

The Researcher

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



January 2014

Website: westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net

No. 84

Introducing our new County Archivist

Wendy Walker: a brief biography

I am delighted to have joined the staff of the West Sussex Record Office and have now completed my first three months in post. It has been a very busy period getting to know the office, the county and the wonderful collections. The staff have all been very supportive and everyone has made me feel extremely welcome.

Coming to West Sussex is the culmination of a long and varied career in the archive world. I first discovered archives as a sixth former at Chelmsford County High School when I was offered the opportunity to do some research at the Essex Record Office as part of my A Level History studies. I was able to spend an afternoon a week reading the 18th and 19th century correspondence of the Strutt family of Terling and submit a project as part of my course work. I couldn't believe my luck and the world that was opening up to me. During the summer of 1973, whilst waiting for my A Level results, I returned to the Essex Record Office to carry out an extended piece of research on the Strutt family, which was submitted for and subsequently awarded the ERO Emmison Prize.



As a teenager I was already involved with local archaeology in Essex, spending my weekends and holidays at various excavations around the county. Being the smallest on site I often seemed to be the one sent down the medieval garderobe (Pleshey Castle) or the Saxon well (Maldon). Bus journeys home on

Forthcoming Events

February 9th The
Archaeology of Parham
by Lesley Voice

March 15th *Death and
Burial Records* a
workshop including a
talk by the County
Coroner

April 12th - AGM to be
held at Barnham Village
Hall

May 10th Joint FESRO
event at the Weald and
Downland Museum

Any queries about this
newsletter or questions
for West Sussex
Archives Society please
email
wsascom@btinternet.com

Saturday evenings in the middle of winter were also interesting as suspicious bus drivers debated on whether to let an extremely wet and muddy teenager onto the bus.

On completing my A Levels I chose a course at Southampton University where I could combine my growing interest in archives and archaeology for the medieval period. There, under the tutelage of Paul Harvey, I was able to visit the Hampshire Record Office, whilst continuing to carry out research at the Essex Record Office for my degree and taking part in excavations.

On graduating from Southampton University in 1976 with a combined honours degree in history and archaeology I took a year out to gain some work experience at the Essex Record Office. Here I worked on the fascinating archives of Franklins, estate agents and auctioneers of Thaxted and Saffron Walden, dating back to the 18th century. The following year I went to UCL to complete my post-graduate course in archive administration before joining the staff of the Essex Record Office as a newly qualified archivist.

At Essex, which was then under the excellent leadership of Vic Gray, I started to hone my fledgling archive skills and was given the opportunity to learn about every aspect of archive work. I remained at the Essex Record Office until 1985 when my son, Ben, was born. I rejoined the office a year later on a part-time basis, juggling childcare with cataloguing the archive of the Majendie family of Castle Hedingham. In 1993 I moved to Lewes and joined the staff of the East Sussex Record Office. Initially an Assistant Archivist, I became the Harvester Press Archivist in 1996, the Brighton & Hove Archivist in 1997 and a Senior Archivist and Records Manager in 2003.

In 2006 I was offered the opportunity to take on the full-time management of The Keep project to build a new historical resource centre for East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and the University of Sussex. I had already taken part in the early preparation and feasibility work but as Programme Manager I was able to become fully involved in every aspect of this exciting project. As well as overseeing the design and delivery of The Keep I was also responsible for managing the partnerships, the project board and teams, strategic and legal work, business planning, audience development, access and activity planning, marketing and communications and the development of a new website and IT applications.

So as well as acquiring a hard hat and becoming familiar with building site work I entered yet another new world, with a new set of skills to learn and at times a whole new language. I met a great many new people from all walks of life, experienced the highs and lows of building projects and had a lot of fun along the way. It has been an immensely rewarding project to be involved with and one that I can look back at with a great sense of pride and satisfaction.

Underpinning all of this however is a love of archives that has been with me throughout my working life. The driving force behind The Keep was the overriding need to preserve the archives for the future. Coming to West Sussex is the next stage of the journey for me. Being able to manage and lead an existing archive service, particularly one with such an excellent and well-deserved reputation as West Sussex, is an immense privilege. In the archive world you are always conscious of those who went before you, the creators of the documents and their custodians and users. This sense of history is palpable but so are the opportunities for the future, the archives yet to be discovered, the stories yet to be told and the new ways of telling them to each new generation.

