

The Researcher



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

County Archivist's report

It was very good to see so many of you at the 50th AGM last month and to share with you some of the highlights and activities of the last twelve months, including the 50th Anniversary of WSAS culminating in our Open Day on 25 November. It was a wonderful way to say Happy Birthday to WSAS.

We have seen a number of staffing changes over the last 12 months, welcoming Vicky Evans as the Search Room Archivist in June, whilst saying goodbye to Susie Duffin who retired in July. Ian Pennicott will be retiring this month and both he and Susie have spent many years helping people with their research. In Ian's case we have a double debt of gratitude as he has been responsible for printing the WSAS Newsletter. Our most recent addition to the staff is Sorcha Riby, our new Conservation Assistant, who will be with us until August working on the papers of the Consistory Court of the Archdeaconry of Chichester as part of our Ordinary Lives Revealed Project.

In 2023 we received 206 accessions with archives dating from 1453 to the present day including deeds, maps, diaries, photographs, oral history recordings, records of schools, parishes, parish councils, the WI, the Royal Sussex Regiment and many more. Taking pride of place amongst these recent additions is the archive of the Great House Estate, West Hoathly and the manor of West Hoathly Rectory, 1453-1964, and the 1939-1940 diary of Hugh de Sélincourt, both of which were purchased with the aid of contributions from WSAS, the SFHG, the Friends of the National Libraries and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund.

Other new additions to the West Sussex archives included costume designs and prop drawings by John and Ann Bloomfield for Chichester Festival Theatre from *Peer Gynt* in 1970 and *Cyrano de Bergerac* in 1975.

We received a photograph album kept by Lady Violet Beaumont whilst Slindon House was being used as an officers' hospital during the First

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

16 May

Highdown Gardens,
Worthing

BOOK NOW

8 June

St Mary's House,
Bramber

BOOK NOW

13 July

Arundel walk

BOOK NOW

28 September

Conference

KEEP THE DATE

**April 2024
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World War. It includes photographs and signatures of many of the officers who were convalescing at the hospital as well as the nursing staff. There are photographs of two sisters, Marcia and Juliet Mansel, who worked for the Red Cross before volunteering to serve closer to the front lines in French hospitals on the Western Front. Both were awarded the Croix de Guerre for their service. The album also includes battlefield photographs of the Somme, personally presented to Lady Beaumont by Lieutenant King of the 'N' anti-aircraft battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery.

We received a collection relating to Solomon Wine, fruit and potato wholesaler of Littlehampton. Solomon Wine (originally Schliania Wiewiora or Solomon Viner) was a Polish Jew who emigrated to the UK with his wife in the early 1900s. He had settled in Littlehampton by 1906. The collection includes deeds relating to the warehouse in Littlehampton and correspondence and bills relating to the running of the business, including during the Second World War. Sadly some of his family remained in Poland during that time and were killed in the Holocaust.

This year we have also received the Betty and Tommy collection comprising the archive of Myra Thomas ('Tommie') and Betty Hakesley of Worthing dating from 1920s-1990s. They met in the 1940s, were in the WAAFs and lived together in Worthing for some decades. Betty appears to have trained as a photographer when in the WAAF and there are albums of military photos. They also have a long link with the West Sussex Territorial Army. The collection was found during a house clearance in 2017 when its importance was recognised in terms of LGBTQ history.

Our work on the New Jerusalems Project has been continuing and Alice has just finished cataloguing the extensive archive of Crawley New Town Development Corporation, 1946-1982 (CNT) which is now up on our online catalogue. It comprises over 3000 records including minutes, board papers, terriers, maps and plans and over 800 photographs. Chris has been busy working on our HIV and AIDS Archives Project. Having completed his questionnaire work and desk-based research he is now doing a series of sites visits to see records held by organisations, institutions and people across the country.

I am hugely grateful to all of our staff for the work that they do each and every day to look after the archives and make them accessible for everyone to use. I am also grateful to our wonderful volunteers and the contribution that they make to the Record Office and to our depositors who enable us to preserve their archives for future generations. I would also like to thank WSAS for the way in which you have supported us over the last 50 years and look forward to the next 50 years to come.

Finally I would just like share with you one other piece of work that I have been involved with because I think it illustrates the very real importance of archives in peoples' lives and why archives matter. For the last year I have been working on a project with CALGG colleagues (Chief Archivists in Local Government Group) looking at how the records of adopted and care-experienced people are created, managed, preserved and accessed with a view to drawing up best practice guidance.

We were fortunate to get a TNA Networks for Change Fund grant together with contributions from individual Record Offices and the Welsh Government. The new guidance was launched last month at the Local Government Association (LGA) Headquarters in Smith Square in Westminster and is now up on the Archives and Records Association (ARA) website together with the research report.

