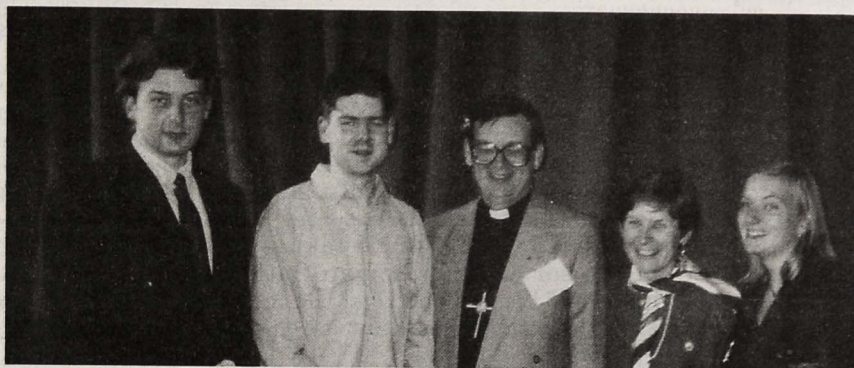


Dr. LESLIE GRIFFITHS METHODIST PRESIDENT



Leslie Griffiths with his family. Left to right: Timothy, Jonathan, President, his wife Margaret, Ruth.

Several members from both Gosbrook Road and Caversham Heights travelled to Leeds on Saturday, 25th June to support their former minister, Dr. Leslie Griffiths on the never-to-be-forgotten occasion of his induction as this year's President of the Methodist Conference. This took place on the Saturday afternoon in the magnificently-ornate Victorian Leeds Town Hall – 250 years to the day since John Wesley convened the first Conference in London in 1744. The Lord Mayor of Leeds welcomed Conference saying that Leeds had become the venue of the 1944 Conference when all conferences in London were banned after the D-Day landings – and now the M1 linked these two major cities of the country.

We were all impressed by the immense, famous and elaborately-decorated organ which fills one end of the hall.

A magnificent 18 foot long banner hung over the platform. Prayers were led by the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland.

The Induction

Dr. Griffiths' induction as President by his predecessor, Rev. Brian Beck, included the handing over of John Wesley's Field Bible, traditionally symbolising 250 years of continuity among Methodists. Then Dr. Griffiths was presented with his Ph.D. gown (a symbol of preaching) by the circuit stewards of the Finchley and Hendon Circuit and a copy of 'Hymns and Psalms' on behalf of his family by his daughter Ruth.

The induction of the Vice-President, Sister Christine Walters followed

with presentations of a gown and stole from the Methodist Diaconal Order, a travelling Bible, a copy of 'Hymns and Psalms' (handed on to successive Vice-Presidents since 1983) and her badge of office. Her twin sister was involved in the presentation.

The Presidential address was given national publicity by the media but there are other points for those who asked on our return 'Did he really say that?' Yes, he did – but it must be taken in context, of course. He paid tribute to Rev. Brian Beck, his predecessor, with whom he had been good friends since Leslie's Cambridge days as a ministerial student when Mr. Beck had been his tutor in languages and theology.

Then Dr. Griffiths said that after living in 11 manses (4 of them in Haiti) he valued his Welsh roots and paid a patriotic tribute to former Welsh Presidents who had all been an inspiration – Irvonwy Morgan 'from my native Dyfed', Maldwyn Edwards (a charismatic preacher full of evangelical zeal), Thomas Coke who pioneered work in America, the Caribbean and West Africa, not to mention initiatives in France and for the Irish and Welsh speaking peoples in their own lands. Last of all, Hugh Price Hughes in whose chair Leslie had sat as his successor at the West London Mission and whose example was a good one to follow – in preaching, use of the media, Christian unity, and social and political reform.

Enlarging on these four themes, Dr. Griffiths commented "Preaching has been one of our great treasures and we are in danger of losing it. When

preachers feed their listeners with the crushed and recycled carcasses of brain-dead literary essays, it's hardly surprising that sometimes congregations may be found suffering from the theological equivalent of mad cow's disease. I say, 'Long live preaching.' Our attitude to the media just won't do. We Christians only dismiss the media at our peril. As Brian Redhead said to me after my very first 'Thought for the Day', "You've just spoken to more people than John Wesley did in the whole of his ministry!" We should find out how best to use the media.

On Anglican-Methodist union, he said, "I believe that both our churches have suffered enormously through the setback of 1969. Now I wonder whether it isn't time we got together again. I just don't see how the Church can call a divided world to its senses while we Christians are so divided ourselves. There are now almost 700 Local Ecumenical Projects – some fed up with waiting for leadership to find new ways forward. How many LEPs do there have to be before the case is heard for a fundamental re-think of how our Churches are organised at local level?"

"The Methodist Church is still a major provider of social care in the voluntary sector – NCH Action for Children, Methodist Homes, and our major city missions – following John Wesley's dictum that we should go to those who need us most. The present government has achieved remarkable results in a

Contd on page 2

TALKING POINT

by June Hardcastle
Vicar's wife and
Lay Reader
St. Barnabas, Emmer Green

SOME THOUGHTS ON SOLES AND SOULS

It was Saturday morning. I was bustling up and down Broad Street in search of a birthday gift for a friend. Actually I was feeling rather smart, decked out in a rather nice outfit bought in the previous Laura Ashley sale. Feeling somewhat pleased with my appearance, I was eyeing up the passers by.

Gosh, I wonder where the woman bought that PECULIAR scarf. Golly, what an amazingly awful colour jacket that young girl was wearing. Having my nose so firmly in the air I didn't notice an awkward piece of paving. Staggering in a less than smart manner, I looked down at my feet. Several shoppers looked in amazement as they noticed a plump middle aged person dissolving into helpless giggles - smart, superiorly dressed me was wearing one navy shoe and one black shoe!

I was at the monthly prayer for healing service at the Caversham Baptist Church. Elizabeth was praying with me. She quoted from Isaiah.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who preach good news."

A six year old in my class

"Mrs Hardcastle these new shoes are hurting my feet."

"Well, take them off then and put on your P.E. shoes," "I can't. I've left them at home."

"In that case, just walk around the classroom in your socks."

Child moves very close to my ear and whispers tearfully.

"I can't. My mum would kill me."

"Don't be ridiculous!"

"She would. She doesn't want anyone to know that I've got holes in them."

"Oh dear. Never mind, just take your socks off as well. Your feet will be perfectly okay."

Child bursts into noisy sobbing. Sympathetic teacher begins to sound a little edgy.

"Now what's the matter?"

"I can't walk in the classroom in bare feet. I've got a verucca!"

The North American Indians have a saying

"Don't judge a man until you've walked a week in his moccasins."

Nigel may be 47 years of age but, for some reason known only to his genes, his feet have never grown beyond a size 4. He gets a lot of attention in the children's department of Milwards. We love it when he brings home new shoes and out of the box drops the card which says.

"Please bring your child back in 3 months to have his feet measured again."

Rebecca's boyfriend is 18 and still growing. His size 12 boots are regularly on display on our hall floor. We haven't a lot of choice over what size our soles are.

In China they used to bind girls' feet to stop them growing. Poor soles!

What binds have I got that stop my soul from growing?????

