

EMMER GREEN:

Memories of Victorian and Edwardian days

THERE CANNOT BE MANY PEOPLE LEFT IN EMMER GREEN who were there in 1889, two years after the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Mr Laurence Hunt is one of them. That year he was aged four and his father came to work as farm bailiff for Mr Saunders of Caversham Grove. Mr Hunt remembers being carried all the way from Reading Station in his father's arms. That was his first day at his new home in Emmer Green. Before long the family were settled in their house and photos I have seen show it surrounded by a garden full of flowers. Sadly it has now been pulled down for development.

Soon Laurie, as he is affectionately known to his young friends from Highdown, was himself attending the little school at Emmer Green in Peppard Road where he rang the bell daily. Like all the rest of the local children he enjoyed playing in King's field, skating and sliding on the pond there when winters were cold enough for it to freeze. The pond is now filled in and has a bus stop on top of it. No doubt as a boy he went along with others down to the little stream which ran through the dip in the field and was called the

Swilley. Here watercress grew beside the fast flowing water and paper boats would have floated merrily along towards the two stiles in Rotherfield Way. This tiny brook was the boundary line between the



The way to Emmer Green. Here at Little End the road divides left and right (now the lights at Queen Anne's School junction). Laurie's father would have turned left unless, of course, he went along Hemdean Road and up the steep climb of Grove Hill.

estates of Caversham Grove and Caversham Park. Perhaps, too, Laurie and his friends explored some of the old chalk caves nearby.

When the butler rang the bell

Then school came to an end and life began in earnest. Laurie started work at the Grove as a gardener's boy. But it was not all gardening. A very deep well had been sunk inside the second entrance to the Big

House and behind on, it was made to walk round and round hauling up the buckets of cool, clear spring water. This went on until first the tank at the lodge was filled, then from this a pipe leading to a second

tank took water nearer to Mr Saunders' residence. As soon as this second one became brimful Mr Low, the butler, who had been keeping an eye on things at his end, rang a loud bell. Immediately the old

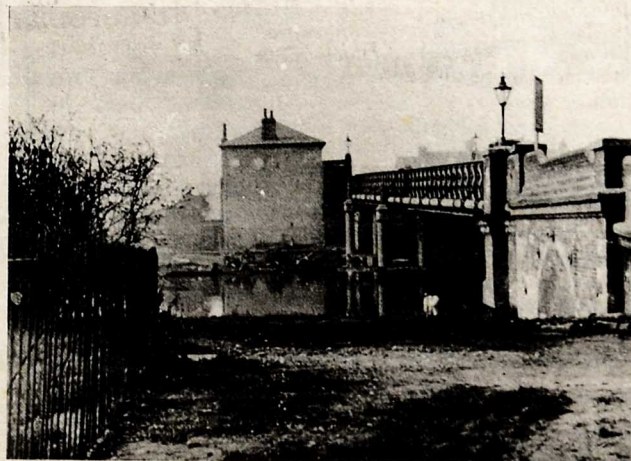
horse stopped dead. It had soon learnt when the bell sounded that was the end of the daily round. Sunday was a day of rest, at least from maintaining the water supply. On Sundays Laurie

been number seven.

Whilst chatting to Mr Hunt, I mentioned how interested I was in Grove Cottages, especially numbers eighteen to twenty-four. Several years ago, before some outside wall repairs had been done, a large amount of dressed stone, obviously old, could be seen at the corner of the dwelling nearest to the road. Laurie told me it had come from the original old mansion of Wyfold Court when alterations had been carried out. Perhaps I am wrong, but these four cottages look as if they were once one dwelling, possibly a farm house. I told Laurie I thought they were about two hundred and fifty years old and that was his reckoning too. With a second storey, attic windows and old tiles on the roof, they were certainly older and different in style from the charming Victorian Cottages which now join them.

For several years Laurie left Emmer Green but came back again to the place of his youth. He has been here a long time since his return and must have many memories still not shared with me. It was a pleasure to chat with him and perhaps, one day, I shall learn more of

pushed Mrs Saunders in her wheelchair to St Barnabas for Matins. The church was then the original building. After the service Laurie made the return trip and always received half-a-crown (twelve and a half pence) from Mr Saunders. No doubt some of the half-a-crown was spent in the little shop in one of Grove Cottages, kept by Mr Jack Woodage. It may have



The iron (second) bridge at Caversham over which Laurie was carried to his new home at Emmer Green. Waterman Piper's house is in the centre of the picture. An old bricked up arch belonging to the original bridge can be seen on the right and the way down to the river marks the old ferry crossing.

TALKING POINT

By The Rev Mike Holmes
Caversham Hill Chapel



GOD AND DISASTERS

My youngest daughter, who is four, announced the other day that she loved everybody in the whole world and then added that she was like God! With the recent spate of disasters that have befallen our planet recently comes a question on many people's lips, "How could a God of love allow these things to happen?" Earlier this year in Caversham and more recently in Reading, hundreds of Christians marched through the streets singing and declaring that God loves us. If he loves us, why does he allow us to suffer?

We have seen famines, floods, earthquakes, wars, diseases, air, sea and train disasters, not to mention the ongoing disasters of violence, drugs, corruption and family breakdown. With there being no apparent end in sight for these things, can we assume that God either does not exist or perhaps does not care any more?

