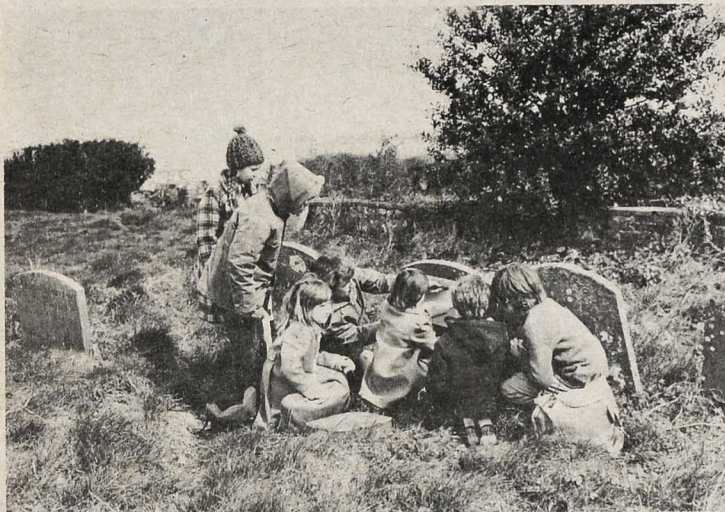


GOOD FRIDAY PILGRIMAGES

For many Good Friday is just another Bank Holiday. But in addition to the very large congregation that was present in St Peter's for the Three Hours Devotion conducted by the Rev Peter Nott, Rector of Beaconsfield, and the congregations that

had attended the other churches of the parish earlier two special pilgrimages were arranged, one for the children of the parish and the other for the youth groups. We print below short accounts of these Good Friday Pilgrimages.



At Winterbourne

— John Tomlin

WINTERBOURNE TO DONNINGTON

Two full coach loads of children and a number of helpers set off from St Andrew's Hall and travelled to Winterbourne Church where they explored both the Church and Churchyard. Then they had a long trek through the woods and over common land to Donnington Castle, the last part of the walk being done in complete silence (the impossible achieved). At Donnington a simple service was held on the hillside which reminded everyone of another hill on a Good Friday nearly 2,000 years ago. When the service ended the cross was broken and the children placed posies of flowers, which they had made, on the site of the cross.



At Donnington

— John Tomlin

Youth Pilgrimage to Dorchester

ONCE again a bus full of young people set off on Good Friday afternoon from Caversham. The pilgrimage this year was to Dorchester Abbey.

The bus took the pilgrims to Garsington, a small village east of Oxford. After some prayers at the old preaching cross in the village, they set off across the countryside at the start of the seven mile walk. From time to time during the walk they stopped for very short meditations on Our Lord's Passion. Then off again towards the destination. The walk through the middle of Berinsfield provided a marked contrast to the rest of the route which was almost entirely cross-country.

The party approached Dorchester at about half-past-six. After eating their packed teas in the Abbey grounds they went into Church to join the congregation in their Good Friday evening Liturgy. And very impressive it was too: Orchestra and choir — music by Palestrina and Brahms — and all against the background of this very beautiful building.

Having taken part in the story of the Crucifixion and death of Our Lord, the party moved out into the darkened churchyard. There they paused for a brief meditation on the burial of Jesus in the tomb.



Dorchester pilgrimage

— John Williamson



— John Williamson

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The Editor's Column

WHAT SORT OF MINISTRY?

Earlier this year the Archbishop of Canterbury sent a letter to the clergy about the problems facing the Church arising out of the decline in the number of men being ordained; although in writing this I have in mind the situation facing the Church of England I am aware that the same problem faces all the principal denominations in this country.

FUTURE TRENDS

In 1975 there were 12,307 diocesan clergy and 2,050 non-diocesan clergy engaged in ministry in the Church of England. The number of priests expected to retire, die or leave the ministry between 1975-80 is 3,530 and the number of men to be ordained is estimated at 1,500. There will thus be about 2,000 less clergy in 1980 than in 1975, a decline of one-seventh. In the ten years 1980-90 it is likely that we shall lose from all causes about 4,760 priests. If ordinations to the stipendiary ministry continue at the present rate of 300 a year, this means there will be a further drop of another 1,760; in fact the age structure of the clergy is such that this decline will be much steeper in the first half of that ten-year period than later on so the shortage will be felt more quickly.

In the past ten years or so the reorganisation of parishes that has taken place has meant that the numbers of clergy in country areas has already been drastically reduced, and further reductions will now have to come from urban areas. The parish of Caversham has seven paid priests; if we apply the same cuts to ourselves as the country as a whole we will have to accept we shall only have six priests by 1980 and five by 1990, even though our population is likely to continue to increase.

FINANCE AS WELL

The Church is also faced with a severe financial problem. The cost of training men for the priesthood has risen alarmingly. In 1977 the Church of England is setting aside £483,000 for this purpose. Because of inflation the rise in University fees and the fact that some local authorities are having to reduce their grants to students the amount that is likely to have to be set aside in 1978 is in excess of £1m. Thus over £500,000 extra money will have to be found from the parishes and of course this item is only one item of expenditure that is rising rapidly.

As clergy cover larger areas the cost of transport looms large, and parishes may soon have to accept responsibility for providing cars. The present cost of even a Mini (at least £1,600) is beyond the reach of many clergy, and the Bishop of Reading has recently remarked that in many country parishes where one priest already serves a large area, the Church's ministry will seize up the day the incumbent's car fails to pass its MoT test.

WHAT SORT OF MINISTRY?

We have got to make up our minds quickly what sort of ministry we ought to have in the last quarter of the 20th century. Shall we depend for the most part on priests earning their living in a secular occupation and being able to give part time service to the Church? But is it not a fact that the most able men are all too often already overstretched by the demands of their business and professional life, and consideration must be given to the needs of their family. And what sort of training is needed and will be possible financially? The days of residential training for all stipendiary clergy may well be coming rapidly to an end. Very probably parishes like Caversham will in a few years time have perhaps three stipendiary priests instead of our present seven, but they will be assisted by a considerable number of men (and women?) ordained as auxiliaries. And parishes may have to decide who from their members they wish to have as priests and send them off to the Bishop with the request that he will ordain them — the priesthood in Greek villages is largely arrived at in this way. And as these changes become the norm we may also find that the present way of running parish life undergoes fundamental alterations.

The Archbishop's letter has brought out into the open some disturbing facts. We must not, in ostrich fashion, pretend they do not exist. Perhaps if we face up to their implications we may discover that God is leading his Church forward to face the next century with courage and realism. And who among our readers is God calling to serve as a priest or minister in his Church?

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

EDITOR: The Rev Canon J. G. Grimwade
39 Church Street, Caversham. Tel. 471703.
ASST. EDITOR: The Rev B. Gardiner
St Andrew's House, Harrogate Road, Caversham. Tel. 472788
ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: Mrs E. Maule
18 Albert Road, Caversham, RG4 7PE. Tel. 471816.
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mr R. Kitcher
8 Blenheim Road, Caversham, RG4 7AW. Tel. 472660.
COMPANY SECRETARY: Mr H. J. Pilgrim
64 Highmoor Road, Caversham, RG4 7BG. Tel. 474017.
POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER: Mr H. Hitchman
153 Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, RG4 7JR. Tel. 472542.

FRANCISCAN VISIT

The Rev John Sumner recently took a group from the parish of Caversham to the Franciscan Friary at Hillfield, near Cerne Abbas. During the weekend they were able to learn about the work of the Community and join in their life and worship. John Williamson's photographs show the Calvary set in the beautiful Dorset countryside and some of the Caversham party working in the grounds.



■ Hillfield Priory, Cerne Abbas



■ Garden work at Hillfield Priory

FROM THE EDITOR

Owing to pressure on our space it has been necessary to shorten some contributions and hold others over until our next edition. All material for the July edition must be received at Church House by Wednesday, June 1.

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ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER

HAVING WRITTEN A RECENT ARTICLE on fires in Caversham, I received a message within a week of its publication that a Miss Miles in Oxford Street could remember the incidents well, so I went along to see her.