Dr. LESLIE GRIFFITHS - METHODIST PRESIDENT

Continued from page 1 -

number of fields. They've brought (and kept) inflation down, controlled the power of various interest groups, and given people greater choice and autonomy in their lives. But there's no denying the considerable malaise to be found in society today - unemployment, bewilderment in the National Health Service, homelessness, poor Care in the Community, impoverishment of students." His call for a change of government and electoral reform followed.

The Conference Service

The procession into Leeds Town Hall was led by a one-year old with his mum and dad and included a Methodist Homes resident well past the age of 90 and others representing the Leeds District Methodist family as well as past Presidents and Vice-Presidents, young people taking part in the service, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Leeds (who read the lesson) and the new President and Vice-President.

The service was quite extraordinary, yet a wonderful act of worship. It included hymns old and new, solos, the Methodist Youth Brass Band (behind which we sat!) and two choirs alongside us - the conductor included us! A 9-strong drama group from the Leeds District gave us 'The Teachers' (from the Iona Community) about those who so often go unnoticed. We had the unaccompanied singing of the 'Gloria' from Peru, and a moving solo 'Save Me' by Cynthia Ugwu from Golders Green.

The climax came with the 14-strong 'God's Posse in Effect' from the President's Golder's Green church who performed a lively, rhythmic, powerfully-inspiring dance 'Shout for Joy'. It was a breathtaking way of expressing the thrill of shouting for joy, singing his name and meeting 'My Lord'. While the call was to 'lift your voices unto the Lord', whole bodies were launched into the air in dramatic fashion and with rapid, intricate foot movements! The President said these black young people face everyday pressures we don't have. Their youth leader was killed and her sister injured in Uganda two weeks earlier, yet at a Friday praise and prayer evening 'these youngsters got up and testified to the power of God and to

hold to his path in days of trouble', adding 'They have been a witness to me.'

There was so much to enjoy, such a variety of styles of music, (including Cwm Rhondda, of course, for a Welsh President) that it was a great thrill to have experienced it all. It ended with the African song 'We are marching in the light of God' (in African and English) as a recessional hymn, led by the Brass Band, the two choirs and the effervescent God's Posse in Effect (by then at their seats between us and the Band). The mood was such that people could hardly tear themselves away and the President led out the procession almost dancing as he went! For us it wasn't finished yet, as the musicians struck up a very lively 'We shall go out with joy' - my word, we certainly did that!

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

The next All Age Praise service will be at 9.30am on 21 August and will be conducted by Rev. David Moody.

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All contributions for September issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 3 August.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 1 August.

The dates for October will be Monday 5 September and Wednesday 7 September.

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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WELCOME ADVICE FOR THE CHURCHES IN CAVERSHAM



- O. Jewiss

Officers of Churches Together in Caversham with the Speaker: from left to right are Ken Dean (Treasurer), the Revd Phil Abrey (Chairman), the Ven. Michael Hill (Archdeacon of Berkshire), the Revd Nigel Hardcastle (Vice-Chairman) and Mrs Audrey Preston (Secretary).

When the Venerable Michael Hill, Archdeacon of Berkshire and the Thames Valley *Alive* Assistant Missioner for Caversham, spoke to the Annual Assembly of Churches Together in Caversham at the end of June, he gave significant pointers as to how we might be more effective as instruments of evangelism. Thames Valley *Alive* would work if we are prepared to play our part: to pray now for our unchurched friend, for courage to speak out about our faith, for wisdom to do it at the right time, and for sensitivity to do so in the right way. Evangelism is a process, it is not the collection of scalps, but the way by which the irreligious become devoted disciples of Christ. The Church is like a greenhouse; it should provide a protected environment for growth where there is continuing fellowship and encouragement.

The Archdeacon went on to give a great deal of practical advice on how we could make our churches welcoming and friendly to those not used to this environment. He pointed out that the majority of confrontations Jesus had with the religious authorities of his day were on the periphery of religion. Today a lot of time is spent talking about the periphery of religion too. This can consume us. We often establish highly visible but relatively superficial boundary markers, such as vocabulary, manner of dress and style of doing things which make it difficult for those outside to come in and join us. In particular the Archdeacon suggested five areas where opportunities existed for improvement, namely the building, the books, the people, the service and the facilities.

Improvements to the lighting of the church and the provision of a welcoming entrance can do much. More care is needed to ensure that new worshippers are neither swamped on arrival by a mass of books and papers nor are they overwhelmed by their welcome but are treated sensitively. New people may also need gentle guidance on where to sit. Often scope exists for sidesmen and stewards to receive some training in these respects.

The services should be accessible to people so that they knew what to do and when to do it. The Archdeacon emphasised the attractiveness of family worship, where families can be together, noise is tolerated, and often because its length is shorter, the sermon is briefer, more visual, and with a

high degree of take home message and where the Bible is seen to be more relevant. Turning to the general facilities he indicated that people needed to know what to do with their children, and whether a creche or Sunday school existed; they needed to know where to find the loos, and what provision there was for the disabled and for the hard of hearing. He advised on comfortable seating and stressed that after church the reception over coffee needed to be friendly. New people really wanted to hear from other Christians of their certainties. What they need to take home was a set of answers and not a set of questions.

WELCOME TO THE CIRCUS

by Rachel Penney

When did you last go to the circus? As a small child? As a teenager? Or was it as an adult, taking your children on their very first trip to the Big Top?

Do you remember the atmosphere of excitement? The noise and bustle of people finding their seats, the laughter and chatter? And what about those faces – the faces of eager children waiting for the opening act?

Well, that sense of *expectation* is not limited to trips to the circus. It will also be evident at the many and varied youth events taking place over the next few months as part of the Thames Valley *Alive* Good News 94 (TVA).

MUSICAL JAM!

Recently, over 500 enthusiastic young people attended the annual J.A.M. (Jesus And Music) concert, staged by local Christians at Rivermead Leisure Centre. It was an evening of "musical exuberance", from the Funky Beehive's opening to Eden Burning's grand finale. One of the quiet spots was performed by singer and songwriter Jelen Jayne:

It was a delight to perform to such an appreciative audience", she said, "and my hope is that young lives were touched by God's love through my songs."

Another musical attraction has been the touring Christian rock band TVB. Visiting local schools (Highdown, Chiltern Edge and Langtree) they played in assemblies and took part in R.E. lessons – letting young people know what being a Christian means to them.

CLOWNING AROUND?

July 9th saw the appearance of clowns on the scene – no, not in school, not at the circus, but at St Agnes' Church in Whitley. A workshop for 11-20 year olds was held during the *afternoon and evening* (allowing plenty of time for that essential teenage past-time, the Saturday morning lie-in!). Drama, Cringe-Free Evangelism, Banners and Posters, Clowns, and Mime were just some of the activities on offer. This was no spectator event; full participation was had by all, along with plenty of fun. And the aim of all this clowning around?

To prepare for the main TVA youth event on October 5th when Baptist Minister Steve Chalke will present his *Welcome to the Circus* evening at Rivermead Leisure Centre. Be ready not only for lots of laughter, but for a *dynamic and unconventional* presentation of the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

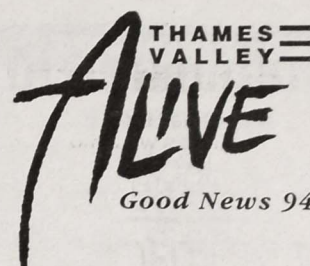
On July 16th a "Celebration of Jesus" was held. This event, organised by the young people themselves, was specially designed with their friends in mind. As were the posters which advertised it: how could anyone resist the challenging invitation – "There's a B-B-Q, so come and Pig Out!" – written in small print beneath the main title? Hopefully, many of the young people who went were challenged by more than the food, and will be interested enough to come along on October 5th to Steve Chalke's "Circus" evening.

