

THE JOHN HAMPDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the 26th Annual General Meeting of the John Hampden Society held at The Market Hall, Amersham, Buckinghamshire on Saturday, 7th April 2017

Present:

Mr. Stephen Barriff (Chairman), Mr. Sam. Hearn, (*Treasurer & Membership Secretary*), Mrs. Anthea Coles (*Hon. Secretary*), Mr. Gerald McGregor and 10 members of the Society and guests.

1. Introduction by the Chairman:

Steve Barriff welcomed everyone to the 26th AGM of the Society, and reported as follows:

“Good afternoon. For those of you who don’t know me my name is Steve Barriff and I’m currently Chairman of the John Hampden Society.

I’d like to start by welcoming you all to Amersham Market Hall. This was built in 1682 by Sir William Drake, the MP for Amersham, and at the time was described as one of the handsomest buildings in the County. Whilst this structure was built sometime after John Hampden’s demise, his links with the county are numerous.

This is, I believe, the 26th Annual General Meeting and I’m delighted to report that the year has been a moderately successful one for the Society.

The web site is now fully “up and running” and has received a significant amount of praise from those using it. Most of the old Patriot newsletters are now available on this web site, thanks to the indefatigable work by Roy Bailey in refurbishing them. What I would say at this juncture is that we would like to see more people accessing the member’s area. This is a relatively simple task and will give us a far better idea of the numbers using the site.

In conjunction with the web site The Patriot is now produced by Sam Hearn in an electronic format using a program called “MailChimp”. This has not only saved the Society a significant amount of money, but is a lot simpler to produce. Sam has even developed an occasional newsletter entitled “Hampden Voice” with which to notify members of relevant events between issues of The Patriot.

I know that some of you were able to attend a series of talks held at the Buckinghamshire County museum in Aylesbury on The Civil War in Buckinghamshire, the battles at Southam and Edgehill, Hampden's defence of Brentford and Turnham Green, and finally the Reading Campaign and Hampden's mortal wounding at Chalgrove. These were held in conjunction with the Battlefield Trust and Bucks County museum and presented by Ian Beckett, Simon Marsh and Stephen Porter. The income from these talks will be shared equally between the two previously mentioned organizations and the John Hampden Society.

After a few false starts we were able, once again, to place a wreath on the statue of John Hampden within the Palace of Westminster. After recent events and with the inevitable increase in security I’m not sure how long we will be able to continue this tradition, but it is something that we are keen to maintain. I’m delighted to say that this year we were joined by students from Hampden Sydney

College together with two members of Parliament. This was all arranged through the good offices of one of our Vice Presidents, The Rt. Hon. John Bercow, MP, for which we are extremely grateful. As many of you know, there have been a number of significant events taking place within Parliament this year and as a consequence the wreath was laid on the anniversary of the passing of the Grand Remonstrance by the House of Commons

Some of you may have read about, and be concerned over the problems the Co-operative Bank has been suffering lately, and whilst our deposits appear relatively safe it may be worth considering moving our account to another, less vulnerable, bank. This will be discussed by your committee and you will be advised of the outcome through the normal channels.

I'm afraid this, once again, brings me onto what has become a regular feature of this AGM, and that is a plea for more Trustees to join the committee. Whilst we all have numerous commitments outside the John Hampden Society a few hours of your time can make an enormous amount of difference to the running of the organization. I know only too well that amongst our membership we have a vast array of talent that can be put to a significant use, and should any of you wish to discuss this further with any members of the current committee we would be only too delighted to have a chat with you after the meeting.

Whilst, subject to our approval, I'm happy to remain as a trustee I feel that after three years in the rôle as chairman I should step aside for a younger and wiser head. As a consequence, I'm afraid that this will be my last year as chairman.

As with many societies, such as ours, there will be the inevitable departures and bereavements. It is particularly sad to advise you of the death of one of our vice-presidents, The Earl of Strafford. The Earl died peacefully, at home last year with his family at Easton, near Winchester.

I now have great pleasure in handing you over to Anthea, our Honorary Secretary.

