

THE THOUGHTS OF VICE-CHAIRMAN BOB



Bob Hammond with his sister Pat Harris

It is four years since I took up the role as Vice-Chairman of the Society and I felt that was now time for a change. I therefore decided to stand down at this year's AGM.

The Vice-Chairman has always had an active role. Indeed, one might expect that as Roy Bailey held it before me. In actual fact it is not strictly necessary to have a Vice-Chairman, but as Roy had created it to such good effect it was continued with.

I have decided to take this opportunity to remind members, in part, what the Committee and others have done for the Society over the last four years, and also how the Committee operates. I am sure members will also want me to give credit to those who work very hard to further the aims of the Society.

It really starts with the unveiling of the plaque in Wendover, on the 21st of June 2003. A civic ceremony, a wonderful day and at last we were able to do some justice to Wendover's greatest-ever Member of Parliament. Although so many played their part I should mention Graham Barfield and Valerie Horne for the arrangements and without whom the event would not have been possible. Also present was a detachment from the Greencoats. It was just two years since the plaques had been unveiled at Grampound, when again Graham, although not a member of the Committee, was very involved.

Shortly before Wendover the Society had published an edition of the biography of John Hampden the Patriot. This enabled many more people to read this fine life of Hampden and since our President John Adair allowed us to keep the royalties, it also helped to swell the coffers of the Society. Around this time the Committee ordered 250 badges (*right*) bearing John Hampden's portrait. We are now ordering more and have been asked by the John Hampden Grammar School at Wycombe to supply 100 for their 6th formers. What better way of helping young people to become aware of John Hampden. Committee member Maurice Kirtland has strong connections with local schools and is often the contact.



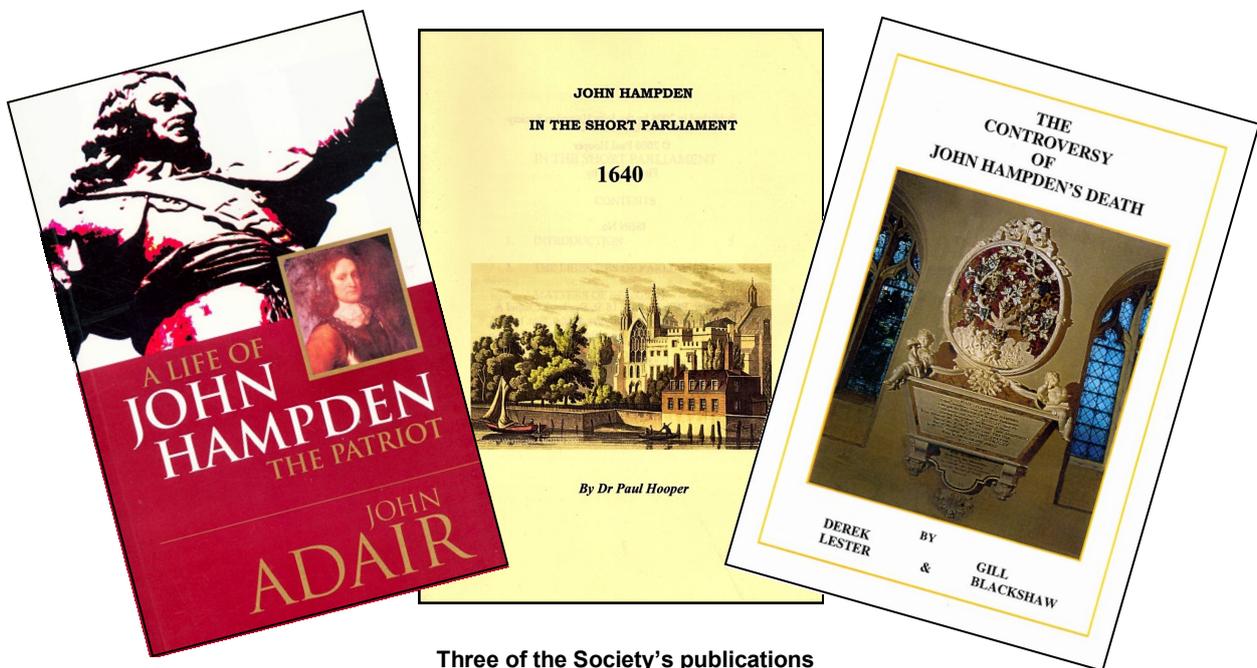
Incidentally on the subject of schools I am hoping to persuade the Committee to do a small publication for children about the ages of 11-13 years. Many years ago I was given a book written for young people called *The Founders of the Empire*. Published in the 1890s, this book had chapters on great Englishmen. Along with Drake, Alfred, Nelson, Wellington and others was a whole chapter on John Hampden entitled 'The Defender of English Liberties.' Beautifully written and not pandering in any way to young people, it honestly gives an account of John Hampden which we can accept today.

