



# BASILDON AND BILLERICAY

u3a

NEWSLETTER No 376

MARCH 2025



**British Summer Time begins on March 30<sup>th</sup>**

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Here are details of our visit to BLETCHLEY PARK on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025**



This visit is for u3a members only, the cost is **£41 pp**

The coach pick up points will be:

**Stock Village Hall.** Leave at 9.00am (Please park at bottom of car park)

**Billericay Railway Station.** Leave at 9.15 am

**Basildon opposite the Bus station.** Leave at 9.30 am (NOT the Rail station)

Please send your applications to the Treasurer .....

You can pay by

1. Bank Transfer      OR
2. Cheque              Payable to "Basildon and Billericay u3a"

Please email the Treasurer with your pick-up point, or if paying by cheque write it on the back.

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Elections have been held for the u3a Trust. The results are:

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Allan Walmsley	Derek Horwood	John Bent
Pauline Green	Alan Burrell	Laurence Wale

### **u3a COUNCIL**

George Clelland	Liz Ervine	Nicky Lee	Colin Luker
Brian Cave	Pat Collard	Ian Mathews	Barry Appleby
John Lewis	Chris Bulford	Jenny Wilson	Kathy Clegg
Jean Cubbin	Gillian Russell	David Blanchflower	Susan Parker
Valerie Cobain	Sally Ingledew	Marian Luck	Rob Rowberry

Jean Jackson

You can find more information on the u3a Trust website.

## MONTHLY MEETING



2.30pm on Friday, 28<sup>h</sup> March 2025  
at the Canon Roche Centre, Billericay

Speaker: Howard Slater      “GLEN MILLER”

His life story and a musical interlude of his most famous music, together with the mystery of how and when he died. Shown by slides and videos

Next Month                      25<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Speaker    Roy Tyzak                      “Investigating Murder”

Roy is an ex-policeman who gives talks about the role of the police, especially during his time in the East End of London in the 1970s

### **BASILDON AND BILLERICAY u3a**

#### **QUIZ NIGHT**    *Last Few Tickets Left!*

Saturday 29th March 2025    7.00pm to 10.00pm  
Emmanuel Church Hall, Laindon Road, Billericay

Cash or cheque only please:

Members: £2      Non Members: £4



Tables of 8 (Maximum)      Bring your own drinks and nibbles

Tickets will be available at the March monthly meeting or by post from the Treasurer

Please make your cheque payable to “Basildon and Billericay University of the Third Age”. If applying by post, please include a stamped addressed envelope for return of your tickets, and a list of the names of u3a members in your team. You can state “Guest” if the names of non members are not yet confirmed.

**The Quiz is open to members and guests. If you don't have a full team don't worry, we can find you one. The more brains the better!**

## RAMBLING GROUP

Our February walk was from Mile End Road Underground station to Kings Cross, predominantly walking along the Regents Canal. Fourteen of us enjoyed the weather as we walked through Hackney and Islington. The canal at Angel goes underground for about half a mile, but otherwise it was a footpath all the way to Kings Cross. We saw some large Gas Holders that are being used as the external structure for lots of new flats. It was a pleasant walk with lots to see, the sharks in the canal were a surprise to say the least. Once at Kings Cross, we had more refreshments before making our way home.



Our final winter walk in Rotherhithe will have taken place when you read this.

In April we restart our country walks, our first one takes place in Ongar on **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April**. **Meet at 10.15 in the Car Park, just as pull into Greenstead Road. This is opposite the Two Brewers Pub, Post Code CM5 9HD.**

This is a 30-minute drive from Billericay. It is a reasonably flat walk along footpaths, with two easy stiles. The walk is 5.2 miles long with no facilities. The walk was tested on 6th Feb and walking conditions were reasonable...

Please wear appropriate clothing, and boots are essential.

All u3a members are welcome to turn up on the day. Please bring your membership card with you, and where possible please car share. Refreshments are available at the end of the walk.

## ESSEX DISCOVERY GROUP

### VISIT TO COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD



16 members met in the main entrance to County Hall in Threadneedle Street. Almost all of us had travelled using public transport and the Park & Ride service. Arriving at different times we took advantage of the coffee shop in the Atrium and were met there by our guides.

Maise and Amber led us through the corridors and security doors into the complex administration centre comprising several linked buildings that have been developed over the decades.

