

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1961

Christchurch Times article.

THE year which ended with a freeze was characterised also by the freeze imposed by the Government on public expenditure. It also included the chilly blast which blew up (in the Somerford direction) when the borough's largest single source of employment set in motion steps to cease functioning. Here is the full summary of a very eventful year.

IF there were one main subject inherited by 1962 from its predecessor, this is undoubtedly the de Havilland close down. The main topic 1961 took over when it started was the shape of Christchurch High Street and the future of the Town Hall.

1961 started with a flurry in the Council Chamber when Mr. J. F. H. Smith resigned and walked out because plans which had been produced by the County Planning Authority ignored, he said, the wishes of so many of the electorate. He was referring to the Borough-wide petition protesting against the demolition of the present Town Hall and the spending of a large sum of money on the building of a new one.

A foreshadowing of the de Havilland trouble was cast by the Area Development Map which called for Christchurch Airfield to be released for the building of 1,490 houses beyond 1971. "Every effort should be made to secure its release by that year", said the Planning Authority. They should be congratulating themselves on the achievement of their desires well before the target date and with so little effort on their part.

A controversy which has long agitated Highcliffe was carried one stage further forward, but not settled, by a decision of the Christchurch Council for the progressive removal of sleeping huts from Highcliffe Beach by 1966. Highcliffe's citizens had been campaigning for this to be done: Highcliffe traders were against the proposition. Members of the Highcliffe Community Association might like to be reminded that their Chairman expressed the wish at an annual general meeting in January that their membership should be not less than 1,000 at the next A.G.M.

The weather, which has been so notable a topic in the opening days of January, 1962, was not absent from the news pages of the Christchurch Times in January, 1961. A year ago it was the severe floods in the lower Avon Valley which caused so much discomfort to villagers beyond the Christchurch perimeter.

FEBRUARY

The repercussions of a major revision of the local Development Map were bound to be widespread. Arguments about the widening of the High Street and major changes at the Town Hall were overshadowed by the remark Coun. Tucker made to the Christchurch Residents' Association to the effect that "Mudford has the key to the future of Christchurch". It was in Mudford that planners saw the key to the closing down of the airfield at any rate. If only there were no airfield, they reasoned, we could plan lots of blocks of flats in Mudford.

It was not surprising that the proposals, which may have been welcomed by the owners of some of the large properties in the area, received on the whole a substantial degree of opposition from the villagers who, it would appear, had had just about as much development as they were willing to stomach without protest. The Mudford and Stanpit Residents' Association held an emergency meeting in February protesting at Mudford becoming the goose that lays the golden egg for the new Town Hall and other developments in the Town Centre.

The idea of flat development produces totally new scales of land values. Large properties which, some years ago, might have been considered virtually unsaleable, were now said to be interesting developers to the extent of up to £1,200 for each permitted flat space on the Harbour frontage.

In the meantime, the ever-increasing financial burden of running the Borough of Christchurch has induced some ratepayers to wonder whether merging with Bournemouth was the possible way out. The Christchurch Ratepayers' Association decided to investigate the pro's and con's but were careful to maintain that the final word to the Boundary Commission must come from the entire ratepayer roll of Christchurch. One good petition, apparently, deserves another! (The inclusive rate in Christchurch, incidentally, is £1 0s. 8d. in the £).

Whatever controversies were raised during the year just ended, one was settled in February by the surprisingly sudden collapse of opposition to claims made by the West Hampshire Water Co. in connection with the bed of the river in the area known as the Royalty Fishery. This clear admission of the Water Company's title and rights had further repercussions later in the year.

The new County Library in Highcliffe was opened this month.

MARCH

In the Town Hall controversy the Minister of Housing and Local Government came down on the side of the 7,567 people who had signed the protest against the Council's scheme to spend £200,000 on a new Town Hall. The tremendous amount of work put in by the central organiser (Mr. R. W. Arnold) as well as by the area organisers and the army of canvassers was not in vain. This set-back forced the Council to look into other schemes for solving the acute shortage of office accommodation. Of these, only one has resulted in any direct alleviation of the pressure. A couple of temporary offices have been made out of what was a lean-to shelter for cars round at the back, whilst the Scouts' field slightly resembles a car park.

