

“JOSEPH” AT ST. ANDREW’S



— John Smith



— Norman Kent

The recent production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat was a triumph, not just for St. Andrew’s Church, but for the whole Christian community here in Caversham on whose behalf it was staged.

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The show was St. Andrew’s major contribution to “Thames Valley Alive-Good News ‘94”, taking place during this year. The aim of the initiative, known affectionately as T.V.A., was that individual churches should put on self financing events with the overall aim of mission, and for those same churches to support and enable a series of central events. We put our “shirt” on “Joseph” which began in October of last year and culminated with the performances which we had just before Holy Week.

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It started when Steve Barden, the one who subsequently came to produce the show, asked me whether we could put on a show which involved the youth of St. Andrew’s as part of our contribution to T.V.A. I offered to direct “Joseph”.

The show was ideal for our purpose, as it involved all ages. Soon we had formed a group to cater for the logistics, but we needed some experts, particularly in music. We were very lucky to obtain the ready participation of Ashleigh Floyd,

piano, David Sidwell, keyboard, my son Tim on guitar with his friend Richard on bass and the one who ultimately became musical director, Lorna Heyes. Eleanor Guy, who is only twelve, performed wonderfully with the percussion. We needed a voice trainer and Jeanne Montague performed miracles with an inexperienced Choir, Chorus, and Brothers.

□ □

We had a team, but what about the cast? By personal approach and a casting meeting we gathered a number of people who became a superb group of actors/singers. Chris Jeffs, who had neither acted or sung on the stage before not only made a hit in the title role, but appeared to know everyone else’s part as well!

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There were agonising times, and some changes in cast. I myself was able to shed my part as Potiphar to Seumus Munro so that I could concentrate on the direction. Leslie Maynard, who choreographed “Joseph” didn’t know until three weeks beforehand how many little girl dancers she was going to have. However, it all came together so well that the pain was quickly forgotten. We had a lovely Mrs Potiphar in Sheila Hodson, with our narrator Henry Pares expertly keeping us in touch with the story line. Bill Montague as Pharaoh also made a super Elvis. The

The Bishop of Reading with three of the successful prize winners of the colouring competition of ‘Joseph’ and his coat of many colours. Seen here are the Bishop, Rebecca Burton, Lucy Marsh and Hannah Jones. Another prizewinner, Amy Frost, was too unwell to attend. The competition was in connection with St Andrew’s presentation of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice’s production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

Brothers performed impressively and gave us just the right amount of anti-Josephness, and the Chorus sang on top line.

□ □

Due to copyright restrictions, all too few people saw the show, but those who did agreed that it was a very worthy performance and thoroughly enjoyed it. For ourselves, that is “of St. Andrew’s” it achieved its aims, first to provide an example of how it is possible for the worshipping community to work together outside the church environment, and secondly in terms of outreach into the wider community.

□ □

I should like to extend my thanks to all who took part and all who helped. I cannot list them all but they, and I, know who they are. It seemed to me that most of St. Andrew’s was involved at some time or another. I was only too glad to hand over on the “nights” to our Stage Manager, Norman Kent, and do my “Hitchcock” bit with my colleague from St. John’s, Stephen Rowe, in a twenty second appearance as Hairy Ishmaelites.

— Bill Carpenter

TALKING POINT

by

the Rev. Gordon W. Thomas
President of the
Berks Baptist Association

**WHIT-SUNDAY**

"The Forgotten Christian Festival?"

As we approach the end of May there is usually great excitement in many of our homes, especially those with children. "Spring Holiday" approaches and there is a welcome break from the rigours of school and families plan a week away.

A few years ago there would have been similar excitement but for a very different reason. Fifty days after the Festival of Easter, when we had joyously celebrated the Resurrection of our Lord from the dead, came Whit-Sunday, an equally great Festival of the Christian Church, when, as the disciples gathered in a spirit of prayer and expectancy, the Holy Spirit was given to them, and they became completely transformed men. Gone was their dread of the civic authorities, gone was their escape from the world as they hid behind locked doors and barred windows, gone was their state of loss and bereavement that their Lord was no longer with them bodily.

On this joyous occasion their lives were filled with love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control. In other words all the qualities that they had seen revealed in the life of their Master were now theirs. Immediately the world noticed the difference. We read that they took notice of them that "they had been with Jesus". They became Christ-like people.

But not only did their lives reveal the "Fruit of the Spirit"; they were empowered for Christian service as the same Spirit gave them gifts to fulfil their Christian calling. They discovered that God never calls people to do anything for Him without giving sufficient strength for the task. Their lives became powerful and effective in God's service as they sought to fulfil the Great Commission, and take the Good News of Jesus to every part of the world.

And so Whit-Sunday became a glorious Anniversary of that great event: children put on new clothes to celebrate the occasion, white dresses and white blouses and shorts became the order of the day, often the day was chosen for the Sunday-School Anniversary, a day of happy singing and joyous praise.

Sadly with the emphasis upon "Spring Holiday Week", and the national trend to live without God and to by-pass His Church, Whit-Sunday began to lose its meaning and significance.

The Holy Spirit became the forgotten factor in many lives and men and women ceased to pray that God's Holy Spirit would empower their lives and make them more like Jesus. Consequently many Christians became more and more conformed to the standards of the world and less conformed to the standards of Christ. The world could no longer see the difference and consequently more and more felt that Christianity was irrelevant to 20th Century Life.

This year Whit-Sunday falls on May 22nd. As we prepare for this great Christian Festival God help us to see our desperate need of God's Holy Spirit in our lives, that Christians will again become more like Jesus, so that the world may see the difference and want to know why our lives are so radiant, joyous and loving. Then in the mercy of God we shall rediscover God's standards in our nation and give the next generation a better foundation on which to build their personal lives and the life of our nation.

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
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
The Eucharist (with hymns)
6.30pm Evening Prayer
An up to date list of weekday Services will be found on the Church notice boards.

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 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 Church House —

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7.30pm. (last Sunday)

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VISITORS & VAGRANTS

'Dawn Chorus' is here again — Spring is in the air. An early-riser may readily identify individual members as they join the 'choir'. Likely tenors may be Blackbird, Robin, Mistle and Song Thrush, accompanied by the altoists — Chiffchaff, Blackcap and Wren, supported by the baritone-department of Col-lared Dove and Woodpigeon.

Bird-song is one of the best methods of identification, confusion between similar species such as Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff being instantly resolved if they sing. An ability to connect song with singer is a natural desire, and excellent cassette-tapes are now available for this purpose.

Migration has been slightly earlier this year with no 'blocking' bad weather over North Africa which so often holds back summer birds once they have perilously crossed the Sahara.

Blackbirds nested in my back-garden whilst Coal Tits were busy in an adjacent conifer, the vigilance of the cat population being surpassed only by the parent birds.

Sunday, March 13th (Mothers' Day) was personally memorable as I received a 'Birthday Gift' in the form of twenty Sand Martins above a Theale gravel-pit, comfortably early arrivals from tropical Africa. March again scored with exciting rarities, well covered by the media. A Black-faced Bunting which ought to have been in Burma, was a 'FIRST' for Britain at a Country Park near Manchester being still there a week into April. Many thousands of birds queued for three hours, due to admittance being rightfully limited to reasonable numbers at a time.

Shortly after, a Bufflehead duck from North America, (where else with a name like that?) arrived on the Trent at East Nottingham, being about the seventh record for Britain. What a double 'Mega-tick' they were for the 450 miles round trip from Caversham!

Nearer to home, a Cinamon Teal, another American duck, took up station on a small lake at Burghfield. This colourful 'Candidate for Captivity', although very shy when approached, will surely be eschewed by the Rarities Committee from becoming another 'glorious FIRST' for Britain, if only on grounds of being a 'probable escapee'. Meanwhile, it enhances the local scenery as summer migrants arrive to sing and nest about it.

Regrettably, once again the Blackcaps and occasional Chiffchaff which sang so beautifully within Hemdean House School grounds throughout March, have no doubt moved to less disturbed pastures, making the 'alto section' of our local 'Dawn Chorus' the poorer by their absence!

SCOPS OWL

S.O.S. - SAVE OUR SWANS!

Do you get pleasure from seeing the magnificent flock of swans gliding and flying around the River near Caversham Bridge? They are truly a sight to marvel at and a great joy to both residents and visitors alike, and yet these beautiful birds are at risk from many different sources. The registered Charity *Swan Lifeline*, entirely run by volunteers and represented in Caversham by Joan and Dennis Hammond, are receiving more and more injured, dying and dead swans at their new hospital and rehabilitation centre at Eton - and many of the casualties come from Caversham.

Since Christmas, Joan and Dennis, both now in their seventies, have been dealing with an average of 6 or 7 swans in trouble every week, and are finding it hard to cope. Apart from the continuing succession of birds ill from lead poisoning, pollution and viruses, injured by fishing hooks or entangled in discarded fishing line, there has been a recent spate of swans injured by vehicles on Caversham Bridge and attacked by dogs on the south bank of the River.

Swan Lifeline are desperate to hear from anyone who would like to become a volunteer swan rescuer. No qualifications are necessary - just a desire to help save injured swans - for many of them can be saved by prompt action and treatment. So, if you are available during the day to be called out, live within reasonable distance of Caversham Bridge, and feel you could handle sick or injured birds, (training will be given) then please do call Joan Hammond on Reading 481458 now!

NEW EDITOR

The Board welcomes Mrs. Marjorie Tillman, who has joined the editorial team. Her career includes teaching in special education, particularly to children in hospitals (Royal Berks and Battle). After she retired she worked as a proof reader at the B.B.C.'s Monitoring Centre in Caversham Park for 21 months. Latterly she accompanied her husband (who taught at Kendrick School before he retired) to Botswana where they both taught full time at a senior secondary school. Marjorie sent back reports which this paper was happy to publish. Now, firmly settled back in Caversham, it is a pleasure to have such a lively mind on the paper's team.

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

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All contributions for June issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 4 May.

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

The dates for July will be Tuesday 31 May and Wednesday 1 June.

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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LOCAL FOSTER HOMES NEEDED

In International Year of the Family, spare a thought for children who are unable to stay with their own parents but who need substitute family care, says local family placement worker Viv Morrissey. Children need foster care for a variety of reasons. It may be that mum is in hospital for a short while and there is no one else in the family able to look after them. Or it may be that a family is experiencing longer term difficulties in coping with stress. In most cases the hope is to reunite families together after a lot of careful work, and how rewarding it is for foster carers to play their part in that process.

