

THE JOHN AND ALICE PARTNERSHIP

IF THE TEST OF A GOOD PRIEST IS WHETHER OR NOT WHAT HE HAS BUILT UP DOESN'T CRUMBLE TO PIECES AFTER HIS DEPARTURE, then it looks very likely that John Sumner will prove to have been a very good priest indeed. For, of all his achievements, the most important is that, as a member of St John's put it, he has helped the congregation to realise its own potential.

It is probably no secret that St John's had for years regarded itself — or has been regarded — as the poor relation among Caversham churches, the one that could not raise huge sums or mount massive campaigns. In short, it had a chip on its shoulder. Now, it seems that chip has been removed for good.

To quote another member, St John's has been blessed in the last two decades with their clergy, each contributing with their talents to its growth. John Sumner's gift, the writer goes on, was his youthful vigour, "dispelling our negativeness through the district committee to all of us, in the first instance to the church buildings and then to spiritual growth."

A PARTNERSHIP MISSION

When John and Alice — for this was a partnership mission if ever there was one — arrived with their sons, Arthur and Petroc, from Cornwall, they hoped to achieve much, but even they were surprised, and pleased, at the free reign they were given. For the first time, John said, there was nobody looking over his shoulder and he was free to be himself and to work out the Ministry in St John's. John made full use of his experience in social work and as a curate, as Alice did of hers as a teacher, and in no time at all, the area became a literal hive of industry. To begin with St John's church itself, the centre of worship, was much in need of attention. So the organ was repaired, the roof and wiring attended to, practical amenities added to the building, the church itself was redecorated, all by the efforts of the congregation — in short, it became a place from which they could get on with the real job.

Outstanding, of course, has been the work among the young people. With their growing family — Kathryn and Rowena were born in Caversham — John and Alice kept their door open to all young families in the district, not merely to those who were regular church-goers. The Sunday School flourished, a tiny tots group was set up, the family service at 11am one Sunday a month became a popular feature of worship. A youth group was set up, John himself visited local schools, the cubs and scouts were revitalised, outings, expeditions and camps were organised and special children's services inaugurated. For good measure, Alice privately undertook the coaching of some members of the groups.

Nor were older people left out. Indeed, one only has to spend a short time with John in his study and hear the way he deals with telephone calls, to know that he gives to everyone as much time as is needed and that all individuals matter.

With all this busyness, one does not automatically think of prayer. Yet members of St John's themselves pay tribute to the fact that prayer was at the basis of John's ministry, and it would not be inappropriate to quote yet another member of St John's. "The breadth of his influence was because of the depth of his prayer. He received much and therefore had much to give and inspired others." John himself says little on the subject, apart from a few details about Bible study groups and groups meeting for quiet meditation. But he does think that "the man who prays properly finds himself in the right place at the right time." And this is certainly true of John and Alice.

TRIBUTES

One could quote ad infinitum from written and spoken tributes which have poured in. John himself would like to thank everyone concerned in what has been achieved in the last six years. They have, he says, been very happy here, blessed among other things with good neighbours. Perhaps most of all he would like to thank his children. They have done their best to fit into "an open house ministry" — no easy task.

John and Alice, who have now moved on to Swallowfield, will be much missed. But there is no doubt that what they have built up will continue to thrive in St John's district.



John Sumner and family at home

Graham Aisbitt

'Covenanting for Unity'

By David Milling

Why is covenanting urgent?

On the evenings of November 11 and 18, those members of the Caversham and Mapledurham P.C.C.s, who are also on the Deanery Synods, will meet with members of the Methodist Church, to discuss proposals on "Covenanting for Unity." These proposals were approved by the General Synod of the Church of England, in February, 1981, and have now been referred back to the dioceses for further discussion. Diocesan synods have been asked to vote on these proposals for covenanting by May 18, 1982, so that the General Synod may reach a final decision about them in July, 1982. It is therefore a matter of urgency that church members in Caversham and Mapledurham should discuss the proposals this autumn, and thus be fully involved in the next stage of the movement towards full Christian unity.

Which churches are involved?

There are five churches in this country which have now committed themselves to seeking for church unity by means of a covenant. They are the Church of England, the Methodist Church, the

United Reformed Church (itself uniting former Presbyterians and Congregationalists), the Moravian Church and the Churches of Christ. They are members of the Churches' Council for Covenanting, which in 1980 produced the Report "Towards Visible Unity: Proposals for a Covenant." This Report is what the dioceses will be voting on in the next few months, and what the General Synod will be voting on in July, 1982.

What does 'covenanting' mean?

"Covenanting for unity" involves certain fundamental principles:

- 1) that we recognise each other as fellow-Christians, sharing the same faith, which is based on the Bible, and is expressed in the Creeds;
- 2) that we recognise each other as fellow-members of the Church, the Body of Christ;
- 3) that we recognise and accept each other's sacraments (and in particular, the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion), and that we welcome communicant members of each other's churches at our own services of Holy Communion;
- 4) that we recognise each other's ordained ministers, as true ministers of the word and sacrament;
- 5) that we accept the threefold ministry of bishops, presbyters (i.e. priests) and deacons, and undertake that all

future ordinations in the covenanting churches will be performed by bishops;

6) that we commit ourselves and our churches to seek for full, visible unity, as a result of working together in the covenant relationship.

What will it involve?

1) Existing Moderators of the United Reformed Church will be allowed to complete their seven-year term of office, without being consecrated as bishops. This is because they already exercise a ministry, similar to that of a bishop, within the United Reformed Church. All future Moderators of the United Reformed Church will be consecrated as bishops.

2) The ministries of the covenanting churches will be reconciled in a national Covenant Service, where those already ordained will be blessed, and new ministers will be ordained. Many ministers of the covenanting churches will not be present on this occasion; but they will have the opportunity of attending regional or local Covenant Services. Even if some ministers do not attend any Covenant Service, the ministries of their churches will already have been reconciled.

3) Although the other covenanting churches allow women to be ordained to the ministry, the Church of Eng-

land does not. This will create difficulties, because the Church of England will be expected to recognise and accept women ministers, belonging to other covenanting churches. The anomaly is actually no greater than that which already exists within the Anglican Communion; some provinces of the Anglican Communion do ordain women to the ministry, whereas the Church of England does not.

Do we really want unity?

The covenant relationship between the churches is not the end of the journey. It is only a first stage in a process which is meant to lead to full, organic unity between our separated churches. Covenanting is an opportunity for the separated churches to learn to grow together, and if it is to be effective, we have got to work together on the local level, in a far more radical way than we do at present. Are we prepared to do this? Our present pattern of church life is organised, for the most part, on the assumption that we are separate churches, and that we are likely to remain so for the indefinite future. The new movement of covenanting for unity may be God's challenge to us to question the existing structures of our church life, and to seek for a much closer level of fellowship and co-operation than we have ever had before.

The Editor's Column

NO. 10 for NO. 10

The last of the Ten Commandments (perhaps just because it is the last) seems to be the least considered of all.

YOU SHALL NOT COVET

The neglect of this commandment and consequently our attitude today to wealth is I believe profoundly unchristian. In the Gospels, Jesus warns us of the dangers the rich man is in: we pay little attention to many of the things he has to say in the sermon on the mount. Warnings not to be anxious about what we shall drink or wear may be familiar but are not much heeded. Society seems today to take it for granted that getting richer is the goal. It has become normal to talk as though it is a fundamental human right to expect to have a higher standard of living each year. The philosophy of the coloured supplements and their advertisements is in sharp contrast with the Commandment not to covet: so too is the bank slogan "Take the waiting out of wanting" or the catch phrase some years ago in the election campaign "You've never had it so good."

THE WRONG GOAL

What is so wonderful about an ever higher standard of living? It does not seem to make people either good or happy. Once a nation gets above a certain level of hardship-malnutrition and rags-economic circumstances have little to do with personal happiness. Indeed a high standard of living has seriously undermined the health of many people and many deaths are caused by excessive eating, drinking and smoking. In this way too the happiness of many marriages has been destroyed.

