THE SURREY COMET

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RIVERSIDE FLATS: NOW MINISTER DECIDES

RESIDENTS FIRE FINAL SALVO

COUNCILS OFFER NO OPPOSITION

FINAL shots have been fired in local residents' year-old battle against the erection of three seven-storey blocks of luxury flats on the beautiful stretch of riverside at Albany Park Road, Kingston.

Their strenuous efforts to stop this development came to a head at a two-day inquiry this week. Now they anxiously await the Minister of Housing's verdict, and wonder to what extent the even tenor of life in this quiet backwater will be affected.

Over 500 people in the area view with apprehension the building of these flats, which they think will mar the beauty of the riverside, and bring in their train a great deal of noise consistent with the comings and goings of cars and tradesmen's vehicles, besides giving a sense of "claustrophobia."

That is their viewpoint, but the developers think otherwise. Attracted by life and work in London, people are flocking to the suburbs. They must have somewhere to live, so that high density population in certain areas is inevitable.

They and local authorities believe that this site is appropriate for building up instead of out, and furthermore think that the buildings will fit into the riverside scene, blending with the lofty trees, and also adding their own imposing attraction.

Mr. J. Ramsey Willis represented the developers, George Wimpey and Co. Mr. A. N. Munday represented Surrey County Council, and Mr. Nigel Bridge appeared on behalf of a large number of objectors at the inquiry at County Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday, which was conducted by Mr. R. G. M. Chase.

NOT TALL

The history of this "battle" shows that residents recognise that there must be some development on the site, and their main objection is to its degree.

Buildings must go up, but they should not be tall buildings, was the essence of their case. Mr. Ramsay Willis took this point in his opening statement, and stated that high buildings were the logical outcome of such a site, bearing in mind the trend towards high density populations in suburban areas.

"This is an example of just the sort of problem where there are green fields round about which must be preserved at all costs and yet high density of population must also be borne in mind," he said.

"When houses such as have been on this site go into the market the sites must be developed far more intensively than before. And there should be no question of waste of land. This is an obvious case for high density and tall buildings."

'NO WASHING'

He frankly admitted that the appearance of the riverside would be altered, but the 82ft. cedar tree, the beeches, elms, and other trees would be in a modern setting.

"The riverside wall and walk would be retained, and also the open character of this reach of the Thames, highlighted by the trees and beautiful gardens, would be preserved," he said, adding that the swimming pool would be kept and gardens planted.

Another feature of the flats would be the absence of laundry flapping in the wind. "This is a small domestic point which could be offensive, but the display of laundry will be controlled by a covenant in the lease prohibiting this. Drying will have to be done, if it is done at all, within the flats."

"The appearance of the riverside will be altered to advantage in a modern setting," said Mr. Ramsay Willis, adding, "The present houses have not made a notable contribution to the architectural charm of this reach."

Mr. E. V. Collins, Wimpey's chief architect, who designed the flats, told the inquiry that when the site was first inspected it was obvious

● Continued on back page.

An artist's impression of how the flats would look from the Middlesex bank.

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Cafe proprietor for trial

'ATTACKED MAN WITH A CLEAVER'

A TEDDINGTON man alleged to have been struck in the neck by a cleaver nearly lost his life through loss of blood, it was stated at Richmond magistrates' court on Wednesday. A doctor at the Royal Hospital, Richmond, said that he was bleeding so profusely that it was not possible at the time to examine his wounds.

Ferdinand Aloise (32), a café proprietor, of Hill Rise, Richmond, was accused of causing grievous bodily harm to Mr. Anthony Costa, of York Road, Teddington. He was committed for trial at the Old Bailey on bail of £400.

Dr. M. MacConaill said Mr. Costa was brought to the Royal Hospital shortly after midnight on August 27 with wounds in his neck and left arm, one three inches long.

Mr. Costa, a demolition worker, said he could not remember anything about the attack. With two friends he visited two public houses during the evening and had some light and bitters.

They met his father in Richmond shortly after 11 p.m. and went to Aloise' coffee bar, Aloise said he would serve the others, but not him.

He said he had no recollection of having been barred from the coffee bar. He remembered nothing more until he heard someone exclaim that he was bleeding.

DENIALS

The two friends, also demolition workers—Mr. Graham Morris, of Hampton Lane, Hanworth, and Mr. Michael Chapman, of Church Road, Richmond—both denied that they all attacked Aloise before he retaliated.

They said that, when Aloise refused to serve Mr. Costa an argument developed.

Someone handed Aloise a cleaver, he began to wave it and it struck Mr. Costa. They picked up chairs to defend themselves.

Mr. Chapman admitted hitting Aloise with a chair.

Mr. Costa's father, Mr. Leslie Costa, also denied attacking Aloise, but admitted that he broke a window with his foot.

Detective sergeant J. Minors agreed with Mr. E. H. Bestford, defending, that Aloise had insisted from the first that he acted only in self-defence.

In an alleged statement Aloise said he refused to serve Mr. Costa because he had barred him from the café about a month previously. The four men swore at him and he called to his brother to telephone the police.