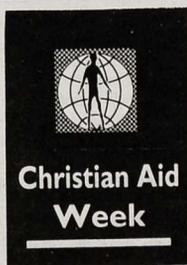
The Caversham and Emmer Green area has "only a smattering" of foster carers, and more are needed because at the moment some local children have to go to foster home placements away from their own familiar territory. When children or young people come to be looked after by the Local Authority at a time of crisis in their lives, it is so important for them to be able to stay at the same school, keep up with their scouts or brownies or youth club, and stay in touch with their local networks of friends. Sadly, too many Reading children have to be placed out of the town because there aren't enough local resources to match the need.

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Viv is one of a team of social workers based at Abbey Mill House, Abbey Square, the HQ of Social Services in Reading, who recruit, train and support foster carers for the Reading area. The team reports a particular need for carers for teenagers and for groups of brothers and sisters together. Sometimes, trying to find families for individual children poses an even greater challenge. Viv is currently looking in this area for some very special carers for a teenager recovering from a mental illness. They would need to be very supportive, with a youthful outlook, and preferably some knowledge or experience of mental ill health to be able to provide the understanding needed. Also church-going "Jason" (aged 11) wants a Christian family with whom he can live for the next few years — special people who can help him to keep in contact with his mum in Reading. He will be moving up to secondary school this September and it would be good to be able to choose a school for him according to his future home base.

Foster carers come from all walks of life and include single people as well as couples, younger and older people, employed and unemployed. What matters most is that they like children and young people, are flexible, sensitive and caring in their approach, and able to work together with the social services department and with the children's parents. The department pays foster care allowances which are non-taxable and do not affect benefits. Foster carers receive the regular support of their own "link" worker from the team, as well as training and support groups with other carers.

If you would like to find out more about fostering generally, contact the Family Placement Team Duty Officer on Reading 393909 or, if you may be able to help the specific young people mentioned here, ask for Viv Morrissey on extension 2222. (Royal County of Berkshire Social Services Department).



Christian Aid Week is from 16th-21st May. Last year the Street Collection produced \$5630 — a small increase on the 1992 figure. Other donations and events brought the total for Caversham & Mapledurham to \$6118 — almost the same as 1992.

The annual Christian Aid Service will be on the 15th May at 6.30pm at St. John's, Gosbrook Road. The speaker will be Mr. Kevin McCullough from Christian Aid Headquarters. All are invited to this united service.

The Christian Aid Walk will be on 21st May at Henley as in previous years. This year, however, the distances will be 7 miles, 13 miles and 20 miles, and in the reverse direction to that taken in previous years. This will give better views and very little walking on tarmac.

Last year 50 walkers from the Caversham area raised \$1867, nearly double the 1992 figure. In total the Walk raised \$15800 from 375 walkers.

If you would like to take part this year please contact your church representative or the Caversham Walk Secretary Keith Stephen-Evans (473619).

THAMES VALLEY ALIVE — "JOSEPH" SETS THE PACE!

St. Andrew's Church stunning production of Joseph & His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat (reported elsewhere in this issue), set the TVA ball rolling in fine style, with sell out performances and rave reviews from all who went. God's gift of music was also the vehicle for spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ in two other TVA Events in Caversham. Alison Wood from St. Margaret's Church masterminded a stirring "from scratch" performance of Stainer's Crucifixion and the Rev. Elizabeth Brazell, with a group of musicians & singers from different churches, led a good congregation in Graham Kendrick's Easter Musical, Make Way For The Cross, at St. John's Church on Easter Sunday Evening.

The action continues in May with a week of activities centred on and around St. Barnabas Church in Emmer Green — "St. Barnabas Alive". The week, from 15th-22nd May, is primarily, but not solely, targeted at those who count themselves part of the St. Barnabas family, and the aim is to increase faith and the ability to share the Faith with others. The Rev. Nigel Hardcastle and his Church workers will be joined by a strong team from St. Aldates Church in Oxford and the programme

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looks both varied and exciting. Highlights are the Family Service on 15th May followed by a barbecue lunch and youth events later in the day; a Barn Dance and Cabaret evening of the 21st May and a Final Service and youth event on the 22nd.

As St. Barnabas Alive reaches its climax, **Gosbrook Road Methodist Church** join the TVA action with a **Flower Festival from May 20th-22nd**, on the theme of **The Christian Year**. All will be welcome to visit the Church during this period and perhaps remind themselves not only of the beauty and variety of God's Creation, but also of the Christian Festivals and their relevance to our lives today.

TVA is well and truly under way and we continue to pray that throughout this year, many people will hear the Good News and turn to Christ.



Christian Aid Week



Wipe out Poverty is a new fundraising action for young people during Christian Aid Week. It's all about coming up with the most unusual washing ideas to clean up as much dosh as you can. Get someone to sponsor you for the number of things you clean, or for how long the job takes, or to beat a challenge.

The money you collect will help people like Zalissa, aged 7, who works in the fields with her mother. She's lucky — unlike many girls of her age in Burkina Faso, West Africa, she only works part-time.

Thanks to the Wend Yam green beans project, Zalissa's family now grows green beans

Wipe Out Poverty

Whether it's ... cars, coffee bars, windows, shoes, church pews, loos, statues, emus ... get wiping!

Wipe out Poverty is a new fundraising action for young

for export to Europe. Her father says "Life has definitely changed. It's getting easier". Now Zalissa can go to school.

Christian Aid supports the Wend Yam project. £12 could provide a farmer with enough seeds to make £160 profit from a harvest.

Want to Wipe out Poverty? Just register with Christian Aid and we'll send you a free fundraising kit with washing ideas, sponsorship forms, Wipe Out Poverty cloths and stickers and a group leader's Activity Programme. There's enough in each kit for 10 people.

Please contact Kevin or Neil at Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London, SE1 7RT (tel 071-620 4444).

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TALKING POINT

by

the Rev. Gordon W. Thomas
President of the
Berks Baptist Association

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

GRAVEL HILL TO BE SACRIFICED

The Public Inquiry Inspector and Nicholas Ridley, the then unpopular Secretary of State for the Environment, could not have failed to be aware that there would be an angry and hostile reaction to their granting permission for 500 houses to be built in Bugs Bottom. To soften the blow a little, they said access should only be permitted from Kidmore Road and Tredegar Road and not from Gravel Hill or Hemdean Road.

At least local people could console themselves that Gravel Hill, that ancient hollow way, trodden down by the passage of countless generations and the only one of its kind in the Borough of Reading, would remain as it was and that in the height of summer the leaves on the trees and hedges would conceal much of the ravage of Bugs Bottom. Instead, we suddenly find permission has been given for houses in what was originally phase 7 of the development to have access on to Gravel Hill.

What's more, in order to make it easier to drive in and out, a hundred and eighty yards of the bank and hedge, one of the characteristics of a hollow way, will be removed and several trees, including three splendid two hundred year old oaks in a very healthy state, will be felled. Some road markings and street lighting will complete the change to suburbia from a country lane. How did the Planning Committee come to make such a wrong headed decision? Everyone knows that

planning permission goes with the site and remains even when ownership changes. This has happened in Bugs Bottom, where Higgs and Hill, the original purchasers, have sold off various sections to anyone they could persuade to buy them.

Early on, Higgs and Hill decided they did not wish to proceed with Phase 7, and excluded it from their development plans. However, they later sold it, as a separate site and not as part of their Shipnell's Farm development, which is what they always call Bugs Bottom. So the buyers had no problem in getting planning permission for their different number of houses as the site already had outline permission. They then applied for access on to Gravel Hill and the Planning Committee meekly granted them permission, apparently on the grounds that if they refused the developer would simply go to Appeal, win, and come on the council for costs and compensation. What takes precedence? A ruling from the Secretary of State or a developer's convenience? Why so sure that an appeal would be successful, and even if it were, why would costs be claimed as if it were a frivolous decision? Surely that is the kind of case that is a legitimate subject for appeal.

The Planning Committee fought long and hard alongside residents and objectors to save Bugs Bottom, only capitulating when they were forced to in a way that did no credit to Higgs and Hill. Since then they seem to have lost all their resistance. Time and again Higgs and Hill or one of the other firms working in the valley flout the conditions of planning permission and get away with it. Now one of the firms only has to ask for the Secretary of State's condition to be lifted and it is granted.

No wonder indignation is running high. No wonder people feel betrayed. Bugs Bottom stands as a memorial to the greed of the eighties, and despoliation of Gravel Hill will forever commemorate inept and feeble planning.

GOLF COURSE GOES TO HIGH COURT

South Oxfordshire District Council is to challenge the Appeal Inspector's decision to grant planning permission for the Mapledurham double golf course. Challenges of this nature cannot be made on planning grounds, one of the stumbling blocks in the way of the Bugs Bottom objectors, but only on legal points. The District Council's case will be that the Inspector placed undue weight on the evidence of the Mapledurham Estate, without allowing it to be the subject of cross examination, and that therefore the decision is flawed. The Council must feel pretty confident of its case to risk money on High Court action and the decision to take this step will prevent any work starting until the case is concluded, and then of course it will be dependent on the result.

Meanwhile an advertisement appeared in the national press offering a ninety nine year lease on a site at Reading adjacent to farmland and beside the Thames which has full planning permission for a medical rehabilitation centre.

No prizes for recognising where this is. The advertisement goes on to suggest that alternative suitable uses could include a nursing home, hospice or residential care centre, and more worryingly, a conference and leisure use, or in combination with an adjacent thirty six hole golf course.

Whilst the former proposals have much in common with the already permitted medical centre and would attract much the same kind of traffic, the latter proposals would attract a different kind, and almost certainly an increase, of traffic. As for 'adjacent', by car, the golf course is far from Chazey Court. It looks as if Mapledurham Estate's troubles are not over yet.

BUS LANE

The controversial bus lane in Church Street is also still in trouble. There had been suggestions that a ban on right

hand turns from Priory Avenue was being considered, when suddenly a public notice appeared announcing it was coming into force within days. No nonsense of public consultation here. Actually it did not happen at once, as the advance notices were not in place, but it was not much longer before large yellow notices appeared all over Caversham warning that it applied.

Even in normal circumstances, it would have meant long detours, bringing traffic and pollution to more streets, but with the partial closure of Prospect Street still operating it meant a ridiculously long detour. Did those who agreed to this proposal have any idea what it actually involved? If they were prepared to accept these difficulties, at least they should have postponed putting the order into effect until Prospect Street was re-opened. By coincidence, just as the ban came into effect the road works in Prospect Street reached a crucial stage where they were causing long tail-backs right into Reading, which did nothing to improve people's tempers.

