



THE PATRIOT

Newsletter of the John Hampden Society

No. 54 - Spring 2008



The John Hampden Society is a registered charity which exists to bring together people with an interest in John Hampden, and to encourage wider knowledge of this great 17th century Parliamentarian, his life and times

THE FIFTEENTH AGM

Some 29 members of the Society gathered in the library of Hartwell House on the morning of Saturday 12th April. The Chairman, Ian Hollenden, reported another busy and successful year for the Society; the publication of Paul Hooper's book, the opening of Thame Museum with its Hampden display, the unveiling of six information boards marking the battlefields at Turnham Green and Brentford, and two superb lunch time talks for members. In addition four talks on John Hampden were delivered to outside bodies, and four editions of *The Patriot* had been published. The year had been rounded off in style with a dinner in November at Chenies Manor to celebrate the Society's fifteenth anniversary.



The Chairman reminded members that despite all these successes 2007 would be remembered with great sadness as the year in which we had lost our membership secretary, Liz Morris. She was a stalwart of the Society, always cheerful and willing to become involved in so many ways in activities of the Society. The Chairman was pleased to report that Roger Paynter had taken on the task of Membership Secretary. Roger explained that he had been updating the membership records and was currently busy chasing up the overdue subscriptions of those members who still pay by cheque.

The Treasurer, Sam Hearn, reported another financially successful year in 2007. However he warned that with rising postage and printing costs it would be necessary to bring a motion to increase membership subscriptions to the next AGM.

The Chairman reported with regret that Bob Hammond, the Vice-Chairman, would not be seeking re-election to the Executive Committee. The Chairman thanked Bob for all his hard work over the years. Mike Malone had also advised that due to his other commitments he would not be seeking re-election. Sam Hearn stood down as Treasurer and was elected as the new Vice-Chairman. Sam will continue in both roles until a new treasurer can be found. Roger Paynter was elected as the Membership Secretary. Anthea Coles was re-elected as Honorary Secretary. Roy Bailey, Maurice Kirtland, Derek Lester and John Gabbitas were all re-elected as Executive Board Members. Lord Hollenden advised that he was prepared to stand as Chairman for a further year, but may not seek re-election next year.

The meeting discussed, under any other business, the desirability or otherwise of holding the AGM on a Saturday rather than a Sunday, and in the morning rather than the afternoon. It was accepted that morning meetings would not be popular with members who had to travel long distances to the AGM. There was no strong preference for a Saturday or a Sunday.

Sam Hearn said that the Executive had decided that a special meeting of the Society would be held to discuss how to halt the decline in membership numbers. A date for this meeting had still to be fixed. Jean Gabbitas suggested that some form of commemorative church service at Great Hampden Church would raise the profile of the Society and would be appreciated by many existing members. Various other suggestions were made.

After the formal close of the AGM members were treated to a talk by Dr Lucy Worsley. Her subject was William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, about whom she has recently published a book which was reviewed in the Autumn 2007 edition of *The Patriot*. Lucy proved to be an amusing and knowledgeable speaker. She was equally at home revelling in her hero's ribald (and bad) poetry as in analysing his architectural and equestrian skills. The Duke, an archetypal Cavalier, was a contemporary of Hampden. However he

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Punching below their weight (part1)



I was intrigued by a comment that Professor John Morrell made in his interesting but unfortunately unpublished lecture at the *Patriot and Protector* day school in 2005. He said that he believed that the Hampden family had been ‘punching below its weight’ in the fifty or sixty years before the Patriot was born. He added that John’s father, William Hampden, had died young and before he could develop anything other than a purely local reputation.

By the seventeenth century the Hampden’s had already been a prominent Buckinghamshire family for several hundred years and some had left their mark on the national stage. These included; Sir John Hampden of-the-Hill, knighted by Henry VIII in 1513 whilst on campaign in France, Sybil Penn (nee Hampden) dry nurse to Edward VI, and her brother Richard Hampden, Queen Elizabeth’s Clerk of the Kitchen.

It is however interesting to go back another two or three generations and track the Hampden involvement in what became known as the Wars of the Roses, and the rise to power of the final victor, Henry Tudor (Henry VII).

Sir Edmund Hampden became an esquire of the body to Henry VI (a Lancastrian) in 1437. Edmund escaped the Yorkist siege of the Tower of London in 1460 and his estates were attainted (forfeited) after the battle of Towton in 1461. He went into exile in France with the young Prince Edward and Henry VI’s wife Queen Margaret of Anjou. Edmund was the Prince’s Chamberlain and died with him at the Battle of Tewkesbury in 1471.

