

II-PLUS STAYS-IN MODIFIED FORM

The II-plus will stay in Essex - at present - modified so that there is less strain on the child. This decision important to all parents and children was made by Essex Education Committee last week.

Under the new system there will be a preliminary test in the Autumn by which hidden talent will be found. This will be followed in the next year with separate English and Maths tests, taken in the familiar surroundings of the child's school as part of the normal routine.

VERY GOOD YEAR FOR COUNCIL.

Reviewing the work of Basildon U.D. Council in the last year, the Chairman Counc H.E. Tanswell said that the Council had done a great deal.

Speaking of the population of the district he said that compared with a population of 57,500 in 1945, there was in 1958 a population of 72,540 and at present about 76,500, an increase of about 19,000 on 1945.

He also outlined how the private street works and lighting schemes were progressing.

ART EXHIBITION.

About 1,000 people saw the 124 paintings in the 2nd annual exhibition of Billericay Art Club, at Church House from 18th to 25th April. Also included were a group of pottery statuettes modelled by Stella Crofts, and Pewterwork by G.S. Amos. One painting was a portrait of "Observer" ed W. Grant.

Proceeds from the exhibition went to the Parish Church extension fund.

The club was founded in 1956 to promote the appreciation and practice of the arts of sketching, painting and drawing in any media and meetings are held every week at the rear of Cottis' Bakery. The club has about 50 members.

Paintings were by: Miss M. Wood, G.S. Amos, W.N. Tilldaley, H. Watson, Miss H. Kennedy, H. Dunning, Mrs V. Phillips, Mrs E. Clark, Mrs E. Pletts, Miss S. Crofts, C.J. Coultrup, W.T. Appleton, K.A. Charlton, Mrs I. Beadle, F.J. Shilling, Mrs O. Holmwood

PERRY STREET ALTERNATIVE.

Councillors Quirk and Phelps stressed the need to widen Perry St before it was too late. They said that the width was totally inadequate.

Counc Phelps said that a 16ft width was completely inadequate for a backbone road, like Perry Street.

In the near future there would also be an outlet from Lake Meadows into the road thus increasing the traffic.

It was reported that the Eastern National Bus Company would consider running a service down the road if it was wider.

Counc Saunders said that he considered a bus service would be a danger to children attending Perry St School.

The matter was referred back to the Committee.

RECRUITING DAY.

Billericay Branch of the Red Cross held a recruiting day on the 18th April at 74, High Street. There was a window display and several new members joined.

In future only the Basildon Council's Treasurers Office will open on Saturday mornings.

It was reported at Basildon U.D. Council meeting that several old people's bungalows had been completed in the district and that the old people were moving in.

The pavillion on the new St. John's Old Boys Cricket Club ground in Stock Road, Billericay is now nearing completion.

MR P. ROBERTSON.

The resignation, owing to personal reasons of Mr P. Robertson, Wickford ward, Chairman of the Works Committee was reported at the recent Council Meeting. Conservatives and Labour paid tribute to his work on the Council.

STOP PRESS NEWS.

Art G. Gony, J. W. Tietts, D. Michael, Dr R. Bowesman, Mrs V. Phillips and R. Embrey.

Mon A 27th to 29th, The Missouri Traveller (U), The Vanishing Prairie.
Thu A 30th to A 2nd, "I Was Monty's Double", Cole, Younger Gunfighter (U).
Sunday 3rd, The First Texan (U), and You Can't Escape (A).
Mon 4th to 6th, The Defiant Ones (A), also Moment of Indiscretion (U).
Mon 7th to 9th, The Square Peg (U), Fury Unleashed (U).
Sunday 10th, The Indian Fighter (U), also Shield for Murder (U).
For details of April films see the last issue.

★ ★ ★ FILMS

The Square Peg (U), stars Norman Wisdom as Norman Pitkin, who describes his job as road-mender during the war as "keeping open the arteries of the nation". Then both Wilfred Grimsdale, the Borough Engineer and Norman are recruited into the Pioneer Corps.

Hilarious scenes follow and Grimsdale and Norman find themselves behind enemy lines in France. Grimsdale is caught and flung in jail as a spy and Norman attempts to rescue him.

The Indian Fighter, (U) starring Kirk Douglas, tells the story of a tough Indian fighter Tommy Hawks who is sent to clear up a situation in Sioux territory.

