



THE BADSEY SOCIETY

Newsletter
No 92
April 2025

Friday 11th April 2025, Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, 7.30 pm

“Badsey 1934-2025 – The Changing Scene”

We are delighted that our very own Terry Sparrow has agreed to deliver this year’s annual Richard Phillips Memorial Lecture. Following on from his talk to the Badsey Society in May 2024, in which he recalled the history of Badsey up until the heyday of market gardening in the 1920s, Terry, 91 years young, will bring the story up to date with this talk. Terry’s knowledge about his home village is encyclopaedic, and his stories and anecdotes really bring bygone days to life. This is an evening not to be missed!

Friday 16th May 2025, Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, 7.30 pm

Nature in Badsey and Aldington

Jane Neill who, for the past few years has been writing the “Nature Notes” column in Community News, will give an illustrated talk on the flora and fauna to be found in Badsey and Aldington. We have a rich variety of wildlife – if you just look closely enough, you will see it!

Thursday 29th May 2025, 9.15 am, meet at The Wheatsheaf

Visit to Stourbridge Glass Museum and the Red House Glass Cone

Please join us for a visit to Stourbridge Glass Museum and Red House Glass Cone. The museum takes visitors on a journey back in time – learn about the origins of glass making in Stourbridge, discover the tools glass makers used, sit in a glass maker’s chair, and explore the museum’s extensive glass collections, some dating back 400 years. There is also a suite of digital interactive screens that give museum goers the chance to get creative and design their very own cameo glass before emailing it to themselves or a friend. The programme for the day and booking form are enclosed.

Friday 13th June 2025, Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, 7.30 pm

Sunday 15th June 2025, New Farm Nature Reserve, Evesham, 2 pm

“Roots in Time – the excavations at New Farm, Norton” + New Farm visit

On the Friday evening, Nina O’Hare from Worcestershire Archaeology and Archives will talk about the 2022 community excavation which investigated millennia of stories buried within the landscape at New Farm, Norton. Geophysical survey of the site had revealed an Iron Age or Romano-British settlement, trackways and possibly earlier prehistoric activity too. Thanks to the excavation, we now have a window into what really went on.

On the Sunday, join us for an afternoon stroll along the Skylark Trail (1 mile or 1½ miles) at New Farm. Meet Alan and Shirley Tutton at the end of the car park by the Valley Railway and take the waymarked path through the gate to the nature reserve – observe the wildlife and see where the prehistoric settlement and Romano-British farmstead lay.

Future event – Friday 4th July 2025, Garden party with the Chameleon Quintet, 7 pm

Membership Fees – Membership fees now due for 2025, still only £5 per person, pay by:

- Paypal – <http://www.badseysociety.uk/the-badsey-society/subscriptions>
- Bank transfer – Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-93-11, Account No 02105424 (Ref: Subs)
- Cheque payable to The Badsey Society or cash, send to Maureen Spinks (address below)

Maureen Spinks, Chairman	The Willows, 8A High Street, Badsey; 01386 831154; history@badsey.net
Shirley Tutton, Secretary	34 Seward Road, Badsey; 01386 831539; info@badsey.net
Treasurer	Vacancy
Committee Members: Helen Green, Andy Higgitt, Tom Locke, Jane Neill, Alan Tutton, Gill Woods	

As The Badsey Society enters its 24th year of existence, membership is buoyant and we have a full programme of events. The same committee and officers were elected at the AGM, but with the glaring omission of a Treasurer (any volunteers?). The death of Will Dallimore at the end of last year has left a large hole – an appreciation of his life may be read overleaf. As a tribute to Will, some of his films, made with brother, John, will be shown at the VE Day event in the church on 5th May (see our VE Day special inside).

