



THE PATRIOT

Newsletter of the John Hampden Society

No. 48 - Autumn 2006



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

2006 has been an interesting year in the annals of the Society, including an excellent lunch at Hartwell House, with a fascinating talk by Dr Tracy Borman, on Henrietta Howard, great-granddaughter of John Hampden.

The AGM this year took place at Hampton Court Palace, followed by an excellent talk on Sybil Penn by Treasurer Sam Hearn.

The Annual Dinner held on 24th June at The Spread Eagle was very well attended. The speaker on this occasion was Dr Maija Jansson, her subject being 'The Multiple Mr Hampdens'.



Marble Hill House

Unfortunately the proposed visit to Marble Hill House was postponed but it is hoped to rearrange this for next year to coincide with the publication of Dr Borman's book on Henrietta Howard. The Committee has one or two other ideas for visits and hopes to be able to organise some of these for next year also. Once finalised, the information will be circulated to allow interested members an opportunity of booking a place for the events.

If you have any suggestions for an interesting outing or visit, please let us know and we will do our best to include it in our future programme.

All in all a busy year for the Society !

BUCKS LOCAL HISTORY FAIR & CONFERENCE 2006 Aylesbury Civic Centre

The Fair returned to Aylesbury Civic Centre with an unusually full programme of five lectures. The quality of the speakers and the standard of their presentations was high. The Ayshford presentation on Nelson's Navy, in particular, made good use of the Powerpoint software. It was good to talk to one of the speakers, Dr Lesley Boatwright, who has been so helpful to Roy Bailey and his work on the Hampden wills.

As at the previous six events volunteer members ran a stall from which they sold the Society's publications and leaflets, handed out membership forms and took bookings for talks. The Society's exhibition boards attracted a steady flow of visitors. The Fair is an opportunity to showcase what the Society has to offer. It would be wonderful if a few more members could turn up and share the burden of talking to the other visitors and selling the Society's products.

Dr Elizabeth Williamson's talk on revising Pevsner's Buckinghamshire was enlightening. Her reflections on Pevsner himself and how he was often misunderstood by people who met him for the first time was most revealing. Most startling of all were her revelations about Milton Keynes. The original plans apparently included the construction of a large mound at the end of Midsummer Boulevard along the lines of Wiltshire's Silbury Hill.

Professor Derek Keane 'painted' on a large canvas - Buckinghamshire in the shadow of the metropolis, AD 900 - 1500. However he made a convincing case for the argument that although key parts of the County had benefited from economic and cultural links with London these links had also prevented the growth of any towns and cities of national significance.

Janet Kennish had chosen a much smaller 'canvas' but a similar theme - Datchet in the Nineteenth Century & its links with London. The impact of the new developed railway and the craze for "messing about on the river" led to a rapid expansion similar but not identical to that of neighbouring towns.

Dr Lesley Boatwright opened up a window on Bucks in the late thirteenth century using evidence extracted from the eyre roll of 1286. It seems that even then Bucks had its 'stropky women' and that multiple murders by a gang of brothers were keeping the lawyers busy. The roll and Lesley's commentary on it have just been published by the Bucks Record Society.

Pam & Derek Ayshford's talk on the men of Nelson's Navy dealt with a huge array of statistics and historical facts in a fascinating and easy to understand way. For me the highlight was the story of Royal Marine David Newton of The Lee who served at Trafalgar. Long, long ago my grandfather told me that he had known a man in Chesham whose own grandfather had fought at Trafalgar.

Sam Hearn

ON THE TRAIL OF JOHN HAMPDEN'S BED

Those lucky enough to have seen a copy of John Drinkwater's *John Hampden's England* will probably remember the black and white photograph of a bed with a caption that reads "John Hampden's Bed in the Old Thame Grammar School." A scanned copy of the photo appears below.



At some stage the bed was loaned by its owner, the late Sir Frank Bowden of Thame Park, to the County Museum in Aylesbury. However the Museum eventually decided that they no longer needed the bed and returned it. Sir Frank, an avid collector of ancient Japanese swords and armour, sold the bed in February 1987 through Christie's London Auction House. The purchaser was the Jamestown Settlement Museum of Virginia, USA.

According to Daniel M. Hawks, Curator at the Museum in 1993, the bed was purchased as being an example of a class of furniture that the original Jamestown settlers could have brought with them in 1607 when the colony was founded. Prior to being put on display the 19th century canvas, visible in the photograph, that had been tacked to the side rails and the head and foot of the bed was removed. The bed was then re-roped, cleaned and dressed with a straw stuffed canvas mattress and a bolster.

Mr Hawks was unable to provide a photograph of the refurbished bed as at the time of writing (to Maurice Kirtland) the bed was housed in a large glass display case and could not be photographed easily. He was particularly interested in the possible Hampden connection being "an alumnus of Hampden-Sidney College founded in 1776 and named for John Hampden and Algernon Sidney." He promised that photographs would be taken when the exhibit was closed for housekeeping.

