

# The Researcher

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

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



October 2016

No. 95

## WEST SUSSEX RECORD OFFICE AT 70

As our birthday year progresses many of you will have seen our 70th Anniversary booklet and the posters of our 70 archives around the walls of the Search Room. Hopefully you may also be following our anniversary blog online and may even have been tempted to follow us on Twitter and Facebook. We are featuring each of the 70 archives in detail in the blog with three being added each week. By the time that you read this there will be less than 15 more to go before we reach our Anniversary Open Day on Saturday 12 November. In that last week leading up to the Open Day we will be posting one a day as the excitement mounts!

We have been getting some great feedback on this and our guest bloggers have all been wonderful. When you read the booklet and follow the blog it really does highlight the astonishing extent and breadth of the West Sussex collections. Built up over the last 70 years they span over 1200 years of history and include

some real surprises along the way. Not many people would expect to find the letters of Lord Nelson or the music of Henry Purcell in amongst the archives at the West Sussex Record Office. Nor might you expect to learn about the fate of 19th century sailors in the Far East or the growth of sugar plantations on the banks of the Zambesi in Portuguese East Africa. All of these treasures have links to the county and sit alongside the vast array of records dating back over 1200 years that tell the history of West Sussex and its people.

**Celebrating 70 years**  
**West Sussex Record Office**  
**OPEN DAY**  
**SATURDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 2016**  
**10.00am - 4.00pm**  
Come and see behind the scenes! **Entry Free As Always!**  
At West Sussex Record Office  
3 Orchard Street Chichester PO19 1DD  
We safeguard West Sussex documents from 780 AD to the present day!  
**EXPLORE YOUR ARCHIVE**  
Telephone: 01243 753602 E-mail: [record.office@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:record.office@westsussex.gov.uk) visit: [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro)  
West Sussex Record Office @WestSussexRO  
blog: [www.westsussexrecordoffice.wordpress.com](http://www.westsussexrecordoffice.wordpress.com)

## Forthcoming Events

November 26<sup>th</sup> - WSAS Workshop entitled "Manors and their Records"

December 10<sup>th</sup> - WSAS Christmas Get Together

### AGM 2017

Please note that the date of next years AGM is **APRIL 22nd**

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

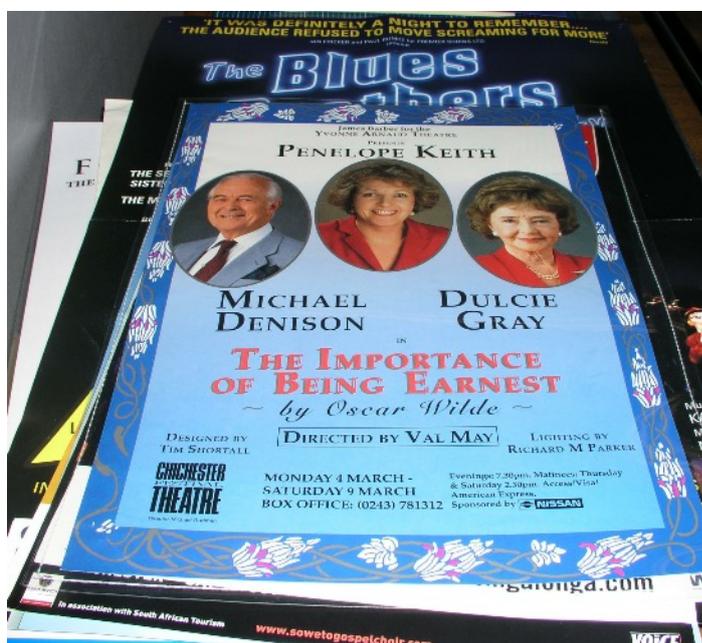
Our Open Day on Saturday 12 November promises to be a day to remember. The Record Office will be open from 10am-4pm when we will be joined by members of the West Sussex Archives Society and the Sussex Family History Group.

We will be offering a variety of activities and displays including tours of the office (behind the scenes in our strong rooms, conservation and digitisation work), archival film shows, family history advice desks, archive exhibitions and displays about our work and recent projects. Do come and join us, we would love to see you there.