A later Edmund Hampden, the second son of Thomas Hampden of Hampden, fought for the Lancastrian/Tudor cause at the battle of Bosworth in 1485. Like his great uncle Edmund he had carved out a career in royal service. He was an esquire of the body to the Yorkist monarchs Edward IV, Edward V and initially Richard III. However he was involved in an unsuccessful rebellion against Richard and was forced to flee into exile in France where he joined the court of Henry Tudor.

Edmund Hampden returned to England with Henry in 1485. He became one of the new King’s esquires of the body and a member of his privy council. In March 1486 he was granted the stewardship of Woodstock Manor “for service done in France and England”. His great uncle Edmund had held the same Manor from the Crown. This Edmund Hampden was a direct ancestor of John Hampden the Patriot.

However, not all the Hampdens at the battle of Bosworth returned home safely or were even on the winning side. Their story will be continued in part 2 of this article. Much of the information above was quarried from a paper and published in 2003 in *The Ricardian - The Journal of the Richard III Society*. Its author, Lesley Boatwright, is a long standing member of the John Hampden Society.

Sam Hearn

SPEEN FETE - 12th JULY 2008

A date for your diary...



The John Hampden Society looks forward to meeting you, your friends and neighbours at this village fete in the heart of Hampden Country.

Don’t miss this chance to see Colonel John Hampden’s Regiment of Foote in action and find out about the types of weapons they used during the Civil War and the clothing they wore.

Make sure to visit the Society’s stand and see the range of books avail-

able for purchase, as well as taking the opportunity to study the display boards with numerous photographs and literature giving the history of the Society and illustrating some of it’s past events, before enjoying the rest of the fete in the lovely Buckinghamshire village of Speen.

This popular event will take place on the Sports Field starting at 2 pm and will be an interesting and informative afternoon out. It would be a shame to miss it.



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HAMPDEN HOUSE

The Buckinghamshire home of the Hampden Family

A Grade I Listed house in the heart of the Buckinghamshire countryside, Hampden House occupies a site given to Baldwyn de Hampden by Edward the Confessor and was the home of the Earls of Buckinghamshire until 1938. The main body of the house is Elizabethan, the oldest part being the 14th century King John's Tower on the south side. This is constructed of clunch (a mixture of chalk and mud peculiar to Buckinghamshire), with gothic windows and the remains of the original staircase in one corner. On either side of this the construction is 16th century, whilst facing east the elevation is of mid-Georgian design. The north and west sides were remodelled round about 1750 to a design by Thomas Iremonger and are of gothic design with battlements and pointed arches. Edward III, the Black Prince and Queen Elizabeth I are reputed visitors to the House as guests of the family and, indeed, it is said that Griffith Hampden cut an avenue through the trees, known to this day as 'The Queen's Gap' to make an easier road by which the Queen could access the house.

After the family left the house it was let to a girl's school, with the resulting subdivision of many rooms and the installation of false ceilings. Pupils at the school were charged 55 guineas a term for board, residence and general school course, paying additional fees for optional subjects, such as fencing at 3 guineas a term. Senior girls could do a domestic science course for a fee of 50 guineas. Pupils were allowed no more than £2 per term pocket money and had to pay 5/- per term to cover the cost of exercise books etc, as it had been found that taught a girl to be more economical in the use of stationery. There was a resident staff of 7 qualified mistresses and several visiting staff.

When the school vacated the house it was occupied for a time by the Hammer House of Horror Group as a film set, with much damage being caused to the interior. The house then stood empty for some time, ultimately suffering the ravages of dry rot, damage to the stucco etc. until some parts of the structure became dangerous.

Salvation came in the form of careful restoration undertaken by new owners between 1987 and 1989, when the first floor was converted to office use, winning an award from *The Sunday Times* for Country Houses restored to life.

Anthea Coles



King John's Tower, south elevation

WANTED...

Information as to the whereabouts of Mr Jonathan Morgan, whose last known address was 19 Elia Street, Islington. Mr Morgan has renewed his membership this year by Standing Order but recent communications addressed to him at the above address have been returned by the Post Office marked "Removed, return to sender, do not redeliver".

If anyone knows where Mr Morgan has moved to, please let me know, so that I can update Society records and ensure that he receives future communications.

e-mail: antheacoles@yahoo.com or telephone 07985 607224.

Anthea Coles



DIARY DATES

2008

Wednesday 17th April. An illustrated talk entitled "John Hampden - Rebel or Patriot" to Hedgerley Historical Society, The Village Hall, Hedgerley, Bucks.

Sunday 11th May.

A Walk in Prince Rupert's footsteps. Three walks to mark the re-listing of Chalgrove Battlefield.

Friday 30th May.

An illustrated talk entitled 'John Hampden - the Patriot' to the High Wycombe Society at The Guildhall, High Wycombe, commencing 7.30pm

Saturday 28th June.