Violet (Cissy) Miles is now in her early eighties and has lived in her

a dame school. Miss Miles remembers the day of the fire clearly. Neighbours came running into the house in Oxford Street with the news and Cissy's mother went up to fetch back her little granddaughter who was about three at the time and it was Cissy's job to look after her while Mrs

teen and went to work. At fifteen he took on the job of gardener at Wychcotes in St Peter's Avenue, later becoming chauffeur as well, and there he stayed until he was eighty nine. What a remarkable record. In those seventy four years he must have got to know every nook and cranny of the garden at



■ Clifton Park Road as it was in 1908 — just a pathway across fields.

family's home for 77 years. It was her big brother who lived in the middle one of the three thatched cottages that were burnt down in 1908. They stood next to the Prince of Wales public house in Prospect Street. Looking through various notes, I see that this part of Caversham was known as Little End. I wonder if anyone else has come across the use of this name. Another item of interest is that one of these thatched cottages was a form of village school around 1835 — possibly

Miles returned to the blaze to rescue the chest of drawers containing all the family's clothes. Apparently there was not so much damage as reported and the cottages on either side were in a pretty bad state of repair anyway. "They said the fire was started by a combustion engine," Miss Miles said, "but it wasn't. It was someone smoking in one of the other two cottages."

Cissy's father was another of those fine old Caversham characters. He left school at four-

Wychcotes and just exactly where all the plants were. It probably seemed to him to be his garden, and in a manner of speaking it was, for he had put all those years of care into it. The owner of Wychcotes was a generous employer and beloved of the Miles family. Often they had peaches and grapes from the hot house, and the best ones too. Sometimes there was the present of gorgeous biscuits brought from London and one Christmas Cissy can remember a roast duck among the Yuletide goodies.

The Miles family are staunch supporters of the Salvation Army and it was Miss Miles' father who formed the Caversham Salvation Army band. They are also real old Caversham people for Cissy's grandfather worked at Caversham Mill and so did her great-grandfather and that must take the family back to the beginning of the eighteen hundreds.

I was told about the lovely picnics they had on the field up St Anne's Road, now covered with houses. There was the old cart track through the meadow to the top of the hill, now Clifton Park Road and in the middle of the field an ancient pear tree, probably remaining from the orchard belonging to Caversham Court, for the land almost as far as Priory Avenue belonged to this property. They were happy days for many local children with simple pleasures like a picnic just a few minutes away from home and yet what memories it has given to these children in their old age. Cissy Miles was quite emphatic when she said: "I really have had a good life." M.K.

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

Getting away with it

The past ten years in Caversham must have seen more changes than any other period in its history. One does not have to be very long in the tooth to remember when it was a rather old-fashioned, rather sleepy, kind of place. Opinions may differ as to whether the changes that have taken place are for the worse or the better, but all will agree that it is a very different place from what it was within the memory of all but the very young.

Most of the major changes met with some kind of opposition in the initial stages and three in particular are still surrounded with controversy. The supermarket in the shopping precinct at Emmer Green was built in such a way that it extended beyond the agreed building line, yet in spite of this contravention of planning regulations, was allowed to remain where it was. The warehouses at Paddock Road were built without regard for the residential character of the area. The shopping precinct in Church Street was built on the opposite side of a main road to an already existing shopping centre, and there were fears about the increased amount of traffic it would bring, its effect on the shops already there, and the radical change it would bring to the centre of Caversham.

In all three cases, certain conditions were attached to the planning consent. In the case of the Emmer Green supermarket, after the faux pas was discovered, and a Ministry inquiry had decided that even so it should remain where it was, a condition was that landscaping should be carried out to soften the impact this ill-sited building made. Five years later we are still waiting. As the Inspector said, there it stands, "a memorial to inept planning."

In the case of the Paddock Road warehouses, landscaping conditions were again imposed but these also have been ignored. The property company concerned have been reminded of their obligations again and again, but they simply ignore communications, secure in the knowledge that their development is there and no one is likely actually to order its removal.

BOTHERSOME BOLLARDS

In the case of St Martin's Precinct, one condition was that a car park should be provided primarily, but not

exclusively, for shoppers, as it was realised that the development would bring a great pressure on existing parking facilities. The car park was duly provided but it has been highly unpopular, partly because of its poor surface but largely because it is obstructed by bollards of which the colour and height make them difficult to see from the driving wheel of a car. Their purpose is obscure, unless it is to provide work for the car body repair industry, for there is scarcely one of them that does not bear streaks of paint from some unfortunate car with which it has been in contact. Not surprisingly, many users of the precinct shops prefer to park in the council car park in Chester Street or at the kerb side in adjacent streets, both of which are consequently heavily over used.

The Caversham Resi-

dents' Association, after repeated complaints from users of the car park, approached the property corporation who own the development to ask if the bollards could either be removed or made more conspicuous. The company's reply was that it would gladly carry out the necessary work if the Residents' Association would pay for it. The association certainly achieves a great deal on its 25 pence per family per annum subscription, but it hardly stretches to helping out a property corporation whose list of directors clearly indicates that they are not short of a penny. Reading Borough Council is fortunately completely on the side of the residents in this controversy, and although the car park is private property, are reminding the corporation of an undertaking

■ Continued on Page 9



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THE REV GUY ARMSTRONG WRITES:

I have not had good health for the past three years, and the doctors finally advised me to retire and take three months complete rest, after which there would be a good chance that I could undertake some light work. So we retired in March, and are now sorting ourselves out in our new home, a cottage in the delightful village of St Helens on the Isle of Wight. The Prison Service Chaplaincy have approached me to help at Parkhurst in due course, and I look forward to that, having enjoyed enormously my work for the past three years as Chaplain of a detention centre for teenage youths.

I have also been particularly involved in the Church's Healing Ministry, was Chairman of a Guildford Diocesan Working Party which produced a diocesan policy on the subject, and was Examining Chaplain for the Healing Ministry. I also served as Rural Dean of Woking until my retirement, a challenging role with the re-development of the town centre, while sorting out how to apply the Sheffield Report.

Rita is in excellent form. She distinguished herself a month before our retirement by holding an auction of our surplus possessions. She had a packed hall from 2-7pm on a Saturday, and raised £675 to be shared between our local Venture Scout Unit and the Church Ceiling Repair Fund.

Both our girls are married and settled happily. Paddy lives at Wimbledon and has two children, while Anne has one daughter, with another due in October (their first child died after a few hours).

Should anyone from Caversham pass our way, we would be delighted to see them.

THE REV. ROGER PACKER WRITES:

Since moving here we have adopted Sophie who is now 5½. Helen is 8. Both go to our local Church School next to the parish church. Jill still teaches part time at the Abbey — which she has done, in varying degrees, all the time we have been here. I still play the organ for an occasional recital — the last one was in Camberley a year ago. For six months last year I "stood in" as parish choirmaster and accompanied the "Faure Requiem" in Holy Week this year. The "Flymo" with which the parish presented me in 1970 still cuts the Rectory grass!

Since 1970 I have trained three deacons. The first is now Chaplain of Bradfield College. The second, at the time, was the first A.P.M. in this diocese. He has since moved north to the diocese of Bradford. As a consequence of this job I am a member of the Supervisory Board for the A.P.M. in this diocese.

We print this month news from three former Anglican priests who served in Caversham.

The Rev. Guy Armstrong came as a deacon in 1961 and was later priest-in-charge of St Andrew's. The Rev Roger Packer followed him at St Andrew's in 1965 until moving to Sandhurst in 1970. The Rev Peter Atkinson was priest-in-charge of St John's from 1969 until 1975.

The third deacon is my present curate.

In 1973 a local area called Owlsmoor was separated from Crowthorne and added to this parish. To cope with this, I took on a half-time curate in an experimental Joint Appointment with the County Council. This experiment is to end shortly — with the future at present uncertain. A further substantial increase in the population is expected over the next few years.

THE REV PETER ATKINSON WRITES:

A town of past greatness and future uncertainty — such is the Sunderland to which Anne and Peter Atkinson moved more than two years ago. Peter is priest in charge of the parish of St Mark Millfield. With a population of about 5,000 it consists largely of single storey terraced housing, known locally as cottages. Also within the parish boundary is a shipyard and the Gorning glassworks (formerly James A. Jobling) where Pyrex is made. Like any other parish St Mark's has its problems but it also has a strong core of Christians ready to explore the meaning of ministry today.