Part of the answer to these questions is strangely enough the fact that "God is love". To God love matters more than anything else in the world. God's purpose in creating men and women was for them to enjoy his love and for them to return that love.

Because love is a voluntary thing, he gave us free-will to choose whether to love God or not; you cannot make people love you.

Instead of choosing to love, many people act selfishly, giving way to hatred and greed in their hearts and causing great trouble to others. Many of the disasters we see happening are due to man's inhumanity to man.

We therefore see that out of man's free-will come many disasters for which only he is to blame. Even with some of the more 'natural' disasters man is not entirely innocent. If a great earthquake hit San Francisco next week causing great loss of life, would God be to blame or the people living there who know only too well the possibility of such a disaster? Also, man's mismanagement of the environment is beginning to add to the dimensions of some more natural problems such as flooding.

This does not explain everything. What about the innocent child mauled to death by a lion, or the baby struck by lightning? I think we need to understand that we live in a world that shapes our characters. Without people who are hurting there would be no good Samaritans. If life was a bed of roses we would all grow up to

be weeds! I personally know many people who suffer in order for them to be better people at the end of it, although it is hard for them at the time. God is interested on the inside of our lives more than the outward appearance. Now, it may seem fair that only those who believe in God and his purposes should undergo suffering for the development of their characters, since those who choose not to live God are free agents, are they not? However, if only Christians suffered, and God protected everybody else, I wonder what the result would be. Not many Christians I would think! No, God has created a world where time and chance happen to everybody. Where a measure of suffering is almost bound to come to us all at some stage. The more godless man becomes, the more likely disaster will hit.

Is all doom and gloom? God grieves to see the selfishness of man and yet we read in John's gospel that, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Despite the fact that at that time the world had by and large grown cold towards God, he sent Jesus not to condemn the world but to save it.

As individuals we have the opportunity to escape the greatest disaster that can ever befall us, the consequence of our godlessness, namely eternal death. This is through belief in Jesus and his work on the cross.

There are people I know who suffer, but inwardly they have a peace, a joy and love that comes from Jesus.

God says through the Bible that one day he will step into the affairs of this world in such a way as to put an end to suffering, crying, pain and even death. This is called the future 'Kingdom of God'. I am looking forward to it, are you?

*A victim of disaster
An act of God they say.
Precious little consolation
On this dreadful, dismal day.*

*A victim of disaster
They know it was a bomb,
Precious little consolation.*

That won't bring back my son.

*A victim of disaster
But he made Christ is King.
Very precious consolation
Resurrection this will bring.*

IT'S LENT

Every now and again, businesses examine where they are heading and consider whether they can make improvements in the way they operate. Such 'stocktaking' is seen as necessary and invaluable.

Christians too need time to examine their lives. The season of Lent offers a useful opportunity for this. It can be seen as a time "lent" by God to us to do some spiritual stocktaking.

This lent, St Peter's is planning 5 house groups, each on a different aspect of the Christian faith. Three of the groups will be bible study, one on prayer, the other looking at a number of issues. Most of the groups will, of necessity, be limited to about 12 people owing to space, but the groups are open to all, from other churches and from none. The groups are: Monday evenings (starting Feb. 13th): bible study group, leader Fi Radford (483965), hosts Enid and John Toombs. The book for this group will be "The Christian Adventure" by Maurice Maddocks; 6 weeks.

From page 1

Emmer Green as it once was when I visit him again.

★ ★ ★ ★

I did visit Laurie again, at least three times, but his memory had become very bad and I was never again to have such a clear account of the past. I was never sure if he was rambling and he often repeated the same stories to me. In the end he would forget who I was when I arrived and during the afternoon often ask me my name. Laurie died in 1980.

Tuesday evenings: (47046). Hosts: Margaret Baily and Peter Fry. Also follows the Maurice Maddocks book. 5, possibly 6 weeks. There will also be an afternoon group, led by Rosalind Rutherford, at which creche facilities may be available. Details from 479081.

Wednesday evenings: (starting Feb. 15th): prayer; considering practical aspects of prayer, (about a quarter of the time will be spent in prayer). Leader John Madeley (476063), host Susie Mee; 5 weeks.

Thursday evenings: (starting Feb. 9th): at least some of bible study; leaders Lyn and Bill Butler year.



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All contributions for March issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 1 February.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by January 27.

The dates for April will be Wednesday 1 March and Friday 24 February.

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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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTION is always difficult to produce. With one's mind still half anchored to the Christmas celebrations, it isn't easy to project to the beginning of February, by which time Christmas will be but a dim memory to most of our readers. But I'm making no excuses for using the opportunity to congratulate the shop assistants in Caversham for the gallant way in which they coped with hordes of shoppers. The lads and lasses in Waitrose, for instance, remained unfailingly polite and helpful in spite of the enormous queues. And that goes for the other shops in the area.

