

# The Researcher

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

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



April 2015

No. 89

## 41st AGM

The 41st AGM of the society was held at Pulborough Village Hall on Saturday 18th April 2015.

Richard Mant chaired the meeting and gave his report which is included in this newsletter. Richard reported on the many successful activities of WSAS that are seen as very professional both by members and more distant onlookers. He very much highlighted that it was an enthusiastic committee that made this possible and thanked them for their efforts.

Wendy Walker gave a report about WSRO, which is reported later in this newsletter.

The accounts were not presented as the handover between treasurers is not yet complete. These accounts therefore will be distributed later.

Richard Mant conducted the elections. The only nomination for Treasurer was Susan Nicel. The only nomination for Membership Secretary was Jane Mant and they were unanimously elected. Three new committee members were also elected: Holly Wright, Gillian Thompson and Barbara Ely. Richard lamented the fact that WSAS still desperately needs a secretary.



Members tuck into a good lunch at the AGM

After the meeting Caroline Wells gave an illustrated talk on *Pulborough and West Chiltington: archaeology and historical researches*.

Barrie Keech

## Forthcoming Events

May 12th Joint FESRO event - visit to Coombe Place, Offham

June 14<sup>th</sup> A walk around Victorian Chichester

July 4<sup>th</sup> - A visit to High Salvington Mill

September 20<sup>th</sup> - A visit to Shulbrede Priory

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

## **WSAS AGM, 18 April 2015, Chairman's Report**

During my time on the WSAS Committee I have come to realize increasingly what an impressive society it is to which we all belong.

There cannot be many societies that do all that we do. There cannot be many societies that produce a journal every year, an A4 booklet full of articles on history. Our Journal is highly acclaimed and widely acclaimed. People and organisations from far afield join WSAS to obtain a copy of our Journal, organisations such as the University of Notre Dame in the USA and the Guildhall Library in the City of London, to name but two.

There cannot be many societies that produce a newsletter four times a year with the content, format and quality of our Researcher. I know our Researcher is read with keen interest and we are asked to send copies of the Researcher and the Journal to a number of prestigious libraries every year. These include the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, the Cambridge University Library, the National Library of Wales, the National Library of Scotland and the British Library.

There cannot be many societies that organise ten events a year, each one with a different historical content or theme, which range from walks through the Sussex countryside, to workshops where we learn from the professional archivists, to talks given to us by a number of well-known Sussex historians; and this last year has been no exception for we had that delightful walk one summer's evening through Amberley village, led for us by Richard Howell, which ended up with tea and refreshments in the garden of one of the village residents; we had that memorable workshop at the Chichester Festival Theatre, organized for us by Wendy in conjunction with the Friends of Chichester Festival Theatre; and we had our all-day conference at Fernhurst where we had six guest speakers, three displays put on by three different societies and more than thirty people attended that event – and that is just three of our ten events.

There cannot be many societies that do all that we do. So how does it all happen? Well it all happens because our committee makes it happen. The committee has worked extremely hard this last year to overcome various difficulties and I do thank them for the support they have given me and all that they have done for you and WSAS. You know who they are by name, because they are all mentioned in every edition of the Researcher, but in case you do not know them, I will now ask them all to stand and take a very well-earned round of applause.

So what of next year? Well, we have good news in that, subject to election, we have a new Treasurer, a new Membership Secretary and three new members of the committee and they will help enormously in the efficient running of WSAS. However we are still without a Secretary it seems and in the absence of a Secretary, the committee will have to work especially hard to shoulder the responsibilities and to carry out the work which would normally be done by the Secretary. We will try to maintain the traditional programme of events and we will try to maintain the standards normally associated with WSAS, but it will not be easy. We would be delighted to hear from any of you at any stage of the proceedings, today or next week or next month, that you could take on the job of Secretary. Perhaps it could be shared between husband and wife, or between two people taking six months each, and I will leave that thought with you.

## **WEST SUSSEX ARCHIVES SOCIETY AGM 18 APRIL 2015 COUNTY ARCHIVIST'S REPORT**

I am very pleased to be able to give the County Archivist Report to the 41st AGM of the West Sussex Archives Society and to see so many members here today. This has been a very busy year both for the Society and for the Record Office and I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the highlights as well as to thank all of those who have done so much for the Society and for the Record Office.

