

The Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society

Spring 2021



The former Spaldwick Chapel. See *Records of Hunts* vol.4 no.3 and forthcoming talk by Simon Clemmow
© Alan Richardson

Light at the end of the tunnel? We hope so, but as we begin to plan some outdoor Summer visits and for the possibility of Autumn talks back in the Methodist church we continue to make the most of what the internet can enable us to do. Keep safe, keep positive, keep in touch.

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www.huntslhs.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 290741

Annual General Meeting and Talk

7.30 p.m., Wednesday 12th May

This issue is published to coincide with the agenda for the annual general meeting. Please sign in early for this part of the evening. We shall endeavour to deal speedily with the business part of the meeting, but please consider if you would be willing to contribute to running the society. Most of the officers and committee are willing to stand again but there *are* vacancies and some members would be happy to stand down to give others a chance. If you are thinking of this it would be helpful if you could contact Philip Saunders, in advance (see email on cover or phone 01954-250421).

After 10 years David Cozens ceases to be vice-chair upon his elevation to presidency of the society. The Committee have nominated Caroline Clifford to fill his place. We have particular need for an administrator for the Goodliff Awards scheme. It is primarily a role for someone to be a point of contact as other members of the committee will help with publicity, so need not be an enormous amount of work but it is critical to operation of the scheme, which is a flagship activity for the society. Further information on request.

Editor's Report

In case we have technical problems Richard Halliday has sent the following report:

There was a slow start to my work as editor as, initially, submissions trickled in and for a time some authors were handicapped by being unable to consult archives. However, following an appeal for material, things picked up remarkably towards the end of 2020 and, provided all that has been proposed comes to fruition, I believe that it should be possible to produce something this year (covering what I feel is an interesting range of topics).

Representatives on other bodies

Something we have dropped from recent AGMs is reports from the society's representatives on other bodies. This year isn't the time to re-start this but it is worth noting the valuable work these members do on our behalf, representing Huntingdonshire local history interests. The following are formally-nominated representatives:

Cambridge Antiquarian Society: David Cozens

Cambridgeshire Records Society: Philip Saunders

County Advisory Group on Archives and Local Studies: Jennifer Liddell

Additionally we have informal links with other organisations including Huntingdonshire Association for Tourism, Cambridgeshire Community Archives Network, Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and Huntingdonshire History Festival.

The AGM will be followed by a talk to be given by Simon Clemmow on 'Establishment & Dissent: Conformity and Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century Huntingdonshire'

Simon is chair of the Hemingfords Local History Society and author of the chapter on Post-Restoration Nonconformity in the book of essays *The Singing Milkmaids* published in 2019 (with support from the society's Goodliff scheme). This is the subject for which Simon was awarded an Advanced Diploma in Local History by Cambridge University, and no-one could dispute that it is a subject deserving further investigation.

David Yeandle's Talk

The printed version of David's recent talk on the Coming of Anglo-Catholicism to St Ives can be obtained from George Skelly, 7 Ley Mary Farm, Windrush, Burford, OX18 4TS. Cheques (£5) should be made payable to *Anglo-Catholic History Society*. Remember to include the return address. David's book, to be published during 2021, is *A Victorian Curate: A Study of the Life and Career of the Rev. Dr John Hunt* (Cambridge, Open Book Publishers).

<https://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/1390>.

Summer Excursions/ Visits

We all know planning ahead is difficult this year, but we have sketched out some village walks and historic church visits for late June – September. Information will be circulated when those plans are a bit firmer. Please tell us what you want in the Autumn. All suggestions welcome.

Betty Britton

If you did not know already, you will be saddened to hear that Betty died at a care home in Suffolk on 16th March. She was a member of the committee 1992-2002 and of the Goodliff sub-committee for a little longer. She had a role as the society's official photographer(!) so we have a very full photographic record of our activities in that period. And she was for many years a regular at meetings and on excursions with her close friend Jayne Paynter. A letter of condolence in the society's name has been sent to her family. We share their sorrow.

The Society's Facebook Page

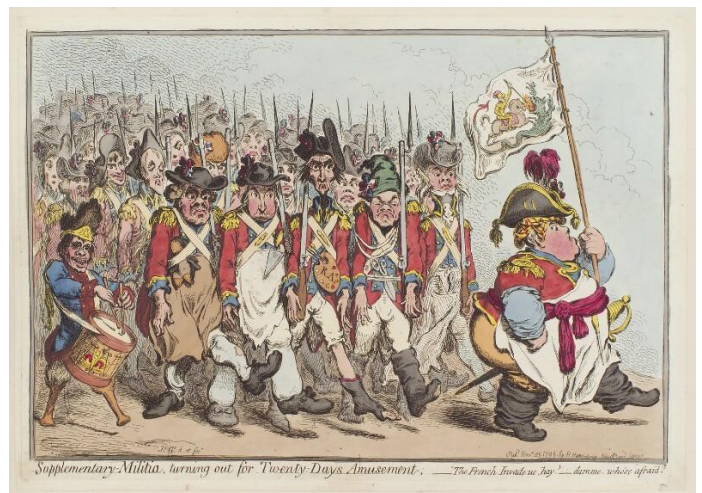
A reminder that the Society has a *Facebook* page, monitored by Lesley, Jean and David and we are keen to hear from you. We post notices about forthcoming meetings and through our online community, we have shared and identified photographs and helped with research. It is easy to write a post in the 'create post' field (views of our page vary, depending on the device you are using) or send us a message. We have nearly 500 followers but let's see if we can make it 1000! Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/Huntingdonshire-Local-History-Society-130678980441446>

