

Robert Hancock, Porcelain Painter

In our last Newsletter, we mentioned the porcelain painter, Robert Hancock, who was referred to in a recent publication as Badsey-born. But the problem was, we were not convinced that the Robert Hancock who was baptised at Badsey on 7th April 1731, was THE Robert Hancock. None of our readers came forward to confirm or deny this but, just before Christmas, Jane Neill and Maureen Spinks paid a fortuitous visit to the Worcester Porcelain Museum to look at their archive catalogue. Who better person to ask than Wendy Cook, the Curator. This was her answer: "My trusty team of volunteers have done some searching on the Hancock question. We have Cook's book [*The Life and Work of Robert Hancock*, Cyril Cook, 1948] and the book written by Ballantyne [*Robert Hancock and his Works*, A Randal Ballantyne, 1885]. Neither are very conclusive, but recent researches by someone writing a dictionary of Worcester porcelain artists and craftsmen suggested that our Hancock was born in Burslem in 1729. He was apprenticed in Birmingham in 1746, then moved to Battersea, London, in 1753 and to Worcester in 1756. Sorry the Badsey Hancock seems to be another person with the same name." So, reader, beware! When studying your own family histories, check and double-check your facts. Whilst the internet can be a wonderful resource, be aware of where the information has come and don't assume that everything you see is the truth!

Tony Jerram Award

We were delighted with the response to the annual Tony Jerram award which will be presented by Mrs Barbara Jerram at the Annual General Meeting. Six individuals were nominated, so the Committee had a difficult task on its hand, but a decision has been made. We would like to thank all those who took the time to complete a nomination form. If your nominee is not successful this year, we would be happy to receive another nomination for the same person next year.

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THE
BADSEY
SOCIETY

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A Happy New Year to all our members! Membership is booming. We ended the year with a total of 224 members, the largest number ever. If you have yet to pay your subs for 2011, please send to Terry Sparrow or bring along to the AGM in February.

Round-Up of Events October to December 2010

- October/November, Trial Census Walks - Last year, a team of willing volunteers transcribed the Badsey, Aldington and Wickhamford 1911 census. Over a period of about six weeks, some of the volunteers walked the route of the 1911 census enumerator in stages, checking the present-day addresses of houses listed in the census as a trial run for census walks in March (see below).



Who lived here in 1911? Census walks at Badsey (Brewers Lane) and at Aldington (Mill Lane).

- Members' Evening, Friday 19th November – Around 40 members were present for a members' evening in the back room of The Wheatsheaf. Some of our members had indicated that they never have the chance to get together on an informal basis, hence the decision to hold this event. As well as the chance to drink and chat, members were able to view a selection of items from the growing Badsey Archive.

Future Events

- Friday 11th February – AGM (new committee members welcome), presentation of Tony Jerram Award, talk, tea and biscuits, 7.30 pm, Badsey Remembrance Hall. After the business part of the meeting has finished, Valerie Magan will talk about Evesham Gaol and the commencement of the police force in the town and surrounding villages.
- Weekend of 25th-27th March – Programme of activities relating to the 1911 census, to coincide with the 2011 census. We shall go live on the Badsey website with transcripts of the 1911 census and organise walks:
 - Sat 26th Mar, 11 – Walk 1 Badsey (meet by Badsey Church door)
 - Sat 26th Mar, 2.30 – Walk 2 Badsey (meet by Badsey Church door)
 - Sun 27th Mar, 10.30 – Walk 3 Aldington (meet by Lokos sign, Main St, opp Hillside)
 - Sun 27th Mar, 2.30 – Walk 4 Wickhamford (meet at Wickhamford Church)
- Saturday 21st May 2011 – Launch of Terry Sparrow's book.
- Wednesday 22nd June 2011, 7 pm – Whit Walk: a stroll round the centre of Badsey looking at houses featured in the 1911 census and re-enactment of the official opening of the fountain in the High Street to commemorate the coronation of King George V exactly 100 years.

The Next Publication

Terry Sparrow has completed writing his book about the rise and fall of market gardening, and Richard Phillips has started on the design. The book now has a title: *Digging for a Living*. It's not too late to become a subscriber (please send £5 to Terry, cheques payable to The Badsey Society). As a subscriber, your name will be published at the back of the book and you will be invited to the launch, which will take place on Saturday 21st May.

The Badsey Archive

In our quest to decide what best to do with our growing collection of books, archive material and museum items, we have paid visits to other organisations. In October, Jane Neill, Mike Lovatt, Valerie Magan and Maureen Spinks went to see the organisers of the Chedham's Yard restoration project (www.chedhamsyard.org.uk). This is an early 19th century blacksmith's and wheelwright's workshop in the village of Wellesbourne, Warwickshire, run by seven generations of the Chedham family, the last of whom, Bill Chedham, still lives in the village. Restoration work is being undertaken in a warehouse outside the village but, later this year, all the items will be returned to the yard. The work of restoring, photographing and cataloguing each item, undertaken by a dedicated team of volunteers, is inspirational. The project won the BBC Restoration Village in 2006 and it is planned to open the yard to the public in the summer of 2011.