Archivists, records managers, data protection and social care professionals, as well as care-experienced and adopted people, all took part in the project and attended the launch. We were also joined by representatives and stakeholders from across the sector including the Information Commissioner's Office, the LGA, TNA, OFSTED, the Welsh Government and the Shadow Children's Minister, Helen Hayes. Tim Loughton (MP for East Worthing and Shoreham and Co-Vice Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group

on Care-Experienced Children and Young People) spoke at the event, and Baroness Young of Hornsey has also been providing her support and written a foreword to the guidance. We also heard from people who spoke about their own experiences of accessing their records, which made it a very powerful event.

These are records that people care passionately about and that have the power to change lives. We have enquiries from people trying to find information about their family background and birth families, and people submit Subject Access Requests to WSCC on a regular basis. I often say that our strong rooms are full of stories waiting to be told but in cases like this we are helping people to uncover their own stories. This more than anything else highlights the importance of what we all do.

[Care and Adoption Records — Archives & Records Association](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xs28tczL3yA>

Wendy Walker, County Archivist

West Sussex Record Office opening hours

Following a public consultation the revised Search Room opening hours from 1 May will be Tuesdays to Fridays, 9.15am to 4.45pm.

Over the last six months we have carried out a review of our opening hours, looking at patterns of use both before and after the pandemic. Overall we have seen a reduction in the number of people visiting the Search Room, whilst at the same time there has been a steady rise in the demand for online access and resources. Far fewer people are visiting the Record Office on Saturdays than during the week. The use of the Search Room on Saturdays was declining before the pandemic, but this decrease in usage has become more marked over the last three years. We will therefore be changing our opening hours as from 1 May.

We are using this as an opportunity to rebalance our resources. We want to ensure that we continue to support our customers who want to visit the Search Room in person, whilst also meeting the growing demand for virtual access. The change to our opening hours will make more staff time available to do this. We will be embarking on a programme of work that will include cataloguing, digitisation, preservation and packaging. We will also be adding more images to our online resources through our new website, which will enable us to make much more of our content available in this way.

We all know that nothing can replace the experience of using original archives, being able to look at and work with documents that were written many centuries ago. However we also recognise that we have audiences across the UK and all over the world who want to access and engage with West Sussex archives. We know how special our archives are and want to share them with as many people as possible whilst continuing to welcome you all in the Search Room.

Wendy Walker, County Archivist
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Chairman's Report

It is hard to believe that it is the best part of a year since I took on the role of chairman at last year's AGM at Sullington. In my first report for The Researcher I noted that the AGM had been the first 'normal' AGM since we had held it in Boxgrove in 2019. Following that we had the epidemic which meant we had to cancel our AGM in 2020, our AGM in 2021 was held via Zoom, and in 2022, because a number of members including myself had gone down with Covid, we had insufficient numbers to form a quorum.

Hopefully Covid is now behind us, but elsewhere we view a troubled world. Two years on from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, that war continues with no end in sight, and since October we have had the war in Gaza, bringing protests on to the streets of Britain. Soon there will be a general election and a Presidential election in America, and one senses a shift in the tectonic plates of history. However against this background WSAS celebrated its 50th Anniversary. In June we were treated to a walk around the historic town of Midhurst, led by Dr Tim Hudson. During the same month, Leigh and Richard Lawson kindly opened their historic bakehouse behind their cottage in Broadwater as part of Worthing Heritage Week and very kindly donated the £400 proceeds from the opening to WSAS. In July we had a fascinating visit to Lancing College Chapel, which most of us have viewed from a distance as we travel along the busy A27 but probably few have had the opportunity to visit. The story of the chapel was very much brought to life by Dr Janet Pennington in a way that only Janet can.

In September we spent the day at the Tangmere Museum, learning about the history of the former RAF station and seeing the impressive collection of exhibits they hold. In November we had the amazing Open Day at the Record Office to celebrate the Society's 50th anniversary. This was a truly memorable day and Wendy and her team had pulled out all the stops. Over 160 people came through the door that day for various activities such as behind the scenes tours, seeing vintage films, and story boards telling the story of the development of the Society since its inception 50 years ago. There was also the opportunity to view documents from the WSRO collection that had been laid out on display. Taking pride of place were many of the items that WSAS had helped purchase over the years, thus helping to preserve them for future generations of historians. This event was soon followed by our annual Christmas Get-Together when we were treated to three excellent 5-minute talks by Philip Robinson, Tony Wakehurst and Alan Green. Last month, for our first gathering of the year we were treated to a fascinating talk at Slindon on the history of film in West Sussex by Ellen Cheshire.

