



Proudly supported by Basildon Council

November 2022

Newsletter 45

Since the last newsletter our Queen of seventy years has peacefully passed away. Our condolences and best wishes to the family we believed is covered in the following poem by one of our volunteers.

OUR QUEEN

A newflash interrupts our screen
To announce the death of Elizabeth
our queen,
Who was the longest reigning monarch
Our country has ever seen.

The mantle passes seamlessly
To our future king,
The duties he will undertake,
And the challenges it will bring.

For the legacy she left behind
Will be so hard to follow,
As we mourn the passing of our queen
In the coming days of sorrow.

For she has given years of her life
Devoted, committed and loyal,
And so, we offer our heartfelt thanks
For a truly remarkable royal.

By Sue Ranford



Our display at the Green Centre.

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Updates – since the last newsletter

All Saints – Vange

15 July we had our usually annual display at the old church, following their refurbishment of the Church.



Basildon Carnival – 23 July 2022

A most enjoyable and eventful day. We were at Northlands Park by 8 am setting up our gazebo for our photographic display. By 9.30 am members were at the parade meeting point de La Salle school.



The parade of set off just after 11am, from De La Salle School. Two of our members decided to walk beside our float. Being the first time, we have taken part in the parade we were a little surprised at the large crowds on route. Our float under the category of Decorated Vehicles floats came third after Slopers Milk Van (1st Place) and USA Police car (2nd Place). The parade took about an hour and half to reach Northlands

Park where we stayed until closing time 6pm. A tiring day but well worth it – roll on next year.

Rochford & Ashington U3A-History Group

On Friday 2 September we had a visit from the above U3A group. We gave them a short talk on the Explosive Factory and then spent well over an hour walking the site at Wat Tyler. Those that could not walk round stayed behind and one of our volunteers showed them around our displays and gave a talk on the Society.



Six Formers

On the 16 September we were visited by 22 six formers from various schools who spent time looking at our displays and artefacts. Before spending time in the park studying the Peasants Revolt (1381). They created short films depicting the event

Dr. Alben Shkodrova

We had a two-day visit from Dr Alben Shkodrova of the Institute for Social Movements a research unit of the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany. Alben's current project is 'The Social Mobility in New Towns, built across Europe after the Second World War.

The case studies include towns in the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the United Kingdom. The towns she has chosen for United Kingdom are Telford and Basildon.

We arranged for twelve volunteers over two days to be interviewed by her. The questions she asked covered the life of their families when a child, life choices regarding education, employment, career, family, children and their memories of growing up and living in Basildon area.

In time allowed we also arrange a short tour of Basildon Town Centre. It was an enjoyable experience and we are looking forward to see the outcome of her project.

Cambridge Students Research

On Friday 7 October we had a visit from fourteen Cambridge University Students in their third year who are studying Architecture and their two lecturers. We had arranged a seventeen-seater mini bus through our partnership with Basildon Twinning. In fact, we went and picked them up from Cambridge and after a briefing at the Green Centre we took them on a tour around Basildon so they could view the various forms of architecture. We also spent an hour and a half in the town centre having lunch and a tour.

We believe the students got a lot out of it and we are looking forward to their report. Although we are at first expecting a load of questions and a possible return.



Students looking around Five Links

We eventually arrived back in Basildon at 8pm after a very tiring but an enjoyable day.

Blind & Sight Impaired Society (BASIS)

On Wednesday 12 October we visit BASIS at Bradbury House, Witchards. and spent nearly two hours giving a talk and listening to the members and their experiences living in the Basildon Borough. There were a dozen members present, it was very pleasant two hours, backed up with Tea and Cake. We will certainly call back.



Twizzle Tops Farmers Market

On Saturday 16 October we joined in with Twizzle Tops Nursery at Wat Tyler with a display. This was a follow up of two previous displays held in the Dutch Barn during September.



St Andrews Church Hall, Wickford

We have had a photographic display in the hall since the 14 September and on the 21 October, we gave a talk to 35 on Wickford's Famous people starting with the Puritan

era (1620/30s). All organised by the new rector of the parish Rev. Jonathan Evens,



Basildon Twinning Association

The following are the events where we have partnered Basildon Twinning.

23/25 September, our mayor visited Heiligenhaus to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Youth Contract with Heiligenhaus. The Burgermeister of Heiligenhaus was present with a framed photograph of the 'Radian Project' which was the brain child of one of our members and local artist Shaun Badham. This was reciprocated with a panoramic view of Heiligenhaus.



