

THE JOHN HAMPDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting of the John Hampden Society, held at Hartwell House Hotel, Aylesbury, on Saturday 21st April 2007.

Present: The Earl of Buckinghamshire and Lady Buckinghamshire, Mr Bob Hammond (*Vice-Chairman*), Mr Sam Hearn (*Hon. Treasurer*), Mrs Anthea Coles (*Hon. Secretary*), Mr Maurice Kirtland, Mr Derek Lester, Mr Roy Bailey, and fourteen members of the Society and visitors.

1. Apologies for absence: Graham Barfield, Doreen Taylor, Professor Ian Beckett, Marion Wierszycki, Michael Morris, Charles Woodd, Jim Kelsall, Lady Helen Motteux, Hughes Motteux, Angela Feaviour, Mike Malone, Charles Woodd, Tim Oliver, Sarah Barrington, Jonathan Morgan, Lord Hollenden and John Seal.

In the absence of the Chairman, Lord Hollenden, Bob Hammond as Vice-Chairman, opened the meeting, first ensuring that all present had copies of the relevant documents. He then welcomed everyone to Hartwell and explained that Lord Hollenden sent his regrets but unfortunately he had urgent business, which meant he was unable to be present.

2. The Minutes of the previous AGM (23rd April 2006) had been distributed and further copies were available at the meeting. They were agreed to be true record of the meeting with no amendments necessary. Proposed by Derek Lester and seconded by Lady Buckinghamshire.

3. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

4. Reports from Officers:

Vice-Chairman's Report 2007:

Bob reported that he had a brief note of what Lord Hollenden would have reported and had incorporated this in his address as follows:

“It hardly seems a year ago that that we last met at Hartwell for an interesting talk by Dr. Tracey Borman on Henrietta Howard, the Patriot's great grand-daughter. Before I give my report, however, there is some sad news. As many of you are aware, our Membership Secretary and stalwart of the Society, Liz Morris, died suddenly last month. We commiserate with her family and friends. Many of the latter are in the Society. We will certainly miss her and her sense of humour. She was quite selfless and self-defacing. She always used her offices to further the Society and its aims. Liz had good reason to believe her family were descended from the Patriot and in her own quiet way, she displayed many of his great qualities.” He called for a Minute's silence out of respect for Liz. Following which Bob continued:

“This has been another year of continuing progress for the Society. Since our last AGM at Hampton Court on 21st April 2006, our regular activities have been maintained. We have given talks At Cherwell University of the Third Age and Olney Historical Society. Our commitment to run a stand at the Bucks History and Archaeological Fair was continued. Valerie, Sam, Maurice and Liz represented us there. It enables us to interface with local historians and that is very valuable and is an excellent thing to do. There was the annual dinner at The Spread Eagle, with Dr Maija Jansson as our speaker. This was a memorable evening, and of course, we have continued to publish *The Patriot*, Roy having retired from the editorship after 14 impressive years, has now handed over to Anthea, though he retains an advisory role. I hope you like the larger format. We have had a good response to it thanks to the tireless work of our editors and the contributors. If anyone would like to contribute who has not done so yet, we would love to hear from you. Members have been involved in a number of other projects. As our Chairman mentioned at the last AGM Derek and Gill Lester on the opening of the Chalgrove Battlefield Monument in 1843 is now available. Preparations for the publication of Paul Hooper's book on The Short Parliament are now under way and this will, without a doubt, be a very welcome publication. I have read it and, although it is a short book, there is a lot of meat in it. Also I should mention here that Dr Hooper is donating his extensive library of books on the 17th century to the Society, which is extremely generous and we are very grateful and looking to find a convenient repository for them at the moment. At a ceremony last Saturday, which I attended, the new Thame Museum was opened. For the very first time in any town museum John Hampden is treated in the way a great national figure should be, in my opinion. Buckinghamshire Museum should look to its laurels I am afraid, as regards Hampden, however fine a museum it might be and it should see what Thame has done to commemorate the Patriot, as Aylesbury has as much connection or even more, than Thame. Enormous thanks to Maurice Kirtland, a Trustee of the Museum and, of course, our Committee member, and those who gave him great support, particular Derek and Sam, and others as well. Maurice will elaborate on this during AOB. Sam Hearn is part of a project team established by The Battlefields Trust with the objective of marking the battlefields at Turnham Green and Brentford with interpretive boards, which seems a great idea. The boards and accompanying website will refer to the contribution made by John Hampden and his regiment to both battles. We have a number of outreach workers in this Society and Sam, Roy, Derek and Maurice certainly are that and we thank them for involving themselves.

