



## March 2025 Newsletter 53

### Contents in this issue

- Who are we?
- Our Location
- Website
- Our Community Involvement
- Overseas Friends
- Visitors Comments
- Day in History
- Booklets
- Members Publications
- Coming Events
- The Language of Flowers
- Facts about September
- Poem
- Social Media
- Fund Raising
- Future Newsletters etc.
- Adverts
- Vin Harrop – Condolences

### 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, photos, 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 Saturday until 3.30pm all day.

### WEB Site

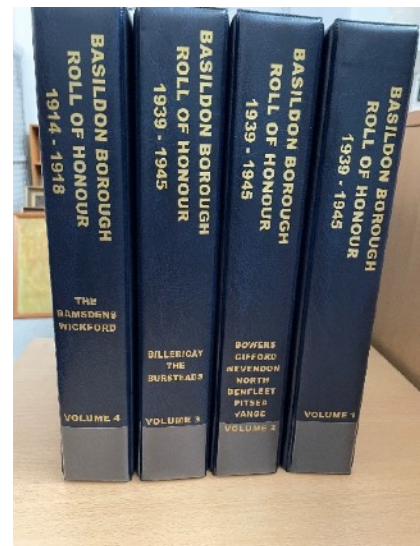
Our new website has been launched. It includes a considerable amount of old and new information. Including a list of all the parishes within the Borough and where their names come from, previous newsletters, who our research volunteers are, regular historical updates and links to other Heritage sites etc: -[www.basildonheritage.org.uk](http://www.basildonheritage.org.uk).

### Our Community Involvement

We hope you had a pleasant Christmas and wish you a happy and successful New Year. We took a two-week break to recharge our batteries after a very hectic and successful twelve months.

We are currently working on the following projects: -

- We are finalising the processing of four volumes of the Boroughs WWII Role of Honour's Binders. The appropriate binders will be presented to the Borough Parishes Churches, Libraries and the British Legion. This exercise has taken some five years.



- We are continuing to work with various groups including the council on unveiling Blue Plaques commemorating individuals. To date the borough has six blue plaques.

- Joan Sims – Actress – Carry on Films etc.: - Laindon Station.
- Hannah Lake – A founding Mother of America – Wickford Library.
- Marion Wilberforce – Pilot with the women’s Air Transport Auxiliary – Nevendon Manor.
- Joan Rosaire - Circus Queen – ‘The Fold’ Laindon Road, Billericay.
- Yvonne Williams - Broadcaster with Gateway 97.8 – Laindon Community Centre.
- Ralph Morgan- Basildon Taxi driver – Taxi Rank, Basildon Town Centre.
- William Keeling – Farmer – North Benfleet.

We are working on another two, which we hope will be unveiled in the next six months. Hopefully with many more to come.

- Over the next few months, we will be working and supporting Creative Basildon and other similar groups – so watch this space.
- We recently joined Creative Basildon at the official opening of the Museum under the Moon at St Martins Church. Then a few days later we back with Volunteers to talk about our memories with others on living in the Borough.

### Tesco

On the 11th December we held a display at Tesco, Pitsea. It proved very successful, and we hope to go back.



### Walks

We Arranged Heritage a walk for a Purfleet walking group T100 around Wat Tyler Park several months ago, they requested that one of our members, arrange a

walk around One Tree Hill. As it turns out we have an experience walker and, on the 29th December, she took them on a 4.5 mile walk around the One Tree Hill area.

The walk started at the top of One Tree Hill, pointing out that the toilet block behind the car park had previously been where Tile Kilns were.

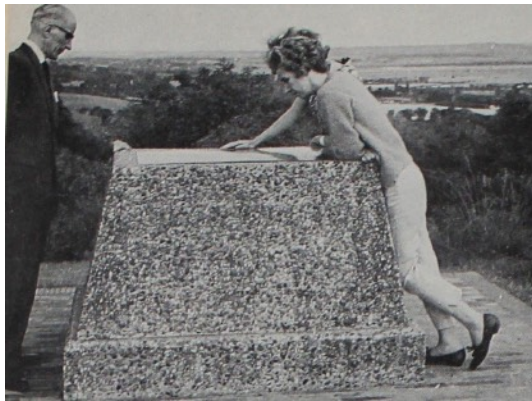
From here they walked down the hill to the footpath which is on the edge of Martinhole Wood where they reached Vange Well No.5 (Cash’s Well) which is to be found amongst the dense woodland. It resembles a Grecian Temple but unfortunately now is very dilapidated. Water was bottled and sold for medicinal purposes by Edwin Cash (formerly of The Angel Inn, Islington) in the 1920s. The water was highly sulphated and reputed to heal many ailments. By the mid-1920s however trading ceased.