1 October we hosted along with Basildon Twinning a MacMillan Coffee morning at the Green Centre.

22/23 October we hosted along with the twinning Association the commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the Battles of El Alamein' at the Green Centre. Modellers from Basildon and Germany re-enacted the various battles. It was a most enjoyable weekend.



Our American Friends

Santa Barbara and Ventura County Genealogical Societies (California)

We continue to be received and welcomed at the various weekly Zoom and Hybrid meetings, each of the societies have and in return of course, are often questioned as regards helping members with their individual research questions.

On Sunday 13 November, Santa Barbara are hosting their 50th Anniversary Celebration of "Finding Family and Making Friends" and we are very pleased to wish them every continued success.

New Releases – The Incidental Marshman by Mervyn Linford - £10.00

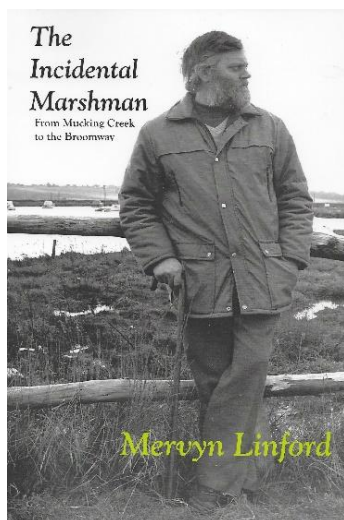
Mervyn is one of our members has produced another book on his memories which covers his ramblings along the coastal areas from Mucking Creek to Barling Magna taking in the marsh areas of Vange, Pitsea, Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet.

Though now living in Norfolk he has happy memories of his childhood living in the area and still wonders back from time to time.

From playing on bombsites in the East End to fishing in old gravel pits and roaming the Essex marshlands, this touching autobiography with fascinating historical details soon acquires a broader canvas as Mervyn Linford opens up the marvels of the

creeks, marshes and saltings between the River Crouch and the Thames and its estuary. A wealth of personal knowledge and experience is combined with a lyrical talent and love of nature.

Mervyn Linford revels in memories of place and in the beauty of nature, even where industry has left its mark, and in villages that might seem unremarkable he sees flowerings of significance and joy. The journey's tale is told in the easy and at times humorous language of a born storyteller. A liberal scattering of Mervyn Linford's poems breaks into the prose text as spiritual highlights and waystations. Colour photos illustrate the local geography.



Every tree, bird, fish animal, insect or even worm he sees is named, known and placed in Linford's beloved land and seascapes. Between parish churches and country pubs, coastal waters and flowery fields, he leads threader through a personal and inspiring Essex.

Day in History

21 January 1916 – on this day, the National Board of Review agreed not to accept nudity in motion pictures. The Board of Review was first set up in 1909 as the National Board of Censorship, created as a watchdog group to help movie studies

avoid government censorship. In 1921 the New York State Legislature passed a law stripping the board of much of its power.

22 January 1879 – on this day, American soldiers ruthlessly put down Cheyenne Chief Dull Knife and his people as they made a desperate bid for freedom. Dull Knife had led his people into war against the invading Anglo-Americans after an 1864 massacre of two hundred peaceful Cheyenne by Colorado militiamen. In 1877 Dull Knife reluctantly surrendered and the military relocated the Cheyenne to present-day Kansas and Oklahoma. The Cheyenne marched back to Wyoming in 1878 and made one last attempt at freedom. Soldiers chased after the weak and starving band of men, women, and children, and attacked and killed at least thirty people.

23 January 1941 – American hero Charles Lindbergh, who achieved fame and glory in 1927 by becoming the first person to fly an airplane nonstop across the Atlantic, on this day urged Congress to negotiate a neutrality pact with Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. President Roosevelt denounced Lindbergh publicly. However, he redeemed himself to the American public by eventually flying fifty combat missions over the Pacific.

24 January 1965 – on this day Sir Winston Churchill died at the age of ninety. He was admired for many things: standing alone against Nazi Germany, knighted by Queen Elizabeth II, and winning the Nobel Prize in Literature etc.

Local Archaeology

Archaeology update from the 'The Essex Society for Archaeology & History' – Transaction publication – Volume 11 – 2020.

Updating the archaeology evaluations around the Dry Street and Hospital

developments previous reported in our August 2020 newsletter number 36.

Basildon, Land West of Basildon Hospital, Dry Street (TQ 69770 87000; BADS20)

A trial-trench evaluation was carried out in advance of residential development. The site had recently undergone significant landscaping and was split between two levels, the north-west half of the site being approximately 8m higher than the south-east half.

