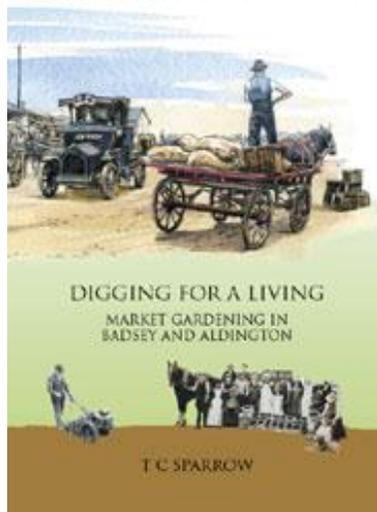


The Aims of the Project

- To produce a book about the rise and fall of market gardening.
- To produce a DVD with the working title “The Last Market Gardener” in order to capture market gardening on film before it’s too late.
- To transcribe the 1911 census for Badsey and Aldington and place it on the Badsey website (www.badsey.net).
- To produce an outside mural at Badsey First School, based on the occupations and land-use in the Parish at the time of the census 100 years ago.
- To create adequate storage facilities for the growing archive (market gardening tools, photographs, documents) which The Badsey Society is accumulating; to hold annual archive evenings when the contents of the archive will be on display and to allow more accessibility.
- To hold historical exhibitions at Badsey Flower Show, Evesham Asparagus Festival, Bretforton Fleece Inn Asparagus Auction.
- To hold a series of walks and talks and readings from some letters written by Badsey schoolchildren in 1933 about living in a market gardening community.

Digging for a Living: Market Gardening in Badsey and Aldington

Professor Nick Evans of the Geography Department, The University of Worcester, writes: “Once the dominant land use, small-scale market gardening in the Vale of Evesham has all but disappeared. Drawing upon first-hand experience and fascinating illustrative material, Terry Sparrow provides timely insights into ‘growing’. *Digging for a Living* traces the rise of market gardening in the late 19th century, when Badsey and Aldington bucked the trend of rural depopulation, through the boom years, to steep post-war decline. I can thoroughly recommend this book to all those who want to understand the essence of Badsey, Aldington and the Vale beyond.”



On sale in The Spar, price £6

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How to Join The Badsey Society

Membership - £2 per person (please give your name, full address, telephone number and email address)

Cheques should be made payable to “The Badsey Society” and sent to the Treasurer, Terry Sparrow, 36 Brewers Lane, Badsey, Evesham, WR11 7EU.



**THE BADSEY
SOCIETY**



THE LAST MARKET GARDENER NEWSLETTER 6 – OCTOBER 2011

Badsey is very proud of its market gardening heritage and it’s good to know that the latest technology is being employed at the very impressive Hornsfield Nurseries on Willersey Road. Tomatoes have been grown commercially since the early 1880s in the Vale of Evesham. The crops at Hornsfield are grown hydroponically (a method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, in water, without soil). At the beginning of September, Badsey Society members visited the Nurseries and were welcomed by the manager, Roly Holt. R & L Holt is a family run business which has been growing tomatoes since 1980. There are currently three nurseries: Sandylands Nurseries at Offenham, Hornsfield Nurseries at Badsey and, most recently, Springhill Nurseries at Lower Moor. Hornsfield Nurseries was bought in 2004 and a new 6-acre block was built in 2005. The total glasshouse acreage of the three sites is 22 acres.

The tomatoes are grown in heated glasshouses, which allows the season to be extended from February until November; no genetically modified plants are used. A variety of tomatoes are grown, including cherries, cocktail and large tomatoes, all sold on the vine, as well as loose classic tomatoes. Crop work is carried out all year and picking takes place from April until November. More can be read about Hornsfield in Terry Sparrow’s new book (see back page).



The plants are grown on hanging gutters; thermal screens are used to help to control the climate. Fans promote air circulation and avoid 'cold' areas.



The work involves trimming, truss pruning, deleafing and picking. Most of this work is carried out from trolleys a few metres above the ground.

THE JONES FAMILY

At the time of the 1911 census, there were five Jones families living in Badsey, all engaged in market gardening. Arthur Edward Jones of Malvern House and Geoffrey Jones of Norfolk House were descended from a prominent landowning family which had been in Badsey since the 18th century. Charles Jones and his son, George Edwin, came from an Evesham family which had moved to Badsey in the 1880s. A fifth Jones lived in Badsey for only five years, so it is the first four families on whom we shall concentrate.