One of the first problems shortly after arrival was that the borough council wanted to reduce the population of what is already a fairly small parish. The proposals were to demolish a substantial number of cottages regarded by the council as unfit for habitation, but the Millfielders are old hands at

this game having fought off fairly successfully several earlier attacks. As soon as the new threat appeared street committees sprang into action. Eventually plans were changed and houses designated for demolition are now being renovated. The church gave its support to the campaign but played a background role and Peter found it provided a good opportunity for getting to know the people of the wider community. Apart from the usual run of parish duties, Peter is also a member of the recently formed Industrial Mission team in Sunderland and is chaplain at the Corning glassworks.

While the boys, Richard and Stephen, are happily settled at a local primary school (Richard was top of his class last year and also won the prize for "effort and progress") Anne is busier than ever. Helping to run St Mark's Playgroup occupies three mornings each week and at present, in relation to that, is doing an evening course in playgroup leadership. The parish Mothers' Union is also her responsibility. But that is not all. Since October she has been the family's cushion against inflation by taking on a part-time post teaching Domestic Science at a nearby private school on two afternoons a week.

All in all it is a fairly busy life and living in a vicarage on a busy corner means you never know what will confront you on the doorstep when the bell rings — especially late at night. In the last year or so it has meant assisting the police who seemed to believe that a man they had arrested lived at the vicarage; being as kind and restrained as possible to an inebriated gentleman who had been overcome, as he said, "by an irresistible urge to ring the vicarage bell"; and having to deal with an alcoholic and his lady friend who wanted to get married there and then in the vicarage study at 11.30pm on a Saturday night! They had been living together for several years and already had 13 children between them from previous marriages.

Caversham can never be far from the Atkinsons' thoughts because they frequently see Jo and John Stevinson who live only a short distance away. John and Mary Conn, who used to live in Pembroke Place, now live in Sunderland as well and are occasional visitors. Anne and Peter send their greetings to all their friends in Caversham and would like veterans of Embley Park to know that they have now mastered the "Guardian" crossword! And echoing the words of a famous lady they say "Come up and see us sometime."

POTS AND PAINTINGS SERVE

A PURPOSE



Photograph by courtesy of the Evening Post

THREE local artists recently combined their considerable talents into an exhibition of remarkable variety and interest at the Exhibition Centre in Henley.

Part of the proceeds was given by the artists to "Action Research for the Crippled Child"; the Charity benefited by more than £100 from the sale of paintings, pottery and other items sold in the gallery.

The artists were Reg Smith, a skilled painter, who showed sensitive atmospheric water colours of local and Italian scenes and interesting still life studies, Eve Chantler, a gifted artist whose work included lively portraits, vibrant flower pieces and attractive landscapes of Canada, Malta, as well as local river scenes of jewel-like quality.

Margaret Boone, creator of imaginative wall decorations in pottery, has explored the original concept of combining sculptural pots with flower decorations.

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Reading's Rivers

It wasn't a particularly pleasant Spring this year. One or two sunny days but nothing like those glorious sunny days that were a curtain raiser to the hot summers of the last two years. Still the timely mechanics of nature's awakening were operative as usual. The buds appeared, the flowers bloomed, grass was green, and the rat-tat of the political canvasser was heard once again in the land — for what would Spring be without our annual visit from that most faithful of all door-to-door salesmen, this time peddling the virtues of candidates for the Berkshire County Council?

A touch of Spring must have settled in the Civic Centre quite early this year, because amidst the carnage of enforced cuts, postponed projects and drastic economies necessary to keep the rate demand to a reasonable figure, there was one little known Council Sub-Committee that was granted some extra cash. The Waterways Group, who act as an advisory body on all matters concerning rivers and streams in Reading, was voted £7,200 to spend in the coming year. Some think that even this sum was a bit profligate, but our waterways have been virtually neglected for so many years that simply it is sensible to make a start to realise on what could be one of the town's major assets.

WART REMOVER?

So a list of likely projects was made, although seven thousand pounds doesn't go far these days and it was found that the choice was either spreading it around in a cosmetic treatment of the face of the river sides — removing a wart here, smoothing out the wrinkles there, such jobs as painting fences, making good towpaths, planting shrubs and a few trees; or spending the money on one scheme that would have an impact on a particular section. The area between Reading Bridge and the lock badly needs refurbishing, such as repairs to the banks and some landscaping. The provision of railings along the water's edge would be not only a safety device but a useful amenity. There's nothing like leaning on a rail and watching the boats go by!

Another favoured scheme is to form a tree-lined walk in Christchurch Meadows. This would be the first step in a much larger plan for that side of the river, and would represent a commitment to something more than piecemeal improvement of individual sites. The eventual aim is to bring to the riverside a long-term majestic quality sadly lacking in Reading.

GUNTER'S BROOK

But of the several suggestions considered by the Waterways Group, the one that had the most sup-

By ZOILUS

port was not in the Thameside area, but in central Reading and involves a stream probably not known by many people. Dividing Kennet Side from the Queen's Road car park is an insignificant little channel called Gunter's Brook. But small though it may be, this glorified ditch stops the realisation of a long-term ambition of Reading riparians — the construction of a continuous riverside walk from east to west Reading. If a timber bridge was thrown across the brook it would make the final link between Kennetside and the town centre and would pave the way for a waterside pedestrian route to be finished when road construction works in the High Bridge area are finally completed.

There will be published in the autumn a master plan for Reading's waterways, showing how landscaping and tree planting can make the best of the Thames, the Kennet and Holy Brook. Like most schemes, money will be the major requisite for its completion, but perhaps hard times won't last for ever and if we can fulfil even one scheme a year we shall be making some progress towards making the riversides the attraction they deserve to be for both residents and visitors.

LINK GROUP

In his last chapter St Marks instruction is to "preach the gospel," so it was appropriate that the group met on his feast day. Like him, members try to be faithful to old friends, so it was decided to continue support for Reading's Mentally Handicapped Children and the Smith Hospital. A contribution was also given to the Partially Sighted Society to help especially handicapped youngsters to receive as normal an education as their circumstances permit. This was made possible by the generous support afforded to the Good as New Sale in April which raised just over £200 clear. A report was received from Mrs Pauline Whitehead (Tel. 478892) on the Priest Hill Project: she is still seeking help for the Single Parent Families who are soon to move in. Plans are going ahead for the concert on September 30, when it is hoped to raise more funds.

Mrs Doreen Leavey reported how the Berkshire Women's Aid Group go about their task of helping so-called "Battered Wives." Her talk impressed members very much.

QUEEN'S GUIDE AWARD



— Reading Chronicle

On April 1, Jane Nicol, who is a member of the 2nd Caversham Guide Company, received her Queen's Guide Award from Miss Shurmer who is the Division Commissioner.

Jane, who is 15, is the first Guide to receive the Award since the Company was re-started in October, 1975. In all, it took Jane about four years to reach the required standard, which included badges for First Aid, interpreting in Russian and Signalling in Morse Code, amongst the many activities which are part of the training to become a Queen's Guide.

A party was held at St Andrew's Hall in her honour, to which the Guides parents and members of the 4th Caversham Brownies were invited.

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Institutes annual council meeting at Oxford which she attended as delegate, and where the guest speaker was Martin Young of BBC "Nationwide."

It was proposed by the President that a Jubilee Party will be held, later on in the year which it was hoped all members would attend, bringing

husbands and friends. Mapledurham and Blagrave are combining to serve teas at the Mapledurham Jubilee celebrations at the Memorial Hall on June 6.

Mrs D. Walker then ran a Beatele Drive which everyone enjoyed and tea was served by the Committee.

Rosehill W.I.

Mrs S. Buckle opened the meeting, welcoming visitors and two members of the Link Institute, Blagrave, Delegate and Deputy, to the AGM. There was a good attendance to hear the annual resolutions, some very complex and technical, ably discussed by Mrs M. Mayne, VCO. After voting on the resolutions the competition winner was announced, Mrs C. Watson (shortbread).

Caversham Park

W.I.

Mrs Olive Harris presided at the April meeting. After dealing with the business, and on behalf of Mrs Thelma Castle, the President read an excellent report on the Spring Council Meeting held at the Corn Exchange, Newbury on March 29, 1977.

Members were interested in the informative talk given by Mr George Knight on Bees and Honey.

