

The Researcher

Newsletter of the
West Sussex Archives Society
The Friends of
West Sussex Record Office



July 2012

No. 78

County Archivist Report

The past few months, as always it seems these days, have been full of activity and certainly leave me with no shortage of material for this report.

Visitors will have noticed the staff car park is rarely free of contractors vans. The fact that the building is now over 20 years old has meant that it is now the appointed time for a range of scheduled refurbishment and remedial work. The major piece of work this last quarter has been the replacement of lighting throughout the office including the strongrooms. This occupied several weeks but fortunately without significant interruption to our normal pattern of working and public service.

The search room has in fact been very busy over the Spring and early Summer months. Indeed, our statistics show that



The 13th Irish Pipers march along the promenade at Bognor - from the Frank L'Alouette Collection, see detail over page

Forthcoming Events

Events 2012

August 20th - Wiston House Visit is now **FULLY SUBSCRIBED**

September 9th - Chantonbury Ring Research with Janet Pennington

September 16/17th MAP SALE at WSRO

September 29th - Arundel Castle Event

October 13th - Conference, Horsham - Vernacular Architecture

November 10th - Poor Law Records Workshop

December 8th - Christmas get together

Any queries about this newsletter or questions for West Sussex Archives Society please email

wsascom@btinternet.com

annual visitor numbers rose in 2011-12, from 9723 to 10386. We have latterly sought in various ways to encourage people to visit, to explore our collections and make use of our expertise. County Record Offices generally are reporting falling visitor numbers, usually attributed to the increased provision of source material online, so it is satisfying that here our policy is working. The challenge of course is to sustain it and that implies continuing to think creatively and implement new ideas.

To that end, we are being helped significantly by our very productive working relationship with colleagues in Communications & Marketing. If you visit the County Council's website you will now see the new Record Office logo adorning various advertisements for our goods and services. And if you log onto the WSRO website you can read about two of our new joint initiatives both designed to spread awareness and boost income generation. Caroline mentioned these in the Spring Newsletter. Research and Stay is a venture with local hotels offering an accommodation and research package. Whilst a new online picture gallery provides a means of buying images in a range of formats from framed prints & canvases to jigsaws and mugs. We will be constantly adding to the number of images available. I mention this again as you may find some ideas there for birthday and Christmas presents.

Outreach is critical to the promotion of the office and we are in the midst of a particularly busy time. Our contribution to the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee was very well received and public feedback shows how appreciative people are of our articles in newspapers & magazines and the presentations we put on. I have to say I indulged myself by following this up with a couple of film & slide shows on 'Chichester in the Fifties'. My favourite decade!

Our work with communities and partners continues to increase. This will I am sure be very important for the Record Office in the future. So, too, externally funded projects, and our preparatory work on the proposed Quarter Sessions project has been enhanced by the completion of a commissioned pilot study on its educational implications. This has the potential to be one of our most exciting projects and we sincerely hope we will be successful in our funding application.

In May I attended the launch of the 'Wartime West Sussex 1939-45' pages on the County Library's website. This is one of the outcomes of a Heritage Lottery Funded project to which we have contributed substantially and I would recommend you have a look at it. One of the most pleasing benefits for the Record Office is that we have now received as a result of the project the magnificent collection of the wartime photographer, Frank L'Alouette of Bognor Regis, which is one of the most important photographic archives of the county in the war. As this project reaches its conclusion, we are now planning with our colleagues in the Library Service our contribution to what we hope will be a similar project on the First World War history of the county.

Another of the facets of life in the Record Office today is the increasing involvement of volunteers. But this is nothing new for WSRO. In June this year we said a fond farewell to two of our most dedicated and long-standing volunteers, Joan and Ron Ham of Storrington, who first visited us as researchers in 1982 and began their transcribing and indexing work three years later. They leave with our very grateful thanks for all they have done for us and we wish them a long and happy 'retirement'.

