

# THE JOHN HAMPDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting of the John Hampden Society held at Hampden House, Great Hampden on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2004.

**Present:** Lord Hollenden [*Chairman*], Mr Bob Hammond (*Vice Chairman*), Mr Sam Hearn (*Hon. Treasurer*), Mrs Anthea Coles (*Hon. Secretary*), Miss Elizabeth Morris (*Membership Secretary*), Mr Maurice Kirtland, Mr Derek Lester, Mr Roy Bailey, Mr John and Mrs Gillian Goodall, Mr Michael and Mrs Joan Portsmouth, Mr Michael Malone, Mrs June Wailing and nine members of the Society.

**1. Apologies for absence:** The Earl of Buckinghamshire, (*Patron to the Society*), Lady Buckinghamshire, Mr Graham Barfield, Mrs Sarah Barrington, Mrs Cynthia Ettenfield, Mr Frank Hansford Miller, Mrs Annabel Bailey and Mrs Anne Kirtland.

Lord Hollenden opened the Meeting by welcoming all members.

**2. The Minutes of the previous AGM** had been distributed and further copies were available at the meeting. It was proposed by Mr Bob Hammond and seconded by Mr Michael Malone that they be accepted as a true record of that meeting.

### **3. Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising.

### **4. Reports from Officers:**

Lord Hollenden reported as follows:

“Chairman’s Report 2004

Once again I can report that the Society has had another very successful year, both bringing together people with an interest in John Hampden, and encouraging wider knowledge of the life of John Hampden.

Without doubt the most important and successful event held during the last year was the unveiling in June of a memorial to John Hampden in the town of Wendover, commemorating his tenure as MP for that town. As was the case at Grampound, the plaque was produced by Graham Barfield to whom the Society is deeply indebted. Thanks also to the energy and unstinting hard work of Valerie Horne, everything went according to plan. The weather was wonderful, the crowds were out, which all contributed to a most enjoyable and memorable day, for both the Society and the people of Wendover.

A special full colour commemorative issue of *The Patriot* was subsequently prepared and issued by Roy Bailey, and a most excellent tribute it is to such an important event in the history of the Society. Whilst mentioning our publication *The Patriot*, I would like to thank Anthea Coles, the Society’s secretary, who has been responsible for the publication of recent editions. Extremely readable and informative they have been too, and very professionally put together.

I now turn to another milestone in our history, of a very different nature, but with no less hard work and preparation. I am referring to the successful registering of the Society as a Charity in July last year. I am sure that you will all join me in thanking our Treasurer Sam Hearn for all the hard work that he put into the preparation of the documentation required by the Charities Commission. Your Committee feels very strongly that the Society will benefit in a number of areas in future years from this new status.

I mentioned last year in my report that the Society was commissioning the publication of a reprint of John Adair’s well known book *John Hampden - The Patriot*. This has been a resounding success, and over half of the books that we had available to sell, have now been sold. Sales of books and publications by the Society continue to increase, providing welcome income. These sales have been greatly assisted by the popularity of cards featuring Gladys Cooks picture of John Hampden’s statue in Aylesbury. This was produced as part of the Wendover Plaque Event. An up to date list of all our publications and products can be found on the last page of *The Patriot*.

The Society’s team of speakers continue to be in demand giving illustrated talks on John Hampden. This is a particularly important part of the Society’s work, and our thanks go out to all of them.

Finally our thanks go to Tim Oliver again, for having very kindly loaned us the use of Hampden House for this meeting today. Also most importantly, may I take this opportunity to remind everyone that our annual dinner at the Spread Eagle Hotel in Thame is booked for Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> June.”

### **Hon. Treasurer’s Report:**

Sam Hearn, the Treasurer, circulated copies of the Society’s accounts, hot off the press, having only just been received from the Accountants. These show a balance as at the end of December 2003 of £1037.

He gave a brief explanation of some of the items of expenditure and commented that the largest regular outlay is on the printing and postage of *The Patriot*, though the Society has been fortunate in acquiring the services of a benefactor who is happy to do a certain amount of printing, including two editions of the newsletter, charging only for the ink used. This represents a huge saving for the Society.

Sam reported that he has sent a return to the Inland Revenue to claim back tax on Gift Aid donations and subscriptions and is hoping to receive a cheque in the region of £265 very shortly.

The John Hampden plaque, which was on display at the meeting, was the next topic to be discussed by Sam. He explained that this had been offered to the Society for the sum of £800. However, as it was so soon after Wendover Day, the Executive Committee felt that it would be unfair to ask for donations from members towards this purchase. Fortunately the owner of the plaque was prepared to be patient and he allowed Sam to borrow the plaque whilst the Society investigated ways of financing the purchase. Several people and institutions were approached, including the Museum of Scottish Football at Hampden Park Stadium in Glasgow and the John Hampden Grammar School in High Wycombe. Eventually a benefactor paid for the plaque on the understanding that the Society would raise the money to refund him.

