

FESTIVAL TIME IN READING

By Zoilus

IT WAS in 1981 that Tony Smith, Reader in History at the University of Reading decided that Reading ought to have its own Festival of the Arts. As he was a senior figure at the University it was natural that the first conception should be of a Whiteknights based organisation and he enlisted the help of Lord Sherfield, the Chancellor who was to be an enthusiastic President of the newly formed Reading Festival Society. And it was he who was largely responsible for enlisting the backing of a formidable array of national figures as Patrons — from Sir John Betjeman to the Duke of Wellington. Meanwhile Tony and the committee worked hard in securing financial backing from many local firms, notably Metal Box and

Huntley and Palmers (and now, as Nabisco the biscuit firm is still a valued supporter). Meanwhile Murray Edwards, then the Director of the Hexagon became the artistic adviser and the backing of Reading Council was secured and they became, and still are, a vital partner in the venture.

So on a bright Sunday morning in May 1982 the Reading Festival was launched with a choral service at St Mary's Church attended by all the great and the good in the district, followed by a reception. In the evening the scene shifted to the Hexagon where a charity gala concert was held in the presence of Princess Alexandra and a multitude of local and national celeb-

rities. The Festival had rocketed off to a glittering start (and it was to end with a giant firework display by the Civic Centre), and for the next two weeks Reading became a mini-Edinburgh with a heady mixture of art and entertainment ranging from performances by the English Chamber Orchestra and pianist Andre Tchaikowsky to the Medieval Players and an all night Jazz Festival.

Enough support and enthusiasm was shown for this first venture with top market local arts festivals for the organiser to plan a follow-up in 1983, with Tony Smith still at the helm.

With continuing support from Reading Council, the University and many firms and individuals this important feature of the town's cultural life has gone from strength to strength and now we are all looking forward to the 1985 Festival. It hasn't been too easy to follow the magnificent programme of 1982, but the standard is still high and ratepayers will be interested to know that last year's event made a small profit!

Caversham has figured in the planning for each year, Caversham Court being the usual

venue for some of the outside shows, notably the gala picnic when the Festival goes gay (in the traditional way!) and this year the theme will be "School Days".

So there is plenty of scope for local Peter Pans to prance about in short trousers or gym slips. Some years there has been a concert in St Peter's Church and perhaps something of the kind will be arranged for this May. But in Reading there are some very attractive events including a choral concert at the Hexagon with the Pro Arte Orchestra, a performance by the Handel Opera Society, a Viennese evening with the

Philharmonia Orchestra, a concert by Glen Miller's band, the Kings Singers — but there are more good things than can be listed here, and the programmes will be sent out by the time you read this.

All good Festivals have a Fringe — light entertainment that although not part of the official Festival, is organised by supporters on an ad hoc basis. The Fringe looks as though it will be particularly ambitious this year and we may find Reading holding its own Mardi Gras with the streets filled with colourful performers, parades and cardboard figures

called Ziggerats, to bring carnival to the Thames Valley.

This year the Reading Arts Festival has a running association with the West Reading Community Festival which has operated from West Reading for some years and pleased us all with its Carnival Procession, street parties, youth activities and involvement with the happy West Indian community based on the Oxford Road. This will follow the Arts Festival starting on May 24 and there is a possibility that in future years the two organisations will amalgamate and operate as one bumper Reading Festival. But for this year we can look forward to May and June as a time of fiesta, when Reading shakes off its reputation in the leisure world as a place where nothing happens.

JOYOUS EASTER GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS

ELLIOTT'S' APPRENTICES

FOUR Elliotts of Reading apprentices have been given awards by the Reading College of Technology and the Annual Presentation of Prizes and Certificates took place on Thursday, February 7 at the College.

Certificate in Building Studies Course.

Local lad Tony Evans, (third from left) a joiner, was awarded the Henry Stradling Rose Bowl for the best apprentice at Advanced Craft Certificate Level.

Another local lad, Terry Brant, (first on left), was awarded the Lionel Elliott Trust Award for Machine Woodworking Apprentices.

Jeremy Ellis, a trainee estimator, was awarded the Metal Box Prize for the best student at level II of the Business and Technician Education Council National

Tim Parsons was awarded one of four prizes given by the Reading and Newbury District Local Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee for carpentry and joinery.

In addition to these prizes, and in recognition of their achievements each of the award winners was presented with a cheque by Mr Brian Warren, Managing Director, on behalf of the Company.

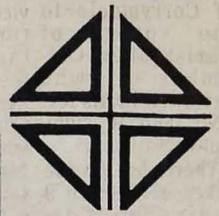
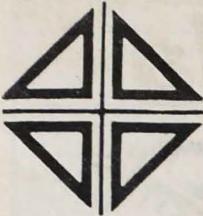


Left to right: Terry Brant, Mr Brian Warren, Tony Evans, Tim Parsons and Jeremy Ellis — Walton Adams

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HARMONY AT CORRYMEELA SERVICE

THE CARDINAL'S QUESTION



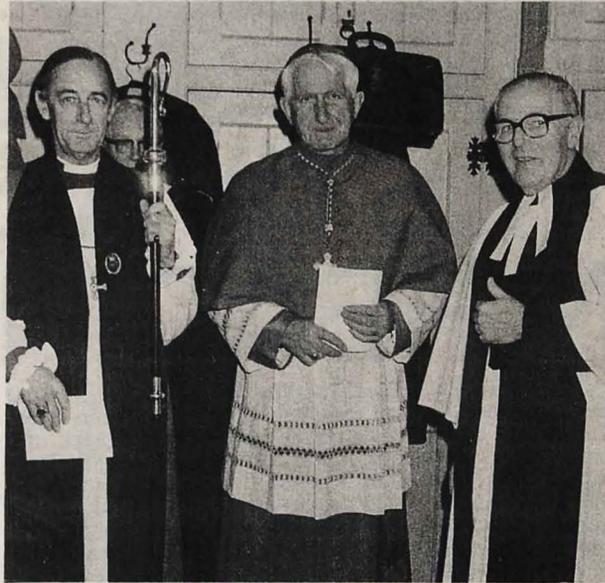
"IS IT naive to suggest that socio-economic problems, national and international conflicts, can be solved by applying the second commandment — to love your neighbour as yourself?" This question of naivety was asked by H. E. Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, in his address at the Annual Ecumenical Service for the Corrymeela Community on March 3 at the Minster Church of St Mary-the-Virgin, in Reading. His question proved to be rhetorical as he

replied: "It is naive to base government on anything else."

Corrymeela Link: Cardinal Hume has been a Patron of Corrymeela Link since its inception in 1976. Corrymeela Link is the appointed agent of the Corrymeela Community on this side of the Irish Sea. The Link sees its role as that of servicing existing support and encouraging new support for the work of Corrymeela. It does this through the dissemination of information with a comprehensive collection of educative (in the broadest

sense) materials. With an office and committee based in Reading, Corrymeela Link has a network of contacts all over Britain. The complexity of the Northern Irish situation must never be underestimated, and in its educative programme the Link is attempting to unravel some of the strands. As a result of this work, support for the Corrymeela Community is both spiritual and financial.

Corrymeela Sunday: Corrymeela Link asks Churches and Meetings up and down the country to mark the Sun-



■ The Right Rev Graham Foley, Bishop of Reading, with Cardinal Hume and Father Gerald Restall at St Mary's Butts church.

Photo courtesy Evening Post.

Venture" and closed at the end of two successful years, passing the baton on to us in Reading. The very imaginative and beautiful "Croi" (Irish for heart) was built, and is used not only for worship but for many activities which bring people together.

Sailing on in faith: The heart of Corrymeela is indeed worship.

