

# BILLERICAY OBSERVER

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 22nd, 1960.

EDITOR WYNFORD GRANT. EDITION NUMBER 74. PRICE 1½d.

## THE DECLINE OF BILLERICAY

"Billericay is in a state of decline", said Mr. Rosier, Prospective Liberal Candidate for the Billericay-Buttsbury Ward of Basildon Council, at a meeting of Billericay Liberal Association last Thursday week.

Mr. Rosier continued;

"We have seen the erection of factories on the Industrial Site against the will of the majority. As a result a new Residents' Association was formed, consisting mainly of dissenting Tories, together with a few Liberals and Socialists. We have seen the spoilation of Lake Meadows and the High Street, which is now derelict. We have seen the Car Parking situation in the central area grow worse. Yet in a southerly direction from behind the Post Office to the old Council Offices there is a large expanse of land, ideal for a Car Park. From Gooseberry Green towards Lake Meadows there is a large plot of land, which could be used as a Car Park for Lake Meadows, thus solving the question of cars using Lake Avenue. Also cars going to Lake Meadows would avoid the High Street. The lighting on Bell Hill, from Billericay to South Green is dreadful. At present most Councils are representative of the main political parties. Whilst we feel that the Residents' Assn. are doing a good job of work, we feel that we can represent the local residents better as we are in a position to put up candidates in all wards throughout the Urban District and thus have a large number of representatives on the Council".

I understand that Mr. Rosier's remarks have upset some members of the Residents' Assn., which has in fact been in existence for over fifteen years.

### CAR PARKING - LATEST PROGRESS.

Negotiations are proceeding in respect of a number of pieces of land in central Billericay for car parking purposes, both permanent and temporary. The Council hope to make early provision for 150 cars.



OYEZ, ALL THE LOCAL NEWS.

## STATION IMPROVEMENTS - EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

In an exclusive interview with the "Observer" Mr. Freemantle, Billericay's Station Master, gave details of British Railways's plans for improving Billericay Station, which are now proceeding.

The scheme is expected to take five months. The down side will be improved first. During the scheme the temporary booking office will be used, and the down platform stairs will be closed. The temporary open-air stairs will be used to the down platform. Access to the up platform will be gained by a gangway from the road on to the footbridge. A temporary cycle store in Station Approach will be in use.

The present booking office is to be replaced by an automatic one. Part of the booking hall and office will be rebuilt. The old down stairway is being replaced by a new wider stairway. Central heating is to be installed throughout the Station and the waiting rooms' decoration and furniture are to be renovated. There will be new toilet facilities. There will be electric lighting throughout the Station, in place of the present gas lighting. There will be a parcels lift on the up-platform. Smiths bookstall is to be re-built to the left of the "up" stairway and flush with the platform wall. After the main scheme has been completed a new cycle store will be built on the cattle pens.

When the Industrial Estate Link Road is in use, the upper part of Station Approach will be sealed off and converted into a Car Park. Vehicular access will be gained by the Link Road and short Spur Road.



## CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BAZAAR.

Billericay Congregational Church held a Concert and Bazaar in the Mayflower Hall on Saturday in aid of the Church Repair Fund. Target for the fund is £1,000 for repairs on the fabric of the Church, and nearly £500 has been raised. The Bazaar was also in aid of repairs to the Mayflower Hall.

The Bazaar was opened by the Rev. H. Stock of Little Waltham and was well attended.

## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE.

Billericay Remembrance Sunday service was attended by a large crowd of people at the War Memorial last Sunday week afternoon.

The service at the War Memorial was preceded by a service at the Congregational Church. The worshippers then made their way in procession down Chapel Street, which was closed to traffic, to the War Memorial. Billericay Brotherhood Band and a detachment of the Royal Observer Corps marched down the High Street to the War Memorial. The laying of wreaths by local organisations and dignitaries was followed by a short service.

## UNMADE ROADS.

The Works Committee of Basildon Council discussed the problems arising from the existence of so many unmade roads in the Urban District - problems which have been emphasised by the amount of development now taking place in the Urban District and the recent heavy rainfall, at their recent meeting.

