



THE PATRIOT



Newsletter of the John Hampden Society
No. 33 - Autumn 2002

The John Hampden Society 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

A NEW BATTLE OF AYLESBURY

by

Vice-Chairman Robert Hammond *

You may have seen the report in the *Daily Telegraph* of 19th August about the Battle of Aylesbury. The report came about because of a housing development at Weedon, close to where we believe the battle took place. It has raised some interesting questions.

Hugh Norwood, whom I haven't met, and thank for being so observant, had pointed out that the council's location map did not show the symbol of crossed swords. However, the present Ordnance Survey map also does not show the symbol. In the 1980s the Ordnance Survey maps were certainly marking the site with the crossed swords. So on whose recommendation was the symbol removed?

I believe it occurred about the time the large Watermead development took place. It seems highly likely that the Holiday Inn and other buildings are in the centre of the battlefield site.

We, as a Society, were approached by the press for our opinion, since a local historian - George Lamb - had written an article in the prestigious *Records of Buckinghamshire Journal*, Vol. 41, 2001, in which he wrote 'The Parliamentary pamphlet printed at the time describes a brief but bloody engagement that left 600 dead and Prince Rupert fleeing back to Oxfordshire, and this gained a place in local mythology as "the Battle of Aylesbury".'

Let me return to the matter of the battlefield symbol. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Andy Bateson, a planning officer with AVDC, 'was unable to explain the omission but said it did not matter anyway because modern research was unequivocal - there never was a battle of Aylesbury.'... 'I expect we shall hear more about the so-called Battle of Aylesbury before this issue is settled..... I am sure sure there will be more parting shots.'

We I think I can assure Mr Bateson of the

accuracy of the last part of the statement, although I gather that he has now left AVDC.

After Roy Bailey passed on all the enquires to me I took part in a radio talk show and appeared on BBC TV South, as well as being interviewed by the Bucks Herald.

As far as I am concerned, and those in the Society I have talked to, the Battle of Aylesbury took place on the 1st November 1642. In the absence of evidence to prove otherwise, I am content to rely on the Parliamentary Report, the many reports of artefacts, no disclaimers from the Royalists, and the collective memory from the past. Although John Hampden was not present, the Society's interest is engaged since the 'foot part of Colonel Hampden's were'.

For those not familiar with the Battle of Aylesbury, I will give a very brief summary. A Parliamentary force of 1500 men under Sir William Balfour was detached from the Earl of Essex's Army, which was hurrying back to defend London. It was only 7 days after Edgehill. On the 1st November 1642 they were engaged by a larger force of Royalists under Prince Rupert, about a mile to the north of Aylesbury in the Holman's Bridge area. Holman's Bridge is on the road to Winslow, the A413, and the Holiday Inn is almost certainly on part of the site of the battle.

After a short but bitter fight the Royalists fled the field of battle, leaving about 500 dead and 200 prisoners. The Parliamentarians suffered about 90 dead. By this action Aylesbury, an important garrison town, central to the defence of Bucks and on a strategic route to London, was preserved by Parliament.

We are now in the position of collating evidence, and familiarising ourselves with the known facts of the battle.

Anyone reading the Bucks Herald will have seen many letters expressing unease and the underlying scepticism of the correspondents. Quite a few of the letters have referred to artefacts, which have been found.

This article is not intended to be anything more than keeping members up to date with the current situation. I am grateful to two of our members, Mrs Diana Hammond and John Hart, who have shared some knowledge with me.

In a later edition of *'The Patriot'* I hope to give a full account and assessment of the Battle of Aylesbury, as well as a description of the artefacts that have been found. To end this all too brief report, I can do no better than to quote from R. Gibbs, *'The History of Aylesbury'*, publ. 1885:

'As to the oblivion into which the incidents of the battle of Aylesbury have fallen, it is not difficult to afford an explanation. After the Restoration all documents in the hands of individuals relative to the Parliamentary cause would be concealed; and among the inhabitants of a town such as Aylesbury, which had taken part in the contest against a triumphant antagonist, probably no pains would be taken to preserve a memorial.'

'Doubts have been raised by some as to the remains discovered being those of warriors, inasmuch as no weapons were found; accoutrements were not wanting, and as to arms, they were carefully collected after the battle, as all through the war; on the side of Parliament at least, there was a dearth of the ordinary implements of war, and arms of the most grotesque fashion were again brought into service.'

* see page 3

Elliott Viney

1913-2002

We are sad to announce the death of one of our long-serving Vice-Presidents, Elliott Viney, on 9th August. The following appreciation was written by David Truen for the Bucks Herald, and is reproduced here with his permission:

He had an imposing presence...but also a tremendous amount of dignity.

