



Proudly supported by Basildon Council

November 2024 Newsletter 52

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

Our Location – Green Centre, Wat Tyler Country Park.

Why not pay us a visit, we are open Monday and Wednesday mornings until 12.30pm and all-day Saturday until 3.30pm.

Poem

While searching through old archive material we came across the following poem.

Now you see it, now you don't

Basildon's a town

Born in '49

It's seen many changes

During its life time.

It once had many sculptures

Dotted round the town,

Some have changed location,

Others can't be found.

Our clock, a silver ball

Stood high up in the air

One day it had moved

To St. Martin's Square.

Had it gone on holiday

For a change of scene?

Then a few years later

It was back again

The pool at Gloucester Park

Was fine in its heyday,

Now it's in the Sporting Village

A short stone's throw away.

For many years the cinema

Was located in the town,

Then it was decided

It had to be pulled down.

A brand-new leisure complex

Appearing a mile away,
With plenty of free parking
And food to take away.

But now a change of heart,
What does the new town lack?
A cinema of course
To bring the people back!

Like a game of chess
The college is moving soon,
Bringing students with it
For a population xxxx

So now the market's gone,
It's in St Martin's Square,
Just how long will it be
Before it goes elsewhere?

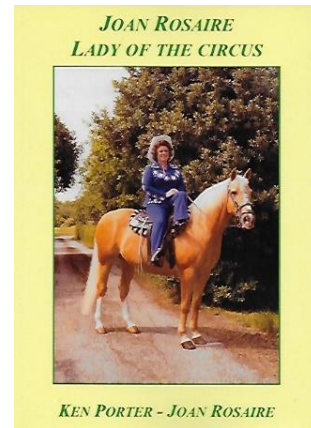
So best not be away too long
Things may not stay the same,
It's even been suggested
That Basildon change its name!

Anonymous

Our Community Involvement

Blue Plaque

On the 9th July at 'The Fold' Billericay Tom Roberts, circus friend and performer unveiled a blue plaque in honour of Joan Rosaire Lady of the Circus who lived in Billericay and went to 'Quilters' school. In attendance was the Mayor of Basildon, Alan Davies; the Lord-Lieutenant Jennifer Tolhurst of Essex and many of Joan's circus friends.



George Hurd Centre – 18th July

We spent the morning at the George Hurd Centre giving a talk on Basildon's Famous People.

Women's World Group – The Knares Community Hall.

On 30th August we gave a talk on the History of Laindon. It was a very enthusiastic afternoon with plenty of questions and comments from those attending.



St Margarets Church, Bowers Gifford

On the 20th July we attended the church with a display of the local area.

Basildon Carnival – 27th July

Unfortunately we could not enter in the actual parade this year but we still had our usual gazabo, and a display of the Borough Carnivals photographs over past years.



Visit to the Green Centre.

On Saturday 10th August the Rayleigh U3A group joined us at the Green Centre to view our displays. We gave a short talk on the history of the park followed by guided tour around the park, before finishing up with light refreshments at the Green Centre.

Creative Basildon Funday -17th August

We joined in with many other groups at the Creative Basildon Funday in the town centre. Our display focused on Basildon's Historic Buildings.

Bowers Gifford – Picnic in the Park

On the 8th September we again attended the Bowers Gifford annual picnic in the park with a display of photographs of the area.



Annual Fund Walk

On the 14th September at least a dozen people took part in our Fun Walk around Wat Tyler Park. We thank those that sponsor us, it has been one most successful and we are looking forward to our bonus cheque!



Vange Church 7/8th September.

We were invited to hold a display at Vange Church on the 7th-8th September. The photographs were on the old buildings of Basildon.

During Septempter and early October we also had displays on Wickford Churches and Sounds of Basildon at St Andrews and St Catherines.



Pitsea & Vange Library Presentations.

Since our last newsletter, we have reviewed and expanded our topic presentation skills to include "Audio Voiceovers" and 'Podcasts' in order that presentations can be made to a wider audience and society, without necessarily our attendance.

Firstly, our contact with regard to Pitsea and now Vange Library service, by request of the librarian, to host a series of sessions directly relating to Family and Social History research, these have also been recorded onto our Basildon Heritage 'You Tube' site including –

10th Aug 2024 – Session No.3 – A 'Live' Case Study (by agreement with the person with the person for whom we are researching his family history and who helped audience participation.

7th Sept 2024 – Session No.4 – The Evolution of Genealogy. (How history has played a major part in creating obstacles for researchers.



Not video recorded:

04th Oct 2024 – Session No. 5 – The History of Genealogy. (A retrospect of the demographic movement of peoples.)

