

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS

Christmas
Crib
in
St Peter's



The figures were made by Mrs Pauline Mercier, a local potter.

— E. S. Archer

Come
Let us
Adore
Him

ST PETER'S
December 2nd 5.30pm Christingle Service
December 9th 9.15am Family Eucharist and Toy Service
December 23rd 6.30pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4pm Children's Crib Service
Christmas Day 11.30pm Midnight Communion
8am Holy Communion
9.15am Family Eucharist
11.15am Holy Communion

ST ANDREW'S
December 23rd 6.30pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4.30pm Children's Crib Service
6pm Solemn Evensong
Christmas Day 11.30pm Midnight Communion
8.30am Holy Communion
9.30am Family Eucharist
11.15am Holy Communion



ST BARNABAS'
December 23rd 4pm Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Eve 5pm Children's Crib Service
Christmas Day 11.30pm Midnight Communion
8am Holy Communion
9.30am Family Eucharist

ST JOHN'S
December 23rd 4pm Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Day 11.30pm Midnight Communion
8am Holy Communion
10am Family Eucharist

ST MARGARET'S, MAPLEDURHAM
Christmas Eve 2.30pm Children's Service
Christmas Day 11.30pm Midnight Communion
11am Family Eucharist
December 30th 6.30pm Christmas Carol Service



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (meets in Caversham Park School)
December 16th 11am Christmas Carol Service
December 23rd 11am Nativity presentation by Children of Sunday Circle
Christmas Day 11.30pm Midnight Communion
11am Family Service

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH
December 16th 10.30am Christmas Nativity Family Service
6.30pm Carol Service: Music by "Gospel Singers"
December 23rd 10.30am Family Service
6.30pm Nine lessons and carols
Christmas Day 10.30-11.15am Christmas Day Service

CAVERSHAM METHODIST CHURCH (Gosbrook Road)
December 9th 11am Toy Service
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Service (with Caversham Heights)

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH
December 16th 11am Toy Service
December 23rd 4pm Christingle Service
Christmas Day 11.15pm Midnight Communion Service (Christmas morning worship at Gosbrook Road)

ST PAUL'S UNITED REFORMED CHURCH (York Road)
December 16th 11am Toy Festival Service
6.30pm Advent praise
December 23rd 6.30pm Service of lessons and carols
Christmas Day 10.30am Family Service

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Reading)
December 23rd 3pm Family carols followed by bring-and-share tea

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL
December 23rd 10.30am Christmas Family Worship (in The Hill School)
6.30pm Evening Worship
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Day Family Worship

ST ANNE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
December 16th 6.30pm Carol Service
December 22nd 7.15am Mass
(Saturday)

11.30am Mass
10.30-12noon Confessions
6.15-7.30pm

5.30pm Confessions
Saturday Evening Mass for Sunday

December 23rd 9am Mass
11am Mass in Latin
6.30pm Evening Service
Christmas Eve 7.15am Mass
10am Mass
10.30-12noon Confessions

Christmas Day 3.4pm Confessions
5.30-7pm Confessions
11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass at 12 midnight
Blessing of the Crib

9am Mass
11am Mass
December 26th 10am Mass
(St Stephen's Day) only



OUR LADY OF CAVERSHAM (Richmond Road)
December 23rd 8.30am Mass
10.30am Mass
5pm Mass
3.30pm Carol Service
Christmas Eve 10am Mass
10.30-11am Confessions

Christmas Day 4.30-5pm Confessions
11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass at 12 midnight
8.30am Mass
10.30am Mass (no evening Mass)

December 26th 10am Mass
(St Stephen's Day)

TALKING POINT

The Rev Chris Justice, Minister of the Chapel on the Hill

CHRISTMAS "TALKING POINT"

I AM sure that I have no need to remind you that this month brings with it the best-known and certainly most popular "festival" in the calendar of the Christian church — Christmas. And as a prelude to all the activities that will take place towards the end of the month, I make no apology for reminding you, as clearly as possible, of what it is the Christian church is celebrating. Because it is just possible that, amidst all the preparations and "feasting", these basic facts may be overlooked.

So, to bring the facts to your attention again, I'd like to use the words with which the angel greeted the shepherds on that first Christmas night. "Do not be afraid — I bring you good news of great joy — which is for all the people."

"Do not be afraid". There is much in the world today that threatens us and causes anxiety and fear to rise in our hearts. International events, national events — and even the situations and circumstances in our own homes — seem, at times, to leave us constantly living "on edge". But it wasn't these things so much that the angel was referring to — not the natural things around the shepherds — it was about the supernatural things he was putting them at ease. Like the shepherds, many of us feel ill at ease when someone brings the supernatural into a conversation. Many react against any talk about God — or "religion". The whole idea of God being involved in "our" world puts them on their guard. But if we are ever to understand life — as it is, and as it was intended to be — ultimately we will have to allow God to intervene. We need to hear these words the angel spoke — "Don't be afraid" — and listen to what God is saying about life — about your life.

"I bring you good news of great joy". The Christian gospel is, simply, the good news about Jesus Christ. Sometimes Christians are accused of talking about bad news rather than good news. We're told "All you talk about is sin and hell; and rules about not doing one thing or another, or giving things up." For many people the Christian message seems to be made up of a long list of "do nots". Now, I am willing to accept that this impression is probably largely the fault of Christians, who have painted a very black picture of the life God offers us in Christ. Let me attempt to redress the balance. The news about Jesus is good news. It is about sin and hell. How to have sin forgiven and how to avoid going to hell! If Christmas should be a celebration of anything it should be a celebration of the fact that when Jesus came into the world it was with the express purpose of eventually taking the punishment and penalty for the sins of the world on himself when he died on the cross. The good news is that we are offered forgiveness and a new life through him.

"For all the people". I think we all need reminding that the life and love God offers through Jesus is for all of us. I find it strange that a lot of people can see this message applying to everyone else, but never to themselves! The young dismiss it as being for the old who "need to be thinking about what happens after death". And the old feel it's for the young who "need to be challenged." Some think it's only for the "religious types" or the "do-gooders". Others think it is for the poor and anyone else who has nothing better to do. But God says that this piece of news is for all people.

So let me repeat as I finish — the message about the Lord Jesus Christ — whose coming we celebrate at Christmas — is good news of great joy for all the people!

Dear Editors

Ethiopia and Caversham

Biafra, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia are parts of the world where people have suffered to such an extent that the conscience of the wealthy nations has been moved.

The poor, and no doubt the evil of destitution, will be with us always. But is it really necessary that people first from one country then another should be forced to bear witness to this prophecy? At this point human compassion moves into the realm of politics. Christianity and politics become intertwined. Worse still the first evil, poverty, gives rise to other evils. Some people turn to the gun and the bomb to change the "system" that has caused such distress. Arguments over policy split parties, parliaments and assemblies. Relief agencies are accused of wasting

money on administration. We all know, and sometimes repeat, the trite phrases which are turned out for these occasions.

All the while my brothers and sisters are dying and there really does appear to be nothing I can do about it.

The story of the Good Samaritan tells me what to do to help my brother. But in this modern world isn't this possibly too simplistic? It is one thing for an individual to see, touch and help another, but quite another for that same person to do anything to help thousands, if not millions, half a world away.

Let us leave the economists and politicians to organise their theories. The evil of destitution has touched the hearts of the people of Caversham as individuals. As individuals they have done what they can for other suffering people.

St Peter had no money to give away, so he gave

what he did have. All we do have is money and as Christians we give what we have.

We pray and we give. We have faith and good works and we help individuals even though we do not see the person we help. Perhaps those who have seen are blessed but even more blessed are those who give without seeing to whom they give. And so from the great evil of poverty comes great love, a great good.

The giving, the loving, can never have an end. The poor we shall always have with us. Money, which is all most of us have to give, will continue to be needed. Make no mistake about it, that 50p or £1 will make the difference between life and death for someone lying by some roadside as you read this.

JOHN MULLANEY
Chairman

Save the Children Fund
(Caversham branch)

SWEET HARMONY

THE St Andrew's Missionary Committee wish to give advance notice of a light musical entertainment to be given by the "Sweet Harmony" wind sextet on Saturday, February 16, 1985. This sextet, consisting of pairs of clarinets, bassoons and horns with a narrator, specialises in light music of the eighteenth century, particularly that of Mozart, J. Christian Bach and their less well-known contemporaries.

