

Pantomime party at Caversham Library

THERE was a surprise in store for visitors to Caversham library on the morning of Monday, December 23 — all the staff had donned their "Panto gear"! A successful year of children's events at the library was completed with a Pantomime Party. Children

were asked to come along dressed as their favourite pantomime character and the staff were not to be outdone! About fifty children

came along to join in the fun. The staff hope that such occasions make youngsters more aware of their local library and feel that it is an enjoyable place to visit.

Farewell

This is an opportunity to record that Mrs Mary Kendall left the library services in January 1986. As branch librarian in Caversham she has done much to improve the facilities and to make known the services that are offered. In particular she has encouraged the children to use what is available and indeed Caversham has benefited from them, as several exhibitions put on by and contributed to by schools have been of great interest. These, it is hoped, will continue. Meanwhile, all the best to Mrs Kendall in her new career.



IT IS, you may think, a strange partnership. We are not in it to make money! I stand to lose a little money — thirty pence a day to be correct, and he stands to survive. I am a Christian: he is a Moslem. Strangest of all, perhaps, I am an OAP and he is nine years old!

Mohamed Farouk lives in Zeinoh, a suburb of Cairo which, in current jargon, is an area of acute social deprivation. His home — and that of his father and mother, sisters Jehan and Mona and brothers Ali and Omar, is a twelve foot square room which contains two double beds, a sofa, a wardrobe, a cupboard on which is perched an ancient black and white television and an

even more ancient gas stove. Toilet facilities are primitive and communal, and water comes from a nearby standpipe.

To reach the Farouk home you have to step gingerly to avoid the garbage. There is no municipal refuse collection and families in this district, with an income of only £25 a week, are too poor to pay for it to be removed. Better off people pay £4 a month for the dust cart to call: it is a ramshackle cart pulled by a donkey and staffed by two small orphans, this being the traditional way that orphans eke out an existence.

Goats, chickens and even sheep, all aspects of "income enhancement", also impeded

MY PARTNER AND I

Martyn Allies

our progress and aroused misgivings as to what was in store for us when we reached Mohamed's home. What was in store was the warmest of welcomes, appreciative mirth over our Berlitz acquired Egyptian phrases, and Cokes all round!

Mohamed showed us his school drawing book. His likenesses of mum and dad were surprisingly similar to the impressions that Caversham children have of their mums

and dads! But in the background were camels instead of Cavaliers and a mosque instead of a church. Mohamed is a bright, alert child and attends school for seven hours a day, but his classroom is fifteen foot square and fifty children have to find room to squat on its floor.

I am a partner to Mohamed through Plan International, known in this country as Foster Parents Plan, since it was founded

by John Langdon Davies, an English journalist covering the Spanish Civil War, after he had found a little boy wandering through burning streets with a note pinned to him that read "When Santander falls I will be shot. Please look after my son. His name is Jose." Today Plan works to make a better future for children in 21 countries in the developing world, and support comes not only from Britain but from Australia,

Belgium, Canada, Holland, Japan and the USA.

How you can help

When you participate in Plan you are put in direct touch with a child and his or her family, but your contribution is pooled with those of Foster Parents of other children in the immediate neighbourhood and the money used to improve the living standards of all by a project which the families themselves agree merits top priority. It may be the supply of safe water, essential repairs to dwellings or the school, or training the parents to enhance their incomes and so give their children the chance of a healthier life and a rosier future.

We visited one site where the project was to make the dwellings a little more sanitary and comfortable by repairing and plastering rough stone walls, replacing roofs made of plaited branches by chipboard, and tiling earth floors. Those living in them showed us the improvements with great pride, and our guide, the wife of the Director of Plan in Egypt, pointed out that by fostering a child you also foster a sense of pride and responsibility in the child's family and the concept of co-operative enterprise in the community. Will you join me in losing thirty pence a day? Do phone for more information — 472007 is not a Freephone, but local calls are very cheap!

TALKING POINT

AN EDITOR'S VIEW

REMEMBER TO KEEP HOLY

IF LOGICAL argument always won the day then we would all be members of the same political party and church. The problem is that one person's reasoned way of thinking never quite convinces his neighbour. Perhaps this is not such a bad thing. After all without sectarianism how could we in Caversham enjoy our ecumenical newspaper? There would be no gaps to bridge.

The removal of trading hour restrictions presents Christians with a challenge. At first sight it is contrary to the normal interpretation of the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy by resting from servile work. It is also true that all

but the strictest groups of Christians have allowed for the fact that somebody had to work on the Sabbath; some have even done the work themselves. After all the Bible-quoting Christian could always turn to the words that the Sabbath was Made for Man and not vice versa. The author of this article himself worked with a clear conscience on Sundays in a hospital and a children's home for several years.

How many Christians would condemn those who worked in essential services and industries? What would the average Sunday be like if the medical services ceased to operate? What would our churches

and chapels be like if there were no light and heat, not forgetting the family Sunday lunch? Then, of course, we have to consider our Sunday entertainment, sports, DIY, day tripping. We are all of us guilty of relying on somebody supplying the essentials of our day of rest. Not the least among the conveniences of modern life is the television. Where would many of us, especially the old and lonely, be without TV on a cold, wet, dark Sunday evening?

Who will cast the first stone?

So if we Christians have tolerated, even encouraged, the growth of these Sunday industries, how can any reasonable Christian object to the next logical move? Where is the difference between a leisure park serving everything from hot chocolate to cold culture in the grounds of a stately home and the same commodities being offered for sale in our own high street?

The final argument to clinch the debate must be that the great majority of people in the country are no longer Christians anyway. As good democrats Christians cannot expect to impose their own rather outmoded views of morality on the majority.

It seems that logical argument has led me to only one possible conclusion. I can not object to Sunday Trading. It is happening anyway. I use it continually and I have no right, as a member of a minority group, to force people to abstain from work because of my interpretation of a two and a half thousand year old

snippet from the Bible. Some people might say I cannot even get the day of the week right for the Sabbath anyway.

He who is not with me

But we know that logic is not compulsive. Christians are divided over the issue and it would be most uncharitable to condemn those holding different views as hypocrites.

As with virtually all life's problems it is not a black and white issue. The question is not simply about the rights and wrongs of working on Sundays. Even less is it a matter of theological debate over one's interpretation of Biblical commands.

The Bible is there to help us make a moral judgement within the conditions and circumstances of our life. The Sabbath is indeed made for man and the meaning of the Sabbath has been interpreted very differently by different generations of Christians and by different Christians in each generation.

I know we are entering the tricky realms of moral theology and the question of the immutability of moral laws. But let's cut through the red tape and get down to the moral problem facing us as shoppers and workers in Caversham today in the light of the new bill.

If Christianity has anything left to offer the world then it is the one last and

lasting message of love.

