

The Researcher

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



January 2016

Website: westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net

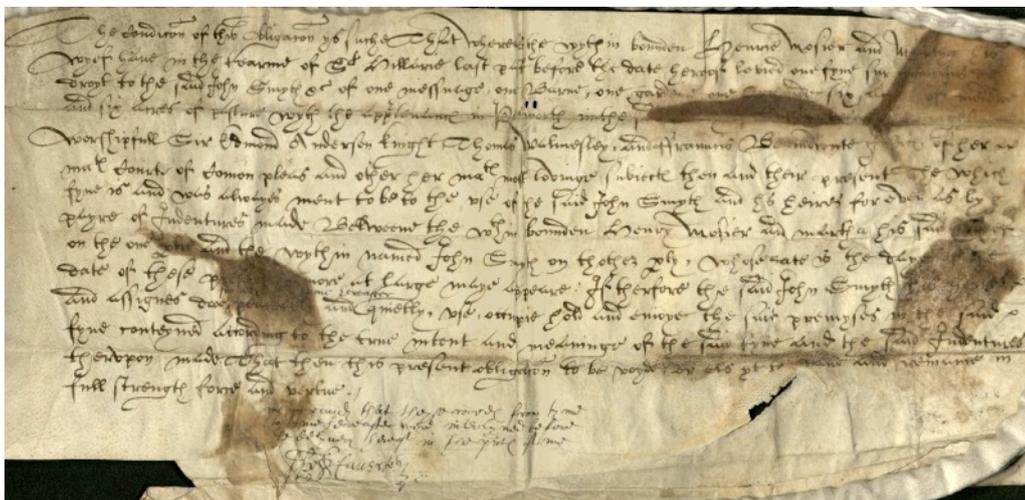
No. 92

WSAS and WSRO in Partnership Archive Acquisitions Part I

Over the last year WSAS and the Record Office have been working together to try and secure a number of archives that have come up for sale in auction rooms and with private dealers across the country.

The National Archives runs a sales catalogue monitoring service and keeps a database of manuscript sales throughout the UK. The Record Office receives alerts from TNA whenever a West Sussex archive comes up for sale. We do not have a budget for document purchases or for competing in the sale room. However thanks to a number of generous donations from WSAS and private individuals together with a series of successful grant applications to the Friends of the National Libraries and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund we have been able to acquire several important archives to add to the Record Office collections.

We owe WSAS a huge debt of gratitude for helping us to do this. Grant funding bodies will not cover the total purchase price and the match funding that WSAS has provided has enabled us to apply for several important grants this year. Furthermore the



Bond of Obligation re. Land in Petworth 1596

Forthcoming Events

2016

February 13th
Workshop at WSRO -
Photographic Archives.