The two imposters of Triumph and Disaster are never far apart in community life. In March the Stanpit Village Room rebuilding fund was closely approaching £5,000. The project for a Christchurch Swimming Bath received its death blow by an announcement that the estimate for building had risen in 12 months from £27,000 to £75,000. One of the suggestions by the Council's Baths Committee was that the £860 in hand as a result of local appeals and efforts should be handed over to schools in the borough who were providing their own pools. This step was, in fact, taken later in the year.

Whilst on matters of finance, the Red House Museum welcomed a decision by the Bournemouth Council to pay £400 annually for out-of-school educational facilities provided by the Museum. The Christchurch Regatta Committee announced a loss of £60 on the 1960 event.

Another "burning question of the moment" was taken up by the Christchurch Ratepayers' Association when the Council's new scale of charges for private beach hut owners at Mudeford Sandbanks were announced. Frightening statistics were quoted at the March meeting by a hut owner who said the site rent for a hut occupying 72 sq. ft. in 1939 was £1 9s. 0d.; in 1960 a day hut of 112 sq. ft. cost £6 15s. 4d., whilst in 1961 the cost of the same site would be £23 12s. 6d. Increases of as much as 300 per cent, in a 12-month were indicated by some hut owners.

The increase was justified by Alderman J. W. Richardson on the grounds that it provided a 1½d. rate benefit.

At the approach to Easter, Inspector D. A. Cobb, of the Christchurch Police, told a meeting of the Highcliffe Chamber of Trade that the worst menace on the road was the driver who lacked road sense. He never realised he was doing anything wrong and so would never remedy his mistakes.

APRIL

Still developing! South-West Hampshire Area Planning Committee deferred consideration (pending negotiations in regard to drainage) of an application from the Earl of Malmesbury to develop land at St Catherine's Hill for 215 building plots for bungalows or semi-bungalows, a site for a church, hotel, car park and 24 self-contained flats.

At the other end of the borough, Highcliffe citizens turned out in force at a public inquiry into the refusal of the Hampshire Planning Authority to permit Chewton Glen House Hotel and grounds to be used as a motel with chalets and/or caravans for holiday use—and the use of Parkland Caravan Site, New Milton, for residential development.

An overall broadside against multi-storey development was fired by Highcliffe citizens in a resolution sent to Mr. John Cordle, M.P., "deploring planning permission for multi-storey buildings of four-storeys or over in rural or semi-rural areas, on prominent sites, in places of historical interest, and in areas of outstanding natural beauty—or, in fact, in any place out of keeping with the natural surroundings." The resolution emanated from the Hampshire Federation of Ratepayers' Associations which evidently foresaw the county being dotted by a rash of over-sized blocks of flats.

For the first time ever television cameras were used in Christchurch Priory Church when morning service was broadcast nationwide on all I.T.V. networks in April.

A notable event was the successful settlement of a Ukrainian family in Somerford during the month. The house was made available by the Council whilst more than enough furniture and equipment was handed in to the Christchurch Rotary Club following appeals which were published in the Christchurch Times. According to latest information the family is "very well and the children are doing very well indeed."

Amongst other events of the month were the announcement of a sewerage scheme costing £123,604 for Burton and Winkton and a talk on Russia given to Christchurch Round Table by Mr. Y. Loginov, secretary at the U.S.S.R. Embassy. Mr. Loginov told his audience that income tax in Russia is likely to be abolished within the next seven years.

MAY

The Cat and Fiddle Inn at Hinton Admiral started serving drinks on Sundays. This is recorded in our review of the year as an example of those who, apparently discontented at working six days a week, insisted on working on Sundays as well.

For centuries at least the district has not been altogether disinterested in the subject of drink. Old ties, with origins undoubtedly dating from the activities of smugglers in past centuries, were further strengthened by a visit of Cognac Rotarians to be entertained by members of the Christchurch Rotarians early in May. Two Mayors came over with the visitors—who were, of course, welcomed by the Mayor of Christchurch at the Town Hall when the ties of international goodwill successfully withstood the strain of official speeches exchanged in each other's language.

