



Chairman - Colonel A.H. Maude, Stone House, Petworth.

Vice-Chairman - Sir Leslie Fry, Gore Hill House, Petworth.

Hon. Secretary - Mr. G.P.D. Adams, Byworth Rough, Petworth.

Hon. Treasurer - Mr. R.F. Geeves, Kitts, Middle Street, Petworth.

Committee - Mrs. J. Boss, Mr. J.W. Davidson, Mr. R.F.F. Davidson,
Mr. P.A. Jerrome, Mr. H.C. Oakes, Lady Shakerley,
Mrs. M. Sheridan, Mr. D. Sneller, Miss L.M. Streeter,
Mr. P.M. Synge, Mr. K.C. Thompson.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Since our last bulletin appeared in December we have suffered further loss from the Committee owing to illness and other causes. Mr. Horace Probin, after a heart attack from which he is making a good recovery, has felt obliged to resign the office of Honorary Treasurer, and Mr. John Bentley has resigned owing to professional engagements. We are grateful to both for their help during the Society's first year.

We have been fortunate, however, in finding successors, who have been co-opted to the Committee. Mr. G.P.D. Adams of Byworth Rough, (Tel. 42483), has kindly agreed to act as Honorary Secretary in succession to Mr. Arthur Hill; Mr. R.F. Geeves of Kitts, Middle Street, (Tel. 42440) has been appointed Hon. Treasurer and Mr. R.J. Fowler Hon. Auditor.

The Society, founded in 1974 "to preserve the character and amenities of the town and parish of Petworth, to encourage an interest in the history of the district and to foster a community spirit", now has over 200 members. The first Annual General Meeting will be held at the Leconfield Hall on Tuesday, April 22nd at 7.30 p.m. After the meeting Mr. A.W. Hill will present a photo play on "George O'Brien, 3rd Earl of Egremont".

Future Plans, of which details appear on other pages, include:-

A lecture on J.M.W. Turner to be given by Mr. Michael Kitson on May 2 in Petworth House, where many of the artist's works were painted.

An Exhibition on "Inns of Petworth, Past and Present" arranged by the Local History Group in the Public Library from Monday April 21 to May 20.

A Photographic Survey of the Parish is being organised by the Conservation and Architecture Group in conjunction with the County Record Office.

It is proposed to hold a Christmas Party on Friday, December 19. Particulars will be announced later.

Notices of Group Meetings will be issued direct to members who have signified their special interests. It is hoped also that Groups will be able to arrange a few meetings on Topics of General Interest, which will be notified to all local members.

FORMATION OF ACTION GROUP

A small group mainly of younger members of the Society and their friends is being formed under the direction of Mr. David Sneller and as part of the Countryside and Amenity Group to undertake projects in and around Petworth such as clearance of dumped rubbish and repair work to damaged bridges on footpaths to improve the amenities of the town. The work will be voluntary and will for the present only involve a few hours at irregular intervals. Will anyone willing to assist in this way give their name to Mr. Sneller at Messrs. David's, The Square, Petworth. (Tel. 42811).

THE LITTER PROBLEM

Petworth is getting a bad name for untidiness. The litter, mostly paper, that blows about The Market Square, and the rubbish that offends the eye in some of our attractive byways, is a disgrace, as we have recently been reminded in the local Press.

The cost of providing additional street cleaning falls upon the Chichester District Council, who have asked that the Parish Council bears a quarter of the cost, about £500 a year. This will only maintain standards at about the present level. If an unwelcome increase in rates is to be avoided, far more co-operation from residents is needed - whether the guilty "litter louts" are local residents or not.

For example Householders could ensure:-

That dustbins and other containers put out on collection days are securely covered, so that the contents are not blown about by the wind.

That the frontage of their own property is kept clean and tidy, and that paper blown against hedges and walls does not remain there for weeks.

That dogs are kept under control and not allowed to foul the footways.

That the Parish Council are informed of sites where more litter baskets are needed, or roadside dumps which are not enclosed or cleared at proper intervals.

Those in charge of Public Notice Boards, especially in Market Square, could ensure that they are not disfigured by the use of adhesives and the remains of old notices.