The Society has acquired seven volumes of the recently published Opening Session of the Long Parliament by Dr Maija Jansson of the Yale Centre for Parliamentary Studies, also, of course, one of our Vice Presidents. This is a seminal work and the books are already being put to good use and two volumes are on display here. This is an incredible work that took Dr Maija Jansson about 10 years to produce. We were fortunate to obtain a good discount on these books.

This year started on a good note with a visit to the Chilterns Brewery in February. This was a great success and ended with an informative talk by Simon Marsh of the Battlefields Trust. I would not want to go there too often. Their beer is far too attractive – I am not a beer drinker but my goodness the taste of those beers could be addictive, I feel.

Sam Hearn gave a talk to 100 people at The Amersham Society in March, entitled *John Hampden – Rebel*. It is hoped that Sam quickly debunked the idea of ‘Rebel’. In August last year, by some strange chance, I gave a talk on BBC Three Counties Radio about the Patriot. Unfortunately, though, there is some difficulty about getting reception in the Bucks Area but I have the CD somewhere to prove it.

Today’s meeting will be followed by a talk by Dr. John Adamson and then lunch. We are grateful to Dr. Adamson for coming and having seen the book he has produced, I am even more impressed. I am informed that, unfortunately, places are limited and only those who have booked a place will be able to attend. There will, however, be another chance to hear Dr Adamson in September. The annual dinner will be held as usual at The Spread Eagle on 23rd June and the speaker this year will be our own Dr. Paul Hooper, whose book on The Short Parliament will be available. Like me you will have had an enthusiasm for Paul’s skill in translating historical documents into today’s language. We will have another day at Hampton Court Palace on 29th September. The Conference will be addressing new perspectives on the origins of the Civil War, which will be a fascinating subject, with Dr Adamson as the lead speaker there. In October we intend to hold a fifteenth anniversary dinner and will advise details at a later date. I think this will be an event not to be missed because this will be quite a good one, though, as pointed out by Derek, there appears to be some difficulty about the venue because of Health and Safety issues over the use of Hampden House. I hope you will agree that we have been busy. It is due, however, to the enthusiasm and participation of all our members that the Society is able to survive. In 16th Century parlance, ‘you are our body and limbs’. Finally our Honorary Treasurer and, as I say, a man of many parts, Sam Hearn, will report that the Society has had a good year financially with income exceeding expenditure by £394 and the Society finished the year with £1,404 in the bank. We will, therefore, not be effecting an increase in the membership fees in 2008, but this is something that the Executive Committee will keep under review. Thank you ladies and gentleman, and now we will proceed to the next part of the Agenda, which is the Treasurer’s report.”

Hon. Treasurer’s Report: Sam Hearn reported

“I am obviously very pleased to be here and as Bob announced, financially it has been a good year and we have ended up increasing the money in the Bank at the end of the year, despite some reasonably serious expenditure. As of today we have got about £2,500 in the Bank, but following today, we will have a bill to pay to Hartwell House, so the actual money we are sitting on at the moment is about £1,960 or something of that order. The membership subscriptions, if you are looking at the accounts, are very similar to last year, and includes, I have not separately itemised it, £164 of Gift Aid. I have submitted the claim for the current year and that will be for £237. We have Gift Aid on donations this year, so in terms of our Society, with £164 for 2006 and £237 for the coming year, it is a useful amount of money for us to be garnering in and if anyone would like a Gift Aid form so that all their annual subscriptions can be made subject to Gift Aid, please let me know. There are still a handful of members who have not completed the forms.