Subsequent attempts by Maurice Kirtland to continue the correspondence with Mr Hawk failed to bear fruit. However, earlier this year contact was established with Tom Davidson the Senior Curator at the Museum. The Society is particularly grateful to the introduction provided by Jane Sonberg who works for the National Parks Service in Virginia.

Tom Davidson has informed us that the Jamestown Settlement Museum is undergoing a major renovation and expansion, and all of the artifacts formerly in its permanent galleries are in storage. The Museum will re-open in late October 2006, and the bed will be part of the new permanent exhibition. He has promised to photograph the bed when it is re-installed and to send a copy to *The Patriot*.

We would be grateful to hear from anyone who saw the bed when it was on display at the County Museum or who can shed any light on its provenance. Is there any real evidence that the bed was used by John Hampden? We would also like to wish the Jamestown Settlement Museum all the best in preparing for next year's celebrations in connection with the 400th anniversary of the founding of the first successful English Colony in America.

THE OPENING SESSION OF THE LONG PARLIAMENT

The Executive Committee has agreed, in principle, that the Society should purchase the seven volumes of the *The Opening Session of The Long Parliament* recently published by the Yale Center for Parliamentary History. The Committee believes that this will provide an important reference resource for members and others: One of the Society's three charitable objectives is to provide a library and archive of materials for research into the life and works of John Hampden, for the public benefit.

The Executive Committee agreed that since this represents a significant outlay for the Society it would be appropriate to ask members if they would like to make a contribution. One or two members of the Committee indicated that they would be prepared to make a donation. The overall cost will be in the region of £400.

If you would like to make a donation towards this worthwhile cause please contact the Treasurer, **Sam Hearn on 020 8995 2666** and he will be pleased to send you a gift-aid form and bank your cheque. Send cheques to The Treasurer, The John Hampden Society, 134 Park Road, Chiswick, W4 3HP. Please write on the back of the cheque "Long Parliament Appeal".



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ACCOMMODATION, RESTAURANT
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BATTLEFIELD TRUST PROJECT

REPORT BY THE SOCIETY'S REPRESENTATIVE

As announced in the last edition of *The Patriot*, the Society is supporting the Heritage Lottery Fund-backed project to create battlefield trails for the Civil War battles of Brentford and Turnham Green and to increase public awareness of the battles and their lasting significance. John Hampden played an important part in both battles and so the objectives of the project will both directly and indirectly support the Society's aim of honouring his name.

The Project Team has met three times and a great deal of progress has been made between the meetings. A Press Release has been issued, potential locations for information boards have been investigated and discussions are now at an advanced stage with the planning departments of Ealing and Hounslow Councils.



Five Members of the Project Team on the day of the first press release; Sam Hearn (The John Hampden Society), Janet McNamara (Hounslow Tourist Guides), Simon Marsh (The Battlefields Trust), and Val Bott and James Wisdom (Brentford & Chiswick History Society).

Designers have been selected for the information boards, website and brochures. A detailed brief is being developed for the designers. Each board will tell its own story and 'stand alone' but will form part of a larger narrative. The battles ranged over a wide area of what is now a busy urban landscape and the project team believes that most people will just read individual boards rather than follow the actual battlefield trail.

Lord St. Germans has extended to the Project Team the permission, that he so kindly granted to the John

Hampden Society, to use images derived from the Walker portrait of the Patriot. This means that the designers will be able to incorporate images of the Patriot into the designs for at least two of the information boards. Images of re-enactment battle scenes owned by the Society and previously only held in slide format have been digitalised and may be used by the designers on all or some of the information boards.

In early October, before this edition of *The Patriot* goes to press, public lectures about the battles will be given in Brentford and Chiswick. This year's annual battlefield walks will take place on Sunday November 5th - all members of the Society are welcome.

Anyone wishing to know more about the project or the battlefield walks should contact me on 020 8995 2666. Further updates on progress and notice of events will be published in subsequent issues of *The Patriot*.

Sam Hearn
JHS Project Team Representative

In view of recent changes to postage rates, the committee have considered ways of keeping down the costs of sending *The Patriot* and other documents to members.

One method would be to e-mail copies to those members with e-mail addresses, who can print copies themselves or simply read them online if desired. If you have an e-mail address and would like to try this, please e-mail your name to

secretary@johnhampden.org

and your name will be removed from the mailing list and placed on the e-mail list. If you subsequently decide that you still prefer to receive articles through the post, your name can be reinstated on the mailing list at any time. However, if enough members are happy to receive e-mail communications, it may well stave off the need to increase subscription rates to cover the increased costs of postage.

