tel. 475065. (Leader Mr Shield, Tuesday evenings. Tel. 473709.)

Theme 4:
Greendene Farm, Chazey Heath (Mr and Mrs Martyn-Johns). Tel. 325-2198. (Leader Miss Kift, Wednesday evenings. Tel. 471143.)
52 Kidmore Road (Mr and Mrs Birtwhistle). Tel. 473489. (Leader Monday evenings, Mr Brearley. Tel. 473673.)

Theme 5:
148 Upper Woodcote Road (Mr and Mrs Farmer). Tel. 472865. (Leader Wednesday evenings Mr Boulding. Tel. 472515.)

Area B: Caversham

Theme 1:
135 Hemdean Road. (Leader Mr Wyeth, Monday, 10.30am. Tel. 471197.)

Also in this area (but fully subscribed):
12 Auburn Court, Church Road (Mr Bentley, Wednesday 10.30am. Tel. 478237.)
29 Chiltern Road (Mrs Willoughby). Tel. 475199. (Leader Mr Clark, Thursday evenings. Tel. 473519.)

Theme 2:
25 Chester Street (Mr and Mrs Doggett). Tel. 476839. (Leader Mr Perkins, Wednesday evenings. Tel. 475265.)

Theme 3:
39 Blenheim Road (Mr and Mrs Cropp). (Leader Mrs Cropp, Wednesday afternoon.)

Theme 4:
Old Boundary House, Boundary Lane, The Warren (Mrs Solloway). Tel. 470382. (Leader Mr Foster, Wednesday evenings. Tel. 474172.)

178 Hemdean Road (Mr and Mrs Woolgar). Tel. 479346. (Leader Mr Reed / Mr Bailey, Tuesday evenings. Tel. 325-2452 / 325-2334.)

Theme 5:
67 Chazey Road (Mr and Mrs Fowles). Tel. 473988. (Leader Mrs Stringer, Monday evenings. Tel. 477545.)

15 Peppard Road (Mr and Mrs Baily). Tel. 471032. (Leader Mr Williams, Thursday evenings. Tel. 325-3350.)

Area C: Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Theme 1:
2 Blackwater Close (Mrs Bartlett). Tel. 474152. (Leader Mr Vincent, Thursday evenings. Tel. 472965.)

20 Osterley Drive (Mrs Gray). Tel. 478099. (Leader Mrs Gray, Thursday pm.)

10 Wetherby Close (Mr and Mrs Brand). Tel. 475178. (Leader Mr Brand, Friday evenings.)

Theme 2:
8 Marchwood Avenue (Mr and Mrs Hales). Tel. 475293. (Leader Mr Brown, Thursday evenings.)

Theme 3:
Springfield St Luke Convent, Surley Row / Marshland Square. Tel. 471593. (Leader Mr Holbrook, Friday evenings. Tel. 475371.)

Theme 4:
7 Pendennis Avenue (Mr and Mrs Wood). (Leader Mr Abel, Tuesday evenings. Tel. 470383.)

12 The Ridings (Dr and Mrs Jewiss). Tel. 475003. (Leader Dr Jewiss, Wednesday evenings.)

Theme 5:
1 Aldenham Close (Mrs Holbrook). Tel. 475371. (Leader Mr Cooper, Friday evenings. Tel. 471000.)

Other Groups

Theme 1:
96 Inglewood Court, Liebenrood Road, Reading (Miss Armitage). Tel. 57208. (Leader Mrs Beabey, Monday evenings. Tel. 475665.)

Bible study group at Springfield St Luke Convent
Studying the Letter of St James, Mondays at 7.30pm. Tel. 471593.

Talks with discussion on the "Time to Live" themes:

At Caversham Methodist Church and St John's Church alternately on Thursdays at 7.45pm (not March 10) given by the Rev John Sumner (tel. 471814), and the Rev Leslie Griffiths (tel. 472223.)

To join a group, please either tell any of the clergy or ministers, or make contact with the Group Hostess or Leader as soon as possible.

Except where noted groups meet at 8pm. In individual cases this may vary; your Hostess or Leader will let you know about this. Generally, groups begin to meet in the week beginning Sunday, February 27, and continue for four or five weeks. Again, there may be variation from this in some cases, and Hostesses or Leaders will be able to tell you about it.

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BIRDS IN THE CAVERSHAM AREA

by Paul D. Goriup

This year is the 30th anniversary of the Reading Ornithological Club. The publication of its first report for birds found by members in 1947 marked the start of proper documentation of Caversham's birds. Since then, 140 different species have been recorded in Caversham, which is 61 per cent of all bird species recorded in the Reading area — this latter area being some 20 times the extent of Caversham's boundaries. It appears then that Caversham offers rich opportunities for the local birdwatcher.

For practical recording purposes, Caversham is contained within a rectangle 6km by 3km (18 sq km). The corners of this rectangle have the O.S. grid references: 7468, 7868, 7874 and 7474. Within these bounds there are a fair variety of habitats. Tokers Green, Emmer Green and Trench Green typify the agricultural landscapes: the areas around Tanners Farm, especially the golf course, are rough chalk-grasslands, and Chazey Wood the largest piece of old beechwood, again typical of chalk hills. There are three wetland areas: the backwater of the Warren with its associated wet meadows, the River Thames itself, but most important, the large, flooded gravel pit between the Henley Road and the gasworks. Two important sites fall outside the Caversham area: the sister gravel pit at Sonning Eye and the second half of Chazey Wood overlooking Mapledurham.

WINTER VISITORS

Several of those species recorded within the Caversham area over the past 30 years were rare, one-off sightings of birds blown in from abroad whilst on migration. Examples include Hoopoe (Shepherd's Lane, 1948), Waxwing (along the Henley Road, 1965), and Leach's Petrel (Henley Road gravel pit, 1970). The majority of species, however, may be seen every day of the year in or near to gardens — including Blackbirds, Blue Tits and Greenfinches. These birds are called residents, as opposed to the two classes of birds known as migrants (or visitors) and passage-migrants.

Caversham, in common with the rest of Great Britain, receives migrant species of birds both in summer and winter. Familiar summer migrants are the Cuckoo, Swallow and Nightingale. They leave their winter quarters in Africa during spring to

breed in the northern latitudes, and return with their offspring during the autumn. Incidentally, the Swallow is rarely the first summer migrant to arrive in the British Isles: it is usually a small warbler called the Chiffchaff, and this is true also of Caversham.

Winter visitors to Caversham are less well-known. These birds generally breed in the high Arctic, Scandinavia or Siberia. For them, Great Britain is as safe a winter quarters as Africa is to our summer visitors. This is because Britain, as an island, has a mild atlantic climate rather than a harsh Continental climate. The birds arrive in autumn and leave in the spring. Obvious species such as geese and swans do not find a suitable habitat in our area, preferring river estuaries and water meadows.

