



MECCA DANCE HALL FOR THE TOWN CENTRE?

The large hall controlled by Basildon Development Corporation in the church Commissioner's block being built in the Town Centre may be taken over by Mecca for dancing. Only the shell of the hall will be there, and whoever takes possession will do their own decoration.

The General Manager of the Corporation (Mr R.C.C. Boniface) said this week: "Whoever runs it will complete it".

The No 2 car park, costing £30,000, in the north-east corner, should be finished in three months. The Corporation have in mind, at a later stage, properly attended car parks where a small fee will be charged.

The extension of Broadmayne from Timberlog Lane down to Pitsea will be started early next year.

W. and C. French who will build Fryerns Community Centre and Library, have been given the "go ahead".

April 1959



December 1960

Mecca dance hall open in Town Centre by autumn

MECCA, Ltd,. have taken over the hall in the Church Commissioner's block at the Town Centre. They are to spend about £50,000 on interior decorations, alterations and furnishing before opening it as a ballroom - probably in the early autumn.

Giving this news to a "Standard" reporter , Mr G. J. R. Bannet, secretary of Mecca, said they had taken out a 99 year lease on the hall. When it was opened there might be as many as five nights a week for dancing, while the hall would also be available for letting.

Heats of contests such as the "National Ballroom Queen," "Miss England" and "Miss United Kingdom" competitions, which Mecca help to sponsor, will undoubtedly be held in the ballroom. Mecca are providing the ballroom, which will be lavishly decorated and furnished, with a balcony.

Mr Bannett said that it had not yet been decided what nights would be set aside for dancing, but it was likely that teenagers would have an evening set aside for them.

Mecca also hoped to arrange for the ballroom to be let for functions such as works buffet-dances. There would be at least one letting night each week and possibly more.

One or perhaps two resident dance bands would be employed. Efforts would be made to cater for a variety of types of dancing. The ballroom would include a soft drinks bar and probably a licensed club.

Basildon will be the first New Town in which Mecca have opened a ballroom.

Basildon Standard January 1960

MECCA Ballroom opens in March

Basildon should have it's first dance hall completed shortly.

So says Mr Maurice Green, manager of the new Mecca "Locarno Ballroom"

Situated in the market Pavement near the Town Centre. The fitters have been at work on the luxury - sprung floor of the Ballroom. Which will hold something like 1,000 dancers. The work should be finished early in March. Mr Green describes it as a modern dance hall with every amenity possible. The ladies' "boudoirs" are "second to none," and the men are also being looked after.

Rooms for "putting the crease back into those trousers" are a special feature, and there are facilities for Shaving.

CIVIC FUNCTION

The Ballroom itself has elegant lighting. At one end there is a magnificent Tudor Club.

Basildon's latest addition to the social scene will be opened on March 24th with a Basildon Urban District Council civic function , and on March 25th it will be open to general view from 11am until 5 o'clock. At 7.30pm on the same night Mecca will hold its first dance.

Times Recorder February 1961



Mr Maurice Green , he is a 26 years old six - footer who became the manager of Mecca's new "Locarno Ballroom".

Although young, he is no means new to the glamour of the dance world, for he has been the manager of Mecca's Grand Casino Ballroom in Birmingham for two years.

February 1961

Maurice Green left in August 1962 to take over a new appointment

BINGO! MASS GAMBLING CRAZE Will SOON HIT NEW TOWN



THE CALLER WILL SOON SHOUT: “LET BINGO BEGIN” and it will, The new craze already sweeping the country will hit The New Town on March 29th.

This will be big time Bingo the small scale fairground stuff is out. Prizes will be cash - big cash.

On Wednesday, March 29th the massive new Locarno Ballroom in Basildon’s Town Centre will open doors for the first mass Bingo rally.

The stage will be crowded with the latest Bingo equipment. The caller will announce: “ Let Bingo begin”

Heads will be down as the players follow the ritual: which could win them £100 in an evening.

SUNDAY TOO

This new craze is mass gambling on a scale never before seen in this country. In the Mecca dance halls already used for bigtime Bingo, more than 1,000 players flock regularly to each session.

At the first, there will only be two sessions at the Town Centre Ballroom, on Wednesday afternoons and again the same evening.

BUT A SPOKESMAN FOR MECCA ASSURED THE “RECORDER” THERE WILL ALSO BE SESSIONS ON SUNDAY AFTERNOONS IF IT IS FELT THERE IS SUFFICIENT DEMAND.

MECCA LTD.

is proud to announce that with the completion of the fabulous new Ballroom



THE LOCARNO TOWN CENTRE, BASILDON

BASILDON NOW POSSESSES PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DANCING FACILITIES UNEQUALLED ANYWHERE IN THE COUNTRY

'AT HOME'

SATURDAY, 18th MARCH ★
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

MONDAY, 20th MARCH ★
3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

TUESDAY, 21st MARCH ★
3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Come and see for yourself (Admission is FREE) when we are

You will be amazed at the many wonderful things which there are to see at

this latest MECCA Wonderful Ballroom — Beautifully appointed Ladies' Boudoirs; Gentlemen's Stag Room; Something entirely new in Decor; Wonderful lighting effects, fully equipped Bars and Catering Points, etc., etc.

★ OUR GRAND CARNIVAL OPENING DANCE ★ is on Saturday, 25th March, 7.30 p.m. - 11.30 p.m. 7/6d.

ON SUNDAY, 26th MARCH THE LOCARNO WILL BE OPEN TO SUNDAY CLUB MEMBERS AND GUESTS FLOOR FEE: MEMBERS 1/-, GUESTS 4/- FOR A SUNDAY CLUB MARATHON 3 p.m. - 11 p.m.
MONDAY, 27th MARCH WILL SEE THE OPENING OF THE TUDOR CLUB AND OUR WEEKLY POLICY. FROM MONDAY, 27th MARCH, WILL BE AS BELOW, BUT PLEASE NOTE THAT ON GOOD FRIDAY OF OUR OPENING WEEK THE LOCARNO WILL AGAIN BE OPEN FOR SUNDAY CLUB MEMBERS AND GUESTS FLOOR FEE: MEMBERS 1/-, GUESTS 4/- FOR A SUNDAY CLUB MARATHON 3 p.m. - 11 p.m.

LOCARNO WEEKLY PUBLIC DANCING POLICY (on Thursdays the Ballroom is available for Private Booking)

EVENING SESSIONS	
Monday	7.30 to 11.00 p.m. Off the Record
Tuesday	7.30 to 11.30 p.m. Over 21 Night
Wednesday	7.00 to 10.30 p.m. Mecca Bingo Club
Thursday	
5 hours to 1 a.m.	Private Let
Friday	
7.30 to 12 midnight	Week-end Gala Night
12.30 to 1.45 a.m.	and from 7th April
1.45 to 3.00 a.m.	Private Club Marathon
3.00 to 11.00 p.m.	Bingo & Records

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Monday	3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Dance Lesson
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	3 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Mecca Bingo Club
Thursday	3 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. Dance Lesson
Friday	Closed
Saturday	3 p.m. to 5.45 p.m. Tea Dance

LUNCHTIME SESSIONS

Monday to Saturday Inc.	12.00 to 2.00 p.m. Off the Record
Sunday	
6d. per head reduction for home side charities when minimum guarantee has been reached during Winter season only, i.e. September to May inclusive.	

OUR ADMISSION PRICES INCLUDE CLOAKROOM

AT STATED, THE LOCARNO MAY BE BOOKED ON THURSDAYS FOR PRIVATE OR CHARITY DANCES ON VERY FAVOURABLE AND HELPFUL TERMS. PLEASE ASK FOR BOOKLET GIVING FULL INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE BOOKERS REGARDING THE WONDERFUL FACILITIES AVAILABLE.

This wonderful new Ballroom in Basildon is part of the

MECCADANCING

organisation, always of your service in

PROVINCES

LONDON
Cafe de Paris, 3, Coventry Street, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.

SCOTLAND
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
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Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.
Leicester, 10, W.1.

CATERING MANAGER:
MR. G. NELSON

Chief Cashier:
MRS. M. J. GOFF

BANDS:
DON DABBY & HIS BAND
THE HARVEY KELSEY BAND

Basildon Recorder March 1961

FOR BASILDON

HARRY KELSON has recently been signed up to appear at the Locarno Ballroom, Mecca Dancing, at Basildon, Essex, from March 24th. He will be leading a trio consisting of Tommy Hayes on piano, Peter Doherty on bass vocals, and himself on drums.

The Stage March 9th 1961



LORAINES A WINNER

Loraine Shipps (19) Won the Basildon heat of the Miss England contest at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday night. Her £5.00 prize was small to what she will get if she wins the final of the contest to be staged at the Lyceum in London's West End on May 8th.

Basildon Recorder March 1961

MIX-UP OVER CIVIC FUNCTION

A Sell - Out !.. THAT'S BASILDON COUNCIL'S CIVIC FUNTION AT THE LOCARNO BALLROOM ON MARCH 24th. ALL AVAILABLE SEATS HAVE NOW BEEN TAKEN. HUNDREDS OF DISAPPOINTED APPLICANTS HAVE BEEN TURNED DOWN.

Many People who thought they had tickets have been told: "it's a mistake". Even members of the council staff are having to leave their evening clothes in mothballs.

Basildon Recorder March 1961

BRRRRR -BUSY LINE!

Nobody would complain if they got this busy line from the Basildon Telephone Exchange. They are 12 contestants from the local exchange who entered the Personality Girl Competition at Mecca's Ballroom.

Basildon Recorder April 1961



ALL ABOARD THE JAZZ FLOAT



NEW TOWN shoppers had a free music show as they walked around town on Saturday. In order to advertise their future bookings Mecca's Locarno ballroom in the town Centre, Murray Campbell and his band about on a decorated float playing some of their well known traditional jazz numbers.