Other news from the Record Office includes the appointment of Lucy Maguire as our new Preservation and Digitisation Assistant on the Queen Victoria Hospital Archive Project funded by the Wellcome Trust. Lucy introduces herself to you elsewhere in the newsletter and we are delighted to have her working alongside Andrew on this fascinating and important project.

Elsewhere two major archives have just become available on our online catalogue.

Details of the Chichester Festival Theatre Archive, 1960-2015, can now be found using the link below and you can search the catalogue to find out more about this wonderful collection. For those of you attending performances of James Graham's play, *This House*, at the Minerva this month you will also be able to read an article about the Festival Theatre Archive in the programme for this production. Of course this too will become part of the archive in due course.



A rather different type of archive has also been made accessible in the Search Room and online. The Shoreham Community Archive was brought together to record the community's response to the tragic event at the Shoreham Air Show on 22 August 2015. It includes over 1900 tributes from the Shoreham Tollbridge together with the books of condolence and newspaper reports. Conservation, digitisation and cataloguing work on the archive has been completed and the online catalogue now includes digital images of some of these records. It has been an important and at times very emotional archive to work on,



Part of the Shoreham Community Archive

one in which respect for the victims and their families has been at the forefront of our minds at all times. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those involved in this work including the volunteers at Shoreham, who helped to preserve the archive, and the Record Office volunteers and staff, who have worked so hard to complete all of this work.

The catalogues for both of these archives can be searched using the link below:

(<http://www.westsussexpast.org.uk/SearchOnline/default.aspx>)

Details of other up and coming talks and events at the Record Office are listed in the newsletter as well as all of the monthly WSAS events. As from 1 January we will be offering WSAS members a discount on tickets for the Record Office Tuesday Talks and Wednesday Workshops. With so much on offer do make a note in your diaries and come along.

In the meantime you can follow the build up to our Anniversary Open Day in our blog:

Blog: <https://westsussexrecordoffice.wordpress.com/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WestSussexRO>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WestSussexRO>

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## Introducing Lucy Maguire

My name is Lucy Maguire and I am the Preservation and Digitisation Assistant for the Record Office's Queen Victoria Hospital project. I grew up in Haywards Heath, and I have recently discovered that the Record Office holds my birth certificate, so beginning my position here has been a real homecoming! I graduated from the University of Exeter earlier this year with a BA in English, where I chose to write on theories of the personal archive for my dissertation project. I have undertaken placements in a variety of archives during my studies, which have given me the chance to work on collections ranging from Agatha Christie's correspondence to the early records of Exeter City Football Club. Like our Searchroom Assistant Holly, I have also worked with Exeter's Royal Albert Memorial Museum, and I'm excited to begin volunteering with Chichester's own Novium museum in the near future.

I'm thrilled to be working on the Queen Victoria Hospital project, and to be building on all of Andrew's good work. As part of my role I've been cleaning and packaging patient case files, as well as digitising the fascinating records of the Guinea Pig Club. While working through the files, it's easy to get drawn in to the histories of the patients and staff at East Grinstead – as I hope you'll all find out, they're stories that really deserve to be shared!

I'm so pleased to have found myself working with the team here at the Record Office, who have made me feel very at home, and I'm looking forward to seeing the project through together.



**NEWS FROM THE SUSSEX RECORD SOCIETY**  
***Littlehampton School Logbook 1871-1911* edited by Dr Ruth Brown**

**Sussex Record Society Vol.95, June 2016 ISBN 978 0 85445 077 0**  
**Price: £20 (£15 for SRS members) and available at the West Sussex Record Office or through the SRS website: <http://www.sussexrecordsociety.org/about-us/>**