FOR THE GARDENER.

The May Garden.

The flower garden now needs a lot of attention, if plants are to develop properly. Any weaklings can be sacrificed. Allow plenty of growing space, watch out for the insects, loosen soil round stems, and give weak manure water.

In the Vegetable Garden, runner-beans can be put in. Be sure to dig the stakes in enough to stand high force winds. You can now sow your vegetable marrow and cucumber in warm places.

Do not neglect the care of fruit and rose trees. These can be sprayed and manured.

A WATER GARDEN.

Perhaps you have some wet and swampy place in your garden. If so you can drain it and make a water garden at the same time. A pond or pools with rockeries around and plants growing in the water makes an attractive addition to any garden. If you wish to have fish in your pond it is wise to consult expert advice.

ROUND AND ABOUT

by
"WANDERER".

No doubt you have read already about the fuss over Perry Street. There is no need for any fuss for roads of smaller widths have bus services, and after all the Perry Street one need only be every hour or so.

However if there is ANY danger to the schoolchildren then NO bus service. Widening the road would cost too much, after this work has been completed so no bus. I am afraid, from my inquiries the bus campaigners are in the minority by about 60 to 40 in every 100. Perry Street residents are mad with the Council over the time that has been taken over the road and the state in general. Many did not want the road made up in the first place.

A resident informs me that it is his opinion that the paddling pool in Lake Meadows is not safe from the medical point of view as regards Polio. In my opinion the pool water should be changed every day to combat the spreading of such diseases.

I entirely approve of the methods by which Essex County Council have modified the II-plus. They ease the strain on the child and find hidden talent, both most important features. But the II-plus must not be dropped. A fairer method of selection could not be found. If a teacher made a report on the child he (or she) may misjudge the child.

I am rather puzzled as to why local people buy "Lion" eggs in the shops, when they can obtain fresh-laid eggs, often double yolk from the many local chicken farms.

Mr Marple's Polite Telephone Operators Scheme does not seem to affect some mind you some of the Billericay Exchange Operators. The deterrent to the tight cutting of your phone time is firmness. Once recently I was telephoning to London and being a large daily newspaper I was telephoning to I had to get an extension. I had just got through when the operator told me that she was going to cut me off. I firmly told that I had hardly got through. As a result I never heard a thing from her and I went on talking.

Last year the ancient weather lore ash before the oak expect a soak, oak before the ash expect a dash was proved correct. The ash is before the oak this year so will we have a repetition of last year's weather?

- "Wanderer".

STORY OF BILLERICAY

CHAPTER 17 by Ha/R1.

As early as the 14th Century Billericay was a centre of the Wool Trade with Flanders and the Low Countries, but the methods of trading were not always to be admired however as we find in the Colchester Court Rolls. In 1406 it was stated therein, that 'Benedict Wollemongere, John Stace, John Tannere, Thomas Blowere, and Richard Marchaunt of Billerica buyers of wool have several times come to the town market and carried off, each one for himself, wool mangy and watery which they expose for sale to the burgesses as well as to foreigners to their great deception and against the ordinances of the town, in mercy 12d each'-quite a hefty fine for those days.

A later Wool merchant of Billericay was Joseph Fishpoole whose home was at 'Hurlocks', then known as the 'White Hart', which stood on the site adjoining the Westminster Bank. He owned a Hop Garden and Hop Garden Field in Western Road, as well as farmland on the site of Rosslyn Road and Beaufort Road, the present Cricket Field and Tennis Courts, and the site of Humphrey & Glasgow's Works. Two meadows in Perry Street from what is now Bridge Parade to the brook also belonged to this Woolman in 1681. Morant, in his History of Essex describes him as having owned the manor of Apton Hall, in Canewdon. In 1669 he issued his own Tradesmen's Token which bore his sign of a Woolpack denoting his type of business. John's sister married Henry Abbott of Earls Colne, and died in 1753 leaving £100 to be laid out in the purchase of land, or invested in one of the public funds 'the interest to be equally distributed between five poor widows of Great Burstead parish'. It was to be called 'Fishpoole's Gift'.