AND FINALLY...

The clowns invite ALL CHILDREN OF 12 OR UNDER to a Summer Special at Christchurch Meadows on 23-24th August (2-4pm each day). Activities will include face-painting, making musical instruments, drama, puppets, and much, much more!

With all these young people's events in view, Mike Holmes, from Caversham Hill Chapel, voices the hopes of youth leaders from many Caversham Churches when he says:

I hope that the TVA young people's events will help children to see that church does not have to be boring, but is *relevant* to where they are, and an *exciting* place to be. I pray that many young lives will be radically changed as they meet Jesus at these events."



ST. PETER'S ALIVE!

The "Erleigh Cantors" will be entertaining visitors at St Peter's, Caversham on Friday evening 23rd September.

The concert is a highlight of the four day Harvest Festival 22nd-25th September when the theme will be celebrated in Flowers and Music.

Tickets for the Concert priced £3.50, to include a glass of wine, are available from Tillmans 475711, Bennetts 473096, Scotts 479179 and Caversham Bookshop.

Coffee, Ploughman's Lunches and Afternoon Teas will be available in the Church throughout the four day Festival.

There will be attractive photographic displays of Brownie, Guide, Cub and Scout activities, plus the many adult interest groups.



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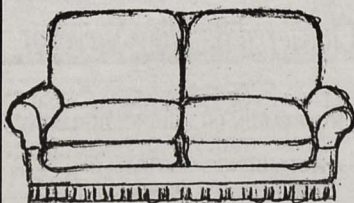
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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

HANDS OFF OUR GREEN FIELDS

As the deadline for influencing the final outcome for local Government approaches, alarm, consternation, surprise and horror all mount as if all this had suddenly sprung out of the blue instead of having been about for months, if not years, inviting discussion, but receiving yawns.

Let us not concern ourselves here with what is happening in distant parts of the realm (Rutland restored, Lancashire annihilated, and Humberside returned to those from whom it was taken) nor even with what is happening in less remote areas such as parts of Newbury and Wokingham, which to the uninformed eye look as though they are part of Reading. Instead, let us be totally parochial and concentrate on what is going on on our own doorstep.

Here, the most likely option is for an enlarged Reading to take in part of Eye and Dunsden between Henley Road and the river. Then Reading and whatever unitary authority then administers the area south of the river (it will not be Berkshire because that is due for the chop) will be able to build another river bridge without asking south Oxfordshire who will continue to refuse to play.

This leads to alarm in Oxfordshire, where it is seen as the first stage of a link-up through its rural areas with the M40. Berkshire and Reading have always said it is to be a local bridge for local needs, as a by-pass for Sonning and central Caversham and will no more lead to mass motorway building than the various by-passes Oxfordshire County Council have already permitted along the route of the A4074. Another group, however, can only see a third bridge being of any use if it is connected by a long, inevitably damaging and expensive by-pass leading to the A4074, north of the Borough and through Oxfordshire, who certainly, if they still existed then, would not be prepared to contribute a single penny to it.

This view is fuelled by one of the options which shows the parishes of Eye and Dunsden, Kidmore End and Mapledurham all absorbed into a greater Reading. This is a wildly improbable outcome which stands little chance of becoming reality. Reading itself acknowledges in its submission that extending boundaries into adjoining counties where there is likely to be a lot of opposition will not, in accordance with the Boundaries Commission guidelines, be given serious consideration, and apart from the small section of Eye and Dunsden they have no ambitions in that direction.

This does not mean that residents of the areas concerned should not make their views known, but wild assumptions that Reading will stop at nothing to get its hands on south Oxfordshire's rural acres are very wide of the mark. What is necessary is constant vigilance to ensure that areas like south Oxfordshire should be defended from the attacks of powerful organisations which have none of the public accountability that constrains local government.

GRAVEL HILL DECISION

None of the foregoing should be taken to mean that this column gives blanket support to all that Reading Borough Council does. Stuart Hylton, Head of Planning and Environmental Health, calls Watchdog to task for suggesting that local planners had weakened on Bugs Bottom. Planners must know planning law better than the man or woman in the street, in which case it must be planning law that is out of kilter in this matter. If the Secretary of State said there was to be no access into Gravel Hill, that, in the eyes of most people, was that. His inspector did not say 'O.K. Develop the rest of the site then ask the borough if you can have access from Gravel Hill for some of the houses because you have blocked them off from the rest of the site'. He did not even suggest that they sell that awkward bit to someone else and get them to ask, because he would know that planning permission goes with the site and not the current owners. It would never have occurred to him to tell them to sell it to themselves under another name and get round it in that way.

Looking at the problem from all angles, standing it on its head and standing it sideways, it is therefore difficult for the uninstructed mind of the general public to come to any conclusion other than that this application should have been refused, and if necessary gone to public inquiry. It happens in other cases, so why not in this one?

DOUGLAS ROSS

His many friends and members of those organisations in which he was involved were all shocked to hear of the sudden and unexpected death of Douglas Ross. In spite of the sadness of the loss of Mary towards the end of last year, Douglas had courageously picked up the threads of his life again and continued his involvement with the various causes in which he was always an active participant, rather than a passenger. He was Reading born and bred and felt a sense of responsibility towards the community in which he lived.

Caversham and District Residents' Association is only one of many bodies across the town which is going to miss him, not just because of the efficient way in which he carried out the work of being its honorary Treasurer but because of his equable nature and lack of self-centredness. He was a good man who will be remembered fondly for a long time.

A LOVESOME THING

A warm June evening attracted a gathering of gardeners of varying degrees of success to Gardeners' Question Time, organised by the Park Rangers at Mapledurham Pavilion. With problems, failures and threats assailing them on all sides it is amazing that gardening should be one of Britain's most popular pastimes. Vanishing daffodils, rampaging Japanese knot weed, and hoards of predatory slugs, were only a few of the discour-

agements that might well have led them to throw the whole thing in and pave it over, but far from it. There they were, animatedly discussing their problems with fellow sufferers and obviously thriving on it. One questioner, with blithe disregard for all the traps awaiting anyone trying to turn their patch into a lovesome thing, asked the panel if they could suggest flowers and plants bearing, or suggesting, the names of various members of her family, so that she could plant a family garden. What a lovely idea, though I know if I attempted it, slugs would devour them or ground elder choke them. Nevertheless throughout the summer, Caversham gardens have produced colourful displays in sufficient numbers to bear witness to humanity's determined optimism.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Hemdean House School had a party of parents, staff and pupils out earlier this year tidying up and improving their Hemdean Road frontage and a very good job they made of it. This small school has been part of the Caversham scene since 1859, and at this year's Speech Day, held on a very warm afternoon in a marquee in the school grounds, an audience of parents and friends of the school heard how the school had continued to maintain a high standard of success in public examinations. This year's highlights also were the success of one pupil in gaining a L.A.M. silver medal with honours, the school's first, and a rare qualification for a sixteen year old still at school, whilst at national level another pupil won the Margaret Milner Memorial Medal awarded by ISIS (the independent schools' body) for her performance of Tituba in the Crucible.

