

The Researcher

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



January 2012

No. 76

WSAS buys a medieval document for the Record Office

West Sussex Record Office has recently bought an important medieval document with the help of WSAS. It is a notarial instrument, dated 18 February 1429, which recorded a decree from John Rickinghall, Bishop of Chichester settling a dispute concerning Easebourne Priory.

Sir John de Bohun, Elizabeth the prioress of Easebourne and her convent, and the parishioners of Easebourne claimed that the burgesses of Midhurst were liable to contribute towards the renewal and repair of the nave and churchyard enclosure of the church of Easebourne. In response the burgesses maintained that the prioress and convent were liable to provide ropes for their bells, and a man to daily ring the morning and evening



Medieval Deed WSRO Ref AM 499/1

Forthcoming Events

Events 2012

February 26th -
Graylingwell Records.

March 17th - Garden
Records Workshop

April 14th - **AGM**

May 12th - Arundel
Castle, joint event with
FESRO.

June 23rd - Walk in the
Arun Valley

July 17th - Evening talk
on "The 3rd Lord
Egremont's worst
Investment".

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

curfew with the watch-bell in the chapel of St Mary Magdalene in Midhurst. Both parties turned to the Bishop for help.

Giving judgement from his manor of Cakeham (near West Wittering), the bishop decreed that the burgesses of Midhurst should renew and repair a section of the churchyard wall 72 feet long, and that would be considered a full discharge of their obligations. They were also to pay the expenses of the case. The nuns and parishioners were to be discharged from providing the ropes or providing the curfew ringer.

The lawyer who drew up the document was William Plumer, a clerk from the diocese of Norwich, whose notary's knot resembled a tree formed from a monogram of the initials W and P, growing from a base inscribed 'W Plumer'. For an account of Bishop John Rickinghall's life and career, see Christopher Whittick's biography at <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23604> . He was 74, and died a couple of months after this dispute.

It was Christopher Whittick, Archivist at East Sussex Record Office, who came across the document, for sale at auction, and notified his colleagues at West Sussex Record Office. After Alan Readman, County Archivist, negotiated a reduction in the price, WSAS paid £500 towards the purchase, and the Friends of the National Library funded the rest.

Caroline Adams

Chairman's Reflections and New Year Thoughts

May I begin by wishing all our members a very happy, if probably not prosperous, New Year. It won't be an easy year for anyone, particularly those of us in the Record Office, but there are other ways of measuring success than purely financial ones. The Record Office continues to be one of the top ten in the country, and compares well with its neighbours.

First a quick look back at 2011, which was actually very successful for WSAS. Our membership has increased by about 10%, and the number of people attending meetings is rising as well. We have had some lovely meetings, for example the relaxed lunch, talk and film at Burpham in September, the canal trip in June and our first evening talk at the Record Office, when Helen Whittle spoke on the Civil War. The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the booksale, ably run by Richard Mant, which raised over £1600.

Secondly, I would like to say that that the committee members really have worked very hard on your behalf. To keep a ship as big as this Society going, there is a lot of maintenance work. Every three months, for example, Barrie is gathering together articles for the Newsletter, and coming to the Record Office to ensure it is printed out correctly. Clare Snoad, IT officer at the Record Office prints out labels, Leigh, Liz and Stella buy envelopes and stamps, and give up an afternoon to 'stuff', and Barrie, having got home, sends out the email versions. And that's just the Newsletter.

We need more people on the committee. Every so often we send out this appeal, and generally it falls on deaf ears. But there are a lot of small jobs which need continual maintenance, and the people already on the committee are all busy in their own ways. Specifically, we need somebody who lives locally, or who visits us at least weekly, to keep an eye on the 'WSAS cupboard'. This wonderful receptacle holds post from members, cheques waiting to go to the bank, new membership packs which need updating, tea and coffee for meetings etc, and is where we turn when we can't find anything. Stella Elliot, who has been looking after it, can no longer come in so regularly, so we just need someone to come into the Record Office from time to time (at least once a fortnight) and pass anything that needs doing to the relevant committee member.

Even if you can't get into the Record Office regularly, but would be interested in giving some of your time to promote it and local history in the county, we would love to hear from you. There are always small jobs to do, and we would like to do more fund-raising, and organise more ways of helping the Record Office, two of the prime objectives of the Society.

Caroline Adams

What happened at the Record Office during closed fortnight 2011?