Basildon Recorder May 1961

EXPRESSO FIVE at the Locarno, Ballroom



Tommy Berry drums, Roy Harries bas guitar, Colin Hill lead guitar, Pete Summers on right vocals and Graham Bradley (Bonney) rhythm

Times & Recorder October 1961

Music, Dancing and Entertainment

MECCA Dancing, Locarno Basildon. Rock and roll band contest 1961 - 62. Heats held every Monday night, Enter now. Enter now. Applications in writing to General Manager, Mr M. Green.

Basildon Recorder October 1961



Basildon Standard November 1961



Basildon Standard November 1961



Wendy is 'Sweater Girl' finalist

LOVERLY blonde Wendy Goff is pictured after winning the British Nylon Spinner's Association "Bri-Lon" sweater contest at the Locarno Ballroom.

February 1962

The Basildon round of the National Sweater Girl Contest was held at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Saturday. Seated Miss Wendy Goff, Southend, the winner, (standing left) Mrs Brenda Phillips, a former Carnival Queen of Basildon third; and Miss Anne Holland, who was second.

Basildon Standard February 1962



‘Miss England finalists’



Winners of the Basildon Area finals of the Mecca “Miss England” contest Chosen at the Locarno Ballroom, they are first Miss Stella Pithy, second Miss Carol Geary and third Miss Wendy Goff.

Times & Recorder February 1962



Garry Brown starts a BBC series on 6th March. Every Tuesday “Things Are Swingin” Sound and guest vocalists Lorie Mann, Shirly Jackson, Colin Day, Al Saxon and Tony Stevens will be on the air. On March 7th, Garry Brown and his swingin Sound take up residency at the Mecca owned Locarno Ballroom, Basildon .

The Stage and Television Today

1st March 1962



The Locarno Ballroom celebrated its first Birthday on Saturday with a birthday dance. The picture shows Mrs Patricia Mathieson, Pitsea, with Mr Green (Locarno manager) and Mr P. Richardson. Both Mrs Mathieson and Mr Richardson are celebrating their own 21st birthday's and received the Locarno birthday cake on behalf of the Quendon Road, Childrens Home. They also received personal gifts from the management.

Basildon Standard March 1962

Contestants in the Interflora G.P.O competition



The Girl with the Golden voice at the Locarno Ballroom, with them is Mr H. Read, Head Postmaster, and the Interflora Manager, Mr J Bews.



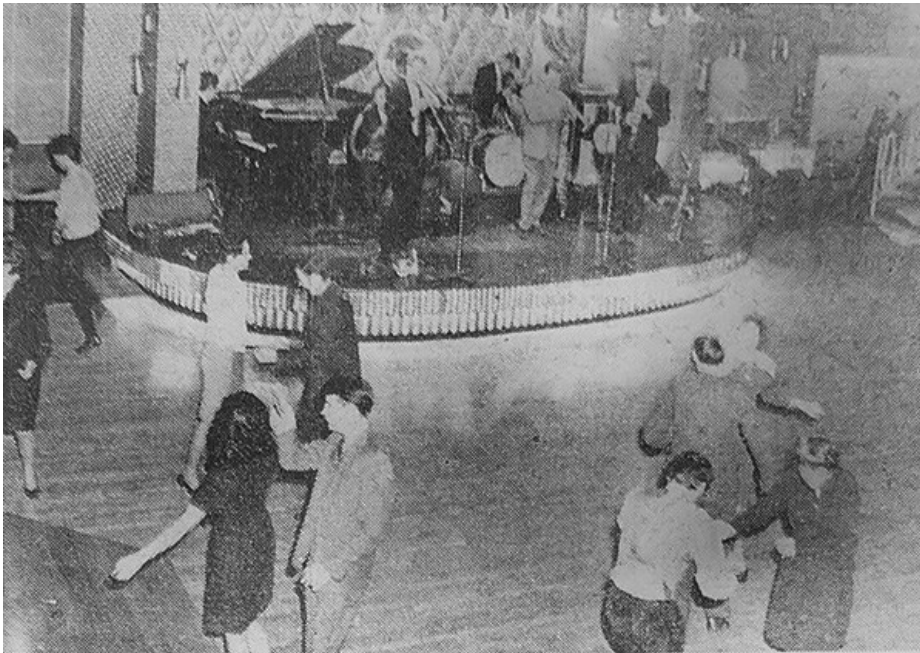
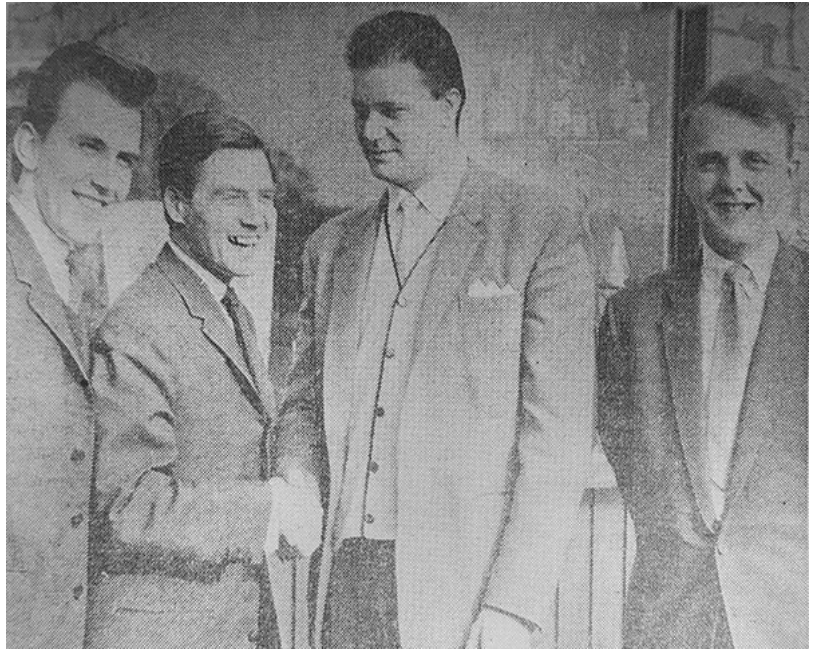
And the winner is Mrs Stratton Downes, mother of three children.

Basildon Standard March 1962

The new music maker

NEW resident band at the Locarno Ballroom are Gary Brown and his musician's, popular lunch time entertainers on the radio. Gary (centre- left) is pictured being welcomed to Basildon by Maurice Green (Locarno manager). With them are Mr Gordon Pickering (deputy manager) and Vic Tremayne of the Basildon Recorder.

Basildon Recorder March 1962



Dancing was to Mike Daniels and the Delta Jazzmen and the vintage Jazzmen at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday night.

Times & Recorder April 1962

It's a grand civic affair



Chains of office twinkled on the V.I.P. tables at Basildon Council's Civic function at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday week. Our photograph shows Councillors Mrs C.J.Gadson JP. (Chairman of the Council) and the vice - Chairman Councillor A.P. Phelps (both seated on the left), with some of their guests, including Mayors and Council Chairman from neighbouring areas. On the centre table are Sir Humfrey Gale

Chairman of Basildon Development Edward Gardner, Q.C (M.P. for Billericay).

Basildon Standard April 1962



At the Palladium

Busy days ahead for local saxophone player Alan Jones. He will be in the "backing" group for top-liner Adam Faith when he stars at the London Palladium and then goes on tour.

Twenty - six- year - old Alan from Brixton Hill, is well known as a bandleader in his own right and is at present playing at the Locarno, Basildon.

The news April 1962

DAIRY DELIGHT



Glass in Hand, 17 year old Maureen Pollard of Dagenham, winner of the Basildon heat of the National Dairy Queen contest at the Locarno Ballroom.

Maureen is a book keeper for United Dairies.

Basildon Recorder, Pitsea, Vange, Laindon Times
April 1962

COME DANCING
MECCA DANCING

The Management and Staff of the
LOCARNO BALLROOM, BASILDON
wish all their patrons a HAPPY EASTER,
and have pleasure in giving full details of
their

**GRAND
EASTER PROGRAMME**

THURSDAY, APRIL 19th
Teen-Beat Night, Expresso Five and Records
7.30 - 11 p.m. Admission 2/6

FRIDAY, APRIL 20th
Grand Easter Spectacular Dance. Jiving to The
Fabulous Garry Brown and his Swinging Sound
from 7.30 - 11.45 p.m.
PLEASE NOTE — Sunday Club Members or Members' Guests Only.
Floor Fee — Members 4/6, Guests 5/-

EASTER SATURDAY, APRIL 21st
Afternoon
3 - 5.30 p.m. Beat for the In-Betweens — 1/6
Evening
Grand Easter Carnival Dance. 7.30 - 11.45 p.m.
Admission 5/-, Expresso Five—plus Guest Group

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 22nd
Afternoon
Mecca Bingo. Doors open 2 p.m. First Game
3 p.m. Entrance Fee 3/6, Members Only
Evening
Sunday Spectacular. 7-11.30 p.m. Expresso Five
and Records. Members 4/6, Guests 5/-

COME DANCING

Basildon Recorder April 1962



The ladies were obviously up in arms during this dance at Basildon Rugby club's dance at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday.

Basildon Standard May 1962

“JUNIOR MISS” Competition



Our picture shows some of the large crowd of youngsters at the Locarno Ballroom waiting to hear the winner of the first heat of Junior Miss contest. And the winner was on the right Janet Biddulph (10) of Great Gregorie.

Basildon Standard May 12th 1962

“JUNIOR MISS” competition



These youngsters are some of the Contestants who took part in the second heat of the Junior Miss Contest, which was held at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon on Saturday. A Picture of this heat winner is 8 year old Denise Hoare below.



Denise Hoare (8) is this week's semi-finalist.

“Junior Miss” Competition



Seven-years- old Valeria Barter, of Bell Lane, Vange, who won the “Junior Miss” heat at the Locarno on Saturday, There were over 50 entries.