Its founder, the Revd Dr Ray Davey, is very aware of the power of Christian community, and at its opening Pastor Tulio Vinay of Italy's Agape Community, said that Corrymeela must be a question mark to the Churches. Ray has always been concerned that Corrymeela should not be seen as another sect in a land beleaguered by sectarianism and division, but as a place where people of all ages and backgrounds learn to ask questions of one another, of their own church, and of their society — and to listen to the answers. In his book "Take away this hate" Ray likens the journey

day immediately before St Patrick's Day as Corrymeela Sunday. They are asked to focus their thoughts and prayers on the work of healing and reconciliation to which the Corrymeela Community feels itself to be called, both in its own society and throughout the world. Each year a major town or city is chosen as a main focal point. An ecumenical service is held and local dignitaries are invited with patrons of the Link, as well as representatives of the Corrymeela Community. In the past the focal points have been in London, Glasgow, Liverpool, Southampton, Coventry, and this year Newcastle upon Tyne. Another Sunday in March is chosen for a Reading based service because of the Reading connection. It has been the custom to invite one of the Link's Patrons to be the guest preacher. Cardinal Hume has always indicated his desire to be with us, but it has taken some years for us to find a mutually convenient date. 1985 — the Community's 20th year — will be designated "The

year of the Archbishops' because The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Runcie, another Patron, preached in Newcastle on Corrymeela Sunday!

Support from Britain: Although Corrymeela Link was only founded in 1976, support from mainland Britain began when Coventry Cathedral, recognising the work for peace which was being undertaken by the Corrymeela Community, made it the first member of Coventry's world-

wide Cross of Nails fellowship. The Cathedral raised money to build a staff house and conference centre at Corrymeela's residential site near Ballycastle in Co Antrim, in the early 1970s. Then two churches in the Paddington area of London set themselves the task of raising £40,000 over two years to build a worship centre to replace a rather battered tent which had draughtily played the part for 10 years. This group was called "The London Corrymeela

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of Corrymeela to the voyage of Christopher Columbus who recorded in his log: "No land in sight, but we sail on".

There, but by the Grace of God: In 9 years the Corrymeela Link has been enabled by the wonderful support of men and women of goodwill all over Britain, to hand over in excess of £200,000 to the Community. Last year Corrymeela House, which had been rented from Queen's University in Belfast, was bought for £45,000 so that the vital follow-up work in the city could continue. The spiritual support is incalculable, but it is greatly appreciated by the Community, who can feel very isolated in the war-torn province, in their work for peace. In our prayer suggestions we ask that you pray not only for peace workers, leaders in the community, the clergy and the churches, for the victims of violence and the bereaved, but also for the men and women of violence: they too contain a spark of the Creator.

Celebration and Agony: That thought brings me back, at last, (what a garrulous lot we Irish are, to be sure) to Cardinal Hume's address. The ser-

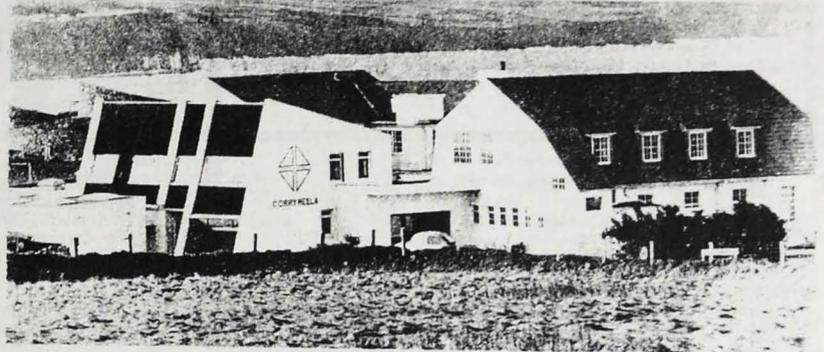
vice was a celebration, an hour of thanksgiving, for the vision and work of the Corrymeela Community. It was a time to thank God for the hope and faith, for the love of a small group who are battling against the world's odds, day in and day out. And yet, the Cardinal walked to the pulpit with a heavy tread, in his face was a look of pain: his opening words brought the reality of Ireland's suffering into our midst. He referred to the Newry mortar attack on the R.U.C. station where nine police officers died, and another was shot at point-blank range that very morning. Basil Hume identified as a man with the agony and distress of man's inhumanity to man; he grieved with the bereaved and empathised with the grief of the families who had lost a loved and cherished member. With the Irish Bishops he condemned the violence and reminded us of the plea of Pope John Paul at Drogheda for an end to violent methods. Historical justification shuts out the hope of repentance and therefore of forgiveness, repentance and forgiveness on which a society based on

love can be built. Love is not just a feeling, but a deep understanding of the special contribution of every individual who expresses a unique facet of God. This, Cardinal Hume said, was the work of the Corrymeela Community as it laboured to discover a better way, God's way. The Cardinal's words, though quiet, were powerful, and spoke to us all, exhorting us to see ourselves and our fellow-men through God's eyes, as loved individuals, never as a crowd, to believe the words of encouragement, the compassionate face of Christ whose concern is for the weak and the sinners. As we grow in understanding we should be prepared to change, to become missionaries of love, to live the Gospel, to open ourselves to God and therefore to one another.

After such an address the service moved into a higher gear, and the 850-strong congregation, many of whom had come quite a distance (a number of whom had come across the river from the wilds of Caversham) felt able to join in those powerful words: "Break down the walls that separate us, and unite us in a single body" as we

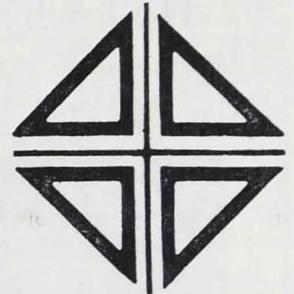
Corrymeela

... is the Gaelic word which means THE HILL OF HARMONY



CORRYMEELA is a Community of about 130 men and women, mostly lay, of all Christian denominations who annually dedicate themselves to be INSTRUMENTS OF GOD'S PEACE.

All the work undertaken by the Corrymeela Community is an attempt to work out their commitment in their society to heal the breaches — social, political and religious — in Northern Ireland today.



WHERE IS CORRYMEELA?

CORRYMEELA'S OPEN VILLAGE

On the windswept and beautiful North Antrim coast near Ballycastle is Corrymeela's residential centre where over 100 people can be accommodated in the various areas on the site.

There is Coventry House, the Main House, the Youth Village and the Cottages. All these are brought together by An Croi (pronounced "cree") another Gaelic word meaning "the heart". This beautiful and imaginative building is the worship and communal centre. In it the different groups staying on the site can meet and share.

CORRYMEELA HOUSE

In Belfast, situated near the University in one of Belfast's few mixed areas, is the non-residential nerve centre of Corrymeela's city work. It, like the Ballycastle Centre, is a place of meeting, a place of hope and peace. As well as the secretarial staff, Corrymeela House is the base for Corrymeela's community worker and youth worker.

ALL OVER NORTHERN IRELAND

The work of Corrymeela can never be confined by walls or limited to localities. Its influence is boundless and is spreading all the time through members, friends, helpers and the many people who visit Corrymeela each year.

celebrated our differences, with renewed understanding of the vitality of those differences.

Bind us together:

We were all there at that service: Anglicans and Roman Catholics, Baptists and Methodists, Quakers and United Reformed, to mention but a few, brought together by the vision of a small group of concerned students and their University Chaplain, Ray Davey, who founded the Corrymeela Community in 1965, and the presence of a Man of God, H. E. Cardinal Basil Hume, whose simple yet profound message made a nonsense of the wisdom of the world. "Live the Gospel, love God, love your neighbour as you love yourself". Naive? According to my Concise Oxford Dictionary, "Naive: artless, unaffected, amusingly simple". This sort of living demands all — total commitment, to my mind a lifetime's work, but the only way.

ANN VARMA

For further information about Corrymeela, please contact: Corrymeela Link, P.O. Box 118, Reading RG1 1SL (Tel: 589800).

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By WATCHDOG

Decay in all around

ONE of the Holm oak trees in St Martin's Precinct has, alas, succumbed at last to ill treatment and by the time you read this

will have disappeared. These two trees were all that remained of Caversham House Academy where Francis Knighton and his son held sway as respected schoolmas-

ters in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. About six years ago St Martin's Property Corporation saw fit, for reasons best known to themselves, to build a raised bed round one of the Holm oaks and some of the other trees in the precinct, a procedure that in almost all cases, guarantees the eventual demise of the tree. Last summer's concrete was simply the last straw, and bores taken showed that the interior of the tree had crumbled to dust. A dangerous tree order was consequently served on the owners.

