

The Black Pear Bulletin

Issue No.6 May 2014

The Monthly Newsletter of the Battle of Worcester Society



THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY

The Chairman writes: April proved another busy month for the Society. The decision on charitable status was made, the encouraging Museums Worcestershire presentation at the Guildhall, a talk at the Commandery from the Worcester legend, Malcolm Atkin, the Cromwell Association AGM at Worcester Cathedral, all kept us in spotlight – and busy too! And the now the Society has a President!

CHARITABLE STATUS

With over 50% of the membership voting, and none voting against the Executive Committee's recommendation, we have a clear mandate to press ahead with applying for the Society to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status.

One or two members did query certain elements, but I am afraid to say that their emails have disappeared into the ether of one my obscure pc files. Should those members want answers to their queries still, could you please contact Executive Committee member, Vaughan Wiltshire wiltshireford@btconnect.com My sincere apologies for not responding.

Charitable status will mean greater accountability, including an annual report and with Executive Committee members becoming trustees, but the advantages far outweigh the additional bureaucracy. A review will be undertaken to ensure that we have the necessary levels of expertise on board. For the record, I have been a trustee of two charities in the past, and I know that some other members of the Executive Committee have similar experience. If it is necessary to recruit new trustees, we shall, as this is a step that is being taken most seriously. I will, as always, keep members updated.

MUSEUMS WORCESTERSHIRE AND THE FUTURE OF THE COMMANDERY

On 8th April the Mayor of Worcester, Cllr. Pat Agar, hosted a presentation at the Guildhall chaired by Cllr. Roger Berry, Chairman of the Joint Museums Committee. The presentation was entitled "Worcester - The Civil War City" and was called to discuss the findings of two consultancies employed by the Museums Committee to look into the future of Worcester's heritage and to discuss what needs to be done in the light of the consultants' findings to encourage tourism and heritage education with the aim of strengthening the museum product and kick starting the visitor economy. (The previously approved Commandery Redevelopment Programme 2014-2019 was not discussed).

All interested parties had been invited and were represented, the only notable absentee being the Worcestershire LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) which I found very disappointing. Your Executive Committee were well represented though some were wearing more than one hat..... hoodie!

In summary, the consultants findings, which were supported by the Joint Museums Committee members and the officers, reflected very much what we as a Society have been preaching for many a long year. The Civil War is Worcester's USP (unique selling point). The U.S. market, via the Adams/Jefferson connection, could provide a substantial increase in visitor numbers. It was acknowledged that the magnificent Cathedral (with its own Civil War stories) and the Royal Porcelain Museum are other key attractions, but, as one consultant put it, "the Civil War is the shop window of the department store". And another, "The Battle of Worcester and the Commandery are to us what Jorvik is to York".

It was recognised and acknowledged that Worcester had missed out to Newark in terms of a National Civil War Centre, but that there is room for two centres. I told the meeting that Newark are very keen to work in partnership with Worcester and would like to meet with Museums Worcestershire when they are ready.

On 16th April I attended a follow-up meeting with the officers at the Commandery when it was made clear that it's "full steam ahead" with Phase One of the Commandery Programme, which includes a £100,000 fundraising element, beginning this month (May). Although it is hoped the Heritage Lottery Fund will provide the bulk of the funding, the Society have been asked to be one of the other contributors. Such contributions need not involve money, but time spent. The item will be on the agenda for the Executive Committee meeting later this month. It is all very encouraging and I have suggested a Steering Group with all parties represented be established to co-ordinate progress.

BATTLE OF WORCESTER DINNER HAVE YOU ORDERED YOUR TICKETS YET?!

Worcester's finest dinner of 2014 takes place on Friday 5th September at New Road, in the

Graeme Hick Pavilion. The 10th Battle of Worcester Dinner will be a splendid black tie occasion. A specially selected three-course meal followed by a talk from our guest speaker, Professor David Stevenson of St. Andrew's University, flying in from Scotland! Professor Stevenson will be talking about Charles II in Scotland 1650-51.

This marvellous evening only happens on alternate years, and at £50 per head (the same price as 2012), it would be a shame to miss out.

To reserve tickets please contact Vaughan Wiltshire wiltshireford@btconnect.com



The Graeme Hick Pavilion
(the dinner is inside)

MEET THE PRESIDENT - BEN HUMPHREY

The Honours Sub-Committee met for the first time in April and it was decided, firstly, in recognition of his outstanding service, and secondly, to assist in his fundraising efforts at home and abroad on behalf of the Society to ask Ben Humphrey to become the

Society's first President.