Nine evaluation trenches were excavated in the north-west half of the site, revealing made ground deposits over most of the area; these consisted of reworked natural clay up to 5m thick, imported from the southern part of the site. Undisturbed London Clay was exposed in only two trenches along the north boundary of the site. No archaeological features were encountered cutting either the made ground deposits or natural clay.

Basildon, Nethermayne, Dry Street, Phases 2A, 2B and 3B Excavation (TQ 69566 87260; BADS16)

Four preceding phases of trial trenching and three phases of excavation had been undertaken within the Nethermayne site (Gilman 2016, 230; 2018, 142; 2019, 168), identifying widespread Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and Saxon features attesting to agricultural and possible settlement land use.

The Phase 2A, 2B and 3B excavations, amounting to a 1.49ha area of the overall site, recorded a similar range and density of prehistoric and Roman period remains as found in excavation Phases 3A and 3B. A small number of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pits and gullies were identified, with the majority of the features being ditches and pits of Late Iron Age/Early Roman to Middle Roman date, areas evidenced various phases of

agricultural/pastoral land use across the site. Although no definitive evidence for structural remains were encountered, the recovery of large amounts of domestic pottery, items associated with textile and pottery production, clay quarrying, as well as charred seeds and mill-stones for cereal crop processing, suggested a rural settlement such as a farmstead nearby. The previous discovery of a small cremation cemetery in the Phase 3A excavation area would seem to support this. The Roman land-use activity appears to have ceased in the 3rd century AD. Sparse Early Saxon remains, consisting of gully continuations from 3A and scattered pits, demonstrate a fairly low level of activity on the hilltop during this period. A single post-medieval ditch was the only feature found that post-dated the Early Saxon period, located along the extent of an existing hedgeline/field boundary.

Ghost stories continued.

Built in 1938 the station is one of the younger buildings in Billericay, so it's a little surprising of the number of Ghost stories that are emanating from it. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, could it be an Inspector based there who was a few days away from retiring when he was called to a burglary. The car he was in was hit whilst travelling to the burglary (which was a false alarm). The inspector rescued the officer driving the car before collapsing. He later died in hospital.

Since then, the inspector has been blamed for various odd occurrences in the Police Station. A Police Community Support Officer reported that while she was sitting alone in the station waiting for a lift when a stapler went flying past her. The PCSO fled to the safety of the car park and refused to return to the building.

In last month's newspaper we reported on John Mansford a volunteer experience while working at the station and our web master James Nason who works for the

police who very recently has experienced eerier occurrences, could it then be this Inspector up to his tricks again.

'In June 2022 I got into work early, the first in I thought. As I walked into the main office I was greeted with "good morning", so I said "morning" only to see that no one else was in the office'.

'In August 2022 I was walking through the building and spotted a tall man in the kitchen wearing white shirt and black trousers, as I walked by. To be polite I went back to say 'hello' so walked into the kitchen, only to find it empty'.

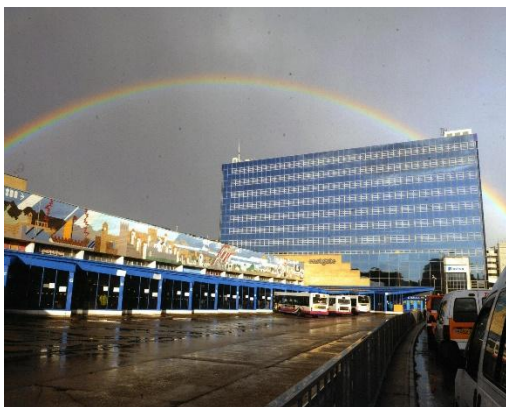
Eerier!!

Following our previous newsletter on this Ghost Story a retired Chief Inspector has informed us that the Inspector who was killed was Chief Inspector George Albert Manning. Also during his time at Billericay, he never heard of a ghost

Mural by Numbers

The erection of the first mural above Blenheim House, were completed in 1961. It was designed by Mr John Gordon, for Murrayfields Real Estate Company. There were 16,000 tiles making up this 315ft x 18ft mural, each of the tiles had a number and letter on the back indicating its correct position in the design.

This mural was replaced in the early 1990s when the bus station underwent extensive renovation work. The second mural depicts a Timeline covering the years 412 to 1949, the year that Basildon became a New Town. Both murals are considered to be the longest in the country.



J.K.Payne.

Another one of Jessie Payne's articles from the 1950'60s.

THEY PLAYED CRICKET FOR GOLD-LACED HATS!