I was once asked at an interview at the Bodleian Library in Oxford why I chose to go into archives rather than archaeology. I replied that I had done so because I thought that working with archives would be cleaner and drier but that I had since found out that I was wrong on both counts. At that point the assembled and august panel behind the long table burst out laughing. It broke the ice but on that occasion I didn't get the job.

I am looking forward with great anticipation to my future at West Sussex, to getting to know everyone and to working with you all on the next stage in the life of the West Sussex Record Office.

Record Office update

First things first: this is the Record Office baby. Her name is Emily and she is the daughter of Nichola Court, searchroom archivist, who is currently on maternity leave. She is three months old. Emily is like her mother in that she doesn't do things in half-measures – as an archivist this means you get lots of cataloguing done as well as everything else; as a baby it means you keep your mother awake when she could really do with some sleep.



At the end of November we said goodbye to Alex Barford. This was a real wrench for the Record Office, as nobody knew more about the Royal Sussex Regiment than Alex, and nobody could match her enthusiasm. As our researcher she had a real trick of sharing her findings with the enquirer in such a way that they always came back for more. She would find obscure incidents in the archives, relate them to local or national events, and in the end everybody would be talking about a World War I soldier's adventures, or a family tale of deportation to Australia and the start of a new life. We will miss her personal touch, both in the research and helping customers in the searchroom. Alex has gone to work in Worthing Health Sciences Library.

The first couple of weeks in December were our Closed Fortnight. This year, we had the scaffolders back, so that they could add a filter to the glass in the roof window, and repaint all the

area around it. The searchroom has not been painted since it was opened in 1989, and now the it looks cleaner and brighter. The pictures show that once again, it proved difficult for staff to get on with jobs where they need to spread out. However, we managed to carry out the usual maintenance jobs – cleaning the microform machines, sorting out order slips, misplaced books, misplaced fiches and documents that have gone back in the wrong box. It is an enjoyable time because you get to work with people that you don't usually work with, but it can be frustrating because just when you really get going, it's time to put everything back again. The second week is usually devoted to cataloguing, so it all went very quiet. One of the bigger achievements was the sorting and checking by Sue of the sixty-odd boxes of Guildcare records piled up in the library and corridor upstairs, and they were then re-shelved in the strongrooms. Everyone managed to get something sorted in the second week.

There was a 'PS' to this. In the closed period, we started to sort out a huge accession of ecclesiastical faculties (permissions granted by the diocese to parish churches to make physical changes, such as repairing guttering, putting in a new kitchen or putting up a piece of sculpture), which had arrived in 72 large boxes in September. We then ran out of the correct archive boxes – and had to leave half-sorted papers and boxes on the strongroom floor! The new boxes duly arrived, and on Christmas Eve, when we were closed to the public, a team of eight of us, spurred on by chocolate and cake, set to, covering the entire searchroom with packets of envelopes – and we managed to finish the whole thing by the time we went home! We were dead chuffed.

Caroline Adams

Graylingwell War Hospital, 1915-1919

Katherine Slay, a member of WSRO staff, has recently written 'Graylingwell War Hospital, 1915-1919'. This is the fifth in the New Chichester Papers series, produced by Chichester Local History Society.

The received wisdom in the record office had always been that there was nothing about the war hospital. There are certainly no official records, but a combination of delving in the Graylingwell archives and using the local newspaper ('Chichester Observer') proved that there was a good deal of 'unofficial' material.

The Medical Superintendent's journal – his monthly written reports to the hospital management committee - provided some information, and named all the patients who died. (Actually, no doubt owing to pressure of work at the time he was writing the reports, several patients were omitted, but that only came to light recently).

The annual report of the hospital in 1920 included a section on the war hospital period, with reports from several of the doctors about the type of injuries and illnesses they had treated.

The 'Chichester Observer' contained frequent reports about the war hospital. It noted patients arriving by hospital train at the railway station; described concerts and entertainments, fetes and other fundraising activities; and made regular pleas for 'wanted' items such as cake, fruit, and face flannels.

