

HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY

ALMANACK

Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society

AGM & Summer Excursions 2026



Elton Hall

Inside you will find the programme of this summer's society visits. We hope you will find them of interest and join us on some of them. Please also let us know what you think. Suggestions of places to visit are always welcome.

*Philip Saunders
Chairman*

Annual General Meeting

7.30 p.m, Wednesday 13th May, Huntingdon Methodist Church

You should already have received papers – please read them. We shall try to get through the business part of the meeting quickly, but it isn't just a constitutional nicety, and shall also have an excursions preview. Please consider if you would be willing to help run the society. All the committee are willing to stand again but we have vacancies. Meetings, around four a year, are usually held on *Zoom*. If you are thinking of volunteering it would be helpful if you could contact Philip Saunders, in advance (phone 01954-250421 or email paksaunders@talk21.com).

After the AGM, member **Susan Mortlock-Rajasinghe** will talk about researching and writing the biographies of her **Godmanchester** parents, **Billy Mortlock** and **Rose Allen** and will have copies to purchase.



Excursions

Thursday 21st May

An afternoon stroll around Brampton

Long-term resident Michael Measures will guide us along the High Street, pointing out buildings of interest, arriving at the parish church where he will hand over to Julie Barker, who will no doubt tell us something of the notable local evangelical, Olivia Bernard Sparrow (b.1775) on whom she is expert. The church has much to surprise and admire: the 'best misericords in the county' (*Pevsner*); also monuments to Pepys' sister Paulina erected by the diarist, a fabulous one to Sir Robert Bernard (1679), to OBS and children, extraordinary glass memorialising the Great War, and outside, memorials to James Alexander, the 5th earl of Sandwich's servant, 'a native of Africa', and his son who fought at Trafalgar.



Tea and coffee (and toilets) available at the Black Bull.

Cost: No charge, but donations to church very welcome.

Meet 2.00 p.m. at Brampton Green (some parking there but much more at Memorial Centre, Thrapston Road, 10 mins. walk away but closer to where we finish).

Book by Sunday 17th May.

Thursday 11th June

Private visit to Elton Hall and Gardens; Elton Parish Church

An hour's guided tour of the stunning Hall interior, containing many Old Masters, home of the Proby family since 1660, finishing in the award-winning gardens where we can look around 'at leisure' till approx. 1.00 pm before the public arrive. Regrettably the hall is not accessible with mobility aids.



If you want lunch at the garden centre café or the Black Horse nearby it would be wise to book as both are very popular.

We suggest driving on to the Black Horse car park before going across the road to Elton Church (approx. 1270-1500) for a tour with Ashley, one of our members, and Revd. Ian Browne a local historian **at 2.30 p.m.** to look at the Saxon crosses (relocated with Goodliff support) and the fine Burne-Jones and William Morris-workshop stained glass windows plus tea and cake. The church has no toilets, but the Black Horse will let us use theirs.

Meet 11.00 am at Bosworth's Garden Centre next door just off the A605 where there are toilets and parking and where the Hall guide will meet us.

Cost: Elton Hall £17.50; plus donations to church; Book by Wednesday 3rd June.

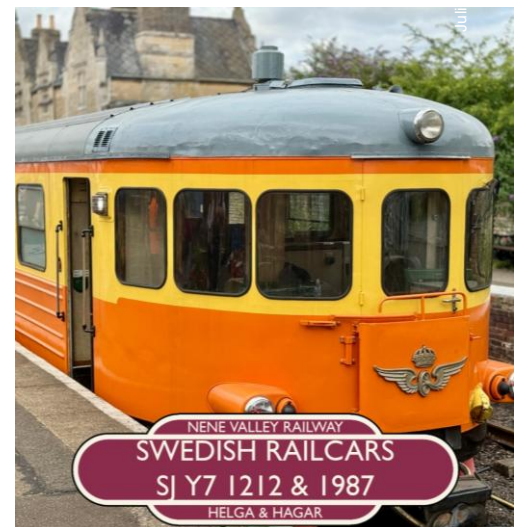
Wednesday 15th July

Tour of Nene Valley Railway engine shed, Wansford

As we learned in April, the NVR has a wonderful collection of locomotives from UK and continental Europe and the line was an important one. This visit will be followed by scenic trip on railway (Swedish diesel railcar), departing 1300, returning 1543. Lunches at Wansford Refreshment Room after tour and/or light refreshments on board train.