March 13th - Talk and
Films on the Land
Settlement Association

AGM April 16th to be
held at the Fishbourne
Centre

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

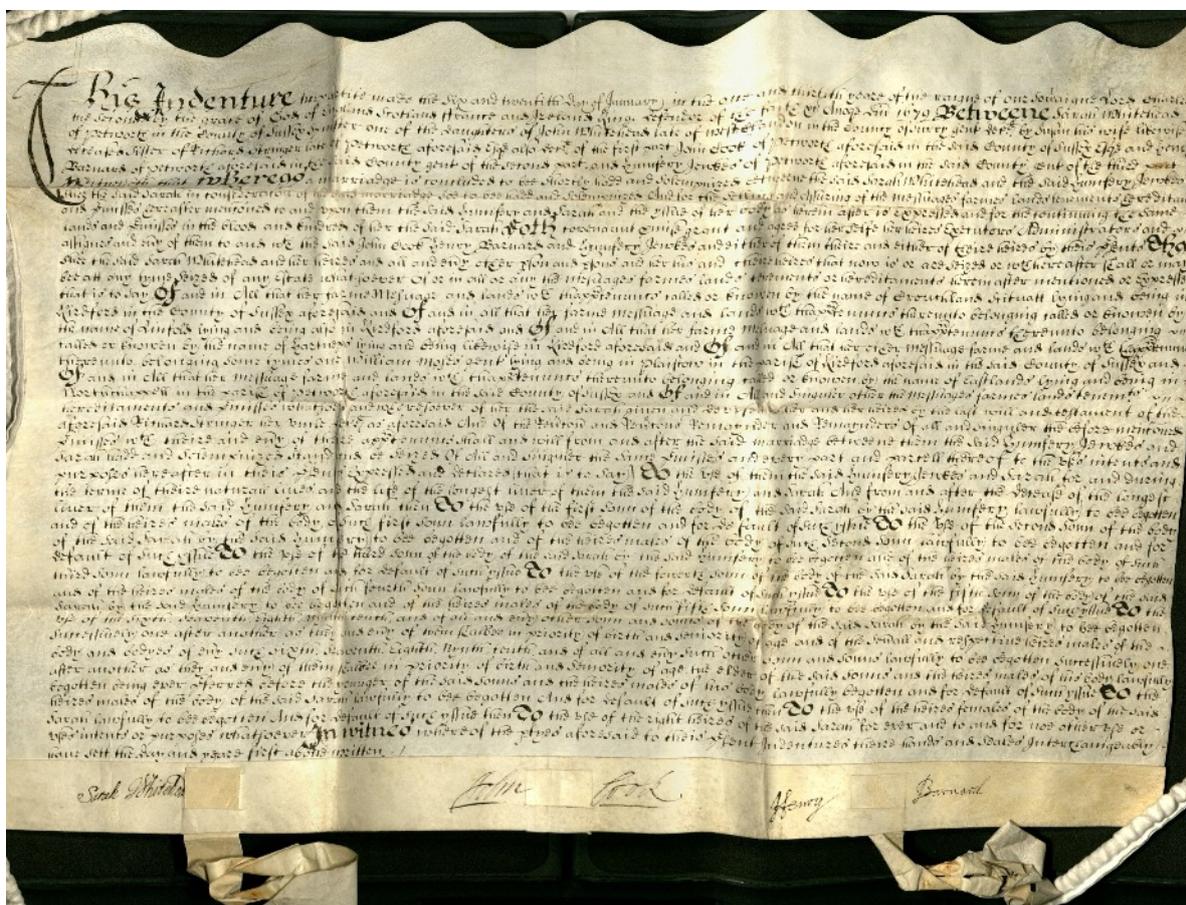
individual donations that have been made to WSAS to support this work have been gift-aided thereby maximising their benefits.

For those who were unable to join us at the Christmas Get Together, I thought that you might like to see some of the documents that we have been able to purchase in this way. I will feature a series of these in the forthcoming newsletters and first up are three separate purchases of deeds made at the beginning of 2015:

- (1) Deeds of properties in Petworth, Kirdford and Wisborough Green including the Manor of Pallingham in Wisborough Green, 1596-1767 (WSRO: AM 942)
- (2) Deeds of properties in Worthing, Broadwater, Goring, Tarring, Southwick, Sompting and Poynings, 1700-1900 (WSRO: AM 883)
- (3) Deeds of a house at Clayton called 'Pleasant Villa' situated in Cricketers Road, St John's Common, 1873-1891 including an inset plan of the property (WSRO: AM 902)

You can find further details about all of these documents in the [West Sussex Record Office Online Catalogue](#)

Coming up shortly in future editions of the Researcher – Dante Gabriel Rossetti's connection to Bognor, an insight into 19th century politics, beating the bounds at Rogate in 1774 and village life in Iping between the wars.



Marriage Settlement of Sarah Whitehead re land in Petworth and Kirdford 1679

RECORD OFFICE UPDATE

As another year begins we have a lot to look forward to. 2016 is a particularly auspicious year as it is the 70th anniversary of the Record Office, which was first set up in 1946 in the basement of County Hall. We are busy planning celebratory events and birthday cakes in the true Record Office tradition and there will be more to follow on all of this in the next newsletter.