Parents, teachers and leaders of youth organisations can do much to encourage children to take a pride in keeping the town tidy - not merely by not dropping sweet wrappings etc., but perhaps by occasional scavenging forays in the twittens and byways.

The old nursery rhyme might be revised:-

"See a tin and pick it up,
All the day you'll have good luck."

Complaints to the local authorities are not enough. They are aware of their curiously divided responsibilities - the District Council being responsible for collection and the County Council for disposal of rubbish - and they are doing what they can with the means available.

In this "do-it-yourself" age cleanliness, like charity, must begin at home. Meanwhile the careless offender, old enough to know better, may be reminded of the legal position:-

Under the Litter Acts of 1958 and 1971 it is an offence to "throw down, drop or otherwise deposit" litter in any public place in the open air (including buildings such as bus shelters, parks, playgrounds, streets, woods, fields, footpaths, National Trust Property etc.). The maximum penalty is £100 fine.

The Civic Amenities Act, 1967, makes local authorities responsible for providing a place where refuse other than household refuse normally collected by them may be deposited free of charge. Unauthorised abandonment of such refuse elsewhere in the open, or on any part of a highway, including verges, hedges, ditches etc., may lead to fines of up to £100 on first conviction and of £200 and/or

imprisonment for a second offence.

A few convictions of offenders might have a salutary effect.

LECTURE ON TURNER

On Friday, May 2nd, at 8.00 p.m. Mr. Michael Kitson, Reader in the History of Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London, will speak to us on J.M.W. Turner and his work, on which he is a noted authority. By kind permission of Lord Egremont and the National Trust the talk will be held in the Carved Room of Petworth House, where we held the lecture on Grinling Gibbons, and afterwards a glass of wine will be served in the Marble Hall. Lord Egremont will be our Chairman. It is hoped also that those present will be able to visit the Studio in Petworth House where Turner actually worked and to see the Turner pictures, some of which have been lent to the recent exhibition in London.

It is particularly fitting that the Petworth Society should hold such a lecture in the Turner Centenary Year owing to his close association with Petworth, where some of his most distinguished work was done, and it is a great privilege to hold it in such a setting. This should be a unique and memorable evening. In this year Turner has been acclaimed among the country's greatest artists and the exhibition in London has been visited by considerable crowds.

Accommodation is limited by the capacity of the Carved Room, so we ask that members will book early. Members of the Society may bring guests and up to April 7th there will be a priority booking period for members and their guests only. After that it will be open for public booking.

Tickets 50p each for Members and £1 each for members' guests and others may be obtained from:-

Mrs. J. Boss, Lombard Street, Petworth. Petworth 42627.
Mr. J.W. Davidson, North House, North Street. Petworth 42145.
Mr. R.F.F. Davidson, Lancaster House, Golden Square, Petworth 42674.
Mr. D. Sneller, Messrs. Allans, The Square, Petworth.

N.B. Since the above notice was issued to members all tickets have been sold and future applicants must be put on a waiting list. Any members who have tickets and are unable to use them are asked to return them to Mrs. Boss if possible before the lecture.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Bulletin Number 3, issued in December last, advised members that the Society would be holding an evening party at the Leconfield Hall on

Friday, December 20. In the event, attendance at the function numbered well above 150, of whom about one-third were guests of members. Lord Egremont was among the members present. Two middle-aged couples, born and bred in Petworth and known to each other for many years, were heard to remark that they were delighted to have this opportunity to meet at a social function.

That indeed was the main purpose of the party: to give members a chance to get to know each other, and to mark the end of the Society's first year of existence. Nevertheless, it is satisfactory to record that the net receipts from the various competitions and the sale of wine, beer and mince-pies totalled £64.57. This is a most welcome addition to the Society's funds.

The performance of the Petworth Edwardians and the carol-singing of the St. Mary's Junior Choir, supported by some senior choristers, were applauded with enthusiasm. The Christmas trees in the Hall were provided by Gorehill House, and the other decorations, notably the individual posies on each table, were arranged by the Floral Art Group.

After distributing the prizes for various competitions, the Chairman, Colonel Alan Maude, thanked all those who had contributed to what he considered might well be regarded as a successful and happy evening.

L.F.