Arthur Edward Jones (1863-1950) and Geoffrey Jones (1864-1948) were the grandchildren of Joseph Jones (1771-1853) who was named in the Badsey Enclosure awards of 1815 as an owner of 80 acres of land. The family fortunes suffered during the 19th century and most of the land was sold in 1831. Joseph's son, Joseph Jones (c1830-1891), was a tenant farmer for many years living at Badsey Manor but, by 1881, Joseph and his sons had embraced market gardening. They had by then moved across the road and were renting Oakleigh House on Old Post Office Lane.



Both Arthur and Geoffrey prospered in the market gardening boom, as Arthur was able firstly to buy back the family home, Malvern House (pictured left), where he was living at the time of the 1911 census, and later went on to buy The Stone House (present-day Badsey Hall, 42 High Street).

Geoffrey moved into a new house on Badsey Fields Lane following his marriage in 1896 to Alice Kelland. Geoffrey's unmarried sister, Augusta, had bought the land at auction in 1890; his father-in-law, John Skinner Kelland, bought the land off Augusta and had a house erected which was named Norfolk House (after the county of Norfolk where Alice had grown up).



Charles Jones (1837-1914) came from more humble origins, but also prospered in the market gardening boom. Charles began his working career as an agricultural labourer, but had become a market gardener by 1881. In August 1893, Charles took the opportunity to buy 600 square yards of land from Espley the Builders on the road which was later to be known as Chapel Street. Here Charles had a house built (the present-day Primrose Cottage, No 5 Chapel Street) where he remained with his wife, Anne, for the rest of his days.



Charles' son, George Edwin (1870-1943), followed his father into market gardening, and George's son, Frederick Charles (1894-1967) set up a fruit and vegetable merchant's business. 90-year-old Cecil Jones of Badsey Fields Lane is the grandson of George and wrote one of the market gardening letters of 1933 which appears on the Badsey website, www.badsey.net/letters. It begins: "Dear Sir, My father is a retailer, he buys fruit and vegetables off the market gardeners and then he takes them to other towns." He goes on to explain the fruit and vegetable growing seasons. Cecil remained in the family business until his retirement in 1990.

COMING SOON IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER – THE SEARS FAMILY

BOWERS HILL

In our previous Newsletters, we have been concentrating on the housing boom which took place at the turn of the 20th century in the centre of the village. Now we head out to the south-east corner of the parish where a farm grew up in the post-enclosure period. There was then no more development until the 20th century when ten workers' houses were erected.



There is evidence to suggest that this remote area of the parish bordering Willersey was occupied during Roman times. The area then appears to have been abandoned for many centuries; that was until about 1816 when Bowers Hill Farm was created. In 1905, the farm was bought by Messrs John Idiens & Sons Ltd .

Within a month of buying the farm, the company had borrowed £7,000 for the purpose of enabling them to erect 14 houses on part of the land. The village was growing at a rapid rate, with more and more people moving to Badsey to try and take advantage of the market gardening boom, so the demand for housing was great. Ten houses (five pairs of semi-detacheds) were built in 1906 instead of 14. There was a gap between the first three pairs of semi-detached houses and the last two pairs, so perhaps a further four had been intended to be erected in the middle but the company ran into financial difficulties. The people living in the houses at the time of the 1911 census were nearly all market gardening labourers. For full details go to www.badsey.net/history/c11 and also find out more about Bowers Hill in *Aldington and Badsey: Villages in the Vale, A Tapestry of Local History*, on sale in The Spar.



Nos 1 & 2 Bowers Hill

Mary Huxley, her partner Richard Hardiman and six sons lived at No 1; George and Louisa Cole lived at No 2 with six children. Richard Hardiman, the six Huxley sons and George Cole and three sons were all market garden labourers.



Nos 3 & 4 Bowers Hill

Walter and Rose Jones lived at No 3 with their two sons and a niece; Harry and Annie Jelfs lived at No 4. Both Walter Jones and Harry Jelfs were market gardeners working on their own account.



Nos 5 & 6 Bowers Hill

Francis and Elizabeth Chamberlain lived at No 5 with their 11 children; Francis was a market garden labourer. William and Frances Langfield lived at No 6 with their two daughters; William was a market gardener working on his own account.



Nos 7 & 8 Bowers Hill

Frederick and Caroline Jelfs lived at No 7 with their eight children; Charles and Mary Smith lived at No 8 with six children. Frederick and three of his sons and Charles and three of his children worked as market garden labourers.



Nos 9 & 10 Bowers Hill

Jesse and Mary Davis lived at No 9 with their four sons; Jesse's three eldest sons worked as market garden labourers. Benjamin and Amelia Kilby and two sons lived at No 10. Benjamin was a groom and Amelia was a fruit farm worker.

COMING SOON IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER – SANDS LANE