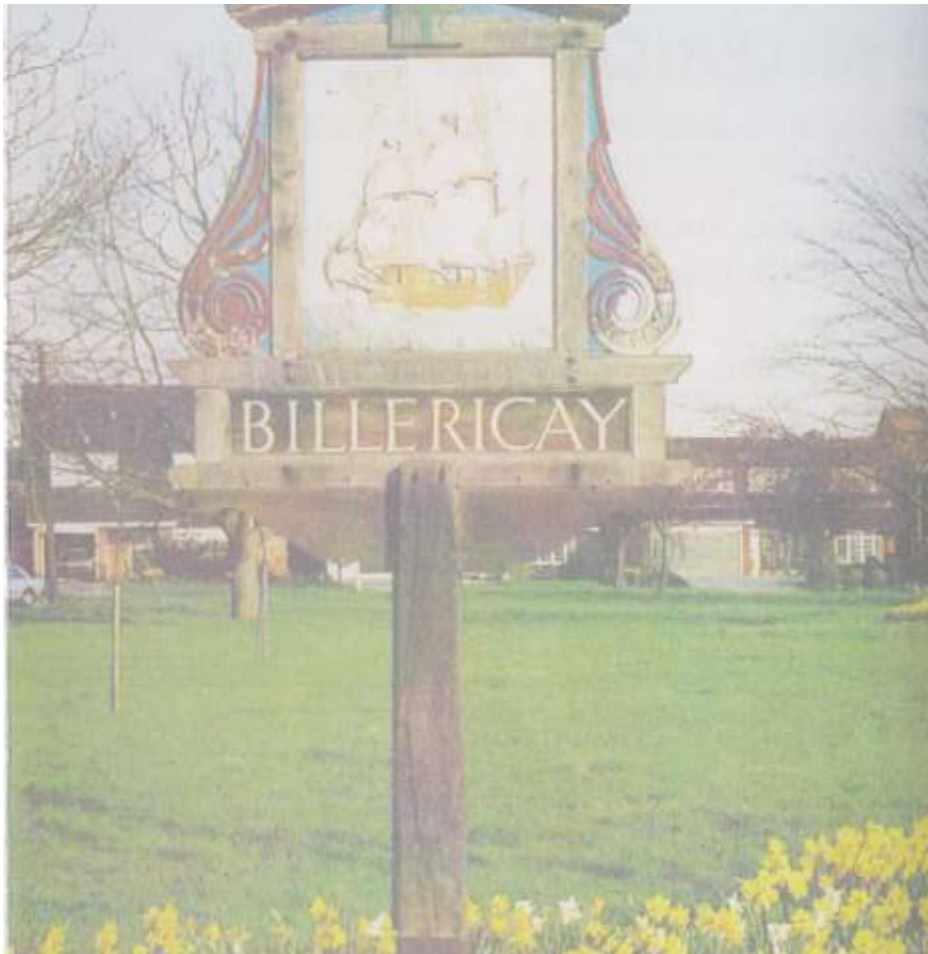


BILLERICAY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 206

FOUNDED 25TH JULY 1935 TO PROTECT OUR HERITAGE

AFFILIATED TO THE CPRE

CAMPAIGN FOR THE PROTECTION OF ESSEX



THIS IS THE FIRST BILLERICAY WELCOME TOWN SIGN
INSTALLED BY THE SOCIETY TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S
CORONATION IN 1953

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

THE COMMITTEE WISH YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR – WE HOPE IT WILL BE ONE IN WHICH MANY OF OUR CURRENT POLITICAL AND LOCAL PLANNING PROBLEMS MAY BE CONSTRUCTIVELY DISCUSSED AND RESOLVED.

SOME POLITICAL PROBLEMS ARE SLOWLY BEING RESOLVED WHICH IS MORE THAN CAN BE SAID OF OUR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SO CALLED PLANS.