The four men attacked him and he fell to the ground, grabbing a hammer. He dropped this and picked up something he thought was the hammer, but it must have been the cleaver, "I was dazed," he said.

Detective sergeant Minors admitted that Aloise had had a nasty cut on his head, which had required several stitches.

He also agreed with Mr. Bestford that eye-witnesses were afraid to give evidence for the defence.

When Aloise was committed for trial, Mr. Bestford said he pleaded not guilty and denied most strenuously that he did anything other than defend himself against a vicious attack by four men.

Tragedy they dare not tell a youth

A Malden father sat at a Sutton inquest on Thursday—his son's 18th birthday—and heard that the boy might never walk again.

The father was Mr. Edward Garas, of Seaforth Avenue, Malden. His son had been the driver of a 500c.c. motor-cycle, which collided with a van at Streatham Road, Mitcham, on the night of September 15.

The inquest was into the death of the pillion rider, a 17 years-old Mitcham schoolboy, John O. Wootton, of Park Avenue, who had died soon after the collision, from cerebral contusions and a fractured skull.

It was stated that Raymond Garas was paralysed from the chest down as a result of the collision and was too ill to be told about his friend's death.

It was unlikely that he would ever be able to walk again.

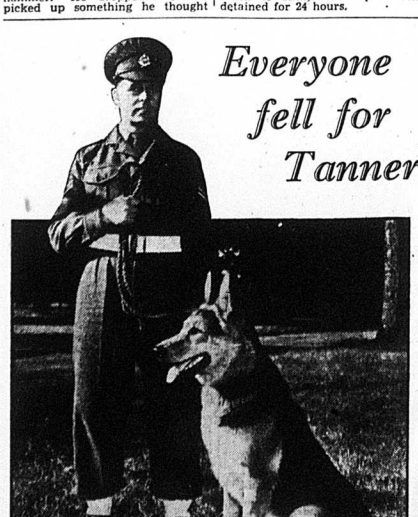
The collision had occurred when the two youths were about to overtake a van. They drew alongside as it started to turn right.

The jury returned a verdict of accidental death

HIT BY SWINGBOAT

Struck on the head by a swingboat in Elm Road recreation ground, Kingston, on Monday, seven years-old David Webb, of 118, Richmond Park Road, Kingston, was knocked unconscious. He was taken to Kingston Hospital and detained for 24 hours.

Everyone fell for Tanner



One man and his dog . . .

THIS is a story with a happy ending, which perhaps would not have been so happy for those concerned had not the SURREY COMET *taken an interest. And thereby hangs a tale . . .*

In a halfway house in Ditton road, Surbiton, lived an old age pensioner, Mr. George Wyman, his wife Amelia, and their dog Whisky. For two years they had existed in one room, put there because they could not afford to go anywhere else.

At one time there was some suggestion of them going into an old people's cottage, but for one reason or another, that idea fell through.

Their life was humdrum, but they got a great deal of pleasure from the company of Whisky, a black and tan 12 years-old mongrel, docile, friendly, and a favourite with the dozen or so children who have flitted in and out of the halfway house in the last couple of years.

Bit of a blow

Shock number one came when they were told that they would have to move to another halfway house. Admittedly the room would be nicely decorated, with hot and cold water laid on, but the rent was 15s. more.

On a joint income of £5 8s. 6d. this was a bit of a blow, but that was nothing compared to shock number two. They were also told by letter that as the house to which they would have to move was to be shared with three other families, who had young children, Mr. Wyman could not keep a dog, which, according to the letter, he had been keeping "contrary to regulations."

We heard about it and went to see Mr. Wyman. He told our reporter, "Whisky is our life. He loves us and we love him. I'm not moving without him. Can you help us?"

It seemed, to say the least, a bit hard that a man who had fought for his country in the first world war, had been blown up, and suffered shellshock, should be deprived of the little pleasure in his life.

Very friendly

A telephone call to Mr. C. Barclay, Surbiton's housing officer, produced results. Told about a letter signed by him stating that Mr. Wyman had kept a dog "contrary to regulations," and asked: "What regulations?" Mr. Barclay said, "There are no regulations as such, but it is undesirable to have a dog causing a disturbance in halfway houses, where people live on top of each other."

We offered, "It's an old dog. Very friendly, shakes a paw."

Said Mr. Barclay, "Oh, well. I didn't know it was an old dog. If Mr Wyman likes to come and see me, I will discuss the matter with him."

The message was relayed, Mr. Wyman went to see the housing officer, and—here's the happy ending—he can keep his dog.

TYPIST WEDS AT GRETNA GREEN

A 17 years-old Kingston girl posted a letter on Thursday to break the news to her parents that she was getting married at Gretna yesterday.

Miss Sandra Preece of 53, Vincent Road, a pretty dark-haired typist, said that her father had given her a lift to work in his car as usual on a Monday three weeks ago.

But he had not known that the basket she carried would have revealed the secret of her runaway plan.

In it she had packed away all the clothes she dared without arousing suspicion at her home. Sandra did not go to her office.