This year has seen a number of changes at the Record Office with the return of existing staff and the addition of several new faces. We were delighted to welcome Nichola Court back from her maternity leave in the autumn following the birth of Emily. She has since been appointed as part-time Archivist in a job share with Sue Millard, who took flexible retirement last September, after 24 years of dedicated service at the Record Office. It has been very good to have Nichola back whilst continuing to benefit from Sue's extensive experience, her hard work and unfailing commitment. Having said that I should perhaps qualify this slightly as Nichola will be leaving us again to have her second baby in June. However her last maternity leave seemed to fly by and we are very much looking forward to welcoming another 'Record Office' baby and to her return in due course.

As a result of the new job share arrangements we have been able to extend Rhodri's post as Search Room Archivist. Rhodri is a real asset to the Record Office and I am really pleased that we have been able to offer him a permanent position - and even more delighted that he has accepted! Last autumn also saw the arrival of Nick Corbo-Stewart as the Chichester Festival Theatre Archivist, an appointment that is part of the theatre archive project, Pass it On. Nick will be with us for 18 months building on all of the hard work and box-listing carried out by the project volunteers. He is producing a full catalogue of this amazing archive, which will be available through our on-line catalogue and accessible for researchers to use. September also saw the retirement of David Milnes, our Technical Search Room Assistant, who was in post for over 10 years and is much missed. Finally on the staffing front in January we welcomed Jenny Mason as our new Collections Manager following the retirement of Caroline Adams.

The Record Office continues to be as busy as ever with a steady stream of visitors, our ever popular talks and coffee morning workshops and regular inquiries continuing to come in from all over the world. We continue to receive excellent feedback from our users whilst valuing the input of our User Forum in striving to maintain and improve on the service that we offer. Our many volunteers continue to do a wonderful job, including those who come in as part of on-going project work as well as those who undertake individual tasks for us each week in listing, indexing, scanning, digitisation and conservation.

Project work and partnerships remain an important part of Record Office life. The work of the Chichester Festival Theatre Project is continuing with Nick whilst the Quarter Sessions volunteers are continuing to index and work on these records to reveal the hidden stories that lie within these fascinating archives. The Graylingwell Heritage Project comes to an end this week with a series of showcase events at Graylingwell Chapel, Pallant House Art Gallery, the Otter Gallery at the University of Chichester and at the Record Office to celebrate the work and findings of the project. From 14-29 April the Record Office is hosting an oral history exhibition, together with a display of original documents illustrating the history of the hospital. As we say good bye to some of our

projects we have others waiting in the wings and will be telling you more about these in future Newsletters.

We continue to benefit from the discovery of new archives and the deposit of additional collections ranging from parish records, hospital archives and manorial records to additional records of the Royal Sussex Regiment and a further 30 linear metres of local newspapers. Where else would you come across (in no particular order) the newly deposited records of the Petworth Horticultural Society, Worthing Football Club, the West Sussex Beekeepers' Association, Sussex Ornithological Society, Shippams Retirement Association, the Glasshouse Crop Research Institute in Littlehampton or the Bognor Regis UDC weather books dating from the 1930s. Nor should we forget the receipt of additional records of Graylingwell Hospital including patient artwork, the 1st World War autograph book from Bignor Park Auxiliary War Hospital and last but certainly not least the additional papers of Admiral Sir George Murray, who became the Lord Mayor of Chichester in 1815 and served under Lord Nelson during the Napoleonic Wars.

Archives come into us from all walks of life and from all parts of the globe. One of the great joys of being an archivist is that sense of discovery and the knowledge that when you arrive for work on Monday morning you do not know who or what will come through the door that week. Donors and depositors continue to seek us out and we remain very grateful for their trust in us and their generosity.

There are also some documents that come in to us from a very different route, that of the sale room. This has always been a fact of life for most archivists albeit one with a sting in the tail in the form of an unaffordable price tag. The National Archives has monitored the major sale rooms and alerted us to forthcoming sales for a number of years now but the advent of eBay and on-line sales has raised the profile of these activities considerably in recent years. This year we have been in contact with someone who has very kindly offered to monitor eBay sales in the UK for us and alert us to West Sussex documents coming on to the market. As a result the Archives Society has provided funding to enable the Record Office to acquire three different sets of title deeds for Kirdford, Petworth and Wisborough, 1594-1757, for Worthing, Broadwater, Tarring and Southwick, 18th-19th centuries and for Clayton, 19th century, all of which have been purchased over the last six months. We are planning to feature more information about this on the Society's website shortly, to provide updates in the Newsletter and to display all of the archives that the Society has helped to buy, at our Christmas get together at the Record Office in December. We owe the Society a huge debt of gratitude for supporting us in this way. I should also add at this point that the Society has also provided the match funding to enable us to purchase the oral history listening turrets that are being used for the first time in our Graylingwell Heritage Project Exhibition that I mentioned earlier. Oral history is a very important part of our work and of our collections and the turrets will enable us to make this a feature of our exhibitions both now and in the future.