PLAYING and watching cricket in the local parks, watching and listening to the scores of county matches on the television; this is part of the pleasure of summer and old records tell how the folk of Basildon and Billericay enjoyed the same game in the 18th Century; they once played for gold-laced hats!

by
J. K. PAYNE

The ancient Crown Inn, Billericay (Grenville House, No. 88, High Street, is the only part left of this inn), was the scene of a county cricket match in 1761. "The Ipswich Journal" for June 28th of that year published the following: "A Match of Cricket will be played on the 27th of this instant June, 1761, at the Crown at Billericay in Essex, by Eleven Men of Kent and the best Eleven in Essex for a large Sum of Money. The Wickets to be pitched at one o'clock."

In 1771 a match was played here "between the gentlemen of Temple Mills, Essex and eleven picked men of the said county for £20." Food was never forgotten in those days and a "Cold ordinary" was served on the field.

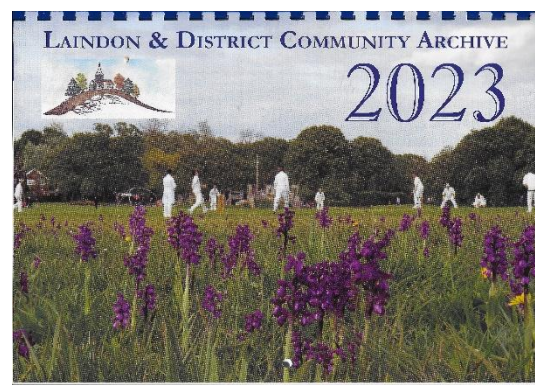
At the 18th-Century White Hart, Billericay, a match was advertised in the "Chelmsford and Colchester Chronicle" in 1776. Eleven picked gentlemen of Barstable and Chafford Hundreds were to play against eleven of Billericay for eleven gold-laced hats on June 5th, 1776. The wicket was pitched at 10 o'clock and the match was to be played out.

A field to the east of Vange Hall was long known as Cricket Field, as in the latter half of the 19th Century the local farmers used to play there.

At the White Hart, Billericay, the cruel sport of cock-fighting was also carried on. On February 7th, 1777, an advertisement in the "Chelms-

ford and Colchester Chronicle" read as follows: "COCK-ING. To be fought at the White Hart, Billericay, on Shrove Tuesday next. A Cock-fighting Match between the Gentlemen of Rochford Hundred and a Gentleman of Brentwood for Five Guineas a battle. Dinner at 1 o'clock."

Laindon & District Community Archive 2023 Calendar



Laindon & District Community 2023 Calendar is now available, price £6.00 plus postage. They also are available at our Green Centre Office.

The front cover is of the orchids and cricket match at Langdon Hills Recreation ground. Our January photo is following the 'famous people' theme and is Perry McCarthy who was a Formula 1 driver and the first 'Stig' in the Top Gear programme.

February – Laindon Railway Station just after a fire in the 1920s

March – Aerial of Laindon High Road, 1965

April – German POW Camp 266, Langdon Hills

May – Winston Club darts team 1950/60

June – Windsor Hill taken from the Laindon Railway in 1914

July – Aston Road with Memorial Hall in the back ground, 1940

August – Baptist Chapel, Langdon Hills, 1920

September – Royal Highness Princess Alice Countess of Athlone opening the Methodist Church, Langdon Hills new extension 1956

October – Laindon Railway Cottages

November – 16th century Dunton Wayletts farmhouse, 1922

December – The bungalow 'Cornerstone', High Road Langdon Hills

Essex Art Collection

In 1978 the Basildon Arts Trust (BAT) brought together works collected by Basildon Development Corporation, Carreras and various donations under one umbrella. In 2014 The Foundation for Essex Arts (TFEA) and Basildon Arts Trust became one charity and over the years extensive efforts were made to find a permanent home in Basildon for the Collection but sadly without success. TFEA and BAT have been badly affected by the Covid pandemic making their continuation unsustainable.

Fortunately, Harlow Art Trust (HAT) come to the rescue and have taken the 62 pieces of art, with the agreement that they would be available for loans.



While discussions were ongoing with HAT, TFEA had built at the Green Centre a metal cage to store the paintings etc but following the transfer they have kindly gifted the cage to us, whereby we can store our more delicate pieces of archive. For this we are very thankful.

Thank You.

Open University (Open Learn) Courses

We are continuously looking at ways of improving our knowledge so that we are in a better position to help and give advice to members of the public who contact us.