It was an exciting month. The Duke of Edinburgh dropped in for a flying visit to M.E.X.E., Alderman Miss Padwick was re-elected for her second year as Mayor. Highcliffe ran an extremely successful Festival and the fat was really in the fire when the Christchurch Times announced that the West Hampshire Water Company was contemplating giving the

Christchurch Sailing Club a fairly long lease with exclusive mooring rights over most of the area from Wick Ferry on the Stour and Claypool on the Avon down as far as the seaward boundary of the Royalty Fisheries.

Christchurch Council went really up into the air when this was announced. For some time they had been pressing that more control of the river frontage and amenities should be vested in the Council and although no-one objected very strongly to the Sailing Club being saddled with the responsibilities of arranging moorings, the Council seemed to think that the rights should have been offered to them first.

The alternative, then, would presumably have been for either the Council to have set up a committee and staff a department to perform those functions which the Sailing Club were going to do voluntarily, or, to let the Sailing Club get on with it. Eventually excitement subsided and the club has been left to do the work.

Whilst still on river matters, Christchurch Rowing Club reviewed an extremely successful year at their annual meeting held in May. It was later in the year that the club was made anxious by the reaction of some members of the Council when they applied for a lengthy extension of a lease for the ground on which their present boat house is constructed.

In case it might be considered significant in local politics, it must be recorded that the Somerford Ward of Christchurch Council became completely Labour after having been in existence for just over 12 months. The composition of the Christchurch Council, after the May election, was said to be Independents 10, Conservatives 5, Labour 3, and Liberals 2.

A man who said he had been Field-Marshal Alexander's driver for three years and who was chosen to drive the late King George VI on his visits to Africa and Italy, was fined £1 by Christchurch Magistrates for riding a pedal cycle without due care. It was alleged that he had performed this operation in Purewell with neither of his hands holding the handlebars!

JUNE

Money ! The Borough's new £380,000 sewage treatment works occupying 13 acres of land at Stony Lane was officially opened in June; Wessex Regional Hospital Board said they would spend £85,000 on improving Christchurch Hospital over the next two or three years, and a 14-year-old schoolboy was said to have stolen £300 to give a friend whose father was very ill and needed the money "so that he could stay alive".

Before eventually dying down, the shock of the Sailing Club's lease of mooring rights evoked an agitated demand by Alderman Harry Mears, O.B.E., of Bournemouth for an urgent meeting of the Christchurch Harbour Joint Committee (of which he was chairman) to discuss the situation.

The following day Christchurch Council passed a resolution that the boroughs of Bournemouth and Christchurch, working in co-operation, should seek to obtain all the rights held by the West Hampshire Water Company necessary for the control of the tidal waters of the harbour and the rivers Avon and Stour.

The resolution added "That the two authorities should take steps to secure any further powers which might be necessary to enable them jointly to have full control of the area". Justice had been restored to the situation.

Having dropped the idea of collecting money for a public swimming pool on land which had been bequeathed to the local Council for the purpose, a decision was made to collect money for seven swimming pools in Christchurch on land paid for by ratepayers at various local schools.

In June there occurred one of those occasions when a local newspaper can come to the assistance of even small handfuls of residents who consider they are oppressed by a grievance. When the Signals Research and Experimental Establishment decided they wanted

to re-route a public footpath running through Ministry of Aviation property from Highcliffe Castle Golf Course to Steamer Point, some bungalow owners in East Cliff Way attacked the proposition on the following grounds:—

1. The extension of an industrial site along the seafront.
2. The immediate depreciation in the value of their properties which in turn would reduce the rateable values.
3. The invasion of privacy.
4. Noise and annoyance, particularly in the late evenings.
5. The possibility of litter, etc., being thrown into the gardens immediately bordering the proposed footpath.
6. Violation of rights without consulting the residents.

