

# THE PETWORTH SOCIETY



BULLETIN NO. 2

AUGUST 1974

Since the publication of the first bulletin in May the Society has suffered a grievous loss by the resignation of the Honorary Secretary, Mr. Arthur Hill, as the result of a serious heart attack. Although he is home again and recovering well after some weeks in hospital he feels that his whole energy will be needed for his work as Headmaster of the Petworth Primary School when he returns to duty there next term. We are grateful for his valuable help in the Society's early stages.

For the time being the work is being carried on by the other officers, with the kind assistance of Mrs. Patricia Watson, until a new honorary secretary can be found with the necessary qualifications. Of these the chief are some spare time; residence in Petworth - not necessarily of long standing; a typewriter and a telephone. Letters addressed to "Whitelocks" will be forwarded.

## Registrations

The Society is now registered with the Civic Trust and with the Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies.

## Membership

With this bulletin is issued a complete list of the 134 members enrolled to date (August 18). Future bulletins will include lists of new members only.

An application form for membership will be found herewith.

Unless you wish to keep your copy of the bulletin for reference, please pass it on to a friend who may be interested.

## Further Meetings

The Committee is endeavouring to arrange several meetings during the winter on subjects of particular interest or connected with Petworth, which will be open to all members of the Society and their friends. One subject suggested is a talk on the work of the sculptor Grinling Gibbons by an expert, since some of his

best work is at Petworth House. We hope to be able to make an announcement about our winter programme shortly.

#### William of Orange and the Pigeons

Several members have called attention to the condition of the bust of King William III on the Town Hall, and we have asked the Leconfield Hall Committee to consider having it cleaned. As those who have served on that Committee know well, the protection of this fine sculpture has been a problem for years past, owing to the pigeons which infest the Square.

Various "repellants", some of them quite expensive, have been used on expert advice, but none has proved entirely successful. In fact the green stains on the stone may have been caused by the repellent jelly, since dirt sticks to it. The new light above (too often left on in broad daylight) makes the royal head a warm resting place for pigeons.

#### Litter in Washington Copse

Arrangements have been made by the Leconfield Estate for the accumulation of litter in Washington Copse, mentioned in our last bulletin to be removed during the autumn. It is clear, however, that much of this rubbish has not been put there by the owners or their tenants, but that it has come from the adjoining newly-developed area. The help of members is asked to prevent the dumping of rubbish in unauthorised places, whether on Estate property or elsewhere.

#### GARDEN FETE, SEPTEMBER 7

With the generous help of other local organisations, the Society is to hold a Fete in the grounds of Gorehill House, near Petworth, from 2 to 6 p.m. on Saturday the 7th September.

Members of the Society are invited to give the widest possible publicity to the event, and to urge their friends to attend it. Entrance charges will be 15p. for adults, 5p. for unaccompanied children. Ample car-parking space is available, free, in the paddock behind the house.

Public 'buses will leave the Square at 1.35 and 3.15 p.m. Passengers should ask for Gorehill Drive and will then be put down

at the gates of the house.

A private car ferry-service from the Square to the house will be run for the older members of the community and anyone unable to use the 'bus. Those wishing to avail themselves of this facility should telephone, not later than the day before, to Mrs. John Davidson, Petworth 42145.

The Petworth Floral Art Group will display flower-arrangements in the Library of the house. This will be combined with a small photographic exhibition, "Petworth Past and Present".

The Town Band will play during the afternoon, the Mothers' Union serve teas, the Youth Club sell soft drinks and the Play-group will provide a crèche for the under-fives.

The Petworth Women's Institute and the Byworth Fellowship are joining forces to organise a Cakes and Fancy Goods Stall. Please telephone Mrs. Sheridan (42054) if you can kindly supply something for sale at it.

The Petworth Horticultural Society will be running a Garden Plants and Produce Stall, so there certainly will be something of the best of all local produce on show.

Threshers of Lombard Street are generously donating a selection of wines for a Wine-Guessing competition and the prize of six bottles of wine for the winner.

A bric-à-brac/white elephant stall is being organised by Mrs. Richard Davidson (Petworth 42674). Please get in touch with her if you have anything you can give her for the stall.

A children's Books and Toys stall will be run by Mrs. John Davidson (Petworth 42145), and Mr. Dallyn will be selling Corn Dollies.

The Tombola and Raffle are being organised by Miss Streeter (Petworth 42306), who will be very glad to receive any contributions, large or small, to serve as prizes. Gifts may be left at The Clockhouse.

