

The Researcher



NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST SUSSEX ARCHIVES SOCIETY
THE FRIENDS OF THE WEST SUSSEX RECORD OFFICE

48th AGM—Billingshurst

An early spring day, an excellent location and a stimulating afternoon speaker; the disappointment was that only sixteen members of WSAS attended and fourteen sent their apologies. As a consequence, the formal 48th Annual General Meeting was not quorate.

The formal business was to appoint Helen Whittle to a further three-year term of office, 2022-25, and to accept the accounts for 2021 as verified by Sheen and Stickland.

Unless I hear to the contrary by the end of this month, April 2022, Helen's appointment will be deemed to have been ratified and the accounts, enclosed with this newsletter, accepted and the Charity Commissioners will be so notified.

My report, as your chairman, is included in this newsletter, as is that from the County Archivist. There is a summary of the talk by Kate Pugh, OBE., FSA., that was much appreciated by those members present.

At the meeting we expressed our thanks to Sophie Wood whose term of office has now ended. Sophie has been inspirational in guiding WSAS through social media and her professionalism, as editor of *The Researcher*, has established high standards which will be difficult to sustain.

Your committee is now reduced to ten, five of whom come to the end of their current period in office at our next AGM. A focus of our discussion during the year will be to explore the ways in which WSAS might manage its challenges.

I invite you to let me have your thoughts and ideas and, as you will read, *"remember, remember that engagement in voluntary activity is good for wellbeing."*

Philip Robinson

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday 14th May
WSAS WALK:
GRAYLINGWELL
HOSPITAL

Led by Greg and Katherine
Slay

Friday 24th June
WSAS VISIT
HAMMERWOOD PARK
Led by Richard Howell

**Saturday 24th
September**
WSAS TALK
ASPECTS OF
LANDSCAPE AND
COMMUNITY IN
WIVELSFIELD

Saturday 29th October
WSAS TALK
AMBERLEY ARTISTS

**Saturday 19th
November**
WSAS TALK
HILAIRE BELLOC

APRIL 2022
ISSUE 117

County Archivist's Report to the AGM

We are excited to be opening up our services fully once again. On 19 April the Search Room will be open from Tuesdays to Fridays with full seating availability, no advance bookings necessary and no lunch time closures. We will still be asking people to wear masks and we will retain the Perspex screens on the staff desks. With the advent of the warmer weather we will be able to open the windows and have a regular circulation of fresh air. We will then be phasing in our Saturday openings and the very welcome return of our volunteers.

We will be holding our first on site event on Tuesday 26 April at 7pm when Alan Green will be talking to us about Chichester Canal, which is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year. During the pandemic we had regular audiences for our online events including our Tuesday talks and West Sussex Unwrapped webinars. Whilst we are really looking forward to welcoming you all back to our Tuesday Talks at the Record Office we also don't want to lose our online audiences so we will be live-streaming Alan's talk on 26 April as a pilot. In this way we will be able to open up the event to those in Chichester as well as those living further afield.

Archives have continued to come in despite the restrictions of lockdown and in 2021 we received over 170 accessions ranging in date from 1731-2021. These included the typescript Great War Journal of a Visit to the Front, October 1918, by Edward Heron-Allen, which describes his dispatch to the Western Front as part of his work for the propaganda department of the War Office; a letter book of Robert Raper, 1759-1770, who had a legal practise on South Carolina and whose descendants went on to establish the firm of Rapers in Chichester; a map produced by the WI showing crops grown in Sussex during the Second World War; the Tom Creedy photographic archive featuring Selsey in the 19th and 20th centuries; the research papers of the late Dr Annabelle Hughes, who will be known to many of you and whose loss we mourned in 2020; a 20th century collection of books and pamphlets relating to the Oxford and St George's Jewish Youth Clubs, founded by relatives of the Sterns and who held annual camps on Highdown Hill at Goring-on Sea, and whose alumni included John Sopel, the BBC correspondent; records relating to the HIV and AIDS charity Avert, founded by Annabel and Peter Kanabus in Horsham in 1986. The charity was set up to produce educational publications and fund HIV-related educational, social and medical research. It is now an international organisation, based in Brighton, using digital communications to build health literacy in AIDs and sexual health.