2. Apologies for absence:

Apologies had been received from, Lord and Lady Alison Buckinghamshire, Lady Helen & Mr. Hughes Motteux, Mrs. Betty McBean, Mrs. Marion Wyerszicki, Mr. John Seal. Mr. Christopher Hobart, Mr. Roger and Mrs. Patsy Paynter, Mrs. Valerie Horne, Mrs. Sarah Barrington and Mr. Simon Marsh.

3. The Minutes of the previous AGM:

These were agreed to be true record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

5. Reports from Officers:

Chairman:

Foreword

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2016.

Trustees

The Trustees who served during the year are shown below:

Steve Barriff, Chairman
Roy Bailey,
Anthea Coles, Honorary Secretary
Sam Hearn, Honorary Treasurer
Gerald McGregor
Jim Rodda (from 9th April 2016)
Phillip Broomfield (from 9th April 2016)

Structure, Governance & Management

The Society has been a registered charity since 2003. The structure, governance and management are set out in its constitution agreed by the membership in 2003.

The objects of the charity are to:

- Make the character and achievements of John Hampden better known to the general public.
- Provide a library and archive of materials for research into Hampden's life and works.
- Preserve and conserve and erect monuments and artefacts associated with John Hampden.

Day-to-day responsibility for both restricted and unrestricted funds is delegated to the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer.

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Trust and of its surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Chairman's Annual Report

General

The aims and objectives of the Society are set out in the Society's constitution which is accessible to members on the website. In planning the Society's activities for the year, the trustees kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Accounts

It is the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure proper accounting records are maintained which are able, with reasonable accuracy, to provide the financial position and statements of the charitable company in compliance with the 1993 Charities Act and 1985 Companies Act. The Trustees are also responsible for the safe keeping of all of the Society's assets and for taking all reasonable steps to detect and prevent any fraudulent or other irregular activities.

Funds

There are currently no restricted funds within the Society, and as a consequence the funds under the Trustee's control can be used to further any of the Society's aims and objectives.

We were happy at the AGM to welcome onto the committee new trustees Philip Broomfield and Jim Rodda, as Membership Secretary and Treasurer. Whilst Jim is a long-standing member, Philip is relatively new. Both show a degree of enthusiasm which augers well for the Society's future.

Nevertheless, we continue to actively seek assistance from members willing to take a hands-on role in the running of the Society. I have been a member since the beginning of 1993 and Chairman for the past three years. As I mentioned last year I believe that it is now time to hand over the baton to a younger and wiser head.

Due to the hiatus of the EU Referendum in June the authorities declined our request to repeat the 2015 wreath laying ceremony at the Palace of Westminster on the anniversary of Hampden's death. However, members were permitted to lay a wreath at the foot of Hampden's statue close to the Central Lobby on the 375th anniversary of the passing of the Grand Remonstrance by the House of Commons.

A series of four talks on John Hampden's military career were run jointly with the Battlefields Trust. The talks were open to the general public and held at the Buckinghamshire County Museum in Aylesbury. It is possible that the Society may arrange for the talks to be published. The final two talks were held in January and February 2017.

After a great deal of hard work, the new web site is now up and running. This new site has received praise from both home and abroad for its clarity and ease of navigation. Members are invited to request access to the members' section of the website. We are grateful to Sarah Large of Websquared for all her practical advice and dedication.

With retirement of the Editor, Roy Bailey, it was clear that we could no longer produce The Patriot newsletter in the same way. The printed version of The Patriot has been replaced by an electronic document using the free "Mail Chimp" software. Not only does it save the Society money but it is also much easier to manage and maintain. We have recently introduced an occasional e-newsletter entitled "Hampden Voice" to keep members informed about the activities of the Society.

Several talks were given by members of the Society during the year, from Tingewick to Chiswick, and well attended battlefield walks were run at Chalgrove, Brentford and Turnham Green.

This year (2017) marks the 25th anniversary of the John Hampden Society and to celebrate the occasion a dinner will be held in the magnificent surroundings of Hampden House in Buckinghamshire on the 7th October.

