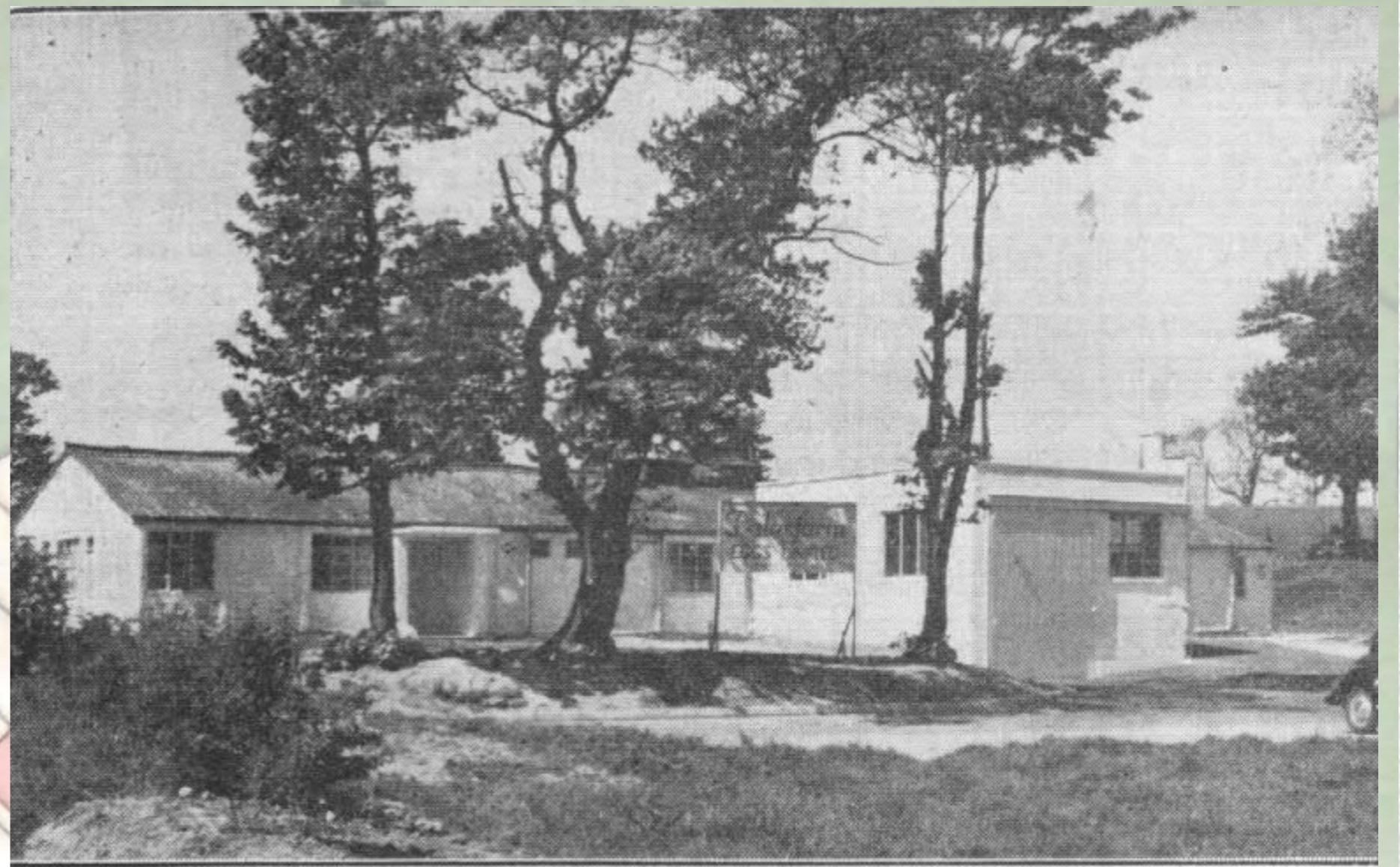


NORTHOLME ESTATE, COMMUNITY CENTRE

A Centre of Social Activity

Work Commenced on the Northolme housing estate in the early years of the second world war to house "essential" workers who were relocated from the Midlands to work in the aero engine factories which had also been relocated to escape the German long range bombing missions. A total of 168 prefabricated semi-detached bungalows were built, for a population of around five hundred adults and children. The Community Centre would probably have been built last after all the houses had been finished.

