



GORDON SPRING

Readers of February's Caversham Bridge will have seen the report on Gordon Spring's booklet, "Casual Ramblings Concerning the Waterways of Early Reading & For Those in Peril on the Canal". But what about the man himself?



Gordon Spring on holiday with the Caversham Heights Society.

Local author, Gordon Spring, is a man of enthusiasms. Small, spry and active for his years he finds it difficult to understand why people have to go on courses about what to do when they retire. He has no trouble filling his hours with worthwhile activity. I could well believe it, we had had some difficulty in finding a suitable time when he was free to be interviewed.

Gordon Spring was born in Exeter in 1904 and moved to Reading with his parents when he was seven years old. His father was a master at Reading School and the young Gordon was educated there. When he left school he was articled for three years to the Borough Surveyor of Reading, Mr. A. S. Parsons. He qualified as a Chartered Civil Engineer and spent the whole of his working life until his retirement in 1967 working in the Borough Surveyor's department.

As principal assistant in charge of structures he supervised the taking down of the old tram shed to be replaced by the trolley-bus garage and workshops at Mill Lane. One of his most difficult projects, because it was on the skew, was replacing the old timber bridge at Fobney by a concrete structure which would bear the weight of heavy lorries. His work on the waterways is lovingly detailed in his book, but he was also responsible for the advance preparation (roads and services) for the housing estates at Whitley and Emmer Green. Another memory is the hard winter of 1947 when flooding occurred after the thaw, Gosbrook Road was under water and he was busy recording flood levels.

In 1963 he and his wife moved from Morgan Road to the house in Caversham where he still lives. He designed and supervised the building of the house which is set in a secluded spot on the site of what used to be the Bishop of Reading's tennis court although when they took over the land it was covered in grass and brambles. Mrs. Spring planted trees, flowers and lawns and created a beautiful, tranquil haven for the local wildlife: foxes, squirrels, many different birds and even the shy muntjac who occasionally appears to nibble the young shoots of the roses.

Gordon Spring has always loved gardens and gardening. He was for fifteen years treasurer of the Reading and District Gardeners Association and arranged outings to visit gardens of beauty and interest. Although he has help in the garden now he still raises cuttings and seedlings. He is a Fellow of the R.S.P.B. and a keen member and supporter of the Woodland Trust and the World Wildlife Fund but, a man of principle, he has relinquished his membership of the National Trust in protest at their policy of allowing stag-hunting on their land.

For many years Gordon Spring has been a member of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust and the live steam section of the Reading Society of Model Engineers. Over several years he contributed a series of articles to the R.S.M.E. newsletter on the early history of steam locomotives and as a variation the editor suggested

he might write a series of articles on the waterways. As a result of the interest generated by these the editor went on to suggest that they might attract a wider readership and so the book came into being.

Another great passion is music. He plays the piano and the violin and in earlier years frequently played violin solos at local concerts. He and his wife attended the Summer Schools at Dartington Hall and one year while in Elizabeth Lutyens' composers' class Gordon had the thrill of hearing his setting of W. B. Yeats' poem "Chamber Music" sung by the distinguished Swiss tenor, Hugues Cuénod.

As well as music Gordon enjoys literature especially Charles Dickens, whose "vigorous prose" he relishes. He is an avid reader and has collected books of reference on the many subjects that interest him. In 1979 Gordon's wife died and more recently their friend of many years' standing, Mrs. Elizabeth Golby, herself a widow, came to share the house as his companion. In the evenings while she does her tapestry the two old friends enjoy Gordon's readings of the classics, notably Dickens, of course!

Over the fireplace hangs a completed tapestry, a framed picture of a steam engine, for as well as belonging to the Model Engineers' Society Gordon is a steam enthusiast. He has ridden on footplates from Reading to Sheffield, Glasgow to Oban and Fort William to Mallaig. Special favourites are the narrow-gauge lines in North Wales which he hopes to visit on holiday later this year.

The culmination of the interview was an invitation to enter the workshop and see the model engine which this man of many talents has built. A five-inch gauge 0-4-4 tank engine, it is a replica of one designed by William Adams for the London and South Western Railway and later used on the Isle of Wight. The painstaking care which has gone into the making of this model demonstrates the joy that its owner takes in precise and meticulous craftsmanship and, he assures me, it still isn't quite finished!

For the past twelve years Gordon has attended the Stay Awhile Lunch Club at Caversham Heights Methodist Church where he is a popular member of the so-called "Men's Table". In the past he has enjoyed belonging to the Caversham Heights Society but his membership has lapsed now, giving "younger members" a chance to take his place.

It was time to leave. There had been so much to talk about that time had passed very quickly. I left with the impression of a man who has led a contented and fulfilled life, balancing his pleasures between the arts, technology and nature, enjoying the company of others and always willing to share his enthusiasms. As he saw me out of the front-door my host smiled with pleasure at the trill of a hedge sparrow in a tree nearby.

M.T.



HAPPY EASTER TO ALL OUR READERS



D/EX 1758/31/4

TALKING POINT

by

the Rev. Nigel Hardcastle
Vicar of St. Barnabas



ALIVE!

Nature coming alive – Jesus alive – Thames Valley Alive and St BARNABAS *Alive*. The word "Alive" is very much in the air at the moment. People are asking, "Is our society alive and well?" Are you alive and well? Physically? Spiritually? Or are we, as a nation and as individuals in the process of a slow spiritual death?

At times like this I think of Mrs Gren. She is not one of my parishioners, but a way schoolgirls remember the characteristics of life: *Movement, Respiration, Sensitivity, Growth*, etc. A thing that is alive is a changing thing, a growing thing. Rocks and crystals are unchanging, dead and lifeless.

Changes Good and Bad

But not all change is good. Change can also be decay. Fruit left on the grass changes, decays, dying. Inside, perhaps, a different sort of life: maggots, worms or germs begin to grow. Unchangingness is death, but not all change is good. How can you tell good life from the bad? Christians have a very simple test for real life – for good life. Love is the fruit of real life, and you know a tree by its fruits. Many people who are not Christians have come to the conclusion that, on this point at any rate, Christ was right. If you do not love you may as well not be alive.

What about ourselves and our society? Are we dead and unchanging? And if we are changing and alive, is the life good, or is it bad – the life of decay? Is our society getting more loving and caring? Or do we care less than ever before? Almost certainly we will find evidence for both good and bad in Caversham today. Sometimes we get paranoid and see only the bad. For the last 3,000 years at least, people of nearly every nation have had a deep feeling that the world is going to the dogs. If we take this as a complete description we are, of course, simply being paranoid. Yet there is much seriously wrong with Britain and with us as individuals at the moment. The trouble is that when we fall into moaning about it, we become the very Whingeing Pommies we are complaining about. We are then part of the problem, not part of the solution. Our society needs us to be alive with good life to change the balance. We need to grow in love or society will die.

Easter Day

I feel I came spiritually alive one Easter Day 30 years ago. I was at Lee Abbey. I knew the people there had something I wanted. They talked differently about Jesus. On Easter Day I realised. The preacher pointed out the difference. The resurrection was not a claim about a long past event. It was a claim that Jesus was ALIVE NOW. That was what was different. Jesus was a living reality for them, not a theory or a story character. I wanted the same, and found it, and found that this "ALIVE" made me alive. There were, of course, no simple answers, no protection from the troubles of this world, no sudden perfection. But the growth that started there was precious and worthwhile. All sorts of

things have made me grow spiritually. None of them equals the Risen Christ in any way, and in each of them I now see the Risen Christ at work.