02nd Nov 2024 – Session No. 6 (The last in the series) – Researching the British Armed Forces.

All of these lectures are on a Saturday afternoon at the Vange Library.

We have already been asked by the library to prepare a programme for next year, albeit this may well be with a different format as we also have learned from those attending of the differing levels of research knowledge they bring or wish to pursue.

The individual topics, now under discussion, some which could include:

A Walk across the Thames. Air Raid Shelters. Animals that served in the First World War. British Actors who served in the Second World War. British Entertainers who served in the Second World War. Evacuation in World War Two. Famous London Pubs. Ley Lines. Livery Companies and Pub Signs. London Prisons. The Battle of Benfleet. The Explosives Trail (At Wat Tyler Country Park). The Stagecoach. Women's Land Army and Workhouses.

Remembrance Comemoration

On Saturday the 9th November we held a short remembrance service with the Basildon Twinning Association at the Empty Chair just outside the Green Centre. Then a number of us were involved with remembrance day services at various locatons on the Sunday.



On Monday 11th we gave a talk to Fairhouse School explaining the meaning of remembrance day and how the poppy became a remembrance symbol, followed on what the basildon area was like during wartimes.

Overseas Friends – California Dreamin'

We continue to join in the weekly Zoom meetings with both Santa Barbara and Ventura County Genealogical Society groups, being asked to give various lectures from our ever-increasing library of historical information as well as having one-to-one contact with their members who ask for our help and knowledge of their own family ancestors who came from Britain.

What is appreciated is that when they also have visitors to their advertised zoom meetings from other widespread locations in America, we are introduced personally as being their out based members from

'across the pond' from Basildon in Essex, with the implied knowledge of their histories.

The most recent deliveries to the Ventura society have been on:

11th Sep 2024 – Chief Joseph Brant – The Mohawk Nation on the side of the British during the Wars of Independence (Part 1).

16th Oct 2024 - The London Beer Flood of 1814.

11th Dec 2024 – Chief Joseph Brant – (Part 2) – His meetings in Britain with King George III and with British social society in this country.

Visitors Comments

The following just small collection of comment in the visitors' book

- Will come again with family, lots to see, haven't been here for a few years. – from Canvey Island
- Memories flashing back from a Pitsea Life 1962-2003 – from Shropshire
- Interesting collection, hope it builds into something larger – from Leigh on Sea
- Researching history/culture etc. Very helpful staff – from Pitsea
- Lovely display of history – Lovely staff! Thank you! – from Basildon

Day In History

- 5th November 1854 – The combined British & French armies defeated the Russians at the Battle of Inkerman in the Crimean War.
- 5th November 1914 – Britain & France declare war on Turkey.
- 5th November 1956 – A popular uprising in Hungary was crushed by Soviet Tanks and troops with an estimated 20,000 Hungarians killed.
- 13th November 1941 – HMS Ark Royal torpedoed by German U-boat; she sank the next day.
- 13th November 1954 – Great Britain won the first Rugby League World Cup, defeating France 16-12 in Paris.
- 14th November 1770 – Scottish explorer James Bruce discovered the source of the Blue Nile.

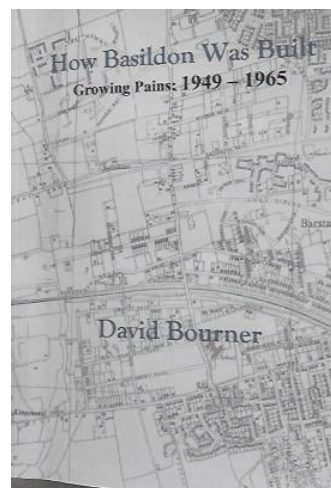
- 14th November – The British Broadcasting Company began daily transmissions. At 6pm the news was read by Arthur Burrows.

Booklets

- The Poppy Story
- Last from the past
- Cricketers last Inning
- The code Breakers of Room 40
- Women's land army in Basildon during the first world war
- My life in Pitsea
- Pilot-John 'Paddy' Hemmingway -26/4/1940

Members Publications

Following Dave Bourners successful book "The Rise and Fall of Laindon High Road", he has come up with his second **"How Basildon Was Built – Growing Pains: 1949-1965"**



"Basildon was designated as a new town in 1949. This decision completely transformed the area and had a dramatic impact on the lives of the 25,000 already living there, and also the many thousands of 'incomers' who would arrive over the next few years. From both perspectives the outcome was life-changing.

This book tells the story of how Basildon New Town was built and the challenges faced, not only by the Development Corporation, but also by its existing and new inhabitants. It covers the key events leading up to 1949, housing construction, the town centre, industry, art, architecture and people".

