

HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

65th Annual General Meeting, 11th May 2022

Annual Report

In the interests of saving time at the AGM I have consolidated reports for the Editor, Goodliff Fund and on Excursions into this one report. It provides an opportunity to recognise some of the activities of the society's committee that the membership at large may be unaware of. – Philip Saunders

Lecture Meetings. Six talks, all by Zoom were held during 2021, the last substituting at short notice for the planned seasonal social evening with the RAF Brampton and Wyton Military Wives' Choir, itself postponed from 2020, but called off by a further resurgence of the virus.

Jan.	Ken Sneath	The Census: Behind the Doors in 19 th -century Godmanchester
Feb.	Tamsin Wimhurst	The David Parr House: an extraordinary Cambridge Home
Mar.	Chris Thatcher	Lessons of the Ermine Street Excavation: reassessing Medieval Huntingdon
Apr.	David Yeandle	Clerical Wars: the Coming of Anglo-Catholicism to 19 th -century St Ives
May	Simon Clemmow	Establishment and Dissent: Conformity and Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century Huntingdonshire
Oct.	David Cozens	The Ramsey Psalter
Dec.	Stuart Orme	Did Cromwell Ban Christmas?

All were well supported, with Tamsin's talk on the David Parr House threatening the maximum allowable under our Zoom subscription. We held one meeting in person, at the Town Hall, as a Goodliff Presentation evening for award winners in 2020 and 2021, for which we invited the winners to bring displays relating to their projects and our president gave an appreciative recollections of Phyllis Goodliff. Despite understandable covid anxiety this proved a great success.

Excursions. In the event, there had been no excursions in 2020, even that to Leighton Bromswold church being cancelled close to the date due to resurgence of Covid-19; so it was especially good to re-commence in August 2021, when 17 visited excavations at what developers have dubbed the Falcon Quarter and be shown round in two groups by archaeologists from Oxford Archaeology East, seeing an important site for medieval and early modern Huntingdon. Later that month 16 members visited the magnificent late medieval Conington church courtesy of the Churches Conservation Trust, in connection with which Philip Saunders gave in advance a talk by Zoom on the Cotton family. Afterwards we Sawtry All Saints hosted tea brought in by Jan Tilden and we saw the famous brass. In September a similar number took up our member Hugh West's invitation to Leighton Bromswold where Hugh gave us a brilliant talk memorably demonstrating how initiative and imagination is rewarded in keeping the roof on ancient structures, most of us continuing to The George at Spaldwick for dinner. Some of us also gathered in advance to look round Steeple Gidding church (also in CCT care), that had been planned for the same day as Conington but cancelled then due to a fall of ceiling plaster. This is a romantic and moving site overlooking the deserted village. Few places in Huntingdonshire make you so conscious of the passage of history than this.

Records of Huntingdonshire

Hopefully all members will have received the latest issue of *Records* by now. Members will have seen that it is considerably larger than usual- this is coincidental. Material seemed to arrive in two waves, a small cluster early on, not enough for immediate publication (and the earliest contributors are to be thanked for their patience), then a much larger bundle markedly later. The editor is also grateful to David Smith and Philip Saunders for their

practical help in the final stages of production. He will welcome enquiries and contributions for the next issue. It will be mutually beneficial to make contact before starting to write an article which should focus, of course, on some aspect of the history of the historic county.

Richard Halliday

Goodliff Award Scheme

Thanks to Kate Hadley's sterling work in encouraging applicants, we received 17 applications and made 14 (7 from individuals, 7 from organisations) awards totalling £7,813, £6,313 from the society's general funds and £1,500 from the funds received from the former Hunts Family History Society for projects of family history interest. Details are in last year's summer *Almanack* (on the website). Some of these have now completed, others are on the point of completion or publication. The Goodliff Committee met 3 times by *Zoom* during the year, to review review progress of projects from previous years and make awards.

14 applications were received in 2022 (6 from individuals, 8 from organisations) and 12 awards, totalling £8,700, £6,250 from general funds and £2,450 from former HFHS monies, have been made. Details are in the Summer *Almanack* to be published and circulated shortly and available at the AGM.

Other bodies with which the society has formal representation (*) or links:

County Advisory Group on Archives and Local Studies (Jennifer Liddell*).

Jennifer kept us informed of gradual re-opening of the Archives search-rooms and of initiatives to better advertise the service to owners of archives and users alike, including making the diversity and location of resources better understood by local historians.

Cambridge Antiquarian Society (David Cozens*). CAS held meetings by *Zoom*. Some of the live sessions were beset by technical difficulties but from October onwards they are available as recordings in the Members area of the society's website using the password *cantabrigia20*. The *Proceedings* of the society, its flagship archaeological publication, appeared as usual and has a report on excavations at Ellington.

Cambridgeshire Records Society (Philip Saunders*). The society published a much improved edition of its best-selling *Cambridge 1574-1904: a portfolio of 12 maps to illustrate the changing plan of the city*. Publication of the keenly-awaited *Huntingdonshire Hearth Tax* volume was further delayed due to difficulties with final checking records at The National Archives but is expected during 2022. Sales of other back-publications continued at a trickle but appropriate volumes are now available via the [Cromwell Museum shop](#).

Cambridgeshire Association for Local History (Philip Saunders). CALH is primarily concerned with the former Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely but often has matters of interest for Huntingdonshire. Information on *Zoom* talks and the more obviously relevant of its numerous emailed circulars was forwarded to HLHS members. Since 2018 it has taken under its wing the Landscape and Local History Research Group, which is a free-to-join group of persons actively involved in research over a wider area producing its own digital *Bulletin* and having its own *Zoom* talks (that are likely to stay that way).

Huntingdon Association for Tourism (Jean Burbidge). Jean kept us up-to-date on difficulties facing local hospitality industry and also on various tourism initiatives

Huntingdonshire History Festival (Caroline Clifford, Stuart Orme, Philip Saunders).

The Festival was again postponed, but will take place this July. Some Lottery Fund moneys for the 2020 Festival were re-directed into other projects lest they be lost altogether.

Additionally the Society's committee was kept updated by Archives staff and museum curators throughout Huntingdonshire on their continuing work during the year.