A Time to Grow

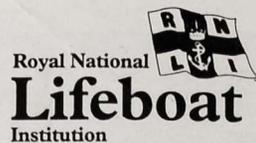
I expect that everyone can remember times of spiritual growth – times we learnt more of prayer and love. Sometimes it is in difficulties or suffering that we grow. Sometimes it is in periods of sweet excitement. I expect that most of us can also remember long times when we stayed still, or went slowly backwards. Our spiritual growth needs renewal from time to time. This is what St Barnabas *Alive* is – a chance to renew our spiritual growth as a church and individuals. There is no one so "advanced" in the spiritual life that they do not need renewing by God. Nor is there anyone so "poor" in the spiritual life that God's renewal is not possible. This is not a "mission" of the "converted" to the "unconverted". We all need renewal by God.

Learning from Each Other

In St Barnabas *Alive* we will be inviting a team of about 25 people from St Aldates Oxford to help us renew our relationship with God. They are lovely, humble, sensitive and loving. They have a good sense of humour and fun. Far from seeing themselves as the "experts" come to "save" us, they feel they have already learnt from us as we hope to learn from them. They bring in a professional drama leader, a youth leader, a priest and many other people. The programme will have our fellowship meetings at the core. People will be able to share our real experiences, ask hard questions and disagree if they like. We will seek to find Christ in each other. There will also be services, youth events, and a Social with Barn Dance and cabaret provided by St Aldates. Anyone in Emmer Green is welcome to join in. Later, Thames Valley Alive will give us all another different sort of chance to grow and change. As well as the big rallies when the "message" is explained, I think most churches will have smaller intimate groups where we can all share and build relationships.

Birthday

This year St Barnabas church is 65 years old. There will be no time to hold a special celebration on the day. A new altar frontal by Jacquie Binns is being made for our church as a birthday present to ourselves. It will appear for the first time on Whitsunday, the last day of St Barnabas *Alive*. You will be able to see it on St Barnabas Day. We will dedicate the frontal, in the presence of its artist, on the last Sunday in June. This is when we will remember our birthday. The main celebration will however, be St Barnabas *Alive*. Perhaps the altar frontal will really be part of that. It is entitled "St Barnabas in the Midst of the Spirit" and that is what we are praying for. We don't mean the spirit of excitement, or the spirit of sentimentality, but the Spirit of Jesus the crucified, the spirit of love alive today – making us *ALIVE*.



Caversham Branch

A successful Fish'n Chip Supper, organised by the Caversham Branch of the RNLI was held on Thursday, February 24th, at the Baptist Church Hall. Visitors were welcomed by the Branch President, Dr John Foley-Fisher, who also announced that Mrs Phyllis Duckworth had been awarded a Bar to her Gold Badge. This will be presented to her at the Royal Festival Hall on May 10th.

After supper a video was shown. This was a condensed version of the six episodes of "Lifeboat" which were shown on TV. The result of the evening was a profit of £154.60, and the organisers thank everyone who came and supported the Lifeboat Crews.

Lifeboat Flag Fortnight will take place from Monday April 4th to Saturday April 16th. Collectors are urgently needed, especially in Lower Caversham. Please ring 0734 402714 if you are willing to help.

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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 Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe,

The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 471814.

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PASTOR

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.

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The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.

The Rev Michael Holmes, 13 Carlton Road. Tel: 474138.

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

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All contributions for May issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 6 April.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maulle, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 5 April.

The dates for June will be Tuesday 3 May and Wednesday 4 May.

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

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THE MICHAEL HILL INTERVIEW

The Associate Missioner for Thames Valley Alive for Caversham is the Archdeacon of Berkshire, the Venerable Michael Hill, and when he came to the most recent meeting of the Caversham TVA Action Committee, Andrew Radford took the opportunity to interview him for the Caversham Bridge.

AR. Archdeacon, I know that you've not been in this job for very long so perhaps you can tell us what you were doing before coming here.

MH. Most people call me Mike! Immediately before taking up this post I was Rector of the Parish of Chesham Bois in South Bucks, which was a commuter Parish. I was Senior Minister with a staff of eight full timers and many volunteers, ministering to the local community.

AR. Now, I know you are a married man, can you tell me a little about your family?

MH. Yes I am married to Anthea, and we have five children, Naomi 17, Charis 15, my son Nicholas 13 and then two more girls, Alexa 11 and Eleanor 8. We live near Newbury in a village called Donnington.

AR. What does an Archdeacon in the Anglican Church actually do?

MH. Well job descriptions vary across the country, but I work alongside the Bishop of Reading and I see my role as mainly concerned with care. That is firstly with the care of the clergy and of their families; secondly with the care of buildings - I guess that's what most people associate with Archdeacons - the so called 'gutters & drains' bit of the job; then I get involved with various legal aspects of the Church, particularly associated with our responsibilities for listed buildings; I'm involved with appointments of clergy alongside the Bishop and I tend to put an emphasis on preaching and teaching when I get the chance.

AR. So now I know! Moving on - what I particularly want to talk with you about is Mission and Evangelism, which I know you give a high priority - why?

MH. You're right - I do put them high on my priority list and for a number of reasons. Firstly, because of where I come from. I wasn't brought up in a Christian home and had no experience of Church, never mind the Church of England. I was converted to Christianity at the age of 18.

AR. How did this happen?

MH. Largely through the ministry of a Christian Community - Scargill House in Yorkshire. Now, having been converted, I had to struggle as one who had no Church culture, with trying to fit in with the culture of the Church. So, the personal perspective I bring is that I look at the kind of guys I used to hang out with before I became a Christian, most of whom have no Church background and no Christian belief whatever and I'm motivated to ask the question - what kind of Church would we need to be to win some of my non-Christian friends for Christ? Secondly there is a Theological perspective - Jesus did give a mandate to his twelve disciples to go into all the world and make disciples of all the nations. Now some purists argue that this was an Apostolic command, but if that was the case it was a pretty tall order! I take it to be a command to all disciples to go out and share what God, in Christ, has given to them.

AR. A number of Christians I've met don't believe in the necessity for overt evangelism, feeling rather that it's enough to witness through leading a good and 'Christian' life. What would you say to them - particularly those in local Churches who are being called to share in TVA?

MH. Yes, let's say that one of the authenticating marks of a Christian life is the kind of life that we lead - are we producing the fruits of the Holy Spirit in our lives, are we allowing the Holy Spirit to inculcate in us the kinds of qualities that he wants to - that's a part of it. On the other hand, if you look at the Scriptures and you read Paul in

Romans, he says that that it's through hearing the word of Christ that people become Christians. I don't think that means all members of our Churches will necessarily have a specialist gift of evangelism, but I think that in today's world, Christians who can give a reason for the faith that is in them and who have some experience of God to share, sensitively and boldly, will be the evangelists of tomorrow. There are, after all, many atheists and members of other religions who lead a 'good' life.

AR. There are others amongst the laity and indeed the Clergy, who have severe misgivings about the value of big missions with major rallies and Central events. They would say that mission is better conducted at the local Church and that in fact they're carrying on with mission all the time. How would you answer them?