How could all these notices, all these longer journeys and all the extra pollution, possibly be justified on the grounds of taking thirty seconds off bus journeys into Reading. By the widespread hostility it has caused this crass action could put back any steps to give buses an advantage over cars, which is a great pity as car drivers are starting to come round to the idea that they cannot always have it their own way.

ANNUAL MEETING

Caversham and District Residents' Association reported an active year at its annual meeting, with funds in a sufficiently healthy state to be able to make worthwhile donations to Swan Lifeline and Feed the Children, both charities with local connections. The latter donations came from auctioning a water colour of Bugs Bottom, as it was, not as it is, which Bill Vincent bought.

After the business

part of the meeting, Therese Lawlor, of the Borough Council, explained the options available for the forthcoming local government changes. Berkshire favours unitary authorities, but there is some dispute over boundaries. Wokingham appears not to want anything on offer and in other fringe areas the thought of free bus passes for the retired seems outweighed by the prospect of a higher charge on the community.

There was some talk of a parish council for Caversham. It was an interesting idea but would require dedicated people to run it. It wouldn't run itself.

THE CRUCIBLE

'This time they really have bitten off more than they can chew' was the reaction on hearing that Hemdean House Drama Club were proposing to put on *The Crucible* for their annual production. How could an all girls cast, with no one over the age of sixteen, and many considerably younger, cope with this play dealing with emotions and situations far beyond their experience?

Yet in spite of these problems the full horror of Arthur Miller's powerful play came over. It tells of a whole community caught up in a wave of hysterical fear in which wild accusations were believed by those with entrenched attitudes and good people were hanged on suspicions that never should have, but nevertheless did, stand up in a court of law. These young actresses conveyed the distress, disbelief at what was happening to them and sense of helplessness of the victims. Abigail maintained throughout the coldly calculated intent which enabled her to manipulate the gullible in her search for vengeance. Tituba lived the part of the slave girl dragged into a situation not of her making, and few could have failed to be moved by the final scene which brought the Proctors together for the last time.

Nancy Quinell, the director, is to be congratulated for all the hard work that must have gone into making this bold choice a venture that came off.

Save the Children

Seventy-five years ago on May 19th 1919, the charity "Save the Children" was formed by a true Christian, Eglantyne Jebb. It was the appalling plight of the starving Austrian children, victims of the blockade during the first World War which prompted her to start up this movement. From this early beginning, "Save the Children Fund" has expanded and now works in one hundred and thirty countries all over the world, including the United Kingdom.

Seventy-five years on, the work of the movement is even more vital for children in Bosnia, Somalia, Bangladesh, everywhere where disasters, both man-made and natural, have struck.

Our aim in this, our seventy-fifth year, is to raise an extra £20 million, and to do this, we need the help of everyone. Our regular source of income comes from our shops. In order to raise money, we must have a steady supply of donated goods for sale. We are not asking for money, though naturally we would happily accept any offered. We are asking for good quality clothing, bric-a-brac, books, toys, jigsaws, household linen. We are asking you to give us things for which you no longer have a use. These may be taken to the shop at 260 Oxford Road between 10am and 4pm. If that is not convenient, you could bring it to me at 109 Peppard Road — the part that runs along behind Buckingham Drive.

Help "Save the Children Fund" save the children and bring smiles to the faces of those living in desperate conditions.

Another Pile-up on St. Peter's Hill

A quiet Wednesday afternoon. A juggernaut driver mis-judges the incline of the bend and slams into a car waiting in the inevitable queue. Six vehicles are shunted, three badly damaged, possibly written off. Motor insurance premiums rise to compensate for the authorities' inertia on diverting heavy traffic from this road. Luckily nobody was badly injured this time. Meanwhile, pedestrians and cyclists risk their lives on the narrow pavements until a northern by-pass is built.

HELP!!

ST ANDREW'S BROWNIES are desperate for a new Brown Owl to take over the Pack in September. The Brownies meet on Fridays in St. Andrew's Church Hall 5.45-7pm. If anyone — or better still, any two people — feel they could take on this most rewarding activity please contact the present Brown Owl, Vanessa Hine, Tel. 661998 or Margaret Pearson at St Peter's, Tel. 473913. Please think hard about this, and pray that someone will come forward. We do not want to lose the Brownie Pack.

ADVANCE NOTICE

St. Peter's and St. Margaret's

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Saturday 2nd July 1994

at 2pm

FEED THE CHILDREN



TAKING THE AID DIRECT

THAMES VALLEY APPEAL FOR FOOD FOR BOSNIA

On 10th March 1994 Reading based humanitarian aid agency Feed the Children (Europe) launched an urgent appeal to get desperately needed food and toiletries for the suffering children in central Bosnia.

In central Bosnia FTC is the only organisation regularly distributing food for babies and infants. As a result the lives of thirty eight thousand children depend on the charity's ability to continue reaching them with more supplies.

David Grubb, Executive Director, Feed the Children, said "In spite of the ever present danger and difficulties, every week our teams deliver one hundred per cent of the donated aid direct to children and their carers. Many more could benefit but to achieve this we need more support from the people in Britain.

If only a cease-fire could be made to stick, we could get more aid through to more places. The UNCHR is encouraging us to increase the volume of aid we supply and in recent months we have doubled the amount. We are now sending three twenty-ton truckloads every week but it's just not enough. Given more support from the public we can deliver the desperately needed aid. Our target is at least an extra lorry per week" he said.

According to official sources about sixty-eight thousand people are encircled in the area of Vitez, the town that serves as the forward supply base for FTC's aid supply operation in the war zone. Refugees are living in freezing conditions in temporary homes, or what remains of their houses after shelling. They rely on donated aid. Houses are without heating, light or proper shelter.

"The situation is getting worse. There is now a desperate need and we are asking the public, companies and food retailers, for donations of tinned food, packet soups, rice, pasta, plain flour, sugar and dried milk and toiletries. We also need blankets and, of course, money to pay for the transport" said Mr Grubb.

Collection centres in 60 Northbrook Street, Newbury and 82 Caversham Road, at the junction of Vastern Road, are open during office hours, five days a week.

Founded in July 1990, Feed the Children is a UK registered charity mainly concerned with taking primary aid direct to children in distress. Since its formation, Feed the Children has delivered over £14.6 million worth of aid to the Kurdish refugees, to Bangladesh, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Croatia and Bosnia. FTC occupies a thirty-five thousand square feet aid supply base in Reading.



Catharine Harris, Eagle Owl of St. Peter's Brownies, is happily surprised by a Brownie guard of honour after her marriage to Ian Sharman on April 9th.

ST. ANNE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

The St Anne's school teams have been having another successful season. The football team was recently very unlucky to lose in the cup to The Hill on penalties, but they have been doing very well in the league. The most successful teams, however, have been the revitalised netball teams, who have been taking on all comers, and only lost two of their eighteen games played so far. Congratulations to them and to Mrs Hardiman and Mrs Jarvis, two of the St Anne's teachers who so ably look after the teams.

The school held a very successful 'Lenten Charity Day' on March 24th. The children paid to wear their ordinary clothes rather than school uniform on the day. They bounced on a 'bouncy castle' and enjoyed a bring and buy sale in the afternoon. Over £350 was raised, which will be shared between the Father Hudson Homes appeal, which is the Children's Society for the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and St Anne's Parish in Agadir, Morocco.

Their next event is an indoor 'car boot sale' to be held in the hall in Washington Road on Saturday 30th April. They will then be staging a Fashion Evening to be held on May 10th, again in the hall.

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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

Easter in Caversham

Perhaps not much fun this year with the weather so bad, but it gave one an opportunity to drive around a bit and see some other parts of the village. Particularly I welcomed the chance to go up to Emmer Green and was literally stunned at the beautiful display of daffodils, especially on the Evesham Road turn-off. I don't know who is responsible for all this but whoever it was should be congratulated. It was really beautiful.

Little Lambs

A couple of years ago I recommended a visit to the lambing at Ipsden Farm for this event and this year I was very pleased to hear that the takings were on behalf of the Multiple Sclerosis Centre in Patrick Road; I believe that something like £2,500 was handed over to them. It really is a delightful event and is, I believe, thrown open most years on behalf of some charity or other. Anyone with young children certainly shouldn't miss this opportunity.

Local Shops

As recently as last month I appealed for people in other parts of Caversham to let us

know about the shops in their area, so I was particularly pleased to get a call from Mr. Hazell to say that his son, Roland, and a friend, Mike Butlin, both of whom have worked for many years at Jennings in Emmer Green, were taking over the shop. Alas, the Jennings family, so long a name to conjure with in this area, are having to give up some of their businesses. But it is good to know that at least one shop will be in very capable hands and will continue to give as good service as ever. They will now be known as "Cavendish Meats" but that's about the only thing which will alter as the young people intend to continue with their existing suppliers both now and particularly at Christmas, thereby ensuring the quality of the meat they sell. They look forward to serving the needs of both old and new customers and we wish them every success in their venture. We'll be glad to have any more such news in future.

Dale Care Services

Some of you will be familiar with the two residential homes, Goldendale in Kidmore Road and Silverdale in Addington Road, Reading, so we were interested to hear from Maureen Schwartz, Director of Dale Care Services, that they are now branching out into a new venture - home care. No doubt some of you will have read about it in the local paper. Many elderly people dislike the thought of moving from familiar surroundings yet need a certain amount of care and, appreciating

that not everyone wants or needs the 24 hour service offered by residential homes, Maureen is aiming to fulfil this need. She and her fully trained staff, working with other care agencies, plan to provide, as they say, the best possible plan for each individual situation. There is not room here to list all they are prepared to do but they range from things like bathing, house and garden maintenance, accompanying on journeys (doctors, dentists, opticians etc.) to providing access to a 24 hour monitoring centre, approved by Age Concern. At the moment it is expected that the charges will be approximately £6.85 an hour but it could be just what somebody needs now that the NHS and Social Security cannot afford to provide many of the services they did in the past.

Further information can be obtained from contacting Maureen on 0734 660001 or at Goldendale Retirement Home, 2 Kidmore Road, Caversham. As Maureen says, Dale Care Services staff will not be sent to visit clients until she is entirely satisfied that they can perform to the exacting standards in her own retirement homes.

We shall be interested to know how the service progresses for, as far as we know, it is the first of its kind in this district.