Because however life has to have some meaning or purpose, and because so many people have nothing corresponding to a religious faith, the pursuit of a steadily higher standard of living has become the goal. It is not valued so much for its own sake as for the fact that it gives something to live for.

VANISHING HOPE

Today it is apparent that this hope of a higher living standard is vanishing for many people; with it the purpose of living is also vanishing. But the false gods always eventually break the hearts of those who worship them. The goal of a higher and higher standard of living, when taken seriously as it has been, fills people with bitterness when they find they cannot attain it.

So this is where the Christian Gospel must fill a void. Christian contentment is the answer to the golden calf of the coloured supplements. "Be content," said John the Baptist "with your wages." — "Seek first the kingdom of God," said Jesus. The words of the 10th Commandment might usefully be written on the walls of the Board Rooms of our large companies and in the headquarters of our large Trades Unions. But perhaps an even more appropriate place for them to be found would be in Downing Street in the Cabinet Room of No. 10.

John Grimwade

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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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POSTBAG

Dear Sir,

Bob Kynaston's letter seems to me to be a little obscure in parts. To quote from him I suppose that the statement attributed to John Madeley that "we Christians should not defend ourselves" implies that Bob Kynaston believes himself to be a Christian.

I have searched the New Testament in vain for the gospel according to St Inge or St Mountbatten, although one cannot deny the excellent qualities of both of these outstanding personalities. It would appear that Bob Kynaston is selective in respect of the Christian ethic, that he believes what he chooses to believe and ignores the rest. In St Matthew (5/39) I read "But I say unto you,

that ye resist not evil (my emphasis). That is a clear and unequivocal exhortation; there is no evading it. Does it not imply total unilateral disarmament? What possible reason can we have for not aligning ourselves with such peoples as the Danes and Norwegians on the question of disarmament?

I have no intention of pursuing any argument on this subject, but I would point out that there can be no defence against nuclear attack. Some retaliation might just be possible, but that is another question.

Yours etc
Roy Monkcom

Greensleeves,
Priest Hill,
Caversham.

Dear Sir,

Like David Clift, I too regret there was no mention of Mary in our special 200th edition, but I'm sure he would like to know that tribute was paid to her at the party given for this publication.

Planning the special

copy evoked a great deal of nostalgia and Mary's name was frequently mentioned, for we all know what a great deal the "Bridge" owes her. Her expertise and drive were vital and she certainly helped to lay the foundations of the paper as it is today. David might like to know that I have continued to use the name "Katy" just because she chose it.

More than this, though it is many years since Mary's death, to those of us who knew her, she is still very much alive. She could disagree and argue with us, but she listened and cared for all of us. Nobody was unworthy of her notice, and to me she is still a very real person in every respect.

But I should like to thank David for bringing her to the notice of those who did not have the very great advantage and blessing of working with her.

Yours etc,
KATY



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MALAYSIAN CULTURES — THROUGH A BLENDER SMOOTHLY

MALAYSIA IS MADE UP OF TWO PARTS — firstly what used to be called Malaya, now known as Peninsular or West Malaysia, which joins Thailand to the north and has Singapore nestling in its toe to the south; over a thousand miles away to the east across the South China Sea are the two Malaysian states of

Sabah and Sarawak in northern Borneo. I was living in West Malaysia.

West Malaysia is a hot, wet, tropical country. Just under half of it is still covered with beautiful and fascinating undisturbed jungle where tigers and elephants roam freely, and where it is easy to be completely lost while only a hundred yards

Liz Bennett has just returned home after living for 2½ years in Malaysia. Liz is the daughter of Doreen and Ken Bennett (Caversham Parish Warden). For a great deal of her time she was on her own in the jungle doing research into the behaviour of a particular species of monkey; others in the team of graduates from Cambridge University were working in other areas, the whole being part of a project concerned with conservation. Liz also managed to travel extensively throughout South-east Asia. She stayed with the almost extinct aboriginal tribes, climbed the highest mountain in SE Asia (Mount Kinabalu in Sabah), and visited the nearby countries of Thailand, Burma and Sri Lanka. Speaking Malay and living as she did, Liz came to understand a great deal about a country of vivid contrasts, many nationalities and cultures, all very different both from one another and also from our own. Here are some of her impressions.

ourful and flamboyant lion dances in the streets at Chinese New Year, to the overwhelming atmosphere of the vast crowds and amazing penance ceremonies at the Hindu Thaipusam festival, to the more sedate open-house celebrations of the Moslems' Hari Raya.



Although the races and cultures within the one country are so diverse, they manage to live very peacefully side by side, being very tolerant of people with other viewpoints to their own.

One of the most widespread impressions while living in Malaysia is that all the different peoples, from the jungle-living aborigines to the Chinese living in their smart air-conditioned houses in the capital, are *not* looking towards the so-called "developed" countries for an example or for aid, but are very content with and proud of their own cultural heritages. Indeed, the children of the different races seem to have a rosy future ahead of them as they play together in the warm tropical sunshine.

— LIZ BENNETT



■ Chinese children, Malaysia

from home. The only people who live in the jungle itself (besides one or two western zoologists like myself) are the few remaining aborigines who earn their living by growing tapioca and rice, and hunting their food (mainly monkeys, hornbills, wild pigs and deer) using blowpipes with poisoned darts.



It is a mistake, however, to think that all of Malaysia is like this. It is a wealthy and advanced country where the majority of the people in the major cities own cars and televisions (I have never seen so many Mercedes and Volvos together in London as I have in Kuala Lumpur), where throughout the country the roads are good, technology advanced, education of a high standard — and where everybody in all walks of life has plenty to eat.



It is also a country extremely rich culturally. There are three main races of people there, all very distinct in their cultures and their religions. The Malays are the largest single group, being about 40 per cent of the population, all of whom are Moslems. The Chinese make up about 35 per cent of the population, and traditionally are the people mainly responsible for running businesses and commerce; most of the Chinese are Buddhists or Taoists, although a few are Christians. Ten per cent of the population are Indians, mainly Tamils from Southern India and mostly Hindus, although again a very few are Christians. Since each of the races has its own festivals, a year contains celebrations and ceremonies ranging from the col-



■ Liz Bennett with a tame young banded lead monkey on her shoulder

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A LAND OF PROMISE?

— continuing the travel journal
of Peter Sear and Derek Spears

The old city of Jerusalem is a rabbit-warren of narrow streets and souks — alleyways which tunnel their way between and beneath the mediaeval buildings. Here you can buy — or barter for — a vast variety of goods — food (the smell is quite indescribable), clothes, souvenirs...

It is through these streets and souks that the Via Dolorosa threads its way, the traditional route followed by Christ on his way to crucifixion. Groups of pilgrims follow along the route, sometimes carrying a heavy cross with them, stopping along the way for worship and prayer.

The Via Dolorosa ends at the Church of Holy Sepulchre. In part, the church is hewn out of the living rock, supposedly Golgotha, the

Place of a Skull, where Christ was crucified. And next to the rock, the Aedicule — the monument built around that

now-empty grave in which the body of Jesus lay. Here is the starting-point of our Christian faith — "If Christ is not risen then your faith is in vain." But we felt only anticlimax.

DIVISIONS

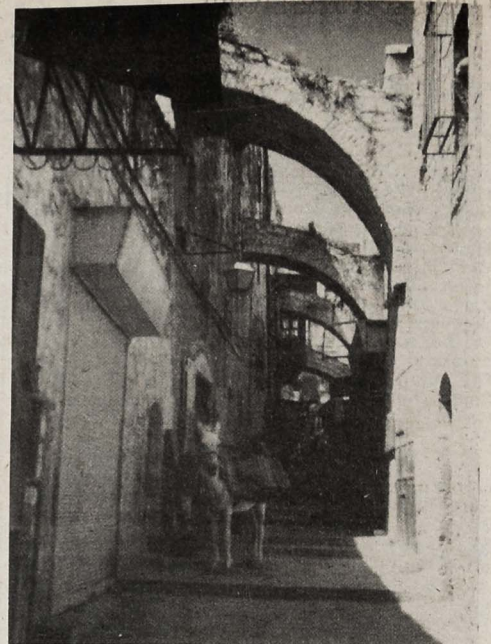
The resurrection of Christ cannot be presented as if it were a museum piece — contained within the confines of time and place. It is an event of eternity. It is experienced not in

a dead monument, but within the heart of the believer. And it demands a response of commitment which no monument, however elaborate, or decorated with however many candles, can ever demand.

