



MEGA SHOPPING THREAT

Watchdog comments . . .

Opposition to the proposed superstore on Queen Anne's playing fields increased as new and further information about it spread. Safeway's line is that they will be bringing benefits to Caversham by relieving it of traffic in the centre, attracting more trade from people who currently go to more distant super-stores because they can't get what they want in Caversham or are fed up with queueing at checkouts or for the car park, and bringing more trade to the existing shops by attracting newcomers who will walk (not drive and pollute the atmosphere) to the centre to buy other items once they have done their main shopping.

This was put over at the Public Inquiry into the Revised Borough Structure Plan (see last month's column) with all the ruthlessness and persuasive force that expensive counsel and their paid witnesses can muster. If the Inspector has been persuaded by their arguments this use of the site will become part of the Borough Plan and when a proper planning application is put in, it will have to be granted. This circumstance arose because Safeway

made their objection to the REVISED Structure Plan, that is after the consultation period following the Draft Plan, so it was never written into the plan or seen by any of the interested parties who would normally have wished to comment.

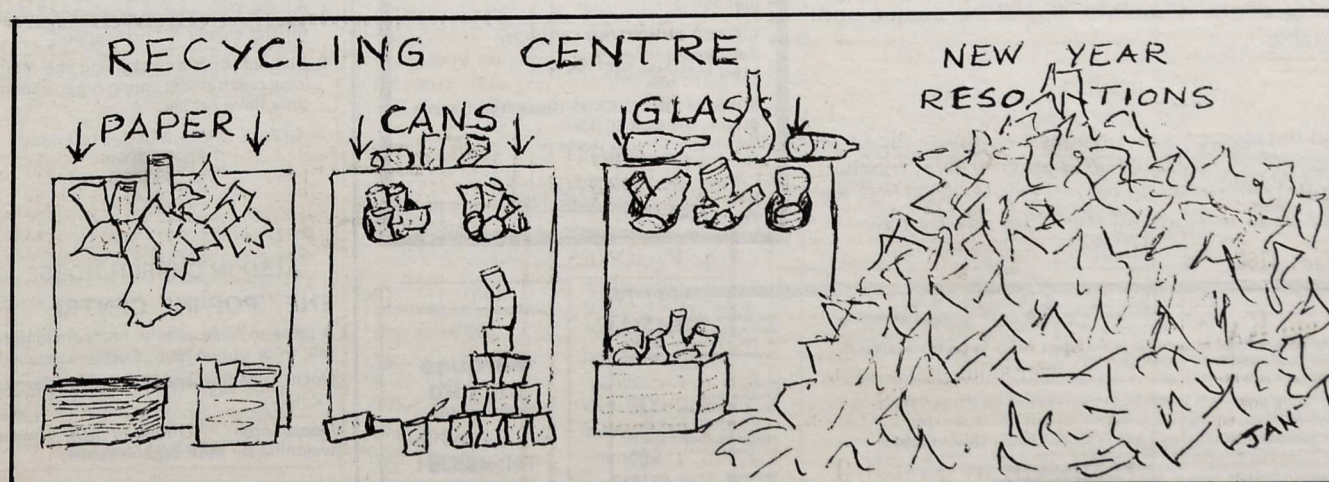
The full extent of Safeway's plan was made public (if that is a correct description for an occasion attended by few if any members of the public because of its length) when they were putting their case at the Inquiry. The superstore will be very large with a very large car park (much bigger than Waitrose or St. Martin's), a dry cleaners, a cut-price petrol station and car wash. However much Safeway argue to the contrary, this development can only harm the existing shops in central Caversham (which they insist on calling the 'town centre') as well as local petrol stations, and change for ever the character of Caversham.

The Borough Council is against the objection, but they are up against powerful and well funded adversaries. Caversham and District Residents' Association attended all the relevant sessions of the Public Inquiry and used what opportunity

they could (legal formalities limit this) to show the weakness of the developers' case. They also included it as a major part of their disposition on the whole plan when they put it at a later sitting of the Public Inquiry. They alerted shops, residents and councillors and made petition forms available. Every effort will have been made to convey to the Inspector that such a massive commercial development as this is not wanted in Caversham, but the powers ranged against ordinary residents, most of whom were unaware of what was going on till it was almost too late, are formidable.

Even more important than the outcome of this case (and heaven knows that is important enough) is the need to prevent powerful forces from circumventing the normal planning channels by pushing in major objections to a revised structure plan when a draft plan has already been out for consultation. The democratic right to object was never intended to produce this kind of result. It will be some months before the Inspector's recommendations are known.

(Watchdog continues on page 3)



TALKING POINT

by
Rev. John Boakes
Minister
Gosbrook Road Methodist Church



PRESENT IMPERFECT?

AS we grow older there is an increasing tendency to look back. Many of us have to be careful not to remember the past as 'perfect' in contrast to the present as 'imperfect'. The ideal is to count our blessings in the present as well as for the past. However, our reflections regarding 1993 will be mixed. For many it was a year of struggle – worries, problems, despair, even hopelessness, especially for those caught up in world disasters. For others the year would have contained joyful occasions – celebrations, new happy experiences, memorable days.



Now the question I would ask is, "Where was God with you?" Perhaps some might reply that He wasn't there, or that you were not aware of His presence. Be certain of this: God never deserts anyone. Therefore He shared with you throughout 1993, and indeed, all your past. The trouble is that we so often get caught up with our opinion that God should push His way in and take control. The best experience for all would have been to have known in some way God's touch of Love. It depended upon our responding to Him.



So we look ahead to this year of 1994. I believe that the only certainties for the future are God's. His Good News through His Son Jesus Christ is constant. His Son Jesus Christ is constant. His Love is ever sure. His 'vision' for each one of us is always right and good. As we respond to all the opportunities to share with Him and let Him fully share with us, we will know His perfect Way. One of these opportunities in 1994 will come to Caversham, as to the whole of Reading in September and October with Thames Valley Alive. Watch out for news of this great Christian Event involving all the Churches. It will be unique and memorable.