In order to speed up the make-up of these roads it was agreed to appoint an additional engineering assistant, and to allow some of the preliminary survey work to be carried out by a private firm. They also decided to continue to enforce contractors to reinstate unmade streets which had been damaged by their vehicles, in connection with adjoining building schemes.

Tenders have been approved and work will soon start on Hill House Drive and Horace Road, Billericay. A scheme is being prepared for the make-up of Station Road, Billericay and a scheme for making up The Brightside. Billericay is being prepared.

## ROUND AND ABOUT

by  
"WANDERER".

It has been usual for the last few years for Basildon U.D. Council to hold a Press Conference every November. I hope that 1960, a very important year for Billericay, will not prove to be the exception to the rule.

"The decline of Billericay", "everything won't be plain sailing", "no confidence in the Council", "uproar hostile to the Council". Those are just a few of the dismal quotes from this week's "Observer". However, it is no good just talking about these things something must be done, before the decline ends in Billericay becoming just another dormitory suburb, with a sprawling industrial area on its doorstep. It's not entirely due to the Council that Billericay is in a mess, though they are responsible for quite a bit of it. The County Council, loopholes in the law, Parliament, apathy in the past have all made their contribution.

How can the "decline of Billericay" be stopped? For a start the Council should do something drastic and definite about a Car Park, if only temporarily while they get on with "negotiations" that we've heard so much about, but which haven't resulted in anything. Use the old Council Offices Car Park, the Cinema Car Park, or any other suitable piece of land as a temporary Car Park and then set about providing permanent Car Parking arrangements, as part of a long-term traffic plan for the High Street area. But do something NOW to alleviate the desperate situation. Don't just talk about it.

Then do something about all the derelict sites in the High Street. Surveying them doesn't get them built on. It should be a matter of a few hours to count the sites, estimate their size, and report on their condition and owners.

Then decide on a long-term policy for Lake Meadows, see that it meets with general approval and KEEP TO THAT POLICY.

Then ensure that the Industrial Site was properly landscaped and screened and then the decline would be arrested. Just do a few things and Billericay wouldn't be in a quarter of the mess it is in. Then start on some of the minor jobs that need to be done.



## COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR BUTTSBURY.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Buttsbury Residents' Association last Monday week it was reported that the County Council had earmarked Buttsbury for a Community Centre in 1962. It was decided to call a meeting of all organisations interested to form a Community Association.

68 members were present and the Secretary, Mr. H. E. Wilkins, reported that membership had increased by 9 since the last meeting.

All present welcomed the erection of the four demountable classrooms at Buttsbury School, although one member remarked that the County Council "were always 18 months behind the times". Some members expressed fears that the main project would be late in completion.

Regarding the final proposals for the Industrial Site members felt that there was a lack of modern planning, screening, and landscaping. One member asked what had happened to the Industrial Site Car Park. Some members then stated that in view of the Industrial Site they could have no confidence in their local councillors and an uproar hostile to the Council followed.

It was decided to complain to the Council about the state of the Mountnessing Road/Perry Street junction where road improvements are in progress.

20 non-members were present for the item regarding the Council proposal to run the sewers for the Buttsbury High Level Sewage Scheme along the rear of private properties. They complained about the lack of information, and the vague and contradictory correspondence from the Council. One man suggested that the idea was sound in principle, provided each person took professional advice. One man said that he could have no confidence in the Council, and another uproar hostile to the Council followed. It was decided to write to the Council for more information.

The Secretary reported the reply of British Railways to the Association's suggestion that an extra train be provided to arrive at Liverpool Street between 8.15 and 8.25 in the morning and one to leave Liverpool Street between 5.34 and 5.56 at night.

CONTINUED IN NEXT COLUMN.

## BRITISH RAILWAYS SAY "NO" TO EXTRA TRAINS SUGGESTION - Continued from previous column.

The Association also suggested that the 5.56 be made a first and second class train, that more trains stop at Billericay and Wickford, and that some trains start and finish at Billericay and Wickford. British Railways stated that they could not meet any of the Association's wishes, owing to the lack of trains. The Secretary remarked that last year the Association's suggestions for extra trains could not be met with owing to the lack of paths.