All of the above is about archives but equally there has been a huge amount going on in Records Management. The discussions over the respective merits of in-house or

outsourced provision, the additional work in running the new out-stores at Willow Park & Durban House, and the preparations for the replacement of the mainframe system have added substantially to the work of a very small team.

So I would like to end this report by thanking all the staff for their ongoing dedication, commitment and hard work. They make the Record Office what it is. There is a lot going on at the moment and I thank them all for their support, their ideas and their good humour.

This is a good point to mention Alison, who is retiring at the beginning of August, after giving so many brilliant years service to the Record Office. We will all miss her, staff and public alike. You will see I have written a special article about her elsewhere in this issue. Later in August we will welcome Matthew Jones who succeeds her as Team Leader of the Public Access team. He brings lots of experience from East Sussex, Dorset, Portsmouth and the College of Arms and we look forward to having him with us. We will have an article on him in the next issue and in the meantime I will look out a WSAS recruitment form for him!

We as staff are all proud of the Record Office, endlessly fascinated by its treasures and ever glad to explore new ways of promoting it to the public, and in all of this, both the daily routine of the job and the planning for the future, we draw great strength and encouragement from the support we receive from the Archives Society. So our sincere thanks, as always, to officers and members alike.

Alan Readman
County Archivist.
July 2012.

Appealing

Nichola Court (Searchroom Archivist) and Sue Millard (Collections Team) would like to make a plea to WSAS members who attended any Jubilee events this year! Despite the inclement weather, communities, villages, and towns across the county celebrated the Diamond Jubilee with great aplomb. WSRO already has some wonderful photographs of past Jubilee celebrations, from Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1887, to Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee of 1977, and we are hoping to build up an archive, which shows how West Sussex celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of 2012. If you attended a Jubilee event this year and would like to have your photographs included in the archive, please get in touch by telephone (01243 753602), e-mail (records.office@westsussex.gov.uk) or letter (West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RN); we can accept physical or digital photographs, and can scan and return photographs if required. **We are offering a prize for the best Diamond Jubilee photograph**, so submit your photographs before 31st August for a chance to win! And if you have photographs or other records relating to any previous Jubilee or Coronation events, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thanks

Sue and Nichola

Farewell to Alison

Most members of the Archives Society will know already that Alison McCann is retiring on Friday 3rd August. It will be a sad day for us at the Record Office as not only are we losing a highly respected and much valued colleague but also a friend of many years standing.

Alison joined the Record Office staff in July 1971 having gained her degree in history at Queen Mary College, London, and her post-graduate Diploma in Archive Administration from the University of Liverpool.

She came with a particular interest in the medieval period and her ability to read Latin remains unmatched. Whenever a researcher puzzles over some Latin in the search room or an enquirer requests a translation of a document the staff response is simple: "Where's Alison?"



Though little survives from quite such a period, the particular demands of the early Episcopal records of the Diocese of Chichester and Capitular records of the Dean & Chapter of Chichester - have placed those, too, firmly in Alison's province. Her special knowledge of the history of Chichester is testified by numerous publications.

In the 1960s the Record Office had taken over the running of the Petworth House Archives. Lord Leconfield was the biggest landowner in the county at the time of the *Return of Owners of Land* in 1873. Fittingly, the archives too are amongst the biggest and best estate collections in Sussex. The job of cataloguing them and arranging for their access at the Record Office was given to Alison.

One catalogue had already been published but between 1978 and 2004. Alison produced four more volumes, now all uploaded onto the office's electronic database.

This was a massive job, not only sorting and listing, but also document cleaning and ensuring the best possible storage conditions. Her regular visits to Petworth were supplemented by staff trips with vacuum cleaners in Closed Week.

PHA is not only rich in the staples of an estate collection - rentals, accounts and wage books - but also in special gems from the times of the 'Wizard Earl', the 'Proud Duke' and, my own favourite, the Third Earl of Egremont. These the catalogues have brought to light and to the attention of academic, local and family historians. The drawings of the moon by Thomas Harriott, the records of 'Capability' Brown, the story of the Petworth Emigration Committee, and so on have been featured in articles and exhibitions by Alison.