A notable feature will be a display of children's Ballet by the Bertram family. A Fortune Teller will forecast your

future for a modest fee, and you may even be lucky in the Treasure Hunt, the Wild Flower Competition and at guessing the weight of a cake or the number of sweets in a bottle.

For the older children there will be donkey and pony rides in the orchard and tractor/trailer rides in the paddock.

The Committee of the Society and the group of ladies organising the Fete very much hope that the event will succeed not only in giving many people an enjoyable afternoon but in raising a substantial contribution to our funds. The rate of annual subscription is rightly being kept to a minimum and income from that source will not suffice to cover the cost of producing the Society's periodical Bulletins, stationery and postage charges and many other small items which inevitably have to be paid for. Over and above those day-to-day expenses, it plainly is desirable for the Society to have money in the bank from which to meet unusual items of expenditure. The Society might wish, for instance, to engage in a conservation project involving some expense, or to buy an article or document of particular interest to add to its collection of records.

Please make every effort to come to the Fete, to publicise it among your friends and to persuade them also to attend it. We doubt if keeping your fingers crossed for fine weather will have much effect, but there will be a marquee in which to shelter if the worst comes to the worst...

#### GROUP REPORTS

##### Conservation, Planning and Architecture.

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

Among planning applications which we have recently inspected at Newlands are those for alterations to 1 Pound Place and for the erection of two private garages near the Car Park. No special representation on behalf of the Society to the Planning Authority seemed necessary in these cases. Indeed the restoration work being carried out on the 16th century stone house in Pound Place for Mr. E. Lane will restore it to something like its original beauty.

A number of members have indicated their interest in the Architecture & Conservation Group, and it is hoped that a meeting

can be arranged in September at which the objects and programme of the group could be discussed. A subject of joint study would be, for example, the courtyards and small squares of Petworth. Apart from "Kitchen Court" and others in High Street there are several with intricate and unique groups of buildings such as those in North Street, East Street and Lombard Street.

The Group has been informed that the application for the demolition of the Hermitage has been refused.

J. W. DAVIDSON.

##### Countryside, Amenities and Horticultural.

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

Rothermead Estate. The Engineer and Surveyor, Chichester District Council, kindly sent plans of the estate with the architect's suggestions for sites for tree planting, but without further details of the kind of trees to be planted. He asked that we would make suggestions and then discuss them with his deputy. In collaboration with Mr. John Davidson and after further visits to the site I have prepared a list of suitable trees and marked them on one copy of the plan. This has now gone forward for consideration to the Deputy Surveyor. The suggestions include use of a number of upright trees where the area is limited and for two grey cedars where there is more space. Along the West side, where there is a wide band away from the buildings, weeping willows, white-flowered Japanese cherries and Lombardy Poplars have been proposed, with two pink-flowering horse-chestnuts at the North end. Trees with good autumn colour and a number of whitebeams with large silvery leaves are also included.

Other projects. Application has been made to the owners over the clearing up of the copse mentioned in the last bulletin, and they have agreed to have this done in the autumn. There are no further developments concerning the former garden of "The Hermitage" and the line of yews above the public footpath. It is understood that a general tree preservation order has been placed on the site but that this has been relaxed in certain instances.

Mrs. Joan Boss and Mr. David Sneller have taken a particular interest in the disposal of litter in Petworth and are endeavouring

to enlist a regular round of cleaners from various youth organisations. A letter on the subject has been sent to the Clerk of the Chichester Rural District Council.

Several additional members have joined the group, and I hope to hold a further meeting soon to discuss further plans.

Now that the scheme for a new airport at Maplin has been rejected by the Government it is likely that the traffic at Gatwick Airport will be increased considerably. In the past a proposal for an additional runway has been made but has been held in abeyance. If this should be built it could have a very considerable effect on the amenities of Petworth and the surrounding area if planes should be routed over the town. We hope that members will be vigilant in joining with other societies in opposition if the proposal should be reactivated.

The Minister of Transport recently announced in Parliament that his Department is sending to local authority associations and other bodies a consultation paper on routes for heavy lorries, and inviting views. He admitted that the effectiveness of this will depend on a national system of through routes. This is an old problem for Petworth, but nevertheless members should perhaps use the opportunity to press the view that Petworth should no longer be included in the through routes for such vehicles.

PATRICK M. SYNGE.

