



# THE PATRIOT



Quarterly Journal of The John Hampden Society

No. 17 - Winter 1996/7

## THAME TO HOST JOHN HAMPDEN WEEK IN JUNE

**A full week of activities to promote John Hampden is being planned to take place in Thame from 16-22 June.**

The event, the first major commemoration of the Patriot's life in the town since 1993, is being organised by the John Hampden Primary School of Park Street, with the assistance of Colonel John Hampden's Regiment of Foote of the ECWS and the John Hampden Society. Plans are still in the early stages - the first meeting of interested parties was held at the school on Friday 24 January - but the initial proposals include the following:

*A Living History encampment run by members of the English Civil War Society.*

*An exhibition in the school on the life of John Hampden by the John Hampden Society.*

*A short wreath-laying ceremony at the Monument at Chalgrove on Wednesday 18th.*

*An illustrated lecture on Hampden at the school by a well-known speaker on the Friday evening.*

*A march through Thame on the Saturday and Sunday by Hampden's Green-coats with drums beating and colours flying.*

*A skirmish on a public site near the school involving some 150 troops.*

*A special memorial service in St. Mary's Church on Sunday morning.*

The prime movers behind this idea are **Alan Haigh**, Headmaster of John Hampden School, and the Rev. John Simmons, Chairman of the Board of Governors, who wish to promote among their pupils and other schoolchildren a greater understanding of history in general and one of Thame's most illustrious sons in particular.

They are being supported by a number of interested local organisations including Thame Historical Society, the Town Council, Lord Williams's School, the Festival Committee and the Tourist In-

formation Office. Sponsorship is being sought from local businesses to defray costs.

Further information will be available in the next issue of *'The Patriot'*, but ongoing details can be obtained from **Mr Haigh** on 01844 212291 or from the Rev. Simmons on 01844 218832. Offers of sponsorship and/or help, both of which are badly needed, should also be directed to them.

In view of the size and importance of this event, members of the Society will probably receive a special mailshot in early June giving final details. We shall also require help in staffing the exhibition and its accompanying products stand, so any member with spare time in mid-June should contact the Hon. Secretary.

Officially unconnected with John Hampden Week, but not entirely coincidental, is the Society's Annual Dinner, which will take place at The Spread Eagle Hotel on Saturday 21 June. Bookings should be made directly to **Mrs Sarah Barrington** on 01844 213661. A menu and booking form will be enclosed with the next issue of *'The Patriot'*.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It has been decided to hold the AGM rather later in the year in future.

The original AGM was held in February as soon as possible after the formation of the Society in order to put its organisation on a proper basis, and we have rather got stuck with that date. However, **Mr Tim Oliver**, owner of Hampden House, has pointed out that travelling conditions for visitors would be much better and the House would look more attractive later in the year.

Consequently, we have arranged to hold the AGM on Saturday 26 April, commencing at 2 pm. Together with the visit to Broughton Castle, which has been scheduled for the following day, this will make a weekend of activities and be more convenient for members who have to travel some distance.

Motions for discussion and nominations for the committee should reach the Hon. Secretary by 31 March.

### MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

A warm welcome to membership of the Society to **Alan Haigh**, Headmaster of John Hampden Primary School in Thame, who becomes member number 200; to **David Gimson**, another teacher from Oxford; and to **Leonard Barker** of Aylesbury.

At the time of publication, a number of members have failed to renew, despite receiving a reminder in the Autumn issue of *'The Patriot'*.

Those who have renewed will find a note about membership cards enclosed with this issue.

Those who haven't will find a final reminder!



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## VISIT TO BROUGHTON

The visit to Broughton Castle near Banbury, postponed from last October, will take place on Sunday 27 April, commencing at 2.30 pm.

The owner, Viscount Saye and Sele, has kindly agreed to personally conduct members of the Society around the Castle, which has many associations with John Hampden. It was here that Hampden, the first Viscount, and other partners in the Providence Company gathered, ostensibly to discuss company business.

In fact, these meetings, which took place in a secret room described by a contemporary writer as 'A room that hath no ears' and now known as 'The Council Chamber', were to formulate opposition to Charles I in the years when Parliament was suspended.

Artifacts include two portraits of Hampden, a miniature alleged to be of him, and the silver cup featured in issue no. 7 of 'The Patriot'.

The cost per person will be £3.50, and members wishing to attend should apply, with their remittance, to the Hon. Secretary. Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to 'The John Hampden Society'.

Lunch, which is not included in the price, can be obtained at the Saye and Sele Arms (01295 263348) which stands by the Castle gates.

## WEB PAGE

The Society's page on the Internet's World Wide Web is beginning to take shape.

Mr Michael Smith, Director of Information Technology at Hampden House, has produced a page based on the promotional leaflet, and by the middle of January this had been accessed 105 times by interested computer users. We received our first enquiry by e-mail just after that.

