

# B1NS Newsletter

June 2007

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Hello, and welcome to this edition of the B1NS Newsletter.

This is an important edition. It is dominated by two articles: Firstly a write-up on the 2007 Annual General Meeting and Conference, which occurred last month in the Forest of Dean; and secondly a special "launch" feature for Peter's book, "Badham Delvings".

The latter is a truly notable event: As most of you know, the book has been awaited for some time, and while I know I have provided updates on progress over the last couple of years, its appearance in recent weeks - just in time for the AGM/Conference - was nonetheless a marvellous surprise in addition to it being a momentous event in the comparatively short life of the Society. Hence, I make no apology for the limited content in this edition.

Naturally, we cannot properly represent the book in the space we have in this Newsletter; it would be hopeless even trying to do so. Those of us that have had the privilege of seeing it recently have been delighted at the quality of it in every sense. It is the definitive book on "Badham"s - OK, there isn't another one in competition, but you know what I mean! But the main thing is that Peter deserves a round of applause (along with Janine, who has put in a massive effort in support) - and I am pleased to report that a hearty round of applause was certainly what he received at the Conference!

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## 2007 Conference/AGM

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This year's Conference and AGM was held over the weekend of 19th/20th May in the Forest of Dean, with the general theme of Badham links to the Forest.

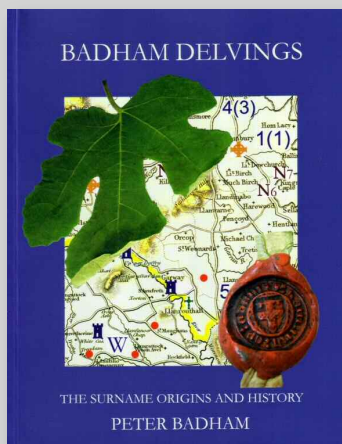
Peter and I (not forgetting our respective wives - Janine and Pamela, who let's face it, probably did most of the real work!) took on the task of organising the event, and one thing I learned was what a daunting and exerting task that is. My hat goes off to all those organisers of past events!

The general concept was similar to previous years (if it ain't broke, don't fix it!), where we spend the Saturday in "excursion mode", visiting sites of Badham interest; the Saturday evening having a relaxing meal and beverages, and the Sunday dedicated to the AGM and main Conference agenda.

## The Saturday Visits

There were sixteen in the group for the Saturday visits.

As we were using the Dean Heritage Centre as the venue for the AGM and Conference on the Sunday, we had wanted to allow time to



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look around the Centre which was a rich and interesting source of Forest of Dean life and history. However, time on the Sunday was restricted so we decided to start the Saturday schedule with a visit to the Centre and a short guided talk by a volunteer "host" that the Centre can provide if required. Our host on this day was Brian Johns, a "forester" born and bred and a retired "freeminer". It transpired that Brian was also an amateur archaeologist who had not only been involved in numerous "digs" around the Forest, but was personally responsible for a number of the finds now exhibited in the Museum based at the Centre.

Brian gave a unique insight into Forest life that included the language and culture not found anywhere else and his dry sense of humour provided an excellent



*Brian Johns at the Dean Heritage Centre*

start to the day! I would recommend a visit to the Centre if you have a chance - there are a surprising number of exhibits both large and small, from tools and photographic collections, to immense beam engines used in the foundries, a working water-wheel and even a recreated cottage fully kitted-out with Victorian furnishings. All this, together with local crafts that can be purchased and

how it acts as a general information centre, makes it a good, easy and interesting way to wile away a few hours!

The group then moved on to St Briavels where a pre-booked lunch was waiting at the George Inn, with the opportunity after lunch to have a short wander around. St Briavels is a delightful village, the ancient heart of which is almost completely dominated by the impressive Castle, which is surprisingly intact compared to many others in the area although partly due to it operating now as a Youth Hostel. Almost any view from a walk around the Castle gives the impression of living at

