

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2025, Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, 7.30 pm**

**To murder a priest: the Popish Plot and Worcestershire 1678-1681**

Doug Smith, a retired History teacher, has spent his retirement in research. Doug describes his talk as follows: “Lies, intrigue and death threats at the very centre of Power! This may sound familiar but it’s Worcestershire in the late 17th Century. This is a story of the turmoil following the Reformation of the 16th Century and the Civil Wars of the 17th Century. It involves a pantomime villain of epic proportions, an unbelievable tale that many believed and the death of innocent people. The events took place at the end of the reign of Charles II (1660-1685). I will use examples from Worcestershire to show how this tale, centred on London, affected the whole kingdom.”

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2025, Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, 7.30 pm**

**The Evolution of Badsey: 1066 to the Present Day**

Having worked on the Badsey and Aldington QR CODE Trail and led walks around the village based on this, Alan Tutton became fascinated by how the topography of the village has affected its development. This was then fuelled by a visit to the Hive where, as part of a guided tour for the Society, he was introduced to the Historic Environment Record – a searchable database with digital mapping of all known archaeological sites, historic buildings and landscapes in the county supported by paper and digital sources. Come and find out what makes Badsey the village it has grown into today.

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025, 9 am, meet at The Wheatsheaf**

**Trip to Gloucester Cathedral/Shopping in Gloucester**

Please join us for a trip to Gloucester. The cost is £37 and includes coach travel, refreshments on arrival, Cathedral Highlights tour, Crypt tour and lunch, with free time in the afternoon to explore Gloucester. The enclosed form should be returned to Shirley Tutton by 7<sup>th</sup> November.

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2025, St James’ Church, 7.30 for 8 pm**

**Christmas Celebration: Shepherds Crook Folk Choir**

Two years ago we welcomed Shepherd’s Crook Folk Choir to come and sing for us. We are delighted that they have agreed to come again. This event takes place in St James’ Church, Badsey, and follows immediately after the annual Christmas carols outside The Wheatsheaf, organised by the Parish Council. The church will be open from 7.30 for you to come inside and warm yourself with tea/coffee and mince pies. The concert will begin at 8 pm. The choir will perform a selection of traditional Cotswold Carols and Wassails.

**Events in 2026**

- Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January – Excavating Milestone Ground, Broadway
- Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February – AGM followed by Tony Jerram Award
- Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March – A House through Time: the story of Harrington House

**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 John Waters (address below)

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maureen Spinks, <b>Chairman</b>                                                                     | The Willows, 8A High Street, Badsey; 01386 831154; <a href="mailto:history@badsey.net">history@badsey.net</a> |
| Shirley Tutton, <b>Secretary</b>                                                                    | 34 Seward Road, Badsey; 01386 831539; <a href="mailto:info@badsey.net">info@badsey.net</a>                    |
| John Waters, <b>Treasurer</b>                                                                       | Hollywood Villa, 10 High Street; <a href="mailto:treasurer@badsey.net">treasurer@badsey.net</a>               |
| <b>Committee Members:</b> Helen Green, Andy Higgitt, Tom Locke, Jane Neill, Alan Tutton, Gill Woods |                                                                                                               |



**THE  
BADSEY  
SOCIETY**

**Newsletter  
No 94  
October 2025**

It’s that time of year when we need to start thinking about who will be the next recipient of the Tony Jerram Award. Please see the enclosed form for nominations. Also enclosed is a form if you would like to join us on a trip to Gloucester in December.

**Round-up of Events July to September 2025**

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July – Badsey Flower Show**

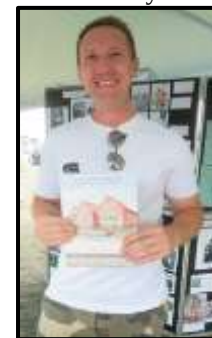
The sun shone for the occasion of the 122nd Badsey Flower Show which was officially opened by our very own John Dallimore. We welcomed many visitors, including Robin Sladden, great-grandson of Sir Julius Sladden; James Archer, great-grandson of John Henry McDonald, former Headmaster of Badsey Council School; and Daphne Gisbourne (née Salter), whose father, Edgar Salter, appears in a photo of The Wheatsheaf Darts Team 1949, which has recently been donated to the Society.



John Dallimore



Robin Sladden



James Archer



Daphne Gisbourne

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September – Visit to Hartlebury Castle**

Hartlebury Castle is a hidden jewel in the crown of great places to visit in Worcestershire. On a guided tour of the State Rooms we were told about the various Bishops who had lived at Hartlebury, and saw the magnificent chapel and long gallery upstairs. The Hurd Library was particularly fascinating. It was founded by Bishop Richard Hurd in 1782. Hurd was close friends with King George III and his wife Queen Charlotte, who visited often. The library was built to house his collection of 3,000 books, some of which he collected himself, and others which he inherited from others.



Tea/coffee and delicious cakes served in the Saloon, a beautiful Georgian room.

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September – The SS Suevic and the night the RNLI saved 611 people**

Around 40 members were present for a fascinating talk by Galen Bartholomew about how the SS Suevic ran aground in a storm off the Lizard Point in Cornwall in March 1907. The RNLI rescued 456 people in appalling weather conditions. This is still the largest number of people rescued by the RNLI in a single operation. Another ship also ran aground on the same night and the RNLI saved a further 155 lives. Not a single life was lost in either rescue. Galen’s interest in the story was aroused when he discovered that his great-grandmother and great-aunt were amongst those rescued from the Suevic.