Closely associated with Petworth are the superb collections of the photographers, Walter Kevis and George Garland. Almost 10,000 Kevis negatives, dating from 1876-

1908, have been indexed by Roy & Sheila Morgan, and 70,000 Garland prints, mostly from the 1920s to 1950s, were processed and printed by a Community Programme, both of these huge projects supervised by Alison. These are key collections – Kevis for his portraits of the late Victorian era and Garland for his views of the changing rural scene in the 20th century – and they are now fully catalogued online, thanks to Alison. They produce many enquiries, enhance many publications and generate income for the Record Office.

Volunteers have always been part of the Record Office culture in Chichester. The PHA wage books have employed a small team in recent years. Long before that Alison organised a fabulous project, undertaken by Bernard Vick and Norma Pilbeam, to index a series of pre 1642 sources for Chichester. It produced literally thousands of index cards, occupying 35 index drawers in the search room. It so impressed one family historian that she enquired whether we knew if there was a Vick-Pilbeam index for Worcestershire!

As do most archivists, in time Alison acquired managerial responsibilities and over the years has headed up the outreach, admin and search room teams at WSRO. I am particularly grateful to her for her support over the past year or so since the restructuring here.

I have said elsewhere in this issue that all members of staff here are proud to be part of the Record Office. For myself I feel immensely privileged to have worked with Alison for all these years. She is continuing at Petworth as part-time Consultant Archivist dealing with enquiries from Lord and Lady Egremont and the Estate Office. And we will see her here doing research from time to time and at our various staff functions.

On the archive course at UCL back in the 1970s one tutor of the more cynical school of thought cautioned us: "If it's recognition you're looking for in a career you won't find it in archives. A footnote or two in a couple of obscure publications is as good as it gets." Well, that's certainly not true in Alison's case. Apart from the books, catalogues and articles she has written, there is the legacy of Petworth together with the gratitude of future generations of historians for all that she has done at West Sussex. Plus the thanks and best wishes of all her colleagues and friends at WSRO. And I know members of the Archives Society will join us in sending all good wishes for the future to her, Tim and James.

Alan Readman
County Archivist.

New Treasurer Needed

Adjustments within the WSAS Committee have left us with a very significant gap as we now have NO treasurer. This is not an onerous role and if any members would be willing to volunteer or know of a friend who could help, we would be most willing to hear from you. Either contact us using the email wsascom@btinternet.com or contact Caroline Adams directly on 01243-753617. We are very pleased that Helena Millen has joined the WSAS Committee to assist with administration.

The WSAS Committee

WSAS and Worthing Heritage Alliance

WSAS as a society has recently become a member of Worthing Heritage Alliance. Committee member Leigh Lawson attends Alliance meetings on our behalf and we are able to publicise our events on a calendar on the WHA website, which also has a link to the WSAS website. Members of WSAS can attend events publicised by other societies. If anyone would like to see the Alliance website the address is www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk The calendar can be found under forthcoming events.

The Worthing Heritage Alliance was established in 2010. Its key aims are to represent, develop and promote the heritage of Worthing and its surrounding area. To achieve these aims, the Alliance works in partnership with local, regional and national bodies. Membership of the Alliance comprises representatives from all groups and professional organisations which have an interest in the heritage of Worthing and its surrounding area. Currently member societies are The Worthing Society, Friends of Broadwater Cemetery, Worthing History Forum, Sussex Family History Group, Canadian Roots UK, Friends of Worthing Museum, Transition Town Worthing, and West Sussex Archives Society.



Leigh Lawson and Carole Barber at Worthing History Day

As so many records relevant to Worthing are held at the Record Office it seemed appropriate for wsas to become a member of the Alliance. The chairman is former County Archivist Richard Childs.

