

BILLERICAY OBSERVER

TUESDAY DECEMBER 8th, 1958.

EDITOR WINFORD P. GRANT. EDITION NUMBER 49. PRICE 1½d.

MINISTRY TO MEET RESIDENTS OVER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE — PETITION ORGANISED

The Ministry of Housing & Local Government have written to the Billericay Residents Association who are leading the fight against the erection of 40 factories on land near Billericay Station, and have stated that they have examined the Council's reply to their letter on this subject and that the Ministry would like to meet a deputation from the Billericay and Sunnyville Residents Associations. This meeting has been fixed for Tuesday December 15th.

The Billericay and Sunnyville Residents Association are organising a petition regarding the Industrial Estate which will consist of door-to-door canvassing in the Buttsbury Ward, as well as tables in Billericay High Street on Saturday 12th and 19th of December.

Mr. Edward Gardner, M.P., Billericay Constituency is taking an interest in the fight of the two associations.

In their letter to the Ministry of Housing & Local Government the Council answered some of the Resident's criticisms. Below are printed some excerpts from the letter: "The buildings are not 'cheap industrial development'. The buildings will be of a nature suitable for light and general industry. With regard to the complaint as to space between buildings the Council do not think a 10ft. space between buildings is in any way detrimental to external appearance or to adequate ventilation or natural light in view of other features of the layout of any group. Regarding screening the Council prefer landscaping to screening, which could result in make-shift fences. The Council do appreciate the feelings that many residents have for the amenity of Billericay, but realise that the town cannot expand, as it has done without accepting the inevitable results of such expansion".

STOP PRESS.

LATEST TOTAL — METHODIST
CH. BAZAAR (PAGE 3) 1374-15-4

RATE OF EXPANSION IN BILLERICAY AND WICKFORD IS LARGEST IN ANY URBAN DISTRICT IN COUNTRY.

Speaking at a Press Conference held by Basildon Council on November 28th Councillor A.P. Phelps, Chairman of the Council's Works Committee said: "Since 1945 4,080 houses have been built in Billericay and Wickford and the present rate is 600 a year and it is interesting to note that this is around half of the rate of progress of the Development Corporation whose sole function is to build. This rapid build up cannot be equalled in any other Urban District in the country but of course it brings problems to the Council's Works Committee.

"Group A (Sodium) Lighting has been installed on numerous major roads in the District and Group B (Pole Brackets) have been carried out on 84 roads consisting of 1,450 lighting units at a cost of £18,000 and we are now working on Noak Hill Road, Billericay and are preparing another scheme to bring into lighting such roads as Outwood Common Road and Sunnymede Estate and other roads in the district at a cost of £2,500. and in addition work will commence shortly on Group A (Sodium) lighting to cover Stock Road, Billericay, and Southend Road, Wickford at a cost of around £9,000 making a total on lighting during the year of about £11,500."

"One of the major headaches is the large number of unmade roads in the district where enough development exists for them to be made up under the Private Street Works Act. There still remains in Billericay and Wickford, 9 miles, and in Basildon, another 9½ miles of roads in this category. In my opinion, this is a most important function for the Council to put right to obviate people having to wallow through mud and slosh to their homes.

CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE.

CINEMA DIARY, RITZ CINEMA, CHAPEL ST.
Prices: 1/-, 1/6, 2/-, 2/6, 3/-.

Monday December 7th. Three Days.

Gregory Peck, Harry
Guardino, in "POK CHOP HILL", (A).
Story of the Korean war and a few
soldiers, hampered by officialdom,
hold a strategic position. "CRASH
DRIVE", (A).

Thursday December 10th. Three Days.

Yul Brynner, Claire
Bloom in "THE BUCCANER", (U). A
stunning, colourful, spectacle. Also
"SPACE CHILDREN" (U).

Monday December 14th. Three Days.

Orson Welles, Diane
Varsi in "COMPULSION", (A). Also "GANG
WAR", (A).

Thursday December 17th. Three Days.

Danny Kaye, Virginia
Mayo, in "THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER
MITTY", (U). Also "THE 3 OUTLAWS" (U).

ANGRY RESIDENTS FIGHT FOR PATH FOR
SCHOOLCHILDREN.

Angry residents living
in the Stock Road and Perry St. areas
led by Mr. A. J. Dodd are fighting for
the restoration of a legally-accepted
public right of way between Stock
Road and Perry Street. Schoolchildren
who used the path now have to make
a wide detour via Orchard Avenue or
Mill House Drive. For the field over
which the right of way runs is being
used for building (the field was
formerly St. John's Old Boys Cricket
Ground) and already several houses
which are in the way of the path,
are occupied. Other parts of the path
are made impassable and dangerous by
building materials.