It was decided to hold a Children's Party and Parent's Social in January.

Mrs. E. Clark, Mrs. E. Mabey, and Mrs. S. Wilkins were co-opted on to the Committee.

## M.P. OPENS LABOUR BAZAAR.

Mr. Herbert Butler M.P. (Hackney Central) opened the first-ever Bazaar of the Billericay-Brentwood Divisional Labour Party on Saturday.

Mr. Butler said; "Looking at your 1959 election figures I can see how disheartening it must have been to you to be so near and yet so far. Yet remember as a result of your hard work one day you will become the dominant political party in the area, as we did in Hackney after 40 years of Tory and Liberal tradition. I shall not deal with the high matters of politics, which at this moment are tearing the Labour Party to pieces, the very important issue of Unilateralism. I have seen the conditions under which some people in this area live, along unmade roads, and this is the scandalous state of affairs under a Tory local Council. There is much for an enlightened Labour movement to remedy. Despite the fact that we are in a minority we can by our pressure and influence make an important impact on problems. There is much crying out to be done if we keep together over the years ahead. For example the Old Age Pensioners have to wait through the Winter for their measly increase. There are vast fields of activity and over the years we shall become the majority party despite the blandishments of the Tory threat.

Mrs. Joe Parker, the Bazaar organiser was married in the morning, and was at the Bazaar in the afternoon.



THE "BILLERICAY OBSERVER".  
Editor's Notes.

Demand for advertisement space continues to increase. However I try to keep advertisements within a certain limit. If no adverts were included, there would only be four pages in the "Observer".

There are usually one or two letters in each issue now, but more would be welcome.

--- The Editor.

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THE "OBSERVER" CINEMA GUIDE, RITZ  
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All programmes last three days.

Mon. Nov. 21st Curt Jurgens in  
"TOMANGO" (A) and "COMANCHE STATION"  
Thurs. Nov. 24th Anthony Newley,  
Bernie Winters in "IN THE NICK" (U)  
Also "THE ENEMY GENERAL", (U).  
Mon. Nov. 28th Jack Hawkins, Richard  
Attenborough in "THE LEAGUE OF  
GENTLEMEN" (A). Also "WOMEN SHALL  
WEEP" (A).  
Thurs. Dec. 1st. "CONSPIRACY OF  
HEARTS" & "OPERATION CUPID" (U).

FIRST ISSUE OF NEW MAGAZINE.

The first issue of the new magazine of Billericay Residents' Association's new magazine "The Mayflower" was issued to members over the weekend. The magazine has an attractive cover (designed by Mr. Bird of Hill House Drive) produced by electronic duplicating, and is well supported by advertisers. The inside is comprised of 8 semi-foolscap pages.

In the Editorial, Mr. E. Lunt, Editor states; "The 'Mayflower' with its close associations with Billericay has always been a symbol of the future, of new horizons, brighter hopes: but it is also symbolic of hard work, and we certainly do not expect everything to be plain sailing in our future efforts to serve the town and people of Billericay.

Mr. Cox, Chairman writes an introductory article.

News & Views deals with Car Parking in Lake Meadows, Street Lighting, Garage Run-Ins, Station Education, and Private Street Works on which the magazine says; "It appears that the Council is insisting on a uniform concrete specification, without regard to local conditions, conformity with surrounding residents' wishes etc. We are threatened with a veritable concrete colossus of roads". Other articles are "Around Billericay", dealing with items of interest to particular areas, "Boquets and Brickbats", "Committee News", "Social Activities" and "Ladies Section". It is intended to issue the magazine every two months.

CATER MUSEUM RE-OPENS.

Billericay's Cater Museum re-opened yesterday after closing for six weeks for renovations. The Museum now has a full-time curator, Billericay's "Mr. History" Mr. Harry Richman, who was the part-time curator. Two lumber rooms have been converted into an office and reference library. Some of the exhibits on display have been changed to maintain interest. The Museum is open on Weekdays from 10.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on Tuesdays, when it is open until 7 p.m.

