

EAST CAVERSHAM SUNDAY SCHOOL

STEPPING STONE TO UNITY

A significant step towards Christian unity in Caversham will be taken on December 2nd, when the Sunday schools of Gosbrook Road Methodist Church and St. John's Church of England combine to form East Caversham Sunday School. It is hoped that the pooling of the resources of both churches will not only improve the service offered to the neighbourhood's children, but will also witness to the growing conviction that the future of the two churches lies in work together.

The Sunday school merger is the immediate result of a recommendation made by a working party of members of both churches which was set up earlier this year, and is still meeting, to consider how the Church's mission can best be furthered in East Caversham by the two churches acting together. But such a move would not have been possible had there not been a history of growing under-

standing and friendship between St. John's and Gosbrook Road Methodist Church.

CONSULTATION

A combined meeting of Sunday school staffs in the summer indicated that there would be no insuperable difficulties in joining forces and it was discovered that both churches were already using the same syllabus. Following consultation

with parents whose children would be affected by the proposals it was agreed that the new scheme should come into effect on Advent Sunday, the beginning of the Church's year.

As neither church hall is big enough to hold all the classes, both sets of premises will be used; the Primary meeting in St. John's Hall and the Juniors in the schoolroom at Ardler Road. It is hoped that

Juniors will stay long enough to form a Senior group and later join confirmation or church membership classes. A "dummy run" held at the end of October, to enable children and teachers to get used to each other and the new premises, passed happily and all are looking forward to the forthcoming "marriage".

GLIMPSES OF OLD CAVERSHAM

That well-known collector of souvenirs and pictures relating to old Caversham, Mr. Bill Good, has provided two of the photographs for a new book, "Reading as it was". Edited by Borough Librarian R. J. Lee, the book is a treasury of photographs depicting the borough from about 1870 to the early 1920s. Here are horse trams, early balloons and aircraft, fire brigades, Great War parades and countless vanished street scenes, together with descriptive captions that may help to answer many long-standing arguments.

Caversham pictures include the Handbell Ringers, the Caversham Academy and the building of the old iron bridge.

THE EDITOR WISHES

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A JOYOUS CHRISTMAS



A wintry scene by the Thames at Caversham

— Denys Williamson



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CHRISTIAN MISSION

This number of the Caversham Bridge sees the completion of the first year of the newspaper in its new format. This may therefore be an appropriate occasion to try to restate the aims of the paper.

When the paper was launched in 1964 the word 'Bridge' was used in the title for a double reason. One aim has been that the newspaper should serve as a bridge between Christians of different traditions, and the progress that has been made in the ecumenical field in Caversham is in no small way due to the fact that the Bridge has helped Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Free Churchmen to learn about each other. The second aim has been to provide a bridge between the Church and society: in this way the paper is involved in the mission of the Church.

CHANGING UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION

The whole idea of mission has, however, in recent years undergone a change. At one time it was thought of largely in terms of personal conversion. This idea still rightly exists, but alongside it a new conception has grown up. This sees the mission of the Church in more secular terms. Thinking is in terms of the Kingdom with the Christian being concerned to build up a healthy community at international, national and local level. And it is with the local aspect of this that our columns are concerned.

Until a year ago our pages contained some material that was produced outside Caversham. For this we were often criticised. The Editorial Board believes that it made the right decision when it replaced those pages of syndicated material with entirely Caversham material: our general policy now is to publish only local matters written by local people. The emphasis will, of course, vary from month to month. Sometimes more of our space is devoted to what might be deemed to be exclusively Church matters. After one such edition a Roman Catholic distributor admitted her embarrassment at trying to sell a paper to her non-Christian neighbours which contained such a high proportion of Church news. On another occasion an Anglican has complained that there has been a shortage of what he considered Christian material—and of course some people think that unless the name of God is mentioned the subject is not fully Christian. So long as criticisms of both kinds occur it would seem that, though the pendulum will swing from month to month, the right balance is being kept.

VIGOROUS COMMUNITY LIFE

Caversham has a very vigorous community life. It is, for example, noticeable what great demands are made upon the local halls, nearly all of which are in fact Church halls (another aspect, incidentally, of the way the Church, often at considerable financial cost, serves the local community). We are glad, too, to have contributions from our columnists, Zollus, Katy, Stan Eldon and Peter Shock. They may appear to write about so-called "secular" matters, but they are all Christians who are involved in the life of our Caversham community. It is, however, necessary to point out that our space is limited and when unexpected articles arrive, sometimes of considerable length, sometimes written in a style that is not suitable for reproduction in a newspaper, and sometimes not really related to the life of Caversham, they cannot be published. We want variety, we want news of Caversham and of Caversham people, and we want to encourage contributions from a wide range of people. But a quart cannot go into a pint pot.

CHRISTMAS

This number gives news of the worship that will be offered to God in Caversham over the Christmas season. No one who claims the title of Christian can presume to keep Christmas without finding time for Christian worship. To do so would be rather like arranging a birthday party and not seeing the person whose birthday it was was invited. And the Caversham churches have combined to produce a card which should be delivered to every home in Caversham and Mapledurham during December to tell them about the Christmas services. Christmas is a secular feast because it speaks of God becoming man and being totally identified in our day-to-day life. The Christian is called to live his life in this world and not to retreat into a ghetto of the like minded. Some aspects of this life are good and some are evil. The Caversham Bridge wants to draw attention to the good and to encourage all people, whether or not they would call themselves Christians, to uphold those things which are true and honest, good and beautiful. I believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ has something to say to all of us about this, and I believe that it is the task of the Bridge to further this purpose. If I did not, I would long since have ceased to be its editor.

John Grindale

MORRIS MEN AT WEDDING

The wedding in St. Peter's of Keith Woodward and Valerie Harbor, of Priest Hill, was made memorable by the dancing of the Kennet Morris Men. The dancers preceded the bride's car from her Priest Hill home to St. Peter's, but they did not stop at the church door. Instead they danced the bride up the nave, danced again after the signing of the registers, and danced the bride and bridegroom

after the Eucharist from the altar to the church door; then came more dancing in the churchyard. The wedding was taken by the bridegroom's uncle, the Rev. Reginald Beevers, chaplain of Liverpool College, and the Eucharist, at which over 50 relatives and friends received the Sacrament, was celebrated by the Rector.

The Woodwards are now living at Binfield Heath.



The Kennet Morris Men dancing in Caversham Churchyard

—The Studio, Bucklebury.



Keith and Valerie Woodward and the Morris dancers

—The Studio, Bucklebury.

Community Concern

The Caversham Bridge Scheme of Social Service will be holding its annual general meeting on Monday, January 21st, 1974, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, at 7.30 p.m. in St. Anne's Hall, Washington Road.

Those already involved in the Bridge Scheme and anyone else with a concern for the welfare of people in Caversham should try to be present. Make a note of the date in your diary now.

As on previous occasions there will be a speaker. This time it will be Mr. Chris Perry, of the Reading Department of Social Services, who has a special responsibility for Caversham. His subject will be "Community Concern in the Social Services."

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With Katy in Caversham

Just back from my auto-hypnosis group at the Smokers' Forum — on my second count-down and back to five a day. Since so many people (including Elsie South, of Priest Hill, who is doing voluntary duty as secretary of the forum) are determined to stop me smoking, I'm equally determined to give up this time if it kills me — it probably will if I don't! Dr. Fraser, Deputy Medical Officer, asks me to tell our readers that the group will shortly be obtaining bio-feed-back machines; for the benefit of the uninitiated these are somewhat sophisticated electrical instruments for measuring energy waves and gauging the state of relaxation, a vital factor in 'giving up'.

There's no virtue about 'going it alone' if you think the group can help—Abbey Mill House, every Monday night, between 5.30 and 7.30.