#### Local History Group.

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

The Local History Group has met twice since May and in smaller groups on other occasions. On June 4 we discussed a list of 25 topics that were likely to be of interest. A copy of this list is available to any member who may care to contact me.

We decided to begin by looking into the history of the old gaol at Petworth - a somewhat formidable topic, but one from which we have learnt much about methods of research. Several members have been to the County Records Office at Chichester on various occasions and we are still studying the many documents there - mainly of the early 19th century.

#### The "House of Correction".

A prison, or Bridewell, was ordered to be built at Petworth in 1625. Very little is known of this structure, or even of its site. The Bridewell was examined in 1782 by Major Mitford and Mr. Smyth, who found "the said House of Correction was in every particular improper for the purposes intended". Plans were put in hand for a new gaol, but evidently not on the site of the old one. We now have photostats from Dallaway's History (1831) showing plans and particulars of the new gaol, including returns, letters from the governor, information about staff, diet, the treadmill, and comments from the chaplain.

#### Future Plans

We hope it may be possible to republish in booklet form the articles which the 4th Lord Leconfield contributed in the 1950's to the Parish Magazine. These articles would be a great help to local historians. We hope also in the not too distant future to publish with an introduction the invaluable "Tales of Old Petworth" by John Osborn Greenfield.

While Petworth is very rich in photographs from the late 19th century onward, pictures from the period before photography, or when photography was in its infancy, are rare. We have some, of course, but if anyone has a print or drawing which we could borrow or copy I would be pleased to hear from them. Old photographs continue to appear, and we are much concerned with these too. Miss Streeter, Mrs. W.A. Ball and Miss Older have given the Society some interesting ones, Mrs. Knight has given us the rule book of the old Park Club, and Mr. Lane has given a Tudor fireplace from 1 Pound Place. We hope eventually to have a room where these and like exhibits can be freely accessible to members and others.

Members helped Miss Duke with her interesting display of Ebernoe antiquities shown in the Library during July and August.

P. A. JERROME.

#### Kelly's Directory 1852-1938

A valuable addition to the reference department of the Petworth Public Library is a bound volume containing photostats

of the local sections of Kelly's Directory for Sussex for the years from 1852 to 1938. These contain lists of all those holding official positions in Petworth during that period, as well as of private residents, with a commercial directory and much other information.

The book is available to members of the Society on request to the Librarian.

#### Museum Service

The Chichester District Museum has instituted a museum inquiry service at the Petworth Public Library. The museum inquiry desk will operate on the second Saturday of each month - August 10, September 14, November 9, December 14. A member of the staff will be present to answer questions about the museum's services, collections, identifications, school loans etc.

#### Architectural Heritage Year

The Council of Europe has designated 1975 as European Architectural Heritage Year.

Its objectives are:-

To awaken the interest of European peoples in their common architectural heritage;

To conserve the character of old towns and villages;

To protect and enhance buildings and areas of architectural or historical interest;

To assure for ancient buildings a living role in contemporary society.

Detailed information, including conditions under which grants can be obtained, have been placed in the Library.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Most of the questions posed in our last bulletin still await a definite answer, but several members have expressed an interest, and in some cases provided clues:

Q1. "Wicked Hammans", the 17th century farmhouse in Grove Lane (now known as "Soanes") derived its name from a former occupant whose unpleasant characteristics were alleged to include wife-beating. Two members whose early years were spent in Petworth have informed us that their parents always spoke of the house by that name. It apparently persisted until the period between the two world wars.

Q3. The Providence Chapel, it was suggested, might have been either the building in East Street, formerly the Girls' School, or the Ebenezer Chapel in Park Road. Both are ruled out by dates. The Girls' School, built in 1819 as an Independent Chapel, was closed as such in 1833. The Ebenezer Chapel was not built until the 1880s. Neither therefore could have been the chapel in which Mr. Hallett's sermons were preached between 1848 and 1867.

Kelly's Directory, 1867, mentions two chapels as follows, but gives no locations:-

Calvinistic Chapel: Rev. James Hallett and Rev. George Halden, Ministers.

Independent Chapel: Rev. Henry Rogers, Minister.

One member of an old Petworth family remembers her parents speaking of a chapel that used to exist in the area behind the houses at the top of North Street. The recent discovery of foundations of a building there may throw some light on the question.

- Q7. A photograph of The Rectory as it was before partial demolition in 1952 has been presented to the Society. This shows the building as it must have looked in the 18th century.