In addition to the archives which our depositors continue to entrust to our care, we have also been successful in acquiring documents that have come up for sale at auction houses and online. The Record Office does not have a budget for buying documents but thanks to the generosity of WSAS members and those of the Sussex Family History Group, as well as grants very kindly made to us by the Friends of the National Libraries, we have been able to add a number of significant archives the collections. Over the last year these have included a map of Upper Nappers Coppice, Fernhurst, 1859; Baybridge Canal Archives, 1825-1875; and a postcard album, 1907-1912, compiled by Lieutenant Colonel Leonard Charles Rudolph Messel, who

served in the Royal Sussex Regiment and lived at Nymans. Most recently we have been able to purchase a map of Steepwood Farm, West Chiltington, 1792; and an album of photographs of a gang of workmen laying a water main along Yapton Road at Barnham in 1911, seemingly with not a health and safety regulation in sight. WSAS plays such an important role in helping us to preserve these archives in the county and I am very grateful to you all.

Finally I would just like to look ahead to future events and the work that we will be doing over the next year. On 11 June we will be holding our international Transatlantic Ties Symposium at the University of Chichester marking the end of our three-year research project, funded by The Andrew W Mellon Foundation in New York. We will be showcasing our findings and exploring the many fascinating connections between West Sussex and the United States through the wealth of historical resources in the archives. Emily Sneff will be joining us as the keynote speaker. She is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in the Harrison Ruffin Tyler Department of History at William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Before graduate school, she was the Research Manager of the Declaration Resources Project at Harvard University. In collaboration with Danielle Allen, she conducted research on the Sussex Declaration, held at West Sussex Record Office. The overall programme for the day is currently being finalised and invitations will be going out in April.

We will be appointing a project archivist in the summer to start work on our New Towns Project, cataloguing and preserving the extensive archive of Crawley New Town together with the Freddie Laker Archive that we took in prior to lock down. We have also just been awarded a grant for a two-year project to carry out a survey of HIV and AIDS archives in England and Wales. This follows on from the deposit of the Avert archives that I spoke about earlier on. Some of these archives are already held by archival repositories but others are still in private hands, with individuals, charities and campaign groups, and together they represent a rich research resource for the history of science and medicine as well as social and cultural change.

Our work therefore continues to be as diverse and rewarding as the archives themselves. I look forward to sharing more of this with you in the year ahead and thank you all for your support of the rich and varied West Sussex archives.

Wendy Walker

Forthcoming events at the Record Office

Tuesday Talks

26 April: **The 3rd Earl of Egremont's worst investment—or how Chichester got its canal** by Alan H. J. Green. Tickets £7.00 for WSAS members (Free for those attending via Zoom)

To attend in person, phone 01243 753602 to book and pay. To attend online book via [Eventbrite](#) using the link in the Record Office "What's on" page.

Date for the Diary:

11 June: **Transatlantic Ties Symposium**, University of Chichester,
Visit www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro and view the 'What's on at the Record Office' page for more details

Chairman's Report to the AGM

The year of the chrysalis, a year that saw WSAS gradually emerge from lockdown. At first hesitatingly, as Susan Millard led a walk around Oving with a glimpse of graffiti from the civil war. Richard Mant tested the resilience of WSAS members as a deluge drowned early footsteps before the calm delight of the Wey and Arun canal. Alan Green contrasted neglect with awe in Chichester's Priory Park, the vandalism to the former tea rooms with the emerging discoveries of archaeological investigations that supported the theory of sophistication in its Roman villas.

These beginnings were confirmed in September in our first 'in person' inside event when Richard Howell compiled a team of speakers who provided a rich, diverse and entertaining exploration of West Sussex Country Houses from the Montagues at Cowdray, through the Sherleys of Wiston to the Beales of Standen. Our thanks to Dr Caroline Adams, Dr. Janet Pennington, Dr. Sue Berry, Dr. Anne Stutchbury and Adrian Tinniswood, OBE., for their vivid illustration of continuity and change as 'old money' gave way to new and adapted to shifting cultural norms. I venture that none of the participants arrived in Midhurst expecting an exegesis from Elizabeth I to the Beatles.

This confidence held for the two final talks of the year John Hilary telling the story of the Messel family at Nymans and Dr. John Godfrey that of Will Longstaff, a celebrated Australian war artist of the First World War who died in Littlehampton in 1953. Each talk was excellent and each, in Balcombe and in Littlehampton, attracted members of the local community. The WSAS object of arousing and stimulating interest in the history of our county was palpable.