"You're welcome"

I don't know who the gentleman was, but he made my day recently when, on being thanked for holding open a local shop door, replied: "It's my pleasure". I've always missed the equivalent of the German "Bitte", and I found the same pleasure in America, hearing people reply "You're welcome". A little thing, but a way of showing friendliness and it means a lot.

Wools and silks

I've been chatting to Vera Fletcher, of Prospect Street. She tells me she is now stocking a very wide range of tapestry wools and special embroidery silks. It

seems that this particular range of tapestry wool was hitherto unobtainable anywhere closer than Salisbury, so this is going to save someone a journey. She also tells me she is very willing to advise anyone who has never tackled this kind of thing before and that her assistant, Mrs. Crook, is an expert in crochet work and only too happy to help. So there you are — right on your doorstep!

Christmas greetings

Bedecked as always by this question of Christmas cards and to whom to send them (costs rocket every year with increase in postage), I've decided to compromise. With the editor's permission I hereby give notice that with few exceptions I'm sending no cards this year to people I meet frequently — the exceptions will be those to whom they mean so much, i.e. old people, people on their own, and those who need a bit of reassurance of one's affection.

And may I repeat my annual suggestion that to someone in very reduced circumstances, a small gift of money to enable them to purchase gifts for others some weeks before Christmas can mean very much more than an elaborate and — dare I say it — often useless gift "on the day". Talking to a nun recently, she told me the hardest thing she found to give up was the pleasure of giving gifts. Well we can't do much about those who have voluntarily relinquished this pleasure — we can, if I may say so, do a hell of a lot more for those whose poverty is involuntary!

Caversham's roads

I regret to say it will be no hardship to me to forego the pleasure of sending Christmas greetings to the local Highways Committee. Like many others, I'm sick of staggering over piles of bricks and rubble (especially when the street lights fail to come on) and coping with traffic lights that give no guidance to pedestrians. And why, oh why, do they have to tackle more than one road at a time? Heaven knows the Henley Road alterations are trying enough — couldn't they concentrate on those first.

Noise!

Congratulations to the owner of the new fish and chip shop who had the courage to ask someone to switch off a radio in a crowded shop recently; and thanks to the young gentleman concerned who had the good sense to accept the request quietly. A bit more courage and a bit more co-operation might serve to reduce some of the 'noise strain' we are always complaining about!



— Walton Adams

Mr. John Kirkpatrick and Miss Lynda Davis were married at St. Andrew's Church on October 20th

Mapledurham Parish Council

The monthly meeting of the Mapledurham Parish Council was held on Thursday, 11th October, 1973. Mr. B. A. Fowles, Chairman of the Council, presided at the meeting.

During the last few months the Council have been having lengthy correspondence with the Charity Commission and other legal authorities to determine the legality of building the proposed Hall on the Playing Fields. The Charity Commission had suggested that because of the terms of the original conditions that permitted the use of the land as a Playing Field, the erection of a Hall was infringing these conditions. However, following a visit made to the Charity Commission by representatives of the Parish Council, the Charity Commission are satisfied that by erecting a pavilion that will be an ancillary part of the Playing Fields no breach of trust is involved.

The Council have now overcome all the obstacles that have prevented the pavilion from being built before this, and it will therefore now be possible for building operations to commence. This it is anticipated will be in the early part of 1974.

Concern was expressed by some members that residents had found it difficult to find a suitable place to dump household rubbish that cannot be taken away by the normal means through the weekly collection by the Henley R.D.C. refuse collectors.

Members were reminded of the rubbish dump managed by Henley R.D.C. that is available to all residents, particulars of which can always be obtained from the offices of the Henley R.D.C.

Because of this inability to dispose of some rubbish, concern was also expressed at the number of bonfires that there have been in the parish lately. It had appeared that on occasions some of the fires had been lit without any consideration or thought for other persons living in the neighbourhood. Residents were particularly asked to bear this in mind when lighting a bonfire.

In view of the delays in implementing the main drainage scheme proposals that are intended for the houses in the Chazey Road and Upper Warren Avenue area, a letter is being sent to the Henley R.D.C. asking for the scheme to be hastened.

A letter was received from Oxfordshire C.C. stating that junction road markings will be placed at the junction of Upper Warren Avenue and Ridge Hall Close when the latter is adopted. It was also noted that in view of comments that had been received about the speed cars travel along Upper Warren Avenue, the Police Authority have been requested to observe the speed of vehicles in that avenue.

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Serving the Seamen of the World

TWO MEN DIED WHEN FIRE SWEEPED THE BRITISH SHIP EDENMORE in Newport Docks, Monmouthshire, leaving other crewmen injured and suffering shock. The fire broke out in the early hours of the morning, and soon afterwards Newport's Missions to Seamen chaplain, Eric Newman, was summoned to the ship by local firemen.

Mr. Newman found the crew clearing up, and was invited to join them in their bar before telephoning voluntary helpers and opening the mission.

"Thanks for coming down so soon, padre", said one of the men, "I expect we'll be coming up to your place".

Emergency action was taken to provide food and washing facilities for the men, and the police borrowed Mr. Newman's office to take statements.

With the telephone in continual use for reassuring calls by the crew, Mr. Newman was particularly conscious of the "white faced first trippers" who had suddenly seen a hard and horrible side of life and were reacting after a period where they were too busy to think too much".

Afterwards, Mr. Newman paid tribute to his voluntary staff, who had reacted with "speed, efficiency and com-farers".

passion".

He was also impressed by the fact that The Missions to Seamen had been summoned almost immediately, proving, Mr. Newman said, "the complete identity of our industrial mission with the industry it serves".

Practical Service

That story, with its emphasis on practical service, illustrates one of the more dramatic aspects of the work of The Missions to Seamen. The third largest Anglican missionary society, it has been working with seafarers since 1856, always ready to cope with the emergencies when they occur but more usually offering Christian counsel in major ports throughout the world.

In fact, the society has 87 clubs and representatives in some 25 ports, and its Flying Angel flag is known to all seafarers.

The symbol dates back to soon after the society's foundation, and was inspired by a passage in the Book of Revelation which reads: "Then I saw another angel flying overhead, sent to announce the good news to all who live on the earth, every nation, race, language and tribe".

But, in addition to proclaiming the good news in words, The Missions to Seamen is noted for its practical approach. The society's clubs offer a wide range of services and facilities, and some have hostel accommodation.

No picnic

The work began in the 1850s when a seafarer's life was no picnic, and it was inspired by a clergyman called John Ashley who ministered to seamen in the Bristol Channel. Ashley bought a cutter, named it Eirene, and sailed the Channel in all weathers, retiring eventually through ill-health brought about by his irregular life.

After a short gap The Missions to Seamen came into being, and today there are boats in many ports carrying on the work that Ashley began. The mission boat in the Port of London is called John Ashley III, and it serves as a floating taxi, taking chaplains ship visiting.

When they go on board ships, mission staff have to be prepared to give advice on everything from getting around the port to mending a marriage. Sometimes there is an impromptu communion service while the ship's business goes on all around.

Sick seamen are not forgotten, either, and one of the most important tasks for chaplains is hospital visiting, finding books and magazines in the seafarer's language and trying to make the long hours of inactivity less boring, because The Missions to Seamen is a mission to seamen of all beliefs and all races.

Million Pound Budget

Many British seamen first come in contact with the society at the National Sea Training School at Gravesend which has its own Flying Angel club, and chaplains on leave talk to the boys about life at sea and in other countries. Problems are the stock in trade of chaplains, and their counselling skills are often tested to the full. Sometimes they meet hostility, but most often the 'sky pilot' is a welcome visitor on board ship.

