

THAMESIDE SCHOOL WORKS UNDER DIFFICULTIES

THE FIRST IMPRESSION ONE GETS OF THAMESIDE SCHOOL IS HOW GAY EVERYTHING IS. THE WALLS ARE COVERED WITH PAINTINGS AND DECORATIONS WHICH THE CHILDREN HAVE MADE, THE YOUNGSTERS THEMSELVES SOUND VERY HAPPY AND THE STAFF AND HEADMISTRESS ARE FRIENDLY AND CHEERFUL.

What the decorations hide

Look closer and you will find the decorations cover large patches of wall from which the paint has peeled, and the children are happy in spite of the complications of getting to school, feeding arrangements, etc., and the staff are coping with difficulties almost unbelievably bad in this day and age. Take, for example, the staff room: when students and secretaries are present, there are up to 20 members gathered together at coffee breaks—yet the staff rooms hold no more than about eight people comfortably at a time. The headmistress shares a small room with her secretary; should a parent visit for a private talk, the secretary has to take the hint and make herself scarce. There is nowhere for the medical authorities to carry out their duties; nor is there anywhere for a sick child to be taken care of.

More money needed

The plain fact is that, despite the tremendous efforts of the staff, in spite of the co-operation of various members of the local authority, not enough money has been spent on this school, built in 1906, despite the fact that it has changed over the years from an infants' school to a secondary modern and then back to a primary school. And perhaps now, when the whole problem is to be

come the responsibility of a new authority, it is not a bad idea to mention a few of the things that should be planned for the future.

Basically it is an attractive enough school, yet to function as a modern school, with modern teaching methods, it needs complete reorganisation inside. At the moment a start is being made by building the infants' lavatories inside the school; the juniors, of course, will have to make do with those across the playground, which are being decorated—without complete rebuilding it is impossible to improve them. Certainly more provision should be made for the children to hang their clothes—such hooks as there are inside the school have been mainly provided by the staff; it should also be mentioned that Mrs. Fox, the headmistress, and other members of her staff have

taken the trouble to add a bit of paint themselves where it is most needed.

Feeding and access

There is one very pleasant infants' classroom which serves also as a dining room for infants; unfortunately the juniors have to cross the road (no safe trip at any time) for mid-day meals. There is a small kitchen-cum-scully, but no hot water facilities for very young children who may find themselves in need of being cleaned up at times.

Possibly the biggest problem is access, but since this depends on the new road improvements for Caversham and where they are to be sited, it is impossible for anyone to suggest a safer method for the children to get to school. It follows that more parents than usual take the children to school and meet them—but there is nowhere for the parents to wait except at the gate entrance, no joke on a wet day.

The big responsibility

One could go on indefinitely listing things that could be done to make this school the attractive place it could be. Certainly the parents are willing and anxious to co-operate and the staff can be guaranteed to pull out all the stops. But the main responsibility will, there is no doubt, lie with the new district office which will shortly take charge. Let's hope that, when they have settled in, they will take the trouble to take a long hard look at Thameside School and its problems.

TWENTY PAGES IN JUNE

The June edition of Caversham Bridge will be a special twenty page edition, containing a supplement giving full details of the arrangements for Caversham's Family Festival which is being held from June 28th until July 14th. In spite of the extra pages the price (4p) will remain the same.

Contributors are reminded that all material for inclusion in the June edition must be submitted by 10 a.m. on Wednesday May 1st and nothing received after that date can be printed. The paper will be published on Friday, May 17th.



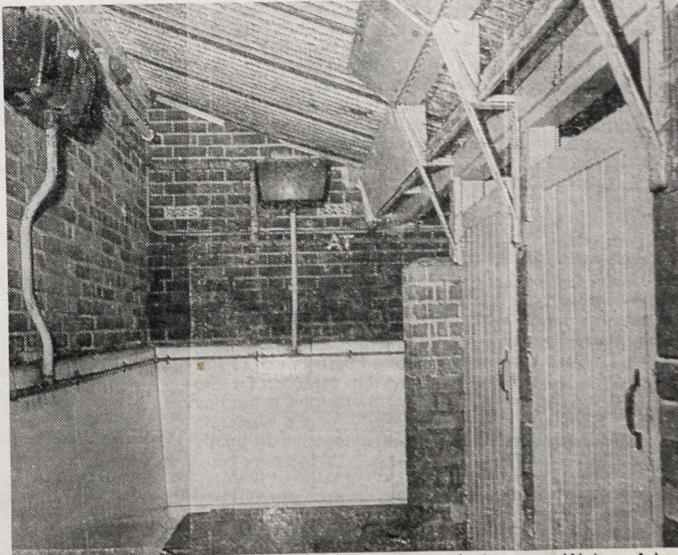
The attractive courtyard

—Walton Adams



Some of the staff in the staff room—too small for all of them at once

—Walton Adams



Only outdoor lavatories for the juniors

—Walton Adams

THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

ONE UP TO THE DAIRIES

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LOCAL DAIRIES WHO HAVE STOPPED DELIVERING MILK ON SUNDAYS. Of course it may be inconvenient to some of us, and I am aware that not everyone has a fridge. I am sure, however, that most housewives will manage well enough. But what I particularly liked was the letter one dairy sent to their customers. Behind it lay the recognition, if not of Sunday as a day of worship, at least of Sunday as a day of rest and as a family day when unnecessary work should be avoided.

A pendulum swings from side to side. The truth, however, usually lies in drawing the best out of opposite viewpoints. Earlier generations looked on Sunday in a narrow way—a day when restrictions were imposed on many activities. Not infrequently I am reminded by older people of Sundays dominated in their childhood by little except church services and Sunday school. Today the pendulum has swung so far the other way that even many who think of themselves as faithful church members do not regard regular Sunday worship as at all important. Consequently we have all but lost the understanding of Sunday as a Christian day.

A WEEKLY EASTER

The Christian Church from earliest times kept Sunday in thanksgiving for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first day of the week. Christians came together to share in the fellowship meal, the Holy Communion. This is what Christian people have done ever since on this day. They have done this because they believe that Christ comes to them in a very special way in this Sacrament, and they have done it to bear witness to the Resurrection.

It follows, then, that just as a husband and wife who love each other want to say so in words, Christians want to express their love to God in public worship. Sunday worship is not like cinema or concert-going: we do not look to see what is on and then decide whether or not to go; we worship regardless of the weather, and regardless of who the preacher is. Of course there will be occasions when a mother's duty is to a sick member of the family or when father has to do some unavoidable work. But these will be the exceptions rather than the rule, and since public worship is provided at a variety of different times, it should usually be possible to go at some time during the day, even though it be at a different hour from our usual one.

CHRISTIAN BETRAYAL

I remember a book being published some years ago with the title "The Betrayal of Christ by the Churches." Perhaps a more apt title to-day would be "The Betrayal of Christ by the Christians," for the erratic appearance at Sunday worship by so many Christians is a marvellous way of persuading those outside the Church that we are not really serious about our belief. Erratic attendance makes it far harder to develop a sense of Christian fellowship, and it makes far harder the work of the clergy, who are so often told, "I've never heard you preach on such a topic" when we know full well we have done this often but that the remark comes from one whose Sunday attendances are far from regular.

On Easter Day the churches of Caversham were full. It is only the half-heartedness of so many Christian people which prevents them being equally full every Sunday.

Let us resolve at once to adjust the pendulum. Let us make Sunday a happy day together for the family, but let us start the day by making it the day when Christians thank God weekly for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as we gather together in public worship.

J. S. Grimwade

Swift Response to Parish's Financial Crisis

The 'Caversham Bridge' expects to be able to avoid incurring a deficit for the current financial year.

The 'Caversham Bridge' expects to be able to avoid incurring a deficit for the current financial year. As continued inflation is expected it is still, however, necessary to investigate the total resources of the parish in buildings and manpower in relation to the needs and financial resources, and a special working party set up for this purpose has started its work. The 'Caversham Bridge' hopes to give fuller details next month of the result of the financial appeal, and those who have not yet replied to the letter they received are asked to do so at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mrs. Katharine Barton

The 'Caversham Bridge' sends centenary congratulations to Mrs. Katharine Barton, who on Friday, April 5th, celebrated her 100th birthday. Born at Dorchester, Mrs. Barton came to live at 37 Church Road, Caversham, when she married in 1907, and worshipped at St. Peter's for over 60 years. Her husband was a member of the choir. In 1969 she gave up her Caversham home and since then has lived at Little Thorpe, Cleeve Road, Goring, where she is visited by many of her old Caversham friends.

