



THE PATRIOT

Newsletter of the John Hampden Society

No. 55 - Summer 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

We are sad to report the death in February of Dr Frank Hansford-Miller, Founder and Vice-President of the Society. The following obituary has been written by his nephew.

Dr Frank Hansford-Miller MSc PhD FRGS FSS (26 November 1916 - 21 February 2008)



Frank speaking at the Society's Annual Dinner in 1995

Born the second of four children, Frank grew up in a full and happy household in SE London. Academically gifted, he won a scholarship to Colfe's Grammar School, but before he was able to move on to higher education war broke out and in 1940 he volunteered for service. Starting in the Pay Corps he was later transferred to the Artillery, where he served in Northern Ireland, before ending his war duties in the Education Corps.

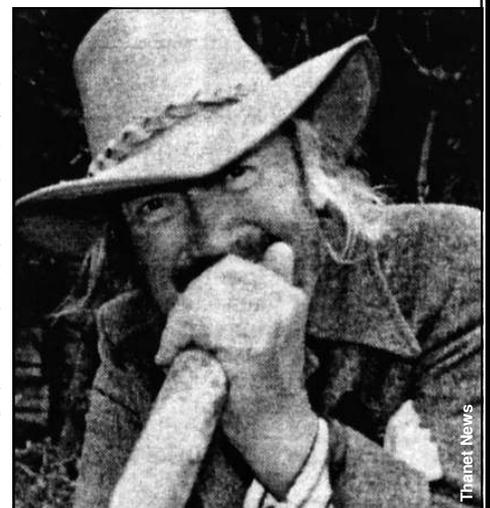
After the war in 1946 he went up to University College London to read mathematics, but his education was interrupted yet again, this time by illness. Frank contracted TB Spine and was in hospital for 18 months. It was during this period that he married the great love of his life Phyllis. They had met during the war and remained a devoted couple until Phyllis's death in 1989. Once recovered from his illness Frank returned to finish his studies and obtained his BSc. He later went on to obtain an MSc and PhD in Humanities.

His love of mathematics and education took him into teaching and later he became a mathematics advisor to the ILEA. He was fascinated by statistics and saw their practical application as a means of benefitting society. He was a lifetime fellow of the Royal Statistical Society and also a member of the Statistical Society of Australia.

Maths and education were not his only interests and as readers of this newsletter may know he had a great interest in parliament and parliamentarians. In the 1970s he

founded the English National Party as a foil to the Scottish and Welsh nationalist movements. During this colourful period in Frank's life he organised many well-attended St. George's Day rallies in Trafalgar Square including one to choose an English National Costume. A disillusioned Frank finally left the ENP following bitter internal struggles and he started to spend longer and longer periods in Western Australia where Phyllis had family.

Never one to let the grass grow under his feet he took up tutoring at Murdoch University in Perth, WA, started painting, learned the didgeridoo and took up running. Even in his 80s he was regularly competing in marathons, half marathons, and race walking, and had a fistful of medals to show his success. He also had his own publishing company, set up during the 1960s, and wrote and published many books on a multitude of topics. His interests were wide and varied and were equalled only by his sense of life and fun.



Playing the didgeridoo

Stephen Edwards

ANNUAL DINNER OF THE JOHN HAMPDEN SOCIETY

28th June 2008

Our annual dinner this year was held in The Spread Eagle Hotel, Thame, Oxfordshire, where once again the Barringtons provided fine food in convivial surroundings. The evening was chaired by Miles, Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Our speaker this year was the historian, Dr. Diane Purkiss (*pictured*) of Keble College, Oxford, who has written a number of books, including *The English Civil War: A People's History*, published in 2006. Her book, researched from original contemporary documents; letters, diaries, memoirs, pamphlets, newspapers and published sermons, presents the period mostly through the eyes of the common people, some of them quite obscure individuals.

For her presentation, Dr Purkiss selected three people, two women and one man, from the many fascinating individuals who appear in her book and by their experiences illustrate different aspects of the Civil War in the 1640s.

The first of these three characters, Anna Trapnel, a Godly woman (later to be termed a Puritan by her critics), the daughter of a labourer who worked in the London dockyards building ships. In spite of Archbishop Laud's policy of increased ritual, and the use of vestments and set prayers in church serves, there was a period when travelling lecturers, not necessarily in Holy Orders, were permitted to preach in churches. This activity led to the creation of lay preachers and Trapnel herself, in time became one, published printed versions of her sermons and her news and opinions, for which she was later prosecuted and imprisoned. Her story has no satisfactory ending since we have no record of her later life, if indeed she survived the wars.