The walk continued around the perimeter of Martinhole Woods towards Dry Street Memorial Church, along The Chase (old plotland road) exiting further along Dry Street near the West Ham T.B. Sanatorium (Wootton House). The building was purchased around 1924 firstly to provide accommodation for 40 children from the East End. Then in the 1950s it also became a TB hospital for adult males. Later Essex CC initial considered it for the proposed new Basildon Hospital. However, in 1963 it became Kennels and is now privately owned.



Further down Dry Street the walk took them to a path towards Northlands Wood, passing Clapgate Cottages. The walk finalized at the ordnance Survey Triangulation Point at the top of One Tree Hill. A high point of 275ft above sea level. Unfortunately, the metal plate which originally was on top of the plinth indicating various landmarks was removed many years ago.



What should have been a spectacular view of the Thames was spoilt because of the mist. However, the group all enjoyed the walk and expressed interest in exploring other walks in the area.

So, it looks like our walker is going to be kept very busy over the next few months (We have small historical pamphlets at the Heritage Centre on 'Cash Well'.

### Overseas Friends

Our overseas contacts, particularly with the members of the Ventura County Genealogical Society in California, continue to throw up many surprises in the joint histories of their members along with links here, particularly with our aristocracy of former times.



We join their Zoom on-line meetings on Wednesday evenings (for us), and participate in the topics raised especially where questions regarding the British Isles are often raised. Also, we have again been invited to present a talk at one of their April meetings on the "Women's Land Army".

We must say that the warm welcome we always receive is gratifying at least and we are always introduced to their new members from across the various states as their part of their research team, helping spread the names of Basildon Heritage Society.

With regard to individual research, we are supporting three of their members and have generated some interesting facts, one of which links to the casting of Bells across Essex, even "Big Ben" in 1856 and the recasting in 1858 by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry and of course this is the same foundry that cast the original Liberty Bell in 1752. It remains a powerful symbol of American independence and freedom.

Another member who has direct links to Scottish clans is generating centuries of history including the Battle of Floden Field and Culloden, to the capture and subsequent transportation of those who fought for "Bonnie Prince Charlie" through to the surrender of the German forces in the forest of Compiègne in France in 1918.

The third member also has direct links to the English Civil War and to the great migration period around 1640's, and we have been able to trace direct and indirect lineage back nearly a thousand years.

### Visitors Comments

Selection of visitor's comments since last newsletter.

- Lots of memories, friendly staff. Looking forward to coming back.
- Interesting to read about Basildon New Town.
- Great to see all the old photos etc:
- Very Interesting, helpful staff.

### Day in History

- 1<sup>st</sup> February 1908 - Portuguese King and heir assassinated.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1880 – First electric streetlight installed in Wabash, Indiana.
- 5<sup>th</sup> February 1989 - Last Soviet troops leave Kabul, signaled the end of the war in Afghanistan.
- 6/7<sup>th</sup> February 1952 - Princess Elizabeth becomes Queen.
- 17<sup>th</sup> February 1909 – Geronimo the Great Apache Leader died. His real name was Goyathlay which means “one who yawns”.
- 18<sup>th</sup> February 1516 – Mary 1, Queen of England was born in Greenwich.

## Booklets/Pamphlets

Booklets produced since the last Newsletter:

- Researching Military Records
- Historic and Specialist Trades
- Kynochtown
- Sir Alf Ramsey
- Frank Lennard Payne – Kuching POW Camp Sarawak Borneo 1941-1945.
- Historic & Specialist Trades & Locations.
- Charities in the First World War.

## Members Publications

- The Rise and fall of Laindon High Road - £10
- How Basildon was Built - £15
- Basildon’s Famous People - £8
- Basildon Famous People Volume Two £8
- German P.O.W. Camp 266 Langdon Hills -£7
- Laindon in the Great War - £8
- Castle Point in the Great War - £8
- Clacton in the Great War - £10
- Joan Rosaire, Lady of the Circus - £8.00
- Poems and a Brief History of Laindon & Surrounding District - £7

Further information check the website.

## Coming Events

### Library Lectures.

Over the past few months, we have held various talks on family history, initially at Pitsea Library, now Vange Library. These will continue monthly for the foreseeable future, so please keep an eye on our Facebook page and Web Site.