Looking back over the last year with the Archives Society it is difficult to pick out specific highlights. The events and workshops have covered a wide range of topics and interests. I thoroughly enjoyed the day that we shared with the Friends of Chichester Festival Theatre and the workshop on the Pass It On project. Up until that point palaeography had been concerned with medieval Latin documents and the hand writing of several hundred years ago. I will now look at modern theatre scripts and their production and technical notes in a new light. More recently the Records Management workshop showed that, contrary to expectations, modern records can

be fun and that the discipline of appraising records for archival preservation can be both challenging and stimulating. It also showed that modern records can appeal to all ages, with the age range of participants spanning over 80 years.

Finally I would like to pay tribute firstly to all of the Record Office staff who work so hard to provide such an excellent service and without whom none of the things that I have talked about today would be possible. Secondly my thanks go out to the chairman and all of the committee, who do so much for the Society, and to all of the members who continue to support the work of the Record Office and everything that we do. I have enjoyed working with you all over the last twelve months and look forward to the year ahead.

Wendy Walker

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## **Introducing Jennifer Mason**

My name is Jennifer Mason and I'm the new Collections Manager at the Record Office. I'm taking over from Caroline Adams (who is a hard act to follow!) overseeing the acquisition, care, and cataloguing of archives at the Record Office.

I'm originally from Liverpool but have spent the last six years living in Winchester. I studied history at the University of York and whilst there spent time volunteering at York City Archives. It was at York, having grappled with title deeds and Ordnance Survey maps, that I was really bitten by the archive bug. After graduating, I continued to work at York City Archives as a part time Archives Assistant before studying for the MA in Archives and Records Management at UCL.



After completing the course, I worked as an Archivist at Hampshire Archives and Local Studies for nearly 3 years, which was a brilliant introduction to the busy and varied world of county record offices. After Hampshire I worked on cataloguing projects at Liverpool Record Office and Tate Archives before a brief stint as the Oxford English Dictionary Archivist at Oxford University Press. I was excited to learn that the Record Office holds the papers of Betty Murray who was the granddaughter of the first editor of the OED, James Murray—it's a small world!

It's certainly been a busy first few months but I've really enjoyed getting to know the staff and collections at the Record Office and I'm definitely looking forward to learning more.

# Events Review

## TRAVEL IN THE PAST

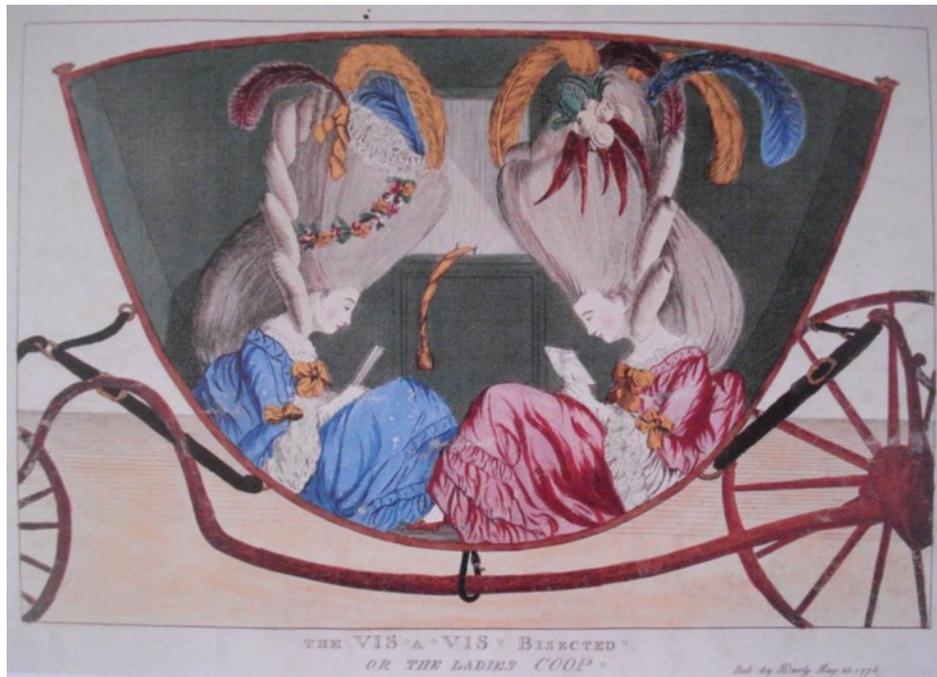
Quotes galore and pictures aplenty, Dr Janet Pennington's talk on Travel in the Past kept us all enthralled throughout the afternoon in Worthing on Saturday, February 14th 2015. About 40 people attended this event at St Botolph's Church Room.