No one appeared very seriously to dispute the legal right of S.R.D.E. to move the footpath but the small pocket of offended residents attracted very widespread sympathy for their cause in fighting against the sudden lessening of privacy which would have resulted from a public footpath being moved up against their garden fence. For bungalow owners this was considered to be a serious intrusion. The Christchurch Council and other bodies agreed to take the matter up with the Research Establishment.

On odd occasions the weather has made news throughout the year. A miniature whirlwind was recorded off Mudeford Quay in the middle part of the month. The last week of June produced a heat-wave — with a special warning issued by the Red Cross about the dangers of being bitten by an adder. We hope the adders, wherever they may be, are enjoying a happy winter and that the weather will be warm for them in the summer of 1962!

JULY

The first day of July brought with it something excitingly new for the many townspeople who made their way through the sun-baked fields to the Roeshot Hill arena where they saw the first ever Christchurch and Highcliffe Tattoo and Pony Race Meeting.

It was a big success and the Christchurch and Highcliffe British Legion branches, the British Red Cross Society and the St. John Ambulance Brigade's Cliff and Sea Rescue Unit all benefited from the gross takings of £480. An event we would like to see again this year.

Over in Ringwood it was farewell to Mr. F. W. Pilbrow, who retired from the position of Clerk and Chief Financial Officer of the R.D.C. He was given a cocktail cabinet and cut glass to mark his retirement.

Also at the beginning of the month there were important discussions at de Havillands on the subject of apprenticeship policy at the Christchurch factory. For two years past there had been no intake of apprentices and it was felt that unless this policy were reversed a highly dangerous vacuum would be created in the staff situation.

It was later revealed that a small intake of craft apprentices had been approved.

Sports wise, Christchurch Rowing Club were by far the most outstanding of the eleven clubs at the B.T.C. Regatta of Weston Shore, Woolston, while Christchurch Football Club were reporting at their annual general meeting that theirs was a club with "high spirits."

Burton F.C. had good reasons to be happy for after disappearing from the game half-way through the previous season they were able to report that their former waterlogged pitch in Martin's Hill Lane would be dried out for the following season, over 300 yards of drainage piping having been laid by kind permission of the Playing Fields Committee. There was a new spirit of enthusiasm in the club.

A letter signed by twelve well-known local residents was sent to the Minister of Housing and Local Government supporting a C.R.A." request for intervention by the Minister

to determine whether or not demolition of the existing Town Hall could be allowed before the future of Christchurch as a separate local government area was settled.

The C.T. headline of July 21 read: "More staff wanted by D.H.'s" and the report stated that an increase in the numbers employed by the company was urgently required to deal with the work then promised for what a spokesman called a "rosy future."

A small "war" broke out at Fisherman's Bank where residents protested against "unofficial restrictions." The local Residents' Association asked for an investigation into the matter and "prompt action taken to protect interests and rights of the general public of free access to the whole of the foreshore."

The property owners at Fisherman's Bank who were being accused of "invading" the rights of residents and fishermen told the C.T. that they were "peace-loving people who ask that their rights be respected as they respect the rights of others." They also added that the action they had taken had been done with the full approval of the Borough Engineer.

There was a grave warning to smokers by Dr. D. J. N. McNab, Medical Officer of Health. Fourteen deaths had occurred from lung cancer in Christchurch the previous year and the rising incidence was; directly related to the rising consumption of tobacco in the form of cigarettes.

AUGUST

The month for holidaymakers and they hit the headlines in the first week when it was reported that hundreds of them helped to put out a blaze which threatened beach huts on the cliff banking at Avon Beach.

They formed a human chain from the sea to the banking, using children's buckets, milk bottles and teapots to carry water to stem the fire and their action prevented what might have been a disaster for a row of about 140 beach huts.

The same week it was the turn of a local resident to come to the rescue of holidaymakers for two were seen frantically waving a red shirt from a sailing dinghy off Christchurch Ledge. Rescuer was Richard Freeborn, of 41, Warren Avenue, Christchurch.

On the banks of the River Avon measures were taken by the Royalty Fisheries to stamp out the playing of transistor sets. Notices were erected banning the playing of these sets after complaints had been received from anglers.