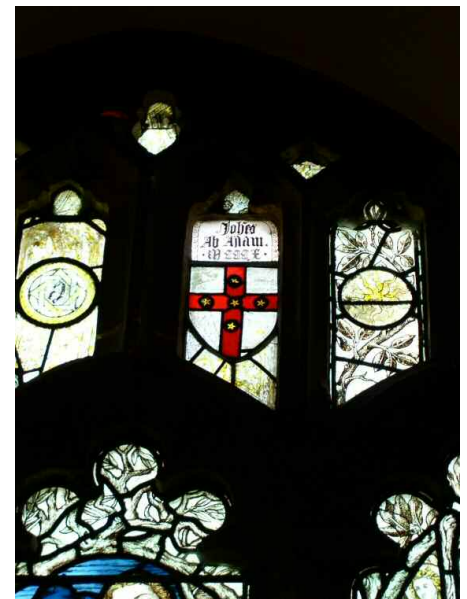


*St Briavels Castle*

least 100 years ago, with only a few cars and a small ice cream sign affecting the image and despite it being a main site of the Forest's iron industry, there is little evidence left, at least around the Castle. St Briavels has no direct Badham connections as far as we are currently aware, but the Castle was the administrative centre for the Forest for many hundreds of years - right through the periods when Sir John Ap Adam was resident in Beachley and Purton around the turn of the 13th Century and Walter Badham's appointment as a Forest Ranger in 1519. We do not know whether Walter would have taken up residence in the Forest as part of his appointment, but there is surely a reasonable chance that he may have visited the Castle on occasions.

Next on to Tidenham and the parish church of St Mary and St

Peter. When he was Lord of the Manors of Beachley and Purton, Sir John Ap Adam would have worshipped at Tidenham when in residence at Beachley. From the Society's point of view it is a key site because there is a remnant of a stained glass window dating from around that period representing the Ap Adam family. Some Society members may have seen this (it's in one of the windows on the South wall of the church), but



*Ap Adam stained glass remnant*

it was a first for all of us - even for Peter, who had seen it from outside but the church had always been closed. This time, he made sure we had a key!

We were soon to depart from Tidenham Church when Peter mentioned there was meant to be a monumental stone outside the South porch. This was an often seen case where monumental slabs that were originally either vertical or part of a chambered tomb had been laid horizontal, effectively making up the paving around the entrance to the church. The inevitable result is that the stone is worn by the many feet that walk on them often making them illegible, and this appeared to be the case for a stone that looked a possible candidate. However, right next to it was one, with surrounding grass encroaching

onto it, and being slightly further away from the "beaten path" some engraving had survived. We've probably all been present at some sort of "discovery" before, but being near 16 Badhams present at the discovery of a newly discovered ancient Badham artefact is not for the faint-hearted! A few minutes with a bottle of water, a cotton wool bud and a small make-up brush and letters were becoming clear!

The probability is that this stone sat on top of the tomb with the one next to it making up one of the sides. The guess is that the one on the side was dedicated to William Badham who died in 1735, whereas this one seemed to be dedicated to his son, William "Junior" who died in 1753. The family were the Hopkins family that claimed a line back to Adam Gwent, took the Badham name and took a lease out on Badams Court on the Beachley estate in the 16th Century and resided there for at least a hundred years. The current dwelling largely originates from the 18th Century and is clearly not the original Manor house, but is probably sited nearby. Suffice to say both entries (and more) are in the Society's Custodian database, and a more complete story can be found in Peter's new book (so buy it now!).



*The discovery of a Badham (Badam) Tombstone!*

Then on to Brockweir and Hewelsfield community shop - a good example of a community pulling together to create an eco-friendly answer to replacing a lost Post Office, the last village shop, and the need for a "social hub". It includes a solar energy capturing roof, a ground source heat pump, and conference and IT training facilities (see the following website for more details if you're interested in the concept:

[http://www.virsa.org/index.cfm/villageshop/Directory.Details/shop\\_id/238](http://www.virsa.org/index.cfm/villageshop/Directory.Details/shop_id/238))

However, for the B1NS group, it was just the place for a well-deserved cup of tea and slice of

cake!

All good things must come to an end - given more time, a trip to the Newland parish church (known colloquially as the "Cathedral of the Forest") was on the cards, but it was getting late and the excitement of the find at Tidenham meant everyone was happy to head back to their "digs" in readiness for the evening meal.

Or that's what we thought - it proves that there is no rest for the B1NS committee - Peter asked if we could meet to clear some of the agenda items to ensure we finished on time on the Sunday. However, a very important matter - that of deciding on a price for the book - was necessary for the launch the following day, so we all acquiesced!