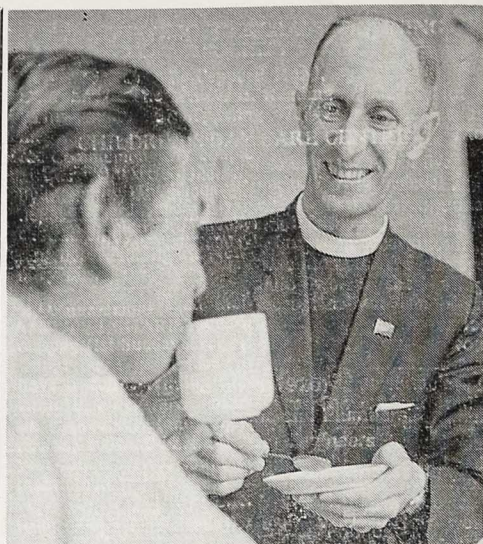
With a worldwide budget of one million pounds, The Missions to Seamen welcomes one-and-a-quarter million seafarers to its clubs each year, and its chaplains clock up 80,000 ship visits. The proposition will change as modern shipping patterns mean shorter times spent in port, but the society's work will continue as long as seafarers exist.

"We never go anywhere else", said a ship's captain in Belfast, whose club has continued to flourish despite the troubles. "The mission's here,

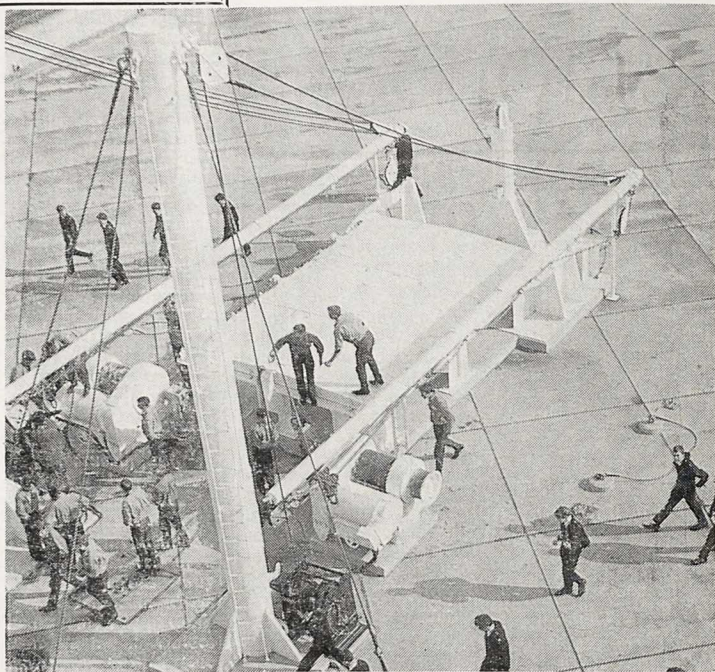
Missions to Seamen

The Rev. John Precious, who is spending the first week-end in December in the parish of Caversham on behalf of the Missions to Seamen, has had varied experience in many ports throughout the world. Ordained in 1935, he served as curate in two parishes before becoming the Missions to Seamen chaplain at Middlesbrough for six years. Then he was with the Mission in Durban and has also been port chaplain at Hongkong, Yokohama and Hamburg as well as incumbent of an Australian parish from 1952 to 1957.

It is hoped that as a result of his visit interest will be aroused in Caversham in the work of this great society.



Eric Newman, Missions to Seamen chaplain in Newport, with a seaman in hospital



Boys at the National Sea Training School, Gravesend, practice deck work.

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7.30 p.m. — Preach at St. Andrew's.

Sunday, December 2nd:
9.15 a.m. — Preach at St. Peter's.

11.15 a.m. — Speak to St. Andrew's Sunday school.

12.45 p.m. — Bread and chese lunch at Caversham Park.

4 p.m. — Evensong with film at St. John's.

8 p.m. — Film at Emmer Green Youth Centre.

and thank God for it because if it wasn't, well, there'd be just nowhere to go, nobody to talk to".

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WEDDING AT HOME PASSPORT

"THE NOBLE VOICES OF THE PAST" by Zoilus

"The noble voices of the past are clearly to us calling
Examples of such men as these prevent the nation falling".

—Excerpt from Reading School Song.

The admirable if somewhat archaic sentiments expressed in the anthem familiar to all Old Redingians set me pondering on what sort of list of famous men Caversham could produce, and as there is little to report from the Reading Council front this month, I spent an hour or two delving into the records of the village, to discover the kind of example local worthies have provided in the past. And I must pay tribute to Mrs. Margaret Tate and Mrs. D. Robinson, whose well-documented histories of Caversham and Emmer Green respectively were rewarding sources of local lore.

Sadly, it seems that Caversham has been pretty short on resident celebrities. The founding father figure of our community was probably a Walter Gifard, who had the good luck to be an uncle of William the Conqueror, helped compile the Domesday Book, and in 1070 A.D. was rewarded with a gift of lands in and around Caversham. From this grew a settlement and in the 12th Century there was a castle maintained by the Earl of Pembroke, who has a niche in the hall of fame as a signatory to the Magna Charta.

Siege of Reading

For the next four hundred years our forebears seemed to have lived a life of industrious simplicity, no bad thing in those turbulent times, and even the sacking of Reading Abbey and the visit of Henry VIII's notorious commissioner, Dr. London, to destroy the famous Caversham shrine, alleged resting place of crucifixion relics, did not shake them from their steadfast neutrality. During the Siege of Reading in the Civil Wars they resolutely kept their heads down and resisted all temptation to be mentioned in despatches.

But some years before this, on the hill above the Thames, a great house was built that was to be the setting for such historical figures that Caversham can claim. It was known at

various times as Caversham Manor, Caversham House, Caversham Park Mansion, Crawshay's Mansion, the Oratory School — and is now a department of the British Broadcasting Corporation. In the sixteenth century the owner was Sir Francis Knollys, a great figure in his day as Chief Steward to Queen Elizabeth, whom he frequently entertained with much pomp and circumstance. He also found time to be a Member of Parliament and to father sixteen children.

Later the owner of Caversham Park was the Earl of Cadogan, who brought in the renowned landscape architect, Capability Brown, to re-model the house and lay out the grounds at a cost of over £30,000, a tremendous sum in the eighteenth century. This could well have been the noble earl's undoing, because debts drove him out eventually to settle in a less salubrious but more economical estate on the sandy coast of Norfolk.

George II, that fiery little Hanoverian monarch who was the last English king to lead his troops into battle, has a somewhat tenuous link with Caversham as one of his natural sons, the offspring of an affair with the delectable Countess de Marsack, was pensioned off quite handsomely on the condition that he kept quiet about his exalted origin. Major Charles Marsack took over Caversham Park from the Earl of Cadogan and lived there, in sedate state, until he died at a ripe old age.

Celtic Invasion

Now comes the Industrial Revolution and the arrival of the last family to occupy the big house on the hill, and so qualify for a place in the gallery of Caversham notables. The Crawshays were prosperous iron-masters from Wales, who, like so many successful businessmen of the nineteenth century, marked their affluence by purchasing a country seat in the shires. After a fire in 1851, the house was re-built and the

Crawshays remained one of the leading families in the district until well into the twentieth century, when Caversham Park became a school. No doubt they were responsible for many benefits in the locality, but one at least may be of doubtful merit. A hundred years ago the Black Horse Inn was situated in Peppard Road, on Crawshay land. Each Sunday as they drove home from church the family was affronted by the sight of a crowd of thirsty villagers waiting outside the pub for the doors to open. So they had it demolished and later it was re-built on its present site, opposite the White Horse. Such was the benevolent dictatorship of the Victorian squire!