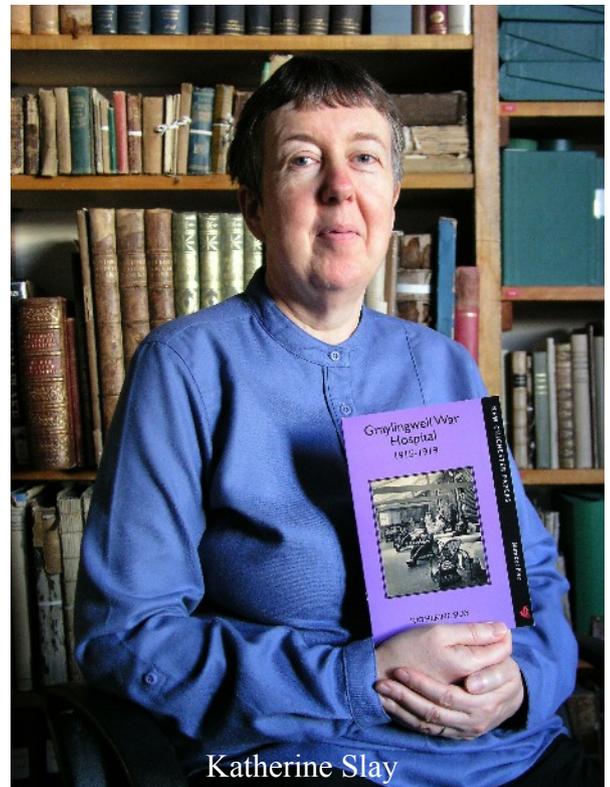
There were 29,412 admissions to the war hospital, but as the admission registers have not survived, there is no list of these patients. The Medical Superintendent's record of the 142 who died was a useful starting point, and Katherine has gathered names from various other sources. Her list now contains over a thousand entries, although some men appear more than once.

One of the particularly useful sources of names is autograph books. Very popular at the time, these contain poems and drawings in addition to the men's names and regiments. Three have so far found their way to the record office, and Katherine is very keen to receive others. They can either be donated or loaned for scanning.

Something else Katherine collects for the archive is photographs of the war hospital. Hundreds were taken and printed as postcards for the soldier patients and staff to buy and send to friends and family. There are exterior shots of the buildings, and many of the patients and staff in their wards. Not all the postcards are identified as Graylingwell War Hospital – some just give the ward name (such as Queens C2 or Kings E1, or even just QA1 Ward). Katherine has about 100 postcards so far, and is keen to add to the collection.

Anyone with information on a patient, postcards or an autograph book can contact Katherine by email at records.office@westsussex.gov.uk or by telephone on 01243 753602.

'Graylingwell War Hospital, 1915-1919' is available to purchase at the Record Office for £3. To receive a copy by post (at a cost of £5) please contact record office reception on 01243 753602 for payment details.



Major Changes to the WSAS Committee on the Horizon

All good things come to an end and so it is even with the very successful WSAS committee. Three extremely important members plan to stand down at the forthcoming AGM, including the Chairman (Caroline Adams), Vice-Chairman (Richard Martin) and Secretary (Stella Elliot). Here in her own words is Caroline's reasons for stepping down after such a progressive period for WSAS: -

"I have now been chairman of WSAS for four years. At the end of the three-year term last year, I was quite happy to stay on for another three years, because there were still things I wanted to do. However, I am now finding my workload at the Record Office is proving too great to allow me to give as much time to this role as it needs.

The new Chairman will be ably supported by Wendy Walker, the new County Archivist, and there will be changes at the Record Office which will affect our activities in WSAS and our relationship will be more focussed and clearer. The Society needs to

support the Record Office as we approach a difficult financial period, and the committee would like to look for new ways to assist the Record Office to raise money and to support many more projects and activities. I will still be available to contribute, but from a Record Office point of view.