In all the moments of 1994 may we know the Love of God, the friendship of Jesus and our lives touched by the Holy Spirit. Whatever our experiences, may we put our Faith in God and trust Him day by day.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am Parish Communion
11.15am Matins
6.30pm Evensong

St John's

8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am Parish Eucharist and
Sunday School
6.30pm Evensong (1st Sunday)
6.30pm Informal Worship (3rd Sunday)

St Andrew's

8.00am The Eucharist
9.15am Family Eucharist (Sung) (10am first
Sunday)
11.15am The Eucharist (with hymns) (not on
first Sunday)
6.30pm Evensong (followed by Eucharist on
first Sunday)

St Barnabas'

8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Family Communion
(apart from 2nd
Sunday)
9.30am Family Service
(2nd Sunday only)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

8.00am Holy Communion
(1st Sunday)
11.00am Parish Communion

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (Caversham Park Primary School)

11.00am Family Communion
(1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
Morning Worship
(2nd Sunday)
Triple F Family Service (4th Sunday)
6.30pm Evening Worship (1st Sunday)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

10.30am and 6.30pm

NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

10.45am and 6.30pm

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

10.30am (in Chapel)

METHODIST

Caversham, Gosbrook Road
10.30am and 6.30pm

Caversham Heights

9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
9.30am Family Service (3rd Sunday)
11.00am and 6.30pm

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Anne's Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 9.45am and 6.30pm

Our Lady of Caversham 8.30am and 11.15am

St Martin's School 9.15am Mass

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass
(last Sunday)

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,
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SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers), Church
Street, Reading 10.30am

Caversham Church House –
Meeting for Worship
7.30pm. (last Sunday)
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POST BAG

FEED

THE CHILDREN

Dear Editors,

Feed The Children is most grateful for the generous donation of £200. This was especially generous from a small profit made during the year.

We have moved across the bridge to 82 Caversham Road, but our time at 1 Priory Avenue was a very important phase in the development of our work. During that time, life saving aid for Bosnia and Croatia commenced and with the passing of 15 months more than £4,600,000 worth of aid has been delivered safely into the hands of desperate children and their carers in that war torn area. Now that a second Balkan winter starts to bite since the war escalated, the urgency of our task increases.

Your readers may be assured that we will continue taking aid where it is most needed.

PETER FORD
Appeals Co-ordinator

NEED THE BIG PRINT — ask at the library

The Big Print – a new monthly newspaper for people with a visual impairment – is now in stock at five libraries in West Berkshire.

The newspaper, printed in a large clear typeface is intended to help people who have difficulty in reading normal newsprint keep up to date with national and international news.

Libraries will stock the paper on a trial basis for one year to allow demand to be assessed.

Local libraries taking part in the pilot scheme are Caversham, Newbury, Thatcham, Wokingham and Woodley.

Mark Taylor, Lending Librarian for West Berkshire commented: "The Big Print" is a useful addition to our range of services for people with visual impairment. We already stock Large Print novels and non-fiction books, spoken word cassettes and "talking newspapers". Hopefully, customers who benefit from large print bookstock will find "The Big Print" an easy way to keep up to date with news stories of interest to them.

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

EDITORS: Mrs Margaret Baily, Mr Eric Chappell, Mr John Mullaney, Mr Kevin Corrigan, Mr Bernard Miller, c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham. Tel: 471703.

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All contributions for February issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 5 January.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 3 January.

The dates for March will be Monday 31 January and Wednesday 2 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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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

A LEAFY SUBURB

Warren Residents' Association turned out in force on a miserable November evening to attend their annual meeting. They are assiduous in defending their leafy acres, which is fortunate for all those who do not live there, as they provide an attractive backdrop for the rest of the town.

□ □

Lots of trees mean lots of falling leaves in Autumn which pile up more quickly than a cash-strapped local authority can collect them, and an attractive riverside position means that the noisy revels of those, particularly Pop Festival attenders, enjoying themselves on its banks shatter summer weekends. Even so, it is an enviable place in which to live.

□ □

The Secretary's report covered an active year, a major success being the implementation of the escarpment rehabilitation scheme. Along the Warren itself, problems are building up where formerly large sites in single ownership have been let and then sublet, with the result that a series of small sites, mainly used for mooring and with or without some kind of

shelter, have inadequate parking and are in danger of degenerating into some kind of shanty town.

□ □

After the formal business of the meeting, Mrs. Pat Baxter, Transport Planner for Berkshire County Council, addressed the meeting. She is one of the few planners directly employed by the council, as Babbie, a consultancy agency, is now mainly responsible for running its transport, planning and surveying services.

□ □

Two interesting points from Mrs Baxter's talk were that 39% of people in the county do not have access to a car, something sometimes forgotten by this high car owning area, and that the third Thames bridge is now coming to be seen as the Sonning by-pass.

□ □

Emphasis, she said, was now being put on producing an integrated Transport policy which would include a whole range of measures designed to make public transport more attractive. Amongst points being looked at is real time passenger information. This means that when you go to a bus stop,

information will flash up telling you when the next bus will be along, so that if it is delayed you will at least know and can perhaps change your arrangements, and if you have just missed it, you won't have to stand there wondering.

□ □

A transport card is also, so to speak, on the cards. Working something like a phone card, it will give access to all types of transport, including car parks.

□ □

Future road planning will also have built in facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, something that in the past was only added on as an afterthought. It is also planned that more bus lanes will be con-

structed. The message is that resources must be switched to public transport rather than to trying to accommodate ever growing volumes of private transport.

STANDS THE CLOCK AT TEN TO THREE?

Well, actually it doesn't, but the large clock which is one of the first things to catch the eye of those coming over Caversham Bridge has been stopped for far too long. It is of course privately owned, though it serves a public purpose. It is old, probably nearly a hundred and fifty years, since earliest photographs show it, and it was probably there when Clock House was established in the 1840's.

Its owners are aware of their responsibility, but the cost of repairing it is so high that it is beyond what a small business can afford. The cost of taking it down, taking it away and then replacing it is formidable, without any of the major overhauling it needs. The Borough Council has no money to spare, and so far it has not been possible to raise grants from elsewhere.