It is possible that at least one of the houses of the old Woolmen still exists, in Billericay, now quite unrecognisable to its builder, however, in the form of 3, 5, and part of 7, Chapel Street. This property dates from about 1450 when the Wool Trade was at its height, and during the recent reconstruction work at No. 3, the original Solar or private quarters of the owner, there was found an unusual Double Doorway with small window facing into what is now No. 5 which would have been the Hall open to the roof with windows high up in the wall below the eaves. Two original windows can actually be traced in that position in the former rear wall of 'St. Aubyn's'. A few years ago one of these was completely uncovered showing the grooves for the shutters. The frame work is quite plain and of heavy timbering with no sign of carving or other decoration such has been found in other houses of the period. Was this because the so-called Hall was more of a Warehouse which would not have any need to be elaborately decorated? It is to be noted that a window in the same kind of position at 'Hurlocks' was also quite plain. At 'St. Aubyn's' the second window has been brought into use for a Leaded Light which was inserted in one half of it, the remaining being completely blocked and the exterior covered with Parget work of 16th/17th cent. date.

To return to the Woolman theory. During the recent alterations at No. 3 a carved door panel of 16th cent. date, and of Flemish origin, and it is to be remembered that this is the part of the World with which the old Woolman traded, and from which they brought such things to decorate and enrich their homes.

NEWMAN'S

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New equipment has been ordered, which will enable us to get away from the typewritten sheet and have real style headlines and the "Billericay Observer" front page heading in printed form. It is to be hoped that it will be in use on this issue, for I am typing this article on Thursday owing to pressure of time.

The "Observer" mail has included letters from Germany, Austria, Singapore and South Africa. An excerpt from the latter is printed below:

Carlton Hotel,
Johannesburg,
Sth Africa.

Dear Wynford Grant,

No doubt you will be surprised to hear from me but Press Reports do get around as you see this cutting about your paper from the Johannesburg Star.

I was quite taken aback as I live in the Billericay neighbourhood and I am glad to know of someone so enterprising as you.

Soon it will be Winter here but they tell me it is sunny with night frosts. It is a delightful climate, although often terrible thunder storms. The Flora is undescribably beautiful. I like especially the tree lined streets of the blue Jackranda blossoms. Pretoria is also much visited during the Autumn and Early Spring to view from a height the city entirely covered in blue.

At the moment the Rand Show is on and the cattle were gorgeous so many breeds I hadn't seen before. The "Africander" with wide horns, the "Depters" from Ireland. Also the small long furred Galloways were much admired.

The flower section is quite the best I have ever seen especially the Roses & Dahilas as big as dinner plates.

Next week I hope to go down a gold mine. Every Sunday there is a native dance which is much attended on the mine environs.

M. Thomson.

CORRECTION.

In the last edition we stated that the play "For Better, For Worse" was presented on 9th-11th April. In fact it was presented on the 16th-18th April. We are sorry for any inconvenience caused by this announcement, but owing to the fact that the paper is run by one such incidents are unavoidable.

JANUS REPORTING.

The story of Billericay as recorded by the "Observer" shows it has a wonderful history and tradition. It also seems to have a Council that encourages private endeavour. They realize that their records will be unique, for one of the Billericay citizens, must be the youngest combined Editor, Reporter, Printer and Delivery Boy in the World. I hope this may be recognised by a new kind of Honours award.

On the subject of Council's, it is discouraging to the Street Clearance men to see litter thrown on the ground as soon as they have swept it. If these people who do so would reflect what they would feel like, were some one to throw coffee on a newly painted landscape or garbage on their tidy lawn they might refrain from deliberately transgressing.

I understand a new daily newspaper is to be started by The British Newspaper Trust of 175, High Holborn, London, W.C.1. It will be an independent newspaper with no Political aims. The Organisation controlling will be a non profit making one. It aims to be a watch dog, for British freedom. It would report injustices by Monopolies. It will have its own printing press and staff.

In the event of a strike on a wide scale it would call on Volunteers from every trade. It is in touch with all Trade Unions. If any or several of them endeavoured to paralyse the Country by Strikes, the organised band of Volunteers would man essential services in an endeavour to minimise hardship. It has enrolled 50,000 members since it founded the People's League for Freedom in 1956. Suggestions for the name of this new daily paper are being sought. My own would be "THE FREEDOM ECHO". For fuller detail of date of publication write Secretary, British Newspaper Trust, 175, High Holborn, W.C.1.