The competition for the prettiest honey-pot was won by Mrs Linda Rixon, second was Mrs Doris Gillett and Mrs Esme Boshier was third. At the meeting on May 26, resolutions will be discussed for the Annual General Meeting to be held in June at the Albert Hall.

At the meeting on June 30, Mr J. M. Jennings will speak on buying meat.

The competition — a decorated egg.

Blagrave

W.I.

Mrs Margaret Haigh at her first meeting as President introduced the new committee and presented birthday posies. A report of the Spring Council Meeting was given by Miss Wellstead. Members were very interested in the demonstration of "Pressed and Dried Flowers" given by Mrs M. Cundell, who also judged the competition for a small flower arrangement, won by Mrs Maddox. A vote of thanks was given by Miss M. Chapman. Tea hostesses were Mrs Clarke and Mrs Guest.

A FRUITLESS SEARCH

Knowing that Queen Victoria had lost her beloved Albert only two to three weeks before 1862, the year in which she was to celebrate her Silver Jubilee, I went to the Reading reference library to read through that year's copies of the local papers feeling I should probably come away with nothing to write up about local rejoicing of this event. This turned out to be correct, for she was for weeks on end sojourning at either Osborne or Windsor and even the journey from one place to the other was in strictest privacy according to accounts in the papers. What surprised me most was the absence of any

form of mourning in any edition right from January 1, 1862, only two weeks after Albert's funeral.

Having drawn a blank I decided to see what Caversham got up to at the Silver Jubilee of her grandson, King George V in 1935. Here again I was surprised, for Caversham, according to the papers, only lit a bonfire. Mapledurham did nothing at all as far as news reports went, though almost every other village and town for miles around had their contribution to the occasion printed in full.

It seemed that people in Caversham joined in with the Reading festivities. Certainly I can

remember going as a Caversham Girl Guide to a rally and march past in a Reading Park followed by sports and games.

One other point of interest emerged. As I read through the 1935 editions of the local Mercury beginning at the commencement of the year I came across little or no mention of George V's Silver Jubilee, celebrated early in May, until I reached the March editions, then gradually as the weeks went by it gathered momentum. No advertising of Jubilee souvenirs seemed apparent. There was no doubt sophisticated sales techniques

had not yet arrived on the scene and people were not being exploited as they are today. Since 1977 began certainly the souvenir side of the Silver Jubilee has been emphasised as never before.

By the way, the three Union Jacks which I shall fly from the attic window in June will be the same ones which were flown for King George V in 1935. M.K.

CORRYMEELA

According to St John's Gospel the first words of the Risen Lord to His disciples were: "Peace be with you," and this Peace which passes all understanding, should be the Christian's gift to a weary world. In an effort to get folk away from the crowded cities, especially Belfast and Londonderry, the Corrymeela venture has been formed; the idea is to foster a spirit of understanding and love between the disparate groups of the bomb-torn province by inviting a few people to a very beautiful part of the Irish countryside, Ballycastle on the extreme northern coast.

THE TRAGIC YOUNG

As the emphasis is on the younger element their future may be more helpful than the solution of bombs and bullets. To foster these aims a Group exists in Reading called Corrymeela Link which has two main objectives, firstly to promote information and encouragement to the local communities and, secondly, to help raise funds to support a full-time community worker attached to Corrymeela in Belfast. However, here in Caversham a small gathering meets each Friday to pray for peace in Ireland.

Mrs A. Varma (477413) will be happy to give further details.

St Andrew's Church Fete on June 25 is in aid of Corrymeela. But it is hoped that support for Corrymeela will come from those throughout Caversham and beyond, from all who value the peace and quiet in which we are permitted to live, in an effort to help those in less fortunate places. — H.E.B.

ST ANDREW'S Women's Group

The Group held its Annual General Meeting on April 27 with over 40 members attending. The meeting was a very happy one with members in the best of spirits. The Chairman, in her remarks, thanked the retiring members of the Committee, with a special thanks to Pat Cleare, who has acted as Treasurer for the past year.

The Chairman then gave a review of the past year's activities, commented on the increasing membership and also the healthy state of the finances.



■ Bonfire for the Coronation of King George V in the fields, that are now Clifton Park Road. This was probably the work of the late Mr Fisher of Emmer Green, for he was an expert in such matters. Note the entrance to a "room" in the centre of the bonfire where someone kept watch until time came to light it.

Caversham Shopping Basket

Item	Co-op**	Liptons	Sabre*	Budgens*
Large white sliced loaf	20	22	19	22
1lb cheapest butter	52	52	52	44
1lb lard	24	24½	25	24
1lb cheapest Cheddar	54	60	47	61
1 dozen standard eggs	47	47	53	48
1lb cheapest bacon	78	48	62	76
1lb cheapest sausages	43	43	42	41½
Packet of 10 Fish Fingers	45	45	40	45
15oz tin baked beans	13	12½	16½	13½
15oz tin soup	13	13½	15½	15
1lb frozen peas	29	26½	25	29
3lb self-raising flour	22½	22	22	22
1lb dried fruit	44	38	48	45
¼lb cheapest tea	17	19	19	14½
4oz instant coffee	65	87	1.09	89
Kilo granulated sugar	25½	25½	24½	26
500gms cornflakes	26½	26	25	29
¾lb packet biscuits	23	23	23	23
1lb cheapest marmalade	22	25½	24	26½
Double pack toilet rolls	19	21	18	24
TOTAL	£6.72½	£6.81	£7.09½	£7.18
Compared to last month's total	-5½%	-2%	+4%	+2%

* Sabre and Budgens give Green Shield Stamps, Sabre double stamps on Tuesdays.
** Co-op gives members 1¼% discount in form of dividend.

The four supermarkets listed here were visited on Tuesday April 26, 1977. The totals have, on average, remained stable during the last five weeks — increases in the cost of imported commodities like coffee being balanced by a seasonal drop in the price of eggs etc. Significantly "good" buys this month were the Co-op's coffee with chicory at 65 pence for 4 ounces, Budgen's tea at 14½ pence per quarter, and Sabre's all cod fish fingers at 40 pence for ten.

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THE ROYAL MAUNDY

By Audrey Asquith

FOLLOWING a most interesting talk on the Royal Maundy by Mr Peter Wright, Secretary of the Royal Almonry, last year, the Chairman of St Andrew's Women's Group was fortunate to secure 14 tickets for this year's Maundy service at Westminster Abbey.

The ancient ceremony of the Royal Maundy recalls Our Lord's act of humility when, on the night before His crucifixion, He washed the feet of His disciples. Although the actual washing of the feet by the sovereign was discontinued during the 18th century, the four principle almonry officials still wear a white linen towel round their right shoulder and tied at the waist.

The Duke of Edinburgh read the first lesson taken from chapter 13 of St John's Gospel. The traditional nosegays, originally carried to ward off infection, were carried by all the principle people in the service. The four almonry children, two boys and two girls, carried small posies. These nosegays were made up mainly of daffodils, violets, primroses, thyme and rosemary.

The Queen, wearing a royal blue coat and matching hat, made the two distributions to the recipients. During the first distribution the women received a green purse and the men a white one. These contained £3 for clothing. In the second distribution the women and men received two purses. A red one with long white strings containing money for food and a white one with red strings containing the Maundy coins — the same number of coins as the sovereign has years.

The Queen's body-guard of the Yeomen of the Guard looked splendid in their red uniforms as they processed with the Queen the length of the choir and into the nave. During the service several anthems were sung by the choir and the final hymn, When I Survey The Wondrous Cross, was followed by the National Anthem.

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WITH KATY IN CAVERSHAM

I always wondered why we continued to take the "Evening Post" well, quite apart from the fact that I hate to miss the local news I've now come to appreciate the services of their delivery boys.

Locked out by a faulty catch recently, young Neville came to our aid, and though house-breaking is no part of his job, he persevered until he managed to force an entry. And on a wet night we were very, very grateful to see the inside of the house.

It wasn't an easy job and we were reassured, in a way, to find it had been so difficult. But I'd never realised that, given loose windows and catches, it can be only too easy — so watch it! My advice is to check all catches on doors and windows and make sure there are no gaps in the frames near the catches.