Several people have asked about the result of the wine tasting competition which was held during the party. In fact no correct solution was received, and the prizes will be retained for some future competition.

NEW MEMBERS 1975

The following members have joined the Society since the publication of the last list in December 1974:-

Sir Desmond and Lady Ackner, Browns House, Sutton, Pulborough.
Mr. and Mrs. G.P.D. Adams, Byworth Rough, Byworth.
Professor Marian Bowley, Brook Orchard, Graffham, Petworth.
Group Captain and Mrs. A.P. Campbell, Perrot Farm, Graffham.
Mrs. E. Canning-Cooke, Cherry Orchard, Fittleworth.
Mrs. R.E. Due, Edmonds House, Mant Road, Petworth.
Mr. and Mrs. C.P. Duncton, Brinksole Farm, Petworth.
Dr. J. Fines, Bishop Otter College, Chichester.
Mr. R.J. Fowler, 298 North Street, Petworth.
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Higgitt, September Cottage, Graffham, Petworth.
Mr. J.H. Mason, Butlers Cottage, North Street, Petworth.

Mr. and Mrs. Angus Maude, South Newington House, Banbury, Oxon.
Mrs. Ivy Peacock, 300 North Street, Petworth.
Mr. and Mrs. T.C. Reilly, Roses Farm, Wisborough Green, Sussex.
Mr. and Mrs. H.C. Salisbury, Grasmere, Northmead, Petworth.
Mr. and Mrs. E. Skegg, Preyste House, North Street, Petworth.
Mr. E.A. Southall, The Nook, Wisborough Green, Sussex.
Mr. and Mrs. C.A. Stilwell, Daintrey House, Petworth.
Miss V. Wilson, Westwoods, Lombard Street, Petworth.

GROUP REPORTS

Architecture and Conservation

Leader: Mr. John W. Davidson, A.R.I.B.A., North House, Petworth.
(Tel. 42145)

All three Groups of the Society were represented at a meeting held by the County Record Office at Christ's Hospital, Horsham, on February 22nd in connexion with European Architectural Heritage Year 1975. Plans were put forward for a complete photographic survey of towns and villages in West Sussex to be undertaken with the help of amenity societies, camera clubs, youth groups and others.

Some photographic work to record specific buildings had already been started in Petworth, and members will be aware of the importance of providing a permanent record of the buildings in our community for future generations. A meeting will be held at North House shortly to plan the local survey in detail. A copy of the "guide-lines" issued by the Record Office can be seen in the Petworth Library. Anyone with a camera is invited to join in. Some help with expenses for film and printing may be obtainable.

If you are interested in supporting this effort and would like to be notified of the date of the meeting please contact Mr. J.W. Davidson (Petworth 42145). Further information can be obtained from him or from Mr. P.M. Synge or Colonel Maude.

There was an encouraging turnout of members at a meeting of the Group at North House on January 11. Among the subjects discussed were the recording of existing buildings; visits to buildings of interest, including Somerset Lodge and the Church bell tower; the state of the bridges over the Rectory Brook; the proposed new medical centre, and the condition of the Almshouses on the Tillington road.

Although not directly related to the activities of the Society, it may be of interest to members to know that five architectural students from Pennsylvania State University have been engaged since March 16 on a ten-weeks' course of study under the direction of Mr. Davidson at

North House. In spite of unfavourable weather for outdoor sketching the students have produced some excellent drawings. The main project is a design for a community centre for Petworth. It is hoped that before the end of the course the work of the Group may be placed on view.

Planning Applications

Planning applications have been submitted to the Chichester District Council during the past few months which affect several buildings, almost all of them listed and in the Conservation Area, which are of importance to Petworth.

Among these plans which have been examined on behalf of the Society are the following:-

New Rectory and conversion of existing Rectory into six flats.

Petworth House: Old Servants' Block, change of use to Medical Centre and proposed access route through Churchyard.

George House: Change of use to two dwellings.

Culvercroft: Change to two dwellings.

Market Square: New Shop Front, Austen & Co., Petworth Ltd.

Football Field: Grove Street between New Grove and Lund House.

Tudor House: Internal and minor external alterations.

The condition of buildings in North Street and especially of Thompson's Hospital and properties adjoining North House has been the subject of correspondence in the Press and discussion in the Parish Council, and of serious concern to the Society.