There remains faith, hope and love and the greatest of these is love. Love is gentle, caring and sharing. As Christians these are the strengths we should be expounding to the non-Christian world. Now that we are to be presented with a degree of freedom which can turn Sunday into a day such as any other, no individual can sit in judgement on his neighbour. No individual can be his neighbour's conscience and categorically say it is wrong, or right, for his neighbour to work. Each individual must make his or her own moral judgement and in Christian charity no other can praise nor condemn him.

Whose image is on the coin

On the other hand no employer, if he is a Christian, can demand that another should work on Sunday. To do so is to remove the freedom of choice of that person to exercise the right to follow his conscience.

The Government Bill unfortunately protects only those in existing employment. It does not preclude employers from insisting on Sunday working for their future employees.

There is a self-evident danger to the family, already under attack and rapidly disintegrating as a pillar of our society. It is clear that married women who comprise a large pro-

portion of shop workers, will be called out on Sundays with obvious consequences for the family Sunday.

By the waters of Babylon

To those who say we have no right to impose our religious views on others, as is the case with compulsory Sunday closing, can we ask for a reciprocal guarantee? Will we now be compelled to work on Sundays, just as before we were compelled not to? Can we be guaranteed the basic religious freedom to worship on Sundays as our consciences bid us? Or will it become the case, as I suspect, that unwillingness to work on Sundays may impair promotion or even lead to dismissal.

We are not now talking of voluntary who wish not to work, we are not

talking of keeping essential services running, we are talking of the unessential, we are talking of increased profits, we are talking of providing a convenience, and we have survived without these well enough to date.

See how these Christians

Many further arguments could be drawn up on both sides. But bandying arguments never convinces anyone of anything. The aim here is rather to express a hope that our sentiments, beliefs and convictions whichever side we are on, will not blind us to those of the opposition. The important point at issue is not whether Sunday trading is right or wrong but whether the freedom the new Bill offers will restrict the rights of those who wish not to work on Sundays.

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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 April issue should be sent to Church House by noon on Wednesday, February 28. All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by Friday, February 21.

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

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THE report "Faith in the City" has aroused an enormous amount of interest and on reading it, I don't find the interest one little bit surprising. The result of two years work by an 18 member commission set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury to examine Britain's inner city areas, "Faith in the City" is one of the most well reasoned, thoughtful and caring books I have read for a long time.

Neither am I surprised that the government appears to find its message distasteful. For the report tells us — including "us" who live along the affluent M4 corridor — that our

inner cities have been neglected and allowed to become places of desolation. They urgently need more resources, both of money and imagination, if there is to be any hope.

A correspondent in the "Church Times" put it like this — "Faith in the City" he said, "has done for us what Michael Buerk did

for the Ethiopia famine, it has alerted us to a real tragedy."

A real tragedy. Millions of British people are living in conditions which are inhuman. Conditions have deteriorated far more seriously than has been generally realised. In addition to unemployment, housing is an acute problem.

Commission members said they were "shaken" by the housing they witnessed. "The

fabric of our cities is crumbling" they report. More than one house in ten is unfit to live in. In some areas as many as three or four people are out of work.

Repairs and maintenance urgently need doing — and the unemployed would be delighted to have the chance to do them! There is something wrong when the workless cannot be matched up with the work that cries out to be done.

The Church too comes in for criticism — it has largely failed to organise itself to meet the challenge of inner city areas. Most of the report's recommendations are addressed to the church.

Christians are right to be demanding action to correct an intolerable situation. We should be failing our Lord if we did anything other.

"Faith in the City" is subtitled "A Call for Action by Church and Nation". But what are we in Caversham and Mapledurham going to do?

political channels, that action is taken as a matter of urgency.

Poverty is the root cause of the inner city "problem" — and Jesus said he was sent "to bring good news to the poor". Those of us who are enjoying comfortable surroundings might reflect whether we could do more to share in that task.

William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury in the 1930's, said that Christians should insist that social evils such as unemployment, be put right. Both church and government need to act. Let us urge action from both — as far as the government is concerned possibly the best way we can help our brothers and sisters in the inner city areas is to insist, through our

★ "Faith in the City: A Call for Action by Church and Nation". The report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas. £7.50, Church House Publishing, London.

RUNNING INTO 1986

BY THE turn of the year nearly 4,000 people had entered the 1986 Dec Reading Half Marathon and with the usual rush expected in January/February it looks certain that over 7,000 people will be running through the streets of Reading again this year. Don't forget that the Race is a little later this year being on April

6 so there will be time to squeeze in an extra two weeks training.

Many of our regular visitors to Reading are coming back for the fourth time and include several of our older male competitors who are now 72 years old. It is always interesting to see the entries to note where they come

STAN ELDON'S COLUMN



from and also the varied groups from diverse employments. In addition to the large numbers of military personnel, policemen, firemen, local government officers and British Airways staff there is a new group this year and these are Post Office employees. Well over thirty are coming from the Croydon Post Office alone and there are many more from other Post Offices around the South of England. Perhaps it is the new fit breed of Postmen that enabled the Post Office to reduce the cost of second class mail. Perhaps if they continue to run and become even faster then the first class mail could also be reduced!!!

Third Division Championship by April, then the whole team may like to run in celebration!

If you are running this year it is important to try and prepare properly for the big day and by now you should be running at least four times a week and covering up to five miles a time. It can be hard to push yourself out in the bad weather at this time of the year but if you do it will make the task much lighter on Race Day and you will enjoy the Run very much more. Training sessions are continuing at the Palmer Park Stadium on Monday and Wednesday evenings starting at 6.30pm and a Season Ticket to cover a three month period is £8 or payment for each session is £1. It is worth taking advantage of these sessions because not only can you run in safety under floodlights but running with other people of mixed abilities will almost certainly start you running faster.

There will be one more opportunity to have a race before the Half Marathon and that will be a 10K Race on March 9, 1986 to celebrate 10 years of Radio 210. Details of this event will be available shortly.

A fit and happy New Year to everyone and whatever your age consider taking just a little more exercise in 1986.

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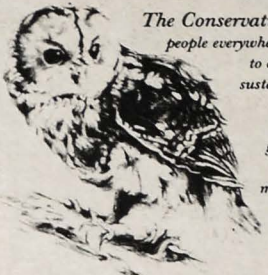
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THANK goodness for Christmas! One does tend to lose touch with people in this mobile society, but the festive season brings its crop of cards, often with letters or odd items of news. For the benefit of those who remember them, I have to report the following. John Crowe, one-time priest in Caversham Park Village, has been elected as one of the five Proctors representing the 480 clergy of the Lichfield Diocese at the General Synod of the Anglican Church; I'm a bit vague as to what it entails, but it seems to take him to Church House, Westminster, which he finds interesting. The family are still at Stonesfield, Alice happy with her two-year course of social studies at Bedford College, and David now living in London and driving for various firms.