During the year, *West Sussex History* No. 89 was published with articles from Amberley to Yapton illustrating the depth of scholarship in the history of West Sussex. Again, Helen Whittle is to be thanked for attracting and editing a range of articles. The Researcher, our quarterly newsletter to our 149 members, continued to report on activities that had taken place, keep members up to date with the Record Office and advertise future events. Our thanks to Sophie Wood whose template will continue as Sophie stands down from the committee following the AGM.

A frustration of the year was access to the Record Office; limited by Covid regulations, the imperative of maintaining safe conditions for staff, and users together with ensuring the Registrar's office could continue its essential registrations. A balance had to be maintained against a shifting public health environment and competing priorities. The plan for the coming year is a return to 'normal' and the continuation of exploration of the rich resources held at our record office.

The challenge for WSAS is to continue to offer a programme that enriches and enlivens understanding of the history of our county. Events are in the diary for the remainder of 2022, our quarterly newsletter will be issued, and we can look forward to the 90th edition of *West Sussex History*.

All this depends on the energies, efforts and enthusiasm of your committee. It is a committee of thirteen with at present four vacancies. At our next AGM, 2023, five members come to the end of their period of office, (*some of whom have served the committee for many a year*). It would be unreasonable to expect the remaining four people to continue to offer the programme that we have enjoyed this year. We face an existential threat, without more support serious consideration will need to be given as to how we are able to fulfil the charitable objectives that we have set.

Philip Robinson

Keynote Talk at the AGM

Kate Pugh, OBE., FSA., “Our heritage post Covid: The long and the short of it”

The message from Kate was to recall that charities do not disappear, though may become dormant, to remain optimistic and remember, remember that engagement in voluntary activity is good for well-being. “*Places look after people as people look after places.*”

We were privileged that Kate had been the Chief Executive of The Heritage Alliance, a charity that brings together over a hundred heritage organisations. Currently she is a non-executive Director for Culture at the UK National Commission for UNESCO, with a particular focus on World Heritage sites. A career that is local, national and international, that informed her perspective of the present challenges for heritage.

Appropriate for a historian she began with a reminder of where we were, pre-Covid, a heritage sector embracing three meta principles:

- ◆ broadening the concept of heritage and ensuring greater democratisation
- ◆ protecting heritage through planning and funding
- ◆ promoting awareness of the benefits from heritage, financially and psychologically, recognising the importance and strength of volunteers.

What could possibly go wrong in a sector secure on a three-legged stool of public funding, earned income and donations?

And then came covid, bringing with it a loss of the volunteer base, a loss of income and shrivelling of donations. This to a sector that had benefited by £8bn from the national lottery but where, according to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, 98 percent of organisations had been impacted within the first three weeks of the pandemic.

The security of tradition has given way to the fragility of unpredictability. The British government has supported the sector, but through allowing the drawdown of future funding, with no guarantees that the funding gap will be replaced.

Kate referred to a report from the Office of National Statistics (16th March 2022) on public perception of the post pandemic setting. A third of people in Great Britain felt it would take more than a year for life to return to normal, with those disabled or struggling financially more pessimistic of that return. Of relevance to WSAS, a third of those aged 16 to 24 reported avoiding crowded places, compared to half of those aged 25 to 34 but 71 per cent of those aged 70 and over.

The impact on the heritage sector had been immediate; in finance, participation, sources of revenue, volunteering and the prevailing uncertainty over the behaviour of the public, post pandemic. There had been some amelioration through digital media, the growth in webinars (a pandemic word), but these could not supplant the sense of awe and wonder that so often accompanies physical presence within heritage.

Kate referred to a report from The New Economic Forum on five ways to wellbeing, beginning with a symbol of an evocative handshake, representing 'connect'. Heritage is a handshake across time, the past is ever present, a stimulus to thought, emotion and deeper understanding of the human condition, The four other symbols represented calls to be active, take notice, keep learning and to give of time, enthusiasm and skills as well as money.

Our heritage post pandemic—the future



The 5 ways to
Well being.
New Economics
Foundation

Kate illustrated this with examples of people who had experienced the benefits of heritage and wellbeing, increasing confidence, enhancing opportunities and discovering new skills. All this coming together in reasons to 'celebrate' in the rich diversity of heritage open days that joyous access to so much of our heritage that has been curtailed throughout the pandemic.

The talk was followed by an enthusiastic discussion amongst members, giving examples of heritage joy and of the snakes within planning guidelines including Certificates of Immunity against listing being applied for by developers who are aware that the listing process has been instigated for buildings on sites they have acquired. It was also observed that general relaxations of planning controls within the National Planning policy Framework are being made to the detriment of heritage.