The proceeds of the concert will be devoted to the special missionary projects of St Andrew's Church.

Further details will be given in next months "Caversham Bridge."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Money if needed. Although the scale of aid needed is beyond the scope of any individual voluntary agency or grouping of agencies, Save the Children needs money to keep its emergency feeding centres operating and to open more, for fuel and transport, for shelters and plastic sheeting, and to employ more local workers. Work in Ethiopia in the past twelve months cost one million pounds.

Pressure is needed. It's more vital than ever to write to your MP and Euro-MP to press for more government aid, particularly for food to be released from European food mountains. Grain is a priority.

New Blankets and clothes for babies and children are needed. They should be new not second hand (because of the fumigation laws). Hand them in to SCF shops, if possible, or Branches.

Voluntary help may be needed at Headquarters to deal with the influx of donations.

Food is not needed — money is, to buy in bulk. Food for starving people needs to be specialised. There is no requirement for volunteers to help in Ethiopia. Donations can be paid over the counter at any Bank.

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

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All contributions for the January issue should be sent to Church House by noon on Wednesday, December 19. All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by Friday, December 14.

The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in the newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

Published by Caversham Christian News Ltd, Church Street, Caversham, Reading. Telephone Reading 471703.

Printed by Thames Valley Newspapers Ltd, Tessa Road, Reading.

STAN ELDON SPORTS
ST MARTINS CENTRE, CAVERSHAM
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BARCLAYCARD AND ACCESS WELCOME

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PETER SEAR ON THE MOVE

THERE is to be another change on the editorial board of this paper when the Rev Peter Sear, who has been assistant editor since November 1977, leaves early next year to take up his new appointment as Vicar of Thatcham. He will be missed by the board at their monthly meetings, where they have enjoyed his all-round knowledge, his clear mind and his job as clergy liaison. He has been a most useful staff photographer and his own special favourite was the series on "Caversham from the Air".

First days in Emmer Green

Peter Sear came to St Barnabas' in May 1977 as priest-in-charge. On his second day, he attended the diocesan conference in Swanwick (Derbyshire) where, among other things, he was taught the subtleties of croquet by Colin Scott-Dempster, who will be his Rural Dean in Thatcham. The 50th anniversary of St Barnabas' church was the occasion for a Festival, marked by an exhibition of history of Emmer Green and the church, as well as other events. Contributions from the children at the Emmer Green Primary School remain a pleasing memory. It was just too bad that a serious attack of chicken pox laid Peter low for much of this time!

During Peter's time, the St Barnabas' Hall was damaged by fire and he encouraged the refurbishing and improving of the interior following this. The Church's "Handyman" sales had also proved very popular.

Senior Priest

After Canon Grimwade, Peter was the senior priest as far as appointment in the parish was concerned ("primus inter pares" or first among equals) and it was he who led the clergy first during John Grimwade's detached retina operation, then his six month's sabbatical and finally during the

nine months interregnum. During this time he would have liked to have been more experimental and he must be congratulated on his restraint. In the event, all went smoothly and that's what counts. It also gave him a greater opportunity to work with the Rev Derek Spears — their names are so similar that

they have often been confused, though no-one seeing them both on their motorcycles would be in doubt, as Peter has never been overtaken by lady parishioners on bicycles! The two men did an overland trip to Israel on their motorcycles and one of your editors, who met up with them in Greece, can see them now

wending their way home, both on one bike, after an extensive dinner. Peter is a holder of the National Motor Cycle Training Scheme Gold Award. He would like to be an instructor if time permitted. No doubt that two wheels are preferred to four! And in contrast, Peter keeps chickens at the bottom of his garden.

Family

Peter's wife is Anne and they have two

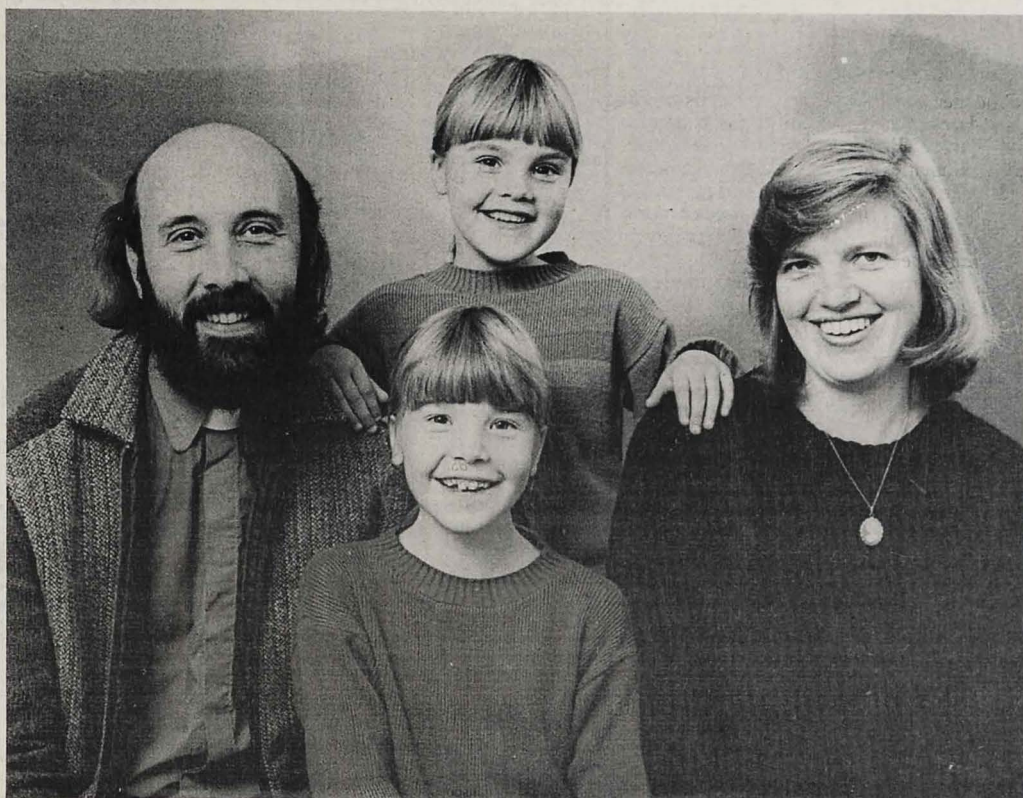
children, Rachel, 8½ and Catherine, now 7, who was born shortly after after their arrival in Emmer Green. Anne runs the 2nd Emmer Green Guide Company and holds a camper's licence, which has been used frequently. She will surely become involved with the Guides in Thatcham. She teaches German at Southlands School on the other side of Reading, and will continue to do so after the

move — the journey could even be faster than some occasions of late!

Thatcham

Thatcham is happily no great distance from Reading, being just east of Newbury on the A4. Greenham Common and the Kennet form the southern boundary of the parish. The population 15-20 years ago was around the 4,000 mark; today it is 18,000 and growing. There has been rapid house-building, mainly small houses for young families. Although this can mean 250 baptisms a year, it can also result in a greater turn over, as families grow too big for the houses. The church, St Mary's, is Victorian rebuilding on an old foundation. It has a fine peal of 8 bells and one of the churchwardens is President of the National Campanology Society. A hall has been built within the church with a gallery above which opens out to the church at the first floor level. Peter is fortunate in having a non-stipendiary assistant priest, Walter Barbour. He has taken early retirement and works full time in the parish. Ecumenical activity includes regular Sunday evening worship which goes the rounds of the various churches.

The best wishes of all his friends go to Peter Sear and his family. They will leave with mixed feelings but there is the exciting challenge of a large parish where Peter can see the great need, not to mention great potential, for lay ministry. He has found the parish here warm and friendly, but this is the right time for him to make a move and he is looking forward to it. God bless them all in their new life in Thatcham.



Peter and Anne Sear, with Rachel and Catherine

— Walton Adams

SUE RYDER SUPPORT GROUP CAVERSHAM

THE Group is pleased to announce that £131 was made at the All Sorts Fair and also £36 taken in cards and foods for the Foundation. The Fair was opened by his Worship the Mayor, Ron Jewitt and the Mayoress, and the Group thanks them for their patronage.