For the start of 'WSRO at 70' we are putting together a selection of '70 Archives for 70 Years' highlighting the extraordinary range and breadth of the many millions of records that we hold. In order to do this we are inviting all of our staff and users to nominate their favourite document and would very much like to hear from WSAS members so that we can include your choices in the shortlist. We would like to hear from you as soon as possible so get you thinking caps on and let us have your views. Make sure that you include a short paragraph explaining why you have chosen this particular document and what it means to you. I am looking forward to seeing all of the nominations although I suspect it will be quite a task deciding what makes the final cut.

If you ask 70 different people to choose their favourite archive you are likely to get 70 completely different answers such is the extent and diversity of the Record Office collections and the range of interests amongst our many visitors. The answers are also likely to vary from year to year as new material comes to light and additional records are added to the archives. Our new shelving, which is due to be installed shortly, will enable us to provide much needed space for all of these future deposits. We have now appointed a contractor and they will be starting work with us later this month. The detailed timetable will be finalised shortly but the bulk of the work will be carried out between now and the end of March. As outlined in the last newsletter, we will be relocating some of the archives off-site on a temporary basis while the new shelving is installed. Some of our holdings will therefore be unavailable for a short period of time and there will also be periods when the Search Room may be operating a limited service. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused and will be doing our utmost to keep any disruption to a minimum. With this in mind we are asking all of our visitors to contact us in advance throughout this period so that we can help them to plan their visit and advise them on the availability of the archives. There will more details on our website in due course so do keep an eye on this or contact us for further details.

As I am writing this update the survey on our opening hours, which I referred to in my last update, has come to an end and we are now busy analysing all of the results. I am very grateful to all of the WSAS members who took the time to tell us what they think and complete the survey. It is really important to have your views. I will be able to give further details on all of this in the next newsletter and there will be updates on our website with the announcement of any changes due in the Spring.

At the WSAS Christmas Get Together on 12 December, as well as our usual activities, we were able to display a series of West Sussex documents purchased during the year in sale rooms and from private dealers. In partnership with WSAS the Record Office has been successful in bidding for a number of important archives and the first in a series of articles on these new acquisitions is included in this newsletter.

Following on from our Christmas event, on 15 December Richard Mant and I, together with several of the WSRO staff, attended the launch of the new 'Murray or None' Exhibition at The Novium. The exhibition is part of an HLF funded partnership project

between the Record Office, The Novium, Chichester District Council and the Murray Club. It includes a fascinating series of documents and artefacts telling the story of Admiral Sir George Murray (1759-1819), who was a friend of Lord Nelson and fought with him at the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801. Born in Chichester he became Lord Mayor of Chichester in 1815 and lived in North Street at what is now the Ship Hotel. The Murray Archive is a fascinating series of records and includes letters from Nelson and Lady Hamilton as well as records relating to his family and life at home. The exhibition will be open throughout 2016 so do go and see it if you get the chance.

As a postscript to this, if you haven't already seen it, there is now a short film on YouTube of [The Descendants of Admiral Murray Visiting Chichester](#) last July. It includes their visit to the Record Office to see the Murray Archives.



Murray Exhibition Launch December 15th 2015

Our new programme of Tuesday Talks and Wednesday Coffee Time Workshops has just been announced and you will find further details of all these events in the newsletter and on our website. Do take a look and we would love to see you if you are able to join us.

Finally as befits the first edition of the Researcher for 2016 I would like to wish you all a Very Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you at the many WSAS events and at the Record Office throughout the year.

Wendy Walker - County Archivist

WSAS MEMBERSHIP IS DUE FOR RENEWAL NOW!

Please find Membership Renewal Forms (with Gift Aid on the back) and Standing Order Forms enclosed with this edition of the Researcher. Please do Gift Aid if you can. It is a great help to WSAS to be able to reclaim 28p for every pound of your subscription.

If it suits you, please take out a Standing Order for your subscription as this cuts down the amount of administration for the society. The Membership Renewal Form states that renewals are due on 1st January each year. That is correct, but this year is an exception! For 2016, please renew your subscription by 1st February.