□ □

Has anyone any ideas about what could be done, remembering that it is thousands rather than hundreds of pounds that is being talked about? The manager, on Reading 472295, would be glad to hear from anyone who can come up with something constructive.

WOODBINE WILLIE

Caversham Heights Methodist Church has a long-standing link with St George's Church in Tower Hamlets which, like Tower Hamlets as a whole, has been grievously affected by the present state

of the country. To support it with funds, two performances were given, in November, of the play 'Woodbine Willie' by David Hill. Woodbine Willie was the name given by the First World

War troops to the Revd. Geoffrey Studdart Kennedy, who always had a Woodbine at the ready to calm a soldier's frayed nerves. Apart from being a man of deep compassion, he was a splendid orator who could hold an audience for hours. Once, when he preached on Good Friday to two thousand troops at the front, they stood at the end of his sermon and cheered Christ!

'Woodbine Willie' is a one man play which seeks to explore the complex and sometimes contradictory nature of Studdart Kennedy's personality. The action of the play takes place in the attic of his vicarage in Worcester ten years after the end of the war. Searching for his

old camp bed, he comes across other souvenirs, such as a tin helmet and a Sam Browne, which spark off reminiscences. The playwright draws on his writings, particularly the words of his many poems, to reveal his thoughts and emotions.

The play was a tour de force for Bill Wiesener who was on the stage as Woodbine Willie for an hour and a quarter. Sadly the event was poorly supported, and in a church where the acoustics benefit from full pews, audibility sometimes suffered. Nevertheless it was a most moving performance which will long be remembered by those who attended. E.M.A.

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ANYTHING ABOUT?

THE age-old question which one birder will ask another as they pass by! Usually, it is the 'hard' birder seeking up-to-the-minute information about local or more distant rarities with formalities forsaken, a pair of binoculars being the accepted vade-mecum.

These days, the above question can cause a degree of confusion as even beginners now often tote 'scope and tripod in addition to binoculars. Thus the innocently unhelpful reply may well be, "There's a flock of Greenfinches over in the alders", or (in the depths of winter), "Yes, three Redwings, calling, flew over just now", when thousands may have been passing through the area daily for several weeks!

When two twitchers pass each other, it is sufficient to ask, "Is IT" or "Are THEY", "Still there?", typical examples being the Red-flanked Bluetail and (probable) Blyth's Reed Warbler, both within twenty yards of each other in Dorset during November, from their homes in East Finland.

It is strange how some folk will revel in the full common names of birds, seemingly the more 'involved', the greater their delight – or is it a form of 'Showmanship'? For example, (and inaccurately), "THE GREATER Black Backed Gull", a twitcher shortens to "Great Black-backed" (note "Greater" is incorrect). "The Red Flanked Bluetail" is so rare that "Bluetail" identified. Although Cormorants are common, the once-only record of a "Double-crested Cormorant" quickly became nationally known as "THE" Cormorant – amongst 'those who know'.

At the scene of a twitch, birders may be discussing bird-topography and genera in fore-shortened Latin terminology with consummate, even insolent, ease of familiarity and understanding, often so essential to identifying positively one very similar species from another.

So then, "Anything About?" Frankly, "YES", at the time of

writing. Showing well at Dinton Pastures (Winnersh) is a Great Grey Shrike, easily seen perching atop tree or bush.

At Burghfield rubbish-tip is an equally fine Ring-billed Gull from North America. Due to the build-up of wintering gulls, perseverance may be required – look for the distinctive black, bill-ring when bird is grounded.

For the Shrike, use the well-made foot-path from the 'Alternative' Car-Park at Dinton Pastures main entrance.

For the Gull, take FIRST turning on right after the 'Cunning Man' pub. Just after left-hand bend (¼ mile), look across gravel-pit on left through wire fence, to gull flock, and check-out any individual gull standing on mud below main flock.

Both species could well over-winter – so why not venture forth and start the New Year Happily with these exciting birds, virtually 'On Our Own Patch'?

SCOPS OWL

CAVERSHAM CLERGY

ANGLICAN

Canon Richard Kingsbury, Caversham Rectory, Church Road. Tel: 479130.
(Parish Office: Monday-Thursday 9.30-12.30 Tel: 471703)
The Rev Bill Carpenter, St Andrews House, Harrogate Rd. Tel: 472788.
(The Rev. Andrew Tyler. Hon. Asst Priest)
The Rev Nigel Hardcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road. Tel: 478239.
The Rev Christine Allsopp, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.
The Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe,
The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 471814.

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PROJECT

The Rev. Philip Abrey, 51 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village. Tel: 475152.

METHODIST

The Rev David Moody, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 472223.
The Rev John Boakes, 9 Woodlands Grove, 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, 13 Carlton Road. Tel: 474138.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev Thomas Meagher, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel: 471787.
(For Caversham Park Village)
The Rev J. Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common. Tel: 723418.



MESSAGE FROM HRH CROWN PRINCE ALEXANDER OF YUGOSLAVIA

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This brilliant new work has already received well over 50 broadcasts on the radio in the UK. It is that rare thing, a new work of classical music which possesses both integrity and approachability. It is a modern masterpiece and is well able to stand alongside the other work on this new CD, Barber's much-loved *Adagio for Strings*.

Lament for Bosnia is already a best seller in the shops. Feed the Children receive a royalty on all sales. However, every copy of *Lament for Bosnia* purchased in response to this leaflet will raise a further £2.50 for Feed the Children.

LAMENT FOR BOSNIA may be obtained direct from Future Classics Ltd, 13 Cotswold Mews, Battersea Square, London SW11 3RA (Tel: 071-223 7265). Price: £7.50 including VAT, postage and packing. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

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VOLUNTEER READING HELP

New Training Course in January

THE speaker at the Annual General Meeting of the Reading Branch of Volunteer Reading Help on 15th November was Mrs Vivien Cussell, Headteacher of Thameside School Caversham, who stepped in at short notice after the illness of the National Director, Mr Charles Martineau. He has promised to visit Reading later.