She waited on the steps until her

SUSAN HAS THAT OPERATION

Six years-old Susan Griffiths, of 114, Stoneleigh Avenue, has become the third Worcester Park child to have had a successful hole in the heart operation in the past six months.

Susan was only a few months old when the fault was discovered, but nothing could be done at that time. However, she recently entered Brompton Hospital and on August 5 had the operation. She is expected to be able to return home soon.

THEFT FROM BY-PASS PETROL STATION

Detectives have been investigating a theft during Sunday night of about £650 from the Ewell By-pass petrol filling station of Dawnier Motors.

There's nothing like a change!

The weather has been in a fickle mood this week, with a little concession to holidaymakers who plump for September as the one month in the year that is likely to be rain-free.

Happiest day was Sunday when nine and a half hours' bright sunshine prevailed with a temperature of 68 degrees, but the picture was destroyed on Monday when mist formed and the area just escaped a drenching, a rain belt passing over without spilling a drop.

Conditions were windy and cold on Tuesday, with temperatures rising to only 54 degrees, and with a minimum of 44 that night it was the coldest since May 31.

It was still cool on Wednesday despite a deal of sunshine, but on Thursday it was warm and close with half an inch of rain in the night.

Top cubs get all the badges

TWO cub packs proudly informed the SURREY COMET this week that they had sixers who had gained the maximum number of badges open to a wolf cub. Congratulations were offered and photographs of the industrious lads called for, but then there was a query.

The 6th Tolworth pack claimed for 10 years-old Stuart Davis, of 8, The Roystons, Berrylands, the highest number of proficiency badges—15.

Then along came 1st Cuddington with a similar claim for young Alan Rogers, of 97, Thorndon Gardens, Stoneleigh, but the number of badges mentioned was . . . 16

The discrepancy was explained by Mr. E. L. Fancourt, group scoutmaster of 1st Cuddington (Warspite) sea scout group.

Last September cub proficiency badges were rearranged and two badges—those for Homecraft and House Orderly—which covered similar activities were merged into one, the new House Orderly badge.

Alan had obtained both the old badges and thus has the distinction of exceeding the new "maximum."

But all credit also to Stuart, who is the first member of 6th Tolworth pack to gain the maximum number of badges. He gets plenty of encouragement in his cub activities: his parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Davis, are both active workers for the scout movement.

Stuart is a pupil at Grand Avenue primary school and received his 15th badge recently from Mr. Phillip Moss, district cub commissioner.

Alan Rogers.

Stuart Davis.

CAR KNOCKED ON TO PAVEMENT

RACECOURSE BUILDING

We'll buy t open, say

IF the Minister of Housing racecourse, Esher Coun substantial contribution tow the land for a public open s riverside amenities.

On the eve of the public inquiry into the proposed development of the racecourse, to be held at County Hall, Kingston, on Monday, Esher Council re-affirms its opinion to oppose such building plans, but in a report to be presented to the council on Tuesday the General Purposes Committee adds a rider about the open spaces.

Together with other interested local authorities, Esher would be prepared to buy land near the river, which is part of the Thames flood plain.

Discussions have already taken place about this possible purchase, and London County Council is prepared to make its contribution.

Do these suggestions show pessimism on the part of the councils about the outcome of Monday's inquiry?

Previously Esher Council has expressed its opposition in the strongest terms. Monday's inquiry will deal with its refusal to grant planning permission to the racecourse syndicate and to Modern Homesteads (Tulse Hill) for housing development.

POPULATION RISE

The schemes could mean an increase of over 3,000 in Molesey's population. Car parks, shops, schools and recreational facilities are envisaged.

Molesey Chamber of Commerce has decided not to state any official view on Monday because its members are so divided in their opinions, but the Molesey Society has taken great trouble to prepare its case and will be fully represented.

The society held a public meeting on Thursday at which the position was explained to residents, who were also given the chance to voice their opinions.

● Report of the meeting, page 13.

—and they dug it up again

PASSERS-BY stared and motorists passing through Church Street, Kingston, on Wednesday afternoon could not believe their eyes. For Church Street, just resurfaced by the council, was being dug up again with electric drills and shovels.

Yes, only 48 hours after the steam rollers and tar-laying machines which held up traffic for days were removed, two men were tearing up the surface once more.

Before angry ratepayers reach for their pens to address indignant letters to the council, it should be explained that the men were repairing a gas pipe which was damaged during the re-surfacing, and only discovered on Tuesday morning.

"The pipe may have received a knock from one of the road laying machines. It was decided to mend it on Wednesday afternoon since there was no danger and work would not hold up traffic," a gas board official told the SURREY COMET.

WATCH OUT FOR DUD CHEQUES

Kingston traders are being asked by the police to watch for a man who has been passing "dud" cheques. Four traders fell victims to him this week.

He is described as being about 25, tall, thin, and wearing an Italian-style suit.

FASHION at your FING

1. Nylon 'Simplex', elegantly ruched at wrist; b lining. Six colours.
2. Soft cape leather lined pure silk. Eight colou
3. Reversed sueded lamb in four colours.
4. Real hogskin, handsewn, pure silk lining. T
5. Crochet backs, cape palms in tan only, and w nylon lining.

Bentalls