The home at Nettlebed recently said a sad farewell to their founder Matron, Mrs Avril Moat. Everybody's heartfelt thanks and love were expressed to her for her help in starting the home and lovingly running it for five years. The Group too wishes her well as she cares for her own family and home following her husband's death.



The Christmas Fair will this year take place on Saturday December 8 at the Regal Centre Wallingford 11am-3pm. The Group will have a stall including jams, cakes, handicrafts and sweets and will gladly receive gifts. Contact Mrs Ann Deane, 473798.

Nicholas 1982

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READING all the back numbers of the School magazine, prompted by Queen Anne's recent birthday, is hardly a recommended literary experience but it did produce some items worthy of record, illustrating the changes since 38 girls and four staff arrived from London to "benefit from the bracing air".

With a headmistress then only 28 — two years before she had been the youngest Head in the country — who shook each pupil's hand every morning, wished them goodnight individually and allowed them to go for walks unsupervised, it must have been a most progressive institution for its day, with half of its pupils coming from a school for the rich and the rest from a school for the poor.

Euclid to Fretwork

Starting with a somewhat limited curriculum — Patching and Darning in the 1900s were among the first externally examined subjects — Dalcross Eurhythmic, Plainsong with praiseworthy "faux bourdons", a domestic science course at Hill-side, work in leather and brass, basket-weaving chip-carving, cardboard sloyd, fine-drawn thread work, DIY and car-maintenance all had their day. Hockey was soon superseded by lacrosse but the cricket teams, known as Savoyards, flourished for over 60 years. While swimming styles changed with the emphasis in 1926 on trudgeon, side-stroke and backsculling, the daily drill — conducted by monitors called the Sergeants — remained unchanged until 1952.

Out of Class

There was little opportunity for the Devil to find idle hands with clubs covering every conceivable topic. Not all were as successful as the Insect Collecting Club which bagged two Bloody Nosed Beetles in 1899 or the Astronomical Club for which the recognition of 10 constellations was the entry requirement, but dances were popular even though they meant a walk to Balmore Hall until the School's own hall was built in 1930. Early outings were by brake including one to Wood End Farm in 1899, but in 1908 trains and the new charabancs — one broke down — went to Burnham Beeches. The 1926 General Strike saw a hurried change of plans to a steamer trip to Streatley — a far cry from the first visit to the Soviet

Union in 1973. Costs were extras on top of the school fees, which rose from £57 per annum in 1917 to £198 in 1951 and, with travelling and uniform, to £350-£400 in 1959.

Spotty Schoolgirls

The "bracing air" did little to prevent epidemics which extended holidays and, one November, closed the school altogether. Measles, German Measles, Mumps, Whooping Cough — diseases now associated with young children — either in Reading or in the School itself, often curtailed activities. Girls helping to entertain the poor at the London Mission had to have had the "necessary diseases". Even as recently as 1953 'flu put over 100 girls to bed at the same time with the rest of the staff — 22 were off sick together — doing the nursing and housework.

Helping Themselves and Others

From early days the School had its own Fire Brigade with 30 staff and girls, gradually acquiring a two-man pump, a long hose which wet participants more than any conflagration, a chute "to practise coming down, when it hangs vertically from a window" and, in 1914, a new system for giving the alarm — "a placard inscribed 'FIRE'". Since 1898 when garments were sent to St Giles for girls going into service and the unclaimed items in the Confiscation Cupboard went to the poor of Camberwell, many have benefited. Eighteen shillings and sixpence paid the fare and two weeks' board for a poor boy's holiday, though by boarding her with a School ex-housemaid, the poor girl's holiday may have been cheaper. One hundred and fifty pupils from Silver Street Ragged School were entertained in 1904, and troops and refugees during and after the World Wars were the recipients of comforts, sweets, home-made respirators and sandbags. In 1915, two boxes of foxglove leaves were sent for "War medical purposes".

Give Us The Money

For charities as well as for major school improvements, not a term has passed without some fund-raising activity. Darning stockings, making dishcloths, cleaning bicycles, fetes — with one memorable one open to the public and with Margaret Rutherford as the star attraction, sponsored walks, concerts with the

Headmistress performing in a grass skirt, no possibility has been ignored since 14s 8d was raised with a borrowed gramophone in 1901, until nearly £4,000 was produced recently for the Ken Thomas Appeal. Nine-teen-fifteen saw the award of money prizes at Speech Day which the winners had to hand back as they left the platform to buy wheelchairs for wounded troops and at the same time a presentation to an Old Girl for past service was on condition that she used it to buy an artificial leg for an ex-soldier.

My Country Right or Wrong

Although Conservative allegiance — exhibited on Election Day 1923 by the girls going into Reading wearing Conservative colours — only once wavered with a large majority for Labour in the mock election of 1960, the school's patriotism, if not jingoism, has been constant. The appearance of Lord Kitchener on lime light slides during the Sudan Campaign was loudly applauded. The surrender of Pretoria in 1900 during the Boer War saw the whole School, with staff and girls dressed in red, white and blue, parading up Caversham Hill to Colonel Radcliffe's house, carrying Union Jacks and pictures of Queen Victoria and the relevant Generals. Girls wore daisies as symbols of imperialism on later Empire Days and Peace Day 1919 and the later opening of Caversham Bridge were celebrated with the formations of living Union Jacks.

The Changing World

The girls "much appreciated" the showing in the Town Hall of "Our Army and Our Navy" on the new cinematograph in 1906. Zepelin Raid Drill and the cancelling of potato races at the Sports were noted during the first World War as were the erection of high poles on the Games Field, to deter parachutists, during the second, and the cutting short of the 50th birthday dance so that all could gather round the radio to hear the latest reports of the D-Day landings.

Present-day pupils think nothing of jetting half round the world; not so in 1912, when "On Ascension Day Miss Livermore darted into the dining room and informed us in a breathless voice that an aeroplane was flying over the School. We all dashed with one accord to the Front Lawn where we found the staff already assembled. As the aeroplane passed over we waved our handkerchiefs and cheered enthusiastically and M. Salmer, who was driving the machine answered by flashing a red light."

What happened to the Assagai?

As usual after such a

marathon read, one is left with more question than answers. Which was appreciated most, the 160 tam-o-shanters sent to the troops at Ladysmith in 1900, the entertainment with a Drill display for the wounded at the Caversham War Hospital in 1915, or the button hooks and hat pins awarded as prizes in the 1908 sports? What did the girls learn in the four lectures on "The Care of the Brain" in 1907? What were the feelings of the prefects who, until the School Chaplain invented a pulley system in 1929, had to balance up a 10 foot step ladder to trim, fill and light the Sanctuary Lamp at 7.45 every Sunday Morning? How did

the girls address one-time teacher, Miss Scott-Scott, and did Senior Mistress, Miss Faulk, really make all the blackout curtains in 1939? What happened to the school museum, consisting mainly of gifts from Old Girls accompanying their husbands to serve in the outposts of Empire? What became of the assagai? Was it the singers or the accompanist whose limited repertoire caused the School to sing the same hymn — "New Every Morning" — every day and why, until the School's own chapel was finished in 1899, were Sunday services held at St Giles and not St Peter's? Perhaps Parish records may have the answer to that one.

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A FOREIGNER IN CHINA

WE CONTINUE our series on young Christian people working abroad. Anne Ringrose writes:

People ask me to tell them what China is like and at this question I am always stumped! I have lived there for two years, teaching English in a college of agriculture, but the longer I am there, the more I appreciate how little I know of this China, this vast land with its immense population. So I do not propose to write about "China", but only to try to tell you a little of the corner where I live and work, of my

particular life and of what I have learnt from my friends there.

