

Forty Years On – by David Seaton

As read to the group on Tuesday 2nd December 2025

Hunts Writers was initiated in 1985 by founder member Alan Cross although the group was then known as Huntingdonshire Writers' Group. The group's inception heralded the beginning of an era of writing excellence and development that has stood the test of time. Writers have come and gone, but continuity of the group's core ideals have carried the group through years of success and setbacks in a changing world. So much so, tonight marks the group's 40th Christmas. Thus, I would like to commemorate this milestone with a group photo which I would like to take later.

I joined the group in 1994 and, unfortunately, I'm not able to share any memories of that first group Christmas, but I am able to share some memories of what was in the news at the time.

How many here tonight remember when on Wednesday December 4th 1985, Queen Elizabeth, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and all living former UK prime ministers gathered for an historic official photograph at 10 Downing Street. I certainly don't remember, but it's an interesting fact.

Hunts Writers, of course, meet on the first Tuesday of every month, a tradition that has also stood the test of time. Unfortunately, I am unable to confirm that the group met on Tuesday 3rd December 1985, but I can confirm that on that particular night, Peterborough United were preparing for a second-round home FA Cup tie against Bath City on Saturday 7th December 1985. And although Posh went on to win the game 1-0, Posh were lying 16th in the fourth tier with Posh fans fearing a Christmas of footballing woe.

Amazingly, as we mark our 40th Christmas, Peterborough United are again preparing for a second-round home FA Cup tie but with Barnsley providing the opposition this coming Saturday. As for the league, Posh are again threatened by the prospect of relegation, but unlike the Christmas of 1985, Posh are in the third tier and looking to move away from the relegation zone following encouraging displays since Luke Williams replaced Darren Ferguson as manager. And unlike that night on 3rd December 1985, Posh are in action tonight and I can report that the latest score against Swindon in the 2nd round of the Virtue Cup is Swindon 0 Posh 0. Posh, of course, have won the trophy for the last two seasons.

In 1995, the writers' group celebrated its 10th anniversary and as part of the celebrations, I wrote a short article for the Inkpot, a group magazine edited by former member Andi Van-Kerro. As part of the report, I wrote, and I quote, 'Meetings can be serious and at times seem quite daunting, but underneath there is a unique friendliness. After a few meetings this soon becomes evident. And it doesn't matter if you're introverted or extroverted. If you have plenty to say or indeed nothing to say, you are welcome. The only main requirement is that you enjoy writing and listening to others.' End of quote.

Thirty years on from that article, I'm sure everyone will agree that unique friendliness among members still exists today. And, for me, it is still an honour and a joy to be a part of such a supportive group. So, thank you everyone and a merry Christmas to you all.

Score Update: Swindon 1 Posh 0 Full Time