The Blounts were another name prominent in the district, although their residence was at Mapledurham Hall. The diarist John Evelyn notes that when he visited Caversham in 1659 he met Sir Henry Blount and describes him as "the famous traveller and water drinker". Presumably the choice of water as a beverage was fame enough in those bibulous days.

At the end of the last century, F. G. Saunders, chairman of the Great Western Railway, lived in Surley Row. He must have been a popular chap, for when he returned from the Boer War the male villagers lined up on the outskirts of Caversham to welcome him, unhooked the horses from his carriage and drew him home in triumph and rejoicing.

So although the noble voices of the past in Caversham may not have figured much in national history, they were no doubt great local celebrities in their day. And there is at least one who is preserved for posterity as an exhibit at Madam Tussaud's, surely the hallmark of fame. Mrs. Dyer, the baby farmer who drowned several of her charges in Caversham Weir, is a senior inhabitant of the Chamber of Horrors.

ARTHUR WISE

The 'Caversham Bridge' records with regret the death on October 29th of Mr. Arthur Wise at his home at 80 York Road. He was one of the oldest members of St. Peter's congregation, and as we reported earlier this year he and his wife had recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Mr. Wise had been employed for many years at Suttons. During his retirement he had been a familiar figure in Caversham Road, acting as Lollipop man for the children of E.P. Collier school. His funeral service took place on November 2nd. Many readers of the 'Caversham Bridge' will wish, through our columns, to send sympathy to Mrs. Wise and her family.

OFF TO SHROPSHIRE



—Walton Adams

After thirty-five years in out his years in Caversham 14 Churchill Drive, Wem, Geoffreys Road, Reg and (actually they lived in the Salop: they will hope that Pauline Harper have moved first house across the Caversham friends in the to Shropshire to be near Mapledurham border) and neighbourhood will look their daughter, who was re- Pauline will be missed from them up. ber. Their new address is life in their new parish.

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Dates—Monday, May 6th to Friday, May 17th.
By coach with 2 overnight stops each way. Inclusive Price £60-£70.
(Alternatively 10 days with overnight rail travel to Glasgow or Stirling).

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Dates—Commencing Saturday, May 4th, or Saturday, October 19th.

By private coach each way. Inclusive Price £19.

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Leader: Fred Jackman.

Dates—Commencing Thursday, May 2nd, or Monday, September 30th.

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Dates—End of August (Monday to Friday week).

By coach—including sightseeing. Inclusive Price £78.

AUSTRIAN ALPS—12 DAYS (to be finalised).

Dates—July (Monday to Friday week).

By coach—including sightseeing. Inclusive Price £72.

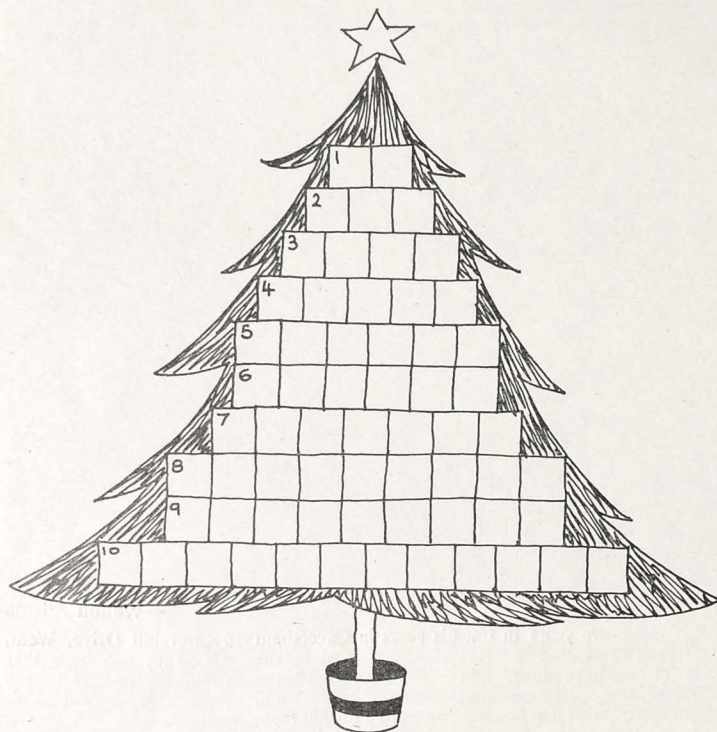
WHICH?

A CUP OF WATER OR A
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MARY IN ETHIOPIA?

★
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SEND CHRISTMAS GREETINGS
AND LOVE
TO ALL THEIR FRIENDS
and to
CHRISTIAN AID

Children's Christmas Corner

by FRED A MEADOWS



CHRISTMAS IS THE TIME OF YEAR when we give presents. It is the time when we remember the very special present God gave to everyone. God sent us baby Jesus, who was to grow up to teach us about God, about loving and each other. We can also remember the other first Christmas presents: the shepherds with their lambs and the

three Kings with their precious gifts.

Christmas is also a very busy time, especially for mummies and daddies. Mummy is busy cooking cakes and puddings and Daddy has a lot of work to get finished before he can enjoy his Christmas holiday. So if you are wondering what you can give them for Christmas, try to be helpful. I am sure they will think it one of the best presents they could have.

Of course, no one can be good and helpful if they are bored, so here is something that will help you to keep busy.

Fill in the words on the Christmas tree. Afterwards you can colour it and draw some decorations.

Happy Christmas!

Clues

- 1 An animal in a stable.
- 2 The place where Mary and Joseph went first.
- 3 The mother of Jesus.
- 4 The king who looked for baby Jesus.
- 5 What Jesus used for a bed.
- 6 Mary's husband.
- 7 They followed the star (4, 3).
- 8 The angels came to them.
- 9 The town where Jesus was born.
- 10 A present from the three kings.

Answers

- (10) Frankincense.
(9) Bethlehem.
(8) Joseph.
(7) Wise men.
(6) Mary.
(5) Manger.
(4) Herod.
(3) Inn.
(2) Ox.
(1) Donkey.

S.P.C.K. BOOKSHOP

The opening last month of a small religious bookshop at 7 Castle Street, Reading, run by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, will provide a much-needed facility for the town's churchpeople. For too long there has been a dearth of outlets for good books from the religious presses.

The space available to S.P.C.K. in Castle Street is limited but the Society aims to provide a representative range of books, including all important new publications, together with stocks of church requirements—stationery, candles, wafers and wine. Although the shop can carry only limited stocks it can quickly obtain books from London. Orders placed not later than Friday afternoon will normally be available in Reading on Tuesday mornings.

Opening hours at present are: Monday to Friday—10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. The telephone number is Reading 53716. If turnover warrants it, S.P.C.K. will consider extending these hours, but it is regretted that because it is primarily an office building it is not possible to open the shop on Saturdays.

POSTBAG

Dear Sir, The writer of "This should not happen" may take comfort from the fact that the elderly couple in question were picked up by a friendly car-driver and deposited at Reading Arcade to enjoy tea and shopping before taking the Newbury bus.

However, all such incidents may not have such a happy ending and surely it would be a good idea to have a coffee-vending machine installed in St. Martin's precinct (and sign-posted) so that an all-the-year-round service could be maintained.

C.R.
(Name and address supplied.)

building as such. Not for nothing was the heading above my article "More Office Blocks".

But perhaps E.C.L. answers his own argument most effectively in his last paragraph, where he draws attention to the disrepair into which the cottages occupied by a firm of grocers is falling. I have a feeling that the owners would argue that ancient cottages are highly unsuitable premises for modern trading and that instead of spending money on repairs and adaptation they should be demolished and a purpose-built supermarket erected in their place. How would E.C.L. reply to that argument?