I work in Nanning, the provincial capital of Guangxi, one of the most southernmost provinces of China. Nanning lies a little over one hundred miles away from the troubled border with Vietnam. It is not a big city but the population is large (800,000) as any city attracts people. It is where a wealthier way of life lies. Rather like the England of about one hundred and fifty years ago, the contrast of town and country is startlingly vivid, perhaps especially so in Guangxi, which is one of the poorer provinces of the country. transport. I too have my bike and enjoy the freedom it gives me, once I had become

used to the peculiarities of riding a bike in China, such as complete disrespect for the rules of the road

With the river Yong dividing the city in half, spanned by an attractive bridge topped with its elegant street lamps, its wide streets lined with green trees, Nanning is a pleasant city to find yourself in! Like all Chinese cities it is crammed with bicycles: bicycles in all directions, bells continuously ringing, bicycles with one person, two, three people on them, or piled high with anything from vegetables to ducks to furniture. They are the major form of and riding at night in total darkness with no lights.

HOT AND HUMID

The pace of life is quite slow there, necessarily so perhaps, because of the limitations of transport and also the weather. The summer heat will allow for no rushing about. The temperature is about 35-36°C (90-95°F) and it is humid. The prospect of sleeping on a straw mat on wooden boards with no mattress struck me as impossible initially but I was soon to learn the wisdom of it. The winter, by contrast, is quite cool but short, temperatures dropping to 3-4°C (36-40°F). The damp and the lack of heating, however, make it quite chilly, so people cope by wearing layers and layers of clothing with the end result being that we all look like Michelin men.

LIVING WITHOUT

Like most people I live in the place where I work, in a small bungalow, the kind of accommodation normally provided for vice-professors or foreign teachers. I delight in showing friends here a picture of my kitchen as it results in instant sympathy, but the rest of the place is very bright and cheerful. My first year was not very comfortable. All washing, of self and clothing, was done in a metal bucket; there was no fridge so no cold drinks, even in such heat. Being the first foreign teacher ever to work in the college meant that the people there had to learn as much about me as I had to learn about them. By the end of this, my second year, I have a washing-machine, a fridge and a hot-water shower. My appreciation of each item has been greatly deepened having been without!

Most Chinese families are without.

I take my main meals in the college canteen. The staple food is of course rice, and plenty of it, with a green vegetable and a little meat, although as a foreigner I get rather more. Eating with friends, and their families is always a great treat. Everyone complains about the canteen food!

COMPANIONSHIP

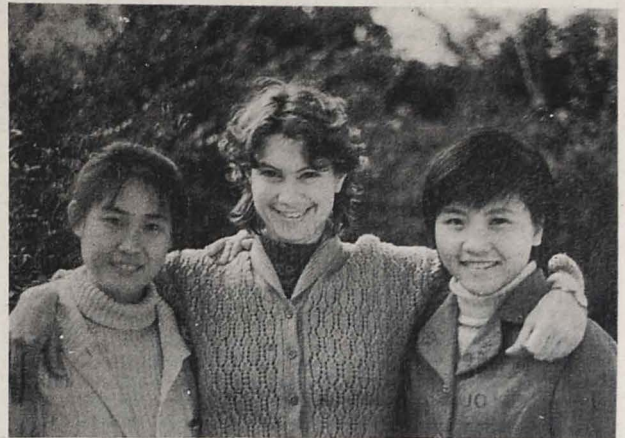
I am very fortunate to live with two Chinese girls whose company I enjoy very much. They have taught me so much of the little customs, which, if you are not familiar with them, can lead to absurd misunderstandings. A small thing such as taking something the first time it is offered to you will be thought quite rude! Goodwill and a sense of humour, to reach beyond the differences of our cultures, is in high daily demand.

The usual day involves an early start. Classes begin at 7.30am so the loudspeakers will blare out their wake-up tunes and the news at six o'clock, followed by the morning exercises which I have never yet taken part in! At midday we have a long break during which everyone takes their "nap", even myself in summer. Evenings can be spent in various ways. There is television, and the cinema is very popular. Most work units have an open-air cinema: watching a film in the pouring rain is a novel experience. Most of my own time is spent with people. Being one of only about thirty foreigners in the city means that people will attempt to seize any opportunity they have of practising their English on you. However, being an English teacher at the outset means this can lose its charm after a while!

LONELINESS

Loneliness is often a problem for a foreigner in China. Though for an instant during the day I might forget I am a foreigner, the inevitable curious stares will be a quick reminder. Yet I have enjoyed a very warm welcome from so many, and after two years I have made some good friends.

So China is a fascinating country, although not always an easy one in which to be. Then follows, naturally, the question "Why China for



■ Anne with the two friends with whom she lives

you?", which always makes me smile because initially I had no thought in my head to go to China. My one aim was to get to India, but God thought differently and sent me off to China. Only make yourself available to Him and you never know where you may end up nor what you may be doing! I am in China as a Christian teacher, to reveal, God help me, His great love to all those who live and work around me. There is keen interest to learn about God, and a desire in the hearts of some to actually know Him.

The discretion I must exercise in this respect must be extended also to this article, so may I here simply thank God for the increase in freedom for people to worship Him in China, and thank Him for our greater freedom in Britain. So I ask you to pray for the Chinese people, her government, and for all those working in China at the call of God.

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

ST PETER'S

IT HAS been an eventful period at St Peter's. First came the Ordination service, at which 11 men were ordained Deacon and one lady as Deaconess. The church was crammed full with supporting families and friends who saw the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Rev Patrick Rodger, lay hands on the 12 people. Eleven of these were non-stipendiary ministers and the twelfth man, but by no means the reserve, was Peter Matthew Mullins who has joined St Peter's church as curate.



The following Sunday was Dedication Sunday, traditionally the first Sunday in October when the original date of dedication has been lost in the mists of time. The church again was beautifully decorated. In memory of Col Oswald Francis and at the service he attended so regularly, the 11.15am Communion service was enhanced by the dedication of a new Trinity frontal. It was designed by Mrs Lucy Judd, who has been responsible for tapestry work in Salisbury Cathedral and at the Museum there. The simple green frontal, made by Mr Robin Kitcher, was covered by Mrs Judd's splendid super frontal, of gold work in an

antique Romanesque pattern which Mrs Mary Smith, in her quiet behind-the-scenes fashion, helped to secure safely. The service was the first taken by the Rev Peter Mullins which he did with confidence and competence. Many of Col Francis' family were present, including his three daughters who donated the frontal, grandchildren and great grandchildren. The church is much enriched and most grateful for this offering in memory of a much loved man.

The Harvest supper, held at St Andrew's Hall was an enjoyable evening, and a variety of excellent food was eaten before the serious business of the evening—country dancing. The Social and Entertainments committee are to be thanked for the hard work put in to make it such a good time for everyone.



Harvest Festival itself brought many to the church, so finely en fête for the occasion. A vast amount of produce was offered during the service, the bulk of which was taken to REAP. Highlights were the decorations made by the children—a working model of Mapledurham Mill, not to mention the results of various bakings with the flour ground there. Once again the pillar decorations vied with the glorious flower arrangements to steal the show.

NEWS FROM THE CHAPEL

Reading Bible
Convention October
9-11

THIS annual event, organised by the Reading and District Evangelical Fellowship, is an opportunity to hear God's Word expounded by some fine Bible teachers. The Rev Jim Graham and Martin Goldsmith are two such men.

This year we packed into the Salvation Army Central Hall for three evenings to hear the message they brought to us. On the Tuesday and Wednesday the Rev Jim Graham, pastor of Gold hill Baptist Church, ministered from Titus, covering various aspects of church leadership and life. God-called church leadership is vital to the ongoing ministry of the church, and we were encouraged to obey and pray for those in authority over us.

On the third evening Martin Goldsmith, a converted Jew, ex-missionary and now tutor at All Nations Christian College, spoke to us. His subject was the command of Jesus that we should evangelise the whole world. As Christians we can learn much from the "zeal" of the Muslims—how much more zealous should we be. As we reach out to a world without Christ, we must go in the confidence of Revelation 5 verse 9—the blood of Jesus is to purchase

men in every tribe and nation.

Next year's convention has been planned for November 12-14, and God willing the speaker will be Ian Barclay.

From Caversham to Poland

As a fellowship, the high spot of the month was a visit to Poland by our pastor, Chris Justice. He had been invited to go there, with another Pastor in Reading, by the Evangelical Church in Warsaw. Although it was quite a short visit, from October 12-15, it was possible to pack a lot into the time. One day was given to teaching sessions on "church life" and the following day's programme included two worship services and an evangelistic service. Like many other people in Britain, we have had a great concern for the people of Poland in recent years; and, in addition to praying for them, have been able to send gifts. But we're very pleased that Chris was able to go and meet our brothers and sisters in Christ in person.