From the Scott-Dempsters at Chieveley comes the surprising news of the arrival of Harry, born August 28, while friends will be glad to know that Betty Shaylor is recovering well and spent a very happy Christmas with the family, Binda celebrating communion at the village of Beech. Lilian Lewis, who last year was forced to give up her home in Church Road and move to be with the family at St Albans, continues to keep her links with Caversham; she tells me they listened to the broadcast from St Peter's Church on Advent Sunday and that she very much enjoys being able to attend the Abbey.

Now come on — let's have more news; I'm sure many of you have some and the "Bridge" offers a

wonderful opportunity for keeping in touch.

Highly Involved

Many of you will have purchased things from the BBONT Christmas "shop" in Hymor Photographers; it was a pity we didn't know about it in time to mention it in the "Bridge"; unfortunately not everybody visits Prospect Street in the normal way, but we'll try to do better next year. It was there I met Meryl Beek of Morecambe Avenue. Having a moan about the number of organisations one gets involved with, Meryl, a volunteer temporary shop assistant there, informed me that she belonged to no less than 14 different organisations to do with conservation. They included such unlikely ones as Friends of Offa's Dyke, or something like that. Indeed, she tells me she often gives talks on the subject. So for the benefit of secretaries frantically trying to compile programmes for the coming year, here is her phone number — 477428.

Worth knowing

It strikes me that we seem to have a plethora of chemists in Caversham at the moment; that might be no bad thing. Since the latest increase in prescription charges and the cut-back in range of prescribable drugs last year, we are going to need our pharmacists much more now. A good pharmacist — and we are fortunate in that respect — will be able to tell you what is in a certain over-the-counter medicine and whether it is safe to take at the same time as medicine your doctor may have already prescribed.

Mrs Way, the new pharmacist/owner of Caversham Pharmacy tells me she is very keen to promote the role of the pharmacist within the health-care team. The pharmacist can be readily consulted without appointment and will advise you on the treatment of minor ailments such as coughs and colds.

Some of us remember the old days when one could pop into the chemist with an upset stomach or a sore throat. Mostly you still can, and don't be afraid to ask for the pharmacist who will be only too willing to help or advise. The shop assistant,

KATY IN CAVERSHAM

however helpful, is not always qualified but a pharmacist always is.



Liz Cheyney with her Cookery Book

Bonnie Aylett

On July 14 Bonnie was apparently a normal healthy eight-year-old; by the next day she was dead, the victim of Reye's Syndrome, a life-threatening illness about which little is known but which can kill young children very rapidly. Her story was told on television at the end of October.

You're wondering what this has to do with Caversham. Well, one of the people watching that programme was Liz Cheyney of Upper Warren Avenue; somehow the sad tale caught her imagination. She sent off a donation to the fund set up by Bonnie's mother, Susie, to provide diagnostic equipment urgently needed to save the lives of others, but the story kept niggling her. To cut a long story very short, the beginning of December saw the publication of a book of recipes, many supplied by students at Bulmershe College where Liz works, with a foreword by a consultant physician at Great Ormond Street Hospital. The interesting thing is that Liz has never done anything like this before; the collection of recipes proved fairly easy, but then came the problem of printing, raising funds for it, etc. and to do it in so short a time is very unusual. Her main object was to publicise the need for research into this disease, but with 400 copies of the book now sold out and a reprint on the way, Liz is now hoping to raise a considerable sum towards the fund.

It has been a fantastic effort, so how about giving it a boost by purchasing a copy from the London Street or Friar Street Branch of Smith's Bookshop and by recommending this Trust Fund to any group looking for a cause to

support during the coming year. It is a nicely presented little book, with an attractive cover illustrated by Liz's daughter, Kate, a pupil at Queen Anne's School, and well worth £1.60 of anyone's money even if, as the author says, she can't vouch for the originality of the recipes but "is prepared to accept their genius on trust".

Oxford success

Jonathan Newham, a pupil in the Upper Sixth at Highdown School has been offered a place to read History at St John's College, Oxford, starting in the autumn of 1986. Well done!

I've just heard that Neal Hopcraft and Rachel Bilsby of AZDEC, the home decorating shop on St Martin's Precinct, are getting married on

February 22. Many people will remember Rachel when she worked in FADS in Caversham; she returned here when the new shop opened. She and Neal, the manager of the new shop, met when they were both working in the Butts Centre, Rachel in FADS and Neal at the organ shop nearby — a nice touch that the shop AZDEC took over here was originally Keyboard House, selling organs, pianos, etc.

They are being married at Tilehurst, where they now live, but they have very close Caversham connections, Neal having been brought here at a very early age and Rachel born in Oxford Street.

Our best wishes to this very friendly couple for a long and happy married life.

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WILLIAM MARTIN WAS A NUISANCE

FOR A long time I had been meaning to read the old Quarter Session Rolls for Oxfordshire at the Records Office and this Autumn I made an effort to look at all six hundred and fifty or so pages in a large volume dated 1783 to 1830. I thought perhaps I might find something that would be worth writing up in the Caversham Bridge. I hoped so, and my hopes were rewarded.

Almost the first entry for the county dealt with a Caversham case in which John Stevens, yeoman, and Thomas Stevens, farmer, both of Caversham were each fined twenty pounds for assaulting William Martin, also of the same place. This rather surprised me as I thought the Stevens were a highly respectable local family. But then so was Thomas Benwell, a church warden

at St Peter's, farming Deans farm (then known as Lower Caversham Farm) and a true Caversham worthy; yet he, too, was fined twenty pounds for assaulting Joseph Duffin of Shiplake in 1788. Perhaps an entry three years earlier provided the answer. Thomas Stevens, Wheelwright and farmer had two sucking pigs stolen by Moses Hutton of Reading. Could it be that local farmers took the law into their own hands when they discovered people up to no good on their property?



In 1788 William Martin was mentioned again, only this time it was he who was fined for assaulting one Samuel Edney. It seemed that assault was almost entirely the only crime brought before the Quarter Sessions, for in 1788 James Bye was fined for violent attack and again there was another case of it in 1793, while in 1791 John Lloyd of Caversham was set upon by a group of Reading men. Then once again, in 1793, William Martin appeared on the scene. This time I learned a little more about him. He was a Caversham Baker and had been seen by Sarah Benwell assaulting two farm labourers — perhaps on the family farm? William appeared to be rather a bellicose character.

Pigs in the barley and sheep in the clover

Two years later he was in trouble of a different kind. It appeared that Rachel Betheridge, the hay-

ward's wife, had impounded eight pigs and a sow belonging to the baker because they had got into the Common Field and damaged barley belonging to James Fuller. Now this was very anti-social and any animals straying and causing havoc were automatically locked up in the village pound — usually a small stable-like building, kept especially for this purpose. William, it appears, had "rescued" his property to save paying fines to have them returned, and in so doing brought down the wrath of the village upon his head. The following year his animals were once again causing damage. Thirty seven sheep were found eating John Stevens' clover. Naturally they were rounded up by Richard Betheridge and others and locked up. Only on payment of a fine would they be returned to their owner. When William Martin found out what had happened he was having none of it. Off to the village pound he went and broke it open to take away his animals, probably under cover of darkness. Never mind if he hadn't mended his fences and his stock had got out. Never mind if someone else lost money through spoilt clover or corn. He was a law unto himself — a difficult man indeed. One felt sympathy for John Stevens. Perhaps he had justifiably attacked the baker back in 1783.

