

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY

BULLETIN NO. 3

DECEMBER 1974

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

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

Hon. Treasurer - Mr. H.A. Probin, Mayfield, Sheepdown Drive,
Petworth.



Committee - Mr. J. Bentley, 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. Syngé, Mr. K.C.Thompson.

Membership

A list of members who have joined the Society since the publication of the first list last August is included in this Bulletin.

The total membership is now 179.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Society is holding an evening party at the Leconfield Hall on Friday, 20th December from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. No charge will be made to members and coffee and biscuits will be served free. Wine will be sold by the glass. Mincepies, French bread, butter and cheese may also be bought.

The Floral Art Group and Mrs. Hill will kindly provide table decorations. There will be a Tombola and Raffle, a competition to guess the names of a variety of wines, and another to guess the weight of a cake.

The St. Mary's Junior Choir will sing carols, in which all will be invited to join, and the Petworth 'Edwardians' in costumes of the period will sing old-time songs.

The Committee hope that as many members as possible will attend the party, the first of its kind since the Society was founded. They are most welcome to bring guests, at a nominal

charge of 10p each to cover the cost of coffee and biscuits.

GRINLING GIBBONS LECTURE

On October 5th, 1974, the Society was able to hold its inaugural lecture in the Carved Room of Petworth House and Miss Lucinda Fletcher, an experienced speaker, gave us a most interesting talk on the life and work of Grinling Gibbons in a magnificent setting among some of his finest carvings.

Grinling Gibbons is regarded by many as England's greatest wood carver, but probably few of us had previously realised his versatility in other respects. Lord Egremont took the chair and welcomed members to the house, contrasting the pleasures of the carvings with the hustle of the electioneering outside. Colonel Maude later proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker and to Lord Egremont and the National Trust for allowing us to hold the lecture in such an appropriate setting. The members then adjourned to the marble Hall for a glass of wine.

The State Rooms and the Picture Gallery were kept open and the pictures lighted. Members were able to wander through the rooms, a great pleasure. Some of the pictures, particularly the Turners, seemed to take on an added luminescence and brilliance from the lighting. The evening was a great success and the Carved Room was full to capacity for the lecture.

We are most grateful to the speaker for a talk of great knowledge and charm, to Lord Egremont and Pamela, Lady Egremont, for their enthusiastic help in organising the lecture and for enabling us to enjoy such a rich evening. We would also like to thank the National Trust for their permission for us to hold the lecture in Petworth House.

The next lecture planned at Petworth House will be one on Turner, when the pictures lent to the present exhibition at Burlington House have been returned. It will be particularly appropriate to hold such a lecture in the artist's centenary year and in a setting where he did some of his finest work. We hope soon to be able to send a notice of the lecturer's name and the date of the talk.

GROUP REPORTS

Architecture and Conservation

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

Since the last bulletin a watching brief has been kept on planning applications covering the Petworth area, but there has been nothing of consequence to report in these matters. Some time has been spent in producing an outline proposal for the formation of a room for the use of the Society if and when circumstances make this possible. The Group leader has also been involved with Patrick Synge in his planting proposals for the Rothermead estate, and in obtaining estimates for the cleaning of the William III bust at the Leconfield Hall.

A good many members of the Society have indicated that they are interested in the work of the Group and letters have been sent to everyone concerned inviting suggestions for a programme of future activities. It is hoped that a number of ideas will be put forward at an informal meeting of the Group at North House, Petworth, arranged for Saturday, 11th January, at 11 a.m. With 1975 designated as Architectural Heritage Year it was felt that a preliminary meeting at this time would be complementary to the national theme. The photographic records of the Group will be shown at the meeting, and it is hoped that members will bring along their own photographs of buildings so that records can be compiled for reference and as a supplement to the albums of the Society. Anyone who has not received notification regarding the meeting but who would like to attend should contact Mr. Davidson (Petworth 42145).

JOHN DAVIDSON.

