



BASILDON AND BILLERICAY u3a

NEWSLETTER No 367

JUNE 2024



80th Anniversary of D Day landings



The Great British Summer (again!)



Tennis at
Wimbledon



Euro 2024 Football
Championships



And don't forget the coming
General Election

AN EVENTFUL MONTH

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

We are now coming to the AGM and the start of another year. Time for all of our members to think of new ventures and new ideas for our u3a. Is there an event or group you like, please let us know.

We obviously all think Basildon & Billericay u3a is the best, otherwise we would join another u3a!!!

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello everyone,

Do please come along to our AGM, which will be held at the Canon Roche Social Centre, 21 Laindon Road, Billericay on Friday 28th June 2024, commencing at 2.30pm

All paid up members of Basildon and Billericay u3a are invited to the AGM.

NEW!

BBu3a coffee mornings

1st meeting Thursday 4th July

10.30-12.30 50p per person Ample Parking

A great opportunity to meet other members and have a chat.

At the Canon Roche Centre, Laindon Rd, Billericay

*****Change of venue due to General Election*****



MONTHLY MEETING

2.30pm on Friday, 28th June 2024
at the Canon Roche Centre, Billericay

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BASILDON AND BILLERICAY u3a 2024

Next Month's Meeting

July 26th 2024

Speaker

Doreen Sim

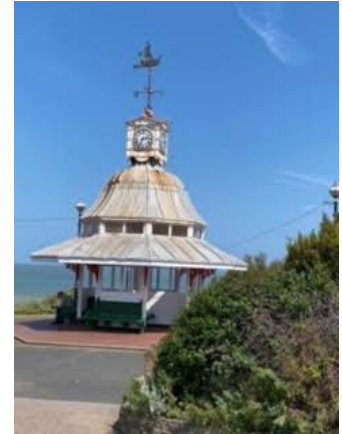
The Guide Dogs Association



Doreen has been volunteering for Guide Dogs for over 25 years, covering many roles within the organisation from puppy raising to a speaker. Her talk will cover the history of Guide Dogs, breeding of dogs etc, puppy raising, training and their other services.

BBu3a coach trip to Margate and Broadstairs

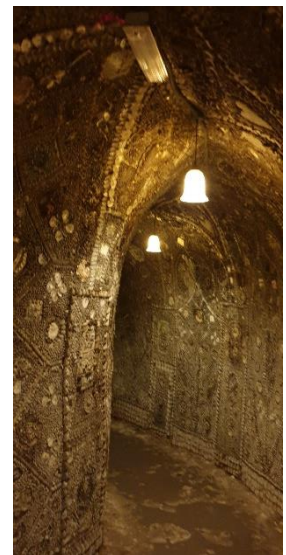
Our coach trip to Margate and Broadstairs on June 6th was a great success. So many of you said how much you had enjoyed it – thank you. We have some lovely photos from Michael Parsons (see below) who went on to Broadstairs. There is quite a bit of history there as you all probably know. It was one of Charles Dickens favourite places and I believe he did a lot of writing there. We were so lucky to have such nice weather as you can see from the beautiful blue sky.



Broadstairs

Margate

Those of us who stayed at Margate had a lot of choice too as to where to visit. I went to the Shell Grotto which you can see in some of the photos. There was The Turner Gallery, lots of lovely cafés, patisseries and restaurants and the beach looked very inviting. You will also see a photo of a Tudor House which was in the process of being renovated, so once completed it will be another attraction for Margate visitors.



ESSEX DISCOVERY GROUP

Visit to RAF Hornchurch Heritage Centre



It is always a joy to make a visit and be welcomed by infectiously enthusiastic guides, as we were at the RAF Hornchurch Heritage Centre. Our two hours there just flew by, and we came away full of new knowledge and insights.

The Aerodrome was operational during both World Wars and was finally closed in 1962.

The Centre is inside two houses that have been knocked through to make a well organised series of rooms, each one dedicated to a different time or topic. The amount of material on display is phenomenal and all so well displayed that everything can be easily studied. Our guides Jim and Tony were able to explain everything that we saw and answer any questions. Even the stairs and landings display material worth a close study.

Did you know that Max Bygraves, Richard Green and Ronnie Corbett were some of the showbiz folk who were stationed at Hornchurch? Two of the real "Great Escapers" were Hornchurch airmen. It was a Hornchurch pilot that shot down the first Zeppelin in WW1.

Remembered with pride is Raimund Sanders Draper, an American pilot whose plane suffered an engine failure shortly after take-off. It was headed for the local school, but Draper deliberately nosedived into the ground rather than hit the school. He was killed instantly. The school is named after him even now.

Also worthy of note are the women pilots who flew combat aircraft to the different airfields. Certainly, Mary Wilkins delivered Spitfires to Hornchurch.

Appropriately our lunch was taken at The Good Intent which was the local used by the airmen during WW2.

GOLF GROUP

June Report

It's been a while since the previous golf group report appeared but now that summer has just about arrived with the joys of mud free fairways, we can reflect on some muddy outings.

Mardyke was fairly soft on 14th March with special measures at the short 8th where players had to use temporary mats laid on mud for the approach shot over the lake to the green beyond. There was a "no go" area under the trees to protect a lovely display of woodland primroses.

On 21st March four players took advantage of a free round at Five Lakes being offered to promote club membership. This was our first time on this course which might be better in drier conditions.