SPONSORED SERMON

THE Rector of St Peter's Church, Caversham, the Rev Richard Kingsbury, will be giving a sponsored sermon at St Peter's on Saturday, December 8, to raise money for the Save the Children Fund. However, it is the members of the listening congregation who will be seeking sponsors for the number of hours that they are prepared to sit and listen to Richard.

Save the Children does save children's lives and here is your chance to help. If you would like to become a sponsored listener to Richard's sermon—and Richard intends to try and beat the existing record by carrying on speaking for nine hours—and are prepared to give up one or more hours to help Save the Children (you get sponsored at so much per hour) then apply to Mrs Elsie South, of 32 Priest Hill, Caversham, for sponsor and registration form, telephone No. 473780 or Norman G. Kent, 42 Highmoor Road, Caversham, telephone 475472 (evening), 479378 (day).

DON'T PUT IT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW—PHONE NOW.

PARISH TRIP



Junior members of the choir of the parish who had a trip to Bath and Bristol in September

ST ANNE'S NEWS

SEPTEMBER ended with Harvest Festival Sunday, largely organised by the staff, parents and children of the school. They gathered together the produce, designed posters and arranged their display in church. Afterwards they helped to take the produce, as a gift to the Carmelite convent.

By way of complete contrast, and on an all too sadly topical note, there was a Family Fast the next Friday, for the needy of the world.

But October events began with the much publicised, long awaited... parish knit-in. Sponsor forms were available well beforehand to stimulate parishioners' support for the knitters' zeal. The event had no less than three lofty aims as quoted by the parish bulletin—1, a good money raiser for

the parish; 2, an enjoyable get-together and 3, a blanket for Hungary. It turned out to be a very successful evening, though final results are still awaited with bated breath.

On October 12, 13 and 14 was held Forty Hours Prayer, with exposition of the sacrament. It was well attended from all areas of the parish and it was noted that the number of watchers participating in this annual devotion has been growing year by year.

Without pausing for breath, further action was rallied for the next Jumble Sale, when faithful helpers and any and all buyers were summoned to assist and promised jumble and all sorts...

Can November keep up the pace?

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

BAPTIST NEWS

Pilgrimage to St Albans

OR MORE prosaically Shield's Away-day for the Baptist Church. This year the annual outing, masterminded by Mr Ken Shield in the capacity of both travel agent and courier-in-chief, was a combination of business with pleasure in that it was staged to coincide with the induction of the Revd Philip Webb to the pastorate of the Baptist Church at Dagnall Street, St Albans. Some ninety members and friends travelled by coach through beautiful countryside to that bastion of Christendom on a day which the weather prophets had decreed would, at best, be indifferent but which in reality proved them wrong. On arrival the party dispersed to do as they wished, the Cathedral or Abbey — the ecclesiastical authorities are not clear which — being the chief attraction with the street market a close second. The majority then took lunch alfresco style in the park adjoining the Abbey, or Cathedral, before converging on Dagnall Street for the Induction Service.

The Induction was a memorable occasion enhanced in no small measure by the address given by a Caversham resident, the Revd Roger Hayden, who is Minister of Abbey Baptist Church, Reading, and with whom Philip Webb had a close working relationship during his assignment at Baptist Union Headquarters.

Following the Service the Members of

the Dagnall Street Church entertained over three hundred visitors to tea which proved to be no curly-cut sandwich affair but a meal which would have graced any table — they certainly live well at St Albans.

Didn't they do well

SO SAID a well known television personality and so say all of us. "They" are the Gospel Singers, the Group of eighteen or so members and friends of the Baptist Church who first met in February 1983 to "Sing Unto The Lord a Joyful Song". They did just that on a recent Saturday when they staged their first musical evening in the Church. The Group, led by Miss Sue Allum, supported by instrumentalists and Guest Artists, Mr David and Mrs Dorothy North and Mrs Jo Packham, gave a good account of themselves in the rendering of a wide range of sacred songs interspersed with audience participation in the singing of well known and much loved hymns. One of the highlights of the evening was the singing of "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" by four male stalwarts, the only four in the Group. In the limelight they appeared somewhat diffident and self-conscious but their obvious misgivings in succumbing to the wily charms and persuasive powers of their leader were ill-founded. At the conclusion of the performance, admission to which was free, a retiring collection raised £60 for TEAR Fund — The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund.

The Group seeks to increase its numbers and range of voices especially in the male section and Sue Allum — Telephone 478330 — would welcome inquiries from those whom the Lord has endowed with the gift of song.

ORDINATION AT ST. PETER'S



The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Rev Patrick Rodger, with the Rev Peter Mullins (right) after his Ordination at St Peter's — Courtesy Reading Chronicle

ST. MARGARET'S NEWS

Harvest supper

WARMTH. Happy voices. Noise. Laden tables. Music. The bustle of many people. Thoughts of the Mapledurham Mob (St Margaret's teenage group) on the Harvest Supper held on Saturday, October 20, when almost 100 people met to celebrate the safe gathering-in of the harvest. Among those enjoying the evening were some 20 young people from the Methodist Church, Caversham Heights, whom it was a delight to welcome.

Also joining in the fun for the first time were Richard and Angela plus family, and Peter Mullins, and it is hoped that they will join in many more of these happy occasions. In a real family atmosphere dancing — well, some danced — to the splendid playing of Wheelwright Bane.

Grateful thanks go to all who decorated the old village hall so attractively for the event and to all those who must have spent so many busy hours to produce such a wonderful harvest supper. It was indeed a very successful evening. Congratulations to those who arranged it.

LINK GROUP

MEMBERS of the Link Group met at the home of Mrs Anthea Prescott on Monday, October 22. The main object of the meeting was to discuss the way forward for the group.

The Chairman reminded members that exactly ten years ago the money raised during the Family Festival was handed over to those causes it had been decided to help. From that beginning the Link Group was formed as a link between members of churches of different denominations in Caversham, and between those people who for various reasons need help and those who are able to offer it. The group continues to give not only material help but also genuine friendship to an increasing number of those in need. It has been the aim from the first to show personal interest where pos-

sible; for example the annual outing for mentally handicapped children and the fortnightly tea parties for house-bound people.

From much discussion it had become obvious that the many caring groups in Caversham could avoid overlapping if they co-ordinated their efforts and members were enthusiastic in promoting ways of achieving this co-operation. In this way it was hoped that everything possible would be done to ensure that nobody in Caversham would be without help of some kind.

Finally members were reminded that Reading Emergency Accommodation Project was in urgent need, with the onset of winter, of warm clothing for the many homeless for whom they offer shelter and food.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS AT THE BAPTIST CHURCH CENTRE

THE first of these meetings took place on October 6 when Max Sinclair, author of *Halfway to Heaven*, and Director of Hildenborough Hall, Christian Conference Centre, came and spoke. For the first of these meetings the organisers were greatly encouraged to see such a good number of friends from other fellowships in Caversham and from across the river present. A time of worship was led by "New Light", a music group from the Baptist Church, after which Max Sinclair brought a clear, very down to earth message. As one who has experienced suffering, he did not offer a "soft" Gospel but spelled out very clearly the cost involved in committing oneself to and in following Christ. At the end of the meeting several friends expressed a desire to know more of Christ and we pray that the seed sown may grow and that they will in repentance come to Jesus.

The next meeting is on December 8, details elsewhere in this issue.

COME CAROL SINGING IN LOWER CAVERSHAM

Saturday December 22

5pm Meet at St John's Church

7pm Stop-off for soup in the church (latecomers can join in)

8-8.30 Hot punch and mince pies in the church

All welcome. Members of the Reading Brass will provide musical accompaniment. Please bring a torch etc. Carol sheets provided.

13026

The Editors apologise to many contributors, whose articles are not published this month, due to lack of space. Non-topical items are held over for the next issue.

13025

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Ethiopian Appeal

The Board of Directors of the Caversham Bridge Newspaper has given £100 towards the Ethiopian Appeal.

Thanks to all those who buy the paper and to the advertisers, this is the second occasion this year that the Board has been able to make a charitable donation.