So, fifty years on from its founding, WSAS is still very much alive and we have another programme of interesting events lined up for the coming year. However we still need new members. At the beginning of the year our membership stood at around 150 which included joint memberships and group memberships. Whilst we have been able to welcome a number of new members, unfortunately we have lost some along the way for a variety of reasons. We were all saddened to hear of the death of our Vice President, Alan Readman, who had been a stalwart of both the Record Office and the Society for a great number of years.

As a Society I feel we have much to offer to anyone who has an interest in their local history. In addition to the varied programme of events, we also provide our excellent quarterly newsletter and our annual journal, West Sussex History, which has won a number of awards over the years. And as the Open Day in November highlighted, we have enabled the Record Office to purchase many documents that might have otherwise gone elsewhere.

For the Society to prosper I do feel we need more members. With this in mind we are going to introduce a new scheme called 'Bring Along A Friend'. If anyone who is planning to attend any of our events knows someone whom they think might be interested in that event and might wish to join the Society, then bring them along for up to two events at the same rate as members pay. In addition, with their permission 4

give us their e-mail address and we will send them a current copy of The Researcher and the one that follows. Who better to 'sell' the Society than the members themselves?

We are also planning to work more closely with other local societies, because, at the end of the day, we all share the same common interests; and we have recently been approached by FoTKA (our East Sussex colleagues) to reinstate the joint meetings that we used to enjoy before Covid brought things to an abrupt halt.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Wendy Walker, our County Archivist, for all her support throughout the past year. Wendy is the epitome of quiet efficiency, and her support and advice has been much appreciated this past year. Thanks also to her team at the Record Office, who are always on hand to lend a hand or give advice.

I would also like to thank my fantastic committee, who between them put so much into the Society, working hard behind the scenes ensuring that everything runs as smoothly as possible.

Finally, as we embark on our second half-century, a special thank you, the members, for your continued support, for without you there would be no Society.

Richard Howell

A quicker way to book WSAS events

As an alternative to posting a cheque and the booking forms printed in The Researcher (see pp14-15), it can be more convenient to book and pay by bank transfer to:

West Sussex Archives Society, account no. 10942073, sort code 20-20-62

When using this method it is essential to email contact@wsas.co.uk to let us know that you have made the transfer, specifying the event/s being booked and naming those attending.

(And WSAS members are allowed a discount for WSRO organised events, as listed on p13).

WSAS Committee

Following the March 2024 AGM the membership of the committee remains the same.

Carol Brinson

Kim Fleming

Dr John Godfrey

Richard Howell, chairman

Mike Kipling

Leigh Lawson, secretary

Jane Mant, treasurer, membership secretary

Susan Millard

Wendy Walker, county archivist

Helen Whittle, journal editor

All are contactable at: contact@wsas.co.uk

Further Society information is on the website: www.wsas.co.uk and on the WSAS Facebook page.

Registered Charity no 266997.

Members' survey – decisions

In the last issue of The Researcher we reported on the method of and results from the autumn 2023 survey of members. At its recent meeting our committee received a detailed report on the results, and discussed the issues raised by those who responded. Decisions were made on each of those issues. This report summarises the plan which the committee has now adopted.

1 In compiling the annual programme of events, the committee will ensure a wide range of subjects linked to archives, both across years and within each year.

2 In 2025 a scientific history subject and a village history should be chosen, the latter potentially in collaboration with existing local history groups.

3 In compiling the annual programme of events, the committee will continue to ensure that at least some take place close to rail or bus connections.

4 In the publicity for events alternative methods of transport should be highlighted, eg the Book-a-Bus 96, 98 and 99 routes.

5 The committee will examine whether a system of car sharing might be feasible.

6 On-line events will not be prioritised.

7 Event booking processes will remain under review, so that booking and paying options are as easy as possible for members and non members.

8 Once a suitably qualified person to lead it has been identified, a separate detailed review of the Society's use of social media will be instigated.

9 An "Ask the members" column will once again be trialled in the newsletter, inviting members to contribute pieces on their research or volunteer project, and potentially as a channel for members' queries.

10 Members will be reminded that they are free to apply to volunteer at WSRO if they wish; and a piece will be written for The Researcher about the current volunteering process.

11 The committee will include amongst its key 2024 objectives and in successive years a programme to recruit a target number of additional members.

On pages 11 and 12 of this newsletter is an article relating to decision 10.

All comments from members on this plan, including from those who were not part of the sample who received a questionnaire, are very welcome. Please send your views to: contact@wsas.co.uk or write to WSAS, % West Sussex Record Office.

