

Beresford Hotel Fire

“FIREMEN FIGHT EIGHT HOURS BLAZE AT HOTEL”

Isle of Thanet Gazette report 17th March 1967

Birchington's famous Beresford Hotel — once the haunt of the titled, the rich and the famous — came to an inglorious end when it was swept by fire on Tuesday.

The blaze brought the final chapter in the last days of the cliff-top hotel, which was closed last year after its A.A. and R.A.C. appointments were completely withdrawn.

Demolition men were at work on the building when the alarm was raised.

Controlled burning on the site got out of control and

within minutes the flames, whipped by a stiff breeze, had a firm hold on the building's three-storey west wing.

Firemen from Westgate and Margate were called. They arrived to find flames leaping through the roof and dense smoke billowing from the building.

Six jets were used by a team of more than 20 firemen, who were at the scene for about eight hours.

At 10 p.m., a number of them were still on the scene, engaged in final

damping down operations.

At the height of the blaze, the smoke was so thick that firemen had to wear breathing apparatus.

A considerable quantity of valuable material, such as flooring, tiling and beading, was lost in the fire.

The hotel was closed last year after a number of planning applications for housing development on the site, had been refused. But the latest plan for 50 detached and semi-detached houses on the site has been approved by Margate Town Planning Committee.

The Hotel was closed in 1966 and is now the site of Moray Avenue and St Magnus Close, which are accessed from Spencer Road, with a small side access from the top of Beresford Gap, where the old original Hotel entrance stood.