Basildon Standard May 26th 1962

Who is the best of the six? Basildon Carnival Queen for 1962 will be chosen from these six girls. They are Lesley Cushen (16) Great Gregorie, Margaret Sheppard (24) Curling Tye, Wendy Shove (17) The Slades, June Adams (20) Great Knightleys, Pat Barker (19) Great Mistley and Denise Wright (17) High Road, Pitsea..

The lucky girl who becomes Basildon Carnival Queen will be Crowned by Ten pin bowling champ Doug Lyons.

Times & Recorder May 1962



BEAUTY ON PARADE



The line-up for the News of the World "Miss United Kingdom" Basildon heat at the Locarno Ballroom last week.



Out of 17 contestants Wendy Goff, 22 came third, Mary Norris 22 second, And the winner from Paddington was Maurueen Zena Gay 18.

Basildon Standard May 1962



It is apparent that young people enjoy beauty contests as much as their elders.

Our picture shows the big crowd of youngsters who took part in the Junior Miss Competition heat at the Locarno, Ballroom on Saturday. Few would envy the judges in their task of choosing the winner, but eventually they decided upon the little lady on right. She is 11 year old Rosalind Graham, of Long Riding, Basildon.

Basildon Standard 2nd June 1962



JUNIOR JANICE IS TOP "MISS"

Rockin',rollin youngsters took a breather on Saturday to watch nine-year-old Janice Parker of Basildon win's the final or the "JUNIOR MISS" contest organised by Mecca. In her Petty white dress with pink bow, delightful Janice collected a £2 prize. But the money will not burn a hole in her pocket. It is going straight in to the bank, she told our reporter.

"I'm not saving it for any-thing in particular. It will come in handy if I ever need it ." she explained.

With her prize from Locarno manager, Mr Maurice Green, came a powder compact for mum, and a wallet for dad.

Other finalists - Denys Hall (8) Delhi Road, Jan Biddulph (11) Great Gregorie, Valerie Barter (7) Bower Lane, Rosalyn Hoar (11) long Riding - were not disappointed. They also took home presents for their parents.

Basildon Recorder June 1962

But Janice is JUNIOR MISS



Nine year old Janice Parker of Long Lyders Wood, Lee Chapel North, was chosen Basildon's Junior Miss at the area finals of the contest staged at the Locarno Ballroom in recent weeks,



Some of the other contestants in the finals

Times & Recorder June 1962

BIG DATE - NEW PICTURES



This week we are pleased to present the latest pictures of local rock group, the Espresso Five, and pop singer Steve Arlen (left). The boys are to back Steve in A.T.V.'s "Sunday Break" programme on Sunday.

All Basildon will be eager to see what kind of their first TV date. If they maintain the standard they have set as resident band at the Locarno Ballroom, they have nothing to worry about.

Times & Recorder June 1962



Brian Thompson the new assistant manager at the Locarno.

Basildon Standard June 1962

Teenager is Carnival Queen



Our new Queen is Lesley Cushen (16) of Great Gregorie, Lee Chapel South. Won the final at Locarno Ballroom.

Basildon Recorder June 1962



John Durell, a mature and capable teenager of Basildon, thinks that physical recreation facilities in Basildon should be given as much priority as libraries. Nineteen years old John who lives in Basildon has recently been promoted to Assistant Manager of the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, and is one of the youngest assistant managers in Mecca Ltd. Head boy of Craylands Country Secondary School from 1959 - 1960.

Basildon Standard July 1962

Rab promises another visit

Few saw the gleaming black Rolls which slipped up to the main door of the Town Centre's Locarno Ballroom on Friday. Few took any notice of the middle aged man in a dark suit who stepped from it.

And even fewer realised that Britain's deputy Prime Minister, Mr R. A. Butler, was paying his first visit to the New Town.

For Mr, Butler, recently appointed First Secretary of State, was guest of honour at the annual luncheon of the Essex Police Old Comrades' Association, held for the first time at the Locarno.

There too were Col. Sir John Ruggles-Brise, the Lord Lieutenant of Essex. Sir Jonathan Peel, Chief Constable of Essex, Sir George Chaplin, Chairman of the Essex County Council, and a

The majority of Essex Police Superintendents.



Basildon Recorder, Pitsea, Vange, Laindon Times

July 1962



Lee Chapel North Conservative Association held their first dance at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday.

Basildon Standard July 1962



SEMI-FINALISTS in the Lee Chapel South Community Association's "Personality Girl" after being chosen at the Locarno Ballroom on Thursday night.

Times & Recorder July 1962



If you were the only girl in the world ,,,
 "as seen at the Locarno Ballroom in a
 novelty dance." Occasion was the
 Summer dance held by
 Stability Radio Components.

Basildon Recorder September 1962



Twisting to the top are Michael Neil and Pat Baldwin. The competition was organised by Kangol Ltd.

Times and Recorder September 1962



Locarno Ballroom manager Maurice Proctor (right), Presents a cheque for £10.00 and a Kangol beret to the winners of the modern dance contest held in the ballroom on Tuesday.

BIG BAND BEAT IS BACK

Leader of the new resident band at the Locarno Ballroom is handsome 27 year old Denny Holland from Ilford, Swing/Jazz band.

Times & Recorder September 1962

Jean's a Natural Twister !

(YOU KNOW WHAT WE MEAN)



October 1962

RECORD crowd's at the Locarno Ballroom on Thursday night saw attractive 23 year-old housewife Mrs Jean Stevens of Mistley Side, With her dance partner Malcolm Dolton of Chalkwell win the Basildon heats of a national twist competition. Malcolm was surprised to win as it was the first time that they had danced together.

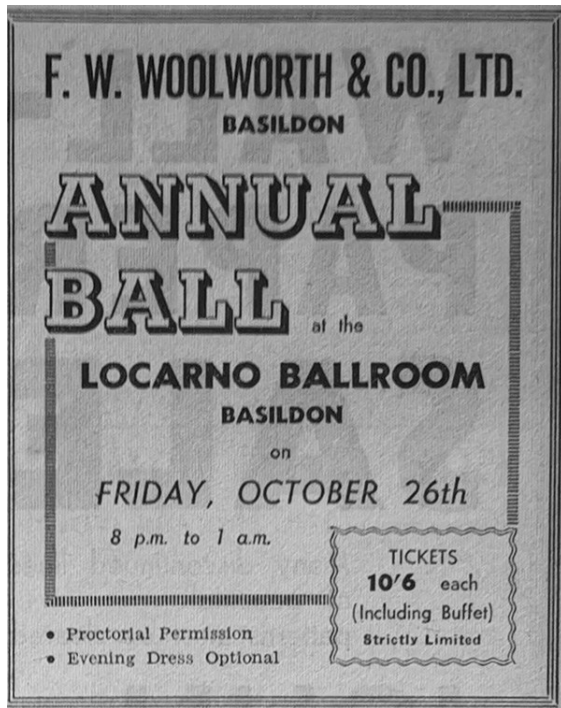


Mrs Jean Stevens and Malcom Dolton chat with Basildon Carnival Queen Lesley Cushen.

BINGO



Basildon Standard October 1962

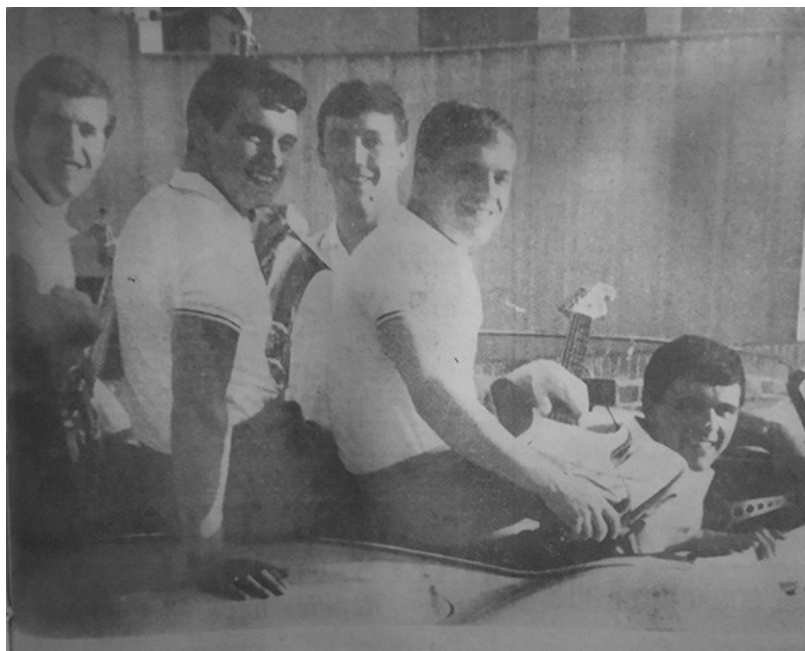


Basildon Standard October 1962



Gordon Pickering newly appointed
assistant manager.

Basildon Standard October 1962



Dave Clark Five

Basildon Recorder November 1962



Rev. Gibbins

TEMPTATION, DRINK AND NEW TOWN TEENAGERS



Mr Boniface

A WHITE - HAired Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government this week holds the key to a day-long dispute which ended with a Basildon Minister clashing with the General Manager of Basildon Development Corporation, Mr R. C. C. Boniface.

Will Mecca's Locarno Ballroom in Town Centre get a full "on" licence - thus putting on a par with 47 of the company's other ballroom's.

Or will the opposition headed by 'Recorder' columnist the REV. Ronald Gibbins triumph.

Times & Recorder November 1962

FREE CHURCHES LOSE FIGHT TO STOP LOCARNO DRINKS

No detrimental effect on teenagers

BASILDON'S Free Churches have lost their fight to stop intoxicating drinks being sold at the New Town's Locarno Ballroom. When an inquiry was held in November, the Churches said the drink's licence would have a detrimental effect on teenagers using the premises.