The local organiser of VRH, Mrs Sonia Churchill, welcomed Mr John Bingham, Assistant Chief Education Officer. In her report Mrs Churchill said that the organisation has continued to expand nationally and that this year the Reading Branch had trained twenty-six new volunteers, allowing two more schools to come into the scheme. There are now twenty-seven schools involved and, with the number of volunteers now reaching fifty, the National Office recognised the need for a Fieldworker. Accordingly Mrs Jill Pritchard, who had been working as a volunteer at Geoffrey Field School, has now taken up this post. Mrs Churchill went on to report that there are eleven other branches nationally, a second Berkshire Branch is being set up in Slough and £400 had been received from the local community (in addition to the proceeds of a bottle tombola at the Mayor's Market) for the purchasing of books etc.

Then she introduced Mrs Cussell who said how much she valued the input of



Left to Right: Mrs Cussell, Headteacher, Thameside school, Mrs Jill Pritchard, VRH Fieldworker, Mrs Pat Heslop, Secretary Reading Branch of VRH.

Volunteer Reading Helpers and spoke of the National Curriculum and how VRH fits into it, explaining in a graphic way the meaning of the various levels known as KS1 and KS2. She went on to describe various library skills, including choosing books - and why! She gave examples of children who had benefited

ed from the kind of help given by VRH volunteers - children in bed-sit accommodation where books and reading are difficult, an elective mute who opened up in a one-to-one relationship, and others who do not speak English at home. Mrs Cussell concluded by saying 'In the battle against computers, videos, and T.V., VRH volunteers are front-

line troops'.

A new training course begins in January for anyone between the ages of eighteen and eighty who wishes to help children to read. There is a particular need for male volunteers and for people of ethnic background. Anyone interested should phone Mrs Sonia Churchill on 844416 or 560463.

A MID-WINTER MISCELLANY

How different the season of Christmas and mid-winter was in many ways years ago. Just how different can be found out through various written records which people have left behind them. A few jottings tell us a little about such times in Caversham and Mapledurham.

The church warden's accounts for St Peter's record paying sixpence for holly to decorate the church in 1705. In 1796 the carols were accompanied by musicians from Reading playing a bass viol and strings. Several years later in 1809 it was a clarinet and a bassoon.

In those days the church was heated by coal firing and Mr Freebody, local boatbuilder and barge owner, provided the church with half a ton of coal for fifteen shillings in 1825.

The bells rang to welcome Christmas Day, as they still do, and no doubt the ringers repaired to the Griffin, as was their wont, for festive beer. They seem to have seized upon any occasion to call in there. Bellringing appears to have

been thirsty work judging by the number of times the church wardens paid them beer money!

It wasn't only the church that got in a goodly stock of coal for the icy months. A certain William Vanderstegen of Cane End House, then in the parish of Caversham, made sure he and his household were comfortable for the coming Christmas in 1757. That year in November he had the chimneys swept and ordered coal and wine, eighty pounds worth of the latter! No doubt everyone sat cozily by the fireside during the Festive Season enjoying a drink! The coal appears to have been delivered by barge to Mapledurham Wharf (by Mr Freebody?) and transported from there by wagon.

Christmas Day Thomas

William had married the daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Brigham of Cane End and Thomas had been born on Christmas Day in 1673, so a plaque tells us in the Brigham Aisle in St Peter's. "Thomas Brigham the sonne of Mr Thomas Brigham and Mrs Maria Brigham was borne the twenty-fifth day of December 1673 and baptised the fourth day of February".

Sitting by the fire is a sure way to make chilblains hurt and the village children at Mapledurham, like so many others, suffered from frozen feet a great deal. The redoubtable Miss Butler, headmistress of Mapledurham Church School for forty-four years, was always writing in the logbook to this effect. Each winter several children were unable to walk to school because of chilblains. Her entries ceased in 1914 when she retired.

Miss Butler did her best for her pupils and initiated a winter cocoa scheme. This meant that for half a penny a week each child could have a cup of cocoa with their sandwich every day. She also taught the children how to make boiled Christmas puddings, and baked ones too, and sent a slice of each home to each child's mother. Having her pupils so much to heart she must surely have given each of them a couple of slices too but there is no mention of this.

On December 6th, 1897 she wrote "I showed the children a magic show which they much enjoyed. It was the Pied Piper of Hamelin". No television then and certainly no chance for those little country children to have a visit to the pantomime in Reading. Well done, Miss Butler! She did her best with a magic lantern!

"Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes it brings good cheer" and whether you had a lot of it or a little, Christmas passed and the New Year began. The worst of the cold was probably to come but Spring would arrive again and all the hardship and cold dark times would lessen as the days lengthened and warmed.

Ending on this cheerful note the Revd Francis Thackeray, Vicar of Mapledurham 1883-1919, wrote in his diary on December 31 1896, "A very interesting year with many reasons for thankfulness".

M.K.



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AROUND THE CHURCHES

THAMES VALLEY ALIVE – GOOD NEWS 94

During 1994 we shall become very familiar with the distinctive heading above because this refers to the major ecumenical Mission that will stir Reading and its environs. Although the Mission itself does not take place until the last week in September and the first week in October, few people in the area will be unaware by then that something is happening. Indeed the process has already started!

Towards the end of last November the clergy and leading laity in the area were envisioned by members of the Springboard Team who will be the Mission's enablers. Springboard is a joint initiative of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for the Decade of Evangelism and, although an Anglican initiative, it seeks to work ecumenically as far as possible. It is expected that about 70 churches of all persuasions will be involved in Reading and up to 120 on the Reading fringe. Members of Springboard actively engaged in Thames Valley Alive are Bishop Michael Marshall, Canon Michael and Mrs Rosemary Green and Martin Cavendar. All four contributed to the November envisioning, three in the flesh and Bishop Michael Marshall through a video (he was conducting a mission in Belfast at the time).