Postbag

Dear Sir,

Reading the article by Katy I see that the posts at the end of South Street are being queried. While they may be a nuisance to some people, I feel sure the residents of the house appreciate them being there. I assume they have been placed in that position so that when traffic goes to the end of the street and manoeuvres about to turn, it is to prevent them from damaging the wall or fence. Should that be the purpose of the posts, then I would like to see the Council erect some at the end of Short Street, for it is only people who live at the end of a cul-de-sac who know the nuisance traffic can cause by twisting and turning and disturbing the road surface in front of one's home.

Yours, etc.,

C. A. Rush

8 Short Street,
Caversham.

HOLIDAY HOMES NEEDED

For the last 90 years the Children's Country Holidays Fund has been arranging summer holidays in the country or at the seaside for thousands of London children who otherwise would not have had a holiday. Two weeks is the usual length of stay and the Fund pays a small sum to hostesses for each child. Families who help these deprived youngsters always seem to find it a rewarding experience.

This year Miss C. H. Burton, honorary organiser for Berkshire, is hoping that more families from Caversham will feel able to offer accommodation for any of the three fortnights: July 18th-August 1st; August 1st-15th; and August 15th-29th. There are so many children hoping for an invitation that it is unlikely that she will be unable to send a child of the age (5-12) and sex you ask for.

If you can help, or want further information, please contact Miss Burton at 63a Alexandra Road, Reading. Telephone 63125.

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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EMMER GREEN CLUB

The Emmer Green Club is still expanding its activities in response to pressure from its members. The weekly evening sessions are well attended by a core of regular members, with new members joining each week. Staffing has improved, with two volunteers offering their services after reading the article in the February 'Bridge.' However, as the club is aiming at a ratio of one staff to ten members, many more volunteers are needed. The role of the staff is to build relationships with the members, so anyone who feels that they can talk with young people would be most welcome. Tuesday evening is sports evening, and for this instructors in judo, table tennis, etc., are needed. If qualified, instructors can be paid. Friday night is disco night, but once a month there is a live group—Justin Canns.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

On Mondays and Wednesdays an after school club has been opened to cater for those members whose parents are both out at work and would otherwise return to an empty house. A quiet area with tables is provided for those who wish to do their homework. Discussions take place on Sunday evenings, often led by outside specialists on topics such as drugs, family planning and religion. This alternates with opening on Sunday afternoons, when members have been decorating the club and practising on their guitars. The club was open on weekday afternoons during the Easter holidays, when competitions and activities such as junk art and drama exercises were laid on.

SWEDISH HOLIDAY

The club enters members regularly for competitions run by the Berkshire Association of Boys' Clubs and one of the senior members, Neil Buckingham, won their table tennis championship. An under-17 rugby sevens team and an under-18 football team will be shortly playing in competitions.

During the summer 21 members will be going to Sweden in three minibuses. The £1,000 needed to cover the cost of the trip will be raised by jumble sales, discos and sponsored walks.

Anyone interested in visiting the club, or in offering help, should ring John Jenkins at 476794, or just call in one evening.



A quiet scene by the river in Caversham Court

— Walton Adams

PROFIT FOR SCOUTS

The rummage sale at Emmer Green Primary School in March, organised by the 89th Reading (Milestone Wood) Scout Group, produced a record profit of £140, which will be used to finance the running of this expanding Group. Already plans are being made for the annual fete on June 1st and a further rummage sale on October 5th. Both will be in Emmer Green Primary School.

This year's annual summer camp, from July 27th to August 3rd, will be at Furzey Lodge, near Beaulieu in the New Forest. About 50 of the boys will be going under the leadership of Mr. R. Smythe.

The task of completing the recently provided H.Q. accommodation for the 89th continues. Money raised by the collection of newspapers, colour magazines and telephone directories is being used to buy essential materials and equipment. The Scouts and Cubs will continue this collection in the area until further notice.

WE RECORD . . .

BAPTISED

St. Andrew's
March 7 Stephen Martin
Matthew Davies

St. Barnabas'
March 10 Kirsty Vince

MARRIED

St. Barnabas'
March 16 Reginald Busby and Julie Pocock
March 23 Anthony Eggleton and Pauline Hutchins

St. Margaret's
March 9 Manuel Martin and Jane Grice

FUNERALS

St. Peter's
April 5 Charles Brooker

St. Barnabas'
March 7 Nerys Philpott
March 25 Alfred Waltham

St. Margaret's
April 8 Annie Vincent

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TALKING POINTby **STEPHEN HAINE****“DANGER—MEN AT WORK”**

PARAQUAT IS NASTY—NASTY FOR WEEDS IN THE GARDEN BUT EVEN NASTIER FOR ANY UNSUSPECTING PERSON WHO HAPPENS TO DRINK IT. It has been a readily available and effective weedkiller, until recently when it has become apparent—through accidents in which children had inadvertently drunk it—that it is a poison to which there is **no known antidote**. These are words of serious proportions! At the end of March the Guardian carried a mini-report that two containers of it had been “lost off the back of a lorry near Peterborough.” “Police searched in the area in vain.” Such an event might be the start of a science fiction story of a gruesome kind—or real life tragedy for someone?

LACK OF INTEREST

Real life tragedy is something which we blindly hope will never happen to us. Reading Trades Union Council debated two press reports recently of real life tragedies both concerned with fatal accidents in the Reading area. One concerned the electrocution of a do-it-yourself enthusiast in his home at Bracknell, a man only married six months; the other the death of a self-employed electrician at a factory on the Woodley estate who was electrocuted while checking a fault on a machine. The debate was concerned with the way the press had reported the tragedies, giving the home accident front page headlines, and the factory death only small mention. But there was also concern expressed about the lack of interest in accidents at work and the lack of publicity given to safety measures.

In Reading in 1973 there were 2,562 notifiable accidents at work and six deaths. (For an accident to be notified to the Factory Inspectors it has to result in absence from work for more than three days.) These figures do not include the construction industry where accident levels are of course very high. They do not thus include the Lodden

Bridge disaster. If you look at the situation nationally then, for example, there were last year 27 people killed at work through electrocution and most of them were probably skilled trained electricians, and each year there are 20-30 times more working days lost because of industrial injuries than because of industrial disputes! And how much publicity is given to the injuries by comparison!

WHO CARES ?

I once worked with a man who had two fingers missing from one hand because of an industrial accident and a long scar across one cheek and down into his neck—the result of an accident while working in a wire mill. (He also had one leg shorter than the other and a large beer stomach, but these were accidents of birth and social environment). It might be said that he was “accident prone.” But it was not helped by the fact that he was working 13 hours each day of a six day week and six hours more on a Sunday in a foundry that was ill-lit, overcrowded and dirty. Anyone who has worked in such situations will not need the catalogue of figures in a Government report on “Accidents in Factories” to be familiar with the almost endless lists of lacerations, severe bruising, cracked bones, severed tendons, strained and wrenched backs and ligaments, which are part of factory life.

Of course everyone wants safety. There are laws, the Factory Acts, which make basis requirements for safety measures, and the Robens report published last year, if made law, will strengthen the powers of the Factory Inspectors a little more. But the fines which courts give when offences are proved are so often derisory in proportion to the offence. Also, despite their efforts to enforce the law, the Inspectors have such a wide area to cover that regular inspection is difficult and it is as much as they can do to deal with confidential complaints made by the public. Anyway, in a civilised country, if that is what we are,

we expect people and firms to be law abiding and to have the good of the employees at heart in the matter of safety. That doesn't always follow!

RESPONSIBILITY

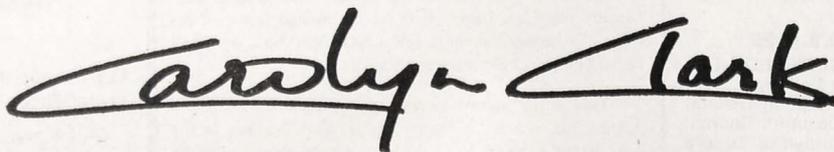
However, a government study shows that only one in five of factory accidents is due to a breach of law. Also that half of the accidents reported could **not** have been prevented by reasonably practical precautions. Of the other half that could have been prevented, the responsibility lay almost equally with management and workers.

Mr. Wucombe, one of the Reading Inspectors, told me that there were three things that needed constantly hammering home. (1) To establish proper safety procedures and to have the necessary “hardware.” (2) To have good supervision, supervision that produces a working climate where it is natural for people to do jobs in the safe way. (3) For the unforeseeable accident, to train people to recognise what are potentially dangerous situations.