A New Caversham

As we go to press, much interest is being shown in the suggestions by our local architect, Michael Burnet-Smith, for a possible permanent alteration in traffic

arrangements in the Prospect Street area. All this, of course, has come about by the necessary one-way system being operated while new gas pipes are being laid. If you haven't already seen his plans, diagrams etc., I believe the Fondue Pot carries copies in their window and, for those who haven't seen them, they are worth investigating. Personally, I'm not at all sure about a permanent one-way system but, judging by letters in the local press, there is obviously much interest, both for and against, so it is worth looking into.

The idea of taking tea or sitting chatting outside the shops in Prospect Street is an engaging one but just now we have bigger problems to cope with and, until we get the final decision about the Reading Structure Plan as it affects Caversham, we can scarcely do more than consider the possibilities. I'm very much afraid that if the developers get their way there won't be many small shops in Caversham to sit outside. But who knows, maybe this time - and current Government seems to be going this way - the value of small 'villages' like Caversham may over-ride the greed of large developers to make lots of cash, whether we need them or not.

We could do with one or two smaller shops. I never thought I'd miss Jacksons so much, particularly as I seldom have occasion to purchase knitting wool for instance, but where in Caversham can I now buy a reel of silk or a yard of elastic

without going into Reading every time I need such a small purchase. Many regret the loss of the colourful window displays that brightened a trudge up Prospect Street.

Old Friends

It is a pity that we obviously do tend to lose touch with old friends as they move away, but may I say how delighted I was to hear that Jo Stevinson, still remembered with much affection in parts of Caversham, is among those ladies to be ordained on 23rd April at Coventry Cathedral. I'm sure many of us will be thinking about her.

And please, please, continue to let us have news of old friends. Older residents love to hear about people they once knew.

Worthy of acknowledgement

Some time ago I mentioned a local milkman who does yeoman service in this area keeping in touch with old people and passing on news. Well now I really would like to be allowed to mention our postman who has served us well for many years now. Alas, we do tend to take so much for granted and it was only when, recently, he was off work for a short time and replaced by a temporary postman, that some of us realised just how much we owe him. Perhaps we don't know a lot about him - a postman's life is too busy to allow for much daily chat but he's a lovely man who plays bowls in his spare time and is very much part of our community. We hope he will continue to serve us for a long while.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

ST. ANDREW'S 'TIDDLERS'



— Norman Kent

Under Fives (called, appropriately 'Tiddlers' in a Church dedicated to St Andrew the Fisherman!) are seen here, gathered near the font, accompanied by parents, nannies and willing helpers from the Mothers' Union. 'Tiddlers', now in its third year, provides an opportunity for children to feel at home in Church, to receive some very simple Christian teaching and to join noisily (with percussion instruments) in well-known hymns. Adults have a chance to meet and chat over a cup of tea afterwards.

Newcomers are always most welcome any Friday afternoon in term time at 2pm.

St Andrew's Fellowship

A large number met on 10th March in anticipation of the talk with slides given by Miss Gwen Gardiner and her friend about a trip they had taken to Bokhara. They had visited the old Silk Route and had also been to Petra, which all

seemed very romantic and desirable on a cold March evening in Caversham.

Fellowship members always enjoy seeing slides in the winter months, particularly travel ones.

3RD READING (ST PETER'S) BEAVER COLONY



— D. J. Pearson

From left to right, Simon West, Andrew Pearson, Ben Hedley-Lewis, Revd Richard Kingsbury.

Beavers Andrew Pearson, Simon West and Ben Hedley-Lewis of the 3rd Reading (St Peter's) Beaver Colony formed the first Beaver colour party to attend Parade Sunday at St Peter's Church, when their new flag was dedicated by the Revd Richard Kingsbury last December at the annual Toy service.

THE FRIENDS OF GUIDING, CAVERSHAM WEST — DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The Brownies' Sports Day has been booked for Tuesday 17th May from 6.00pm-7.30pm at Caversham Primary School.

Please also support the SUMMER FAIR to be held on 25th June in St Peter's Rectory garden 3.00pm-5.00pm. If wet the fair will be held in Church House.

All parents and friends interested in the Guide movement are welcome.

M.U.-CHRISTIAN CONCERN FOR FAMILIES WORLDWIDE

Those members of the Mothers' Union who were able to attend the conference on Saturday 19th March at St. Peter's Earley found it a stimulating and rewarding experience. The programme, entitled "The Way Forward", was designed to give members a vision of the future of the M.U.

The main speaker was the Central President, Mrs Pat Harris who during her term of office has travelled all over the world visiting the many branches where the M.U. is at work. She gave a most inspiring address reminding members that the M.U. is a "movement" not an "institution" and, as such, must be prepared to face up to the exciting challenges and inevitable conflict brought about by change, as it seeks to move forward into the next century and implement its concern for families worldwide.

Part of the day was given up to workshops which engendered much stimulating discussion and led on to so many questions that time ran out before they could all be answered.

The proceedings culminated in a Eucharist celebrated in St. Peter's Church by the Bishop of Reading, the Right Reverend John Bone, assisted by the recently appointed vicar, the Reverend Derek Spears. It was good to see Derek again and to hear that he is settling down in his new parish.

Individual members who attended the conference will be reporting back to their branches in more detail and there will be an article on the work of the M.U. in a future edition of the Caversham Bridge.

On march the 25th, Lady Day, the members of the St. John's M.U. welcomed members from the other branches in Caversham and Mapledurham to a special service.

The Reverend Stephen Rowe and the Reverend Bill Carpenter were joined by the Reverend Hilary Platts, Assistant Chaplain of Reading University, who gave the address. Speaking on the theme of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in whose honour Lady Day is named, she reminded us that if, like Mary, we have the strength to continue when we are least in control of our destiny we remain true to ourselves and open to the will of God.

After the service refreshments were provided which gave those present an opportunity to chat and to meet Hilary and her baby son. Hilary, like the Reverend Christine Allsopp, recently curate of St. Peter's Caversham, is preparing for Ordination on the 17th April.

M.T.

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 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.

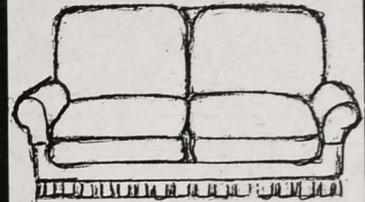
UNITED REFORMED
The Rev David Clark, 41 Highmoor Road. Tel: 471909.

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL
The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.
The Rev Michael Holmes, 13 Carlton Road. Tel: 474138.

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The Rev Thomas Meagher, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel: 471787.
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AROUND THE CHURCHES

FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S CENTRE



D. Jewiss

Our picture shows some of the Management Committee and key helpers. From left to right are Deaconess Margaret Robinson (a counsellor from West Reading and Oxford Road Methodist Churches), The Revd Tom Stuckey (President of the Centre and Methodist Circuit Superintendent), Constance Gooding (Director of the Centre, West Reading Methodist), Sheila Goldsmith (Chairman of the Management Committee, Caversham Baptist Free Church), Margaret Stedeford (teaches cross-stitch and gives prayer back-up, Wesley Methodist) and Loues Mitchell (teaches dressmaking, New Testament Church of God).

More than one hundred people gathered in Wesley Methodist Church towards the end of March in Celebration and Thanksgiving on the first anniversary of the opening of the Churches in Reading Women's Centre. Mrs Sheila Goldsmith, Chairman of the Management Committee, presided over the day which took the form of a service in the church and an opportunity to view the work of the Centre over a buffet lunch in the Hall. In his address the Revd Tom Stuckey, President of the Women's Centre, used the example of the courage and the care of Mary Magdalen in anointing Jesus just before his betrayal and passion and likened this to the courage and care of the Centre, which is a light in a dark place where the fragrance of the actions of love needed to be savoured, to be proclaimed to the whole world. "The Centre", he said, "is good news."

What does the Centre do?

It was Constance Gooding, Director of the Centre and founder of the Churches in Reading Drop-in Centre, who originally had the vision for this venture: a Centre where women who are lonely, unsupported and vulnerable could come and feel secure, be able to make new friends and enjoy a wide range of activities. In her report Constance Gooding told of the great number of women in Reading who are at home, who are lonely, rootless, who are nursing mothers, the long term unemployed and those who have been released from care. She informed us that the Centre offers a space for those not in a state of well-being to explore their potential, a space for these women to be empowered and encouraged back to a proper state of health.

The partners, as those using the Centre are known and who are accepted without questions being asked, have help given if they are prepared to risk taking a helping hand. The Centre allows its partners to develop self-help, builds self-esteem and confidence, encourages assertiveness, offers counselling for the abused and re-socialisation for people previously stuck at home as carers; it offers life and career development, training in literacy, budgeting, parenting, dressmaking, among other skills.

Future goals

In setting the goals for the future of the Centre, Constance Gooding saw it reaching out alongside those giving family aid and the Social Services. She saw the need for pre-service training for new leaders, the opportunities to have salaried staff, the need to develop and increase the Generation of Skills Unit, the need to teach, and encourage the partners and for the work of the Centre to be marketed so that it is widely known. The Centre operates in the Wesley Methodist Church Hall in Queens Road between 10 am and 5 pm each Tuesday and Wednesday.

Side by side with Social Services

In a contribution to the celebration from the Assistant Director of the Berkshire Social Services, Margaret Sheather spoke about making the most of the partnership between Social Services and the Centre and observed that for Community Care it is assumed that there is a caring community, which is not the general tone in the UK. The Centre was remarkable for its inclusive and accepting method of operation.

What can we do?

The Centre needs our help through prayer, through contributions to provide a regular income for the running costs, through offers of help in teaching practical skills (e.g. a typewriting instructor is needed) and in providing resources, such as material and wool.

NEWS FROM ST ANNE'S

The proposed plans for celebrating the centenary of St Anne's were discussed in more detail at a parish meeting on March 18th. As mentioned last month, this would include some items of restoration that would be progressed as normal due to the urgency of the work. This includes the replacement of coping stones on the church tower which is currently awaiting a quotation. The previously mentioned woodworm in the benches has been investigated further, and is now not as extensive as originally thought. The cost of total replacement was thought to be prohibitive, and so work is currently being done thoroughly to check all benches and treat those that have been affected by the rot.

The liturgical celebrations will include a mass being held at 4pm on Sunday 14th April 1996, the actual anniversary date. A further mass in May will include a procession, with the entire event being staged outdoors, weather permitting. The month of October will see a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady, an event that will be widely advertised to areas other than the diocese of Birmingham.

The idea of the school staging a street party in Washington Road was deemed to be unsuitable due to the logistics involved, not least of which would be the problems encountered if the emergency services required access. It is therefore the intention for a party to be held in the school grounds.