St Martin's, their borrowed conservation garments sitting strangely upon them, shed crocodile tears at the news that their beloved tree was to go at the behest of a hard-hearted local authority, but finding that this stance, plus the requirements of the Tree Preservation Order legislation, meant that a felled tree had to be replaced, have agreed to plant another tree, most probably an English oak, to replace it. A Holm oak of a kind suitable for planting in this public spot, can only be obtained from Italy. Mr Knighton, of course, grew his in the privacy of his garden.

The other Holm oak, which was not suffocated, is fortunately healthy. Some of the chestnuts need branches removing and the sycamores at the back are past their peak.

not helped by having been imprisoned first in raised beds and then in concrete. These will remain for a few more years until a new semi-mature tree, of a higher social class than a sycamore, which is to be planted near them, has grown to a suitable size to hold its own.

The group of people who came to the rescue of these trees back in the summer of last year will be disappointed that their efforts came too late. However if it had not been for the attention their actions brought to bear on the matter, St Martin's would have been their usual intransigent selves.

Pavements and Playgrounds

It is not only trees that fall victims to age and damage. Pavements also suffer, as a recent issue of this newspaper pointed out, and particularly bad is the upstream side of Caversham Bridge. The Residents' Association complained about it and in his reply the Director of Technical Services agreed that their remarks were entirely justified. He has requested funding for its complete reconstruction, its being beyond patching up, from the County Council, but was not even expecting a reply from his letter till the end of March (this was January). It looks like being months at least, if not more than a

year, before it will be safe to walk over the bridge admiring the view instead of making sure you haven't put your foot down a hole.

It will certainly be years before anything is done about deteriorating equipment in local playing fields. For the most part it is either broken or has been removed in the interests of safety. The play area in Westfield Road, formerly heavily used as it is in an area of small gardens, is in a particularly sorry state. The acting Leisure Officer said, in reply to the Residents' Association's letter, that he had plans to upgrade children's playgrounds throughout the borough, and this was one of those on the list for improvement. Equipment incorporating the latest designs for safety and creative play would be installed in due course.

So wait for it, kids, because that is exactly what you'll have to do. You'll be lucky if you get it before 1987, by which time some of you will have left playgrounds behind you for the younger fry. Two years is a long time in the life of a child.

Chiltern Edge Transport

Children seem to be getting the rough edge of cuts in local government expenditure all along the line. Parents living in the

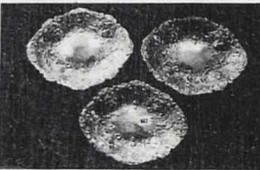
outer areas of Caversham which were formerly in Oxfordshire are up in arms at Berkshire's decision to chaire to provide transport for their children to get to Chiltern Edge School, on the grounds that it is under three miles to get there. As there is no public transport between the Woodcote Road area and Chiltern Edge, this means the children must either walk or their parents must take them by car. Not all parents have a car and for those who have it is not necessarily available to do a twice daily journey into Oxfordshire. The walk is dangerous as the roads have no footpaths for most of their way, and if there are alternative stretches where the traffic is lighter, these are very lonely, particularly on winter evenings. Even if parents are prepared and able to accompany their children, which would entail walking nearly twelve miles each day, this would not guarantee their safety as lack of footpaths makes walking dangerous for anyone.

These parents mostly have no choice where they send their children as Highdown can only take a few of them. The County Council should think again. Most parents would be prepared to pay a reasonable fare to allow their children to use the bus. It is safety rather than cost that is their

Hemdean Valley

The Caversham Residents' Association's representative at the public inquiry into the smaller site in Hemdean Valley, that adjacent to the built-up area with outline consent already granted, put up a good case and showed what an important contribution could be made by someone with intimate local knowledge. She was also able to espy the deliberate use of context of a letter from the Civic Society, who were unable to be present. There is obviously no substitute for actually being present at a public inquiry, as has been seen on every occasion when the Residents' Association has been personally represented. It does, though, depend on someone being available in normal working hours, and this rules out many people. For the inquiry into the large site a massive turnout will make all the difference.

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EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

THE first Annual General Meeting of the Emmer Green Residents' Association will be held on Thursday April 11, 1985 at 8pm at St Barnabas Church Hall, Grove Road, Emmer Green, and in addition to existing members, all newcomers are most welcome.

Since the formation of the Association last year membership has increased to over one hundred and sixty families and continues to grow. The aim of the Association

is to ensure, as far as possible, that the development and amenities of Emmer Green and district are in the best interests of the residents of the area.

In this respect the Association is in close liaison with the Caversham Residents' Association, and their interests are often to the mutual benefit of their respective members.

As members are aware, the Associ-

ation is currently concerned with the proposed construction of the Third Reading Bridge and the proposed development of five hundred houses in Hemdean Bottom, and these items together with other matters of concern, will be discussed at the forthcoming meeting. Your own support would be most welcome and further details would be gladly supplied by either the secretary, Alan Perrin (Reading 474625) or the chairman, David Miles (Reading 475576).

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STATEMENT BY THE RECTOR OF CAVERSHAM AND MAPLEDURHAM

Divorce and Re-marriage

AT ITS recent session the General Synod of the Church of England decided that the decision whether to permit marriage in church of anyone who has a partner still living (ie is divorced) should be left to the individual parish incumbent.

Several inquiries from couples who fall into this category. It may be helpful to state publicly what effect General Synod's decision will have on this parish. Since the responsibility

rests with the incumbent, I wish to make it clear that in Caversham and Mapledurham there will be no change in policy.

priest can conduct a wedding ceremony for a couple, one of whom has been divorced. Acting as Registrar, he is empowered to conduct the full ceremony according to the rites of

the established Church of England. I shall continue to exercise this right in civil law only in the most exceptional circumstances. The general policy will remain that the

Church's teaching will be adhered to — that marriage is indissoluble. I shall continue to offer the service of Blessing and Thanksgiving after a civil marriage ceremony. I do this in the belief (strengthened by experience) that such a Service of Blessing offers the couple a rich and full opportunity to rejoice before God and their families and friends as they embark upon what they intend to be a lasting commitment to each other in marriage. As far as I am concerned, the Bishop of Oxford's expectation that his clergy will continue to maintain the Church's discipline still holds firm: "In order to maintain the principle of lifelong obligation which is inherent in every legally contracted marriage and is

expressed in the plainest terms in the Marriage Service, the Church should not allow the use of that service in the case of anyone who has a former partner still living."

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This remains the policy of the Church of England in this parish. To leave it to the parish priest, as Synod in effect has done, is to make geographical residence the key factor and is grossly unfair and inept in a matter of such vital importance both to a couple seeking a second marriage and to a principle which merits a consistent policy in a supposedly national church.

Richard Kingsbury
(Rector)

Already I have had

In civil law a parish

TO POLAND WITH LOVE

By Chris Justice,
Pastor of Caversham Hill Chapel

I HAVE never personally taken a particular interest in the nation of Poland — no more than in any other country — so it was quite a surprise to me when, in October 1983, I received an invitation to visit that country and speak to a group of pastors in the evangelical church there. The church at Caversham Hill Chapel has been involved for a number of years with John Thorne, a Reading man, who has been visiting Christians in Poland since 1968. And it was through John that Jeff How-

den, the pastor of the Lodden Vale Fellowship on the south side of Reading, and I were invited to go and see the situation for ourselves.

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So, in October 1984, Jeff and I visited Warsaw, the capital, for four days. During that time we got to know the pastor of the evangelical church in Warsaw, Pastor Tadeusz Jarosz, and spent most of the time preaching, and teaching a group of readers who had come to Warsaw

that weekend. Then, we were invited to go back for a longer visit. So it was that, in February this year, Jeff and I left for Poland again, this time to stay for twelve days.

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We arrived in Warsaw on January 30. After sharing a meal and a communion service with the Christians in Warsaw, we were taken to the railway station and put on a train for a nine and a half hour overnight journey (not to be recommended!) to the south-west of Poland. We arrived at Jelenia Gora, a town situated close to the border with Czechoslovakia, at 7.30 in the morning. We were met by a group of young people's leaders and taken to a house in the countryside, where we were to spend the first eight days of our stay.