This last is the most difficult. One initiative which the local Factory Inspectorate has taken is to form a Reading and District Accident Prevention Group. This is proving to be very successful so far. Over 60 firms, both large and small have joined, sending often high up representatives to the bi-monthly meetings. What is now needed is for more shop-floor representatives to be invited to the meetings.

Of course everyone wants safety, but not so many are prepared to think about it constructively and to carry it out. Bravo for the Reading and District Accident Prevention Group and the debate of the Reading Trades Union Council if they prevent accidents at work.

And I wish I knew where those two cans of Paraquat went to.



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CHANGE AND DECAY

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE HUMAN MAKE-UP CAN ONLY STAND A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CHANGE and although it has always been the lot of the old to complain that things aren't what they used to be, when the young start saying the same kind of thing, one does wonder if the time hasn't come to call a halt, or at least to slow up the process. Caversham itself has changed rapidly in the last few years, but even more is visualised: not necessarily for the worse.

If the new centre plan is adopted, with its scheme for widening Reading Bridge and the consequent new road patterns, there will be a great change of scene, although the same volume of traffic will be passing through the centre on its way to get across the Thames, albeit somewhat speeded up. But saddest of all would be the fact that many houses, still with a useful life ahead, will have to be demolished in order to provide this modest benefit. Before such drastic action is taken, it must be carefully compared with the idea so widely favoured in Caversham and district, for a third bridge to the East of Reading's boundary.

The land between Church Street, Bridge Street and the river would have taken on a very different appearance had plans for building a supermarket, flats, offices and garages been passed, but they were withdrawn. It will however be necessary to keep a watchful eye on those sites to make sure that whatever goes there is in keeping with its surroundings.

Part of the surroundings is the row of old cottages which erstwhile gave such an idyllic first impression to the visitor to Caversham. These of late have fallen into a state of neglect and decay, as Dr. Vincent pointed out in February's issue of *The Bridge*. When a sub-committee of the Residents' Association pointed out to the management of Oakshott's the widespread concern felt about the fate of

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT by WATCHDOG

these old buildings, an immediate effort was made to tidy them up. Certainly their appearance was much improved, and for those readers who don't like mustard, that is Oakshott's house colours and they think it's lovely. But the row to date remains in a state of advanced disrepair and one wonders how much longer these buildings can remain there. With so little of Caversham's historic centre remaining, it is going to be painful to see these buildings go, if go they must.

Changes are also mooted on the outskirts. The rural parishes have made it quite clear that they wish to see no change in the boundaries apart from minor tidying up. Residents within the built up area have also made it clear that they would oppose any extension of Reading's, which is to say Berkshire's, boundaries into the rural areas, if that is what Berkshire contemplates. Just what support there is for the idea that if Caversham ceded from Reading and joined up with the five rural parishes, a viable local government unit would emerge, remains to be seen. It would certainly be preferable to seeing Berkshire claiming and building over the five parishes.

OLD ROADS FOR NEW

Hemdean Road is one of the older roads of the parish and never had any proper foundations. In addition, the statutory undertakers (gas, water and electricity, in case you don't know) have kept on digging holes in it for years. At last it has got the new surface it deserves, but what

chaos reigned in the process. Let us hope that when a busy road is repaired in future, there will be a little more planning to prevent such confusion occurring. The asphalt paths are to be welcomed. Flag stones have a habit of breaking (assisted no doubt by cars and lorries parking on them) and making the footway dangerous. A well known resident of Caversham recently sustained serious cuts and bruises through tripping on one of these stones. Pedestrians should at least be safe on the pavement.

The widening of Henley Road is now completed. Gone are the dips, bends and narrowness, but gone also is that row of lovely trees.

One road that will not be welcome is one that will take the increased flow of traffic over a widened Reading Bridge to Peppard Road. We cannot afford to lose the houses that it will displace. This is a change that we can do without.

"JOE" FOR MAYOR

Congratulations to Cllr. "Joe" Bristow, for many years a councillor for Caversham Ward, a native of Caversham and now resident here, on being chosen first mayor of the new district of Reading. If there must be local government changes, at least the eight hundred year old tradition of Reading having its own mayor has not been broken.

THE REV. AND MRS. JOHN STEVINSON

Please note that their new address is: 21 Park Avenue, Roker, Sunderland. A feature article on the family will appear next month.

County Borough of Reading Municipal (Church) Charities

Admiral Coffin's Almshouses, Caversham

NOTICE is hereby given that the Trustees will meet shortly to elect two persons of good character, who are members of the Church of England residing in Caversham, Lower Caversham or Emmer Green into a vacant Almshouse in Westfield Road, Caversham.

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Application forms may be obtained at the office of the Clerk to the Trustees, Mr. P. Blandy, 1 Friar Street, Reading, and must be completed and returned to him not later than May 15, 1974.

Candidates will be notified when and where to attend for interview.

LOCAL DRAMA

by PAUL GORIUP

AFTER MY FASHION

THE MAPLEDURHAM REP RIDES AGAIN! The seemingly endless optimism of its hard core produced two delightful evenings at the Mapledurham Memorial Hall when many of us had already believed that yet another restless generation of stage amateurs has given up the ghost. We shall have to be less presumptuous in the future.

A well-balanced cast of eight women and two men presented Diana Morgan's "After My Fashion" — a play about a film based on

the life and adventures of Sir Christian Starcross who perished with his companions on his last expedition to a city "in the clouds." As the play unfolded, the true nature of Christian Starcross came to light—a vain but determined man who won fame and immortality through bluff and disregard for those helping him in ignorance of his fatal venture, a man whose wife (Barbara Sutton), although betrayed for another woman (Laurina Deighton), insisted that the film be made to pre-

serve Starcross' image and the inspiration derived from it.

The wives of other members of Starcross' expedition were played by Diana Baker, Yvonne Taylor and Eileen Wake. The film team consisted of Christopher Odell, Susan Flett and Patrick Ross. Paula Day played the part of Lady Starcross' daughter and Kathleen Bubb, who also produced the play, appeared "true to character" in the role of the brusque housekeeper. It was a good performance and let us hope there will be many more.



— Walton Adams

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WITH KATY IN CAVERSHAM

NOT FOR THE FIRST TIME, I'VE BEEN TAKING A HARD LOOK AT THIS DISTRICT. SPRING SUNSHINE MAKES ONE MORE THAN EVER CONSCIOUS OF THE APPALLING STATE OF THE ROAD. AND MUCH OF IT IS OUR FAULT. Whatever happened to the laws which made it illegal to drop rubbish in the streets? Whatever happened about the laws against animals fouling the pavements? Make no mistake—parts of this district are a disgrace. It's amazing how much trouble some folk take while others seem deliberately determined to make the place a mess. At the back of our house is an alley which, as far as I can discover from the local authority, is nobody's baby. Yet the owners of some adjacent gardens have taken the trouble to clear the patch at the back of their own garden and even, in some cases, planted bulbs and seeds; others, alas, use it as a dumping ground.

EMIGRATING

Many local people will know Susan Phillips who, until her marriage to Tom Cannen at St. John's in 1968, lived with her parents and her brother Barry at Mayfield Drive. Susan attended the Hill Primary and E.P. Collier School, and then worked as a secretary at Kennet Bridge House. Since her marriage she has lived in Twyford, but has maintained many of her links with Caversham.

By the time you read this, Susan and Tom will have gone to live in Adelaide, Australia, and I'm sure her old friends will join us in wishing her a very happy life in their new home and express the hope that we shall have news of them from time to time.

JOE RAMPTON

It was with great regret that we heard of the death of Joe Rampton at the end of March, following a stroke shortly before. Joe was one of our links with old Caversham, took a keen interest in local history and at one time supplied much material for the "Bridge" on this subject. His small but beautiful garden in Gosbrook Road, where he lived until shortly after the death of his wife, is still remembered and regretted by all those who knew it. Nevertheless, on his removal to the almshouses in Westfield Road, Joe continued to take an interest in what was going on around him and was well-liked by those he lived with, for whom he did many small services in spite of frequent ill-health.

All of us who knew him are going to miss Joe very much — his place in our community will not easily be filled.