The second is less obscure, Lucy Hay of the Percy family, a daughter of the Earl of Northumberland who rose to become a Lady in Waiting to King Charles I's Queen, Henrietta Maria. She became wealthy following two marriages and was the lover of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. More surprisingly she was a Presbyterian and a friend of John Pym. Our speaker quoted a number of contemporary sources which strongly argue, and convinced her, that Lucy provided the warning to the Five Members in 1642 before the King entered the House of Commons with an armed guard, planning to confront Speaker William Lenthall and arrest the five, but finding that 'the birds had flown'.



The third character was a soldier, Sergeant Henry Foster of the Red Regiment of the London trained bands who had rallied to turn back the king at Turnham Green. He also fought in several later battles and has

left a graphic account of the horrors of hand to hand fighting, wounds from pike and sword, and mass destruction by cannon fire. His account describes a terrible war in which armies lived off the land and in which no one in their path was safe whether man, woman or child. He also describes applications by severely wounded soldiers for support in the form of monetary pensions, which suggests that Parliament later attempted to provide some support for those army veterans who were unable to work because of their serious injuries.

Dr. Purkiss spoke to us before dinner and answered questions both before and after our meal, providing a lively and informative discussion concerning her book in particular and the Civil War in general.

Brian Cox



DIARY DATES

2008

Tuesday 30 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.

Tuesday 7 October:

An illustrated talk about John Hampden to The Risborough Countryside Group. (*Time and venue to be advised.*)

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

SPEEN FETE

Saturday 12th July dawned dry and sunny, though the forecast warned of possible heavy showers in the afternoon. At 2 pm the sky was overcast and there was a brisk breeze, which made setting up the stall somewhat difficult.

However assistance was at hand in the shape of John Hampden's Regiment of Foote, and shortly afterwards the sky cleared and the fete was declared open, with the Regiment leading the parade of fancy dress contestants. It was a fun event, with plenty of action from the Regiment, (*pictured below*) including firing the cannon, muskets, etc and explanations of the technicalities of using these weapons, together with pike drill.

Much interest was shown in the Society's stall and plenty of questions were asked. It soon became clear that a number of visitors knew a lot about John Hampden and his life, whilst a surprising number knew very little on arrival but hopefully had learned quite a lot by the time they left. A worth while exercise which hopefully will lead to some new members for the Society.

At 4 pm the weather finally proved that the forecasters had got it right this time and the heavens opened. A number of visitors took refuge under the John Hampden Society gazebo and we continued to answer questions until the deluge finished.

The Regiment then gave a further display, involving those children who were still present, and the fete organiser has since commented that this year's fete was the best one yet!

Anthea Coles

FRANK HANSFORD-MILLER

An appreciation



Addressing the Inaugural Meeting in 1992

My first contact with Frank was in 1988, when he was kind enough to send me an signed copy of his little biography of John Hampden which he had written in 1976. I have no idea how long Frank had been an admirer of the Patriot, but he formed the John Hampden New Freedom Party in the 1960s and stood for Parliament and the London County Council under that label with a notable lack of success on a number of occasions. When the idea of starting a John Hampden Society surfaced in 1992, Frank was one of the first people I contacted and, as I described in the supplement to *The Patriot* no. 52, his enthusiasm was boundless. Getting the Society off the ground would have been much more difficult without him.

He took on the task of being our first Honorary Treasurer, and the fact that our bank account is still with Lloyds/TSB in Canterbury is because Frank was living at nearby Wingham at the time. He raised a big laugh at the



Relaxing at home in Yanchep, Perth, in 2001

inaugural meeting by stating that his position as an unelected Hon. Treasurer asking for subscriptions made him feel like Charles I demanding illegal taxes!

Having helped to get the Society well and truly launched, Frank stood down from the Treasurership in 1993 but remained a stalwart supporter of the Society, later becoming a Vice-President. In 1995 he made a gift of the

remaining 40 copies of his Hampden biography to the Society, and in 1996, as we had been unable to persuade the original publishers, Shire Publications of Prince Risborough, to reprint such a useful book, Frank persuaded them to relinquish the rights and the printing negatives to us so that we could re-publish it ourselves. This we did under the title of *John Hampden of Buckinghamshire - the People's Hero* in time for John Hampden Week in Thame the following year.

Frank's busy lifestyle made it difficult for him to participate in many of the Society's activities (as he had homes in both Kent and Western Australia we never knew where to send the newsletter!) but, together with his partner Adele Parker, he was one of the party to visit Hampden, Maine, in 1994.

He was probably the most indefatigable of the group, acting as a judge of the floats in the Childrens' Day Parade, assisting in burying a time capsule, laying a little Union Jack on the grave of two British soldiers killed in Hampden in The War of 1812, and being the only one to accept an invitation to a post-concert reception in Bangor on our final evening. We younger ones were too tired!