It has only just been released and we have already sold over 200 copies. If you would like a copy please get in touch, you can either collect from the Green Centre or we will post. (Cost £15 plus postage).

Facts about August:

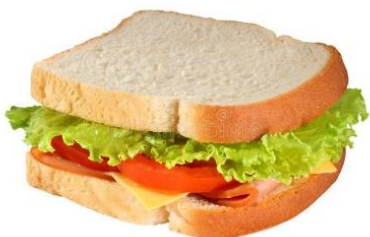
- August was named after Emperor Augustus Caesar in 8AD
- Mount Vesuvius erupted in Pompeii on 24th August 79AD



- August's birthstone is the Peridot! (semi-precious gemstone)



- The Saxon name of August was "Weod Monath", meaning "Weed Month"!
- The sandwich was invented in August 1762!



- August's birth flowers are the Gladiolus and the Poppy!

- The Mona Lisa was stolen in August 1911 and wasn't recovered for 2 years!
- Bamboo in August can be seen growing by the naked eye!

Coming Events

On the morning of Saturday 30th November we will be at the Benbow Club, Bowers Gifford annual Christmas Bazaar.

The heritage centre will be closed for the day.

Social Media

You Tube: -

Fryerns Farm
Radion & The Vue Cinema 2024
Springfield Road
Blue Plaque for Joan Rosaire with Basildon Heritage
Montague Street Now & Then – Old Maps of Basildon
Vange Walkthrough
Family History – Blake Case Study with Basildon Heritage & Essex Libraries
The Evolution of Genealogy
Growing up in Basildon
Gardiners Close
Witches of Basildon

There are also a few short clips
Help Basildon Heritage to help you
The 841 Census – What can we learn
Basildon Heritage Fun Walk – 14 September 2024
The 1851 Census – What can we learn

Please show your support by heading along and subscribing to our channel and liking our videos. If you have any suggestions for content or you would like to share your own photos and memories please comment on our videos! We would love to hear from you.

<https://youtube.com/@BasildonHeritage?si=PDrhk6BBRTixUNwa>

We are also considering signing on to Instagram

WEB Site

We are developing a new web site and hopefully it will be launched before Christmas. It will include a considerable amount of old and new information.

In the meantime, please check into the current site, where we list all the parishes in the Borough and where their names come from, previous newsletters and links to other Heritage sites etc: - 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 regularly get monthly between 30,000 and 50,000 followers and what is pleasing they are coming in from all over the world. In fact in January we had two from Thailand.

Our Facebook entries are also shared on other sites.

Fund Raising

We are sure you will appreciate it but costs are still 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'. 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.

Future Newsletters

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

If you know of anybody else who would like a newsletter by email, again please let us know.

Previous newsletters are on our web site.

General Data Protection Regulations. (GDPR)

We conform to all current regulations.

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.

Our Opening Times

We are opened on Monday and Wednesday – 9.30am – 12.30pm. Saturdays – 9.30am – 3.30pm and Sundays 10am – 3pm.

Founded March 2007 - Registered Charity No. 1176037

Poem

Sorry Sue for once you have been demoted to the back page:

Autumn Fruits.

As autumn days grow shorter
Their warmth still lingers on,
The fruits that grew through summer
Now ripened by the sun.

Apple trees are laden
With fruit that's juicy and sweet,
While windfalls litter the ground
Scattered at my feet.

Blackberries shine in the hedgerow
Like clusters of miniature beads,
Waiting for birds to devour them
And release their tiny seeds.

Plums and greengages ripen
As they cling to the garden wall,
Raspberry canes stand empty
Easten before they fall.

By Sue Ranford

Condolences

Don Shepard – D Day Veteran (104 years of age)

We had the privilege of meeting Don on many occasions over the past few years and he was always willing to sit down and talk to us. A great man he will be missed. Our condolences got to his family.

Kevin Jennings

Our condolences to the family of Kevin Jennings who passed away in August just one-month after he retired. One of our very active volunteers and researchers. He is greatly missed by all his colleagues at Basildon Heritage.

Adverts

Family Research

Have you ever wondered about family history? Are you curious to know where your ancestors lived and what they did for a living?

I provide a professional Family History Research Service to help you learn more about your ancestors. Please contact me for more information.

Sarah Smith

Tel: 07949 747131

Email: Mrs.Smith2012@hotmail.com

Christmas Holiday

Our last day will be Wednesday 18th December and we will reopen on Saturday 4th January 2025.

In the meantime, we wish our readers, visitors and friends all the very best for Christmas and successful New year.

19th November 2024

BBHS