The Bank Holiday weekend was black so far as accidents on local roads were concerned. There were three times as many accidents as those for the corresponding holiday weekend the previous year. Of the 15 accidents only one involved serious injuries.

There was a rousing send-off at Mudeford Quay for Dr. James Brydone, an 86-year-old sailor as he was towed over the sand-bar to make his delayed visit to the Cowes week in his 12-ton Bermuda cutter.

This was the second time local fishermen had helped Dr. Brydone, who had spent a weekend in Christchurch Harbour after being towed there from Christchurch Ledge. He had been in a dazed condition and was slumped over the tiller when the tow-rope was secured.

When the usual thousands of holidaymakers and local residents lined the streets for Christchurch Carnival 1961 little did they realise it would be the last they would see for some time.

In view of the Carnival Committee's decision towards the end of last year not to organise another Carnival for the time being it seems ironical that the 1961 Carnival broke all previous records and was above all else, rainless, the first time for four years.

Carnival Queen Dawn Prichard and her two attendants, Rosemary Ashby and Anne Milne, looked radiant as they rode through the thronged streets. It was a day to be remembered.

An interesting report came from the public library in which was revealed the fact that almost half of the town population read library books. The overall membership of the library for the borough was 11,255, equivalent to approximately 42½ per cent. of the borough population.

Later in the month came Mudeford's Carnival and this event earned the reputation of being a "friendly, family affair." Visitors to the village were amazed at the length of the procession and were struck by the friendly atmosphere in the Recreation Ground. It was a well-organised event and the proceeds of £400 went to a very worthy cause—the rebuilding fund for Stanpit Village Room.

Christchurch Airfield was one of the main topics of a press conference in Winchester on Christchurch Town Development Map, and it was made clear in the discussions that the airfield held a vital key to the future residential development in the borough.

Said Mr. D. H. E. Hockley, deputy county planning officer: "There has never been any question of public acquisition of the airfield over the heads of the de Havilland Company, but we think the company ought to prove at this stage that the airfield is vital to the continuance of the factory. We think that can only be done through a public inquiry into this development plan."

D.H. reaction to this was that the company at that point in time definitely needed the airfield for the take-off of Sea Vixen aircraft still being made against Navy contracts.

SEPTEMBER

Another big day in the town's calendar came during this month when the Regatta attracted thousands to the Quay and made a very satisfactory profit. The programme lasted for 12 hours and as usual it was full of enterprising entertainment. The banks of the Stour were crowded for the big firework display which rounded off a day of excitement.

It was the turn of the Avon to draw the crowds the following week when more than 460 anglers from many parts of the country competed in the third Hampshire Avon Championship. Records were smashed in this event which is fast becoming one of the most popular angling dates in the country.

There was news this month of lone voyager Danny Weil, who commented on his arrival in Christchurch after an absence of three years: "It's good to see the old faces and to be home again, but I am not very keen on this cold weather." A few weeks later he was off again back to the tropics in search of further adventure.

Mudeford and Stanpit Residents' Association joined in the objections against development map proposals for Christchurch airfield. They sent a three-page letter to the Minister and said they didn't consider the airfield should be given over to residential development if and when the government department concerned relinquished its use.

Highcliffe Citizens' Association also joined in with a request that it be returned as an open space.

In Ringwood crowds enjoyed a full week of carnival time. Fine weather favoured the crowning ceremony of Carnival Queen Christine Whelan, who had as her attendants Erica Henton and Irene Hudson.

Proceeds from Carnival week amounted to £1,900 and this went to pay off the balance of £1,450 outstanding on the Community Centre, and still substantially benefited the Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, St. John Ambulance and Red Cross.

Towards the end of the month the Christchurch Town Hall controversy reached a critical stage. The C.R.A. made a last-minute bid to prevent demolition of the Town Hall when they invited aldermen and councillors who voted in support of the demolition to resign

and test the feeling of the electorate, and accepted a proposal that the appropriate authority be urged to preserve the Town Hall as a building of historical and architectural importance.

