



Newsletter

March 2014

No 15

WW1 COMMEMORATION.



As you are probably aware the 4th August 2014 marks the Centenary of the outbreak of WW1.

We are working with Basildon Council and other groups on projects, events and exhibitions to commemorate those who fought in the war on our behalf.

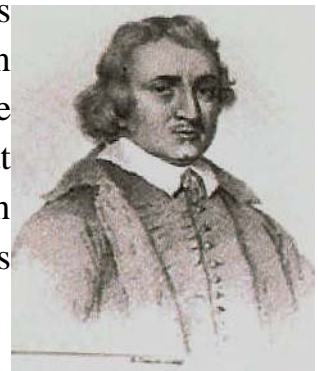
We are therefore looking for artefacts, photographs and family memories that depict this period in our history (1914-1918).

If you have any such items or memories and are willing for us to exhibit them, please get in touch.

Email: info@basildonheritage.org.uk or phone 07968 313614.

History Article

Hugh (Hugo) Peters like Elizabeth and John Winthrop was another Puritan who had connection with Essex and our area in particular who made a considerable contribution to the development of the New World of America. It would appear that at this time in the early 1620s he had taken up residence in Layndon (Laindon) as its curate and schoolmaster (Christmas Newsletter).



The school building and probably where he lived for a time was the timber building at the western end of St Nicholas Church, Laindon which was initially built for the Priest (Priest House). The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments dates this building to at least the early 17th century if not earlier.

Whatever the date, Hugh (Hugo) Peters must have been one of the first teachers if not the first.



We now know of at least three other teachers who taught at the school. Samuel Weald (1715), James Matthews (1745/1809), Schoolmaster for 31 years and James Hornsby (1804/1887), Schoolmaster for 48 years). Hugh's salary for teaching in Laindon would have been paid out of the Puckles Charity which had commenced in 1617. John Puckle was a

local farmer who in his will of 1617 gave all his copyhold lands to the maintenance of a schoolmaster to teach the poor children of Laindon and Basildon.

Hugh was ordained Priest on the 8th June 1623 again at Bishop's Place, London after obtaining a MA at Trinity College. He was for a time under the patronage of the Earl of Warwick, and whilst so became curate at Rayleigh.

In 1624 he married Elizabeth Read(e), the widow of Edmund Read(e) of Wickford. After his time in Laindon he became a very popular preacher of St Sepulchre's at Holborn. However he fell out with the church authorities and had his license to preach revoked and was imprisoned for six months after leading the congregation in praying for Queen Henrietta Maria (Wife of Charles 1) to give up her Catholicism.

Either on his release or because he escaped he decided to go to the Netherlands and in 1633 became a pastor at Rotterdam. Unfortunately pressure was being put on the English Churches in the Netherlands to conform to the doctrines being advocated by Archbishop Laud. So in July 1635 he was off again, deciding to follow many of his Puritan colleagues to America. With his family, which included his step daughter Elizabeth and new husband John Winthrop the younger, he accompanied Henry Vane to New England.

In December 1636, Hugh became minister of Salem, Massachusetts. Although he became involved with religious disputes with Henry Vane, he was a popular minister and was actively involved in the civil administration of Salem. He became one of the first governors of Harvard College.

In 1639 following the death of his wife Elizabeth who was several years older than him, he married Deliverance Sheffield. Then in 1641 he returned to England as one

of three agents appointed by the Colony of Massachusetts to drum up new settlers.

However he soon became an active supporter of the Parliament against the King, in the hope of securing a godly reformation of the English church. He became chaplain in the Earl of Essex's army and in the Cromwell's New Model Army.

Although his preaching inspired the soldiers, he still intended to return to America at the end of the First Civil War but Fairfax and Cromwell valued his services so he stayed on and got involved with the struggle between the Army and the Presbyterians (Scots). He accompanied Cromwell on his campaigns during the Second Civil War and was one of the clergymen to support the Army's occupation of London and Pride's Purge, (The purging of members of Parliament hostile to the New Model Army-the purge was led by Colonel Thomas Pride) which led to the trial of King Charles in 1649. He preached during the trial and these sermons were said to have a considerable influence on the outcome of his sentence on the return of King Charles 11.

He stayed active and loyal to Cromwell throughout the period of the Commonwealth. His last great public act was to preach Oliver Cromwell's funeral sermon in November 1658. He then started to fade from public view mainly because of ill health, other than to declare that the overthrow of Richard Cromwell was 'Very sinful and ruining'.

In August 1660, following the restoration of Charles 11, parliament passed the 'Act of Indemnity and Oblivion' which gave pardon to anybody who had supported the republican (Commonwealth) government of Oliver Cromwell. However Charles retained the right to try for treason those people who had participated in the trial and execution of his father.

Although he had played no direct role in the trial and execution, his reputation and strong association with the commonwealth regime resulted in his arrest with others on charges of treason.

He along with Henry Vane who had been knighted and eight others, were found guilty and sentenced to be Hung, Drawn and Quartered. Hugh was executed on the 16th October 1660 and his head displayed on a pole on London Bridge.

The final twist to this story is that some 369 years after Hugh's stepdaughter Elizabeth had married John Winthrop the Younger, two of their descendants fought against each other in the 2004 American presidential elections campaign, John Kerry and George W Bush! (Christmas Newsletter).