And here, at this place of reconciliation between God and man, the divisions which tear at Christ's Church are most strongly felt. Orthodox, Catholic, and Coptic all vie for a part of this holy place. There is evident tension between the different traditions, tension which, in recent months, has led to fighting. The dividing wall which separates and cuts off the Coptic part of the Aedicule from the Orthodox denies the salvation and reconciliation which the Aedicule tries to proclaim.

★ ★ ★

Jerusalem is, contrary to what the Psalmist says, a divided city. Jew and Muslim live uneasily side by side. The financial gain from tourism helps to keep the peace, but the tension remains. Jewish teenagers armed with



The Via Dolorosa — the Way of the Cross threads its way through the old city of Jerusalem.

Peter Sear

sub-machine guns will stop and search Arab cars at their whim. It is the Wild West — the gun is authority is the law.

On the eastern side of the Old City is the Dome of the Rock. This is surely one of the most beautiful and impressive buildings anywhere, with its rich mosaics inside and out, and its vast gilded dome. This Muslim shrine (second in importance only to Mecca) is built around

the rock from which Mohammed, in a dream, ascended into heaven. But for the Jew that same rock is the Threshing Floor of Araunah (see 2 Sam 24 v18) — the Jewish holy place of the city of King David. The precinct of the Dome was once the great platform on which stood the Jewish Temple. No Orthodox Jew will dare enter the precinct for fear of trespassing upon the sacred site of the Holy of Holies. All that



Praying at the Wailing Wall

Peter Sear



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THEY CAME BY NIGHT

ON THE NIGHT OF NEW YEAR'S DAY 1722, a group of some ten men stealthily entered the new deerpark at Lord Cadogan's great mansion at Caversham. Each man had his face blackened. They were mounted and carried some sort of weapon, a few even fire-arms, and perhaps one at least had a whippet or greyhound trained in the chase. They were a group of poachers making a planned attack on his Lordship's fallow deer.

As they moved among the darkness of tree and bush they took the utmost care, for each realised what risk the raid involved. At worse, if caught, they would be hanged, at best deported to colonies overseas.

The blacking of the face for a night foray was common practice

the list, for a new breed of manorial lords, such as Cadogan with vast fortune and influence in high places, had arisen. Often these men were ruthless people, many having reached their position by riding rough shod over all who stood in the way of their success. Rightly or wrongly, there were those who hated them and banded together making planned raids on their estates, killing game, burning hunting lodges, breaking down park fences, harming cattle and breaching fish ponds.

"A bad, bold, blustering booby"

The people who formed these marauding parties were a mixed bunch which included lesser gentry, yeoman farmers, tradesmen, apprentices and labourers.

A local group, known as the Berkshire Blacks, had a wealthy farmer as its leader or "King." He was William Shorter, a Wokingham man and no

the local Caversham people as he was in nearby Reading. Indeed Bishop Atterburn, a contemporary, referred to him as "a big, bad, bold, blustering, blundering booby." Not only did he pull down the old manor which he purchased from the Kildares and erect a mansion on the lines of Blenheim Palace (belonging to his superior and friend the Duke of Marlborough) he also turned about half the one thousand acres of estate into gardens, lawns and woods, with a great deer park of 240 acres. The terraces of the house extended for a quarter of a mile. Avenues of trees were planted and canals dug and stocked with fish. Besides the menagerie there was a quail yard and pheasantry.

No evidence exists to show that cottagers were evicted or farmers lost their customary grazing rights in this massive exercise, but there is little doubt that some homes got in the way of his Lordship's plans and some farmers lawfully turned out their cattle on land he wished to use. He like many another, had no qualms about turning them out and taking what was not his.

The raiders on that January night killed several fallow deer but the whole enterprise ended in disaster for the poachers. At least some of their number were captured. One of them, Thomas Willets was still languishing in Oxford gaol at the end of the following November awaiting deportation. He was so ill by that time that a plea for mercy was lodged. This was refused and whether he died in prison or on his way overseas, a desperately sick man, no one will ever know. Thomas may well have come from Caversham for a family called Willats were millers in the village and spelling on old documents could easily have meant that there should have been an "a" in his surname instead of an "e." The pronunciation would have been, very similar and people wrote down what they heard or thought they heard.

Robert Shorter, a brother of "King" William was believed to have been the leader of the Blacks on that night. He ended his life in prison while William became an outlaw.

A further raid took place at Caversham Park on July 22, 1722. Lord Cadogan lost a total of 16 fallow deer in the two attacks. No further forays are recorded, but many a local man must have had a pheasant, hare or even yet another deer, for the pot from Cadogan's land.

M.K.



Caversham Park as it looked in 1920

The Link Group

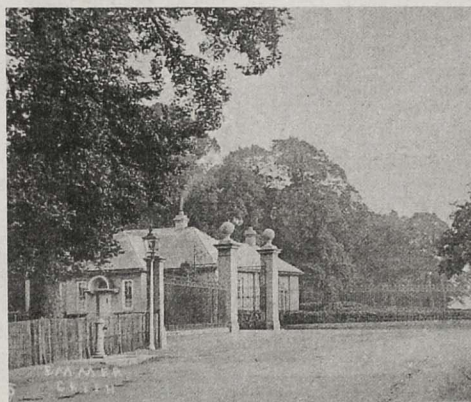
The Link Group resumed on September 28. Members were welcomed to a new season of activities by the chairman, Mrs Lynda Bates. Mrs Peggy Coome, a Link member, spoke about the work of Reading's Victims Support Group, a voluntary

organisation set up to give comfort and aid to people who have been burgled or mugged. Mrs Coome is the local co-ordinator, and works in close liaison with the police. It was stressed that all visits are handled with discretion, tact and very sympathetically.

Then the chairman

thanked the members who had organised the Mencap outing on September 12. Nine children and helpers had a very happy day, which took in a boat trip, barbecue lunch, ball games and tea.

Other business was dealt with; the next meeting is on October 26, 1981.



The lodge gates to Caversham Park (1920)

among poachers. It was recorded in medieval times and was in use as late as the eighteen hundreds, and was simply known as blacking. Those who resorted to this disguise were known as blacks.

From early time poaching had been pursued for various reasons. By the seven-teen hundreds yet one more could be added to

doubt he was thoroughly sickened at the sight of his crops being continually trampled over and eaten by deer from the forest of Windsor, which had one forest walk at East-hampstead, close by Wokingham. "King" William would have been powerless to intervene. Any objection would have fallen on deaf ears.

There is no doubt that Lord Cadogan was as thoroughly disliked by

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7.30pm, Great Hall, London Road, Reading

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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

KATY IN CAVERSHAM

I'm continually amazed at the amount of talent in Caversham. Visiting the recent exhibition by the Berkshire Branch of the Embroiders' Guild, I was pleased to find so many Caversham people represented. Doreen Holt, explaining that this year's work as Chairman left her with less time for embroidery, nevertheless displayed a little panel portraying Concorde in gold and silver — a fairy-like thing, quite unlike the noisy monster that soars over us twice daily. Audrey Ormrod contributed a number of pictures; I particularly liked the Elizabethan Knott Garden. Pictures, popular this year, were displayed by Jill Green and Elsie Bluring, while Doreen Davies and Margot Sutherland contributed fine examples of patchwork. There may have been others from Caversham, but these were the ones I identified.