Donations were received from the Thame Historical Society, and various Society members, together with a welcome offer from the John Hampden Regiment to match any amount donated out of Society funds. Sam announced that with a cheque received at the meeting and fit-aid on donations made by individuals, sufficient funds had now been obtained [£779] to repay the benefactor.

At this point Sam produced an up-to-date Bank Statement showing a balance in the region of £2,000, which after paying for the plaque leaves a balance on the account of £1200.

Sam spoke about the Day School scheduled to be held in conjunction with the Cromwell Association on 27<sup>th</sup> November, for which he is hoping that sponsorship may be forthcoming. This event is open to members and non members of the two organisations and will take place at The Spread Eagle. There should be two speakers representing the Cromwell Association and two representing the John Hampden Society. At the present time the John Hampden Society is attempting to secure the second speaker and Sam is following up one or two leads in this respect. It is anticipated that the cost of the day will be £28 for members of each Society and £30 for non members, which will hopefully leave a small balance to cover any unexpected expenditure.

On the day following this event, Derek Lester is leading a "Walk & Talk" at Chalgrove, and on the following weekend, members of the Society have been offered a free guided tour of the Civil War in Buckinghamshire exhibition at the Bucks County Museum. It had been hoped to run all these events on the same weekend but unfortunately this will not prove possible.

**Membership Secretary's Report:** Miss Liz Morris reported as follows:

"At the AGM last year, membership stood at 134, with 16 Life Members. This year membership also stands at 134 with 16 Life Members and 2 Honorary Members, so overall we have lost no members.

This year Membership stands at 132 with 16 Live Members and 2 Honorary Members, so overall we have lost 2 Members.

During the year only 8 people joined the Society. This is disappointing in view of the wonderful day we had in Wendover in June 2003. Many thanks to Valerie for that occasion.

Some people have failed to renew, reasons given have mostly got to do with money.

You will not believe this, but there are still some standing orders going through at the wrong rate. Despite more letters we still have problems. It is now 2004 and the decision for updating the fee was in 2000. Sam is also now on the case.

We had a standing order go through in January by the name of S. Oram. I have never heard of this name. Anyone know the name? I have written to the Bank to see if they can shed light on the matter."

Mr Mike Portsmouth stated that he had attended the AGM of the Cromwell Association the previous day and that Society has recruited 50 new members during the last year, mainly due to their website. Some discussion took place during which it was mentioned that Mr Roy Bailey is current working on upgrading the Society website, but is having difficulty in deciding what it is that draws people to the website. The Society currently has a large number of links from other websites. It was felt that it might help if it were possible to enrol on line and Roy will continue to research this possibility.

Mrs June Wailling reported that the County Museum has a display of Society leaflets, which she keeps replenished on a regular basis and is surprised that, as so many are taken, there are so few new members enrolling. The suggestion was then made that the leaflet might usefully be updated. This will be considered further by the Committee when it meets again.

Sam Hearn suggested that we might consider advertising in one of the Historic magazines, though this is extremely expensive, at which point another Society member suggested that consideration might be given to placing an advertisement in the Chiltern Society magazine at the address which she supplied, which suggestion will also receive further consideration.

## **5. Election of officers and committee members:**

**Chairman:** Lord Hollenden was proposed by Mr Bob Hammond and seconded by Mrs Anthea Coles.

**Vice Chairman:** Mr Bob Hammond was proposed by Mr Derek Lester and seconded by Miss Elizabeth Morris.

**Honorary Treasurer:** Mr Sam Hearn was proposed by Mr Mike Portsmouth and seconded by Mr Derek Lester

**Honorary Secretary:** Mrs Anthea Coles was proposed by Mr Roy Bailey and seconded by Mr Bob Hammond.

**Membership Secretary:** Miss Elizabeth Morris was proposed by Mrs Anthea Coles and seconded by Mrs Gillian Blackshaw.

Mrs Joan Portsmouth had indicated that she would not be serving on the Committee in the coming year.

Mr Roy Bailey had formally notified the Chairman that he would be a candidate for election to the Board of Trustees of the Society and produced a nomination form signed by Mrs Annabel Bailey as proposer and seconded by Mr John Seal. The Committee is pleased to welcome Roy back.

Mr Michael Portsmouth, Mr Michael Malone, Mr Maurice Kirtland, Mr Derek Lester, Mrs June Wailling indicated their willingness to stand for a further year and were duly proposed and seconded by various Society members.

**6. John Hampden Plaque:** Mr Sam Hearn had already explained to the meeting how the Society had been offered the plaque and had managed to purchase this artefact, which will hopefully find a resting place in the new Thame Museum when this opens next year.