With regard to the Hospital founded by Thomas Thompson in 1624, which has been falling into a deplorable state, there seems to be hope of work for its preservation and conversion into modernized dwellings for local old people being put in hand by the Trustees in the near future.

Protection of Ancient Buildings

A valuable medium, by which properties in need of a sympathetic purchaser or tenant can be saved, is the list of threatened buildings for sale or lease circulated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, 55 Great Ormond Street, London, WC1N 3JA to its members. Somerset Lodge in North Street, Petworth, was a case in point. It was derelict for a long time until it was noted on the S.P.A.B. list and found a purchaser, who restored it.

Several members of the Petworth Society are also members of the S.P.A.B., who will be glad to enter in their list any suitable houses threatened with demolition or decay.

Countryside and Amenities

Leader: Mr. Patrick M. Synge, M.A., V.M.H., Byworth Edge. (Tel. 42471)

Some planting has now been made on the Rothermead Estate and further additions have been promised when the building is completed. Ornamental cherries have been planted in Cherry Walk and willows in Willow Road. The trees, which are good specimens, have been well staked, but no tree guards have been placed round them, so we hope that residents will take particular care of them, since in the future they should enhance considerably the beauty of the Estate. In the event of anyone observing damage to any of the trees from any source will he please let me know so that any wounds may be cut clean. In addition to the original plan a beech hedge has been planted along the Western boundary of the Estate. There is still insufficient planting to screen the Segas area on Station Road and further representations have been made to the Council over this.

A small meeting was held at Byworth Edge on April 4 of members who had expressed interest in this group and 16 members were present. There was a discussion on the future programme of the Group. The formation of an Action Group was approved and Mr. David Sneller kindly undertook responsibility for this. Several projects were discussed and also possible action to improve the amenities of the district. A short report was given on the plantings at the Rothermead Estate. Other subjects discussed included footpaths, litter, the laws on conservation and some short talks. A programme of garden visits in the neighbourhood was approved and Miss J.B. Courtauld kindly invited any members of the group to visit her at West Burton on a date to be arranged.

County Council Policy

Members may be interested to know that the West Sussex County Council is compiling a document setting out its Countryside Policy. The document is intended to replace the old Development Plan which whatever its merits did not go far enough and tended to stress the things which ought not to happen. Now it is intended to promote a more positive policy - one which covers how the countryside is to be managed.

It will be essentially a conservation document and will emphasise the need to husband the countryside resources of agriculture, wildlife and landscape. It is being compiled in connection with the new District Councils and other closely affected responsible bodies. There is general support and co-operation and a considerable contribution has been made to the coverage of the document.

Originally designed for the old West Sussex area the policy will be revised and extended to include the new territory taken over from East Sussex at the time of local government re-organisation. It will be months before the final document will be available to the Press and the public.

(Extracted from Sussex News Letter of Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies and the Sussex Rural Community Council).

Another recent publication of interest is "New Agricultural Landscapes" compiled by Richard Westmacott and Tom Worthington on behalf of the Countryside Commission and recently published by them at £3. (Obtainable from the Countryside Commission, John Dower House, Crescent Place, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 3RA). It surveys the recent effect of modern farming methods on English lowland landscapes and notes disturbing changes taking place in the appearance of much of the English landscape. West Sussex is not one of the areas specially surveyed, but nevertheless many of the examples apply to this area. Arguments are given for and against the retention of hedges.

I would be willing to lend my copy to any member interested.

PATRICK M. SYNGE

GARDENS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The grounds of Gorehill House will be open to the public between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. on the following dates:-

Saturday and Sunday, the 10th and 11th May under the National Gardens Scheme for The Queen's Institute of District Nursing; and Saturday and Sunday, the 17th and 18th May, in aid of The Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops.

Adults will be invited to pay 15p towards these very deserving charities. Children and senior citizens will be 5p.

It would give Sir Leslie and Lady Fry great pleasure to welcome members of the Society to Gorehill on these dates.

Other gardens in neighbourhood of Petworth open in aid of the National Garden Scheme

(Admission 10p unless otherwise stated).