We intend to expand the Web page to include a regularly updated Diary of Events and news, and it will include full details of John Hampden Week in June.

## POSTCARDS

The postcards mentioned in the last issue of 'The Patriot' have now been printed and are being ordered by members.

The original intention of having these cards ready before Christmas was not achieved, because the result from the original printers was so appalling that we were obliged to reject them on the spot and find a new supplier. Happily, we discovered Adlard Print and Typesetting Services of Nottingham, whose care and attention produced first-class results.

To recap, these full-colour postcards, which feature the Walker portrait of John Hampden on the front and some details of him and the Society on the reverse, are available at 20p each post free (minimum order 10) from either:

Miss Elizabeth Morris  
31 Craigwell Avenue  
AYLESBURY  
Bucks HP21 7AF  
or  
Dennis Hargreaves  
30 Ash Road  
PRINCES RISBOROUGH  
Bucks HP27 0BQ

## ANNA WATSON

1926-1976

We are sad to announce the death, in Thame just before Christmas, of **Mrs Anna Watson**, wife of the **Rt. Rev. Richard Watson**, former Bishop of Burnley.

Anna was born at St. Aldate's Rectory in Oxford; the fourth of five children of Bishop Christopher and Mrs Chavasse. When her father later became the first Master of St. Peter's College, the family went to live there. Many years later Anna was invited back with her husband to attend a dedication of a new cross and candlesticks for the Chapel and to dine in Hall.

After schooldays at Headington and Limpsfield, Anna carried out her war service in the Wrens, and spent the latter part working on the Colossus computer at Bletchley Park, helping to decode the Enigma messages from Germany. As Bishop Dick says, "Perhaps there's an encouragement for members of the John Hampden Society; for we follow a Patriot who defended the truth."

After the war Anna trained at St. Thomas's Hospital and became a Nightingale Nurse. She met and married Dick Watson in Oxford in 1955, and continued her nursing career at the Acland Hospital. When they moved to the Oxford Pastorate she welcomed and entertained hundreds of friends - many of them undergraduates - and this hospitality continued as a vicar's wife in Hornchurch and a bishop's wife in Burnley. The Watsons spent 17 years in industrial Lancashire, and when Anna was asked what she would miss most of her time there, she replied tactfully, "The soft water!"

Her failing eyesight did not prevent her getting involved after returning to her native Oxfordshire. She worked hard for the Inner Wheel in Thame (hosting a coffee morning a few days before her death) and regularly attended the AGMs of the John Hampden Society. Though blind, Anna listened very intently and took a keen interest in the proceedings. She was a great enthusiast for Trollope novels on cassette, and actually died peacefully while listening to 'Inspector Morse' on television.

Anna's ability to make and keep friends, and make people feel welcome and comfortable was a valuable attribute in a Bishop's wife. She had a great sense of fun (being easily reduced to giggles) and a contagious laugh.

Anna is survived by her husband Dick and her two children, David and Rachel. To them, and to everyone who met her, she set a wonderful example of courage and making the most of life's opportunities.



1997

**Fri 21 Feb** Committee Meeting, 7.30 pm.  
(Venue to be advised)

**Sat 26 Apr** Annual General Meeting at Hampden House, Great Hampden, commencing at 2 pm.

**Sun 27 April** Visit to Broughton Castle, Banbury, Oxon, commencing at 2.30 pm.

**Mon 16 - Sun 22 June** John Hampden Week in Thame.

**Sat 21 June** Annual Dinner at The Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame.

## PUBLICATION

The Society is to re-publish the 'Lifelines' biography of John Hampden by **Dr Frank Hansford-Miller**.

This little 48-page book, written by one of our founders in 1976, is a first-class primer for anyone who wishes to know more about John Hampden, and has proved to be extremely popular wherever it is on sale. Sadly, it is now out of print (**Dr Hansford-Miller** and **Viscount Hampden** appear to own most of the remaining copies) and Shire Publications of Princes Risborough have declined our requests to reprint it.

However, they have generously agreed to relinquish all rights to the work and to supply us with the original film used for making the plates; **Dr Hansford-Miller** has given his permission for re-publication; and **Graham Barfield**, who has connections in the printing trade, is masterminding the project, aided by his son **Nicholas**. It is hoped to defray some of the printing costs by selling space inside the covers to appropriate advertisers. We are planning to have the 2,000 copies available in time for John Hampden Week in June.

## BEST CELLAR

Richard Jenkinson of the Chiltern Brewery reports that John Hampden's Ale is now on sale in Tesco's in Wendover, and proving to be very popular.

It is outselling the brewery's more established product, Old Three Hundreds Ale.

Sale or return

Free glass loan



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Advice and suggestions

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