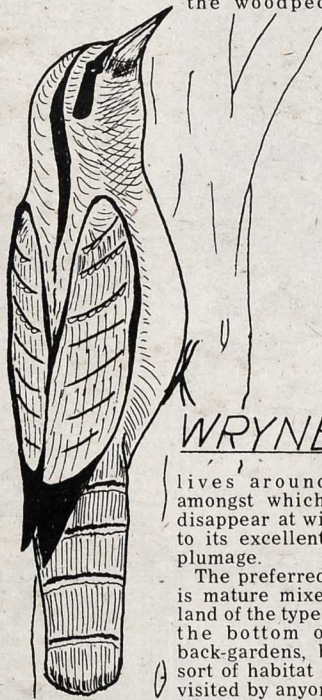
MIGRANTS

Many hundreds of ducks do frequent the gravel pit and river meadows, but the most common winter migrants here belong to the same family as Blackbirds and Song Thrushes and are the Redwing and Fieldfare. The latter is somewhat less numerous than the former. Both species spend the day in open fields feeding on grain from the autumn's harvest, small earth-dwelling animals and berries from hedgerows. In the evening they congregate in large flocks and fly to small copses to roost communally — a characteristic also of Starlings and Wrens.

Thus there are two great movements of birds in Caversham. These are the so-called passages. In the spring passage, summer migrants are beginning to arrive, and the winter visitors to leave. Similarly, during the autumn passage the summer migrants start to depart and the winter visitors to appear. In the months of March, April, September and October, it is usual to see both types of visitor in some numbers during a short afternoon's walk.

Weather conditions determine how many birds visit us. Severe winters in the North, as this year, results in more birds being seen in the South. Hence the large numbers of Redwings wintering in Caversham recently. A bad winter in Africa reduces the number of summer visitors arriving back in Caversham the following year. This happened in 1969, when practically no Whitethroats returned after a severe drought in their Sahel winter quarters during the 1968/9 winter.

Where Caversham differs from the national picture is in its passage migrant bird species. The reason for this is its favourable situation near to the point where three river systems cut valleys through high ground. These are the Thames (through the Chilterns and Cotswolds), the Kennet (through the Hampshire Downs), and the Loddon (through the South Downs). Birds on migration navigate by stars at night and the sun by day. However, they take the opportunity to follow river valleys in order to save energy, rather than flying over high ground.



WRYNECK

lives around trees amongst which it can disappear at will owing to its excellent cryptic plumage.

The preferred habitat is mature mixed woodland of the type found at the bottom of many back-gardens, but this sort of habitat is rarely visited by anyone familiar with the species.

The challenge is this: to find out whether the Wryneck still breeds in the Caversham area. It arrives in April, and two characteristics can confirm its presence.

Thus migrating birds are funnelled into the valleys in the Caversham area where, because of their higher concentration they are more easily observed. Now, passage-migrants are a special group of birds distinct from normal migrants in that they breed much farther north — in Scotland, but more often in Greenland or Iceland — but still winter in Africa.

They therefore overfly Britain during the passage times on their way to and from the Arctic, stopping only to feed. It so happens that Caversham is a feeding and resting place for many of these birds, giving us the rare opportunity of watching them outside of their normal ranges in Africa or Greenland. Examples include the Common Sandpiper and Greenshank.

If you should feel like taking up a little ornithology in the coming year, then there is an immediate challenge. Over the past 30 years, there has been little change in the breed-

ing status of Caversham's birds, with three exceptions. These are the Red-backed Shrike (last bred in 1953), the Woodlark (last bred in 1959), and the Wryneck (last breeding record in 1954). The first two have declined in numbers in a well-documented way through changes in climate and loss of habitat.

However, the Wryneck (so-called because of its ability to twist its head to almost any angle) does not seem to have suffered from these effects. A recent survey suggested that there were no more than 15 breeding pairs in the country at the present time, yet they still occur in fair numbers at coastal observatories (even allowing for foreign migrants).

There can be no doubt that the Wryneck is largely overlooked for a number of reasons. For a start, it is an elusive, shy and retiring bird, making it difficult to find. Like its relatives, the woodpeckers, it

Firstly, it often feeds on lawns in the early morning, but once disturbed will disappear for the rest of the day. A glimpse of a strange, greyish, cigar-shaped bird in your garden one morning should put you on the alert. Secondly, it will nest in nest-boxes if these are left undisturbed.

Again, a strange non-British type of bird visiting an old nest-box in some neglected corner of the garden may be a sign of its presence in the area. Two or three pairs used to breed regularly in nest-boxes in gardens bordering the Warren — a perfect habitat type. There is evidence that it still occurs in the area, with a scattering of sight records during even the last few years, not only in Caversham, but in Sonning and Emmer Green as well — and all in back-gardens bordering or containing a small piece of woodland.

The re-discovery of the Wryneck as a breeding bird would be important not only for Caversham, but also for the whole country, since it would indicate that the species is perhaps more common than is at present supposed. If you think you have Wrynecks visiting your garden then contact Mr Peter Standley (Siskins, Llanvair Drive, S. Ascot), the Berkshire bird recorder, who would be more than pleased to hear from you. Good hunting!

OBITUARY

EDWARD

PLATT

We are sorry to report the death on February 1 of Mr Edward Platt, Son of the founder of the well-known firm of Platts in Gosbrook Road he was himself until his retirement assistant estate and rating surveyor for British Railways.

Married at St John's Church in 1928 he and his wife had lived all their married life at 161 Peppard Road where his large garden had been one of his great delights. For many years he was chairman of St Benet's House Committee: he was a member of the British Legion and used to survey the halls of the parish for the Parochial Church Council.

With his wife he worshipped at St Barnabas. He had distributed this newspaper from the first edition in 1964 to residents in a section of Peppard Road, only relinquishing this a few weeks ago because of the state of his health. Bridge readers will wish to extend sympathy to Mrs Platt and her family.

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Clapper's Foot-path, Caversham.



Great Snow Storm, April 25th, 1908.

■ Clapper's Footpath, Caversham, in the great snow storm of April 25, 1908. On the back of this photo is written "Had to clear snow away from the house about a foot deep". It had obviously been a very cold winter for weeks as the trees are still as bare as in mid-winter with no sign of budding.



■ Almost similar spot in summer

Lost local wells

Quite apart from the ancient and holy well of St Anne to be seen at the junction of Priest Hill and St Anne's Road, Caversham and Mapledurham had numerous similar water supplies, for the presence of wide sheets of gravel in the area offered numerous sites for wells. Many are completely lost, though some can still be remembered.

In Mapledurham there was once a well in the hedgerow on the right just after the turning into Blagrove Lane from Upper Warren Avenue, but before reaching the beginning of Jackson's Lane. Behind that well was once a pair of thatched cottages similar to the one that remains on the other side of the road. This, too, was once thatched and was two semi-detached homes. So the well supplied four families. There was also another among a line of elms, recently felled, on the right of River Road walking towards Chazey Road. Further afield there was another at Nokes End and of course one opposite Well Cottage, Trench Green. Not so many years ago, whilst relaying the cobble stones outside the Almshouses at Mapledurham, a very low lying well was found just beside the front door of one of the dwellings.

Nearer home, in the Caversham Heights district, are the whereabouts of several more. In Darell Road there were once two and in a house in Highmoor Road, close to Buxton Avenue, the occupants awoke one morning to find a disused well which had been covered over, had caved in and part of the garden had disappeared.