As you will know, the record office closed for two weeks at the end of November/beginning of December. This happens every year, and is much appreciated by the staff. The first week provides time to do certain jobs - this year these included sorting and checking the three drawers of parish register microfiche, and moving index card drawers from one end of the searchroom to the other, enabling two extra tables to be added for researchers (giving a group of six tables, now christened 'The Runway').

The second week was Cataloguing Week. While a certain amount of cataloguing goes on throughout the year, Cataloguing Week allows the searchroom staff in particular the chance to tackle slightly larger collections than the ones they can usually fit around their time dealing with the public. I'm not going to list everything that was catalogued during the week, but what follows will give a good idea of the kind of material that has been added.

Two audio cassettes went into the Oral History collection: By the Seaside, a Radio 4 programme about people's memories of the 1950s including Bognor (OH 394); and the recollections of Emma Morley nee Pocock, recorded in 1994, whose parents ran the Three Crowns public house in East Preston (OH 393).

The Additional Manuscripts collection (AM) is an eclectic mixture. Peggy Bostel's wartime diary notes the exact time and duration of air raid warnings in Burgess Hill from August 1940-December 1944. She also noted bombs dropped and planes seen overhead. (AM 508)

The Falcheham Players were an amateur dramatic group in Felpham. Scrap books were kept of their performances 1931-66, and an extensive set of photographs of their productions during just over 50 years from 1931-82. Also included are some documents

about Kay Macaulife who was one of the Players, and who also gave lectures to Sussex Women's Institute groups with character studies and impersonations of literary and historical figures. As an offshoot from that, she wrote and directed plays for them with all-women casts. (AM 505)

The Chichester Electric Light and Power Company kept a record book of its customers in street order, c1909-25, and its directors' minute book 1906-13 has also survived. (AM 514)

Rather more recent are some records from Smurthwaite Signs of Worthing, 1962-2007, which include a brief history, and an account book. (AM 516)

The Ministry of Defence authorised the release of papers from the early 20th century about Southdown Gold Club, Shoreham, and the War Department's possession of the Club (AM 509), and the site for a new coastguard station and lifeboat house at Littlehampton (AM 510).

The St Richard Singers was a choir formed in Chichester in 1969. Their papers include a comprehensive collection of programmes from 1970-2005. (AM 503)

Still being catalogued (and therefore not yet available) is a collection of ephemera from the Worthing area. While this is the kind of collection that initially makes the cataloguer quail, once sorted and listed it is revealing some real treasures. The tourist brochures 'Sunny Worthing' from 1938-86 (not a complete set) have provided fascinating photographs of places and attractions which no longer exist, and colour cover photographs of people enjoying themselves. In among the photos and postcards are several from Worthing Boys' High School in the 1960s, showing boys, masters, and teams, and one of a Fuente's Dairyman with milk pail and leather satchel. In the 'receipts and advertising' section are the receipts from Mr and Mrs Galloway buying and furnishing their house in Worthing in the first half of the 20th century. (AM 507 and Lib 17864-83, 17892)

Into the Parish collection were added the Merston tithe map of 1840, found in Oving church in October 2011 (Par 136/21/3) and a DVD 'Boxgrove Priory restoration: the archaeology' with photos showing the progress of the work (Par 27/16/1)

Some large format slides (2 1/4") from the early 1960s show the Piper tapestry in Chichester Cathedral, the Chichester market cross from West Street, and Bosham church exterior (Slides 10103-6)

Milton Mount College was a private girls' boarding school, which was founded in 1871 and, after being in Gravesend and Cirencester, settled in Worth Park near Crawley in 1920, where it remained until its closure in 1960. The record office already holds extensive archives from the school, and these are added to on a regular basis by Margaret Clark, who encourages the Old Girls to send her items. Catalogued in December were recent photos of reunions (how many schools which have closed still have an active former pupils organisation 51 years after closure?), small black and white photos from the early 1950s, and items relating to a girl who was a pupil from 1918-21. These include her regular and lengthy letters home, several of her exercise books, and a handwritten riddle book. (MMC)

Katherine Slay

Sadly Missed

Tony Voice and John Townsend

The committee were very sorry to hear of the deaths recently of Tony Voice and John Townsend, both of whom had been long standing members of WSAS and served on the committee. Tony at one time shared the post of Vice-chairman jointly with his wife Lesley. We extend our sympathy to their families and friends.