Soft going on slightly muddy fairways, persisted during April but on May 9th seven players enjoyed a sunny day on firm fairways at Stapleford Abbots. We added to our loyalty card which will eventually give us six rounds for the price of five, for a free round later in the year.

Theydon Bois on 16th May, where six players ignored the early drizzle and were rewarded with fine weather later in the round. It looked like the soft going fairways of winter were still evident on some holes. Photo with Theydon Bois clubhouse in background

May 23rd to Epping, a course we love with challenging hills on a fairly short track just under 5000yards which suits some of our short hitters.

Several regulars were on holiday on 30th May so there were only 3 players at Stockbrook Manor – one of our expensive venues at £30 a round.



There were six players at Cranham on June 13th making two groups of three. One group was ecstatic that all members made par at the par 3 eighth hole. This is an extremely rare occasion for high handicap u3a golfers.

We would be pleased to see new members join us on Thursdays to take advantage of summer weather and dry fairways before the mud returns.

RAILWAY JOURNEYS GROUP

JUNE 2024 VISIT TO BRIXTON, LONDON

16 of us enjoyed an interesting day in Brixton, the birthplace of David Bowie. We started our exploration in Electric Avenue, the first street in London to have electric lights in the 1880's. Brixton was an important settlement for migrants from the Caribbean in the decades following the arrival of the Empire Windrush at Tilbury in 1948. In 1981 with years of simmering tensions, poor housing, hostility and discrimination, this sparked the riots, mainly between unemployed youths and the Metropolitan police. It was the year after that Eddy Grant wrote and recorded his song 'Electric Avenue' in his response to the riots. Now the market area, known as Brixton Village, is vibrant and colourful, and where people from all walks of life come together with a community feel. It is a mecca for shoppers with stalls and covered arcades selling fruit and vegetables, many of which you would not encounter in your local supermarket. There are also fishmongers, butchers, vast amounts of clothing, household items, bakeries and many bars and restaurants.



We had a break for lunch and then met our Guide, Adrian, for our walking tour of the area. We started at the David Bowie mural, which is on the side wall of Morley's department store, and is covered in Perspex for protection. We walked to the street where he spent part of his childhood until the age of 6.

Close by is the O2 Brixton Academy which is a Grade II listed award-winning concert venue.



Adrian led us to the Arches, situated by the railway, where there is a collection of independent shops, bars and restaurants and where Nelson Mandela and Prince Charles visited in 1996. Brixton even has its own currency, the Brixton Pound, which is flashy with David Bowie portraits on it. It is accepted in around 200 business in the local community, the idea being to benefit their own local economy rather than the larger shops.

We finished back in the market area which is close to the station. We were surprised how much there is to see in Brixton including the

Windrush Museum, which was unfortunately closed on the day of our visit, and Windrush Square and Brixton Hill, with a 200-year-old Grade II listed windmill situated in a green open space tended by local volunteers.



RAMBLING GROUP



Everyone agreed that our May ramble from Purleigh was an excellent walk. The scenery was good with views of vineyards and Maldon in the distance. We were fortunate with the weather, although it was rather damp walking through the mile long wooded area with its narrow path. As you can see in the picture, the cow parsley was at least 3 feet high, yet the week before it was less than 1 foot high. We could see some of the outbuildings of the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, but it was not open. Our pub lunch in the Purleigh Bell was very enjoyable.



Our July walk is a cross country walk starting from East Hanningfield Village Hall car park which is by the school. We will meet **at 10.15 on 17th July** in **East Hanningfield Village Hall car park**, close to the Vita Bella Restaurant at the traffic calming restriction. Post code:- **CM3 8AE, The Tye, East Hanningfield**. This is a 20 min drive from Billericay. From there, we will walk across the main road and then take a series of footpaths to Bicknacre and Woodham Ferrers.

This is a 5.7 mile walk across fields and foot paths with 3 easy stiles. The route has been modified due to new houses being built. It was muddy when the walk was tested in May, but reasonably flat. There are no suitable places for refreshments in East Hanningfield, and no toilets are available on this walk.

As usual, please wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Boots help to protect your ankles. Where possible, please try to car share.

All u3a members are welcome to turn up on the day, but please bring your u3a membership card.

HALF RAMBLE

We meet on the first Monday of every month at 10.30am. Walks are open to all u3a members, just turn up on the day. We walk for about one hour at a leisurely pace, mainly on flat ground, but it can be muddy. We always hope to finish with coffee (or lunch) and a lively chat to round off the day.

The aim of our group is that individual members will take a turn in choosing, planning and leading a walk on an occasional basis.

Monday 1st July - Ramsden Heath. Meet in car park of South Hanningfield Tennis Club, Downham Road, Ramsden Heath CM11 1PZ - midway between White Horse and De Beauvoir Arms.

Monday 5th August - Watt Tyler Country Park, Pitsea Hall Lane SS16 4UH. Park in second car park near to Cafe Building.

Newsletter Contributions

If you have any items please send them by **12.00 Noon**

on Wednesday, 17th July 2024

I am always happy to receive your report or comments at any time before the cut-off date. Please send all items in **editable format** to bbu3anewsletter@gmail.com

If you are sending photos please send them separately in JPG format.

Only send photos that you have taken yourself. We cannot use photos or pictures that have been downloaded from the internet, unless copyright free.

All contributions will be acknowledged.

Current and past newsletters can be viewed on our website <https://u3asites.org.uk/bb>

Please note that, in the interests of security, all personal details of individuals (address, email or phone number) have been redacted from the on-line versions.

(Editor)