

# The Researcher

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

Website: [westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net](http://westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net)



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No. 83

## Record Office Update

The summer months at the Record Office have been busy, and slightly odd because of the Alan-shaped hole that appears from time to time. Bill admirably filled the gap of lead manager between Alan retiring and Wendy appearing, which was about three months. Lesley Sim, the Information Services Manager, has been more than helpful, coming in at least one day a week to help the senior staff. She is always full of good ideas, and suggestions for taking work forward. She even came on a Petworth House archives fetching-and-carrying day, and really worked hard. She has also been making up a diary for Wendy's first few weeks.

Wendy Walker started as Lead Manager, Archives (aka County Archivist) on 23rd September. She comes from East Sussex Record Office, where she led the project to build The Keep, their new record Office. She has been at East Sussex Record Office for most of her working life, having been an archivist at Essex Record Office before that. A profile will appear in the next Newsletter.



*A peep-hole view of Wendy through racking at The Keep*

## Forthcoming Events

November 9<sup>th</sup> - A workshop on the subject of Military History and Records held at WSRO by Matthew Jones.

December 14<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Get Together

### STOP PRESS

Emily Audrey Ansell born to Nichola Court on the 9<sup>th</sup> October weighing in at 8lb 8oz in old money. We wish Nichola and Emily well.

Any queries about this newsletter or questions for West Sussex Archives Society please email [wsascom@btinternet.com](mailto:wsascom@btinternet.com)

Nichola Court is now on maternity leave for a year , and this month our WSRO baby is due (our first for some years – we think the last one was James McCann, who is now grown up, happily married and expecting his own baby about a week after Nichola’s). Nichola’s replacement as searchroom archivist is Rhodri Lewis, who previously worked at Glamorgan Record Office. Rod spent the first four weeks listing the Hornung Collection, for which Nichola was successful in obtaining a cataloguing grant. Sitting up in the library, surrounded by thirty or so boxes, he looks perfectly at home.



The biggest events over the last quarter were probably the Shippams evenings. Shippams is probably the city’s best-known local firm, tracing its history back to the 18th century. It began in 1786, in premises at West Gate, dealing mainly with grocery provisions and serving the dockyard at Portsmouth. The founder was Charles Shippam and the family connection was to remain through five generations until the retirement in 1996 of Jim Shippam. In Victorian times its reputation spread with the fame of its Chichester sausages and the manufacturing side of the business developed with premises in East Street and a shop in South Street.



A range of potted meats and fish pastes was introduced in the 1890s, first in earthenware pots and later in glass jars, whilst a variety of exotic foods, such as pheasants and prawns, was packed in cans. In 1900 during the South African War an officer of The Royal Sussex Regiment wrote home to congratulate the firm on the quality of its tinned

sausages which he had bought in Senekal. 'Simply perfection', he enthused. In 1911 Shippams products were included in the stores for Captain Scott's last fateful expedition to the South Pole and a letter of appreciation from him remains in the company archives. On 29 July 1924, after the races at Goodwood, Queen Mary, accompanied by the Duke of Richmond, visited the factory, She inspected each department and chatted to several of the 120 employees. Before leaving she was presented with a case of miniature pots of anchovy paste for her celebrated Dolls House, then on display at Wembley. Between the wars there were a number of extensions to the factory at East Walls. Throughout it maintained a standard for its hygiene and cleanliness and its use of up-to-date plant and methods of processing. Only the finest ingredients were used – pilchards from Cornwall, salmon from Ireland, lobsters and crabs from Scotland and pheasants from Goodwood.



*Inside Shippams - workers filling paste jars*

Good relations with the city were nurtured. The factory welcomed tours by the public and many will remember taking home a wishbone as a memento of their visit. It was also a trend-setter in matters of staff relations. Apart from profit-sharing, sickness benefit and pension schemes, it was also a front-runner in the provision of out-of-hours facilities such as its playing field and social club. At first, it was an all-male workforce until women were introduced in 1942. Many staff joined straight from school and stayed throughout their working lives, often one generation following another, their experience and expertise being an integral part of the firm's success. During the fifties the number of jars of paste sold virtually doubled from 22 to 43 million. It was the decade when almost everyone came home to 'Shippams for Tea'. Later, though the demand for spreadables might have peaked, its business in canned chicken and Mexican food flourished, ensuring the firm's status as one of the country's most successful food companies. The family's independent ownership of the firm ended in the 1970's but

the Shippams brand name has been retained by its current owners Princes Food & Drink Group at its premises in Terminus Road.