Dr Sheila Haines

Sheila Haines, died in May 2011 after a short illness. Sheila taught history for many years for the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex and was a popular speaker, much in demand by local history societies. She published many articles over the years and had been a contributor to *West Sussex History*. Sheila edited *No Trifling Matter* (University of Sussex, 1990) an account of the voyage of the Petworth ship *British Tar*, written by members of her Worthing Adult Education study group. In 1990, thanks to a fortuitous introduction by Alison McCann, she and one of her former students Leigh Lawson began research for Wordforce and the Jackman Foundation, Toronto, into the history of the Petworth Emigration Scheme; two books were published in Canada in 2000: *Assisting Emigration* and *English Immigrant Voices*. Since *No Trifling Matter*, Sheila had a continuing interest in the organiser of the Petworth scheme, the rector, Thomas Sockett and with assistance from Leigh wrote his biography *Poor Cottages and Proud Palaces* (Hastings Press 2007).

Sockett, as a young man had been tutor to the sons of the 3rd Earl of Egremont and this led them to research for a biography of the Countess of Egremont – Elizabeth Ilive, long term mistress and then wife, of the third earl. Unfortunately Sheila died before she could complete this work. Leigh Lawson in collaboration with Alison McCann will continue the project.

Sheila had a large collection of specialist history books which were kindly donated by her family for the recent WSAS fund raising book sale.

Sheila is remembered with great affection, for her inspiration and friendship.

Leigh Lawson



Dr Sheila Haines

Events Review

West Sussex Archives Society and Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery Joint Meeting held at Broadwater Parish Rooms on 8th October 2011

On a fine autumn day members of WSAS and the Friends of Broadwater and Worthing Cemetery met at Broadwater Parish Rooms for a morning of lectures, and an afternoon field trip to the cemetery.

The focus of the day was the Worthing Typhoid Epidemic of 1893. Chris Hare presented an illustrated overview of the events of that year. He began by outlining the history of Local government in the town. There were town commissioners from 1803, a Local board of Health from 1852, and funding for improvements and infrastructure after 1871, but these never kept pace with development. The town was incorporated in 1890, and the Borough Council became responsible for water supply and sewerage.

The waterworks and water storage tower were built in 1856. This was fed from boreholes. Unfortunately these were too near old sewers in the area, and accidental contamination during building works led to the problems with disease that Worthing experienced in 1893.

In what became known as the "fever year" of 1893, a new borehole was sunk at the waterworks in March. This led to an outbreak of Typhoid, with 60 cases and 38 deaths. The council and local press were keen to play-down the significance of the outbreak as they were worried about the affects on the tourist trade, which was largely based on the town's 'healthy reputation', so it was little reported in the press. The water system and tank were flushed, and the Medical Officer for West Sussex, Dr. Charles Kelly, officially declared the outbreak over in June 1893. The residents had been advised to boil water but this was then considered not necessary.



Members gathering in Broadwater Parish Rooms

The spring of 1893 had been very dry, but rain in the early summer caused leaching from the sewer to the tower and re-introduced Typhoid to the town, starting in Broadwater and spreading to Tarring and West Worthing by the end of July. It is likely that the spread to these outlying areas was caused not by contaminated water but by association with infected people. In all over 1200 people caught the disease and 188 (or thereabouts) died. Many children died, often after being ill for many days. Some died outside Worthing (one died in Washington village), and so are not recorded in the figures.

The blame for the epidemic was laid firmly at the feet of the Borough Council. It was suggested that a report about the situation was never made public. Oral tradition suggests that Mr. William Verrall, Town Clerk after 1890, behaved dishonourably but there is no evidence. Councillor Cooke, Chairman of the Sanitary Committee, was the focus of much anger in the town. Many councillors also left the area. The mayor, Councillor Patching, left the town during the outbreak, possibly due to a mental breakdown.

The council was accused of mis-handling the situation, being concerned more about the effect of adverse publicity than dealing with the outbreak. Many patients were taken to The Infirmary in Lyndhurst Road, where there was much cross-infection. Those in private hospitals had a better chance of survival. The Broadwater Parish rooms were used a hospital at that time. There were rumours of mass graves in the cemetery – this never happened but funerals were being held late into the night.

The town was virtually quarantined during the outbreak. It seemed to be like a 'ghost town' and had an air of panic. Many of the richer people had left and there were few visitors. The Worthing Intelligencer, one of the local newspapers, printed letters from hostile residents complaining about the council and demanding resignations.

