

HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY

ALMANACK

The Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society New Year 2024



First, let me wish you a very Happy New Year. Inside is our programme for the rest of the Winter and Spring 2024 with more detail than previously circulated. I hope you will find it interesting, and that you will join us for some or all of the events listed.

Philip Saunders, Chairman



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Happy New Year and Subscription Reminder

I hope you have had a restful and enjoyable Christmas. A big thank-you to Liz Davies for her brilliant talk that rescued our (for once) carol-free Christmas meeting and to David, Rosemary and others who helped in their various ways with the Christmas social or contributed to a most enjoyable evening.

Subscriptions were due on 1st January, £10 single, £15 double, indisputably good value. If you have internet banking, you can transfer this money direct to the society's NatWest bank account, **sort code 60-18-17, account number 72654848**, identifying the payment with your surname+2024. Alternatively, please send a cheque to the treasurer David Smith at **16 Dovehouse Close, Godmanchester, HUNTINGDON, PE29 2DY** or pay him (cash or card) at our first physical meeting January. Whichever you do, please renew promptly and make his job a bit easier. Even if, regrettably, you do not wish to renew, please let him know.

If you are a UK taxpayer, he can arrange a Gift Aid declaration, thereby increasing the society's income. Conversely, please tell him too if you have made a declaration in the past but no longer earn enough (£12,570) to pay income tax.

News just in: Our former president Simon Thurley's most recent book, *Palaces of Revolution*, has been awarded the prestigious Royal Historical Society's Samuel Pepys Award for its outstanding contribution to our understanding to the age of Pepys. In view of our programme it seems very appropriate. The book is currently available from [Postscript](#) at £9.99.

Programme Winter/Spring 2024

7.30 p.m., Wednesday 10th January 2024 (by Zoom)

Graeme Clarke, Post-Excavation Project Manager, Oxford Archaeology

Cloth, Coins and Commerce at Anglo-Saxon Buckden

Following metal-detecting finds including Anglo-Saxon coins, Oxford Archaeology in 2019 excavated a site in Luck's Lane, Buckden, and found significant early to middle Anglo-Saxon period remains. The earlier phase of occupation, of the late 6th - early 8th centuries, was characterised by sunken-featured buildings, including a rare 'giant' example. Graeme had been chiefly concerned with the small finds and will be talking about these. They suggest an emphasis on cloth-making by the inhabitants, possibly intended for cross-channel trade. An impressive hall complex succeeded the early settlement, shedding welcome light on estate centres in 8th-9th century Huntingdonshire before the arrival of the Danes.



Zoom link will be circulated to members a few days before the talk.

1.30* p.m., Thursday 25th January [N.B. not 2.30, as in Autumn Almanack]

Afternoon visit to Peterborough Museum for presentation on Fengate Archaeological Archive, with workshop on Osteoarchaeology.

When Peterborough was identified as a new town, few foresaw the importance of the archaeology or its impact not just on our understanding of the locality in the Roman era but during prehistory. That was more than 50 years ago, since when the archive of finds, many immensely important, has grown and grown. A major project led by Jason Cumberworth is now to put that archive in better order, to make it more accessible for display and research. A

presentation on this constitutes the first part of the afternoon. After a tea break Jay will give us a workshop on osteoarchaeology and issues of dealing with archaeological human remains.

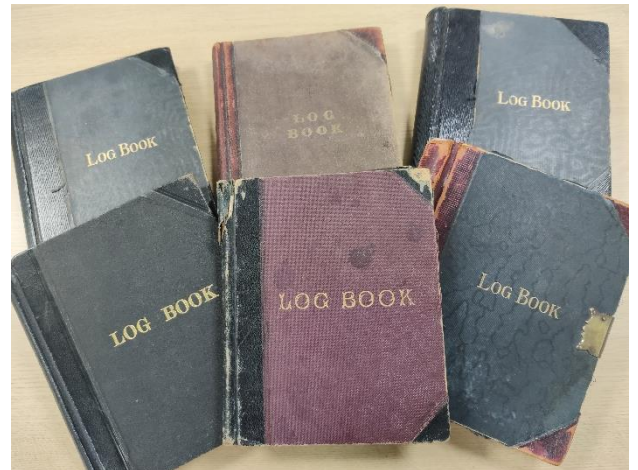
This is a restricted numbers visit – booking essential. Please book by emailing David Smith, info@huntslhs.org.uk or phoning him on 01480-350127 by Monday 22nd January. There is a charge of £10.00, which can be paid on the day (cash or card), or pay by direct transfer (details above under Subscriptions) identifying your payment as Pboro Mus + your surname).

See the museum's website for how to get there. <https://peterboroughmuseum.org.uk/plan-your-visit>. The museum has one disabled parking space that can be booked. You might also consider going early and using the museum café for lunch. Or making a day of it, combining with a visit to the cathedral in the morning where the Katherine of Aragon festival will be in full flow: <https://www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/katharine.aspx> We expect to finish at 4.00.

Tuesday 13th February (by Zoom)

Hannah Bithel-Vaughan, Collections Archivist, Cambs. Archives Service: *Educating Huntingdonshire: School Records for the Local Historian*

Schools are a cornerstone of local communities and their records are an underestimated resource for local history. Huntingdonshire Archives has recently saved records from schools that have closed permanently. These records provide a snapshot of the lives of the local young people, as well as showing how the school impacted the local community



Zoom link will be circulated to members a few days before the talk.