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There we met with a group of about twenty young people and their leaders for a week of teaching, counselling and fellowship. The teaching, about "The Kingdom of God" was received enthusiastically by the young people who shared a clear desire to experience the rule of God in their lives. Most days we sat into the early hours of the next morning shar-

ing with individuals the good news about Jesus — how we can be absolutely sure of eternal life as we come to him and trust our lives to him. It was thrilling to see a number of the teenagers open their lives up to the Lord and receive him as their Lord and Saviour.

At the end of our time in Jelenia Gora we travelled back (through the night again!) to Warsaw. We were greeted by temperatures of 25°F and were grateful for all the warm clothes we had taken with us.

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In Warsaw we met with a group of twenty-five pastors who had come from all over Poland to be with us for the weekend. We taught them from ten in the morning until six in the evening each day and were delighted to be able to serve them in this way. They received our words with such obvious gratitude that Jeff and I were really overwhelmed.

Materially, the people are quite poor — the average wage is the equivalent of £25 a month — and fresh foods and petrol are rationed.

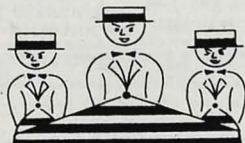
Many of the things that you and I would consider "everyday items" are impossible to obtain there. So the gifts we took from our churches, of chocolate, women's tights, socks, ball

point pens, razors etc were very gratefully received. The spiritual need is also great. We encountered a great hunger for the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ. How he can forgive us and give us the certainty of eternal life — and not because of what WE do, but because of his strong love and grace that can hold us once we have received him as Saviour and Lord.

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I consider it a privilege to have had the opportunity to visit our brothers and sisters in Poland — and thank the Lord for it. We are now praying about what our future involvement should be.

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW

HAVING just typed the "Calendar of Events" for Caversham Methodist Church, it is a revelation to find that between March and September the church, in some form or other, is involved in some 56 separate events, not including regular Church services except for a few special ones. These events include, outings for the ladies, BB Camp in Holland, Band events as far afield as Nottingham and Sheffield, training weekends for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Group, Circuit events and a concert by The Sainsbury Singers. This large calendar can make some arduous tasks, but these are vastly outweighed by the joy and sense of belonging one finds in joining in these events.



During the last few months the outside of the hall has changed considerably, as the men have been building a large patio and wall, which will enhance the look of the premises tremendously. A ramp has been built for wheelchair access as the first part of a project to "up-date" the premises. Work inside the ancillary buildings will continue as funds become available.

On Saturday February 23 Rev Alan Elgar and his wife Pat came to the church to lead the Overseas Missions evening. They spoke about their work in

Zimbabwe. Alan Elgar is now Minister of Whitley Hall and Wesley Methodist churches.

The Ambassador Colour Guard have improved greatly in their "Winter Guard" competitions, starting with a score of 11, they then moved up to a score of 22 and at Hemel Hempstead on March 3 they increased their score to 32.4. This gave them a second place and a trophy to bring home. Congratulations to all for the tremendous amount of hard work and time which has been given.

Ladies from the church joined other Caversham ladies for the Women's World Day of Prayer service at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. This was a beautiful service and the message given by Mrs Thornhill from The New Testament Church of God was very well received. It was a joy to share in the service with other Christians in Caversham.

News from America

Rev Herbert Glenn writes: "We, just last week — New Year's Day to be exact — had a severe ice storm. Ice froze on even the tall grasses in the field until the blades were thicker with ice than pencils. The weight of a ¼ inch thickness of ice on every twig and tree limb and electrical wire caused many to break; and so in our County of Oakland, where it was worst, thousands of homes had no electricity and

we had none in our house (manse) from 8.30am January 1 through 4pm Sunday January 6. Since everything in our house is either cooked with electricity or controlled by electricity except the gas water heater, we had no heat for all of that time except the fireplace in the basement.

That meant that the inside temperature went down to 38°F and the basement, because of the fire, about 50°F.



For some reason the electricity remained on in the Church for all of this time, so we opened it up for anyone who wished refuge. We called the 24 hour News Station of Detroit, and the local police station, and we kept people who brought their own sleeping bags and blankets and cots. Olive-Mae and I, with the help of several of our parishioners, and with food we already had in our Church's emergency food closet, served three hot meals a day throughout the emergency period.

Everything is back to normal now and we have about six inches of snow."

Rev Herb and Mrs Olive-Mae Glenn live in Pontiac, Michigan, where he is Pastor of Central United Methodist Church. They send their regards and love to all their friends in Caversham.



Central United Methodist Church — Pontiac proved to be a refuge from the cold this winter.



Members laying the patio outside the Church Hall.

— Eunice Cooper

SNOWDROP TIME IN MAPLEDURHAM

THE January hard weather, the snow and the ice made access to St Margaret's by way of the hill impassable. Not deterred, most of the congregation accepted the kind hospitality of St Andrew's on two Sundays. We appreciate the warm welcome which they received and also the warm church temperature, a contrast to that of St Margaret's!

At last they were able to return to St Margaret's, most of the snow having gone, revealing a carpet of snowdrops. At one Family Eucharist they were inspired to sing about these snowdrops.

Why do snowdrops come so early

When is it cold to grow?

They are messengers from heaven

God is love you know

Thank Him, praise Him for His tender care

He will make us like the snowdrops pure and fresh and fair.

ST JOHN'S NOTES

ST JOHN'S new organist is Len David. He comes from Reading and he and his wife Rachel live at 50 Beecham Road, in West Reading. He had a variety of jobs before deciding in 1979 he would make a complete change. Len had already taken an external music course with Trinity College, London, and he entered the London College of Music as a mature student. First Len studied the piano and organ. However he wanted to be able to play with orchestras, so he added the clarinet and saxophone to his studies.

By 1982 he was an Associate of the London College of Music (AICM) and he was also qualified to teach music. Len plans to help with St John's choir. He is also ready to play hymns "by request" as part of the prelude to the Sunday morning service. If there is a hymn which has a special significance because it is associated with a particular event in your life — a wedding, confirmation or funeral perhaps, and you would like it played on that anniversary then do tell Len.



His "hobby music" is "tramp jazz" and 1920s-40s tunes, and he has a great interest in opera. Len's other hobby is 1950's MGs and motorbikes, and their bits and pieces. The pride of the collection is a 1947 Matchless 350, as used in the second world war. Rachel is a signwriter and she and Len once set out on holiday to Turkey on a 1945 model. The dynamo failed at Dover, and they had no lights to help them through the European road tunnels. The whole bike "more or less" blew up at Dubrovnik, and they all three had to come home.

Len and Rachel run their own business. It is pleasant to be able to report it is coming along nicely.

★ ★ ★

Linda Sheosmith passed her Nursery Nursing Examination Board in February. Linda has overcome several accidents and periods of ill health while she has been studying and St John's congratulate her on her success.



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ROUND THE CHURCHES

NEWS FROM THE HILL CHAPEL



■ Conductor Norman Morris and his Phoenix Choir in St Peter's Church. — E. S. Archer

The Phoenix Choir in St Peter's

THE superbly blending voices of the Reading Phoenix Choir, conducted by Norman Morris, delighted a large audience in St Peter's Church on March 2. The programme varied from the section of sacred music, including the exciting "Jesus and the Traders" and the moving "Crucifixus", through Folk songs, to the light-hearted "Going to the Zoo" with appropriate mimes. The solo clarinet player, Anne Bray, and a hilarious behaved quartet of "travel agents" interspersed the choral works. The whole programme, from the opening solo singing of "Beauty for Ashes" as the Choir walked around the Church, was presented with warmth and good humour, reflected in the reception they received.

The Choir are to be thanked for their wonderful music. The evening raised approximately £200 towards the setting up, in Church House, of the planned co-ordination and "pop-in" centre. This will act as a focal point for local caring organisations, offering a wide range of help, and matching volunteers with needs. The Link Group and the Good Neighbour Scheme, jointly planning the Centre, are most grateful to the Phoenix Choir.

LIVING here in Caversham, it is easy for us to forget that God's family is worldwide, and that He is drawing people to Himself everywhere. So this month we were really encouraged to hear how the Church is being planted and established in Borneo.

Tom Hamblin, whose home is in Reading, has been working with the tribal church since 1975. It was then that the Lord clearly sent him to Borneo, with the knowledge that the work would be established in a decade. With those ten years almost up, we were thrilled to hear just some of what has been achieved during that time.