I turned over many more pages in the massive rolls book and found no further mention of William. What had happened to him? Was he a

reformed character at last? Then, by extraordinary coincidence, my friend who was researching into woodlands, came to me with a reference card in her hand. "This might interest you," she said, for I had told her the baker's story. On the card it said — 1797 William Martin, late of Caversham, baker, bankrupt, assignment of property. So there we had the end of altogether rather a sad little local story. However it was not the end of my interesting discoveries, but the rest had better wait until another time.

LENT 1986

As several churches currently have on-going groups, there will be no specific ecumenical Lent groups organised for this year. Please keep in touch with your own church to find out what is planned for Lent.

NB. The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book for 1986 is "The Way of the Cross" by Richard Holloway published by Fount at £1.95.

BATH LODGE REGISTERED REST HOME

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

ST ANNE'S NEWS

Refurbishment of St Anne's Church

THE New Order of Mass is now well established throughout the Catholic world, and there were very good pastoral reasons for its introduction. Whether one is devoted to the English translation is debatable; and many people still mourn the virtual passing of Latin in most churches. To one who can see so many virtues on either side schizophrenia can set in, but I am overcoming its advanced state, and I am beginning to see not merely pastoral reasons, but theological and liturgical reasons for Mass facing the people. What is very much needed, whether the Mass is in Latin or English (or even a curious mid-Atlantic) is to make its presentation as dignified as possible so as to reflect the majesty of the Offering. After all, the most perfect possible Act of Worship should be seen as such.



At present St Anne's is not really able to show such a dignified presentation because we have a temporary Altar set in the narrowest part of the Sanctuary. Since it is difficult to present the Sung Latin Mass at the temporary Altar, I have allowed the use of the Main Altar, but it is not the most suitable position for the New Mass.

The general liturgical rules now direct that there should be one permanent Altar (that of the Sacrifice), and that the Pulpit/Lectern (Ambo) should be prominent as the place of the proclamation and the

explanation of the word of God. In fact, the present position of the pulpit will be ideal for the new one. The dignity of the Sacrament of Baptism is to be emphasised by placing it alongside the Sanctuary and connected to it. The present Baptistry is in such an obscure position that most people hardly advert to its existence. It will be placed where the present Sacred Heart Chapel is. There are those who will regret the removal of that Altar, but the cognoscenti will tell you that it is deteriorating seriously. Above the font, on the wall, will be placed a stained glass window.

There were still two great problems to be decided, (1) the existing reredos/Altar complex, and (2) the Altar Rails.

The Reredos/Altar. This was not, as most people probably know, the original (that was the Sacred Heart Altar). It consists of a variety of materials, alabaster, marble (of two or three different types) and deanstone. The effect is curiously attractive. It manages to be a good compromise of baroque and neo-Gothic in a neo-Gothic church. So it was decided to keep the reredos but remove the marble Altar (this is indicated by liturgical law). A plinth will protrude from the centre of the reredos as the Tabernacle podium.

The Altar Rails. Much as I strove to keep them I can see that they will be far too near the newly-positioned Altar, and, if the Mass facing the people is to be carried out properly, then we cannot retain them. There is no reason why people

should not then kneel for Communion, and the side-arm of the rail near the Shrine will be kept to assist those who have difficulty either in kneeling or standing without support.

The material of the Altar, Pulpit and Tabernacle support will be Bath stone (as is the existing Baptismal font). The Architect noticed very soon that this was the stone of the Church. The Gothic (or more correctly neo-Gothic) arch is a constant motif and was the clever way in which the two side-aisles were unified with the main nave, even though they were built at different times and both of them were built some years after the central portion. In the new furnishings, this arch will be shown as recessed on the Altar, the Pulpit and the Tabernacle podium; it will also be the shape of the stained-glass window of the Baptistry. The whole restoration should make for a unified styling.

Further work to be done will be the addition of a toilet/wash-place, reorganisation of the lighting system, modernisation of the sound amplification, and complete decoration. It is hoped that a repository/piety Stall will be built in the existing Baptistry.

The Architect of the project is Brian Wain, of Cork, who has vast experience of restoring Churches, and who has a great grasp of liturgical needs, and is sensitive to style. So far we have not received notification of the starting date, but it is thought that, once started, the work will take four to five months.

ST ANDREW'S NEWS

THE Rev David Milling will be leaving St Andrew's to take up a new post with the Upper Kennet team ministry. His last service in the parish will be Evensong at St Andrew's on February 2, after which a presentation will be made to the Millings. David will be instituted at Broad Hinton Church on February 14. We wish the Millings well and will report more fully in the next issue.

NEWS FROM THE HILL CHAPEL

ON THE Sunday before Christmas the Church at Caversham Hill moved! We realised that to share our celebrations for Christ's birthday with as many people as possible, we would need to meet in a larger hall. So preparations were made and drums, cellos and other instruments were packed into cars and driven just along the road to the Hill School.

We were thrilled to see the hall fill up that Sunday morning — some people were old friends who were back with us for the Christmas break, from college or to visit friends or families, and it was lovely to have them back as part of our family again. Yet more were new faces to us, and if you owned one of them we would like to say how pleased we were that you came.

Using some new songs and some traditional carols, a solo and a duet and several readings, we spent a little time considering some of the titles given to Christ. To begin to appreciate such magnificent titles — Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of Peace, Son of God, Son of Man — needs more time than was available to us that Sunday. But the seeds were sown and many of us gave deeper thought to those names during the following days.

After the service was over, most people were able to stay for a cup of coffee, and as we chatted together we could sense the excitement that can be felt before a birthday celebration.

That sense of excitement was still evident on Christmas morning when we met for a short service at the Chapel. Small hands carefully held new toys — new pullovers, scarves and gloves were very much in evidence, as well as an overwhelming desire to praise and thank God the Father for his goodness in sending His Son to live on earth for a while.

How good God our Father is to us, His children, and how we enjoyed that opportunity to thank Him with our voices, but most of all from our hearts!

A man to treasure!

On New Year's Eve we were very pleased to recognise the thirty years that Victor Porter has served the church as treasurer. In the early evening we met for an informal supper together, followed by a few rounds of "Name that chorus" and a spiritualised "Blankety Blank". It takes some imagining, doesn't it?

After that our three Elders appeared as Frankie Vaughan lookalikes, complete with bow ties, hats and canes, to sing the praises of Victor with their version of the Policemen's Song from the Pirates of Penzance. As the evening drew to a close, Victor and his wife Molly were presented with a Teasmade as a token of our appreciation.