LUCKY SHOPPERS

In spite of a few gaps in our shopping needs, we are really very fortunate in Caversham—I speak mainly of those I know in the Prospect Street, Church Street area but I'm informed so often how good other shopping areas are, in particular the Donkin Hill area, Caversham Park Village and others that I only wish I had the time to explore further. Having to go to Reading for shopping just before Christmas—something I don't do more often than I can help—I was struck with the difference between some shops in the town, where it seems customers are by no means always well served, and our own shops. There's our bookshop, as I've said before, is more helpful and informative than any others. Where else could you go into a bookshop which, as

I've said before, is more helpful and informative than any others. Where else could you go into a bookshop and, not knowing the name of the book or the author—perhaps just the merest idea of what the book is about—find the Mullaneys and their assistants willing to spend ages trying to track down what you want. (Incidentally I only dare say this now because this particular Editor will be away when this goes to print). Where else could you find a

hardware shop where they would take time not only to search for what you want, but to tell you how to instal some items—no wonder the 'shop on the corner' is usually so packed.

The florists don't just sell flowers; the assistants will advise you on what flowers to get for any particular occasions and how to treat their plants and flowers to get the best out of them. And the lady in Stichin' Time recently

went to some lengths to find me a very small piece of material for a patching job.

And as to the pet shop, accustomed as I am to hearing of some customers' demands, I admit I was shattered when I heard about the lady who had them turn out their entire stock of something, cat boxes or flaps or something, and then blatantly said she would get it in town where it would be cheaper. On being asked why she didn't go there in the first

case she replied that supermarkets don't give advice. Really, some people!

And in my hairdressers recently, I was willing the assistants to say 'No' to the lady, not usually a customer there, who wanted a last minute appointment just before Christmas but couldn't make this, that or the other time. Those lasses have got more patience than I have; they didn't say 'No' and they did fit her in somehow.

I make no apologies for mentioning these people; they deserve it. And does it ever occur to them that one day they might wake up and find our local shops have gone out of business because of such cavalier treatment. But I should add that, as our assistants say, this kind of customer is a rarity in Caversham, thank heavens.

DOREEN NIKER

I'm grateful to Sandra Winter for taking the trouble to write about Doreen Niker. Several people have come up with odd items of news about her, including the fact that she was educated at Wilson School and Kendrick Girls' School. And I've discovered, what I half suspected, that I knew here

mother many years ago; I remember her telling me that she was working in the People's Pantry 'when the bomb fell'. I believe she was badly injured. I'm told that latterly Doreen was very interested in gardens of all sorts, which is why we've been so fortunate with her gift of the garden feature in Caversham Court.

Many thanks all of you who have provided odd bits of information. What a marvellous memor-

ial for Doreen to leave behind; she must have been a very interesting person and I'm only sorry that, as far as I know, we never met.

OXFAM

I'm told that the Oxfam Shop is about due for some alterations; they may have to close for a short time while these take place. But I'm sure it won't take long for customers to return to a shop where they never know what treasure they are going to find.

A LETTER TO KATY

Dear Katy,

I was very interested in your piece about finding a refuge for your injured thrush.

I wonder whether you have found out the telephone number of your friendly folk in Queen's Road? In case you have not—it is known as the Silver Birches Animal Sanctuary 475514. I think it was originally run by Mrs Cash in Tilehurst and when she moved away this family took on the no easy task of befriending all injured

animals and birds that were brought to them. I think the gentleman is a relation of Mrs Cash.

I have got to know them quite well through taking jumps to them. They are entirely voluntary and I think a lot comes out of their own pockets. They take in everything but dogs (they have four of their own they rescued!) At one time he told me he had numerous cats, mice, a goat, geese, ducks, an owl, rabbits, etc!

Once he was just off to try and catch a

squirrel which had run amok in a shop in Tilehurst. I think they did catch it eventually! It would be nice if they could have a mention in the Caversham Bridge.

I expect you contacted my friend, Mrs Brimblecombe, at the Wokingham and District Animal Rescue (another concern run entirely voluntarily) 782868. I got my present four footed companion from there.

We do enjoy your articles.

Yours etc,
Elizabeth Golby

BOOKS FOR LENT

Mortification is a practice that Christians have indulged in, I almost wrote enjoyed, from their earliest days, especially in Lent. Well don't despair. There is one activity that can be both spiritually uplifting and enjoyable. What else but discovering a good book.

"Colour of blood" by Brian Moore is about a Cardinal in a Communist country who finds his enemies are his friends and possibly vice versa. It is a fast moving adventure story whilst being deeply soul searching in postulant that old, old question "Who is my Neighbour?" A good

Lenten theme.

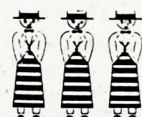
Tales of fasting should go down well with lent. How about those evergreen cautionary hors d'oeuvres, the tales of Beatrix Potter? Peter Rabbit's legendary gluttony leading him into all sorts of scrapes and resulting in the dreaded table spoonful of Camomile tea, must surely give us some food for thought.

Daily scripture readings are a must for the serious lenten pilgrim. Have you thought about trying the original though? For the most robust amongst us whose Hebrew and Greek have seen better

days, I can offer "Light on the Path" this does in fact reduplicate the scriptures in Hebrew and Greek, two readings for each day of the year. But beware, the English notes are minimal. Let's remember that the word carnival really means goodbye to meat but perhaps in the end we can combine mortification with a soupçon of enjoyment.

Books reviewed:
Colour of Blood, B. Moore, Paladin paperback £3.95
Tales of Peter Rabbit, B Potter, Warne £3.50
Light on the Path, Bitzer, Baker paperback £5.95

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

BUGS BOTTOM — STILL THERE

Last month it was stated in this column that unless a miracle occurred, permission would have been given for building in Bugs Bottom by the time this newspaper appeared in print. A miracle did occur, though only a small one, and it would be rash to read too much into it, but nevertheless it means Bugs Bottom is still there and a valuable space has been gained.