To fight their case were four ministers, Rev. R. C. Gibbins (superintendent of Basildon Methodist Church). Rev. W. Ralph Carr (Langdon Hills Methodist Church). Rev. Charles Phillimore (Fryerns Baptist Church) and Rev. Cyril Rusbridge (Kingswood Baptist Church).

Opposition was led by Mr H. Cecil Heath (President of the National United Temperance Council) who represented the Free Churches, Basildon Headteachers Association, Basildon Christian Teachers Fellowship and Basildon Welfare Committee.

Mr Heath said at the inquiry: "Where teenagers morals are concerned the greatest safeguard is not to provided alcohol at all." Quite a number of dance halls did good business without a bar.

Announcing the result of the inquiry the Ministry of Housing and Local Government stated this week.: "In his report to the Minister the inspector summarised the representation made by, or on behalf of the licensed Premises Committee, Mecca Ltd, (the proprietors) and the objectors."

He observed it was appropriate that some provision should be made for the sale of intoxicating drinks in premises such as the ballroom in the case and saw no practical difference between operating the on-licence as proposed and the present system which cannot be operated under the new licensing law.

THE DAVE CLARK FIVE



THE DAVE CLARK FIVE. That's the name of the top -line rock group who moved into the glittering Locarno, Ball-room, on Thursday, and took up their places on the stage that has been dubbed "throne" of the New Town's rock kingdom.

Hundreds of Basildon rock fans were stunned by last, week news that popular Espresso Five had abdicated. On Thursday they forgot how sorry they were to see the local lads leave, and transferred their loyalty to the new group.

Basildon Standard November 1962



GATECRASHERS AT NEW YEAR PARTY

ELDERLY CADGERS BANNED

A bid to stop elderly "cadgers" gatecrashing a special old folks party at Basildon's Locarno ball-room in the New Year is likely to be made.

The organisers suspect that at a similar party held last year, many of those who attended were not "needy" and were entertained at the expense of more deserving cases.

The need for precautions was mentioned at Monday's meeting of the local Old Peoples Welfare Committee. Joint secretary Mr George Hurd reminded the committee members that a function was being arranged and would probably be held sometime in February.

Basildon Standard December 1962

Young Eve was a gift to Dave.



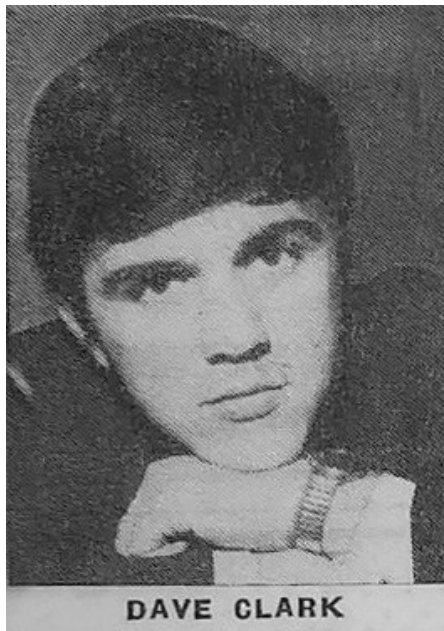
Assistant manager of Town Centre's Locarno Ballroom 19 - old John Durrell jumped on to the spotlighted stage on Saturday, stopped the music and asked hundreds of teenagers to gather round.

Then, hardly able to contain his laughter, He announced the 20th birthday of handsome Dave Clark, leader of the ballroom's resident rock group, "The Dave Clarke Five."

Dark haired John a local boy waited for The cheers and shouted birthday wishes

blonde Evelyn Patterson, of Basildon, an entry in last Year's Basildon Carnival Queen contest. Dressed in a pair of men's pyjamas (several sizes too large) Evelyn allowed herself to be lifted from the floor by John

Basildon Recorder December 1962



The assistant manager at the Basildon Locarno told the "Standard": "We are keeping Dave Clark and his band" Basildon's Dave Clark fans handed in a petition with a thousand names demanding that his band should be kept in Basildon, and they said if they had more time they could have got many more signatures.

Basildon Standard March 1963

SOUNDLY BASED

He concluded that the case for the licence was soundly based and recommended that the proposal be confirmed.

The Minister agreed with the Inspector's recommendation and noted that the objections mainly on the ground that licensing the ballroom would have a detrimental effect on teenagers using the premises, particularly those under 18 years of age.

The announcement continued: The Minister appreciates the proper concern shown by the objectors for the moral welfare of the ballroom's younger patrons, but is not persuaded that young people would in this respect be in any greater peril in a full-licensed premises.

He does not question that Mecca Ltd take more than usual precautions to ensure that no impropriety or breach of the law takes place on their premises, nor does he see any reason to doubt that the company will maintain in the future the high standard of management on which they have built their reputation.

CLERGY REACTION

"Regrettable" is the word Basildon Free Church leader Rev. Ronald Gibbins applies to the result of the Locarno drinks inquiry.

"I regret this decision," said Mr Gibbins, Minister of Trinity Methodist Church and principal witness for the opposition at the inquiry. I feel it will be detrimental to the young people of Basildon, for whom I have a very high regard."

He said the Free Church had made its stand for truth and social righteousness. "This means we shall have to watch the position much more carefully in future .

Rural Dean Rev. William Winfield refused to comment.

But Rev. Cyril Rushbridge, Minister of Kingswood Baptist Church, "told the Standard": "I am not surprised at the result, I did not think we stood much chance, but still think we did the right thing to protest."

Basildon Standard January 1963



January 1963

MECCA		
Extract from Accounts to 31st December, 1960		
	£ 1959	£ 1960
Trading Profit	715,068	817,987
Tax Provision	282,924	349,958
Profit after Tax and Minority Interests	328,333	366,533
Paid in Dividends (less Tax)	232,151	279,683
Retained	96,182	86,850
Dividends paid gross on Ordinary and 'A' Ordinary Shares	25%	20%
(1960 Dividend paid on increased Capital including £735,684 Rights Issue)		
Fixed Assets	5,294,853	6,146,340
Salient points from Joint Chairmen's Review		
Annual General Meeting 6th JUNE, 1961		
<p>New Premises opened last year include Norwood Rooms Banqueting Suite, Norwich, and Dance Halls in Birmingham and Coventry. In January, 1961, Hammersmith Palais was acquired by an exchange of shares. This year new Dance Halls are being opened at Basildon, Bradford, Stevenage and Hull and a Banqueting Suite at Newcastle, and new Dance Halls are being started at Burnley, Portsmouth, Hanley and the Empire, Leicester Square.</p> <p>The first Quarter's Profit of 1961 shows a consistently favourable increase compared with the same period for last year, and we are very pleased with the Trading Results of the Hammersmith Palais and all our recent acquisitions.</p> <p>We have started Bingo as a means of recreation, in many of our Dance Halls, at times when these Halls were not in full use, but this does not affect our Policy of Mecca Dancing which has proved so highly successful for so many years.</p>		

This year new Dance Halls are being opened at Basildon

On Tuesday evening the manger of Basildon Locarno (Mr Maurice Proctor) presented three cheques to the Chairman of Basildon Council (Coun. A. P. Phelps, J.P). The cheques, which Amounted to £66 3s., are to be given to charity. The money was collected by the Ballroom Bingo patrons and was divided as follows: Basildon Children's Home, £16 13s; Basildon Physically Handicapped Club, £27; Basildon Mentally Handicapped Children's Club, £22 10s.



Basildon Standard March 1963





The Haemophilian Society held a dance at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday. The company included Councillor. A. Dove, J.P, Chairman of Basildon Urban Council, Mrs Dove and the Carnival Queen.

August 1963

“Telstar” was best fancy dress



More than 50 children attended a fancy dress competition at Basildon on Saturday to make it one of the biggest the area has seen.

The competition was for under - 12 Mecca patrons. First prize went to Julie Cox, aged nine, as “Telstar”, who won a long playing record.

Other prizewinners were Maureen Short (5) as “CrissCross Quiz,” Gary Bigbon (5) as “Zoony” Dawn Bigbon (10) as “Merry Christmas” and Maureen Brazier (10) as “Cleopatra”.

Basildon Standard October 1963



They also recorded "Teddy Bear Special."
1963

There seem to be a number of stories online about who The Embers actually were, with some people pointing out that they were a band from the Basildon/ Billericay area of Essex. However, the book "Tapestry Of Delights", which we should probably consider to be the most reliable source of information, states that they were from Edinburgh and consisted of Alan Bomfort on vocals,

Another release under the name David and the Embers ("What Is This?") also emerged in 1963, which also sheds doubt on the official verdict. Was "David" a new member or Alan Bomfort adopting another name (and why would he do that)? Whatever the truth, neither single was a hit and the group seemed to disappear not long afterwards



Some of the Children who took part in the Fancy Dress Competition at the Locarno Ballroom on Saturday.

THEY'VE BEATEN THE BEATLE, BUT WILL LEAVE BASILDON



On Sunday Basildon teenagers will no longer be feeling "GLAD ALL OVER" ... the country's No 1 band at the moment and Basildon's own resident band at the Locarno, the Dave Clark Five, are leaving.

The Five have recently ousted the Beatles from

the top spot of the hit parade with their own number "Glad all over". Once Basildon fought tooth and nail to keep the Dave Clark Five at Basildon, but know that they have soared to fame they have little chance of doing so. Sunday will be the band's last stand at the Locarno.

Basildon Standard January 1964



Rick Huxley of Dave Clark Five with Tony Dow

1964

Courtesy of Kim Jennings

Tony Dow was under box office Manager

THEY WANT DAVID AND THE EMBERS



Leading the campaign to bring back David and the Embers back to the Locarno, Basildon are Mrs Sylvia Scott and husband Michael.