Although he will continue as treasurer for the present time, we pray that the Lord will provide us with a replacement before long so that Victor can have a well-deserved retirement.

★ ★ ★

Until further notice our Sunday morning worship services will be held at the Hill Primary School, just down the road from the Chapel, at 10.30am. This is to give us better facilities for our young people's work.

ST JOHN'S NOTES

IT WAS a candlelight Christmas at St John's this year. The quiet preparation service was held by candlelight. When some of the Emmer Green Youth Group came to help St John's sing carols round the Amersham Road estate, they did it by candlelight. Len David took his piano accordion with them, and when offered money, they explained "They were carolling because of the good news of Christmas".

The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols was held entirely by candlelight. There were mixed opinions about this, because it was not easy to manage books, sheets and a lighted candle. Besides there was also melted candle wax! However everyone agreed the lovely singing and traditional readings made it a memorable act of worship.

On Christmas Eve there was the first Christingle carol service ever held in St John's. Many of the one hundred children brought their own decorated orange, with the candle set in it, and the church supplied extra. Only the Christingle carol was

sung by the light of candles. Then small eyes grew enormous — what do little children see in a candle flame? After piling presents for the Probation Service under the tree, they went home, most of them with promises they could light their Christingle again before bed time.

The Midnight Communion Service opened by candlelight in the full church, which now looked beautiful with the flowers set in the evergreen decorations.

On Christmas Day many complete families came to the 10 o'clock Communion service. The abiding memory is of small children, spontaneously kneeling round the crib — in Bethlehem. Then they went home with an orange left over from the Christingle service.

It was very heartening to have so many people help with the church decorating. They are all thanked, particularly the very patient father who put up the Star of Bethlehem and persuaded it to hang level, so the candles would be lighted.

OBITUARY

CANON EDWARD CONWAY

ON MONDAY, December 23 the funeral of Canon Edward Conway took place at Portsmouth Cathedral. Canon Conway was Parish Priest of St James, Reading from 1971-81, and Catholic Dean of Reading. Following ser-

vice with the RAF as a pilot during the war Edward Conway studied for the priesthood and served in the Portsmouth Diocese. He will be remembered with great affection by many readers of the Caversham Bridge.

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BAPTIST NEWS

WOW — WHAT A MONTH

THE non-appearance of Baptist News in the last issue did not signal the onset of winter hibernation within the Church but a famine of journalistic fodder. This month it is a case of "corn in Egypt" for the Church has been bursting with activity and the seams have been stressed.

GREATER THAN GOLD

The Bible Society presented the musical "Greater Than Gold" portraying the story of the little Welsh girl, Mary Jones, who craved for a personal copy of the Bible at a time when such was the perquisite of the affluent few. The members of the cast, choir and orchestra were drawn from a number of Churches in the town and the performance in the Baptist Church was the culmination of a series of presentations. The producer, Mrs Valerie Blake, and the Musical Directors, Miss Sue Allum and Mr Vic Pizzey, merit congratulations for the manner in which they moulded the talented performers into what proved to be a superb and stirring performance in keeping with the intention of the composer, Roger Jones, that it should be not only a re-telling of a beautiful and wonderful real life drama but also a challenge as to the place and value of personal Bible reading.

Following the performance a collection was taken which raised £50 for the Bible Society and £91 for Caversham Link Group Charities.

TALENTED AMATEURS

The occasional absences of the Minis-

ter, the Revd Dennis Weller, as he discharges his peripatetic duties amongst the Churches of the Berks Baptist Association of which he is President, provides opportunities for the laity to display their talents in the conduct of Sunday worship. Recently the members of the Emmer Green House Group took charge and had they made known in advance that the service would include three sermons the very thought would have guaranteed not a few empty seats. In the event there was no cause for absenteeism in that the sermons were all minis which gave considerable mileage for thought and action on "The Love of God". Yes — the sermons and the other varied ingredients of a sparkling production may have been the work of amateurs but the service proved to be a classic much appreciated by the large congregation.

NO ELBOW ROOM

The need for elasticated walls in the worship area of the Church was proved one recent Sunday evening when all the members of the Strong Family, Mr Alan, Mrs Shirley and their sons Martin and Robert, presented themselves for baptism by total immersion. The Service, including the Act of Baptism, was conducted jointly by the Revd. Dennis Weller and Pastor Chris Justice in that the Strong family, whilst now committed to the Baptist Church, have links with, and many friends at the Chapel-on-the-Hill not a few of whom were present to witness this unique event. Such was the crush that the congregation overflowed into the Lounge

where the proceedings were viewed through the "squin" provided by the open door into the Worship area.

ACTORS EVERY ONE

The Church has been the venue for further dramatic productions which also drew goodly crowds — on these occasions the stars were those talented and uninhibited performers — children.

The School Lane Play Group — which is based on the Church — gave a spectacular interpretation of the Nativity and sang choruses lustily. The helpers, under the leadership of Mrs Pat Jenkins, merit congratulations on a production which more than rewarded their considerable effort in dressing the children — it took three-quarters of an hour, staging and rehearsing them. On another occasion it was the turn of the Brownies and the Guides whose "piece de resistance" was their rendering of the "Twelve Days of Christmas" and "The Greedy Giant". Here again the costumes were a joy to behold notwithstanding that some of the "birds" appeared to be exhibiting an "interesting Condition" not far removed from the Baby Unit at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW

ONCE again Christmas has come and gone all too quickly. There is a special joy and fellowship which is so meaningful at Christmas. Friends at Caversham Methodist Church enjoyed various Christmas activities and as in other parts of Caversham experienced the joy of a full Church. At the Christmas Family service, the Ambassadors Drum and Bugle Corps broke new ground by playing for two of the congregational carols. At the Christmas party, children from Micklands Nursery Playgroup came to entertain with their singing, and on Christmas Day the National Childrens Home benefited by a record £156.00 collection.

It is with much regret that we record

the death of Mr Rob Eagleman. Rob died just before Christmas and will be much missed by all the Gosbrook Road congregation. He was one of our most staunch workers, and had kept the grounds in tip-top condition for many years. He was also secretary of the local National Childrens Home effort for many years and was one of their keenest collectors. It seemed therefore very fitting that the Christmas Day collection should be a record donation. Our prayers and sympathy are extended to his wife and family.

All friends at Gosbrook Road wish Caversham Bridge readers every blessing during 1986.

A warm welcome awaits visitors and newcomers.

LINK GROUP

A PERFORMANCE of the musical play "Greater than Gold" was given in the Baptist Church in Caversham on December 7 before a very appreciative audience. This is the story of a young girl's determination to earn enough money to buy a Bible of her own and players and choir gave a memorable performance. A collection was taken at the end in aid of Link Group charities and the Group is very grateful for this donation which was added to the money voted in November for various organisations including those helping the homeless at Christmas.