Membership provides us with an opportunity to publicise WSAS, and gives our own members the chance to attend other events if they would like to do so. Recently, Leigh, assisted by Carol Barber, attended a local history day in Worthing, which attracted many people. She took a display of information about WSAS and the Record Office - newsletters, posters advertising our forthcoming meetings, membership forms, and back issues of the Journal to sell - £48 was raised. It attracted a lot of interest and we hope that we will gain more members as a result!

Leigh Lawson

Summer at the Record Office: Workshop on Reading Old Handwriting

Thursday 16 August 2012, 7-9 pm

Cost £10.00, payable in advance

This two hour workshop is for beginners who want help reading handwriting on old documents.

To book a place, please ring 01243 753602 - places limited.

Events Review

Arundel Castle and Archives 30 June 2012



On a sunny Saturday afternoon members of WSAS and FESRO and guests met in the Collector's Earl's Garden for a tour of the gardens and a visit to the Archive at the castle, by arrangement with the Archivist, Heather Warne.

Heather gave a brief introduction to the Earl's garden and the restored kitchen garden and glasshouses. The group then walked to the castle, across the old London Road, along what is believed to be an Saxon rampart. Inside the archive, Heather and Margaret Richards, Library & Archive Assistant, had prepared a display of

important documents and Heather gave an overview of her role as Archivist.

Heather explained that the Duke of Norfolk's archives form one of the largest private collections in the country, comprising documents from the 12th century to the early 20th century. They include all the family papers and the southern estate papers (Norfolk, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex and London). Four archive catalogues were produced by Dr. Francis Steer (published 1968-1980). Heather continues to catalogue the collection.

Members were able to visit the castle for the day. We managed to look at the keep/Barbican, castle rooms and Fitzalan Chapel after the meeting.

The Archive is not open to the general public, although researchers can visit by prior arrangement. The event was postponed from May. If there are any members who would like to see this archive the event is being repeated on 29th September.

Richard Martin



Members including the County Archivist, Alan Readman enjoy a well-earned cup of tea in the castle tearoom

A Walk in the Arun Valley Saturday 23 June

Under fairly threatening skies a small group led by Richard Howell met in the car park of Amberley Chalk Pits Museum at Houghton. After a short talk on the chalk and lime industry, its uses in agricultural and the building industry, lime burners and sites around Sussex, we set off under the railway bridge down Stokes Lane towards North & South Stoke. We stopped at the site of the canal built in about 1801 by Lord Egremont of Petworth which enabled the transportation of the chalk and lime to areas where it was required. This canal was only about 350 yards long but it allowed easy access from the river at Houghton Bridge bringing barges almost to the chalk workings. We heard about the various people involved in The Arun Navigation Company, Earls of Egremont, various agreements with landowners extending use of the land.



We left the road and set off across the fields towards the suspension bridge built and restored by the 70 Field Gurka Support Squadron, the Queen's Gurka Engineers. The original bridge, also a suspension bridge, was damaged after a tree fell on it. WSCC wanted to replace it with an standard type of bridge, not a suspension type, and after talks with Amberley Society (Amberley village was lucky enough to have two retired Gurka officers living there) a new bridge was built without the heavy machinery required by a normal bridge and finished in 2009, and is now the only suspension bridge in the county.

We walked on down to the Arun and along the river path until we crossed another bridge and walked back along the river on the other side to another quarry. Quarrying had taken place until in 1690 a farmer John Styant, who owned the

fields situated above the quarry, complained that he was in danger of losing his fields due to the quarrying below. While we were standing in the deserted quarry, a pair of peregrine falcons circled above. Near the quarry there are lime kilns almost completely covered which are being reclaimed by nature.



Richard read extracts from the correspondence between the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Egremont giving us a flavour of how these two great noble landowners negotiated with each other. It was most interesting discovering how important the Chalk industry was over several hundred years to the local economy.

We walked along the rising river (The Arun is tidal) over boardwalks

in some places, to the fields below the village of Houghton, across Houghton Bridge and into the tea gardens. We all enjoyed tea and cakes in the sunshine on the riverbank.