MH. I'd say a number of things - firstly the evidence suggests that we aren't currently being very effective in evangelism day by day. The facts are for the Church of England for example, that between 1979 and 1989, Church membership dipped by nine percent - so if they're doing it, they're not being too successful! Secondly, I would agree with the view that we, maybe, over-rely on the big Crusade event as a missionary strategy and I'm praying for creativity and imagination to find ways in which we can spawn Churches which are able to break through to ninety percent of the population of this land who have no cultural handle on the Christian Faith at all. The Churches who are mission minded in the future will regard all members of their Church as missionaries and will seek to regain Biblical community as a model for living in a world ravaged by people who are lonely, hurt, bruised whatever. Now I do Crusade Mission, so I'm committed to it but something I also feel passionately, is that one of the subtleties of the crusade mission is that it means we can feel we've done mission without having to look at what we're doing in our local Churches. A very key question is, suppose God answered our prayers - it's not unlikely in my view that he will - and we were flooded with a surfeit of people who felt they wanted to sign Yes to Jesus Christ. How would we deal with them in our Churches as they are? That for me is a key question.

AR. So what are your hopes for TVA and what should we expect God to do?

MH. I have great hopes that large numbers of people's lives will be touched for Christ and that maybe also, many already in our Churches will be recharged and blessed. But we need to have strategies in place so that if wholesale numbers of people either want to say Yes to Christ or want to know more about the Christian Faith then we are able to deliver, either in small groups or in Churches, facts about our Faith, so that they can make up their own minds.

TVA Events in April

Make Way For The Cross - Easter Sunday (3rd April) at 8.00pm.

Come and join in a united celebration on Easter Sunday evening, when Graham Kendrick's Easter Musical will be performed from scratch at the Church of St. John the Baptist in Gosbrook Road, Caversham at 8.00pm. If you can sing or play an instrument or you just want to Worship God, then please do come along. There will be a rehearsal at 4.00pm, for musicians soloists and any singers who can come, and all are welcome at 8.00pm for the performance.

Listening To Reading - At The Vine on 21st April

A day of preparation for Thames Valley Alive. After some prayer and briefing led by Rev Jeremy Anderson and F1 Radford, participants will be sent out in twos to listen to Reading, returning in the afternoon to share and discern together. The day will run from 10.00am to 4.00pm. To book your place please 'phone 483965.

Christian Rock Band TVB in Caversham

The British Youth For Christ Rock Band TVB will be in Caversham from 25th to 29th April, playing in schools and other locations. The week will culminate in a Concert at Caversham Hill Chapel on Friday 29th April at 8.00pm.



AR. Finally, what advice do you have for those of us involved in planning TVA?

MH. I'm impressed with what I've seen and heard so far but I would say one thing loud and clear. The planning team must give a commitment that whatever we put on in Caversham, will be cringe-free, so that people who invite their friends to the events we lay on, can bring them with confidence, without fearing that they or their friends might be embarrassed, or that their friend might walk out halfway through! Whatever decision they make at the end of it - to accept or reject the Gospel - that's their decision. Our commitment to the people of Caversham needs to be that we will do our best to lay on quality events that they can bring their friends to with absolute confidence - we won't embarrass them, we won't manipulate them, we won't force them to do anything, we will just present the Good News.

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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

THE CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

One of our backroom girls rang the other day in some distress having come across two people outside Church House, discussing whether they could go in as, apparently, neither of them had any connections with the Church and, as they said, it was after all, called 'Church House'. Frankly I should have thought the day was past when people had these kind of hang-ups, and I'm sorry, but it does need putting right. To be blunt, though the Church is the owner of the building, what goes on there most of the time has little or no connection with any church. I don't know what it was these people wanted but there is the Drop-in Centre where people can get a cuppa most mornings of the week and enjoy the company of others. Then there is the office upstairs where one can go for advice as to any organisation which could help them. Now I really must apologise that I cannot give further details as to the times these places are open but I promise to do my best to remedy this in a future issue.

In the meantime, for goodness sake let's get away from the idea that only church members are welcome in such places; I for one have been only too happy in recent years to find, I hope, the disappearance of the 'line' separating 'the Church' from the rest.

A better person to put all this in perspective would possibly be one of our clergy, so I'm hoping they will take up my request to write something on these lines.

Cats' Protection League

I was able to attend the inauguration of the new Branch (Reading East and District) of the "Cats' Protection League" and one of the officials asked if I could mention it in the 'Bridge' for the benefit of anyone who would find this new branch more suitable for their needs. I do so willingly though I'm afraid I've mislaid my notes on the subject and can only suggest that anyone interested should ring 310999. I sincerely hope I've got the correct number but to be honest I came away from a very entertaining inauguration with a clutch of leaflets and useful information. I promise I will try to rectify this in a future issue but in the meantime if I can find anything more definite I will pass the information on to our good friends Jill and Jerry at the local Pet Shop, so that they can make use of it.

Please, please, accept my apologies.

Is Anyone Out There?

Whilst it is true that Caversham has become something of a 'non-starter' for breeding migrants, there are still areas worthy of a bird-watcher's attention. As mentioned in previous articles, from Kings Meadows to the west end of the Promenade can be very interesting.

Balmore Walk, Emmer Green, and Mapledurham Playing Fields can all be covered in half a day. Each has its 'woody' end, providing good habitats for Nuthatch, Tree Creeper and Woodpecker, whilst wintering Redwing and summer warblers are annual visitors.

I saw a Wheatear on the grass at Mapledurham Recreation Ground in 1992 and know that Yellowhammer, Spotted Flycatcher and probably Lesser Whitethroat bred at one of the other venues last summer.

When considering that many families must surely possess at least one pair of binoculars

and may well be present or past Members of the RSPB and/or YOC (younger folk), the complete absence of encountering another birder during many years of bird-watching around Caversham is very disappointing.

What a refreshing difference is Norfolk, where passers-by regularly carry a pair of binoculars, often supplemented with camera, telescope and tripod, and go on their way with cheerful acknowledgement.

Toting a pair of binoculars in the Caversham area seems to arouse nearly as much suspicion as a yob brandishing a flick-knife in the High Street would do. Perhaps this is the off-putting experience of other local birders - if any there be!

All wildlife is surely a Blessing which the Lord has provided. Should not we therefore, show an affinity with it!

There are some who may bemirch such in-

terests, whilst completely overlooking the fact that they are themselves, inescapably a part of the same environmental chain.

Come on Caversham, let's show 'em what we can do!

It is a pleasure to take Scooby, my King Charles Cavalier, on our travels, as he takes an intelligent interest in many things. At the scene of a rarity he patiently sits beneath the tripod and 'reminds' me when his turn at the telescope is due! Truly, it seems doubtful that he can see much through the eyepiece, yet it is a ritual to be regularly performed - much to the amazement and amusement of our 'clan'.

Male and female Blackcaps, until recently regarded as 'African Warblers', have been almost daily visitors this winter, in Blenheim Road/Hemdean Rise area - Hemdean House School watch out for this privilege.

SCOPS OWL

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Now this is something I do know about and am anxious to publicise in case, like me, you are in need of transport to and from hospital and don't know how to go about contacting this rather splendid body of men (and women for all I know) who spend many hours ferrying people around. Where would we be without them. Recently I mentioned the help the Red Cross could give. Nearer home it is probably better to use our local people. But the help is there so if your doctor suggests a hospital visit which you might find more than a little difficult, do ask him about transport. This is very important for anyone who finds getting around difficult, so please do bear it in mind.

More Correspondents Please

I am often asked why I don't cover the other shopping areas - I would really love to do so, but I simply cannot get around much outside Caversham. I'm sure I've asked before, but if there are some good souls out there who could cover Emmer Green, Hemdean Road, Henley Road, Caversham Park Village... the editors would be only too happy to hear from you.

Do think about it - it needn't be monthly, but it would be good for morale to have the other areas mentioned sometimes.