We are pretty certain that the membership subscription figure in the account is as accurate as can be. Liz agreed that with me before her untimely death. We also think between us, Anthea and I, that we have collected enough of the records to ensure that the money paid over at the beginning of 2007 is accurate and will be capturing that, but as we will be mentioning later in the meeting we do need a membership secretary, and part of that job is ensuring that we do know who has left and is no longer paying subscriptions and who is a new member and that they have been properly sorted out with standing orders, etc. Obviously there is a little bit of a hiatus at the moment, but it would seem, and again Liz was very pleased before she died, as she thought she had all the money in for the 2007 year and we have nothing that dissuaded that opinion at the moment, so she has left us a good legacy.

Going down to the income and the other donations of £130, that is mainly donations to buy the seven volumes on the Opening Session of the Long Parliament, and now after the end of the year that has increased to about £255 as several people have made donations in memory of Liz, which have increased the total. What we are intending to do is to include in the front of each of these volumes a list of the donors, not the individual amount of money, just the names, and denote that they are a gift from the Society in memory of Liz Morris. We think that is appropriate and I hope everyone else will agree.

Book sales have been disappointing at £115 and we still have large stocks of John Adair’s book, sitting in a shed at the bottom of my garden. We are hoping for great things for the Thame Museum but time will tell. Appropriately priced and properly displayed then the Thame Museum could be an ideal place for selling several of our publications and obviously that spreads the word about Hampden. Only two talks in the year, but they brought in slightly more money, I think and if anyone in this room knows of Societies who would like talks from this Society, then let us know. We have to reach out as well as waiting to be asked, but I know at the Bucks Annual History Fair that we had two or three enquiries, but it would be nice to have a few more requests. A lot of the slides that the Society own have been digitalised, so talks that I do now are based on PowerPoint using those digitalised images. I try not to bombard people with thousands of images, but we do have some very useful photographs now in digital form, some of which do cross the barriers being used by The Battlefield Trust on their interpretive boards.

On the expenditure side the £400 that you see is actually on books and publications, actually for the publication of the Lester’s latest book. Postage sounds expensive at £488 postage, stamps and envelopes and I went back just to make sure what that was and to look at the receipts and that is quite a germane point as to whether to increase the subscriptions because postage has gone up as you know, and the Post Office has changed the way they charged. Printing costs are just for two editions of The Patriot because we were being sponsored or to some extent subsidised by a good friend of the Society who has now sold his business so

you can see what two editions cost and double that up giving £380 for the year. The printer does a good job but it comes at a price.

My final note to myself is that we are having to pay Hartwell House for the coffee and tea, but we are not paying for the room, so if anyone would like to throw a few bits of silver or other coinage of the realm into this bowl, which we will pass round, or if you would like to do it discretely after the meeting has finished, that will help us cover those costs. They are charging us £4 a head. A very brief work on membership subscriptions. Bob mentioned that we have had discussions about this not having increased the subscriptions, I think, for about five years, and the Society has only ever increased subscriptions once in 15 years. We have done pretty much everything sensible that we think we can do. Purchasing a large stock of stamps, we have offered members the option of having the newsletter sent by e-mail, we have reminded members that they can Gift Aid their subscriptions and have found a new outlet for the books at Thame Museum, so I hope we have minimised the costs and maximised the income, but there will come a point when we have to put the rate up. Again we would welcome the views of any members who may have views on that topic. I think that is it so I will sit down and shut up!"

There being no questions for the Treasurer, the meeting proceeded.

Membership Secretary's Report: Anthea Coles reported as follows

"This is only a very brief report because unfortunately, although I was given several floppy discs with Liz's database on them I could not make it run on my computer, so all I have got is really just the paper records. It seems to me that we currently have 142 members, including 1 junior member, 2 honorary members and 14 life members. Last year we had 139 members with 1 junior member, 2 honorary members and 16 life members, so it would appear that our membership has actually increased by 3. Shortly before her death Liz told me that this year's subscriptions had been received from all members. She was due to update me about the time that she died but I did not receive this. On going through her boxes, I came across one welcome pack ready to send out to a new member, but unfortunately events had overtaken Liz and this had not been posted. I have now sent it off with an explanatory letter and added the name and address to my own database. I hope that now my database is up to date but if anybody thinks that they have been missed please let me know. If you don't receive a publication when you think you should, please get in touch with me and I will rectify the situation.