Philip Robinson

Snippets! - a proposed regular item of finds and searches that link archive users.

An opportunity for members to exchange research problems, requests and archival discoveries that would be of interest to others. It might look like the following?

Email the editor at contact@wsas.co.uk if the idea appeals

New (for example)

17 Who was the vicar of Little Scratchington in the 1450s? The usual sources seem not to have the information.

18 Georgina Smyth has found a large bundle of records of the first primary school in East Hollett. If anyone is interested, please contact the editor.

19 For his PhD Parminder Singh is researching the Punjabi community in West Sussex from 1914 onwards. Other than newspapers what sources can members think of that might help?

20 Does anyone know whether a history of Doddleton has been written, whether published or not?

21 Sam Banks has found that the new digitised version of the Merchant Marine database on the National Archives website includes individuals who had been missing before. She recommends checking it if you are looking for Sussex mariners of the period.

Responses (for example)

3 One of our WSAS committee members has replied to say that they were all destroyed when part of the County Council moved premises in the 1960s.

6 Louise Cranton reports that these fields were in the parish of Storrington, and that at least two of them are still so named.

11 An anonymous member has stated that it was on 24 July 1937, and that the West Sussex Gazette published an article about it around that time.

WSAS Committee

<i>Philip Robinson</i>	<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Helen Whittle</i>	<i>Journal Editor</i>
<i>Leigh Lawson</i>	<i>Vice Chairman</i>	<i>Kim Fleming</i>	<i>Committee Member</i>
<i>Richard Howell</i>	<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Dr. John Godfrey</i>	<i>Committee Member</i>
<i>Jane Mant</i>	<i>Treasurer, & Membership Secretary</i>	<i>Jeff Staniforth</i>	<i>Committee Member</i>
<i>Susan Millard</i>	<i>Information Manager</i>		
<i>Wendy Walker</i>	<i>County Archivist</i>		

All contactable using: contact@wsas.co.uk

Further Society information is available at the website: www.wsas.co.uk

Facebook: [West Sussex Archives Society](#) | Instagram: [@westsussexarchivessociety](#)

Local History News from across West Sussex

Storrington and District Museum

3rd May 2022 at 07:30 pm Talk: Sussex Green Living by Carrie Cort

Venue: Old School, School Lane, Storrington RH20 4LL.

Members £5. Non Members £6. All welcome

Corrie Cort is the Chief Executive of Sussex Green Living, a fast growing, multi-award environmental awareness and education charity. With the help of volunteers, they run the Sussex Green Hub, the Horsham Repair Café, Sussex Green Ideas and their Youth Eco Forum. Green living is a hot topic, so come and hear their aims, activities and lessons we can all use.

Carrie Cort set up Sussex Green Living out of concern for the way we humans are treating the planet which sustains us. With motherhood in 2008 came concern about environmental sustainability and a burning desire to learn how we can live more environmentally friendly lifestyles, in harmony with nature.

She says she is not an expert, just an ordinary person who is on a greening journey and wanting to pass on what she's learnt to others. Let's all make some simple changes, become more resilient and try to lead simpler, less materialistic and consumerist way of life

Falklands War – 40th Anniversary

Thousands of veterans, civilians, and bereaved families will be invited to attend an event at the National Memorial Arboretum on Tuesday 14th June to mark 40 years since the end of the conflict. The Royal British Legion commemorations will focus on the broad range of military and civilian involvement in all aspects of the Falklands campaign, which was unprecedented in modern times.

