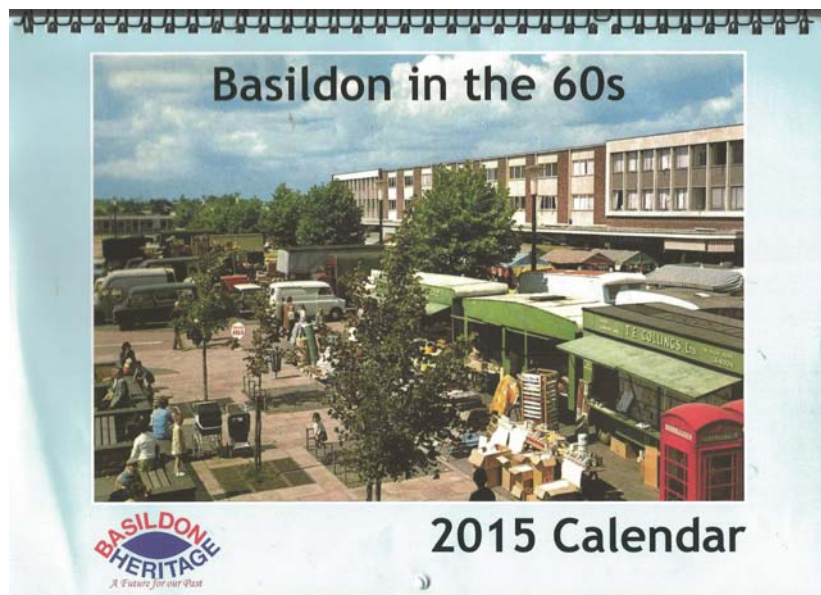




**Basildon Borough
Heritage Group.**

**Christmas Newsletter
Number 18**

**Basildon Borough Heritage Group 2015 Calendar is now available for
£5 if collected plus £1.50 if we have to post.**



Front Cover - Basildon Market

January - Bus Station and Locarno

February - Town Centre from Roundacre

March - Gloucester Park Swimming pool and Boating Lake

April - St Martins Church

May - East Walk and Town Square

June - Keay House

July - Arts Centre

August - East Walk looking East

September - East Walk looking West

October - Fenchurch Street Line near Luncies estate

November – Town Centre looking west

December - Town Square Northgate House and Sweeneys.

If you would like a copy they can be collected at the Green Centre, Wat Tyler, Monday and Wednesday Mornings, or Saturdays or contact Ken Porter on

07968 313614 or k.kfp@btinternet.com

WW1 Centenary Exhibition 27th September 2014



The exhibition held at the Green centre, Wat Tyler Park can only be described as a great success. In addition to Basildon Heritage displays, there were displays from a number of Local Archive Groups and individuals with their own private collection of photographs and artefacts.

Cribbs the local funeral directors had a very impressive stand showing a documentary film on the War Horse. And the Laindon Community Choir provided a nice touch by singing a number of WW1 songs. Members of Basildon Heritage were dressed in period costumes of the time.

The Exhibition was open by local MP Stephen Metcalfe, along with a short speech from a representative from the National Lottery. This was later followed by young Matthew Edson from Beauchamps School reading his reflection of his visit to Heiligenhaus, Germany with three other colleagues to see how they were commemorating the anniversary. The following is his reflection:

In Reflection by Matthew Edson.

When I was first asked to attend a conference on the Great War in Heiligenhaus, I was honoured. I knew that the experience would be an interesting but perhaps, at some points an emotional one. I was to proven right on both counts.

I knew that I would experience two other view points on the Great War, the first that of one of the wars “victors” and the other, that of the “defeated”. The French perspective is very much like our own, except for far greater civilian casualties than our own. But the German, it is one of a defeated country, a broken country and a country that was unfairly blamed for one of the most devastating conflicts in the

modern history of our world.

The impacts of this trip will never leave me; these are some of the reasons why.

The museum that we went to in Essen was both very interesting and also tugged on my heart-strings. The reason being that if you took away any of the names and replaced them with English, French, Belgium or Austrian names they could be exactly the same stories. That of love duty, patriotism and the most terrible of all themes, destruction. Each story showed the same thing, a life lost or changed forever in a



hunt for glory, in a setting, that is most inglorious indeed. They were the stories of the local people, the butcher, the baker and so on. It showed that the war affected everyone. Not just Germany but, as we know, all over the world. The stories of men, brothers, husbands, comrades and boys. Young boys, who left their homes to fight a war that they should have had nothing to do with. And the old boys, sons too; as well as the husbands to many women, who would never know life in the same way again.