ALL ABOARD

Always delighted to hear more news of young people featured in these columns in the past, I was pleased to see that 17-year-old Philip Bowyer of Kidmore Road had won Julians' Award for their best apprentice — a chance of a 1,000-mile two-week trip in the "Malcolm Miller", a three-masted schooner. Philip, congratulations, and please let us hear about the trip.

CONCERT TOUR

Our young people do seem to be getting around these days. Just back from a concert tour in France, David Lewis and Mandy Vincent have been with the Young Musicians Symphony Orchestra giving concerts in and around Belport. The tour included

open rehearsals for the benefit of local school-children — somewhat noisy affairs, these — and a concert especially for children which was a great success. Unfortunately French politics and elections got somewhat in the way of the arrangements, but all the same they enjoyed the experience.

MOVING OUT

One of the biggest upheavals of our lives often comes in old age, and it's sad to find so many people having to move from a district where they've spent the greater part of their lives, to go and live with relatives. It would be nice, I think, if we made a special effort to send newsy letters — and, might I suggest, a copy of the "Bridge" — so that those people don't feel quite so cut off.

Win White, of 3 Southview Avenue, finds that recent widowhood and poor health has meant her moving to Leeds to live with her daughter, Sheila, and though she will miss Caversham very much her neighbours have asked me to send their best wishes. This looks like being one case where someone will be kept well in touch with Caversham events.

Many local residents will remember her husband, Bert White, who died recently at the age of 84, because for many years he was the "lollipop man" in Prospect Street, a hazardous task if ever there was one. We send our sympathy, not only to Mrs White, but to Bert's daughter, Mrs Freeman, who works in the local post office.

A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

Another familiar face, alas, will be missing in the Cromwell Road area this year. Mr Herbert Beech, who died recently after many years struggling with illness, was a well-known gentleman in this area whenever health permitted him to get out. And I use the term gentleman very deliberately because in spite of ill-health and the difficulty of getting around, he was unfailingly courteous to everyone he met, always ready with a cheery greeting, and, in his quiet way, the kind of neighbour it is always a joy to have around. I'm sure all who knew him will wish to send their sympathy to his wife and son, and his brother Mr Percy Beech, who, until an illness, was one of our favourite local electricians.

SHOPS AGAIN

I can't let this column go without mentioning yet again one of our local shops. Always cynical, I have a habit of demanding: "Why are these things so cheap?" and the goods in the new

"bedding" shop in Church Street aroused my curiosity, especially as I'm in the market for such purchases. This time I received a very straightforward answer — it seems that at the moment the shop is able to offer bulk-purchased goods, and so far I've been unable to find Catch 22. The beds are good quality and the manager very knowledgeable about the goods, and very friendly. No apologies for free advertising — unless the Editor absolutely forbids it, I'm always glad to pass on personal experience, good or bad, of local shopping.

One thing I feel bound to comment on — I hate to see shops doubling up on the goods they sell, not only because it often badly affects an existing trader, but also because it does them little good in the long-run. On the whole our newcomers are friendly and willing people, and I like to think they are going to stay with us for a long time.

So, at risk of being told I'm teaching my grandmother to suck eggs, I pass on a hint which two traders have mentioned to me recently. In both cases they kept pencil and paper handy when they opened their shops and made notes of goods which were asked for and which they didn't then stock. Enough requests surely make it profitable to think about stocking these items. As one trader said, fit your stock to the district and demand, and you can't go far wrong.

Caversham Community Association

It was interesting to meet Jean Austin on March 21 and to hear her discuss the many problems raised by the readers of her column. The following week members were given the opportunity to purchase goods displayed at a china and pottery party.

The most recent event was on April 18 when a party was held to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the Association. During the evening a presentation was made to Mr E. Howard, the Chairman, and Mrs E. Howard, the Secretary, on their retirement from office. Mr and Mrs A. Keen were also congratulated by Mr Howard on behalf of the club on the celebration of their golden wedding and presented with a bouquet to mark the occasion.

TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

Mrs Duckworth, the Chairman of the Reading branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, was our guest speaker at the April meeting. She gave a very interesting account of the history of the society, from its foundation in 1824 by Sir William Hillary, an ancestor of Sir Edmund Hillary (of Everest fame). At the time he was a lifeboatman on the Isle of Man and became convinced that a national society, with exchange of ideas, etc., would benefit all concerned. He wrote a pamphlet and travelled all round the British Isles trying to interest people in the idea. At first it was called the "National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck", which was condensed to the simpler title of Royal National Lifeboat Institution in 1854. A set of rules were drawn up which could be summed up in one sentence — "The aim of the lifeboat service is to save life at sea of whatever colour, class or creed, friend or foe alike."

The lifeboat service is entirely supported by voluntary contributions and Mrs Duckworth pointed out that of every £ donated to the society 75p is spent on maintaining the existing fleet, building new lifeboats and purchasing new equipment and shore facilities (lifeboat houses, etc.). 17p is used for fund-raising and publicity and 8p goes on administration. Their splendid new headquarters are at Poole in

Dorset, and here is also based the society's own museum containing Sir William Hillary's pamphlet in his own spidery handwriting.

The crews are paid just £3 for the first hour of any rescue and £1 for each hour after that. One member of each crew is a fully-paid employee of the RNLI, the mechanic, who is with the lifeboat night and day to keep the engine ticking over and to ensure that everything is ready for when the maroon sounds.

What makes a lifeboatman do the job? They are very proud of their boats and love the men they work with, but the real reward is to see the look on the faces of the people they rescue. So far, over 90,000 lives have been saved!

Mr Brightwell, Permanent Boxes Secretary of the Reading branch, then showed a very interesting film of the many different aspects of the lifeboat service.

Mrs M. Kitcher gave the Vote of Thanks.

March meeting

Mr D. Hutchings, Hon Secretary for the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust, was the speaker on March 17. The illustrated talk gave members the opportunity of seeing the amount of navigable waterways that are available for boating. The choice is unlimited, and it seems a good way to relax away from the stresses of our 20th century society, to the comparative peace

of England's green and pleasant land.

Members were shown the delightful scenery that can be seen outside industrial cities such as Birmingham and Huddersfield. It was fascinating to see the Anderton Lift, near Manchester, it literally lifts the boats up to a different height from the river on to the canal. At Bingly there is a five-lock rise, whilst at Foxton ten locks have to be manipulated to go down a hill. London has its quiet backwaters to explore through the Paddington basin, Little Venice, and Regents Park Zoo.

Although Mr Hutchings started rowing on the canals in 1934, his enthusiasm for the waterways has not diminished. He uses the canals continually for holidays with his family, and over the years has seen many derelict locks restored.

It costs around £60,000 annually to run and maintain the waterways, and so the new Job Creation Scheme has been a great boost to the Trust's work in restoring locks. This means more waterways are opened up, therefore enabling more people to enjoy the pleasures of boating on the canals. A donation was presented to Mr Hutchings towards the Trust's funds.

The Social Studies had a talk, illustrated with slides, on the history of Windsor by Mr J. Tomlin.

The Drama Group are presenting an evening of plays, with three other groups, on Wednesday, May 25, 7.30pm, at St Andrew's Hall, Albert Road, Caversham.

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ROUND THE ANGLICAN PARISH

Good Friday observance is featured on the front page this month, but in addition to Good Friday Holy Week was generally well observed this year. There were excellent congregations on Palm Sunday when palm processions took place and palms were blessed and distributed to hundreds of people.

On the Wednesday of Holy Week a crowded congregation was present in St John's when a choir of 80 (including some members of the Free Churches) sang Stainer's Crucifixion under the direction of Peter Allwood. His brother, Ralph, enriched the evening with his beautiful singing as bass soloist, and it was a privilege to have Christopher Gillett from King's College, Cambridge, as the tenor. David Butler was at the organ.

On Easter morning there were 281 communicants at the Family

Eucharist in the Parish Church, the largest number ever known at that one service on a Sunday, and at St Andrew's at the same service there were for the first time just over 200 communicants. St Barnabas, however, had a smaller congregation than for some years and this accounted for the total figure of 988 communicants that morning being slightly fewer than for last year. All the churches were most beautifully decorated.

