

BILLERICAY OBSERVER

Tuesday June 20th, 1961.

Number 89.



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"The only newspaper printed and published in Billericay".

COUNCIL CLASH ON GREEN BELT

The three groups on Basildon Council clashed at last Thursday's Council Meeting on the possibility of the Council acquiring Great Cowbridge Grange, Billericay. The land, which borders on Mountnessing Road and London Road, is part of the only Metroploitan Green Belt in the area - between Hutton and Billericay. It was auctioned, as a mixed farm, at Chelmsford on Friday.

Speaking at the Council Meeting the Labour Leader of the Opposition Cllr.A.T.Dove said; "In 20 years time we are going to be cursed for missing this chance to acquire land for Council Houses. In our ownership the land would be under better control, and the land might be released in time".

The Residents' Associations Councillor Mr.E.E.Wilkins said; "A great opportunity has been missed. Rural land in Billericay is fast disappearing, and if we are not careful there will be no Green Belt left. I view with dismay the fact that we have not acquired this land, in order to ensure that it is preserved as Green Belt".

For the Conservatives Cllr.A.F.Quirk said that the future zoning of the land depended on the planning authority. He said that it would be extravagance to buy the land.

Cllr.Morgan (Labour) then said; "Extravagance! It will be far more costly to buy it if it is released. In the future we will only wish that we had bought the land. We must safeguard for the future".

Cllr.Morley, Chairman of the Housing Committee said that there was no grave housing shortage in the area, as Labour members suggested. He concluded; "We should leave this land as Green Belt - not replace it by acres of housing".

Cllr.Mrs.Downey (Labour) said that it was deplorable that everything was weighed in pounds, shillings, and pence before anything was done.

Cllr.Phelps (Vice-Chairman) stated; "The reason why we decided not to buy this land was that it wouldn't be possible to build Council Houses on Green Belt. At this statement there were cries of "Shame" from the Labour members. After the uproar had subsided Cllr.Phelps said; "We are not going in for land speculation in open farmland. This land is a lung for Billericay".

Commented Cllr.Hollands Labour; "The real reason is that you don't want Council Houses in Billericay - you might lose a few more votes".

Cllr.Pembroke, Chairman of the Finance Committee, which originally discussed the matter summed up; "I have never heard such tripe and drivel - I am using words that have been used here before. I hope that tomorrow the land goes to another farmer who will farm it for many years to come".

LOCAL SUB-POST OFFICE ROBBED.

The South Green Sub-Post Office in Grange Road, South Green, Billericay, was robbed of £1,000 worth of Postal Orders and Stamps, after thieves had forced their way in, in the early hours of the morning of Sunday June 11th.

The thieves forced the kitchen window, and made their way into the lounge, where they took a Ronson cigarette lighter, a gold watch, and two bags of 3d pieces and silver. They then forced the door leading into the shop, where they forced the strong box in which the Postal Orders and Stamps were kept.

The sub-Postmaster, Mr.F.C.Harvey and his family were not woken up by the thieves, and did not discover the robbery until Sunday morning. The police are investigating.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC AND COUNCIL TO HAVE "FRANK AND FRIENDLY" DISCUSSION.

In her Policy Statement for the year, given at last Thursday's Council Meeting the Council's first woman Chairman Cllr.Mrs.C.J.Gadson stated that an opportunity would be given for the public and the Council to have a "frank and friendly" discussion during the year.

Her report reads; "The Council will continue with the policy commenced two years ago, which is one of providing a sound economy whilst making substantial progress in providing social services and amenities for the district.

We will continue the programme for the completion of street lighting, soil and surface water sewers, main water supply, and the making-up of unmade roads, for with the rapid growth of the district and a population of now nearly 90,000 the need becomes not only necessary but more urgent.

The Council have now substantially completed their plans for bringing a private water supply to a large number of properties that had hitherto depended on wells and standpipes.

The programme laid down for the making up of private streets will continue, for the Council are convinced that the social and economic needs of the district require the elimination of unsatisfactory road conditions.

The Council believe that achievement is better than explanation or apology. Nevertheless they will attempt to maintain good public relations, and an opportunity will be given during the year to arrange for the public to meet the Council for a friendly and frank discussion".

PANEL OF MEMBERS TO CONSIDER BY-PASS.

A panel of all members of the Council representing Billericay are to give detailed consideration to the various aspects of a Billericay by-pass. This was decided at last week's Council Meeting. The panel will report their recommendations to the next meeting of the Council's Development & Planning Committee.