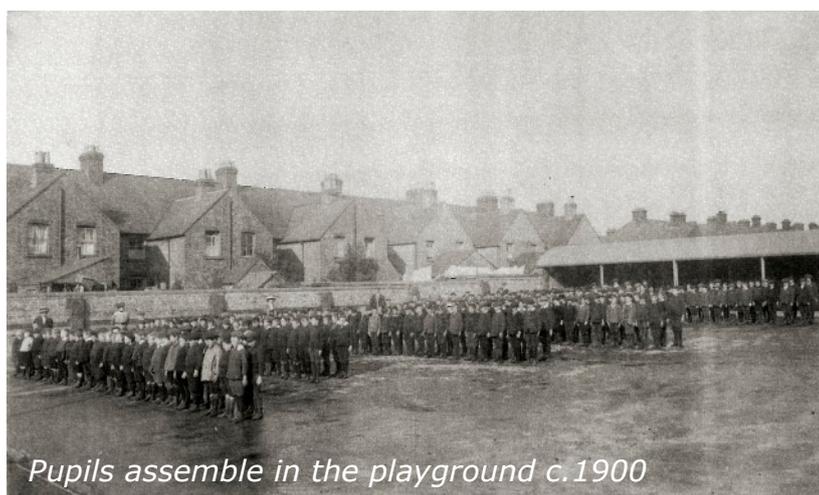
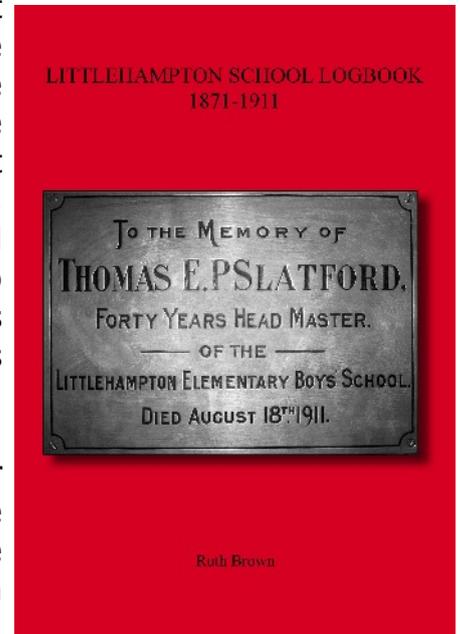
The latest volume from the Sussex Record Society has just been published and provides a fascinating insight into the life of a Victorian School in Littlehampton. Based on the school archives held at the West Sussex Record Office, the logbook provides a daily record of events meticulously kept by Thomas Slatford, the head of Littlehampton Boys' School, 1871-1911. Pupils, parents, teachers, managers and inspectors are all depicted, as are his unceasing battles to overcome the inadequacy of his buildings. His dedication as a teacher and his belief in the importance of education is shown in every page.

He was quick to take advantage of the new junior scholarships offered by the Technical Instruction Committee of West Sussex County Council from 1894 and all of the pupil-teachers who completed their apprenticeships with him did well.

The growth of tourism in Littlehampton is shown in Slatford's concern that children were allowed to run wild whilst their parents looked after paying visitors, one budding young entrepreneur truanting from school in order to sell strawberries on the beach. Tourism wasn't all bad however: one boy, whose family was host to the head of a firm of London architects, so impressed the gentleman with the standard of his homework that he was offered a job.

School trips, the arrival of the circus, Littlehampton Fair and Coronation festivities all feature alongside truancy, haymaking and harvesting, picking blackberries and primroses, childhood illnesses such as smallpox, typhoid and diphtheria, and the challenges of the weather.

The Sussex Record Society was set up in 1901 and publishes original records of the county's history from documents at the West Sussex Record Office, the East Sussex Record Office and in national institutions such as the British Library and The National Archives. Over 90 volumes have been published so far and further details of those in print, online publications and membership can be found on the SRS website above.



