

## Events in 2014

- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2014 – Badsey Flower Show. Once again we shall have a stand at this, the 112<sup>th</sup> annual show.
- 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> September 2014 – Festival of Churches exhibition in connection with the centenary of the outbreak of WW1, St James' Church.

### Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014 St James' Church, Badsey, 7.30 pm

#### AN EVENING WITH THE SLADDEN FAMILY OF SEWARD HOUSE LETTERS FROM A BADSEY FAMILY IN 1914

Members of The Badsey Society will play the parts of the Sladden family and read from their letters written in 1914. We shall hear from them in the weeks leading up to the war and in the first few months of the war.

We are delighted that Patsy Miller (née Sladden) and her husband, Anthony, will be joining us on the evening to take the parts of Mr & Mrs Sladden. Patsy is the great-great-niece of Julius Sladden. Her great-grandfather, Dilnot Sladden, who emigrated to New Zealand in the 1860s, was the older brother of Julius.

Tea and coffee will be served in the interval.

Entrance fee: £2.50 members, £5 non-members. Profits will go to The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and The British Red Cross.

- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 1914 – Film Night: clips from films and videos featuring Badsey; back room of The Wheatsheaf, 7.30 pm.
- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 1914 – A talk on “Wickhamford through the Ages” by Tom Locke and a chance to see The Badsey Society's new archive room; Badsey Remembrance Hall, 7.30 pm.

**Membership Fees 2014** - Membership fees due, £5 per person, cheques payable to The Badsey Society. Please forward to Tony Wood, Treasurer, at the address below, or via Paypal at <http://www.badsey.net/bsp/subs.htm>.

#### Committee Members

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THE  
BADSEY  
SOCIETY

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It's almost time for Badsey Flower Show again – we hope to see lots of you at our stand. And don't forget entry night on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at Badsey First School.

#### Round-Up of Events April to June 2014

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May/Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2014, Asparafest** – Once again, the Badsey Society had a stand at Asparafest, the asparagus and music festival at Ashdown Farm, which is the brainchild of Nigel Smith, landlord of The Fleece and also a Badsey Society member.

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June, Midsummer Walk** - A wonderful mid summer's evening enticed around 30 members to meet at Willersey Duck Pond for a pleasant walk in sunshine from St Peter's Church, Willersey, to St Nicholas' Church, Saintbury. Before setting off, Jane Neill told us of an incident at a Willersey parish council meeting in the early 1900s where the councillors were discussing filling in the duck pond. They were interrupted by a member of the public who appeared at the meeting with the pond's resident ducks tucked under his arms; he enquired what they were going to do with the ducks. Needless to say, the pond was saved!

An abundance of 5-spot Burnet moths were spotted in long grasses of the Butterfly Meadow. Walking over the old ridge and furrow fields was a reminder of how once the surrounding land was tilled using oxen pulling a wooden plough. Inside Saintbury Church, we viewed 17<sup>th</sup> Century wall paintings, recently discovered and preserved by the Churches Conservation Trust. Original Saxon architecture was seen externally, in the form of steps and a blocked up doorway.

The path back down to Willersey offered panoramic views over Bredon Hill and beyond. We traversed an ancient cherry orchard where the trees still bear old grease bands, preventing butterfly and moth caterpillars migrating up the trunk and eventually into the cherries. The war memorial at Willersey mentions Squadron Leader Henry Maudslay DFC, once a resident of Fox Hill Manor, who was killed whilst taking part in the RAF Dambusters bombing raid of WW2. The New Inn was the last port of call for a few thirsty members who rested before making their way home accompanied by a colourful sunset. Many thanks to Jane and Valerie for an excellent evening.



The group assembles at Willersey Duck Pond for the start of the walk to Saintbury.



Brian, Will, Richard, Mike.



Jane and Valerie.

## First World War Memories Sought – Play your part in documenting history

Last chance to submit articles about stories of World War I (see previous Newsletters). Articles should not exceed 1000 words; photographs may be used as illustrations. Please submit your article either via email to [history@badsey.net](mailto:history@badsey.net) or send to Maureen Spinks, The Willows, 8A High Street, Badsey, WR11 7EW, by 24<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

### “Am Drams” in 1920s and 1930s Badsey

Thanks to Pat Goldstraw for loaning us her photo albums which had originally belonged to her parents (Pat’s father was Frederick Barnard who married Rose Crisp in 1928). They include photos of a number of well-known Badsey families. Pat loaned the albums primarily for the First World War photos, but some other photos caught our eye as well. The Barnards and Crisps were into “Am Drams” (amateur dramatics) and the albums contain beautiful photographs of some of the productions.



The photo above shows the cast of *The Winter's Tale* in which Badsey was the winning team in a production put on at Worcester in June 1929.



The cast of *Floradora*, which includes Leslie Poulter (far right) with Deirdre Anderson and Kathleen Poulter (far left) with Leslie Byrd. The Poulters were the parents of Badsey Society members, John and Gerard.



Lily Keen (later Crawford) in *Floradora*, 1931.

## THE SLADDEN FAMILY DURING WWI

Many of our older members will remember the Sladden family of Seward House. The family had lived there for over a hundred years and it was only in October 1984 that the youngest in the family, Miss Juliet Elizabeth Sladden, died at the age of 86. After the death of Juliet, Seward House was sold and a huge archive of letters was deposited at Worcestershire Record Office. Many of these letters span the years of the First World War and will be featured in a special event to be held in the church on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September (see back page for details).



The story will begin on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1914, 111 days before war broke out. There was great excitement in the Sladden family as Arthur, the fifth in the family, was marrying Mary Williams, the daughter of a Welsh parson. A week after the wedding, he wrote from honeymoon in Cornwall to his sister, May.

*My dear May, I was very pleased to get your letter two days ago and have such a good account of the rest of that eventful day. As you say, this April must be made for us – it really is perfect, and you may be sure we are appreciating it to the full. I do hope that prospects will soon open out for Mela and Cyril so that another wedding won't have to be delayed very long. With much love to all from us both,  
Your loving brother, Arthur.*

Less than four months later, Arthur had joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and was sent to France. His younger brother, Cyril, had his marriage plans delayed for five years, and did not get to wed Alice Amelia Brown-Constable until the war had ended.

With just 12 days to go to war (although no one appreciated it at the time), George, No 6 in the family, wrote to his mother on 23<sup>rd</sup> July:

*My dear Mother, I have just finished prowling round the room and complaining to Kath that I have set out to write home and can find no matter for a letter. Today has been a most ordinary day, just like yesterday, just like tomorrow. Then comes the thought; why not talk of the course of an ordinary day just as much as an extraordinary one?*

He proceeded to give in full detail his early morning habits and concluded by saying:

*I see that the daily round will occupy much more than a single letter. About a dozen might cover it. One day I will continue from the point where I halt before the hat-stand and make the vexed choice between a variety of hats. Much love from your affectionate son, George M Sladden.*

George never did get to continue writing about his “ordinary day”. Within a fortnight, he was serving in His Majesty’s Army and his life was far from ordinary.

On the afternoon of Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914, Julius Sladden, who was visiting his sister in Kent, wrote to his wife, Eugénie: “Some stirring events are at hand and it seems almost certain that we shall be involved in a day or so.” Just a few hours later, at 11 pm that night, Britain declared war on Germany.

Please come and join us on 12<sup>th</sup> September to find out about the events of 1914 through the eyes of a Badsey family.