Elliott Viney, DSO, MBE, TD, DL, who was born in Wendover Road, Aylesbury, in August 1913, died in Stoke Mandeville Hospital on Friday last week.

For many people, like myself, Elliott was someone who, because of his local connections, his involvement especially with printing and bookbinding company Hazell Watson and Viney on the Tring Road, had a wealth of knowledge about the area and took a keen interest in preserving that history.

But there was much, much more to the man.

The eldest of four sons, he grew up in the family home in Walton Street and, after completing his education at University College, Oxford, he joined the company which was, for many years, to play a major part in his life.

He called it, as so many did, simply Hazells.

Having joined the Territorial Bucks Battalion of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry in 1932 (when his father, Colonel Oscar Viney was in command) and having commanded the Aylesbury ('B') Company from 1938, he was in command of the Bucks Battalion at its famous defence of Hazebrook in May 1940, an action which was admired at the time even by the German Army, and for which he was awarded the DSO (Distinguished Service Order) in 1945.

Like many other Bucks Battalion men he spent nearly five years as a prisoner of war in Germany.

Elliott Viney's local activities and interests were as numerous as they were varied.

He became chairman of Hazells in 1967, he was president of the Bucks Battalion Old Comrades Association from 1960, churchwarden of St Mary's Parish Church, Aylesbury, for 17 years up to 1978 and of Holy Cross, Quainton for five years up to 1989.

But the story of Elliott Viney just goes on, and on.

He never, in all the years that I knew him, boasted of what he did or sought public recognition but did have a passion for pre-

serving the history of the area which I admired.

Just to list a few things you might not have known about Elliott Viney.



Barry Keen - Bucks Herald

He was a member of the Diocesan Advisory Committee from 1979, a founder Trustee of the Bucks Historic Churches Trust, chairman of the Aylesbury Chamber of Commerce in the 1950s, a magistrate from 1950 and chairman of the Aylesbury bench for ten years up to 1982.

But it does not stop there.

For 16 years he was president of the Aylesbury Orchestral Society and, in 1985 became president of an association which is unique to the town - the Aylesbury Association for the Protection of Persons and Property.

He was a deputy lieutenant of the county from 1951 and High Sheriff of Bucks for the year from 1964, chairman of the Bucks Record Society in 1985, president of the Bucks Archaeological Society from 1979, founder chairman of the Aylesbury Centre of the National Trust, president of the Bucks CPRE from 1991, one time president of the Bucks County Show and field master of the Old Berkeley Beagles for nearly 25 years.

As well as being a governor of the Museum of London he was a president of the British Federation of Master Printers at one time and also Master of the Worshipful Company of Grocers.

Married in 1950 to Rosamund Pelly, he is survived by his widow and their two daughters.

I have known Elliott Viney for more than 25 years through his work at Hazells but also because of a joint interest in local history.

His services background came out at one time when, not long after I moved to Aylesbury, he told me quite simply: 'Mr Truen, I think you need to get your hair cut'. And then he smiled.

We got on well over the years because we shared a similar interest and that was trying to preserve, through pictures and stories, Aylesbury and the Vale as it once was.

He was a mine of information about the area and cared not just for the district but the people.

Above everything else Elliott Viney had that elusive quality... he was a gentleman!

● *Elliott Viney's interest in the history of Buckinghamshire led him to join the John Hampden Society and he became one of our earliest Vice-Presidents.*

Following his tenure as High Sheriff in 1964 he published 'The Sheriffs of Buckinghamshire' which listed all the office holders from the 11th century until that date. The flyleaf states that it was printed in Aylesbury, so it is not difficult to work out by which company!

In 1993 Mr Viney presented the Society with an inscribed copy of the book, and in 1998 spoke most entertainingly on the subject at the Society's Annual Dinner.

LAST CHANCE SALOON

If you are quick you may be able to get one of the last few places at the special 10th Anniversary Banquet at Hampden House on Sunday 27th October. The 24-course meal will cost £25 per person, excluding drinks, and you should contact **Derek Lester**, 8 Margaret Close, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 1PZ forthwith.

If you have lost the menu and booking form which were published in the last issue of 'The Patriot', it can be downloaded from the Society's web site at

www.johnhampden.org/diary.htm

Richard Jenkinson of the Chiltern Brewery at Terrick is offering a discount of 10% on any bottles of wine, beer and cider purchased by members of the Society from the brewery shop in the week prior to the banquet. Just quote your name and membership number to qualify

NEW VICE-CHAIRMAN

In view of his impending 4-month visit to New Zealand, Roy Bailey has stood down from the post of Vice-Chairman and from the committee.