The Chairman's role consists of the following:

- Lead the team which forms the committee, liaising with each member on their particular tasks, picking up any problems on the way.
- Chair the committee meetings, which are held bi-monthly, and the annual general meeting, creating the agenda beforehand, and checking and signing the minutes afterwards.
- Liaise with the County Archivist and other staff as necessary.
- Produce the 'calendar' of meetings, making sure each event has a committee member looking after it.
- Contribute to the Newsletter and Journal, and make sure these are on time and accurate.
- Keep an eye on the financial position, working with the Treasurer, and being a signatory for the bank account.
- Answer questions from the Charity Commission and fill in their online database annually.
- Have some views on the way in which the society fulfils its aims as laid down in the constitution (These aims are printed in the Journal)

You can see where this is leading! We need someone energetic and enthusiastic about the Society and its role, who is prepared to lead it in assisting the Record Office as much as possible over the next few years. If you feel this is you, would you like to discuss it? I am available to talk about this in more detail with anyone who is interested and would like to know more."

Caroline Adams

The other forthcoming WSAS Committee vacancies involve the following activities:-

Vice-chairman - support for chairman, and standing in for chairman if they are not available eg. chairing meetings, representing the Society in lieu of chairman as requested.

Secretary - taking minutes of the committee meetings and AGM, preparing agendas for these meetings (in conjunction with chair), preparing other AGM paperwork (nomination forms etc with chair, treasurer etc), responding to letters and other correspondence. The main commitment is 6 evening meetings a year at WSRO and the AGM (somewhere in the county), preparing the agenda before and writing the minutes afterward.

Anyone interested can contact Caroline directly as mentioned above or for further information contacts us using wsascom@btinternet.com

Events Review

The Conference at Wisborough Green

The annual WSAS conference was held on Saturday, October 12th 2013, in the attractive village hall at Wisborough Green. The theme of the conference was the Petworth Emigration Scheme.

The conference was organised and carefully worked out by Leigh Lawson and took the form of two talks before lunch with a number of readings in the afternoon. About twenty-four people attended the conference.

The first talk was by our Vice President, Alan Readman, who set the scene for us by describing and explaining the hardships suffered by the agricultural community in West Sussex, and elsewhere, both during the wars with France, 1793 – 1815, and in the years which followed. The result was considerable social distress and unrest and this led us to the second talk, given by Sue Millard, on the Swing Riots.

The Earl of Egremont
has signified his intention of continuing his liberal assistance to persons wishing to emigrate to

UPPER CANADA.

The COMMITTEE will therefore engage a vessel to sail from PORTSMOUTH, *early in April next*, under similar arrangements as those of 1832 and 1833.

Applications for Passages should be made as early as possible to

J. PHILLIPS,
LIBRARY, PETWORTHE

Petworth, Feb. 14th. 1834.

Phillips, Printer, Petworth.

Sue's illustrated talk, which included hand-outs, explained how the rural workers in the south and east of England rose in revolt in 1830 and wrote threatening letters to people of some standing in the community. The letters were signed by the fictitious Captain Swing. The letters were often backed up with acts of violence, such as smashing the threshing machines and burning the hay ricks. Sue read out a very telling, contemporary account of a group of men in one village, who went from house to house demanding beer and money.

After lunch, Leigh introduced the Petworth Emigration Scheme, explaining how it was an attempt by the 3rd Earl of Egremont and the Reverend Thomas Socket, Rector of Petworth, to solve the problem of rural poverty and unemployment in the 1830s. Some years ago, Leigh was involved in the extensive research into the scheme and worked with Sheila Haines and a Canadian team of researchers. They managed to track down the names of 1800 emigrants. Some of these emigrants wrote home in the 1830s and their letters were published in various pamphlets and local newspapers at

the time. Excerpts from these letters were read out at the conference by a team of seven readers and the letters gave a remarkable insight into the life and experiences of those who went to Canada.



Samuel and Harriet Merrit and son emigrated from Steyning 1835. Photo courtesy of April O'Hara.



Cornelius and Elizabeth Voice and family emigrated from Billingshurst 1834. Photo courtesy of Kenneth Stormer

Our thanks must go to Leigh for the immense amount of hard work she put into the conference, which made it such a successful and enjoyable event.

Richard Mant

Workshop on Military History 9 November 2013

We met in the Record Office Library for a very informative workshop led by Matthew Jones, Assistant County Archivist. This is the first workshop that Matthew has run for WSAS since he joined the staff and we were pleased for the opportunity to meet him properly.



