

The Badsey Society Committee Members 2004

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The Bottom Line...

If you are attending the Civil War Talk at the Church on Friday 12th November then feel free to take along a cushion to make the wooden pews a little more comfortable.

And Finally...

Membership Subscriptions for 2005 are due in January. The cost is £1 per adult, 50p per child, or £2.50 family membership.

Please do not send cash through the post. Cheques should be made payable to: The Badsey Society. Please send or hand your membership fee to The Membership Secretary, Will Dallimore or, if more convenient, to another Committee member who will forward your membership fee. If you live outside Badsey and Aldington, please enclose a SAE for your membership card.

The SPINKS Family
The Willows, 8A High Street, Badsey

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**THE
BADSEY
SOCIETY**

**Newsletter
No. 10
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The Society is just 2½ years old and in that time we have produced two publications. Not bad for a youngster! We hope that you have both copies on your bookshelf, but if you have not, then it's not too late. The books (*A Brief History of Badsey and Aldington* by T C Sparrow, 2002, price £5, and *Heads and Tales, A History of Badsey Schools*, by Maureen Spinks, 2004, price £6) can be bought either at The Spar Supermarket in Badsey or direct from Terry or Maureen (contact details overleaf). Why not buy a copy for your relatives for Christmas? For a full report of the launch of *Heads and Tales*, see below. If you want to try and win a colour print of Ian Gibson's painting of the old school, just a reminder that quiz entries (see www.badsey.org.uk\Society) have to be in by 7 pm on 22nd October.

Round-Up of Events from August to September 2004

The gods looked kindly on us the evening of Friday 6th August for the **Village History Walk**. After several days of very stormy weather, we were concerned that no one would turn up. But the sun came out and so did you! Information sheets were handed out and around 40 people listened to a short introductory talk in the back garden of the Manor. Everyone then enjoyed a most pleasant stroll along the High Street and Mill Lane looking at the houses in conjunction with the 1901 census. Extra interest was provided when Tony Jerram and Chris Smith kindly permitted access to their properties. As this event was so successful, we hope to repeat it next year in a different area of the village.

The **School History Book Launch** went with a swing at Badsey First School on Saturday 25th September. Maureen Spinks, the author, spoke to a packed Hall of 200 people. Margaret Amos, daughter of Frank Amos, Headteacher 1913-1944, was in attendance. Other guests included Jane Binyon and Edmund Gray, the great-niece and great-nephew of Charles Binyon, who travelled from Oxford for the occasion. They were delighted to meet so many people with fond memories of their Uncle Charles. A full report of the launch with photographs may be seen at www.badsey.org.uk\Society. Headteacher Elizabeth Spencer, herself a former pupil, kindly opened up the whole school for tours of the classrooms. Former pupils were delighted to be able to visit their old classrooms and see the new extensions since their schooldays. Current pupils acted as guides and impressed the older generation with their skills with the new inter-active whiteboards; the montage of old photos produced on screen were very popular. →

Guests were also amused to see 1960s footage of a school fete and sports day, and were interested to listen to oral recordings of eight people in their 80s and 90s talk about their schooldays. The evening ended with the tolling of the old school bell, removed in 1930 as it was unsafe. It now resides at the blacksmith's and was last heard in 1977 at the Jubilee celebrations.

Future Events in 2004

- Fri 22nd Oct** As part of the **150th Birthday Celebrations**, Headteacher Mrs Elizabeth Spencer is kindly allowing people to visit the school for an Open Morning, 9.30-12 noon, to see a 21st century school in action. This will be followed in the afternoon, 2-3 pm by a tea party for former pupils and staff. If you have not already done so, and would like to attend the tea party, please contact Mrs Spencer on 830325.
- Fri 12th Nov** **Lecture on the Civil War in Worcestershire** by Malcolm Atkin, with particular reference to the Vale of Evesham, at St. James' Church, Badsey, 7.30pm, Members Free, Non-Members £1
- Sat 4th Dec** Badsey Society Stand at **Badsey First School Christmas Fayre**

Events in 2005 to be decided, but will almost certainly include a Village Walk (possibly Aldington) and at least one lecture. If you have a special desire for an event to be covered (or can offer assistance), please let us know before our next Committee Meeting on Wednesday 3rd November.

Badsey and the English Civil War

The year is 1645; the date 26th May. This was no normal day for the residents of Badsey and Aldington. As they went about their daily toil, one of the most dramatic battles in the only civil war ever to have been fought on English soil took place just a couple of miles away. Colonel Edward Massey led the parliamentary troops "in a storm of fire and leaden hail" as he attacked Evesham from the north, crossing the Twyford Bridge at Offenham and forming up on Green Hill. Meanwhile, a second contingent stormed Evesham Bridge from across the river at Bengeworth. The fighting was bitter and there is no doubt that the people of Badsey and Aldington would have heard the musket and cannon fire. Perhaps some of their men-folk were involved in the battle and they were concerned for their safety.

The villagers would have known that events were building up to a climax as demands had come from both sides for supplies. The Royalists demanded supplies of horses, carts and food, and Colonel Massey prepared for his planned Battle of Evesham by scouring the surrounding countryside for

materials; for example, householders in Fladbury were forced to supply ladders and boards to help cross the wide defence ditches.

Worcestershire was the scene of both the first and last serious engagements of the Civil War. Its involvement was very great because it was on the direct route between Wales and London or rather, between Wales and Oxford, the Royalist headquarters. It was also of economic importance as a supply centre for both agricultural and manufacturing products. The county supplied both men and materials for the war effort, for example, shoes from Evesham. The production of perry and tobacco in the Vale of Evesham also, no doubt, provided some comfort to the troops.

Which side would you have been on? King or Parliament? Worcestershire was known as the "faithful" county, loyal to King Charles I, but it was not as simple as that. As always, there was a more complex pattern of loyalties based on religious belief, local grievances and loyalties, general economics, mistrust. Worcestershire was secured for the King at the beginning of 1643; it remained under Royalist control until the very end of the First Civil War in 1646; in 1651, Worcester was chosen as the final stand of Charles II. However, the loyalty of the people of Evesham was questionable. They were resentful at having to feed the king's army and garrison in the town, and there was still considerable resentment at the level of Ship Money Tax that the town had been forced to pay in 1636 (among the nine highest rated towns in the country).

Who lived in Badsey then? The Knights and Hartwells, prolific for so many generations down to the present day, had yet to arrive in the village. Some of the main inhabitants in the 17th century were families by the name of Pigeon, Badsey, Smyth, George, Grove. We are fortunate in Badsey that a Protestation Return of February 1642 survives. This return provides the nearest there is (for the next 200 years) to a widespread census of adult males. All males over the age of 18 throughout the country were required to take an oath to swear allegiance to the Protestant religion and to Parliament. Over 80 names are listed for Badsey and Aldington which gives us some idea of the total population. It is likely that the parish had between 200 and 300 inhabitants at that time.

I hope that this little article has helped to whet your appetite for what should be an extremely interesting talk. We hope that a good many of you will be able to come along to hear Malcolm Atkin's expert views, our second talk from an outside speaker. Malcolm has written a book about the Civil War in Worcestershire, and he will be making particular reference to the Vale of Evesham; we hope that he may be able to give us some inkling of how the residents of mid 17th century Badsey were affected by the Civil War.