Add to this the various ponds which have dried up, become overgrown and vanished, such as the one once at the corner of Blagrove Lane and Woodcote Road, near the telephone kiosk, and the water supply at the edge of the Chilterns in this area was better than some. It was further into these chalk hills that the gift of wells, such as those at Stoke Row and Whitchurch Hill, by the wealthy gentry of the district, were such a boon.

No doubt many people reading this article could tell the whereabouts of many more wells now covered over and almost forgotten in the surrounding district.

CAVERSHAM PARISH HOLIDAY EMBLEY PARK, ROMSEY, HANTS

Saturday, July 23-Saturday, July 30

Over sixty people have already booked for this ever-popular holiday. Embley Park School, situated in superb parkland, is the ideal place for a holiday for people of all ages. All cooking and cleaning is done by the school staff, and the food has a reputation for its excellence. There is an open-air swimming pool and many outdoor and indoor games are available at no further charge. Packed lunches are provided for those who wish to go out for the day.

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Deaconess Doreen
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TEN YEARS AGO

We publish some selections from the Caversham Bridge of March, 1967.

Village Association takes stock. The annual meeting of the Caversham Park Village Association took place on January 12, 1967. At that meeting the Association Chairman, Squadron - Leader P. Cockman, gave a full report of all that had happened during 1966.

During the year there have been frequent meetings between the members of the association and representatives of Davis Estates Ltd., which have been marked by a steady growth of mutual understanding.

The association has influenced the provision of public telephone kiosks in the village; its insistence has resulted

in the imposition of a 30mph speed on all village roads even though these are unadopted as yet; progress has been made towards the provision of a bus service.

Among the keenest aspirations of the Residents' Association is the provision of a community centre as soon as possible. To this end a committee has been instituted to plan the project. To achieve a community centre in so short a time the association appreciates how much effort must be put into fund-raising.

Embley Park, 1967. The Parish Family Holidays this year are extending over three weeks. The first two weeks are almost fully booked but there are a number of vacancies on the third week (August 19-26). The charges are £6.15 per week.

St Peter's news. Congratulations to sidesman Peter South and his Caversham Bridge distributor wife who were the second pair in the congregation this year to celebrate their silver wedding — married at St Mark's, Reading, in January, 1942.

Caversham Churches. The Rev Brian Porter, S.J., a Roman Catholic priest from Heythrop College, Chipping Norton, preached at the United Service for Young People held in Caversham Heights Methodist Church on January 22, as part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Rosehill Women's Institute. Mrs Seaby (President) presided at the January meeting. A talk and demonstration on different joints of meat was given by Mr P. Jennings, of Jennings Bros.

St Peter's Wedding



— Walton Adams

■ Mr Alan Gayler of Baker Street and Miss Dawn Winslow of Grosvenor Road were married in St Peter's Church on Saturday, January 29.

OTHER TIMES— OTHER PRICES SHOPPING BASKET 1897

	s	d	
½lb coffee.....	1	0	(5p)
1lb cheese.....	11		(4½p)
1lb currants.....	6		(2½p)
1lb raisins.....	6		(2½p)
1 sultana cake.....	10		(4p)
½lb Osborne biscuits.....	3½		(1½p)

What could you get for 20p today? The currants alone in this list would cost considerably more than 20p.

CHURCH NEWS

St Peter's News The Wives' Group

At the first meeting this year Inspector Curran of the NSPCC gave

an interesting talk about his very varied life. Over coffee he answered many questions from members. At this meeting five new members were welcome.

The Wives' Group has a full and interesting programme planned for the coming year. They meet regularly at Church House on the

third Tuesday of the month with added activities and outings, and copies of the programme are available from Mrs Jean Pugh, of 16 Berrylands Road, Caversham. Tel. Reading 472949. Any "Wives" interested would be made most welcome at future meetings.

The March meeting will be a play-reading by the Progress Players, and a Spring Flower Arranging evening has been arranged with Baptist "Wives" for March 21 at West Memorial Hall.

APRIL EDITION

All material for inclusion in the April Edition must be received by Wednesday, March 2.

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John and Molly Dussek

By Maeve Murphy-O'Connor

Many years ago I remember toiling over exercises written for the piano by a Czech composer — Dussek — so it was with great interest that I met his great, great grandson, John, who showed me a portrait of his distinguished relative, which now hangs in pride of place on the music room wall. As the latter married an Italian girl in Scotland this makes for good cosmopolitan blood running through John's veins.

MUSIC AN INEVITABLE HERITAGE

Music was John's inevitable heritage for his father was Director of Music at Radley College and his mother a professional singer. At the age of ten John Dussek became a chorister at Magdalen College, and as he says, this was the perfect initiation for his later career in music. At Magdalen he learnt the piano and organ showing a particular ability and fondness for the organ. In his spare time, which was sparse, for choristers are worked hard, John wrote operas for his friends and contemporaries to perform. After four years in this idyllic environment

John moved to Radley College.

At the outbreak of war John joined the Royal Navy, which was his home until the end of the war. Whilst serving with the Navy he was able to play the organ, and perhaps surprisingly the bassoon as a member of the ship's band. Despite the war these were enjoyable years for John. In 1946 John went up to Oxford to study at Worcester College for his Bachelor of Music degree. As an antidote to theoretical study John joined the Oxford Bach choir, during which time he took part in performances of Verdi's Requiem and the Dream of Gerontius.

John's first teaching post after graduating was at Geelong Grammar School in Australia. A school with a good musical tradition. A memorable musical event in John's day being a performance of Bach's great B Minor Mass by the whole school. As a point of interest Prince Charles was to spend some of his school days here a few years later. John Dussek found that there was a deep appreciation and enthusiasm for music inherent in the Australians. For instance, they would think nothing of travelling many miles to

a concert.

In 1949 anxious for more teaching experience in England John returned to this country to take up a teaching post at Westminster Abbey Choir School and also as organist to Harrow Parish Church. His next post was that of music teacher at Sherborne Abbey School and organist to the Abbey. After five years at Sherborne John moved to Oakham School in the former county of Rutland, as Director of Music, where he remained until he moved to Reading in 1969 as Music Master to Kendrick Grammar School for Girls.

THE ROLE OF CHURCH MUSIC

Of the role of music in church John Dussek thinks that it should be a source of inspiration to the congregation and as such should be good of its kind and well performed. Experimentation should be encouraged, especially as there is much modern music suitable for church-worship, notably, compositions by the late Benjamin Britten.

As to be expected John's favourite instrument is the organ coupled with a particular affection for choral



■ John Dussek

— Walton Adams

music. It was this tradition that John brought to St Peter's, Caversham, on his appointment as organist in 1974, a post which, alas, he had to relinquish in the summer of 1976 due to a very serious illness, though he still plays occasionally when his successor is away.

John cannot now be as energetic as perhaps he would wish but he still walks and reads, Hardy and Trollope being amongst his favourite authors.

FAMILY LIFE

In 1951 John took, to what in his opinion was the most sensible and profitable action in his entire career, to marry his wife, Molly, whom he met at Radley College, where she taught the violin having studied at the Royal Academy of

Music. As well as being wife and mother to their three children Molly has continued teaching in a peripatetic capacity. She much enjoys music-making in her leisure and is a member of the Reading Symphony Orchestra. As to be expected Molly compliments her husband's musical tastes by a preference for orchestral and chamber music, Brahms being a favourite composer.