Dr. Goldsmith was a fierce critic of the council and had set up the Worthing Ratepayers Association to challenge the council. Even as the outbreak declined the criticism of the council grew. This focused on the election in November 1893. Dr. Goldsmith and Rev. Lancaster (Holy Trinity) demanded the councillors resign. Only two of the councillors decided to run again. Councillor Cooke did not stand as he was absent. Councillor Churcher, who was also the proprietor of the Worthing Gazette, did stand. In 1987 Chris interviewed Mrs. Anderson, who was 13 in 1893, who recalled that effigies of Councillor Churcher were burnt in the street that Bonfire night.

Councillor Churcher was a rather tragic figure. He lost his council seat at the election, but he had also suffered the loss of his wife and daughter during the outbreak. He died the following year, aged only 39 years old.

There is evidence from oral tradition in Worthing that some people on the council benefited from the events of the "fever year", including Councillor Patching and William Verrall. They become known as the "Forty Thieves", who made money out of claiming the property of those who had died as their own. However, these suggestions do not seem to have damaged any political careers.

The new council opened a sewerage works and a waterworks in Broadwater in 1897 to pump water into the town. After the outbreak there was less concern about the cost.

The town's reputation did improve. Oscar Wilde visited in 1894 (although his later scandal did not help!)

The water tower stood in the town until 1924, almost as a monument to the "fever year".

Martin Hayes talked about the history of the Duffield family, focusing on the available sources. Abram Duffield was one of the first victims of the outbreak. He was born in 1859 in West Tarring, married in 1881 at Broadwater Church and died on 27 May 1893



Members and guests during the tour of Worthing and Broadwater Cemetery

at Worthing Infirmary. His death certificate confirmed the cause as Typhoid fever. The family lived in East Worthing and Abram rose from being a Gardener at a local market garden to being the manager. Abram can be traced in various directories, guidebooks, the census, and parish and registration records. Abram was a member of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society, who supported the family after his death, allowing his widow to open a shop. Abram had 6 children, one born after his death, in May 1893.

The 1893 epidemic was not the only typhoid outbreak in Worthing. Outbreaks were common in the nineteenth century.

In the afternoon Major Tom Wye, Chairman of the Friends, and Mary McKeown led a tour of the cemetery. The cemetery was opened in 1863, and is still in use. There are nearly 25,000 burials. At the present the chapels are used by Worthing Museum as a store. We were able to see the graves of many victims of the "fever year" who have been identified, although only one gravestone makes a direct reference to the epidemic. There are other interesting graves in the cemetery, including that of Richard Jefferies (died 1887) and Henry Hudson (died 1922), both well-known naturalists and authors, and a memorial paid for by public subscription to 10 victims of the The Zadne shipwreck disaster in 1894. There are 82 war graves. There are also victims of other typhoid outbreaks in the area.

Richard Martin

MANORIAL RECORDS WORKSHOP
SATURDAY 12TH NOVEMBER

On Saturday November 12th, twelve of us gathered at the Record Office to attend a workshop on Manorial Records, given by our recently retired County Archivist, Richard Childs.

The meeting took place in the new workroom, which is the fragment that has been left to the Record Office following the division of the larger room to make way for the Registrars offices. One felt that twelve was the absolute maximum that could be accommodated in this room, and that any numbers above that, it would become distinctly cosy!

Richard began with a general introduction to Manorial Records. The manor seems to have been introduced by the Normans, and first appears in documents in 1070 and could refer to an actual building or to a land unit. No one is quite sure exactly how many manors existed and estimates range from between 25,000 to 65,000! Unfortunately, the vast majority of these now exist only in name or on a few scattered documents.

As far as the surviving documents are concerned, the principal records are of the Court Leet, which dealt with petty crimes and manorial appointments, and the Court Baron which dealt with property transfers. The two courts were usually held at the one sitting, and their records are noted in the same document. Until 1733 everything was recorded in Latin (apart from during the Commonwealth period, when English was used – perhaps one of Cromwell's better ideas!).

Through a Power Point presentation Richard showed us some pages from original manuscripts and encouraged us to try to read them. Even in English, this was no easy task, as the writing style, although meticulous, is often difficult to read and contains many unfamiliar words such as '*amercement*' (the fine for an offence) '*franklin*' (a wealthy free tenant) '*molman*' (tenant paying money rent but not necessarily of free status) and '*gafol*' (rent in money or kind). Fortunately, Richard had provided us with a glossary of manorial terms, which was of considerable help.