Richard Mant - Chairman

PATRICIA GILL, COUNTY ARCHIVIST 1968-1993

Paddy died on 5th October at the age of 85. She is remembered and admired by a host of WSAS members: it feels strange to realise that this is the very first issue of the Newsletter that she will not read. In the four decades since she pioneered the founding of the Society, she valued more and more the contributions of its members which added a new dimension to the life of the Record Office. (Its early years also provided her with a fund of stories about the contribution of Bernard Vick, the first and accident-prone Secretary, which ought one day to be recorded in the Society's history.)



The establishment of WSAS was a radical step. Very few county record offices had entered this territory; now almost all have followed in her footsteps. It was one achievement among many in a long and distinguished career. Having joined the Record Office (in a rather lowly role despite her high academic attainments) in 1956, she became the County Archivist in 1968, in

succession to her predecessor Dr Francis Steer. Over the next 25 years she was a major force in the build up of the Record Office holdings, encompassing the records of the County Council and other local authorities such as the Quarter Sessions, the Diocese of Chichester, the Cathedral and over 200 parish churches, the great estates such as Goodwood, Petworth House, Cowdray and Wiston, and countless collections, large and small from individuals and organisations. She brought about major innovations: the creation of the Records Management Service (an unglamorous but vital job which made the local authority realise our value); the creation of the Education Service which raised the profile of the Office in schools and among the public at large; the establishment of massive microfilming projects (leading eventually to digitisation), which completely changed the way the public could exploit the documents; a step into a completely new dimension when WSRO became lead partner with the University of Brighton in the setting up of the Regional Film Archive. These are only a few items from a long list. And when she retired in 1993 she could feel a justified pride in a record repository which was renowned nationally for the richness of its archive heritage and the ease and accessibility with which the public was able to enjoy it. And from the whole of her reign generations of Record Office staff will keep their memories of her warmth, friendship, understanding and support

Her final and greatest achievement was to persuade the County Council that it must take on the project of building the present Record Office in Orchard Street. It was a project she masterminded with meticulous skill at every stage, from the initial brief to the final transfer of eight miles of records into their new home. The West Sussex Record Office became known throughout the country as a model for other repositories to copy. It is a fitting monument to a distinguished archivist who made such an important contribution to the history of West Sussex.

Peter Wilkinson

Forthcoming Events at the Record Office and WSAS

Events Review

Family History Workshops at WSRO

If you're new to family history or want to find out more about the sources available and how best to use them, you may be interested in the Record Office 'coffee time' workshops. They start at 10am on the first Wednesday of the month and cover a wide range of sources and topics for 2016 including sessions on tracing the history of your house, poor law records, translating common Latin phrases in old documents, and army records. On 3 February, Caroline Adams will be running a workshop on how to read old handwriting and on 2 March Susie Duffin will be providing a beginners guide to Ancestry.co.uk and Findmypast. On 6 April Imogen Russell will be explaining how to research the history of your house and on 4 May there will be a workshop on nonconformist archives for family historians.

Tuesday Talks at WSRO

WSAS members are also invited to our ongoing series of Tuesday talks, starting at 7pm, which continue throughout the year:

- 26 January 2016: Screen Archive South East - Developing and Preserving the Screen Heritage of Sussex by Dr Frank Gray, Director of Screen Archive South East
- 23 February 2016: Archives in the Footlights - Chichester Festival Theatre at the Record Office by Nick Corbo-Stewart
- 29 March 2016: Chichester in the 1950s by Sue Millard
- 26 April 2016: "Dogs at War" - The British use of dogs during the First World War by Emma White
- 28 June 2016: West Sussex and the Battle of the Somme by Alan Readman

Book now!

If you'd like to come along to a coffee time workshop or a Tuesday talk, please call 01243 753602 to book and pay (advance booking essential). Tickets cost £7.50, which includes refreshments. Visit www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro and view the 'What's on at the Record Office' page for more details.