LOCAL PLAN

IT IS AMAZING THAT AFTER ALL THE RECENT HARROWING FLOODING EPISODES BUILDERS ARE STILL PREPARED TO BUILD HOUSES ON POTENTIAL FLOOD PLAIN. WE HAD TO POINT OUT TO THE LOCAL PLANNERS THAT THEY HAD OMITTED TO PUT A LOCAL RIVER ON THEIR PLANS. THEY DID NOT WANT TO ACCEPT THAT IT WAS A POTENTIAL FLOOD PLAIN AREA. PROFIT HAS REPLACED COMMON SENSE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

I HOPE THAT YOU HAVE PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION OF £5 PER ANNUM FOR 2020. LESLEY HAS TO PUT IN A GREAT DEAL OF PERSONAL EFFORT MAKING THE MEMBERSHIP RECORDS - SO THAT THE NEWSLETTER CAN BE DELIVERED TO YOU. WE WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE OFFERS FROM MEMBERS TO HELP DELIVER THESE NEWSLETTERS – 3 TIMES A YEAR TO THEIR LOCAL AREA. A SPECIAL THANKS TO THOSE WHO DO DELIVER THE NEWSLETTERS AT THE MOMENT. LESLEY ON 01277 656527 CAN INDICATE POTENTIAL DELIVERY AREAS FOR DISTRIBUTING THE NEWSLETTER. THANK YOU.

A PLEA FROM THE VICE-CHAIRMAN

I HAVE LIVED IN BILLERICAY FOR MANY YEARS AND I HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED SEEING THE BILLERICAY WELCOME TOWN SIGNS WHEN ARRIVING BACK HOME.

SADLY THEY ARE IN DIRE NEED OF RESTORATION. THE SIGNS WERE ERECTED BY THE BILLERICAY SOCIETY OVER MANY YEARS. THE FIRST, AS SHOWN ON THE FRONT COVER, WAS INSTALLED IN 1953 TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S CORONATION. THIS ONE HAD TO BE REPLACED AFTER 40 YEARS SERVICE, BY THE METAL SIGN ON PERRY GREEN BY THE A 129.

UNFORTUNATELY, THEY NOW NEED THE STRUCTURE TO HAVE A COATING OF DANISH OIL APPLIED AND THE SHIP EMBLEM PAINTED WITH ENAMEL PAINT.

THE BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCIL WERE HOPING TO HELP WITH THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE SIGNS. BUT DUE TO THE LACK OF FUNDING FROM BASILDON COUNCIL, THIS IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE.

WE ARE GRATEFUL THAT WAITROSE HAVE PUT OUR NAME ON ONE OF THEIR CHARITY BOXES IN THE STORE. ANY MONEY RAISED BY THIS MEANS WILL BE USED TO HELP PAY FOR THIS RENOVATION OF THE SIGNS. THESE SIGNS ARE TO WELCOME VISITORS. THEY ARE SITUATED AT THE NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST ROUTES INTO TOWN.

WE ARE TRYING TO FIND SOMEBODY WHO CAN CARRY OUT THIS WORK TO PRESERVE THE SIGNS BUT HAVE SO FAR BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONTINUE DOING THIS BI-ANNUAL TASK, AS WE ARE TOO OLD. SO IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO EITHER GIVE A QUOTE OR TO DO THE WORK PLEASE LET US KNOW? THANK YOU.

DUE TO THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE "MAYFLOWER" SAILING TO AMERICA IN 2020 IT WOULD BE VERY NICE TO HAVE THEM PROTECTED BEFORE THE CELEBRATIONS. THE MAYFLOWER SHIP IS ON ALL OF OUR SIGNS.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE SIGNS BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL STATE BEFORE LONG.

DOUG SMITH, VICE CHAIRMAN AND SAFETY MARSHALL.

ELIZABETH COTTAGE

AS YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED, MR DAWSON, BUILDER, HAS MANAGED TO REINSTATE ELIZABETH COTTAGE TO AN ACCEPTABLE BUILDING AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE HIGH STREET FROM THE NORTH.

YOU CAN SEE THE ROOF BEING PUT IN PLACE IN THE BACKGROUND OF THE LOCAL TOWN WALK PICTURE IN THE 205 NEWSLETTER.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF "ELIZABETH COTTAGE" NO 4 HIGH STREET IS GIVEN BELOW:

4 BILLERICAY HIGH STREET

SITUATED AT THE NORTH END OF THE HIGH STREET, NO 4, WAS KNOWN AS "ELIZABETH COTTAGE" FROM 1903 WHEN THE EARLIER BUILDING ON THIS SITE WAS RENOVATED. THE EARLIEST BUILDING ON THIS SITE, IS DATED FROM 1704,

THE WEATHERBOARD COTTAGES BEHIND IT IN NORSEY ROAD DATE FROM 1593. THEY ARE ON THE LORD PETRE ESTATE MAP

THE "ROYAL OAK" BEER HOUSE IS MENTIONED IN 1706 ON THIS SITE.