Beechwood, Duncton (Mrs. Herbert Agar) Sun. and Mon. April 13 and 14, June 15 and 16. 11-6. 3½ miles south of Petworth just off Chichester Rd. Beechwood is pink house on left in Seaford College Park. Very fine shrub roses.
Bignor Park, Pulborough (The Viscount Mersey) Sun. and Mon. May 18

and 19, June 29 and 30. 2-7. 5 miles from Petworth on West Burton Road. Walled herbaceous garden with roses, fine old rhododendrons.

Causennae, Hillgrove Road, Northchapel (Miss D.M. Mullens) Sat. and Sun. May 17 and 18. 11-6.

Champs Hill, Coldwaltham (Mr. and Mrs. A.H. Bowerman) Wed. and Thurs. May 21 and 22, Aug. 13 and 14. 11-7. Adm. 15p. Large wild garden with extensive collection of heathers.

Coates Manor, Nr. Fittleworth (Mr. and Mrs. G.H. Thorp) Sun., Mon. and Tues. July 6, 7, 8. 11-6.30. Collecting box. 1 acre garden of particular interest for contrast of small shrubs and other plants with fine foliage.

Coke's Cottage, West Burton (Mr. and Mrs. Nigel Azis) Sun. and Mon. April 13 and 14. Tues., Wed. and Thurs. June 17, 18, 19. 2-7. Next door to Cooke's House.

Cooke's House, West Burton (Miss J.B. Courtauld) Sun. and Mon. April 27, 28. Tues. Wed. Thurs. June 17, 18, 19. 2-7. Adm. 15p. Fine collection of shrub roses, paeonies and other herbaceous plants in setting round Elizabethan House.

Cowdray Park Gardens, Midhurst (The Viscount Cowdray) Sun. May 25. 2-7. Adm. 15p. Entrance by East Front.

The Hazels, Lower Street, Fittleworth (M.C. Pratt, Esq.) Sun. May 18. 11-7. At Swan Hotel turn right. Entrance opp. general stores. Interesting collection of azaleas and rhododendrons planted within last 3-4 years.

Lowerstreet House, Lower Street, Fittleworth (L.J. Holloway, Esq.) Sun. May 18, June 22. 2-6.30. Next to Swan Inn.

The Manor of Dean, Tillington (Mrs. W.S. Mitford) Sat., Sun. and Mon. May 10, 11, 12, June 14, 15, 16, July 19, 20, 21. 2-6.30. Adm. 15p. Half mile from Little Common bus stop on Petworth-Midhurst Road.

The Mill House, Fittleworth (Sir Geoffrey Hardy-Roberts) Sun. May 18, June 22. 2-7. Adm. 15p. Fine borders and shrub roses in beautiful riverside setting.

The Old Rectory, Sutton (Mr. and Mrs. O.S. Parry) Sun. July 6 daily to Sun. July 13 incl. Fine Lilies and good general mixed garden.

River House, Nr. Tillington (Lt. Col. Miles Reid) Sun. May 25 daily to Sun. June 1 incl. 2.30-6. Adm. 15p.

River Nursery, River (J.G. North, Esq.) Sun. May 25 daily to Sun. June 1 incl. 2-6.30. Adm. 12p. Next door to River House. Large cut-flower nursery and small walled garden.

South Corner, Duncton (Major S.G.B. Blewitt) Sun. and Mon. April 13 and 14, June 15 and 16. 2-6. White house 200 yards from bottom of Duncton Hill.

Standlands, River Lane, River (Sir Owain and Lady Jenkins) Sun. and Mon. May 25 and 26, Sun. June 1. Collection of Pacific Coast Hybrid Irises.

Sutton End (Mrs. Holland) Sun. May 18 daily to May 25. Sun. July 6 daily to July 13 incl. Sun. Aug. 3 daily to Aug. 10 incl. 2-6.30. Collecting box. 1 mile N. of Sutton Village.

Trofts, Byworth (Miss Burton) Sun. and Mon. June 22 and 23. 2-7. Adm. 15p. Good herbaceous borders and rose garden.

Upper House, West Burton (I.D. Greenwell, Esq.) Sun. and Mon. April 27 and 28, June 8 and 9. 2-7. Half mile from Roman Villa at Bignor.