Stephen Barriff – Chairman of The John Hampden Society

The Treasurer's Report:

Jim gave a brief resume of his involvement to date with the accounts, following which Sam reported as follows:

A number of books had been sold at the various talks given by the Society.

With regard to concerns over the Co-op Bank, although it was generally felt that there was no cause to be worried about holding money in this Bank, we do still have the old Lloyds Bank accounts and it might be prudent and set members' minds at rest if we transfer the bulk of the Society's funds into one of the Lloyds Bank accounts and only keep a small balance with the Co-op. This would save the hassle of asking members to change their standing order details yet again. This is something we will discuss in due course.

He further mentioned the following matters pertaining to the accounts:

The gift aid return for 2014 was submitted in 2016 and £217 was received from HMRC. The gift aid returns 2015 and 2016 will be submitted in 2017.

Legal costs were incurred by the Society 2015 in its successful action to recover possession of its collection of books from the previous librarian of the Society. These costs were recovered in full by the Society in February 2016.

The Society made a final payment of £1,209 on completion of the new website.

The Society owns a medallion sculpture of John Hampden. It is on permanent loan to Thame Museum.

Stamp stock is valued at cost of £381. Books etc. bought for re-sale are written off in year of purchase.

The Membership Secretary's Report:

Membership Secretary – Report to Annual General Meeting 2nd April 2017

Since the last AGM on 9th April 2016 there have been the following updates to the membership:

Members we have sadly lost:

Ms. Beatrice Dobie (April)
Hugh Muldrew (May)
Thomas Byng, 8th Earl of Strafford (Nov)

New members include:

Revd. & Mrs. Hambly (Aug)
Michael Bannister (Nov)
Colin Hampden-White (Dec)
Robert Boris (Jan)
Hampden School, New Zealand (awaiting confirmation that they have in fact paid)

Renewals:

23 chaser e-mails/telephone calls have been made to bring all members into the system of renewing on 1st January 12 of which have renewed and, in most cases, have adjusted their Standing Order

payments. 2 resignations received. A small number of those who haven't paid for two years have now been removed from the membership.

The current membership stands at 114. The membership list has been updated accordingly. I am in the process of undertaking a data cleaning exercise, verifying members contact details and email. I do hope more will sign up for the e-newsletter option and accessing the members section of the website.

Prepared by: Phil Broomfield.

The Web-master's Report:

The new website has proved very successful with many people enjoying it, though a lot of members have yet to access the Members section and should be encouraged to do so. Sam and Phil have to work on extending the genealogy section. Most of the old editions of *The Patriot* have now been added to the website, and amongst the additions to the Archives is a copy of John Hampden's Will.

6. Election of officers and committee members:

Nominations had been received from six members and Steve ran through them individually as follows:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Proposed by:</u>	<u>Seconded by:</u>
Chairman:	No nominations received	
Treasurer:	No nominations received	
Hon. Secretary: Anthea Coles.	Gerald McGregor	Sam Hearn.
Membership Secretary: Philip Broomfield	Anthea Coles	Sam Hearn
<u>Committee Members:</u>		
Gerald McGregor	Sam Hearn	Steve Barriff
Roy Bailey	Brian Cox	Annabel Bailey
Sam Hearn	Steve Barriff	Anthea Coles
Steve Barriff	Sam Hearn	Gerald McGregor

There being no other nominations individual votes were taken on the above proposals and all were voted unanimously into office. It would be possible to co-opt a Chairman and Treasurer at an Executive Committee Meeting and this will be discussed at the next meeting.

7. Programme of Events and Plans for future Activities:

7th October 2017 – 25th Anniversary Dinner at Hampden House. (Five bookings received to date).

With regard to the wreath laying at Westminster, Roy suggested that we abandon this event because of the security issues that have now arisen, and also the timing that we are allocated makes it very difficult for members to attend, except for anyone living in London. He suggested reverting to Chalgrove or Thame, though the Houses of Parliament gives the Society better publicity. We will have to see how things work out, but if this is not possible, we could consider Thame. Anthea suggested that the statue in Aylesbury might be another possibility. Although it is a very busy venue it is much more visible than Thame or Chalgrove, so there would be more publicity. We could also consider doing both a local venue and Westminster.