It is sad that our old friend, Mr Sear, is no longer able to produce exhibits but — in case you don't know — you can see much of his work in Westminster Abbey and Bury St Edmunds' Cathedral.

Many years ago I interviewed Pamela and Kurt Pick at their residential children's home on St Peter's Hill; at the time I was impressed by their work, so I'm pleased that at last Pamela has been able to produce a book based on her experience. While it will be of untold help to anyone involved in such work, it is a very readable book and of particular interest to Caversham people. John Mullaney says it has sold well and I understand the local library will be stocking copies, so there is no excuse for not reading it.

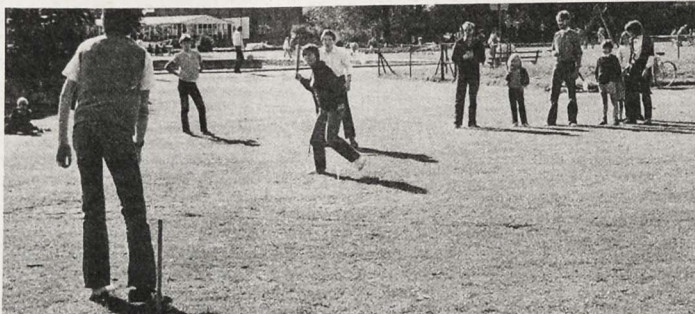
A Way of Living!

Richard Hunt, our local Ecology Party candidate, has also burst into print with an interesting booklet entitled "The Natural Society." Fascinating or absurd — whichever way you regard his views on a kind of Utopia, at 30p per copy at the local bookshop, this booklet will give you something to think about — and have arguments about!

I'd love to know the identity of the author and producer of this book, "the story of a one-armed, one-eyed, subhuman genius." But "Tom Case" prefers to remain anonymous. All

I know is that he lives in Caversham and is, or was, a printer. Writing, it seems, under sheer impulse, he has produced a book about which some say "I couldn't put it down." You may, or may not, come into this category — it's certainly off-beat!

Talking of books, if anyone has not yet read Mary Kift's book on Caversham, I must tell you that it is now only to be obtained at the book-



■ St John's Youth Group with John Sumner and family playing rounders.

— Graham Aisbitt

shop on personal order. It has had such an unexpectedly large sale that it is considered not wise to order a complete reprint at this stage.

"Where to eat in Berkshire" is worth having if you eat out and I'm pleased to see it gives full marks to the restaurant on Caversham Park Village. Indeed, there are a whole clutch of books in stock at the moment which will be of interest to local people.

MAPLEDURHAM'S CLUB FOR THE ELDERLY

Not so long ago the Jubilee Club membership had reached an all time low. Sadly they had lost many old friends who had been with them over several years. Now, however, the picture has happily changed and

in the last few months 15 new members have been welcomed with the result that numbers have almost doubled and they have become a much younger club.

Recent meetings have included tea in the gar-

den at Lilley Farm, with a competition on the Royal Wedding; tea in the great barn at Chazey Court farm, complete with fairy lights and a huge waggon spread with gay tablecloths and loaded with delicious refreshments; a visit to the Cotswold Wildlife Park and a demonstration on flower arranging. A very interesting talk on Saga Holidays, by one of their representatives, rounded off the Summer programme and set many thinking about adventures holiday-wise next year.

On Saturday, September 26, a most successful Jumble Sale was held for club funds and made the grand amount of £85; grateful thanks to all who helped in any way whatsoever and to all who keep this very happy little club running so smoothly month by month.

One future event that is taking place, and which may be of interest, is the Open Afternoon on Monday, November 9, when anyone who would like to meet the Club over a cup of tea is invited to come along anytime after 2.15. There will be a small bring and buy sale and raffle, again for Club funds, so please do come to Trench Green Hall; you will be most welcome.

CAVERSHAM PLAYERS

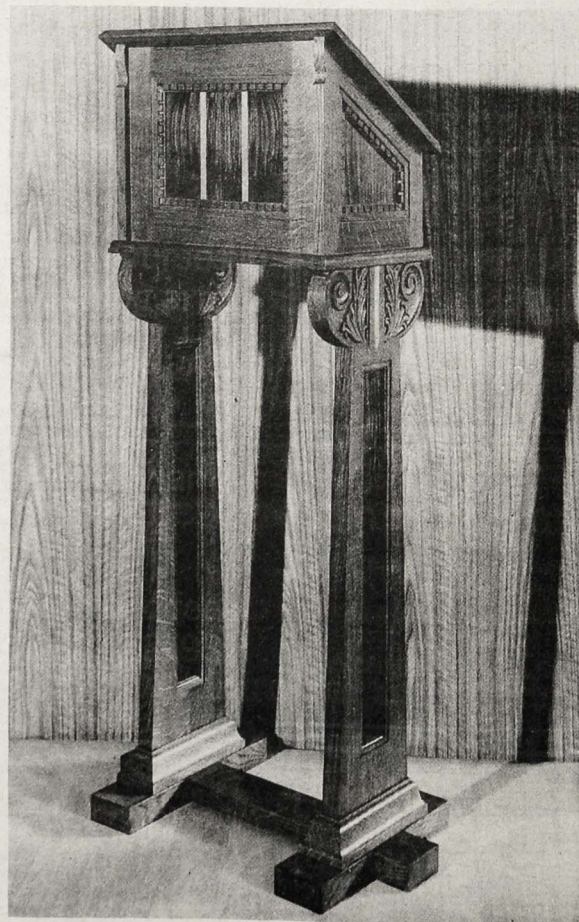
The Caversham Players were re-constituted on September 9 and are essentially a part of St Andrew's Church. While membership is open to all, their aim is to recruit as far as possible from the congregations of St Peter's and St Andrew's Churches. Unfortunately the production planned for October had to be cancelled, but instead it is

proposed to present an evening of entertainment on Saturday, November 14 starting at 7.30 in St Andrew's Church Hall. It will comprise a one-act play followed by a miscellany of sketches, songs, poems, etc. Admission will be free and there will be refreshments, but a collection will be taken in aid of Church Hall expenditure. Please do your best to come along.

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A LAND OF PROMISE (Cont)

remains of the old Jewish Temple (destroyed in AD70) is part of the wall of the platform. This is the Wailing Wall where daily Jews gather to pray for the restoration of their Temple. The place sums up the conflict between Jew and Arab.

BIRTH

Seven miles to the south of Jerusalem is the town of Bethlehem. There, below the Church of the Nativity, is the cave in which, according to tradition, Jesus was born. A silver star set in the floor carries the inscription "Hic Jesus Christus natus est ex Maria Virgine" — Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.

It is, frankly, unlikely that Jesus was born in this exact place, yet despite that, we were here brought face to face with the fact of God-become-man. Our reaction was one of wonder and adoration, as it has been for count-

less pilgrims before us. But we are tourists too, tourists who enter that cave in their coachfuls, tourists who jostle to take photographs of each other standing by that holy spot before being moved on to their next "site." As tourists we destroy the very atmosphere we came, as pilgrims, to experience.

DEAD SEA

To the south-east of Jerusalem lies the Dead Sea, further below sea-level than any other place on earth. Swimming in the Dead Sea is a weird experience; the water is so salty that it is impossible for the human body to sink, instead you remain "suspended" on the water's surface.

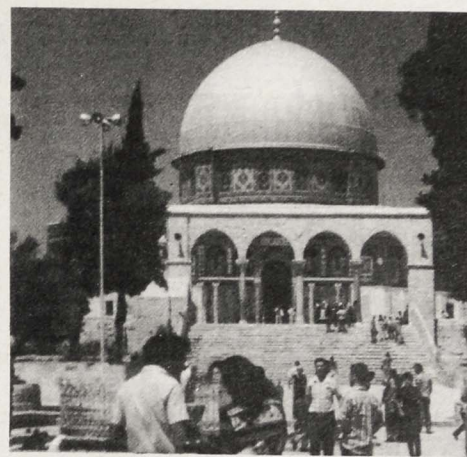
Apart from occasional oases where there are fresh water springs, the area is harsh and unyielding, bare rock baked in the fierce sun and sculptured into strange shapes by the winds.