Also, I saw just how badly the people of Germany suffered during the war. Terrible facial injuries and more amputees than many of us could believe possible. I saw newsreels which showed how these men tried to carry on after the war as normally as they could, working on farms and in factories. All of them joined, by one thing, they were all missing at least one limb. History is written by the victors and I believe that it is safe to say, that many children in Britain don't learn about the amputees of Germany. I never learnt about them, of course, common sense told you that there must be some. But it was never explained to me, just how large this problem was for

the German nation.

However, I was also able to see just how charitable the German people were, how many donated money to help those lives that had been changed by the war. An example of this was a wooden statue, held on the middle floors of the exhibit. When one first looks at the statue, it appears to be made of bronze or some other metal. But upon closer inspection and listening to the audio guide one can see that it is, in fact covered in nails. The idea of this statue was that as people put nails into the wood, they would donate money to the families of soldiers, on return to England; I found that this happened often in Germany but not much here. In fact, it would appear that the Germans were more charitable than us in general during the period.

Also, I saw a small wooden case, about three metres square, in this case there were mirrors along the side so that one could see the faces on the four heads inside the case. Being a curious young lad, I wondered over to the case and had a look inside. What I saw made the hairs on the back of my head stand on end.

Inside the case there were five items of note; a wax cast of a face and four painted wax heads-not unlike something you would see at Madam Tussauds. But the thing that made my hairs stand on end was not an irrational fear of wax works! Far from it, it was the faces.

Each and every one was the face of a victim of facial disfigurement, with casts taken to teach future surgeons about the previously mentioned problem. The cast made me take a step back, before looking in upon them again. The wounds ranged from rounds taking away a man's jaw, to half a face destroyed by an explosion, a risk our soldiers still face today in conflict zones all over the world. But what touched me the most about these heads was, not how I knew very little about it. I knew that it had happened but I realised that I had only learnt about a friend called Helen who used to be a medical scientist. This touched me because I realised that these models were the exact physical objects that show why war is not glorious, or a wonderful adventure, or a pathway to manhood. As those young European men had been told a hundred ago. I began to feel strongly; that if we started to teach about these injuries people would stop glorifying war and treating it like it is some game in which you win or lose. Oh no, war is far more complex than that. The sight of those wax heads will stay with me for the rest of my life. I will never forget them, or the stories they tellThe

next day we attended the opening of Heiligenhaus's new museum exhibit on the Great



War. Again a very interesting view on both life before, during and after the Great War. As well as being a very enjoyable day meeting the locals and having photos taken with the town Mayor, I learnt of many stories about the citizens of Heiligenhaus. And also a German take on the years that

followed the Great War, it was widely agreed that it was because of the Great War, that a particular Bavarian/Austrain corporal was able to gain the support of so many people and start the tinderbox of Europe up again. Which, yes I do agree with. But it was the outstanding display of “yes it happened, lets not forget about it but lets learn from it” type of mentality. Again something that I feel is commendable and one of the reasons that I wanted to visit Heiligenhaus again as soon as is humanly possible!

“War is too important to be left to the Generals”

CLEMENCEAU, Georges, French Prime Minister.

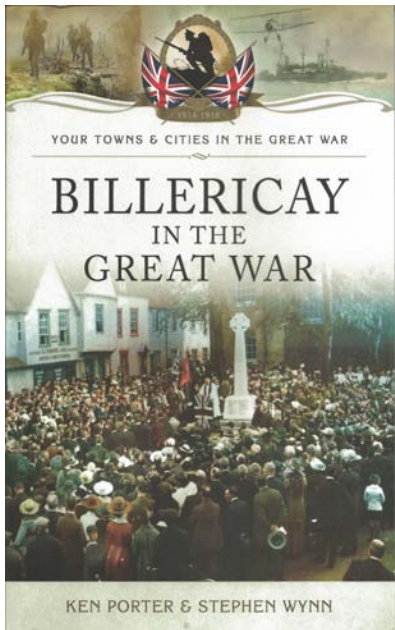
This is true, if I learnt one thing from Germany, it is that war will always affect those who are left behind, not just those who fight in it.