Over this last

year, Tom and his wife Edna have mainly been working in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, informing Christians there of the needs of Borneo and inspiring them to both pray and cross the cultural barrier for themselves. As Tom was able to send groups of Chinese people of all denominations into Borneo, many were so touched by the Holy Spirit that they didn't want to go home! Those who went to expound God's word to the tribal people were able to come into the very real experience of God's presence and power amongst them.

Tom told us of one man called Singah, called to be an evangelist to the tribal people. Singah

has a wife and five children, but felt God's call to a remote tribal area where one previous evangelist had already been poisoned. Without money, but in obedience, he approached the headman of the village and asked if he could rent a room. A room was available, but all previous occupants had committed suicide! Singah was not to be discouraged. Although he was well aware of the powers of evil spirits, he claimed the room for the Lord, and it was freed of the darkness which had engulfed it.



For six months he worked with the people, teaching

them how to grow better food for their families and learning the language. During this time the pagan practices continued — appeasing the spirits and orgies of drunkenness. Normally during these drunken orgies many village children died of neglect, but Singah and his wife worked ceaselessly to save them. The people were amazed! It opened the door to the wonderful Gospel of Light! In just two and a half years 2,400 tribal people were baptised, seven churches planted amongst them and their whole way of life changed!

This is just one example of the power of God over the evil one. Tom was able to share with us many miracles of God's power — pagan fetishes and charms being miraculously burnt up by fire, large groups of new Christians given gifts of tongues even before they had heard of the Holy Spirit, and many healings. How exciting to know that God does not change! We felt ourselves being challenged by Tom's visit to us. We must be open to God, to allow Him to work as He desires, and to give Him the glory when He does intercede.

MAPLEDURHAM NEWS

SUNDAY afternoon, February 3, saw a great gathering of people at Trench Green Hall to say farewell to Mrs Durrant who had lived in Mapledurham for some thirty years. How grateful many must have been that Judy Wright and other friends in the village had the wonderful idea to gather so many together for a goodbye tea party. All the many members of her family and numerous old friends from as far apart as Henley, Goring and Tilehurst came to wish Mrs Dur-

rant well for the future in her new home at Sonning Common.



Not since Mrs Crocker retired from Mapledurham Post Office has there been such a gathering. Everyone was most generous in bringing contributions to the sumptuous tea.

All good wishes for a long and happy time at Sonning Common, Mrs Durrant, and many thanks for your contributions to the life of the village which include looking

after St Margaret's Church so beautifully for many years.



Miss Brenda Coles

Those who remember the time in the late fifties and early sixties when the Reverend Coles lived at the Vicarage with his two maiden sisters will be sad to hear of the death of Brenda Coles. For many years she had survived her brother and sister at their home at Bexhill on Sea. For her life among them, those at Mapledurham are truly thankful.

ST ANNE'S NEWS

AT THE beginning of February the total in the Parish African Famine Appeal stood at £2,440.92. A Parish Dance was further to have boosted the fund but unfortunately had to be cancelled owing to a conflict of charities, both the band and the hall being double booked for other worthy causes! This leaves the family fast day (held on March 1) to add the final touch to the grand total; meanwhile half of every £1 membership fee paid to the parish social club will have

been donated to the Appeal as well.

Fund-raising activities for March have been aimed at local needs, with a Parents' Association Easter Fair hard on the heels of another parish sale; and, an example to us all, the social club has entered a fit team of four for the half-marathon: money from sponsors will go towards Hall improvements, needed before the elusive licence can be got.

Back to wider-ranging

topics: in a parish newsletter Fr Meagher encouraged parishioners, on the occasion of a parliamentary debate on the Warnock report, to protest and petition actively against the kind of "Brave New World" experimentation the report is concerned with. A bit remote from our ordinary parish lives? But we can't ignore the need for people like ourselves to speak out clearly about our beliefs; which new scientific discoveries and new legislation cannot invalidate or replace.

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Caversham Heights Methodist News

AS PART of the Church's 76th Anniversary Celebrations on Saturday, April 20, Hucclecote Methodist Church, Gloucester, are staging a performance of "Greater than Gold", a musical about Mary Jones and her Bible. There is a lot of audience participation, so it should be of appeal to all age groups.



"Greater than Gold" will be presented at 6.30pm in Caversham Heights Church and all friends in Caversham will be very welcome. There will be a retiring collection for the Bible Society.



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ROUND THE CHURCHES

BAPTIST NEWS Holy Writ

AT THE recent Annual General Meeting of the Church the Secretary, Mr Bernard Miller, opened his report by referring to 1984 as the year having sinister overtones arising from George Orwell's novel, but notwithstanding the prophecy of doom it passed happily for the Baptist Church. The roll of members rose to 158 — the highest number for many years. During the year five Services of Believers' Baptism were held when, as on other occasions, the congregations overflowed the normal seating — another prophet of Orwell's silk said the place would not be big enough.

During the year two of the younger mem-

bers had engaged in full-time Christian service overseas. Sally-Ann Ousley was accepted by Tear Fund for work in Bangladesh and Sue Sanders was working for Trans-World Radio in Monaco. At home the Minister, the Revd Dennis Wel-ler, had been elected Vice-President of the Berks Baptist Association and would take over as President at the next Annual Assembly in June 1985. Mrs Peggy Ide had been elected President of the Reading District Council and the "evergreen" Mr Leslie Wyeth had been made an honorary member of the Berks Baptist Association in recognition of his long service to the association and in particular to the

church at Brimpton where he was Lay-Pastor.

There had been no major changes in the pattern of church activities during the year. A measure of the vitality of the Church could be gauged from the fact that twenty-one organisations catering for all ages had submitted reports of their activities. Bible study by house-groups flourished throughout the year, there being four groups with an average weekly attendance totalling fifty.

Meetings had been held by the Minister and Deacons with the Area Superintendent and other officials to explore the possibilities of outreach in the Sonning Common and Peppard areas. Unfortunately this door had closed and it was considered that efforts should be focused on Caversham in view of the large number of contacts which existed through the organisations. The appointment of an Assistant Minister had been considered but the first contact, a lady, did not meet with sufficient acceptance to enable the Church to proceed.

In concluding his report, Mr Miller paid tribute to the leadership given by the

Minister and his wife, Rhoda, and to the numerous souls who week by week gave faithful service thereby ensuring the continuance of the many activities.

The Church Treasurer, Mr Norman Ide, presented the accounts for the year. With the professional wizardry of an accountant he was able to produce a deficit on the general fund from an excess of income over expenditure. This fiscal artifice was explained by the fact that the outstanding liability on the building development work was being borne by members who had made generous interest free loans which would be cleared at the forthcoming Gift Day. The report showed an increase in weekly offerings of over eleven per cent, which together with tax refunds on covenants and gifts to the Building Fund accounted for the bulk of the Church's income. From this largesse over £5,000 was donated to missions at home and overseas, not least the demands of Ethiopia, to the denomination's Ministerial Training Colleges and, nearer home, to Reading's Industry, Trade and

Employment Mission (ITEM).

Romanticism

The wit of the Building Fund committee knows no bounds — they decided to hold a Valentine lunch on the Saturday preceding that romantic festival. It could be said that they planned a Love Feast. Unfortunately their weather lore was somewhat defective as the chosen day was unlikely to inspire any amorous ideas or romantic passions for it snowed thereby ensuring that any such strange notions were consigned to the "deep freeze". However, the thought of a good meal with no washing-up to follow enticed some eighty or more stalwarts to the Church to sample and enjoy a splendid meal of steak-and-kidney pie, cheese cake, mousse and the before-and-after trappings including some multi-coloured lozenges bearing terms of endearment such as "cherry lips", "hug me", "mysweet", and similar nonsense — perhaps they were indigestion tablets incognito. At the end of the day ninety pounds was credited to the fund and a lot of good humour had been generated.

