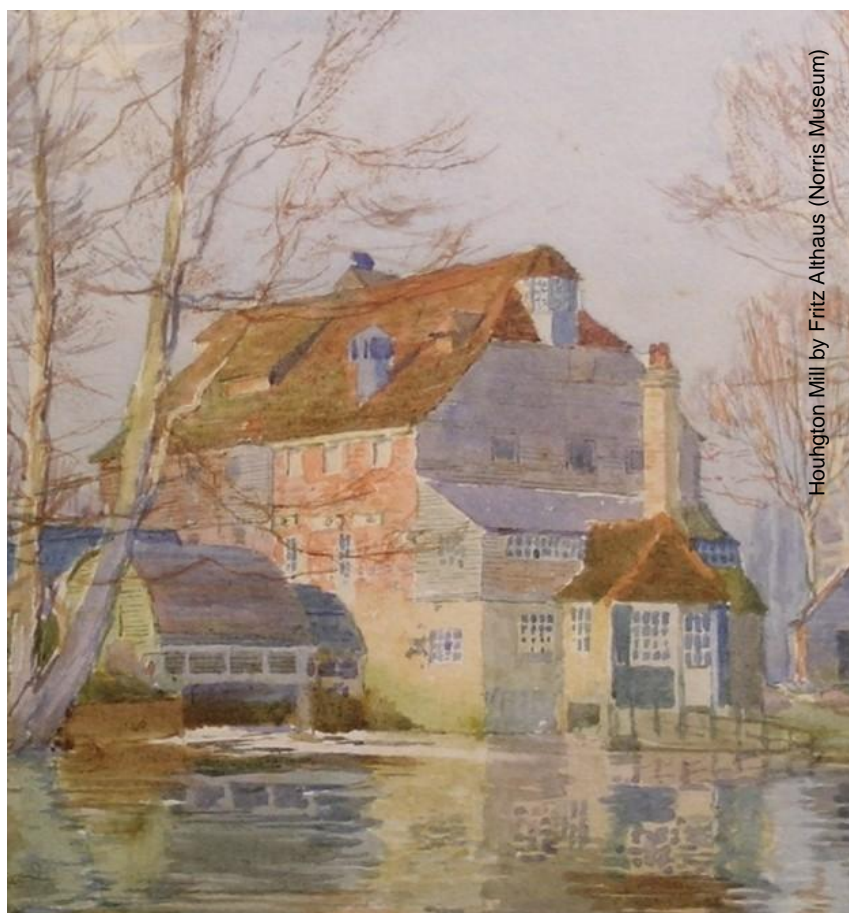


HUNTINGDONSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY

# ALMANACK

## Newsletter of the Huntingdonshire Local History Society

### New Year 2025



*First, let me wish you a very Happy New Year. Inside is our programme for the rest of the Winter and Spring 2025 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 has been given to *Tapestry Singers* for their superb performance for our social. Thanks are also due to David, Rosemary, Caroline and Nick for organising the refreshments and to Alan, Peter and others who helped in various ways with the event or contributed to a most enjoyable evening. I hope *Christmas Day in the Workhouse* and *the Tale of the Fourth Wise Man* gave food for seasonal reflection. It was good, too, to meet some representatives of other local history societies from around the District. Some feedback suggests the church now has several advantages over the Town Hall for this event; please do let us know what you think.

Subscriptions were due on 1<sup>st</sup> 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, **Huntingdonshire Local History Society, sort code 60-18-17, account number 72654848**, identifying the payment with your surname+2025. Alternatively, please send a cheque to the treasurer David Smith at **16 Dovehouse Close, Godmanchester, HUNTINGDON, PE29 2DY**. However you pay, please renew promptly and make his job a bit easier. Even if, regretfully, 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.

## Programme Winter/Spring 2025

**7.30 p.m., Wednesday 8th January 2025 (by Zoom)**

### **John Broad, Affiliated Researcher, Cambridge Group for the Study of Population: *Reading and Writing in 18th-century Huntingdonshire***

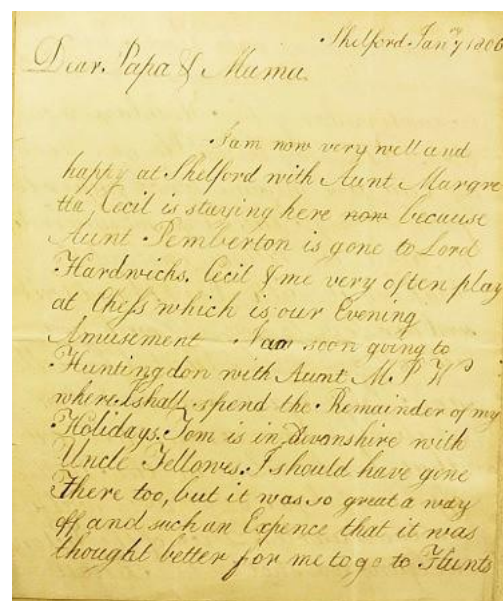
John Broad is a specialist in population history, especially of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but this will not be a dry statistical presentation as John's interests range widely, especially into English rural society, with a particular focus recently on village housing and education. He is also editor of a superb edition of the [visitation returns of Bishop William Wake](#) and will be using this information in his presentation.