At the committee meeting of 6th September Robert V. Hammond was elected to fill the vacancy, and has written this letter as one of his first official acts:

'This will be Roy's last newsletter before he and Annabel take themselves off to a well-deserved holiday in New Zealand. This must be the time, therefore, to thank him, on all our behalves, for the special Grampound edition of *'The Patriot'*.

What a marvellous piece of printing. It is artistically, superbly presented, and has taken our newsletter to very high standards. The content too, has beautifully caught the mood of the occasion. For that I couple our thanks to Graham Barfield as well. Aren't they a great double act? The journal lacked nothing. The right amount of gravitas for the excellent speeches by Miles and Ian. Explanation, banter, humour, description of the event, hospitality of the people of Grampound and above all the great fun we shared with them. And in all that, they didn't forget that we were there to honour the life of John Hampden.

So Roy, June the 21st next year is John Hampden day in Wendover and that means you and Graham will have to sharpen your pencils. By the way, I hope all our members have noted that day in their diaries. It will be our greatest celebration of John Hampden yet. Valerie Horne has been working very hard with Wendover Parish Council and others on this event for some time now. Have we booked the Red Lion afterwards, Valerie?

I am standing in for Roy while he is away. Fortunately you have an excellent committee, all of whom will play their part, since Roy is a difficult act to follow, and honestly with my other commitments it will be a difficult balancing act. However we have many things on the stocks, which I hope will meet with your approval. So Roy, enjoy your relaxation with Annabel in New Zealand, but like the great man himself you can't leave your roots.'

The day-to-day running of the Society will be undertaken by Mr Hammond, while Hon. Secretary Anthea Coles will produce the newsletter as required. The web site will be in the capable hands of a non-member, Alan Cook, who is in charge of information technology for Historic Royal Palaces and is a colleague of Hon. Treasurer Sam Hearn at Hampton Court.

Mr Bailey will be away in New Zealand until the beginning of March, and will be visiting our members Hugh and Trixie Muldrew at Hampden in the South Island. He has been asked to give a couple of talks there on the man after whom the town is named, and he will be packing the Society's collection of colour slides.

New e-mail addresses, in addition to the personal ones on the address list, are:

Bob Hammond:
vice-chairman@johnhampden.org

Anthea Coles:
enquiries@johnhampden.org

Alan Cook:
webmaster@johnhampden.org



2002

22 Oct The Society's 10th Anniversary. A special celebratory 17th century banquet will be held in Hampden House, Great Hampden (by kind permission of Mr Tim Oliver) from 1.30 pm to 6.30 pm.

2003

Saturday 21 June The Wendover Ceremony. Unveiling of a commemorative plaque to John Hampden at Wendover Library. Further details to follow.

For up-to-date information, see the Diary page on the Society's website at:

www.johnhampden.org/diary.htm

WENDOVER '03

Plans for the unveiling of a memorial to John Hampden at Wendover on Saturday 21st June next year are proceeding apace. Valerie Horne (who would be known as 'The Wendover Wonder' if she didn't live in Aylesbury!), has spent a considerable amount of time lobbying all and sundry in mid-Buckinghamshire to get their support for this project. She has secured grants from both Wendover Parish Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council, and several members have sent donations, so the finance is well-organised.



The memorial, which will be sited on the wall of the Library, will be in the form of a metal plaque surmounted by an oval stone bas-relief of John Hampden's head, similar to the one in Thame (above) but facing to the right. The plaque will be cast in bronze by Leander Architectural of Buxton, Derbyshire, who produced the two plaques for Grampound, while the head will be carved by Graham Barfield, who will be brushing up his masonry skills by a week's course at a local stone carving school.

As at Grampound, the Lord Lieutenant of the county - in this case Sir Nigel Mobbs - will open the proceedings at 12 noon, and the Earl of Buckinghamshire will perform the unveiling at about 2.30 pm. Mrs Horne has come forward with a raft of interesting ideas for the day, many of which will make money for the Society, and all of which will provide enjoyment and information for the public.

Watch this space!

SWEET CHARITY

Hon. Treasurer Sam Hearn is still looking hard at the pros and cons of the Society applying for charity status. It would appear that there are a number of substantial advantages and a number of disadvantages to the move.


By the time of next year's AGM Mr Hearn hopes to have circulated members with all the relevant information so that they can vote on the proposal.

NO AD-WANTAGE

Despite the approach from them over a year ago, we heard nothing more from the Vale and Downland Museum at Wantage about their invitation to host the Society's exhibition for several weeks commencing this September.

This is a pity because, as Sam Hearn reports elsewhere, the exhibition attracts a great deal of favourable comment, and would have enlightened people in an area without any Hampden connections.

Perhaps we shall hear from the Museum authorities again at a later date.