Before I sit down, Liz's brother Mike, asked me to give his apologies for not being here with us today, and to thank everybody who sent messages of condolence."

5. Election of officers and committee members:

Bob stated how pleased we all were to see our Patron and one of our Vice-Presidents, the Earl and Countess of Buckinghamshire. He knows that they have a busy life and cannot always get along, but we do miss Alison and Miles when they cannot manage it.

He then announced the election of the Societies officers and committee members. He reported that, once elected, the Committee can co-opt additional members to assist in its work. In 2006 there were no co-opted members. All members of the Executive Committee are Trustees of the John Hampden Society Charity, and it is quite important to remember that. He thanked all members of the Executive Committee who served during 2006. The work of the Committee is obviously increasing. During the election of members for 2007, each member will be voted on individually. It was understood that the existing members of the Committee wished to stand for re-election with the exception of June Wailling and Mike Portsmouth, who have been excellent members and it is hoped that they will return when circumstances allow.

The Honorary Secretary had received no written nominations with names of proposers and seconders. And no one present had a written nomination they wished to hand in.

The Vice-Chairman had received a nomination for the re-election of **Ian Hollenden** as Chairman, proposed by Roy Bailey and seconded by Anthea Coles. He was elected by a unanimous show of hands and was declared re-elected as Chairman of the John Hampden Society.

One nomination had been received for the re-election of **Anthea Coles** to the position of Honorary Secretary, proposed by Derek Lester and seconded by Mike Malone. She was declared re-elected on a unanimous show of hands.

Bob then stood down and Anthea announced that one nomination had been received for the re-election of **Bob Hammond** to the position of Vice Chairman. This was proposed by Anthea Coles and seconded by Derek Lester and Bob was declared re-elected on a unanimous show of hands.

One nomination had been received for the re-election of **Sam Hearn** as Honorary Treasurer. This was proposed by Mike Malone and seconded by Roy Bailey. Sam was duly re-elected by a unanimous show of hands.

Bob reported that the position of Membership Secretary is not specifically named in the Society's Constitution. However it is customary for the Society to elect a committee member to this post. No nomination had been received, but Bob invited anyone who would like to stand, with a proposer and seconder forthcoming, to come forward. No volunteer was forthcoming and Bob commented that it was something that people needed to think about and hopefully someone would fill the post before too long. Anyone who thought they might be interested should talk to the Honorary Secretary about what was involved.

Four further nominations had been received for election to the Committee and Bob announced that those present would proceed to vote individually on each of these as follows:

Roy Bailey, proposed by Sam Hearn and seconded Annabel Bailey. Unanimously voted on.

Maurice Kirtland, proposed by Sam Hearn and seconded by Anthea Coles. Unanimously voted on.

Derek Lester, proposed by Gill Lester and seconded by Anthea Coles. Unanimously voted on.

Michael Malone, proposed by Anthea and seconded by Derek Lester. Unanimously voted on.

There being no other nominations, the Vice-Chairman made the last point that anyone who would like to become a co-opted member of the Executive Committee could approach the Honorary Secretary at any time. He also announced that Society members could attend any Committee Meetings as observers.

He then declared the 2007 Executive Committee duly elected to serve until the next AGM.