Queen's Silver Jubilee. On Sunday, June 12, Holy Communion will be celebrated at 8am in St Peter's and St Andrew's but all other Sunday morning services will be cancelled, and it is hoped that there will be a very large congregation in Caversham Court for the special Ecumenical Eucharist at 10am.

Presentation to the Rev Stephen Bartlett: The Rev Stephen Bartlett

will preach at the Parish Communion at St Peter's on St Peter's Day, June 29, and a presentation will be made to him and Mrs Bartlett after the service.

They leave Caversham for Chalgrove the following week. Contributions can be given to the Churchwardens, the District Wardens of any District, or members of the Church Committee at Caversham Park.

Theatre Outing: A party of 37 members of the parish travelled by coach to the Westminster Theatre, London, on Thursday, April 21, to see Brother Francis, a new play about the life of St Francis.

Choir dinner: For the first time the choir dinner was held at St George and the Dragon, Wargrave. A large number attended; it was a great pleasure to welcome Mr and Mrs R. J. Brind as guests and a most excellent evening was enjoyed by all present.

CHURCH NEWS

Caversham Baptists to Mr Stevens and his wife, Vivien. The Young People then made their own original irreverent contribution in song and verse, followed by an equally irreverent "This Is Your Life" compiled and presented by two deacons, Mr John Brearley and Mr Les Tyler, from the Church Meeting Minutes of the last six years. Gifts were presented to the Stevens by Mrs Eva Swayer, whose membership goes back to 1916, and Mr Martin Beek who became a member just 60 years later: a stoneware jug to keep and a cheque for £100 to spend. Laurence Stevens in replying said it was "a nice way to go", reviewed the aim of his ministry, voiced his hopes for the church's future, and closed the gathering with a prayer and the doxology.

His last official Sunday, May 1, was marked by large congregations both morning and evening; at the family service the various Sunday School departments each presented him with their own large original farewell cards and the evening service incorporated the monthly Communion. Mr Stevens has already begun his new ministry as Chaplain of St Bartholomew's School, Newbury, but will continue to live in the Manse and take some services during the summer. It is good to report that one service a month will be taken by the Anglican clergy — a gesture of practical support and unity which is much appreciated.

ST ANDREW'S NEWS Mothers' Union

The June meeting in St Andrew's Hall will be on June 14 instead of June 7 owing to the Queen's Silver Jubilee holiday arrangements. There will be a talk, illustrated by slides, by Mrs Alison Parmenter and her daughter on Katmandu, Nepal, on that day.

The Treasurer would be grateful if members would bring their Overseas Mission boxes to the June meeting, or at the latest to the meeting on July 5.

ST BARNABAS NEWS

Back home to Australia
During the past three years St Barnabas has had a strong link with Australia through Ian and Nancy Cutlack and their antipodean friends. It was therefore with a note of sadness that members of the congregation bade them farewell at coffee after the Family Eucharist on Palm Sunday. While in Emmer Green Ian

assisted at St Bene's and he and Nancy will be much missed by the family there, too. Ruth, who was born here, will be a certain reminder of their stay. We wish them well as they return home to Melbourne.

New priest-in-charge. On Sunday, May 1, a large congregation was present when the Rev Peter Sear began his ministry and celebrated the Family Eucharist. The Rector preached and thanked the District Wardens, and all others who had undertaken so many extra duties in recent months.

ST PETER'S Wives' Group

The April meeting was a "Getting to Know You" evening when members, old and new, got to know each other socially. It turned out to

be a very successful evening, with all members enjoying themselves, by joining in games and interviewing each other. At the end of the evening, light refreshments and punch were served and a bring and buy sale for Playgroup funds was held. The purpose of the evening was to give members a chance to really get to know other members.

Mrs Dorothy Canning: The death occurred at Totnes on April 23 of Mrs Canning. Until she left Caversham last summer to live with her daughter in Devon she had worshipped in St Peter's for a great many years and will be remembered with love and affection by the large number of friends she had in Caversham. Her ashes have been laid to rest at St Andrews. May she rest in peace.

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BAPTIST NEWS

The Rev Laurence Stevens ended his five and a half year ministry in Caversham at the end of April. On Saturday, April 30, a tea-time meeting was arranged, and about 130 of the church "family" came to thank him and his family and to wish them God speed in their new work. It was particularly pleasing to welcome so many of the Anglican and Methodist clergy from Caversham, as well as Baptists from the Reading district. One of the keynotes of Laurence Stevens' ministry has been his emphasis on the parable of the talents — his insistence that everyone has a contribution to make to God's work and should be given the opportunity to make it. It was no accident therefore that no less than 50 ladies had made their contribution to the fine spread.

Tea was followed by a short lighthearted meeting. First the Rev Neil Hall, Secretary of the Berks Baptist Association, spoke of Mr Stevens' work for his fellow Baptists, including a spell as editor of the Berkshire Baptist, and another as President of the Reading District. He was followed by the Rector, Canon John Grimwade, who spoke on behalf of fellow Christians in Caversham and presented Mr Stevens with a book token from the Anglicans — a gesture which was particularly welcomed. Finally, the Church Secretary, Mr Ken Shield, voiced the thanks of

ST JOHN'S FELLOWSHIP

The Rev D. F. Shaylor gave a most interesting and entertaining talk on life in Africa at the April meeting of the Fellowship. There was a good attendance to hear him.

JUNE FESTIVALS

SATURDAY, JUNE 11

ST BARNABAS DAY AT ST BARNABAS

5.30pm
FESTAL EVENSONG

Preacher
THE REV RAYMOND HUTCHINSON
(Priest-in-Charge 1965-67)

Tea will be served in the Church Grounds from 4.30pm

FRIDAY, JUNE 24

ST JOHN'S DAY AT ST JOHN'S

7.30pm
PARISH COMMUNION

Preacher
THE REV JOHN McKECHNIE
(Vicar of St John's, Reading)

Refreshments after the service

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29

ST PETER'S DAY AT ST PETER'S

7.30pm
PARISH COMMUNION

Preacher
THE REV STEPHEN BARTLETT

Refreshments after the service and a presentation will be made to the Rev Stephen and Mrs Bartlett on their departure from Caversham

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125 MILES BY CANOE

Five teenagers from Caversham and Mapledurham spent many of the daylight hours over the Easter weekend taking part in an International Canoe Race which has been held annually for several years now. It is supposed to be one of the hardest courses in the world and is 125 miles in length, starting at Devizes and finishing at Westminster Bridge.

The course is always the same and on leaving Devizes the entrants paddle along the Kennet and Avon Canal until it joins the Kennet and thence on into the Thames at Reading. Each canoe has a team of two and in the Senior section, those over 19, the course has to be

covered non-stop. Juniors, 16 to 19, spent Good Friday night at Newbury, the Sunday stopover at Marlow and the last night is at Ham, near Teddington.

One hundred and sixty canoes competed this year, with over 70 crews in the junior section. Various trophies are awarded, for position, endurance and team events.

The Second Reading Scouts had two canoes in the Junior Section. Ewan McCombe and Michael Thompson, both from Mapledurham, manned one, and Kevin Smith and Ian Willett from Caversham crewed the second. A third canoe entered from the Warren Canoe Club had Jan

Raciborski from Caversham and Neil Shillingford from Tilehurst at the paddles.

Jan and Neil came in tenth. This was the second time they had competed. Ian and Kevin came in 36th, taking approximately 21 hours and Michael and Ewan fifth-fourth (23 hours 28 minutes). It was Michael and Ewan who came to see me and tell me all about the event. Apart from blistered hands they seemed to have come through the experience in fine fettle. They had support parties all along the banks to cheer them on their way and replenish their drinking bottles, but they were not allowed to feed the competitors. All kit including a tent had to accompany them in their craft but their food was transported to the various resting stages by lorry. Of course, they were allowed some form of

rations during their hours on the water.

PORTAGE

At locks they had to perform the difficult task of portage — getting out of the canoe and carrying it round the lock to start off again on the other side. On one stretch between Devizes and Newbury there was a two-mile stretch of unopened canal and that meant a portage of considerable length. The last night had to be spent in their tent which they had to pitch themselves. Thorough inspections were carried out throughout the course by officials.

At Ham there was a mass start for the Junior entrants, as here the river is tidal and unless conditions were correct for this final stage of the course crews would have been competing against the tide. With another 17 miles to Westminster Bridge the river became quite choppy. But all was well and the long journey from Wiltshire came to a successful conclusion.