As the Head of Bluecoat School, who presented the prizes, told his young listeners, it is amazing what can be achieved when everyone co-operates and pulls together, and when the strong links in the chain help the weakest. The two small boys who illustrated this for him with a paper chain also played their parts with befitting seriousness.

At the end of this term Dr. Marwick the present headmistress, will be leaving, and her place will be taken by Mrs. P. Pethybridge, the present deputy head, who teaches history and has been on the staff for several years. The founder, Francis Knighton and his daughter, Miss Matilda Knighton, would be pleased to see how well their school is doing in a world they would scarcely recognise.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

SUNSHINE, FLOWERS and THUNDERSTORM for ST. JOHN'S



- Mary Smith

This beautiful arrangement was created by Margaret Cameron and Joan Sills of St. John's Church to represent St. John the Baptist.

The May Fair started in rain but proved to be very successful, finishing in sunshine with £800 for the much needed funds. There is a great need to expand before we burst out of the Halls! The Mother's Union flower service was just as full with friends from other churches joining us for this very much appreciated act of worship when bunches of flowers are brought to the altar and then taken to sick friends. This year one of our members had had a birthday and her daughter had sent her so many flowers from Australia that they simply would not fit into her flat and some beautiful lilies came to church - thank you very

much, Mrs. Jones. The Rev. Stephen Rowe preached about the flowers and their life cycle representing our Christian faith.

Half term saw very successful Scout and Cub camps with the Scouts going off to the New Forest, so that Skip could practise all his family skills before his marriage on June 18th. The sun shone for Ken Tallett and Pauline Crowshaw. The Scouts (amongst whom were five sets of brothers) formed a guard of honour to greet the happy couple.

June 22nd dawned and buckets, flowers, greenery and very busy ladies appeared from all corners with all sorts of objects - birds, crosses

and cake stands, to mention but a few. Creation began and soon thirty displays were completed. Once the rubbish was cleared away a wonderful array of Saints had come alive and the fragrance was overwhelming. All our local churches, some companies, a local school, local gardeners and local clubs took part in our Flower Festival, our major contribution to Thames Valley Alive - Reading's Mission to bring many to the Good News of Jesus Christ. Certainly over four hundred visitors passed through the church doors including all the children from Thameside School and Newbridge Nursery. One memorable point was some of the Thameside Children bursting into Kum bah Ya when told they were sitting in the choir stalls.

June 24th was St. John's day and we were delighted to have The Bishop of Reading, John Bone, and his wife, Ruth, with us for our Festal Eucharist, when the Bishop officially dedicated the flowers and declared the Festival open, preaching around our theme of "Saints Alive" and beseeching us to follow their examples today and be alive to everybody's needs and skills. During his sermon The Bishop suggested we should all be still and listen to the sounds around us. Just like well behaved children the elements were quiet and



- Mary Smith

This representation of St. Hugh of Lincoln was contributed by Thameside Primary School.

so was the traffic - we really could hear God's voice should we wish to. As soon as the silence was over the thunder and lightning began all over again and raged through the evening with summer flashes all round the church. The wetness and the loss of light made refreshments in the marquee quite difficult but true to St. John's traditions we were not daunted and despite the storms all were fed and watered. We have been able to send nice contributions to Newbridge's Deaf unit, Mother's Union

Overseas and Thames Valley Alive Mission. Thank you to everybody involved.

Two days later the Mother's Union held their first Garden Meeting in the Vicarage garden. The meeting was completed with the final addition to the Garden of Remembrance, when the seat given by Miss Audrey Vince in memory of her brother Don, who served the church as a longtime member of the choir and at the time of his death was Church Warden, was dedicated by the Rev. Stephen Rowe.



The 22nd Reading St. John's Scouts provide a Guard of Honour for Ken Tallett and Pauline Crowshaw on their wedding day.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

CHURCH CHOIRS IN CAVERSHAM



Top: St. Peter's Choir. Above: St. Andrew's Choir.

Did you know that St. Andrew's and St. Peter's have choirs singing traditional music, and that each has a children's section? We are always happy to welcome new members.

Do you enjoy singing?

Would you like to learn more about music?

Do you fancy instant stardom in the front seats at Sunday services?

If so, think about joining us.

Why join a church choir?

It's good fun, you can make friends and enjoy music.

How old do I have to be?

The age range in the junior section is 7½ to 14 (or until boys' voices change).

Do I have to be able to read music?

No - we can teach you. If you have learnt a musical instrument, that will help.

Does it cost anything?

No. We provide all music and tuition, and choir robes for Sunday services. We even pay you a little pocket money...

What sort of commitment is asked?

At St. Peter's the choir sings for the 9.15 and 6.30 services on Sunday; choir practice is on Thursday evening from 6.30 to 8.30 (very young children can be collected at 7.15 after the junior practice).

At St. Andrew's the choir sings for the 10.00 service and occasionally at 6.30; choir practice is on Friday evening from 7.00 to 8.15.

Are there other events apart from Sundays?

Yes. You can sing for weddings occasionally on Saturdays. There are a very few weekday evening services for special events in the church's year.

How will I know how I am getting on?

Both choirs run the 'Sing Aloud' scheme of the Royal School of Church Music, you can work for graded medals awarded internally, and later on for outside awards.

Is there an audition?

No; but we will check that you can sing in tune.

But I don't go to church!

Not a problem; come and try it!

Yes, I'm interested. What do I do now?

Either phone the organist (or ask Mum or Dad to phone):

St. Peter's: Mrs. Elizabeth Cooke, on 463956

St. Andrew's: Philip Aspen, on 473618.

Or come along to the first choir practice in September (both choirs have a break during August) - that's Thursday 1st September at St. Peter's, or Friday 9th September at St. Andrew's.

Both choirs also welcome adult singers; please contact the organist at either church.

WELCOME SHEILA!



- E. S. Archer

Rev. Sheila Nunn has come to Caversham to assist Richard Kingsbury at St. Peter's Caversham and St. Margaret's at Mapledurham. Sheila was ordained Deacon at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, on Sunday, 3rd July in the morning and was happily received by the congregation of St. Peter's on the same day, at Evensong.

ST. MARGARET'S NEWS

FAREWELL AND WELCOME

This summer St Margaret's has said goodbye to three faithful members of their church community.

Judy Wright has lived for more than twenty years in Mapledurham and has been a regular attender at services. When most churches keep their doors locked during the week, St Margaret's has been kept open because Judy has unlocked it each morning and Roualeyn Cumming-Bruce locked it each night. Judy has also put out the cups and saucers each Sunday so that whoever was on coffee duty found this part of their work already done. She has also served on the PCC. The congregation at St Margaret's owe her a great debt of gratitude and wish her every happiness in her new home close to St John's in Caversham where she intends to worship. Members do hope she will sometimes return to join them at the 11am Eucharist as she will be greatly missed and it would be lovely to see her from time to time.

Ray and Pauline West have also left to live in Dorset. Although they have not been worshipping at St Margaret's as long as Judy, nevertheless they, too, have both taken an active part in the church life. Ray started Scratch Dial, a quarterly newsletter for St Margaret's and it was Ray who drew up plans for the church loo and helped to get them passed. (But more about this new and necessary project in a later edition of Caversham Bridge). Pauline has recently run the coffee rota. They, too, will be missed and to them, as well as Judy, St Margaret's sends their best wishes for every happiness in their new homes.