STOP PRESS NEWS.

MYSTERY STORY COMPETITION RESULT AND COMMENTS - SEE PAGE 4.

SPORTS BETWEEN SCOUTS AND RAMSDEN HALL BOYS.

For the past three years sports have been held between the boys of Ramsden Hall School and the 4th Billericay Scouts, but last Saturday week there was a trophy to be fought for for the first time. It was won by the scouts with 64 points - the School had 58. A plaque for the best individual effort presented by the School's Headmaster Mr.Thomas was won by L.Hill (Scouts) with 16 points. Runners-up were David Osborne (Scouts) and K.Ashman (School) both with 13 points.

After the events, which were well attended by both the parents of the boys and scouts, tea was provided by the School. Following tea the trophy (presented by Mr.Chamberlin a parent) the plaque, and certificates given by Mr.Thomas to the winning boys in the 17 events were presented.

TWO FALSE ALARMS FOR FIRE BRIGADE.

On Sunday June 4th Billericay Fire Brigade were called to 261, Mountnessing Road, Billericay. On their arrival they found that a shed was deliberately being burnt down, and the fire was entered in the log as a false alarm with good intent.

On Tuesday the 6th they attended grass fires in Jacksons Lane, Tye Common Road, Outwood Common Road, and Laindon Road. On the 13th they stood by at Tilbury, and the same evening they attended a fire in a stack of baled straw, where they stayed until the early hours of the morning. On Thursday they attended a field fire in Downham Road, Stock and the same day they answered with Brentwood a malicious false alarm in Hutton.

CARNIVAL PROCESSION WILL BE HALF A MILE LONG.

It is expected that the Billericay Carnival Procession next Saturday (June 24th) will be half a mile long. This was announced by Mr.K.Fearn, Procession Committee Chairman at the last meeting of the Carnival Committee. Altogether 42 entries have been received including 13 floats, 9 decorated non-trade vehicles, 18 decorated trade vehicles and 6 marching groups. The procession will be led by huntsmen of the Essex Union Hunt, and will include three bands.

Mr.Fearn appealed for collectors for the procession route. Boxes and cards could be collected from Vere's in the High Street.

Mr.J.A.Dodd (Secretary) said that highlights of the fete would include the Royal Military Police motor cycle team, a judo display by the Kyu-Shin-Kan club from Basildon, keep fit by Billericay Keep Fit Group, a rock 'n' roll competition, and an air display and height judging competition.

The Chairman (Mr.A.Bryant) said that the Fete would be open to the public from 2 p.m., but would not be officially opened until 4 p.m. by Mrs.C.J.Gadson, Chairman of Basildon Council. At the dance in the Archer Hall in the evening the Carnival Queen, Miss Hilary Ambrose, would present the Billericay Charity Football Cup to Wernick Wanderers.

Mr.Bryant appealed to traders on the route to decorate their premises, and reminded them that the Carnival Committee were presenting a plaque to the shop with the best dressed window typifying Carnival spirit.

Proceeds are distributed one-third to Billericay Old People's Welfare Committee, one-third to the Hospital League of Friends, and one-third to non-political youth organisations.

Programme:-

2 p.m. Fete Opens.

2 p.m. Assembly of procession of Hilary Mount for judging.

3 p.m. The procession will move off via Everest Drive and Western Road up the High Street reaching Sun Corner at 4 p.m.

4 p.m. Official opening of fete.

8 p.m. Grand Carnival Dance.

Dusk Firework Display.

Full details in programmes price 6d from most local shops.

CONCRETE v. TARMACADAM.

Speaking at last Thursday's Council Meeting Cllr.H.E.Wilkins (Ind R.A.) referring to the make-up of Station Road, Billericay said; "The meeting between frontagers of Station Road and the Council is a great step forward in public relations. One thing comes out of this - many people feel very strongly about using concrete instead of tarmacadam on the grounds of amenity. Although cost is a deciding factor I feel sure that some other alternative could be found, and the Council should look into this. Unattractive roads can destroy a town".

At last Tuesday week's Finance Committee meeting Station Road was also discussed. Referring to the frontagers' memorandum Cllr.Morgan (Lab.) said; "I've never read such a lot of drivel and tripe. The way they're going on they ought to try and take over Mr.Wadsworth's (the Engineer & Surveyor) job.

Cllr.Wilkins commented; "If people are paying for a road they have a right to ask for alternative methods of construction. There is a lot of feeling about amenity and their requests are not unreasonable. As the road is parallel to unmade roads it will be a spine road and I feel that the Council ought to increase their contribution".