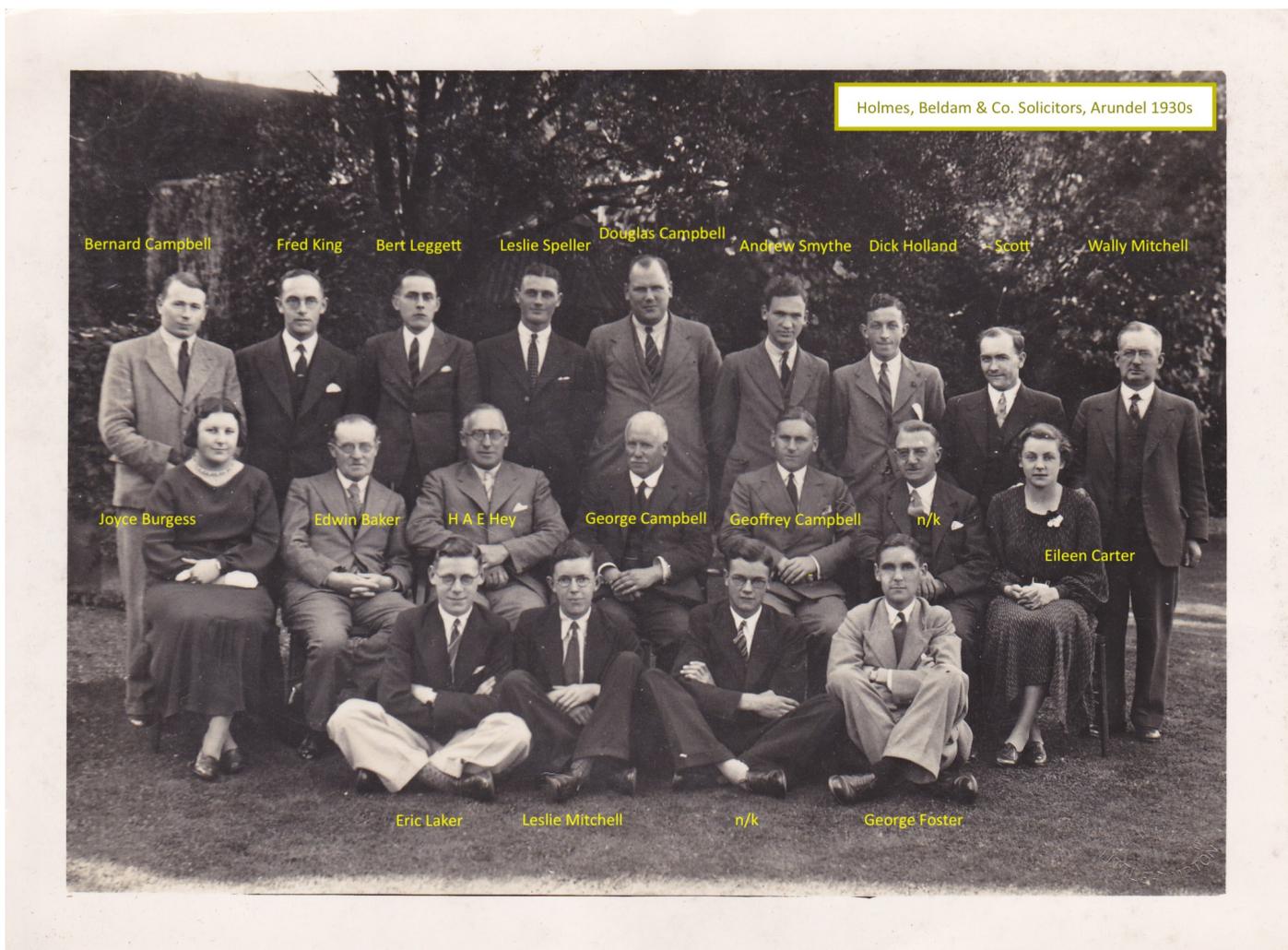
The Falklands Conflict started on 2 April 1982 and was the first military action since the Second World War that utilised all elements of the Armed Forces.

The conflict lasted 74 days, during which seven ships were lost to enemy action, nine aircraft were shot down, and 255 British personnel lost their lives. Their names are all inscribed on the Armed Forces Memorial at the Arboretum.

The **Storrington Branch** of the Royal British Legion will lay a wreath at the War Memorial at St Mary's Church at 10.00 a.m. on **Tuesday 14th June**. All are welcome.

One of Storrington Museum's Committee Members, Richard Shenton, who fought in the Falklands War, is going to provide his memories to the Museum in the next few months. Any other veterans, who wish to do the same, should contact 'storringtonmuseum@hotmail.com'. The Museum is also capturing memories of others who lived in the village or its surrounding area so that this knowledge is retained for posterity; again, please contact the Museum if you would like your reminiscences to be captured.

A surprise in the 1939 Register



Years ago, when I first started using census returns for research, my father, Leslie Speller, liked to tell me that he had taken a census at Arundel Castle obtaining the occupants' details from the butler.

Upon leaving Worthing Boys High School in April 1931 he had secured a clerical position with Messrs. Holmes, Beldam & Co. solicitors in Arundel. He cycled there from his home in Littlehampton each day. As time went on, he assisted Mr. Herbert Hey who was also the Town Clerk of Arundel and Clerk to the County Justices.