Kim Fleming

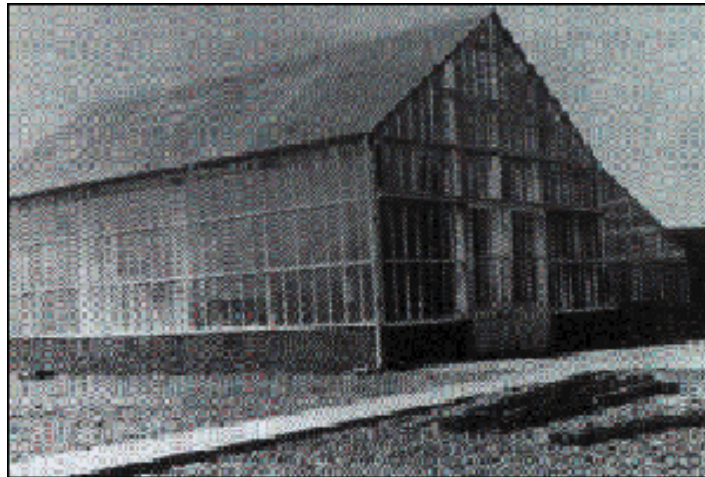
The history of film in West Sussex

Our first event of the year was held on 3 February in the warm and comfortable Coronation Hall in Slindon, where the Slindon Cinema had kindly put up their large screen for our use. Ellen Cheshire, researcher on the history of film and author of books about leading film directors, opened her talk with the beginning of film making in West Sussex.

The first screening of a film in our county was in August 1896, those first non fiction features then being termed “animated pictures” or “actuality”. The first film made here was in Worthing two years later, W K L Dickson remarkably using 68mm film stock. Ellen showed two shorts of the Worthing lifeboat being prepared for launch, horse drawn through the streets, and then the boat returning to shore and offloading a rescued person, though whether this was staged for the camera or a real “shout” is unknown.

Soon it was Shoreham that saw the filming activity in the area. London actors and other film people staying in the summer led to something of a Bohemian atmosphere in the town. As now, the industry especially valued the clear light, wide skies and good weather of West Sussex. Near Bungalow Town, where a residential estate of converted railway carriages had been developed, Sunny South Film Company started work in 1914. Records show that over the next year or so they made eight films based on music hall sketches, but none has survived.

The owner of a company called Sealight, Francis Lyndhurst (grandfather of the actor Nicholas Lyndhurst) took over Sunny South, and built a remarkable studio whose walls and roof were entirely of glass. After that Progress Films spent the summers of 1919 to 1922 shooting sixteen feature films at Shoreham, earning it the sobriquet “Hollywood by the sea”. It was apparently difficult to keep the actors and crew at work, sunbathing and paddling in the sea being so much more enjoyable. Ellen showed clips from their film *A Lowland Cinderella* - in a version curiously recaptioned in America as *A*



The short lived Sealight film studio at Shoreham, c1920.

Highland Maid, yet still featuring the Sussex flint cottages and South Downs of the original.

Being the daughter of Progress’s director, Joan Morgan was their key star, England’s answer to Lillian Gish so to speak. Much loved in the era of silent movies, Ellen had however discovered that Joan Morgan became an active Fascist in the 1930s. The audience watched short clips of *Fires of Innocence* from 1922, shot partly in Bramber. Stanley Mumford, Progress’s cinematographer and joint editor of their films, wrote a memoir about life in that early film industry. Unfortunately in December 1922 the glass studio was severely damaged in a fire, leading the company to relocate to Twickenham, never to return to Shoreham.

Next Ellen Cheshire toured the county with a selection of the many films that have been shot here. Although his studios were elsewhere, Vernon Sewell extended the tradition by shooting much of several of his films at Shoreham, including coastal scenes in *Ghost Ship* of 1952 and *Dangerous Voyage* of 1954. Shoreham airport's main building suited doubling as German and other wartime aerodromes, such as in *Woman in Gold* (2015) and in a different context *The Da Vinci Code* (2006).

We watched clips of several well known films that used Worthing buildings and scenes. The story of Ruth Ellis, *Dance with a Stranger* (1985), featured the seafront and pier, whilst the Worthing Pavilion played a prominent role as the ballroom in *Empire of Light* (2022). In *Stan and Ollie* (2018) Oliver Hardy's heart attack takes place at the Worthing Lido. *Wish You Were Here* (1987), loosely based on Cynthia Payne's adolescence, was filmed substantially in Worthing, although the poster shot was on the front at Bognor. In fact Cecil Hepworth had made fifteen films at Bognor in 1907 and 1908, though just one, the short comedy *A Seaside Girl* (1907), survives and can be watched on BFI Player. Tony Hancock's *The Punch and Judy Man* (1963), filmed in Bognor, shows a good deal of the town; for some reason it is commemorated there with two plaques.

