

Farewells - Bob and Bet Butler, Phillip Castle

We are saddened by the loss of three of our members, and also by the death of John Beasley, the husband of a member, Wendy Beasley. Our heartfelt sympathies go to all the families concerned.

Bob Butler (1923-2010) and Bet Butler (1927-2010) – news has just come in of the sad death of Bet, just three months after the death of Bob. Bob died in Evesham Community Hospital in April, and Bet died on 12th July whilst visiting relatives in Norfolk. Bob was born in Evesham, but moved to Chalcroft, Badsey, in 1928, and attended Badsey Council School. Bob entered into the spirit of research for the school history published in 2004 and had many a tale to tell. Bob, and his brother-in-law, Lionel Knight, were a roguish pair as they regaled stories of their schooldays whilst we sat round Bob and Bet's kitchen table drinking a tot of something. One of Bob's favourite playground games whilst at school was "Jack on the Mopstick", a game which would surely be banned today! It involved two teams of about eight. The largest boy stood against the wall whilst the others bent in front of him. The opposing team then had to jump on to someone's back, the idea being to get all the team on the other's backs. The team that got the most on won the match. Do some of our older members remember that game?

On leaving school, Bob went to work in the office at Espley's the builders in Evesham. He was then offered a job working in the office of Mr Cockerton, Fruit Grower, at The Firs, Badsey. Bob served with the army during the Second World War. After the war, he had several jobs but his main job was working as a salesman for National Cash Registers. Bob married Betty Gould in 1948 and they had a daughter, Anne. They lived firstly at Horsebridge Avenue and then moved to Manor Close in 1971 when the bungalow was first built. Bob and Bet celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in December 2008.

Phillip Castle (1936-2010) - although not active in the Badsey Society, Phil was one of our first members, being membership No 19. Phil was originally from Pebworth. He married Margaret Wells in 1962 and they lived at Wickhamford, moving to Badsey in 1983. He continued to live on Bretforton Road following Margaret's death in February 2008.

Committee Members

Mike Lovatt Chairman	Elm Cottage, Main Street, Aldington	01386 830755
Maureen Spinks Secretary	The Willows, 8A High Street, Badsey	01386 831154 history@badsey.net
Terry Sparrow Treasurer	36 Brewers Lane, Badsey	01386 833368
Steve Bucknall Committee Member	35 Seward Road, Badsey	01386 832724
Will Dallimore Committee Member	30 Horsebridge Avenue, Badsey	01386 831012 editor@badsey.org.uk
Ian Gibson Committee Member	83 Bretforton Road, Badsey	01386 834468
Valerie Magan Committee Member	21 Sands Lane, Badsey	01386 832100
Jane Neill Committee Member	Fircroft, Main Street, Aldington	01386 830301
Richard Phillips Committee Member	4 High Street, Badsey	01386 831112 editor@badsey.net
Neil Thould Committee Member	1 High Street, Badsey	01386 830160



THE
BADSEY
SOCIETY

Newsletter
No 33
July 2010

We heard last month of the wonderful news that we have been awarded a grant of £21,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for our project, "The Last Market Gardener". We've got lots of exciting things lined up for the next two years: the publication of Terry Sparrow's book on the rise and fall of market gardening, Will Dallimore's DVD on a similar theme, walks and talks based on the 1911 census, and a project with Badsey First School to produce an outdoor mural. As with our Enclosure Map Project, we shall be sending out a regular progress report Newsletter to the whole community. This will be arriving through your letter-box at the same time as the Society Newsletter, so please look at that Newsletter for full details of the project.

Round-Up of Events April to June 2010

- Talk on the new Geopark Way, 16th April – It was a nail-biting hour or two just before the start of the scheduled talk. The person who was due to have spoken phoned at 4.45 to cancel! Fortunately, the offices of the Earth Heritage Trust were still open and a lovely lady called Moira Jenkins agreed to hop in her car and come and talk to us. In order to give Moira a chance to grab a bar snack, we began the evening with a showing of the asparagus DVD on the big screen and impromptu talks by members of the Badsey Society Committee. In the second half, Moira spoke knowledgeably about the work of the Earth Heritage Trust and gave a description of the new Geopark Way, a 117-mile trail which runs from Staffordshire down to Gloucestershire.
- Whit Walk, Thursday 10th June 2010 – For this year's walk, we ventured outside the parish boundary and explored Evesham, led by an excellent Town Guide, Helen Piper. Some 40 people attended, with 37 going to Raphael's for a buffet supper. There was a real buzz in the restaurant and the departure from the traditional Badsey walk was voted a great success. At the end of the meal, Maureen Spinks officially handed over to Terry Sparrow the cheque she had received in that morning's post from Heritage Lottery Fund.