Then the bomb-shell. In a crisis statement on the town's economic position Coun. K. L. Smith, chairman of the Finance Committee, told the Council they must put all thoughts of building a new Town Hall, replacing existing buildings or embarking on any project that was not in itself revenue producing, right out of their minds for the next few years.

Children in local schools had their first experience of a strike when their teachers were away from the classrooms for one day.

September brought the announcement that Canon R. P. Price, Vicar of Christchurch since November, 1945, had been appointed the new Dean of Hereford. This was a sad note for the many friends of Canon Price, yet his new appointment was regarded by all as being well deserved.

At the end of the month the de Havilland aircraft company, Hatfield, acting in conjunction with the Ministry of Aviation, lodged a formal objection to the Hampshire Development Plan proposals for the release of the airfield for housing development. This news coincided with the announcement that Christchurch had made 100 Sea Vixens against contracts with the Admiralty.

Thoughts were already turning to Christmas and both Christchurch and Highcliffe Chambers of Trade gave the go-ahead for Christmas shop lighting decoration schemes.

OCTOBER

Flooding in the country area has long been a thorn in the sides of the residents of Bransgore and district. The Residents' Association roundly criticised the Hampshire County Council in October for what was said to be the lack of attention to the problem. It was recalled that Derret Lane had been closed for nearly five months with a maximum depth of flood water at three feet.

It is to be hoped that, although the authorities have done little, the weather will be kinder to this badly afflicted area of land. Bransgore's representative on the Rural District Council said he was waiting to see what would happen if someone, hit by the flooding, were to put in a claim for damages.

One resident, said the chairman of the association, had done so several years previously, but it was pointed out at the time that a great deal of evidence was necessary to prove that the flooding had been occasioned through a lack of care on the part of the County Council. Meantime, certain houses in the area await the events of the next few weeks with considerable trepidation, although Ringwood Parish Council was later told certain flood prevention work was going to start in November.

It would hardly be possible, or correct, to produce a review of the year 1961 without mentioning the term "Bingo". Whilst some reason could be found for the popularity of the art amongst men in the Forces, it is hard to comprehend the success it has achieved amongst civilians of this country — and particularly womenfolk.

Not even the weather appears to cut down attendances at sessions which take place with considerable regularity. The great advantage of the cult is that it does enable some deserving causes to survive which they would find difficulty in doing without this source of income.

It is not now an uncommon experience for newspaper reports of annual general meetings to include such words as "The chairman thanked the committee who had loyally supported him, and especially the bingo team who had done so much to help put the branch's finances in a sounder position". (This was from a report of the Bransgore branch of the British Legion which recorded an increase of membership during the year.)

Money raising by more onerous methods continues to be practised even though it is commonly regarded as "the hard way". Highcliffe Festival 1961 showed a profit of £590 5s. 7d. which sum, together with a carry forward from the 1960 Festival, enabled the Festival committee to give £591 1s. 8d. to the Highcliffe Community Association and carry forward £102 10s. 7d. for the 1962 Festival.

It was announced in October that Highcliffe may look forward to the completion of its new County Junior school by mid-April this year.

At the end of the summer Christchurch Council agreed "in principle" to the employment of a Harbour Patrol in Christchurch Harbour on weekends and Bank Holidays during the summer months. The employment of such a patrol is to be experimental in the first instance and is subject to the full estimates of the costs of them being first submitted to and approved by the Council. This item is recorded as a reminder — in case we happen to have a summer this year.

Throughout the year "Letters to the Editor" have proved a strongly supported and lively feature of the Christchurch Times. Amongst the many topics covered was one raised by a fairly frequent visitor to Christchurch from the town of Marlborough, Wilts., who expressed his shock at the lack of local support given to players of the Christchurch Football Club.

"I have recently come out of hospital with lung trouble," said the writer, "but I could not restrain myself when the locals were making such an effort, from shouting and encouraging them as well as I could. As some of the fans must have heard me shouting, they joined in —and you would be surprised at the extra efforts the players put in, which was when Christchurch scored their two goals." We hope the writer of the letter has fully recovered his health and strength and is in good voice.