Mr Dodd told the
"Observer": "The full responsibility
appears to rest jointly with the
Council and the developers, who have
continued with the project, together,
with full knowledge of what they
were doing. I consider that I am just
in asking for fingerposts to be
erected and a proper footpath be
made available over the correct
course or one not substantially less
convenient, particularly for the
children and that such arrangements
be made immediately.

Last year, he added, the
route was bulldozed and cut by a
maze of trenches without any formal
diversion being sought by the
builders. The casual onlooker would
have assumed this to be the work of
a diligent but impatient general
awaiting invasion, rather than a
public right of way. Any type of zig-
zag course, as suggested by the Urban
Council, besides being longer would
be unsuitable so far as young
children are concerned".

ROUND AND ABOUT

by
"WANDERER".

In their letter to the Minister
-y of Housing & Local Government,
Basildon Council stated that we
accept the "inevitable results" of
such expansion. I would like to
point out to Basildon Council that
just because a town expands it need
not expand for the worse. When a
Council accept that an expanding
town expands for the worse we are
bound to get bad planning. Yet, if
the Council tried Billericay could
be made a more attractive town, with
pleasant streets and buildings, than
when the expansion started.

Two other points regarding the
Industrial Estate. Firstly, the
Council keep on saying words to the
effect that the residents want no
industry. Secondly, they spend half
of their statements on the plans for
the Industrial Estate.

I would like to answer the
Council on these two points. Firstly
the residents are not fighting a
question of industry or no industry.
They are fighting the siting, type,
and construction of the buildings,
for the Industrial Estate. Secondly
the site is a bad one, and as the
site, in my point of view, is a
bad one, the plans must be terrible.
I repeat my suggestion that the site
is ideal for schools, and a "lung" in
the centre of Billericay.

In my opinion, the restoration
of the Stock Road-Perry St. footpath
(adjoining column) is of the utmost
importance. It does not show very
well for the Council when they
approve a new estate and forget their
is an important public footpath
crossing the estate. After arbitrary
statements, they suggest a confusing
(for young children) and twice as
long zig-zag course. Let us hope that
they will give very careful
consideration to a request for
planning permission for petrol
pumps etc., in Station Approach, the
good development of which, being the
town's gateway is essential - and
there are petrol pumps only 30
yards away.

No development in Queens Pk.
until 1962, at least. This assurance
has been given to me by Councillor
W. H. Davies, Chairman of Basildon
Council who was genuinely concerned
when I revealed the activities of
builders in that area. And it may
become Green Belt in 1962, he added.
Let us hope that the suggest-
ion of interview time at Council
Meetings will be successful. It
would be a great help.

RATES WILL PROBABLY INCREASE NEXT
YEAR - COUNCIL CHAIRMAN.
Press Conference- from Page one.

Councillor Phepps went on; "The Council have in the past tackled this problem and to date 9 roads in Wickford, 3 in Billericay and 1 in Laindon have been made up. At the beginning of this year we programmed two more miles, but owing to staff difficulties it is doubtful whether we shall complete these by March.

Councillor Davies, the Council's chairman spoke of the Council's financial position. He said that the Council's expenditure in the forthcoming year was expected to be £1,020,000, double that in 1949/50. Councillor Davies continued: "It would be wrong to give the impression that all this can come about without the ratepayer shouldering a greater burden. Candidly there is no sign of a reducing rate charge, rather the contrary. But if one looks fairly at the level of rates paid in the urban district, compared with other areas, one finds that the rates levied per head are low. This year they average £10.15. Od. per head compared with £13.3.6d, the published average for urban districts in England and Wales".

CUSTODIANS OF BILLERICAY HIGH ST.
Councillor Quirk then spoke on Billericay High Street:- "A panel to assist and advise the Council's Planning Committee on future development in Billericay High Street has been set up. We value the High Street highly, and expert advice will be given by the panel, so that any re-development to the old buildings of the High Street. When giving planning refusals or approvals concerning Billericay High Street we will bear in mind the panel's advice. We regard ourselves as custodians of the High Street".

NEW PRESS INNOVATION.

In an open discussion on the Council's public and press relations the Press Statements system was praised by all nine press representatives. Subject to Council approval an idea of one of press representatives - having an time at Council meetings in which the press representatives can question and talk with Councillors - will be operated for a trial period. Councillor Davies, Council Chairman said that the Press was the method of bridging the gap to the public. Mr. A. Hutt, council clerk said he was disgusted with the poor content of Press Statements.

CHURCH BAZAAR RAISES ANOTHER £360 TOWARDS NEW CHURCH

A bazaar and concert, held by and at Billericay Methodist Church on November 28th added another £360 to the £1,833 raised towards a new church, planned to be erected in front of the present ex-utility classroom building.

The Trust Secretary, in his address said that a new Church would cost something in the region of £17,000. "However", he said, "If we can raise a sufficient amount in a certain time to show that we are working very hard for this church, the 'powers-that-be' have promised a £15,000 grant".