The Mission will proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will invite people to review their lives and put their trust in Him. The objectives are to bring churches together, to build up the faith of the faithful, and to encourage outreach in the Thames Valley which will go on and on long after the Mission. Potentially the whole population will be covered. Caversham is one of 11 local areas in Reading which will have its own focus and specific approach, particularly during the first week of the Mission, starting on 25 September, when we shall have our own Associate Missioners. Plans for this are being worked out by an Action Committee of representatives from each church; the Revd Phil Abrey and Andrew Radford are our local coordinators. During the second week there will be a series of Central Events at Rivermead for youth, for those with interests in art and music, for children, and for the rest of us. All of this is being masterminded by a central Steering Committee.

The Mission will not be a two week wonder, but its success will depend on both the commitment to the preparation and the follow up by each church and each church member. During January all church members will receive a leaflet telling them about the Mission and its expectations; this will include a challenge to be involved. Specific training sessions will occur on 6 and 7 May and on Thursday evenings from late May to early July. However, to succeed the Mission will also need to be undergirded by continual prayer by individuals (the blue prayer cards already widely distributed will be helpful), through prayer triplets whereby three people commit themselves to pray together regularly for specific people and causes, and in Mission orientated prayer groups; the Revd Jeremy Anderson, the Anglican Deanery Evangelism Enabler, is available for advice (Tel. No. 483396). The ecumenical Lent Course "Have Another Look" and an ecumenical resource for Pentecost "On Fire" will provide further opportunities for preparation.

WORSHIP WORKSHOP

Sunday, 6th March 2.30 p.m.
at Caversham Park Primary School

Workshops are planned on Music, Dance, Drama, Arts & Crafts, Banner making.

Whatever your age, inclination or ability, come and have an afternoon of creative fun exploring ways of including your gifts within the context of worship. Open to ALL members of ALL Caversham churches. Tea is available, and the whole will culminate in the evening act of worship at 6.30 p.m.

A NEW VENTURE

Caversham Park Church has started holding non-Communion evening services on the first Sunday of each month. This is in response to requests from people who cannot easily attend morning worship. November's service had the theme of Healing and included the opportunity for prayer for specific people and situations, which proved to be a very moving occasion. It is planned to include a similar service each quarter. December's service took the form of a meditation for Advent. Themes for the first four months of 1994 are:

- January: A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
- February: Prayers for Healing
- March: Celebration of Creation (following the Workshop on Worship)
- April: Songs of Praise for Easter

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY UNITED SERVICE

16th January, 6.30 p.m.

at

St. Peter's Church

Preacher: Rev. Geoffrey Reynolds

Superintendent of the Southern Area of the Baptist Union, former chairman of Churches Together in Berkshire

POLIO FELLOWSHIP DEDICATION

A seat (given by the Polio Fellowship) in the ornate garden of Caversham Court was dedicated by the Revd David Moody on 13th November in memory of Mr Gordon Wingrove, who died of polio four years ago at the age of forty-two. Gordon was very fond of fishing and it had been hoped to erect a hard-standing by the riverside for the use of disabled people. When this proved to be impossible, it was decided to dedicate the seat instead.



— Owen Jewiss

Our picture shows the Springboard Team: from left to right Bishop Michael Marshall, Canon Michael Green, Mrs Rosemary Green and Mr. Martin Cavendar.

ST BARNABAS NEWS

It is customary in the New Year for the Editor of every newspaper or journal to review the year that has just passed. The writer of this column does not intend to review the whole of 1993 in the life of St Barnabas but to give an account of some of the activities which have occurred in the last quarter.

Harvest is perhaps a good place to start and it is good to report that the congregation enjoyed an excellent festival, both from the point of view of fellowship, when over ninety gathered for the supper, and from the point of view of thanks and sharing. The produce was shared with the folk of the Drop-in Centre in Reading. St Barnabas has particularly close links with the Drop-in Centre through the dedication and hard work of Roy and Pat Westwell. The Women's Refuge was also able to benefit from gifts of tinned food and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Work is also in hand for a "New Look" St Barnabas. First priority was new hymn books and two complete sets were purchased and blessed, Ancient and Modern New Standard and Mission Praise.

It is certainly a pleasure to handle new hymn books and not to have to rustle through numerous sheets of paper with all the newer hymns on. If they last as long as the old hymn books then it will certainly be money well spent.

The second priority is a new altar frontal. Designs were submitted by Jacqui Binns and voted upon by all members of the Fellowships. The result is that a beautiful and rich design has been chosen depicting "St Barnabas", Son of Consolation. The colours and textures are rich and magnificent and they will reflect and enhance the beautiful stained glass window above the altar; together they will make a wonderful focal point for meditation. Finally, an experimental stripping and revarnishing of the pews in a lighter colour. The pews have long been an eyesore at St Barnabas and after much deliberation and discussion with Church members it was decided to see whether they would look more attractive in a lighter colour before going down the path of ripping them out and replacing with chairs.

The young people of St Barnabas have continued to meet in their Youth Groups and enjoyed a Christian party on Halloween. They watched a video about the dangers of the occult and finished with a bonfire and prayers to "Christ our Light". Another young man from St Barnabas, Stephen Smith, is at this present time in Kenya with the Church Army prior to going to University to study theology. In January Stephen will start teaching maths in Secondary School although, at the time of writing, he is working with an officer in the field, which means doing almost anything!!

Finally, but not least, a party from St Barnabas went to St Mary's Convent at Wantage to practise meditating. Meditation simply means paying attention to God, with the whole of one's being, hearts, minds, will, imagination, conscious and unconscious selves. It is always difficult in busy lives to find time to be still and sadly, the busier we are, very often the less time is made for just being still and with God. Of course it is possible to be still with God in the midst of business, but time especially set aside is invaluable; as this day proved to be. Arriving tired and exhausted, the mind full of things to be done at home, it was wonderful to leave the convent renewed and refreshed. St Barnabas has run quiet days for prayer and meditation for several years. The message for those who have yet to find the time, or even the courage to try it, is "Do come. You will gain much".