*Pupils assemble in the playground c.1900*

Wendy Walker

## Book Review

### ***Street Names of Bognor Regis: An Historical Gazetteer***

August 2016

**Ron Iden**

ISBN 978-0-9530893-1-4

*'Clues to a town's past can often be found in its street names. Whilst some of these may be inspired by national events, or proposed by the builder or developer, older names can indicate what came before, recalling notable visitors and landowners, former field names and features, or local occupations.'*

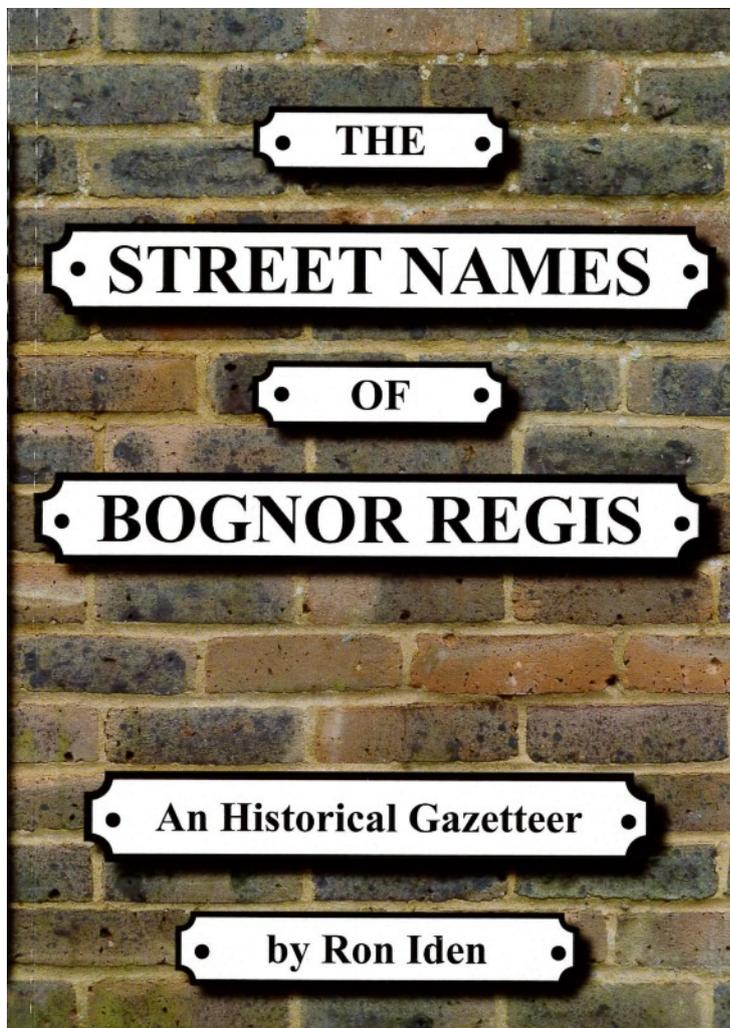
Despite its name, this book is much more than simply a gazetteer. Each street name entry tells a part of the colourful history of Bognor Regis and the surrounding area, from its beginning as Sir Richard Hotham's early seaside resort up to the present day development of the town.

It includes a wealth of prints, drawings, maps and photographs to illustrate the text, as well as a watercolour by the author's twin brother, renowned Sussex artist Peter Iden, to whom the book is dedicated.

Every entry also includes a grid reference to be used in conjunction with the useful map, to help guide the reader around the streets of the town. Appendices include a list of street names which have changed (vital when trying to locate ancestors in the census records!), road names proposed but not adopted and also a useful account of the distinction between what is considered a 'street' and a 'road'.

This is an indispensable guide for anyone interested in the history of Bognor Regis whether it is their home town, connected to their family history, or just intrigued to find out more about this early seaside resort and its fascinating history for the last 200 years.

*Available, price £7 from:* West Sussex Record Office (Chichester), Bognor Regis Museum, Kim's Bookshop (Arundel and Chichester) and Felpham Post Office as well as from the author at 10a Devonshire Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 2SX.



Susan Millard and Holly Wright

## 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. In the next few weeks, a new programme will be announced for 2017.

### *Tuesday Talks at WSRO*

WSAS members are also invited to our ongoing series of Tuesday talks, starting at 7pm. All three talks listed below include a display of original archives and more topics will be announced shortly.