Shippams's archives are at the Record Office, and Nichola has recently re-catalogued the collection. From this, she revitalised the collection, and with other staff such as Clare Snoad, Sarah and Steve Head, and Katherine Slay produced several evenings with a talk, archive film footage and original documents on display. One was at Shippams, now bought up by Princes foods, and trading from the Terminus Road Industrial estate in Chichester, and the other three evenings were held at the Record Office. They included a tea, with Shippams paste sandwiches, 'retro-cakes' (for example, Battenburg), jam tarts and a cup of tea. All the occasions were well-attended, including ex-members of staff and their families. Lesley Sim said they were lively evenings, with the audience chatting enthusiastically.

The bid for Heritage Lottery Funding money for the Graylingwell project has now been submitted. The Graylingwell project is a partnership project involving several partners, including Pallant House Gallery, Chichester University and the Graylingwell Community Trust. Katherine Slay, who has done much of the cataloguing, and Sue Millard are leading on this one. The Record Office side of the project mainly concentrates on oral history.



*Graylingwell - Main approach*

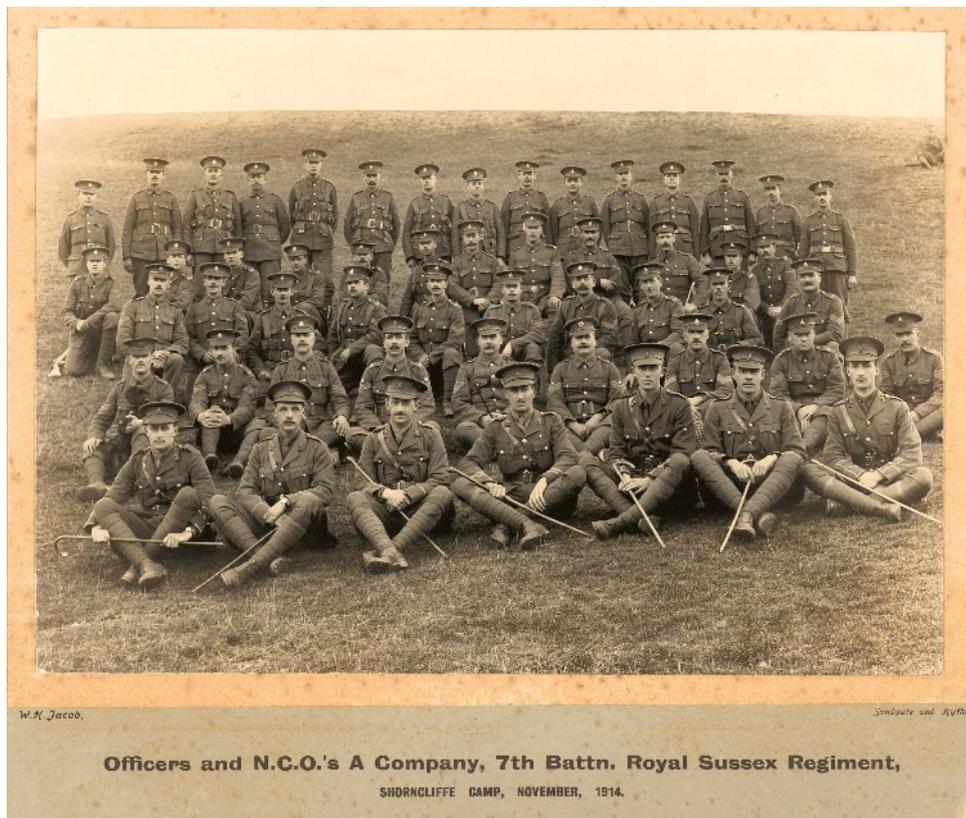
Main App  
Graylingwell



We have the same sort of involvement in Chichester Festival Theatre where we are partners in the heritage side of a huge project, again involving Sue and Katherine. The project leaders are Sophie, Rachel and Gillian Edom, with a great deal of work being carried out by Katherine on behalf of the Record Office. At the end of 18 months volunteers will have been trained up by Gillian to continue working. They are

sorting documents into those which are archives, and those which are semi-current, and therefore need to be records management - 18 boxes of the latter have gone off to an outstore at Selsey.

Matthew meanwhile is dividing his work between preparing for the events we will be putting on and the work we are undertaking, commemorating World War I from next year, and the Open Day in a September as I write. Alex Barford is becoming an expert on the Royal Sussex Regiment, and the fount of all knowledge on military history. The Record Office has a lot of information on these topics, so please get in touch if you need any help to find out more about a relative involved in either of the two world wars.