Overlooking the west coast of the Dead Sea is the rock and fortress of Messada. It stands 1,000ft above the coastal plain and it is reached in one of three ways — the Snake Path (an apt description), the Ramp, or (for the less energetic) the cable-car: the cable-car was not working! Though fairly early in the morning the temperature was well over 100degF as we slowly wound our way up the Snake Path.

The fortress was originally built by Herod the Great as a "country retreat" to escape from the plottings of his enemies — of whom he had a lot, and suspected more. In AD 70, many years after Herod's death, the fortress was occupied by Zealots — Jewish fanatics — hoping to escape the advancing Roman army. The army caught up with them at Messada and waited. Slowly the Romans built a great earth ramp against the sheer cliffs and prepared to advance up the ramp to defeat the Zealots. But rather than

Galilee, home of Simon, Peter and Andrew, James and John. On our final day in Israel we drove north from Tiberias into the Golan Heights, to the north-east of the Sea. The Golan Heights provide the natural boundary between Syria and Israel — and it is a much disputed territory. It is an area of wild natural beauty — but beauty disfigured by man. The area is littered with the refuse of war, army camps, the remains of burnt out tanks left as war memorials, bombed villages. We could hear shell-fire in the distance. It was an eerie experience driving through such desolation ... and a distinct sense of relief as we came down from the hot, dry hills of the Golan into the green and peace of the Jordan valley. Was it at this place in the Jordan that Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist? Who knows? But it was an intensely religious experience standing by the side of the quiet Jordan. The Golan Heights had been a symbol of the fallenness of man; the Jordan a symbol of the true salvation through that King of Peace in whose baptism we share.

For information: Distance travelled 4,083 miles. Motorcycles: Honda 400 Dream (Peter Sear); Honda CX500 (Derek Spears). Consumption (Honda 400), petrol 51 gallons (80 mpg). Oil 4 pints.



The Dome of the Rock

Peter Sear

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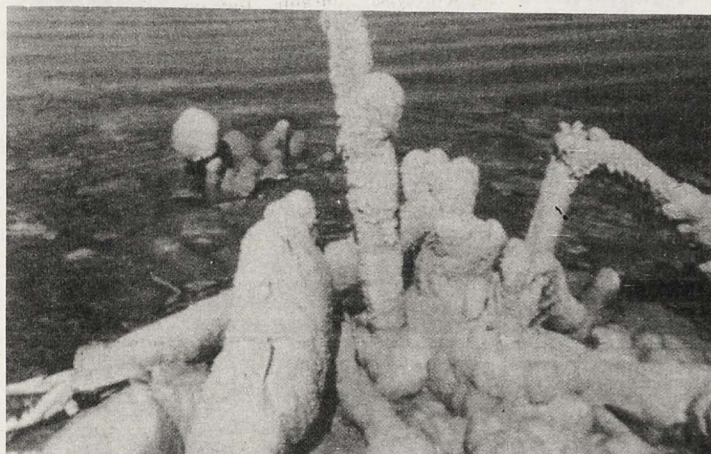
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Peter Sear

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face capture and slavery the Zealots chose to kill each other, the last killing himself. When the Romans arrived, all they found were the dead bodies of the defenders and their families.

For the Israeli Jew today, surrounded by Arab nations who, they feel, threaten their existence, Messada stands as a symbol of past sacrifice, of nationhood, as an inspiration.

North of Messada, still on the shores of the Dead Sea, is Qumran. Here, a few years ago, an Arab shepherd boy searching for lost sheep, stumbled across some old jars containing scrolls hidden in caves. These were the Dead Sea Scrolls and they have told us much about a group of ascetic Jews — the Essenes — who lived there about the time of Jesus, and who lived in the desert to await God's deliverance. It is possible that one of their number, or someone rather like them, was John the Baptist.

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BAPTIST NEWS**NEVER A DULL MOMENT**

The sun shines on the righteous — and the unrighteous as well — and it certainly did for the Church's Annual Outing. A party of members and friends sallied forth one beautiful Saturday morning — one of the few this year — to Thorpe Park, Egham, where the day was enjoyed in delightful surroundings which offered something of interest for all age groups, not least the British Waterski Championship which was being held on one of the great lagoons in the Park.

The non-event of the day proved to be the count of heads on the return to Caversham — two were missing and this only came to notice when an anxious relative raised the alarm. Following a hastily convened Court of Inquiry held in the baronial surroundings of Chester Street Car Park it was eventually revealed that a certain lady's watch had stopped and she and her granddaughter had failed to board the coach for the return journey — or that was the yarn put out by the courier.

HARVEST WITH A DIFFERENCE

Harvest Thanksgiving Weekend commenced with the customary supper on the Saturday evening. For the first time

for many years the supper was held on Church premises, in fact in the Church itself. Some 80 members and friends sat down to enjoy an ample and attractive meal, prepared and served by the young wives and their domesticated young husbands. The Harvest display had been arranged and staged previously by Mr Don and Mrs Joyce Williams and their son, Terry, and what a marvellous job they had made of it — Bond Street traders please note. In addition to the traditional display of fruit, flowers and vegetables, not forgetting tinned and packaged products, they had incorporated a fine display of arts and crafts, the work of members and friends. Such handiwork ranged from crochet to lace, from oil painting to collage, from pottery to sculpture, from model making to metalwork, from music to dancing, or at least the appurtenances thereto — the catalogue seemed endless. It was a genuine Act of Thanksgiving not only for the produce of the land but for the many other blessings which is enjoyed in a beautiful and bountiful world so frequently spoiled by man's selfishness and thoughtlessness.

The underprivileged were not forgotten. The proceedings on Satur-

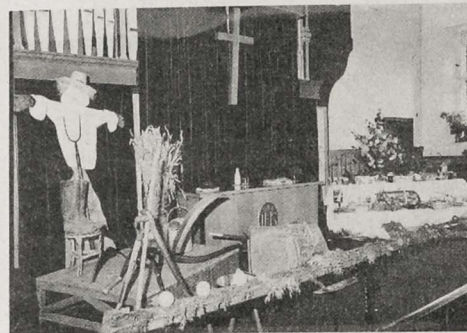
day closed with a film showing the work of "Operation Agri," the Baptist Missionary Society's agricultural "wing" in Bangladesh. This theme was taken up by the Young People during the course of Service on Sunday morning when, with acknowledgement to BBC Television News, they further highlighted "Operation Agri" with journalistic skill.

ST ANNE'S NEWS

The autumn has seen the resurrection out of holiday slumber of many parish activities of which the 11 o'clock sung Latin Mass was one. Here there is a very keen hardworking core of helpers, but sadly the choir cannot tackle much of the beautiful polyphonic settings of sacred scripture for want of a bass line. There is hope of recruiting some of the older school children, but any men or women who like singing would be most welcome in the parish choir. They meet every Friday evening at 8pm. Practice takes approximately one hour.

A most enjoyable social event recently was the barbecue held in the grounds of the Heights Chapel. Although it rained beforehand this did not deter about 75 people

coming along to take part. The cooking of chops and sausages went on continuously until about 11 o'clock. The scene was illuminated by lights strung in the trees and two bonfires around which was a sing-song led by Fr Meagher.



Caversham Heights Methodist Church harvest festival display
Graham Aisbitt

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST NEWS**OBJET D'ART SALE**

Items for auction ranging from a World War II gasmask to a solid silver baby's rattle were to be found in the Church Hall on September 12.

After 90 minutes of brisk bidding a sum of almost £900 was raised to help clear the final balance required for the organ fund. As the total increased during that hour and a half, so Ralph Lascelles' dream of a refurbished organ, without debt, was realised. It was Ralph's idea that the sale should perform just this function and many helpers worked for weeks to achieve a marvellous result.