ST. MARTIN'S SCHOOL

ST. MARTIN'S, THE NEW R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL ON CAVERSHAM PARK VILLAGE, OPENED AT MID-TERM WITH JUST 20 PUPILS, AND WITH A HEADMASTER AND TWO STAFF. It should have opened in September, 1973, but due to failure in business of the contractors considerable delay ensued. It was then decided to open in January, 1974 but once more there was a delay in completion; when it finally opened at mid-term, children who should have attended were accommodated at other local schools. It is hoped that there will be some 50 pupils after Easter and from then on a steady increase in numbers.

It is a semi-open planned building, bright and cheerful. When the laying out of the ground is completed, it will be a very attractive school indeed. The hall is spacious and there is a small room attached which is to be used as a Chapel and music room. Already Mass has been offered in the school for the children and from Easter onwards there will be Mass on Sundays at 9.30 in the morning and a regular weekly Mass for pupils and staff.

The Headmaster, Mr. Peter Warren, is best known as a professional tennis player who organised the "Peter Warren Lawn Tennis School"; he intends to develop sport in the school and also provide social recreation facilities for those who may be interested.

An exciting new school, dedicated to St. Martin De Porres, the coloured saint who has become a world-wide favourite because of his simple faith, his charity and miracles—we look for a successful school under his care.

B.D.

A CLEARING CENTRE FOR VOLUNTEERS

A VOLUNTEER CENTRE IS A CO-ORDINATING CENTRE WHERE INFORMATION CAN BE EXCHANGED ON THE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE IN AN AREA. THERE ARE ALREADY 10 SUCH CENTRES IN THE NEW COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE, AND THE FIRST STEPS WERE TAKEN AT A MEETING ON 8th MARCH TO SET UP A CENTRE IN READING.

The initiative in calling the meeting was taken by the Reading and District Council of Social Service, who sent out 800 invitations to all voluntary bodies in the town who could be traced, and the attendance of over 150 was very encouraging. At the close of the meeting it was agreed unanimously to go ahead.

The Centre will be located at 38 Caversham Road, the home of the Council of Social Service and of the Citizen's Advice Bureau, and an organiser will be provided by the Council from its staff. Finance to cover the initial expenses has been offered by Berkshire County Council, and a Management Committee was elected at the close of the meeting.

A vast amount of information about the needs of the voluntary organisations has already been received, and it is expected that the Centre will be opened by mid May. It will only be able to offer help when it is requested, and the amount of help that it can offer will be determined by the number of individuals who offer their services.

WHILE CAVERSHAM ALREADY HAS THE BRIDGE SCHEME OF SOCIAL SERVICE WE WISH THIS NEW VENTURE WELL, AND MAY INDEED BE GRATEFUL FOR THE INTRODUCTIONS THAT IT WILL GIVE TO NEW VOLUNTEERS. THE ORGANISER CAN BE CONTACTED BY PHONE ON READING 599853—IF YOU HAVE A TALENT TO OFFER, OR KNOW OF A NEED IN ANY ORGANISATION WITH WHICH YOU ARE CONNECTED, THIS IS THE NUMBER TO RING.

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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

13th - 18th MAY

"Some people never forget Christian Aid Week," says the campaign poster for May. And looking at the words rather than the illustration one thinks immediately of the 400,000 men and women who every year voluntarily give their time as collectors and campaigners for Christian Aid. One also thinks of the millions who respond to the invitation to give money.

But, looking at the picture on the poster and the other 1974 Christian Aid Week material, one sees an additional and deeper meaning in the words. A young African studies a text-book while training for a career which will shield him from poverty and contributes to the development of his country; an Indian farmer surveys crops on land rescued from the ravages of drought; a Sahelian herdsman inoculates cattle to protect them, and his livelihood, against destruction by disease; a former Sudanese refugee returns home and begins to help rebuild his old school and, in a different sense, a new nation. These people, and thousands of others like them, "never forget Christian Aid" because its effect on their lives is lasting.

Reading aims for £10,000

Changing lives for the better is the purpose and achievement of Christian Aid. In Reading this year, the organisers of Christian Aid, are aiming to raise at least £10,000 in support of that purpose. The project chosen this time is relief and rehabilitation work in respect of the West African drought. Already £5,000 has been promised in support of this work.

Sponsored Raft Race Saturday, 11th May

The race for home-made rafts organised last year by the University was a great success and they are arranging another this year. The course will be on the Thames

from Pangbourne to Caversham Bridge. Youth groups or anyone else interested should contact John G. Anderson, c/o The Anglican Chaplaincy, 30 Shinfield Road, Reading.

Reading's Project—The West African Drought

The West African countries immediately south of the Sahara, which form the Sahelian zone, are facing the worst drought in living memory. Each year for the past six years the rains have failed and the nomadic tribes, with their herds of cattle, have been gradually forced to abandon their lands and migrate south in search of water. In the process a large proportion of their herds have died of thirst and many of the remainder have contracted diseases from which, on their own lands, they were immune. This mass migration has overwhelmed the southerly areas with problems which threaten health, pasture and social facilities. The economics of both abandoned lands and the crowded reception areas are in jeopardy.

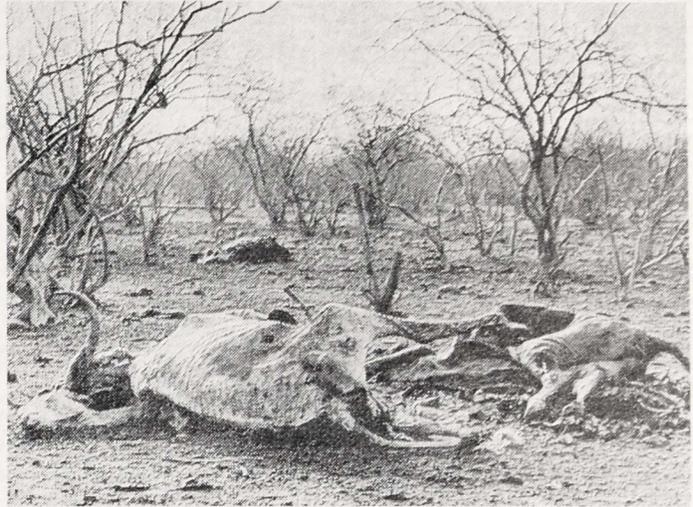
So while foreign governments pour in thousands of tons of grain and emergency supplies to sustain life, development experts are battling with the critical problems of permanent rehabilitation and of making the Sahelian zone again capable of supporting human and animal life. It is in this all-important long term aspect that Christian Aid can make the most realistic contribution.

Cattle Convoy

The most immediate need was to save as much as possible of the severely depleted herds. The cattle which were still alive were in poor condition and transport was urgently needed to enable the necessary veterinary work to proceed. This was the purpose of the convoy of 23 vehicles which David Smithers, Christian Aid's Deputy Director, successfully led across the Sahara. This expedition saved £30,000 in transport costs and enabled the vehicles to be used four months earlier than if they had been transhipped in the ordinary way.

Catalysts of Change

The rehabilitation plans will include the provision of fresh animals for the nomadic families and large re-afforestation schemes to replace the millions of trees which died as a result of drought and erosion. Irrigation schemes are also an essential part of the programme. Plans for projects on these lines are being carefully laid, and David Smithers says: "I believe we may be about to embark on what could be the biggest programme ever undertaken by Christian Aid, indeed perhaps by any U.K. voluntary agency. Here we have a classic case of underdevelopment which if not tackled can only lead to further disaster. By channelling a large proportion of funds into this single area we can effectively demonstrate how agencies like Christian Aid can become successful catalysts of change."



Carcasses of Mali Nomads' cattle

ANOTHER CHANCE TO SUPPORT STAGGERING FEET

Last year the Revd. Bernard Metcalfe raised £88 by taking part in the Christian Aid Walk. This year, with your help, he is hoping to make it £100.

If you wish to sponsor him, please send the form below to him.

To the Revd. W. B. Metcalfe,
25 Ilkley Road, Caversham, Reading.

I am willing to sponsor you on the Christian Aid Chiltern Walk at the rate of per mile (please fill in amount).

Signed

Address (Block Capitals)

THIRD APPEARANCE

The world famous Carl Dolmetsch Consort are making their third appearance in St. Peter's Church when they give a recital on behalf of Christian Aid on Saturday, May 18th at 8 p.m. The programme includes music by Rail, Western Tower, Station William Byrd, Scarlatti, Thomas Morley, Vivaldi and other 16th and 17th century composers. Admission is by programme price 65p which can be obtained from British

Rail, Western Tower, Station Hill, Belle Boutique and Messrs Kitcher's in Church Road, Caversham, Church House or on Sundays at the different Anglican Churches in the parish.