### John Douglas Poulter (1927-2025)

John Poulter was born at The Lodge, Wood Norton, the eldest of three children of Leslie and Kathleen Poulter. The family had to leave when the BBC took over the site at the start of the Second World War and they moved to The Drifford, Murcot Turn. After school, in Evesham and Bristol, John attended Harper Adams Agricultural College and then took a sponsored trip to New Zealand where he worked for the Government for two years. This involved visiting dairy farms to carry out administrative work; he travelled between farms in a pony and trap. He stayed on for two more years and worked in road building. John's father bought Pitchers Hill Farm, Wickhamford, in 1947 and John eventually returned home to work there. The family bought Wickhamford Mill and Farm in 1964 and John moved there where he carried out repairs to the water mill and weir. He managed to get the water wheel turning again and was always pleased to show it in action to visitors. John had a life-long interest in nature and wildlife and only a couple of years ago bought a small piece of derelict land on Golden Lane. He also planted trees along the lane. He and his wife, Pat, whom he married in 1964, moved to Willersey when John retired from farming. He died, at home, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025.

### Eliza Stanley's Midwife's Register

News of the recent death of Barbara Bennett, who was a member of the Society some time ago, reminded us of a magnificent midwife's register which had been passed down to her. Barbara was the great-granddaughter of Eliza Stanley of Bretforton, whose register it was. Barbara showed the register to the late Trevor Hockenhull who immediately recognized its importance as it lists the births of 210 babies born in Badsey and Bretforton between 1905 and 1917. It's some 20 years since Trevor's research was placed on the website, but well worth looking at again.



<https://www.badseysociety.uk/midwives-register/eliza-stanley>

### Who remembers "Cunger"?

For those of you who grew up in Badsey and are of a certain age, you may have fond memories of a celebrated Badsey character. William (Bill) Jones, known by all as "Cunger", was the road man for Badsey, employed by the Evesham Rural District Council, to sweep the roads and tend to the footpaths and verges. He lodged with the Littlewood family in Synehurst, opposite the shop on Bretforton Road. He had a reputation for not working any harder than he had to, and for the hilarious things he said, mostly unintentionally. Brian Smith has put pen to paper and written down some of the stories, such as this one:

*A well-to-do gentleman in a posh car stopped to ask Cunger the way to Wickhamford.*

*"Well, does you know where the Manor is?" asked Cunger.*

*"No, I don't," the man replied.*

*"What about the church, does you know that?"*

*The man said he didn't. "Or the Wheatsheaf then. You must know that!"*

*The man, now becoming irritated, said he didn't know the place at all.*

*"Well," says Cunger, "seems to me as you be well and truly lost, then!"*

More of these stories can be read in Brian's article on the website.

### All England Sprout Picking Championship

*The Guinness Book of Records might have information on the highest number of sprouts eaten in one hour (2,437 sprouts at an astonishing rate of 40 sprouts per minute), but what it doesn't have, is information on the record for picking sprouts. For three years in the 1930s (some two decades before The Guinness Book of Records was first published), an All England Sprout Picking Championship took place in the Vale of Evesham to decide just that.*



Yes, there really was such a championship! Intending participants had to be able to pick at least 30 pots in an ordinary working day, as this was one of the qualifications for entry. They were also asked to provide their own backache powders! The potential competitors were reported to be in strict training and entries were being received by the organisers from men who were known to be the pick of the pickers. The fame of the contest grew daily, and skilled sprout pickers from as far away as Exeter, Bedfordshire, Tamworth and Lichfield had made application for competitors' licences but the organisers decreed that they would confine the championship to Evesham and district.

The event attracted considerable interest with some 400 spectators present. From early in the day, lorry-loads of pickers and spectators flocked into the district from all parts of the Vale. The competitors, equipped with half-pot nets (holding 20 lb) were each allotted a separate steward who took up places with a pair of scales near to the various plots. The umpire sounded his whistle at 9 am and the men, working at top pressure, proceeded to fill their containers. At 10 am, a whistle was sounded as an indication for the competitors to "weigh in" their harvest. They hurried to their respective stewards with the result of their first hour's work. A similar procedure occurred at 11 am. By then, three of the five held an equal advantage over the other competitors, each having 460 lb to his credit.

At least one or two of the participants were from Badsey or Wickhamford. In the first championship, which was held at Church Lench on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1933, W Malin of Badsey picked 34 half-nets. The winner, Gilbert Stanley of Bretforton, picked 38 half-nets in three hours, a total of 774 lb. Seven years later, Gilbert Stanley spoke about the competition in a BBC Midland Home Service broadcast, entitled 'The Vale of Evesham'.

At the third event, Bill Troughton of Badsey was runner-up. He picked 400 lb in the 90 minutes allotted (half the time of the first championship) and headed the field for quantity. But this year the competition was about quality as well as quantity and George Hunting of Ashton-under-Hill was deemed to be the best all-rounder. Bill Troughton was employed by Mr G W Witts of Evesham; he picked 20 nets (about 8,000 sprouts, nearly 90 sprouts a minute). According to press reports, he kept his left thumbnail specially manicured for the job. Bill Troughton had moved from Bengeworth to Badsey in 1925 when he married Badsey-born Gertrude Clare Ballard. They had a son, Robert, who attended Badsey School, and they lived on Brewers Lane with Gertrude's parents. After Gertrude's death in 1938, aged only 34, Bill returned to live in Bengeworth.

To read the full report about the Championship – and Brian Smith's rather tall tale about a sprout picking champion – go to the Home page of the Badsey website and click on the relevant "Recently added articles".