- 25 October 2016: The Story of Shippam's - An illustrated talk by Nichola Court
- 29 November 2016: Graylingwell Hospital - a new illustrated talk on the West Sussex County Asylum by Katherine Slay
- 31 January 2017: Bygone Sussex - The photographs of George Garland and John Fletcher. An illustrated talk by Nichola Court

### *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 for coffee time sessions cost £7.50 and for Tuesday talks £8.00, which includes refreshments. Visit [www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro) and view the 'What's on at the Record Office' page for more details.

**\*\*\* Discount for WSAS members from 1 January 2017 \*\*\***

**Please tell us that you are a WSAS member when you book to benefit from  
£1 off the price of your ticket**

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### **Tour of Shoreham Airport**

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July we visited the oldest airport in the country – generally still known as Shoreham Airport but also more recently Brighton City Airport. Founded in 1910, Shoreham also has the distinction of being the oldest purpose built commercial airport in the world.

The Art Deco terminal building, designed by Stavers Tiltman opened in 1936. It is a Grade 2 listed building – as is the pre-war Municipal Hangar.

We met in the Visitor Centre and Museum from whence our enthusiastic guide led us along the roadway to the Real Flying Co No 4 hangar to see some vintage planes; including a pair of De Havilland Chipmunks from 1952; a Piper Super Cub dating from

1953 and a World War Two Harvard. There is also a canvas covered 'Stampe' bi-plane built in 1947. Our guide explained that the hangar floors have to be kept spotlessly clean to prevent any dirt getting into the engines.

The airfield is located in a difficult position being so near the river Adur and the coast. It is low lying so it can be muddy and it suffers from sea frets.

The Royal Flying Corps pilots were trained here in the early days. They

only received training of 10 hours of flying time before being sent to fight, often not returning. The minimum number of hours needed now for a basic private pilot's license is 25 hours under dual instruction.

Number 1 and Number 2 Squadrons of the Royal Canadian Air Force, were based here in World War One. During the Second World War, Air Sea Rescue Unit 277 Squadron operated from here, performing many rescues in the Channel. In the distance beyond the runway and half hidden in trees you can just make out the camouflaged shape of the WW2 Gunnery Training Dome. This is a listed building and one of only three surviving in the country. About seven hundred people are employed on the airfield, although only thirty of these actually work for the airport. This is because several

companies are located at Shoreham Airport, including a specialist campus sponsored by BA and Virgin for Northbrook College, where students are trained as automotive and aviation engineers. The renowned company Ricardo, founded by Harry Ricardo in 1915, has its headquarters here. The results of Sir Harry's work on fuel and reducing fuel consumption assisted Alcock and Brown to



*Art Deco Terminal Building*



*Gunnery Training Dome*

cross the Atlantic for the first time by aircraft in 1919.

We learnt that certain celebrities, such as Kylie Minogue and Barry Sheen have used Shoreham Airport in order to avoid the paparazzi. The Queen has also landed here when visiting Sussex.

The first flight from this airfield was in 1910, when pioneer Cecil Pashley flew his own Humming Bird aircraft. He had rented a shed and created the plane, then taught himself to fly. The landlord of the 'Sussex Pad', until recently an inn on the main road opposite the airfield, bet him a case of champagne that the Humming Bird wouldn't make it as far as the pub. It did – and Pashley won the champagne! Pashley is a very significant figure in early aviation and much of his archive has been acquired by West Sussex Record Office.

Shoreham also claims the world's first cargo flight. In 1911, a box of a dozen Osram light bulbs was flown all the way to Hove seafront, a distance of about six miles. This memorable flight was recreated, not without some bureaucratic difficulties, in 2011 and sponsored by Osram.

Unfortunately the low cloud base prevented planes from flying on the day of our visit so the skies were very quiet on a grey and drizzly afternoon. At the end of our fact

filled, two hour tour, some of us retired to the Humming Bird Restaurant for refreshment, by which time the cloud had lifted, the sun shone and the first planes began to prepare for take off.

Leigh Lawson



*Vintage Planes*



*Pre-war Municipal Hangar with planes*

## **BATTLE ABBEY AND THE VELLOMANIACS**

On Sunday 4 September, Christopher Whittick, Senior Archivist at the East Sussex Record Office in Brighton (The Keep), gave a presentation entitled " Battle Abbey and the Vellomaniacs – locating the monastic archives" to an audience of 20 WSAS members and guests at the West Sussex Record Office in Chichester.