Round-up of Events January to March 2025

Thursday 16th January 2025 – “Explore the Past” tour at The Hive, Worcester

Twelve people attended this tour, starting with the Historic Environment Record, then visited the finds’ cleaning and storage area to meet the conservator who was working on a large cartoon of the Nativity from the Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart & Saint Catherine of Alexandria, Droitwich. The tour ended with a visit to a strong room containing William Shakespeare’s marriage bond, documents going back to the reign of King Stephen, and a very amusing letter from an American passenger on the Titanic.

Friday 17th January – Evesham Quakers and the 17th-century English Revolution

Dr Stephen Roberts, who was Director of the History of Parliament Trust in London and is a vice-president of the Cromwell Association, gave a short but fascinating talk about Quakers in the 17th century. In 1655, during Oliver Cromwell’s rule, life in Evesham was shaken by an episode of disorder when Humphry Smith, a leader of the new sect called Quakers, visited the town. Dr Roberts looked at what happened and why and set this turbulent period in Evesham’s history in context.

Friday 7th February, AGM and presentation of Tony Jerram Award

At the 23rd AGM, 42 people were in attendance. At the conclusion of the business section, the winner of the Tony Jerram Award was announced as Will (posthumously) and John Dallimore. Between them, the two brothers have clocked up years of community service in the village. John was unable to be present at the AGM but was given the award the next day (see photo overleaf). Will’s film about Doug Deep (first aired at the AGM in 2013) was then shown.

After a short break, Alan Tutton gave a talk about “Lantern Slides of the Middle Eastern Campaign of WW1”. This was based on a collection of slides made by John William Marston, Ralph Bolland’s stepfather, during his time as a Medical Orderly/Nurse in the Royal Army Medical Corps, during which he nursed in field hospitals and hospital ships throughout the region. The slides, and the notes that accompany them, provide a wonderful snapshot of life in the area over a hundred years ago.

Friday 14th March, Witchcraft in Worcestershire – the Archaeological Evidence

The talk by Wayne Perkins on witchcraft proved extremely popular, with 37 members and 19 non-members present in the hall and six on Zoom. In 1690, four women were found guilty at Worcester Assizes of bewitching children to death. We now know that witch trials were rigged and that preconceptions of what constituted a ‘witch’ were based upon a stereotype; each of the confessions in the Worcester trial followed an almost identical narrative. Evidence suggests that few people ever actually practised the kind of witchcraft as depicted in popular pamphlets. But the perceived threats seemed very real.

William Edward Thomas Dallimore (1949-2024)

*Real village characters are rare these days,
They were once ten a penny.
Will was Badsey's very last,
Now he's left us without any.*

*It was a privilege to know him,
He was liked by everyone.
Will was Badsey from head to toe,
I can't believe he's gone.*

The above verses are the first and last of a poem, "A Will to make us Smile", by Brian Smith; they sum up what Will meant to so many people. Will spent all his life in Badsey, living almost all of the time in the house at Horsebridge Avenue where he died peacefully on 27th December, brother, John, at his side. At Badsey School, the late Pat Goldstraw, his first teacher, remembered him as a shy little boy – dressed very smartly in grey shorts, white shirt and tie – who wouldn't say boo to a goose. She was amazed and delighted when, in later life, her pupil produced wonderful films which made people laugh. During his working life, Will worked as a plumber and then as a painter and decorator. In leisure time, in addition to making films (he was Chairman of Evesham Movie Makers and then Tewkesbury Movie Makers), music played a huge part in Will's life. Together with brothers, John and George, and Linda Core, they formed a group which toured locally and entertained residents in care homes; in retirement, he took up the ukulele and joined the Harvington Ukulele Group. Local football was also important in Will's life, being a player, manager and referee. He started up Badsey United Football Club.



One of Will's main interests in the last two decades or so of his life was The Badsey Society, of which he was a founder member, subsequently Chairman and latterly Treasurer. He was one of the original Badsey website group when it was set up in 2000. Will had a finger in many other pies in the village and was always willing to step up when he saw a need, such as editing Community News for several years. But it wasn't just Will – John was also very active in the community, so it was a unanimous decision to award the Tony Jerram Award to them jointly (see full citation on the website).