6. Fund Raising:

This is an important aspect and we do our very best so far as the Society is concerned. Sam had already talked about the sale of books, and although only £300 had been sold this year, we must remember that that sort of outlay that we made initially is now gone to a large extent and we are just receiving income for the numerous books that we had and have sold over the years, so this is one very interesting outcome of the stock held. Fundraising is clearly something we have to look at because, as a Society of our size, we need to make sure we have sufficient income. So far we have always managed that, but Bob asked whether there were any other suggestions on fund raising. Valerie Horne stated that she became a member about 10 years previously and would be interested in receiving photocopies of the newsletter from prior to that date, for which she would be happy to pay and she felt that many people would be prepared to do the same if the availability were advertised. She also mentioned the possibility of using sticky labels to change the address on the membership leaflets following the death of Liz. However, Sam pointed out that he has this leaflet set up as a Publisher file on his computer and can change any details very easily. For this reason the leaflets are printed out as required and for the time being the address shown thereon was that of the Honorary Secretary. It was acknowledged that there will be some stocks already on display in different places that will have the old address, but this is not thought to be a major problem. Bob thanked Valerie for her suggestions and commented that she always has good ideas on fund-raising/money saving.

7. Programme of Events:

This had been covered in the Vice-Chairman's report.

9. A.O.B:

Bob asked Maurice Kirtland to talk briefly on the enormous work he had done with regard to the new Thame Museum. Maurice thanked the vice chairman for giving him the opportunity to thank the Committee of the John Hampden Society for the work that they put in on the display panels, especially Sam and Roy who did a lot of work on the graphics, and also Anthea who had included a mention of Thame Museum in previous issued of *The Patriot*. He also thanked Derek Lester for doing a tremendous job in providing the John Hampden Regiment uniform and weapons that are displayed in a showcase in the Museum. There had been a very short deadline, with the manikin on which the uniform is displayed only being collected from London by Maurice on the Wednesday before the official opening, which took place on the Saturday. Maurice rang Derek on Wednesday morning and Derek went out on Wednesday afternoon and helped Maurice to put it all together. Maurice also commented that, as members had probably read in *The Patriot*, the John Hampden Society have loaned the plaque and the lock of hair received from Mr Charles Woodd, to the Museum and these artefacts are currently on display there. The official opening was carried out by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Hugo Brunner, who mentioned in his speech Lord Saye and Sele who supported the Parliamentary side and he also mentioned the inscription on the Hampden Jewel 'Against my King I do not fight, but for my King and Kingdom's right'. He was very taken by that quotation. Boris Johnson was also present at the opening. Maurice finished by saying thank you to the Society from the Thame Museum Trust and he hopes it will be a focal point for John Hampden for many years to come.

Maurice thanked John Hampden's Regiment and Derek and Gill Lester for providing the Guard of Honour for the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire at the opening of the Museum.

Bob thanked Maurice and commented that the Museum is something that should not be missed, as it is a good memorial to John Hampden.

Paul Hooper took the opportunity of thanking the Society for purchasing the volumes on the Long Parliament, which will be invaluable to him in his work on the Long Parliament, now started. Only the previous Tuesday he had been at the University Library at Southampton University going through the calendar of State Papers Venetian and had found some very interesting comments there. It took him two years to do The Short Parliament, which lasted six weeks. The Long Parliament lasted about 13 years.....

Mr Charles Harvey told those present that he had acquired a complete set of books on the History of The House of Commons and if anybody wants any information from these or access to anything contained therein, he can make it available to them. They contain information on who was a member at the time of John Hampden and other details. Bob thanked him for his kind offer and Mr Harvey handed Anthea a card with his contact details.

Derek mentioned that the wife of the late Mr Norman Lawrence [a previous committee member] Monica Lawrence, has published Norman's research on the website - www.ofroyaldescent.com - containing a fair amount on the Hampden family, showing the importance of John Hampden. The content goes back to the Doomsday Book, and even contains references from earlier than that. There are also many references to the Pye family, to which he was more directly related.

Roy Bailey made a couple of points – Sam had mentioned the problems of postage of the newsletter – and Roy wanted to remind members that if they were happy to have it sent by e-mail or download it from the website, this is a good idea and saves the Society an appreciable amount of postage. Secondly he has set up a mailing list of all those members with e-mail addresses, now containing about 45 members and finds this a very useful system because it enables the Society to get information out to people in the gaps between publication of *The Patriot*, so if anybody wishes to subscribe to this mailing list they should let Roy know in the usual way.

Bob thanked Roy for his suggestion and also for the work he does on maintaining and updating the Society website.

There being no other business to discuss the meeting closed at 11.25.