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CHURCH NEWS

ROUND THE ANGLICAN PARISH

About two hundred electors were present at the different annual meetings that were held early in March. A further ninety attended the parochial meeting the following week when Mrs. Anne Ridler, a well-known Anglican poet and playwright addressed the meeting on the subject of "Language and worship." She sought to draw attention both to the gains and losses in the experimental orders of Holy Communion, Series 2 and 3. It was apparent from the discussion that her audience held divided views, corresponding very much to the views recently expressed in answer to the questionnaire circulated through the parish.

The following have been elected to office for the current year.

Churchwardens: Messrs. F. C. Moore and C. G. Page.

Church Councillors: St. Peter's, Messrs. K. Bennett and T. D. Birtwhistle (District Wardens), Messrs. H. Burton, C. Hubbard, J. Irvine, E. G. A. Kynaston, E. M. Smith, J. Stratford, Mrs. L. Cropp, Miss W. Hill.

St. John's, Messrs. S. Holmwood and P. Tipton (District Wardens), Messrs. K. Deane, K. J. Nicholls, Mrs. I. Bickford, Mrs. D. Gillett, Mrs. A. Yates, Miss K. Harris.

St. Andrew's, Messrs. A. Burton and W. A. Vincent (District Wardens), Messrs. G. Canning, D. Cooper, R. A. Hogarth, N. Kent, J. Tomlin, Mrs. P. Beabey.

St. Barnabas, Messrs. O. Jewiss and D. Miles (District Wardens), Messrs. R. Barnes,

G. Davies, M. Matthews, R. Satchell, Mrs. B. Hutson, Mrs. M. Russell.

Caversham Park, Mr. G. Goldsmith, Mrs. S. Bould.

LADY DAY FESTIVAL

Nearly one hundred members of the Mother's Union were present on Lady Day for the festival service which this year was held in St. Peter's. The preacher was the Rev. Peter Symes, vicar of St. Luke's, Reading who took as his theme the importance of gratitude. Tea was afterwards served in Balmore Hall.

ST. JOHN'S NEWS

An interesting variety of topics were covered by several local clergy during St. John's Mothers' Union's pre-Easter programme. Mr. J. Houghton also contributed with a talk on work with young people. At the end of March Mrs. White-way presented a cheque for £30 to the Revd. S. Bartlett for Family Festival funds. The money was raised by the Mothers' Union and other church members.

ST. ANDREW'S WOMENS GROUP

The group has had an active and interesting Spring session organised by the Chairman Mrs. Daisy Manser who is unfortunately retiring in April. On February 13th a coach party went to the Theatre Royal, Windsor to see "Roar like a dove"—a most successful and enjoyable outing. The February meeting clashed with polling day in St. Andrew's Hall, but thanks to the Rev. B. Gardiner it went ahead as scheduled—in the Church. St. Andrew's Church might not

appear to be the most adaptable of buildings but a very successful demonstration by Kakebrand cooking chocolate was given and coffee and biscuits served as usual.

At the March meeting a Bring and Buy cake stall was held to raise funds for the Playgroup started by Elizabeth Atkinson in Woolwich. The speaker was a representative from the Green Shield Trading Stamp Co.

The Annual General Meeting of the group is on April 25th followed by a Beetle-drive. New members will be very welcome.

ST. PETER'S WIVES

St. Peter's Wives, at their March meeting, heard of a novel form of bargaining—the Speaker was present in exchange for two extra sausages for his breakfast. The scheduled speaker having succumbed to a virus infection, the Chairman's husband was "volunteered" at very short notice to speak about his study of graphology.

Looking ahead, the Wives have a coach outing in May to the Berkshire Agricultural College and look forward to a talk and demonstration by Miss Vowles on "Entertaining at Home."

PARISH RETREAT

Old Alresford Place will be well known to many members of the Mother's Union, who will, I know, have made pilgrimages to the home of their foundation.

It was here that about 25 members of the Anglican parish gathered at the end of March for a two-day retreat. The weather was kind, the house beautiful and the service, organised by the Sisters of Bethany, little less than luxurious. Hot-water bottles filled and tucked into beds while we were at supper, was just one of the little "extras" for which we were so grateful.

The retreat was conducted by our old friend, the Rev. Stacy-Waddy, until some 18 months ago, chaplain at Queen Anne's; his talks were truly thought-provoking, often amusing, and extremely down to earth. It was a treat to have the opportunity of meeting him again and though he and his wife now live far away in Norfolk, it was obvious that he had forgotten nothing about Caversham, which helped to make it a "parish" retreat in the very best sense of the word.

Those of us who attended would like to take this opportunity of thanking most sincerely all those who had a hand in organising and running this retreat, which we hope will become a regular feature of our parish life.

W.D.

The Choir Club has met in the Hall and the Youth Fellowship has met twice; once for a house Communion and once for a joint meeting with a group of young Christians from Maidenhead which was arranged by Yvonnike Roe.

The Coffee Pot is now meeting in the Hall again and has had talks by the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust and on the restoration of paintings.

WOMENS FELLOWSHIP ANNIVERSARY

On March 31st the Gosbrook Road Womens Fellowship celebrated their anniversary. Sister Gertrude Harmes led the morning service when anthems were sung by the Womens Fellowship Choir and the lesson was read by the President, Mrs. Julia Harris.

The anniversary continued on Tuesday Evening with Holiday Slides of South Africa and various other places. Coffee and a buffet supper was served.

FESTIVAL OF QUEENS

After being crowned at East Caversham Sunday School, Queen Maria Neale of 96 Mayfield Drive and her attendant Karen Rees went to the annual Festival of Queens at Reading Town Hall. Queen Maria wore a silver threaded crimplene dress trimmed with red velvet ribbon and Karen wore a white nylon dress patterned with pink rosebuds and trimmed with pink ribbon. The dresses had been specially made for the occasion. They were accompanied by purse bearer Donna Wright who was able to present to the National Childrens Home the amount of £25 from Sunny Smiles gifts.

Queen Maria will be attending the June Fair at Caversham Methodist Church on June 8th when she will be judging a competition for children. There will be lots to do and see at this Fair so make note in your diaries now. Look for details in the next edition.

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST PLAYGROUP

A successful open meeting was held in February. The subject was "Nursery and Primary Education—Any Questions?" The panel comprised Miss E. Sims, Principal of the Chiltern Mothercraft Training Society Mrs. E. Caddy, Teacher at Battle Infant School, Mr. M. P. Brown, Headmaster of Kidmore End C of E Junior School and Mr. A. Webb, Deputy Headmaster of Caversham Primary School.

A wide variety of questions were put to the panel and the answers given were both informative and lively, the members of the panel frequently drawing on their own experience to illustrate their replies. As on previous evenings of a similar nature, this meeting proved to be very popular with playgroup parents and friends.

The Playgroup meets in the School Hall in Highmoor Road on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and enquiries may be made to Mrs. June Davies, Reading 471105.

AWARDS IN READING TEMPERANCE SOCIETY EXAMINATION, 1973

Caversham Methodist young people have excelled themselves in this year's Reading Temperance Examination. That's the spirit!

1st Caversham Girls' Brigade won the Large Shield for the highest total points. They meet every Friday evening at Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road. The Small Reading Shield for the highest average was awarded to Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Woodcote Road.

The prize winners were: CLASS A: 2nd Denise Bentley; CLASS B: 1st Janice McLellan, 2nd Pauline Clarke;

CLASS D: 1st Clare Simpson, 2nd Heather Collins, 3rd Jacqueline Clarks.

All the ones mentioned above are members of the Girls' Brigade.

CLASS C: 2nd Mark Postles of Caversham Heights Sunday School.

We say, "Congratulations" to these winners and to the others who entered and did so well.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

The Baptist Church boasts a small but lively Men's Fellowship and as part of its activities a trip was organised recently for members and friends to the Pendon Museum of Miniature Landscape and Transport at Long Wittenham near Abingdon. The members of the Fellowship were also hosts at the Annual Supper of the Berks Baptist Men's Movement when some seventy guests enjoyed a wonderful meal—prepared by ladies of course—and good company.

Organ Tuner Extraordinary

It was in September, 1912 that Mr. P. G. Phipps of Oxford first tuned the organ in the Baptist Church. Mr. Phipps, now in his eighties, has reluctantly decided that the time has come for him to curtail his activities and has relinquished the task which he has undertaken meticulously for over sixty years. Mr. Phipps must surely be a candidate for the Guinness Book of Records.