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

1994 promises to be both challenging and exciting for all of us. The New Year will be especially so for Richard Purkis of St. John's who has been "called" to organise this year's Lent course. Its title is:

HAVE
ANOTHER
LOOK

HAVE ANOTHER LOOK

"Have Another Look" will help us:

- get to know people from other churches;
- share our Christian experience;
- prepare for our part in Thames Valley Alive.

It's a five week series of meetings each lasting about an hour and a half. There will be time for discussion, a Gospel reading and prayer and reflection.

There will be a session each week from 20th February until 26th March. Each session will have a theme:

Don't give up
in LENT 94!

What are we looking for?

What will make us truly happy?

How do we cope with suffering?

Is there any mystery in life?

Where do we want to go now?

There will be morning, afternoon and evening groups with around 7 or 8 members meeting wherever they like but mostly in people's homes. Each group will have a host and a leader.

It's for everyone! You don't have to be an expert, just willing to spend some time sharing and learning with other people.

For "Have Another Look" to be successful we need people to take part. We also need people to host and lead groups. You don't need experience because all hosts and leaders will be briefed. Anyone who has lead a group will tell you that it can be rewarding and challenging but most of all it's fun!

Don't delay – reply today! Please clip out and send off the coupon.

ST. ANDREW'S AUTUMN FAYRE



— E. S. Archer

The St. Andrew's Autumn Fayre this year, was held in aid of the Macmillan Nurses Fund.

At 2.15pm on Saturday 27th November. Macmillan Nurse Ellen Goodall declared the Fayre well and truly open to a packed Hall. Many of the people there had already enjoyed a ploughmans lunch in the smaller Hall, and trade at the many colourful stalls was brisk.

The children were able to meet and chat to Father Christmas, and later watch a Punch and Judy show.

One of the most successful Fayres to date it raised somewhere in the region of £1,150 at the time of going to press.

St. Andrew's Fellowship

A large audience at the November Fellowship meeting was able to forget the winter for an hour when Eric Aspdon, a very able photographer, and member of St Andrew's Church, showed slides of butterflies and flowers. Those members who had visited the Butterfly Farm near Southampton in the summer were particularly pleased to be reminded of their visit.

CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Monday 17th January

1994

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morning/afternoon/evening

* Please delete as applicable

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CHURCH ANSWERS BACK

In response to requests from members of St. Peter's congregation, the Editors are happy to print the sermon the Revd. Christine Allsopp preached there on Advent Sunday.

"On Thursday, in the wake of the James Bulger murder trial and a critical report on the juvenile justice system by the Children's Society, Home Office Minister David Maclean hit back. While the Church discusses social issues such as housing, it was, he said, "strangely silent" on the importance of teaching children the difference between right and wrong.

After a request for clarification from Lambeth Palace and statements from numerous Bishops, it was reported on Friday that the quarrel had been patched up after David Maclean had stated that his comments had nothing to do with the James Bulger case.

Well, we've been looking at some social issues here at St Peter's over the last few weeks:

We heard from Andy Radford about the plight of the homeless and what the Churches of Reading are doing at the Drop-in Centre.

Last week we heard from Bill Mason, the Methodist Chaplain of Reading Prison, about the Churches' ministry to prisoners.

Today we have been asked to bring life before death by contributing to the work of Christian Aid during Advent.

And today's Gospel reminds us that when we feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, visit the prisoner, we do these things not just for our brother or sister in need but for Christ (Matthew 25:31-end). That is what the Gospel tells us - and don't tell me that is a separate issue from teaching children about the difference between right and wrong.

The whole basis of our morality is summed up in those words of Jesus from Matthew 25: "I tell you this, anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me." We treat others as we would treat Jesus. Isn't that what we want to teach our children?

The difference between right and wrong cannot only be about how we as individuals treat other individuals. It has to be about how society treats individuals. There has been much discussion recently about the influence of videos and television on children. Most of this has concentrated on the portrayal of violence. But television reflects the values of society very clearly. It was my son who noticed that the trailer for the BBC's "Children in Need" Appeal on Friday consisted

of a repetition of the words: "Let's make lot's of money". However worthy the cause the message coming across was that money could solve children's problems.

The message was loud and clear in another programme on Friday night where youngsters at a nightclub were asked whether they would sleep with someone they had only met that night. They all said that they would and most of them weren't even bothered about protecting themselves or their partners from the HIV virus. Our society teaches children that if they want something they should have it, straight away. Our society teaches selfishness.

The values which the Church teaches are the opposite. And they are all of a piece. The Government cannot expect us to take a stand on sexual morality but ignore an issue like homelessness. We cannot pick the bits of Jesus' teaching we like and ignore the uncomfortable parts. There is nothing as uncomfortable or challenging as his words from Matthew 25:

"I tell you this: anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me.....anything you did not do for one of these, however humble, you did not do for me."

Christine will have left Caversham by the time this paper is circulated, and every good wish goes to her and the family in her new parish.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH ORGAN CENTENARY

By Jean Sawyer

Those of us who live in Caversham today may have cause to complain about bumpy roads, illegal parking and dangerous junctions, but these problems are minor compared with those facing the one thousand, six hundred and fifteen residents of "Caversham-on-the-Mud" in 1866. The small village was connected to Reading by the narrow Caversham Road, flanked by trees and high hedges, and the streets were not lit at night. It was against this background that Non-conformists in the village decided it was time for a local building to be erected for simple evangelical preaching according to their doctrine and beliefs. In April 1866 such a building was opened in Gosbrook Street for worship, and music was provided by an Alexandre harmonium, presented by Mrs West Senior. By 1875 the congregation, partly made up of boys from Amersham Hall, was outgrowing the accommodation and a new Church building - Caversham Baptist Free Church as it is now known, was opened in 1877. The harmonium was transferred, placed in the Church near the car park door and used until the beginning of 1894.