Thank you, Merci und danke

Books

The following are books on the Borough we have for Sale at the Green Centre,

Wat Tyler:



- Billericay in the Great War by Ken Porter & Steve Wynn (RRP -£12.99) - £10.00
- The German P.O.W. Camp 266 Langdon Hills by Ken Porter & Steve Wynn £9.99
- Is Anybody Out There? – Joe Goodmans autobiography (RRP-£10) - £8.00
- Basildon our Heritage by Frances Clamp (RRP - £9.99) - £5
- This Is Basildon by Michael Healy
- The Story of Nevendon by Christopher Harrold & John Simpson £5
- The Story of Pitsea Mount by Christopher Harrold - £5
- Heritage walks in Basildon by Sue Ranford £3.99
- Secret Basildon (Walks) by Sue Ranford £3.99
- Secret Paths in South Essex (Walks) by Sue Ranford £3.99

We also have a selection of booklets on the Borough - £1.00 to £3.00

Future Events

Pitsea Junior School -	WW1 Project	13/14 November 2014
St Margarets School (Bower Gifford)	WW1 Project	28 November 2014

Wat Tyler Park Christmas Bazaar WW1 Great War Project 29/30 November 2014

St Martins Christmas Concert Great War Project

6 December 2014

Office Closed for Christmas 20 December to 3 January 2015

Copyright

Back in the 1980s a now defunct Basildon Heritage Group, sponsored by the Basildon Council carried out a number of interviews gathering memories of the local inhabitants. In partnership with the Essex Record Office we would like to confirm copyright status. Below is our first list of those who were interviewed and we would like to track the individuals or their families. If you are aware of any of them please get in touch with us.

Further list will be issued in subsequent newsletters.

Name	Location	Date Recorded
Mrs Eve Baylis	Basildon	26 September 1985
Mr S J Blackbourn	Lee Chapel	22 September 1985
Mrs N Bone	Pitsea	9 October 1985
Mr Sam Brewer	Wickford	26 February 1986
Mr A Boughtwod	Billericay	30 October 1985
Eric Carter	Wickford	15 January 1986
E L Carter	Grays Thurrock	21 November 1985
Mrs Doodes	Laindon	25 November 1985
Mr A Dove	Basildon	3 October 1985
Mr M Ellul	South Benfleet	15 January 1986
Mrs M Ellul	South Benfleet	5 March 1986
Mr J Finch	Lee Chapel North	1 November 1985
Mrs Ruth Flaxman	Wickford	3 March 1986
Mr A F Fairbairn	Vange	29 November 1985
Mr W L Ferrier	Basildon	12 September 1985
Mr D R Fairman	Pitsea	5 December 1985
Mrs E M Fairbairn	Vange	3 December 1985
Mrs Clara Gladding	Vange	28 January 1986

Miss Dorothy Gardner	Vange	13 September 1985
Mr J. R. Green	Pitsea	18 June 1986
Mrs Margret Goodwin	Crays Hill	20 February 1986

ExxonMobil

We would like to thank ExxonMobil for the grant of £1000 via their Volunteer Involvement Programme (VIP). It is a programme that recognises the voluntary work carried out by their Mobil retirees. Eric Lamb is one of our volunteers who applied for the grant on our behalf. He is a very valuable member of our team, not only in the field of research but also in coming up with new ideas.



The equipment we will purchase with this grant money will allow us to improve on our external displays.

Web Site

We are gradually developing our web site www.basildonheritage.org.uk the following are pages that are now providing information:

- Historical Names of the old parishes of the Boroughs
- Contact Details of the various Sports Clubs in the Borough

- The Borough War Memorials
- WW1 Borough Roll of Honour
- Heritage Newsletters back to July 2010
- Various Links to other local historical sites
- Videos
- Future Events
- How to Contact us

You can also follow our First World War exploits
on: www.forgetnever1418.blogspot.co.uk

Photographs

We are still after your photographs and memories of the Borough. If you feel you have any photographs or memories that we would be interested in why not call in at the Green Centre, at Wat Tyler Park. There is always a welcoming cup of tea and biscuits waiting for you.



Future Newsletters.

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

We are also willing to include in our newsletter anything you think might be of interest, again either contact us by email or drop in at the Green Centre.

Volunteers still wanted.

We are still seriously looking for more volunteers to help with our research, collating and recording the information we gather, helping out on our display days. No experience is necessary other than an interest in local history. We are also looking for somebody with I.T. and/or photographic experience and we are more than happy if you want to work from home. At the moment we are researching WW1 and WW2 Stories.

If you would like to join our enthusiastic group or find out more about us please either email us and one of our volunteers will contact you or better still why not drop in at the Green Centre, Wat Tyler Park and see what we get up to. Monday and Wednesday 10am to 12.30am or Saturdays 11am to 3.30pm.

Web site:- www.basildonheritage.org.uk Email: - Info@basildonheritage.org.uk

From the Basildon Borough Heritage Team we wish you a Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing many of you in the Nerw Year.

BasildonCouncil
BASILDON • BILLERICAY • WICKFORD

ExxonMobil