Countryside and Amenities

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

A further planting plan for the Rothermead Estate has been received from the Chichester District Council and after careful consideration has been returned with some amendments. It was good to see that a generous planting of flowering cherries had been suggested for Cherry Tree Road and of willows for Willow Road.

We think though that there is still insufficient screening of the tanks on the Segas area and have asked that more might be done there. We have also suggested the planting of a black mulberry tree by Mulberry Court and of a cedar by Cedar Court, two of the blocks of flats. We very much hope that some, at any rate, of this scheme may be carried out this winter; it should bring added interest and beauty to this area.

Recently a meeting was held between representatives of the Petworth Society Committee, the Leconfield Hall Msnagement Committee and a representative of the Chichester District Council, who promised in conjunction with Mr. J.W. Davidson to consider the question of keeping clean the bust of King William III on the Leconfield Hall and submit recommendations.

There are no further developments to report. The Committee, however, will be glad to consider any suggestions which may be put forward. The persistent rain of October and November has made much of the ground around Petworth waterlogged and any planting has not been possible.

PATRICK M. SYNGE.

Local History and Records

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

The History Group has been in existence now for long enough to enable us to gain a certain perspective. We hope that the Exhibition on Petworth Gaol, shown in the Public Library from November 20th to December 10th, was of interest to members. This first effort of the Group brought to light much hitherto unpublished information, which is now on record in Petworth. It is invidious to single out individuals, but thanks are due particularly to Mr. Jonathan Newdick for his very professional captions and the trouble he took over them.

Our next meeting will be at Trowels in early January. We will then discuss another project, perhaps one on the old inns of Petworth, which would provide a good subject for an illustrated talk at a general meeting of the Society. The Group has now a steady nucleus of members, but anyone interested in local history will be welcome at Group meetings if they care to contact me.

Research into archive material, though an important branch of

our work, is not the especial preserve of experts. The staff of the County Records Office are most helpful to those who lack experience. We hope in the future to look at correspondence between the first Lord Leconfield and Mr. Sockett (then Rector) on a variety of topics relating to Petworth in the 1830's and early 1840's.

We have also a responsibility to keep an eye on the whereabouts of historic objects relating to Petworth, or even, if their owners wish, to take charge of them if they are in danger of being lost or destroyed. We hope eventually to have a room in which they can be kept on view to the public.

P. A. JERROME.

THE EMIGRATION OF 1832

Dr. Fines, of Bishop Otter College, Chichester, has kindly presented to the Society seventy copies of a thesis on the emigration from Petworth to Canada in the 1830's, the work of one of the students; Mr. Lloyd Richardson. This gives a detailed and interesting account of the enterprise sponsored and financed by the third Earl of Egremont, and organised by a committee under Thomas Sockett, then Rector of Petworth. Sockett saw the first party off from Spithead on April 11th, 1832. During that year over 700 emigrants sailed, and by 1837 the Committee had sent 1818 persons to Upper Canada. Most of them settled in Ontario near Lake Huron. Many of their descendants have visited Petworth or sought information from the registers about the family in the course of the past century. One at least is a member of our Society.

Copies of this thesis (typewritten on foolscap) may be obtained by members at the Petworth Library or from Colonel Maude at Stone House, High Street.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Since the answers to questions asked in these bulletins are often discovered some time after the questions are published, we are adopting a method of numbering the answers which should make reference to the original question easier - e.g. AQ2/1 refers to Question No. 1 in Bulletin No.2.

AQ2/1 There was a Cherry Orchard on the site between Grove Street and Angel Street which still retains the name. We are informed that every garden behind Percy Terrace once had a cherry tree. To scare the birds many houses had a bell in their tree which could be rung by pulling a string indoors. The last cherry tree was cut down not many years ago.

The name survives also in the houses in High Street, known as Cherry Row, and presumably in Orchard House. When the Pulborough buses used to go up and down Shimmings Hill, the stop in Angel Street was known as "Cherry Orchard". The naming of a new road in Rothermead as Cherry Tree Road seems likely to cause some confusion.