Paul Wyatt, the auctioneer, produced

The Pope receives Caversham Bridge

Mr Harold Hitchman shortly before retiring from the post of Subscription Manager sent the Pope a copy of the 200th edition of the Caversham Bridge and has received this reply from Mgr Re at the Vatican.

"His Holiness Pope John Paul II has received your kind letter and the accompanying newspaper, and he has directed me to reply in his name. His Holiness wishes you to know that he appreciates the sentiments which prompted you to write to him and he will pray for you and your colleagues."

bids from nowhere at times and his expertise and humour won the day. His reward — great satisfaction and a short recital by Ralph on the nearly complete organ.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on

September 20. The Church was tastefully decorated, each department being responsible for their allotted space or window. All expressed gratitude to God for His great goodness.

The Harvest Supper on Monday was very much enjoyed by a large company. After, many willing hands, including the Guides, cleared the tables while the company enjoyed coffee in the Woodcote room. The hall was prepared for a musical treat. Pianoforte duets, vocal solos by some gifted members were a delight. Thanks be to God for all His gifts, Food, Friends and Fellowship throughout another year.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Annual Bazaar will be held on Saturday, November 14. Proceeds this year will be for the National Children's Home.

EARLIER START FOR MORNING SERVICE

Commencing on Sunday, November 1, for an experimental period of three months, Family Worship and Junior Church will start at 10.30am. After the service, tea/coffee and bookstall facilities will be available in the lounge.

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

On Sunday, November 1, at 3pm, the first Baptism in the new premises, when Mr Nigel Wright is baptised. All are welcome to join with the Baptists on this occasion, especially friends of other churches in Caversham.

FRIDAY OPEN DAYS

at the Baptist Centre. Commencing on Friday, November 6, the Church will be open from 10am - 12 noon for quiet prayer and meditation. The Minister, or some other member of the church's staff, will be available at the office. Anyone is welcome to call, at any time, but when possible appointments would be appreciated. It is hoped to have a short period of spoken prayer in the Church, primarily for the healing and wholeness of those who are sick, or otherwise distressed, and in need of prayer. This time of spoken prayer will commence at 11am to last for no more than 10 minutes. Everyone welcome. Friends may ask prayer for themselves, or bring the names of others — perhaps a loved one or friend.

From 12.30 - 2pm Hot and Cold Snacks will be available at reasonable prices from the Lounge Sundry. This is intended to extend the church's service to the wider community, as well as to promote Christian fellowship. Mrs Joan Shield will be in charge of this new venture, thus making it a part of her Friday Afternoon Meeting Point. Shoppers may still call for their cuppa between 2.30 - 4pm.

MOTHER AND TODDLER CLUB

Mrs Pat Jenkins has started a Thursday Afternoon Group — same hours as the Clinic. The club is a "church-based" organisation, but is entirely interdenominational, non-sectarian, and open to all mothers and their toddlers. Please come along and ask for Pat!

GOOD-AS-NEW-SALE at the Baptist Centre on Saturday, November 7, 10.30 - 2pm. This will be a really bumper pre-Christmas sale. Little used and good quality clothing, toys, books, bric-a-brac and indoor plants etc. Proceeds for the Building Fund.

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ANGLICAN NEWS

ROUND THE ANGLICAN PARISH

Death of two former Caversham clergy

We regret to report the death of two priests who served together in Caversham. The Rev William Smith who died suddenly on September 24 at the age of 55 was priest-in-charge of St Barnabas for three years from 1955. He left to become rector of All Saints, Stretford, and at the time of his death was vicar of North Bradley and Southwick in Wiltshire.

The Rev Dennis Janes died recently after a long illness. Born in 1923 he came to Caversham in 1956 to be priest-in-charge of St Andrew's, leaving to become vicar of Goldington. Since 1975 he had been rector of Wallingford. To their wives and families we extend our sympathy. May they rest in peace.

ST JOHN'S NOTES

St John's kept Harvest Festival on September

20. It was John Sumner's last Sunday in Caversham, as well as a Parade service and the church was full. It was beautifully decorated, and flowers, fruit and vegetables were gratefully received. The Saturday Workshop children had decorated the pulpit window.

On the 21st there was the Harvest Supper. This was a "bring and share" event, when good cooks bring their specialities, and others contribute biscuits, cheese or salads. The Guides organised everything, poured out squash and cider and made tea and coffee. The congregation very much wanted to make this a specially happy and pleasant evening as it was John and Alice Sumner's last appearance at St John's. In fact all the Summer family came, and were presented with a tea trolley, a coffee percolator and six mugs, from the congregation, a voucher from the Mothers' Union, a vase and record from the Youth Group, books

from the "10 to 13" group and a cheque from the Gosbrook Road Methodist Church. After supper the party was entertained by the Summerdown Singers, accompanied by Cyril Miller and David Butler, and by musical solos, songs, readings and a song with actions, all by members of the congregation. At 10 o'clock the evening ended by the singing together of Auld Lang Syne.

Everyone agreed it was an especially friendly time, full of happy memories for all, and it was very nice so many old friends came back to share it.

★ ★ ★

Congratulations to the Scouts and Guides, who raised nearly £200 at their annual fete, held on the very wet Saturday of September 26.

ST PETER'S WIVES GROUP

The Wives' Group invited Richard Snailham to speak at their September meeting. Mr Snailham has been to many parts of the world over the past decade, invited as a writer to accompany several modern-day expeditions. He began his talk by discussing what such expeditions entail, covering essentials such as finance, equipment and food, and problems facing today's explorers — inhospitable terrain, the importance of a balanced, compatible

team and even the delicate problem of political suspicion in some parts of the world.

Mr Snailham then continued by illustrating all these considerations in a talk with slides on the Zaire River Expedition led by John Blashford-Snell. His audience was transported into another world full of the excitement of the unknown interspersed by danger, tragedy and humour. It was Mr Snailham's first visit to the Wives' Group but members expressed a sincere hope that it would not be his last.

ST BARNABAS NEWS

On Sunday, September 27 St Barnabas' Church had its Harvest Festival. At the family Eucharist, which was also a church parade for the Guides and Brownies, the church was full. Many attractive harvest baskets were brought to the church, and during the following days these were distributed among sick and elderly people in the district.

The following day the Church Hall was full for the Harvest Supper. After a most enjoyable meal entertainment was provided by the Reverends Derek Spears (tinkling the ivories and leading community hymn-singing) and Peter Sear ("preaching" the Beyond-the-fringe sermon on the text "My brother Esau is a hairy man"). It was all great fun and many will look forward to next year's supper.



St Peter's Bells did overtime on Saturday, September 5 when Rebecca Dick, one of St Peter's ringers was married to Anthony Cox, Master of the Tower at Bristol Cathedral. A full peal was rung before the service at which many ringers from different bands were present.

