



# Alresford Historical & Literary Society

Newsletter 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026

**Next Meeting's Talk: Wed 17<sup>th</sup> June 2026, 7.30 pm in The Methodist Church  
Nick French will give a talk entitled: 'Shackleton's Antarctic Journeys'.**

The March 2022 discovery of Shackleton's vessel "Endurance" 3000 metres below the surface of the Weddell Sea re-kindled interest in this remarkable explorer. Although his life at home and as an explorer was not entirely successful, he was able to demonstrate huge powers of exploration leadership, enabling his team to survive highly adverse circumstances. These are revealed as we follow his remarkable Antarctic journeys on Nimrod and Endurance [CA].



**Some comments on our May meeting's talk by Professor Alice Hunt entitled:  
*Republic: Britain's Revolutionary Decade, 1649-1660***

Following the execution of Charles I in 1649, The English Protectorate (1653-1659), which started when Oliver Cromwell assumed power, is sometimes viewed as dull and Puritan. Yet Alice explained it was also a period of creativity in the Arts and Sciences with, for John Milton a key figure in the former and Robert Boyle in the latter. Meanwhile our local poet, George Wither, was busy spinning away at his flowery verse while gazing over our pond, his Silver Lake.



Oliver Cromwell

The period fizzled out, arguably because Cromwell didn't have a future plan (typical politician!). The times were complicated and hard to characterise, but Alice Hunt's detailed analysis based on research for her recently published book brought some much-needed clarity.[MD]

**Peter Pooley's Service of Thanksgiving held in St John's on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May**

This event which filled St John's was in memory of our President who died on 15<sup>th</sup> April. We were treated to eulogies by his family, recalling happy and amusing memories. On many occasions the church was filled with laughter. We will all miss his warmth, intellect and mischievous sense of humour. We send our condolences and love to his wife Janet. [MD]

Mike Dickens, Hon Secretary [secretary@alresfordhistandlit.co.uk](mailto:secretary@alresfordhistandlit.co.uk)