What happened was that the period for completing the Section 52 agreement was extended by a month to 9th January. This was because all the details had not after all been completed in the twenty-eight days allowed. Reading Borough Council were not prepared to concede as much as a "blade of grass" (to quote Cllr. G. Rush, Chairman of Planning) beyond what they were legally required to, so every detail had to be looked at very

carefully indeed. It was not until nearly the end of that period that Reading Borough Council's legal advisers had completed their examination of the reasons put forward by the Secretary of State for upholding the original decision and coming to the conclusion that his dismissal of the provisions of the County Replacement Structure Plan should not go unchallenged. As a consequence the Borough Council wrote, with the full support of Berkshire County Council, asking for the Public Inquiry to be re-opened. The response to this is still awaited as this article is being written.

If the Inquiry were to be re-opened, the chances of its overthrowing the original decision would be high, for there is little doubt that had the original Inquiry

been held in the circumstances that were prevailing by the time its results were announced, a very different decision would have been reached.

In the meantime, organisations such as Emmer Green Residents' Association, concentrating mainly on the traffic issues, the Chiltern Society concentrating on environmental issues, Reading Civic Society and Caversham and District Residents' Association, concerning themselves with general issues, have made representations to the Secretary of State, whilst the newly formed Bugs Bottom Action Group have been devising ways of preventing this development from taking place. Further support comes from the County Council's Transport and Policy Programme for 1989-90 in which it is admitted that

substantial spending is required just to cope with existing deficiencies, without taking into account the extra homes envisaged for Berkshire, which 'cannot be accommodated by highway construction of an acceptable scale'. Although it does not specifically mention Bugs Bottom, it clearly comes into that category, particularly as it would result in development north of the river which was not even mentioned in the Structure Plan.

So we are still not quite at the end of the road. Whilst there is still a path remaining ahead, it will be fought over every inch of the way.



HEMDEAN HOUSE
LOOKS TO THE
FUTURE

Another one that is still there. All its

friends will welcome the news that, contrary to earlier reports, Hemdean House School is alive and well and is to remain open. Following the retirement of Mrs M.K. Ralph, who so ably guided the school through all the educational changes of the past sixteen years during which she was headmistress, Dr Margaret Marwick, who for three years has been teaching Science at the school, has been appointed the new head.

A new school council, with full staff and parent representation, is in the process of being set up and is formulating plans for expansion to carry on the school on a firm basis into the 'nineties. Meanwhile, pupils' education will continue uninterrupted.

The school has a history of a hundred and thirty years behind it,

placing it amongst the oldest surviving girls' schools in the country. It has played a part in the life of Caversham ever since it was a small Oxfordshire village separated by meadows from the neighbouring town of Reading. Francis Knighton, who founded it in 1859 as a sister school to his successful Boys' Academy, had moved to Caversham in 1849 from Reading, where he had started his boys' school as early as 1823. This is a record which the school and its friends would not wish to see broken.

With its small classes, the school is able to place emphasis on the individual needs of its pupils, particularly those who do not find it easy to settle in the large environment of most present day schools. Its very good public examination results bear witness to the high standards it sets itself. All its friends will wish it well in this new stage of its long career.



CAR PARK CHARGES

Charges for the Waitrose and St Martin's car parks have not actually been introduced at the time of writing this column. They were to have come into effect at the beginning of December but the necessary equipment was not ready until the end of the year. It remains to be seen whether commuters decide to park in neighbouring streets (those in the immediate vicinity have no available

space), drive into Reading and add to the congestion on the roads leading to and from the bridges, abandon their cars for public transport or even walking, or pay up and look big. Some are even said to be working out cunning schemes with the connivance of spouse or friend, whereby with a bit of juggling they can take advantage of the three hours for fifty pence and still drive into work. It does, however, seem likely that it will be easier for the bona fide shopper to find a space, and it even gives time to take the kids to feed the ducks or visit the play area in Christchurch Meadows before incurring the maximum charges.



IMPROVEMENTS TO PAVEMENTS

Pavements are gradually getting repaired, a very welcome sight. It is, for instance, possible to walk down the much used Priest Hill without stumbling in cracks and holes, and there are many other footways that are in better condition than they have been for years. Others are still awaiting attention, particularly those that are constructed with paving slabs and which are used as parking lots by motorists. These are going to need special attention prior to asphaltting, and are therefore going to have to wait till the next lot of money is available.

Pavement parking is rife throughout Reading and it is done with im-

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POSTBAG

Dear Sirs,

I have been reading your article by MK, Miss Green remembers. I also remember Miss Green. I was born at 10A Bridge Street in 1901 and can remember as a boy of approximately nine years of age having my photo taken by Mr Green, and also on occasions playing with his daughter.

I remember "Baylis" shop and taking three shillings to Mr Theobald and asking for a bottle of Three Gees whisky (Gibleys) for my father Mr Sharp, and on another occasion taking a whip to be repaired by Mrs Berry. The German Band

also used to perform outside the "Crown" in Bridge Street, and the pub's dog, Bess, used to wait in unison.

Happy Days.
Yours,
Camden Sharp
1 Foxhunt Grove,
Fords Farm, Calcot.