#### MORE QUESTIONS

1. Was there a cherry orchard at "Cherry Orchard"? If so, when did it disappear?
2. Does anyone know anything about the derelict swimming pool in The Copse in The Park on the opposite side of the lake from the boathouse?
3. It is said that Goannah/Gohanna Lodge is named after Lord Egremont's famous racehorse. Lady Maxse says the matter is otherwise. Gohanna was named after the place. What then she asks does the word mean? Incidentally is it true that the Gog Lodges were originally double jumps and that his lordship could watch in comfort from an eminence while his horses exercised on the Gog slopes?
4. Was the fair field a field used for travelling fairs? In the late nineteenth century it is said that performing bears were kept in the alley at the back of the Queen's Head when they were visiting Petworth as part of a travelling fair or menagerie.
5. The 1882 map shows Golden Square as formerly called 'Beast Market'. Is there any record of cattle transactions there? The 1608 map shows a much larger area of open square than at present.

#### SOME BOOKS OF INTEREST ON SUSSEX

Available from bookshops or which may be consulted in the Petworth Library

Prices are given only in the case of some recent books.

Nairn, Ian and Pevsner, Nikolaus, The Buildings of England: Sussex. Penguin Books, small 8vo, pp.694, illus., first published 1965, reprinted 1973, £3.25.

The part dealing with West Sussex is largely by Ian Nairn and is probably the most thorough work on the buildings of the area. There are 14 pages on Petworth. The text is very readable and interesting and full of unexpected details and candid comments. There is much emphasis on Victorian buildings and the introduction admits to a weakness on timber-framed houses, but nevertheless it can be strongly recommended.

Armstrong, J.R., A History of Sussex Phillimore of Chichester, 3rd ed. revised and enlarged, Cr.4 to, pp.176, 1974, £3.95.

The author is Hon. Research director of the Open Air Museum. The book is well illustrated.

Arnold, Rev. F.H., Petworth: History and Antiquities A.J. Bryant, Petworth. Small 8vo, pp.114. 1864.

Barnes, L.C., Petworth and its surroundings, Bignor, Pulborough etc. The Homeland Handbooks, small 8vo, pp.88, first ed, 1902-3.

An early small paper back guide.

Curwen, E. Cecil, The Archaeology of Sussex Methuen, 8vo, pp.330, first ed. 1937, 2nd ed. revised 1954.

Eastbourne Rambling Club, Along the South Downs Way From local booksellers, small 8vo, pp.40, paper bound, 25p.

A useful guide with outline maps.

Egremont, Lord, Wyndham and Children First Macmillan, 8vo, pp.216, illus., 1968.

Containing much information about Petworth House.

- Goodsall, Robert H., The Arun and Western Rother  
Constable, 8vo, pp.196, 1962, £1.75.
- Gray, James S., Victorian and Edwardian Sussex from old photographs  
Batsford, £2.70.
- Kenyon, G.H., Petworth Town and Trades, 1610-1760  
8vo, pp.154. Reprinted from Sussex Archaeological Collections,  
Vols. 96, 98 and 99.
- Leconfield, Lord, Petworth Manor in the Seventeenth Century  
O.U.P. 8vo, pp.171, 1954.  
Contains material from the Muniment Room of Petworth House.
- Leconfield, Lord, Sutton and Duncton Manors  
O.U.P. 8vo, pp.98, 1956.  
Contains material mainly from the 17th Century.
- Leslie, Kim C. and McCann, T.J., Local History in West Sussex, A  
Guide to Sources  
8 vo., pp.30. West Sussex County Council, 1971.
- Mawer A. and Stainton, F.M. with Gover J.E.B., The Place Names of  
Sussex 2 parts  
C.U.P. 8vo, pp.613, first published 1929, re-issued 1969.  
References to Petworth are included in Vol 1. In 1086 it was  
called "Peteorde", in 1136 "Peteswurda", in 1166 "Peteswrthe",  
in 1228 "Petteworth" and in 1399 "Putteworth".
- Maxse, The Hon. Lady, The Story of Fittleworth  
The National Review, small 8vo, pp.98, illus., 1935.
- Maxse, The Hon. Lady, Petworth in Ancient Times  
Petworth P.C.C. Revised Edition 1972. Small 8vo., pp.36. 20p.
- Mee, Arthur S., Sussex. The King's England  
Hodder and Stoughton, small 8vo, pp.242, 1964. £2.  
An old work much revised.