West Burton House (A.C. Benedict Eyre, Esq.) Sun. and Mon. April 13 and 14, June 8 and 9. 2-7. Old walled garden under the Downs with good herbaceous borders and shrub roses.

Local History and Records

Leader: Mr. Peter A. Jerrome, M.A., Trowels, Pound Street. (Tel. 42562)

The Local History Group has met twice formally since my report for the last bulletin. Our next project, for an Exhibition to be held in the Public Library from April 19 on the old inns of Petworth, is now well in hand. We have many photographs, and a number of interesting documents, and we have used as a basic text Miss Beck's authoritative article in the Sussex Archaeological Collections. If anyone has any interesting mementoes of Petworth's old inns which might be suitable for exhibition, we would be pleased to hear from them.

We have been fortunate this year in that the Extra-mural Department of the University of Southampton chose "Petworth in the nineteenth century" as a focal point for their study of 19th century social history. A residential week-end course held at the Rogate Field Centre of the University of London from March 7-9 came to Petworth on the Saturday and Sunday for field visits. The course concluded with a discussion at the Leconfield Hall on Sunday afternoon, 9th March. This was attended by a dozen members of our Local History Group in addition to some twenty adult students and their tutors. Projects included Crime, the Poor, Emigration, Education, Religious Worship, Town Government and the 3rd Earl of Egremont as landlord and agriculturist, host and patron. The aim of the course was to build up collectively a picture of life in Petworth in the early nineteenth century. The syllabus for the week-end contained an excellent bibliography.

We hope soon to be able to form a second historical group, meeting perhaps in the afternoon. I would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to take part. We have found already a considerable interest in local history, and while some local knowledge is of course helpful, there are in fact few doors which enthusiasm will not open.

P.A. JERROME

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

AQ3/2 Some "hard information" about Parson Acon of Petworth is contained in the following note in Sussex Notes and Queries Vol. XV (May 1, 1961) p.244, by the Editor, Mr. G.D. Johnston, D.C.L.,

M.A., F.G.A., F.R.G.S:-

"PARSON ACON" - Leland wrote:- 'One parson Acon builded the spire of the faire steeple there in the toun and also made the fayre bridge of stone caullid Rotherbridge, scant a mile from Petworth upon the water that cumeth doune from Cowdrey.' "There is scanty information as to this Benefactor, but he appears to have been a trustworthy friend of the Percy Family (then owners of the Petworth Estates) and was the first named Trustee of the Settlement made by Maud, the second wife of Henry Percy created Earl of Northumberland in 1377. She was the widow of Gilbert, Earl of Angus, and daughter of Thomas Lucy, Lord of Egremont, and on her second marriage settled her extensive estates in the North of England on the Earl and herself, with the remainder to the Earl's heirs in tail. On her death on the 18th December, 1398, the Escheators had orders to give livery of the lands so settled to the Earl. Acon is then variously described as John Acombe parson of Petworth; John de Acombe parson of Petworth, and John de Akome, late parson of Petworth. The (stone) Rotherbridge was therefore contemporary with the famous "New" Rochester Bridge."

(See Close Rolls 21 Ric II m15 and 22 Ric II pt2 m2 and Calendar at pp 255 and 482-4).

Q4/1 Cobbett's Box Hedge

We have been asked where was the famous box hedge described by William Cobbett in his "Rural Rides". He saw it just as he came out of Petworth on his way to Chichester and wrote: "It was more than twelve feet broad and about fifteen feet in height. I dare say it is several centuries old. I think it is about forty yards long."

This hedge, or what remains of it, may still be seen on the East side of Pound Street. It runs southward for some fifty yards from Trowels Cottage to Boxgrove. Its great age is shown by the thickness of the main stems. Was the stone wall along its base built at a later date, as Cobbett's estimate of its height suggests? And does the house whose garden it enclosed derive its name from the hedge or from the Priory near Halnaker?

Q4/2 Where exactly was "World's End"? The 1839 plan of the Town of Petworth lists the owners of a block of houses "South of Angel Street to World's End East of Lombard Street."

Q4/3 Does any one know anything definite about a so-called "Hangman's Cottage" in Petworth - its exact location and the origin of the name?