Away from the coast, Ellen explained, directors have tended to use locations for a limited set of scenes only, for example Arundel Castle in *Young Victoria* (2009) and *Wonder Woman* (2017).

Ellen Cheshire ended by looking forward to the imminent release of *Wicked Little Letters*, set in Littlehampton, but filmed partly in Arundel and Worthing. The trailer was the final piece of film enjoyed by those present.

The earliest days of film making in West Sussex remain the subject of continuing research. Much has disappeared, including many of the films made at Shoreham – indeed 80% of all films made in the silent era are lost. Ellen encouraged us all to keep looking in attics and archives in case some material from our film making history survives unrecognised.

Kim Fleming

Kate Mosse at the AGM: Fact or Fiction, using the archives for historical background and inspiration

After the formalities of the AGM, and a delightful lunch most ably organised by our Treasurer Jane Mant, attendees enjoyed an excellent talk by internationally renowned author, and Chichester native, Kate Mosse CBE. Kate first told us of the love of history she developed as a child, in part from archaeological volunteers who regularly boarded at the family house at Fishbourne. She also recalled how the clerks from the various solicitors' offices in Chichester would meet each morning at the market cross to exchange post, a place where she loved to sit and think of the centuries of people who had also been there.

Kate is probably best known for her books set in the Languedoc region of France, where she and her husband have had a house since 1989. She fell in love immediately with the medieval city of Carcassonne, where she heard the 'whispering of the landscape', which inspired what is arguably her most well known novel, *Labyrinth*, which will be twenty years old next year.

Kate has written both fiction and factual books, and finds archival research essential to both, although in different ways. For factual work it is necessary to find out everything about a subject you are researching, as she did for *Warrior Queens and Quiet Revolutionaries*, but for fiction the search is for facts which can be used as background. Her fiction always had as authentic as possible a historical background, albeit with imaginary characters imposed upon it. She finds it fascinating seeing and holding historic documents, thinking of how many others had held it beforehand. This was ‘the charisma of things’ as described by Neil McGregor. During a time when she was a caregiver to elderly relatives, Kate was unable to travel far, so turned to her own locality for a story. The result was *The Taxidermist’s Daughter*, set in Chichester and Fishbourne in 1912, the year of a great flood. She found the WSRO of great help, especially contemporary copies of the *Chichester Observer*, and in providing advice on accessing archives in general. Local newspapers, she said, tell us about ‘us’. The book was also inspired by Potter’s Museum of Curiosities, which Kate had visited in childhood.

Her most recent series of novels, the Joubert Chronicles, are set in France, the Netherlands and South Africa’s Cape Province, spanning many hundreds of years. Research for these have seen Kate travel far and wide, from the Mary Rose at Portsmouth, via national museums in Amsterdam, to a small local museum in Franschhoek, a town with Dutch and French Huguenot heritage. Kate was there very recently, when finalising the fourth ‘Joubert’ novel, which she told us had just been submitted to her publishers. The museum there had inspirational objects such as a letter back to Holland asking for French winemakers to be recruited and sent to them, and a Protestant bible smuggled out of France inside a loaf of bread.

Kate has also recently been working with Find My Past to promote a campaign, Find Herstory, to identify 5 million of the 39 million women missing from family trees throughout history. Find My Past carried out some research into Kate’s own family, and she was very pleased to discover that a great-grandmother was Lily Watson, a Victorian novelist who gained Gladstone’s endorsement for *The Vicar of Langthwaite*, sadly now long out of print.

Following her talk, which was delivered entirely without notes, Kate was happy to answer many questions from the audience. Asked what books had influenced her, she mentioned *Wuthering Heights*, *King Solomon’s Mines*, *Ivanhoe* – and many novels by Jean Plaidy, the historical backgrounds to which she now realises were not always accurate. She reminded us that people in the past did not know the future. And, asked if she was a document sniffer, quoted from Rudyard Kipling’s *Lichtenberg*, ‘smells are surer than sounds or sights/To make your heart-strings crack.’

Mike Kipling

Loggats and closh: a note on “unlawful games” in the early 17th century in West Sussex

In August and September 1605 the West Sussex magistrates held general alehouse licensing sessions for the Rapes of Arundel, Bramber and Chichester. Following a new Act of James I’s parliament of 1604 concerning regulation of alehouses the magistrates approved recognizances (bonds with conditions and monetary penalties for defaulting) for applicants for alehouse licences (133 of them) and their sureties (guarantors).