FROM 1714 THERE HAD BEEN A QUAKER CHAPEL AND BURIAL GROUND TO THE REAR ON THIS SITE. QUAKERS WERE ALSO KNOWN AS THE "SOCIETY OF FRIENDS". BILLERICAY HAD BEEN A CENTRE OF NON-CONFORMITY SINCE THE 1600S. THE BODIES WERE REINTERRED IN CHAPEL STREET.

IN 1620, SOME SEVEN PEOPLE FROM BILLERICAY JOINED WITH EX-ENGLISH PEOPLE FROM LEIDEN IN THE NETHERLANDS TO SAIL TO THE AMERICAS ON THE MAYFLOWER SHIP. THIS WAS DUE TO THE RELIGIOUS UNCERTAINTY OF THE TIMES. THESE PEOPLE BECAME KNOWN AS THE PILGRIM FATHERS, FOUNDERS OF AMERICA.

IN 1848 THE QUAKER CHAPEL WAS IN A BAD STATE AND THE BUILDING WAS ADVERTISED FOR RENT. THE QUAKERS HAD LEFT AND HAD JOINED WITH THE STRICT BAPTISTS OF CHAPEL STREET.

MENTION OF THE SITE IS MADE IN 1862 AND 1867 AT A RENTAL OF £12 IN THE POOR RATES BOOK. THOMAS CULLUN, A BOOT AND SHOE REPAIRER, WAS HERE IN 1873. THE MCKENZIES WERE HERE FROM 1912 TO 1922.

IN 1941 THE CULLIS FAMILY WAS IN RESIDENCE
THE PREMISES WAS KNOWN AS "THE DAIRY" UNTIL 1955.

FROM 1970 THE PREMISES WERE LEFT EMPTY

BILLERICAY SOCIETY COMPLAINED ABOUT THE SITE BEING AN EYESORE TO THE NORTH ENTRANCE TO THE TOWN. BOB REEVES HAS CONDUCTED A CHAMPAIGN IN THE PRESS FOR SOME COUNCIL ACTION ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY.

FEBRUARY 2014 BASILDON COUNCIL STOPPED ILLEGAL DEMOLITION OF THE BUILDING

JUNE 2014 ENFORCEMENT NOTICE DUE TO A BREACH OF THE PLANNING LAW

JANUARY 2015 COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER WAS RAISED.

JULY 2016 BUILDING WAS PUT UP FOR AUCTION

THE SAGA OF NO 4 HIGH STREET CAN BE SEEN IN MORE DETAIL ON THE WEBSITE:

billericayhistory.org.uk.

BILLERICAY TOWN CULTURE WALK

AS YOU MAY HAVE READ IN THE NOVEMBER 2019 BILLERICAY TOWN CRIER MAGAZINE {THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BILLERICAY TOWN COUNCIL}. SUNDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2019 WAS MY LAST TOWN WALK.

I HAVE BEEN LEADING THE TOWN WALKS ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY AND THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR 17 YEARS AND HAVE DECIDED TO RETIRE NOW THAT I AM 80.

I HOPE THAT SOMEBODY WILL COME FORWARD TO CONTINUE LEADING THE TOWN WALKS AS BILLERICAY HAS A FASCINATING HISTORY. THE TOWN WALK IS A GOOD WAY FOR NEWCOMERS AND EXISTING RESIDENTS TO LEARN ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHERE THEY LIVE. I HAVE PRINTED A FEW HISTORICAL NOTES FROM MY WALKS IN THE PAST IN THE BILLERICAY NEWSLETTER.

David Bremner, CHAIRMAN

AS PART OF OUR OCCASIONAL HISTORY OF BILLERICAY SERIES, OUR TREASURER JULIE SMITH HAS WRITTEN THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTION:

MIDDLE AGES

Pilgrims

During the 1200'sAD and 1300'sAD some pilgrims who travelled to Canterbury journeyed via Billericay. As some may have spent the night this could account for the large number of Inns in the High Street. The Crown Inn, then in the High Street, was listed as a Coaching Inn in the equivalent to today's AA guide.

Peasants' Revolt

The peasants' revolt started on 30th March 1381 when the people from Essex and Kent marched on London.