On December 11 a Christmas party was held at the Baptist Centre for some of the elderly and house-bound friends of the Group. The Rev Paul Kenchington from Caversham Park

brought his guitar and visitors and hostesses sang to and enjoyed his varied music, carols and well-known songs. After tea and crackers Mrs Judith Moore played popular songs on the piano for everybody to sing.

Owing to difficulty in arranging suitable dates, members were unable to visit the homes for the elderly to sing carols this year but were invited to join with other groups.

The volunteers in the office at the Care Centre have continued their work of offering advice or practical help where needed. The sale of Christmas cards in the Pop-In Centre proved popular and as a result many more visitors have found the centre a friendly place to pop in for a cup of coffee and a chat with friends.

OBITUARY MRS LILIAN LOVEJOY

MRS LILIAN Lovejoy died in November aged ninety-five. For the last five years she had been in a Reading Nursing Home where she endeared herself to all the staff in contact with her. But before that she regularly attended St Peter's Church at 11am.

At the age of eight she came with her parents to Southview Avenue, Caversham and regularly worshipped at St John's Church, where she took part in many of its social activities and taught in the Sunday School.

After attending Kendrick School while it was still at Watlington House, she trained as a teacher at the early Reading University College in London Road and taught at Oxford Road and

Swansea Road schools.

When her parents built two houses at Taplow, she and her beloved husband Sydney lived in one of them until they moved to Brooklyn Drive, Emmer Green, and when her husband died in 1963, she moved again to Balmore Drive.

Little Lillie, as she was often called — she was well under five feet in height — led a sheltered, rather secluded life. It was not until about 1970

that she went on her first foreign holiday, giving her a glimpse of a wider world that she was content to live without. She had been a member of Taplow WI and became President of Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild.

Her sunny, cheerful outlook on life endeared her to many friends and she is much missed. She was buried along with her husband's ashes at Dunsden where her father had been churchwarden.

CAVERSHAM CLERGY

ANGLICAN

The Rev Richard Kingsbury, Caversham Rectory, Church Road. Tel: 479130. (Parish Office: Monday - Thursday 9.30 - 12.30. Tel: 471703).

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

The Rev Adrian Dorber, 33 Grove Road, Emmer Green. Tel: 473095.

The Rev Paul Kenchington, 51 Galsworthy Drive. Tel: 475152.

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-Bapty, 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: 723418.



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Postbag

Dear Sirs,

I suppose the most hopeful thing that came out of the Geneva Conference between Mr Reagan and Mr Gorbachev was that both genuinely desired some arms reductions, talked together for several hours, airing their differences, putting forward suggestions and objections regarding Star Wars, etc, and getting the measure of one another. Yet nothing concrete came out of it.

Our present "peace" is no more than an armed truce, a state of fear, suspicion and intrigue and enmity. And we continue to devise more sophisticated weapons. We squander £18,000 million yearly on "defence", then try to retrieve some by selling arms abroad, resulting in possible death and suffering to many people, swelling refugee camps and providing an endless stream of applicants for Save the Children Fund.

A brief item of news appeared recently in one

of the National Dailies, headed: "Top salesman to head arms team, will be paid £47,000 a year in a Defence Ministry £2,600 million weapons sales drive".

Increasing numbers of our people are engaged in the manufacture of armaments of every description, with little thought of the death and suffering they can bring to others, but thankful to be in work and take home a weekly wage, though that does not exonerate one that this is an ungodly pursuit.

Shareholders draw dividends from the arms trade. The crushing burden of "defence" is impoverishing our every Social Service, and the country is slowly being destroyed morally, spiritually and materially. Not till the people, including politicians, and maybe some of us Christians, return again to God in penitence, acknowledge our sinful ways, and follow the way Christ set before us in the Gospels, realising the loyalty and obeisance entailed, can

we hope for true peace and the further extension of God's Kingdom on earth.

A great challenge confronts the Church today: to save and redeem the individual and the nation and a war-stricken world. In Christ there is the power to overcome our vices and weaknesses. The Church offers help and guidance, a rich fellowship, an opportunity of service to others, true freedom. As Jesus said: "The truth shall set men free"; "I am the way, the truth, and the life". Meanwhile, the faithful few keep the Churches open, lit and warmed and the fabric repaired, often at considerable sacrifice, for in the words of C. S. Lewis:

"We are watchers of a beacon whose light must never die; we are guardians of an altar that shows thee ever nigh;

We are children of thy freemen who sleep beneath the sod; For the might of thine arm we

bless thee, our God, our fathers' God".

There is still hope for the world.

H. D. MARSHALL

164 Kidmore End Road
Emmer Green

Dear Editor,

Please would you permit me to ask any of your readers who lived in the Woodcote area from the 'twenties onwards whether they could assist in a project I am undertaking? I am researching the history of all the small bus companies which operated into Reading in pioneer days and their impact on the social history of the area. One group served Sonning Common and Peppard and

another the Woodcote area — Wilkinson, Page, Hall, Jackman and Kemps. Does anyone have memories or know anyone who can help — employees or their relatives, perhaps? I would be keen to see any tickets, timetables and photographs of the buses and men if they exist.

J. R. WHITEHEAD

3 Littlecote Drive
Reading RG1 6JD

Dear Sirs,

Weather Vanes

Prior to publication of the September 1985 competition results, and keeping a (strict) weather eye on **Caversham**, I would have defied anyone to identify all nine vanes in this context, or has someone moved EP Collier School across the river without my knowledge?

Is there a prize for spotting the deliberate mistake?

OWEN CLAMP

156 St Peter's Avenue
Caversham, Reading
PS: I identified six only!

Protest in vain! — three readers identified all nine correctly! Eds.



Matthew Jones from the 3rd Reading Cubs holding the trophy he won as Berks County Cubs Chess Champion

THANKS

Save the Children Fund benefited from the joint choirs' psalm singing to the tune of £378. Thanks to the singers and their sponsors for a splendid effort.

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

TERRITORIAL DISPUTE

One of the main preoccupations in this neck of the woods for the rest of the year is likely to be the proposals for the extension of Berkshire's boundaries into South Oxfordshire. The residents of the threatened areas, practically without exception, are up in arms at what they see as an invasion of their territory by a predatory neighbour, and the opposition is not confined to these alone. Caversham people, who realise their good fortune in having real proper countryside on their doorstep, also view

the proposals with trepidation.

The alarm is of course due to the fear that development, which over the past decades has run amok in Berkshire, will now spread its tentacles across the south Oxfordshire countryside. Oxfordshire's good record in resisting development is pointed to and compared with Berkshire's urban sprawl. This is perhaps hardly fair as Berkshire, against its will, has been designated a major growth area by the Department of the Environment, whilst Oxfordshire is only a limited growth area. The

strength of the resistance put up by both counties is probably the same, but the steamroller advancing on Berkshire knows it has the government behind it, and trundles on remorselessly, practically assured of success. All the same there are real fears that whoever may be at fault, there is no guarantee that the Department of the Environment will exclude from growth that part of Berkshire north of the Thames if the proposals go through.