Believers' Baptism

On Easter Sunday Evening five friends of the Baptist Church witnessed to their faith in Christ through the waters of Believers' Baptism after which they received Communion and were welcomed into full membership of the Church by the Minister, the Revd. L. Stevens.

Missionary Weekend

Recently the Baptist Churches in Reading and District held their annual missionary weekend when missionaries on furlough visited the various churches and took part in services and other activities. This year the local Church welcomed Miss K. M. Brain, who has been active in educational work in Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo) and Mr. Richard Budden who has also served in Zaire as a teacher. Mr. Budden, a native of Reading and a member of Wycliffe Baptist Church, shared in a "picnic lunch" to which children of the Sunday School were invited. Mr. Budden showed transparencies depicting the work on the mission field and the children had the opportunity of talking to a "real live missionary" about his work.

B.D.

Temperance Queen

The Baptist Church is proud that one of its younger members, Miss Pamela Ide, has been elected Reading Temperance Queen for 1974/75 and will be crowned at the annual Festival on Saturday, 27th April. Pamela, a nursery nurse, is a member of the 1st Caversham Girls' Brigade and is a vocalist in the Baptist Church's Young Peoples' Guitars Group.

Obituary

We record with regret the passing of Mr. Leonard Stevens of 148, Upper Woodcote Road on Saturday, 30th March. Readers will recall that Mr. Stevens featured in the March issue of the "Bridge" when he and his wife, Winnie, to whom we offer Christian Sympathy, celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

STATION MASS AT ST. ANNE'S

The title STATION is of ancient origin derived from the latin STATIO. The custom goes back a long way and is connected with the Lenten custom of fasting and pilgrimage to churches where people joined in the church services.

Pope Paul declared 1974 a Holy Year, a year when members of the Roman Catholic Church are called on for reformation and reconciliation in their daily lives. In other words, it is to be a year of spiritual renewal marked by repentance and pilgrimage to designated churches both National as well as in Rome.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Caversham, dating back to the 11th century and now restored in St. Anne's Church with a pre-reformation statue of Our Lady and Child, is designated as one of the centres of pilgrimage in the archdiocese of Birmingham.

The first STATION MASS in the South Oxford Deanery took place at St. Anne's on Tuesday evening, 19th March, when Bishop Emery concelebrated Mass with eight Priests of the Deanery. Some 250 people were present including visitors from Henley, Sonning Common, Dorchester, Watlington and Thame, most of whom received Holy Communion. During the Mass the shaking of hands was passed from a Priest on the altar and from person to person throughout the church, symbolising unity, which is the sign of the Mass, unity in Service and Sacrifice as Christians.

After the Mass, the Bishop, Priests and congregation met informally in St. Anne's Hall where light refreshments were provided; the evening was one of historical interest and was a memorable occasion for those who were present.

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ST. MARGARET'S MAPLEDURHAM

At the annual parochial meeting which was held on March 12th Mr. G. W. O. Price did not offer himself for re-election as churchwarden as he is shortly moving away from the parish. In his place Mr. W. Thomas was appointed and Mr. B. A. Martyn-Johns was re-elected as the other warden. Miss Hawthorn and Mrs. H. Solloway were re-elected to the Church Council along with four new members, Mr. H. Matthews, Miss J. Banks, Mrs. J. Barnett and Mrs. J. Wright.

ST. BARNABAS' NEWS

St. Barnabas Church lost one of its oldest members by the death of Mr. Albert Waltham, aged 83. Mr. Waltham was one of the original residents of Grove Road where, owing to the premature death of his wife he brought up his family singlehanded. He was very active and was a familiar figure cycling around Emmer Green up to 3 weeks before his death.

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FAMILY FESTIVAL DIARY

"FAMILY FESTIVAL—THEN IT'S NOT FOR ME, I HAVEN'T GOT A FAMILY!" THAT IS TYPICAL OF SOME COMMENTS HEARD BY THE FESTIVAL'S ORGANISERS. This, of course, is nonsense and a misunderstanding. The Festival is not only for families, it is for the single, the widowed, the divorced, orphans, students, people living or working away from their homes and family, in fact for anyone and everyone, whoever and whatever they are.

There is something taking place during the Festival for every member of the community.

This is especially true of the **Family Conference on Sunday, May 12th, at High-down Comprehensive School, Emmer Green.** It will take the form of an afternoon conference, with workshops and projects for age groups from toddlers to senior citizens, on the theme "The Family in Modern Society."

The main speaker will be **Dr. Jack Dominian, a consultant psychiatrist, member of the Marriage Guidance Council, author of books on family life and a committed Christian.**

The Conference "proper" starts at 1.30 p.m., but people may bring picnic lunches and use the school swimming pool from noon onwards. Application forms are available from Church House or telephone **Rev. Stephen Bartlett (475152).**

The Festival is not just a matter of understanding what being a Family means and enjoying oneself as a Family, it is also about helping those in need, who are deprived of a Family life. Helping, in this case, means raising cash for the four charities adopted by the Festival.

These charities are: the Reading and District Council of Churches Housing Trust; Help the Aged; the Simon Community for the Homeless and the Reading Society for Mentally Handicapped Children.

The main money-raising events will be the **Festival Shop in Caversham, and the Festival Fair.**

The shop will need glass and china ware, home made articles, preserves, household goods and good secondhand clothes. The shop will be open from June 29th to July 6th, and home-made cakes will be needed each day. If you think you can help or donate goods please contact Miss Kift, 2 Darell Road, or your church representative.

Similarly the **Fair in Caversham Court on Saturday, July 13th,** will need goods to stock stalls such as sweets, bottles, knitting and needlework, and cakes. Mr. Ted Boulding of 35, Oakley Road, can put you in touch with the stall-holders.

Raising money for the Festival charities and setting up a new record at the same time, that is the task the young people of St. Peter's have set themselves during the Festival. The way they intend to do it is to collect a **MILE OF HALF-NEW PENNIES!**

If they succeed, as well as having achieved a record, they will also have raised over £470 — to be exact £470.20, as there are 18 4p's to the foot.

This they cannot do without your help, of course, they will need every 4p that they can get. So start collecting those cumbersome, fiddly, little coins now. Empty out your pockets, purses, handbags, clean out the car—you will be surprised where they turn up—in fact try looking in your trouser turn-ups, if you have any!

Keep the coins until Saturday, July 6th, and bring them along for the half-penny mile.

If you cannot bring your coins along, give them to

someone else to bring, or give them to your churches Festival representative.

While the adults indulge in the ancient English pastime of the **Cricket Match on Saturday, July 6th, at Mapledurham Playing Fields,** the youngsters will also have a chance to use up their surplus energy and compete against each other in a programme of sports and races at the same place. So bring your kids along and let them join in the fun.

Has your Family started scrapping yet? No, not actually fighting, but getting the Family Scrapbook together for the Festival Scrapbook Competition described in the last issue. Don't leave it too late before you start, remember the scrapbooks have to be finished by and handed in on June 15th. Now is your Family's chance to win a £10 gift voucher. Entry forms and rules are available at your church or from Mrs. Doreen Bennett, 157 Upper Woodcote Road.



A FESTIVAL AND AN ANNIVERSARY

As part of the Family Festival to be held in Caversham during the last week of June, St. Peter's Church will once again be decorated with flowers arranged by local helpers and members of the Thames Valley Flower Arrangement Club. Many people will no doubt recall the superb decorations created by this Club for Mayday week in 1970, and the Festival will be in the nature of a double event for the Club celebrates its 21st anniversary in October this year.

Following its inauguration in 1953 the Club held its first Annual General Meeting on October 27th 1954 at Watlington House since when it has had many changes of venue before settling in its present meeting place at the Sir Hermann Gollancz Hall, Clifton Street, Reading. Upon the occasions when a larger audience has to be accommodated Club members meet at All Saints' Hall, Downshire Square. Seven founder members still attend the meetings regularly, and have seen the membership rise from an initial 30 to the present total of over one hundred.

A high standard of work is now expected from members of the Thames Valley Flower Arrangement Club by many of whom have achieved considerable status through participating in competitions within and outside the Club. Among the members are competent judges, demon-

strators and several who have obtained City and Guilds diplomas or are studying for these at the moment. Demonstrators visiting the Club from all parts of the country are among the best recommended by N.A.F.A.S., the national society which lays down the guide lines for Flower Clubs.