Matthew gave us an outline history of the Militia, which had existed in some form since Saxon times. He went on to describe the forming of the Army and numbered regiments. In the 1870s reforms meant that regiments became linked to each county and the numbering system was dispensed with. However the numbers often survived until the early 20th century due to regimental pride. The 35th Regiment of Foot became the Royal Sussex Regiment.

We learnt that the main groups of earliest records are Muster Rolls and Militia Lists. In these lists, can be seen the names of men who signed up for service and the equipment they were expected to provide.

There is a large collection of Royal Sussex Regimental Archives at the Record Office, including unit war diaries, muster rolls, photograph albums, personal diaries and service papers.

We were given a useful reference book list and informed about original printed sources such as Absent Voters lists for 1918-19, and Army Lists dating back to 1740

which can help establish where a battalion might have been stationed at a given time. Matthew went on to describe the many and various on-line resources for army records. One very relevant at the moment is The War Graves Photographic Project. Volunteers have photographed gravestones from WW1 and the pictures of individual graves can be found on the website.

After lunch we thoroughly enjoyed looking at original material from the Record Office collections – a very popular feature of WSAS workshops - and searching for the answers to 12 questions, contained within these documents. Favourite items included a Muster Roll from 1620/1, the War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment 1914-1919 and an example of a Soldier's Small Book which give personal details and include a basic printed will with space for men to fill in if they wished to do so.

A Royal Sussex Regiment photograph album contained some astonishingly clear and detailed mountain landscape photographs from the Tirah Campaign in India 1897-98. The Diary of Ralph Ellis, the Arundel artist, is a beautifully handwritten account illustrated with atmospheric watercolours of the desolate landscape. We all appreciated the opportunity to see this very moving diary, *"48 hours at a time, was quite long enough at Givenchy. The whole place from the support line to No-mans-land was a sea of mud and the trenches might have been gullies formed by the rain... filthy water almost reached to a mans waist"* In a lighter passage we read that the men had for their pre-Christmas meal in 1915 *"roast pork with a liberal supply of fresh vegetables, a lot of etceteras and drinks"*.

A very fitting workshop for the day before Remembrance Sunday.

Leigh Lawson

Christmas Get Together 2013

The annual Christmas Get Together was held at WSRO on Saturday 14th December during the annual WSRO shutdown. Eighteen members and guests gathered in festive spirit.

After imbibing wine, coffee, mince pies and cakes, we were set 3 quizzes to test brain and native cunning. Barrie Keech's quiz relating to West Sussex history posed 25 questions of complexity and mind searching obscurity. Needless to say, the winner only scored just over 50%. For most their answers were inspired guesswork.



Caroline Adams then presented a garden quiz and a biscuit quiz. Again very entertaining; skills depended upon botanical knowledge and dietary weaknesses.

The gathering ended with Caroline reading from an account of Christmas 1911 by the Sussex writer Ticknor Edwards.

A good time was had by all.

Helena Millen

Events Programme 2014

Sunday 9th February. *The Archaeology of Parham* a talk by Lesley Voice beginning at 2.30pm to held at WSRO.

Please try and make your booking as quickly as possible

Saturday 15th March 10.00-4.00pm a workshop entitled *Death and Burial Records* including a talk by the County Coroner and to be held at WSRO.

Please try and make your booking by 2nd March

Saturday 12th April - AGM at Barnham Village Hall, commencing 12.00 for lunch, AGM to begin 1.30pm. At the meeting there were be a talk by Sarah Lowton about her book 'Barnham: How the Railway Changed Village Life'

The AGM papers and other details will be sent in March but please be aware there will be a resolution about a new constitution. If you should have questions that you wish raised at the AGM we would appreciate it if they could be submitted by February 28th. This allows the committee an opportunity to investigate and provide a more comprehensive answer than might be possible if the query is raised at the AGM

Saturday May 10th - Joint FESRO/WSAS meeting to be held at The Weald and Downland Museum, Singleton, near Chichester. (<http://www.wealddown.co.uk/>)

Museum is open 10.30am-6pm. Plenty to see and at 2pm a talk on "Costumes in the 16th century" from Danae Tanyard in the Crawley Hall.