Sarah, Gillian and Michael have indeed inherited a strong musical tradition synonymous with the name Dussek. Sarah is a violinist in the BBC Concert Orchestra, having gained former valuable experience in the National Youth Orchestra which she joined at the age of 12

and studied subsequently at the Royal Academy. Gillian is currently reading Law at Oxford, and like her father before her has joined the Oxford Bach Choir and also plays the flute. Michael is studying the piano at the Royal Academy and recently was the soloist at their Chamber Orchestra Concert.

As you might well imagine with this impressive array of family talent many an enjoyable evening of music-making is spent in the Dussek household ... and so the illustrious name of Dussek lives on.

This spring John and Molly will be celebrating their silver wedding on April 16, and their many friends in Caversham and throughout Reading will rejoice with them.

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So you're bored again. There seems to be nothing to do and the evening's television is useless. Somehow you feel the urge to go out and do something, anything, to "cheat the lingering hour". The easy way out is to go to bed early, but with a little effort you could change all this. Why not join up with a friendly group of people participating in worthwhile projects, both individually and collectively? How about getting out of an evening, or a weekend, or even a week and learning to pit your resourcefulness, initiative and skill against exciting challenges? In fact, why not join the 3rd Reading Venture Scout Unit?

You may be forgiven for believing that Scouts in general spend most of their time tying pointless knots, sitting around camp-fires singing inane songs, or cleaning shoes for "Bob-a-Job" week. In truth Venture Scouting is something completely different: the word "Scout" is usually dropped by members who prefer to call themselves "Ventures". Although the majority in a Venture Unit are

ex-Scouts, the beauty is that absolutely no Scouting experience is required in order to join (in fact it might be an advantage). Nor are those who have left Scouts in any way deterred from entering a unit, which they will find vastly different in outlook from that of a troop.

A Venture Unit, then, is a group of people who run themselves, but enjoy the benefits of belonging to the Scout Association. The broad aims are to provide facilities for young people (16 to 20) to develop personal interests and to train for the Queen Scouts Award and for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme (all standards). Within this approach, expeditions, short talks and visits to places of interest are incorporated into a programme which also caters for personal pursuits and outside social activities.

Thus; over the last three years, projects completed include three major expeditions, construction of hot-air balloon, building a boat, setting up a photographic unit, putting together a record player and salvaging an

old television set. In addition, the unit has partaken in numerous joint activities (with the Rangers, for instance) such as discos, cheese and wine parties, pancake races, canoeing, swimming and sailing. What has been done, however, masks what is available through the Scout Association: gliding, gyrocoptering, parachuting and international camps, most water sports and mountain crafts. Further, there is plenty of room in the headquarters for you to set up your own workshop / laboratory / studio or whatever and to do your own thing — with plenty of help available if you need it. New projects for this year include building a model railway, learning motor cycle mechanics and redecorating the unit room (any suggestions for a colour scheme?)

Well, there you are — come along to the HQ (at the top of Grove Hill) any Monday evening from 8pm and meet the lads, or contact Mr Peter Batley (18 Hemdean Hill) for further information. You may never have another bored moment!

PICTURES FROM THE PAST



■ In spite of wells and ponds, it was water cart in high summer at Mapledurham years ago.



■ Looking at St Anne's Road from Clifton Park Road — then a track through fields.

PARISH OF CAVERSHAM

Annual meetings for members of the Church of England who are on the electoral roll

DISTRICT MEETINGS

Monday, February 28, 8pm
St John's in St John's Church

Tuesday, March 1, 8pm
St Peter's in Balmore Hall

Wednesday, March 2, 8pm
St. Andrew's in St Andrew's Hall

Thursday, March 3, 8pm
St Barnabas in St Barnabas Hall

Sunday, March 6, noon
Caversham Park in Caversham Park Primary School

PAROCHIAL MEETING

Thursday, March 10, 7.45pm
in BALMORE Hall

TALKING POINT

by Leslie Wyeth

FOR PLEASURE ONLY?

A Christian Exploration of the Novel

We read novels for pleasure. They stimulate the imagination and reveal aspects of life which we do not normally encounter. The advent of science fiction for example, has opened up possibilities of speculation on the shape of things to come. It probes into the unknown and conjures up fantastic pictures. The truth is all imaginative literature serves as a mirror of the life of society.

Novelists in particular make it their business to explore every nook and cranny of human experience. Their perception, sharpened by their craft, reveals what St Augustine called the abyssal depths of personality. Christians ought not to neglect this source of illumination.

THE PLOT

Let me illustrate this from a modern novel. The novel is "The Smaller Sky" by John Wain. The plot of the book is strange. A competent scientist, Arthur Geary, is troubled by a terrible sound in his head like that of drums. This distressing condition is only eased when he is at Paddington Station in London. He finds this out as he commutes through the station day by day. So he leaves his wife and children and takes permanent shelter there; he sleeps at night in the adjoining hotel, by day he watches the trains go out and come in. Talks to

people, drinks cups of coffee, smokes and reads magazines.

He is able to cope quite well, but if he leaves the station, back comes the sound of drums. His wife, who is not really interested in him, tries to get him to come home. For one thing she is embarrassed by what the neighbours are saying. For another she needs the bread-winner at home. His son and his friends try to reason with him, but in vain, he will not come out. People invent theories about his sanity. Finally a TV journalist, with an eye to a scoop, poses as a friend of the family and gets an interview. All goes well until the TV camera appears, then Geary realises what is going on. In a panic he climbs the station wall into the steel girders of the roof, slips and falls to his death.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

It is obvious that novelists write to make money. They are not the only ones. The Emperor Hadrian is reported as saying "Christians and Pagans are alike in one thing... they all worship money." But novelists are often propagating ideas as well, sowing seeds in our minds. What then is John Wain telling us? Short of asking him I can only hazard a guess. He is depicting a man in serious trouble with himself. He cannot cope with the larger

world or reality, he needs a smaller sky. The symbolism of the sound of the drums is an indication of an inner confusion and disharmony.

Not that he is devoid of intelligence, ability or charm. It is sheer inability to come to terms with life. He is a lost soul. Everybody construes his salvation in terms of getting him out, but he will not budge. Like a child he has run to mother, and he knows that "Paddington Station" is mother. He has purchased peace at a lower level than the highest. It is an error that we all make.

WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR HIM?

Someone must go to him to share his strange world. To enter "Paddington Station" with love and compassion. To brave the derision of hostile minds. There is a risk of failure. It is a risk that all outreach accepts. It is based upon the faith that Christ is already in "Paddington" and awaits the one who comes as the messenger of pardon and peace. Then where two or three are gathered together Christ becomes visible in the midst and reconciliation becomes real. The drums have ceased, and Arthur Geary emerges into the daylight of reality.

Such is the kind of picture which this novel presents to me, it has proved a useful exercise in Christian exploration.

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ST PETER'S AND ST BARNABAS MOTHERS' UNION

What do we know of other people's beliefs? The Friends, generally known as Quakers, have very simple worship, no music, singing or beautiful vestments. However they are not so puritanical as they were in the 17th century. Mrs Evans of Caversham gave an interesting talk on the Society of Friends.