Caroline Adams/Alan Readman

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## Book Sale - Another Tremendous Success

On Friday September 20<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> we held another very successful book sale at the record office bringing in £926.60.

There was a wide spread of historical books, including such categories as Sussex churches, military history, inns and taverns, and railways. Many aspects of social, economic and political history were well-covered. Except for some specialist editions - rare and highly sought-after volumes - the books were all sold for £2 (hard back) or £1 (paper back).

The Book Sale could never have been run, let alone be the success it undoubtedly was, without tremendous efforts being made by a very large number of people. The actual running of the sale was shared between members of WSAS and volunteer helpers from the record office, but it was a WSAS initiative in the first place so quite rightly members of WSAS did all the categorising of the books (several hundred), and spent many hours shifting books and setting up tables at the record office on the Thursday before the sale opened.

I am very grateful to all those who helped in any way with the setting up, clearing up and the actual running of the Book Sale. Caroline Adams must be mentioned and thanked sincerely for all she did to ensure the success of the sale even under the duress of two cracked ribs!

Richard Mant

# Events Review

## West Tarring Walk 6 July 2013

On a sunny Saturday afternoon members of WSAS and guests met at the Lynch gate of St. Andrew's Church, West Tarring, Worthing for a walk led by Richard Howell.

Richard began with some general remarks about the area. He described the High Street as the 'jewel of Worthing', a remarkable survivor with a fascinating history. The village was given to the Archbishop of Canterbury by King Athelstan in 939 AD, and remained under their influence until the mid-nineteenth century, with the Archbishop appointing the Rector. The area has a strong association with Thomas a'Beckett (although there is no evidence he visited) and St. Richard (who probably did visit). The village was a commercial settlement, with a corn and animal market, in the Middle Ages when Worthing was a small fishing hamlet and Broadwater was mainly agricultural.

At the entrance to a lane by the church Richard explained the History of the Henty family. In 1824 the family, with 30 men and women, emigrated to Perth, Australia. They took 150 sheep, and helped to develop the Australian sheep industry.

In the High Street, Richard pointed out the 'George and Dragon' as one of the oldest pubs in the area, dating to the 1550s. The 'showpiece' building amongst many old and interesting buildings is Parsonage Row, which dates from the 1400s. In the 1920s it came into the possession of the Sussex Archaeological Society and was a museum for many years. It is timber framed and has characteristic Wealden jetties, and a Horsham stone roof (both unusual in Worthing).

Other buildings in the High Street are timber framed but later fronted with bricks. 'The Hollies' dates to the 1600s, as does the 'Castle Inn' which was a pub until 1911. It is now a private house, and owned by Sue and Tim Kempster. Thanks to Leigh Lawson the group was able to go into back garden and view the rear of the property, the building to the end of their garden (which Richard believed used to be a slaughter house) and the recently discovered well.



*Outside 'The Parsonage' High Street*

Another pub in the High Street is 'The Vine', which used to have a brewery attached. There is also a Gospel Hall of the Plymouth Brethren, used until 1992 when it became a house.

On Glebe Road, Richard explained that the Bishop's Palace is a single-storied 14th century hall built on to a 13th century hall which originally had an upper floor and solar.

It was once a manor house held by the Archbishops of Canterbury, to provide them with hospitality on their progresses around the country. It is one of only two Grade I listed buildings in the area (Castle Goring being the other). It has been used as a school and is currently the church hall. Tradition associates the building with St Thomas a Becket and St Richard of Chichester.

Richard led the group to the 'Tarring by-pass', built in the 1930s. At that time traffic was beginning to grow, and it was difficult for buses to pass in the narrow High Street. The usual response was to demolish one side of the street to widen the road, as at Broadwater. This was proposed by the Borough Council, with the suggestion being that the east side, including Parsonage Row, should make way for the new road. The Sussex Archaeological Society and many locals protested and were successful in getting the by-pass built instead. At the time this crossed open fields but is now surrounded by urban development, as is the entire village.

The tour ended at the famous Tarring fig gardens, said to have existed in the early 13th century. Legend has it that they were planted by Thomas a'Becket. Although this seems unlikely St. Richard may have been involved. They were certainly in existence by 1745, and were opened as a tea garden in the 19th and 20th century. In the 1980s Worthing Borough Council (despite oppression from many people) allowed houses to be built on part of the garden. However, some fig trees survive in the gardens of these houses and of 'Bishop's Garth'. As part of the planning conditions the gardens are open to the public once a year on the first Saturday of July. So the group were able to enjoy a look around the gardens and have refreshments at Bishop's Garth at the end of a very enjoyable afternoon.