Quite a remarkable anniversary was celebrated in Highcliffe in a novel manner during October. The first Highcliffe Guide Company reached its fortieth birthday when a number of ex-Guides turned out wearing uniforms as worn when the company was formed in 1920. The celebrations concluded with a beetle drive.

The supreme champion at the first combined ploughing match arranged by the South Avon and Stour Agricultural Society and the Lymington Growmore Club, was a horse ploughman (69-year-old Jack Pearce) from the Efford Experimental Horticultural Station at Lymington. Mr. Pearce has won 265 firsts and championships in ploughing matches. Another horse ploughman was reserve champion in the field of between 40 and 50 competitors.

NOVEMBER

The black month of the year! This crisis at de Havilland's, Christchurch, was, oddly, prefaced by a warning of the critical danger to Christchurch of having almost 50 per cent, of its employed population working in two factories. Mr. R. E. Deverell, manager of the Employment Exchange, told Christchurch Rotarians on the 7th November that the district was gravely susceptible to any redundancy that might occur in the aircraft industry. The following week in a statement issued to the press Union officials reflected the grave situation in the words, "Nothing short of a miracle can save de Havillands, Christchurch."

For some months the management of the Christchurch factory had been making endeavours to secure additional work to ensure full employment when work on the Sea Vixen contracts began to run down. The crisis was precipitated when the decision was made to remove from Christchurch even the remaining Sea Vixen work for the benefit of other factories in the Hawker Siddeley Aviation group.

This was said to be logical but it was action Christchurch found quite difficult to understand bearing in mind that less than two months previously the de Havilland Aircraft Company, Hatfield, acting in conjunction with the Ministry of Aviation, lodged a formal

objection to the Hampshire Development Plan proposals insofar as these were pressing for the release of Christchurch airfield for housing development within the next ten years.

Then, on Friday, 25th November, the bomb was dropped. De Havillands were going to close their Christchurch factory down completely by July of 1962. No graver announcement has ever been made in the industrial history of the district. The main hope to which very many people look forward in the New Year is that a new industry, or industries, will be found to take over the major part of the buildings, and offer employment to all the redundant staff.

One of the repercussions of the industrial crisis had its influence on the Christchurch Carnival Committee when they had decided, in any event, not to repeat Christchurch Carnival in 1962. Without the D.H. trouble the Carnival Committee might well have called a public meeting to decide what reorganisation might be deemed advisable for the running of future carnivals.

As November drew to its close, the Parish of Christchurch was forced ultimately into the realisation that the Rev. Canon R. P. Price really was leaving to take up his appointment as Dean of Hereford.

DECEMBER

Dean Price was installed on the 9th of the month and amongst the very large congregation were 130 people who had made the round trip of 260 miles from Christchurch.

For the rest of the month, attention was divided fairly evenly between further developments in the de Havilland situation, a determination to have a happy Christmas anyway—and the weather. Details of the scale of ex-gratia payments by de Havillands were announced and their various societies contemplated the prospect of disposing of their assets after winding up. De Havillands have always, during their years here, reacted very charitably and thoughtfully to the locality.

One recalls the splendid efforts they made on one or two occasions to help Christchurch Carnival and it was not at all surprising to learn at the end of the year that one of the proposals to be submitted to their Sports and Social Club when it wound up was that their assets should be disposed of to endow a hospital cot. The Engineering Society had already decided that their winding up balance of £90 should be given to the Victoria Home for Crippled Children.

The weather! The district spent one of its coldest Christmasses— but still it wasn't white. The white came suddenly and quite unexpectedly to greet the dawning of the last day of the old year.

Snow continued falling on and off during the Sunday but late in the afternoon the clouds disappeared, the sun shone brightly— and out came all those cameras, exposure meters, colour filters, and other photographic equipment which had so shortly before been wrapped up in pretty coloured paper, and unwrapped with the most eager anticipation on Christmas morning.

Never in the realm of Christmas greetings, will so many "do it yourself" Christmas cards be sent as there will be in Christmas 1962!