ST ANDREW'S NEWS

The Mothers' Union

The January meeting was enjoyed by members and guests. Mrs Rosemary Stringer, the Enrolling Member, welcomed everyone and led the prayers. The speaker was Mr Inglis Mayo, elder son of the Secretary, Mrs G. Mayo. He gave a most interesting account of his three years' training for the Ministry, and members wish him well when he is made a Deacon in June.

A party tea and social time was appreciated by everyone. Members

were pleased to know that as a result of donations and working and saving for the new Lady Chapel carpet, it has already been paid for.

The February meeting began in church at 2.30pm when Mrs Stringer was commissioned, followed by the Mothers' Union meeting in St Andrew's Hall. Members from other branches in the parish were invited to come to hear the speaker, Mrs Audrey Hobbs, Reading Deanery Presiding Member, who showed interesting slides of the Centenary Service in Westminster Abbey.

ST ANDREW'S WOMEN'S GROUP

Despite a very wet evening, the January meeting of the St Andrew's Women's Group was extremely well attended by both members and their friends. The talk, "Country Tales of Berkshire" given by Mrs Celia Milson of Bucklebury, took the audience back through time, vividly reliving historical tales both serious and humorous. Refreshments were served and the usual vote of thanks were

CHURCH NEWS

accorded to the speaker by the group's chairman, Mrs Valerie Gardiner.

The March meeting will be on Thursday 24, when there will be a pottery-making demonstration by Mr T. Doughty. A warm welcome awaits any lady who would like to come along.

ST JOHN'S NEWS

The Epiphany. St John's kept the Feast of the Epiphany with an evening celebration of the Holy Communion followed by a supper. With the remainder of the body of the church set out in readiness for supper, a dining table provided a nave altar, with the communicants gathered round three sides.

After supper, Mrs Molly Casey gave a most interesting and stimulating talk on the history of Caversham from Saxon times. No doubt members of St John's congregation will be visiting the local library in search of more of the vast store of information which Mrs Casey could have given them if time had allowed.

St John's Fellowship. With the Bible study section already well established, the first Fellowship Evening was held on January 18 in the church Upper Room. Although a cold night, a good few came and were well entertained with "Twenty Questions". Host and Hostess for the evening were Chick and Betty Fowler, who excelled themselves as Question Master and Scorekeeper; and with Nancy Wheeler, Audrey Yates, John Sumner and Don Vince on the panel they were assured of, and well-rewarded with, a good evening's enjoyment. The outcome was an overwhelming victory for the panel of 13-2.

The Bible study section meets on the first Tuesday of the month and the Fellowship evenings are held on the third Tuesday. A programme, planned

through to August, has been drawn up, and printed cards giving dates for both sections are available at the church.

Fellowship Social Evenings planned include a Beetle Drive, a talk on Africa, a walk by the river to Sonning, a musical evening in church, and swimming; so it is felt there is something for everybody and it is hoped that people will come along and enjoy not only the programmes arranged, but also the company of other church members and friends.

During Lent, both sections will attend the Lent evenings arranged by the church.

ST ANNE'S NEWS

Two well-known and respected members of the congregation died recently, Mrs Kathleen Harman of 10 Valley Close and Mrs Cecilia O'Brien of 69 Priest Hill, both from long illnesses patiently and courageously borne. The former was the wife of Mr Bill Harman who is a very keen member, his parochial activities being the President of the St Vincent de Paul Society, and the latter taught for some years at St Anne's School.

To their respective families Caversham Bridge readers offer their sincere sympathy. May they rest in peace.

CAVERSHAM METHODIST CHURCH

'WELL DONE, RADIO 210'

One of the many events held at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church during Christmas was the annual visit of the school choir and recorder group from Micklands County Primary School. This proves to be one of the liveliest services of the year not least for the reason the 70 children have to be fitted into the small space available at the front of the church. Of course, proud parents

and admiring friends swell the congregation and the overall impression is one of a church bursting at the seams.

This year's service was recorded by Dr Belton Bensley and included many carols from all over the world. The children were led by Mrs E. J. Phillips, the head of the school. The Rev Leslie Griffiths gave the address and told the children he would be taking the recording with him to Haiti when he leaves Reading in the summer, and he would be able to play it next Christmas as a reminder of Caversham.

Dr Bensley edited the

recording and offered a half-hour programme of carols to Radio Thames Valley. The programme went out on the Wednesday evening before Christmas with an introduction by the Rev Leslie Griffiths and Mrs Phillips talking about the different groups of carols. This was a most successful programme which was enjoyed by all who heard it. It gave the lie to the criticism that Radio 210 plays only pop records. Congratulations 210. The school are hoping to have a tape cassette made of the carols for sale to their pupils and members of the church.

ROUND THE ANGLICAN PARISH

Bishop visits informal gathering

It is not often that a bishop talks to a group of people that are neither wearing dog-collars nor being trained to be clergymen, nor at a Retreat. Yet on two evenings in January a group of Caversham Christians — predominantly from St Andrew's, St Barnabas and St Peter's — met together to listen and talk with Bishop Stephen Neill on "Prayer".

The kernel of these gatherings was the group that went to the Parish Retreat last year. From the very first evening of that Retreat, when everyone found out the life history of his neighbour and then told the rest of the company, right through the two days of silence, we felt we had come to know each other better. So after that Retreat we were glad of the few reunions we have in the year, yet we felt that there should be a specific aim to the later meetings. We agreed that "Prayer" would be a good subject, and Mrs Betty Shaylor offered to invite an old friend of her East African days, Bishop Stephen Neill, to lead it.

One question asked of the Bishop that seems to bring out some of his main points was: should we pray about our sins? The gist of his reply was that we should repent but should not dwell on all our sins. Introversion is bad. If we have caused pain to anyone else then we must there and then go and make peace with them and put right our wrong. Yet we must look beyond our failures to the victory with Christ, must treat our failures as red lights and not try ourselves by getting into the same dangerous situation again.

We should pray for courage, for guidance and help in need, but most of our prayer should be concerned with others. If every Christian in Britain prayed for 20 non-believers then everyone in Britain would be prayed for. It is often a mistake to try to bully someone into conversion but we can and should pray for non-believers. Prayer must be directed to God, let Your will be done in this person, let me be the channel of Your grace.

The Bishop felt that the gathering was too big and that groups of six to eight would serve better. Therefore this group will disband in mid-February when the Lent house groups begin.

The Retreat this year will be held at Catherington House, Horndean, near Portsmouth, and will be conducted by Bishop Evered Lunt, formerly Bishop of Stepney, during the weekend of Friday, May 20, to Sunday, May 22. Names of those who wish to go should be given to the Rector.

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POOH PLAYS



There was a large congregation in the Parish Church for the Eucharist on Epiphany night, Thursday, January 6. The preacher was the Rev Alan Morton, chaplain of Reading School. After the service mince pies and coffee were served and four short Pooh plays were performed by members of the youth fellowship. These were repeated in St Barnabas' Hall after evensong on Sunday, January 9.

