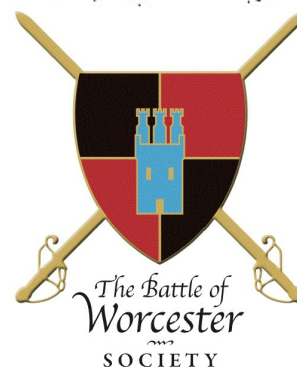


The Black Pear Bulletin

December 2013



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Seasons Greetings, if a little early, to you all. What a hectic few weeks it's been since I took office at the beginning of November; hectic but exciting!

At the outset, I must pay tribute to our brilliant Past Chairman, Ben Humphrey, for the five years of driven and inspirational leadership. Ben was relentless, in his own most charming way, in constantly seeking to raise the profile of the Society and the Battle both here in Worcestershire and further afield. As Andrew Marvell said of Oliver Cromwell, "If these are the times, this must be the man". (Ben would have preferred comparison to a Stuart - sorry Old Chap!). Awareness and membership levels rose immeasurably

during Ben's tenure of office and I will endeavour to carry on where he left off. Of course, Ben is not lost to us, and will continue as both Treasurer and Head of Fundraising, making use of his extensive range of contacts on behalf of the Society.

I would like to take this opportunity also to wish Ben well in his new job as Chief Executive of the Elgar School of Music. Well done, Ben, I know you'll do a marvellous job.

Rob Leetham, our secretary, decided it was time for him to stand down as well. Rob's a lovely chap and another tireless worker for the Society, but sadly, though understandably, his professional commitments meant that he could no longer spare the time that the post demanded. Good luck too, Rob, and hope to see you back as often as you can make it.

For me to be elected Chairman after two years as Deputy is a great honour and I will do my utmost at all times to further the cause of our Society and gain due recognition nationally and internationally of the importance of what happened at Worcester on 3rd September 1651.

It is essential that Worcester has a dedicated Battlefield or Civil War Centre, and this should be The Commandery. Reports and discussions are ongoing at the highest levels within the City and County Councils, though it will be some time yet before we know the outcome. I can assure you that a dedicated home for the Battle is a major priority of my chairmanship.

I wouldn't see The Commandery as exclusively "ours", but I do see the Civil War being the main attraction, as it were. We must be put back into the shop window, literally! Of course, how any changes would be financed is key and this is being looked into as I write. Should The Commandery not turn out to be an option, there are other avenues which can be investigated. Following the moving Drumhead Service at Fort Royal earlier this year, when Ken Potts' beautiful and poignant sculpture was unveiled, along with the new interpretation panels, a head of steam is building and the public are beginning to listen to us. With over 100 paid up members behind us, and growing, this no doubt helps.

The Presidents (Jefferson and Adams) Memorial atop Fort Royal is next on our shopping list, but this will take time and many a generous donation. We are hopeful our American cousins may come to our aid.

With the help of Mark Digger, our honorary IT consultant, we are endeavouring to develop an APP. Yes, an APP! Watch this space, as they say.

All forms of media are important and I've had a very fruitful meeting with Peter John, Editor of the Worcester News who is very much on board.

I have already organised meetings with our MP Robin Walker, (who is a member, is a genuinely tireless supporter of the Society and has said he will do what he can to find a Civil War home in the City); the Leaders, (and their opposition opposite numbers), of both City and County Councils; Lord Faulkner (our Patron, and like Robin, does whatever he can for the cause). I am hoping to meet our other patrons as soon as they are available, as well as other key figures in business and industry. It is necessary for them to get to know me, and it is necessary for me to spread the word far and wide of what the Society are about.

The Society has already started working with our friends from the Battlefield Trust in relation to developing a small picnic spot at the confluence of the rivers Severn and Teme, where the Parliamentary army built the famous Bridge of Boats. Now known as Cromwell's Crossing, it is hoped that an interpretation panel, seat and proper access will be possible in time.



One of the new Fort Royal information panels

Before closing, I must thank the other members of the Executive Committee, they are both friends and colleagues. They give up vast amounts of their own time to support and promote the Society. The wide range of experience and expertise within this small and devoted group is astonishing. This is what the newly shaped Executive Committee now looks like:

Richard Shaw Vice-Chairman
Natalie Digger Hon. Secretary
Ben Humphrey
Vaughan Wiltshire
Roger Fairman
Ken Potts Fellow of the Society
Brian Bullock
Mark "Digg" Digger Hon. IT Consultant

This is what I'm calling a Black Pear Bulletin, getting essential news out to the membership. A Black Pear Journal will appear early in the New Year.