The community centre was also a large prefabricated building, complete with a bar, small stage, snooker tables and one room at the end which was used as a library that would double on Saturdays as a cinema. It was run for many years by Phyllis and Bill Brookes whose son John used to help change the beer barrels and serve behind the bar at the age of just twelve years old. The Community Centre did not stay open for long, an advert in the Craven Herald dated October 1952 states "Once the centre of social activity..."



Original building shown with extension on the front

An Exhibition
Of DOMESTIC ELECTRICAL APPARATUS
Will be held in the
Communal Hall, North Holme Estate, Earby,
on
WED, THURS, and FRID, Nov. 12, 13, and 14,
From 11a.m. to 8p.m. each day.

Demonstrations and Film Shows will be arranged to show you how to obtain the best service from your appliances, and you are cordially invited to attend.

On the twelfth of December 1952 an application for 2 lock-up shops to be formed in the Community Centre was made. The outcome of this is not known. The building lay empty, apart from the library, for some while until a group of youngsters helped by a man called Walter (Wally) Thornton "did it up", cleaned and painted it and started a Youth club in 1957. Mothers would take it in turn to supervise. The youth club attracted youths from the town and also Barnoldswick. There was generic club facilities including table tennis, darts, refreshments counter selling pop and crisps, music from a record player and dancing. The youth club closed in about 1960. In 1961 Dalesfarm Eggs Ltd took over the lease for use as an egg packing station. It was at this time the extension of a loading bay to the front of the building was built, as shown in the photograph. After the egg packing station closed Pendle Borough Council used it as a paper baling unit.

Their Community Centre Plan

Parents on Earby's Northolme Estate want the chance to turn a derelict building on the estate into a new community centre, and they are prepared to be fully self supporting with no financial assistance from Pendle Council. Members of Northolme Parents Association (NPA) were present at Tuesday's meeting of the Development Services Committee (DSC) when it was decided that the planning sub-committee hold a site meeting with parents at the former egg packing station which is now owned by the council.

The Association wants to pay rent and transform the building, currently used by the council for storing vehicles, into its own community centre incorporating a youth club and mothers and toddlers group.

Each member of the Association is prepared to offer their own skills and among the group is a plumber, a joiner and an electrician.

The Association, formed primarily to arrange a Christmas party for the children on the estate, involves around 40 families. Already around £200 had been raised in the past few weeks but members realise that a lot more money will be needed. In a letter asking local councillors for support, secretary, Mrs Sue Dwyer, said that the estate was rather isolated from the rest of Earby. The Association plans to run a mothers and toddlers group from the building and a youth club on alternate nights to the established one in Earby. Also the centre would be available for any other functions as the area requires" she says.

Barnoldswick and Earby Times 4th Dec 1981

Festive Party Fun for Earby Kids

Over 40 children from Earby's Northolme Estate got into the Christmas spirit on Sunday when a festive party was held for them. But there was also disappointment for their parents with the news that the former egg packing station which residents of the estate wanted to turn into a community centre was beyond repair and would have to be pulled down. Plans to build a community centre on the site are still in hand but it will now cost more. Although they will have the use of the land the parents - officially the NPA - will have to raise their own cash for the centre, probably a prefabricated building. The secretary of the NPA, Mrs Sue Dwyer, told us this week "now that the egg packing station will have to come down, it is going to take much more hard work and more fund raising. We have plenty of ideas and are keen to make a go of it. Almost everyone on the estate is prepared to help or support this". Parents are hoping that next year they will have a community centre to hold their Christmas party in.

However, this year they were content with the town's New Road School. The party included a disco, a tea and there was a present for every child.

Barnoldswick & Earby Times 18th December 1981

The NPA was soon disbanded after the failure to secure a community centre but a subsequent association Northolme Residents Association (NRA) was successful in securing a community centre. The old building was demolished and, due to costs, a new prefabricated building was erected on the car park of the original building.

The new community centre was again run on a voluntary basis by residents of the estate. With youth clubs, mums and toddler clubs, bingo and senior citizen clubs.

The area of land associated with the community centre was sold by the council for use for building development. As part of the planning consent a new community centre would be built. The following headlines were published in the local papers at that time.

Craven Herald & Pioneer

Permission Granted for New Building
(Northolme Community Centre)

Craven Herald 11/12/1998

Northolme to get new community centre
Craven Herald 12/2/2000



Earby and District Local History Society



The New Prefabricated Social Club



The Community Centre on what was Churchill Avenue as it is today (2013).