

THE JOHN HAMPDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the 9th Annual General Meeting of the John Hampden Society held at Hampden House, Great Hampden on Sunday 22nd April 2001.

Present: The Earl of Buckinghamshire (*Patron to the Society*), Mr Roy Bailey (*Vice Chairman*), Mr Sam Hearn (*Hon. Treasurer*), Mrs Anthea Coles (*Hon. Secretary*), Miss Elizabeth Morris (*Membership Secretary*), Mr Graham Barfield, Mr Maurice Kirtland, Mrs Marion Wierszycki, Mr Derek Lester, Mr John and Mrs Gillian Goodall, and thirteen members of the Society.

Apologies for absence: Lord Hollenden, Lady Buckinghamshire, Mrs Angela Feaviour, Mrs Sarah Barrington, Professor Ian Beckett, Mr Charles Woodd, Miss Cynthia Ettenfield, Mrs Beatrice Dobie, Mr Michael Malone, Mrs Valerie Ellwood, Mrs Valerie Horne, Mr Michael Morris, Mrs Mary McCormick, Mrs Annabel and Miss Alice Bailey, Mrs Anne Kirtland and Mrs Rosalind and Mr Terry Gibson.

The Earl of Buckinghamshire opened the Meeting by welcoming all members.

The Minutes of the previous AGM had been distributed and further copies were available at the meeting. They were accepted as a true record with one minor amendment.

Matters Arising:

i] With regard to the reported lack of information concerning John Hampden on view at the County Museum, it was reported by Liz Morris that there is now one case of artefacts on display.

ii] An enquiry was made concerning the proposal at the last AGM that more local meetings would be held, open to both members of the Society and the general public, during the winter months. Mr Bailey replied that hopefully the Society would be able to organise something for the coming winter. This would be discussed at the next Committee Meeting. Mr Sam Hearn made the suggestion that any members who would be interested in giving a talk should let the Committee know and they would be given all possible support. Lord Buckinghamshire suggested that we all think about this and asked for ideas and venues.

iii] Mr Lester requested that an amendment be made to the Minutes of the AGM held in May 2000, in that a date was incorrectly recorded. The date of the memorial to Hampden was dated 1663, not 1634

Chairman's Report: read by Lord Buckinghamshire, as follows:

"I am very pleased to report that during the current year we have been extremely busy, actively promoting the aims of the Society to an increasingly wide audience; that is to say, bringing together people with an interest in John Hampden, and encouraging wider knowledge of this great Parliamentarian, as well as his life and times.

Probably the most successful single event organised by your Committee, was the Millennium exhibition, held during the hottest weekend in June last year, in the Masonic Hall in Thame. Over 500 people visiting the exhibition was certainly proof enough that the careful planning and hard work put in by Society volunteers was well worth the trouble; I think they all deserve a warm vote of thanks. The event was rounded-off with a brief memorial service held at the Hampden Monument at Chalgrove.

One of the most admired exhibits in Thame was the double-sided photograph, print and poster stand. Many of the photos and prints used in this display now form part of the Society's travelling exhibition, which has proved extremely popular as a temporary exhibition in a number of local County Libraries.

The annual dinner was held again at the Spread Eagle in Thame, and much enjoyed by all who attended, particularly as we were lucky to have had Lord Saye and Sele as our after dinner speaker, who spoke about the first Viscount Say and Sele, a friend and colleague of John Hampden. Can I remind you that this year's lunch is booked for Saturday 23rd June at The Spread Eagle. Could I remind those interested to please complete the booking form that you should have received recently.

Another highly popular and enjoyable event held in November last year was a winter lunch for members of the Society, held at the Chiltern Brewery in Terrick.

Plans are being drawn up for a Society visit to Grampound, at the end of August this year. This Cornish town is of great historical importance to us, as it was as MP for Grampound that John Hampden first entered Parliament. During the visit it is hoped that the foundation stone of a new block of buildings in the town will be laid, and known as John Hampden Court, and more importantly it is proposed that a specially commissioned plaque be placed on the house where John Hampden lived during his stay in Cornwall. Committee member Graham Barfield and your vice-chairman have been liaising closely with the parish council there to finalise these arrangements. If there are any members here today who would like to join those travelling to Grampound, perhaps they could see me after the AGM.

The Society has increased its range of publications for sale during the year. Most notably with the publication by Derek Lester and Gill Blackshaw of their, some might say controversial, book about how they believe John Hampden really died. I highly commend this book to you. Copies are hopefully available to purchase here today.

I can report that your committee are still actively preparing the groundwork for a video about John Hampden and his life. Agreement in principal has been reached with the National Film School in Beaconsfield for a joint production to be made, hopefully within the next year. We are currently working on a proposed script, and feel very positive about this exciting project that will enable us to have the ideal promotional tool to further the Society's aims in a professional and enjoyable way.

I think that concludes the principal activities of the Society during the past year".

Hon. Treasurer's Report: Mr Sam Hearn reported that subscriptions were slightly up on last year. The Society have picked up some new members and have sold a lot of publications, including the new book published by Derek Lester and Gill Blackshaw, totalling £850, indicating that, taking into account the costs of production, the Society will end up in profit on this venture. Donations of £151.50 had been received, which included a donation of £100 towards the costs of publication of this book. He reported expenses of £725.56 incurred in mounting the Millennium Exhibition, though a large part of this was for the photographs which will now form part of the Travelling Exhibition. Mr Hearn mentioned that the Society has continued to purchase copies of John Adair's biography of John Hampden from second hand book-sellers and these are advertised to members for sale at a modest profit. The year's capital expenditure of £148.63 included the purchase of a banner for display at Society events and exhibitions, and a remote control for the slide projector. He reported that the Committee had agreed to make a token contribution of £100 to the travel expenses of Mr Bailey, in recognition of his invaluable services in publishing *The Patriot*, preparing display material for exhibitions and travelling to Grampound on the Society's behalf.

