



THE BADSEY SOCIETY

Newsletter
No 98
October 2026

"The Severn Valley Pioneers", Mark Higgitt

Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, Friday 16th October 2026, 7.30 pm

Former journalist Mark Higgitt will give a talk about the Severn Valley Pioneers who were formed in autumn 1915 and trained at Norton Barracks before moving on to Salisbury Plain. In June 1916, they sailed from Southampton to Le Havre. Mark will tell of his quest to find out the identity of a soldier's body who died at the Battle of the Somme, which was uncovered in 1995. War records and research led him to conclude the unnamed soldier was one of ten Pioneers killed in the Battle of the Ancre on 13th and 14th November 1916. It is a story he cannot forget and he has spent much of his retirement visiting archives and museums. His quest continues.

"13th-century Marching Camps", Will Parry

Badsey Community Sports & Social Club, Friday 13th November 2026, 7.30 pm

Will Parry will talk about 13th-century marching camps. Will is a member of the Evesham-based "The House of the Twin-Tailed Lion", an authentic 13th-century re-enactment group, primarily covering the events of the second Barons' War. They portray Simon de Montfort's household and retinue, with combat, living history, camp life and medieval crafts. They provide medieval re-enactment like no other group! The annual Battle of Evesham is their main event. We discounted the idea of an actual physical display due to the length of the swords and the low ceiling height! They would, however, be happy to come and do something outdoors in the summer.

Christmas Celebration: Musyck Anon

Friday 11th December 2026, St James' Church, 7.30 for 8 pm

Two years ago we welcomed Musyck Anon, an Evesham-based "a capella" group with a particular interest in early music, 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.

Events in 2027

- Friday 15th January – "The Bayeux Tapestry", Zara Shelley
- Friday 5th February – Silver Jubilee buffet tea followed by the AGM, Tony Jerram Award presentation and illustrated talk of the Society's first 25 years
- March – Trip to the Bayeux Tapestry, British Museum (date to be confirmed on 21st October when bookings open again)

Membership Fees – Membership fees now due for 2026, still only £5 per person (price will increase in 2027 to £7.50), 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)

Maureen Spinks, Chairman	The Willows, 8A High Street, Badsey; 01386 831154; history@badsey.net
Shirley Tutton, Secretary	34 Seward Road, Badsey; 07740 286941; info@badsey.net
John Waters, Treasurer	Hollywood Villa, 10 High Street, Badsey, WR11 7EW; treasurer@badsey.net
Committee Members: Helen Green, Andy Higgitt, Tom Locke, Jane Neill, Alan Tutton	

Autumn is upon us and, before we know it, it will soon be Christmas. Between now and the festive season, we have various activities lined up for you. During the course of the year, 24 new members have joined the Society – a big welcome to all.

Round-up of Events July-September 2026

Friday 10th July – Musical Soirée with the Chameleon Quintet

The best-laid plans! We had meant to hold the concert in the Tuttons' back garden. As a precaution, we booked the church in case of inclement weather, thinking that wind, rain or cold might force us to relocate. What we didn't anticipate was that we would have to change venue because of the heatwave! With temperatures in the 30s, we switched venue to the church where the Chameleon Quintet performed admirably – though Helen did comment that she had never had to towel down so much between pieces as she did that night.

Friday 25th July

Badsey Flower Show

We had another successful Flower Show with plenty of helpers to assist in manning the stand. Pictured right are Christine Dovey, Tom Locke, Maureen Spinks and Helen Green. Thanks to Louise Knight for the photos.



Thursday 3rd September – Visit to Leicester and the Richard III Visitor Centre

An excellent day out was enjoyed by 37 members on a trip to Leicester and the Richard III Centre. After refreshments and a talk about the exciting discovery of Richard III's remains in a car park in August 2012, 527 years after his death at the Battle of Bosworth, we were free to explore the Centre.

After lunch, Alan Tutton guided us round the streets of Leicester on the Richard III Trail. Most people found time to visit the medieval Guildhall and Leicester Cathedral where Richard's tomb is now located.



Thursday 18th September – Chance findings in family history

You never know what you're going to discover when embarking on family history. If you've got the family history bug and are happy to spend hours poring over a computer screen or old manuscript, you will know that it's the unexpected piece of detail that excites you. Our three speakers – Sue Ablett, Galen Bartholomew and Noelle Chambers – shared some of fascinating examples of their chance findings.

Membership Increase

A reminder that, as from January 2027, the membership fee per person will increase to £7.50. When the Society was first formed in 2002, membership was only £1. It increased to £2 in 2010 and to £5 in 2014. Over the years, the nature of the Society has changed. We now have more speakers than we did in the past, we pay monthly Zoom charges, we pay rent for a room at the Remembrance Hall in which to house our archive. We have been fortunate to have obtained a number of grants which has helped enormously with costs, but we feel that now is the time to increase the membership fee, which we hope you will understand. If you have not yet paid your subscription for 2026, this remains at £5, but from January it will increase to £7.50.