LINK OF FRIENDSHIP

Watch for a red or a white balloon soaring up over your roof on the morning of April 2. It will be one of hundreds of red and white balloons — the colours of the City of Dusseldorf — that will be released from the Civic Centre that day to mark the start of the Dusseldorf Friendship Fortnight. The Friendship Fortnight marks the 30th

anniversary of the link of friendship between Reading and Dusseldorf which was established in 1947 with the founding of the Reading-Dusseldorf Association.

Ever since that year there have been annual exchanges of schoolchildren between the two towns. Dusseldorf has provided many Caversham youngsters with their first exciting

experiences of life across the Channel, and there are Caversham residents who still keep in touch with Dusseldorf children — now almost middle-aged — who visited them over a quarter of a century ago. There are good grounds for celebrating this link of friendship.

During the Dusseldorf Fortnight it is hoped to welcome a girls' choir, a traditional dance team and sports teams which will compete with Reading teams in soccer, swimming, fencing, tennis and badminton. There will be an exhibition in the Civic Centre illustrating life in Dusseldorf, whilst on Sunday, April 3, the Mayor of Reading will attend a service in St Mary's Church that will be addressed by Pastor Kurt Dedring, organiser of exchanges between members of Reading and Dusseldorf churches.

So watch for the red and white balloons. But better buy a balloon ticket. Should your balloon be the one to land nearest to Dusseldorf you would win a Sealink Great Little Escape to see the city for yourself!

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

SEE FOR YOURSELF

At least most people can agree that it is an unusual shape and unusual design. After that, opinions start to differ. Is it a powerful firm of architects' vain-glorious theory sold to a gullible local council with dreams of empire, or is it a building worthy of its function, offering comfortable and efficient working conditions to hard-pressed local government officers?

"It," of course, is the Reading Civic Offices, and in order that they can see for themselves, members of Caversham Residents' Association have been invited to tour the buildings on Monday, March 7. They should meet in the entrance shortly before 8pm.

NOISE

The association will also hold its Annual General Meeting on Monday, March 21, at Church House, Church Street.

After the formal business of the meeting has been concluded Mr Geoffrey Holmes, the Chief Environmental Health Officer for the Borough of Reading, and a member of the association, will speak on the subject of noise. Mr Holmes is well-known at national level for his work for local authorities affected by the noise of Concorde, but other sounds that

afflict our ears, such as motor bikes, the Pop Festival, lorries and noisy machinery, come into his orbit. Mr Holmes's department has shown itself to be a

by Watchdog

lively and enterprising one and this should be an interesting and useful meeting.

The annual meeting will be looking for a new treasurer as Mrs Jean Fleming, its present treasurer, is shortly leaving the district. The task is not onerous for anyone who has a head for figures, and it is not even essential for the treasurer to attend committee meetings if that presents a difficulty. Anyone prepared to offer this service should contact the Secretary of the Association on Reading 472300.

The annual subscription still stands at 25p per household, as it did ten years ago (well, it was actually five shillings then). How much longer this can be the case will be decided at the Annual Meeting, so

meanwhile, join at this bargain price. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might also take a few hints on how to run a successful economy without making drastic cuts in services.

The membership secretary is Mrs M. Germain, 62 Westfield Road, who will be glad to receive your subscriptions.

WELCOME NEWS

As we go to press, we hear that South Oxfordshire District Council has refused planning permission for a marina on gravel workings on the eastern borders of Caversham. Sailing on gravel pits is one thing; a huge commercial development is another.

A welcome hint has been dropped by the Prime Minister of a possible amendment to the Local Government Act whereby County Boroughs might have some of the powers they lost on reorganisation restored to them. It is hoped that this might help to arrest, and even possibly reverse, inner city decay. Reading was, of course, a former County Borough.

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Young Caversham

MARK HOPKINS has been a member of the Caversham West Boys' Club for just over two years. He also has a special curiosity in African fauna. One day last summer his dad asked him: "How would you like to go to North Africa, Mark?" "Well, — er" he hesitated, "yes, it would be fine, but suppose I should get my croup?" "Croup!" replied dad, "you don't get croup in Africa. Only smallpox, malaria and typhoid fever."

Mark thought carefully: "Well I could take some chances on all that! Ok then, dad — if 'Jim'll fix it.'" A rather amused Mr Hopkins responded, "if Jim can't, then Peter Shock might. He is going to Tunisia in January, and may be able to arrange a place for you." So Mark saved his pounds and pence and January 6 saw him flying out, not on a magic carpet, but on a Britannia Airways Boeing 737 registration GAXNB, ex-Gatwick to Monastir.

TOURISTS' DELIGHT?

To begin a visit wandering around a Mausoleum is not considered the crest of tourists' delights, but we took a battered old bus to the nearby town of Monastir where we met an impeccably-dressed jobless youth, who offered to

By Peter Shock

guide us round the sacred relics of the burial ground for the price of an English souvenir (a pound note, to be more explicit).

The graves resemble miniature domes and minarets; they are white-washed but bear no flowers. Only men are allowed headstones, and we noticed that some stones had been hollowed out at the top. This was to indicate the interred had died from a road accident.

The Mausoleum covered many acres and contained the shrine of the

ancestry of Tunisia's ruler, President Habib Bourguiba. The President was born at Monastir, and his palace is situated just outside the town. It is now just 20 years ago since Tunisia gained her independence from France, and Bourguiba was a prominent campaigner for Tunisian freedom ever since the 30s. He was imprisoned by the French several times and once banished to the tiny island of Galite.

He returned from exile in 1955. The following year the Tunisian republic was born, and Habib Bourguiba became its first president. Monastir also boasts the siting of Bourguiba's ancient Mosque, adorned with beautifully arched cloisters containing panels of ancient scriptures. About 20 miles from

Monastir, on the Mediterranean coast, is the town of Sousse.

This old Arab citadel is rapidly being transformed into a tourist centre, but the traditional markets and customs within the original city walls are still struggling to survive.

WILD LIFE

Mark was able to pursue his study of African fauna in ample abundance. Although the big game of the jungle is not evident in the north of Tunisia, the smaller breeds of exotic live-stock are everywhere plentiful. Just a few spots of rain will bring out the gigantic snails, about the size of the potato we once knew before last year's famine, and any tit-bits left around will arouse the interest of hordes of wild cats which thrive in their multitudes.

Ugly long-legged creatures climb up crumbling walls, in contrast to the little rabbit who plays unmolested in the sandy undergrowth. But Mark's big day arrived, when his dream came true; to ride a camel! We both decided to mount together. Just one

little point we forgot. The camel rises on its hind legs first. O, calamity, as my chin hit the sand!

The camel is the most domesticated animal throughout Tunisia, although donkeys are used as means of transport in the towns. Since the new Republic was born, much progress and change has taken place. In 1956 only a few fortunate and wealthy people received any education at all, but today about 90 per cent of all children are learning at school.

The Tunisians are mainly Muslims, although the practising of any creed is permitted. It is the one Arab country where Jews enjoy equal citizenship, in fact there are more Jews in Tunisia than there are Christians.

When Bourguiba took power he challenged the old systems, particularly the enforcement of the Koranic laws on women and their mode of dress. They may now show more of their faces and a little bit of their legs, but any

young madam getting carried away with her new-found freedom, beware — mini-skirts are strictly forbidden!