Zoom link will be circulated to members shortly before the talk. If you haven't attended a Zoom talk before, make this a first for achievements in 2025.

**11.00 a.m., Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January**

### **Morning visit to Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology**

This is a limited numbers visit that was advertised to members before Christmas. All places have now been taken. Our apologies if you would have liked to have come but have missed out. Please let us know if you fall into this category and we will consider a repeat if there are sufficient numbers.



An early 19<sup>th</sup>-century boy's writing, perhaps a cut above what Dr Broad will focus on. Malcolm Wale writes from Winchester about a visit to Huntingdon (Cams. Archives R96/109)

**7.30 p.m., Thursday 13th February (by Zoom)**

**Paul Everson, Hon. Lecturer, Keele University:  
*Antiquarians, Architects and Archaeologists:  
rediscoverers of early stone sculpture in  
Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire***

Paul Everson is joint author with David Stocker of the latest county volume to appear in this monumental project to create a comprehensive record of all surviving Anglo-Saxon decorative stonework. It adds to his impressive list of work on medieval archaeology of the east midlands. His talk will focus on the process, how they have built on the work of many predecessors, and tell of some discoveries along the way.



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

**2.30 p.m., Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February**

**Visit to the Huntingdonshire Archives to see a selection of documents from the estate archive of the Dukes of Manchester, of Kimbolton Castle, with an introductory talk by Esther Bellamy, Collections Archivist**

The 'Manchester Collection' was in 1948 as good as the foundation collection for Huntingdonshire Record Office (now Huntingdonshire Archives). It is a wonderful resource for much of the former county, of court rolls, deeds, accounts, surveys, beautiful estate maps and some political papers. New cataloguing, in part made possible with a Goodliff Award, is unlocking this archive, with plenty of new discoveries. Whether you are looking for new resources for research or just want to know what documentary record exists there will be something for you. A display with introduction, followed by tea and biscuits.



There is no charge for this, but as numbers are limited we do need to know who is coming, so please book by emailing David Smith ([info@huntslhs.org.uk](mailto:info@huntslhs.org.uk)) or phoning 01480-350127 by Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February.

**7.30 p.m., Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March, Huntingdon Methodist Church**

**Bridget Flanagan and Keith Grimwade: *Brampton to St Ives – identifying the watermilling landscape along the Great Ouse***

The watermills on this stretch of the river in Huntingdonshire were the most valuable nationally in the Domesday survey. Bridget Flanagan and Keith Grimwade chart the development of these mills and explain how the millers engineered and exploited the river to their own economic advantage and profit. The activity of the watermills left a lasting impact on the landscape, and these features have hitherto not been fully appreciated.



**7.30 p.m., Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April, Huntingdon Methodist Church**

**Chris Bates: Kimbolton Airfield and the 379<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group**

After many years of research and exploring the airfield Chris Bates, a former teacher at Kimbolton School now undertaking PhD research into earlier American history, will talk to us about the history of the American 379th Bombardment Group based at Kimbolton 1943-45. It is a story of grand strategy, technology, individual sacrifice and heroism.



**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May (provisional date), venue to be announced**

***Annual General Meeting with a short talk &/or display***

Details to be circulated with the summer excursions *Almanack*. We are hoping to bring a high-profile speaker but have not managed to fully arrange in time for this publication.

***Summer Excursions 2025***

Unfortunately we have had to postpone plans for the projected weekend visit to the Isle of Man till 2026, so unless someone comes forward with another proposal, and willingness to take on the organisation, it is unlikely we shall have a weekend excursion this year. But planning with other visits is well ahead and will include Godmanchester church & ice house (28 May) and Great Staughton church & Place House grounds (probably 16 or 17 July). Further information will be circulated and published on the website as it becomes firm, and will appear in the next issue of this newsletter at the start of May. Ideas of places to visit and offers to help with organisation are always welcome.

***Goodliff Awards 2025***

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](http://www.huntslhs.org.uk) or email [goodliff.awards@gmail.com](mailto:goodliff.awards@gmail.com) The deadline for receipt of applications is 31st March.

***Yet more awards:*** Twelve months ago we visited Peterborough Museum to see its 'Archaeological Archive Enhancement Project'. We are delighted to learn the project has been awarded the Society for Museum Archaeology's Award for Excellence 2024 and have sent our congratulations. And Northborough Church, which we visited in 2023 has recently received a grant of £20k for urgent repairs (see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c2exrg707yeo>).

The second episode of the next BBC series of *Digging For Britain* features the Chester House Estate dig we saw there last summer. It is believed to be on at 8.00 p.m. on 8<sup>th</sup> January. As that clashes with our talk we suggest you watch on *iPlayer*.