Richard Martin

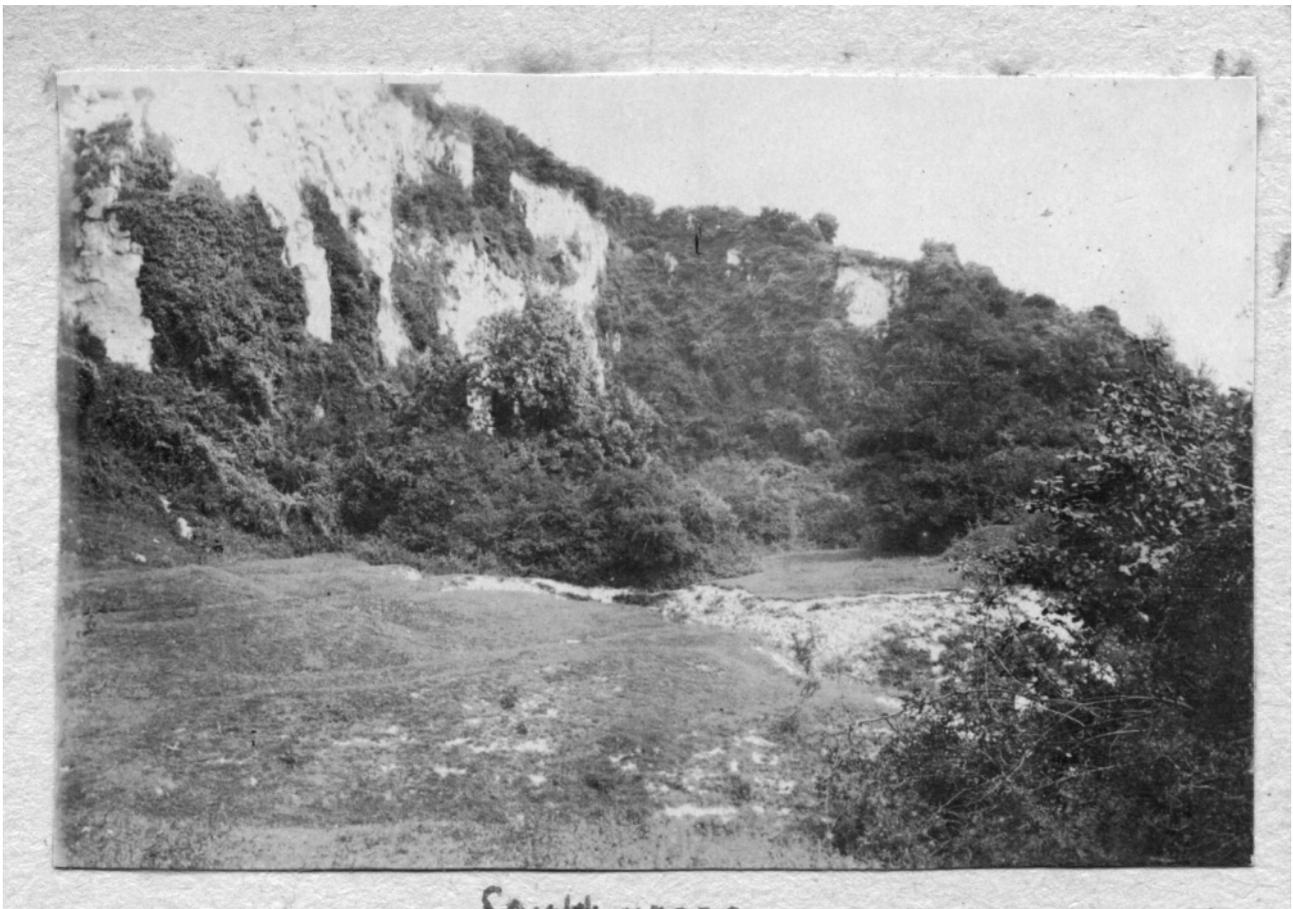


*Attendees enjoy a meander through the remaining fig garden*

## **Limeburners, lords and labourers. The chalk and lime industry of the Arun Valley**

On September 15<sup>th</sup>, members and guests braved inclement weather and the Goodwood Revival Meeting to attend an illuminating presentation at the WSRO by Richard Howell on the chalk and lime industry in the Arun Valley. Richard, who lived for some time at Amberley, became aware of this centuries old industry whilst studying at Sussex University.