One of our volunteers has participated in the following on-line courses. The intention is that other members will fully suit in the near future:

- Working in the voluntary sector
- Becoming an Ethical researcher
- Introducing the voluntary sector
- What is heritage?
- The First World War: Trauma and Memory

- The History of female protest and suffrage
- Late nineteenth-century Britain and America.

We have deliberately chosen 'Topic' courses that may add to our research of families and their social history.

Bound Newspapers.

We have the following bound newspapers at the Green Centre, Wat Tyler Park:

Laindon Recorder from early 60s going back to the 1930s
 Basildon Recorder 1954 – 1965
 Basildon Standard 1956 – 1965
 Basildon News 1960 – 1966
 Link 1967 -1972
 Wickford Times 1946 – 1964

Plus a few miscellaneous newspapers.

If you refer to our website under Research Documents you will be able to see the actual years we have and you are more than welcome to come along and view them. Though it would help if you contacted us beforehand.

Green Centre Displays.

Our current photographic displays at the centre are as follows:

- The Queen
- The old Boat Museum (Permanent)
- The Explosive Factory (Permanent)
- Roll of Honour
- V.E Celebration – Laindon and Langdon Hills
- Basildon
- Billericay
- Bowers Gifford
- Dunton
- Ramsden (Crays Hill)
- Langdon Hills
- Nevendon
- Wickford

- Vange

The displays are updated every few months with the exception of those stated as permanent. In addition, we have we have display cabinets with bits and pieces of interest.



Coming Events

26 November – Wat Tyler Community Christmas Fair – Green Centre Office will be closed and we will be with a display down at the Wat Tyler Centre.

3 December – Again the Green Centre will be closed as we will be at the Heart of Pitsea Christmas Fete

Family History Research

If you are interested in researching your family history, why not come along and have chat with us. We will be more than willing to help.

Fund Raising

We are sure you will appreciate it but cost are continuing to rise. You can help us to mitigate the increase at no cost to yourselves by nominating Basildon Borough Heritage Society as your charity of choice when you buy on-line through 'Give as You Live'. If you buy through Amazon, use their charity site Amazon Smile. A small percentage of what you spend will then be sent to us. Also, if you would like a direct

donation please link onto our website where you will find a donation button – Thank you.

Booklets

Since the last newsletters we have produced the following booklets:

Laindon Hall
Laindon Speedway Track
Saving Private Ryan
Vange Swimming pool
Basildon Ghost updated
Basildon Glass Bell Tower
The First World War Trauma and memory
Thomas Jenner Spitty
A History of Basildon Borough in 25 objects.

Future Newsletters

Future Newsletters - If you would like a copy of our future newsletters by email, please let us know by sending in an email or speak to one of our volunteers.

If you know of anybody else who would like a newsletter by email, please let us know. Previous newsletters are on our web site.

WEB Site

Why not check out our web site, we list all the parishes in the Borough and where their names come from, previous newsletters and links to other Heritage sites - www.basildonheritage.org.uk.

Facebook

We are still putting on our Facebook page – ‘Basildon Heritage’ – interesting snippets most days so why not have a look and add your comments and memories. So far, we have over 4500 followers.

General Data Protection Regulations. (GDPR)

In accordance with the latest General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) we will not

divulge any personal information to third parties without prior approval and you will be able to request at any time removal from our mailing list.

Volunteers-Members

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers to help with our research, digitizing our photographs, typing up individual memories, sorting and presenting out displays, helping out at various events etc; why not call in at our Heritage Office in the Green Centre, Wat Tyler Country Park to see what we do. Our opening times are Monday and Wednesday 10am -12noon and Saturdays 10am – 3.00pm.

You can also become a member - £1 annual membership or £10 life membership.

Who are we?

Just in case you do not know who we are - we are a group of like-minded volunteers who believe that our culture and heritage is central to a sustainable community. We aim to preserve our past for the enjoyment, interest, and benefit of future generations of Basildonians.

We do this by: -

Advancing the education of the public, in history and heritage of Basildon Borough through the collection, preservation of records, materials and artefacts of historical significance. By making available through displays and talks at the society's location and around the Borough.

***Founded March 2007-Registered
Charity No. 1176037***

Email Address

If you would like to contact us our email address is basildonheritage@outlook.com

or contact us via the website and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Christmas Greetings

We wish everybody a joyous Christmas and an eventfully New Year.

We look forward to seeing or hearing from you in the New Year.

Christmas Closure

We will be closed from Monday 12 December, reopening on Wednesday 4 January 2023.