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

SPEED THE BUS

There has been little excuse for not knowing about proposals for a bus lane along Caversham Road as the County Council carried out a widespread door to door distribution of consultation leaflets which allowed plenty of time for sending in comments. Cynics might well ask, why go to the length of a public consultation if the Council intends, according to press reports, to have the whole thing up and running by June. It is not as if bus lanes can be modified in the way that housing or a commercial development can. If a large majority says it doesn't want a bus lane, does the Council intend to go ahead anyhow?

The consultation leaflet made no mention of a bus lane over the bridge. Perhaps there had already been enough straws in the wind to indicate that this would produce total uproar.

The proposals include a ban on all right hand turns along the route of the lane, thus removing one of the problems that would have rendered it unworkable. Instead, cars would have to go to the roundabout and then turn back.

Even with that difficulty removed, a sounding out of Caversham people seems to indicate that there is not much support for this bus lane. Bus users themselves say that buses now move freely along Caversham Road and they cannot see the need for a lane. They must be a section of the public whose views carry weight.

Right hand turns into the side roads which would have rendered a bus lane unworkable will be banned. Instead cars will have to proceed to a roundabout and then turn back. The extra distance required to make a right hand turn will only add to congestion and pollution and the Vastern Road roundabout in particular, which is always very busy, will have to take the extra traffic bound for Swansea Road, York Road and Randolph Road.

Although bus lanes frequently help to im-



Members and supporters of the Woodcote Road Action Group seen outside Shire Hall, Reading carrying the petition with over 2000 signatures that was being presented to the Berkshire County Council to highlight the concern shown by the residents of Caversham and Caversham Heights over the use of heavy goods vehicles on the A4074 Caversham to Oxford. Some 76 residents had braved the wind and rain just before and after Christmas to collect the signatures for the petition.

prove services by giving buses priority in congested areas, this one would only give a minimum benefit to buses whilst bringing increased congestion for other traffic. If the bus users were going to gain some measureable benefit, the hostility of car drivers who had a minute or so added to their journey could be discounted as a price worth paying towards an overall improvement in traffic flow.

There are many other ways of making the bus a viable alternative to the car. Some of them are expensive, such as bringing in a more frequent service and more user friendly buses. Giving buses priority at junctions, which is where the delays really occur, is also more expensive than a bus lane. Part-time bus lanes need not cost a lot, but the County seems set against them on the grounds that drivers would never be able to remember when not to use them. They work elsewhere and a few stiff fines for misuse ought to get the message home to Reading's dim drivers.

Ultimately there have got to be restrictions on cars in urban areas. It's a case of how much we are prepared to invest to reduce the levels of noise and pollution which have damaged our towns and cities for too long.

A4074

The so-called Thirteen Bends of Death on the A4074, a name they retain in spite of some

straightening of the road some years ago, and which they acquired because bad drivers use insufficient care when traversing them, harming themselves and others in the process, have been the subject of a consultation exercise by Oxfordshire County Council. The stretch from the Pack Saddle to Deadman's Lane has a far higher than average accident rate and the aim was to reduce that rather than to upgrade the road for the benefit of through traffic. As a result of the consultation, most people expressed a preference for on-line improvements rather than any attempts to by-pass the winding stretch or to leave the position as it is. On-line improvements still involve the construction of two roundabouts, one at Deadman's Lane and the other at the junction of Horsepond Road near the Fox. These two will have to be lit and the County Council has said they will keep the lighting to the minimum required for safety, a point strongly made by Caversham and District Residents' Association who did not want to see the glare of harsh orange lighting over the Hook End woods.

The Association has now suggested that the footpath which goes from the Borough boundary to Rokeby Drive be extended to the Pack Horse as many people like to walk along there to the pub, although it is dangerous to do so. There is room for a footpath.

All except for a minority of road hogs wanted the road to retain its character as much as possible. It is to be hoped that this will be achieved.

AWE Community Inquiry

Most of us prefer to close our minds about what would happen to Reading, downwind from Aldermaston, if there should be a serious accident there. We also for the most part cross our fingers and hope for the best when a lesser leak is revealed or attention is drawn to the possible hazards of everyday emissions.

Newbury District Council, which has even more cause than Reading to be worried about health and safety aspects at Aldermaston, has asked for a public inquiry to be set up. Reading Borough Council has supported this but so far there has been no response from the Government. The Borough is therefore setting up a Community Inquiry which will sit on 23rd and 24th March under the chairmanship of Helena Kennedy QC. The hope is that the report arising from this will encourage the government to hold a formal public inquiry into health and safety at the base. AWE will be invited to present their case at the Community Inquiry and there is no reason to believe that the establishment does not take its responsibilities seriously.

**MORE WATCHDOG
ON PAGE 11**

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

NEWS FROM ST ANNE'S

At the AGM of St. Anne's Parish Committee last October plans were made for the centenary of the Parish which will be during 1996. The meeting requested ideas from the floor so that the committee could discuss at a later date. A further meeting took place in January where the suggestions were discussed more thoroughly. This resulted in several groups being formed, each responsible for a different aspect of the centenary celebrations. The final decisions on what will actually take place will be decided at the Parish meeting in March. The groups comprise the following areas:-

- Fabric - essential work that needs to be completed to the church and surrounding properties, and not just necessary for the centenary. This includes work to the church tower which needs several areas to be repointed. Other items will include the cleaning of the stonework, a commemorative stained glass window, replacement of the church benches (some of which are being enjoyed by the woodworm), a brass plate to commemorate the Parish Priests of the church, as well as an extension to the existing car park.
- Liturgical - a centenary Mass; pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Caversham during the month of October, and several other items that have yet to be finalised.
- General - history of the Parish; exhibition of artifacts; flower festival.
- Parish - events relating to the various groups within the Parish e.g. Chat and Craft; St Vincent De Paul etc.
- Local Community - relationships with other churches.
- School - events to be organised by the children and the staff.

If anyone has any memorabilia relating to St. Anne's then it would be gratefully received by Fr. Meagher at The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue, Caversham.

Forthcoming events within the Parish include Confirmations on Wednesday 18th May when the Archbishop will be in attendance; the 4th Annual Music Concert on Saturday 21st May (and if the past events are anything to go by, this will be one of the highlights of the year); First Holy Communion on Sunday July 3rd or July 10th, date to be confirmed, and the Summer Fete on Saturday 9th July.

Since the end of January a Toddler Group has been started in the parish rooms behind the school hall. This has proved to be a successful venture with 45 children attending on a Thursday afternoon from 1 o'clock until 2.30 p.m.

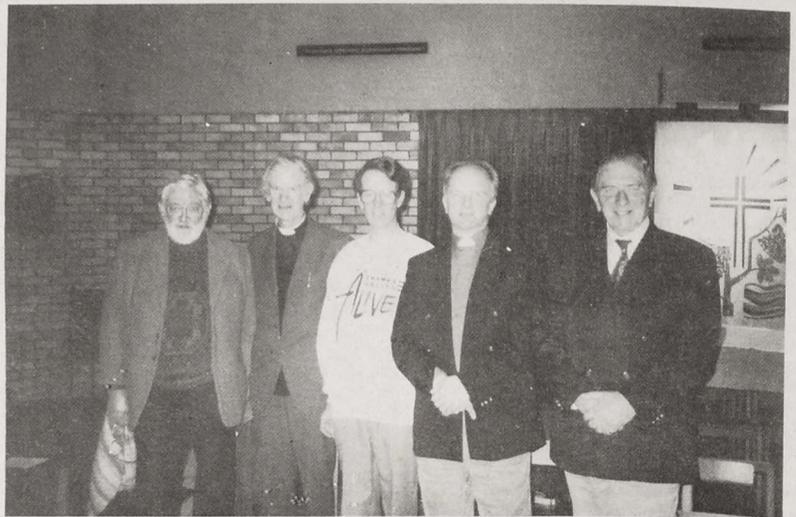
STOP PRESS: The Lenten Penitential Service at St. Anne's will be on Monday 28th March at 7.30pm and the Mass of Christ at St Aloysius, Oxford on Tuesday 29th March also at 7.30pm.