Dear Sir,

In the November issue E.C.L. takes me to task for supporting the movement to retain the present Town Hall buildings. He contends that the Market Place and Town Hall do not lie at Reading's historic centre. Well, this must remain a matter of opinion, but lying as it does outside the great Abbey's outer gateway and beside the town church, it has at least as good a claim as the place where the citizens practised their compulsory archery beside the Minster church.

He lists the buildings' disadvantages, but my article, far from suggesting that the Town Hall was a perfect building, acknowledged that it had its shortcomings. When, however, I spoke of a consensus of opinion, I meant (and perhaps it serves me right for using a vague word) that, taking into consideration all the pros and cons, the general feeling was in favour of retention—and among the citizens of Reading this feeling comes as much from fear of what will go in its place as it does from a passionate admiration for the

time could be more profitably occupied in keeping an eye on Caversham. As most readers realise, the column appearing above my initials is written on behalf of the Residents' Association, and their concern is almost exclusively with Caversham. Caversham is, however, part of the wider community, and as the article pointed out, we do occasionally look beyond our borders. E.C.L., if not already a member, should join us. It will cost him only 25p per annum.

Yours, etc.,

M.C.

GOSBROOK ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

Toy Service

The annual Toy Service will be held at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church on Sunday, 9th December, at 11 a.m., when children of feeling was in favour of retention—and among the citizens of Reading this feeling comes as much from fear of what will go in its place as it does from a passionate admiration for the

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH'S

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WHITE or RED, MEDIUM or DRY, 23/24 oz.	70p
ditto 10/12 oz.	44p
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"MARITZA" RED or WHITE	25p
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ATLANTA GOLD RED GRAPE	37p
BLACKCURRANT	37p
APPLE	30p
ISRAELI: GRAPE JUICE (CARMEL) in 24 oz. Bottles.	
WHITE, ROSE or WHITE MUSCAT	65p
GERMAN: Fruit Juice and Sussmost in ordinary Bottles, 24 oz.	
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TALKING POINT

Bethlehem, how far is it?

by LAURENCE STEVENS

Every time that I hear someone grumbling about Christmas . . . the hectic rush, the commercialisation, the extra work and the difficulty of finding suitable presents, I wonder whether we really would be happy with anything different.

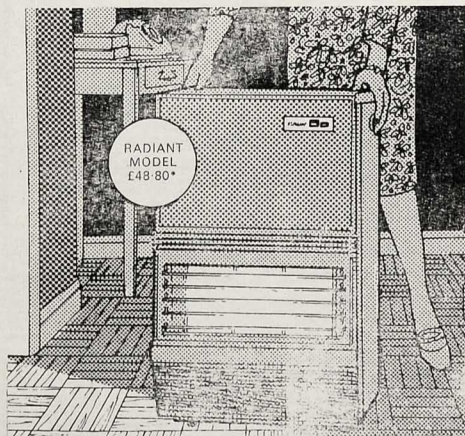
For there was a time when Christmas was "abolished" in this country. Under Cromwell Parliament tried to "clean up" Christmas and passed a law forbidding its celebration as "popish and idolatrous", and commanded that the day be spent in prayer and solemn fasting. Even Church Services were prohibited and the people were ordered to spend the day silently indoors. The effort was scarcely successful in bringing a new dimension of spirituality. John Evelyn the diarist described it as "the mournfullest day that ever in my life I have known". It wasn't long before there were "plum pudding" riots and within a few years Christmas was restored.

If Christians are sometimes accused of dragging religion into everything, then there is more than a grain of truth in respect of Christmas. The actual date of Christ's birth is unknown, and in the fourth century the celebration of Christ's incarnation was deliberately chosen to coincide with the old Roman festival of the winter solstice Saturnalia. Ever since, pagan and Christian celebrations of Christmas have jostled each other, the feast of figgy pudding threatening to push the Christian meaning into the background.

Tinsel Tension

Yet even when we attempt to "keep Christ in Christmas" we run the risk of sentimentalising, and fail to see that Bethlehem is just around the corner still. There is a tension between the tinsel, the turkey and port, and the birth of this child crying in the inhospitable night . . . between the closed door of the comfortable home, and the squalor and seeming insignificance of this birth. For God is revealed with a human face, as a vulnerable child. In the one baby we are to see every child, and from the fields of Bethlehem we can view the world without the mind being numbed by statistics. In this child we see God always and everywhere the Word made flesh.

The old carol asks, "How far is it to Bethlehem?" and the answer for us too is "Not very far" — for in the families broken by the violence of Ulster or Palestine, in the Ugandan Asian refugee, even to the room in the house next door where neighbours sit anxious and oppressed by fears of illness and old age, is the way to Bethlehem still. For God has shown in Christ that this world and its problems must be taken seriously, and that there is a cost to be met in every act of rescue. When men came to reflect on Bethlehem they saw also the cross running like a red thread through life — his life and death, as John Donne put it in one of his Christian sermons, are one continuous act, and his Christmas Day and Good Friday are the morning and evening of the same day.



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Our Environment

A number of the more controversial plans for building in Caversham have been turned down, but this should not lull anyone into a sense of false security that the sites affected are now safe. Massive development at Toker's Green have been frowned on, applications to build high density flats at Mill Green and a fifteen-floor hotel at View Island have been refused, as has the perennial application to fill Hemdean Valley with houses, reported in last month's issue.

But these refusals apply only to these applications, and with land the price it is, it is inevitable that further applications will follow. Is there a trend towards putting in applications of such massive proportions that they will be bound to be refused so that a modified version can then be submitted and perhaps get by, when if it had been put in the original place it would almost certainly have been refused? An example of this is the proposal to build a 199 bedroom hotel at View Island. The application has now been modified to a hundred rooms of ten floors.

Let it be clear. Both of these are unsuitable in that they would dwarf the riverside scene and deprive the citizens of Reading of what should be, and could be, an attractive riverside amenity.

The Borough Surveyor has been reminded of his promise to re-examine the case for designating the neighbourhood of the Bridge and Parish Church a Conservation Area. He pleads shortage of staff (and we know this exists) for failure to do so, and has said that "he hopes to proceed with the matter in due course". Is this a firm promise or a diplomatic brush-off?

Grief for all those 'immortal elms' felled along the lanes of Mapledurham Estate. In 1973, the year of the tree, Caversham has lost an inordinate number.

M.C.

Battle still on

IN MAY THE 'CAVERSHAM BRIDGE' REPORTED THE STORY OF ST. PETER'S SCOUTS' FIGHT TO GET THEIR OWN H.Q. Now, six months later, although much work has still to be done, very considerable progress has been made.

A prefabricated building erected by cranes and other mechanical means requires a lot of work and different skills. Owing to delays of various kinds which were not foreseen, the building will not be finished as soon as was hoped. But for several weeks now a small band of Group supporters have been able to make steady progress. The drainage system has now been connected to the main sewerage. And, as one father reports: "It's wonderful how quickly a fellowship can be built up when several people, young and old, are busy for example unloading 4,000 bricks".

AT WORK . . .



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SUNDAY SERVICES**December 23rd****ANGLICAN****St. Peter's**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Parish Communion.
11.00 a.m. Matins.
6.30 p.m. Evensong.

St. John's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist.

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.

St. Margaret's

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Matins.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

11.00 a.m. Morning Carols and Communion Service
6.30 p.m. Service of Christmas music, lessons and carols.

METHODIST CHURCHES**Caversham**

11.00 a.m. Morning Service.
6.30 p.m. Community Carol Singing.

Caversham Heights

11.00 a.m. Morning Service.
6.30 p.m. Service of lessons and carols.

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (The School)

11.15 a.m. Family Communion.
4.30 p.m. Carol 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 a.m., 10.30 a.m. Mass.

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

There is no United Reformed Church in Caversham.
The nearest is at York Road, Reading.