The then teenager, King Richard 2nd promised to meet their demands but reneged on his promise and on 28th June 1381 sent his soldiers into Essex and

defeated the rebels in Norsey Wood. About 500 rebels were killed in the battle, which ended the peasants' Revolt.

Faith

The Wycliffe preachers influenced the town's people. Four local people were burnt at the stake – Thomas Watt, Joan Hornes, Elizabeth Thackwell and Margaret Ellis.

Two others, Joan Potter and James Harris were tortured for their faith in the Reign of Queen Mary, Catholic daughter of HENRY VIII.

Julie Smith, Treasurer

PILGRIM FATHERS - 1620

The Pilgrim Fathers reportedly met in Billericay in the Old Chantry, 57 – 61 High Street. There is a plaque on the top right hand corner of the Old Chantry which gives the date as 1501 but in fact it should read 1510. This was reported to be the home of Christopher Martin.

There is also a plaque outside the building that is now the home of Ask Restaurant, which commemorates the Pilgrim Fathers and the opportunity of the people of Billericay to worship with freedom of conscience.

Four people from Billericay were on board 'The Mayflower' when it sailed for America in 1620. There were also four people from the neighbouring area of Little Burstead on board – Peter Brown, Peter Britteridge and 2 other emigrants.

Christopher Martin, who was a Billericay Merchant, travelled as the Ships governor. With him was his wife Marie, stepson Solomon Prowe and servant John Langemore. Unfortunately all died shortly after arriving at their destination – Cape Cod in Massachusetts.

Although the original pioneers did not survive, further Billericay Colonists set sail for America and established the town of Billerica, Massachusetts in 1655. They named their new town in honour of their home town. Billerica has been one of our Twinning towns since 1998.

DID YOU KNOW?

Billericay was not mentioned in the Domesday Book as it was part of the Parish of Great Burstead until the 19th Century.

The first recorded name for Billericay appeared in 1291 as BYLLYRICA.

Mary Allerton Cushman, who died at Plymouth on 28th November 1699 at the age of 83 was the last surviving passenger of the Mayflower.

In 1940 2 young ladies from Billerica, acting as the depository for contributions made by the citizens of the Town of Billerica to the Billericay Spitfire Fund sent a cheque for \$39 to the Billericay Times. They said it conveys a boundless feeling of admiration for the splendid spirit, courage and effort being demonstrated daily by you and your countrymen in what, without question, is our cause, as it effects the true spirit of democracy.

The Winter of 1939/40 was so cold and in late January 1940 there was a severe blizzard throughout the country. Bad weather was with us again at the beginning of 1941 and 1942.

The Rosaire Circus had their Winter Quarters in Coxes Farm Road in Billericay.

In 1938 crowds gathered to watch a procession from the Circus ground at Sun Corner along the High Street to the church for the christening of Cicely Leonie Zametta Shufflebottom and Denise Elaine Rosaire. Each pram being pushed along the High Street very gently with their trunks were 2 Elephants. The parents rode behind on the Elephants. The christening ceremony ended with the traditional crossing of the babies' hands with silver – in this case George V Jubilee Crowns.

PLEASE NOTE: A CHANGE TO THE TALKS PROGRAMME

THE TALK ON THE WEDNESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2020 HAS CHANGED: THE TALK WILL NOW BE ABOUT SPECIAL FLOWERS AND THEIR HISTORY.

THE AGM WILL BE HELD ON THE 18TH MARCH 2020 STARTING AT 7:30 PM.

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL ATTEND WITH IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BILLERICAY SOCIETY. ARE WE GOING TO LET THE DEVELOPERS DO AS THEY PLEASE TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR TOWN?

PRESIDENT IAN FULLER 655564;

CHAIRMAN DAVID BREMNER 626674

VICE CHAIR, FIRE MARSHALL: DOUG SMITH & TREASURER JULIE SMITH 623560

SECRETARY: LYNNE BEARD: 624282;

SOCIAL SECRETARY: MARIAN THILO: 624502

MEMBERSHIP AND WALKS: LESLEY AND JOHN HUMPHRIES: 656527

WEBSITE MANAGER: MIKE YATES: 622454;

CATER MUSEUM: KATIE WILKIE: 622023 – THE MUSEUM IS CLOSED UNTIL THE SPRING.

PUBLICITY AND RECEPTION BOTH POSITIONS ARE VACANT – PLEASE VOLUNTEER.