An exhibition and flower festival will be held in September and Dr Bertram Hudson is currently working on producing a history of the parish with an aim to have it completed by the end of the year. As stated last month, any old photos connected with the parish of St Anne's in any way would be gratefully received to be included in the exhibition. These can be handed to Fr Meagher at the Presbytery in South View Avenue.

The next fundraising event within the parish was an auction of promises on Saturday April 23rd. This looked to be a fun evening with people donating items, their time or, in fact, anything that could be auctioned.

The fourth annual music concert will be on Saturday 21st May, to be held in the hall in Washington Road. The participants are currently practising hard for this most enjoyable event in the parish's calendar.

There was cause for celebration on March 26th when St Anne's Choir Organist, Fiona Mary Stansbury, married Simon John Stokes. The choir were in splendid voice for the ceremony held at St Anne's and the weather helped out by being a bright and sunny day.

WHO WOULD A WARDEN BE?



R. Kingsbury

Springtime at St. Peter's. Churchwarden Eric Smith, who voluntarily tends the churchyard, paints the railings despite wind and rain, ready for summer visitors.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

THE GATEWAY TO LOVE

By John Madeley

"Prayer is the gateway to the love of God", Michael Hollings told this year's school of prayer at Westminster Abbey in March. Four of us from St. Peter's attended the day, the sixth time that this "School of Prayer" has been held.

We joined about 300 others from all over the home counties, to hear morning and afternoon addresses from Michael Hollings, author, and Roman Catholic priest in a North London church. These were preceded and followed by worship and the day included dividing into groups of 20 or so, praying silently together. A question session was also included – and every question received an answer.

Michael Hollings began by saying that prayer is about a relationship with God. When the disciples first came to Jesus they spent the day with him. "For them this was very significant. After spending time with Jesus, we should have a deeper sense of Jesus".

But pray as you can, and not as you can't, he urged, "it doesn't matter what you say to God as long as you say it from the heart. Methods vary, but one way or another, you are coming closer to God. God is love and this is where our prayer and meditation should lead. Love is so close, it understands everything, forgives everything".

Stillness is important for the deepening of our prayer, he went on. "There is a depth in silence which is a depth of love. God speaks in the silence. Spend time with God – and trust God enough to be able to be with him. And if you are angry, express it to God!"

In the afternoon, Michael Hollings gave a masterly exposition of scripture and prayer. He traced prayer in the lives of well known people in the Old Testament. Moses needed persuading to do what God wanted. Abraham had a difficult life – "God asked him to leave his home and go far away. He was prepared to do everything for God. What are we prepared to do for God?"

David was overcome by desire for a woman he could not have, but this led to true repentance. "When we repent, God takes us right back into his love", said Michael Hollings, "if we don't accept we are forgiven, we are not trusting God, and if we don't trust God, it's difficult for us to go forward. So accept forgiveness – and rejoice in it!"

He went on to speak of the Lord's Prayer, and told the story of an elderly lady in an isolated part of Ireland who was unable to get to church anymore. The priest came to visit and asked her if she prayed the Lord's Prayer. "No, I don't", she replied. "Why ever not", asked the priest, "you must have time enough to say it several times a day".

"Well I do try", said the lady, "but you see, I never get past 'Our Father' ". She had such a wonderful sense of God, that to dwell on the words "Our Father" was enough.

The day's worship included this prayer: "O Lord, I know not what to ask of you; you alone know what are my true needs. You love me more than I know how to love myself. Help me to see my real needs which are concealed from me. I dare not ask for either a cross or consolation. I can only wait on you. My heart is open to you. Visit and help me, for your great mercy's sake; strike me and heal me, cast me down and raise me up. I worship in silence your holy will, and your inscrutable ways. I offer myself as a sacrifice to you, putting all my trust in you. I have no other desire than to fulfil your will. Teach me how to pray, pray yourself in me. Through Jesus Christ or Lord, Amen".

If anyone is interested in going to next year's school for prayer, which is again likely to be in March, please drop me a line – 19 Woodford Close, Caversham – and I will let you have details when I have them.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CAVERSHAM

One of our contributions to THAMES VALLEY ALIVE MISSION is to hold a flower festival. The idea of the mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to as many people as possible, so we are working with our community in lower Caversham to attract as wide a group of people as we can.

All the churches in Caversham have kindly agreed to help us and many of the organisations who meet in the parish are also taking part. Matching with the main Mission, the flower show is entitled, "Saints Alive" and many of them will be interpreted in floral displays but there will also be other displays like a local school and ladies' group. The

festival is timed to coincide with the day that Saint John's celebrates its Patron Saint – John the Baptist – on June 24th. The festival will be open to the public on Friday June 24th from 10am until 5pm. The evening will see the Patronal festival at 8pm with the Bishop of Reading preaching, then on Saturday the flowers will be on view from 10am until 7pm and on Sunday the church will again be open after morning service until the evening, with a final chance to view on the Monday. It is also hoped that a programme of music will take place around the festival. Any further enquiries can be made through Revs S. & C. Rowe on 471814, or Ann Deane 473798.

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

The next All Age Praise service will be on 15th May and will be conducted by Mr Robin Gowers.

At 11am on 15th May the preacher will be Mr Graham Kirby of Kidlington, Oxon as he returns to his home church.

On 19th May Caversham Heights Methodist Church will be host to the women from all the

Methodist Churches in the Reading and Silchester Circuit for the annual Women's Day. Coffee at 10.30am will be followed by a session led by Deaconess Margaret Robinson. After a ploughmen's lunch the service at 2pm will include the dedication of the traditional Easter Offerings for women's work overseas and the speaker will be the Reverend Derek Shaw. All are welcome.

A NEW FACE IN TOWN



Sheila Nunn (on her farewell presentation day at St. John's School, Marlborough).

On 3rd July, Sheila Nunn will be ordained deacon at Christ Church Cathedral Oxford. She will serve as Assistant Curate at St. Peter and St. Margaret in the Group Ministry. She comes to us from Salisbury and Wells Theological College.

Sheila was born in 1943 and has three children. Richard is a Chartered Accountant. Rebecca is studying drama at Oxford. Firstborn Kayte is in Australia as an editor. All graduates (two from Oxford) the Nunn's support their mother's extraordinary response to give up a fine teaching career and train for the ordained ministry. Sheila's husband is an RAF officer and has held senior postings in Asia, Europe and USA. In August 1992, when Sheila was well into her ordination training, they separated amicably.

Sheila was born a Lancastrian, is a graduate and has worked with young people through her teaching profession and community work. At present she lives near Marlborough, but will take up residence at 25 Ilkley Road late June. We look forward to welcoming her as a warm friend for the coming years.

FAREWELL ANDREW WELCOME LIZ



— R. Kingsbury

Retiring organist Andrew Bosley admires the Rector's wife's hat after a wedding.

April 24th was Andrew Bosley's last Sunday as Organist and Choirmaster at St. Peter's. After nine devoted years, Andrew felt it was time for a break from the many Sunday and midweek duties he has undertaken. He trained a fine choir at St. Peter's, put many candidates successfully through the RSCM Bishop's Chorister exam, and his dedication and vision has enhanced worship wonderfully.

His successor is Mrs. Liz Cooke, an experienced chorister, choir director and musician (tutored by St. George's Chapel, Windsor), living in Caversham and already very much at home and part of St. Peter's life.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS' CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Those who have followed reports in the national press over the past two years of the mismanagement by the Church Commissioners of the investments of the Church of England may have gained the impression that what is a financial crisis is in fact a financial disaster. While one cannot condone unfortunate investment decisions, poor management and a lack of proper accountability that have led to the loss of value on the investments of £800 million (over a quarter of the total value) and an accompanying large fall in income, partly a consequence of the recession and partly because of the nature of the investments, we have to be thankful that crisis is making the ordinary members of the Church of England more aware of their financial responsibilities. Most other denominations and other parts of the Anglican Church have long had to reckon with their financial position, not having had the benefits of accumulated riches from earlier generations. In its present crisis the Church of England might learn some lessons from them about Christian giving.

Earlier declining support for clergy stipends

Those with an intimate knowledge of central church finance will have been well aware of the erosion of income from the Church Commissioners for the support of stipends for Anglican clergy. Thus in the Oxford diocese the contribution of the Church Commissioners to stipends has fallen from 68 to 21 per cent over the past 22 years; when other costs are taken into consideration in the current year the Church Commissioners are only meeting about 16 per cent of the total cost of the parochial ministry. Even before the present financial crisis the Oxford diocese was already planning to be financially self-sufficient for stipends by the end of the century. Until the recent change in the fortunes of the Church Commissioners, two main factors had been responsible for the reduction in the level of their income available for clergy stipends: a greater proportion of the income had been diverted into pensions, both to ensure that pensions are maintained at a realistic level and because the age structure of the clergy has meant that an increasing number of them have been retiring; secondly, increased support had been given to the poorer dioceses at the expense of the richer ones.

Why is there even less money available now?

As a result of concern in the General Synod in 1992 the Archbishop of Canterbury asked Coopers and Lybrand, the well known firm of accountants, to look into the activities of the Church Commissioners. He also set up a Group to consider the accountants' report and to make recommendations. The latter reported in July last year when it transpired that the present financial crisis had been brought about by a series of factors which has both reduced the value of the assets and the income accruing from those assets. First they reported that the Church Commissioners' investment portfolio was unbalanced in relation to that of other very large funds. It was high on UK property and low on UK equities; within the property portfolio there was a disproportionate investment in retail property at the expense of offices. As a consequence income had been poorer than that from other very large funds. Secondly, speculative development costs had been poorly controlled so that there had been excessive borrowings to meet these costs. Thirdly, neither the committee responsible for monitoring investment nor the Board of Governors were properly informed about what was happening. Fourthly, equities were being bought prior to the declaration of dividends, which were then used to aid cash flow; the equities were subsequently sold at a loss, thereby



D. Jewiss

reducing the total value of the assets. Finally and somewhat surprisingly there was no proper determination of pension liabilities on an actuarial basis and therefore no definitive picture of future commitments. When this was done it was found that in only 16 years time 90 per cent of the income would be needed to finance clergy pensions.

Recent developments: what can we do?