WSAS Conference held at Oving, October 10th

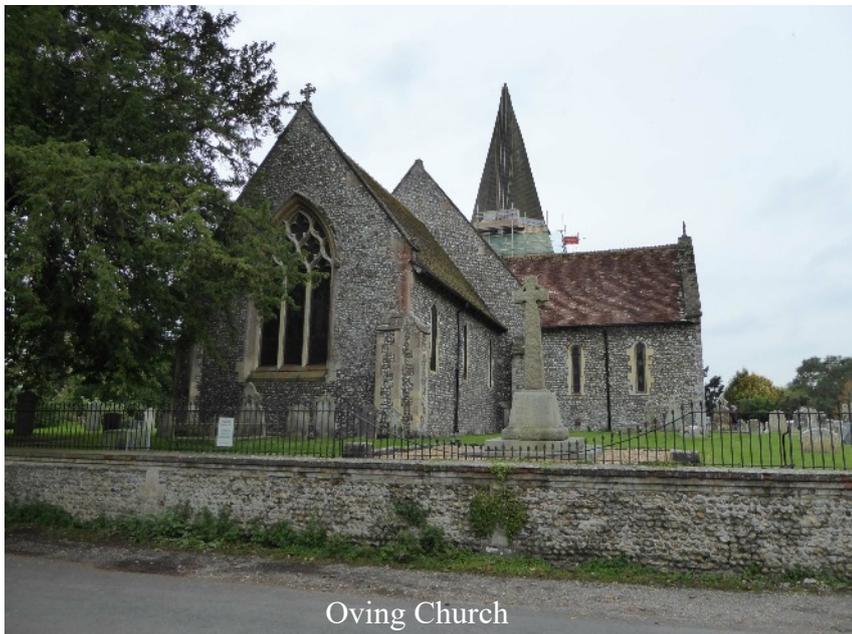
An outstanding conference held in Oving Village Hall, comprising six speakers, was seamlessly organised by Susan Millard. Susan, most certainly deserves all our thanks, for an incredibly entertaining and knowledge sharing day.

We assembled at 9.45am for a 10.00am start to enjoy a tea or coffee and to chat with gathered friends and colleagues. Thanks must also go to our beverage making members who never let us down and provide a wonderful service.

A theme that seemed to ripple through almost all the presentations was that of "how to pronounce Oving?" I felt after considerable "oo-ing" and "o-ing" (not to mention behind the scenes lobbying) that the answer is best left with the individual!

Our first speaker was Emeritus Professor Brian Short who put forward the simple question "Is Oving special?" Brian presented many interesting ways to attempt to answer this question covering many hundreds of years. At the end of his presentation Brian quite rightly left it to the audience to answer this question but it really was an eye-opener to consider the many ways of trying to answer this question.

Next Beryl Lang gave a presentation of her research on Katherina Woods (1785-1848). Katherina lived in the old manor house of Shopwyke, never married and was a very wealthy, determined and charitably-minded lady. Katherina was responsible for the building of six almshouses still surviving beside Oving High Street. We were fortunate enough to have time during the lunch period to look at these wonderful brick-built properties. It is suspected that for a time Katherina may well have lived in Dunsfold, Surrey (perhaps while the property at Shopwyke was renovated) as she was also responsible for the school built there for the benefit of the villagers.



Oving Church

Prebendary Graham Claydon came next with a wonderful presentation entitled 'Oving's Graffiti Artists'. The graffiti in question is etched upon pillars within Oving Church and is a number of names, most of which fall intriguingly within the Civil War period (1642-1651). Graham has been researching the families connected with these names and presented his findings to date.

Lunch for many, was a short walk from the village hall to the thatched Gribble Inn, which took us past the old almshouses. Food and service at the Gribble were excellent. After lunch, first on was Cliff Mewett who

presented on the subject of 'War Memorials and Windmills'. Cliff has been researching the lives of the people recorded on Oving's War Memorial. Many it seems joined the Royal Navy in The Great War and lost their lives on ships such as HMS Hampshire, HMS Tipperary, HMS Invincible and HMS Britannia. Cliff also covered the sad victims of a flying accident buried in Oving Churchyard. Both were from the 92nd Squadron and died on 7th April 1918. Cliff covered the working existence of four principle windmills at Oving, Barnham, Aldingbourne and Halnaker through until their demise as a working mill. Cliff also covered a number of very serious accidents at the mills including a poor chap who was crushed between the major cog-wheels.