10.50 for 11.00 a.m., Wednesday 6th March

Visit to the Pepys and Old Libraries, Magdalene College, Cambridge

Pepys the diarist and naval secretary, born in Brampton in 1633, was also a bibliophile, a collector of medieval manuscripts and early printed books, of scientific and naval books, of ballads and plays. In 1703 he bequeathed this great collection, including also his diaries (not deciphered till 1825) to the universities of Cambridge or Oxford, with first refusal to his old college of Magdalene. Fortunately they accepted gratefully, housing it in a recently-built extension, and it has become a pillar of its reputation. This will be a guided visit by Dr Jane Hughes, Pepys Librarian, and will also include a visit to the Old Library that contains the Ferrar Papers, a collection with even stronger Huntingdonshire associations.

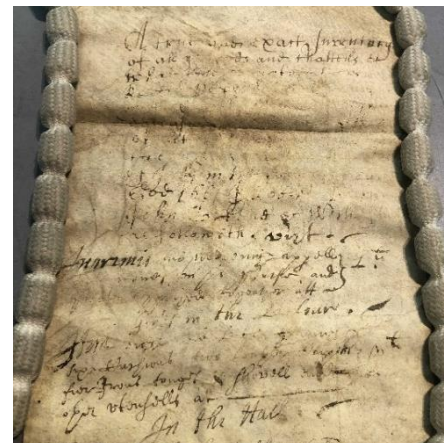
This is a restricted numbers visit – booking essential. Please book by emailing David Smith, info@huntslhs.org.uk or phoning him on 01480-350127 by Friday 1st March. There is a charge of £10.00, which can be paid on the day (cash or card), or pay by direct transfer (details above under Subscriptions) identifying your payment as Pepys + your surname). The library is on the first floor. Regrettably, there is no lift.

As an optional extension to the day Philip Saunders will lead at 2.00 p.m. a **tour of Castle End Cambridge**, including St Peter's and St Giles' churches, the site of Roman Cambridge and the Castle (dependent on weather), much less known than the city centre. Please indicate when you book if you want to do this too and if you would like to have lunch at [The Punter](#) in Northampton Street (where we could book a table) in between. Early booking advised.

Wednesday 13th March, Huntingdon Methodist Church

Ken Sneath: *Robert Pepys and his house at Brampton: A newly discovered document.*

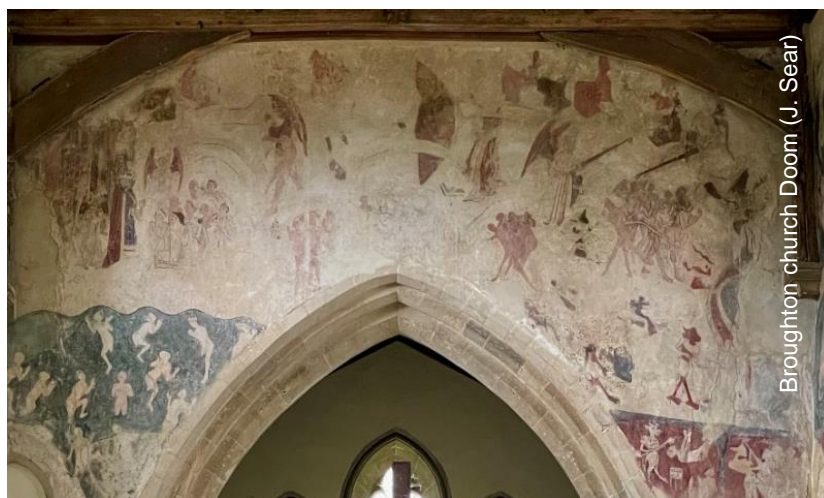
Work on Pepys House (that belonged to the diarist's uncle) has stimulated some research into its former owner and the transcription of his particularly difficult probate inventory. A new Pepys document dragged into the public domain calls for celebration. From his expert knowledge of this type of source Ken will examine what it tells us about Mr Pepys and the people of his status in 17th-century Huntingdonshire.



Wednesday 10th April, Huntingdon Methodist Church

Joanne Sear: *Benefitting the Soul – Life, Religion and the Church in Late Medieval Huntingdonshire*

Studies have suggested that during the Henrician Reformation, the people of Lincoln Diocese, including the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon, held firmly to the 'old Faith', and were reluctant supporters of the new form of Christianity. This talk surveys religion in late medieval society and examines the evidence, suggesting Huntingdonshire people truly embraced Catholicism.



Wednesday 8th May (provisional date), venue to be announced

Annual General Meeting with a short talk &/or display

Details to be circulated.

Friday 7th - Sunday 9th June

Wiltshire Weekend staying at Delta Hotels (Marriott), Swindon

An update about this excellent value weekend visit, being organised by Heather McLoone and Jean Burbidge, with something for all historical tastes, is being circulated separately. A revised itinerary now takes in Hughenden *en route* but omits Stourhead but will be finalised after Heather and Jean have done an exploratory trip in March. There are still some places, but be quick! Contact Heather, heatherymclloone@gmail.com, for more information.

Goodliff Awards 2024

Do you need help to complete a local history project? You can apply to our **Goodliff Award Scheme**. We provide funding to individuals, societies, schools and groups who need support. Over the past 25 years, the Society has contributed £150,000 to over 250 projects. Funding may be given towards publication costs for books, leaflets or display panels; the purchase of equipment; conservation or purchase of artefacts or documents etc.

For more information and to find an application form, visit the Goodliff Awards section of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society website www.huntslhs.org.uk or email goodliff.awards@gmail.com The deadline for receipt of applications is 31st March.