St Margaret's may have said farewell to three of their congregation, but they also welcome most sincerely Sheila Nunn as she begins her ministry at Mapledurham. Members hope she finds St Margaret's a friendly and lively church, and send her their best wishes for her future among them.

THAMES VALLEY ALIVE - TO NORDIC INVASION!

Twentyeight delegates from eight countries spent a summer week exploring how the Church of England serves the people. The tenth Anglican-Lutheran Pastoral Conference brought church-sponsored participants from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia and England to Reading to share visions for mission.

After a rousing introduction by the Archdeacon of Berkshire, seminars in Reading Prison, Church House Westminster, the Department of the Environment, Reading Hospitals and at The Vine, Caversham (where the Radford team gave wonderful hospitality), delegates met officials of Oxford Diocese at Church House Oxford and were treated to a stimulating talk by Bishop Richard on 'The sweet spirituality of the Church of England.'

Hospitality was generously given by local Christians. The Eucharist at St Mary Minster Church and supper at St Mary's House were appreciated by all, as was the last night cruise up the Thames to Mapledurham on 'Princess Marina'.



- Photo Frederik Lautmann

Pictured above after a St Peter's Eucharist are Meg Gale (Conference Administrator and delegate), Richard Kingsbury (Anglican Chairman) and Dr Anders Backstrom (Lutheran Chairman).

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

A FEAST OF FESTIVALS

Of the five Anglican Churches in Caversham and Mapledurham three are dedicated to saints whose anniversaries fall in the last three weeks in June. Thus in rapid succession St. Barnabas, St. John the Baptist and St. Peter are remembered in Festival Services with visiting preachers each striving, and often succeeding, to say something new about the patron saint. Each year the host congregation welcomes visitors to their churches with appropriate hospitality. Thus it was this year when the Revd Paul Kenchington, the previous minister at Caversham Park, returned to preach at St. Barnabas; the Bishop of Reading came to St John's not only to preach and to preside at the Eucharist but also to dedicate their Flower Festival (part of the special events for Thames Valley Alive); St. Peter's welcomed as their preacher the new Assistant Rural Dean of Reading, the Revd Brian Shenton, Rector and Vicar of the Minster Church of St. Mary and of St. Laurence's.

This year was the 65th anniversary of the consecration of St. Barnabas Church, which also coincides with St. Peter's Day. To mark the occasion the new altar frontal "St. Barnabas in the midst of the Holy Spirit", which was specially commissioned from the well known church embroiderer, Jacquie Binns, was dedicated in her presence on the Sunday nearest to the actual date. Coincident with this an exhibition of Images in Textiles was mounted in the church, which for a weekend was bedecked with banners from all over Caversham and farther afield and with many works of art and craft from local people, mostly from within the church.

Our pictures show: (1) outside St. Barnabas Church the visiting preacher the Revd Paul Kenchington (left) with the Vicar, the Revd Nigel Hardcastle; (2) the Bishop of Reading and Mrs Ruth Bone about to admire the flower arrangement dedicated to St. Guthbert in the Sanctuary of St. John's Church; (3) The Assistant Rural Dean of Reading, the Revd Brian Shenton, (right) with the Rector of Caversham, Canon Richard Kingsbury, enjoying refreshment after the Service at St Peter's; (4) Jacquie Binns, the embroiderer of the new altar frontal "St Barnabas in the midst of the Holy Spirit" with the Vicar, the Revd Nigel Hardcastle on the occasion of the dedication. Banners by Ann Farmer, specially made for English Martyrs Roman Catholic Church, can be seen displayed behind the altar.

- O. Jewiss

INDUCTION OF FORMER CAVERSHAM MINISTER AS PRESIDENT OF METHODIST CONFERENCE



- Pam Halliott

Gerry Alderman of Gosbrook Road Methodist Church with Dr. and Mrs. Griffiths.

Just three weeks before becoming this year's President of Conference, the Rev. Dr. Leslie Griffiths returned on 5th June, to preach at Caversham Heights Methodist Church where, with all the churches in the Caversham section, he had been the minister in 1974-77. After the service, cheques were presented to him from Gosbrook Road and Caversham Heights churches and a basket of flowers was given to Mrs. Margaret Griffiths. Dr. Griffiths recalled that he used to travel to minister to the Caversham Park Village ecumenical church on his bike; He was the first occupant of the newly-built manse in Highmoor Road and spoke of great days with the Caversham Boys' Brigade at camp. He is very proud to be the first Circuit minister (as distinct from a University professor or from high office in the church) to be elected to the Presidency since the Second World War and the days of Donald Soper. He goes from the Finchley and Hendon Circuit and prior to that was minister of the Hinde Street West London Mission, where he took turns with Dr. Donald Soper at Speakers' Corner on Tower Hill.

OBITUARY

JESSICA GILBERT

Those of you who have, in the past, enjoyed the productions of the Caversham Players will be saddened to learn that Jessica Gilbert died on Friday the 17th June at the Sue Ryder Home in Nettlebed.

Jessica first joined the Players in June 1985 when they put on a Summer Entertainment and she directed the one-act play "There's Always Spring". From then on Jessica directed regularly for the group, freely offering them her skills and expertise which were the fruits of her long association with the theatre. Under her guidance the Players delighted audiences with thrillers such as "House by the Lake", comedies such as "Book of the Month", and classics such as "Dear Brutus", "The Rivals" and "Arms and the Man". In November 1986 Jessica assisted Wolfgang Van Emden with the production of "Murder in the Cathedral" which was put on at St. Andrew's Church and also at Christ Church in Reading. More recently she directed "The Hollow Crown" which was performed at St. Andrew's and at St. Matthew's, Southcote in November last year.

Jessica's love of literature and her high standards of professionalism were imparted to those of us who worked with her. As a member of Progress and Berkshire Shakespeare Players for many years no-one was better qualified to demonstrate how it should be done but once the First Night arrived Jessica never fussed around backstage. Her work completed, she wished the cast well and joined the audience knowing that, as always, she had given of her best.

Jessica was a founder member of St. Crispin's School, Wokingham, and remained on the staff there until her retirement ten years ago. As a qualified teacher and LRAM she taught English and Drama and was responsible for O and A-level work in English.

During her very active retirement she continued to share her passion for English Literature with others, directing plays, enjoying visits to the theatre, giving classes in drama and leading readings. She was also Chairman of her local Conservative Ladies' Association, a governor of Reading Girls' School and an active worker with the Women's Royal Voluntary Service.

Jessica was unmarried but although she had no close family she had a special gift for friendship. She valued and nurtured her friends, taking a keen interest in their activities and delighting in their company.

The illness from which she died escalated in the last year and brought her life swiftly to a close. She died as she had lived, with courage and dignity. She will be sadly missed by those who knew and loved her.



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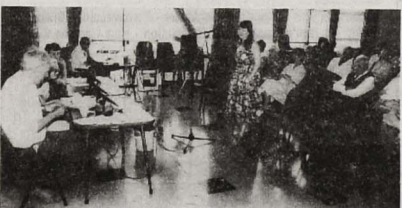
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CAVERSHAM COURT ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE

Gardeners' Question Time held at Mapledurham Pavilion on Wednesday, 15th June, was attended by about forty people, many of whom brought problem plants to be 'analysed'. On the panel were David Penny, Patricia Green and Dr. Peggy Ellis, all experts in various aspects of gardening.