BRIGHTON COACH, 1876, GOING DOWN CUCKFIELD HILL.

Janet's sources covered a vast amount of ground, so that during the afternoon we were told about bridges and toll gates on the one hand, and innkeepers, barbers and barber-surgeons on the other.

We looked at maps: a road map by John Ogilvy and a map showing all the streams and rivers in Sussex. We looked at inns that served coffee, and coffee houses, as places of refreshment on one's journey. We looked at all sorts of carts, those propelled by man and others pulled by horses, oxen and dogs. Oxen were needed for the heaviest loads on the muddy roads and lanes in Sussex. Great use was made of dog carts. The Royal Mail carts were pulled by dogs. We looked at the clothing to wear on a journey by horse or in a coach.



The origin of words was explored. The boot of a car is so called because there was a part of the coach put aside for an extra person(s). A hack or hackney was a horse to ride, which became a horse to hire, and then a hackney carriage with four wheels for hire, as opposed to the hansom cab with two wheels.

The design of horse-drawn coaches was examined, including the introduction of the swivelling front axle, and metal leaf springs to replace those made of leather.

I would like to thank not only Janet for an extraordinarily informative afternoon which was very much enjoyed by all present, but also Leigh Lawson for arranging and organizing this event in a new venue, as well as providing all the refreshments. Furthermore, we greatly appreciated the welcome and support given to us by members of the St Botolph's congregation.

Richard Mant



## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP**

### **SATURDAY, MARCH 14<sup>TH</sup>**

On Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> about a dozen of us gathered in the upstairs library of the Record Office, for a day long workshop investigating the work of the Records Management Service. Led by County Archivist, Wendy Walker, who was ably assisted by Nicola Court, this gave us a fascinating glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes when decisions have to be made about what to do with the thousands of records generated each year by the County Council, before they actually become archives.

During the morning session, Wendy explained how in the past County Council records have tended to have been kept in multiple locations and are stored in thousands of boxes making access both difficult and time consuming. Now these records are being centralised, listed and managed through the Records Management Service which is part of the Record Office. One of the first criteria that has to be considered is how long records should be retained before they can be even considered for disposal. Retention periods are therefore applied to these modern semi-current records and these can vary considerably. Thus financial records must be kept for a minimum of 6 years, whilst others, such as adoption records must be kept for considerably longer.

At the end of these retention periods, when the records are no longer required by the County Council for its own business purposes then they are either confidentially destroyed or appraised as potential archives.

Other considerations then have to be taken into account including whether the record is of long term historical significance? Is it an original record? Is the information available elsewhere? How does it relate to other archives held elsewhere? How does it relate to the Archive Collections Policy?

Over the ensuing years, the evaluation of electronic records will also play an increasingly larger part in the process.

After lunch Wendy and Nicola presented us with a selection of files for us to examine and make our own decisions as to what should be kept and what could be disposed with. These ranged from a file relating to a visit by Nyasaland chiefs to Sussex in 1956-57, an architects' department file on Worthing Civic Centre, 1959-65, a Review of County boundaries, Crawley New Town, 1951-52, a file on Hungarian refugees, 1957 as well as several others.

This proved to be a fascinating exercise. With some the decision was quite easy. For instance, a file relating to the Royal Wedding 1977-81, contained just a few applications for the holding of street parties, and it was felt that that information could be found elsewhere, so the file could be disposed of. It was felt that the file on the visit by the Nyasaland chiefs was of some historic importance and should be kept. Most, however, seemed to fall into the 'Not Sure' category, with one or two members of the group saying that they would hate to do the job as they wouldn't want to dispose of anything!

One file relating to Licence Applications for licensed premises in 1937, for instance, caused much debate, as it was felt that the information would be available elsewhere. However, this file contained a number of letters of objection from various individuals and organisations, which threw a light on to social attitudes of the time. The writer of one such letter wrote, *'Is there not anything that can be done about these 'Children's*

*Rooms'? It is appalling what the outcome of these rooms could be'.....* He then went on to relate how during a lantern show he gave to a group of youngsters about the evils of drink '.....when one of them (very poorly dressed) said "I like that stuff".' Letters such as these are priceless to the social historian, and it was decided that the file should be retained.

As a conclusion to the workshop we were shown into Strong Room 5, where thousands of boxes are stored, awaiting the scrutiny of the Records Management team.

