

The Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society Autumn 2026



The Launch of H.M.S. Lenox 1678, the King, his mistress (the ship named for their son) and Samuel Pepys in attendance in the adjacent barge (David Davies)

Inside is our programme for Autumn 2026 to Early 2027, some online, some face-to-face. We hope you will find it interesting, and that you will join us for some or all of them

Philip Saunders, Chairman



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Lectures, etc., Programme October 2026 – May 2027

In timings and venues we continue the mixed theme, so pay attention to when and where things are taking place, enter them in your diary, and leave home or work in good time. We are sticking to *Zoom* for the talks in January and February, complemented with some daytime activities. A further *Almanack* is planned for January with more information on these and on the March to May meetings. Unless otherwise specified, meetings start at 7.30 p.m. There is some parking at the church. For Town Hall there is disabled parking only on Market Hill (approach via High Street from south). For both venues please use public car park at Malting Close PE29 3AR if you can and remember the Assembly Room at the Town Hall is on first floor with competition for the lift, and the front door is closed once we start, so allow a few more minutes.

Wednesday 7th October, Huntingdon Methodist Church

Jim Blackwood: *The Pathfinder Force: History and Legacy*



Jim has almost 20 years' connection with the Pathfinder Museum, seven of them at RAF Wyton as Officer-in-Command and since retirement as a regular volunteer, meeting many veterans over those years and building up an unrivalled knowledge of the Force, in particular of the local No.8 Group. This will be an invaluable briefing for those going on the visits to the Wyton Heritage Centre on 21st and 28th October (all now fully booked) but even if you are not going there is sure to be of interest. The Pathfinders is perhaps the contribution to the war effort for which Huntingdon is best known.

Tuesday 17th November, Huntingdon Town Hall

Goodliff Awards Presentation Evening

Once again, an amazing variety of projects (listed in May's AGM papers), popular and academic, spanning many centuries, types of history, covering the length and breadth of Huntingdonshire. Come to hear about and see the successful projects and congratulate the successful applicants. Refreshments.

Our President, Julie Montagu, Countess of Sandwich, will present the awards. No doubt too Julie (*right, at Mapperton with her predecessor Alberta's House of Worth frock*) will give us a short update on her projects since we last saw her.



Afterwards Dr David Davies, naval historian whose 2009 book *Pepys's Navy* was awarded the [Samuel Pepys award](#) and Latham medal, will give us a talk entitled :

Samuel Pepys and Charles II's Navy

It is as well to remember that the naval associations of the Montagu family did not begin with the 4th Earl as Lord of the Admiralty and that it was a naval general that Edward Montagu made his mark during the Commonwealth, managing nevertheless to trim his sails to the winds of the royalist cause and be on hand to receive the thanks of the returning King Charles II in the form of the earldom of Sandwich. A lesser beneficiary was Montagu's faithful servant and distant relative, Samuel Pepys, made Clerk of the Acts in the Navy Office, a department that became his life's work as is well-recorded in his diary (favourably) and the public records. But his legacy for the royal navy is not an easy one to assess. Expect Dr Davies to explain some of the complications.



Thursday 17th December, Huntingdon Town Hall

Christmas Musical Evening and Social with *Huntingdon Rotary Voices*



This year, thanks to member Peter Downes, we are delighted to host well-regarded local group from *Huntingdon Rotary* under musical direction of Chris Shannon. To give them a break **Liz Davies** will also give us a short talk on **Christmas in St Neots in the past**. Offers of further short readings by members also welcome.

Following the performance there will be the opportunity to get to know one another better over a glass with some Christmas fare..Non-members welcome.

We are making a charge of £10.00 principally to cover costs of food, drink and donation to support *Rotary's* fund for improving music education. For catering purposes, please let David Smith (email: info@huntslhs.org.uk; 01480-350127) know by Sunday 13th December that you are coming or return the tear-off slip at end of this newsletter.



Subscriptions

New subscriptions during Autumn 2026 cover all 2027. Renewals are due on 1st January, £10 single, £15 double, indisputably good value. Please renew promptly through our treasurer, David Smith (info@huntslhs.org.uk). If you are a UK taxpayer, he can arrange a Gift Aid declaration, thereby increasing the society's income. Tell him too if you have made a declaration in the past but no longer earn enough (£12,570) to pay income tax.

Fuller Information about January-May talks will be published in the New Year 2027 issue of this newsletter, but put these in your diary now.

Wednesday 13th January 2027 (by Zoom)

Karen of Nene Valley Trust: *The Longthorpe Tower Wallpaintings*

11.00 a.m., Thursday 21st January

Morning visit with guided introduction to the Whipple Museum of Science, Cambridge University

Thursday 13th February (by Zoom)

Ian Browne: *All Saints Elton: an exceptional Huntingdonshire church*

2.30 p.m., Thursday 25th February (subject to confirmation)

Visit to the Cambridgeshire Archives, Ely, to see a selection of documents kept there, with tour of repository and archives conservation studio.

Wednesday 10th March, Huntingdon Methodist Church

Eleanor Whitehead: *The Chivers story in Huntingdon*

Wednesday 14th April (provisional date), Huntingdon Methodist Church

Speaker and subject to be announced.

Wednesday 12th May (provisional date), Huntingdon Methodist Church

Annual General Meeting with a short talk &/or display

Christmas Musical Evening – reply slip

Either:

(Print and) return this slip to the treasurer, David Smith, 16 Dovehouse Close, Godmanchester, HUNTINGDON, PE29 2DY (01480-350127)

I shall be coming to the musical evening on 17th December and enclose a cheque payable to *Huntingdonshire Local History Society* for £.....forperson(s) at £10.00 per person.

No tickets will be issued but an attendance list will be kept at the door.

Name.....

Telephone number or address.....

Or, 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+*Social*. If you do this please email the treasurer David Smith (info@huntslhs.org.uk) so we know how many to cater for and he expects to find the payment in the society's account. **You may like to pay your 2027 subscription at the same time..**

Or pay on the door. Please have exact cash or cheque ready, but you must email or phone (01480-350127) David Smith so we know how many to expect.

Replies please by Sunday 13th December.