The Presidential term is four years and the incumbent then stands down, after which another worthy Society member will be conferred with the title. All retiring Presidents will hold the office of Life Vice-President.

Ben's contribution to the Society over recent years has been outstanding and I am sure that we all wish Ben a happy and successful presidency.

CROMWELL ASSOCIATION AGM

On Saturday 26th April the Cromwell Association Annual General Meeting took place at Worcester Cathedral. Twelve Society members joined the Cromwellians for a fascinating

lecture by Professor Malcolm Wanklyn, one of the country's leading Civil Wars academics. All enjoyed his highly informative and fascinating lecture, after which a light lunch was served. Lunch was followed by a tour of the Civil War City conducted by members of the Society, though some Cromwellians opted for the Charles Stuart view from the top of the Cathedral tower. All gathered again for tea and biscuits, hosted by the Society, followed soon after by departures.

As some members will be aware your Chairman is a life member of the Cromwell Association, and fellow Society member and Cromwellian, Howard Robinson is a descendant of the Lord Protector. The AGM provided a wonderful opportunity for two Civil War related organisations to network and many new contacts were made.

ANNUAL COMMEMORATION SERVICE – SUNDAY 7th SEPTEMBER

Another must for members' diaries is the Annual Commemoration Service being held on Sunday 7th September, for the first time this year at Old St. Martin's Church.

In the year of the Scottish Independence Referendum, there seems to be a Scottish theme running through the September weekend, what with Professor Stevenson speaking at the Battle of Worcester Dinner and Lord Selkirk giving the address at Old St. Martin's.

It is turning out to be quite a day as Lord Selkirk, a direct descendant of the Duke of Hamilton who fought and died for the Royalist cause at Worcester, will be accompanied by his nephew, the current Duke of Hamilton. Both have expressed a wish to visit the Commandery and the Cathedral which are so closely associated with their noble ancestor. I am grateful to both David Nash at the Commandery and Susan Macleod at the Cathedral for making the visits possible.

The service begins at 12noon and we'll retire to the King Charles House afterwards. For those wishing to partake, our good friend Tony Spicer of the Battlefields Trust will be conducting a battlefield walk beginning at the Commandery from 2.30pm. Finishing at around 4pm.

I would ask all members to come along and support this very special day which marks the loss and sacrifice of so many men; it would be marvellous if we could get a "full kirk" for their Lordships' visit. All activities - exceptn lunch! - are free.

CURRENTLY READING

I am about to finish "Turncoats and Renegades – changing sides during the English Civil Wars" (Oxford University Press) by Dr. Andrew Hopper of the University of Leicester. Though overpriced for its size, (retailing for around £50 for 250 pages), it makes for a fascinating read. Hopper looks at the various categories of side-changers: nobility, MPs, army officers and ordinary soldiers from both sides of the divide. Regional, social and cultural factors

played a considerable part. However, what I found most illuminating was the lengths many went to in justifying their actions. A man's honour was still taken very seriously in the 17th century and side-changers were very adept at playing the "I've not changed, it's you lot that have" card. Excellent stuff, but not one for the casual reader.

HOWARD ROBINSON'S BATTLE OF WORCESTER FACTFILE

* The old Tudor style black and white building, now known as "Nash House" in New Street was in Royalist hands before being bought by the Puritan, John Nash, in 1645. Nash was buried in St. Helen's Church in Fish Street which stands on what may be the earliest known church in Worcester dating back to the Roman occupation. St. Helen's houses two funerary monuments, one for Parliamentary Nash and the other for a Royalist, Dudley with Puritan Nash's being the more flamboyant!

* The largest cannon in the Parliamentary train was the fearsome "Roaring Meg", a mortar that fired 200 pound shots. It damaged Worcester's medieval walls with the barrage directed by mathematician and master gunner, Nathaniel Nye. Nye's scientific approach to artillery had been detailed in his 1647 book, "The Art of Gunnery". (Your Chairman recently purchased a facsimile of Nye's book from Amazon!)



FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2014

LINDSEY DAVIS

TUESDAY 20th MAY at 6pm – CIVIL WAR NIGHTS AT THE COMMANDERY
In Partnership with the Worcester Literary Festival

Best-selling author Lindsey Davis will be speaking about her career as a writer of historical fiction, including the background to her Civil War novel, "Rebels and Traitors", in the third of the series of Civil War Nights. Lindsey's talk will be followed by a Q

& A session and book signings, with an opportunity to meet Lindsey. Refreshments and Society merchandise will be available. Entrance fee is £5 at the door on a first come, first served basis.