LINK GROUP

A MEETING of the group was held at the Rectory on March 25. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Felicity Radford who came to tell members about the work of the National Childbirth Trust. The Trust was founded in 1956 with the aim of promoting education in all aspects of parenthood. It runs antenatal classes, gives support with breastfeeding and practical post-natal advice and help. The Trust publishes helpful leaflets in aspects of pregnancy and parenthood. Information is given on procedures and drugs used during childbirth. Those working for the Trust have good relations with midwives and hospitals and conferences are held between mothers and the medical profession. Many members visit schools to help prepare young people for parenthood. There is good post-natal support and young mothers can be put in touch with members with children of their own to give help where needed. Finally some groups organise get-togethers for mothers and small children. Mrs Radford (tel: 470861) has organised such a group and would welcome inquiries. Mrs Radford is Chairman of the Reading Branch.

Members were kept up to date with the

setting up of the office in Church House which will be open shortly. Names of volunteers who can give the help asked for by many organisations are needed for the files. Please contact Mrs Susie Robinson (478371) or Mrs Vera Scott (479179). The "pop-in" Centre in Church House is also opening shortly on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Volunteers are needed to make and serve coffee, to sit and chat or just to listen, (men or women!). Please contact Mrs Doreen Bennett (473096) or any Link Group member. Possible names for the centre are being considered, one suggestion being Caversham Voluntary Care Centre. This has still to be settled.

The fortnightly tea parties have been resumed with the better weather and continue to be popular and worthwhile with the many elderly and housebound.

The annual Good as New Sale was discussed — this to take place on May 11 (see separate notice). The Group will be grateful for offers of goods for sale (not jumble).

Final arrangements were made for the concert by the Phoenix Choir in St Peter's Church on March 2 in aid of the Centre in Church House. This is reported on elsewhere.

Come and sing aloud your praises

"WE OUGHT to do something to help explain the Communion service to children". That was a remark made by one of St Peter's Sunday School teachers to one of the clergy. Beware! Sometimes the clergy listen! And so it was on Shrove Tuesday that eighty children (plus a host of adult helpers, balloons, candles and other assorted equipment) packed into St John's Church.



Having charged wildly about with a few opening games they all set to work. A glorious cacophony of sound was soon emerging from the upper vestry where the music was taking shape. Meanwhile, in the body of the church one group was trying to write out as much of the service as they could remember along one wall of the church. Another was preparing a presentation about shepherds (including a Goliath created by placing one child on another's shoulder and wrapping the whole lot up in a sheet) to take the place of the readings and sermon. And still



Children were despatched to find a table, light the candles, fetch the bread and wine. The clergy explained the reasons for their robes as they put them on. And so the service went on — with music, readings, sermon and prayers provided by the children themselves.

At the end those who did not receive communion were given a candle and together (with cross, candles and banners) they marched around the church singing "Come and sing aloud your praises. Jesus Christ is here!"

Does anybody else have an idea what we might organise next? You have no idea what a casual word in the ear of one of the clergy might result in.

another set to work to create two banners — one illustrating the caring shepherd and another illustrating a less emphasised aspect of the brave shepherd confronting a lion.

Then lunch (thanks to a marvellous team of helpers from St John's) and a music practice and everything was ready. Or almost ready. Everybody sat in a circle. Two clergy stood in the middle in their jackets. "What do we need?" they asked.

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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

BY THE time you read this we hope snow and ice will be but a vague memory, but that would be a poor excuse not to take the opportunity of thanking, once again, those who continued to serve us so well in our time of trial. Milk and mail arrived with unfailing regularity and dustbins were emptied — no easy task when everywhere is covered with ice, especially in a hilly place like Caversham.

Roads must take first priority in snow clearance, but it would have been nice if a bit more thought had been given to pedestrians; though I could walk down the middle of our road in daylight with reasonable safety, I was then cut off from the shops by icy pavements and alleyways which, I should add, had no houses nearby so it was not the responsibility of householders to clear them. As it happened by the time I did go out things had improved, so I don't know what the Council did; but I was agreeably surprised when I called them on the 'phone to receive a very cheerful and friendly welcome both from the switchboard operator who put me through quickly to the right department, and from the gentleman I spoke to in Highways Department. Bracing myself for a harangue about how busy they were, I received a very courteous reply and was told something would be done to clear one of the pavements in question as soon as possible. And the moral of that is, don't be afraid to ring the local council. Surprising as it may seem, they are also interested in the state of the roads. We've not yet become as advanced as Southampton where they are actually supplying postcards for people to fill in reporting holes in the roads, but they will make a note of them, if reported, and investigate.

Our local pet shop reports a record sale of bird seed and nuts this winter, so it seems Caversham people were very concerned about the wild birds which must have died in thousands. But I should remind people if they are still feeding birds with nuts by the time this paper comes out, please stop immediately; it seems birds don't always have the sense not to try to feed their babies on "whole nuts" and they could well choke. But I'm pleased to know Caversham people do care about animals. I recently heard of two people who've rescued what appear to be stray dogs and, at considerable inconvenience to themselves, have tried to find their homes or put them in care of some responsible authority.

sonally I hope they'll all soon get fixed up with jobs, but I doubt it.



I hear Caversham Nursery School is losing its headmistress at the end of term when she and her family move to Shropshire. Mrs Reed, who came to Caversham from the nursery unit at EP Collier School two years ago, has proved to be an excellent and much-loved headmistress and a worthy successor to our old friend, Miss Cooper. Those connected with the school have asked me to say how grateful they are for all her work there and to offer very best wishes for the future.

Those who know me personally — and I can't say I don't enjoy

being addressed as "Katy" when I'm out — will probably realise that I had help last month. It's always been our policy to throw this column open to anyone who had something to add, but to have someone from another district writing as "Katy" about their own locality, is something I've always wanted. Any more volunteers? It's up to the editors, of course, but if I have my way, this column will continue to appear under this name; it's one way of keeping alive the memory of our much loved Mary Clift who, as many of you will remember, started the column about twenty years ago. Without her expertise the "Bridge" would have a difficult time getting off the ground, as I'm sure our previous editor would agree.

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'Sweet Harmony'

There seems to be a popular myth that unemployment is a thing we in the south don't have to worry about. Of course the percentage of unemployed is not so high as in many places but, as somebody said, if it's you that's out of work it's 100 per cent. I had a sad experience recently when I arrived at a local supermarket just as four assistants had been told they were redundant, with more to follow. The atmosphere wasn't happy. On the whole I've found these particular assistants friendly and efficient and it was depressing to find them in such a state of confusion. It was, I suppose, inevitable, with the opening of a smart new store in the district, but I fear we're rapidly moving into an "Every man for himself" society, and those assistants who switched to the new store when it opened are a lot better off than those taken on to replace them and who are now unemployed. Per-

THE musical tradition of St Andrew's Church was furthered on Saturday February 16 when an unusual concert was given by Miss Martha Kingdon Ward and six colleagues as "Sweet Harmony". The musicians, in period costume, and a narrator, told the story in words and music, of a young eighteenth century clarinetist and his experiences while playing in a wind sextet for the aristocracy of the day.

An appreciative audience of one hundred and twenty enjoyed a delightful evening's entertainment, followed by refreshments. The concert raised just over £200 for St Andrew's Missionary Projects in India and Tanzania.

Some time ago an offer was made to lend christening robes in return for a donation to Save the Children Fund. Would the person who made this offer please get in touch with Margaret Baily Tel: 471032

SUE RYDER SUPPORT GROUP CAVERSHAM

THE group are pleased to announce that their annual Jumble Sale will take place on Saturday April 13 in Caversham Hall. Goods received from 10am at the hall or by Mrs A. Deane, 168 Henley Road, 473798 beforehand. Sale will start at 2pm. Please come and help or support and let's make the profit rise again!

THE LINK GROUP

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Caversham Women's Institute

THE February meeting of the Institute was given a very informative talk by Mrs Linda Chandler on her work at the Emmer Green Youth and Community Centre. Linda, who is the only full-time paid worker at the Centre, is assisted by volunteer workers; one of her biggest problems is trying to generate an income of about £5,000 a year to keep the centre going. She told members of some of the many activities that go on at the centre, which is used by groups of all ages. She herself is mainly concerned with counselling young people; having trained at Durham University, she considers her work to be primarily with people of between 14 and 21, usually those who are not in any other organisation. The centre is open all day but for adult groups only during the day and young people in the evenings, so that there shall be no temptation to skip school and wander over to the centre. It is obviously not an easy job and she has a great deal of responsibility; nevertheless, it is work she enjoys.