Sorry!

Apologies to our many distributors. Owing to problems beyond our control, the production of this edition of the Bridge has been delayed.

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

OBITUARIES

FOR many older people who have resided in Mapledurham parish for a number of years, this September was rather a sad month, for in just over a week they lost three members of the community whom they had known for a long while. Mr William Geer, who lived in Woodcote Way for many years, only survived his sister, May, by five months. Mrs Edna Tinson of Chazey Road died on September 23. She had been in poor health for many years. Both belonged to the

Jubilee Club and Mrs Tinson was a member of The Women's Institute.

On September 19 Mr Tom Pickerin died at Goring after a long illness. Mr and Mrs Pickerin lived for many years in Mapledurham village and both were active members of St Margaret's Church where Tom was a server. Some twenty years ago he and his wife, Maud, moved to Goring, but St Margaret's has always kept in touch with them.

We extend our deepest sympathy to all three families.

Mr Leonard Tinson

EXACTLY a month to the day after the loss of his wife, we have to record the death of Mr William Tinson, once Mapledurham's local policeman. Except for service in the 1914-18 war, he spent his life in the police force, living and working in Mapledurham during the years of the Second World War and for a short time afterwards. Ever since retirement, he and his wife lived in Chazey Road, where he cultivated his large garden with great enthusiasm as long as he was able. For a short time after he left the police force he worked part-time for the RAF at

Woodcote and then at the English Forestry. He was a member of the local British Legion.

Those who visited Mr and Mrs Tinson over the last few years will remember him for the wonderful way in which he looked after his ailing wife and tried so hard to keep their little home going for as long as possible.

Caversham Park House Communion

Wednesday at 10.30am

December 5 — 13 Newton Avenue (Rosemary Randall)

December 12 — 2 Osterley Drive (Mildred Samuel)

December 19 — 8 Harlech Avenue (Margaret Dimmick)

December 26 — NO HOUSE COMMUNION

January 2 — 27 Galsworthy Drive (Karen Rees)

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The Rev Peter Sear, St Barnabas House, 33 Grove Road. Tel: 473095.

The Rev David Milling, St Andrew's House, Harrogate Road. Tel: 472788.

The Rev Graham Lynch-Watson, 51 Galsworthy Drive. Tel: 475152.

The Rev Alan Wilson, St John's House, 9 South View Avenue. Tel: 471814.

The Rev Peter Mullins, 25 Ilkley Road, Caversham. Tel: 472070.

BAPTIST

The Rev Dennis Weller, 80 Balmore Drive. Tel: 478668.

METHODIST

The Rev Ralph Rogerson, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 472223.

The Rev Brian Skinner, 48 Allhallows Road, Caversham. Tel: 482530.

UNITED REFORMED

The Rev Philip Lee-Bapt, 41 Highmoor Road. Tel: 471909.

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev Thomas Meagher, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel: 471787.

(For Caversham Park Village)
The Rev Cecil Keane, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common. Tel: Kidmore End 3418.

GOSBROOK ROAD

REVIEW

This was well attended, and we were pleased to have a visit from the Mayor, Councillor Ron Jewitt during the morning. £63.00 was raised.

The month ended on a high note, with a very successful Gift Day, when over £1,000 was given. The evening took the form of a "hotel style" evening dinner. The guest after dinner speaker was Rev Leslie Griffiths MA. The Sunday saw a double celebration with the Church Anniversary incorporating the 75th birthday of the Women's Fellowship.

An exhibition covering 75 years was staged to mark the occasion and a special anniversary cake was provided by Mrs Gladys Alderman. During the evening service, which was conducted by Rev Ralph Rogerson, Mrs Kathleen West, who is the longest serving member of the Fellowship, was invited to cut the cake. Mrs Sylvia Vinall, a past president, spoke of the special place the Lower Caversham Fellowship had in the hearts of her family. After the service there was time to share fellowship and enjoy the 75th birthday cake and coffee.



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ROUND THE CHURCHES

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST NOTES

IT IS a proud boast that the Church premises are used regularly and to the full, not only by the Church community but also by the larger community around. Such continual use leads to constant wear on the decorative state of the rooms. The state of the hall had given cause for concern, so during the late summer the opportunity was taken to redecorate it. This was carried out by a team of volunteers from the Church family. Its work has made the hall look resplendent and pleasant to use.

One of the early meetings to be held in the redecorated hall was the Harvest Supper on October 1. The gathering which overflowed into the adjoining Woodcote Room, enjoyed a traditional meal and was entertained by Shirley Fry from Woodley who sang sacred

and secular music. A sum of £94 the profit from the supper was given to a local Caversham charity.

The "Squash" Youth Club go from strength to strength in their "Clean Water" project. The target was to raise £700 to provide a well for a village in the Third World, probably in Africa. Already by the end of October the target had been passed. The latest fund raising effort was a Hunger Lunch held on Sunday October 28. This was attended by about 70 people and the proceeds have been divided between the Clean Water project and the Ethiopia Famine Relief Appeal.

The Church has recently been pleased to be the venue for a meeting of the Berkshire Organists Association and is shortly to be visited by the

North Hampshire Organists. By the time these notes appear in print a concert will have been given in the Church by the Reading Bach Choir. It was the vision some four years ago of those responsible for the rebuilding of the organ that the Church would not only be used for regular worship but would also be available for musical events.

1984 has seen the introduction of a new Methodist Hymnbook called "Hymns and Psalms". The actual publication has not been without "birth-pangs" and many people could not really see the need for a new book. However this new book has been in use at the Heights since early September. The congregation is getting used to singing some hymns at different pitches, with different harmonies or different tunes. Some old Methodist favourites have been left out but there is a wealth of new material which demonstrates the catholicity of popular hymnody today.

CAVERSHAM WEST BOYS' CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE Annual General Meeting of the Caversham West Boys Club was held recently at the Club's headquarters in Kiln Road, Emmer Green. The leader, Malcolm Gray, reported a good year for the Club. Members had been successful in certain county sports events. Also, an enjoyable Club holiday was had at the Mendip Adventure Centre, near Cheddar. Most importantly, one of the Club's members, Colin Edwards, had delivered the Mayor of Reading's message to Earl Spencer at the opening of Club Week 83.

The Accounts for the last financial year showed a loss during the year but this situation had been corrected by two successful jumble sales held since. The Club was, therefore, reported to

be in a relatively healthy state.

The Chairman, Bill Harris, paid tribute to the work of Peter Shock, who had died so tragically in January. He did, however, praise the efforts of the new leadership.

Thanks were also given to the retiring Treasurer, Ken Hyslop, who because of other commitments was leaving the Club after more than a dozen years. The existing Officers and Committee were returned en bloc and now look forward to a new season even more eventful than the last. Mention was made, however, of the falling membership and if there are any boys wishing to fill these spaces they should contact the leader, Malcolm Gray, on Reading 479560.

St Peter's Wives Group

FUTURE programme: December 11, Microwave Cookery; December 18, Carol Singing; January 15, My Work as a Town Councillor — Fred Pugh.

The National Council of Women

JANUARY 18, 1985: Speaker from Unemployment Centre to talk on Youth Training Scheme, Job Sharing etc. February 8, 1985 Juliet Baxter, past National Chairman of the Pre-school Playgroup Association. If interested, please phone 475928.

Caversham Methodist Church Gosbrook Road

National Children's Home House-to-House Collection

The recent collection in the Lower Caversham area resulted in raising

the magnificent sum of £410.05. Ted Curling, the local Secretary, extends sincere thanks to all collectors and to all who gave to this very worthwhile cause.

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THE CHURCH AND THE CHILDREN

ST ANDREW'S Sunday School meets in St Andrew's Hall 9.15am. Contact Mrs Sheila Ivens (477180) or Mr Peter Watsham (478744).

ST BARNABAS Sunday School in the Hall 9.15am. Contact Mrs Jean Carroll, 45 Brooklyn Drive (472598). (Also Children's Service last Sunday in the month).

ST JOHN'S Nursery Church (for children up to 8 years) in church during the Sunday eucharist at 9.15am. Family Service 1st Sunday in the month at 11am (mainly for children over 4 years).