Heading a fight to see David and the Embers, a local group, installed at the Basildon Locarno as the resident band is attractive 23 years old Mrs Sylvia Scott. She told the "Standard"; "My husband and I go to the Mecca regularly, and we know a lot of young girls who go there. Nearly all of them want to see David and the boys playing there now that Dave Clark has gone".

Mrs Scott, who is a telephonist living in Brook House, Town Centre, continued: we got up a petition, and we expect to hand it in to the Locarno Management once it has been signed."

The Embers are almost the same group as the Expresso Five, who played at the Locarno until 18 months ago and since disbanded.

The group are Quentin Little (organ), Graham Brady (lead guitar), Darryl Kent (bass guitar), Johnny August (drums), and David Hamber (vocalist).

Basildon Standard February 1964

A Royal occasion took place at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday evening when Basildon Carnival Queen committee held a ball for Carnival Queen Brenda Spurling and her court. Among the special guests were Basildon Teen Queen Christine Roper and her attendants, the Carnival Queens of Wickford, Billericay, Hornchurch, Orpington, Thurrock and the London Queen of Queens, Margaret Clapp. The Queens were greeted on their arrival by a fanfare by trumpeters of the Basildon Boys Drum



the assembled "royalty" 30 Queens and attendants with the trumpeters in the back ground.

Basildon Standard February 1964

HER LEAP-YEAR PROPOSAL OVER MICROPHONE IN PACKED BALLROOM

"WILL you marry me"—the words echoed round a packed Locarno ballroom on Friday, and another couple sentenced themselves to life imprisonment—or an eternal bond of happiness—according to which way you look at it!

The voice belonged to 18-years-old Jessie Hernandez, of Somerset Road, Laindon, who took advantage of 1964 being a leap year and took the plunge by proposing to her sweetheart over the microphone at the grand leap-year dance organised by the Basildon Queen's committee.

Her husband-to-be is 25-years-old Mr. Alfred Skittrell, a lorry driver from Plaistow. The couple had been planning to get married, but until the dance neither of them had officially broken the ice.

Miss Hernandez was approached by a Carnival official and agreed to do the deed in public. As they were waltzing on the floor resident bandleader Denny Holland stopped the music and asked her to propose. Mr. Skittrell accepted without hesitation.

And if this wasn't enough for our shocked friend, he was then forced to sing "If You Were The Only Girl In The World"!

The couple will probably be married at St. Nicholas' Church, Laindon, in March of next year.

Mr. Skittrell told reporters after his ordeal: "I was completely in the dark. Jessie told me nothing about it."

Said Miss Hernandez, who is a shorthand-typist for Basildon Council: "He's wonderful—I'm glad he has taken it so well—not many people would have done so."

The dance was attended by more than 30 Carnival Queens and Princesses from Grays, Tottenham, Orpington, Hornchurch and Billericay as well as the Basildon Carnival Queen (Miss Brenda Spurling), her deputy (Miss Lesley Cushen), Miss Margaret Clapp (London Queen of Queens) and Miss Christine Roper (Basildon Teen Queen).

Twenty representatives of the Billericay Young Citizens' Guild provided a guard of honour for the Queens, and a welcoming fanfare was given by the Basildon Drum and Trumpet Corps.

Music for the dance, which drew over 300 people in all, was provided by the resident group, Denny Holland and his Band, and also the Sabres. Bouquets were also presented to chief organisers Mrs. Gwen Marriott and Mrs. J. Penstone.



Basildon Standard February 1964

1884
1964

1,000,000

PATRONS OF MECCA LTD.

ARE *Invited* NEXT WEEK
COMMENCING SUN., FEB. 9
TO HELP US CELEBRATE

80 YEARS

OF SERVICE TO THE NATION

COME AND JOIN THE
WORLD'S LARGEST
**CATERING
DANCING
BINGO and
ICE SKATING**
ORGANISATION IN
CELEBRATING THEIR
80TH BIRTHDAY

HERE IS WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE

LOCARNO

BASILDON

GIFTS AND ATTRACTIONS -

SUNDAY 9th	200 jars of VASELINE Hair Cream 200 POND'S "Spray 'n' Stay" Hair Sprays presented to lucky ladies and gentlemen
MONDAY 10th	CUTEX NIGHT 200 bottles of the famous Cutex Nail Varnish to lucky ladies. Six autographed copies of the latest DAVE CLARK COLUMBIA DISC.
TUESDAY 11th PANCAKE DAY	ADDITIONAL BINGO PRIZES A Holiday at the famous MADDIESONS HOLIDAY CAMPS. Tea and Carving Sets presented by BROOKE BOND TEA. The Mecca Lucky Frying Pan Charm presented free to the first 500 patrons.
WEDNESDAY 12th	BINGO 200 jars of VASELINE Hair Cream 200 POND'S "Spray 'n' Stay" Hair Sprays presented to lucky ladies and gentlemen
THURSDAY 13th VALENTINE EVE	WELL GROOMED CONTEST FOR MEN Four REMINGTON Rollershave Electric Shavers to be won ST. VALENTINE'S "SILENTNIGHT" PERSONALITY GIRL CONTEST "Silentnight" Bermudian Divan for the winner. Chance to win a holiday for two in Bermuda. First 500 ladies, a St. Valentine Heart Sachet free. A wonderful romantic gift.
FRIDAY 14th	PRIVATE PARTY NIGHT
SATURDAY 15th	200 Mixed Gifts by ANGEL FACE: lipsticks, eye pencils, powder eye shadow, mascara, compacts, cream powder compacts. Free gift of the Mecca "Lucky 80" Birthday Charm to every patron as a wonderful souvenir.
SUNDAY 16th	300 Sachets of "LAK-AWAY" Shampoo to 300 lucky ladies.

Read full details of the Solid Gold Charm you can win in any Mecca
Establishment in this week's "DANCE NEWS," the only weekly Dancing
and Bingo newspaper. Order your copy through your newsagent. Price 6d.

MECCA CATERING

THE "LUCKY 80" HORSE SHOE CHARM will be distributed
in Mecca Cafés and exclusive Restaurants on Friday, Feb. 14

MECCA LTD.

Chairmen: C. L. Helmann, Alan B. Fairley
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Mrs Rickerby, of Quilters Straight,
Who won the Locarno Ballroom's
lucky Scoop prize of £700.

Basildon Standard March 1964

MECCA BINGO

CLUB

LOCARNO BASILDON

EVERY
TUESDAY EVENING

£75

SNOWBALL

ADMISSION 2/6
(Members Only)

**WHY NOT JOIN TODAY ?
AND PLAY NEXT TUESDAY**

Basildon Recorder 1964

Basildon Standard February 1964

The Migil Five



The Migil Five played at the Locarno weeks later they went to no 10 with Mocking Bird Hill.

Official Singles Chart on 30/4/1964
30 April 1964 - 6 May 1964

Tony also mentioned on a Monday night they would audition five bands to pick a resident band,

With thanks to Tony Dow (Box Office Manager 1963 - 64)

THEY WANT THE SEARCHERS



Part of the crowd who packed the Locarno Ballroom on Friday evening to see the Searchers, who were playing at the Marconi Apprentices Association annual ball.

Basildon Standard May 1964



The Queen will be chosen at a dance at the Locarno on May 22nd, and the lucky lady will receive prizes which include a suit and accessories valued at £25.

Basildon Standard May 1964



Basildon and District Town Show Queen Mrs Barbara Brady takes over from the guitarists.

Basildon Standard June 1964

DARTS PRESENTATIONS

The Laindon Ladies Darts League presentations were made at the Locarno last Friday.



Pictured above are the members of the winning team Marconi (A)
Cup is presented by Councillor, Joe Morgan.

Basildon Standard July 1964

The Incas fill in for the Saracens



Playing at the Basildon Locarno while the regular band, Dave Francis and the Saracens, take a two week break, are the Inca beat group.

Basildon Standard July 1964

Swinging Blue Jeans....Take a Breather



In spite of all the hullabaloo for the Kinks, the Swinging Blue Jeans receive the top money, £300 or £200 more than The Kinks. The Blue Jeans are seen above taking a breath of fresh air on the roof of the Locarno Ballroom.

Basildon Standard September 1964



The Kinks guitarist was almost stripped of his jacket, Dave's arm can be seen on the left of the picture holding on to his jacket.

Basildon Standard September 1964



Transport and General Worker's Union held a dance at the Locarno Ballroom, on Friday. Among the guests were Councillor P. Saunders (Chairman of Basildon Urban District Council, with Miss Legge and nurses from Billericay and Orsett Hospitals.

Basildon Standard November 1964



Dave Clark Five, with Locarno night watchman Len Ruston.

Courtesy S Crosbie

New Town Shocks and Suprises



Shocks and surprises for customers at Basildon's Wimpy bar when two monkeys popped in for a cup of tea! They had not done a moonlight flit from a zoo - they were catering manager of the Locarno Mr Ian Fraser and the manager, Mr Roy Winkfield, advertising a Twist completion at the Mecca,, Back to the Jungle.

Basildon Standard November 1964

TRAMPS TAKE TO BINGO!



These tramps got a bit mixed up with Bingo at the Locarno, during a best dressed tramp competition.

Basildon Standard December 1964

The music goes round and round!



"and it comes out here!" Joe Bradish shows off his musical paces to Pam Morris Basildon Carnival Queen, Brabara Brady, Town Show Queen, and Ann Paris, Teen Queen, at the Locarno on Friday during the Teleflex Charity Dance.

Basildon Standard February 1965

Mrs Connie Jones, of Gordon Road, Basildon, has won £943 playing bingo at the Locarno Ballroom. Mrs Jones who has a married daughter and a nine year old son, won the money on her "night out" last Wednesday when she paid a shilling (5p) to take part in the "Hot Pot" Bingo National scale. She had already won £10 on a previous game. And plan to have a bathroom built on to their bungalow.

Basildon Standard February 1965



Basildon Standard December 1964

BINGO - £943!