Dear Sir,

The 3rd Reading, St Peter's, Venture Scout Unit is looking for new members. You will have the opportunity to go camping, climbing, caving, canoeing and walking amongst others. Anyone is welcome, male or female, provided they are between age fifteen and twenty,

and we meet on Monday nights from 8-10pm.

If you are interested please phone our leader, Ian Cleare, on (0734) 477326 or our chairman, Nigel Underwood on (0734) 475419.

Yours,
Nigel Underwood
24b St Andrew's Road,
Caversham.

Dear Sirs,

On the day that the Prime Minister visited Northern Ireland and commended the RUC in their fight against terrorism, the following item of news appeared in the Daily Press, the result of a visit by Mrs Thatcher to Malaysia some months previously: "MAGGIE CLINCHES ARMS ORDER". "Mrs Thatcher has signed a deal to supply

Malaysia with up to £1.5 billion worth of arms. The order includes twelve British Aerospace Tornado fighter bombers, ground to air missiles, radar and at least one submarine."

I immediately wrote to Mrs Thatcher as follows: "Arms for Malaysia! How can you possibly condemn the IRA when you are helping to spread possible death and destruction around the world?"

Now Michael Heseltine MP was seen and heard to say on television: "The Conservative Party would never unilaterally discard nuclear weapons, thank God!" And here I quote an extract of the letter I sent him the following day: "Dear Mr Heseltine, you slipped up badly

when you thanked God that the Conservative Party would not discard nuclear weapons; you should have thanked the devil for he, not God, is responsible. God repudiated the manufacture and use of weapons of war through His Son Jesus Christ when he preached His Sermon on the Mount (Matt. Chap. 5). You should read it, take it seriously, and act on it."

In support of the above, the following quotation is attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, who won independence for India by non-violent methods: "Almost anything you do will seem insignificant but it is very important that you do it!"

Yours etc.,
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From page 4

RESIDENTS VIEWPOINT

punity. There should be no need to have to place bollards along the edge of the footways if the law were enforced. Even with bollards, motorists go to amazing lengths, either knocking them down, or inching between them, anything rather than parking legally and then walking to where they wish to go.

PRIORITY
FOR BUSES
New traffic

Combined Churches Lent Course

This year the Study Guide — 'Sword and Spirit — the Local Churches Respond,' which is being published by BBC TV to link up with their television series taking place during Lent will be used. There will be weekly groups made up of all Christians living in or worshipping in the area.

The TV programme and the study-exercises are based on the belief that God is at work in his world. It is the task of Christians to discern his activity, and then ally themselves with it.

measures have been drawn up to make the junction of Hemdean Road and Church Street, badly abused by illegally parked motorists, safer than it is at present. A bus lane along Church Street and then along Caversham Road is designed to make bus travel more attractive in order to reduce the use of cars. This will entail the loss of a traffic lane, though this is usually lost anyhow through

parked cars. On the other hand, if it serves to remove car users who use their cars as a matter of habit rather than necessity, it could have beneficial results. Reading's roads are overchoked and there is a limit to the number of new roads and car parks that can be constructed (see above). This is another experiment that it will be interesting to watch.

when the particular group meets.

Lent begins on ASH WEDNESDAY, 8th FEBRUARY when the two Churches will be open for prayer and meditation.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church: Highmoor Road — from 9.00am to 2pm, with a Service of Meditation at 2pm — speaker the Reverend Bill Carpenter.

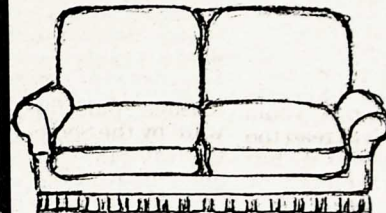
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ROUND THE CHURCHES

GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW

Christmas at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church proved a time of celebration and sharing. The Sunshine Girls Singing Group started the ball rolling with a Christmas Coffee Morning when after coffee and mince pies they entertained visitors with carols. £100 was raised (including generous donations). The money was divided between Leukaemia Research and help towards the cost of treatment in Hungary for Cerebral Palsy.

The young people's Fellowship took part in a Christmas slide/music and readings meditation, which was conducted by the Rev. John Stephens. There was special singing, and piano and baritone horn solos. The slides were taken from stills

of Franco Zeffirelli's film 'Jesus of Nazareth', and were of an excellent quality.

The Women's Fellowship enjoyed a Carol Service when they were joined by St John's Mother's Union. The hall was packed and all appreciated a lovely afternoon. The following Tuesday the Fellowship held their Christmas party at the home of Mrs Julia Hackman and enjoyed a lovely tea. All members received a beautifully worked felt Christmas stocking made by Catherine Hackman and Sarah Lavington.

A Coffee and Carols evening was organised when members gave interesting readings on

Christmas traditions and excerpts from well-known stories and poems. Friends from Hawthorn Ward at Borocourt joined in the evening and all thorough enjoyed the fellowship, coffee & mince pies. £42 was raised for Hawthorn Ward which will go towards a summer outing.

The children of the Church came to the fore on the morning of the 18th of December. Anne & Mark Tanner who have recently assumed responsibility for the children, produced a fine nativity play and children's Family Service. The Sunshine Girls sang carols to link the action together. Samantha Cooke gave a beautiful solo of 'Let there be peace on earth'.