Peter and Jane Dyer



A rarity for this year - tea in the sunshine

Future Events 2012

Monday 20th August - Visit to Wiston House - **ALREADY FULLY SUBSCRIBED**

Sunday 9th September - Chanctonbury Ring Research with Jane Pennington - starts 2.00pm WSRO

Saturday 29th September - Arundel Castle and visit - Assemble 1.20pm in the Earl's Garden

Saturday 13th October - Conference Horsham - Vernacular Architecture of West Sussex. Held at Horsham Park Barn, North Street, Horsham, RH12 1RL. Starts 10.00am for 10.30am

Saturday 10th November - Poor Law Workshop with Nicola Court - begins 10.00am for 10.30am at WSRO

Saturday 8th December - Christmas get together at WSRO. 10.00am to 12.00pm

MAP SALE

Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September WSAS will be holding a sale of old maps. As with last years book sale we would like to enlist volunteers to help with the sale. The days will be split into morning and afternoon shifts and anyone who can help is most welcome. You can volunteer using the WSAS email address wsascom@btinternet.com or you may phone Leigh Lawson the organiser directly on 01903 206275.

To keep you aware of events please do not forget the WSAS website is available at:

westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net

There maybe occasions when members wish to attend an event but feel they cannot due to transport limitations. Please do not be deterred, we would encourage you to book the event and indicate with your booking slip that you can only attend if it is possible to obtain a lift. Could we also ask please, that any members coming to an event who feel they could give a fellow member a lift let us know with their booking slip. We can then do our best to marry parties together. Thankyou.

WSAS Committee

<i>Caroline Adams - Chairman</i>	<i>Helen Whittle - Journal Editor</i>
<i>Richard Martin - Vice Chairman</i>	<i>Richard Mant - Committee Member</i>
<i>Richard Howell - Committee Member</i>	<i>Joy Eccleston - Membership Secretary</i>
<i>Stella Elliot - Secretary</i>	<i>Leigh Lawson - Committee Member</i>
<i>Barrie Keech - Newsletter & Website</i>	

All contactable using wsascom@btinternet.com

Booking Slips

Any query about any event please contact: wsascom@btinternet.com

Sunday September 9th Chantonbury Ring, Janet Pennington will present her latest research at WSRO, 2.00pm-4.00pm

Cost is £3 per member and £5 per guest

Names of those attending.....

Tel No.....Email.....

Amount paid, cheques payable to WSAS.....

Please return slip by 14th June, to The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Saturday September 29th Arundel Castle Event - Assemble 1.20pm in the Earl's Garden

Cost is £10.00 per person (no increase for guests)

Names of those attending.....

Tel No.....Email.....

Amount paid, cheques payable to WSAS.....

Please return slip by 15th September, to The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Saturday October 13th - A conference that will explore aspects of vernacular architecture in West Sussex. The Wealden and Downland areas have given rise to a special form of houses for the ordinary people of these areas - from yeomen to shopkeepers, and agricultural labourers. The conference will be held in partnership with the Wealden Buildings Study Group, and experts will be talking on types of houses to be found locally, and the best documents to trace their history. To be held at Horsham Park Barn, North Street, Horsham, RH12 1RL

Arrive 10.00am for 10.30am start. Ends 4.00pm

Cost to members £10 and £13 for guests

Names of those attending.....

Tel No.....Email.....

Amount paid, cheques payable to WSAS.....

Please return slip by 29th September, to The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Saturday November 10th Poor Law Workshop with Nicola Court - find out which documents will tell you about the people and parishes involved. It will include a talk on the Poor Law and a 'hands-on' session with the different sorts of documents available for this important topic. To be held at WSRO.

Arrive 10.00am for 10.30am start. Ends 4.00pm

Cost to members £8 and £10 for guests

Names of those attending.....

Tel No.....Email.....

Amount paid, cheques payable to WSAS.....

Please return slip by 26th October, to The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN