

## Committee Members

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## 2007 Membership Subscription

Membership Subscriptions for 2007 are due now. The cost has been maintained at £1 per adult, 50p per child, or £2.50 family membership. We appreciate that some of you have already paid your subscription for 2007; if this is the case, please ignore this message. Cheques should be made payable to: The Badsey Society. Please send your membership fee to Terry Sparrow or, if more convenient, to another Committee member who will forward your membership fee.

Please note that, for the purposes of administration only, names and addresses of all members are stored on computer. In compliance with the Data Protection Act, this information will not be passed on to any third party. If you have any objection to your data being stored, please contact the Secretary.

A happy New Year to all our members.

## Round-Up of Events October to January

- **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2006** – Around 35 people turned up on a cold winter's evening for a talk at the church by Colonel John Lowles about the Worcestershire Regiment.
- **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2007** – Hot off the press photos of the computer training session on Tuesday (see inside for details).

## Future Events

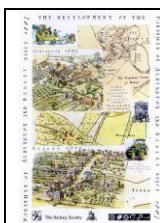
- **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006** – Day School on Enclosure Records, 10–3.30, Badsey Remembrance Hall. **BOOKINGS CLOSED.**
- **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2007** – Annual General Meeting, 7.30 pm, Badsey Remembrance Hall, followed by an opportunity to see an amazing collection of aerial photographs of Badsey and Aldington taken by Richard Phillips in August 2006. Please come along and give us your ideas about events you would like to see the Society hold. Then relax over a cup of tea or coffee and have your bird's-eye view of the village.
- **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2007** – End of Enclosure Project Evening (see details below – invitation and reply slip in Project Newsletter recently circulated).
- **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2007** – Badsey Flower Show.

**200**  
**COME TO A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!**  
**1807-2007**

**200 YEARS OF BADSEY'S HISTORY  
AND THE FIRST DETAILED MAP OF THE PARISH  
BADSEY FIRST SCHOOL  
SATURDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH - 7.30 pm (doors open 7 pm)**

## Bill Moore

We are sorry to report the death of a former member, Bill Moore. Bill came to live in Badsey, at 14 Chapel Street, 25 years ago; for his wife, Doreen, it was a return to her roots, as she came from an old Badsey family, the Ballards. Later, they moved to 8 Binyon Close. Following Doreen's death in November 2005, Bill went to live with their daughter at Bristol, where he died a year later.



### Have you bought your Badsey Society Tea-Towel?

A little later than scheduled, the long-awaited Badsey Society tea-towel arrived in Badsey just before Christmas. Based on the 200-year-old Enclosure Maps and aerial photos of the village, the tea-towel is a novel idea for a present. Just £5 only, it is available from The Spar.

## Badsey suffers from a volcanic eruption

Hands up who watched the "Timewatch" programme on the TV last Friday? Or were you watching "Celebrity Big Brother" on the other side? If you DID watch "Timewatch", you will have some inkling as to why I think a volcanic eruption which occurred in Iceland in 1783 has any relevance at all to Badsey.

The eruption of Laki began on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1783 and lasted for eight months. Just over two weeks later, a deadly fog entered Britain. The naturalist, Gilbert White of Selborne, described it as "the peculiar haze or smokey fog that prevailed ... unlike anything known within the memory of man." Local newspapers up and down the country reported the freak weather conditions. A very hot summer of 1783 was followed by record-breaking cold winters of 1783-4 and 1784-5, the severest Britain had seen for 250 years. In addition, millions of tons of toxic fumes were released, suffocating many in the process.

The Icelandic eruption has been forgotten in all but its mother country, but the consequences were extreme. It is estimated that 23,000 people died in Britain as a result of the extreme weather conditions and the toxic haze which enveloped the land. This cloud was resident for two to three years after the eruption and led to, or accentuated, the extremes of heat and cold. The "Timewatch" scientists reported that parish records up and down the country tell the same story of increased mortality. I was intrigued to see whether this was paralleled in Badsey. Amazingly, this was the case.

In the decade preceding 1783, the number of burials in Badsey varied between one and four each year (remember, the population then was only about 300). But in 1783 there were five burials, in 1784 there were ten and in 1785 there were eleven. The number of burials then declined in the following years. One would normally have thought nothing of it, imagining that a serious disease had afflicted several people that particular year. But it is a sobering thought when one realises that this pattern was replicated throughout the country. Not even in this rural backwater could people hide from the toxic haze. The Knight family lost three members within four months. One-year-old Hannah Knight was buried on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1783. Just a week later, her 83-year-old

grandfather, Samuel Knight of Aldington, was buried on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1783. Samuel's daughter-in-law, Ann Knight, was buried on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1784, aged 51.

We consider ourselves immune to natural disasters. But history warns us we that should not be so complacent.

## The Badsey Society goes back to School

On Tuesday evening, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, ten brave souls signed up for a computer training session held at Badsey First School. For most, it was a surprise to see the vast array of equipment on offer to school pupils of today: a suite of laptop computers and interactive whiteboards in every classroom. Head Teacher, Elizabeth Spencer, kindly allowed us to hire the Hall and equipment for the evening. After an introduction and demonstration by Richard Phillips on how to get the most out of the Badsey website, the participants were off, clicking away, each with their own laptop. A most enjoyable evening was had by all, and the participants had to be torn away from their keyboards at the end of evening. Log on to [www.badsey.net](http://www.badsey.net) to find out more about your village in the past.



Back to school for these Badsey Society members (including the Head Teacher)!



Parish Councillor Pete Smith takes a laid-back approach to using the laptop, whilst wife Liz, and Gill Stewart are doing well.



Maureen Spinks offers a helping hand in how to use the digitised Aldington Map on the Worcesterhsire Tithe and Inclosure Map website.



No, your eyes don't deceive you! It really is our illustrious Treasurer, that famous non-computer user Terry Sparrow, in front of the keyboard!