ST ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Parents' Association of St Anne's primary school held a very successful Music Quiz recently at Piper's Island. A total of 17 teams, with four members in a team, listened to music from the 50's through to the present day. Questions were on musical intros, film themes, name the lead singer, television adverts and the one that had everyone scratching their heads - the "think link". This round was where three pieces of music were played and the teams had to name the artist and the title and then identify the link between the three items. It was a very enjoyable evening, and raised £145 for school funds.

Their next event is a Fashion Evening to be held on May 10th in the school hall. This also promises to be an enjoyable event, with the parents being the models for the night!!

FOCUS ON MISSION AT ANGLICAN DEANERY SYNOD



O. Jewiss

Our picture shows from left to right the Revd Geoffrey Udall (Assistant Rural Dean), Canon Eric Essery (Rural Dean), the Revd Jeremy Anderson (Deanery Evangelism Enabler), the Ven. Michael Hill (Archdeacon of Berkshire) and Mr Wilfred Dyer (Deanery Lay Chairman) at the Anglican Deanery Synod meeting at St. John and St. Stephen's Church.

Outreach and mission was the main focus at the recent meeting of the Anglican Deanery Synod. The Revd Jeremy Anderson, Deanery Evangelism Enabler and a key figure on the Steering Group of Thames Valley Alive, gave an encouraging update on the plans and preparations for the Mission. The Anglican representatives were reminded of the continual need to support by fervent prayer the Mission, those leading it, those helping in it and those touched by it, an imperative that has been extended to all Christians in Reading.

The Venerable Michael Hill, Archdeacon of Berkshire, who during Thames Valley Alive will also be Assistant Missioner in Caversham, prepared the members of synod for outreach through a major presentation on the topic. "Suppose God answers our prayers and a lot of people are influenced by the mission, then what kind of church do we need to be to encourage these people to be devoted disciples

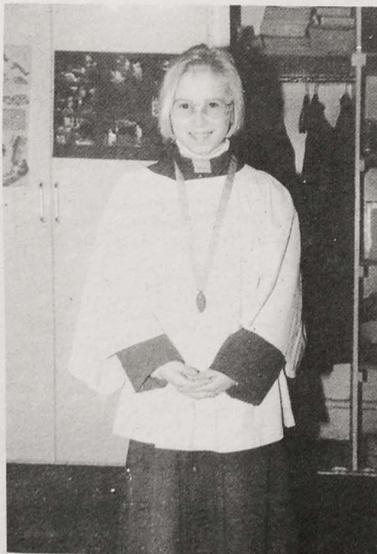
of Christ?" he asked. He then answered by elaborating on the six things the church needed to be:

- a church with mission as a priority item on the agenda (so often the battleground is given over to maintenance);
- a church that understands that all its members are missionaries;
- a church which relates what it does on Sunday with what its members do the other six days of the week;
- a church which perceives the incarnation model that God loves the world;
- a church which engages with the culture around us;
- a church which is prepared to take risks for the Kingdom.

He concluded that the church would appear shallow until it truly becomes a church that prays and recovers an authentic spirituality.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Liz Pannell, choirgirl at St. Peter's, for she has won a place at Wells Cathedral Choir School, which has just opened its ranks to girls.



E. S. Archer

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CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

During the Rev. David Moody's Sabbatical visiting preachers will lead services on the following dates:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 17th April | 11am Mr Andrew Bull, Local Preacher from Birmingham returning to his home church. |
| 24th April | 11am & 6.30pm Rev. Keith Sanders - Minister at Caversham Heights from 1986 to 1991. |
| 1st May | 11am & 6.30pm Rev. Mark Barrett who was at Caversham Heights as part of his training for the ministry and has now completed his training. |
| 15th May | 11am Mr Graham Kirby, Local Preacher from Kidlington, Oxford returning to his home church. |
| 5th June | 6.30pm Rev. Dr. Leslie Griffiths, President-Designate of the Methodist Church, Minister at Caversham Heights from 1974 to 1977. |
| 12th June | 11am & 6.30pm Rev. Terry Harris from Plymouth, Minister at Caversham Heights from 1969 to 1974. |
| 3rd July | 11am & 6.30pm Rev. John Stephens from London, formerly Superintendent of the Reading Methodist Circuit. |
| 10th July | 11am & 6.30pm Lord Len Murray will be speaking on behalf of the NCH Action for Children. |

AROUND THE CHURCHES

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)

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METHODIST

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Caversham Heights

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

ROMAN CATHOLIC (from 9th April)

St Anne's Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.30am and 6.30pm

Our Lady of Caversham 9.00am

St Martin's School 9.15am Mass

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass
(last Sunday of the month)

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CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS
METHODIST CHURCH

The next All Age Praise
service will be at 9.30am
on 17th April. Preacher Mrs
Viv Morrissey

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN
BERKSHIRE RECONSTITUTED

Our photograph shows the Rev David Hawkes, the new Chairman of Churches Together in Berkshire, with Bishop John Bone, the retiring Chairman, the Rev Philip Abrey from Caversham Park LEP and Chairman of Churches Together in Caversham, Mrs Margaret Dimmick, Chairperson of Churches Together in Reading, and Sister Janet Wilcox, the County Ecumenical Officer for Churches Together in Berkshire.



O. Jewiss

More than twenty years after attempts at church unity failed at national level it is now fully realised that it is at local level where churches are really working together and it is the voices of these local churches that need to be heard. Thus in mid-February Churches Together in Berkshire inaugurated its new constitution whereby its Council is now predominantly made up of representatives from the 26 local Churches Together and 11 Local Ecumenical Projects (LEPs) and Local Covenants throughout Berkshire, whereas before it mostly comprised denominational representatives. Thus for the first time the LEP at Caversham Park and Churches Together in both Caversham and Reading were represented in their own right. It also completed the transition from the former top-down British Council of Churches approach to the new Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland and Churches Together in England which encourage greater emphasis at local level and the contrasting bottom-up approach, a process which was only inaugurated in 1990.

The occasion in Trinity Church, Lower Earley, another LEP, also

saw the leadership change as the Bishop of Reading, the Right Revd John Bone, the retiring Chairman, handed over to the Rev David Hawkes, the new Chairman. In a Service to celebrate the occasion, the Rev Gordon Thomas, the Baptist Church Leader in Berkshire, likened the past and present chairmen to Moses and Joshua. So Churches Together in Berkshire should now be entering the promised land of ecumenism. During the Service the new Chairman was commissioned by a laying on of hands by the Church Leaders present.

Another sign of advance and maturity is the fact that for the first time in its history Churches Together in Berkshire, like its antecedents, is no longer led by a Church Leader but by one of its senior clergy. The Rev David Hawkes, who lives in Newbury, is the Methodist Circuit Superintendent for Newbury and Hungerford.

The activities of Churches Together in Berkshire and its constituent parts will be on view to anyone interested on the afternoon of Saturday, 23 April, at Wargrave Piggott School, when there will be displays from all the local Churches Together.