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

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The Rev. John Grimwade, The Rectory, 20 Church Road. Tel. 471703.

The Rev. John Stevinson, Mapledurham Church House, 222 Upper Woodcote Road. Tel. 471605.

The Rev. Peter Atkinson, St. John's House, 9 South View Avenue. Tel. 471814.

The Rev. Brian Gardiner, St. Andrew's House, Harrogate Road. Tel. 472788.

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

The Rev. Denis Shaylor, 17 The Mount. Tel. 476988.

The Rev. Leonard Burn, St. Barnabas' House, 33 Grove Road. Tel. 473095.

The Rev. Bernard Metcalfe, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel. 472070.

BAPTIST

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

METHODIST

The Rev. Terence Harris, 17 St. Anne's 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.

Christmas Day Services**ANGLICAN****St. Peter's**

11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Parish Communion.
11.00 a.m. Matins.
12.15 p.m. Holy Communion.

St. John's

11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist.
11.00 a.m. Carol Service for children.

St. Andrew's

11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist.
11.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

St. Barnabas'

11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Family Eucharist.

St. Margaret's

11.45 p.m. Midnight Eucharist.
9.15 a.m. Parish Communion.

The clergy would be glad to know of any sick or housebound communicants who wish to receive the Sacrament in their homes in the days following Christmas. Times when confessions will be heard will be announced in the church notices on Sundays, December 16th and 23rd.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

10.30 a.m. Family Service.

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (The School)

11.15 a.m. Family Service.

METHODIST**Caversham Heights**

11.45 p.m. Holy Communion.
11.45 p.m. Holy Communion.
11.00 a.m. Family Service.

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. J. C. Grimwade

59 Church Street, Caversham. Tel. 471703.

ASST. EDITOR: The Rev. P. D. Atkinson

St. John's House, 9 South View Avenue, Caversham. Tel. 471814.

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**SUNDAY SERVICES
December 2, 9, 16 and 30****ANGLICAN****St. Peter's**

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION.
10.30 a.m. Family Service (3rd Sunday).
11.00 a.m. Matins (not 3rd Sunday).
11.15 a.m. Holy Communion (3rd Sunday).
12.15 p.m. Holy Communion (1st Sunday).
6.30 p.m. Evensong.

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
11.00 a.m. Family Service (2nd Sunday).
6.30 p.m. Evensong.

St. Margaret's, Mapledurham

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (2nd Sunday).
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION.

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)

11.15 a.m. Ecumenical Half Hour Family Service.

METHODIST CHURCHES**Caversham Heights**

11.00 a.m. Morning Service.
6.30 p.m. Evening Service (not 3rd Sunday).

Caversham

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.

CHRISTMAS EVE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 24th**St. Peter's**

4.00 p.m. Christmas Gift Service, with Blessing of Crib and Lighting of the Christmas Tree

St. Andrew's

6.30 p.m. Solemn Evensong with Blessing of Crib.

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GODSPELL— A Personal View

by ANN ROBSON

A party of about 40 people from St. John's Church recently saw the show "Godspell". We asked Ann Robson, who was with the party, to describe her reaction to the experience.

"Godspell" is a representation of the Gospel according to St. Matthew in revue form. The cast are first seen as a competing, gabbling, incomprehensible babel of philosophers. They are interrupted by John the Baptist calling them to 'Prepare the way of the Lord'. The rest of the show, by implication, contrasts the directness and clarity of Christ's teaching with the boring, confusing lectures of the self-appointed commentators on His words. Transformed into anonymous entertainers — looking, as one of the passengers on the coach home put it, as if they'd picked up their costumes at the nearest jumble sale — the cast re-tell the parables, and re-enact the key scenes of Christ's ministry using mime, dance, music hall, ballad — anything and everything.

New Life

Technically it was superbly done. We saw first-rate mime, singing and acting. What we didn't get were the cheap jokes which rely on double entendre, the stand-up comic who self-consciously laughs to prompt the audience, or the usually mandatory strip to stop us getting bored.

Well that's fine, a fast-moving, clean, funny show. But to say that I liked it is totally inadequate. I was utterly rivetted, caught up and moved more than once to tears. What moved me, paradoxically, was the sense of commitment and

reverence even of the players. 'Let's pretend' they seemed to say, and through their clowning and child-like antics came a vivid sense of God's spell.

The Godspell message was seen afresh — vital, exciting and, above all, joyful. Then the show's 'show' ended. Symbolically the Christ figure removed the clown's make-up. A terrible reality broke in on this happy fantasy. The farewells as Jesus embraced his friends, for the last time, and the silence, were most moving. Then the crucifixion — the contrast of life with and without a living God was conveyed as a terrible, wordless horror. Then gently and reverently they raised him and moved out of the auditorium singing so softly, yet so powerfully — long live God. For me this was a moment of real beauty, and a sudden insight — Christ's resurrection is in his life in me.

Who's Gain?

I think I was lucky to be hooked by 'Godspell'. It certainly didn't tell the whole story; and this show alone would convert no-one from indifference to commitment overnight. Resisting the temptation to separate religion from entertainment, I gave in. Alright, so somebody made a profit out of my sentiment. The show was designed to be a commercial success; to exploit people like me. But I reckon I'm the one who's in profit by the experience in the end".

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NEW SCOUT DISTRICT INAUGURATED

The inaugural meeting of the new North Reading Scout District, held in St. John's Hall on 11th October, marked a significant step in the history of scouting in the area.

The formation of the new district is part of the wider plan under which the whole of Reading has been split into four districts, each to be administered and financed independently of the others. The growing numbers in the previous Scout district, which covered the whole of Reading, and the difficulty of administering such a large area, were the main reasons for the new decentralised structure.

Help Needed

The North Reading district covers the area north of the railway, the whole of Caversham and Emmer Green, and stretches to Boroughcourt, South Reading includes Whitley, Shinfield and Spencers Wood. East Reading takes in most of the town centre eastwards into Earley, and West Reading is bounded by the Thames and the Kennet, taking in Tilehurst, Norcot, Kentwood and reaches to Purley.

The introductory meeting in St. John's Hall was intended to introduce the District Commissioner, Mr. Chris Wort, to helpers of the scout movement; to explain the requirements and organisation of the district and to recruit a sufficient number of voluntary helpers on the required committees to make North Reading a viable proposition.

John Reed, the district's P.R.O., points out that the scout movement, like other voluntary part-time organisations, does not have sufficient help in the form of leaders or "backers up". North Reading is no exception, despite the willingness of some keen B.P. Guild members who are willing to fill some posts until the right person comes along. "We are looking for anyone willing to give just a little of their time, at intervals, towards the training of our final product — a good citizen with a wide outlook on life".

Anyone with anything to offer or who is interested in any way should contact the district secretary, Mrs. S. I. Reed, at 5 Norman Road.

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ST. ANDREW'S WOMEN'S GROUP

At the October meeting Miss A. Gibson, who comes from the depths of the Cotswolds, gave a fascinating talk on the History of Corn Dollies. For those whose only knowledge of corn dollies came from churches decorated for Harvest Festival, it came as something of a shock to learn of their pagan and somewhat gory origins. Miss Gibson brought some fine specimens with her, the majority of which she had made herself, representing local designs found in many areas of Great Britain and even Scandinavia and Russia.

At the end of the evening she had a long list of orders for corn dollies to make for members.

ST. JOHN'S NEWS

Christmas tends to catch everyone unawares and very often unprepared, as far as its real significance is concerned. In an attempt, therefore, to provide some time for thought and reflection before the great celebration overwhelms everybody, there will be an evening of music and readings on a Christmas theme in St. John's church on Friday, 14th December, at 7.30 p.m. Taking part will be the Summerdown Singers. A warm invitation is extended to anyone who would like to come.