Caroline Adams followed with a presentation on Aldingbourne's Tudor Bishops' Palace. Caroline lamented how she had agreed to present on something which does not survive and as yet no-one has actually definitively found where it was! Despite this minor inconvenience Caroline gave a spirited presentation using many old records. From early times Aldingbourne was one of the chief seats of the Bishop of Chichester who had there a 'palace' or manor-house. Caroline firmly believes this was situated at Tote Copse though earlier excavations have revealed nothing. We know that during the reign of Henry VI Bishop Moleynes obtained licence to crenellate the manor-house of Aldingbourne. Caroline had also found old records which would indicate a bishop certainly knew how to lay on a feast!

Lastly there was a fascinating presentation given by John Pitts whose family have farmed in Oving for 133 years. John shared with us many of the artefacts found across his farm dating back to a time when much of the parish of Oving was covered by sea incursions. His anecdotal tales of his father driving home from Chichester whilst potentially inebriated escorted by the police drew a laugh from the audience. He added that was a different time!

All the speakers were really excellent and everyone left feeling they had been fully entertained, enlightened as to Oving and very happy to have visited this little outpost of West Sussex.

Barrie Keech

Literary Workshop November 14th

What can an author find in the archives to inspire them to write a novel? This was one of the questions asked in the lively November workshop led by County Archivist Wendy Walker assisted by archivists Jennifer Mason and Holly Wright.

The theme was the literary collections held at the Record Office and how writers can turn to the many other archives for inspiration. Archives relating to William Blake, Wilfred Scawen Blunt, Robert Gittings, William Hayley and Nancy Price all feature in the Record Office collections. We learnt that authors' collections can include not only annotated drafts of work, but notebooks, revealing correspondence – with friends, family and publishers - scrap books, photographs and even book jacket designs.



Original material was produced throughout the day, including a recently catalogued collection relating to the once popular, but until now forgotten, nineteenth century author Anna Eliza Bray. Another new addition to the archives are the records of the Brighton branch of the Mendicity Society which provide a unique snapshot of the urban poor of Brighton in 1872 and could be inspirational for writers and researchers. One of the most pleasing original documents to see was the 1929-59 diary of Dr Geoffrey Bourne noting country life, local events and local history - delightfully illustrated in pen and ink.

It was intriguing to discover what inspires modern writers to find a theme for an historical novel. We were encouraged to consider how, in order to draw the reader into the story, they must have 'done their homework'. They must show a proper understanding of the period about which they are writing to make you believe in the place they have created and be drawn into their world.

The temptation to go straight out and buy quantities of books was strong, as we were introduced to a selection by modern authors including A.S. Byatt, Esther Freud, Elly Griffiths, Alan Hollinghurst and Sarah Waters, all of whom had chosen to write about the recent past. Local author Kate Mosse had used the Record Office extensively to research the background for her novel *Taxidermist's Daughter*, set in Fishbourne in 1912. We were shown a clip from a recording of a talk she had given, explaining how she had found inspiration in the archives and she proved to be a very eloquent speaker.

At the end of the day we were encouraged to experience that moment of inspiration for ourselves. Divided into three groups we each had a pack of photocopied nineteenth century documents relating to Petworth, Bognor or Chichester. We were asked to go through the various documents which included census returns, parish records, prison records and newspapers to see if any item stood out enough to make us curious. The groups then devised a brief scenario, based on the snippet of information found, inventing the rest to fill in any gaps and expand the story. It was an amusing and instructive way to end a fascinating day.

Leigh Lawson

The WSAS Christmas Get Together December 10th

It was possibly a record number for this event. Twenty-four people (WSAS members and their guests) gathered in Reception at WSRO on Saturday, December 12th to enjoy mince pies, coffee and wine. Such was the enjoyable flow of the various conversations that we all trooped into the Search Room rather later than usual. In fact it was only the arrival of the guests for the wedding that morning that prompted us to move on at all!

In the Search Room we found that Wendy had very kindly laid out all the manuscripts that we had helped WSRO purchase during the course of the year – and it was an impressive array, well-covered in cellophane sheets in case someone had inadvertently brought their coffee or wine in with them. But I do not think anyone blotted their copybook in this respect.