St Peter's "Scrubbers"



E.S. Archer

This group were cleaning the church; other groups cleaned other churches for Christmas.



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In the evening an adult carol service was organised by Miss Mary Prior and led by the choir. This was followed by coffee and the distribution of Christmas cards.

Monday December 19th was open-air carol singing night. The Sunshine Girls sang outside the Caversham Library for Radio 210's 'Give a Child a Chance Appeal' and raised £32. After a good sing all enjoyed burgers at the Coffee Inn. Thanks to the staff for their welcome. The Ambassadors Drum & Bugle Corps played

carols around Lower Caversham during the evening and over £40 was collected for The National Children's Home.

Finally Christmas Day was celebrated with all the Church family. The Morning service was conducted by Mr Tony Champion and various members took part on the theme of peace, joy and love. The children brought their toys and were given balloons, crackers and streamers. Samantha Cooke & Bryony Wood distributed sweets to the whole congregation. The service was organised by Mr Brian Bosier and thanks must go to him and all who took part.

Last but by no means least thanks, must be recorded to Mark Tanner who made and provided the outside Christmas Tree and Lights. these added to festivities and brightened up Gosbrook Road.



E.S. Archer

St Peter's Cherubim Nativity play.

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New Priest for St Barnabus

As we go to press we hear of the appointment of the Rev. Nigel Hardcastle to St Barnabus. More next month — meanwhile welcome to him and his family. Institution hoped for April 12th.

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 Paul Kenchington, 51 Galsworthy Drive. Tel: 475152.
The Rev Bill Carpenter, St Andrew's House, Harrogate Road. Tel: 472788

BAPTIST

The Rev Dennis Weller, 80 Balmore Drive. Tel: 478668.
The Rev Dr Philip Egglestone, 324B Hemdean Road. Tel: 470554.

METHODIST

The Rev Keith Sanders, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 472223.
The Rev Brian Skinner, 48 All Hallows Road, Caversham. Tel: 482530.

UNITED REFORMED

The Rev David Clark, 41 Highmoor Road. Tel: 471909.

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.
The Rev Michael Holmes, 8 Southview Avenue. Tel: 474138.

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.

ROUND THE CHURCHES

BAPTIST NEWS

December was a busy time for the fellowship, starting with the celebration of the one hundred and sixteenth Church Anniversary. Dr Barrie White, Principal of Regents Park College Oxford, came to preach at both services on the 4th. Regents Park is one of the colleges which trains people for the Baptist Ministry.

Part of the church's preparation for Christmas traditionally includes a Toy Service and this was held on 11th December. The children were encouraged to bring presents which were placed under the Christmas tree for

local distribution.

One of the major events in the church in December was the musical 'While Shepherds Watch' written by Roger Jones. It was performed by one of the music groups, the Gospel Singers, who were assisted by other members of the fellowship in acting out the story of the shepherds receiving the news of the birth of Jesus. It was an excellent, well attended evening and the retiring collection went to the 'Wishing Well, Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital Appeal'.

Sunday 18th saw the carols by candlelight service in the evening. On the

19th, in the evening, the 'Monday Club' children's group sang carols and Christmas songs to parents in the church. This same group had been out a fortnight earlier singing carols at the Arthur Clarke old people's home.

The younger children also had an opportunity to take part in the festivities. On Thursday 15th December the Toddler Group had a little Christmas service in the church followed by a party in the upstairs hall which they all thoroughly enjoyed.

Christmas Day saw the church packed for the celebration of Jesus' birth and the Gospel was preached.

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St Andrew's Epiphany party

St Andrew's Fellowship

St Andrew's Ortnor and Joanna Fellowship members Hodson sang, Jim enjoyed their usual George read amusing Christmas Party in December. The large number attending offering fell to Philip were greeted with a glass of punch and the proceedings began with a toast to the Fellowship.

The Chairman then handed over to Eric Aspdon who had organised a delightful evening's entertainment. Eric read poems, James his younger son sang and played Ruth

HELP!

Help is urgently required with the Guide Company at St Anne's Church. This flourishing company may have to close at Christmas unless some adult leaders are found. Anyone interested please contact Jane Mansfield on 473656 or ring 477869 or 576587.

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E.S. Archer



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E.S. Archer

Part of Surley Row, looking east

IT WAS WITH GREAT DELIGHT that most of us heard that Surley Row has now been designated a Conservation Area. With its charming and interesting collection of old houses, it would have been a great shame to find its character altered by the kind of new development we've seen all over the place lately, and though the conservation gives no absolute guarantee of safety, it is far less likely to happen now, particularly as many of the houses are already Listed Buildings.

It would be a difficult task to try and give a potted history of all the houses concerned; suffice it to say that the actual conservation area will include some fine old buildings off Rotherfield Way and will extend as far as the 'Gardeners' Arms', so it seems that, unlike Bottle Cottage which older residents will remember, nothing that is old and beautiful will be destroyed in the foreseeable future. Readers of the 'Bridge' will have read in the past something of the previous inhabitants of the area, in particular the Noble family, whose home was at 'The Hill' at the entrance to the Row; the house is now divided into two, part of which is occupied by Tony Durant, MP for West Reading, who has always taken a keen interest in the history of the place. Another old resident was Rear Admiral Coffin, who lived at what became Springfield St Luke; he was responsible for providing the almshouses in Westfield Road.