A year or two before this, some members had been agitating to purchase an organ. In 1893 a committee, headed by Mr W.H. Hocking, was formed to investigate the situation. Each pledged £5 to start the fund and after hard work enough money had been collected to place an order with Mr C.H. Walker of Manchester Square, London. The bill, receipted on January 27th 1894 shows the organ cost £189.2.0. It was erected where the harmonium had stood and was opened on January 23rd 1894 by F.G. Goodenough FRCO of Reading. Mr E.P. Collier brought the King's Road (now Abbey Baptist) choir to sing at the event. The programme consisted mainly of organ solos and choral music and it ended with the Hallelujah Chorus.

The organ has two manuals and eleven speaking stops which give over one thousand different combinations despite its being barely "average" size. It has a pleasant sound and variety of tone. There are five hundred and fifty-three pipes and the action is tracker except for the pedal board.

In 1898 some alterations were made to the church. The organ was moved to its present position under the central arch on the north wall and a new oboe was added to the swell organ.

Originally the organ was blown by hand and many blowers put their initials or signed

their names on an adjacent door. By the mid 1930s their service was no longer needed as an electric motor was installed. Caversham at that time was on D.C. so later the motor had to be replaced by an A.C. one. In 1961 the church was redecorated. To fit in with the new decor, the visible pipes were removed and rubbed down to the metal before being replaced.

The original work must have been of excellent quality as so far the organ has not had a complete overhaul. By now it is necessary, as, in course of time the moving parts wear and the leather perishes. Dust accumulating in the inaccessible areas affects the tone and increases the wear on the moving parts. One of the effects of the latter is that keys in the middle of the key board rattle. Special white lambs' leather gives the flexibility of the bellows and this is perishing. It is feared that in the not too distant future they will leak to such an extent that

insufficient air will be available for the pipes. The adjustments to mechanical action are made with leather buttons and the splitting of these causes cyphers.

To celebrate the organ's centenary a special weekend is planned. The church will be open for three days from Friday January 21st 1994. Various displays including ones on the organ, Church Music, Caversham in 1894 and the current work of the Church will be on show. The focal point of the weekend will be an organ recital by Graham Ireland, Director of Music, Reading School. This will start at 8pm on Saturday January 22nd. The programme will include well known works, refreshments will be available during the interval and proceeds from a collection will be used to start a fund for much needed repairs. Please book the date in your diary and come to an enjoyable evening.

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Thames Valley Alive - 94..... Joseph at St. Andrew's

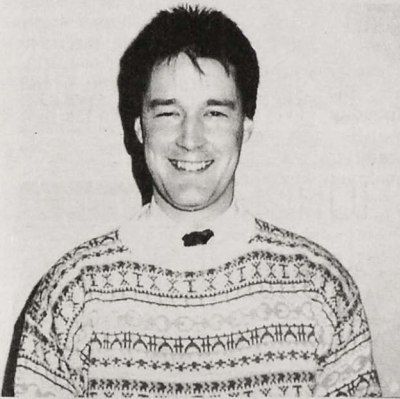
Anyone passing St Andrew's Hall on a Sunday could well have been surprised to hear music and song which may have sounded strangely familiar to them.

This is because members of St Andrew's and others have been busily rehearsing this past two months for their presentation of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's production of JOSEPH and HIS AMAZING TECHNICOLLOUR DREAMCOAT, as their contribution to Thames Valley Alive 94.

What started as a very cautious approach to the casting meeting quickly developed into enthusiasm as rehearsals progressed and those taking part found that they were really enjoying what they were doing. The 'Brothers' sang lustily and the 'Adoring Girls' reached incredibly high notes. The rehearsals have been very happy occasions, with those taking part reaching very high standards.

The production will take place in the St Andrew's Hall, Albert Rd, Caversham on 24th & 26th March 1994 (plus Saturday Matinee).

Also there is a colouring competition of Young Joseph for children.



The leading man - Chris Jeffs.

N. Kent

ECUMENICAL ADVENT CONCERT

Save the Children Fund organised an ecumenical concert in St. Andrew's Church on 5th December, by kind invitation of the Vicar the Rev. Bill Carpenter. Mrs. Janet Offord, Chairman of the Caversham branch of the Fund welcomed the Mayor of Reading and his family and the extremely well filled church. The Christmas music was sung by many different choirs from the Caversham churches, interspersed with readings given by clergy and laity. Sue Divall, the area organiser, gave a short address, and at the end of the concert, tea was arranged in the hall. Over £530 was raised and all those, both participants and congregation are to be thanked for their support of this worthwhile cause.

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All pictures will be on display in St Andrew's Hall in February when prizes for the best pictures will be awarded. All entries to be in not later than 1st February 1994.

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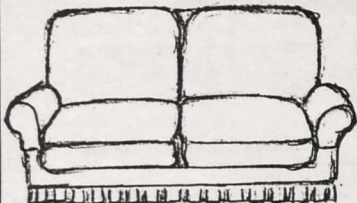
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Rosehill W.I.

THE November meeting was on the 2nd when Mrs Jane Stockhill told members the sad news of the death of Mrs Edna Evans and silence was kept in her memory. She was a great personality and all will miss her very much. Dates were planned as were early preparations for the Christmas Party.

The speaker was Mrs Markham who works with the Travel Committee of the W.I. This was a most interesting talk; the holidays are very well arranged and must entail a lot of work. Slides were shown of different locations, some known to members and others they would like to visit.

The competition for a homemade flower was won by Mrs Barge.

Caversham W.I.

Members enjoyed a leisurely trip on the Kennet and Avon Canal from Bristol to

Reading without leaving their seats, by way of excellent slides shown by Mr Martin Brown, Leisure and Tourism Manager of the Canal. Scenery in all its seasons mingled with close-up shots of the varied plant and wild life. Members appreciated the hard work that went into the restoration of this local amenity.

Caversham Community Association

The first Monday in November members welcomed Mrs Phyllis Duckworth and her son who described and showed slides of the work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute. The following week was a members' evening with memories, readings and shared experiences. Mr Moss was welcomed again with more slides of old Reading, providing plenty of memories of how things were, with cries of "I remember that!"

The Christmas spirit was awakened with a marvellous demonstration of flower and greenery arrangements. Seven in all were shown giving members plenty of inspiration for their own decorations. The seven lucky raffle prize winners joined in the thanks to Mrs Jo Jefferies.

