

## The John Hampden Society

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held via Zoom on 24 September June 2023.

**Present:** Beth Rogers (Chairman), Anthea Coles (Hon. Secretary), Sam Hearn (Hon. Treasurer) and Peter Osborne

**1. Apologies were received from:**

Miles Buckinghamshire, and Phil Broomfield and Rich Howell.

**2. Minutes of last Meeting:**

These were approved as a true record of the meeting.

**3. Matters arising not included in the agenda:**

All matters actioned at the last meeting will be discussed under the Agenda.

**4. Chair's Update:**

We have managed to get going on Instagram thanks to an enthusiastic new member from the USA. We have also become more active on Facebook, thanks again to a member from the USA, so we have moved forward on digitalization. We have yet to feel the benefit of that, but we have another new member from the USA. Our Instagram account was instantly connected to a number of accounts of historical societies, so we may get some cross membership as a result.

Beth said that we are now getting more requests for speakers, having picked up three in the last couple of weeks. Some of the talks take place during the day and she can do some of these as she is now retired and living in the area. Sam is also happy to come out to do some of them.

**5. New Leaflet Update:**

Beth had sent round some proposals but had not had any feedback. Beth now thinks it is beyond her graphic design skills and asked whether we should get a professional graphics designer to produce the leaflet – Peter felt we should. It is possible that Sarsen Press might also have a graphic designer who would do this for us, either in-house or outsourced. Beth asked Peter, if Sarsen could not help with this, whether his printer would give us a quote. Beth will ask Sarsen if they can do this in the first instance.

**6. The Patriot:**

Beth was getting enough copy for this. Peter offered to proof read future editions before publication.

**7. MP's Letters:**

Beth wrote Greg Smith and the Marlow MP but got no reply. She asked whether Sam or Peter had had any luck with their MP contacts. Sarah, the MP for Chesham and Amersham, did say yes. Peter pointed out that if you write to your MP and do not get a reply you can complain as they are obliged to reply.

**8. Schools Material:**

No action as yet. Beth tried to get the person who raised this question at the AGM to consider whether he could take it forward, but he declined as he was too busy with his own project.

**9. Plaque:**

No action as yet. Beth will put it on her to-do list before the AGM. Sam suggested a fund-raising event at Hampden, inviting non-members as well as members, to raise funds relating to the work at the church. We need to fund the plaque if we get permission to do this and possibly an information board outside because many people will not see the plaque inside, whereas a board outside will be visible to all visitors.

**10. Events and forthcoming talks:**

Zoom talk by Howard Robinson on November 18<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm.

AGM at Broughton Castle.

Forthcoming talks: Chiltern Medical Society, Misbourne Society, Beaconsfield 41 Club all of which Beth will be doing.

Beth had tried to set up a social event without much uptake, but we do still need to launch the lock of hair at the museum. Peter suggests that we do this as part of a social event supported by FOM, probably early June 2024.

Beth will re-connect with Wycombe Museum regarding exhibitions next year.

Sam mentioned the Cromwell Association conference in Huntingdon, which he will be attending.

**11. Secretary's Update:**

Nothing to report that had not already been discussed.

**12. Treasurer's Update:**

Sam reported that we have £7,235.00 in the bank at present. £5,735.00 of that sum is now on deposit and is beginning to get a reasonable return now. As a charity we are supposed to use the money to achieve our objective

**13. Gift Aid:**

Sam had not had a chance to claim the next tranch of gift aid, but it is on his to-do list. Sam is going to update the software that he has and will be trialing some other software shortly which should make it easier to complete the Gift Aid claims.

**14. Transfer of Books/merchandising from BFHS:**

We sell books at events and can give Peter a good stock if he is prepared to take on marketing them. Peter agreed that he could process and fulfill the orders through his organization. Sam will deliver the books to Peter, who will alter his website to reflect this. Sam will get Sarah to liaise with Peter who will set up a sub-site and the order will go through automatically.

**15. Civil War Memorial Register:**

This is being launched on 25<sup>th</sup> October and Sam and Beth are planning to attend and represent the Society at the Civil War Museum in Newark. They will take books etc. with them, together with leaflets, and try to make as many contacts as possible..

**16. New Biographer:**

Beth asked whether Sam had made any progress with contacting biographers who might be interested in this project. He had mentioned Robert Harris and Jesse Norman but has not done so as yet. Peter had a couple of suggestions – Jenny Uglow and Adrian Waddington. Beth suggested that the way forward would be to speak to them and see what their reactions were. Sam commented that this was an instance where we need another trustee who would be able to do this as we are all struggling with the workload. Both of Peter's suggestions are friends of his and he was happy to speak to them. Sam felt that if Robert Harris were to take this on, our membership would increase greatly.

**17. Membership Secretary Update:**

Phil had reported that membership now stood at 98, up from 93 at the time of the AGM.

**18. Update from other Committee Members:**

With regard to the inscription on the Ship Money memorial, the position had changed as Peter now has a connection to an expert on the subject, who has explained the process which we/The Chiltern Society would have to use to put a case for re-etching the inscription. There are precedents and we would have to make a strong case for doing it. You need to make a persuasive case that this inscription is too important to lose and because of the nature of the material, being sandstone, it is going to disappear, and something needs to be done sooner rather than later if we are going to save it. All interested parties need to agree the principle that that is so, put it in writing, then he as the expert, collates the information, submits it to English Heritage and tells them that they cannot say 'no'. It would not be easy but would be just about do-able provided we could get The Chiltern Society on side and agreeable to taking the lead as it would be better coming from them. We have only got about another 5-years before the inscription is lost. The rate of disappearance of the inscription has accelerated over the last 15 – 20-years due to climate change. The alternative is to do nothing and see it disappear.

**19. Rich Howell – connecting with Hampden themed history societies in the US:**

Beth had not heard from Rich as to how he had been getting on with connecting to Hampden orientated historical societies. She had sent him some material in July as promised but she does not know how he has got on disseminating that.

**20. Preparing for the AGM:**

There is not much to prepare at the moment. We have a committee meeting in December where we can discuss this and the next meeting will then be February, when we can finalize matters relating to the AGM, which is to be held at Broughton Castle. Members wishing to pay for it can have a tour of Broughton Castle. We need to decide whether we want a speaker. Beth hopes that Broughton can assist with technology, setting up the Zoom aspect of the meeting and recording it for the records and to assist with production of the minutes of the meeting. Broughton will be providing refreshments, but we have not received an order form yet so do not know what the menu or cost will be. Sam

mentioned the church at Broughton which would be worth a visit if time allowed. He also mentioned that there is a pub close to the entrance and he thinks they provide accommodation which could be useful if anyone wished to stay there the night before the meeting.

**21. AOB:**

Beth commented that the meeting had been a marathon but until we have more hands on deck, we do have to do everything ourselves instead of delegating some of the work. We need to talk to new members as they join and ask whether they would be prepared to help in any way in the hope that we might encourage some of them to assist with various tasks. The personal contact may produce results.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting was declared closed. The next meeting is scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> December.