**7. Annual Awards:** Lord Hollenden stated that he did not have a lot to report. He has been trying to find an appropriate school or schools in the area for the Society to sponsor a prize to the student or students who had written an essay or project relating to the Civil War or John Hampden. He had not achieved any notable success and asked whether anyone present had any ideas as to who he could approach who would be likely to be interested in this project. Unfortunately the John Hampden Grammar School was of the opinion that their pupils were in the wrong age group for this type of undertaking. Mr Jim Rodda stated that his wife teaches History at Beaconsfield High School and he would mention this idea to her. Mr Roy Bailey suggested contacting the local Education Authority. Mr Derek Lester reported that he had had contact with a Steven Barker and felt it might be worth talking to him as he is using John Hampden as an English project at Secondary School level. Mr Michael Malone wondered whether there was any point in linking this project up with the exhibition in November. It was explained that we are in contact with Sarah Gray concerning the exhibition.

**8. Fund Raising:** Mr Hearn stated that we do not have a specific Committee Member in charge of fund-raising. We do sell books etc. and several committee members give talks, all of which raises funds for the Society. In addition the annual subscriptions should cover the cost of producing *The Patriot*. There is no special reason at present for raising more money. Lord Hollenden pointed out that charity status enhances our likelihood of raising funds for specific projects. There are sponsors who will donate money to charities for educational purposes.

Mr Bailey asked whether the Society has considered running an annual raffle. This would require suitable prizes and organising the raffle might not be easy. There are companies who will undertake this type of project on behalf of organisations, but their fees make this less of an attractive method of raising funds. Mr Hearn was more in favour of holding a raffle at the annual dinner, having either just one prize, say a bottle of whisky, and selling tickets at £1 each, or even having 3 or 4 prizes. It was agreed that it would be worth holding such a raffle this year, with one prize of a bottle of whisky.

## **9. Programme of Events:**

There are a number of talks in the pipeline, to be given by different members of the Society. These are published in *The Patriot* and on the Society website.

The Annual Dinner is scheduled to take place on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> June at The Spread Eagle – this year's speaker being Dr. Maija Jansson.

As reported above, The John Hampden Society and the Cromwell Association are joining forces to run a Day School at The Spread Eagle on 27<sup>th</sup> November. The Cromwell Association are very enthusiastic about this event.

Derek Lester is holding a Walk and Talk at Chalgrove Battlefield on the day following the Day School.

Sarah Gray will lead a guided tour of the exhibition of Civil War portraits on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**10. A.O.B:** Derek Lester reported that Wheatley Dramatic Society were holding a play on 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May at Wheatley Primary School 'Swallows in the Move' re 1643 and 1943 – comparing wars of the two eras.

Roy Bailey has a framed picture on the Hampden Bomber attacking German shipping in the Channel. The Hampden Bomber was taken out of service in 1943.

Mr Portsmouth enquired whether the Plaque was insured and Sam Hearn stated that he will be looking into this. He also mentioned that he might ask Wycombe Museum to look after it until a more permanent resting place is assured, in which case he will check the question of insurance with the museum.

Mr Michael Malone thanked Mr Bob Hammond for his excellent talk in Great Kimble Church which raised £300 for the Church funds to go towards upkeep. Mr Malone also said how much he enjoyed the Inigo Jones article in *The Patriot*.

Mr Michael Portsmouth talked briefly about the portrait at Kenwood House, reputed to be of John Hampden. English Heritage have promised to send him a print of this. This portrait was part of the Suffolk collection which was originally housed at Greenwich.

Derek Lester mentioned that a copy of the portrait at Hampden House now hangs in the offices of Oxfordshire County Council. This was reported in the latest edition of *The Patriot*.

Sam Hearn told the meeting that the Bishop of London will be giving a lecture on the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 in the Great Hall at Hampton Court Palace on 6<sup>th</sup> May at 6.45. Tickets for this lecture cost £16 and can be obtained by booking through Sam Hearn.

Roy Bailey had received information from the Battlefields Trust about a walk at Naseby scheduled to take place on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> June. Details of this event are displayed on the John Hampden Society website.

Bob Hammond stated that he believes the Society consists of strong individual members who do a considerable amount of work, and although the Society is not large, it has been instrumental in making people more aware of John Hampden and the effect he had on the course of history. This statement was endorsed by Lord Hollenden.

At this point Lord Hollenden read out a letter that had been received from Frank Hansford-Miller, giving his apologies for not attending the AGM due to the fact that he was recovering from cancer. He was very complimentary about *The Patriot*, feeling that it was full of interesting articles. He very much hopes to be back in this country in time for the Annual Dinner and would like to be there to hear Dr Maija Jansson's talk. Contact will be made with him to see whether any help can be offered by any member of the Society to enable him to attend the Dinner.

Mrs June Wailling asked whether the Society was aware that there was a portrait of Queen Elizabeth in the Judges' Lodgings in Aylesbury. Lord Hollenden explained that this portrait had originally hung in Hampden House, but had been sent away for cleaning and restoration, at which time it disappeared for a time. When it came to light it was decided that Hampden House was not the most appropriate place to re-hang the portrait and it was loaned to the Judges Lodgings, where it still hangs.

Sam Hearn suggested that members might like to consider personally donating a copy of the new John Adair book to their local school libraries. Those present agreed that this was a good idea.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm, with a vote of thanks to Mr Tim Oliver for allowing the Society to hold the AGM at Hampden House.