Some members of the Institute have been involved in the work of the centre in the past, so a lively discussion followed.

After tea members had a chance to try and sort out who was who from among photographs brought along by members of themselves as babies; the success rate was not exactly high, not surprisingly.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

FROM RAGS
TO RICHES

THE first leisure afternoon in February at Mapledurham hall was well attended. Miss Rosalind Renshaw came to talk about women in business and lively discussion followed. At other meetings speakers will be invited and it is hoped to pursue hobbies such as patchwork, making lampshades and yoga. At the Social Studies meeting Mr Donald Clarke spoke about "Wandering in Israel", and there was an outing to Marwell during the month.

At the evening meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild in St Andrew's hall Mr Alex Matthews, Departmental Manager, and his assistant staff manager from the local branch of Marks and Spencer provided an interesting glimpse into the past, when Michael Marks, the humble immigrant, was sent away from Russia under the Czar in 1884. He founded with Tom Spencer in Leeds market what was to become a thriving chain of bazaar stores based on the principle of a fixed price. He died unexpectedly early in 1906.

His son Simon and Israel Sieff married each other's sister and became life partners in the business. Later began the main work of the development of a

type of store new to this country, working directly with manufacturers who were educated to supply what was needed in the way of design and quality. There were the real initiators of high quality, low cost clothing, and at a later stage of food and other commodities. Since 1945 the growth of the company has been based on the principle of giving maximum value for money.

Large sums have been given to charities. Outstanding welfare and other arrangements are made for employees. The two representatives said that for the first time for many years clothing now accounts for less than half the turnover.

Members were encouraged to say what their needs were and to give their reactions to the merchandise offered.

St Peter's Wives Group

AT THEIR February meeting members were pleased to welcome Miss Esme Few as their Speaker. Miss Few was Area Nursing Officer for Berkshire and in 1979 was seconded by the Ministry of Health to Kuwait to help organise their nursing services. She illustrated her talk with some ninety slides, covering the building of the 575-bed hospital, her surroundings in Kuwait and her flat.

The Group's next meeting will be on April 16 at Church House at 8pm when Mrs M. Churcher will talk about her work as a Store Detective.

For details of this year's programme, please contact the Group's Chairman, Jean Pugh (Reading 472949) or the Treasurer, Marie Smith (Reading 477376).

Caversham Darby & Joan Club

THE clubs activities during the last few months have included a visit to the Redgrave Theatre Farnham to see the musical "Annie" which was greatly enjoyed, an excellent film show by Mr Kirby on the Liverpool Garden Festival and another film and talk on the Forbury Gardens by Mr Wilton which was of great interest to us all.

Harold and Fred on the piano, June and her girls with music and movement and the Brownies gave excellent entertainment and the Club wishes to thank all those who give so freely of their time and talents. Future events will include Bingo, a visit from the Fir Tree Singers and an outing to Wiltshire in May.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

MR F. J. Turk gave a most interesting slide show and lecture on swan upping to the ladies of the Emmer Green Evening Townswomen's Guild at their meeting at St Barnabas Church Hall on February 26. It was amusing to learn that although the

ROUND THE CLUBS

swan suffers some indignity when it is "upped" from the Thames, new recruits to swan upping suffer rather more, being tipped into the water and dragged to the bottom by their more experienced colleagues. On a more serious note, swans are still decreasing due to lead poisoning; it is only to be hoped that this can be stopped in time.

Miss Pollard gave a vote of thanks. She also provided some lovely spring flowers for the committee table.

Caversham Ladies Club

THE February meeting of the club took place at the Baptist Church Centre. After the usual business the speaker was Mrs Sutherland, who had visited Japan and gave us an extremely interesting talk about housing, dress, religion, and the strong contrast between life-styles. She afterwards showed slides which illustrated her talk admirably. She was warmly thanked by the Chairman.

The next meeting will be the AGM followed by an auction of bric-a-brac.

Rosehill WI

THE February meeting was chaired by Miss Vincent, who welcomed members and Mrs Gardner VCO, who came to assist at the AGM. After thanks to the old committee and several presentations, the new committee for 1985/6 was presented, with Miss Nancy Vincent again elected President. Mrs Gardner then talked about "Giving a Speech".

Seventy-five brightly coloured jerseys were displayed. They were knitted by the crafts ladies and their friends and will be taken to Oxfam for distribution in Ethiopia. The competition "A Beauty Hint" was won by Mrs Ellingham.

Blagrove WI

MRS Poplewell, the President, welcomed one new member and three visitors to the February meeting.

A very successful outing took place on a dreary January day when a party of twenty eight members attended a Matinee performance of "Holiday on Ice" at Wembley.

An informal half hour was held in place of a talk with slides which had to be cancelled owing to the sudden indisposition of the Speaker.

Craft meetings, with a project in mind, recommended in mid-February.

The competition for a Valentine Verse was won jointly by Mrs Gowthorpe and Mrs Housden.

Maplewood WI

AT THE February meeting, held on Shrove Tuesday, the President, Mrs Joy le Mare, introduced Mrs Ann Dunn, a cookery expert, of the Berkshire College of Agriculture. Mrs Dunn demonstrated three appetising supper dishes including, appropriately, pancakes with a

savoury filling. Mrs Margaret Pilgrim was judged to be the winner of a competition for six cheese scones. A bring and buy sale is to be held at the March meeting to raise money for the purchase of Easter Eggs for the children of Peppard House.

Nominations were taken for the new committee to be elected at the Annual Meeting.

Chazey WI

THE February meeting of Chazey WI started with the presentation of a cheque for £20 to the NSPCC. This had been collected in the last few months of 1984 in half-pence pieces hiding in members' purses at the monthly meetings. This amounted to 4,000 coins.

Denis Rogers gave a most interesting talk on the background to the Sue Ryder foundation, and more particularly on Joyce Grove at Nettlebed. This used to be a convalescent home and then a nurses' training centre until 1979 when the National Health Service decided they no longer needed it. Sue Ryder was asked to raise the money to buy the house and by the end of 1979 Joyce Grove was opened for the first patients — one of whom is still alive today at 93. Terminally ill cancer patients are cared for while they learn to live with the effects of their treatment and then return home after two or three weeks. Other patients are cared for while their families have a break, and in this instance multiple sclerosis and motoneurone sufferers are taken in small numbers for a short time.

Later in the month a coach party of members went to "Starlight Express" at the Apollo Theatre in London. Mrs Tricia Stringer won through to the Final of the Scrabble competition being run by the local WI groups.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

Berkshire & North Hants

THE 1985 activities of the Guild have proceeded vigorously despite the Arctic conditions early in the year. Members enjoyed a memorable visit to the Mayor's Parlour with the Mayor himself popping in for chat over a welcome cup of tea. £100 was donated to the NSPCC from the proceeds of the

Autumn Fair and several well attended coffee mornings. The speaker in January was Mrs M. Sutherland who deserves a medal for bravely carrying on in a Meeting Hall of sub-zero temperature. She kept members enthralled with her talk illustrated by beautiful slides of Life in Japan. In February Mr Ray Hobson from the Crime Prevention Section of the Thames Valley Police gave valuable advice on protection from the not so well intentioned members of the community. The next meeting is on March 21.

Caversham Community Association

THE February meetings opened with a visit from Mrs Molly Casey who gave a fascinating talk on the history of Hemdean House School from its beginning in 1859. A teacher at the school, Mrs Casey gave some interesting insights into the family of Mr Francis Knighton and the dedicated work of his daughters and succeeding principals of the school. The club members were very interested in the photographs, educational certificates and old prospectus of the school that Mrs Casey brought for their inspection.

The whist drive arranged for February 11 was cancelled due to the icy weather.

Members of the club visited the new Waitrose store in Caversham on February 19 and had a good time. After a welcome from members of the Waitrose staff a tour of the various sections and warehouse was made. Samples of some of the delicacies were also available. Later refreshments were served before the departure for home.

On Monday, February 18, a Valentine party was held. Everyone brought a share of the refreshments which resulted in a good selection. The Valentine card competition was won by May Plant, Olive and Ted Howard won the Elimination dance. Entertainment was given by June and her agile Aerobic team from Tilehurst.