It seems likely that action taken since these reports came out and a further poor year for the income on investments has precipitated the recent, widely leaked, Church Commissioners' budget conferences with diocesan authorities. The proposals nationally are to halve over the next three to four years the income for clergy stipends from the Church Commissioners. These reductions are not totally unexpected, although the timing is earlier than anticipated. Members of the Church of England are now being asked to shoulder the burden of supporting their parish clergy, something that most of the other denominations and the church overseas already do. Realistically this means that each parish ought to be raising annually about £20,000 to support each of their clergy. A recent First Leader in *The Times* suggested that as little as 20p in extra giving on each and every week from all the 1.4 million people on the church electoral rolls would meet the shortfall this year, a similar increase would be needed in each of the two subsequent years. It is not always helpful to use examples of average giving but the level of giving to cover the shortfall in income for clergy stipends alone needs to increase by 20 per cent over this three year period. The present level of giving is about 2.5 per cent of net income; some are suggesting that this target should be raised to 5 per cent. Many church members of other denominations give 10 per cent of their income. If Anglicans adopted this principle of tithing, which has been supported by the Oxford Diocesan Synod, there would be no financial problems.

The other challenge

The level of Christian giving is one challenge but if it is not met then there is still the challenge of how the present parochial system can be sustained with less income. The possibility of redrawing parish boundaries and the reduction in the number of clergy to look after those parishes is being discussed. The challenge of every member ministry and the fuller exploration and use of the gifts of the laity, the increased use of non-stipendiary and locally ordained ministers and the possibility of a permanent diaconate are also under discussion. What may initially appear to be a disaster may indeed lead to a renewal and a reawakening within the Church of England. If the Church of England is to continue as it is now there will need to be a change in the hearts and minds of its members that leads very soon to a change in what they give from their pockets and purses. Alternatively there will have to be changes in the way the Church of England ministers to this land. Probably it will be some of both. Maybe God is challenging us to reshape with Him one branch of the Church and those of us who are its members need to seek out His will in this.

O. Jewiss

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SOCIAL ACTION GUIDE

The Newcastle-based "New Consumer" magazine has produced a Social Action Guide for Christians, Churches, Christian groups, and all who want to put their social consciences to work.

The guide looks at seven issues of concern — Housing and the homeless, Environment, Poverty, War, violence and peace, Consumer culture, Marginalised groups and Women.

Each topic includes a survey of contemporary events, relevant Bible passages, possibilities for joint action, and information on resources for study and action. The material is practical and provides a "way-in" to difficult issues.

The guide is available, price £8.50, from New Consumer, 52 Elswick Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 6JH.

FREE CHURCH WOMEN'S COUNCIL

The National President of the Free Church Women's Council, Mrs Eunice Hopkins of Southport, is to visit Reading on Thursday, 12th May. A service, organised by the Reading Council, will be held in Caversham Heights Methodist Church at 1pm when Mrs Hopkins will be the speaker.

The service will be preceded by a "Bring your own sandwiches" lunch. Soup and coffee will be provided at the cost of £1. Lunch will commence at 12 noon and the friends at the Heights hope to see you there.



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AROUND THE CHURCHES

NEW LIFE AT ST. BARNABAS

This year there were two opportunities at St. Barnabas Church to follow the events of Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter Day.

First there were the traditional observances day by day. Thus there was the Palm Sunday procession from the Church Hall to the Church and the reading of the Passion. On Maundy Thursday there was a vivid reminder of the Last Supper in a Service of Holy Communion held in the Church Hall within the context of a meal; included on this occasion was a representational washing of the feet of some of the congregation by the Vicar. On Good Friday we recalled the crucifixion and the meaning of the cross. On Easter Day Jesus' resurrection was celebrated with a Service of Light, Renewal of Baptismal Vows and Communion.

Secondly the events of Holy Week were re-enacted on the afternoon of Easter Day by the Junior Church in an entirely new happening, billed as an Easter Egg Service. It was a symbol of the new life in the resurrection. The chancel and adjacent area of the nave had been converted into the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane. Members of the Junior Church waved palms and spread garments for Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Then the meaning of the Last Supper was explained. The young people re-enacted Jesus' betrayal and his arrest; he was stripped of his

garments and movingly nailed to a cross. Subsequently his body was taken down from the cross, wrapped in a white cloth and laid to rest in the sepulchre. Then there was the re-enactment of the events early on Easter Day when the disciples came and found the stone rolled away and the grave clothes remaining in the empty tomb. Finally the Risen Jesus appeared to Mary.

Within the space of 45 minutes on Easter Day these central events of our faith were followed through reverently by the young people under the guidance of the Vicar, the Revd Nigel Hardcastle and his wife, June, Leader of the Junior Church, in front of a congregation of about 90. They culminated in the baptism of Matthew Whinney and the beginning of a new Christian life. Dramatically at the end of the Service the stone that was rolled away at the entrance to the sepulchre became another symbol of new life in the form of a giant



Some prominence was given to the Easter Egg Service in the local press as a result of a replica of the vicar in the form of a decorated egg by Adam Harper, one of the Junior Church. Our pictures show the model and on the left the real thing. Spot the difference!

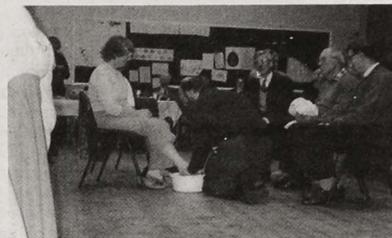
Easter egg. Further transient symbols of new life in the form of small chocolate versions of the Easter egg were given to the young people before their departure. The drama and newness of this service seem likely, not only to leave a lasting impression in the memories of those attending, but also re-focus their attention on the message of Holy Week and Easter.

St. Barnabas Alive!

Further signs of new life at St. Barnabas are likely to emerge during the week from 15 to 22 May, when with the help of a team from St. Aldates in Oxford we shall engage in St. Barnabas *Alive!* Central events occur at the Services on the two Sundays: the first will be on 15 May and will be followed by a barbecue; the second on 22 May will be preceded by a Social Evening with Barn Dance and Cabaret the night before. During the week the St. Aldates team will concentrate on the regular meetings of the Fellowships and other groups.



— O. Jewiss



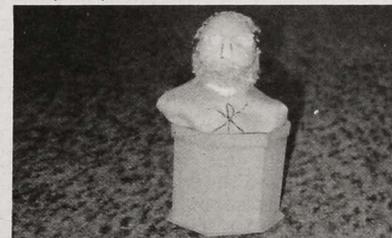
— O. Jewiss

Our pictures above of Holy Week events at St. Barnabas show part of the Palm Sunday procession and the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday.



— O. Jewiss

On Easter Day the events of Holy Week were re-enacted by the Junior Church and the picture shows their portrayal of the arrest of Jesus.



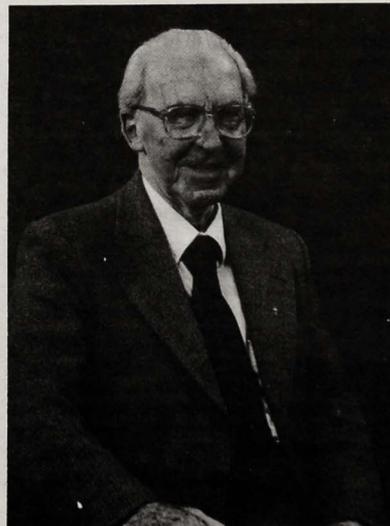
— O. Jewiss

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

On 7 May well-known Christian, John Sholl, friend to many in the Caversham area, will celebrate his 90th Birthday. John started his career with The London Oil Refining Company whom he served for 53 years, rising from office boy to Sales Director. Born in Manchester in 1904, he married Mabel Winifred Mellor in 1930 and in 1960 they came to live in Reading. John's hobbies were scouting and youth work and even though he is now deaf and partially sighted, he is still able to relate to young people and old in a very special way, visiting many elderly people in their homes and in Eventide Homes. He also has a special epileptic friend for whom he cooks lunch every week, organising transport to and from his home. John became a Christian at the age of 30 and his strong faith and witness are an example to his many friends. Incidentally, he has been delivering the Caversham Bridge since its inception, thirty years ago! John's very full diary highlights his great interest in all that is going on about him and his energy puts many a younger person to shame. John describes himself as 'an activist' and is looking forward to joining in the many activities of the great Thames Valley Alive Mission in the months leading up to October when there will be several events at the Rivermead Centre, and to the period beyond when the churches will be nurturing many new Christians. Such is John's popularity that since his wife's death some years ago he has only had to provide his own Sunday lunch on five occasions.

Birthday celebrations will include a special service of thanksgiving and praise at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, where John worships, on Friday, 6 May at 7.30 for 8.00pm to which all are invited. The following day his extensive family - three sons, three daughters-in-law, nine grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren - will take part in further celebrations.

We join in wishing John very Happy Birthday.



John Sholl

On 6th May Mrs Helen Cawkwell, another member of Caversham Heights Methodist Church and a familiar figure in Caversham, celebrates her 90th birthday.

PICTURES

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OBITUARIES

The Revd Geoffrey Udall Assistant Rural Dean

Few people can have had such a life of service as Geoffrey Udall, who died on 22 March at the age of 77 after a relatively short illness. Fewer still can have had a contemporary from his preparatory school, the Headmaster from his public school, a Professor from the hospital where he was for much of his life a consultant, the Bishop, many past and present deanery clergy and a packed church of friends from several denominations involved at his funeral. Such was the impact of and respect for this much loved and remarkable man who remained active to the end. To most of us Geoffrey Udall was known as the Assistant Rural Dean, a non-stipendiary priest, who had entered the ministry after retiring as a consultant paediatrician at St Bartholomew's Hospital, and a priest who had the knack of encapsulating in a wonderful way the essentials in his public prayers, particularly at the end of a long and difficult Deanery Synod meeting.

Instead of this former Head Boy of Bryanston School following an acting career, as he might have done, he had a distinguished career in medicine, after study at St. John's Cambridge, and St Thomas's Hospital, where he was a research fellow in children's diseases. He was subsequently county medical officer to schools in Middlesex and held posts at St Bartholomew's Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth's Children's Hospital. His service in medicine was followed by over 11 years of service as a non-stipendiary minister, of all which were in the Reading Deanery and nearly eight of which were as Assistant Rural Dean. For 10 years before ordination in Advent 1982 he had been churchwarden at Beech Hill. He founded the Society for Horticultural Therapy which aims to bring the skills and pleasures of horticulture to physically and mentally handicapped people. He was devoted to his wife Eleanore who died not long after he retired from his medical work.

Geoffrey Udall will be remembered as a humble, gentle man, who put his trust in God and sought to do his will. His funeral, fittingly held on Maundy Thursday, was a memorable Service of Thanksgiving at which the Rural Dean movingly quoted from Geoffrey's last sermon on the theme of 'The Son of Man must suffer', preached little more than two weeks before his death, and told of the effort Geoffrey had made, regarded by him as a privilege, to celebrate his last service of Holy Communion. "His example", said the Rural Dean, "puts us all to shame. We shall miss this dear, dear man, whom it was a privilege to have known."