Passing some interesting art works on the way, we were guided to the impressive Council Chamber and Lobby.

The lobby is a big open space featuring two large murals depicting Royal visits to Essex; Queen Victoria in Chelmsford and Queen Elizabeth I at Tilbury. Engraved in the Portland Stone wall leading to the Council Chamber are the names of all the Chairmen from the beginning of the County Council in 1888. There are also memorials dedicated to people lost in the two World Wars. Stained glass windows depict emblems relevant to different part of the county which included Grays and Southend previously

We were escorted into the Council Chamber (photography not permitted) and were duly impressed by the accommodation. It has space for all 75 councillors on beige leather upholstered tiered benches, with microphones, around three sides of the large chamber. Chairs are available for other officers that need to attend Council meetings plus an appropriately large sized chair for the Chairman overlooking the horseshoe.

Large wall paintings depict significant Essex events – Icenis uprising; Peasants Revolt; the Mayflower voyage; Samuel Pepys fleet inspection at Harwich. Maps of Essex are also illustrated on the walls. There are also portraits of significant Essex residents. A frieze is engraved with the names of Saxon Kings.

At the end of the Chamber there is a gallery for people to observe the meetings unless secrecy or privacy is required.

At the finish of the tour our guides answered our many questions and enabled a discussion about the future of the site resulting from the planned County Council reorganisation.

## RAILWAY JOURNEYS GROUP

19 members enjoyed a fascinating tour of St Pancras station and learned a lot about the history of the area, the relationship between the rival railway companies and the architecture of both St Pancras and Kings Cross stations.



Using Greater Anglia or C2C services we arrived at St Pancras in time to grab a coffee before we met with Chris Everett, our guide, for the 11.00am start.

Chris is an historian and so gave us a very interesting insight into the changes that have transformed the St Pancras / Kings Cross area over the centuries. He walked us around the outside of the station to show which once was an area of ill repute but is now an upmarket business and shopping location.

We were taken into Kings Cross station to see where the Harry Potter Platform 9 ¾ is sited as well as a statue to Sir Nigel Gresley, builder of locomotives such as the Mallard. The structure of the train shed was explained to show the contrast between the two stations

Back in St Pancras we saw the difference between the two train shed constructions and had it explained why the trains in St Pancras come in at First Floor level rather than Ground Floor level as in Kings Cross. Chris went on to describe the changes that had occurred to make a main line terminus for the London Midland Railway into the superb Eurostar terminus that it is now. This is still used for the Northern trains but also the high-speed rail link to Kent as well as the various underground services now located there.

Finishing our tour, after almost 2 hours, by the statue to Sir John Betjeman, the Meeting Place statue and the famous station clock, we said farewell and thanks to Chris and headed off for lunch.



If you are interested in this tour, you can view full details on the City Highlights website - [www.stpancrastours.co.uk](http://www.stpancrastours.co.uk)

## 4 MILE MAX



It had been raining most of the week and I was in two minds whether to cancel the walk, but I didn't. I was very pleased to see a good turn out for the walk in The Wick Country Park. Thank you to all those who turned up. Although it was very muddy in parts, the rain held off for our walk. This is a big park and is well used in the summer, but also a nice place for dog-walkers. The photo of the Group was taken by the lake (called a pond on the internet) and the other photo looks like the beavers had been busy – ha ha!! We managed to walk about 3 miles.

**Next month's walk** will be on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March at Mill Green. There are a few stiles to manoeuvre in the first mile, so I hope that's ok with you all. Meet in Mill Green Common Car Park (CM4 0RH) at 11.00 a.m. The Cricketers Pub is close to the car park where we will end up and if you would like to have lunch afterwards, please let me know and I will book a table.

## KNITTING AND SEWING GROUP

Does anyone have any double knitting or chunky wool that they don't need? Our group makes TWIDDLEMUFFS for dementia patients. These are made from scraps of colourful wool, buttons, bows and decorations.

If you have any to spare, please bring them to the monthly meeting and give them to Linda Anderson (Business Secretary).

The next meeting of the Knitting and Sewing Group is on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 10.30am in Billericay and new members are always welcome.

If you want more information, please contact us via the link to the Groups Facilitator on the BBU3a website.

# Newsletter Contributions

If you have any items please send them by **12.00 Noon**  
**on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

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 [bbu3newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bbu3newsletter@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)