It is astonishing to think that the Victorians were so even-handed and proud of Hampden at the height of the British Monarchy - a far cry from today. That chapter I hope we can publish in small book form and perhaps give to young people in their early years at Secondary School. However I must wait for the Committee's approval as our finances have to be considered.

In the same way the Committee has recently published our member Dr Paul Hooper's splendid account of the Short Parliament, although payment for that goes into the Society's funds. Thanks to Paul, Sam Hearn and Derek Lester for that.



The Society's procession through Wendover before the unveiling of the plaque



Three of the Society's publications

It was in 2004 as well that Derek organised the fine 17th century banquet at Hampden House, by kind permission of Tim Oliver; still a great supporter of the Society. What a memorable day that was. Almost cyclonic; our Chairman cutting up fallen trees; eating by candlelight; which included a 17th Century mustard egg saved for me by a beautiful lady in stunning dress of the period. In fact all the ladies looked lovely and many of their consorts, cavalier, with definitely a small 'c'. Regrettably we will find that event very difficult to repeat due to insurance considerations. How fortunate we have been to hold many meetings at Hampden House.

The Old House cannot, in my opinion, be beaten for our AGMs although I am willing to agree that recent meetings at Hartwell House with a speaker have been a considerable success. Generally Treasurer Sam Hearn has been responsible for the arrangements and smooth running.

Sam, who is a man of great action, also played the lead role, with the Committee's sanction, in the purchase of the impressive roundel of John Hampden for the Society. He kept it for some weeks under his bed! It isn't recorded what Sue thought of that. It is now however, splendidly displayed in the Thame Museum with other exhibits on the Patriot. This is now the best display about John Hampden in the country. As on so many occasions it was Derek and Roy who supported Maurice, our local contact, to set up the display for the Museum.

Each year the Society gives a number of talks. In the main Roy, always in demand, gives the greatest number, but Sam is becoming more active and makes use of modern technology. Graham Barfield, Derek and I have also given the occasional lecture. We are grateful also to our Patron Miles Buckinghamshire who regularly packs in a good audience to his own particular talk on his ancestor.



Professor John Adair and Derek and Gill Lester listening to Dr Maija Jansson giving one of her fascinating talks at the Annual Dinner

Many of our members are unable to get to meetings so it is essential that the quality of our newsletter, *The Patriot*, is maintained. We feel a certain amount of pride that for a small society it is of such a high standard. Much of that is due to our Honorary Secretary Anthea Coles, who doubles up as Editor 'in her spare time'.

There is no doubt the Society is very fortunate to have Anthea in both posts and she is a primary contact for those enquiring about us. She is very determined the Committee should stick to deadlines. If an organisation is to function there always has to be someone who picks up and runs with what others would look away from - Anthea is that someone.

Also on the newsletter, Roy, after being its Editor for so many years and who set the standards, is now the Consulting Editor, and Anthea appreciates his wealth of experience in all areas of publishing.