Jane Neill and Maureen Spinks also visited Worcester Porcelain Museum to see how they deal with their cataloguing. We were impressed with their website, which gives easy-to-read information about all the items in their collection.



Left: Photographing the items. Centre: Bill Chedham. Right: Jane Neill (right) at Worcester Porcelain.

As a result of our fact-finding mission, we are buzzing with ideas. Our hope, ultimately, is to have a permanent home for the collection but, in the meantime, we are creating a virtual museum. We have commissioned Will Phillips (son of Richard, so a safe pair of hands!) of Stapleford Design to design a website for us, which will go live later this year. In the meantime, there is a lot of work to be done. See below for how you can help.

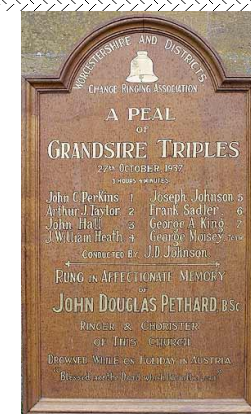


If you feel you can help, please ring Jane Neill on 01386 830301 or email familyneill@gmx.co.uk

The Badsey Archive – No computer expertise required for these tasks! Neat Writers and Measurers, please read on! We have made a start on cataloguing the growing Badsey Archive. It is now time to put a unique reference number on every single item (every tool, book, letter, deed). This can be done either in your own home at any time convenient to yourself, or a morning or afternoon or two at Jane's house. All you need is an HB pencil and the ability to transcribe a number correctly on to the right document in an easily readable format. At the same time, we need to add information to the catalogue such as the measurements of the object and the physical description. Tools – You've probably seen some items in our collection of market gardening tools. We need help in cleaning the items and identifying exactly what they are, manufacturer, approximately when made, etc.

The Pethard Family

In the past year or so, the name of Pethard (once fairly common in Badsey) has come to our attention on a couple of occasions. The first was when Julian Pugh, the historian of Worcester City Football Club, contacted the Badsey website to find out more information about John Douglas Pethard (1913-1937), as he was writing a series of articles for the Programme about players who had played one game only for the Club. Then last year, one of the visitors to the Society's stand at the Flower Show was Frances Knight of London, who is descended from a different branch of the Pethard family. Frances was staying in the Alcester area on a family history hunt for her Sreeves ancestors and it was only a last-minute decision to make a detour to Badsey to try and find out more about her Pethard ancestors.



Doug Pethard was only 23 when he died in 1937. A bright lad who graduated from Birmingham University, Doug was a keen footballer and played once for Worcester City in the 1932-33 season. Doug was tragically drowned in Austria in 1937 when he and a fellow teacher, Arthur, were on holiday at Igls near Innsbruck. Doug's cousin, Doreen Moore (née Ballard, 1922-2005), wrote movingly about his death: "... he arrived at the Hotel, sat down to write what was to be his last letter home, saying, 'This place is the nearest to Heaven I'll ever see' then, with Arthur, went for a cooling swim in the lake. He went down with cramp which Arthur was unaware of until it was too late. His body was recovered and he was buried in the tiny churchyard in Igls, with apparently the entire village attending. An English vicar took the service; he later visited Badsey. My aunt was too ill to travel and in fact never saw his grave. She told me she would never have been able to leave him had she gone out. I think her mind didn't want to accept he was in a grave. I eventually found his grave in 1970 and it was still being looked after, even though all those years had passed. A candle is still lit on it on saints' days." Doug had been a choir boy and later organist at Badsey Church; after his death, there was a peal of Grandsire Triples in his memory and a commemorative plaque was erected near the belfry. Doug's life may have been tragically short, but he is remembered in the annals of Worcester City Football Club as well as in Badsey. I wonder if his grave is still cared for. If any of you visit the Innsbruck area, please look out for Doug's grave; it would be lovely to have a photograph of his last resting-place.

Our second Pethard family concerns one of our newest members of The Badsey Society, Frances Knight. Frances is the granddaughter of Rose Beatrice Pethard (1885-1955), whose father, William (1862-1886), died of diabetes at Claybrook, aged only 24, when Rose was just one year old. William was the son of James Pethard (c1834-1900), known as Jim, who was employed initially as carter at Aldington Manor and later became farm bailiff at Claybrook Farm, Badsey. Jim was featured in Arthur Savory's book, *Grain and Chaff from an English Manor*, Chapter IV being entitled, *The Head Carter*, which began: "Jim was my first head carter, and he dearly loved a horse. He had, as the saying is, forgotten more about horses than most men ever knew, and what he didn't know wasn't worth knowing." Savory rarely gave full names to the characters in his book but, because of our knowledge of the people living in the village at the time, we were able to confirm to Frances that this was her ancestor.