ST PETER'S Sunday School meets in the Rectory at 9.15am (except 2nd Sunday which is Parade Service). "Cherubim" Club for babies and pre-school children in church every Thursday at 2.30pm

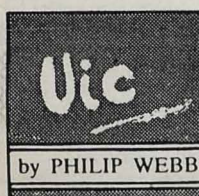
ST MARGARET'S (MAPLEDURHAM) Family Workshop 2nd Saturday of each month 10am-12 noon. Contact Mrs Heather Robinson, 4 Hilltop Road (476873). Sunday School meets at Trench Green Hall 10.45 every Sunday except the first Sunday of the month.

CAVERSHAM PARK At Caversham Park School 11am. Contact Mrs Paula Andrews, 5 Gifford Close (478430).

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST Junior Church — Sundays 11am. Youth Squash — Sundays 8pm.

GOSBROOK ROAD METHODIST CHURCH Bee-Gees — Sundays 10.15am. Sunday School — Sundays 11am Young Peoples Club — Sundays 7.30pm.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH 10.30am Creche — up to three years. Beginners, Juniors and seniors three to 14 years. Fourteen Plus Group. Secretary: Mrs J. Morgan, 7 Grove Road, (Sonning Common 72-3704).



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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By WATCHDOG

BRIDGE BY THE '90's?

A THIRD Thames bridge is very much a live issue as the packed meeting organised by Caversham Residents' Association convincingly demonstrated. Many people were in fact turned away as the room simply would not hold any more. Its importance lay both in its subject matter and in the fact that for the first time representatives from Berkshire and Oxfordshire County Council's were appearing together on a public platform to speak about a matter that has for too long divided them.

R. H. Clarke, Assistant County Surveyor for Berkshire, spoke first. The preliminary report on the need and possible sites for a third bridge was, he said, almost complete and would be presented to the Council in December before going out for public consultation. By mid-1985 a decision as to the need for a new bridge could be taken and if favourable, a site chosen. The bridge itself could then be in operation in another ten years.

He went on to say that Berkshire's highway strategy was to cater for growth that has already taken place and to bring relief to existing roads. It was definitely not aimed at attracting further growth into an area which is already one of the fastest growing in the country with one of the highest levels of car ownership. That kind of policy would even-

tually lead to demolishing Reading in order to get into it. Apart from new or widened roads (for example, Caversham Road) traffic management schemes and techniques such as flexi-time were essential back-ups.

One of the major problems is that there are only two town bridges across the Thames, both close together and both discharging into Reading's already overcrowded centre. In a sense a third bridge already exists, for in order to avoid these problems eight hundred vehicles cross Sonning bridge, centuries old and built for horse traffic, in the morning peak hour and funnel their way through one of the most beautiful villages on the Thames, a rat run indeed.

O & D SURVEY

By far the greatest part of the traffic using these three bridges in the morning comes from the built-up area of Caversham. This is what the 1982 Origin and Destination Survey (which produced the biggest traffic snarl-up ever!) shows, the newly completed results of which Mr Clarke had brought with him. Sixty-six per cent of it came from Caversham, 26 per cent from South Oxfordshire, six per cent from Oxfordshire, excluding South Oxon, and a mere two per cent from further afield. Eighty-one per cent of it goes to greater Reading south of the Thames, seven per cent to East Berkshire or London, six per cent to West Berkshire and six per cent to other areas of South England. A remarkable total of 95 per cent goes to or comes from Greater Reading and 78 per cent does not leave it. Less surprisingly most of the journeys are for work, with educational purposes coming next and most of the vehicles are private cars. Caversham Bridge takes the greatest share, but Sonning Bridge's 800 vehicles are made up almost entirely of Caversham traffic.

SOLUTIONS

Of the various solutions, widening the two bridges would still pour traffic straight into the town centre, and draw it to two points close to each other in Caversham so that there would be a danger here of demolishing the centre of Caversham, in order to get out of it. A bridge to the West, whilst undoubtedly bringing some relief to Caversham, would present

serious environmental and engineering problems and make a poor linkage with Reading roads. Its estimated usage of 500 vehicles at the morning peak would not justify its existence.

An Eastern crossing, either straight from the A329(M) roundabout or a longer one nearer the former Earley Power Station would cause comparatively little environmental damage, would provide a good linkage with Reading roads and the A329(M) which takes traffic to outer Reading, would reduce town centre congestion and bring immediate relief to Sonning.

It would be a single carriageway bridge for local use and as such it is estimated that it would take 1,600 vehicles in the morning peak period, thus being fully utilised with no need to justify its existence by setting out to attract more traffic. The majority of these 1,600 vehicles would be from Caversham, as the O & D figures indicate. Roads carving up South Oxfordshire are therefore unnecessary and fears of expansion in these rural areas because of the new bridge are unfounded.

OXFORDSHIRE'S CASE

Mr R. G. Williams, Principal Assistant to the Chief Planner for Oxfordshire, who had come to the meeting rather in the spirit of Daniel entering the lions' den, must have felt encouraged to find the meeting strongly in favour of preserving the rural character of South Oxfordshire, which was the main point of his platform. He spoke of the problems that arise when a county with an officially approved policy of restraint in growth shares a boundary with a county with an officially imposed policy of high growth. Pressures to develop are already severe and will only be exacerbated if a new bridge is built, as new roads attract new traffic and bring with them further development, as witness South Reading. This new road could well attract motorway traffic from the Midlands once the M40 was extended to Birmingham, and it would all go through South Oxfordshire's unsuitable roads. Oxfordshire's policy was to bring traffic off unsuitable roads on to major roads. Whilst it has as yet no firm views on Berkshire's plans for another Thames Bridge, it stated in 1983 that it found the idea of a bridge to the east of Reading generally unacceptable and asked that the western option be kept open. This was the first time Oxfordshire had seen Reading's latest figures and they would be studying them. They had sympathy with Reading's traffic problems but could not support a solution that would give Oxfordshire the same kind of problems.

CONSEQUENCES

Lively discussion followed from the floor.

Some, whilst accepting Berkshire's figures, queried the inferences drawn from them; Councillor Joe Bristow pointedly remarked that Oxfordshire had started development in its own rural areas by given permission for Caversham Park Village which generated a considerable proportion of the traffic. Councillor Brian Fowles, although absent, stuck out his neck by tossing in his own idea of a route for a radial road, complete with map, and another absentee, Gerard Vaughan MP sent a letter of support. A few days later Linda Chalker turned up in Reading's rush hour and made far more favourable noises about financial help to solve Reading's traffic problems, including a new bridge, than the Government has ever made before. After all, it is Government policy for major growth in Berkshire that has largely contributed to the problems and it is no good their shrugging it off and telling local ratepayers to find the money to sort it all out.

All that remains is for everyone to make informed comments during the period of public consultation. Don't leave it to someone else.

GOOD RIDDANCE

Gasps of disbelief, which turned to cries of

triumph, echoed round Caversham as the news spread that the bollards in St Martin's car park were actually being removed, at last, after all these years. No, St Martin's haven't had a sudden rush of social conscience to the head. The new Waitrose car park has been linked to St Martin's and John Lewis have paid for the removal of the bollards and the re-surfacing of the car park. However, if it had not been for the barrage of moans, complaints and grumbles for the past 10 or 15 years no one would have realised how hated they were and they could have been left there.

Actually St Martin's have made some effort to repair their tarnished image by planting shrubs and what not in the beds round the trees in the forecourt, and replanting the space left by the felled sycamore. The two chestnuts at the front do not however look very happy. They changed colour and lost their leaves quite a time before the others. It is not a good sign. It may have been the concrete but the mere fact of raising the level of the earth round them when the beds were made would have a bad effect on them. Established trees do not like this. It would be ironic as well as sad if we lost them at this stage.

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I SUPPOSE it's just possible that one day the road I live in will be free of builders hammering away, Gas Board people digging up little bits (at random, it seems), the Water Board and Telephone people lending a hand — possible, but I'm beginning to think it highly unlikely. To make matters worse, we've got builders working on both sides of our house; incidentally it would be interesting to know where builders go to in between their short bursts of energy on any particular job. Does anyone know of a nice quiet cave we could move into for the next few years? Alternatively, I suppose I could invest in a JCB and join in the fun myself.