Helen Piper talks about Eof's Statue



Members listen to Helen at the Abbey Bell Tower



Supper at Raphael's Restaurant – David and Doreen Jack and Graham Cudd

Wickhamford Manor – New members, open-air theatre and a cautionary tale about bell-ringing

The Society had a stand at the Wickhamford Festival in June which provoked a lot of interest; we have now trebled our membership in Wickhamford (from two to six!). A big welcome to our new members. We are hoping in the future to have a small section about Wickhamford on the Badsey website.



When summer arrives, I always think of beautiful summer evenings watching a play in the grounds of Wickhamford Manor. What better way to spend the time than walking across the meadow to the Manor, soaking up the atmosphere, then walking back to Badsey, arriving at The Wheatsheaf corner just as the first of the cars are driving back. After a gap of a year or two, the Ryan-Bells are welcoming back Heartbreak Productions for their showing of *Love in Shakespeare* on Saturday 7th August.

I wonder how many people realise that Wickhamford Manor, and several people connected with Badsey, appear in the writings of the architectural historian, novelist, biographer and diarist, James Lees-Milne (1908-1997)? Baptised George James Henry Lees-Milne at St John the Baptist, Wickhamford, on 5th September 1908, James grew up at Wickhamford Manor. He became the first Historic Buildings Secretary of the National Trust and, largely through his efforts, properties such as Charlecote were acquired by the National Trust. He often returned to stay with his parents, taking the train to Evesham, bus to Badsey, and then walking across the fields to Wickhamford.

In the first chapter of James Lees-Milne's autobiography, *Another Self*, he introduces Mrs Emily Hartwell, the churchwarden (the widow of Badsey-born William Hartwell) and Norris Haines (born at Aldington and the Lees-Milne chauffeur for over 60 years):

Mrs Hartwell began peeling the bell a quarter of an hour before service. She was sexton, vergar and cleaner combined. She was an aged widow who gallantly brought up an orphaned brood of undisciplined grandchildren. She was tiny, about 4 foot nothing, with skin and sinews creased and stretched like the parchment leaves of a family bible. She was never to be seen – but once – without a huge hat which practically concealed her like an umbrella. The brim was covered with leaves and cherries of purple celluloid, which her grandchildren would pop during those brief intervals when she dozed off in her pew....

Although really far too old and frail, Mrs Hartwell refused to relinquish the bell rope with its fluffy stripes in red, white and blue, called I believe the "sally". She regarded the pulling of it as her sacred duty, which she would surrender to no one, until the breath, as she put it, was out of her body. Bell ringing, even with one rope, necessitates a sense of rhythm in the ringer. Mrs Hartwell lacked this sense. Occasionally she would pull too soon, or too late. The rope thereupon gave a jerk and if she failed to let go – it was not in her nature to let go of things – she would be swept up the belfry. When this happened she would either cling to the rope until it came down again, or she would swing on it until her feet touched a ladder kept permanently fixed to the wall to enable workmen or builders to go up the tower. With astonishing agility for a person of her years she would scramble down the ladder and resume ringing as though nothing had happened.

Once, having been carried upwards, she failed for some reason to swing across to the ladder. Owing to the unusual velocity of her ascent the whole mechanism of the bell

became dislocated, and the rope did not come down again. Mrs Hartwell was left clinging to a small fraction of the fluffy part which was stuck in the hole of the ceiling some 30 feet above the ground. She looked like one of those mediaeval saints in a state of levitation. Beneath a voluminous skirt and petticoats her button boots could be observed going through the motions of someone trying desperately and ineffectually to swim. The impact of her poor head against the ceiling had dislodged the purple umbrella of cherries, which floated pathetically to the floor. Yet no cry of alarm escaped her. The congregation anxiously gathered under the tower and began shouting contradictory directions how she was on no account to let go. With much presence of mind the Vicar ran to fetch Haines, our chauffeur, to come to the rescue. Eventually Haines, when found, was able by climbing through the trap-door in the ceiling to release the rope, which had got jammed in the wheel of the bell. Slowly Mrs Hartwell was lowered into the font. Quite undeterred by this mishap she shook herself, put on her hat and began pulling the rope all over again.

Events in 2010

Saturday 24th July 2010 – Badsey Flower Show



Launch of "The Last Market Gardener"
Market gardening quiz
Display of market gardening implements



Folders to browse through focussing on market gardening families of a hundred years ago: BALLARD, COLLETT, CRANE, FIELD, GEDEN, HALL, HARTWELL, JELFS, JONES, KEEN, KNIGHT, PERKINS, SEARS and many others.

If you have any documents or photos that we haven't seen, please let us know, as they may be useful for our forthcoming publications.

Don't forget Entry Night next Tuesday, 20th July, at Badsey First School.

Wednesday 6th October 2010

Coach Trip to The National Archives, Kew

Depart Badsey 7 am, depart Kew 5 pm

Free trip to London to visit The National Archives.
See enclosed form for details.

Friday 19th November 2010

Members' Evening, 7.30 pm, The Wheatsheaf

A chance to meet other members of The Badsey Society for a drink and chat. Items from The Badsey Archive will be on display – come and see what has been donated to the Society since 2002.