The month ended with a members' suitcase sale with plenty of bargains to be had.

Emmer Green T.G.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild held their monthly meeting in St Barnabas Hall the second Tuesday in November.

ARTS AND CRAFTS: Future meetings will include bringing along information on a holiday country of member's choice including photos and appropriate clothing. There is also to be a social evening.

WORDS & MUSIC: Members enjoyed their theatre evening at Sonning Mill and they also look forward to a social evening at a future meeting.

RAMBLERS are still enjoying their walks although these are shorter because of the weather. Members are planning a festive lunch.

There was a competition of a Christmas centrepiece for a table, and this was judged by the speaker of the evening. The talk for the evening was "The History of the Mansion House" by Mrs Parsons.

This well known local listed building designed by Wyatt and now owned by Whitbreads has had many different families living there in the past. Mrs Parsons had managed to bring along many slides of photographs and postcards of the house in different stages of its life. The Kendrick family was one family who owned and lived in the house, and the ghost of Frances Kendrick is said to walk there. It has been said that she warned the workmen working on the house during its restoration about a "well" which none of the records had shown. Apparently a gentleman called George Pitt who used to sit and watch the house being

restored to its former glory told the workmen "she says, be careful you are near a well". There was no way that George Pitt could have known about the position of this well. People who live in the house have reported things being moved around out of their usual places.

It was very interesting to see the slides of approximately ten years ago when the house was in reasonable condition. Since then unfortunately, the building deteriorated until this present time when it has been restored by Whitbreads who have tried to keep the house as much as possible in its authentic state.

As "The Mansion House" is well known locally and by members of the guild, this was a very interesting talk.

The Guild meets on the second Tuesday in the month and new members will be made very welcome.

stall manned by the Guild during the Apple Fair at Caversham Court in September had been most successful and that the Guild had been invited to employ their skills again at next year's event.

Members had visited the newly-opened Museum in Reading and found that two hours viewing the many fascinating artefacts from Reading's history plus the beautiful replica of the Bayeux Tapestry on show proved not enough time to do full justice to all aspects of the Museum, and were proposing further visits in the near future.

The Guild's Birthday lunch, a much anticipated event, was timed for early December. Mrs B. King's play-reading group were busy preparing entertainment for the Christmas party and also planned for December was a visit to the

turn to page 11

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

On opening the meeting the Chairman, Mrs J. Spall, was pleased to announce that the tea tent and cake

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the CLUBS

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Pantomime at the Hexagon, Mrs Odey having booked seats for an afternoon performance.

The high spot of the meeting came when Mr C. Kirby, husband of a member of the Guild, began his talk and slide show on their collection of miniature "Hats". These were mainly in china, although with some exceptions; all delicate and varying in size. Mr Kirby had pictured each hat displayed beside a thimble to compare the size. Some were commemorative or crested, each had a story to tell of its origin or purpose and sometimes of how it was obtained throughout the years of devotion to their hobby by Mr and Mrs Kirby. Later dur-

Deane as this month's competition which was won by Mrs Kirby.

The Guild was pleased to welcome two new members this month. The meeting is held on the third Thursday of each month, visitors and/or new mem-

appliances which used less energy; giving customers advice on how to improve insulation in their homes; giving house designers advice; and educational schemes.

Members were looking forward to the Christmas enter-

from the icefields of the Gulf of St. Lawrence in Canada. The ooh's and aah's were proof of the beauty of the slides being shown of mums and their babies, so many of them. One baby seal shown close up was only two hours old.



Mr Ted Burnell, Tutor of Reading and Caversham Academy of Art Centre, at the Art Exhibition at Church House on Saturday 27th November.

ing tea members were able to view a splendid selection they had brought along with them.

A seasonal quiz on 'Trees' had been prepared by Mrs A.

bers most welcome.

Caversham Heights TG

British Gas and The Drop-In Centre

At the meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's main guild in November a new member was welcomed.

There was a report about the British apple fair, held at Caversham Court, which is to be arranged again next year. Arrangements were made for attendance at the carol concert at St Mary's church in Reading. An announcement was made about the carol concert to be held at St Andrew's church in Caversham on 5th December in aid of the Save the Children fund.

A home service adviser for British Gas, Miss Sarah Lane, gave a short talk illustrated by a video on the subject of "Pollution - who cares?" and distributed booklets. She said that British Gas was committed to its customers and was working in many different ways to encourage people to use gas efficiently. These ways included supporting the development and use of

tainment.

"Just imagine" was the phrase used by Miss Margaret Hill when she described the plight of some of Reading's homeless population at the social studies group. Since the decision of a council of churches in 1990 to help the homeless, amazing progress has been made after the scheme started in quite a small way, in a formerly derelict church building. An open evening was to be held on 8th December at the centre.

Caversham Ladies Club

Mrs Harwood, Chairman, opened the meeting with her usual warm welcome to members. After Club business was completed Mrs Harwood introduced Mr David White who is an official photographer for the International Fund and Animal Welfare on the Sealwatch Programme.

It was 1986 when the ban on killing these beautiful creatures came into force in many countries. Sadly there are still too many countries still allowing the slaughter of these animals. The slides Mr White had brought along were

They seemed to accept the cameras and often posed, so close to the camera that it seemed they were coming into the Clubroom to look at members with their beautiful, soulful eyes. The wonderful result of the Sealwatch is that it is possible to book holidays and have the chance to walk on the ice and even play with and fondle the seals, take photographs close up and give thanks knowing these beautiful creatures are safe from slaughter in the Gulf of St Lawrence.

Members agreed it was an interesting and enjoyable afternoon and showed their appreciation in the usual way to Mr White for the talk and fabulous slides.

Holloway's

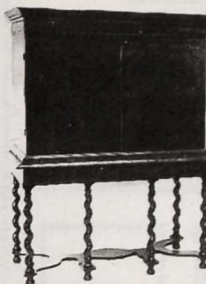
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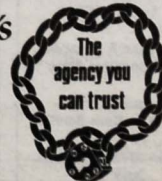
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