Lunch Breaks

On the other hand, there are some nice things going on in Caversham. I recently visited the Lower Caversham Lunch Club in the old school meals centre in Wolsey Road and discovered a group of people busy serving meals to some of our older residents. The Club, which was started by the Social Welfare authorities some 12

years ago, meets on Mondays and Thursdays, except Bank Holidays, between 11.30 and 1.30 and people are welcome to come to one or both. For 60p they get a good lunch supplied from the Prospect Day Centre, and for an extra 10p tea and biscuits, the latter actually yielding a profit which is used for Christmas parties.

Though some people are recommended to the Club by their GPs or the social services, this isn't necessary and anyone who feels they could benefit from this service — somebody who is normally house-bound for instance — is welcome to apply to Mrs Heather Langford (Tel: 472121) about the Monday Club or to Mrs Pauline Underwood (Tel: 475419) for the Thursday one. Transport can be provided from anywhere in Caversham. Both sessions still have a few vacancies. But the

Thursday Club, in particular, does need more helpers and Mrs Underwood would be very glad to hear of any volunteers.

Animal Rescue

Some readers will have seen in the local press of the retirement of Doris Gash, who for years ran the animal sanctuary in Tilehurst, Dave Bryant and his wife have now taken over the running of the sanctuary from their home at 79 Queen's Road, Caversham (Tel: 475514). At the moment they are unable to take in stray dogs or cats but anyone is welcome to phone for advice. I've not had time to visit Mr and Mrs Bryant yet, but hope to do so before long. In the meantime Mrs Bryant would like to remind readers that in the case of strays or lost animals one can always phone Petwatch (665918) or contact Radio 210. I do think Mr and Mrs Bryant are to be congratulated on taking on such a big job and wish them well in this venture.

Lost and Found

There has to be some perks about writing this column, one being that I'm in the almost unique position of being able to send personal messages. This time I'd like to thank the person who kindly handed in the handbag I left lying around in Liptons recently. Who he or she was I don't know, but I'm eternally grateful, so many thanks, whoever you are.

Changes at Liptons

While on the subject, I must say how sorry I am to hear that four of the

very friendly check-out staff have just left Liptons. Almost without exception they are efficient and helpful, though heaven knows how they manage to keep so cheerful; if I was on that job I think the scenes would be reminiscent of "Tripper's Day", the last TV series Leonard Rossiter made before his recent death. Anyway, it seems some of the girls will be turning up at Waitrose when it opens, so we shan't be losing sight of them.

Caversham Horticultural Society

Next year it's hoped to give more than a brief mention of some of the organisations existing in Caversham, mostly run by volunteers. But in the meantime I've been asked to mention the Horticultural Society which would very much welcome new members. Among other things they put on three flower and vegetable shows a year, have open meetings with talks every other month in Church House and run a "shed", open on alternate Saturdays and Sundays, at the bottom of Hemdean Road, for the sale of such items such as seeds, compost and so on. On December 8 at 7.30 they are running a Christmas Party at St Andrew's Hall (£2 for adults and £1 for children) and on Tuesday, December 11 at 7.30 the Caversham Allotment Holders' Association are organising a talk on Christmas Decorations at St John's Hall. I should add that the Society also issues a monthly bulletin to members containing not only details of activities but masses

of topical advice to gardeners. For a very small subscription, membership would be worthwhile for any gardener in the district, so if you're interested, why not turn up at one of the events mentioned or at the shed, or contact the General Secretary, Mr West, at Flat 4, Mander Court, Derby Road (477816).

Scout Hut renamed in founder's memory

It's good to commemorate local people, and the Scout Hut in Emmer Green is now named after the founder, Freddie Knight. The ceremony was held on October 7, and the hall is now to be known as the Skipper Knight Scout Hall. A tree was planted and a plaque unveiled to mark the occasion.

A new market for Caversham

On Friday, November 16, a new indoor market opened in Caversham Hall, off Gosbrook Road. It is a weekly market, the brainchild of two enterprising Caversham ladies, who felt that there were not enough opportunities for people wanting to set up their own small businesses. The market is run on commercial lines, with stalls ranging from crafts to bric-a-brac and wholefoods to clothes. Most are run by people working from home, with a family to look after, and with this in mind, there is a creche available.

The creche is principally for the stall holders' children, but shoppers are welcome to leave their children on their own responsibility. Tea and fresh coffee is also available with delicious home-cooked biscuits and cakes.

Viv Pheasant and Anne Milner, who are running the market, are very pleased with the response so far. It seems that there is a need for the sort of opportunity in Caversham, both for good value shopping, and for selling. They are always interested in hearing from anyone with good ideas for new stalls and are at the market from 9.15am to 2.45pm every Friday.

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SECOND QUARTERLY MEETING AT BAPTIST CHURCH CENTRE

HEAR PETER KINGSTON, BRITISH DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS for WYCLIFFE BIBLE TRANSLATORS at Caversham Baptist Church Centre on Saturday, December 8 at 8pm.

Peter Kingston, his wife Shirley and their three children have spent 14 years in Brazil translating the Scriptures for the Mamainde people, a group of seminomadic Amazonian Indians. After an absence of six years, Peter and his eldest son John, visited the Mamainde this year for three months, returning to this country in September. He is the British Director of Communications for Wycliffe Translators, based at Horsley Green, High Wycombe, and is an Elder of his church and chairman of the mission board (Gold Hill Baptist Church).

(Information by courtesy of Wycliffe Bible Translators)



Peter Kingston
— Courtesy of Wycliffe Bible Translators

WE HAVE again reached the time of year when there will be a noticeable increase in the number of people running around the streets of Reading at all times of the day and night. The 1985 Digital Reading Half Marathon was launched on October 3 and a l r e a d y thousands of entries have been received. As in the previous two years, a great deal of support is coming from local people and the majority of the early entries were from people in the Reading area. This year the entry is being strictly limited to the first 6,000 and in any case the entry will close on February 1, 1985; so if you stood by and watched the race last year and promised yourself

that you would take part this year — now is the time to act. Firstly enter for the race and then start training for the big day on March 24. If you start now, even if you have never run before, you have got time to prepare sufficiently to get you round the 13.1 mile course without distress.

This time the British Sports Association for the Disabled will again be the main charity supported by the event. All money raised by BSAD will go towards three special local projects, all connected with teaching and training physically handicapped and educationally sub-normal children.

These are:

1, The Avenue

School, Basingstoke Road, Reading. Project — Re-tile and improve the school swimming pool.

2, Hephaistos School, Farley Castle, Farley Hill, Reading. Project — Provide a "Pro-Plus" exercise system for the gymnasium.

3, Addington School, Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, Reading. Project — Help towards providing a swimming pool.

It is hoped that many runners will be sponsored for the BSAD and thus help these very important schools. Of course, many will be running for other charities and as always the organisers are glad to encourage this aspect of the run.

The course will follow basically the same route as last year although there will be one or two

minor alterations because of new traffic and road closure arrangements around the town.

In addition to the "Fun Run" element of the race, special prizes are being awarded to the better athletes in the hope of attracting some of the well-known runners in the athletic world to the Reading event. Last year's winner, Mike Hurd, has already agreed

to run and special saying "farewell" to invites have been the chairman of the given to the winners Reading Sports of all the other local Council, Robin Half Marathons Sharp, Reading is such as the Henley, about to lose Courage, Wokingham, etc. has contributed much to the sport-

If you want some help and over the last five encouragement years. Iain Moir, the with your training sports advisor at don't forget there the University, is are some special moving from Caversham in the New floodlight at Palmer Year to take up an Park every Monday appointment at Birmingham University. Around 500 people a week are taking advantage of this training and it is ideal if you are a little self-conscious about starting your first running steps from your own front door. If you join in the Palmer Park sessions you will find people of every possible running standard and all ages, from the very beginner to the reasonably experienced runner.

ANOTHER LOSS TO SPORT

Shortly after

Iain has been involved with many aspects of sport in Reading and for several years has been secretary of the Reading Sports Council. He has also been a member of the Digital Reading Half Marathon committee and has done an enormous amount of work to help with the success of that event. Reading's loss is Birmingham's gain and we wish Iain and his family well in their new surroundings.

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