Hope to see a good few of you at the Christmas drinks at 8pm on 17th December at the King Charles House.

Very best wishes to you all, and may you have a happy and healthy New Year.

Grant
Grant Simmonds MBE OstJ, Chairman

CONCESSIONS FOR SOCIETY MEMBERS

A GREAT SAVING FOR MEMBERS!

From 1st January 2014, Society members will receive a 10% discount in the following retail outlets in Worcester, subject to presenting a valid membership card for inspection:

PEPLOWS Jewellers (excludes Rolex), High Street

CARDINAL'S HAT , Public House (includes food, excludes fruit juices), Friar Street

CHARLIE'S CAFE, Sidbury

WORCESTER LIVE All own events at The Swan and The Huntingdon Hall

CARLUCCIO'S Restaurant, Crown Gate Shopping Centre

POCKETS Men's Fashion Wear, Friar Street

SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL, Beauty Salon, St.Swithin's Street

CHOCOLATE DELI, Coffee House and Chocolate specialist, New Street - already operating!

Members will be kept informed as more businesses join the scheme.

Grant Simmonds, Chairman



SOCIETY EVENTS 2014

As well as the fixed annual events such as the Drumhead Service in September, several new events are being planned for the forthcoming year. It is hoped that members will support the committee in trying to provide an interesting, balanced, appropriate and affordable programme. There are few set dates as yet, but there may be more news following the final Executive Committee meeting of the year when all members will be most welcome to join us for CHRISTMAS DRINKS in the KING CHARLES HOUSE, New Street, at 8.00pm on TUESDAY 17th DECEMBER.

A small series of TALKS by leading experts in their specialised fields, where supper will be available for those wishing to partake, are being planned for the Spring and Summer. Speakers will include Howard Robinson, Membership Secretary of the Society, speaking on "Oliver Cromwell and the Battle of Worcester". Howard's talk at the Worcester Festival last year was a sell-out!

Academics such as Dr. David Appleby of Nottingham University, a leading authority on the New Model Army, will also be asked to speak. In the interests of fair play, efforts will be made to ensure that the Cavalier/Scottish side have their advocates too!

We are delighted that THE CROMWELL ASSOCIATION is holding it's AGM at Worcester Cathedral on Saturday 26th April. Following their business meeting, the Chairman, Dr. Patrick Little has invited all members of the Battle of Worcester Society to attend a lecture, currently scheduled for 11.00am given by Professor Malcolm Wanklyn of the University of Wolverhampton, a leading Civil War authority. There is no charge for the lecture, but if members would like to join the Cromwell Association for lunch afterwards there will be a charge of £10 per head. After lunch Society members will conduct Cromwell Association members on a tour of the Civil War City. It will be most helpful if, in due course, members could indicate if they would like to attend the lecture, or the lecture and lunch. As part of the WORCESTER FESTIVAL, on Saturday 23rd August there will be a BATTLE OF WORCESTER DAY, where events will be put on during the day for the enjoyment of young and old,

culminating in, what we hope will become an “instant tradition”, when children will be invited to chase “Charles Stuart” along the High Street., all in mid-17th century costume. The Cathedral authorities have already kindly made the Cloisters available for related children's activities. The bi-annual BATTLE OF WORCESTER DINNER will be held at the Worcestershire County Cricket Ground, New Road on Friday 5th September. In the past, members have been invited, though the event was organised and run by a committee with no formal attachment to the Society. Following the publication of their excellent book after the last dinner in 2012, (through our own publishing arm!), the old committee decided to call it a day. However, it was clear there was still an appetite for such a prestigious black tie dinner with a top academic speaker, in excellent surroundings.....with fine food and wine!

We are most fortunate to have Vaughan Wiltshire as an Executive Committee member. Vaughan was heavily involved in the previous dinners, and was indeed, Chairman. So the committee decided that we will continue this excellent occasion under the auspices of the Society. Tickets will be £50 per head and tables will be of 10. The last dinner in 2012 was a sell-out, so when the notification is sent out in the New Year, be sure to purchase your tickets nice and early!

I will also be testing the water to see if members would like to undertake visits during the Spring and Summer to such places as:

THE NEW NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE AT NEWARK (opening mid 2014)

BOSCOBEL HOUSE

DAY TRIP TO NASEBY/HUNTINGDON & ELY

Rest assured that members will be kept up to date on developments, by either myself, or our Secretary, Natalie Digger.