### **Saturday Evening**

I won't bore you with the details of our evening meal (although I have no doubt it would get your mouth watering!), but suffice to say we had an extremely pleasant and good-humoured evening thanks to proprietors Mike & Michelle Downs (and barkeep/waitress Gayle) at the Woodman Inn at Parkend.

### **Sunday - The AGM**

This year, 18 members or "associates" attended the AGM.

The running order was switched for this year with the formalities of the AGM going first and the presentations (and of course, the book launch) following. Minutes of the AGM will be posted on the B1NS website shortly, however a particular development I am pleased to mention here is the willingness of new member Mike Badham, who attended the Saturday meal and the AGM/Conference, to volunteer his services as Membership Secretary. Mike made it clear that this is subject to him having more time towards the end of the year, but I can assure Mike that now we've got him he's going to have trouble escaping!

Peter and Janine between them have temporarily covered this post for the last three years, but quite rightly they now wish to stand down. It is also excellent for the Society that we are seeing further enhancement to the Committee both in numbers and experience - Mike's commercial and professional background will I am sure be invaluable to the Society as we enter a new era. Welcome aboard Mike!

### **Conference Sessions**

As far as the conference sessions were concerned, "yours truly" offered a short background history of

the Forest of Dean, attempting to capture some of the historical context of the times when our known Badhams (Sir John Ap Adam and Walter) were directly connected with the area. The Forest is a truly unique part of Britain - a natural forest area (as was much of Britain at one time), but where the demand for hunting and supplying the Royal dinner table competed with the clamour for its other natural resources of rich iron-ore and coal. This was in addition to the availability of fine oak timber, perfect for His or Her Majesty's' navies. This competition, often fierce and quite unsettling to the inhabitants, has been at the heart of the Forest's history since Norman times and our featured Badhams would no doubt have seen the effects, both good and bad, in their times.

Onto session 2, when Shane provided an interesting insight into the Wireworks at Tintern. This 400-year old industry relied on the natural resources from the area: water power from the Angiddy River, charcoal and wood from the surrounding forests, and iron ore from Dean. At various times, the Wireworks were owned by the same people that owned ironworks in the Forest of Dean, but presumably without some of the tighter restrictions that operated there under "Forest Laws".

The works were known for the manufacture of "Osmond Iron", a different process to other ironworking carried out at the time in the rest of Britain. 100 men were directly employed and 5000 others in the surrounding area relied on the Works, manufacturing products from the wire that included wire combs (e.g. "cards" for combing wool essential for the British wool industry), hooks, eyes and needles. The early success of these and other Osmond Iron foundries depended on bringing experts from abroad. In the case of Tintern, it included transporting to Britain a German copper maker, Christopher Schultz, along with his entire workshop! The subsequent sale of the Works to local farmers brought accusations of lower quality and the Works eventually lost out to cheaper (and sometimes, better) quality products from abroad.

### **The Launch of Peter's Book**

It fell to Dallas Badham, our President, to introduce the book to the Conference. She spoke for all present, and indeed the whole B1NS membership, in offering her grateful thanks to Peter and also to Janine who we know has contributed greatly, for the effort that had been put into bringing the book into existence.

Peter then ran through an outline of the purpose, structure and contents. He explained that it was

aimed at a wide audience - apart from the serious history, for example of the surname origins, there were also a number of more light-hearted sections that served to illustrate the diversity of interests a One Name Study inevitably has; e.g. from dedicated research into fungi to smuggling! By including a good number of illustrations, many in colour, Peter hoped it would be an enjoyable experience for all, irrespective of the degree of their direct interest in the Badham "story".

Certainly from my perspective, I can see it obviously contains plenty of information about the Badham family history, but also lots of topical information that should provide you all with a few tales to tell in "the local" or at future dinner parties! You will see I have included a dedicated panel to advertise the book in this edition of the Newsletter. There will also be blatant advertising on the Society website in due course. We make no apology for this: We need to do justice to the hard work that Peter has committed to this project, but we also need to remember the essential supporting role the book has in taking forward our own research which represents a cornerstone to the future direction of the Society (a bit more on that later).

### **Conclusion**

The general consensus was that this was another highly successful annual event for B1NS. I hope you have enjoyed the story of the weekend, and if you're at all inspired to come along in 2008 (set to be held in Glamorgan, South Wales on the 17th and 18th May), please book the equivalent dates in your diaries now and come and join in - we very much look forward to seeing you!