Christopher has worked at the East Sussex Record Office for 38 years since 1977 and one of the projects in which he became particularly interested and intensely involved was the cataloguing of the Battle Abbey archive.

From the start of his talk it became clear that Christopher had carried out an intensive study of documents over the years to establish what had happened to the archive of Battle Abbey. His attention to detail regarding dates, the people involved and the transfer of ownership over the centuries provided evidence of his dedication to the project.

At its height, the Battle Abbey estate consisted of 15 manors in Sussex, seven in Kent and more in several other counties, besides income from various rectories. These produced mountains of estate records, as demesne farming (as opposed to renting the land out) produced a wealth of information. The earliest cartulary (now at Lincoln's Inn) dates from 1240. There was no systematic organisation of the records until the 13th century, but from then on it is possible to trace various efforts to manage the properties, and consequently sort out the documents attached. After the Dissolution, the properties were divided up, and many records went their separate ways, but the core of the archive stayed together. Christopher has pieced together what happened between then and 1923, when part of the Battle Abbey archive was sold to an American collector, Henry Edwards Huntington. Today the Battle Abbey archive is housed in the library which Huntington founded in San Marino, California. Since 1991, Christopher has been visiting the library to catalogue the documents and has only recently completed this enormous task.

The Battle Abbey estate since 1973 has been in the charge of a trust which acts for the Webster family who played a significant part in the history of Battle Abbey.

This talk was highly detailed and well-illustrated with images of many documents from the archive. The early documents were written in Latin and Christopher's explanations enabled us to understand the meaning and context of each one. We would like to thank him for coming to Chichester to give us this fascinating story of the archive.

Margaret Palacios

# Events Programme

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**Saturday November 26<sup>th</sup> WSAS Workshop entitled “Manors and their Records” to be held at WSRO.**

What was a manor? Was it the same as a village? What was copyhold or a terrier? Come and find out about manors in West Sussex and how their records were created. There are wonderful documents waiting to be discovered, and this workshop will help you to be able to use and interpret them for your own research.

10.45-11.00	Arrival and coffee
11.00-11.45	Manors and how they worked. How and where to find out about them.
11.45-12.00	Short break
12.00-12.45	The records – what they looked like, how to read and interpret them.
12.45–2.00	Break for lunch (you will need to bring a packed lunch or go out into the town)
2.00-3.30	Practical workshop for participants
3.30-4.00	Tea and feedback

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**Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup>.** The WSAS Christmas Get Together for members and their guests to be held at WSRO from 10.30 am to 12.30pm. Mince pies, coffee, wine, quizzes and a chance to ask those questions you have been itching to ask of the County Archivist. The event is free but we need to know numbers so please complete a booking form.



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## **Future Events in 2017**

**February** - We are hoping to visit Pallant House where we would be given a private tour of the old house, with a visit to the library and tea to follow

**March** - Once again the record office staff are kindly providing us with an all-day WSAS Workshop. We shall discover the theme of this workshop in the New Year.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> AGM** - more details to follow in the new year

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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>Richard Howell - Secretary</i>	<i>Helen Whittle - Journal Editor</i>
<i>Barrie Keech - Newsletter &amp; Website</i>	<i>Gillian Thompson - Committee Member</i>
<i>Holly Wright - Committee Member</i>	

*Wendy Walker - County Archivist*

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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**Saturday November 26<sup>th</sup> -WSAS Workshop entitled “Manors and their Records” to be held at WSRO.**

Cost: £8 members £10 non-members

Names of members attending.....

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

Names of non-members attending.....

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

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

Please return slip by 18th November to, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

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Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December - The WSAS Christmas Get Together for members and their guests, to be held at WSRO Chichester from 10.30am to 12.30pm. The event is free but we need to know numbers so please complete a booking form.

Names of members attending.....

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

Names of guests.....

Please return slip by December 1<sup>st</sup> to, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

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