Meet Wansford Station, Stibbington, PE8 6LR, at 11.15 a.m. for 11.30 tour.

Cost: £13.00 Book by Wednesday 8th July.



Thursday 13th August

National Horseracing Museum Newmarket (guided tour, possibly by Michael Sutherill, our speaker in January). The museum is situated in the centre of Newmarket, England in King Charles II's former palace and stable yard and displays social history, science and art collections relating to thoroughbred horseracing and breeding from the 17th century to the present day.

We are currently exploring possibility of optional visit to St Nicholas' Chapel, Landwade late morning. Further information nearer the time.

Meet 2.00 p.m. at Museum entrance, Palace Street (south off High Street at east end, beyond TK-Max). NB There is no car parking at Museum. We suggest All Saints public car park in Rous Road, CB8 8ET, the next turning east off High Street (£1.50 for 3 hours, £3.00 all day). The museum has a restaurant. Members may want to arrive early for lunch and/or stay afterwards for tea).

Cost: £16.00 (includes guide). Book by Wednesday 5th August.



Some NHRM exhibits:

Pointer by Stubbs (not just horses!); The Goodwood Cup; Cartoon by Griffiths-Buchanan



Thursday 10th September

A History-oriented Walk around the Offords

The twin villages of Offord Darcy and Offord Cluny have several substantial buildings of interest packed into a small area, including a former charity school, two manor houses and a former mill by the riverside. The two medieval churches (with their twin towers) have many interesting features. The redundant St Peters is part-Norman and has some of best brasses in region, the continuing All Saints has Jacobean and later fittings, one of more recent being a memorial window for RAF 35 Squadron (Pathfinders), link to final visit of the season.



Meet 2.00 pm at village hall car park (west side of High Street, Offord Cluny)

Tea and cake in village hall

Cost: £10.00 (proceeds in aid of All Saints church)

Book by Wednesday 2nd September



Wednesday 21st October

RAF Wyton Heritage Centre

The Heritage Centre houses the **RAF Wyton Timeline** dealing with the history of the base since 1916, the **Photo Reconnaissance Collection** formerly at RAF Brampton and the **Pathfinder Collection** assembling in one place the large contribution to military aviation history which this area has had, and conversely the effect the RAF has had on the area.

Meet 2.00 pm at Wyton.

Cost: No charge. Donations welcome. N.B. Early booking for security reasons.

Book by Thursday 1st October, specifying name, nationality (more detail will be required for non-UK nationals), date of birth and vehicle details (make, model, colour, reg. no.).



Excursion Notes

- Booking is essential, even for free events. Preferably, use the accompanying form and pay in advance by direct transfer or cheque. Otherwise, email David Smith info@huntslhs.org.uk or phone 01480-350127 and have correct money ready to pay on the day.
- If you need a lift please let us know and we will try and arrange one.
- Note especially the 'Book By' deadline, usually Wednesday of previous week. Early booking is helpful. However do contact us if you are able to come at the last minute. Where possible we will accept you.
- Non-member guests of members welcome, as also other non-members, but for restricted number visits we give priority to members. If this is a problem, the solution may be to join.
- The Society undertakes to make arrangements for the excursions but cannot accept liability for any mishap or loss connected with them.

Illustrations copyright of the venues in question, i.e. from their websites, except of Susan Mortlock-Rajasinghe (supplied by her) and of Brampton Church Tower (Capturing Cambridge).