For the Rapes of Arundel and Bramber, conditions of recognizance for alehouse keepers were to keep good order in their alehouses, and follow the terms of their licences, but the licensing magistrates for the Rape of Chichester were more explicit in their requirements. Alehouse keepers were required to abide

by the laws and regulations forbidding preparation or eating of meat on holy days; harbouring vagabonds or persons known for theft, (sexual) incontinence or drunkenness; buying goods from travellers not personally known to them; tippling (allowing parishioners to while away the hours drinking in the alehouse); and selling ale or beer at less than full measure, and were to keep to the prices for beer and ale fixed by law (the Assize of bread and ale). It was also specified that:

“The condicione of the several recognisances above menconed is suche that yf the several persons above bounden which are licensed to [keep] common Alehouses, tippling howses or victualling howses in the several parishes above menconed wherein they dwell accord[ing to] the forme of a statute in that case made & provided during all the tyme he shall keepe a common Alehouse doe not suffer [any] playes or unlawfull games, viz. tables, dice, cardes, bowles, cloishe, coites, loggets or unlawfull games what[soever in] his howse, orchard, garden or other grounds...[and do] keepe good rule & order in his said house That then the recognisance of him or them performing the same & his man[pernors] to be void or els to remayne in his full power strength & virtue.” (see Figure 1, p16)

In a similar condition for an alehouse recognizance of 1637, “Shovellbord” replaced “closhe” in the list of “unlawful games”. Besides bowls, cards and dice, what were these games, and why were they unlawful?

“Tables” was an early version of backgammon, while “coites” or quoits involved throwing a ring of flattened iron or rope over a peg in the ground. In loggats, shaped sticks were thrown at a circular jack or fixed post (nearest landed wins), whilst in cloysh (or cloish/clash), a game-name of Flemish or Dutch origin, a ball was struck with a shovel-like instrument through an iron hoop, somewhat like croquet. For shuffleboard, today played on courts, there was originally a very long table along which discs or tablets were shoved towards marks.

Medieval and Tudor royal proclamations and statutes aimed at keeping the common people’s leisure time on holy days and Sundays, after divine service, focussed on archery practice, “whence by God’s help came forth honour to the kingdom and advantage to the king in his actions of war” (temp. Edward III, 1363), forbidding games such as quoits, loggats and football. Henry VIII similarly encouraged archery practice, and initially prohibited all unlawful games, past, present and future – including “bowling, coyting, cloysh-cayls, half-bowl, tennis, dicing-table, or carding” to all classes of society. In 1572 Elizabeth I allowed that “all men of worship which may dispend 100£ yearly and upwards may use these games with discretion at their pleasures”.

By the end of the 16th century the longbow’s usefulness as a weapon had given way to the crossbow and the gun, but, as seen above in 1605, “unlawful games” continued to be prohibited, especially in alehouses. When Edward VI set up a formal system of magistrates’ licensing of alehouse keepers in 1552, the latter were bound by recognizance to keep “good order” in the alehouse, such “good order” not then being closely defined, save for a ban on the playing of unlawful games.

A raft of ever-tighter alehouse regulation in the reigns of James I and Charles I reflected the early Stuarts’ concerns about recreational drinking, tippling and drunkenness, especially as causes of crime, disorder, and impoverishment amongst the common people. Game-playing in alehouses may often have been for forfeits, such as buying the next round of drinks rather than gambling, but even the former could lead to unlucky drinkers’ impoverishment, and the likelihood of increased poor relief bills for the parish ratepayers.

Reported cases of “ill rule” (disorder) in alehouses in the West Sussex Quarter Sessions of 1605-1636 are not uncommon, but rarely mention specifically the playing of unlawful games. In 1625 John Ball of Felpham and James Chate of Henfield, “victuallers” (alehouse keepers), were keeping “common tippling”¹⁰

houses” (alehouses and/or houses selling strong drink). They were indicted by the West Sussex Jury of Constables for keeping disorderly houses, “willingly permitting” various persons living in their respective towns “to linger there and disturb the said Lord King’s (Charles I) peace and play unlawful games”, to stay on drinking in their tippling houses, notably on Sundays at the time of divine service, and drink to excess, “against the peace of the said Lord the present King, his crown and dignity”, and contrary to the statutes.

This list of accusations sounds almost like a “tick-box” list of most of the potential reasons for reporting a disorderly alehouse. One has to wonder how seriously game-playing in alehouses, just on its own, as a reportable offence, was regarded in West Sussex at this time. Continuing research into early modern alehouses in West Sussex may add to this picture.

John Mills

Notes and sources

This short article arises from current research by the writer, presently in its early stages, on references to alehouses, alehouse keepers and brewers in the West Sussex Quarter Sessions records in West Sussex Record Office (WSRO).