Later in the afternoon we were able to see and handle some original Manorial Records, some dating back hundreds of years, and all in a remarkably good state of preservation. The day provided a fascinating introduction into this particular area of archival research, and Richard provided that rare combination of scholarship and humour. Interestingly, he commented that this was the third time he had given this particular presentation, the first being in 1996 and the second in 2002, and it seemed that the documents he used had not been taken out by anyone else between each occasion!

Certainly, they are not a source that are easy to use, and require a great deal of time and patience to read. However, they undoubtedly shed a unique insight into the way our ancestors went about their business, and for those of us who attended the workshop, we now have a much clearer understanding of what they are all about.

Richard Howell

Events Programme 2012

Sunday 26th February beginning 2.00pm an illustrated talk on the former West Sussex Asylum - Graylingwell given by Katherine Slay and held at WSRO.

Please try and make your bookings by February 12th at the latest.

Any queries contact - wsascom@btinternet.com

Saturday 17th March, 10.00 - 4.00pm a workshop on **Garden Records** given by Sue Millard and Caroline Adams and held at WSRO. Participants will be taken through a range of sources for gardens, including plans created for large-scale gardens, such as those for country houses, and accounts, correspondence and diaries. Even title deeds for small properties often mention gardens, and the size of the holding can be surmised from their descriptions. Although West Sussex has no written garden history, there are plenty of original sources.

Please try and make your booking by March 5th at the latest.

Any queries contact - wsascom@btinternet.com

Saturday April 14th **AGM** to be held at Field Place, The Boulevard, Worthing. BN13 1NP
There is parking on site or Field Place is well served by buses and near to Durrington Railway Station.
10am for 10.30am. Tea/coffee will be served before the meeting.
After the meeting there will be a lecture - topic to be confirmed - and a buffet lunch
The AGM papers and other details will be sent in March.
Cost for lecture and lunch is £10.00 per person.
(closing date for booking lunch is 30th March)
Any queries contact - wsascom@btinternet.com

Future Events to be finalised

Saturday May 12th joint event with FESRO at Arundel Castle.

Saturday June 23rd A walk in the Arun Valley beginning at Houghton.

Tuesday July 17th Evening illustrated talk "The 3rd Lord Egremont's worst investment".

There may be occasions when members wish to attend an event but feel they cannot due to transport limitations. Please do not be deterred, we would encourage you to book the event and indicate with your booking slip that you can only attend if it is possible to obtain a lift. Could we also ask please, that any members coming to an event who feel they could give a fellow member a lift let us know with their booking slip. We can then do our best to marry parties together. Thankyou.

WSAS Committee

<i>Caroline Adams - Chairman</i>	<i>Helen Whittle - Journal Editor</i>
<i>Richard Martin - Vice Chairman</i>	<i>Richard Mant - Committee Member</i>
<i>Liz Collison - Treasurer</i>	<i>Joy Eccleston - Membership Secretary</i>
<i>Stella Elliot - Secretary</i>	<i>Leigh Lawson - Committee Member</i>
<i>Barrie Keech - Newsletter & Website</i>	<i>Richard Howell - Committee Member</i>

All contactable using wsascom@btinternet.com

Booking Slips

Sunday 26th February. 2.00 - 4.00pm at WSRO an illustrated talk on the old West Sussex Asylum - Graylingwell to be given by Katherine Slay.

Costs free to members & £3 for non-members

Name/s of members attending.....

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

Name/s of non-member/s or guest/s.....

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

Please return slip by 12th February to, The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Any queries contact: wsascom@btinternet.com

Saturday 17th March 10.00 - 4.00pm. A workshop on Garden Records to be given by Sue Millard and Caroline Adams.

Costs to members £8 & non-members £10

Name/s of members attending.....

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

Names of non-members or guests.....

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

Please return slip by 3rd March to, The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Any queries contact: wsascom@btinternet.com

Saturday April 14th AGM to be held at Field Place, The Boulevard, Worthing. BN13 1NP
10am for 10.30am. Tea/coffee will be served before the meeting.

After the meeting there were be a lecture - topic to be confirmed - and a buffet lunch

Cost for lecture and lunch is £10.00 per person.

Name/s of members attending.....

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

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

Please return slip by 30th March to, The Honourable Treasurer, WSAS, c/o West Sussex Record Office, County Hall, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RN

Any queries contact: wsascom@btinternet.com