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O.A.P.'s  
9th November.

There was an excellent attendance. With regard to sick members it was stated that Mrs. Hopkins was now out of hospital and much better; Mrs. Darling, Mr. & Mrs. Sadler, and Mrs. Sippitt were all welcomed back after being absent through illness. Being the Annual Meeting officers were elected:- Mr. Joseph (Chairman) Mr. Riches (Secretary) Mr. Lewis (Treasurer), Mr. Hopkins (Vice-Chairman) Mr. Dawkins (Assistant Secretary), Mrs. Dawkins (Social Secretary), Mrs. Charlesworth (Collector), Mrs. Plumridge (Canteen Supervisor) all unopposed. Committee:- Mesdames Johnson & Riches, Messrs. Wiltshire, Plumridge, Charlesworth, & Spencer.  
16th November.

Sick members - Mrs. West, Mrs. Train, Mrs. Harrison, Mr. Plumridge and Mr. Ramage, who was about the same were wished a speedy recovery. Mrs. Hopkins and Mrs. F. Horne were welcomed back after absence through illness. Birthday honours were accorded Mrs. Wakeling. Entertainment was provided by "The Keynotes". Tea hostesses for both meetings were Mesdames Little, Harding, and Stewart.

CHRIST CHURCH, PERRY STREET.  
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Services:- November 27th, 9.30 a.m.,  
Holy Communion. Sunday December 4th,  
Family Matins, 9.30 a.m.  
Young Wives Fellowship:- Tuesday  
November 29th, 8 to 9 p.m., Eastern  
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### THROUGH THE POST.

Letters from "Observer" readers.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your recent articles on school buildings I think it is time that some effort was made to complete the school now being built at South Green. The 5-year olds from South Green have to walk over a mile to school in Billericay. This walk includes the dangerous trip up and down Bell Hill, which still has a footpath on one side only, and naturally children overflow into the road. A school bus is not provided.

--- Mr. G. Rix, South Green, Billericay.  
Editor:- This seems to prove that builders regard the building of schools, or extensions to existing ones as stop-gap jobs. The County Council should put a time limit clause in contracts for these jobs, and speed up the planning side, so that these much-needed schools and extensions are quickly provided.

### ROAD SAFETY POSTER COMPETITION.

The results of the Basildon Urban District Road Safety Organisation's Poster Competition are as follows:-

Adults; (1) Robert Whale of Lower Dunton Road, Laindon, (2) Kenneth Smale of Nether Priors, Basildon, (3) Ralph Carr, High Road, Langdon Hills.

Children II-14, (1) Wayne Boughen of Hunts Mead, Billericay, (2) Ian Croft of Billericay Junior School.

Children under II yrs. (1) Alison Fish of Norsey Road, Billericay, (2) Graham Shirmer of Billericay Junior School, (3) Jimmy Harbison of Billericay Junior Sch.

### HORTICULTURAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The Secretary's Report of the Billericay Horticultural Society for 1960 is on a rather dismal note. The report, circulated to all members, by G. R. Versey, the Secretary, reads: "Ten monthly meetings have been held during the year, but I am afraid these lecture meetings were poorly attended. It appears, judging by the records, that a mere 25% of our members follow our objects. There were only about 50 individual exhibitors at either show, and an average of well below 50 attended the monthly meetings. Only 36 members attended the last A.G.M. and this is disheartening when we have a paid-up membership of over 200."

Regarding the Shows the Report is on a far brighter note. "However, in spite of the not too helpful weather conditions our 1960 shows were well up to standard. The number of entries was slightly down on 1959 but the quality was as good as ever. At the Autumn Show the Dahlias, Chrysanthemums and Michaelmas Daisies were very fine indeed considering that the Show followed a week of wind, rain, and storm. A delightful part of both Shows was the keen competition in the Floral Arrangement Sections."