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GRAMPOUND REVISITED

by
Roy Bailey

As my wife and daughter were travelling to North Cornwall for their annual holiday on Saturday 7th September, I decided to get a lift a large part of the way and attend Grampound Carnival. Annabel dropped me off at Exeter St. Davids station, and by means of train and bus I was in Grampound by 4 o'clock.

My arrival came as a bit of a surprise to those who recognised me from last year, but Town Crier John Sweetman lost no time in roping me in to be a judge of one of the floats. Not an easy task as the standard was very high, but it qualified me for a cream tea in the Village Hall! There were not as many floats as last year, but the usual high level of imagination was present.

One particular entry was entitled 'Grollywood' and featured residents of Grampound, some of whom were old enough to know better, dressed as film stars. Believe me, it was well worth the long journey to see Parish Clerk and John Hampden Society member **Roger Paynter** dressed as Marilyn Monroe in a blonde wig, heavy makeup, white ball gown, false bosom and high heels!

I was then asked by John Sweetman to be one of the money collectors, following the Carnival procession up Fore Street and relieving the spectators of their small change. They were so generous that the bucket soon began to weigh heavy, and I stopped halfway up the hill. I remembered the climb from last year!

The evening's activities included the bonfire and a barbecue, and a performance by a middle-aged but very professional band called (appropriately) 'Mid-life Crisis'.

My visit was rounded off by the pleasure of staying the night at Trevail by courtesy of **Mrs Pat Miller's** daughters Sally and Carol, who were in residence with their families



The only sad note was to learn of the death in May of churchwarden Peter Williams, who had been so helpful during our visit last year, and who had acted the part of a Royalist (*above*) stopping the Society's procession until **Graham Barfield** gave the password.

THE BUCKS LOCAL HISTORY FAIR AND CONFERENCE

by
Sam Hearn

The Conference, organised by the Bucks Local History Network, returned this year to the Civic Centre in Aylesbury on Saturday 5th October.

Over 200 people attended the fair; a significant increase on the 160 who attended last year's successful event at the University of Buckingham. This was despite a substantial increase in the registration fee from £5.00 to £12.50.

The lecturers varied in quality and style but the range of subjects was impressive. Professor Dyer's slide illustrating the development of the village of Great Hampden 'started a number of hares running' which members of the Society might like to pursue at some stage.

The redoubtable Professor Spufford had us spellbound with her fascinating research on the links between Lollardy and later religious non-conformity in the Chilterns.

The highlight of the day was the revelation by Neil Loudon that the man who designed the Titanic had been apprenticed to a marine engineering firm based in Stony Stratford.

At the breaks between the five lectures delegates could visit twenty eight stands representing local history organisations. There was also an extraordinary display of Parish Maps in the basement. Several stands were aimed at those interested in genealogical research including one displaying the Hampden Family Tree. Cutting edge archaeological work was presented by the stand for the Whittlewood Project.

Liz Morris, Valerie Home and I set up the mobile John Hampden exhibition and ran a stall selling Hampden literature and memorabilia. It was flattering to have the Society's stand complimented by two of the organisers and one of the main speakers.

One new member, the County Museum, was signed up and a booking taken for the Banquet. Thanks are due to Maurice Kirtland who transported the stands and exhibition materials to Aylesbury. At least four other Society members attended the fair.

The Conference is now an annual event and will be held next year at Gerrards Cross. The Fair's Organising Committee is looking for people to assist in making next year's fair an even greater success. If you are interested please contact Liz Morris or me.



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ACCOMMODATION, RESTAURANT & BANQUETING

NEW VICE-PRESIDENT

Dr Maija Jansson, MA, PhD, FRHistS, has accepted the invitation to become a Vice-President of the Society.

Dr Jansson, who lives in Hamden, Connecticut, has been Director of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History since 1993, and is one of the leading authorities on the sources and proceedings of the Stuart Parliaments. She has recently edited a number of massive volumes dealing with the proceedings of the English Parliament; the latest of which is entitled *Proceedings in the Opening Session of the Long Parliament*.



Dr Jansson has made a number of visits to Britain in the course of her research, and is an enthusiastic member of the Society. With her husband, Professor Paul Bushkovitz, she attended the Annual Dinner in 1997 (*above*), and in March of this year devoted some of her valuable time to being filmed outside the Houses of Parliament for the Society's proposed video. She has indicated that she will be in Britain again in November, hopes to meet some of the Society's members, and has promised, when not so busy, to make some scholarly contributions to this newsletter.

As well as her qualifications mentioned above, **Dr Jansson** tells us that she is also a Fellow of Davenport College at Yale University and a Magna Carta Dame. We haven't enquired as to the details of the latter, but as they say in *South Pacific*, 'There is nothing like a Dame'!

Such an experienced and enthusiastic historian will be an invaluable addition to our list of Vice-Presidents.