Cllr.Phelps (Con.) said; "This is not 'drivel' - I have read it a little more carefully than some people. The fact that they want their road to blend with Western Road (which is tarmacadam) is a valid point, although the objections have been made after the expiration of the usual period. If it is technically possible the road should be of tarmacadam construction. However, I do not agree that it would be a spine road".

The matter was referred to Committee in private, when it was decided that the frontagers should be invited to the Works Committee meeting of June 12th to discuss the make-up of the road.

At this meeting the frontagers were told that tarmacadam would be 1/- a foot dearer than concrete. The frontagers present expressed their desire for the works to be carried out at the earliest possible date, and the majority indicated that they preferred a concrete carriageway. The Committee then went on to consider tenders for the road, and decided to accept one for £10,043, subject to Ministry approval.

EDITORIAL.

Editor:- Wynford P. Grant.

Editorial Offices:-

"Billericay Observer",
143, Perry Street,
Billericay,
Essex.

Phone:- Billericay 1927.

Only two entries were received for the "Billericay Observer" MYSTERY Story Award, 1961 but I feel sure that this was due to the length of story required. While I am, of course, disappointed with this response, I am not downhearted. In view of the fact that the competition was not competitive I have decided not to make any award. However, as a consolation to those who did enter, a book token to the value of £1 has been dispatched to:-

Irene Harley, 11, Perry Street,
Billericay.

D. Nourish, 116, Gloucester Avenue,
Chelmsford.

I am convinced that the young people of Billericay can respond to this sort of competition, and another competition will be run over the school holiday period, full details of which will be given in the next issue.

Readers are reminded to look out for the "Observer" float in Billericay Carnival on Saturday.

----- The Editor.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Forthcoming Events In Billericay.

Wednesday 21st June:- Annual General Meeting of Billericay Residents' Association, W.I. Hall, 8 p.m.

Saturday June 24th:- Billericay Carnival and Fete. For full details see Page 3.

Wednesday June 28th:- Basildon Urban District Council Finance Committee Meeting, Council Chamber, High Street, Billericay, 6.50 p.m. All welcome.

Saturday July 1st:- Billericay Residents' Association, Buttsbury Residents' Association, Joint Summer Bazaar, W.I. Hall, opening at 3 p.m.

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Stalls --- Refreshments.

THE BILLERICAY WOMEN'S CO-OP GUILD
MEETS IN THE CO-OP HALL, HIGH STREET,
ON MONDAYS, 2.30 to 4 p.m.

FOR THE OLD FOLK

Billericay O.A.P. - 7th June Meeting.

98 were present. On sick members it was stated that Mr. Ramage, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Pegg were all in hospital but improving, Mrs. Wormald was also improving, Mr. Dawkins, Mrs. Rowe, and Mrs. Bertram were away ill. All sick members were wished a speedy recovery. Mrs. Shiner, who had been away for some time, was welcomed back. The Secretary emphasised that those who went to Yarmouth stated that they had had a very enjoyable holiday, and Mr. Spencer, one of the party, gave a vote of thanks to the Secretary and his wife for working so hard to make the holiday a success. Entertainment was provided by Cicely Wardle (soprano), Ernest Newble (Accordion Solos and Songs) with Margaret Marshall at the piano.

Billericay O.A.P. - 14th June Meeting.

There was an excellent attendance. On sick members it was reported that Mr. Ramage and Mr. Pegg were improving, Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Bertram, and Mrs. Marshall were about the same, and Mrs. Parkin had had to go to Oldchurch Hospital with eye trouble. The Secretary stated that in the outing to the Strawberry Fields, they were going via Maldon, where they would stay a few hours, to Tiptree. The Secretary asked if members knew of anyone who had a Bath Chair which they did not want, or could be borrowed, for someone in need. Members took part in a Social Song and Dance.

Buttsbury Monday Club.

On Monday the 5th about thirty members entertained themselves. Again on the 12th members entertained themselves, but only 12 attended on account of the wet weather. New members - over 50 - are welcome.

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CHRIST CHURCH, PERRY STREET.

Services:- Sunday June 25th, Family
Matins. Sunday July 2nd, Holy
Communion. All services start at
9.30 a.m.

Young Wives Fellowship:- July 4th,
2.15 to 3 p.m.

COUNCIL TO TAKE NO ACTION ON LAKE MEADOWS CAR PARK - FOR TIME BEING.