Clearly the team is doing an invaluable job, evaluating these records for future generations. It is very time consuming, but as Wendy pointed out, good records management is both more efficient and economic.

Wendy and Nicola had clearly put a lot of effort and thought into this workshop, and those of us who attended all came away with a much clearer understanding and appreciation of what goes on behind the scenes, and how decisions are reached.

Looking at the papers piled up on this writer's desk and on the surrounding floor, I have now decided to have my own Records Management day. It somehow seems much more focused and purposeful than merely having a tidy up!

Richard Howell



*Wendy helps out members during the records management workshop*

# Events Programme 2015

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**Tuesday May 12th** - Joint FESRO/WSAS visit to Coombe Place (Grade 2 listed house (1657), now a private residence), Offham, Lewes, BN7 3QB. We meet at Coombe Place for 2.00pm.

Visit will include access to grounds and house tour with tea. To book please send cheque and details to FESRO Visits Secretary, The Keep, Woollards Way, Brighton, BN1 9BP Tel: 01273 482349 There are only 5 places for WSAS members as the owners have limited numbers.

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Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> – A Walk round Victorian Chichester. Come and join us for a walk round the city seeing it as our ancestors would have done in Victorian times: the NatWest bank building, new in the Victorian era; the Halstead Iron Works in North Pallant (gone now but look out for the drain covers in Chichester made at the works); the Keeper's Lodge in Priory Park – and much more besides. The walk will be led by Anne Scicluna, formerly Mayor of Chichester and now Chairman of the Chichester City Guides.

Meet at 2.15 pm at the West Door of Chichester Cathedral. The walk will finish at approximately 4.15 pm and it will take place whatever the weather. If numbers are large we will divide into two groups, with a second Chichester Guide, both walks starting at 2.15 pm.

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Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July- Visit to High Salvington Mill, Furze Road, High Salvington, Worthing, BN13 3BP - post mill restored by the High Salvington Mill Trust. Guided tour of the mill followed by tea and home-made cake. Meet at the mill 2.00pm.

**Please note that the mill lies on a slope in a field and it is on 3 floors reached by steps.**

Travel - take A27 through Worthing at Salvington Hill on east side of Swanedan Hospital turn off and continue to the top where it joins Furze Road. The use of Mill Lane is not advised as this is an unmade-up road with lots of stones and large holes. If travelling South towards Worthing on the A24 turn off at Bost Hill which also joins Furze Road. There is limited parking at the mill so use adjacent roads which are residential.

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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. Thank you.

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## ***WSAS Committee***

<i>Richard Mant - Chairman</i>	<i>Jane Mant - Membership Secretary</i>
<i>Leigh Lawson - Vice Chairman</i>	<i>Stella Elliot - Committee Member</i>
<i>Susan Nicel - Treasurer</i>	<i>Barbara Ely - Committee Member</i>
<i>Vacant - Secretary</i>	<i>Richard Howell - Committee Member</i>
<i>Barrie Keech - Newsletter &amp; Website</i>	<i>Gillian Thompson - Committee Member</i>
<i>Helena Millen - Information Manager</i>	<i>Holly Wright - Committee Member</i>
<i>Helen Whittle - Journal Editor</i>	
<i>Wendy Walker - County Archivist</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)

Events can also be seen at: [westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net](http://westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net)

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Tuesday May 12th - Joint FESRO/WSAS visit to Coombe Place, Offham, Lewes.

Cost: £12

Names of members attending .....

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

Names of non-members.....

Amount paid, cheques made payable to **FESRO**

Please return slip by May 1<sup>st</sup> (if possible) to, FESRO visits secretary, The Keep, Woollards Way, Brighton, BN1 9BP. Can you also please enclose a SAE envelope in case the event is fully booked and your cheque needs to be returned.

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Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> – A Walk round Victorian Chichester. Meet at the West Door of Chichester Cathedral at 2.15pm. The walk will end at approximately 4.15 pm.

Cost: £5 members, £7 non-members

Names of members attending .....

Tel No..... email, or home address.....

Names of non-members .....

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

Please return slip by May 15<sup>th</sup> (if possible) to: WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex. PO19 1RN

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Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July- Visit to High Salvington Mill, Furze Road, High Salvington, Worthing, BN13 3BP - post mill restored by the High Salvington Mill Trust. Guided tour of the mill followed by tea and home-made cake. Meet at the mill 2.00pm

Cost: £4

Names of members attending.....

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

Names of non-members.....

Amount paid, cheques made payable to **High Salvington Mill Trust Ltd**

Please return slip by 21st June (if possible) to, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

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