**The 10th Anniversary Banquet at Hampden House in 2002.
Left to right - Alan Barton, Lord Buckinghamshire, Derek Lester,
Lady Buckinghamshire and Peter Kaminski**

I asked Roy to write about how the Society was formed and the result was the splendid article in *The Patriot* no. 52. As a relative newcomer to the Society I was delighted to read how Roy had gained his original enthusiasm from the good old wireless, and then how he had become inspired to form the Society, to bring together like-minded persons to celebrate John Hampden's life. As an aside from the serious points, I should have enjoyed seeing Roy leading the cavalry charge at Cropredy Bridge (from a distance). I gather it was not exactly as planned!

Coming back to *The Patriot*, it is often incumbent on members of the Committee to contribute articles since we are committed to four issues a year. It is not so easy as it may seem to get articles submitted on time, as Anthea will confirm, so I would ask any of our members who feel they have something to contribute of relevance to John Hampden and his times to do so.

Interestingly as I write this Roy has passed onto me an e-mail from Rita Lamb, not a member at

the moment sadly, who has uncovered a family connection between William Hakewill, William Hampden, and the Horsey Family of William's will. Now since I noticed in the registers of Pyrton, Elizabeth Symeon's home, that there was a Horsey living there, perhaps we might find another relationship. Could Elizabeth have been a second cousin of John? Speculation, I know, but worth looking into. We already know Hakewill and Symeon share the 3 trefoils on their arms.

Most Committee members at some time have written for *The Patriot*. Apart from the usual suspects - of which I am one - I am reminded of Mike Portsmouth's interesting series of articles on the Whartons and Goodwins. Also June Wailing's fascinating piece on the Warren Family; dear Uncle Warren of William Hampden's will, and how through his widow Joan Cromwell the London house in what is now Downing Street came into the possession of John's mother, her beloved niece Elizabeth Cromwell.

Then of course members of the Committee have arranged a host of interesting meetings. The Joint Day School with the Cromwell Association comes to mind as well as the annual dinners at the Spread Eagle with good food, great vivacity and excellent speakers. Speakers in the last four years of the quality of Dr. Paul Hooper, Professor Malcolm Wanklyn and Dr. Maija Jansson (twice), a Vice-President of the Society. We also hold the bi-monthly committee meetings at the Spread Eagle in Thame by courtesy of Sarah and David Barrington, for which we are very grateful. Sarah is a member of the Society and the Spread Eagle, like Hampden House, has become one of the homes of the Society.

Incidentally we have the meetings in the Cockpit, but this should not deter new arrivals to Committee, as they are friendly with a pint and only occasionally controversial. In any case our Hon. Secretary insists they stop by 10 pm. I should mention that at the beginning of my Vice-Chairmanship we met also at the home of Committee members Gillian and John Goodall, until due to other pressures they reluctantly had to stand down. John kept us well supplied with beer.

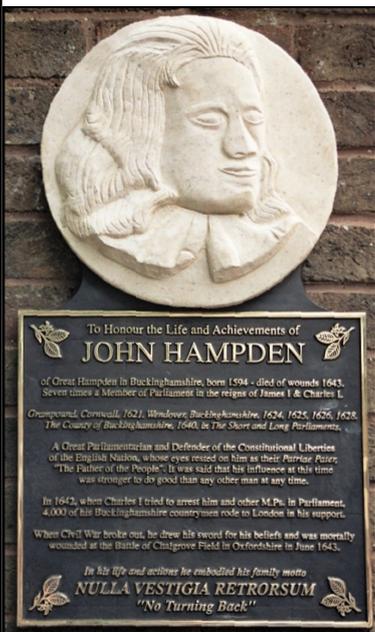
I must express our appreciation of our Chairman, Lord Hollenden. Ian is a much better timekeeper than I am, and is always ready to take a leading role, as at Grampound and Wendover. Nor must I forget here our Patron the Earl of Buckinghamshire, who regularly fronts ceremonies and chairs events, again as at Grampound and Wendover. Our meetings without Alison and Miles would certainly be less charismatic and enjoyable. The Countess - a Vice-President - reminds me of the important role the ladies play in the Society. I have no doubt that