NOT HIBERNATING

The LINK GROUP has continued to meet throughout the winter months in the comfort of members' homes. Business meetings alternate with those addressed by speakers from local organisations. In September the members listened with interest to a talk on the work of ARMS (Action and Research into Multiple Sclerosis) based in Patrick Road, Caversham. In November the speaker was from HOMESTART - a charity orientated to visiting and counselling young families experiencing difficulties. In December the members, with due modesty, hope they brought pleasure to the elderly residents of both Summerfield and Goldendale Retirement Homes by visiting and singing carols. In January the meeting welcomed the Rev. Stephen Rowe who concluded the business session by celebrating House communion and in February it was the main fund raising event of the year - a sponsored 'Knit-in' - which was the attraction.

New members are always welcome and anyone seeking to know more about the LINK GROUP and its activities is invited to telephone either Pat Jenkins on 478502 or Sonia Higgs on 478981. Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month and ideally the Group would like to include representatives from ALL Churches in Caversham.

St. Andrew's Fellowship

As is customary during the months just after Christmas, the Fellowship looked to its own members to provide the evening's entertainment in January. The large gathering was transported to Norway for a display of slides by Bill Vincent who went there last summer.

The Black Prince cruise went as far as Archangel and north as far as Northcape, where there were many reindeer. The ship was the first cruise ship ever to visit Murmansk and, because of its size, it had to dock in the commercial docks which seemed to be at a complete standstill.

At the end of the programme three slides of the midnight sun taken by the late husband of one of the audience thirty years ago were shown, to her great delight.



Pamela Wing and Neil Asbury, married at St Peter's on 12th February.

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A VISIT TO No. 11

The Editors are indebted to Mr Phillip Bowcock for the following report which originally appeared in the Caversham Baptist Free Church's Magazine. Whilst it may appear 'dated' they feel that it has a delightful freshness which merits a wider readership. Toby is a handicapped teenager in the care of Mr Philip and Mrs Sheila Bowcock.

"No 11"? Well, there is only one well-known such number, and most of us will associate it with a red dispatch box and an expectation that next year we shall have even less to spend than last year.

Three weeks before Christmas Toby was invited to attend the 1993 Treasury Handicapped Children's Christmas Party at that address, which was given by the Chancellor. And so on 9th December a special car from Make-a-Wish arrived to take Toby and me to London. On arriving at the entrance to Downing Street we walked through the crowd of tourists gazing through the iron gates, and were greeted by several very friendly-looking policemen who happily waved us through. After a brief check by the organiser of the event we were free to walk the length of the street. Part-way down the street there is now a steel ramp which is normally raised to prevent a kamikaze attach by vehicle and this was duly lowered for us.

We walked past "No 10", and the reporters and camera crews who spend their days glued to the pavement opposite in case there is some item worthy of news comment, to the end of the short street, where the welcoming party was assembled. This included Aladdin and other members of his cast - some of whom were very scantily dressed on a very cold day - and Toby and other guests were photographed with them.

Inside No. 11 was another welcoming group including more members of the Aladdin team, Gladiators Scorpio and Saracen, The Nolans and Marcus Mole. The decor of this and all the rooms which we were allowed to see is very formal, panelled up to the ceiling in most cases, and walls are covered with photographs of politicians of years gone by and other items, such as a painting by Churchill of a woodland scene.

About thirty children had been nominated by one of four charities (Toby being nominated by Make-a-Wish) and included several who were profoundly

handicapped and in wheelchairs. Each was accompanied by one parent and in addition to the thirty parents and children there were in the region of one hundred benefactors who had made substantial donations to the charities concerned. It was thus a very large crowd in the main reception room which overlooks St James' Park and which even though large, was very full.

We were entertained by two musicians and several other well-known show-biz personalities who led us in Christmas songs etc. until tea-time. Mrs Major was also present - a very charming lady.

Tea for the children was in another ground-floor room but this was far too small for all the adults as well, so we were invited upstairs for refreshments to yet another palatial room with oak panelling, paintings of notable personages, and glass chandeliers. The staircase to the first floor has photographs of former chancellors and others; the second has Punch-style caricatures of politicians of the last century; and the last some cartoons which were very appropriate for a Chancellor!

After tea there was more entertainment with a visit by Mr Blobby and then, of course, Father Christmas assisted by Graham Bright MP. There are no prizes for guessing who was playing that part, and each child received a sack of very substantial "goodies" from him. Then it was time to go, but on the way out children received yet more presents, and had more photographs taken.

Security was very low key but nevertheless present. As we were waiting to go in, the Prime Minister's car arrived at No. 10. Two ladies walked over to it to get a better look and were told very sharply to go away. Inside there were men quietly standing in some of the doorways watching the crowd, and, although they could easily have been taken for visitors, it was clear to me that we were being supervised just in case.

This party is an annual event and in previous years has been for the benefit of a particular charity. This year they had decided to split it between the four charities, Make-a-Wish, MENCAP, the National Autistic Society and CLIC International. In addition to being fun for the children, it was obviously a fund-raising event, as I understood from one of the visitors that his firm had been invited to make a substantial donation, and in return an indication that if it was substantial enough, he would receive an invitation. At the end, each of the charities received a cheque for £1,500.

POSTBAG

Caversham W.I.

Dear Editors,
It was most useful to see in the February 'Caversham Bridge' the list of local groups and where they meet.

Unfortunately the top of the list Caversham W.I. meet on the third THURSDAY of the month at 7.30pm at Caversham Church House, NOT Tuesday as printed.

We were sad to read that Maplewood W.I. was closing and would like to extend a welcome to any of their members to join us at Caversham W.I.

Yours etc.
M. Cameron,
Caversham.

Willow Creek

Dear Editors,
Is the reason why 19,000 folk visit Willow Creek because there are nearly a dozen hedonistic attractions?

But WE should avoid enthusiasm over crowd-mesmerism... Only converts are the sacred targets of God's messengers (see John 6: v44).

Why search for fresh means of communications to carry the Gospel news, if its precious message is clouded - crowded by other thoughts already associated with said communications in the minds of all our contacts?

As always, our greatest

weapons are Prayer, and sensitive ears. I pledge this for all of you; your efforts, and all your contacts.

Sincerely yours, in His work.

Reginald H. Gostage
Caversham.

Golf

In his letter in your March issue, Mr Eyston expresses the hope that the golf course he proposes for Mapledurham "will receive even wider approval than at present."

I doubt it. There is now a growing awareness about the damage to the environment that golf courses bring about. Chemical pesticides, for example, are applied heavily on golf courses, to keep greens in peak condition. One study in America found that 7 to 9 times more pesticide is applied to golf courses than to agriculture.

The chief problem with this is that pesticides run off the land and find their way into watercourses. Heavy use of pesticides brings an increased risk that our water will be poisoned.

Pesticides can have a devastating effect on wildlife. Again a study in the United States has revealed many cases of birds being poisoned on golf courses.

These courses also demand considerable amounts of water to keep them in good condition.

In the dry summers that are bound to come, the courses will compete with households for water.

This is incidentally a world-wide problem, so much that a Global Anti-Golf Movement was launched last year. It called for an immediate moratorium on golf course development, and for an open and public environmental and social review of golf courses.

For our community there is also the matter of the rights of way which have been established over the land where the course is planned. Walkers beware - lethal golf balls could be flying over your path.

Ultimately the reason why "wide approval" for the idea is unlikely, is that people in Caversham and Mapledurham have never been asked for their views about alternative uses for the land. I believe there are alternatives - a country park, for example, with a wide range of facilities, including perhaps a pitch and putt course that could be used by all the family - instead of the comparatively few people from the area who would use a golf course.

It is surely not too late for a re-think, and for local people to be allowed a say over an important stretch of local land.