A full appreciation of Will's life, and Brian Smith's poem, may be seen on the website.

Valerie Magan (1947-2025)

Valerie Magan, who lost her battle with cancer on 14th March, was Secretary of the Society from 2012-2018. Valerie grew up in Suffolk, living first at Great Waldingfield and then Ingham. After school, she trained in secretarial studies and shorthand at college in Bury St Edmunds. This led to a variety of administrative jobs throughout her working life, including four years spent in Germany where she learned to speak German fluently. A move to Badsey in the 1970s followed and marriage to Bob Magan and the birth of two sons. Valerie loved walking, particularly on holidays in Scotland with Bob. In retirement, Valerie became very active in the Society. She compiled a photographic diary of events in 2009 which is in the Archive, conducted much research, particularly on law and order in the area, and enjoyed taking a prominent role in the Whit Walks which used to be held. She also helped to produce the documentary film, "The Market Gardener". During our WWI project, Valerie, being a fluent German speaker, managed to locate the descendants of Johann Rosskopf, the German prisoner of war at the Manor House who died of flu in 1918 and was buried at Badsey. Valerie never really got over the death of her younger son, Simon, in 2016. She will be buried alongside him at her funeral on 23rd April, 1 pm, in St James' Church. Our sincere condolences to Bob and family.

The 80th anniversary of VE Day

On 7th May 1945, the formal act of military surrender, to take effect the next day, was signed by Germany, ending the war in Europe. On 8th May, celebrations broke out all over the world to mark Victory in Europe (VE Day); Prime Minister Churchill marked the occasion by declaring the day a public holiday. People held parties, danced and sang in the streets.



Terry Sparrow, who was a schoolboy of 11 in 1945, recalls that was first aware of the news of victory in Europe when walking to the bus-stop from Prince Henry's Grammar School. It was only when he saw all the flags and bunting in the High Street that he realised what had happened. The next day, he and younger brother, Patrick, aged nine, participated in the children's street party which took place in Brewers Lane (similar parties occurred throughout the village). Tables and chairs were set up along the middle of the road, cakes and sandwiches were served and races were organised. Terry recalls that former police constable, Fred Hill, who was then in his seventies, insisted on joining in when an adult race was taking place. American soldiers turned up in a jeep at one party and gave the children a ride, whilst on Bretforton Road the children were given free ice-cream from the store belonging to Messrs Butler.



In 1945, young Terry & Pat Sparrow attended a VE Day party in Brewers Lane; 75 years later they attended a similar party in Brewers Lane, this time with their spouses.



For many though, the celebrations were bitter-sweet. People mourned their lost friends and loved ones, while others were still engaged in combat as the war in East Asia continued. The 2nd battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment was still fighting the Japanese in Burma. Lance Sergeant Frederick Charles Perkins was killed in Burma on 29th May 1945, aged 22. For Philip Sparrow, who was a prisoner of the Japanese, the war did not end until his safe return to Badsey in October.

* * * * *

On 8th May 2020, in the midst of the global pandemic, villagers all over Badsey, Aldington and Wickhamford came out on to the streets to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. To commemorate the 80th anniversary, please join us this Bank Holiday Monday, 5th May 2025, 2-4; we shall be putting on an exhibition as part of the "Bunting, Bells and Biscuits" event at St James' Church. One of the things we are focussing on is how the village celebrated the event, both in 1945 and on subsequent anniversaries. Do you have any photographs that you would be willing to let us use for the exhibition? We have plenty of photographs of the 75th anniversary in 2020, but earlier ones would be very much appreciated, particularly from 1945. We won't need to keep your precious heirlooms – you can email us a jpeg scan of the image, telling us where and when it was taken, and the names of any people in the picture – or bring it along on the day to be scanned. In addition, Andy and Jan Higgitt will be present on the day to record the war-time stories of anybody who is willing to share their memories.