ST. ANDREW'S MOTHERS' UNION

A party of St. Andrew's Mothers' Union recently visited John Groom's Association for the Disabled at Edgware. The weather was fine and the drive was very pleasant. Members were interested in seeing the various crafts in which the very handicapped are trained and occupied, especially in the making of artificial flowers, which are really beautiful. The Association has built small blocks of individual flats, all most comfortably and artistically furnished, and the grounds are most attractive.

The annual general meeting was held on October 2nd with the Rector in the chair. This being the year for the triennial elections, the officers agreed to be re-elected, i.e. Mrs. St. Alphonse, enrolling member; Mrs. Mayo, secretary; and Mrs. Beetham, treasurer. A new committee was voted for and thanks were expressed to the Rector and the retiring committee members.

Coming events include a talk by Mrs. M. Campling called "A Christmas Anthology" and on December 12th the annual party for some young people from the Borocourt; members are invited to attend St. Andrew's Hall on that evening.

OFF TO THE NORTH

The Rev. John Stevinson has been appointed Social Responsibility Officer for the churches in Sunderland and expects to take up this new work after Easter 1974. He came to Caversham from Bristol in 1963 and was for six years priest-in-charge of St. John's. In 1969 he undertook similar work at St. Margaret's, Mapledurham, and during that time has also been chaplain at Heelas and undertaken much work with the Reading Council of Churches. A feature article on him and his family will appear in the 'Caversham Bridge' nearer to the time of his departure.

GIFTS FOR CHURCHES

Many people like to give a gift to a church in memory of some relative who has been a faithful worshipper. At a time when so many changes are being made it becomes increasingly difficult to suggest what form these gifts should take. Services are likely to be revised for some years so that it is unwise to buy expensive altar or other books. The interior of all Caversham churches may well undergo considerable change within the next few years. With a working party considering the future of the church in East Caversham no-one knows what alterations might be made at St. John's. The architect of St. Peter's has recently been consulted about making a number of alterations to the interior. The installation of new central heating at St. Andrew's has postponed the interior decorating that badly needs to be done: when it is done thought will be given to rearranging the sanctuary, and the debate continues at St. Barnabas as to where the choir should be placed. In the meantime perhaps donors will be prepared to give sums of money which can be used when these different alterations and improvements are able to be carried out.

ST. BARNABAS' NEWS

Over 70 people came to a Stewardship Supper on October 20th. The ladies of the district produced splendid refreshments, Mr. Whitby laid on some entertainment, and Mr. Gould set up an exhibition of the various activities of the district. The Sunday School is now established, with about 40 children under the expert care of Mrs. Hawthorne, Miss Ryder and Mr. Satchell.

There have been several comings and goings in the last few weeks. The Rye family moved to Brize Norton where Peter is now vicar. Derek and Janet Misell have moved to Barnet. Many people appreciated the work of Michael Dare in building up the life of the choir, not only musically but also socially in the Choir Club, and were sorry to see him leave. However, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson have been warmly welcomed and are now well established in the life of Saint Barnabas.

ST. PETER'S MOTHERS' UNION

In October members entertained seventeen patients from Borocourt to tea and games and all had a very happy afternoon. Music by Mrs. Goodworth was much appreciated and thanks also to members who provided cakes and presents.

BUMPER CROP AT ST. PETER'S

Harvest Festival at St. Peter's was observed in a particularly joyous way this year. The Church was packed for the Parish Communion when the Guides presented the Gospel (the parable of the sower) in dramatic form; another Guide read the epistle, and a group of Scouts took the intercessions. At the offertory the congregation presented more than 350 tins of food, over half-a-hundredweight of sugar, more than fifty jars of jam or marmalade, and an uncounted quantity of packet soups, jellies and other groceries. These are being distributed to pensioners and other needy folk through the coming months.

Two days later Balmore Hall was crowded for a splendid supper organised by Mrs. Birtwhistle and other members of the catering committee, while younger members of the congregation ended the evening with some excellent light-hearted entertainment. Many thanks to all concerned.

Advent Carols

The popular service of Advent Carols with the choirs of St. Peter's and Queen Anne's School will be held as usual on Advent Sunday, December 2nd, at 6.30 p.m. Those who wish to get a seat should arrive by 6 p.m.

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ROUND THE CLUBS

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

At the last Guild meeting members were entertained by Miss C. Allen. As a young actress Miss Allen fell off a stage and ever since has suffered a severe handicap of the hip and leg movement. She did not let this get her down and as soon as she was on her feet again she started her one-woman shows. With her props, clothes and make-up on stage Miss Allen was able at the wish of a cloak and little rouge, a couple of lines rapidly drawn on her face, to transform herself from Jimima Puddleduck, Lady Bracknell (of the importance of Being Earnest), Miss Mary Smith of Cranford (at Miss Betty Barker's tea party), to Mr. Pickwick (during the embarrassment of the wrong bedroom) and to Hiawatha. The vote of thanks was given by Mrs. Mona Idendon, who said that no superlatives were available to show appreciation of a lovely performance. Earlier in the month a Challenge Quiz took

place. Emmer Green, Caversham Afternoon and Woodley Evening were the other Guilds challenged. It started with the game of 'Twenty Questions' which was to be the qualifying round for a final game similar to that of 'Ask the Family' on television.

Caversham Heights and Emmer Green started off with objects such as the Crown Jewels, the kitchen sink and a mirror. Emmer Green won and went forward to the finals against Woodley. Here each team had a buzzer on the table in front and the idea was to answer reasonably simple questions as fast as possible. At the end of the first round Emmer Green was leading by two points, but Woodley evened the score on the next round. By round four Woodley was leading 60 to 53 and the final score was 103 to 83 in Woodley's favour.

Mrs. Mary Bradley, of Highmoor Road, acted as the impartial Questionmaster and kept the proceedings going most fairly and entertainingly.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

The October meeting, chaired by Mrs. C. Mitchell, was held at the Caversham Community Centre on Thursday, October 18th. The speaker was Mr. J. C. M. Blatch and his subject, "Pleasure on your Doorstep", was a conducted tour through places of historical and architectural interest in Reading and the surrounding district. Mr. Blatch illustrated his talk with some excellent transparencies and his remarks and descriptions will ensure that familiar buildings and features will be viewed with added interest in future. Mrs. P. Goodyear, on behalf of all present, proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker.

On Tuesday, October 2nd, at Church House, a most original and instructive exhibition and demonstration of "Seed and pasta work" was staged by one of our members, Mrs. D. Hosner. All the exhibits had been made by Mrs. Hosner and although she is well

known to members for the artistic quality of her creations, it is a constant source of surprise that such beautiful pictures can be produced from such ordinary objects. The demonstration of method was first class, full and clear and from the amount of interest it generated, it is certain that there will be many attempts to emulate her art during the coming winter evenings.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month at 2.15 p.m. in the Caversham Community Centre. New members are assured a warm welcome.

by Mr. and Mrs. Palmer; and Guildford. Mr. T. M. this was greatly enjoyed. Long, the Principal Officer. The competition for an apple tart was won by: (1) Mrs. Bartlett; (2) Mrs. Sholl; (3) Mrs. Wright, and the raffle prize by Mrs. Wright.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

On Tuesday, October 16th, 70 ladies, both present and past members of the Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild, attended a dinner to mark the 21st anniversary of the forming of their guild. Mrs. M. Watts, from the Berks. and North Hants. Federation, was present and a most enjoyable evening was had by all.

Blagrove W.I.

Mrs. Wilkie presided over the September Harvest meeting held in the Mapledurham Memorial Hall, Upper Woodcote Road. The hall had been decorated with autumn leaves, berries and flowers and a stall selling garden produce, preserves and home-made cakes was well supported. One new member was welcomed and birthday posies were presented. The President asked for volunteers to arrange flowers at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, also to distribute forms for a survey.