Lindsey Davis

SATURDAY 14th JUNE – BOSCOBEL HOUSE VISIT
Applications closed.

MICHAEL ARNOLD

MONDAY 23rd JUNE at 6pm – CIVIL WAR NIGHTS AT
THE COMMANDERY

In Partnership with the Worcester Literary Festival
Michael Arnold, best-selling author of the highly
successful “Stryker” Civil War series, will be
speaking about his career as a writer of historical

fiction, including an insight to Stryker, often

referred to as “the Sharpe of the Civil War” , in the fourth of the series of Civil War

Nights. Michael's talk will be followed by a Q & A session and book signings, with an

opportunity to meet Michael. Refreshments and Society merchandise will be available.

Entrance fee is £5 at the door on a first come, first served basis.



Michael Arnold

PROFESSOR RONALD HUTTON

WEDNESDAY 23rd JULY at 6pm – CIVIL WAR NIGHTS AT THE COMMANDERY

In Partnership with the Worcester Literary Festival

What a finale! The marvellous Ronald Hutton, one of the nation's leading academic
historians, author and TV personality will talk on “The Nature of the Great Civil War”.

Ronald's talk will be followed by a Q & A session and book signings, with an

opportunity to meet Ronald. Refreshments and Society merchandise will be available.

Entrance fee is £5 at the door, but pre-booked tickets are available from the Elgar
School of Music's reception desk in Deansway. Pre-booking is recommended.

CIVIL WAR DAY at the COMMANDERY

MONDAY 25th AUGUST (BANK HOLIDAY)

Organised by Museums Worcestershire

CIVIL WAR ACTIVITIES WEEKEND

SATURDAY 30th and SUNDAY 31st AUGUST

Details to follow

BATTLE OF WORCESTER SOCIETY VISIT TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

MONDAY 1st SEPTEMBER

With grateful thanks to Society member, our Member of Parliament, Robin Walker,

for arranging this very special visit. For details please contact Vice-Chairman, Richard
Shaw richardshaw99@live.co.uk





Drumhead Service in 2013

ANNUAL DRUMHEAD SERVICE at FORT ROYAL

WEDNESDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER

Commandery from 6pm

Fort Royal from 7pm

Full details to follow

**BATTLE OF WORCESTER DINNER at THE GRAEME HICK PAVILION,
WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET GROUND, NEW ROAD**

FRIDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER

Biannual Black Tie Dinner with leading Civil War author and academic Professor David Stevenson. Superb evening guaranteed. Tickets £50.
Contact Vaughan Wiltshire wiltshireford@btconnect.com

**OLD ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH HISTORY EXHIBITION with contributions from the
Society**

SATURDAY 6th SEPTEMBER Opens

**ANNUAL BATTLE OF WORCESTER
COMMEMORATION SERVICE**

OLD ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

SUNDAY 7th SEPTEMBER at 12noon

Address will be given by Lord Selkirk.

The Duke of Hamilton will also be present. Members and their families and friends are encouraged to attend. At the conclusion, members may wish to retire for lunch to the King Charles House.

2.30pm at the Commandery, Tony Spicer of the Battlefields Trust will conduct

members on a walk taking in the approach of the Parliamentary Army. Duration: 90 minutes approximately.



Old St Martin's Church

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 8th NOVEMBER at 10am – THE COMMANDERY

MEMBERS CHRISTMAS DRINKS follows final Committee meeting of the Year



BATTLE OF WORCESTER SOCIETY OFFICIAL MERCHANDISE

All items may be purchased via the Secretary.

Prices apply to Members only.

Lapel Badge £4

Mug £4

Hoodie £15

Tie £14



CONCESSIONS

Don't forget to use the stores where we have a 10% discount concession on production of a current membership card:

PEPLOWS

CARDINAL'S HAT

CHARLIE'S CAFE (SIDBURY)

WORCESTER LIVE EVENTS

CARLUCCIO'S

POCKETS MENSWEAR

SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL BEAUTY SALON

CHOCOLATE DELI



WORCESTER - THE CIVIL WAR CITY

**WHERE THE CIVIL BEGAN AND ENDED
1642 - 1651**

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