

Blacon History Newsletter



July 2021

Welcome to the Blacon History newsletter, the Newsletter goes out either digitally or in printed format to a large number of Blacon residents. Our main aim is to research and distribute local historical information to our membership and the wider Blacon & Chester community. Additionally to work with the local community and schools to enable residents old and young to discover their local history and provide a sense of belonging. To work with other institutions to enhance and provide a local learning resource for those who are able and unable to access new technology.

Please contact us at blaconhistory@gmail.com

Or take a look at our website <http://www.blaconhistorygroup.org/>

For more information If you are unable to access technology then contact either

Dave Cartwright on 07854 681886 or Alan Smith on 07932556062

The Normans

1066 was a momentous year for England. The death of the elderly English king, Edward the Confessor, on 5 January set off a chain of events that would lead, on 14 October, to the Battle of Hastings. In the years that followed, the Normans had a profound impact on England the country they had conquered.

The Normans that invaded England in 1066 came from Normandy in Northern France. However, they were originally Vikings from Scandinavia.

The Battle of Hastings was fought on 14 October 1066 between the Norman army of Duke William of Normandy and an English army under King Harold. It lasted all day, and was exceptionally bloody even by medieval standards. When Harold was eventually killed and the English fled, the way was open for William to assume the throne of England.

The overthrow of the Saxon kingdom of England by William the Conqueror and his Norman knights was to transform the country they had conquered, from how it was organised and governed to its language and customs – and perhaps most visibly today, its architecture.

The Normans are famous for the Domesday Book which was commissioned in December 1085 by William the Conqueror. The first draft was completed in August 1086 and contained records for 13,418 settlements in the English counties south of the rivers Ribble and Tees (the border with Scotland at the time). More information about the battle of Hastings if you can access I player

[BBC iPlayer - 1066: A Year to Conquer England - Series 1: Episode 3](#)

Blacon is recorded in the Domesday book

Blacon from Earl Hugh

Thored held it he was a free man

2 Hides paying tax

Land for 4 ploughs in Lordship

4 Villagers and 4 small holdings have 1 plough

A fishery

Value before 1066 14 s now 40

This describes a settlement of about fifty people occupied in Farming and fishing.

More local information documented

In 1260 Sir Thomas Mainwaring of Blacon and Guy de Provence of Saughall agreed to abide by the findings of a Jury appointed to fix the boundary between Blacon and Saughall. The jury found that all the wood between Blacon and Saughall belonged "to the town of Salhale up to the outer oaks towards Blaken, the oaks themselves to remain part of Salhale," and the open countryside beyond the wood belonged to Blacon, the bounds having been made clear by the marked oaks and by ditches⁴. This is the first of many references to the woods of Blacon, which extended to the Wirral and resulted in the following local rhyme

From Blacon Point to Hilbre

A squirrel could jump from tree to tree⁵



BHG Drone Flight Project Update

The continuing saga of the BHG Drone Flight project is at last coming to an end.

Thu 17th September 2020

We segregated Blacon in to 11 flight zones each with a number of historical sites within the zone. Zone 1 included Cheyney Rd Stone Bridge, Blacon House Farm, Blacon Farm Cottages [The Chimneys] and the Blacon Escarpment and Ancient Woodland. This Zone 1 fell just outside the Airbus Beluga flight path so this time we did not need to use our special licence arranged for us by Leaf Productions.

<http://www.leafproductions.co.uk/>

Fri 18th September 2020

Our second flight concentrated on Zone 11, King George V Playing fields. From this launch site we captured the Shropshire Union Canal built circa 1772 -1776 which flanks our Blacon eastern boundary. During the flight we searched for signs of a lane from Blacon which lead to Parkgate Road. This lane crossed the canal at what was called Scott Morris Bridge and although it is no longer there the Lodge still stands on the Parkgate Road side of the canal.

. Whilst in this area we also took aerial photos of the Blacon Adventure Playground and Queen Elizabeth II playing fields.

As we returned to our original launch site on King George V Playing fields we took the opportunity to take the drone to its maximum altitude to take a fantastic 360degree panoramic video of Blacon

After a long break due to confusing Covid restrictions we resumed our flights again on

Thu -15th April 2021

This time we initially concentrated on the area around the current Blacon Nature Park [1987] previously this was the site Blacon Point Farmhouse circa 1734.This was bought in 1935 by TB Gorst.,so it was known locally as Gorst Farm For a brief period there was also an 18 hole golf course and Golf House here in 1938-39.

We also captured the Blacon Army Officer's Houses which were built in 1936 and occupied until circa 1960 until the MOD sold them to private owners.

Our final flight of the day from Dee Point School playing fields went in search of the Roman Lookout Fort built in circa AD60 which was .a wooden fort built at Blacon Point circa 15 years before the main legionary fortress of Chester [Deva Victrix].

Another enforced break due to the even more increasingly confusing Covid restrictions meant our final flight did not take place until

Tuesday 27th July 2021

Our final flights initially focused on our former Blacon Railway Station and sidings [1890 - 1968] opened on 31st March 1890 by the Great Central Railway .We also travelled along the Blacon Greenway and Cycle track created post 1992 on the old trackway which is part of the National Cycle Route [5]

Before leaving this site we look video footage and stills of the old Parade shops and the new developments at the Enterprise Centre before capturing Holy Trinity Church which replaced St Chad's Church Hall when it was consecrated in 1960.

Our penultimate flight was over Church Hall Close the site of the former St Chad's Church Hall .The foundation stone was laid here in 1929 by Dr Padgett, Bishop of Chester

Whilst airborne we couldn't leave without filming the Blacon Railway Cottages which were built in the mid-1890s for the railway workers at the nearby Blacon Station.

Once again we thank Alan Smith [BHG Chair] and Lee Bennett from Leaf Productions who are currently editing all the video footage and digital photos before we publish them. Additionally, for also helping us in our quest for more knowledge about our Blacon history.