Coming Events

- St Chad's Church, Vange- Display of Vange photo's pre-1940 in aid of funds for the repair of their Bell – 25th March 10am-3pm.
- Green Centre – Display from April for two months – Basildon Entertains (photo's of carnivals and drama groups).
- Easter Holidays – 5th to 21st April – on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday 11am to 3pm at Blunts Cottage –Displaying of heritage oldest photos of Basildon Borough.
- Basildon Library – 31st to 28th April – Display of the latest additions to Basildon Heritage collection of old photos.
- Great Burstead Church – 28th June
- Bowers Gifford, West Lake Park – 17th August – Display of photographs of the area 1914-1960.
- Barleylands Country Show – 13/14th September 2014 – Display of Basildon at War.
- 27th September – Green Centre, WW1 Commemoration Display.

Coming Talks

- 1st April – Essex History Group/Essex Record Office – Changing face of Basildon over the last 150 years.
- 2nd April – Manor House W.I., Laindon – Local History and POW Camp – 2 - 4pm
- 24th July – Noak Bridge Parish meeting – Local History – 6.30pm
- 31st October – Women's World Group, Lee Chapel South – Local History.

Other projects we are involved in.

St Chad's Vange - Restoration of Ancient Church Bell

The bell at St Chad's Church dates from 1608 and is the oldest and smallest of three remaining bells from a very rare founder, Peter Hawkes, who operated along the North Essex and Suffolk boarder. The bell developed a crack in 1966 and has

remained out of use since then. The bell was originally hung at the 12th century Parish Church, St Mary Magdalene, Shopland, Near Rochford, Essex, which fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1957 and the bell was installed at St Chad's on its completion in 1958.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is being approached for their financial support. To help meet funding requirements, organisations from across the community are working together to establish an exhibition of the Heritage of Vange, which will be held at St Chad's. The period of heritage being focused on is the second half of the 20th century and incorporates the



experiences and lives of the people who make up the community. Rydene and Bardfield Primary Schools, 1st Pitsea and Vange Scouts, Friends of All Saints and Basildon Heritage are among those supporting this initiative. (Refer to coming events).

Langdon Living Landscape

The Langdon Living Landscape was established in 2012, in keeping with a nationwide strategy, initiated by the Wildlife Trusts. Thus the Essex Wildlife Trust has been instrumental in setting up an initial fifteen such living landscapes, with a view to establishing more in the future.

The aim is to encourage landscape-scale conservation, where possible linking up wildlife-rich sites so that wildlife can move more freely across the landscape. Thus we seek to address the problem of species becoming restricted to just a few protected sites, where their longer-term chances of survival are at increasing risk ~ from accident, inclement conditions, genetic inbreeding, etc.

There are other aims as well. In addition to protecting and maximising biodiversity, it is hoped to encourage economic sustainability where that is practicable ~ supporting local businesses and encouraging communities to engage actively with their environment, through volunteered effort, education and initiative.



Various exciting projects are anticipated. The Langdon ridge used to have a lot of orchards of different kinds, with several local fruit varieties. It is possible to identify some of the trees that remain, with a view to propagating and planting new stock, including in community orchards.

It is also hoped to see more of the ancient woodlands brought back into regular coppice management, after very lengthy periods of neglect during the past century. Meanwhile the considerable areas of more recent ('secondary') woodland are increasingly being treated as coppice, thereby promoting the wildlife interest.

The Langdon Living Landscape extends right along the ridge, from Dunton and the margins of Horndon in the west to Basildon golf course and Vange Heights in the east. Thus it encompasses the precious green lung which is so important for folk living in the surrounding urban communities.

Basildon Heritage involvement will be the people impact on the area.

Launch of 'You Are Hear' Project at Essex Sound and Video Archive

The Essex Sound and Video Archive (at the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford) has received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to develop a proposal for our project 'You Are Hear: sound and a sense of place'.

The project aims to digitise the unique recordings in the Archive and to help people learn about them, engage with them, and enjoy them, leading communities to develop a 'sense of place' based on their audio-visual heritage.

One aspect of the project will involve community groups listening to a range of recordings from the Archive, selecting those which have particular relevance to them, and creating an audio montage to be added to some kind of outdoor listening post or sonic park bench. We hope to work with the Basildon Borough Heritage and Museum Group to show off the holdings we have for the Basildon area, which include oral history interviews with local residents and radio broadcasts. We would provide

support and training in audio editing software, and in return we hope that the Group will adopt it as your own means of encouraging wider enjoyment of the local heritage.

Over the next eighteen months, we will be building up contacts with different communities, investigating intellectual property rights for the material, and gathering quotes for the necessary equipment. If we are successful in our second-round bid to the HLF, we will then go into full swing to lead each community group in the development of their own audio montage. We are grateful to have received an initial interest in our project from the Group. If anyone wants to know more, please do contact me, and I'd be happy to answer any questions (contact details below).

I look forward to working with the Group over the next couple of years to help bring the changing sound scapes of Basildon to the general public.

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Pathways to the Marshes (HLF Landscape Partnership) - Long term project to improve footpaths links between stations and the marshes – more on the project next newsletter.

Essex Place Names – Another long term project – more next newsletter.

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 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 address 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.

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