Nearly all the houses concerned would have a story to tell about previous inhabitants and how the houses came into being or were altered to suit later requirements. When

our photographer, Ben Archer, and his wife Joan moved into No.8 in 1968 they were aware that the house was over 200 years old, but it was only later they were able to piece together something of its history. It is by no means the oldest House in the Row and appears to have been something of an infill, and a very charming one at that, probably on the site of the forge yard belonging to Springfield House. Nor was their interest confined to No.8; they have been able to work out that Fir Tree Cottage and White Cottage are possibly the oldest houses and have a wealth of ideas about how the various buildings came into being and their previous history.

Thanks to the efforts of people like Mary Kift, quite a lot is known about the area, and no doubt with people like the Archers living in the area, even more will come to light in the future. Surley Row is still a charming road and the newer houses on the opposite side of the road are built and landscaped in such a way as to keep its general character. If anyone does have a story to tell about this area we would be delighted to publish it. Katy

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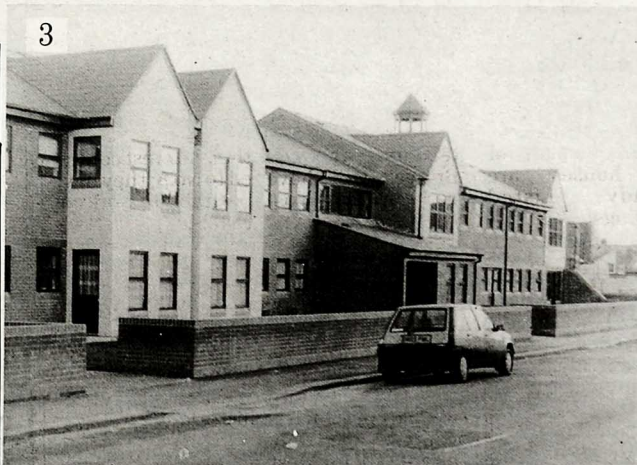
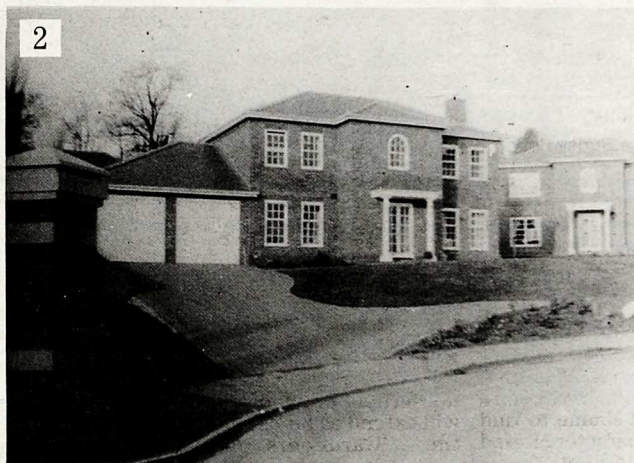
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Blagrove WI

The Christmas party held at the December meeting seems a long time ago but is easily remembered as a very happy afternoon. Members from several other Institutes were able to join in the excellent tea and entertainment by the Sainsbury Offcuts who sang delightfully.

At the January meeting Mr Chardt showed slides of Berkshire Churches and opened our eyes to many features that are so easily missed in such a wide variety of building styles that can be seen without going too far.

There was an exhibition of pictures of old churches brought by the members which did confirm that there is a lot of interest in the subject.

Caversham Heights TG

The traditional pre-Christmas party was the form the December meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild took at which some new members were welcomed. A small amount of official business took place which consisted of a short resumé of how money has been raised recently for a gastroenterology unit for guild funds. The treasurer said that Federation funds are very low and ideas for raising money would be welcomed. A new constitution is to be adopted. The sick visitor has been in touch with a member who is ill.

Clarice Lott and Edith Hawkins, who retired recently as chairman and secretary respectively, were perhaps especially relaxed and ready to enjoy the entertainment and refreshments provided, but so also were the new chairman and

vice-chairman Jancis Brown and Betty Smith. In fact everyone present enjoyed the good arrangements, the ever popular punch and the friendly atmosphere. Sainsbury Singers Offcuts sang a charming variety of songs and their accompanist produced some good music from the piano. Coffee and mince pies rounded off the evening. It was a good welcome to Christmas.

Emmer Green TG

The members of Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild enjoyed an entertaining evening with Mr Sands talking about the History of The Music Halls. He showed slides and played recordings of some of the old songs. Many names were familiar, such as Marie Lloyd, Champagne Charlie and Albert Chevalier. Music Halls began around 1840 to counteract the effect of the fairs in the pleasure gardens which were taking business from the taverns and the coffee houses. Eating and drinking were rather more important than the entertainment, but gradually, as the popularity grew, many theatres converted to full time music halls. Mr Sands' talk was all too short and his audience could have gone on listening for much longer. Mrs Chamberlain gave the vote of thanks and the meeting ended with the Chairman and Committee wishing everyone a very happy Christmas.

Rosehill WI

Members arriving at the December meeting found tables around the hall decorated for the Christmas party. Mrs Barbara Weller welcomed everyone and kept the monthly business short so that they could be entertained by Mr John Barlow. His act was called "It's fun being

fooled" and it was fun because not only did he confuse with tricks, but involved some of the ladies, making his act more amusing than ever.