Festivals in which the Thames Valley Club have participated were held at St. Laurence's Church, Reading in 1971, at Sulhamstead and Ufton Nervet Churches in 1972 and at Checkonden Church in the same year, all of which were planned by Mrs. K. M. Sagar, who last year retired after many years as Chairman of the Club.

The Club's 21st anniversary is to be celebrated by a luncheon and demonstration at Grosvenor House Hotel Caversham, on 25th September. New members are welcome at the meetings held on the last Wednesday



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GALLERY VIEWPOINT by ZOILUS

NOT WITH A BANG NOR YET A WHIMPER, ON MARCH 26th, 1974, READING BOROUGH COUNCIL SLID PEACEFULLY OUT OF EXISTENCE, having ordered the affairs of the town for the past 86 years, often with foresight, sometimes with stupidity but always conscientiously. For a body that was first formed in the heyday of Victorian England it might be appropriate to describe its record as 'worthy,' a complimentary adjective much prized in those days, though it may be modishly devalued in these sardonic '70s.

At one time there was a possibility that this last meeting would be the scene of a scintillating setpiece of verbal fireworks demonstrating the party political dynamite never far below the surface of a modern town council—all of which would have been thought both unseemly and slightly ridiculous by the founding members of 1886. However, the Labour group decided not to go forward with an amendment asking the new Education Minister to reconsider local plans for secondary education, and as nobody had anything of note to contribute on any other item the members signalled approval of the proceedings of seven committees in just about as many minutes.

In fact it looked as though the Council was racing to its demise with almost indecent haste until Education was reached, and then there was an opportunity to listen to not only a final debate on a controversial subject but one which gave an opportunity to hear for the last time two party leaders who are retiring from active politics. Cllr. Bob Towner has led the Socialists for three years. He is young, efficient and dedicated. His debating style may seem to some a trifle sulky, as though he is for ever trying to wriggle a king-size chip off his shoulder, but he has led his group with flair and success, gaining the respect of both his opponents and the Town Hall establishment.

It was appropriate that his last political speech in the chamber should be on the subject of secondary school reorganisation, for Bob Towner has always been one of the most forceful advocates of a fully comprehensive system in education. No doubt he was sorry he had to explain why it was decided to abide by a committee decision not to ask the Minister to re-open the case for the inclusion of Reading and Kendrick schools into a comprehensive scheme. But as Berkshire Council was about to take over the town's educational responsibilities he thought it only proper that any such moves should be made by them.

Councillor Day for the Liberals congratulated Councillor Towner on his decision and suggested the Berkshire Authority might well come down in favour of total integration in Reading and other members, Tory and Labour, joined in the song of praise for a logical decision to leave the matter with the new authority, though some of the former couldn't resist reminding the council that the "softlee softlee catchee monkey" advice came originally from the Labour Education Minister himself.

But it was when Ald. Ted Busby rose to make his contribution that the sense of occasion came alive. Nearly thirty years a member of the authority, the last thirteen as leader of the Conservatives, he too has made Education one of his main concerns and for many years was Chairman of the Committee. Listening to him speaking in the

typical Busby manner, combining telling facts with a kindly sense of humour, must have brought home to everyone how much poorer his retirement will make the new District Council and the Tory Group in particular.

There were other farewell appearances at this, the final meeting of the Borough Council. There was Ald. Charles Evans for instance, not only the Father of the Council but probably its most popular member. Caversham in particular has much for which to thank Charlie Evans who was representative for the ward from 1935 until he became an Alderman. Ald. Stanley Woodrow was also one of those to retire, and like Aldermen Evans and Busby is a Freeman of the Borough.

As the end of official business there were valedictory speeches from the leaders of the three parties and each regretted, not only the departure of many long serving councillors, but also the end of the old system of local government by county boroughs. There were doubts on all sides that the new system would work as well as the old, and the Town Clerk pointed out that though some rural areas would benefit, the service to towns such as Reading might well be less direct. In the coming years we may well regret the passing of the old form of Local Government, seemed to be the general opinion of most representatives. It was all rather a shame and the mandarins of Whitehall may have made a notable bloomer but good luck to the new District Council in its effort to make things work.

So for the last time the members of Reading Borough Council filed into the Small Town Hall to take a farewell glass of champagne with the last Mayor of the Borough. It seemed a pity that they could not have been presented with something a little more durable to mark the end of what was indeed a very worthy institution.

SUNDAY SERVICES IN MAY

ANGLICAN

St. Peter's
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION.
10.30 a.m. Family Service (3rd Sunday).
11.00 a.m. Matins (not 3rd Sunday).
11.15 a.m. Holy Communion (3rd Sunday).
12.15 p.m. Holy Communion (1st Sunday).
6.30 p.m. Evensong (not 3rd Sunday).

St. John's
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST.
4.00 p.m. Evensong (1st Sunday).

St. Andrew's
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST.
11.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
6.30 p.m. Evensong (not 3rd Sunday).

St. Barnabas'
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. FAMILY EUCHARIST
11.00 a.m. Family Service (2nd Sunday).
6.30 p.m. Evensong (2nd Sunday).

St. Margaret's, Mapledurham
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (2nd and 4th Sundays)
9.15 a.m. PARISH COMMUNION
(4th Sunday, Matins)
10.00 a.m. Family Service (2nd Sunday)

NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH
10.45 a.m. Morning Service
6.30 p.m. Evening Service.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH
11.00 a.m. Morning Service.
6.30 p.m. Evening Service.

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (The School)
11.15 a.m. Ecumenical Half Hour Family Service.

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6.30 p.m. Evening Service.

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Round the Clubs

ROSEHILL EMMER GREEN W.I.

The new Committee elected were Mrs. Sansum President, Mrs. James Secretary, Mrs. Burtenshaw Treasurer, Mrs. Ramsbottom, Delegate to the Spring Council meeting gave her report. Eight members attended, Mrs. Honor Wyatt spoke on working for the BBC, on March 28th. The Annual Group meeting was held at Rosehill. After the Presidents' addresses an interesting talk on "Ladies Headdresses through the ages" was given by Miss Hibbard, who herself wore a handmade period costume. An excellent buffet was provided and beautiful floral arrangements much admired. The highlight was the production of five short plays written and produced by each of the institutes in competition. Songing Gleve were the cup winners, Rosehill second, Maiden Erlegh third. At the April meeting 8 new members were received. Mrs. Arkle guest speaker, spoke on "Children's literature."

MAPLEDURHAM W.I.

Mapledurham W.I. held their A.G.M. on Friday, 8th March. Mrs. Curtis, a V.S.O. for Oxfordshire who comes from Checkonden W.I., attended. It was a very lively and interesting meeting, Mrs. Bramwell, the retiring President, was warmly thanked for all her hard work in the past year and the financial report read. The whole hall heaved a large sigh of relief when Mrs. Griffiths nobly volunteered to be the new President—right up until the meeting started it was feared that Mapledurham might have to close down, for lack of a President. Everyone enjoyed

their tea once that was decided.

The annual general meeting was held in St. Andrew's Hall on March 19th when voting took place to elect the committee for the coming year. Mrs. Betty Oxbourne was re-elected president and Mrs. Lawford and Mrs. Fry again as secretaries. A coach party was arranged to attend the Spring Council meeting at Oxford on March 20th.

CAVERSHAM PARK W.I.

At the A.G.M. Mrs. Gillett was re-elected President and Miss Powell was re-elected Secretary. Mrs. Harding is the newly elected Treasurer. A report was given on the Institute's activities during the year and Mrs. Loram was awarded the competition trophy for 1973/74. The competition for a spring floral arrangement was won by Mrs. Mann.

BLAGRAVE W.I.

Mrs. Wilkie presided over the Annual Meeting, held in The Memorial Hall, Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham, and welcomed Miss M. Latham (ex County Secretary) also Mrs. K. Bubb and Mrs. Turner from Maplewood W.I., who acted as tellers for election of the new Committee.

Miss Latham gave an interesting talk on "Making the most of your membership."

Annual Reports were read and adopted and Mrs. Wilkie thanked members of the Committee and others who had assisted in the smooth running of the Institute over the past year.

Mrs. Price made final arrangements for the Group Meeting, also outings to Glass Factory and Theatre.

Mrs. Wilkie was re-elected President, Miss Reynolds Secretary and Mrs. Wright the new Treasurer. The Competition was Home-made Cookies was won by Mrs. Sholl and the Raffle prize by Miss D. Chapman.