O.J.

Mrs Dorothy Pollard — Tree in Caversham Court

The late Mrs Dorothy Pollard who lived in Star Road will be remembered with affection by many Caversham people including her friends within the fellowship of the Baptist Church and her memory has been commemorated by a new tree in Caversham Court. In consultation with Tina Gower, the Park Ranger, a "Broad Leaved Cockspur Thorn" (*Crataegus x prunifolia* to be correct) was chosen by Reading Gardeners (Reading and District Gardeners Mutual Improvement Association) as suitable in scale and colouring for the "red bed" in the main lawn.

Although the tree is now slim and elegant, displaying its shiny dark chocolate purple shoots, it should grow into a more comfortable shape for middle age and become a low, spreading tree. It will have white flowers, the berries will be red and the dark glossy green leaves will turn orange, crimson and purple in the autumn. Whether slim or spreading, *prunifolia* should not be approached too closely; her thorns will be 1½ to 2cms long, hard and numerous.

An engraved bronze plate records the gratitude of the Reading Gardeners for a generous bequest from the estate of Mrs Dorothy Pollard who was born on 5th July 1915 and died on 23rd July 1989.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH MAY FAIR

On Saturday May 21st at 2pm Caversham Hall
Raffle, stalls, teas, plants

HI!

Just a reminder for your diary.
The Caversham Inter-Church Quiz 1994
will be held at St Andrew's Hall, Albert Road,
Caversham, on Saturday 17th September, 1994
We do hope you all will be there.

POST BAG

Dear Editors,
CHURCH HOUSE, CAVERSHAM

We write in response to the article in your April edition "Katy in Caversham" and her comments re the use of the above mentioned building.

This good lady writes in your newspaper, but does she ever read it we ask ourselves?

Every month you very kindly carry an advertisement for Caversham Good Neighbours and The Pop-In Centre, which gives brief details about both organisations and the times of opening etc. Having been around for nearly thirty years the Good Neighbours find it a little hard to be dismissed as "the office upstairs", particularly as the voluntary car drivers mentioned under another heading are more likely to be the Caversham Good Neighbours!!!

Organisations using the building are many and varied. To our certain knowledge the hall is used on Monday mornings by a painting class and on Wednesday afternoons by the Darby and Joan Club. Caversham W.I., St Peter's Wives, St John Ambulance Brigade (Junior Divn) and others meet either weekly or monthly. Not all Church based, but run by good, caring people.

May we suggest Katy telephones the office to make an appointment to meet our Secretary and learn more about us.

Yours etc.
Christine Baker
For Chairman
and Committee,
Caversham
Good Neighbours,
Church House,
Caversham,
Reading.



Self help is our way of action.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Dear Editors,

We are delighted to announce that as of 30th March 1994 A.R.M.S. (Action and Research for Multiple Sclerosis) has had a new name.

From that date we became known as the BERKSHIRE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS THERAPY CENTRE LTD. We have chosen the name because it more accurately describes what we do and the area which we primarily provide support for.

Since the Centre was opened in August 1984 the group has grown considerably, particularly in the last couple of years. We handle over six thousand appointments each year, enabling sufferers to make use of the extensive facilities we have to offer. We provide Counselling, Oxygen Therapy, Physiotherapy, Nutritional advice, Yoga classes, general information, companionship and support.

The Centre is open five and a half days and one evening each week and apart from the name change it's "business as usual."

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HAIL, BLITHE SPIRITS!

Blithe Spirit, the brilliantly constructed and written play which Noel Coward penned in just five days, was the end of season choice by Caversham Theatre.

The play's blithe spirits were very much birds – the two attractive wives, Ruth and Elvira, of the playwright Charles Condomine, Peter Ludlow in the part of Charles, gave one of his best performances with Caversham Theatre, effectively conveying the playwright's supercilious ubanity. He was excellently partnered by Liz Martin as Ruth, particularly in the sparkling, brittle repartee which is a hallmark of those who dwell in Coward's sophisticated society.

Charles, planning to feature spiritualism in a new book, has invited the medium, Madame Arcati, to dinner and subsequently to sing for her supper with a seance. Pat Blundell's fine stage presence fitted her well for Madame Arcati though she might have allowed herself freer rein with the unpredictable, animated eccentricity which leaves Charles and Ruth in no doubt that she is a fraud. In fact the seance proves anything but a fraud. Charles' first wife Elvira materialises, much to the irritation of Charles who can see her, and to the frustration of Ruth who can not!

The slinky, seductive Elvira, delightfully portrayed by Sue Stainthorp, is clearly no more of an angel when a spirit than she was when a mortal. She devises "accidents" designed to reunite her with Charles in the after-life but the first injures Edith, the maid, and the second proves fatal to Ruth. Charles now is beset by two blithe spirits!

Handy to bind up wounds and to give comfort is Dr Bradman, well endowed with the gracious dignity of the medical profession by John Evans. His wife is one of those ladies who puts her foot in it every time she opens her mouth and Julia Marshall might perhaps have sharpened the contrast between her bright, ill-judged utterances and her subsequent discomfiture.

When Madame Arcati fails to dematerialise Ruth and Elvira, Charles is given his freedom through the unexpected spiritual powers of the ungainly, anxious-to-please Edith, whose character was made the most of by Penny Mason.

The well furnished set suffered a little from a strangely brown sky and the climax could have been enhanced by a more sustained falling about of pictures and ornaments. . . But these are minor quibbles: Bob Green had directed a most successful and enjoyable play. E.M.A.



Left to right: Liz Martin as Ruth, Penny Mason as Edith and Peter Ludlow as Charles.



Left to right: Sue Stainthorp as Elvira and Peter Ludlow as Charles.

MUSEUM OF BERKSHIRE AVIATION —

SWAPMEET on 6th March 1994

The Museum of Berkshire Aviation is situated in Mohawk Way, Woodley, near the site of the old Woodley airfield where Sir Douglas Bader lost his legs when his aircraft, a Bristol Bulldog, crashed back in the '30s.

On Sunday, 6th March, there was an aviation swapmeet at the Museum for subscribers to "The Plane News" and their guests, arranged by Philip Jewell, an associate of the Museum. Each subscriber had booked a table of which there were about thirty, and the items displayed consisted of 1/200 scale metal aircraft models in numerous colour schemes, Dinky Toy aircraft models (way out of my price range!), wood and World War 2 identification models as well as a few tinplate toys.

Mention must be made of the finished models shown by the Norfolk Group, Vapour Trails, and especially Fred Memsall of Lincoln whose "piece de resistance" was a beautiful Supermarine Stranraer flying boat, priced at £60, and finished in silver. Tommy Atkins of Bridlington who in the past has produced pewter armoured car kits in 1/76th scale, 1/72nd scale pewter aircraft kits, and 1/48th scale vacform aircraft kits with white metal parts, is now providing the 1/200 pewter aircraft kits for Fred who turns them into fully finished and painted models.

Also present at the meet was at least one member from outside the UK — Raymond Magnani from Aurillac in France.

There are numerous exhibits in the Museum including a Miles Magister awaiting restoration whilst outside is a Handley Page Herald. The Museum is open on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays from March to October, admission being £1.50 for adults and £1 for children and senior citizens, and it also has an excellent refreshment bar and a souvenir shop. Pay it a visit and support your local aviation historical body!

Pete Littlewood

POST BAG

CHALLENGES

Dear Editor,

I thoroughly enjoy reading the monthly digest and wish to express my appreciation for your valued contribution month by month.

Many of the contributions are challenging and so relevant to contemporary life. It is most encouraging to read of the many activities originating in Caversham related to Thames Valley Alive. If the church does not speak for the Master, who else will? Alas, so often we professing Christians fail to grasp the many opportunities provided in a society which cries out for excitement, joy and real life. Thankfully, with the various evangelistic initiatives in the town, 1994 promises to be a year of challenge.

We are privileged to have Squadron Leader Cole OBE, a much sought after and most exciting speaker — described in one newspaper as a 'modern day David Livingstone', speak at Argyle Chapel, (Argyle Road, off Oxford Road) at 8pm on Sunday 15 May. It has been timed to accommodate those attending the evening service of other church fellowships to whom a warm welcome is extended.

I wonder if through the medium of 'Caversham Bridge', this event could be given some publicity?

Thank you

John Hornal.

WATER

Dear Editor,

John Madeley's letter is quite amazing in asking for local people to be allowed a say about the future of Mapledurham. Was this not the reason why in January 1992 you gave me the courtesy of the whole front page and another inside page to explore the alternatives available? Did he not come to any of the talks I was asked to give about the future planning proposals?

I cannot remember him either writing to the Inspector or attending the week long public enquiry held last year. There were some 75 letters of which 60 were supportive.

It may be of interest to your readers to be reminded that their water supply is not at risk from the Golf Course which is supplied from its own borehole. If through misfortune any Caversham household is lacking water the following statistics may point to the problem:

"Domestic use accounts for a staggering 55% of all water consumption in the UK (30% of this is used for WC flushing), 25% in industry, 15% in commerce and 5% in agriculture."

(Rob Jarman from the National Trust Environmental Audit Adviser).

Meanwhile John Madeley may not be aware that Thames Water have been offered additional water supply facilities from Mapledurham Estate.

Yours sincerely,
J. J. Eyston.



Left to right: Sue Stainthorp as Elvira, Liz Martin as Ruth and Pat Blundell as Madame Arcati.

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Pic: K. Buckley

Cake made by Mrs Kate Buckley for Chazey W.I. Party.

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Caversham W.I.

The President welcomed members to the annual meeting and after normal business the VCO, Mrs Collinge, was introduced. A musical theme linked her talk on several of her family holidays ranging from opera in Bulgaria to bagpipes in Normandy.

Mrs Collinge then guided members through the election procedure. Miss M. Cameron is now president, Mrs S. Taylor the new secretary and the rest of the committee were elected en bloc. Potplants were presented to the retiring president and secretary and the competition cup to Mrs Ivy Butcher.

Caversham Community Association

February opened with a make-up demonstration from Body Shop with two brave volunteers. Members compared notes on their favourite Body Shop products.

The St. Valentine's party had to be cancelled due to the snowy weather. The following week was the popular prize bingo with some satisfied winners going home happy.

Mr and Mrs Archer were welcome speakers at the last meeting in the month. The slides of their

holiday in India contrasted lavishly decorated palaces with views of ordinary street life. The highlight of the visit was the stunning views of the Taj Mahal.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

Pictures of familiar logos and headings including a well known "Scottish Widow" tested members' powers of recall in this month's competition of "Name The Adverts". An Easter Egg was the prize on offer for the highest score.