Archive Move

A big thank you to our members – Alex Christison, John Dovey, David Ella, Mike Gwynn, Jon & Harriet Hardiman, Andy & Jan Higgitt, Tom Locke, Jane Neill, Terry Sparrow – who helped to facilitate the Archive move at the Remembrance Hall a couple of weeks ago. Despite being forced to move from a larger room to a smaller room, miraculously all the boxes went in and the job was done in double-quick time.

Celebrating our Silver Jubilee in 2027

Next year will be The Badsey Society's 25th birthday. When 19 people met on a cold winter's evening in February 2002 in St James' Church, Badsey, to discuss the formation of a Society, little did we realise then that, a quarter of a century later, we would be celebrating our silver anniversary. Nor could we imagine that we would have a thriving membership of over 200, six books, two videos, a website and several awards under our belt.

As part of our Silver Jubilee celebrations, we shall be holding a buffet tea prior to the AGM on Friday 5th February. This will be free to all paid-up members. You will be asked to complete a form which will be sent with our January newsletter to let us know if you will be attending so that we can confirm numbers for catering. You can, of course, just attend the AGM part of the meeting which will begin as normal at 7.30 pm with the Tony Jerram award presented afterwards. After a short break when we will cut an anniversary cake, there will be an illustrated talk on the Society's first 25 years.

For our Jubilee year, Shirley is also busy planning some exciting trips in 2027, beginning with a trip to the Bayeux Tapestry exhibition at the British Museum in the Spring. We will know on 21st October whether we have been successful in getting a group booking for 54 people. Other trips planned are to St Fagan's National Museum of History, Cardiff, and to Christ Church College and Cathedral, Oxford.

Tony Jerram Award

It's that time of year again when we begin to think about nominations for the annual Tony Jerram Award. Perhaps you know of some community-minded person who has gone above and beyond in helping others. Or it might be someone who can be considered for a lifetime achievement who, through age or infirmity has not done much in recent years but, in the past, has contributed greatly to our village in some way. If your nominee was unsuccessful last year, please try again this year. There can only be one winner and sometimes we have a very strong field from which to choose.

This year's winner was Marlene Atkinson who was thrilled to be presented with the award at Briarlea Care Home in January by Jane Neill. Sadly, Marlene died in August, but it is good that she was able to know that her 30 years of service to St James' Church as organist and choir mistress had not gone unnoticed.

The Eclipse of the Sun

Did you watch the eclipse of the sun on 12th August this year? Alan and Shirley Tutton were on a ship off the coast of Greenland and saw totality, whilst those of us in the UK saw a partial eclipse. This event brought to mind a similar event which occurred more than a century ago and brought great excitement to the people of the Vale of Evesham, not least the pupils of Badsey Council School who had the privilege of watching it through a telescope.

On 17th April 1912 there was a partial eclipse of the sun. Charles Binyon, one of the School Managers, took along his big telescope to school and displayed the image on a screen so that the eclipse could be seen by all without any damage to the eyes. Afterwards, the pupils wrote about what they had seen. Three prizes were awarded for the best essays, awarded to Nancy Crisp, Lucy Roberts and Evelyn Cull. Nancy's essay was considered so good for a 12-year-old that it was printed in entirety in the June 1912 parish magazine. Nancy's essay began:

An eclipse of the sun is an event that occurs on an average about twice every year. In England it is seen only on very rare occasions. But I expect you will want to know what I mean by an eclipse.....

Nancy then went on to give a very detailed account of an eclipse, the full text of which may be read at <https://www.badseysociety.uk/parish-magazine/60157>. She concluded with a description of what happened in Badsey on the day of the eclipse:

At the starting here it appeared as if a very little bite had been taken out of the sun, but gradually the moon swept right across the sun, starting from the south-east and going to the north-west. It started at 10.50 am, reached its maximum at 12.08 pm, and ended at 1.28 pm. We saw it through a piece of smoked glass, and other different contrivances, such as telescope reflections, eyelenses, pricking of a pin through a piece of white cardboard, etc. When the eclipse was at its height it seemed to grow dusky, everything seemed peculiar, and in some places the hens began to roost, and the birds stopped chirping. The temperature began to go down, and at 12.08 it was very low, according to the temperature of the day. Mr Binyon was kind enough to bring his telescope for us to see the eclipse quite plainly, and I think he had no little trouble in getting it ready. Also he brought his camera and we had our photographs taken.



Charles Binyon described the eclipse as the largest he'd ever seen as nearly 9/10 of the sun was covered.

This photo shows his telescope with some of the staff at the school: unknown, Miss Lilian Cull, Miss Emily Hartwell, Miss Maggie McDonald, Miss Maud Bird, Mr John McDonald. It is possible, however, that the person on the left is Nancy Crisp.