Dancers stood Marlene and Gloria up at sit-down

A SIT-DOWN DEMONSTRATION PLANNED BY FANS of the Dave Clark Five at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon on Sunday night fizzled out miserably. About 100 young dancers had agreed to stage a sit-down on the dance floor at the end of the evening session, but only about 15 stayed behind after the dance. The Object of the sit-down was to show the management that Basildon's youngsters want Clarks music group to remain in Basildon and not return to Tottenham, where 4,000 of his fans signed "We want Dave" petition last week. Equally determined to keep the group at the Locarno, some of his Basildon supporters started their own petition, and when 2.5000 signatures had been obtained it was handed in to the ballroom manager Maurice Proctor at the weekend.

Basildon Standard March 1965

MEET OUR DAIRY MAID

So many beauty contests for this- or- that title have been held in Basildon and on numerous occasions the titles have gone to young ladies living out side the New Town.

There was a pleasant change last week, when at the Locarno, 18 years-old Madge Callow, of Wash Road, Laindon, won the title of "DAIRYMAID of Basildon"

She is with runner-up, Shandy Morrison, of Queensmere, Thundersley.

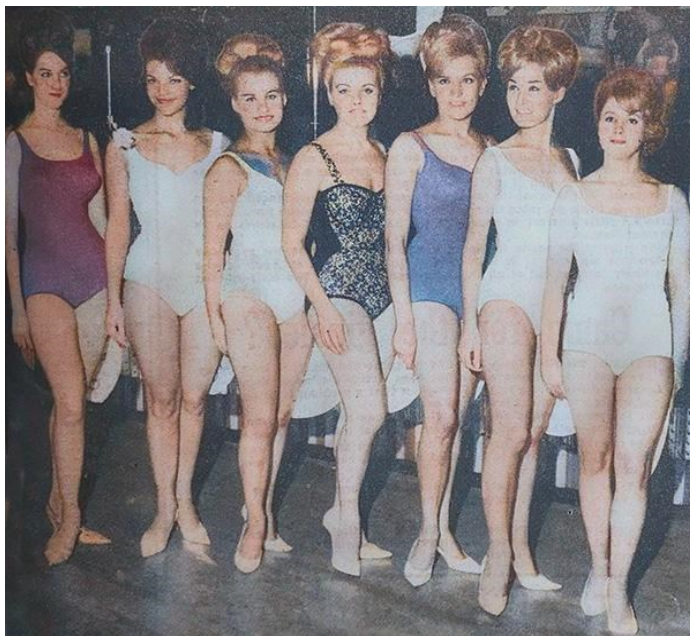
Basildon Standard April 1965





Sir Richard Bonallack seen with award winners at a Bonallack presentation dance held at the Locarno on Friday evening.

Basildon Standard April 1965



BEAUTY contest in Basildon sometimes border on the farcical, and once again a charming lady chosen to represent Basildon lives far from the New Town boundaries. This particular beauty Contest held at the Locarno Ballroom was to select the Basildon representative for "Miss Britian" title contest later on. She was 19-years old Miss Dawn Sullivan, a telephonist from Margate. Runner-up was Miss Joan Lofthouse of Mill Hill, and third Miss Nanette Slack from Finchley.

There was only one local girl, Miss Jennifer Westwood of Laindon, in the competition.

Nanette Slack (left) Dawn Sullivan (centre) and Joan Lofthouse (right).



*Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
May 1965*

Meet the Animals



Ex-Marconi apprentice Association Chairman Paul King
Came back from Cardiff to see them. He is seen with
members of the group Eric Burden, Charles Chandler and
Dave Rowberry.



Eric Burdon, vocalist

It might have been a Church hall dance!

WITHOUT any riots or incidents The Animals came to Basildon on Friday
50 mins minutes of the Animals is £300. if you feel like booking them for your next
party.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard May 1965

THE SENATORS ARE HERE FOR A FORTNIGHT



“Thank Your Lucky Stars” performers The Senators are to replace the resident Inca group at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on July 17th. They will hold the Locarno fort for two weeks while the Inca’s are on holiday. The Senators who are due to appear on Television in Saturday’s “lucky Stars” Programme. The group have played at Woodlands Youth Centre.

Frank Thienel (24) Drums, John Butt (21) rhythm guitar, Bob Abbott (21) bass guitar, Ron Reynolds (21) vocalist and Chris X (19) he keeps his surname a secret lead guitar.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard July 1965



For a young Basildon couple, Friday night’s Carnival dance at The Locarno, as a singing twosome, was only their third Engagement, but Mr and Mrs Dave and Maureen Mallandain Who chant under the stage name of Maureen and Dave.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

August 1965

GLAD TO MEET YOU, RICHARD



Happy to meet Richard Murdoch, television and radio star, at the Locarno Ballroom on Friday week were Mrs J. Wheeler and Mrs V. Harris. They were at the Conservative Ball, and Richard was obviously just as pleased to meet them.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
October 1965



A fashion show was held at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday evening, to publicise a teenage fashion contest held on Saturday. Locarno manager Mr Roy Winkfield is shown with three of the models Christine, Kathy and Janet.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard November 1965

THEY'RE DRESSED UP!



Children who took part in a fancy dress competition held at the Locarno Junior Club on Saturday morning. The event was won by four-year-old Deborah Perkin, of Langleys, Basildon, as a playboy bunny girl. Second place was won by Debbie Beaumont (8), of Collingwood Terrace, as Queen of Poland, while Sandra Harris and Thomas Redican were joint third.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard November 1965.



Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

December 1965

SHE'LL BE AT PRINCE RAINIER'S ROYAL BALL



FIRST BASILDON girl to win a Mecca organisation national contest is Margret Jones. This week she is one of three "Miss Jetsets" taking part in the British Week at Monte Carlo.

Aged 20 she works as a clerk at Teleflex and lives in Kathleen Ferrier Crescent, Laindon.

On Friday she flew out from London Airport the first time she has left the country. A Royal Ball at Prince Rainier's Palace is among the functions she attends during the hectic week. Earlier this year Margret became Teleflex's deputy gala queen. But this is the first national contest she has entered.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
December 1965



St Andrew's Hospital staff ball was held at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday evening guest's are shown at the buffet table.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard January 1966

WINNER FROM GRAYS

Lucky Fellow in the thick of it is Basildon recording star Graham Bonney, who was One of a panel of five judges for the Basildon Heat of the "Miss England 1966" Contest at the Mecca Ballroom on Thursday night.

On the right is the heat winner 20 year old Pauline Harris from Grays, Sue Wickham (left) was the runner up, and Karen Van Laun was third.



Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
March 1966

NEW RESIDENT BAND



ROY KEY AT THE LOCARNO

New resident's at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, are the Roy Key Band from Southend. The eight - piece band, is led by Southend - born drummer Roy Key, they got the job last week and played at the Locarno for the first time on Friday.

April 1966

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford standard



Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

April 1966

A drink to success

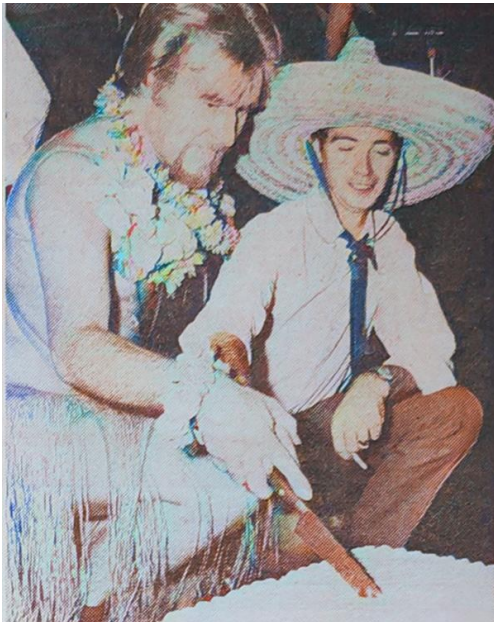


Ron Bull leader of The Inca resident "pop" group at the Basildon Locarno pours champagne to help singer Lynn Barrie celebrate The Inca's rating as Runner's up in the Mecca circuit "group Of the year " contest .

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

May 1966

AND SO DO THE INCA!



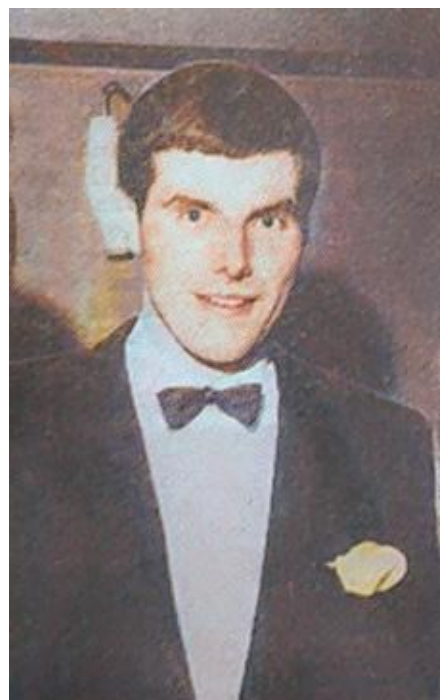
The Inca, resident group at the Locarno, Ballroom, Basildon, celebrated their second birthday on Friday. Our picture shows Ronald Bull, the group's leader and guest star Brian Johnson, cutting the first slice of a birthday cake presented by Mr J Val, assistant manager of the Locarno.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

August 1966



*Basildon, Billericay &
Wickford Standard
September 1966*



J Vale assistant manager

THERE was a champagne celebration for the Inca Group at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Saturday evening, when their leader, Ron Bull, was present with the Mecca Summer Cup by Mrs A Burn, wife of the chairman of Basildon Council. Also in the picture is the rest of the group and Locarno Manager Mr R Winkfield.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

October 1966



The first entrant for this year's Basildon Carnival Queen contest comes from Billericay. And is Irene Wooldridge (17) a short hand typist.