The Rape of Chichester alehouse licensing session of 21 September 1605 excluded the separately regulated City of Chichester Sessions of October 1605, which will be the subject of further study.

“Ma(i)npornors” were sureties.

Royal Proclamation, 1363, Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III, Vol. 11.

Unlawful Games Act, 1541, 33 Henry VIII, c.9.

Alehouses Act 1551, 5 & 6 Edward VI, c. 25.

1 James I c.9, 1603/4, “An Acte to restraine the inordinate haunting and tiplinge in Innes Alehouses and other Victuallinge Houses”.

WSRO Quarter Sessions Rolls (QSR), QR/ W2 2/109a, 109b, 109c, 110, 128.

WSRO QSR, QR/W15, 16/7 & 16/8.

WSRO QSR WE31/106.

Oxford English Dictionary (OED); “Loggats,” James Masters, 2021, [LoggatsByJamesMastersV2.1.pdf \(gamesboard.org.uk\)](#)

Davenport, E., “Elizabethan England’s Other Reformation of Manners,” *ELH (English Literary History)*, Vol. 63, no. 2, Summer 1996, p. 263.

Ellis, J., “Archery and Social Memory in Sixteenth-Century London,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (Spring 2016), p. 27

Hailwood, Mark, “Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England,” 2014, p. 24 ff, 205-207.

Volunteering at West Sussex Record Office

The West Sussex Record Office (WSRO) volunteer programme is part of the numerous public voluntary engagement services provided by West Sussex County Council (WSCC). It offers the wider community a chance to engage with WSRO’s services from behind the scenes, providing experience of working with archives and learning new skills.

Currently 25 volunteers commit their time to WSRO. They are a mixture of new recruits and others who have been with us for many years. Most attend on a weekly basis. They come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, bringing with them a wide range of skills and experience developed during working careers or within education, together with an interest in history. Volunteering gives them the opportunity to learn more about the archives, develop new skills and catalogue our collections so that they can be used by researchers.

WSRO’s volunteers are engaged in a number of activities, working individually or collaborating on joint projects. This includes handling, sorting, listing, transcribing, conserving, researching, cataloguing and packaging our collections. They learn to work with a variety of different archives including deeds,

photographs, slides, maps, plans, correspondence, papers, prints and drawings. Their work encompasses numerous collection types; such as parish, business and local government archives and the records of organisations, individuals, events, social activities and cultural developments.

The volunteers benefit from continued training and development delivered by archivists, record managers, and conservators who are all dedicated, knowledgeable and professionally qualified. Instruction is provided on how to handle archival documents, sort them, understand different cataloguing instructions, research for information of interest, use information technology software to record data, develop palaeography skills to read older writing, and practice packaging techniques. In return the volunteers build on their own experiences and development, allowing them to attain transferable skills useful for not only working with archives but for new careers or hobbies. They also gain a sense of satisfaction from engaging and completing projects successfully.



In addition WSRO offers opportunities for those with less time to engage in activities via the work experience placement programme. This is open to students from schools, sixth form colleges and universities, as well as those in full time employment. The programme offers different perspectives for the participant to benefit from, allowing them to shadow members of staff in their everyday roles, including those working in the public facing services and behind the scenes. They also get the opportunity to learn some of the archival skills that our volunteers experience, by completing a short cataloguing or listing project. Finally the participants gain an insight into future careers within the archive or wider heritage sector, as well as raising their awareness of the services Record Offices can provide for both future professional and personal development.

Above all the volunteer programme at WSRO has for many years had and continues to have a significant impact. It encourages positive self-development, enables a plethora of archives to be made available for research, raises awareness of the service and promotes recognition of WSRO within the community as a whole.

For more information, please visit the volunteer pages on our website:

[Record Office supporters and volunteers - West Sussex County Council](#)

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/history-and-heritage/west-sussex-record-office/record-office-supporters-and-volunteers/>

Nick Corbo-Stewart, Archivist and Volunteer Co-ordinator, WSRO

Articles about some of the individual projects being undertaken by WSRO's volunteers will be commissioned for The Researcher in due course. Ed.

Forthcoming Record Office events

Tuesday talks

WSAS members are invited to our series of Tuesday talks, starting at 7pm. The current programme is as follows:

30 April 2024: **What did the Victorians do for Chichester?** by Alan Green

28 May 2024: **Returning to the Moon – Sir Patrick Moore’s Legacy** by Dr John Mason

24 September 2024: **Tales of a Sussex Family Farm** by Angela Lerwill

The talks in April and September can be attended in person or online. The talk in May can be attended in person only.

Workshops for family and local history

If you’re new to family and local 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. The remaining programme for 2024 is as follows.