Lord Buckinghamshire thanked Mr Sam Hearn for his work on the accounts. Mr Hearn then mentioned that they should be audited and he has located someone who will do this but had been unable to arrange the audit before the meeting.

Mr Derek Lester proposed that the accounts be accepted and this proposal was seconded by Lord Buckinghamshire and carried unanimously.

Membership Secretary's Report: Miss Liz Morris reported that last year the membership stood at 154, with 16 Life Members and only 6 failed to renew. This year membership stands at 146 with 16 life members and 2 honorary members, meaning that overall we have lost 8 members during the year 19 people have joined the Society and 27 have failed to renew, 7 of whom had notified her that they were not renewing. The increase in subscriptions did not seem to be the reason. Advancing age, distance from the Society's activities and inability to participate in events or give help when required were all mentioned as reasons for non-renewal. Miss Morris was sending out 18 letters to people who had not changed their standing orders to the new amount to ensure that their new standing orders are in place for the end of the year.

Election of officers and committee members: The Society's President, Professor John Adair, continues without election. The election took place as follows:

Chairman: Lord Hollenden had indicated that he was prepared to stand and together with all other officers, who had announced that they were happy to continue in post, was unanimously re-elected.

Mrs Marion Wierszycki announced that, due to personal circumstances, she was unable to stand for re-election to the Committee. She was thanked for all her work and support in the past and the hope was expressed that she might feel able to join the Committee again in the future.

Other Committee members: - comprising Mr Graham Barfield, Mr Maurice Kirtland, Mr Derek Lester, Mr Bob Hammond, Mrs Gillian Goodall and Mr John Goodall - were proposed en bloc and were re-elected unanimously

John Hampden Video: It was reported that the Society have been thinking about producing a video about John Hampden. It is envisaged that this will run for 20 – 25 minutes, informing viewers of who he was and what he achieved, in the same way as the Society's book does. Mr Sam Hearn had made contact with Mr. Jim Rodda at Beaconsfield Film School and an initial meeting had been set up attended by Committee members, Jim Rodda and Roger Crittenden to discuss the practicalities of this scheme. As a result the Committee were advised put our ideas on paper, following which another meeting should be arranged and the Film School hoped to be able to advise on costs. Committee members should put their ideas on paper and send them to Mr Bailey for collation. Mr Bailey would then send these ideas on to John Adair and Frank Hansford-Miller for their thoughts, and also to Mr Ken Pockett and Mr Mark Evans, both scriptwriters, who had offered to assist. Mr Hearn was awaiting the production of a script for the video, which he could use to try to arrange sponsorship to help with the cost of production. Various suggestions had been made for the format of the video and these were currently being considered.

Grampound Connection: Mr Graham Barfield reported that he and Mr Bailey had been working on this project for some time. It was felt that this exercise would have the effect of publicising the Society and was a new type of project for the Society. John Hampden's first entry into Parliament had been as representative for Grampound, and the current owner of the house in which John Hampden lived whilst there is happy for a commemorative plaque to be placed on the wall of the house, which it is believed was originally an inn. Mr Barfield produced copies of this plaque and the one which will be placed in Grampound Church, having now obtained the necessary permission. These are to be of patinated bronze, which requires no maintenance. The total cost amounts to £750 including VAT and £155 had been received by way of donations. Further contributions should be sent to Mr Sam Hearn. The Society hoped to gain new members through media coverage.

A vote of thanks was made to Mr Barfield for the excellent work he has carried out on this project.

Charity Status: Mr Hearn has done a lot of work on this. There could be possible tax problems if the Society does not become a Charity, though it may be possible to come to an agreement with the Inland Revenue regarding this. It was felt that the Society's new auditor could be asked to look at the papers initially and then the Committee will need to consider the matter further. It had come to light that the Cromwell Society had written to the Inland Revenue and explained their situation. They had been charged some small amounts of tax and then been told that it was not worth while their while to make any more returns. If we could come to the same arrangement this would relieve us of the necessity to register as a charity, though the latter course might be more favourable to us as we can then claim back tax on any sponsorship moneys received.

Fund Raising: The Society had invested some money in the production of Society Badges, which sell for £1.50 each. Mr Robert Hammond had brought these along to the AGM and would be displaying them after the meeting. Lord Buckinghamshire mentioned that he had worn one of these badges whilst in America recently.

Programme of Events: These include ongoing lectures and winter talks. Mr Bailey pointed out that the Society was formed in October 1992 and therefore the 10th Anniversary would fall in 2002, which should be celebrated in some way. This was discussed briefly, one suggestion being that the annual dinner, normally held in June, should be held on October on that occasion, and that this should be a full-blown banquet. This matter will be considered further by the Committee. Suggestions were requested for ongoing programmes.

Suggestions were put forward for possible speakers at the annual dinner, and it was decided to discuss this in more detail at the Committee meeting.

A.O.B: Thanks were expressed to Mr Tim Oliver, for allowing the Society to hold the AGM at Hampden House. Various forthcoming events being organised by other historical societies, were announced in case members might be interested in attending them.

The meeting was concluded by a very interesting short talk on The Long Parliament, given by Mr. Bob Hammond.