I had always assumed my father meant that he was an enumerator for the 1931 Census, which we will never be able to see as it was destroyed in a fire. However it occurred to me only recently that it was more likely to have been the 1939 Register.

I searched for Arundel Castle in the Register on Find My Past and to my delight all the entries for the Castle, as well as thirty-two pages of the Register, are completed in my father's distinctive hand. He initialed the last page of his first book and continued into nine pages of a second book. Apart from the Castle he took details from all the households in High Street, Tarrant Street, Maltravers Street and seven others. He would have been twenty-four years old at the time.

Leigh Lawson

Leigh's father is in the back row, 4th from the left

Events Programme

Saturday 14th May 2022

Graylingwell Hospital: a walk in the grounds reviewing the history and comparing new with old through photographic records and extracts from the archives.

2.15 pm—The Pavilion, Connolly Way, Graylingwell Park, Chichester PO19 6DA

Opened in 1897 as the West Sussex County Asylum. The walk, led by Greg and Katherine Slay, experts on the history of the hospital will take about 90 minutes, level ground, no stiles, no muddy sections. It will end at the recently refurbished Graylingwell Chapel with its stunning reredos, a shining cross.

Parking needs to be booked through Just Park, (justpark.com or call 01453 488020) Parking Location ID is 524810 cost for up to 3 hours £2.60

Alternative parking Oaklands Pavilion (Chichester Rugby Club) corner of Wellington Road and College Lane charge £1.50 for up to 3 hours. Park using MIPermit Location indicator 701050 – 5-minute walk to the Pavilion along Connolly Way.

Friday 24th June 2022

Hammerwood Park: an exclusive tour for WSAS members and their guests of the house and gardens.

1.30 pm for 2.00pm start, Hammerwood Park, East Grinstead, RH19 3QE

If using satellite navigation system type in “Hammerwood Park” rather than the post code.

Hammerwood Park was built in 1792 by the architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764-1820), for John Sperling as a hunting lodge. At aged twenty eight it was Latrobe’s first principal commission and he would become the architect of the White House and US Capitol Building in Washington D.C., and many others (including Ashdown House, near Forest Row).

One of the first examples of Greek Revival architecture in the United Kingdom, the house was converted into flats in the 1940s and later purchased by Led Zeppelin. Rescued from dereliction by the Pinnegar family in 1982, Hammerwood remains one of Britain’s best-kept secrets, an architectural gem, and a family home.

WSAS Event Booking Form

Saturday 14th May 2022

Graylingwell Hospital

2.15 pm The Pavilion, Connolly Way, Graylingwell Park, Chichester PO19 6DA

Cost: members £3, non-members £5

Names of members attending: _____

Tel No _____ Email: _____

Names of non-members attending: _____

Tel No: _____ Email: _____

Amount paid (cheques made payable to WSAS): _____

Please return slip by Friday 13th May 2022

Friday 24th June 2022

Hammerwood Park

Time 1.30 pm for 2.00 pm start Hammerwood Park, East Grinstead, RH19 3QE

Cost: members £12 non-members £15 (includes a "voluntary donation" of £10 per head)
refreshments included,

Names of members attending: _____

Tel No _____ Email: _____

Names of non-members attending: _____

Tel No: _____ Email: _____

Amount paid (cheques made payable to WSAS): _____

Please return slip by Friday 17th June 2022

WEST SUSSEX ARCHIVES SOCIETY

THE FRIENDS OF WEST SUSSEX RECORD OFFICE

Saturday 14 May at 2:15pm

GRAYLINGWELL HOSPITAL WALK

A walk in the grounds reviewing the history and comparing new with old through photographic records and extracts from the archives Led by Greg and Katherine Slay

Cost: members £3 non-members £5

Meet at The Pavilion, Connolly Way, Grayingwell Park, Chichester PO19 6DA

Book parking through justpark.com or call 01453 488 020 Use Parking Location ID 524810

Friday 24 June at 2:00pm

HAMMERWOOD PARK

An exclusive tour of the house and garden for WSAS members and their guests

Built in 1792 as a hunting lodge, one of the finest examples of Greek Revival in the UK Rescued from dereliction by the Pinnegar family in 1982, Hammerwood remains one of Britain's best kept secrets, an architectural gem and a family home

Cost: members £12 non-members £15 includes refreshments

Hammerwood Park, East Grinstead, RH19 3QE

booking forms in *The Researcher* and on the website

Enquiries email contact@wsas.co.uk

Website wsas.co.uk

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