The areas concerned are the parishes of Eye and Dunsden, Kidmore End, Mapledurham, Rotherfield Peppard and Sonning Common. It is a substantial slice of land, some lying already within the Chiltern AONB, and comprising a population of about seven and a half thousand people. This would still leave 123,000 people in the remainder of the district. This seven thousand odd, argues Berkshire, all fall within the "journey to work area" based on Reading, to which all the main roads lead. Their children provide half the roll of Chiltern Edge School, Berkshire Fire Brigade already puts their fires out, they congest and wear out Reading's roads, and problems occur because there are two county social services.

Berkshire has a good case, which should not be underestimated, but whether it is good enough to justify altering the historic boundary of Oxfordshire and threatening its essential rural character is another matter. A preservation committee has been set up under the chairmanship of Edward Hordern of Cane End House, and consisting of representatives of the parishes concerned, to oppose these changes and they have widespread support.

Perhaps their case would have been stronger if at the last boundary changes Berkshire had not lost its northern parts to Oxfordshire, thereby losing its historic areas such as the Berkshire Downs and the Berkshire White Horse, which had been part of the ancient county since pre-conquest times. Administrative convenience is not the only consideration.

RADIATION FEARS

Another major concern that has pushed Berkshire into the national headlines is the dangers of radiation from emissions from the nuclear weapons establishments at Burghfield and Aldermaston. The Yorkshire TV programme, First Tuesday, came up with figures that show a severe increase in leukaemia and child cancer figures above the national norm in the vicinity of nuclear weapons establishments. The tame spokesman wheeled out by the Ministry of Defence to answer the allegations made soothing but hardly convincing sounds. In the face of the figures produced by the programme makers, the MoD will have to produce equally well-researched figures if they are to allay the very real fears of local people about the effects on the health of their children.

How does all this affect Caversham? For one thing, we are down wind of both Aldermaston and Burghfield, and for another, the polluted water that enters the Thames at Pangbourne Meadows flows under our bridges. It doesn't vanish in the intervening distance as it flows along. It may be less concentrated but it is still there for whatever unfortunate being should come in contact with it. We are told it is only low-level waste, but if it is as safe as all that, why are there notices along the Pangbourne banks warning against mooring, fishing or bathing, and why be so coy about stating the reason and revealing the name of the authority issuing the warning?

One concerned person is Isabel Dovey, well known to members of Caversham Residents' Association, whose husband died in 1983 from a type of cancer normally associated with exposure to radiation. She appeared in the programme which was shown in the course of the very week in which an open verdict was returned at the inquest into her husband's death. He worked at Aldermaston and had been present during the nuclear tests in Australia in the early 1960s. Mr Dovey is not the only Aldermaston worker to have con-

tracted cancer and if the verdict had been death due to industrial disease, there would have been many whose relations would be claiming compensation.

Isabel wants to see better protection for workers in nuclear industries, greater care to avoid emissions, whether planned or accidental, and intensified research into the treatment of nuclear waste. She is not opposed to the development of nuclear power, and in fact firmly believes in the deterrent effect of Britain's nuclear weapons and the future of nuclear power as a major source of energy. Her personal experience has, though, put her amongst the growing number of people who have serious misgivings about the present standards of safety in and around Britain's nuclear establishments.

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Caversham Court has acquired a handsome pair of wrought iron gates, replacing the shabby and patched wooden ones which can never have been very attractive even in their hey-day. How refreshing it is to see money spent on something to give people pleasure and not just grudgingly doled out, Scrooge-like, for a bread-and-butter diet only. As spring and summer come along, a growing number of visitors to Caversham Court will be enjoying this new addition to its attractive gardens.

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ROUND THE CLUBS

The Jubilee Club, Mapledurham

The turn of the year is always a time of looking back and looking forward. For the Jubilee Club the year that has just passed has been both a happy and successful one. Last Winter there was the usual visit to the theatre at Windsor in spite of the sharp, icy weather, which cancelled the February meeting. We had two very interesting talks, one last Spring about the work of the Express Dairies from an excellent speaker who brought along a very generous present of many free samples of his firm's products. The other, last Autumn, from a member of Tappin's Coach Tour Company who talked on the subject of holidays illustrated with excellent slides. In March we had another visit from our talented friend Mrs Reed, of Three Mile Cross. This time she demonstrated enamel work and brought along a fine display of her handcraft.

In spite of the poor summer we managed a successful visit to Stonor Park and another to Pusey Gardens, near Wantage. On one of the few really hot afternoons we were lucky enough to have arranged a picnic at the Childe Beale Trust. We were not quite so fortunate when we held a garden party at 2 Darell Road, but it didn't matter for we all squeezed indoors somehow and held a most successful Bring and Buy Sale, as well

as making almost thirty pounds towards club funds.

Then it was goodbye to outdoor activities and back indoors again with a show of holiday slides in October and the best ever Open Afternoon and Christmas Sale in November. On that afternoon we gained five new members to the Club and made one hundred and twenty-nine pounds with a grand cake and produce stall and a marvellous selection of gifts made by various clever people.

The year ended with our party when we were entertained by a most gifted group of young schoolchildren and their teachers. Their performance with recorders and their singing was of a very high standard and much enjoyed. It was also good to have our friend, the Rev Derek Spears, to join us and tax us with another carol quiz.

Certainly 1985 was a very happy year for us in spite of our sadness at the loss of a dear friend and member, Dr Martyn John, early in the year and also Mrs Hartup, who, for many years, so generously made us our Christmas cake.

Now we have a new year ahead and a very special one it is too, for the club, which was formed in 1965, will be celebrating its twenty-first birthday. The committee will no doubt have this in mind when planning this year's programme of talks, trips into the country, tea parties and a fun afternoon, for having fun altogether is what the Jubilee Club is all about.

Chazey WI

Chazey WI began its Christmas celebrations this year with a memorable visit from the Thames Valley Chorus from the Reading Barber Shop Harmony Choir. There were thirty members led by the chorus director, Peter Powell, all immaculately dressed in purple and grey. For many it was a nostalgic evening, with such numbers as "Keep Your Sunny Side Up," "Tootsy Goodbye," "The White Cliffs of Dover," "Now Is The Hour," and "California Here I Come," with much fun and laughter when the group were asked to participate in "Bring Back My Bonny."

After the business of the meeting the committee served everyone with a festive turkey supper and mincepies.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild celebrated its twenty-fourth birthday with a Christmas luncheon. The guest speaker was Mary Fryer, Federation President.

Christmas poems and traditional carols at the December meeting ended a successful year. The target of £200 toward the special Dhaka appeal was raised from coffee mornings and the Autumn Fair.

The many outings during the year were well supported and the Chairman, Dora Smith, welcomed several new members and announced that Eleanor Smith would be Guild President for a further year.

