The Black

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*The Newsletter of the Battle of Worcester Society*

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**OUR CHAIRMAN WRITES**

**369th Anniversary of the Battle of Worcester on 3rd September 1651**

Despite the current situation BOWS Executive Committee and I have decided to go ahead with our **Drumhead Service** on **Thursday 3rd September 2020**. The event will be on a much reduced scale with no Civic Parade.  The Executive Committee of ten intend to meet in the large garden of the **Commandery Café at 5p.m.**  We will be joined by the Mayor, Councillor Jo Hodges and it is also hoped that our illustrious President Ben Humphrey will attend.  The café will remain open for us and safe distancing regulations will be adhered to. The Service will take place in **Fort Royal Park at 6.00p.m**. and will be conducted by the Reverend Peter Hart. I will host the event and there will be words from our President. It is intended to have five or six re-enactors with us who will fire musket volleys to mark the beginning and end of our customary one minute’s silence in recognition of the fact that 3,200 Scottish and English soldiers died during the Battle of Worcester.  If you are in town that evening you will be very welcome to attend but we will be encouraging safe distancing and whilst at the Commandery Café the wearing of face masks. We will disperse from Fort Royal Park, there will be no gathering this year at the Commandery.

**The Adams and Jefferson Monument**

 I wish to update you on the current situation with the Adams and Jefferson Fort Royal Hill Monument.  The Executive Committee held a meeting on 30th July 2020 on Ken Pott’s lawn, when an important decision was made.

You cannot fail to be aware of the upsurge in the Black Lives Matter movement, sparked off by the fatal heart attack sustained by George Floyd in the USA following his resistance to arrest, and the statue of the slave trader Edward Colston being thrown into Bristol Harbour and the general ‘statue wars’ that this has created. W have revised our thoughts on the proposed monument to Adams and Jefferson in Fort Royal Park.  You may also be aware that in June the replica cannon and the Information Board in FRP were wrecked and ‘BLM’ was sprayed over our sculpture panel and plinth but fortunately that has been cleaned off. We do not believe that the BLM was involved in any way, but another party misappropriating the tag to commit acts of vandalism.

We have always known that Jefferson inherited his father’s Virginian plantation and his father’s slaves upon his death but the majority of the Executive Committee and Trustees were prepared to continue fund raising for a monument of the two men who later became USA Presidents and visited Worcester in 1786.  Our project was estimated to cost £150,000 but since our launch of the appeal on 8th April 2018 we have only raised £16,000.  So there was a very long way to go and due to the recent world events we could not envisage reaching our target.

The Executive Committee of the Battle of Worcester Society considered its options and at the meeting referred to above, we unanimously agreed to come up with an alternative to the Adams and Jefferson Monument.  Of course, their visit to Worcester and the words of John Adams’ speech are recorded in the Adams and Jefferson room at the Commandery, so they will not be forgotten!

The committee has chosen for its next project a sculpture by Ken Potts which he has entitled ‘The Gates’  which shows Parliamentary soldiers forcing the Sidbury Gate with their shoulders and Charles Stuart, pistol raised, standing on the other side ready to fight. This depiction may resonate more with local people and have more relevance to the Battle of Worcester itself. Ken is producing a montage showing how it will look in Fort Royal Park on the same site of the proposed Adams and Jefferson statue, which we will share at a later date. <https://www.thebattleofworcestersociety.org.uk/> shows Ken at his desk with ‘The Gates’ monument in front of him under the title, “Discover our Monument Campaign”.  Clearly this part of the website will need updating as it still mentions Adams and Jefferson, but we need to obtain a good image of ‘The Gates’ and an estimated cost.

Ken is assessing the cost of ‘The Gates’ project but he is optimistic of having the materials donated which should bring the cost down to an achievable target.  I will write to all of the donors giving them further details of the project and ask if they are happy to transfer their donation. We will, of course, also offer a full refund if they wish. Lord Faulkner has agreed to continue to be our Patron of this new monument.

Our Adams and Jefferson Planning Application expired at the end of January 2020 and I had already applied for a renewal.  I was aware that it was unlikely to be renewed for the reasons outlined above so we have withdrawn the renewal application.  I will need to submit a new Planning Application for ‘The Gates’ and we will also need Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic England as the Park is a listed area.

**Civil War Nights 2020 Season**

The Covid 19 plague has wiped out our Civil War Nights 2020 programme, but we still have one in the pipeline. On Wednesday 30th September 2020 we have Richard Bradley giving a talk in The Commandery at 7pm on the Civil War artefacts found during the excavations on the widening of the Southern Link Road. This talk was postponed from 21st May 2020 but we have our fingers firmly crossed that we can go ahead with this revised date. We will be emailing the membership very shortly about this event.

**Winter 2020/21 Non Civil War Programme at The Hive**

It has been our experience that most venues are waiting for the magic date of 1st October to arrive before they can commit to taking bookings for any events, therefore we are still hoping to go ahead with our **Non Civil War Programme at The Hive** all starting at 7pm.

On Wednesday 28th October 2020 we have the author Steve Dunn talking about his latest book, *‘The Battle in the Baltic 1918/20’* (postponed from 30th March 2020). Copies of the book will be on sale and Steve will be pleased to sign them.

 On Wednesday 25th November 2020 we have our very own BOWS member and Trustee Howard Robinson giving a talk on, ‘*Edward Winslow, The Mayflower and The Pilgrim Fathers.’* It is the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower’s journey this year. Winslow was one of the leaders of the Mayflower expedition, he was a Droitwich man and educated at The Kings School, Worcester.

I am intending to give a talk on ‘*Waterloo*’ in January 2021 with many facts that will amaze you. For example Abba won the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest in Brighton with this song yet the UK Panel gave it nil points, but it was top of the UK chart for two weeks!!!

**Drumhead Service Friday 3rd September 2021 - Banquet in The Guildhall on Saturday 4th September 2021**

2021 will be the 370th anniversary of the Battle of Worcester so we are hoping to put on a large parade of re-enactors through the city and perhaps a small re-enactment in Fort Royal Park prior to the Drumhead Service on Friday 3rd September 2021. The English Civil War Society is interested in joining us. We did enquire with the Sealed Knot but they wanted £20,000 so I politely declined!

The following day, Saturday 4th September 2021 we have booked the Guildhall for a Grand Banquet, so start saving up as it will be great occasion! I have invited the 16th Duke of Hamilton and his uncle, Lord Selkirk to be our guests. I await their reply.

**And Finally …**

A Big THANK YOU to all members for continuing to support the Society. We have not been in a position to give you very much for your subscription this year, but we hope to do better next year, Covid-19 willing. We look forward to seeing everyone again.

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**PATRONS OF THE SOCIETY**

**His Grace The Duke of Hamilton ▪ Earl Spencer ▪ Lord Faulkner of Worcester**

 **Lord Selkirk of Douglas ▪ Sir Robert Worcester ▪ The Hon. Lady Rosalind Morrison**

 **Mr. Henry Berkeley ▪ Ms. Diane Rapaport**

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**Monument Appeal**

**Lord Richard Faulkner is Patron of the Appeal**

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