News that the Dalai Lama and his family, were eventually allowed to enter India must have enhanced Mr Nehru's status. During that long period of suspense, it seemed that no voice was raised to urge help for the stricken Tibetans. The assurance of Sanctuary for their Spiritual Leader meant more than their own lives. In desperation a Britisher sent a letter to the Pope at the Vatican, asking him to use his influence in the appeal for an offer of help for the Buddhist Leader.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6.

COMMENT.

St Pancras Council intend to repeat their action of last year, and fly the red flag from the Town Hall on May 1st. Readers will remember the fiasco and near-riot of last May. Is it right that the Council should be permitted to fly the flag, which has such large and dangerous political implications?

Britain is a free country, but if everybody was allowed to do as they please we would be in a fine state. I do not think it right or fair for the Council to be allowed to provoke in such a way a disturbance of the peace. The flag flying should be forbidden by high authority.

YOU break the law once a week.

YOU break the law at least once a week. The law broken so often are the laws under the Lord's Day Observance Acts of about 1770. One is you must not play cricket within two miles of a church. And opposing the repeal of these laws are the members of the Lords Day Observance Society.

In their opinion it would be a bad thing to repeal the laws. But who obeys them anyway? According to some people everybody should go about glumly on Sundays. I am sure this was not how Sunday was originally intended to be. Let us be sensible about these things.

Missed publicity?

The tourist trade is a steadily growing one, and also very profitable. Britain should be publicised as much as possible abroad. I think that in our postage stamps we are missing a great field of publicity. Other countries advertise their national prizes and scenic beauties in this way so why not us? The present stamps are dreary and miserable. I do not suggest we do away with the portrait of the Queen. The stamps would be similar to the 2/6 upwards present values and commonwealth stamps. Similar size to last year's Empire Games issues. Here are my suggestions for the various values: 1d, Ben Nevis, 1d, Loch Lomond, 1 1/2d, 2d & 2 1/2d, Tower of London scenes, 3d, 4d, 5d, 6d and 7d, London scenes, 8d, Cornish Coast, 9d, Windsor Castle, 10d, Sandringham, 1/-, Welsh Mountains, and the others History. I am sure this would greatly assist foreign tourist trade and this would be a very good thing for some villages, depend nowadays on the tourist trade for their living.

CHRIST CHURCH, PERRY STREET.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS.

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NORMAL (Billericay not by post) 1 1/2d
BY POST WITHIN THE BRITISH ISLES - 4d. ABROAD - 2d Plus normal surface rate postage (or air if desired). It does NOT help us if you pay in advance.

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 CUP OF TEA 3d OR COFFEE
 5d SNACKS ALWAYS READY.

"JANUS" REPORTING - Continued from Page 4.

No reply or even an acknowledgement of the letter was received. Well "courtesy is common to princes, it should be unfailing with the representatives of Religions. And co-operation should be shown to be working in practice not a matter for Resolutions ending in the Committee rooms.

Mussoorie is an Indian hill station. It had the reputation of being free from crime, disease and dirt. I was told no locks were needed on the doors up to the time of Independence in 1947. I saw the Waste Boxes, Spitons sentimentally preserved by the Indian Mussoorie hill men as a tribute to British rule. Dehradun is at the foot of Mussoorie. It has a military training Academy and forestry training. But it was the Centre for Refugees from many parts including Burma. Though there are some motors the main mode of transport is by Bullock cart. Tonga Pony carts compete with Cars as Taxi hire. All have little bells that tinkle as they proceed. The Himalayan Mountains are all round, with the snow on them like a white halo. Very awe inspiring Indian motor taxi drivers take their passengers up the narrow perilous road of some 10,000 feet Dehradun to Mussoorie. These drivers skilfully manouvre when they meet a car from the opposite direction and to the passenger it looks as if one or the other will go over the precipice. The Maharaja of Jind has a residence in Mussoorie and his young sons were to be educated at the famous Doon School. The Americans started many Mission Schools in Mussoorie for Indian children. The sons of the Indian princes are modest and at their Schools are never called anything other than a short name and Roll Call number.

This Northern part of India is an important Strategic position. If only Mr Nehru would now make a supreme effort to regain the good confidence of the people of Pakistan over the Kashmir dispute he would indeed be hailed by his own Indian people, the Pakistanis and the World as a Peace-Maker.

Copyright, "Janus". Part of "Janus's" article has been held over until the next issue, owing to lack of space.

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