The club drama group and their producer May Plant acted in an amusing comedy called "The Little Heir" at the meeting on February 25. The theme was the rehearsal of a new play with a rather obstreperous cast — and received warm applause from the audience.

Mrs Vera Mortimer demonstrated the Bamix foodmixer on March 4 and gave methods of making economical tasty dishes and nutritious drinks.

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CHRISTIAN CAMPAIGN FOR REAL AID

By Sally, Chris, Helen and Laura Garforth
Caversham Heights Methodist Church

THERE cannot be a family in Caversham which has not been horrified and disturbed at the plight of the victims of famine in Ethiopia. Many of us, as individuals and as members of churches and organisations, have taken part in fund raising or knitting, and have given our individual donations to Oxfam, Christian Aid, or other agencies.

In recent weeks, it has become all too obvious that the horror of suffering in Ethiopia is only the spearhead of a disaster of tremendous

scale, as drought takes its toll in a broad band of countries right across eastern and central Africa. The problem became acute first in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Tigré largely because of the civil wars there; but now refugees travelling across national boundaries to Sudan in search of food and water are finding the situation there just as desper-

ate, and the same is happening in other countries. Through no fault of their own, families are forced to eat their livestock and the seed they had stored for the next planting season, and then, when there is nothing left to eat, move from their villages in search of survival.

In our family, we have recently come to the conclusion that the gospel demands more from us as Christians than a retiring collection or a donation. Jesus said: "I was hungry and you did not feed me. I was thirsty and you did not give me a drink". We do not begin to know how to respond in love, but we are starting the Christian Campaign for Real Aid in our church in order to explore how to help. The Campaign has two strands. First, a sustained change in lifestyle — a radical

examination of our family spending on the basis of needs rather than wants. We hope to find ways of channelling the excesses of our affluent western lifestyle directly on a regular basis (in our case, through the Methodist Relief and Development Fund) to victims of the African drought. I have been staggered to discover how easy it has been regularly to trim up to £15 from our weekly shopping bill, for example, and it soon mounts up.

We hope to involve other Christian families in the Campaign and explore together the idea of "living more simply so that others may simply live". The Campaign began with a church family lunch on March 17 where we discussed some of these issues. We hope to form a nucleus of families to meet for mutual support and

exchange of ideas and news from the famine areas.

The second — and equally important — strand is to use our political voice within our democracy to campaign for a redressing of the balance on a larger scale. We hope to organise a rota of letter writing to politicians at home and in Europe on such issues as long term overseas aid for development to prevent future disasters, and the obscurity of our European grain stores and butter mountains. It may seem a tremendous task, but faith can move mountains — even those of butter, no doubt!

If there are other Christian families in Caversham interested in this approach, please talk it through with us and share your ideas; or we will gladly give you a more detailed leaflet with suggestions. The last thing we want to do with this idea is to keep it to ourselves: we would be thrilled if groups in other churches felt able to undertake something similar!

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EASTER SERVICES

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OBITUARY

Sybil Martyn-Johns

CAVERSHAM and Mapledurham lost another link with the past on the death of Sybil Martyn-Johns of Westdene Crescent in her ninety-second year.

Dr Sybil Martyn-Johns was born in Lawton, Cheshire, and was one of the first women graduates in medicine at Manchester University. On graduating she held posts at St Mary's Hospital for Women and Pendlebury Children's Hospital and her first appointment was as a School Medical Officer. In 1922 she married the Rev C. B. Martyn-Johns, a former Army Chaplain. They started their life together in Cawnpore, India, where her husband was Chaplain to the Civil Lines. On their return her husband held livings at Knayden and later Patricroft in the Manchester Diocese. The period at Patricroft was a much shared ministry as she set up her plate as a general practitioner, dispensing all her own medicines.

During the early part of the war she experienced the bombing of the Vicarage in Patricroft escaping shaken, but uninjured. In 1943 she moved with her husband to her childhood parish of Church Lawton. Here she quickly resumed her career in nearby Stoke-on-Trent.

In 1960 she came to live in Caversham and continued her medical vocation as a consultant at the Battle Chest Clinic. She became a regular member of St Margaret's Church and often worshipped in the week at St Andrew's or St Peter's. Her small colourful garden and the birds at Westdene gave her much pleasure.

Week by week, come wind or high weather or snow, she was always there at the Parish Eucharist serving and praising her Lord right up to her short illness through which her family nursed her with great care. In 1983 she broke her leg but it was not long before she was worshipping with us again. Her indomitable courage and spirit, blended with typical northern humour and common sense, and her confidence in Jesus Christ radiated from her, impressing all who came in contact with her and enriching their lives. She will be missed by all who knew her but remembered for her ministry of healing and loving and witnessing to her Lord.

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OBITUARY
Charles Buck

Vice Chairman
 Caversham Bridge
 Newspaper



CHARLES Buck was a man with wide interests. Methodist church member and local preacher, for fifteen years a Borough Councillor, Magistrate, Ecumenist, Pacifist, tireless campaigner for the homeless, officer in the Co-operative movement, yet also a family man and a man so concerned about children that in the midst of a busy life he would visit the local primary school and there help in the collection of postage stamps to build up school funds. It seems incredible that one man should maintain so many interests.

The reason for Charles' wide ranging interests was his Christian faith. An active Methodist at Caversham Heights, in the Reading and Silchester Methodist Circuit, and the Southampton District of the Methodist Church, he gave himself to all his tasks because they were important, and if they were important they were worth doing. The Church owes him a great debt, and the Free Church Council of which he was Secretary, and the Reading and District Council of Churches on whose executive he served have reason to be very grateful for his wisdom and guidance. But it was as a crusading Councillor that Charles made his mark. He felt passionately for the homeless, and because he had such a good home, longed that everybody should be similarly privileged. An ordinary man with no pretensions to high office or personal prestige he served ordinary people out of a genuine concern for their well being. A convinced member of the Labour Party he showed the acceptable face of local politics, at all times gracious, magnanimous in victory and charitable in defeat.

Although often frustrated he campaigned vigorously for those things in which he believed and the record section of the local library was one of his achievements. In a career working alongside health workers, he coveted a successful National Health Service and wrote many letters to politicians and the Prime Minister on this and related subjects. He will be missed because of these concerns, but we shall thank God for his conviction and certainty of faith that made him the man he was. We thank God for Charles Buck and wish there were more like him. He was a good man.

J. S.

Tribute to Richard Robson

RICHARD Robson was the perfect example of a Christian gentleman, and the Methodist Church at Caversham Heights and the Reading and Silchester Methodist Circuit will miss him greatly. He combined in his life a professionalism in his work as a surveyor and a pastoral concern for those people who were assigned to his care in his capacity as a Methodist Class Leader.

An Anglican by upbringing he came into Methodism when he married Kathleen and proceeded to serve the Methodist Church with a zeal that won the admiration of all who knew him. His thorough understanding of property matters made him an ideal person to serve nationally and locally on property committees and as District and Circuit property secretary he advised many people about the practical problems of caring for their church. Richard saw the buildings people use as an expression of the gospel. He could make bricks and mortar come alive for the Kingdom of God and in a unique way could inspire others to do the same.

Often required to do routine work within the church, he never treated it as routine and one of his greatest fears towards the end of his life was that he would be unable to fulfil some of the responsibilities laid upon him.

He faced his final illness with a resolution that inspired others who visited him. He did not hide his fears, but at the same time expressed his faith and as a result he died as he had lived, with dignity, earning the respect of those around him.

He was a man who never shrank from difficult or unpopular decisions and was a person to whom many turned for guidance.

His family and church and circuit officials were able to rely on him for advice right to the end of his life.

We shall miss Richard Robson, he gave so much to so many, but particularly we shall miss his gracious Christianity which took hold of practical things and helped them to glow with the glory of God.

J. S.

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 February 3 Tracey Robinson
 February 17 Thomas Jacob
 February 18 Penelope Wells
 February 24 Luke Barnett
 St John's
 March 3 Gemma Harvey, Benjamin Phillips, John Primmer, Tracey Primmer, Samuel Barrett

Caversham Park

February 24 Mark Slade
CHILD DEDICATION—Chapel on the Hill
 February 24 Naomi Fletcher

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