### TRANSPORT MEETING TONIGHT.

A meeting on Transport, organised by Billericay Residents' Association, will be held at the W.I. Hall tonight. Representatives of British Railways and the Eastern National Bus Company will be at the meeting to answer questions from members of the public. The meeting starts at 8.0 p.m.

## BILLERICAY ROUND TABLE

A

### JUMBLE SALE

to be held in  
the  
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on  
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 26th, 1960.

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# BILLERICAY IN THE PAST

by W.P.G.  
No.9.

## PERRY STREET.

Perry Street in 1960 is a bus route, lined by modern houses and shops with roads leading off to estates of more new houses. Not, on first sight, an ideal subject for a historical article. And if you wanted to write about old houses you would certainly look to the High Street area, and not to Perry Street for material. However, Perry Street has both an interesting history and some old houses, although little has been written about either, and I intend to rectify that with this article.

The road is probably of Roman origin, as shown by the inclusion of "Street" in the title (Strata - street, Latin). Until recent years curious earthworks could be traced in ground along Perry Street, and they may have been of Roman origin. However, it certainly existed around 1300, when we find references to the repairing of drains in Perry Street. The road seems to have always been called "Perry Street", although it was shown on a 18th century map as "Peartree Street".

Until modern times the main settlement was around where Queens Park joins Perry Street, by Shuttleworths Stores. The whitewashed farmhouse opposite Queens Park was erected between 1600 and 1700, although it was last used as a farmhouse about forty years ago, and is now a private house. It is possible that there was a previous erection on this site, but this has never been proved. The exterior of the building was formerly crossed with Tudor beams, but these have been covered over.

A recent extension serves as the lobby. The downstairs dining room, which is thought to have once been the dairy, has a low ceiling crossed by thick oak beams. Some of the beams have grooves in them, and appear to have been put to some other use, and are said to have been ships timbers. In one corner of the room the place where a ladder once gave access to the upper floor can be clearly seen. When part of the kitchen floor was re-tiled recently a layer of brick tiles on sand was discovered, under which was a layer of Tudor bricks resting on the earth. Similar layers of tiles and bricks were discovered when part of the sitting room floor was renovated. Along one wall of the sitting room is the bricked-up old fireplace. This fireplace must have been very large, and a stone seat can be seen on one side of the fireplace, part of which has been converted into a cupboard. The rear part of the fireplace and chimney has been converted into a stairway. Some of the bricks from the fireplace appear to have been moved to the opposite wall. They are red in colour, and long, narrow, and irregular in size.

The upper floor, which appears to have been one big room at one time is divided into two rooms. The floors and ceilings slope. In one of the rooms there is a solid oak beam over 13" thick.

There is a small loft with oak beam rafters. The roof appears to have been thatched at some time.

The farm outbuildings were Hatcher's Woodyard and on the sites of Queens Park and Shuttleworth Stores. The back garden is shown on an old photograph as a duckpond. A well in the garden caved in recently. The garden contains two large old apple trees - which are thought to be about two to three hundred years old. The Tun Apple tree is so old that it has rotted on the northern side, although the south side is flourishing. This tree is the only one known to be left of the Essex Tun Apple, a delicious non-keeping apple.

No. 101 (next to Uplands Road houses) is a 17th century farm cottage, although its appearance has altered since it was built. The two wooden weatherboard cottages near Lakeside date from the 18th century.

Peartree Farm was on the site of Mannings Poultry Farm in Queens Park. It is remembered by some of the older residents, and appears to have been demolished at the turn of the century. Little is known about it, but it is shown on old maps.

There was once a Public House at Gooseberry Green, at the junction of Perry Street and Mountnessing Road called the "Kicking Dog". This stood on the site of the Railway Cottages, and was demolished when they were erected in the late 19th century.

NEXT ISSUE: MORE ABOUT HISTORY AND OLD HOUSES OUTSIDE THE CENTRAL AREA.

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The "Billericay Observer" is Printed & Published by W.P. Grant, at 143, Perry Street, Billericay, on alternate Tuesdays, Price 1½d.