At last Tuesday week's Finance Committee meeting it was decided to take no action on a request from the Police for a temporary Car Park to be provided in Lake Meadows to ease the situation for the time being. It was decided to allocate a Park official to the park at weekends to keep an eye on the situation. The matter will be considered again by the Parks Committee in a few weeks time, in order to see what improvement will be brought about by the opening of Radford Way (the Industrial Estate road) to cars for the park.

Commenting on the situation Cllr. Wilkins said that on the Sunday before the meeting the position was almost desperate. Cars were parking in Lake Avenue and the Hospital grounds. The Industrial Estate road should be opened to cars, but no parking should be allowed in the grounds.

Cllr. Pope said that he had seen at least two hundred cars parked down the Industrial Estate road.

Mr. Wadsworth, Engineer & Surveyor, said that cars were in fact now allowed to park along the Industrial Estate road, and as a result the situation had considerably improved.

Cllr. Tesoirere said that he had seen a hardboard notice which read "Limited car parking space in Lake Meadows". The two policemen did not know where the notice came from.

In reply Mr. Wadsworth said that he had arranged for notices advertising the space along Radford Way to be erected.

CONTINUED IN NEXT COLUMN.

LAKE MEADOWS PROBLEMS. Continued from previous column.

However, he knew nothing at all of the notice Cllr. Tesoirere had seen. Cllr. Tesoirere said that he had definitely seen such a notice. Mr. Wadsworth said that he had not seen it.

Cllr. Wilkins drew attention to the fact that there was a notice at the entrance to Radford Way stating that all people parking along there would be prosecuted. This notice created further confusion.

In reply Mr. Wadsworth said that he had arranged for a sack to be placed over the notice at weekends.

URBAN DISTRICT HAS 3rd LARGEST POPULATION IN COUNTRY.

The preliminary Census report reveals that the Basildon Urban District has risen from the Urban District with the 4th largest population in the country to the Urban District with the 3rd largest - 88,459, Hornchurch being first with 128,127 and Thurrock second with 114,302. The Urban District is 3rd largest in area too. It is larger in population than twenty-one existing boroughs, including Southport, Bootle, Rochdale, Exeter, Doncaster, and Bath. 53,707 live in the New Town area - the other 34,752 live in the Billericay and Wickford areas. Another interesting fact which emerges from the census is that there are over 1,000 empty houses in the Urban District! 700 of these are in the New Town. The population of Billericay is estimated at 17,000. The rateable value of the Urban District now exceeds £1,000,000.

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HEINZ SALAD CREAM -----	SAVE 4d	REDUCED FROM 2/1d to 1/9d.
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LIBBY'S RED SALMON -----	SAVE 3d	REDUCED FROM 4/6d to 4/3d.
SPAR FRUIT SALAD -----	SAVE 3d	REDUCED FROM 1/11d to 1/8d.
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Monday June 19th (3 Days):- Dana Andrews, Rhonda Fleming in "THE CROWDED SKY" (A). Also Jack Lord, Karen Steele in "PATTERN FOR VIOLENCE" (A).

Thursday June 22nd (3 Days):- Howard Keel, Susan Kohner in "THE BIG FISHERMAN" (A). Programmes start 1.50 (Sat.) 4.40, and 7.30.

Monday June 26th (3 Days):- Jayne Mansfield in "TOO HOT TO HANDLE" (X). Rita Moreno in "THIS REBEL BREED" (X).

Thursday June 29th (3 Days):- Audrey Hepburn, Peter Finch in "THE NUN'S STORY" (U).

COLLECTED £10,000 WORTH OF SAVINGS.

Presenting a 21 years' long service medal on behalf of the National Savings Movement at last Thursday's Council Meeting to Mrs. Joyce Harris, the Council's Chief Committee Clerk the Chairman, Mrs. C.J. Gadson said that for ten years Mrs. Harris had, first on her own, and later with help, looked after the savings of the Council staff. During this time she had collected over £10,000 in National Savings.

ADVANCE PUBLICITY OF SOME PLANNING APPLICATIONS?

Basildon Council's Planning Panel are to consider the desirability of giving advance publicity to certain planning applications.

The Council have decided not to make any charge for the supply of Council and Finance Committee agendas to the Press.

NEWS OF THE LOCAL ORGANISATIONS.