Several river valleys in East and West Sussex including the Arun, Adur and Ouse have evidence of this, now largely closed, quarrying, although there are still a few, small scale operations. The main areas in the Arun Valley were at Burpham, Offham, Houghton and Amberley. Many of these workings have been covered by vegetation and, in time, all could be lost in this way.



*Houghton Chalk Pits 1915*

Chalk was dug for many uses from the three layers of Upper, Middle and Lower chalk bands. These are the remains of a dome of chalk from millions of years ago, which was gradually eroded to form the North and South Downs leaving the Wealden clay in between. The chalk had many uses including agriculture dressing, building blocks, medicinal purposes, lime mortar and cement. Lime kilns were erected at the chalk pits but much of the chalk was transported, initially by barge, around the UK and most ports had lime kilns to convert the chalk. Numerous buildings in West Sussex including Amberley Castle and the now ruined Arundel Priory had chalk walls often covered in flints.

Initially the main workings in the Arun Valley were at Houghton dating from medieval times. Amberley Castle was the summer residence of the Bishop of Chichester and the Bishop controlled the chalk workings in the area. By the 1700s with an increase in population and the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, the chalk industry expanded and the workings in the Arun Valley came under the control of the 11th Duke of Norfolk (1746 - 1815) and the fabulously wealthy 3rd Lord Egremont (1751 – 1837) who financed the the Arun Navigation System opened in 1795. This enabled more chalk to be transported northwards to improve the heavy Wealden clay.

The Duke of Norfolk purchased the lease on the Houghton workings from the Bishop of Chichester. Unable to tolerate his new landlord, Lord Egremont, then built up his holdings at Amberley into the principle chalk the workings in the area. Lord Egremont developed a cutting south of Houghton Bridge to improve river transport on the Arun, whilst omitting to pay his rent on his Houghton chalk pit to the Duke.

In 1805 the Amberley workings were leased by Lord Egremont to Jeremiah Scarville (barge owner) of Littlehampton and Francis Jarrett (limeburner) of Pulborough, although the post Napoleonic Wars Depression of 1815 brought more local families into the business. Amberley prospered and became a hive of industrial activity from the 1870s under the Pepper family, local entrepreneurs of Littlehampton. The Houghton pits declined and closed in the mid 19th century especially due to the arrival of the railway at Amberley, which enabled the widespread movement of chalk by rail. However, barges were still operating on the Arun from a quay at Houghton Bridge ( now Houghton Bridge Tea Rooms) into the 1930s. By 1901, 69 workers from Amberley were employed at Amberley chalk pit – far more than on the land.

The Pepper family ran the business for several decades until the chalk pits and kilns finally closed in the 1960s after running into financial difficulties. Remains of the workings and kilns can still be seen although the area is now the Chalk Pits Museum and Amberley station car park.

Thanks go to Richard for presenting an interesting afternoon on an important but now mainly forgotten industry.

Helena Millen



*An unknown group at Houghton Chalk Pit 1915*

## Events Programme 2013

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Saturday 9th November. A workshop on Military History and Records to be given by Matthew Jones, to be held at WSRO.

Arrive 10.00am for a 10.30am start

The focus of the workshop will be on army records and will certainly cover some of the extensive holdings at WSRO for the Royal Sussex Regiment. It will cover a period encompassing WW1 but will broadly be 19th/20th century.

The workshop will aim to close at 4.00pm



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Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December. Christmas Get Together at WSRO.

Our usual festive get together between 10.00am and 1200pm



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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.

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### *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>Paul Guest - Treasurer</i>	<i>Helena Millen - Information Manager</i>
<i>Stella Elliot - Secretary</i>	<i>Leigh Lawson - Administrator</i>
<i>Barrie Keech - Newsletter &amp; Website</i>	<i>Richard Howell - Committee Member</i>

All contactable using [wsascom@btinternet.com](mailto:wsascom@btinternet.com)

Further Society information is available at the website:

[westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net](http://westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net)

# Booking Slips

**Any query about any event please contact: [wsascom@btinternet.com](mailto:wsascom@btinternet.com)**

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Saturday 9th November. A workshop on Military History and Records to be given by Matthew Jones, to be held at WSRO.

Arrive 10.00am for 10.30am start. Ends 4.00pm.

Costs £8 to members & £10 for non-members

Name/s of members attending.....

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

Name/s of non-member/s or guest/s.....

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

Please return slip before the 26<sup>th</sup> October to, The Honorary Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

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Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am-12.00pm. The WSAS Christmas Get Together, to be held at WSRO, Chichester.

Names of members attending.....

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

Names of Guests.....

Please return slip by 1st December to, The Honorary Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