— Walton Adams

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

St John's
8.00am Holy Communion (not on 4th Sunday)
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST

St Andrew's
8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.15am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evensong

St Barnabas'
8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.00am Service for Parents and Children (November 29th)
4.00pm Evensong (2nd Sunday)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham
8.00am Holy Communion (4th Sunday)
11.00am PARISH COMMUNION

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH
11.00am Morning Service
6.30pm Evening Service

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (The School)
11.00am FAMILY COMMUNION (1st and 3rd Sundays)
MORNING WORSHIP (2nd and 4th Sundays)
7.30pm Holy Communion (2nd and 5th Sundays)

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL
11.00am Morning Service
6.30pm Evening Service

METHODIST Caversham
11.00am Morning Service
6.30pm Evening Service

Caversham Heights
8am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
11.00am Morning Service
6.30pm Evening Service

ROMAN CATHOLIC St Anne's
9.00am, 11.00am (also Saturdays 5.30pm)

Our Lady of Caversham
8.30 and 10.30am Mass

St Martin's School
9.15am Mass
Mapledurham House
6.00pm Mass (last Sunday)

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
There is no URC in Caversham. The nearest is in York Road over Caversham Bridge.
Morning worship 11am
Evening worship 6.30pm

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)
meet at the Friends' Meeting House in Church Street (Reading) for worship at 10.45am. There are classes for children at the same time

WE RECORD

BAPTISED

St Peter's
September 27 — Katherine Medd
St John's
September 13 — Emma Budge
Anne Sherlock

Caversham Park Church

September 27 — David Jones
Robert Anderson
Christopher Trinder
Caversham Heights Methodist Church
August 23 — Natalie Dismukes

MARRIED

St Peter's
September 23 — Kenneth Ward and Claire Hendy
Gerald Clifford and Andrea Cannon

St John's

September 12 — Nigel Jones and Miriam Brown

St Andrew's

September 12 — Graham Sadler and Kim Hallett

St Barnabas'

September 12 — Martin Harwood and Beverley Kingston
September 26 — David Barnes and Rosamond Eagle
Ian Smith and Mandy Johnson

St Margaret's

September 5 — Nigel Godden and Claire Smith
Caversham Heights Methodist Church
September 19 — Terence Davis and Helen Edwards
Gosbrook Road Methodist Church
September 5 — Martin Palethorpe and Ann Askew

FUNERALS

St Andrew's
October 1 — Grace Noble

THE CHURCH AND THE CHILDREN

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

ST BARNABAS Sunday School in the Hall 9.15am Contact Mrs Jean Carroll 45 Brooklyn Drive (472596). Also Service for Parents and Children — last Sunday in the month at 11am.

ST JOHN'S Tiny Tots Service on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 2.15pm. **Nursery Church** (for children up to 8 yrs) in church during the Sunday eucharist at 9.15am. **Family Service** 1st Sunday in the month at 11am (mainly for children over 4 years). **Children's Workshop** (starting soon) fortnightly on Saturday mornings (details from Rev John Sumner).

ST PETER'S Sunday School meets at 43a Church Road (home of Mrs Jane Kane) at 9.15am (except 2nd Sunday which is Parade Service).

ST MARGARET'S (MAPLEDURHAM) Family Workshop 2nd Saturday of each month at 222 Upper Woodcote Road 10am-12 noon. Contact Mrs Heather Robinson, 4 Hilltop Road (476873). **Children's Group** (for 10-13's) Sunday 6.45-8pm Contact Rev. David Milling (471606).

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

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

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

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CAVERSHAM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Monday, September 7, heralded a new era for the club as henceforth the meetings will be held in the building on the corner of Wolsley Road and Gosbrook Road, previously used for school meals.

The chairman, Mrs Waite, welcomed the members to the opening social at the new premises. When it was refreshment time a good selection of home-made cakes, all made by the committee, was available to members of the club.

A Whist Drive was held on September 14. Evelyn Willis won the first prize with Joan Tarrant taking the consolation prize.

The following week there was a good display of needlework, knitting, crochet, cookery, photography and flower arrangements at the Arts and

Craft evening. Amongst the prizewinners were Muriel Waite who won the Muriel Rampton Cup for her floral arrangement and Joan Tarrant who received the Joe Rampton Cup for the best floral arrangement in a jam jar.

The Harvest supper was well attended. The Rev Chris Justice from the Hill Chapel, Caversham, gave the address and sang two songs, accompanying himself on the guitar, reminding the listeners that all harvest offerings are gifts from God. Mrs Justice was also a welcomed visitor.

The committee had been busy again — baking delicious scones and apple pies and making sandwiches. The meal ended with the singing of the harvest hymn.

CAVERSHAM DARBY AND JOAN CLUB

The Club recommenced meeting at Balmore Hall early in September after the summer recess, and several new members joined. In a W.R.V.S. District handicraft competition Mrs Neal received a 'Highly Commended Certificate' for a cushion she had made. Arrangements are well in hand for the Christmas lunch and a theatre outing in the new year.



ROSEHILL WI

Mrs Ellingham welcomed members after the summer break during which Mrs Burtenshaw held a coffee morning for ACWW and the garden party at the President's home was most successful with glorious weather. The talk this month was by Mrs Mates, who gave a talk on 'Show Boat and Show Business.' This was most interesting and amusing, ranging from a visit to a show boat on the Mississippi to her experiences with evacuees in the last war.

An exhibition of necklaces was shown by members.

Mrs Ellingham welcomed members to the October meeting. After the usual business and news of a coffee morning at Mrs Alderson's for 'Mencap', the talk was given by Mr John Jennings about 'Meat for your Freezer', a most informative and interesting talk. Members exhibited their fuel saving tips and articles made by members for the autumn fair in the Old Town Hall were also on show.



MAPLEWOOD WI

There was a happy reunion of members on September 15, after the summer recess. Mrs Joan Fry, the president, took the meeting. The speaker was Mr Philip Dennis from Borocourt Hospital, assisted by Miss Neale, a Nursing Officer. Slides were shown of patients, staff and voluntary workers. In line with this talk there was an exhibition of decorative and useful articles made by members from remnants, and these will be given to the Friends of Borocourt Hospital to be sold at their annual bazaar on October 17.



BLAGRAVE WI

At the September meeting Mrs J. Price, the President, was in the chair, and welcomed a new member and two guests. Members thoroughly enjoyed a 'Tour around the World' with folksongs beautifully sung and played by Esma and Ruth Cope. A vote of thanks was given by Mrs Iliffe on behalf of members.

The competition 'A flower from my garden' was won by Mrs Dean, with Miss Wellstead runner-up and Miss Rowe third. The raffle prize was given by Mrs P. Price and won by Mrs B. Sullivan. The tea hostesses were Mrs Holloway and Mrs Guest.



CAVERSHAM LADIES' CLUB

The September meeting was the usual Harvest Home, and also a celebration for the Royal Wedding. The stage was nearly covered with gifts of produce and decorated with flags and bunting, and the tables with red, white and blue serviettes. Following the singing of 'We plough the fields and scatter, the produce was auctioned by Mrs King, and Mrs Wellstead. Mrs Reeves was elected Harvest Queen for the afternoon and presented with a decorated tin of tea. Tea was served by the committee, and the cake, made and iced by Mrs Brenda Strong, was cut by the Harvest Queen. The meeting ended with each member receiving a Royal Wedding Mug, and wedding crown piece, and members asked the Harvest Queen to thank the committee for a very pleasant afternoon.

CAVERSHAM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Mrs Hilda Adair presided at the September meeting and was privileged to welcome Mr J. Teroni, who showed a film and spoke on the life and work of Trinity House Lighthouse Service. The Corporation of Trinity House, London, with its headquarters on Tower Hill, is a unique maritime organisation which throughout its long and distinguished history, dating back to medieval times, has had as its prime objective the safety of shipping and the welfare of sailors.

The competition for a vegetable monster was won by Mrs Phyllis Colley.

A Cheese and Wine Party was held at the President's home, followed by a hilarious Quiz which was very much appreciated by all members present.

At the meeting on November 19 the speaker will be Mrs D. Malvern on 'Make or save money at WI markets.'

The competition will be a hot water bottle cover.



EMMER GREEN TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

The Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild met at 7.30pm on Tuesday, September 8 at Emmer Green Primary School after the summer break and listened to an amusing talk given by Mr G. Pulley entitled 'A Policeman's Lot.' Mr Pulley has been retired from the Thames Valley Police Force for 26 years and had many interesting stories to relate, especially of the days of the policemen on the beat. He told of great friendship and many kindnesses, such as the lady who always left a flask of soup on her doorstep for him during the winter. Mr Pulley also spoke of a very happy association with Oxford University and its members, with many of whom he still keeps in touch. The vote of thanks was given by Mrs Smallbone.

Members were sorry to hear that Mrs Risius, the Chairman of the Guild, is in hospital, and

sent good wishes for a speedy recovery. The Stoke Mandeville Appeal is now closed at the magnificent sum of £530. Guild members were thanked by the deputy chairman, Mrs Gudgion, and praised for their many and varied efforts to raise the money throughout the year.