At their June Meeting held on Wednesday week at the W.I. Hall, Billericay, the Billericay Floral Arrangement Group were given some useful hints by Mrs. Warner of the Thorpe Bay Floral Arrangement Group on "Summer Flowers From The Garden". Members competition "Fireside" was won by Mrs. Ryan, 2nd. Mrs. Turner, 3rd. Mrs. Shepherd, Highly Commended, Mrs. Schofield.

At their meeting on June 12th the Billericay Women's Co-op Guild were given an interesting talk on Manor House Hospital.

The Flag Day of the Crusade of Rescue last Saturday week, which cares for destitute Catholic children, raised £52 in the area.

COUNTY COUNCIL TO MEET BOARD OF TRADE ON LOCAL INDUSTRY.

At a recent meeting of the Council's Development & Planning Committee the Clerk submitted a schedule from the County Council suggesting ultimate populations for 1981.

As regards the provision of additional employment facilities this matter was very much in the mind of the County Planning Committee in view of the expected increases in population. They had asked for a meeting with the Board of Trade and Ministry of Housing & Local Government to discuss the former's policy on this

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"BILLERICAY IN THE PAST".

by the Editor. Series 2. No.6.

Billericay Market and Fairs.

Billericay has a very wide High Street and this is partly due to the fact that it was here that Billericay Market and the two Annual Fairs were held.

The charter was originally granted in 1233 to the Abbot of Stratford Langthorne, and was confirmed in 1476.

The market was held every Tuesday and was opened and closed by the tolling of the bell of St. John's Chapel - now St. Mary Magdalene. The Fairs were held on August 2nd and October 7th - St. Mary Magdalene's day.

The Market House has long since disappeared - probably about 1832 when the Town Hall (now the Council Chamber) was built. It is thought to have stood opposite Bassom's where the street widens in the middle of the street.

Old records refer to various stallholders - "Gingerbread men", Butchers, Patten makers, Edgtoolmen, Pedlars, Hardwaremen, and even a stall for Staffordshire China!

Towards the end of the 19th century the fairs were moved to the ground now occupied by the Police Station. About 1900 the fairs and market were closed down because local residents led by the Rev. Dowby claimed that they were rowdy, and attracted undesirables.

Evidence of this is given in the "Chelmsford & Essex Chronicle" of October 10th, 1777:- "On Tuesday last a gentleman's servant from Hornchurch being sent to Billericay Fair to buy cattle was decoyed by some sharpers into the White Hart of that town, where they got him to cards and won £80 of him; he likewise lost a banknote of £20 which he thinks they picked out of his pocket and which the sharpers immediately made off towards London. Cattle sold remarkably dear at the above fair".

However the market and fairs were mainly a centre for S.E. Essex where the farmers sold their produce and bought what they needed. One thing is certain - if Billericay Market and Fairs existed today the High Street would be a very different place from what it is!

ROUND AND ABOUT

by
"WANDERER".

In her policy statement at the Council Meeting Cllr. Mrs. C.J. Gadson stated that the public would have a chance to have a "frank and friendly" discussion with the Council during the year. Does this mean that the successful Delegate Conference is to be revived? I hope so. Other ideas for the Council to bear in mind are a Town Forum once every three months, or fifteen minutes Public Question Time at Council Meetings.

While Great Cowbridge Grange is Green Belt, and I trust always will be, there is always a chance that it might be released for building purposes. If the Council owned the land the release could be a temptation to build Council Houses, unless they had bought it as an Open Space. This "lung" must be preserved at all costs, and the Council must keep a watchful eye and see that this is done. The land is the only official Green Belt in Billericay, and prevents Billericay from linking up with Hutton in one vast sprawl. I deplore the views of the Labour Councillors, who all come from the New Town, and I doubt whether they know the land, or have asked for the views of local residents.

Census figures show that Basildon has the 3rd largest population of any Urban District in the Country, and no doubt with the continued expansion of the New Town, and gradual (I hope) expansion of Billericay and Wickford it will creep into 1st place. Serious consideration must be given to giving Basildon Borough Status (it has now taken on all the functions of a borough - Highways, Education, Health & Welfare etc.), and at the same time the possibility of making Billericay and Wickford a separate Urban District.

While consideration of the by-pass is at an early stage, is the time for residents to express their views. I hope that all local residents will do so on this important matter - through local organisations, local papers, and by writing direct to the Council.

Next Saturday is Billericay Carnival. I hope that you will give a little more generously than last year (£465 was raised) in order to help the worthy local charities benefiting from the proceeds. Turn out in your thousands and give generously!

----- "Wanderer".