- E. S. Archer

A member of the audience poses a question at 'Gardeners' Question time.

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'BUCKS EYOT'



Bucks Eyot - nearest to Caversham Bridge.

Just upstream from Caversham Bridge, on the Caversham side of the river, are three small islands, owned by Reading Borough and leased by them on a yearly basis, to the people who own the nearby river bank houses. These islands have always been home to river-bank wildlife - birds and animals alike! But erosion has taken its toll, and the islands are getting smaller. The last few winters have been extremely wet and the river has been in flood with very strong currents; the islands have been under water for days on end. When the waters subside inevitably they take top-soil with them. The large and powerful motor launches which now use the river, often travelling faster than they should, create heavy 'washes' which help to erode islands and river banks. It has been claimed that the river-birds, especially swans and ducks have denuded the islands, but both the islands and birds have been here for many years as older local inhabitants will tell you, and erosion has only started comparatively recently.

Many Caversham residents will have seen the programme on Meridian T.V. regarding Reading Borough Councils' proposals to 'build-up' and restore these islands. Mr. Adrian Lawson, Officer-in-Charge of Conservation matters talked to Mrs. Joan Hammond who cares for Bucks Eyot nearest to the Bridge, which being the most exposed has suffered badly; she backs the conservation plans wholeheartedly! Joan has looked after river-birds for many years, ducks of various breeds, grebes, coots etc., as well as swans, and has no self-interest in the repair and conservation of 'her' island - her concern is only for all the wild-life which will again be able to regard the islands as their home.

MUSIC AT MAPLEDURHAM

On Friday 27th May a capacity audience in St Margaret's Church heard a delightful recital by The Erleigh Quartet. These four talented musicians, Alison Wood and Rosie Stephens (sopranos), Ian Westley (tenor) and Timothy Munday (baritone) entertained with a varied programme of vocal and piano music. The musical items were interspersed with apposite poetry readings sensitively presented by Gill and James McInnes. The high spot of the evening was undoubtedly Tim Munday's arrangement of Gustav Holst's Planet Suite for eight hands on two pianos. A very thrilling performance.

Dear Editors,

Sad to see Waitrose continue to blot their copybook. What was a good family service store is following the giant firms in this ever-growing commercial babylon. Waitrose could well do without selling flowers, newspapers and goods not expected in a food store for further gain. The small shops of Caversham are losing out by this, spoiling the character of the village, like the departure of the much needed wool shop for one.

Now Waitrose hopes to add to their 'blotting' further by all day opening of the stores on a Sunday if the law is passed. There is no need in this district to do so. Forbuys and other stores and shops open late on a Friday. Saturday opening also is enough for people to get in their household needs, leaving the Sabbath rest alone, including their staff.

It is just because of this, together with the neglect of Scriptural Christianity in our schools and colleges the nation is on the downward drop; this is not back to basics. The Sabbath is a blessing to the people - we are charged to keep the Sabbath. It is a time of worship and family rest and is a personal Covenant between the Almighty and His people. Does then commercial Babylon count for more than this?

Yours etc,

Ted Burnell, retired Pastor

11 Bristow Court,
Hartley Road, Caversham.

HAROLD

Dear Editors,

With regard to the article about the Pop-in Centre in last month's Caversham Bridge, I wish to point out that my late husband was always called Harold and never Harry.

Yours etc,
Sheila Hobbs

4a Conisboro Avenue,
Caversham

APOLOGIES AND CORRECTION

It is regretted that in the article on Caversham West Friends of Guiding Cookery event, on page 3 of the July edition, Lis Rout's phone number was incorrect. It should read 471738.

TERNS (Part 2)

To all genuine bird lovers, the late Mr. Ted Eales OBE, for all his many attributes, will forever be synonymous with his love for terns.

His interest in birds was not only land-based, but held his attention during war years afloat in the Royal Navy.

This true 'Norfolk lad', born into a Christian family, a man of unswerving faith and loyalty himself, became an 'Institution'. Living at Morston, near Blakeney, on the north coast of Norfolk, he threw in his lot with the National Trust, and was made head-warden of the Blakeney Point bird reserve for a great many years.

He helped many thousands of terns to find natural breeding sites and entirely due to his hard work and husbandry, Blakeney Point became one of the leading terneries in Britain.

Ted was a very fine photographer and lecturer who in later years, wrote his autobiography illustrated with his own photography. Before becoming an Anglian Television celebrity, he was regularly invited to give ornithological lectures throughout Britain.

Upon joining Anglia T.V. he made many films as head photographer for the well-known 'Anglian Survival' series and was filming on the Falklands at the outbreak of hostilities when two of his lady team-members were rescued from the island of South Georgia well covered by the media at the time.

For many years he made superb recordings incorporating a parabolic-reflector, seldom used in those days for isolating bird-voices.

The tea-house on the Point still provides refreshments for visitors, with upstairs bedrooms for special guests and students, and a look-out post above. A radio-telephone pole stands amid the salicornia bushes, which often teem with migrants and rarities.

Ted's family worked hard ferrying provisions and assisting during busy visiting periods. His step-son still operates a daily boat-service between Morston Creek, the Reserve, and 'seal-point' at the tip of Blakeney Point.

When terns are nesting, predators such as gulls and the Short-eared Owl prevail, but the most serious of all is man - the 'egg-stealer', which is one reason why the look-out post was equipped with an enormous telescope to forewarn of their approach from land or sea. Without realising it, they often betray their intentions!

This is only a brief and inadequate tribute to a fine gentleman who, with his family, I was very privileged to know for nearly forty years.

SCOPS OWL

STEPFAMILIES

An Information Day for all those concerned with and about
Stepfamilies on Saturday 24th September 1994
10.00am to 4.00pm

at St. Peter's Church Hall and Church of England
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Principal Speakers:

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Author and Founding member of the National Stepfamilies Association
Noreen Tingle

Secretary of the Grandparents Federation

This Information Day is open to anyone concerned with and about
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CAVERSHAM CHARITY FOLK FESTIVAL

The weather was perfect for the first Caversham Folk Festival on the weekend of June 17-19. Over 50 groups and performers were involved in the festival which featured concerts, dances, sing-a-rounds, musicians' sessions, children's events, dance displays, workshops and craft stalls.

The events were centred at The Millers Arms, Paddock Road, with the final session hosted by the Readifolk Song Club at its regular Sunday night venue of The Griffin, Church Road, Caversham.

The festival attracted a most encouraging number of visitors and raised, through sponsorship and voluntary donations, about £1800 for eight local charities:

R.I.T.O. (Reading Industrial Therapy Organisation)	B.A.S. (Berkshire Autistic Society)
N.S.F. (National Schizophrenia Fellowship)	CRUSE (Bereavement Service)
A.R.M.S. (Reading Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre)	Camp Mohawk
C.F.T. (Cystic Fibrosis Trust)	The Berkshire Branch of the Red Cross

The organisers were delighted with the response and hope that the Caversham Charity Folk Festival will become an annual event.



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St. Peter's Guides and Brownies held their Summer Fete in the Rectory Garden on Saturday, 25th June. The sun shone and it was a happy and successful day!