We then had to face up to doing the quizzes. What had we got to cope with this year we wondered? with one from Helena Millen and the other from Susan Nicel.



Helena's quiz was rather like a crossword, with cryptic clues requiring answers that were all places in West Sussex.

Susan's quiz was equally testing. Half the questions were on the theatre, literature and music, and half were designated 'pot luck'.

Both quizzes had been carefully and skilfully worked out and tested our grey matter to the full. Helen Whittle won Helena's quiz on West Sussex places and Richard Howell won Susan's quiz.

We then moved on to 'a question and answer session', with Wendy very kindly taking the hot seat and taking any questions that we chose to throw at her. The questions all really centred on the next stage in the development of the record office, that is to say the introduction in the Strong Rooms of mobile shelves and the impact this would have on the availability of documents in the coming months.

What an enjoyable morning it was, and it was kind of Wendy to arrange for us to use WSRO despite the complications of a wedding taking place at the same time. Our thanks must go to Leigh who master-minded the whole operation, including remembering such details as the need to use pencils in the Search Room – she brought in a batch of her own to lend to us that morning. And thank you too to Helena and Susan for all the hard work involved in putting together such fascinating quizzes. Before we all left, a quick look ahead reminded us that we have a whole programme of interesting WSAS events lined up for 2016.

Richard Mant

Events Programme

Saturday February 13th Workshop - Photographic Archives at the Record Office

Come and find out about the many thousands of archival photographs held at the Record Office. Discover how these records are preserved and get tips on how to look after your own family photographs. Find out about digitisation and how digital images are preserved as permanent archives.

- 10.45-11.00 Arrival and coffee
11.00-12.00 Introduction to Photographic Archives at the Record Office
12.00-1.00 Break for lunch (you will need to bring a packed lunch or go out into the town)
1.00-2.30 Conservation and Digital Preservation of Photographs including a tour of these facilities at the Record Office.
2.30-3.15 Practical workshop for participants
3.15-4.00 Tea and feedback

Booking is essential as numbers are limited.

Sunday March 13th. A presentation by Dr Bill Martin on the Land Settlement Association in

Sidlesham will be held at the West Sussex Record Office in Chichester from 2.30 pm to 4.15 pm.

Using films to illustrate his talk, Dr Bill Martin will tell us how more than 100 unemployed miners and shipbuilders moved in 1936 from the North-East of England and South Wales to Sidlesham to begin new lives as market gardeners. Tea and Biscuits will be served during an interval in the presentation. You are advised to book promptly as numbers are limited.

Saturday, April 16th – the AGM will be held at the Fishbourne Centre, starting with coffee/tea on arrival at 11.30 am. The AGM will begin at 12.00 midday, to be followed by lunch and a presentation on ‘The Secrets of the High Woods’. Speakers will include Sarah Rance-Riley (Project Manager) and Dr Caroline Adams (Freelance archivist and historian).

The AGM papers and other details will be sent in March. If you should have questions that you wish raised at the AGM, we would appreciate it if they could be submitted by March 1st. This allows the committee an opportunity to investigate and provide a more comprehensive answer than might be possible if the query was raised at the AGM.

There may be 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.

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>Richard Howell - Acting Secretary</i>	<i>Gillian Thompson - Committee Member</i>
<i>Barrie Keech - Newsletter & Website</i>	<i>Holly Wright - Committee Member</i>
<i>Helena Millen - Information Manager</i>	<i>Helen Whittle - Journal Editor</i>
<i>Wendy Walker - County Archivist</i>	

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

Saturday February 13th - Workshop - Photographic Archives at the Record Office

Cost: £8 members £10 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 February 1st (if possible) to, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Please be sure to include your address, so that in the possible event we are over-booked we can return your cheque.

Sunday March 13th - A presentation by Dr Bill Martin on the Land Settlement Association to be held at WSRO beginning 2.30pm.

Costs £3 members £5 non-members

Names of members attending.....

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

Names of non-members.....

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

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

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