Annual Dinner at The Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame, meeting in the bar at 6.45. Guest Speaker - Diane Purkiss.

Saturday 12th July.

A display of drill and musketry by Colonel John Hampden's Regiment of Foote at Speen, Princes Risborough.

Tuesday 30th September.

An illustrated talk about John Hampden to Kidlington and District Historical Society, at the St John Ambulance Headquarters, St. John House, High Street, Kidlington, Oxon.

All meetings commence at 8 pm, unless otherwise stated.

For up-to-date information, see the Diary page on the Society's website at:

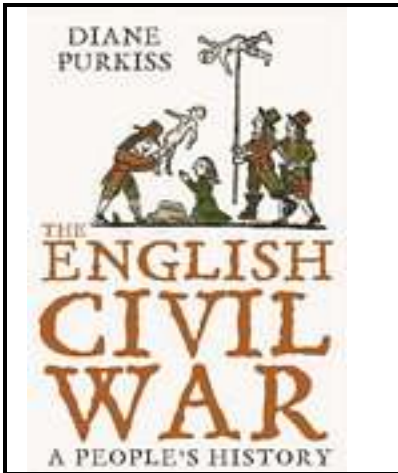
www.johnhampden.org/diary.htm

WORDS OF WISDOM

Thomas Rainborowe c1610-1648

"For really I think that the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live, as the greatest he; and therefore truly, sir, I think it's clear, that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government; and I do think that the poorest man in England is not at all bound in a strict sense to that government that he hath not had a voice to put himself under."

Steven Ede-Borrett



BOOK REVIEW

The English Civil War: A People's History by Diane Purkiss.

Published in 2006 by Harper Collins. ISBN 13 978-0-00 -715 062-5627, 627 pages including index. 24 pages of black and white illustrations. Price around £10.00 in paperback.

The author was educated at the University of Queensland and Merton College Oxford. She is a Fellow and Tutor at Keble College, Oxford and was formerly Professor of English at Exeter University

The professional reviewers of this book are fairly evenly divided between those who loved it and those who loathed it. Some have been confused by the title into thinking that Dr Purkiss is writing from a left wing perspective and others have assumed that she is a 'feminist' historian simply because her book contains the stories of so many women. In my opinion the author writes with great enthusiasm and charm and has steered well clear of fashionable 'isms'.

The book is constructed around a chronological account of the war and the events leading up to it. The narrative is driven forward by a patchwork of brief stories about how the War affected the lives of dozens of individuals from all levels of Society. It is the author's contention that people became committed to one side or the other for a great variety of reasons and that the nature and strength of these commitments changed as the War progressed. In many respects this book is a useful antidote to John Adamson's *Noble Revolt* with its concentration on the machinations of a small clique of aristocrats.

Other reviewers have pointed out a few factual errors in the text but these, whilst unfortunate, are not sufficient to damn the work as a whole as unreliable. Members may, for example, be surprised to learn that 'on 17th June 1643, John Hampden lay dead on Chalgrove Field'.

I am grateful to Graham Barfield for recommending this book and for sending me his copy just to make sure that I would read it! Graham also suggested contacting Diane and asking her speak at one of our events. I am pleased to report that she has generously agreed to give us a short talk before the annual dinner in June.

Sam Hearn

THE FIFTEENTH AGM

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survived the Civil War and spent sixteen years in exile before returning to England after the Restoration.

Following the talk over thirty members and their guests were able to stay on for an excellent three course meal. Hartwell House proved itself once again to be an excellent venue and its staff were most helpful and professional. We hope that no one's enjoyment of the event was marred by a couple of minor communication errors that were quickly resolved.

Detail of Lucy Worsley's book:

Cavalier: A Tale of Chivalry, Passion and Great Houses

ISBN 978-0-57122703-7. Published 2007 by Faber and Faber.



Springtime at Hartwell House, the delightful venue for the Society's AGM.

Sam Hearn

AND LAST, BUT NOT LEAST:

1. Be sure to turn up on Sunday 11th May for the three guided walks at Chalgrove, under the auspices of Derek Lester, to celebrate the official re-listing of the Battlefield, following much research and hard work on the part of Derek and Gill. There can be no greater authorities on this site and this will be an excellent opportunity to find out what actually happened and where.

2. Don't forget to book your place for the Annual Dinner to be held at The Spread Eagle in Thame on Saturday 28th June, meeting in the bar at 6.45. The dinner will be preceded by a talk by **Diane Purkiss**, whose book, **The English Civil War**, is the subject of review at the top of this page, and this event is the ideal opportunity for Society members and their guests to enjoy a good meal in nice surroundings, with the bonus of an interesting talk to start the evening.