### Talks.

In addition to our Library Lectures we have three separate talks arranged on the history of Blue Plaques including those in the borough. The recipients will be the Rayleigh U3A groups at the Green Centre, Canvey Dinning Club at the Oyster fleet Hotel and St Andrews Church Wickford.

## VE Day Display-8<sup>th</sup> May

Display of photographs and artifacts at the Heritage Centre, Green Centre, Wat Tyler Park from Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May for two months. During the week commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> May to 10<sup>th</sup> May we will be open every day. We also hope that we will be able to light the beacon in park on the 8<sup>th</sup> at 9.30pm. More information nearer the time via our Facebook page.

## Local Radio

Gateway FM, Basildon local radio will be presenting from the Green Centre in August for a week. (18<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> August) In the meantime, a member of the Society appears on the radio once a month.

## Basildon Carnival 2025.

We will have a marquee with display of photographs of the Borough and local books. Northlands Park 26<sup>th</sup> July.

## Annual Fun Walk 2025

September around Wat Tyler Park- all are welcome to participate. More information at later date.

## The Language of Flowers

Trawling through our Library at the Heritage Centre we came across the following book ‘The language of Flowers’, so we have decided to pick for each newsletter a flower and where the name came from. Our first is the **Amaryllis**: -



“The Amaryllis is named after a shepherdess - Referred to in Virgil (Roman Poet) and the name comes from the Greek word meaning dazzling. The species is called belladonna, an Italian word meaning beautiful lady. In the Language of Flowers, the

Amaryllis may be interpreted as haughty as well as proud, perhaps because the flower is difficult to grow, but once in bloom outshines all those around it.

### **Facts about September**

- Anglo-Saxons called September “Haefest Monath” which means Harvest Month.
- September’s birthstone is the Sapphire.
- September is the most popular month to be born in.
- Virgos are born between August 23<sup>rd</sup> and September 22<sup>nd</sup>. They are known for being hardworking and kind.
- September 22<sup>nd</sup> is the Autumn Equinox, meaning the days will get shorter and nights longer.
- The Great Fire of London started on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1666 and raged for four days.
- The first free lending public library was opened on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1852
- September has three birth flowers; the Aster, the Forget-Me-Not, and the Morning Glory.

### **Poem**

The Passing of Time

Wouldn’t it be nice if we were younger  
Then we wouldn’t have to moan and groan.  
And we wouldn’t have to sit and wonder  
our teeth will still be all our own.  
You know it’s gonna make it that much better  
If we could put our bodies back together.

Wouldn’t it be nice if I could remember  
Exactly where I was when I parked the car,  
Then I wouldn’t have to spend the morning  
Searching all the car parks near and far.  
My memory isn’t good although I try  
I climb the stairs but can’t remember why.

Wouldn’t it be nice not wearing purple  
But to wear whatever colour you choose.  
Not to be walking fashion disaster  
Never with a matching pair of shoes.  
Avoiding all the things with your reflection  
Not to worry if you’re not perfection.

Now we know that beauty is on the inside  
It’s in everything we say and do  
So that when you make your resolution  
Remember to include a good deed or two.  
I wish that everyone could live together  
So that love and peace could last forever.  
Wouldn’t it be nice!

By Sue Ranford

(BBHS Volunteer)

### **Social Media**

#### **You Tube’s Videos**

Since the last newsletter we have loaded on our website the following You Tube Videos:

- My Ancestors/Solomon Frank Bewers
- Fanton Hall/Haunted Basildon
- Tractor Run for St Luke’s Hospice
- Basildon Now & Then
- Beautiful Paintings of Essex
- Pitsea Carnival 1930
- Pitsea Now & Then
- Old footage of Basildon 1961
- Tom Thumb’s Tunnel
- Basildon Our Town
- Pitsea A13 Construction 1969 Documentary.
- Building the Ford Tractor Plant - 1962

There are many more to come, if interested please keep an eye on our Web Site or Facebook.

#### **Instagram**

We are now on Instagram – <https://www.instagram.com/basildonheritage>.

#### **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. In the past month we have received well over 3 million hits and have at least 9,000 followers. 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**

If you would like a copy of our newsletters by email, or you know of somebody else who would like one please contact by email or speak to one of our volunteers.

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](mailto:basildonheritage@outlook.com) or contact us via the website and we will get back to you as soon as possible.*

## **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](mailto:Mrs.Smith2012@hotmail.com)**

### **Vin Harrop**

**It is with great sadness that we have to inform you that one of our founders, Vin Harrop passed away on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025.**

**Our sincere condolences go out to his wife and family.**

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

*Founded March 2007 - Registered Charity No. 1176037*