Members welcomed Mrs A. Dadd as Returning Officer at this, the AGM, and learned that this year's Committee had been formed with Mrs J. Spall to continue as Chairman. After six years of sterling work as Secretary Mrs S. Froud would be standing down, her place in this post to be taken by Mrs A. Deane. Together with two new members, the Committee were to begin planning this year's events and activities.

Members were entertained next by the Playreading group, with their version of a comedy by Mabel Constanduros providing much enjoyment. A welcome 'cuppa' with delicious homemade cakes was followed by the announcement that the new President would be popular long-standing member Mrs E. Odey. The overall winner of the cup for the monthly competitions proved to be Mrs E. Hodgkinson. Two new members were warmly welcomed by the Chairman.

The Guild meets on the third Thursday each month at 2pm in Church House. Visitors/new members always welcome.

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MARCH ACTIVITIES

The speaker at the monthly meeting in the Kennet Room was Joe Wise, the News Editor of the Chronicle. After admitting that reporters were only more unpopular with the public than estate agents, he explained the advantages of the press. A great many questions followed his interesting talk.

A group of members made a very enjoyable visit to Richmond to see 'A Month in the Country'. Next month they will be visiting Basingstoke to see 'The Lion in Winter'. Play readers have read 'Twelfth Night' and are much enjoying Shakespeare. The Books group are now studying Thomas Hardy. The Music group heard John Hawkes give a talk.

The discussion group had a lively discussion on the question whether we should change the clocks. An Art Workshop has been arranged for the fourth Friday in each month in the Art Room at Wilson Adult Centre, Caversham. All are welcome however inexperienced. More members are needed by the Chess group. The Walks group will reassemble in April for a ramble through Theale.

New members are always welcome. Please contact Mrs Grace McGregor, telephone 866037.

Caversham Ladies Club

There was a very good attendance of members for their AGM. Unfortunately, Mrs Harwood, Chairman, was unable to attend through continual ill health but had sent in a letter of resignation as Chairman, feeling this was the right decision in her circumstances. She had been a member for twenty-four years and, within that time, Chairman for eighteen years. She had always enjoyed the club and the company of all the members and would definitely, on her return to health, be back with them all. Members took a vote

and agreed that Mrs Harwood be made a president, thus keeping in touch closely with the club. A card signed by all present would be delivered to Mrs Harwood who would also receive a present of a basket of groceries.

After reports were read out and committee disbanded, the election of chairman was agreed by all, Mrs Brenda Strong being willing to accept the office; the previous committee was re-elected by all present.

The outing in May to Eastbourne was confirmed, the final details to be given out at the April meeting.

It was then time for the Bring and Buy and the new "Auctioneer", Mrs Phyllis Weston, was soon doing a fast trade in bargains.

The welcome 'cuppa' was very much appreciated after a busy but happy afternoon.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

At the annual general meeting in March, Federation chairman Maureen Dawson recommended change and new people coming on the committee. The officers are as follows; Margaret Mellin, chairman, Mildred Hutchison, vice-chairman, Pat Read, treasurer, and Janet Slawson secretary.

Marilyn Jones' poster about the movement had been displayed in the library. The secretary reported that membership had increased. Listed among the year's events were the skittles evening which had replaced a jumble sale in the autumn, and the apple fair which took place at Caversham Court. Hopefully there may be a drama event for all groups in the coming year. The treasurer reported on the

financial position and mentioned that donations had been made to the National Children's Home, the Royal Berkshire Hospital and the Reading Talking News amongst other good causes. Wilf Smith remained as auditor. Thanks were especially given to Muriel Holloway who entertained from time to time.

At social studies later in the month members heard Mrs Sedell describing how it came about that she was one of a party of 15 people, together with porters, sherpas and a cook, who trekked in Nepal as part of a package organised by Saga. Some interesting photographs were pinned up around the walls of the Wesley lounge, Highmoor Room and slides were also shown. After some preliminary treks and a period of acclimatisation to the altitude in Kathmandu, where there is a temple with a living goddess, the main trek was undertaken. They managed six hours of walking each day, with breaks, each carrying a litre of boiled water daily.

A handsome azalea plant was given to Dorothy Moore in token of her many years of service as secretary. Next month's talk entitled "Celebrating Columbus" will be given by Martyn Allies.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

The Guild met in St Barnabas Hall on a Tuesday evening in March.

It was an "A.G.M." and a very busy evening. The Returning Officer was Mrs J. Chapman who said how pleased she was that the Guild had a full committee for 1994.

ARTS & CRAFTS will visit The National Portrait Gallery to view a

turn to page 15

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from page 15

special exhibition of the "Court of Henry VIII". WORDS & MUSIC will adopt a theme of "Four Seasons" for their next meetings and the first will be in March and the theme will be "Spring", any reading on spring – even if it's only the "spring in your heart". Music is to be arranged. There is also to be an informal outing to the Hexagon to see "Julius Caesar".

RAMBLERS are still enjoying their walks and have had two walks but are still walking mainly on roads because of the very wet weather.

The talk for the evening was by Mr B. Moore on "The Royal British Legion". We were all amazed by the extent to which the British Legion helps ex-Servicemen and their wives and children. We all knew about the Poppy Appeal, but the largeness of the British Legion surprised us all. The Legion was formed in 1921 and was originally set up as a result of the first world war.

The legion deals with 18,000 War pension cases each year and since May 1985 the Legion has helped 5,000 people including some 2,000 widows to visit more than 38 countries on War Grave Pilgrimages. There is also a Business Advisory Service to assist unemployed ex-service personnel by giving guidance on setting up small businesses. The Legion is the largest private employer of disabled people. There is also a RBL Attendants Co. Ltd. This is a car parking and security organisation for around 1,200 ex-service people as security guards and car park attendants. There is "The RBL Industries" who not only employ ex-service personnel who are unable to work in normal industrial conditions but also place

them elsewhere in sheltered industrial groups. The RBL have also formed a "Benevolence" Dept and a Housing Association.

Mr Moore asked his wife to give us information on the Women's Section of the Legion. Mrs Moore told us they do not use money from the Poppy Appeal on the Women's section of the RBL but raise their own funds by the usual means of jumble sales, coffee mornings etc. The Women's Section was formed to deal with the problems of the thousands of women widowed in the First World War. They have helped widows of the Falklands campaign and their children. They finance ex-service women and the wives and widows of ex-servicemen for two weeks rest and convalescence in suitable accommodation of their own choice. Allowances are given for widows and ex-servicemen and they have also helped with unfurnished sheltered accommodation for a number of retired ex-servicemen. They have provided financial help to assist ex-service personnel's children with clothing, school requirements, job training etc. Wheelchairs are purchased for disabled children.

Over 35 million poppies as well as 86,000 wreaths and 250,000 Remembrance crosses are made annually at the RBL Poppy Factory in Richmond, which employs disabled ex-servicemen and women.

We all felt we had learned so much more of all the wonderful help given by The Royal British Legion. We had not known before that it was such a very very large organisation.



— Courtesy, Henley Standard

Left to right Anthea Prescott, Jean Pugh (past President), Kate Buckley (new President), Marjorie McCombe and David Duvall (speaker).

Chazey W.I.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

The 12th birthday of Chazey W.I. was celebrated by members at Mapledurham Pavilion with songs, good company, a fish and chips supper and a superb cake made by their new president, Kate Buckley. Kate also won the competition – new words to "The Happy Wanderer" tune – all W.I. inspired of course.

When Marjorie McCombe came to live in Chazey Road in the 1960s she decided that what the area needed most was a playgroup, and after that a Womens' Institute and so she started a playgroup for her own young children and others living locally, at Mapledurham Pavilion. The W.I. idea had to wait a few years but Marjorie still had it in mind, and whilst delivering the "Caversham Bridge" in Chazey Road, (which she has done for 27 years now) she found that many other women welcomed the idea. Marjorie was working as a tutor at Denham W.I. College and knew what a wealth of interests and skills was there waiting to be discovered. At a coffee evening at her house about 50 people agreed to form an institute and since many lived in Chazey Road its name was easily found.

As most members were at work during the day, an evening meeting was ideal and since many were involved in the St Peter's Wives Group which met on Thursdays, the first Tuesday of every month was agreed. Among the first

members were Hazel Blackburn, then working with her photographer husband Michael; Barbara Rhodes, an admin officer with Thames Valley Police; Mitza Fawcett and Joyce Wright both secondary school teachers; Gail Russell, company director; Doreen Moore, day centre manager; June Brown, nursery school teacher; Kathy Sell, playgroup supervisor (yes, the original one at Mapledurham Pavilion and still going strong); and Jean Pugh now a day care consultant and Chazey W.I. President for the past three years. There were over 40 others, most of whom are still members, so this is only a random selection.

Fund raising was, as might be expected, a priority and there were Fashion Shows, Car Boot Sales and The Auction. Attics, garages and understairs cupboards were scoured for months and the Auction, conducted by Elizabeth Holland's husband John, raised £1,020 – magnificent. Chazey W.I. was able to fit out the kitchen at Mapledurham Pavilion and complete the curtaining of the main hall and still have money for speakers and the hire of the hall. The membership rose rapidly to the 100 limit and a waiting list became necessary. In the last 10 years numbers have varied considerably and now around 50 members attend regularly, so there is room for any number of new members to join. New ideas are the breath of life to the W.I. No longer the fusty "Jam and Jerusalem", their motto is "Today's Women Working for Tomorrow's World".

Talks at the 1994 meetings will include "History of Reading", "Looking after yourself with Music", "Hypnotist", and "First Aid" from a St John's Ambulance officer.

There are to be demonstrations from a florist and a country dance club, outings to stately homes and gardens and regular theatre trips. Added to all this is the fun of the smaller Social Group meetings in members' homes – making Christmas decorations, Favourite Books discussions, poetry, and up-to-date make-up lessons, also the Scrabble Group. Every summer Chazey W.I. give a tea party, in conjunction with the Red Cross, for elderly local people which is enjoyed by all, and this year a Fashion Show is being planned. The accent will be on up-to-date clothes (avoiding mutton dressed as lamb) that everyone can afford.

Chazey W.I.'s Birthday speaker/entertainer was Mr David Duvall, organist and choir-master at St Andrews, Sonning-on-Thames who proved that "Anyone Can Sing". Between the laughter and singing it was an altogether joyous occasion.

A.W.P.

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