The Queen and two Princesses will be chosen by a panel of five judges at a dance at the Locarno Ballroom on May 27th.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard

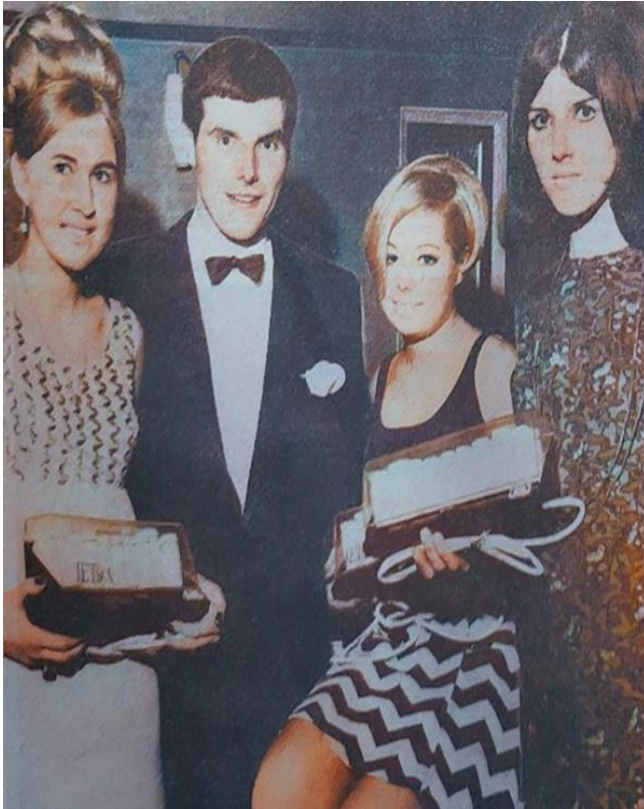
May 1966

Wickford Carnival Association held a dance at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday. Among the guest were Wickford Carnival Queen Susan Reeves and Princess Linda Fox, Billericay Carnival Queen Pamela Morris and her court and the carnival Queens of Romford and Stanford - Le - Hope.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
August 1966



Billericay Constituency Labour Party held a dance at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday.
Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
November 1966



A contest to pick three semi-finalists to become British Ambassadors of beauty at Monte Carlo was held on Saturday at the Locarno Ballroom. The three "Miss jetsets" picked were Margret Jennifer Jones (20) of Kathleen Ferrier Crescent, Laindon, Margaret Anne Redgrave (18) of Harold Hill and Anne Whitbread (19) of Barkingside, They are seen with Locarno Assistant Manager Mr. J. Vale, who presented the semi- final awards. They were chosen by a panel of judges Mr and Mrs A Paffery, a representative of "Basildon Standard" and another local newspaper, And Mr R. Winkfield chairman.

*Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard
November 1966*

Sadie's Expression



Chris Brown Mick Harding Hugh Thomas Mike Drewer John Skelton

THE EXPRESSION

The Expression have taken over from the Inca as resident group at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon. They are from Benfleet. Formed nearly three years ago, they first had the name The Troggs. This had to be changed when another set of Troggs hit the scene in the big way. For the Expression, their Six week trial period at the Locarno is their first big break. The Inca did well with this start and now



have other contracts. In the Expression, Chris Brown (23), of High Road, Benfleet, is the organist, lead vocal is Hugh Thomas (25), of Hart Road, Thundersley, Drummer John Skelton is 17 and lives in High Road, Benfleet, Lead guitar Mick Drewer is 23 years old, of Melcombe Road, Benfleet, Fifth member of the group is 20 years old Mick Harding, of Arundel Road, Benfleet, he plays brass guitar.

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard February 1967



The Locarno It's now 1966 and we are regularly playing Basildon Locarno, looking to be full time there in January 1967. Fed up with the boring lighting, Tony built us some stage lights consisting of spotlights in old biscuit tins with coloured gels, also strobes made from coloured gel windmills driven by record player motors. Remember, this type of thing wasn't readily available in those days and we were one of the first to have anything like it apart from the bigger gigs and festivals. There was a storm in the papers as another band had accused us of copying them...all good publicity.



Early Basildon Mecca with Chris Pyrah on bass

courtesy of John Skelton



courtesy of John Skelton

Thanks to John Skelton for the use of their photo's

HOW MUCH HIGHER



Danny Carter, Basildon Locarno disc jockey, measures Elaine Young at the "miniest mini" contest held at the ballroom on Saturday.

Basildon Standard Recorder July 1967





A grand tramp's ball was held at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Thursday evening. Photo on right shows Dawn Anderson, who was judged to be best lady tramp, and Alan Hills of Wickford, was chosen as the best boy.

Basildon Standard July 1967

The Constituency Labour Party held a ball at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday evening. The guest of honour Was Mr Eric Moonman, M.P., accompanied by his wife; they are seen here with Councillors and their wives.

*Standard Recorder
November 1967*



MECCA **DANCING**
CARNABY CLUB NIGHT **LOCARNO BASILDON**
 Every MONDAY is
 for the "IN CROWD" — for the "TRENDSETTERS"
 7.30 to 11 p.m. CARNABIES 2/6, NON-CARNABIES 3/-
 Membership is **FREE** including GOLD MEMBERSHIP CARD

Basildon, Billericay & Wickford Standard April 1967

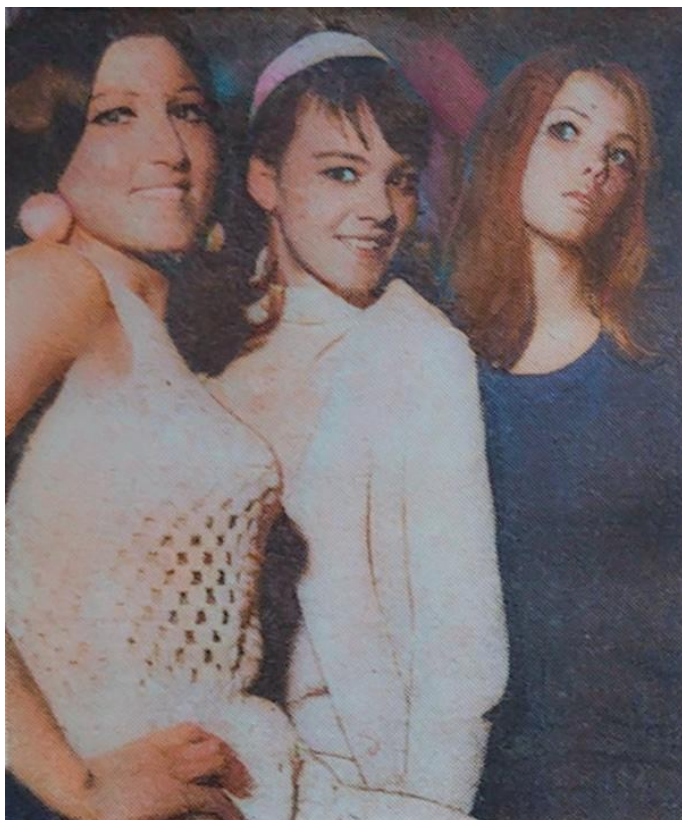
SORRENTO GRAND DANCE
 AT THE LOCARNO BALLROOM
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10 — 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.
 with the Fabulous **PATCH OF BLUE** Group
 AND RESIDENT BAND ● SPOT PRIZES, RAFFLES, ETC. ● ADM. 6/-

Standard Recorder November 1967

LOCARNO BASILDON **MECCA DANCING** **TELEPHONE 21486**
THIS BALLROOM IS AVAILABLE
 for Private Functions every Friday evening. The terms of
 hiring are from as little as **£52-10-0** inclusive
 of Band, Staff, Bars and all Catering Facilities.
 So before arranging your next Social Occasion
 please allow us to quote **FOR YOU**

Standard Recorder December 1967

NOW IT'S "THE EXTRA-LIFE GIRL"



A Bevy of 24 beauties faced a panel of judges At Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, last Thursday evening ,competing for the title of "The Extra-Life Girl." The competition was sponsored by an internationally famous manufacture of hair beauty preparations; points were awarded for attractive hair, personality and good grooming; and the winner received a cash prize of £10, plus an expenses paid trip to the area finals to be held at Streatham Locarno later this month. The judges were Mr Roy Winkfield, manager of the Basildon Locarno ; and Mr Arthur Paffey, photographer, and Mrs E. Wall "Standard Recorder"

*Basildon Standard Recorder
December 1967*

A yard of ale for a contestant in the beer-drinking competition at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday. Looking in admiration is Carnival Queen Geraldine Gahan, who organised the evening in aid of funds for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

*Standard Recorder
December 1967*





A few of the guests who attended Frizzell House, Billericay, staff party at Locarno Ballroom, Basildon, on Friday.

*Billericay Standard Recorder
January 1968*



Leap Year festivities were held at the Locarno Ballroom, Basildon. winners of a competition to describe the perfect man were Lorrain Anderson of St. Mary's Crescent, Pitsea, and Sandra Cunningham of the Slades, Vange. They each received a transistor radio and a chance to go forward to the National Finals.

Standard Recorder March 1968

CARNIVAL CHAIRMAN HAS RESIGNED

The Manager of the Locarno Ballroom (Mr. Roy Winkfield) is the new chairman of the Basildon of the Basildon Carnival Association, it was announced this week.