A typical impoverished village of northern Tunisia is Sahline, where a wide gritty road leads up to a cluster of mud and plaster dwellings. At the open doorways squat old men; the little children playing around them, and women wander to and fro with over-sized baskets atop their covered heads.

CHEAP ORANGES

Street traders offered their wares at almost any price. We bought a kilo of fresh, juicy oranges for 150 millimes (about 5p per pound). Three fell to the ground as the paper bag split, and fun started as passing school-kids scrambled for the quarry. Hooded beggars seemed eager to make their acquaintance, inviting you to shake hands with the self-acclaimed hero who carried Monty's knapsack all the way from Tripoli to Bizerta.

As they want a share of your wealth, drop a coin, and say: "Well done, old chap!" Then take to your heels, only to be accosted by the next enchanter.

It will take many years to eradicate poverty from Tunisia, but the Government is working on the right lines. The monetary unit, the Dinar, is non-negotiable; that means you cannot take Tunisian currency into or out of the country. So the nation's wealth remains within the republic and its future prosperity benefits.

No story about Tunisia is complete without mention of those ornate bird-cages. The visitor is amusingly surprised at the varied uses to which they are put. Searching frantically for a royal red pillar-box, I asked an official where I might post my view-cards. "Oh, you silly Englishman, look — in zat bird-cage!"

STAN ELDON'S COLUMN

CANOE CLUBS

Two of Reading's canoe clubs have recently merged to become the Reading and Leighton Park Canoe Club with a home on the Thames at The Warren, Caversham. By uniting they hope to become stronger and therefore better able to develop the sport in the Reading area. The club activities cover Slalom, Wildwater, Long-distance and Sprinting, which is the complete range of canoeing events.

They have a strong membership of Juniors and Seniors and have been very successful in recent years with several members representing Great Britain. They had a competitor in the 1972 Olympics and currently have several young members in the Olympic training squad for the next "Games", indeed, one girl only just missed selection for the last Olympics in Montreal.

READING'S 'SKILLMASTER' COMPETITION

The club holds the record for the famous Devizes to Westminster Race of 17 hours 50 minutes for the 125-mile course.

Canoeists of all ages have to be extremely fit and train right through the year both on the water and with running and gymnasium work.

Plans are now firmly under way for a "Skillmaster" (Superstars) Competition as part of Reading's plans for the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations.

The first events will be on the Thames at Caversham on Monday, June 6, when the competitors will be trying their skill at canoeing. This will be followed by Tennis and Bowls at



MERGE

and indeed has run some of his finest Cross-country races over various courses at Emmer Green, including Southern and National championships over the last 15 years. Fortunately, Gerry is now making a steady recovery and if his serious running days are over I am sure he will get great satisfaction out of passing on his knowledge and enthusiasm to younger athletes in the future.

Cintra Recreation Ground on Wednesday, June 15. Next, on to the Meadow Sports Centre where the third and for some of the contestants, possible the hardest part of the Competition, will take place on June 22. This will include Swimming, Table Tennis and Gymnastics.

The Grand Final will then move on to Palmer Park on July 6 when the participants will be Running, Throwing the Javelin, Shooting at Goal, Cycling, playing Cricket and trying their skill at Archery and one or two other events as well. The Final is expected to be a real fun-day with sports events for spectators as well as competitors.

The "Skillmaster" Competition will be open to anyone who resides within the Borough of Reading and is over 16 years of age.

It is the intention to have representatives of as many different sports clubs as possible taking part and if necessary some sort of preliminary competition will be held to ensure that there is a good mixture of competitors in the Final. If you are interested in taking part, an entry form can be collected from Stan Eldon Sports in Caversham.

GERRY STEVENS

As many people will know, Gerry Stevens of Reading Athletic Club suffered a heart attack after winning the Berkshire Cross-country Championship in January. He has been a stalwart of local athletics for a very long time

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ROUND THE CLUBS

Mapledurham WI

The President welcomed all members to the January meeting and wished them a Happy New Year. Birthday buttonholes were presented to Mrs Dixon, Mrs Gale, and Mrs Hayward.

Mrs J. Skinner read a letter she had received at Christmas from the WI in Verschoyle. This is a Canadian Institute who during the war sent gift parcels of food, etc., to the Mapledurham WI.

The Treasurer's report was very well received as the sale of hand-made gifts at the Christmas meeting had been very well patronised.

The speaker was Major Hoddinot who gave a very interesting talk, illustrated with slides, on Arthritis and Rheumatism research.

Caversham Park WI

At the January meeting, in place of the advertised speaker, we were fortunate at short notice to welcome Mrs Pauline Young, one of our members, who gave us an entertaining account of her recent three-month holiday she spent with her brother and his family in Australia.

Mrs Young travelled many miles in that beautiful country, and we were able to enjoy all her coloured slides which brought warmth to us on a cold winter evening.

A small exhibition was held in which members displayed their favourite pieces of Victoriana.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on March 17.

Blgrave WI

At the January meeting Miss Chapman welcomed members and friends and presented the Birthday Posies, and the flowers, for the President's Table, which were done by Mrs Bond, included some lovely blooms which had been sent by her daughter from South Africa.

The Guest Speaker was Miss Diana Wilkie, the daughter of a member. Miss Wilkie, who is a teacher in Canada, was home for Christmas and had arrived via New Zealand and Australia where she had travelled extensively and visited friends and relatives. Her talk on these two countries was illustrated by superb slides which she had taken and members were indeed fortunate to have such an entertaining and delightful speaker.

Reports were given by several members who had attended Christmas parties given by neighbouring institutes, and Mrs Haigh spoke on the meeting to which she had been for the Jubilee celebrations. The Competition for the most attractive Christmas Card was won by Miss Amor, and the Tea Hostesses were Mrs Haigh and Mrs Messent.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

At the January meeting, members were entertained by Mr P. Lucas, a Reading art teacher. However, it was not simply one-way entertainment as Mr Lucas was quick to point out; he wanted members to go away thinking about the question he left in their minds. He opened his talk by asking members to think of a potato from the point of view of the possibilities inherent in it.

This led to the creative possibilities in everyone and the use of imagination using the means and material to do any given job. Mr Lucas illustrated his talk with slides of paintings, well known and not so well-known, to show how different artists see the subjects they paint.

Members traced the development of how artists portray human figures from early icons to examples of post-impressionist work. The vote of thanks was given by Mrs E. Fuller.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

Members saw a completely different culture and life-style on January 20 when our speaker, Mr Donald Clarke, took us "Roaming in Chitral", which is now part of West Pakistan. The illustrated talk gave a pictorial view of the people, and places that Mr Clarke and his friends visited. He also had plenty of amusing anecdote to relate.

The life-style of the people was fascinating to see, it appears so primitive compared to the Western world — it is difficult to believe we live on the same planet. Mrs Strange gave the vote of thanks; she had lived in India in 1938 and had visited some of the areas with her husband.