For those who wish, we will gather at around 12.30 midday for lunch (either purchase from Museum café or bring picnic) in the picnic area adjacent to Crawley Hall (undercover if wet). Please note that the Museum covers 50 acres, is on a slope and there are distances between exhibits. Please contact the Museum for facilities for those with disabilities (01243 811348)

Cost - £14 per person or for those people who are members of the Weald and Downland Museum and eligible for free entry the cost will be £7 for the presentation.

Closing date - 28th April 2014 - this is important because names need to be forwarded to Museum for entrance.

Travel - Just off A286 Chichester/Midhurst road south of Singleton (well signposted). Free parking at Museum.

Public transport - Bus no. 60 (Midhurst) from Chichester Bus Station (near to Chichester Railway Station). get off at Singleton for 200 yards walk to Museum.

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

Caroline Adams - Chairman

Richard Martin - Vice Chairman

Paul Guest - Treasurer

Stella Elliot - Secretary

Barrie Keech - Newsletter & Website

Helen Whittle - Journal Editor

Richard Mant - Committee Member

Helena Millen - Information Manager

Leigh Lawson - Administrator

Richard Howell - Committee Member

All contactable using wsascom@btinternet.com

Further Society information is available at the website:

westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net

Booking Slips

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

Events can also be seen at: westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net

Sunday 9th February. *The Archaeology of Parham* a talk by Lesley Voice beginning at 2.30pm

Costs £3 to members & £5 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 31st January to, The Honorary Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Saturday 15th March 10.00 - 4.00pm. A workshop entitled *Death and Burial Records* led by Sue Millard and Caroline Adams and including a talk by the County Coroner.

Costs to members £8 & non-members £10

Name/s of members attending.....

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

Names of non-members or guests.....

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

Please return slip by 2nd March to, The Honorary Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Saturday 10th May. The joint event with the Friends of East Sussex Record Office(FESRO) taking place at the Weald and Downland Museum, Singleton near Chichester.

At 2.00pm, Danae Tanyard will give a talk on *Costumes of the 16th Century* in Crawley Hall.

Cost £14 per person - however some people may already be members of the Weald and Downland Museum and as such are eligible for free entry to the museum. The cost in this case will be £7 per person to cover the cost of hiring Crawley Hall and the presentation from Danae Tanyard. Please indicate clearly below whether you are already a member of the Weald and Downland Museum.

I am **NOT** a member of the Weald and Downland Museum and so will pay £14 per person.....

I am a member of the Weald and Downland Museum and so will pay £7 per person.....

Names of members attending.....

Tel No.....Email, or home address.....

Names of non-members or guests.....

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

It is extremely important to book by the 28th April to ensure the full list of attendees is available to the museum. Please return slip and cheque by the 28th April to, The Honorary Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Please may I remind anyone who does not pay their annual WSAS subscription by standing order or direct debit that renewals are now due. Cheques should be sent together with the enclosed form to: - The Honorary Treasurer, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

West Sussex Archives society

Membership Application & Gift Aid Form 2014

Annual subscriptions are due for renewal on 1st January each year.
The rates as decided at the AGM 2008 are as follows:-

Members £13

Joint (2 people at the same address) £15

Society £25

Life membership £150

If you pay by standing order or are a life member please ignore this form.

Cheques made payable to West Sussex Archives Society together with this form should be sent to:-
The Honorary Treasurer, W.S.A.S., c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester,
West Sussex, PO19 1RN.

Receipts will only be given if specifically asked for.

Name(s).....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Telephone Number(including code).....Email.....

Gift Aid Declaration.

I want the charity to treat as Gift Aid donations, delete as appropriate:-

- * the enclosed donation of £.....
- * the donation(s) of £.....that I made on/...../.....
- * all donations that I make from the date of this donation until I notify you otherwise
- * all donations that I have made since 6th April 2000, and all donations that I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise

Signed.....Date.....

Please note:-

- 1) **You must pay an amount of income and or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the Society reclaims on your donations in the tax year (currently 28p for each £1 that you give).**
- 2) You may cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the Society.
- 3) If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the Society reclaims, you should cancel your declaration. (See note 1)
- 4) If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
- 5) If you are unsure that your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief please contact the Treasurer or ask your local tax office for leaflet IR 65.
- 6) Please notify the Society if you change your name or address.

For WSAS use

Date to bank

Date to database