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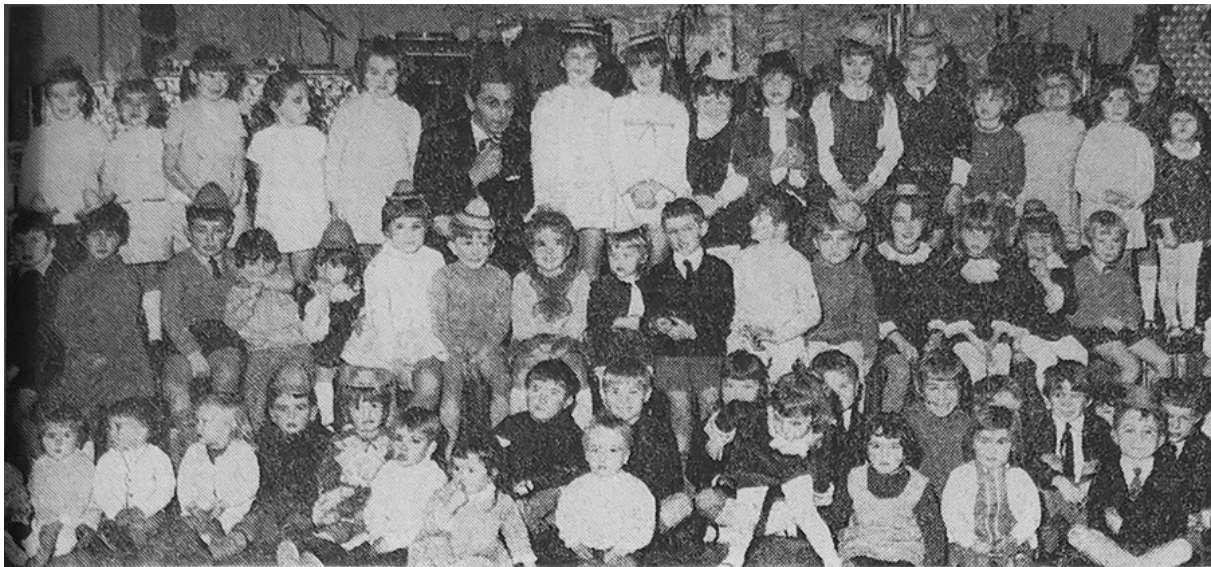
A form titled "CARNIVAL QUEEN, 1968" and "Basildon Carnival Queen, 1968 ENTRY FORM". The text on the form reads: "The 'Standard Recorder' has been chosen by Basildon Carnival Association to carry its entry form for this year's Carnival Queen competition. Pictures of the entrants as they come in will be published in our columns. The Queen and two attendants will be selected at a dance at the Locarno on Friday, June 21. Fill in the form and return it to the address shown below. Entries close June 14." The form includes fields for Name, Address, Telephone No., and Age (over 16). At the bottom, it says: "Please return entry form to MR. G. K. CRAVEN, CHAYCOURT LODGE, BOWERS GIFFORD, BASILDON. Telephone: North BenReel 836."

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The twelve contestants for the Basildon Carnival Crown. Seated centre the future Queen, Gloria Shayler. Just a few days after her 21st birthday reigning Billericay Carnival Queen Gloria Shayler won Basildon's Crowns too. Chosen as Princess for Gloria were Gail Wilmot 19, of Theydon Crescent, Basildon and Mary Kane 18, of Whitmore Way, Basildon.

Basildon Recorder June 1968



Basildon Police Stations Childrens Party at the Locarno

Standard Recorder January 1969



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SECOND PLACE FOR JENNY



The Basildon Tiffany's ballroom was the scene of a "Ski Girl 1970" heat last week.

Ex-carnival Princess Jenny Adams, 18, of Pitsea, finished in second place and won £10.00. First place went to Anita Gudgeon, 23 from Cheshunt, who won £15. Jennifer Tracie, also 23, finished in third place. The finals of the competition, organised by a Yoghurt firm, will be held at the Lyceum, London, on October 26th.

Basildon Standard October 1970

Groups that have appeared at the Locarno Mecca, Ballroom, Basildon.

Dave Clark Five

Date: Monday 24th December 1962 - Sunday 12th January 1964

The Dave Clark Five were formed in Tottenham, north London by stuntman turned drummer Dave Clark. The group first played the Locarno in 1962 where they provided both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve's entertainment. They then held down a very successful Sunday night residency that lasted throughout 1963 and into 1964. In January 1964 after around 56 dates the band switched Mecca venues to the Tottenham Royal in north London following the success of their second hit "Glad all Over", released in December 1963.

The Searchers

Date: Friday 24th April 1964

Manfred Mann

Date: Friday 24th July 1964

The Kinks

Date: Friday 4th September 1964

The Animals

Date: Friday 14th May 1965

The Who

Date: Friday 9th July 1965

The Paramounts

Date: Friday 24th September 1965

The Who

Date: Friday 18th March 1966

The Who

Date: Friday 2nd September 1966

The Who's third and final performance at the Locarno was in support of their latest single "I'm a Boy", released on 26th August and charting at No. 2.

Small Faces

Date: Friday 23rd September 1966

The Nashville Teens

Date: Friday 12th May 1967

Geno Washington & the Ram Jam Band

Date: Friday 11th August 1967

The band would return for a second appearance in 1968 on 12th July.

The Move

Date: Friday 1st September 1967

Con't

The Riot Squad

Date: Friday 15th March 1968

Amen Corner

Date: Friday 29th March 1968

Geno Washington & the Ram Jam Band

Date: Friday 12th July 1968

Desmond Dekker

Date: 1969

The Box Tops

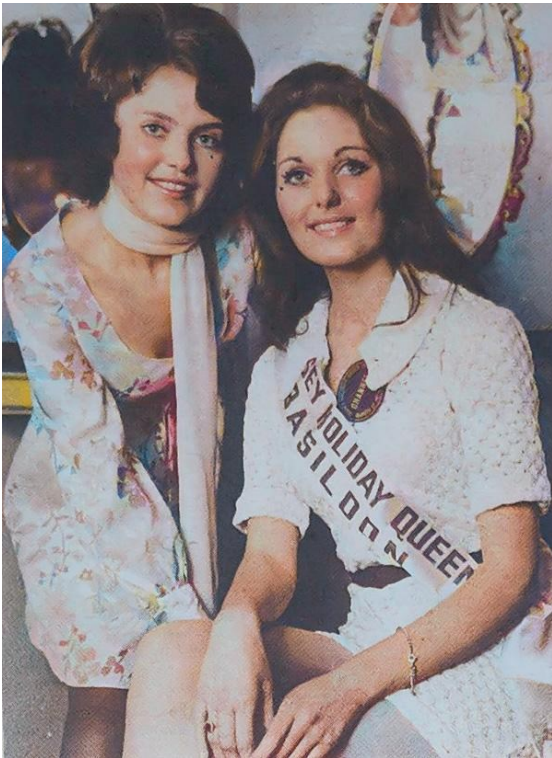
Date: Thursday 4th December 1969

The Upsetters

Date: Friday 26th December 1969

From Basildon History online.

Lesley's off to Jersey



BASILDON'S beauties were ousted by a girl from Hockley in the local round of the Jersey Holiday Queen competition. At Tiffany's, Basildon , The winner was Lesley Lodemore (21) and runner-up was Jennifer Adams of Rectory Road, Pitsea.

Standard Recorder February 1971

NEW LOOK FOR BALLROOM

The £50,000 face lift to the Locarno Ballroom in Basildon is under way. Work which will completely remodernise the dancehall started on Monday . It is expected to be completed in October. Manager Maurice Green pointed out: The work will not affect business in any way. It will be dancing as usual.

Standard Recorder August 1971

In 1970 the first change of name occurred when Mecca dropped the Locarno branding and the ballroom was renamed Tiffanys through to early March 1974 when following another refurbishment, it reopened under the name Raquels on 6th April. Sadly its time as Tiffanys was marred in 1972 following an incident that resulted in a fatality and criminal proceedings.

Mecca Ltd. had remained a dominant force within the leisure industry and by 1977 were operating over 100 nightclubs nationally. Their Basildon venue continued to host live acts like Edwin Starr, The Equals, Ben E. King, The Platters and Jamaican star Desmond Dekker, though name artistes became less frequent as time went on as the emphasis was geared towards DJ run disco evenings and a popular Monday evening 'Teen Scene' for the under eighteens.

During the 1980s the nightclub went through another refurbishment and subtle name change to Raquels II The Discotheque, and things continued much as before. The change of name adorned a new white backed black lined illuminated sign in the shape of an upturned isosceles triangle positioned high on the west facing wall. During this period, musician, producer and Pinkees band manager Keith Bonsoir was recruited as the main DJ. He would later go on in 1991 to found the Time discotheque in Time Square, Basildon. Other popular DJ's who worked the venue during this period were Robbie Vincent, Essex Radio's Dave Gregory and local man Micky Laudat.

Basildon History online.

VANGE BOOKLETS

All Saints Church Hall 1931 £2.10
Barges at Vange Wharf £2.10
Cashes Well No5 £2.10
John (Paddy) Hemingway £1.50
The Barge Inn 1832 – 2015 £2.50
The Bull Public House 1878— 1961 £1.50
The Vange Crystal Well £1.50
Vange Board School 1876 £5.80
Vange Fire Station 1934 – 1962 £3.90
Vange Hall Brick Works 1886—1921 £3.30
Vange Reservoir & Southend Water Company £2.00
Vange Swimming Pool 1933-1952 £2.00
The Shops of Vange London Road & High Road £5.00
The 1st Pitsea and Vange Scouts 1913—1970 £4.50
3rd Battalion Essex Home Guard. Vange and Pitsea. £2.80
Royal Observer Corps, Monitoring Post, Vange, Essex. £2.10

BASILDON BOOKLET

Locarno Mecca Dancing £6.00 1961 - 1971

PITSEA BOOKLETS

W. J. Wager Dairies £1.50
Tuskite Works Pitsea Hall Lane £1.50
Broadway Cinema 1930—1970 £3.00
Pitsea United 1909—1971 £8.70
The Old Pitsea Market 1924—1969 £2.60



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Monday & Wednesday's 10am—12pm

Saturdays 10am—3pm