

MINUTES OF THE 63rd MEETING OF AYNHO HISTORY SOCIETY HELD AT AYNHO VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY 27th NOVEMBER 2013

Present: - Rupert Clark - Chairman & Treasurer

1. Chairman's Report

Rupert Clark

The society hosted its first double-header lecture. Two Cambridge graduates, both now professional historians were delighted to speak to a full hall comprising members of the society, villagers, members of other local groups and schools.

Firstly, George Goodwin spoke on "Before the White Queen". George introduced the concept of the "office" of King and the present incumbent, a physical King. During the Wars of the Roses a cast including Henry VI, Edward IV, Warwick the Kingmaker, Richard of York and the Dukes of Exeter, Gloucester and Somerset and played their part in an ever changing political landscape. Including the Nevilles and Margaret of Anjou: power and influence see-sawed from one alliance of these characters to another. In turn each being crucial to who held the twin seats of power. The result was years of upheaval throughout England and Wales. The execution of losing aristocracy was a symbol of the bitterness of this civil war. Previously, in the Hundred Years war, knights would be ransomed for fortunes but not now. No better example of the brutality exists than at Towton in 1461.

For those who bought George's book "Fatal Colours" I need write no more. For those who have not read it, I urge you to, as this rather forgotten period of our history is now very much in vogue.

In contrast, Julian Humphrys, Development Director of the Battlefield Trust encouraged us to visit and support the protection of Britain's battlefields. There 30 odd battlefields within 30 miles of Aynho. Edgcote is our local WoR site, a beautiful spot and still to be fully understood from a military and archaeological point of view.

As we start four years of remembering the First World War, bar the attacks by sea and air on the NE coast of England, the war was fought overseas. Julian emphasised that the Trust concentrates on what happened in this country, under our feet. A thought provoking discussion followed on why we should remember what happened and why we might commemorate the fallen. Britain was forged by these home-fought battles just as much as those fought "on a foreign field".

For those who would like to walk in the footsteps of the soldiers I can personally recommend Julian's site walks. He is also a regular speaker at Banbury museum explaining Edgcote and the local English Civil War actions, so do keep an eye out for these. The Trust also produces a number of publications, all details at www.battlefieldstrust.com

Further thanks to Paul Duncanson for helping to arrange the speakers and event and also to Coles Bookstore from Bicester for bringing their wares and organising the book signing. Stratford Armouries Museum sent their apologies for absents due to illness.

A foot note, thank you to Gill Phillips for the donation of an "Aynhoe" brick to the archive

Future Events

Feb-26 Nothing much happened in Bicester.....

Pete Chivers

Mar-26 Lord Nuffield of Cowley

Bob Harris