Grant Simmonds, Chairman



How Did Roundheads and Cavaliers get Their Names?

The term Roundheads was first used in 1641 (a year before the civil war started in 1642) as a term of derision during debates in Parliament which caused riots in Westminster. One comment on the rioting crowd was recorded thus, “They had the hair of their heads, very few longer than their ears, whereupon it came to pass that those who usually, with their cries, attended at Westminster were by a nickname called Roundheads.” The demonstrators included London apprentices and Roundhead was a term of derision for them because the regulations to which they agreed included a provision for closely cropped hair.

Cavalier derives from the French word chevalier and the Spanish word, caballero, which both mean horseman.

Richard Shaw, Vice Chairman





Sculptor and Fellow of the Society Ken Potts with Past Chairman Ben Humphrey before the unveiling of the piece commemorating the Action at Fort Royal is unveiled



How Worcester, Massachusetts got its Name

The story starts with 100 Pilgrim Fathers, who were devout Puritans, sailing from Plymouth for the New World in the Mayflower in 1620. They saw little chance of England becoming a place in which they wished to live. Under the rule of James I they saw England as ungodly and decided to make a new start in America. They landed at Massachusetts and started a settlement which they called New Plymouth.

After many difficulties with severe weather, disease and hostile Native Americans, they were joined by other Puritans with our old mate Charles I acceding to the throne in 1625, continuing to make life unbearable for Puritans in the new Great Britain.

By 1673, while Worcester, England was already an important market town with a complex economic system of specialized trades and a population that exceeded 10,000, the area of Massachusetts that became known as Worcester was a newly created village of six or seven log cabins called Quinsigamond. This village had existed on paper since 1669 when the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony created the settlement on maps to deter Connecticut's aspirations towards its western lands.

A Puritan Colonist named Daniel Gookin purchased eight square miles of land known by the Native American name of Quinsigamond from the Nipmuck Indians and in 1673 the settlement was subdivided into plots for 32 families, but not many had yet taken up the challenge when King Philip's (a Native American) War erupted. What settlement there was, was destroyed in 1675.

King Philip was defeated in 1676 but the settlers were reluctant to return due to continued threats from the Native American tribes. However, after seven years the General Court issued its own threat, "rebuild or forfeit your lands." This persuaded the settlers to return and rebuild their homes, surrounded by a stockade. Even so they were often driven off by native tribes at various times during the following years, but they kept returning and rebuilding.

On 10th (should have been the 3rd?) September 1684, three of the settlement leaders, Daniel Gookin, Thomas Prentice and Daniel Henchman, all devout Puritans requested, "that the plantation Quinsigamond be called Worcester in commemoration of Oliver Cromwell's great Puritan victory at Worcester in 1651." This was granted by the General Court of Massachusetts on 15 October 1684.

So Worcester Massachusetts which now has a population of over 200,000, twice that of our Worcester, was named specifically after our 3 September 1651 battle of Worcester.

From 'A Tale of Two Worcesters' by Karen M. Pierson

Richard Shaw, Vice Chairman



SOCIETY MERCHANDISE

As the hoodies have proved, Society members are keen to show their support for our new merchandise initiative. Such purchases help Society finances, whilst at the same time publicising the Society and letting the general public know that we exist. There can't be many of our hoodie wearers that haven't had someone stop them to ask about the Society. They are made to a very high standard and are fantastic value to members at only £15 each. Even the £25 price tag for non-members represents excellent value for a garment of this quality.

The Executive Committee decided at the meeting on 13th November to order the following further items:

A further order of HOODIES ready early December cost £15 (non-members £25)

Battle of Worcester MUGS ready early December cost £4 (non-members £5)

SOCIETY LAPEL BADGES ready early 2014 cost £3

SOCIETY TIES with LOGO will also be available early in 2014 cost £15

The Executive Committee will monitor how popular these products are and will re-order accordingly. It is hoped that T-shirts and Polo shirts will be available for Summer 2014. In due course, we will be selling our merchandise through various local outlets, such as the Tourist Information shop and The Hive. The Commandery are already taking orders for Hoodies. Enquiries regarding purchase should be made to the Society Secretary, Natalie Digger, at her email address secretary@thebattleofworcestersociety.org.uk

Grant Simmonds, Chairman

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