KATY IN CAVERSHAM

Forgive me if I have a private 'beef'. We all have some expression which really annoys - one of my favourites is 'I keep myself to myself'. Recently, trying to trace somebody I discovered a lady who confesses to knowing very little about her neighbour though I gather she has

lived next door for many years. Few of us want to be in and out of each other's houses all the time, but that's a different thing from shutting ourselves off. That's just one reason why there are so many lonely people around and why bodies are sometimes found where they have

lain in a house for perhaps days. We all need friends at some time. One of my neighbours has recently had twins and told me she was looking forward to being home a lot more and getting to know more people. I like it!

JACK DAINTY

Jack, alas, didn't have the opportunity to get to know as many people as did his wife Peggy, because since moving to Emmer Green from Lower Caversham some eight years ago, Jack has had much illness and lost his leg some years ago. But Peggy, far from wanting to 'keep herself to herself' and having been involved in a number of local organisations for many years, was greatly supported during Jack's illness by friends and neighbours who called in. They were always welcomed by Jack who, weather permitting, was out in the garden, which he loved very much. He died some weeks ago. One of the nice things about Peggy and Jack marrying in June 1977 - they both had lost their previous partners - was the way in which Peggy's daughters, Gillian and Elizabeth, both married themselves, remained very close to Peggy and Jack and gave Peggy a great deal of support at a

time when otherwise caring for Jack would have been quite a strain. Peggy never spared herself and was determined to keep Jack at home as long as necessary.

THE RED CROSS

Some months ago I mentioned the good offices of the Red Cross in providing transport for people having to attend hospital at some distance. Since then I've used the services on a couple of occasions and have been most impressed. Apart from the transport itself, the drivers are very good at finding where to go, where to park and so on. It makes the whole thing much easier. I've been talking to Mrs. Brain, the Community Care Officer (872165) who says she would be delighted if we would advertise their services and would like it if we could also mention the need to recruit new drivers and escorts. It would be nice if we could help to fill this need.

AND NOW APOLOGIES

Unfortunately holidays and other things have held up news of the diamond wedding of Eileen and Bert Wake in June. (We don't get many diamond weddings to report and this certainly requires more than a mere mention). Hopefully next

month we shall be able to include not only a photograph, but more interesting details about Mr. and Mrs. Wake. In the meantime, again, my apologies.

NEW MANAGER FOR LLOYDS BANK

Welcome back to Peter Jackson, who has just been appointed manager of Lloyds Bank in Caversham. Peter began his banking career in Tilehurst and has since worked at most of the Bank's branches in the Reading area. He is married with a 2½-year old daughter and another baby is expected in August. He is a keen cricketer and an active member of St. Peter's congregation. Peter is very pleased to be working again in his home town.

CHESS CHAMPION

Congratulations to Edward Armstrong, who has qualified for the under 11 England Chess Team. This is hardly surprising from a boy who played in his first tournament at five. Edward, the son of Richard and Veronica Armstrong of St. Peter's, will be representing Berkshire at the British Chess Championships. We wish him well and will watch his further progress with interest and admiration.

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the CLUBS

Caversham W.I.

A warm June evening found members listening to an inspiring talk by Mr. Peter Ford of 'Feed the Children'. This local charity is doing sterling work in helping to relieve the suffering of refugees in Bosnia and Eastern European areas. A collection of tinned food given by members will help this valuable work. Pennies for Friendship benefited from the penny vote in the best rose competition, "Queen Elizabeth" being the popular winner.

Rosehill W.I.

The June meeting of Rosehill W.I. was the birthday party and as a celebration the Speaker, Mr. A. Baldwin, helped members to enjoy their meeting more. He told of old Music Hall artistes and their famous songs which members sang along with him. The plant and "bring and buy" stall successfully raised money for the Institute as did a raffle which produced over £23.

Members have knitted squares which were made into ten blankets for the premature baby unit.

The Ramblers' first picnic in May was at Christmas Common

and in June they walked over Binfield Heath and ended with a Pub Lunch.

Caversham Heights T.G.

June was the month for the annual birthday party which was as usual a happy occasion. There was a Caribbean atmosphere with bright colours and paper garlands being worn by members of the committee. After a little preliminary business which included welcoming new members there was an especially sparkling entertainment. Singing and comedy were presented by a group called "Enterprise 2". What fun it was to hear "Jealousy" sung by an attractive lady in a swishy green dress! Supper with a Caribbean flavour followed this.

Social studies group managed to fill a big coach and enjoyed a lovely summer's day at Brighton, with a visit to the Royal Pavilion. There was a chance to sunbathe on the Palace Pier, to explore the Lanes and mingle with the holiday crowd. The driver of the coach coped exceedingly well with the route, mostly on the M25.

The guild meets on the third Thursday in each month at 7.30pm in St Andrew's Hall. Social studies meets at Highmoor Hall at 7.45pm on the fourth Monday. New members and visitors are always welcome.

Caversham Ladies Club

Mrs Brenda Strong, the Chairman, opened the meeting and welcomed the members to their afternoon club. Mrs Strong said it was good to see Mrs Harwood back after such a long time absent through ill health, and members showed, with loud applause, how pleased they were on her return to the club. The outing to Eastbourne had been enjoyed by most people although the weather had not been very kind. Plenty of rain, summer weather!

The speaker for the afternoon was then

introduced to members, the Revd George Neal, whom the club was lucky to have to give his time as he had retired and was in the throes of moving away from Reading. What a wonderful store of stories he had to share.

Laughter, sadness, joy, starting from his childhood which was in the East End of London, where he was one of nine brought up in a working class environment. From the age of eleven he had a strong interest in religion and did numerous odd jobs to pay for his training, some jobs paying two shillings weekly, another in a jam factory where he worked in a temperature of one hundred degrees, but as he said, it all helped towards his goal. After four years training, he went to four churches, eight years at each of two of them, fourteen years and seven years with the remaining two, and learned a great deal as each was different. He was also chaplain on two wards at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. His wish and need was to serve God always and by the end of his talk one realised how much he had enjoyed all those years and faith doing God's work.

Members showed their appreciation of a good and interesting afternoon in their usual way, and wish him all the best in his new venture, retirement.

Emmer Green T.G.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild met in St Barnabas Hall on the second Tuesday evening in the month.

ARTS & CRAFTS - had to cancel their garden expedition because of the rain.

WORDS & MUSIC - will have the pleasure of watching a video of Schubert's Trout Quintet at their next meeting.

RAMBLERS - have had three walks since the last meeting. The first was a really wonderful walk through the bluebells at Highmoor woods and although it was very wet the rain stopped long enough to have a picnic lunch. The second walk was around Mapledurham and it rained really heavily for the whole three hours of the walk - so lunch was taken home. The walk was still enjoyed by everyone. The third walk was around the Ruscombe area plus a coffee and a look around Kennedys nursery.

The competition for the "Nora Pollard" vase to be judged by our

speaker for the evening, Gill Purnell, was judged on two flowers or one flower and a piece of foliage in a vase. The standard for this year was really high. The judge decided that the display of two yellow flowers in a tiny shell was the winner. Margaret Pocock the winner this year will have the pleasure of the Nora Pollard vase for this year.

The talk for the evening on "First Aid Tips" was given to us by Gill Purnell from St Johns Ambulance from the Reading area. Gill started her talk telling us about Ascot week and that St Johns Ambulance are there to look after the jockeys but find that people with their wine bottles also need a lot of attention.

Gill gave members lots of First Aid tips useful around the home and also how to approach certain incidents calmly. We all found it very interesting as well as useful.