See also the centre column on page 4



DIARY DATES

2006

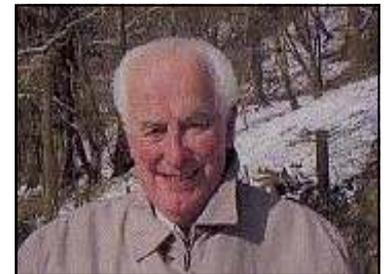
Sunday 22 October Wreath laying by The Sealed Knot at the battlefield of Edgehill.

For details, see The Sealed Knot's website at www.sealedknot.org/

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



Gordon Knight 1942 - 2006

We are sad to report the death of Gordon Knight of Wendover, who died from cancer in June. Gordon joined the Society 3 years ago. A Quantity Surveyor with Taylor Woodrow, he was clearly very respected in that field.

Gordon was greatly involved in the local community, but had time for his passion - steam trains. An activist in politics, he was chairman of the Aylesbury Vale Liberal-Democrat Constituency Party for many years until his death.

It is always encouraging to our Society when those with an active political interest of whatever party join us, demonstrating their strong belief in Parliamentary Democracy. Sadly, because of his illness, Gordon was unable to be with us at any of our gatherings.

We send our sympathy to his wife, Eileen, and his three children.

To the Editor,

Since publishing *The Controversy*, Gill and I have continued to research events relating to Hampden's death. Recently we happened upon an old article concerning the consequences of muzzle loading pistols exploding. Try thinking of what might happen if one pulled the pin on a hand grenade and just held on to it! At 'Hampden's' or should we say his father's exhumation, Nugent and others reported that a small bag was found in the coffin by the side of the body. It was said to contain the bones of John Hampden's right hand. If indeed the 'Pye' pistol had exploded in Hampden's hand at the Battle of Chalgrove Field, then it would have shattered his hand into a thousand pieces, never to be found or to be put in a bag. Can you imagine Hampden's aides trying to find pieces of Hampden's hand while the battle raged all about them! This article shatters any thoughts of believing in the 'Pye' theory of an exploding pistol.

'The Times' of July 28th 1828 reported many lies that day and this item just adds to them. We are cross with ourselves that such an obvious fact should have passed our notice. Dr. Grace, the Earl of Buckinghamshire's steward, who examined the body with Mr. Norris, a medical man, wrote on the 9th August 1828. '*... I saw nothing like a fracture of either hands or shoulders, nor was there any dislocation. The account you saw describing the hand as being found in a separate bag (which on being examined proved to have been sawn off) was altogether incorrect...*'

The whole story can be found in our book *The Controversy of John Hampden's Death*, £4.00 including postage and packing from the Society.

Derek & Gill Lester

The Society is sorry to lose Diane Ansell of Thame as a member, who feels that she does not, at present, have the time to do justice to her membership. We sincerely hope that she will join us again at a later date, when she has less demands on her time

A NEW SERVICE

While we are trying to find out how to set up a dedicated members' page on our website, it has been decided to start a John Hampden Society mailing list on Googlegroups. This will be very useful for sending out information which cannot go into *The Patriot* or onto the website either because of the timescale or because it is only of concern to members. It will also be invaluable for members to impart information to the executive committee or to make general enquiries.

Instead of having to log onto a website to read what other members have to say, the information will reach you as an e-mail. Instead of having to post to a long list of other members' addresses, you just send your comments as an e-mail to the list address. It is the same as pinning up a note on a notice board.

As manager of the list I have subscribed all the e-mail addresses which we have on file so that those members can immediately start receiving all communications. If you have an e-mail address and would like to be included in this facility, just send an email to me at webmaster@johnhampden.org with 'Subscribe' in the Subject line.

The other advantage is that the system provides an online archive where all postings are preserved. This means that documents such as minutes of AGMs, membership lists, etc, will be there for members to refer to once they have registered.

Once you are subscribed, I will send you further details of how to log onto the archive.

I am a subscriber to a number of these mailing lists for various of my interests, and I can thoroughly recommend them. As participation is restricted to registered individuals, and the archive is private, there is no possibility of your e-mail address being harvested by spammers.

**Roy Bailey
Webmaster**

A list of all Society publications can be seen by logging on to the website. This also contains information on prices and how to order.

www.johnhampden.org

PRINT SIZE

You have probably noticed that the font size used in this issue of *The Patriot* is larger than previously used. The reason for the change is that some members have mentioned difficulty in reading the smaller print of earlier issues and it has been decided to try and make life easier for those who do experience problems. If you wish to comment on the use of a larger font size or have any other suggestions as to improvements you would like to see in the newsletter, please contact the Editor

The Society wishes to produce a newsletter that is of interest to all members and would welcome input to this end. If you feel that you can provide an article on any subject related to John Hampden or his times, please submit it for consideration.

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