CAVERSHAM AFTERNOON TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

September saw the guild meeting for the first time in Balmore Hall. Mr Vernon Gos-

lin paid a welcome return visit, this time with an illustrated talk 'Little-Known London.' This was like a patchwork quilt with its snippets of unusual sights and facts and bits of history. The smallest pub — the oldest tea firm — different memorials in Westminster Abbey — Roman remains — the last sewer gas lamp — a Church with the Tube in its crypt — all these and many more made one realise how much there is to be seen in London off the usual tourist tracks. Mr Goslin kindly provided a list of addresses of the sites he mentioned, so that the adventurous could go out and see for themselves.

Advance notice was given of the Autumn Fair to be held in Balmore Hall on the afternoon of Saturday, November 14. Among the goods on the stalls will be found cakes, handicrafts, gifts, bric-a-brac, children's clothes and toys, bath-room needs, plants and books.

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STAN ELDON'S COLUMN

RUGBY SPECIAL

ONE of the area's most successful sports clubs, the Abbey Rugby Club, is now playing its Jubilee season. The club was formed in 1956, by a few members from Reading Rugby Club, and over the years has developed its facilities and playing strength.

Their first home ground was Palmer Park and their "local" was the Marquis of Granby. They used six pubs as their "head-quarters" until 1972 when they moved to Rose Hill, Emmer Green, their current home where they have built their own clubhouse and hall and have three pitches. The latest innovation this season is the installation of match floodlights, which is very ambitious for a club of this size. They are now able to play a number of fixtures against leading

local and specially invited teams in mid-week matches. This enables them to make full use of the facilities and provide games for the many teams they run.

In addition to the 1st XV they run five other senior teams, all with unusual names; the 2nd team is the Abbots, the 3rd the Friars, then they have the Monks, the Ruins and the Casuals, plus a Sunday team known as the Ghosts. Their two Colts and many Junior and Mini Rugby teams cater for the youngsters from eight to 17 years old which ensures that there is a continuous supply of Rugby talent to their senior teams.

This season they have sought and found continuous sponsorship for each of their floodlit



home matches and have attracted many of the top teams in Rugby to Rose Hill, including Richmond, London Scottish, Harlequins and the London Welsh. All these teams have been so impressed with the standard of play and facilities that they have offered return fixtures to Abbey for next season. Later this year they will also be entertaining a Rumanian touring side and will then be returning the compliment by touring in Rumania themselves during the coming summer.

The club takes great care of all its players and provides not only excellent coaching, but also insurance cover against injury and its own physiotherapist.

Abbey Rugby Club has come a long way in a comparatively short time and by its own efforts has built up both a good reputation and fine facilities.

The Gillette Table Tennis Club formed this season to develop promising youngsters into top class players has got off to a very good start. They won their first two games 5-3 and now top their division in the National League. One of their star players, Simon Rowland from Caversham, has had mixed fortunes though having won both of his games in the first fixture he then lost both of his games in the second.

ALL CHANGE!

Sport is like a game of musical chairs with about five to six million people taking part. Only about 10% of the total population of this country play or take part in regular sporting activities but there is increasing evidence that the sporting public do not stay with one sport but tend to move from one to another. Everytime one sport "booms" another seems to decline.

In recent years a lot of footballers have switched to other sports such as squash and this took that sport right up the popularity level. However, there are already signs that the squash "bubble" has burst. Clubs in many areas are having difficulty in selling their membership and it is getting much easier to get a court. Where have they gone to from the squash court? ... This time it seems to be running! Spotting the trends must be a nightmare for those such as local authorities who have to plan years ahead to provide the right sporting facilities.

The National Fun Runs in Hyde Park last month certainly proved that the running boom is continuing, with over 27,000 people entering and many being turned away. The total mileage covered by the runners on that one day would have taken us half way to the moon. ...

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By WATCHDOG

REGAL DECISION AT LAST

After years of protracted negotiations and the submission of one set of plans after another, a decision has at last been reached on the future of the old Regal site, with Waitrose emerging as the victors. This decision will on the whole be welcomed by the people of Caversham who are tired of the eyesore the site had become and believe that a Waitrose shop will offer them a better service than is at present available in the area.

Yet shortly before a decision was announced, and possibly hastening it, another application, along similar lines to that of Waitrose, was received, which also included a community hall. Was not this, some might be asking, a better bargain? The answer must be a categorical "No." One reason is that there is no pressing reason for just another supermarket (and Waitrose had better be good as it has aroused high expectations), and the other lies in the identity of the applicants, our old friends, the St Martin's Property Corporation. These are the people who own the shopping precinct of that name with its two supermarkets, and who stand to feel the draught when a Waitrose shop opens on their doorstep. So in went a rival application and to gain the support of the local people they threw in the sop of a community hall.

Caversham people however, are not the simple minded yokels St Martin's take them for. They have suffered long enough from the precinct car park and well remember the rebuffs they received when they suggested the bollards should be either removed or at least painted to make them more visible. And when they were finally painted, surprise, surprise, it was the very week Waitrose were conducting their publicity campaign to gain the support of Caversham people for their application. Further, with a lump in their throat and tears of sympathy streaming down their cheeks, these kindly benefactors painted in some "disabled drivers only" spaces to show how public spirited they were.

SQUALOR

But when it comes to spending real money like re-surfacing and draining so that the car park is not under inches of water whenever it rains, they are far more reticent in their displays of public concern. It is no wonder that the offer of a community hall was received with a large measure of scepticism. Far more evidence is needed that this particular leopard has changed his spots. He has however retired temporarily defeated and meanwhile Caversham sits back and waits to see what changes will result from this new development in its midst.

Zoilus, writing in last month's issue about the Rock Festival, hit about the right note when he talked of mixed reactions

to the event. Even if it didn't exactly frighten the horses, it certainly made some of them shy. Crowds and noise must be expected as being the essential components of such an event, though quite why such amplification is necessary that the residents of Southcote are nearly deafened is a little difficult to understand, at least by those who aren't in to what Zoilus describes as "Heavy Metal."

The rubbish however is not an essential part of the business, though one can to a certain extent sympathise with those campers who may have wanted to be tidier, but who, in these days of mass packaging, found few receptacles for their rubbish. That does not, however, excuse putting it in the river, which suffered badly from bottles, cans and plastic bags and containers. A river is not cleaned as easily as a street, and litter there is not only unsightly but can cause material and ecological damage. The Festival organisers must make more positive efforts to prevent this in future years, and must be sent the bill for any cleaning costs incurred.

The site itself, the promenade and nearby streets were swept up within a more or less reasonable time but Caversham Road needed more than sweeping. Indeed it had to wait for a night of torrential rain three weeks later before it became more salubrious. The organisers, not the ratepayers, should be required to pay for it to be hosed down. We are on

the whole pretty tolerant about accepting the mess for a weekend, but not for days or even weeks afterwards. It would be as well not to frighten the horses too badly.

MYSTERIOUS WAYS OF BUSES

It was notable that when SavaCentre opened, regardless of whether it was or was not going to be of benefit to the people of Reading, two bus undertakings leaped in and provided rival services to get to the site. But just try to get buses to take people to the doctors' surgery, to church or home after about seven in the evening and you have almost a life-long battle on your hands. However, at last in Emmer Green such a bus service has been inaugurated, if only for a trial period, to serve the doctors' surgery. Let us hope its use will be continued for it fills a need which, it could be argued, is more important than a regular service to out of town hypermarkets.

The Emmer Green bus services are always a bit of a puzzle to the uninitiated, going literally round in small circles, presumably to overcome the problem of turning round. Even those who live there have been known to find themselves going in exactly the opposite direction from what they had intended, while those unfamiliar with the area would be advised to take a course of evening classes on the subject before setting out. Surely it should not be beyond the wit of man to devise a simpler scheme.

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