A ballot was held for six tickets allocated for the autumn Council meeting and final arrangements were made for the theatre outing to Windsor. The entertainment was a selection of old tyme songs and music given

Caversham Park W.I.

The loss of our first-class meeting place as the result of a fire was lessened by the fact that the October meeting did not lack any of the usual enthusiasm and enjoyment of the members. In fact, the cheerful atmosphere was commented upon by the speaker, Mrs. Redgrave, who gave an excellent talk on the art of relaxation. Her sincere concern for the need of relaxation in the busy round of life today, especially as it affects the role of women, captured the enthusiasm of her audience. Mrs. Redgrave admired the collage gar, Grinstead, and from pictures that were entered there continued through the Norman and early English architecture to modern day cathedrals such as Coventry of Irish seashells.

EUROPE INSIDE OUT

The World Development Movement's "Europe '73" programme is currently reaching its climax. With the slogan "Help turn Europe inside out", the programme is designed to focus attention on the effects of Britain's entry into the E.E.C. on the developing countries. It is stressed, however, that the movement is neither for or against the Common Market. It is simply concerned that such a large power and economic bloc should play its full part in helping to reduce the poverty gap. This has meant drawing attention to the opportunities as well as the possible dangers of E.E.C. membership.

"Third World Week" from 25th November to 2nd December, marks the culmination of the campaign, when a petition will be launched, calling for:

- 1 Easier access to the rich markets of the European Community for
- 2 goods from poor countries, and for regional policies to ensure that deprived areas within the community do not suffer.
- 3 Radical changes in the Common Agricultural Policy to allow for con-

tinued imports from poor countries of agricultural products, such as cane sugar, at a fair price.

An increase by the British Government of its official aid to 0.7 per cent of our gross national product (recommended by the United Nations General Assembly) as a step towards a just distribution of world resources.

The campaign has been commended to all clergy and congregations by the Earl of March, chairman of the Church of England's Board for Mission and Unity and it is hoped that churches will give serious consideration to signing the petition.

Local events include a "March for Justice" to be held on 1st December. Leaving St. Mary's Butts Church in Reading at 3 p.m., participants will march down Broad Street to the Town Hall where there will be a further opportunity to sign the petition. During January and February next year public meetings will be held in as many local constituencies as possible to present the petition to M.P.'s.

Also, as part of "Third World Week", Gosbrook Road Methodist Church will be devoting its worship at 6.30 p.m. on Sunday, 25th November, to films and slides about Europe and its relation to the developing world.

Further information, including house-to-house leaflets, posters and a special order of service called "A Giant upon Earth", can be obtained from Mr. Pat Gerard, of 5 Dacre Avenue, Caversham Park Village (tel. Reading 479887). Completed forms should also be returned to Mr. Gerrard.

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YOUNG CAVERSHAM

It was one of those mornings in early October when the road works at Pugg's Hole railway arch were causing Caversham's worst traffic jams ever. In the bus queue facing Rectory Road stood two Stoneham School boys, David Roberts and Stephen Robinson. The time, 7.45 a.m. Wisely, they were allowing themselves a generous sixty-five minutes to cover the four miles journey across the town. Normally this was ample time, but on this day, following delays encoun-

tered by bus passengers on previous mornings, most people were setting off earlier. So the No. 21 bus, packed to capacity, breezed past the waiting queue. For David and Stephen, and many other pupils who go to schools on the other side of the town, it was a question of finding an alternative route to arrive on time. The Battle of the Buses is what they must endure as scholars of Stoneham, Westwood, Southlands, Ashmead and others.

by PETER SHOCK

Lucky in some ways are those who attend Highdown or the local primary schools, where transport is usually not so complicated.

Particularly fortunate is that large slice of Caversham's school population which commutes to the countryside in pursuance of its education. These are the pupils who live on the Oxfordshire side of the boundary; the majority travelling to Chiltern Edge School at Sonning Common. This is a large modern school situated between field and woodland and about three miles north of Caversham. Each school day some 350 children migrate to this school in nine coach loads from various parts of the Caversham fringe. Of these, three coaches serve Emmer Green and Caversham Heights and the remaining six are scheduled at approximately five-minute intervals from Henley Road, Micklands and Caversham Park Village. Each child is designated a specific coach and in some cases even reserved seats! Four coach firms maintain this massive daily operation under contract to the Oxfordshire Education Committee. Strict time-keeping is necessary to avoid overcrowding at the picking-up points.

In addition to the Chiltern Edge conveyances, two more coach loads head for Henley Grammar School, which has an intake of older students specialising in higher education. Primary School children are transported from the Upper Woodcote Road district to Micklands School, and there are about fifty young children from a catchment area around Highdown Hill and Rosehill, Emmer Green, who are allotted a special bus to Sonning Common Primary School. It is not customary for the school buses to be accompanied by adult supervisors, so the driver, whether he likes it or not, finds himself as a social service worker! I should know this — having been inveigled into this vocation nearly nineteen years ago. One never knows what to expect. Six-years-old Lisa toddles up the gangway — "Please, Mr. Shock, little Emma is eating a button!" Thankfully, unruly behaviour is very rare, and in extreme cases the culprits are dealt with by the schools.

Such, then, is the pattern of Caversham's scholastic exodus.

I look forward to having a chat with my neighbours on my monthly jaunt with the "Caversham Bridge". Like most distributors I must be prepared to indulge in conversations of many flavours. Not the least to be appreciated is the Common Market touch when calling at No. 113 Hemdean Road. Being greeted "Bonjour, Monsieur" by six-years-old Elizabeth Williamson makes me feel more welcome than the "Man from the Pru".

"Renouvez, bientôt votre visite, Monsieur du 'Pont'."

A Brake on Record Breaking

by STAN ELDON

Drug-taking in sport started about 20 years ago, just prior to the 1956 Olympic Games. Up to that time odd individuals must have experimented with stimulants but there was not enough knowledge available for the use of drugs to make any real difference to the record books. However, by 1956 the Russians had certainly found ways of improving an athlete's performance, particularly in the longer and more arduous track events. In the 1956 Games Vladimir Kuts, who already held 5,000 and 10,000 metre world records, beat Britain's Gordon Pirie and Derek Ibbotson in the 5,000 metres, and then in a very fast 10,000 metres won it after being held for most of the race by Pirie. I knew Pirie very well and know that he was always convinced that the Russian could not have won in the way he did without 'outside help'. In fact Kuts was forced to retire from athletics in 1957 after being seriously ill with stomach disorders. Since that time it has become general knowledge that many athletes, and indeed other sportsmen as well, have been taking drugs in one form or another. For the heavy events of shot, discus, hammer, etc., the 'bulk bomb' (anabolic steroids) rapidly increases weight—mostly in

the form of muscle—and in the case of the female athlete can give her many male characteristics.

Gold Medal and Die

The effect of anabolic steroids can be quite disastrous for anyone taking them. Apart from the grotesque bodies that it can produce, with men weighing 30 or more stone and even worse, women weighing 25 stone, hairy and with little to distinguish them from the men—even more serious can be the liver damage and even possible cancer. There is not much doubt that athletes have cut short their lives by the use of these drugs.

Control

Now that a simple test can detect the use of the 'bulk bomb' there will be a slowing down of record-breaking in many athletic events and it is to be hoped that a much stricter check will be made on all sportsmen taking part in top competitions. Although I fear that with so much at stake both for the individual and nationally it will not be long before some new drug will be found that is more difficult to detect, it is to be hoped that the sports authorities keep as strict a control of shot, discus, hammer, as possible so that they are effective in the detection of all forms of artificial stimulation.

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