Yours sincerely,
John Madeley,
Caversham

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OBITUARY

JOHN STRATFORD

John Stratford, Churchwarden at St. Peter's, died on 4th February 1994. On Sunday, 6th, Canon Richard Kingsbury preached a sermon covering John's life and work for the church and on the following Sunday, all services were dedicated to John, culminating in a special evensong in his memory. Canon Kingsbury took the funeral service on 10th February and Canon John Grimwade gave the address as he had known John and all the family since their arrival in Caversham in 1960.

John was born in 1920 near Aylesbury and attended Aylesbury Grammar School. In 1936 he joined the Post Office there. In 1940 he was called up and enlisted in the Royal Signals, serving most of the war in the Middle East, mainly in Cyprus. In 1946, while waiting to be demobbed, he worked at the Royal Signals depot in Balmore House in Caversham. In Reading he met Beryl who was teaching at George Palmer School. They were married in September 1947 and went to live in a tiny cottage in Upton. John returned to Aylesbury Post Office. In about 1955 he moved to the Ministry of Agriculture where he worked as an Inspector of egg-packing stations throughout southern England. When Britain joined the Common Market his job took on new dimensions: he ran a number of training courses (at Harper Adams College) for egg inspectors. In the late 1970s he often had to travel to ports where French eggs were being imported, to make spot inspections, often in the middle of the night.

In 1983 he retired from the Civil Service.

John and Beryl (who sadly died 15 months earlier) and their three children joined St. Peter's on their arrival in Caversham. There they became staunch and regular members, John playing a major part in its worship and affairs. He joined the District Committee in 1972 and became Warden in 1981 until Caversham devolved into separate parishes and he became St. Peter's devoted Churchwarden, a position he held with dedication and authority. No job was too difficult and the church fabric was in the capablest of hands - and it showed. Church entertainments brought out a wry wit and he and Beryl wrote several amusing monologues which are well remembered with affection. His efforts towards the annual summer fete were tremendous and he made sure that all ran smoothly for the best result.

He kept an immaculate allotment, and being a meat and potatoes man himself, his neighbours did very well from the vegetables and fruit that he grew. He was a keen supporter of Reading Football Club and their position at the top of Division 2 gave him much satisfaction. He had artistic talents and was enjoying drawing again when he was so housebound.

Above all, John was a good friend and real neighbour in his own quiet way. He will be sadly missed.

"... and the trumpets sounded for him on the other side".

BINDY SHAYLOR

The following memory of Bindy has been sent to the Editors by Mr Norman Ellingham, O.B.E., of Cardinal Close, Caversham.

During the period 1952/62 we lived in the Westlands district of Nairobi and, as a family, regularly attended the Sunday service at the Children's Church of which Bindy was in charge and where he conducted the services. It was a unique church, of wooden construction, situated in garden-like surroundings and designed purely for children; the pews and furnishings were what might be termed as 'kindergarten' size - so an adult had to sit virtually with chin on knees. It was a well patronised church in our day.

Following the Sunday service, as a treat we adjourned to 'The Thorn Tree' an open air adjunct of The New Stanley Hotel for coffee and cream cakes. Thus, it might be said, satisfying both spiritual and secular needs! Happy Days indeed!

The year following the 'Wheelchair' effort (mentioned later) as you will see, Bindy again enlisted the help of the children, dishing out to each child the sum of 2/- with a request to each to 'put the money to work' during the forthcoming holidays to help the destitute and homeless children of Nairobi. We came home to the U.K. at the time, staying at my wife's old home in Emmer Green. Our younger son Jonathan, who was eight years old at the time, was a great supporter of Bindy's causes; he spent his 2/- on wool and, with the assistance of his Aunt Phyllis (Fisher), knitted dishcloths, which he sold at exorbitant prices to his other aunts and friends, and was able to remit £4 to Bindy's fund.

I have particularly fond memories of the Children's Church and Bindy; at the time I was Controller (Postal Services) of the E.A. P & T Administration and two of my staff and their families also attended the Sunday morning services; one George Ritchie played the harmonium and the other, Gordon Jackson, acted as 'Church Warden', handing out hymn books etc. So, in P & T circles the Children's Church was always referred to as the 'Postal Branch Church'. Like Bindy, George and Gordon have now passed on. May they all rest in peace.

The following is an excerpt from the East African Standard of July 20th 1962:

Children raise money for Wheel Chairs

A year ago, while working as a gardener in the Nairobi City Park, Nyaga Munyi fell from a tree and fractured his spine. Paralysed from the waist down, he knew that he would never be able to walk again and his work as a gardener had come to an abrupt end. But today, after spending almost a year in hospital, he is back at the City Park tending the plants in the nursery. He is there because of four people from entirely different walks of life - a physiotherapist, a minister of religion, a lawyer and an engineer.

A wheelchair was needed and one that would enable his legs to be straight and obviate the need for expensive calipers was designed by the Senior physiotherapist at the hospital. It was realised that chairs like this would help other people to get back to work, but where was the money to make them to come from?

The Hospital Chaplain and Minister at the Cathedral was able to help and raised £200 and so was Bindy who sought the cooperation of one hundred boys and girls attending the Children's Church by giving them 'talent money' which resulted within a few weeks in a total of £42. With the help of a local engineer the special chairs were able to be produced for £25 and two were presented at a ceremony after the morning service at the Children's Church.

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**Caversham
Heights TG**

The way local services are provided is likely shortly to change, which may mean more difficulty in gaining the ear of fewer councillors, on account of the creation of unitary authorities. Madeleine Hammond, a director of the Community Council for Berkshire, came along to Caversham Heights Townswomen's guild in February and mentioned that the Local Government Commission is accepting recommendations before its decision in May. There has been a recent meeting of 38 parish councils. There is sense in having unitary authorities, and her council could be working with just one authority. It is one of a network of independent charities which try to help in various ways, including developing community projects, campaigning for rural communities, and strengthening voluntary organisations. A survey of 60 villages with only one shop showed a proportion of these are in some kind of difficulty. Her organisation tries to help the village community to put money into the shop. She said local people are able to influence decisions and urged the guild to make its view known. The aim is that local government should reflect the identities and interests of local communities and be effective and convenient. Questions put included these: Are local government services responding to the needs of its people? How strongly do you feel you belong to either the borough or the county? Should there be closer links with other parts of Berkshire or not? There should be discussion. A vote of thanks was given by Mildred Hutchison. The travel talk given by Caroline Jones at

social studies embraced two trips. A beautiful chair from Kenya was on display and places visited included Kenya, Zanzibar, India, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, Manhattan, Guatemala and Mexico. All this was much enjoyed.

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The French group are continuing to enjoy their short stories. The Music group had their Convenor, Harry Harcourt to talk about music from France. The Books group had a biography of Paul Scott and then discussed aspects of his work. They will study this author for several meetings. A meeting at Arundel Lodge, heard John Woodcock talk on 'Psychological Types'.

The Playreaders so enjoyed 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' they are to proceed to more Shakespeare plays. The Travel group had talks on 'A visit to Carcassonne', South of France, by a U3A group, and 'The Munich Beer Festival'. The Discussion Group debated the offer by Saga to run their newspaper. This was further discussed at the Open meeting at the Kennet Room. The speaker there was Chris Boardman who gave an introduction to Homeopathy and Acupuncture. He pointed out that acupuncture sets out to balance all the electrical systems of the body, while homeopathy stimulates self healing and targets disease processes. While homeopathic medicines can be obtained at most chemists he was very insistent that expert advice should be taken about their use. New members are always welcome. Please contact

Membership Secretary
Mrs Grace McGregor,
tel. 866037.