Mrs C. Hedley Wicks of Goodmayes opened the bazaar. Susan Desmond, (5), presented her with a bouquet.

David Wooster, (6), presented the Vicar, the Rev. Earl. L. A., and Mr. Hedley Wicks with buttonholes.

Cake competition results were; 1. Mrs Rilstone. 2. Miss Bowers. 3. Mrs Merlind. 4. Dr. Rilstone.

A concert was given in the evening by St. Baddow British Legion Augmented Choirs.

TOT H FORMED IN BILLERICAY.

A Tot H Branch has been formed in Billericay. The next meeting is being held at the Recreation Rooms, Billericay on December 11th, 7.45 p.m. Tot H is not an ex-serviceman's organisation and does a great deal of voluntary work.

COUNCIL MOVE TO BASILDON - MEETINGS WILL BE HELD THERE.

Basildon Council are moving to Basildon on March 29th. They are occupying temporary office accommodation on the 2nd and 3rd floors of Block J at Basildon Town Centre. Announcing this Councillor Quirk, Chairman of the Council's Development Committee at the November 28th Press Conference said; "The offices are sufficient to take only four of the Council's five departments and one (Clerk's, Engineer's & Surveyor's, Finance, Health, and Education) will be left behind. However, good liaison will be kept. Council meetings will be held from April 1st, at Timberlog Lane Secondary Modern School, Timberlog Lane, Pitsea, Basildon."

Replying to a question about the Billericay Council Chamber's future he said that it was on a lease from Essex County Council, due to expire in four years, and that until then it would probably be used for storing records, for which there was no room at Basildon, and perhaps twice yearly Billericay Council meetings. Councillor Quirk added, "We think Basildon Town Centre is ideal for our administrative centre".

EDITORIALS NOTES.

The Christmas Edition of any newspaper is an important one, which is given great thought by all from Editor to Office Boy, Features Editor to Printer. The 50th. Edition of a newspaper, particularly one like the "Observer" gets similar honourable treatment. Our next edition is both a 50th. and Christmas edition apart from the usual "all local news" and regular features there will be a few special items. Some new features will be introduced, including that Town Crier and some other surprise items. By the way, you will be seeing a lot of this town crier - models, badges and in many other ways, apart, of course, on the front page of the paper.

Whenever the Editor has a holiday from school and he is able to devote a lot of energy to the "Ob" and the circulation suddenly jumps forward in jumps as big as 50 copies a time. This Christmas holiday will be no exception. By the way, readers have remarked on the improved neatness and pleasing appearance of the "Observer". This standard will be kept up.

In a notice of a town planning enquiry it is revealed that Basildon Council have plans for a road linking Chapel St. and Crown Rd. This was revealed in the "Observer" of August 4th! We intend to keep our news standard up.

Wynford J. Grant - (12) Editor

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MEMBERSHIP OF HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY HAS RISEN BY 52 IN YEAR.

Members of Billericay Horticultural Society were told by their secretary, G.R. Versey, at the Annual General Meeting of the over-50-years-old Billericay Horticultural Society at the W.I. Hall on November 30th that membership had risen by 52 from 140 to 192. Mr. Versey said that in the past year the society had made a "profit" of £10-1-5.

Reading his report Mr. Versey said: "During 1959 we have had two shows, eleven monthly meetings, and an outing. The two shows were a credit to the society; at the Summer Show, there were 318 entries which was good considering the dry weather, but the Autumn Show broke all records with 478 entries. The standard of all exhibits, to quote the judges, was extremely high. Attendance at the monthly meetings has been most encouraging, the average being above 50, as many as 89, attending one meeting. Subject matter was well varied and included general discussions on gardening problems, notes on bedding plants and bulbs, films on Rose culture and seed raising. Some 36 members had an enjoyable visit to the R.H.S. Gardens at Wisley in the Spring. In my letters to you in 1959 I have constantly asked for your support. Thank you for giving all that support. This passing year has been very successful and it is the member who has made it so."

Capt J.J.A. Tesoirere (Retd) was re-elected as Chairman. Mr. G.R. Versey was re-elected as Secretary.

Next Editions: December 22nd, (50), January 5th, 1960, (51).

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O.A.P's.

25th November.

Mr. W. Joseph presided. There was a very good attendance. The Chairman in his opening remarks said there were several members away sick and they were all wished a very speedy recovery. He then said he was very pleased to see some members who had been away sick now back - i.e. Mrs. Gill, Mrs. Warden, and Mrs. Pearson. Details of the Xmas Party on 16th. December were given. Mr. Meyer entertained with songs, accompanying himself on the guitar, and then told one or two good stories. Tea hostesses were Mesdames Mc Carthy, Wakeling, Gould, and Harding.

3rd December.