Local and Landscape History Research Group

This is an independent group of local historians in the Cambridge Region who are engaged in active research. For the last few years it has been meeting with the support of Cambridgeshire Association for Local History. In normal times it meets at Anglia Ruskin University, but over the last year via *Zoom* and maybe that's how it will continue. A bulletin of activities is also circulated (that on the Hearth Tax was recent circulated). If you would like to join the group, email Evelyn Lord, evelyn.lord@ntlworld.com. There is no subscription.

Huntingdonshire History Festival

Matt Calleway's latest blog on the festival website, <http://www.huntshistoryfest.com>, is on the Huntingdonshire Napoleonic Militia and Volunteers. It's very informative, beautifully-illustrated, has context and makes the link to the 2019 reenactment. Do take a look. The Festival has now been postponed again till next year as it was not thought we could be confident of necessary audiences even if lecturers, re-enactors et al. were willing to turn out.



Cromwell Museum Lectures

Following the immense success of the February lectures by *Zoom* the Museum has a further series during June focusing on the Civil War, Wednesday evenings during June

9 June- Stuart Orme: 'Making a Soldier: Cromwell's First Campaign'

16 June David Flintham: 'Rediscovering London's Lost Civil War Defences'

23 June - Keith Downen: 'With Swords by their Sides: Arms and Armour of the Civil Wars'

30 June Prof Steve Murdoch: 'History v. Heritage: the Mythology of Marston Moor'

See [Museum website](#) for details and booking.

More website recommendations

The published *Calendars* [i.e. summaries] of *Inquisitions Post Mortem* are a fabulously fertile source for landholding in the Middle Ages, but searching them for a single place or person can be a time-consuming process and libraries and record offices rarely nowadays have them on their open access shelves, so Mapping the Medieval Countryside, combined with the *Calendars* on british-history.online is an eye-opener. <http://www.inquisitionspostmortem.ac.uk/>. Try it for your town or village.

Since the last two of our speakers this season come from the Hemingfords it's appropriate to give some publicity to the Hemingfords Local History Society's excellent web site <https://www.hemlocs.co.uk/> that is full of well-researched material. Another local website is The Parish of Fletton, <https://www.flettonparish.co.uk/>, created by our member Sadie McMullan, with a growing number of blogs on particular subjects. Check it out!

Lady Mayors of Godmanchester

Jaime Reynolds of LSE is writing a book about pre-war lady mayors, that in Godmanchester included between 1931 and 1939, Grace Prescott, her sister Bernice Gray and Dorothy Carr (née Hunnybunn). I have some information on these ladies but if you know more I should be interested to hear and to pass on to Dr Reynolds. (Philip Saunders).

Goodliff Awards 2021

We are delighted to announce the following awards for projects this year:

- £440 William Beeke**, for a book on the culverting of the Great Whyte, Ramsey.
- £500 to Charles Beresford and David Yeandle**, for a book on the clergy of St Margaret's church, Hemingford Abbots.
- £500 to the Huntingdon Community Nostalgia Group**, for a book of photographs of Huntingdon selected from those posted on the Group's *Facebook* page.
- £300 to Ramsey Rural Museum**, for teaching packs of copy material on children of the past.
- £250 to Don Hill**, for a booklet on the medieval meeting place of Toseland Hundred.
- £1,200 to Buckden Local History Society** for a permanent exhibition of the Anglo-Saxon village at Buckden Village Hall.
- £423 to Cromwell Museum Trust**, for creation of educational videos for delivery via *Google Classroom* and *Microsoft Teams*.
- £650 to Ramsey Walled Garden Trust**, for a new website.
- £300 to Martyn Smith**, for new equipment for use in connection with his Huntingdonshire Cyclists' Battalion talks.
- £1,500 to Elton parish church**, to relocate and conserve two Anglo-Saxon crosses from the churchyard to within the church.
- £250 to Leighton Bromswold parish church**, for a pamphlet on the architecture and history of the church.

Also, the following Family History Awards:

- £750 to Roger Leivers**, for a book, *Godmanchester during the Second World War*, focusing on its effects on family life.
- £500 to Gill Rayment**, for the first two of a series of illustrated booklets on the shops and trades of Ramsey.
- £250 to Dorothy Ann James**, for continuing research and production of a biographical record of Huntingdonshire convicts sentenced to transportation