**Rosehill
Emmer Green
Women's
Institute**

The two meetings in 1994 have been interesting and informative. On January 5th there was a speaker from Relate who told members about their work and answered questions. A number of knitted woollen squares were brought and were made into blankets for the premature babies' unit in the Royal Berks hospital.

In February the speaker was Major Paxton who gave a very enlightening account of his career at Huntley and Palmers.

There is a rambling section of Rosehill W.I. and afternoon Scrabble meetings and any new members would be welcome.

Please note meetings are in St Barnabas' Hall at 2pm not 7.30 as was mistakenly quoted in the Caversham Bridge.

**Caversham
Afternoon
Townswomen's
Guild**

A cheerful display of daffodils on the Chairman's table made a focal point as the February meeting began. Members were delighted by David White's slides of Harp seals and their mothers when he presented his collection 'Canadian Seals on Camera' to the Guild. He is official photographer for International Fund for Animal Welfare, travelling each year since 1986 to the icefields of the Gulf of St Lawrence, the culmination of twenty years' struggle by I.F.A.W. to stop the annual slaughter of these creatures valued for their beautiful pelts. A new tourist industry based on the Madeleine Islands in the Gulf has financially replaced the traditional seal hunt. David's pictures of holiday makers and visiting M.P.s and M.E.P.s making friends with the little pups have filled travel brochures and have

appeared in newspapers and magazines all over the world.

A further visit to Reading Museum has been arranged by Mrs G. Gale and Mrs E. Odey has booked a trip by coach to Winchester taking in a visit to the Silk Mill after lunch. Arts and Crafts, Scrabble afternoons and the Playreading Group are all reported to be flourishing. Three new members have been welcomed recently.

The competition for a 'Music Hall' hat was won by Mrs E. Hodgkinson, her feathered creation recalling the days of Marie Lloyd.

Meetings of the Guild take place every third Thursday in the month at 2pm in Church House, new members and visitors especially welcome.

**Caversham
Community
Association**

Members were welcomed back in the New Year with a cheese and wine evening. A talented singer, Ken Howes, kept everyone entertained with opportunities to

join in the popular songs. A selection of cheeses, crackers and a glass of wine or fruit juice completed a most enjoyable evening.

The following Monday Mr David White, a freelance press photographer, brought along his slides of Harp seals and their pups in Canada. He spoke of his work with the 'Sealwatch' programme of the I.F.A.W. and everyone agreed they were pleased the culls of past years had ended, and tourism was providing a living for the local people.

turn to page 11

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from page 10

A selection of unwanted presents and food items filled the table the following week for the bring and buy evening. Funds raised go towards the annual Birthday party.

The month ended with a friendly whist drive ably led by Doreen Crawley. The winners were Joyce Roddy, first prize, and Lee Hammond, booby prize.

Caversham Ladies Club

In the absence of Mrs Harwood, Chairman, who unfortunately is still indisposed, Mrs Brenda Strong again chaired the meeting, opening it with a warm welcome to members

and saying how good it was to see so many present. Members were told that May 26th (Thursday) was the date for their outing which was to be to Eastbourne, this venue having received most votes.

Mrs Cottrell was then introduced as the speaker for the afternoon; she is matron of the Sue Ryder Home at Nettlebed, this being the subject of the talk. Mrs Cottrell had brought along a lovely selection of photographs showing patients, nurses and all interesting aspects of the Home and its lovely surroundings. Lady Ryder, who is the widow of Group Captain Leonard Cheshire, is now seventy-one years of age but still works sixteen to eighteen hours a day and is as busy as if in her

twenty-first year. She is a life peeress and has taken the title of Lady Ryder of Warsaw in Poland. She has dedicated her life to suffering humanity, the homeless and other causes, and at the present time there are twenty-three Sue Ryder homes in this country, but there are also homes in Yugoslavia, Italy, Poland, Australia, Africa, all being served by volunteers. They are helped in very many ways by schools, bazaars, and even the London Marathon has three of their nurses complete with collecting boxes running in it. Mr Brian Williams over the years has raised the marvellous sum of £20,000.

They have twenty-one patients' beds, day patients, and also visit patients in their homes. Mrs Cottrell said it was far from being a sad, depressing home. There was a great sense of love and peace there and lots of colour in the surroundings. Their budget for the year ahead is £1.3 million which is going to need lots more volunteers. This was the view of all present at the Club.

Mrs Cottrell was warmly thanked for a very interesting and warm talk. Members showed their appreciation in the usual way, and the Sue Ryder collecting box was a lot heavier than at the beginning of the meeting. Members agreed it was a very interesting and eye-opening meeting.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

The Guild met in St Barnabas Hall on Tuesday evening February 8th.

Art and Crafts will have their next meeting in the evening which will include slides and talk on International Fashion on spun woollen garments.

Words & Music have decided to continue their meetings in the afternoon during the winter months and will have further discussions on Thomas Hardy.

Ramblers are still walking locally and one walk was cancelled because of the extremely wet and windy weather.

The charity chosen for 1994 by Guild members is to be "Guard Dogs for the Deaf".

The talk for the evening was given by Mr Hawthorne on "Horse Brasses". Apparently Horse Brasses were originally used like a talisman to keep away the evil eye as well as being decorative. They were also made in silver, gold and often encrusted with semi-precious stones as well. Small workshops which had previously made objects such as buckles, rings and various other small objects started to make Horse Brasses in 1845 as we know them today. Horse Brasses

were attached to horse harness also the horse face piece and extra brasses were added when the horses were taken to town to collect things for their farmers, similar to people "dressing-up" really. Food companies often had brasses which were made of nickel but which were still referred to as "brasses". Horse collars had very decorative brasses and breast straps could have one to eleven small brasses added to them.

Saddles had brasses on each corner. Rein hangers were decorated with lots of very small brasses. Mr Hawthorne explained to us all about the casting of these brasses and also a method called "stamping". He told us of collectors items some marked Edward 7th-George 5th-Queen Elizabeth and many other well known brasses. He also said to be careful if collecting brasses because there were many reproductions around.

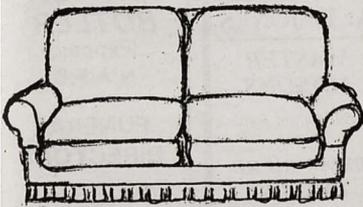
A Horse Brass Society was formed in 1975. Horses are still used to deliver beer in Devizes because it is a cheaper mode of transport for that area. They also still use horses in other parts such as Aberdeen to collect leaves.

Mr Hawthorne had brought along a fine collection of Horse Brasses to show us and there were many different types and sizes. Members had enjoyed listening to a small piece of history about Horse Brasses.

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WATCHDOG FROM P.5

One way in Prospect Street

On this occasion when Prospect Street, Westfield Road and part of Gosbrook Road became one way whilst Southern Gas dug up the not so long renewed surface, there has not been the pressure to make this a permanent feature. Although some speeding up of movement has resulted, it has also added to journeys, particularly west to east ones. While traffic has flowed faster in Westfield Road, it is very unsuitable for a residential road with an unfenced playing field along one side. We can therefore look forward to a return to normal when this very long operation is completed, normal that is except for Jackson's being missing. That had been there for as long as anyone could remember.

Bugs Bottom shares
A considerable number

of people indicated their willingness to purchase £1 shares in Higgs & Hill plc when that company was the sole developer in Bugs Bottom. It has however on this occasion proved very difficult to purchase single shares at a low enough brokerage fee to make it a practical proposition. It seems increasingly unlikely that it will become possible to do so in the future.

Very few people actually sent in their pound in advance, but if those who did would like it returned they should contact Jean Sawyer on Reading 472133.

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