EMMER GREEN TOWNSWOMENS GUILD

Meetings are still being held in the Church Hall but it is hoped to get back to the school after the Easter holidays. There was no speaker at the February meeting. A short film on gas conversion was shown and the evening finished with a Social including Community singing much enjoyed by all.

The speaker for March was Mrs. J. Austin a newspaper reporter whose subject was "How the other half live." Mrs. Austint reated the main theme of her talk on other peoples problems in a light-hearted manner which proved interesting and amusing. Nevertheless her audience were left in no doubt that she wet to a great deal of trouble to pass the more serious problems on to the organisations most suited to deal with them and that the lesser ones were dealt with in a most understanding manner.

Mapledurham Parish Council

The monthly meeting of the Mapledurham Parish Council was held on Thursday, March 14th, 1974. Mr. B. A. Fowles, chairman of the Council, presided at the meeting.

The Council were given firm information regarding the building development for the new pavilion. It is hoped that work will commence towards the end of April, and the Council were advised that, subject to the availability of labour and materials, the work will take about 26 weeks from commencement to completion.

The Council were not able to give any further details regarding the proposals to revise parish boundaries as no further positive information has been received from any source.

South Oxon District Council are to implement a revised procedure for planning applications. Under the new method, they are asking parish councils to give their comments on planning applications within two weeks of receipt. This will inevitably speed up the timetable for persons who are considering a development in this area.

The Council were advised of the several reasons given by Oxfordshire C.C. concerning the County Council's refusal for the development of the 230 housing units at Chazey Heath that was under consideration last summer. The Parish Council are naturally pleased to have this information, and to know that such a large development was strongly opposed by the County Council.

The Council noted with interest that Oxfordshire Education Committee had made an application for a primary school site at the top end of Hemdean Bottom, as a possible alternative to the ones suggested in Shepherd's Lane, Mapledurham. It was noted that the Shepherd's Lane sites were causing the County Council some concern because of the probable necessity to seek compulsory purchase order powers if they wish to acquire this latter site.

It was noted that the proposal to erect three houses at Warren Court had been rejected by the Oxfordshire C.C.

CAVERSHAM AFTERNOON TOWNSWOMENS GUILD

Where can you travel absolutely free to any part of the country on three days each month? The answer is, if you are an old age pensioner and live in Holland. This was one of the fascinating pieces of information given to Caversham Afternoon Guild by Mrs. C. Symons when she spoke on "Education and the Social Services in Holland." This talk was followed by a "Balloon Debate." Four members with chosen occupations are up in an imaginary balloon, three must be jettisoned and only one could be saved, would it be the farmer, the miner, the business man or the Prime Minister? After an amusing debate it was agreed that the farmer had put forward the best case for his survival. The jumble sale had been a great success and part of the proceeds would be given to the Caversham Derby and Joan club. A group of members enjoyed a visit to the Ideal Home exhibition in London where they were able to see an exhibition of work from Townswomen over the whole of the British Isles. With the approaching conversion to natural gas in Caversham, the Guild saw a film at the Gas Showroom explaining what would happen during this operation.

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YOUNG CAVERSHAM

IT IS MY USUAL CUSTOM ABOUT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR TO COMMENT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE TWO CAVERSHAM BOYS' CLUBS DURING THE WINTER SESSION. Both organisations have settled in at the Reading Athletic Club's premises in Kiln Road, Emmer Green, following an emergency evacuation from the Toc H Centre brought about by the enforcement of restrictions on the use of the building by the Fire Authority.

On the Ball

The Indoor Games Tournaments were organised as in previous years. They have always aroused immense enthusiasm among the members. Individuals and teams have competed in area and county events with several notable achievements resulting. Anthony Bateman, of West Caversham, won the Reading Borough junior draughts competition in November and went on to win the Berkshire junior championship a month later. West Caversham's five-a-side soccer team proved themselves worthy winners of the Berks Boys' Clubs Senior Plate competition, and were maintaining a healthy position in the South Oxfordshire Senior League until fixtures were abandoned because of the power crisis. Nicky Ford was selected to play for Berkshire Boys in the Gillette Cup, the county having reached the semi-final, when they were

beaten by London Boys' Clubs 2-1 at Catford. Geoff Powell, the club's ping-pong supreme, lost the final set to Neil Buckingham, of Emmer Green Youth Club, in the Berkshire table tennis championship.

Lowfield Boys' Club also had a fair share of successes. Simon Cockman won the Reading Borough Junior

by
PETER SHOCK

Snooker competition, but was prevented from competing in the county championship owing to a dislocated shoulder. Lowfield's "B" 5-a-side soccer team reached the final of the Minors' section of the Berks County competition, losing to Wokingham. Their 11-a-side ended the season's local friendlies

with a resounding 15-1 victory over Park Place, Henley.

Show a leg

I hope you all carefully read in last month's "Bridge" Stan Eldon's comments on the fitness of young people. Being in agreement with him on the issue concerning the lack of natural exercise undertaken nowadays by children, I also wonder if the cluttering up of the body by unnecessary clothing has some significance. What has happened to those chubby bare knees once typical of British boyhood; and school-girls (with or without those controversial pig-tails) vaunting as heralds of the Spring with their neat pleated gym-slips and Persil-white ankle socks? For the life of me I cannot understand why pairs of sturdy young knees have to be perpetually shielded by cavalry twills and Levi jeans. In recent years, even in the majority of our primary schools, it seems to be the rule more than the exception for boys to, don their long-johns at the earliest opportunity. Those who attend schools where "shorts" are traditional ought to be grateful for the privilege. As to the girls, well, being a respecting kind of gentleman, I had better exercise a little discretion in my criticisms of their mode of dress. However, health-wise, I would vouch that whatever examples of vigour is portrayed it is likely to be detected only on the sports

field or gymnasium. Well-meaning medical advisers often confuse us, too. Whilst I emphasise that stringent precautions and adequate dress are absolutely essential for mountain walking, I consider it rather hideous to suggest that rambling in the freedom of good old "shorts" in areas like the Chiltern Hills should be potentially harmful. So I repeat Stan Eldon's advice to keep fit. Walk more often—AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO SHOW A LEG!

CLUB TO COUNTRY

THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CAVERSHAM SPORTSMAN OF THE WINTER SEASON MUST SURELY BE CAVERSHAM SCHOOLMASTER CLIVE REES who has had a rapid climb to success since moving to Highdown School last September. In one season, whilst only twenty-two years old, he has moved from being a Club Rugby player to Welsh International and now to crown his season he has been selected to tour with the British Lions in South Africa this summer. Although he is an "import" he has put Berkshire Rugby on the map as the first Berkshire county player ever to be selected for a 'Lions' tour.

At the moment there is a lot of speculation as to

whether the Tour will be allowed to go ahead as planned. I hope that it does for three reasons. Firstly, the disappointment for the players, who in some cases have worked hard for years to earn a place in the team, would be enormous as this can be their once-in-a-lifetime chance. Secondly, I do not think that sport should be used as a political weapon in any way at all, whether it be as a protest for Black Power—as in the Mexico Olympics, or against countries with whom we do not agree with all or some of their policies. Finally, it is important that people should see for themselves and sportsmen have a wonderful opportunity to do this when they travel abroad, as in mot cases they are freer and more able to mix with people than politicians, diplomats, etc. As a member of a British team I travelled to many places that had their political and racial problems—Nigeria, East Berlin, Poland and twice to Russia—and I always found that even during times of very great restrictions of movement as sportsmen you could meet and talk to people in these countries. In Poland a young journalist came to my room as an official reporter for a State publication and then proceeded to search my room for 'bugs' of the microphone variety before

speaking to me about conditions in that country for a not so official publication.

I look forward to seeing Clive Rees take his place with the British Lions this summer and I'm sure all Berkshire sportsmen will wish him a successful tour.

CLIFTON STILL THE TOPS

Caversham's most successful football team of recent years, Clifton Athletic, have had another very good season. Both their Saturday and Sunday first teams are well positioned in their respective Premier Leagues, the Saturday team being in fourth place at the moment and the Sunday team well placed in the middle, thus ensuring that they will both be in the top leagues again next year. In addition to this they are still progressing in three Cup competitions, having reached the final of the Reading Challenge Cup, where, by the time this reaches print, they should have played and beaten Sunninghill F.C.; they are also still competing in the Combination All Champions and Invitation Cups competitions.

An innovation for the team this season was indoor football, where they won the League competition and have reached the finals of the Indoor Cup competition at the Meadoway Sports Centre.

Nicholas

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