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### **Current Initiatives**

Finally, I can talk about some of the B1NS initiatives with greater certainty! The reason for this of course is that the production of the book has, for some time, been the essential "first step" needed to take things forward.

Before going onto these, just a few background details about the book from the Society's perspective. As far as B1NS is concerned, the book has been published at no expense to our funds. It is being privately funded by Peter and others with the understanding that there is no personal gain and with the sole purpose, after production costs have been met, of putting profits into the B1NS research fund. Production costs are not inconsiderable (you will guess that from the quality of the final product), but we feel we have set a price point for the book

(£22.50) that is not too expensive for such a specialist publication, yet ensures a decent revenue stream if it sells as well as we hope - we can't expect to sell thousands, but we hope to sell many hundreds.

### **B1NS Mailshot**

Of the related initiatives, and an essential element of covering the costs and getting into a profitable position, the most obvious is the "Mailshot". We have identified some 630 Badham households in Britain and the intention is to post a letter and a "flyer" for the book to each one. There will be some cost involved in this and some B1NS funds will need to be used, but as you will see from the Minutes of the Committee meeting also held over the AGM weekend, the Committee have authorised a release of funds, but limited (at this stage) to £500. This may sound a lot, but by the time you consider postage, stationery charges and printing of the flyer for 600+, something near this will soon be spent. However, we're confident it will be contained well within this sum.

The main point is that we must not let the quality and value of the book down by undertaking a second-rate publicity and advertising exercise - it won't be elaborate or extortionate, but we need to make sure people who know nothing about B1NS are reassured that we are a serious and genuine organisation before they part with their hard-earned cash! To some extent this is a "one-off" chance to do this, but rest-assured, we'll make sure we don't waste the opportunity.

### **Academic Research**

We will be keeping an interested eye on how sales of the book are going as this is the only means we currently have for raising the sort of funds necessary to co-sponsor the work for research with one of the academic institutions who have so far expressed an interest. When you get to read your copy of "Badham Delvings" (blatant plug!), you will realise the need for this further research as Peter sets out various lines of potential further enquiry; but also the complexity of it; involving knowledge of Latin, Early & Old Welsh, Medieval English (and possibly French). Oh, and a smattering of knowledge of patronymic and other naming conventions wouldn't go amiss!

### **Membership, etc**

An obvious spin-off from the Mailshot is the opportunity to encourage more people to join B1NS. Along with the flyer for the book, there will be a letter from Dallas, our President, to encourage membership in

addition to purchasing a copy of the book - or two, or three! A great deal of effort is being put into the wording of this letter as we need to ensure recipients are not inclined to discard it on the initial assumption that it's yet another piece of "junk mail", or even worse something from the unscrupulous organisations that purport to sell you a genuine "history of your surname" publication.

We are also looking at the possibility of offering a "package deal" involving reductions on the price of the non-member cost of a cut-down version of the B1NS CD ROM if purchased in conjunction with the book. Again, it would be wrong for us not to try to maximise the opportunity, and the CD ROM - while being a valuable resource for anyone wishing to trace potential links in their own families - also offers the Society a way of making a few extra pounds towards our research fund! However, only B1NS members will continue to get the full version.

I hope you agree these are exciting times for B1NS. However, what shouldn't be overlooked is the need to drive forward the other, non-book related initiatives. Of these, support to you, our members, is paramount - and finding links between the various Badham lines that we all represent is still a vital piece of work. We're therefore hoping that the next couple of years will be a fruitful time for this activity, but we clearly need volunteers to take it forward. The Committee will be working up ideas for possible projects with suggestions as to which members might benefit from working in conjunction with others. Please offer to take part when the time comes.

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### **Items of Interest/Members' Contributions, etc**

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Not much space for "snippets" in this edition I'm afraid. However, keep them coming! Just room for this small item from Harold:

*How to twist the truth without altering the facts.*

*Mark Twain spent a lot of money tracing his family tree, then twice as much trying to keep it secret which reminded the writer of the family that wanted its history written, so they hired a professional biographer. However they were worried about Uncle George, the black sheep of the family, who had been executed in the electric chair for murder. 'No problem' said the biographer, I will say "Uncle George occupied a Chair of Applied Electronics at an important government institution. He was attached to his position by the strongest of ties, and his death came as a real shock."*

Thanks Harold - worth remembering, I think - just in case!