Ewan and Michael practised as a team from October onwards and took part in races of 34 miles. Naturally the entrance form in this event had to be signed by parents and club leaders saying the would-be entrants had already paddled 40 miles in a day. Each contender had to wear an identity bracelet. The whole affair was by no means child's play, but a real feat of endurance, team work and adventure, and all who took part from Caversham and Mapledurham are to be heartily congratulated.

M.K.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

April showers did not dampen members' enthusiasm. A large number heard all about Peru. The features of this country were revealed by Mr Clark with the aid of excellent slides.

Tomatoes and potatoes grow freely and the runner bean runs wild. The three climatic zones give homes to the largest river, longest mountain range and highest railway.

Also at the meeting were a full and varied display of members' own handicrafts, and

entries of button displays in readiness for the National Union competition.

The spring jumble sale proved a great success for the funds and for apparently happy buyers who had vigorously competed for bargains.

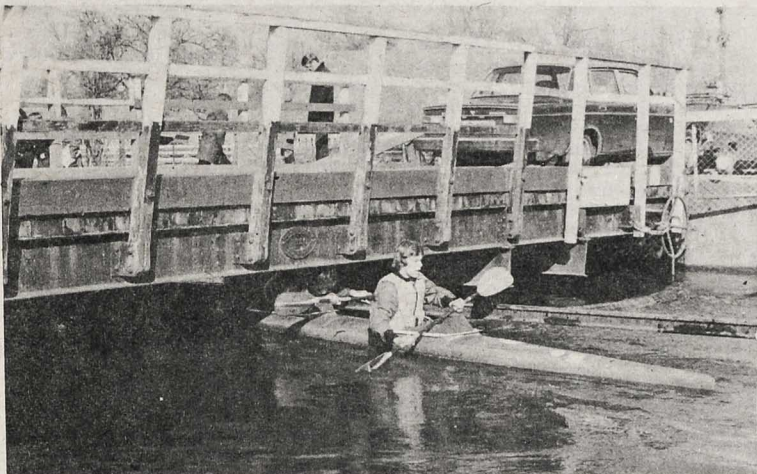
In bright sunshine a select band of six members joined a Federation outing to Poole Pottery and Compton Acres, and if the Pottery did not touch their purses the garden centre certainly did!

—From page 3

it gave some five years ago to remove the bollards in order to increase parking space. If anyone else wishes to weigh in in this business, the address to write to is St Martin's Property Corporation, Adelaide House, Lon-

don Bridge, E.C.4.

It is time wealthy property developers ceased to adopt this cavalier attitude of arrogantly ignoring local feeling once they have got their way. 'Might is right' is no motto for a civilised society.



Heads down under a canal bridge

'TIME TO LIVE'

by MICHAEL KITCHENER

As every regular reader of the "Bridge" must know, 24 house groups — as ecumenical as could be arranged — along with a special group centred on the East Caversham churches — were meeting in Lent to explore the five themes of true humanity, salvation, Christian unity, Christian styles of living in terms of the world as a whole, and our relations with other religions. The first stage of the response to these discussions took the form of a meeting on April 27, attended by over 50 people from 22 of the groups. It was a very full — some thought a too hurried — evening; but through it all came several clear messages from the groups.

NEED FOR TRADITIONS TO MEET TOGETHER

First, a feeling of isolation among many Christians, and a need to be better informed about basic aspects of Christian teaching — and about other Christian approaches to them. Several people called for more and more chances for Christians of all traditions to meet together (with the full approval of church authorities but not necessarily organised by those authorities) so as to exchange insights, to learn from and with each other, to pray together, to gain

strength from each other — a desire to learn together.

Another recurring theme was a sense of dissatisfaction with some of the existing ways of the organised churches. Some felt the church-based organisations that meet are ill-fitted to do the real work of fostering fellowship and growth. Others mistrusted organised, official interests in the sphere of Christian unity, and looked to informal exchange and sharing among lay people for real growth. Others again were refusing, in their discussion of salvation and evangelism, to draw neat lines between those within the churches and those outside them — all part of a desire to be open and approachable, not enclosed in tight structures.

TRUE CHRISTIAN LIFE-STYLE

A third message was that Christians are coming to feel again the importance of the character of their own Christian living. For example, groups discussing issues of world poverty were tempted sometimes to despair at the sheer size of the problems; and yet they sensed the only way forward is for Christians themselves to live in a style in keeping with the Gospel, even if they cannot see its result. Or groups discussing salvation concluded — some hesitantly, others with massive confidence — that the personal example of deeply committed, lively Christians is (after all the talking) still the key.

And at every turn, though it had little explicit mention at the meeting, was the question of prayer. The core of Christian unity seen by all groups is a sharing of Holy Communion; the heart of an approach to the world's problems as a deepening of our spiritual life with God; Christians desiring to meet not only to talk but to pray together; European Christians needing to learn about ways of responding to God both from their fellow-Christians in the East and sometimes from those of other religions, too — a desire for a deeper Christianity in ourselves.

These were deep and important issues, and several practical suggestions were made in connection with them. So the team of Lay Readers, Local Preachers and Deacons who had organised the Lent groups was asked to meet again, to sift it all through and pass matters on for discussion or action in the most suitable ways. We wait for the results of that team's meeting on May 25.

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Young Caversham

YOUNG CAVERSHAM almost struck at Paul Francis (pictured below), a 12-year-old choir-boy of St Peter's Church. He had been selected to play the part of "Robin" in the production of "The Ballad of Salomon Pavey" at the Young Vic Theatre, London, in April. After the third consecutive performance his voice began to crack! What had poor Robin to do then? He needed a sweet soprano voice. Young Paul, so thrilled with his debut on the London stage, thought he might be understudied for the remainder of the presentation. But Musical Director, Ralph Allwood, found him another part in the play, and Paul was able to continue in the cast till the final night.

and won one of the "Scotsman" First Awards. It is a stage entertainment with songs and dialogue merging to make a continuous dramatic entity. The story is set in Elizabeth times.

Salomon Pavey, around whom the story is written, was a 13-year-



by Peter Shock

The play, The Ballad of Salomon Pavey, is an Elizabethan Ballad Opera based on a moving epitaph of Ben Johnson. It was written and first produced by Jeremy Taylor and David Drew-Smythe at the Belmont School, London, in July last year. In August, the 25 boy actors travelled to Edinburgh for the Festival Fringe competitions,

old child of the Queen's Chapel, one of a highly successful bunch of young choristers who frequently entertained the Court at the Blackfriars Theatre. Here, they dominated the private theatre of the day — along with the neighbouring St Paul's Singing School.

There was considerable jealousy between the two choirs, but towards the end of the

16th century the boys of the Chapel Royal and of St Paul's did combine to perform jointly at Court. It was at one of these performances when Salomon Pavey's story ends, a victim of the plague.

This was one of the most moving productions I have seen, where the cast is all children.

The play was staged through Easter Week, and the dramatisation of the young cast was superb. The accompanying instrumentalists performed on reproductions of instruments used in Elizabethan times.

Now, a happy sequel for young Paul. His voice has returned to normal!

* * * *

Who were those three familiar faces on BBC-1 at 4.40pm Wednesday, April 20? Involved in Bernard Cribbins' STAR TURN programme were Tyrone Clark of Hemdean Road, David Mutch of Kiln Road, and David Walker of Holyrood Close. All three had been specially invited to participate in the recording by producer Peter Charlton. Just could be one step towards sharing the News Desk with Angela Rippon.

STAN ELDON'S COLUMN

Reading Athletic Club who have their winter headquarters at Emmer Green have been very much in the local news lately because of the state of Palmer Park Track, their home for the summer season which should start at the beginning of April at the latest.