Mr. W. Joseph presided. One minutes silence was observed on account of the passing of an old member, Mrs. Wilson. The Chairman then stated that one member had had an accident - Mrs. Clarke who had fallen downstairs and broken her nose and was very queer. Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Riches, and Mrs. W. Speller, who had been away ill were welcomed back. The Club's own Concert Party gave a splendid afternoon's entertainment. Those taking part were Mesdames Sippitt and Plumridge and messers. Joseph, Wiltshire, and Plumridge. Leader Mr. Dawkins, pianist, Mrs. Dawkins. Tea hostesses - Mesdames Mc. Carthy, Gould and Harding.

CHRIST CHURCH, PERRY STREET.

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CHURCH SERVICES; Communion, 1st. Sunday in month, 9.30a.m. Evensong; 3.30 p.m. except 1st. Sunday in month.

YOUNG WIVES FELLOWSHIP; December 8th, 2 to 3 p.m. December 22nd, 8 to 9 p.m. All meetings held at Christ Church.

DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING YOUNGER MEMBERS OF BRITISH LEGION.

Mr. Peart, President of Billericay British Legion, opening the Women's Section Christmas Bazaar last Saturday said that the British Legion had difficulty in finding members to keep it going. "But we are doing our best", he said.

Part of the profits from the bazaar will go to British Legion Women's Section and another part will go towards the £400 target for improving the Rose Hall, in Chapel Street, the Legion's local hall.

Friends and members manned the stalls.

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THE BILLERICAY STORY

CHAPTER 6 - BILLERICAY AS A
CENTRE OF TRADE.

by Ha/Fd.
2nd series.
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An old writer had described Bishop Odo as "by nature of a bad disposition and busie head, bent always to sow sedition and to trouble the state; whereupon he was committed to prison." Later, he raised a rebellion against his nephew William Rufus, that Rufus who was killed by an arrow from the bow of Sir Walter Tyrell whose family had close connections with this part of the country. This rebellion ended with Odo's defeat at Rochester Castle, and his banishment from the country. He also lost all his property including much treasure intended to help him realise his ambition to become Pope.

As he left the Castle the people were scarcely able to keep their hands off him, and shouted out "On for a halter to hang this perjured, murderous bishop."

Evidently not a very nice person to know.

The next owners of the manor of Burstead were the Mareschall family, Earls of Pembroke, but by 1147 it had come into the possession of the Monks of Stratford Langthorne whose Abbey stood in the marshes of the Lea, near Bow Bridge. At a later date the monks were to be driven out of their home by severe floods, and were to remove to their Grange, or Farm, at Burstead until the abbey was made habitable again, as we shall see.

In 1253 Henry III granted these Cistercians a Fair and Market to be held at Burstead then, as you know, a parish which included Billericay. Edward I confirmed this Charter, and it is likely that even in those days that the market and two Fairs were held in the wide street of Billericay, the only town in the Barstable Hundred, which many villages used as a centre for buying and selling not only the common things of life - farm produce etc. but also hides and wool for export. Billericay was then known as a 'Haven Town', and goods were collected there for transport abroad by way of the rivers which at that time were more navigable than they are now.

The Crouch, for example, could be used as far as Wickford or even higher, and there was also the Mardyke flowing from Warley to the Thames by way of Laindon. The arm of the Thames separating Pitsea from Canvey, both closely connected with Billericay's history, is still called The Haven, and the fact that at a later date the Pilgrim Fathers assembled at Billericay before leaving for Leigh seems to point to the business connections between the two towns at the time of which we are now speaking.

Near the London Road and Blunt's Wall is a small wood called Shipman's Shaw, and until a few years ago there was a small, old house called Shipman's Farm facing the London Road. Did this have some link with a master of one of the ships trading between Billericay and the Continent? The house was said to have been ancient and held the name for many generations before its destruction by fire.

The town had several prosperous woolmen, buying from farms, or from the market, for the export trade, as well as skinnners and fellmongers dealing in hides at the time when few places had populations of more than 2,000, the proof that Billericay was a fairly important town at this period is shown by the fact that its inhabitants numbered about 1,200.

Although our town must have seen much coming and going of priests and monks, to the Cistercian granges and other properties at Burstead, Crowbridge and Buckwens, of the Bishops of London and their representatives to their properties at Little Burstead and Crondon Park, Stock, let alone the Thoby Priory, (Mounthessing) visits to Blunt's Walls, and the Pilgrims on their way south to Canterbury, and north to Walsingham, Billericay seems to have been without its own church until 1342, when a member of the Sulvard family of Fleming's, Runwell founded a Chantry and Chapel on the site of the present Parish Church, and endowed it with lands to support a priest.

Billericay Disabled Club, although only formed in October, has fourteen members. Assisted and founded by Billericay Red Cross members enjoy, every Monday entertainments and handicrafts. The Christmas party has been arranged for December 21st.

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