Members were then served tea by the Committee, the Christmas cake was cut and handed round. The competition was for a Christmas cracker, with many entries, all very pretty, and won by Mrs Roberts. The afternoon closed with each lady picking a gift from the lucky dip.

Caversham Community Association

Mrs Cheryl Pilgrim made a return visit to the club when she came and gave a seasonal talk on Christmas decorations. The talk included hints on wrapping presents in an attractive way. An easy yet colourful idea was making a snowman from a can and cotton wool then concealing the present inside. Mrs Pilgrim brought some decorations for the home already made and then gave instructions to the members on her methods. There was an opportunity to buy materials and the decorations at the end of the talk.

At the same meetings there was a Chocoholics Party when Mrs Eileen Millam brought a wide selection of imported chocolate novelties and some English home-made chocolates, all beautifully wrapped, to show the members. These goods were for sale or could be ordered.

At the next meeting, on the 12th December, the choirmaster and the choir of St John's Church came to give a carol concert. Mr Len David, the choirmaster, accompanied the choir at the piano during the concert. The choir sang melodiously carols old and new, the club members joining in many of the carols. There were also solos given by Phyllis Colley who also joined Sonia Higgs and Sue McQueen in singing the part of the Kings of the Orient in the well known carol. Home-made mincepies were served at refreshment time and were much appreciated. Mrs Feast, the Chairman thanked Mr David and the choir for a very happy evening.

The Christmas party

held on the 19th December was well attended. The members arrived to find the hall decorated and the tables prepared with a tasty meal of ham, quiche, salad and baked potatoes etc., the second course consisted of a choice of various fruit salad and cream. After the meal entertainment was provided by the Shinfield hand bell ringers. John Lawes, their leader gave an amusing commentary on the events happening in a family over the Christmas period which gave the cue for the next tune and led to a most entertaining concert. The members joined in singing the songs and carols to the

sound of the bells ringing out tunelessly. John Lawes sister, Anne Bassett, also sang to the members and was well applauded. The Chairman thanked the visitors for the good performance. Christmas cake and a glass of wine or fruit juice was then distributed. The winners of the best wrapped Christmas parcel were then announced, Margaret Payne received first prize and Evelyn Cook was in second place. A vote of thanks was given by the Chairman and endorsed by all the members to the Committee and fellow

Turn to page 12

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CHRISTMAS PARTIES



St Martin's RC Primary School presented a Nativity Play and "The Wizard of Oz" as this year's Christmas entertainment.

Photographs by E.S. Archer

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SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's
8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am Parish Communion
11.15am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)
11.15am Matins (2nd 4th and 5th Sundays)
6.30pm Evensong

St John's
8.00am Holy Communion
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)
6.30pm Evensong (1st Sunday only)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham
8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
11.00am Parish Communion

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH
10.30am and 6.30pm

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (Caversham Park Primary School)
11.00am Family Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
Family Service (5th Sunday)

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL
10.30am (in Chapel)
6.30pm (in Chapel)
10.45am Christian Fellowship at Mapledurham Pavilion.

METHODIST
Caversham, Gosbrook Road
11.00am and 6.30pm

Caversham Heights
9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
11.00am and 6.30pm

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Annes 9.45am (also Saturdays 5.30pm)
Our Lady of Caversham 8.30 and 10.30am, 5pm Mass
St Martin's School 9.15am Mass
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday)

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, York Road 11am every Sunday,
6.30pm (2nd Sunday)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church Street, Reading 10.45am.
Caversham Church House — 3rd Sunday Meeting for Worship 7.30pm.
House study groups Sept — June Tel: 475783

GUESS WHERE

The new developments
pictured on page 8 are:
1. Elmleigh Court, off
Donkin Hill.
2. 'The Rise', Cedarwood
Crescent, off Peppard
Road.
3. Harley Road (opposite
Thameside School).
4. Montague Street, be-
hind St John's Church.

the CLUBS

From Page 10

members who had
worked hard preparing
the meal, and the hall,
to help make a suc-
cessful party.

Caversham Ladies Club

It was Christmas party time once again as Mrs Harwood, Chairman, welcomed members to this last meeting of 1988. Tables were looking lovely with their festive coverings and lots of goodies which members had so generously brought along, and in the centre of the top table was a large Christmas cake, made and decorated by Mrs Brenda Strong. When everyone was seated Christmas carols were sung, which always make one

realise what Christmas really is about.

A competition for a small decorated basket had been held, and Mrs Shaddock had very kindly agreed to judge the entries, the result being first: Mrs Nelhams, second: Mrs J. Henwood, third: Mrs Q. Strong. Entries were then spread around the tables, making them even more festive looking. Mrs Harwood then said Grace and the party commenced with the Committee waiting on members, the usual procedure at club parties. Nearer the end Mrs Brenda Strong presented a beautifully dressed doll to help raise money for the Sue Ryder Home. A grand sum of twenty pounds was raised, which would be sent off immediately.

Then it was time for Mrs Harwood and committee to give out to every member a small Christmas present and a Christmas card. The tables having been cleared, this brought to an end a very happy and enjoyable afternoon, and with choruses of Christmas greetings in the air, members departed for home.

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