Sam had a couple of ideas for events, one being a visit to the Chiltern Brewery, where we had held events in the past for a meal and a talk, combined with a tour of the brewery. The Brewery had stopped holding these events, but following a rebuild, they have now started doing them again.

Jim mentioned holding an event at the Ship Money Memorial in Honor End Lane, Prestwood, which had been scheduled to take place some time ago, but which had had to be shelved at the time. This is a historical memorial, but there are difficulties with access, as there is no parking available in the vicinity and it means walking up a fairly steep, narrow lane which carries a lot of traffic. Sam suggested that we wait until we have the new information board finalized and erected and then we should try to organize as much publicity as possible of an event to be held there.

Sam had received some publicity about an event held annually in November at Westminster to enable organizations to get involved in UK Parliament. The Committee will discuss this and see whether we could become involved. This might fit in well with what Gerald was working on, which involved trying to interest new MPs in becoming members of the Society, on which he reported briefly. Unfortunately, this plan had been put on hold because of Brexit, but would be reinstated as soon as possible.

There are no talks booked at present except for one to be given by Sam on Sybil Penn, which he is doing on behalf of the Society.

Sam had discovered that a new member, the Revd. Hambley, had given two talks on John Hampden prior to joining the Society.

8. The Patriot:

Sam apologised for the delay in producing the overdue copy of *The Patriot*, for which he had plenty of material, but had not had plenty of time, due to his political commitments over the previous months. He promised that the next edition will, therefore, be a bumper edition and will include a report on the AGM. He gave a brief idea of what will be included, including an article by Valerie Horne.

9. A.O.B:

It was reported that Simon Marsh of the Battlefields Trust intended to arrange more guided walks of the Chalgrove Battlefield Site and information on these will be included in the next edition of *The Patriot*. Sam also reported that there was good news regarding the Chalgrove Battlefield site in that any development that takes place in Chalgrove will not interfere with the Battlefield site.

Sam and Phil are overdue a meeting to organize the genealogy page on the website, which Phil is keen to expand. We do receive quite a lot of queries in this respect.

We are now nearly up-to-date with publishing all of the back copies of the newsletter on the website, the delay in doing this having been caused by the fact that a lot of the earlier editions had to be completely re-made as they were not originally produced in a form that could be uploaded to the website, but Roy has nearly completed this task and shortly they will all be available on line. There is a wealth of information available on the website and the scope for more to be added over a period of time.

Some discussion took place regarding the problem of recruiting more members, particularly in a younger age group, and the question was raised about gaining access to schools, which is what Beatrice said she would do before her unfortunate death. Unfortunately, if this period of history is not on the national curriculum, the schools tend not to be interested when approached. More could be done to make contact with schools and organizations if more people were prepared to put in a little time and effort, and Sam reiterated that anyone prepared to help in this way did not need to be a Society member or a member of the Executive Committee.

Roy reported that, in the course of re-making some of the older newsletters, he had come across Edition 25, wherein our membership secretary at that time, Liz Morris, has received a letter from someone who declined to renew his membership because all he had gained from the Society was four newsletters. He went on to say that the Society was almost as inert as the great man it was formed to honour. He felt he had joined an organization without any energy or sense of purpose. Roy and former member Graham Barfield drew up a list of 65 achievements of the Society from the time the Society was formed. Unfortunately, Roy felt that, if such a letter was received now he would be inclined to agree with the correspondent. For the last five years we have not been very active, and we need to ensure that Committee Members carry out the tasks for which they were elected and show a little leadership, otherwise the membership will decline further. We need more Trustees and Roy had decided to come back onto the committee as he feels his experience has something to offer to the Society, but he feels that we need to knuckle down and work hard to promote John Hampden and the Society. He remarked that, in Wikipedia and Google our Society comes out in the top few names when searching and we have a reputation as being an important authority to people researching Hampden. He would be very sad to think that the anniversary dinner to be held in October would be the last event to be held by the Society.

There being no further points to be discussed, Steve declared the meeting closed and refreshments were served.