Valerie Horne

I wanted this to be just a head and shoulders picture, but Roy insisted that I be shown in a warlike mode!

many are as strongly-minded as their consorts regarding John Hampden. One recalls those dangerous times between 1620 and 1650, when women like Elizabeth Hampden (nee Simeon) and Letitia Hampden (nee Knollys), John's second wife, must have given him the strong support he would have needed. We need to know more about both these ladies. That seems possible about Letitia whose father was a first cousin of Queen Elizabeth and because of his strong Protestant feelings had to go to Germany during Mary's reign. It is impossible to think that coming from such a family she would have been anything other than one hundred percent with John. Miles himself of course is a direct descendant from Mary Hampden, who Letitia looked after and was, I suspect, a pretty interesting person in her own right.



The Wendover plaque

Derek Lester is also a tower of strength in the Society. Not only does he organise, with others, battlefield walks and co-write books with Gill (which also help our finances), there is always the support and colour the Society receives from the Greencoats, of which Derek is Colonel. A number of our members have worn the Greencoat uniform, particularly at Grampound. Some Committee members have worked with the Battlefields Trust; most recently at Brentford where John Hampden's leadership of the tactical defence at a perilous time is now recognised on the official information boards. I believe I am right in saying that Sam took the lead in that, but as always he was well supported by others.

Although Liz Morris is no longer with us, apart from the arduous work of Membership Secretary, which involved updating membership lists and making sure members had not forgotten their subscriptions, she always organised our presence each year at the Bucks Local History Fair and Conference. As with so many members she was also a Greencoat when required. We are pleased that Roger Paynter has taken on the work as Membership Secretary and this helps us retain a contact with the delightful Cornish town of Grampound, which is almost twinned with the Society.

In this resume I know I have missed out half of those things done in the last four years. I hope those who were responsible for other projects will forgive the omission of their names, and what they did. It has certainly been appreciated. As I wrote that I thought of the get-togethers at the Chiltern Brewery, with sausage and mash, strong beer - even John Hampden's own - and good speakers.

Lastly my thanks, as I am sure from all of us, go to Roy Bailey who initiated the Society with the help of Annabel, and he is still one of it's pre-eminent drivers.

In part the purpose of my article is to give members confidence that their Committee is very active in the Society's business, because in the end it is you members who are our lifeblood. Whether you just read *The Patriot* or perhaps take part in some or most of the meetings or support us in some special way, we could not continue to honour and make others aware of the achievements of this great Englishman without you.

Those who are able to make the journey to join us - and I know some come from a distance - please continue to do so if you can. I am reminded of Gloria Smith who travels up from Canterbury, John Seal from Hampshire, Mary McCormick from South London and indeed one of our Vice-Presidents Dr. Maija Jansson. Pride of place however goes to our speaker at the last Annual Dinner, Dr Paul Hooper, who travels from the Isle of Wight, and we are very pleased he does. However, whether you come or not, please stay with the Society; we need you.

In these days of mission statements, my own has been very simple - to keep focusing on our Aims and that briefly is primarily the Life of John Hampden and his times, and making his achievements better known. I think it was the Moravian Brotherhood who sent out their Missionaries with the basic need to plant a seed. That is what we must do.

John Hampden, although he was not aware of it, at his death was a leader who put the Country on a path from which it would never divert. There would be many hold ups and part reversals but with the determination that John Hampden had himself, Government by Parliament with a Constitutional Monarchy became the norm. I do not think he would have been unhappy with that.

For myself it has been a considerable honour to serve as Vice-Chairman and also an incredible lot of fun, as well as a learning curve on John Hampden. I now look forward to continuing as a member on the 'back benches', so to speak.

Bob Hammond



The John Hampden exhibition at the new Thame Museum