5 June 2024	Reading old handwriting
4 September 2024	Getting started with Ancestry.co.uk
2 October 2024	Researching the history of your house

Book now!

If you’d like to attend a Tuesday talk **in person**, or one of the workshops, please ring 01243 753602 to book and pay. For current WSAS members a £1 discount is available for in person talks and workshops. To attend a Tuesday talk **online**, for which you don’t need any special software, please book on [Eventbrite](#).

Visit www.westsussex.gov.uk/ro and view the ‘What’s on at the Record Office’ page for more details and for helpful links to WSRO talks on Eventbrite.

WSAS Events

The following three events are now ready for booking.

The Highdown Lowdown: a talk by Alex New and Jane Doré

Thursday 16 May 2024 starting at 2pm

At The Visitor Centre, Highdown Gardens, Highdown Rise, Littlehampton Road

Worthing BN12 6FB; TQ097040

Alex New is the Curator of Highdown Gardens and Jane Doré is an Archive Volunteer. The talk will open a window into the exciting work that is taking place at Highdown. Hear how curating the collection has led to a journey into the past, revealing the stories of the plants that came from around the world and the people who brought them here.

The famous chalk garden, created between 1909 and 1967 by Sir Frederick and Lady Sybil Stern, is open to the public with free entry from 10am until 8pm, so there will be time to explore the gardens before or after the talk. The Highdown pub/restaurant serves lunch from noon, and the tea room serves light refreshments from 9am to 4pm: both are next to the gardens. There will be a maximum of 30 for this event.

Private Tour of St Mary's House and Garden, Bramber, BN44 3WU; TQ189106

Saturday 8 June 2024 starting at 2pm

A Grade I historic house, St Mary's is a former pilgrim inn, constructed in about 1470 for the Bishop of Winchester. Still a home, its five panelled rooms include the unique Elizabethan *trompe l'oeil* Painted Room. It has intriguing literary connections with Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* and the Sherlock Holmes story *The Musgrove Ritual*.

We will have exclusive use of the house and gardens, and the services of an experienced guide. The five acres of beautiful gardens include an exceptional *Gingko biloba*, amusing animal topiary, a secret garden, pineapple pits, and a rural museum.

The property has a free carpark with up to 20 spaces; the Bramber village carpark is about 50 yards to the west of St Mary's. If pre-booked tea and cake (£5.50) will be available after the tour.

Arundel, 1000 Years of Town, Castle and Church: a walk and talk led by John Barkshire

Saturday 13 July 2024, starting promptly at 2pm

Meet at Arundel Museum, Mill Road, Arundel BN18 9PA; TQ019070

John Barkshire leads historical walks and gives talks in Arundel on behalf of the Museum and St Nicholas' Church. The walk will show how Arundel has evolved over the centuries. It will last for about 90 minutes, and will include walking uphill.

By the meeting point on Mill Road is a large carpark and PCs. In Arundel there are plenty of eating places for lunch and tea. There is a maximum of 20 for this event.

Booking for WSAS events

Please book and pay either by e-mail and BACS (see page 5) or by returning the booking forms with your cheque to: WSAS, % West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RN.

We do not issue tickets or receipts for bookings. For queries please contact: contact@wsas.co.uk
Event details are also at www.wsas.co.uk and on the WSAS Facebook page.

The Highdown Lowdown, Worthing

Thursday 16 May 2024, starting promptly at 2pm

At Highdown Gardens, Littlehampton Road, Worthing

Members £6; non members £8

Names of members attending _____

Tel no or e-mail address _____

Names of non members attending _____

Tel no or e-mail address _____

St Mary's House and Garden, Bramber

Saturday 8 June 2024, starting at 2pm

At St Mary's House, Bramber

Members: £15; non members: £16; tea and cake £5.50 (to be pre-booked)

Names of members attending _____

Tel no or e-mail address _____

Names of non members attending _____

Tel no or e-mail address _____

Number requiring tea and cake _____

Arundel, 1000 Years of Town, Castle and Church

Saturday 13 July 2024, starting at 2pm

Meet at Arundel Museum

Members £6; non members £8

Names of members attending _____

Tel no or e-mail address _____

Names of non members attending _____

Tel no or e-mail address _____

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a legal document or record. The text is written on aged, yellowed paper and is oriented vertically. It appears to be a recognizance or a record of a legal proceeding, mentioning names and locations such as "Chichester". The handwriting is dense and somewhat difficult to decipher due to its cursive nature and the condition of the paper.

Figure 1 (see page 10)

Condition to 1605 alehouse
licensing recognizances,
Rape of Chichester

(West Sussex Record Office
QR/W2/2/128)