Next month's talk will be on the "Sport of Kings".

Caversham Afternoon T.G.

Roses on the Chairman's table, strawberries awaiting their

raffle winner, and a warm sunny afternoon all added up to the June meeting of the Guild. Plans were under way for the much looked forward-to Garden Party to be held at Mrs Adair's home on 4th August. Members were invited to join a ramble to the Bugs Bottom area arranged for a date two weeks hence by Mrs Gale. News was given to members of an autumn trip to the Forest of Dean. Mrs Odey had fixed a date for this trip for October. Backdated copies of Townswomen magazine being displayed on the Sales Table had been laid aside for future reference by former Guild Secretary Mrs Froud and now made interesting comparison with current copies of the magazine.

Mrs Bonham's talk on 'Victorian Dickens' highlighted the vast changes in social conditions that a century and a half have brought. Children's lives nowadays happily bear no resemblance to those 'hard times' when it was commonplace for children to be employed for perhaps ten to

turn to page 11

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the CLUBS

from page 10

twelve hours daily for a pittance. Boy chimney sweeps were a reality at that time, cheap alcohol the drug of the poor; coupled with the large families of those days and the most dreaded threat of all - that of the Workhouse - ever looming, our Welfare State and NHS would seem paradise. During Queen Victoria's reign, just beyond the Castle wall of Windsor itself, was the contrasting situation of row upon row of slums which finally were cleared for the building of the G.W. Railway station on the coming of the Railway to Windsor. Many of the great and charitable figures of those times, Florence Nightingale and Dr Barnardo to mention but two, played a powerful part in helping to alleviate the miseries of the poor, whilst the rich it seems, were simply becoming richer.

The well supported competition for a 'Piece of Victorian' brought forth many treasures

from members, gave rise to much interest and discussion. The most appreciated item belonged to Mrs B. Atherton, but there were a number of close runners up!

Meetings are on the third Thursday each month at 2pm at Church House. Visitors/new members welcome.

Chazey W.I.

The June meeting on the 7th was not held in Mapledurham Pavilion, but in a coach going to Broughton Castle near Banbury, the home of the Fiennes family. About fifty members, husbands and friends, had a specially arranged evening visit to the Castle. The Fiennes have lived there for over four hundred years and each generation has added some contemporary article. From steel armour and leather coats to a modern tapestry and from hand painted Chinese wallpaper to a specially commissioned bed, Chazey WI was guided through the centuries. The evening finished with a (non-alcoholic) ploughman's in Broughton's refreshment room. Souvenirs included plants, which benefited from the damp evening - chosen by torchlight from under umbrellas!

On June 23rd Chazey

WI held a tea party for about fifty elderly residents from the district. Red Cross and Age Concern supplied names and addresses from across the town and arranged transport in cars and ambulances. Volunteers from Caversham Link Group also brought some of their members.

Everyone had an assortment of sandwiches, sausage rolls and chicken vol-au-vents, and cakes, all made by Chazey WI, and, of course, gallons of tea! The sun shone gently, the air was soft and the windows let in the smell of the newly cut grass of Mapledurham playing fields - a proper country afternoon. To end the day the Caversham Bellplate Ringers gave a concert of music to sing and hum to, and arrangements of classic music which included part of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. Bellplates produce a sound as clear as handbells and everyone heard and enjoyed the music.

July 5th saw Chazey WI back in Mapledurham Pavilion at 8.00pm. A report of the Triennial General Meeting of the National Federation of Women's Institutes was heard and future activities were discussed. The Social Group's barbecue was to be on July 12th. Names of food providers were listed, and china and crockery organised, and hopes of a fine evening voiced. The members sat back to see a demonstration of corsage and buttonhole making by a florist from Beautiful Blooms. Carnations, fern, wires and florists tape were handed out and everyone tried to reproduce a buttonhole. Most were very successful.

The next Meeting will be on Tuesday August 2nd at 8.00pm when Harold Hill will give an illustrated talk on the History of Reading.

University of the Third Age, Reading Branch

The open meeting in the Kennet Room heard John Rhodes on 'Current developments in the Museum'. He told them that the Reading museum was founded in 1883 and was one of the earliest founded after the Great Exhibition set the fashion for museums everywhere. He described the varied nature of the first exhibits making it more of a country museum, but the Silchester collection was early on a focal point. Because of reorganisation at the Town Hall the museum was closed in 1989 but plans

for the gradual reopening were very much in train. The first stage had meant one hundred thousand visitors in one year and has concentrated those on Reading itself. There is now room to display the Bayeux Tapestry in full. This work has cost much money but grants have been obtained and there are hopes of help from the National Lottery.

The Books group concentrated on Hardy's 'The Mayor of Casterbridge'. The Playreaders read Miller's 'View from a Bridge'. The discussion group had such a lively meeting on 'The priorities of U3A' and they are going to continue it next month. This was in conjunction with the Wokingham group. The Walkers enjoyed a ramble round Pangbourne.

Third Age news reveals that the total membership of U3A is approximately thirty-seven thousand, six hundred (as compared with twenty-nine thousand at this time last year). That represents a growth rate of individual members of thirty-three per cent. New members always welcome. Please contact Mrs McGregor 866037.

St Peter's Wives' Group

The June meeting of St Peter's Wives Group was a visit to the Sue Ryder Home at Nettlebed. There the Matron welcomed the Group into the panelled room which also serves as a chapel. She spoke of the history of the Sue Ryder Foundation which had been set up in the early 1950s as a tribute and memorial to those who had suffered during the war. Lady Ryder herself is a devout Christian who ensures that each home reflects her own ideals. However, patients can be of any religion or race. The aim is that each home is an extension of the patient's own home, where visitors can be received at any normal social hour. As well as the Sue Ryder homes in this country there are a number abroad, particularly in eastern Europe. There is some concern that the British ones are of a higher standard than others, but this is essential to reach the standards set by the National Health Service; perhaps a salutary reminder of just how fortunate we are!

The Nettlebed home was rebuilt as a private home by the Fleming family in 1902 on the site of a small existing manor house, Joyce

Grove. Well known members of the family are Ian, creator of James Bond, and the author and explorer, Peter. In 1936 the house became a convalescent home for St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. By the early 1970s a Reading group had been set up to fund cancer patients who were beyond cure, and the group had been able to buy the home. As it was already equipped as a convalescent home the transition was easily made. The first patients arrived in 1979, and there have been over 4,000 since that time. Up to twenty-five in-patients can be accommodated now. The Day Centre, which opened in 1989, is currently open two days a week, but there are plans to increase this when funding permits. There are also plans for additional beds and to extend the range of care offered, for example to those with Parkinson's or motor neurone disease, or haemophilia. Expertise has been built up in the control of pain. Patients are all short stay, some being assessed for further special care treatment before moving elsewhere. Besides caring for patients, attention is also given to their relatives by a "Family Support Sister".

No charge is made for patients though voluntary contributions may be made. The Home is partly funded from the Health Service, which uses its facilities, and partly from fund raising. The home has been able to support itself for the past few years without needing to call on the resources of the Sue Ryder Foundation itself, thus enabling those funds to give more help to poorer areas.

The Wives' Group members were deeply impressed by their visit and inspired to continue their support for the Home.

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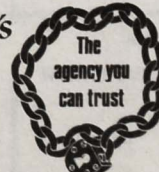
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