Caversham Community Association

One of the highlights of the club's meetings at Christmas-time occurred on December 9 when the East Reading Salvation Army Songsters and Band visited the club. Karen Cox was in charge of the singers and Alistair Todd led the band through a varied programme of new and old carols. Recitations, solos and readings interspersed the music and the audience were

invited to choose their favourite carols. Captain Bartlett finished with a reading from the Bible of the first Christmas and then spoke of the three ships sailing by at Christmas reminding us of worship, friendship and service by stewardship.

The committee and members were busy on December 16 decorating the clubroom and preparing a meal for the members in readiness for a warm welcome on their arrival at the Christmas party. A tasty meal of salad, ham and meat pie with trifles, cakes and mincepies gave everyone a selection that was much appreciated. The entertainment was provided by Malcolm Plant, Doug

Allan and Dave Croton of the Outlore Group who played and sang a good variety of contemporary folk music enjoyed by the members. Christmas cake and a drink was partaken at the end of a happy evening which was the last meeting in 1985.

Rosehill WI

Miss Vincent welcomed members to the December meeting, which was the Christmas party. One minute's silence was held in memory of Kitty Raines, one of the Institute's most esteemed members, who died recently. She was an active

Turn to page 11

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ROUND THE CLUBS

From page 10

Committee member and will be greatly missed. A successful coffee morning for ACWW was held at Mrs Cook's home.

During the afternoon there was a Beetle Drive with much hilarity. Tea was then served by the Committee, and a lovely cake made and iced by Mrs Barge was enjoyed. Everyone then took a present from the "Lucky Dip" from parcels which had been put into baskets by members as they entered the hall.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild Christmas Parties

Typing this report in early January with resolutions as yet unbroken and wishing all readers the very best of the season, the realisation suddenly dawns that this will not be published for ages. Anyway a Happy New Year to everyone! After this opening a report can only be an anti-climax, so what did actually happen? There were two parties in the week before Christmas, one for the social studies group at Mrs Betty Smith's house, where Christmas poems were read and the other for Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild at St Andrew's Hall. It was

good to see members there having a good time after having had to miss meetings on account of ill health.

Voting took place on the Federation's proposal to divide Berkshire and North Hampshire region into two regions. A last big effort is being made to build up the fund for Dhaka, so that a cheque can be handed to Princess Anne in June.

Amusing entertainment in St Andrew's Hall was provided by the drama group. Coffee, mince pies and carol singing by the attractively dressed Townswomen's choir with splendid piano accompaniment concluded the evening. And who did make that excellent punch?

Maplewood WI

At Maplewood's December meeting the business preliminaries were soon disposed of and then the President, Mrs Le Mare, welcomed members, husbands and friends to a Magic Christmas Party. Mr John Barlow, Caversham's own Mr Magic, soon had the audience participating in his varied programme of tricks and his speedy patter kept everyone laughing and applauding, and set the scene for a hilarious evening.

Mrs Phyl Duckworth gave the vote of thanks which was followed by a delicious buffet supper prepared by committee members and the evening closed with the singing of a carol.

St Peter's Wives Group

In December the St Peter's Wives Group held two very different events.

At the beginning of the month the Group held a Christmas party, attended by members, husbands and friends. Members provided an appetising array of food and the committee organised the liquid refreshment.

After supper Marie Hyde provided the musical fun and soon had everyone joining in the singing or participating in her backing "group."

A week later, the Group, again with husbands and friends, were carol singing in Caversham. The residents of the Sheridan Avenue/Hemdean Road area were again most generous and appreciative and £60 was raised for the Sue Ryder Home at Nettlebed.

The Wives' next meeting is on February 18, at 8pm, in Church House.

Emmer Green TG

Mrs Sutherland was the speaker at the December meeting of the Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild, and her subject was Oberammergau. She told members of the history of the Passion Play; how in the seventeenth century the plague was rife on the continent and brought into the village by a worker coming home for a church festival. In desperation, after a great

many deaths, those of the villagers who could still walk processed to the church and made a promise that if God would deliver them from the plague they would reenact the last seven days in the life of Christ for eternity. This they have done, with only one or two pauses during times of war. The format of the play has evolved from a medieval outdoor play to the straight biblical enactment of today. The whole village is involved, no make-up is used, no amplification either, yet every word can be heard by an audience of four thousand. Mrs Sutherland said that the play, which lasts all day, is extremely moving, and above all, the music is magnificent. The play is performed every ten years, the next performance being in 1994.

It being the last meeting this year, Mrs Chamberlain wished members a very happy Christmas, and the festive spirit was followed through with mince pies and sausage rolls provided by the committee. The raffle prizes were won by Mrs Dovey and Mrs Smallbone, and the prize for the most attractive Christmas parcel was won by Mrs Hodges. The parcels will be distributed to the elderly in Emmer Green.

Caversham Ladies Club

Well filled tables and a lovely iced Christmas cake as centrepiece meant it was Christmas party time again. Carols were sung by members. Grace was then said and tea commenced. Tables soon started looking sparse as everyone tucked into the goodies. A competition for a decorated home-made Christmas cracker was then judged by Mrs South. The winner was Mrs J. Henwood, second Mrs Nelhams and third Mrs Queenie Strong.

Mrs Brenda Strong donated a doll to be raffled in aid of Save the Children Fund. This was won by Mrs Board. £5 was raised and this was given to Mrs South who is an active member of the Save the Children Fund.

Mrs Harwood, the Chairman, then distributed an envelope containing a Christmas card and diary to each member. The meeting closed with Happy Christmas being wished the members as they left for home.

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St John's

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9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.00am Children's Service (1st Sunday)

St Andrew's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.15am Holy Communion (not 3rd Sunday)
11.15am Matins (3rd Sunday)
6.30pm Evensong

St Barnabas

8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Family Communion (apart from 2nd Sunday)
9.30am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)
11.00am Holy Communion (2nd Sunday only)
4.00pm Evensong (1st Sunday only)

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11.00am PARISH COMMUNION

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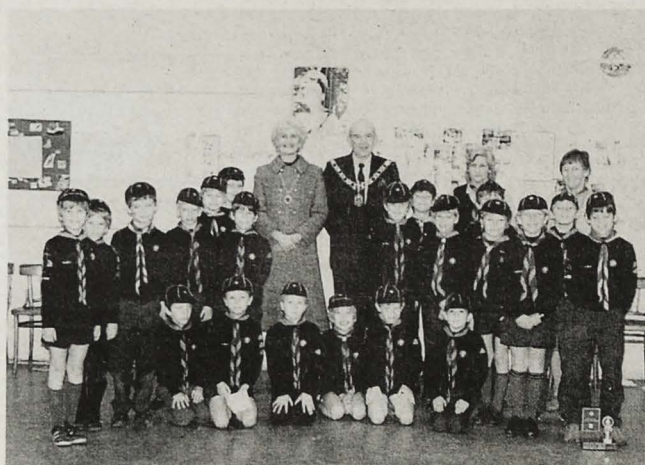
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