Several new members were welcomed into the Guild by the Vice-chairman, Mrs Lott.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

Swan Upping was the very interesting topic that closed 1976 at the December meeting. The talk, illustrated by slides, was given by H.M. Swan Keeper, Mr F. J. Turk. It has since been the Guild's pleasure to congratulate him on being made a Member of the Victorian Order in the New Year's Honours. There was only one entry in the "Favourite Get-well Remedies" competition, namely The Cold Cure: "Throw your hat on the bed, drink whisky until two hats appear — cold gone, or certainly forgotten about!"

A play reading group has recently been formed and they amused the members with "Ten Little Townswomen" written by member, Mrs E. Fitzeustace. Carol singing led by Mrs Kirby concluded the meeting.

New Year greetings

were expressed to all members by Chairman, Mrs C. Mitchell, when she opened the January meeting. Two new members were welcomed. The Federation Secretary, Mrs N. Morgan, gave a vivid account of the scope of the Citizens' Advice Bureau, after which members were unanimous that the Bureau be adopted as the charity for 1976, and a gift of £20 was handed to Mrs Morgan.

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution was the main subject, and another dedicated speaker on their behalf described the work and dangers involved. Mrs Phyllis Duckworth, the local chairman, also showed a film to underline her talk and members' response was displayed in their wish to buy souvenirs afterwards. Another competition concluded the meeting — "Who, when and where" — and was won by Mrs A. Smith.

Maplewood Women's Institute

Visitors from six institutes were welcomed by the President, Mrs K. Bubb, to the 22nd Birthday Meeting on January 18. Mrs P. Ridley, as the institute's own County Executive member, cut the cake, which was made by Mrs M. Wooldridge and iced by Ann Baker.

Mrs J. Millward presented a very good programme of slides and taped commentary of "A Visit to Oxford", which was enjoyed, and encouraged many people to want to go to re-look at the city. Mrs Stivel gave the vote of thanks.

National Federation plans to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee year were announced. These include a request to all members to make an item of handwork to be sold in the Craft Shop in Debenhams, London, in September; all profits will go to Prince Charles' Jubilee Appeal for young people's projects to help others.

THE LINK GROUP

The Group held its meeting on January 24. The Chairman welcomed several visitors. The Secretary reported on correspondence including letters from the Berks Partially Sighted Society and the Royal Institute for the Deaf. The Chairman thanked St John's Mothers' Union for their offers of help at the Good as New Sale, and for a donation to funds. The Group welcomed the Rev Michael Kitchener, who spoke on Ecumenism. The meeting ended with the Link Group prayer.

THE LINK GROUP 'GOOD AS NEW' SALE

on
Saturday, April 2
10.30am-4pm

at St Anne's Hall, Washington Road, Caversham
Refreshments available

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If you have any items you would be prepared to donate, including home produce, please contact: Mrs C. Pynn. Tel. Reading 476065 (42 Geoffreyson Road); Mrs C. Kitchener. Tel. Reading 471605 (222 Upper Woodcote Road); Mrs D. Birtwhistle. Tel. Reading 473489 (52 Kidmore Road).

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The Rev Stephen Bartlett, Caversham Park House, 2 Blackwater Close, Caversham Park. Tel. 475152.

The Rev Michael Kitchener, Mapledurham Church House, 222 Upper Woodcote Road. Tel. 471605.

The Rev John Sumner, St John's House, 9 Southview Avenue. Tel. 471814.

The Rev Martin Loveless, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel. 472070.

BAPTIST

The Rev Laurence Stevens, 80 Balmore Drive. Tel. 478668.

METHODIST

The Rev Leslie Griffiths, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel. 472223.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev William O'Malley, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel. 471787.

The Rev Plunkett Shannon, 2 South View Avenue. Tel. 471787.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN CAVERSHAM

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

St Peter's — Balmore Hall, 11am (not 3rd Sunday of month).
St Andrew's — St Andrew's Hall, 11am (9.15 1st Sunday of month).

Superintendent: Mr J. Tomlin, 32 Kidmore Road. Tel. 473809.

St Barnabas' — Church Hall, 9.15am

CAVERSHAM PARK

The School, 11am.

Superintendent: Mrs Paula Andrews, 5 Gifford Close. Tel. 478430

METHODIST

Caversham Heights — In Church, 11am —
Superintendent: Mrs P. Court, 3 Woburn Close. Tel. 471445.

COMBINED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND METHODIST

East Caversham: Caversham Hall 11am (aged three to seven). Superintendent: Mr P. Stephens, 24 Carlton Road. Tel. 477030. Secretary: Miss K. Harris, 4 Valentine Crescent. Tel. 472084.

BAPTIST

West Memorial Hall — 11am, aged three years and upwards.

Secretaries: Mr and Mrs L. Tyler, 162 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park. Tel. 476214

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Sunday Worship: 11am and 6.30pm

Minister: The Rev Stephen Haine
41 Highmoor Road. Tel. 477490

CAVERSHAM PARK

Wednesday morning House Communion at 10.30.

March 2: 8 Devon Drive (Chris Winchester).
March 9: 62 Kingsway (Margaret Lauder).
March 16: 5 Gifford Close (Paula Andrews).
March 23: 8 Launceston Avenue (Diana Etherington).

WE RECORD

BAPTISED

St Andrew's
January

1 Eleanor Blenkarn,
Peter Bishton

February
6 Sarah Heyes

Caversham Park
December

26 Katie Whitehead, Charmaine Allum

January
2 Susal Abel, Lorraine Horsfall

WEDDINGS

St Peter's
January

22 Stephen Cousins and
Marion Beard

29 Alan Gayler and Dawn Winslow

FUNERALS

St Anne's

January
21 Cecilia O'Brien



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Mrs P. Edwards (West Caversham), 4 Harrogate Road, Tel. 476893.

Mrs C. Pynn, (Mapledurham), 42 Geoffreyson Road, Tel. 476065.

Mrs D. Davies (Caversham Park), 81 Galsworthy Drive. Tel. 476181.

Mrs J. R. Holmwood (East Caversham)
81 Queens Road. Tel. 478253

SUNDAY SERVICES IN MARCH

ANGLICAN

St Peter's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION
11.00 a.m. Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
11.00 a.m. Matins (2nd and 4th Sundays)
11.30 a.m. Holy Communion (3rd Sunday)
6.30 p.m. Evensong (not 2nd Sunday)

St John's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
4.00 p.m. Evensong (1st Sunday)

St Andrew's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.15 a.m. Holy Communion
6.30 p.m. Evensong

St Barnabas'

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
6.30 p.m. Evensong (2nd Sunday)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays)

9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION
10.30 a.m. Family Service (2nd Sunday)

NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

10.45 a.m. Morning Service
6.30 p.m. Evening Service

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

11.00 a.m. Morning Service
6.30 p.m. Evening Service

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (The School)

11.00 a.m. Morning Worship (2nd, and 4th Sunday)
FAMILY COMMUNION (1st and 3rd Sundays)
7.30 p.m. Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays)

METHODIST CHURCHES

Caversham

11.00 a.m. Morning Service
6.30 p.m. Evening Service

Caversham Heights

11.00 a.m. Morning Service
6.30 p.m. Evening Service

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Anne's

8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m., 11.00 a.m., 7.00 p.m. Mass

Our Lady of Caversham

8.30 and 10.30 a.m. Mass

St Martin's School

9.30am Mass

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