Stan Eldon

THE PROBLEM

The Track at Palmer Park is one of the oldest in the country and at one time was the pride of athletics, not only locally but nationally also. Over its life of nearly 100 years it has obviously deteriorated but with modest care it can still be of service to athletics and the locality. There has always been difficulty in preparing the Track for the start of the season as it is used as the major local stadium for soccer as well as cycling and athletics. Each year the Track is neglected from September through to April and then requires major treatment to put it into some sort of condition for running, which normally results in it being raked up and rolled at a time when it should be settled and firm. This year has been the worst for a very long time as nothing at all had been done until well into April due to the extension of the football season. The result — a running track that is rutted and rough, and looks more like a

ploughed field on a cross-country course; in fact, not just unsightly or difficult to run on, but very dangerous. It is so bad that Reading's only current Olympic athlete, Beverley Goddard, cannot train on it but opts for the grass at Bulmershe College or goes all the way to Bracknell for her training sessions and several very good, promising young athletes from Reading join the Bracknell club despite the inconvenience of travel.

THE SOLUTION

In the long-term there is no doubt that Reading will need a new top-grade athlete track if it is to keep up the high standard of athletics which it has always enjoyed. The Southern Sports Council have in fact already decided that the town should have a top-class track and funds will be available when the local authority has the money to match it. But that, of course, is not

likely to happen for some time and the athletes accept this. However, something must be done with the cinder track at Palmer Park or it will deteriorate to a stage beyond repair and so become completely unuseable.

What is needed is some commonsense and proper communication so that the Track is properly supervised all the year round with very regular rolling and water where necessary. The council have argued that they do not have the money, but which is better, the modest cost of a few hours' work each week, or a major re-laying operation costing £100,000 or more in a couple of years if something is not done NOW?

THE STADIUM OF THE FUTURE

Out of all the discussions that have taken place concerning the Palmer Park and other sporting facilities in the town, one very good scheme has been suggested and discussed by many people. This is for a new Reading sports and leisure complex on the Pop Festival site in Richfield Avenue which would incorporate a top-class running track, restaurant, squash courts, sports hall, and because of the access to the river, water sports such as canoeing, rowing, etc. In fact, a communal home for sport in Reading.

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COMMITMENT

Dear Sir,

With regard to the editor's article on commitment to Christ in the May edition of the Caversham Bridge, I would like to explain just why some of us lay such primary importance on the personal aspect of commitment to Christ, and the reasons for this understanding.

I understand firstly that eternal life has to be a gift; this cannot be earned or deserved, as we could never attain to the perfection of Christ by our own self-effort, and so eternal life has of necessity to be an unearned, undeserved gift (Ephesians 2, v. 8). The moment you seek to add to Christ's finished work by saying, "to be a Christian one must go to church, etc., eternal life ceases to be a gift, which we instead prefer to try to merit. How many church services and good works does one have to attend and perform before one knows God's acceptance and earns eternal life? But the proof of an inner change, of Christ living within a person will be growth in live, expressed or out-worked in fellowship, prayer, Bible study, serving others. "A good tree bears good fruit." How does one "help out" the same power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead?

In short, I believe that we have to guard against the external without the internal, and this is why I would maintain that the first essential is knowing that the Spirit of Christ

is living in me, through my own personal invitation for Him to do so (1 John 5, v. 11 and 12), and I do not believe Confirmation replaces this, nor is discipleship part of the foundation stone, which is Christ's death and resurrection.

Yours etc.,

Rod Wood,
1 Rossendale Road,
Caversham.

LOS ANGELES

Dear Editor,

On Palm Sunday this year we enjoyed a different church service in a very different locality — in a Methodist church in Los Angeles.

When we arrived at the bright, modern building, low and ranch-like, similar to the houses around, on a beautiful warm sunny morning, many of the congregation were standing about chatting in the sunshine, each holding one flower from their garden, or an eight-foot leaf from a palm tree.

The minister entered and first bade us all turn to our neighbours and introduce ourselves. When everyone in the crowded church did this so naturally it was impossible to feel awkward and self-conscious.

As we sang the first hymn (how useful to have a hymnbook with tunes and harmonies in the pew) the flower people streamed in in ones, twos and families and placed their flowers on the front table. The palm leaves were stuck into two big vases. While the service continued three women busied themselves unobtrusively with the flowers.

POSTBAG**THE CHURCH**

Dear Sir,

I expect that Mapledurham is indeed a strong and mutually helpful community as Michael Kitchener depicts it in the April "Caversham Bridge." Nothing will ever take the place of loving consistent help from one's own neighbours and friends and family, people one learns to trust over the years and who don't come and go like social workers and professional helpers do. Indeed, the picture of a community where statutory workers are only supplementary, if needed at all, is a good idea as an aim for us all to work towards.

In Bracknell, to name a sharp contrast to Mapledurham, there are people so paralysed with fear that they dare not visit the shop or even cross the road, people for whom the daily picking up of the children from school is an ordeal because their clothes are a bit cheap, people who won't speak to the woman

A specially musical meeting followed, with hand-bell ringing, a fine anthem from the choir and a good vocal solo, fitted in between cheerful worship, with the Californian sunshine streaming in through the clear glass windows.

After the final hymn, All Hail The Power, came a dramatic moment when the flowers, now arranged as a wreath, were raised off the table and hoisted to the arms of the huge wooden cross above, a multi-coloured circlet of antirrhinums, arum lilies and roses. With enthusiasm we sang again the final verse of the hymn "The Crowned Lord Of All", and after the Benediction we came out into the everyday world refreshed by a wonderful sense of having shared something vital in worship with these one-time strangers.

Perhaps it was just God's beautiful sunshine in a golden landscape that went to my head.

Beryl Stratford

TOMBSTONES IN MAPLEDURHAM

Dear Sir,

I am taking the liberty of writing to you with a few comments about the article "More about tombstones in Mapledurham", in particular the reference to Ah Chiang Sai. I knew Sai quite well as my father was the head gardener mentioned in the article, and we lived in Chase Lodge, for Sai was employed at The Chase and not the Fisheries, which was next door. Who Mrs Frost is, or was, I haven't a clue, she was certainly not cook at The Chase, for that position was held by a French woman — known to us as Jean and who died shortly after the Somerset Playnes closed the house and returned to New Zealand from whence they originated, and it was on one of their trips back to the United Kingdom from New Zealand that they collected Sai from (I believe) Singapore.

This is all quite unimportant, but if MK is really interested I thought perhaps I would enlighten him a little more. Incidentally Sai passed away in Peppard Chest Hospital suffering from TB.

Yours etc.,

(Mrs) L. Humphreys

71 Chazey Road,
Caversham.

OBITUARY**Walter Busfield**

Walter Busfield passed to his eternal reward on April 29 in his 77th year.

Yorkshire-born, he joined the Air Force at the end of the First World War, served with it until 1920 when he joined the Newcastle-on-Tyne Police Force. He retired after 28 years and immediately became involved with the Air Force as an air-craftsman spent some time working on radar in the USA and Canada. Wars over, he worked for years at Windscale atomic centre.

Two years ago he celebrated 50 golden years of marriage with his wife, Winifred, to whom Caversham Bridge readers will wish to extend sympathy. They both have been active members of St Anne's parish and he was a Golden Jubilarian in the Knights of St Columba, a body of Catholic men involved in charitable works.

May he rest in peace.

down the road, even in times of family emergency, husbands who have lost the courage to go into their local for a quiet pint, and grandmothers who never see their grandchildren.

The social workers and planners battle away at these difficulties and they do make considerable headway, but, in the end, only the Church can have any real effect in building up a neighbourhood, because only the Church is going to go on being simply there — at weekends, in the evening, in ten years time. Only the Church can draw on deep reserves of compassion and go on caring in spite of discouragement, and only the Church dissolves the petty boundaries of mistrust created by a stratified society because its adherents genuinely have more in common than what divides them. Or so it should be. Sometimes Church people say

things like "its all their own fault really," "they should go and see a doctor or a psychiatrist or a social worker or anyone but me;" "we should all be doing more for negroes or small animals or ex-prisoners or the environment or anyone but my immediate neighbour;" "it's better to let well alone;" "I'll do something practical but I don't want to get involved." I wonder if this is really the voice of the Christian faith.

The Caversham Bridge scheme is very good. I am suggesting that it marks a stage only on the road to a caring community, and that in Caversham itself there may be untapped reserves of friendship and kindness which could indeed produce an ever increasing independence of official social work.

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St Anne's

April 3 Daniel Muston
Stuart Prentice

17 Philip Vince
24 Alastair Grant

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St John's

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23 Stephen Munnings
and Julie Bellinger

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April 23 Nigel Mott and
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30 Christopher Coles
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