Indefatigable, too was Frank's writing output. In 1996 he celebrated his 80th birthday by publishing his 16-volume *A History and Geography of English Religion*, and that was just one of 50 works. He was also a keen karaoke performer in recent years under the title of 'Frisky Frank', and recorded several CDs.

Competing in a number of Over-80s Marathons, in which he won several medals, was another of his interests. In 2001 he was featured in Meridian TV's *Country Ways* jogging on the beach near his home at Birchington and giving a demonstration of his skill with a didgeridoo in which he had apparently graduated from the online didgeridoo 'university' at Alice Springs.



Honouring the British soldiers in Hampden

The following year he caused a stir by stating that, because his late wife was never able to have children and cancer had now left him infertile, he should be cloned! He also advocated making Prince Harry King of Australia.

If that leaves you with the impression that Frank Hansford-Miller was an eccentric, then he certainly was, but what a poorer world it would be without people like him. Frank was highly-intelligent, well-educated, witty, erudite and with an enormous range of interests. He was great, if sometimes a little exhausting, company.

I consider myself greatly privileged to have known him.

Roy Bailey



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The John Hampden window in the Oak Room of the Wycombe Swan. The other windows portray other Buckinghamshire worthies such as Edmund Burke, Benjamin Disraeli and William Penn

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR ...

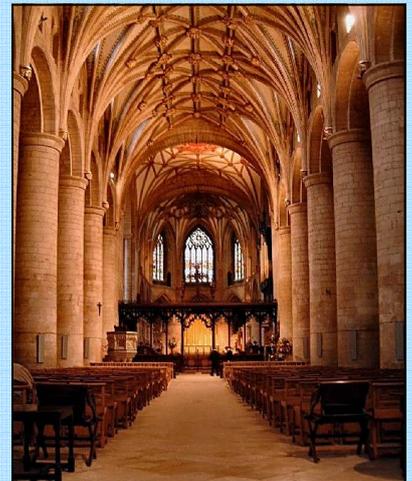
Dear Editor,

Our new Vice-Chairman's informative and fascinating article on the Hampdens during the period of the Wars of the Roses was vividly illustrated for me on a visit to Tewkesbury. In the old museum at Tewkesbury there is depicted a thoughtful diorama of the battle which took place on the morning of 4th May 1471. The Lancastrians were exhausted after a series of forced marches and although there was a hard fought battle, they eventually succumbed and many were massacred, even inside the Abbey. Sir Edmund who, as Sam points out, was killed, probably alongside the young Prince of Wales, to whom he was Chamberlain, was given as of Beckley, which is on Otmoor in Oxfordshire. It is interesting that fighting also on the Lancastrian side was a knight by the name of Knollys. He was also killed, I believe.

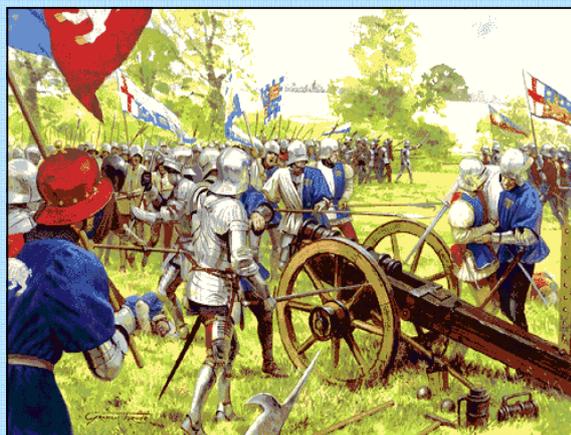
The Knollys family is descended from Mary Boleyn, Anne Boleyn's sister and is also the family of John Hampden's second wife, Lady Vachell, who was born Lettice Knollys. Both the Hampdens and the Knollys were strong supporters of Parliament, so it seems likely that these liaisons between certain families were of longstanding. Maybe a feeling for the past would have been very strongly passed on by word of mouth in families such as the Hampdens, Knollys, Cromwells, Dormers, Grenvilles, Russells and many other families who held great influence in their own 'Countries'. They may also have led to great friendships and loyalties or great antipathies.

Out of interest the keeper of the old Tewkesbury Museum kindly gave me a picture of the standard that Sir Edmund Hampden flew at Tewkesbury. The birds appear to be coloured ravens. It is not exactly what I would expect. Perhaps our expert on matters military, Derek Lester, might like to comment.

Bob Hammond



Tewkesbury Abbey



The Battle of Tewkesbury

**Have you....
 Renewed your membership, notified us of changes to your address, e-mail address, telephone number?**