AQ2/2 The "Swimming Pool" in the copse in the Park above and West of the Lake, now surrounded by an iron railing, was a medicinal bath dating from Georgian times. The ruins of the bath-house still stand, but no record of the date of its erection has come to light. Nor is it known what was the particular virtue of the waters of the spring which still trickles through the muddy swamp which is all that remains of the pool. Formerly no doubt the spring provided water for the stables. These were demolished to make way for the Lake.

Miss Alison Edwards, Assistant Archivist at Petworth House, who has kindly made some research on the subject, suggests that since the bath-house does not appear on the "Capability" Brown plan or feature in any of his contracts, it seems likely that it dates from the time of the 3rd Earl of Egremont, after 1764 when Brown finished his work.

MORE QUESTIONS

Q1 Why is Washington Copse, (south of Rothermead on Frog Farm) so called? Is there some connexion with the well-known Washington family who were carriers in the Town in the 18th century, and who, some think, were relatives of George Washington? Note the interesting stone set into the front of Mr. Harper's shop in Saddler's Row. The copse is not shown in the map of 1779.

Q2 Is there any hard information, other than Leland's reference, about the semi-legendary Parson Acon?

Q3 Why Hunger Lane? Does it refer simply, as Lady Maxse half-suggests, to a profusion of blackberries?

The Virgin Mary Spring, about which we have as yet received no reply to Q.1/4, about its history and healing properties, has recently been considerably tidied up by some "person or persons unknown" - a good example that might well be followed by some of our younger and active members.

NEW MEMBERS 1974

The following members have joined the Society since publication of the first list last August:-

Miss E.R. Bayliss, York Cottage, Pound Street.

Mrs. J.M. Beech, Kitchen Court, High Street.

Mrs. M.W. Bibby, The Cottage, High Street.

Mr. J.A.G. Bragg, The Cottage, Sutton, Pulborough.

Mr. C.F. Catt, River Valley, Little Bognor Common, Fittleworth.

Mrs. J.M. Chatwood, The Flat, Petworth House Garage, North Street.

Mrs. J. Christie, Saddlers Row.

Mrs. H.M. Colquhoun, Cherry Orchard, Fittleworth.

Miss J.B. Courtauld, Cooke's House, West Burton, Pulborough.

Mr. and Mrs. N.P. Courtney, Sheepdown Cottage.

Mr. D.H. Dean, The Red Lion, New Street.

Mr. and Mrs. R.H. Field, Merrindale, Sheepdown Close.

Mrs. D. Gwillim, Four Winds, Graffham.

Mrs. I. Hamilton, The Manse, High Street.

Mr. and Mrs. C.O. Hartman, Gorehill Lodge, Byworth.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Hyde, Corner House, Bury.

Miss E.L. James, The White House, Duncton.

Mrs. B. Johnson, Glebe Cottage, Bartons Lane.

The Revd. Canon T.J. Lynch, The Presbytery, Angel Street.

The Viscount and Viscountess Mersey, Bignor Park, Pulborough.

Mr. R.J. Minnitt, Hopkins, Sutton, Pulborough.

Mrs. J.A. Moorey, Burton Mill Cottage, Burton Common.

Mrs. G. Morley, Arnops Leith, Angel Street.

Miss J.L. Penfold, 228 Sherman South, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Mrs. R.H. Pletts, Kitchen Court, High Street.

Lt. Colonel Miles Reid, River House, River, Petworth.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Smith, Brunswick, Cornwall Gardens, Brighton.

Mrs. B.M. Overton Smith, Fennell Cottage, Bashurst Hill, Itchingfield,
Horsham.

Mrs. C. Speed, 348 Middle Street.

Mr. K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth.

Mrs. D.M. Thorpe, Rectory Gate.

Mrs. W.M. Wadsworth, 28A Back Lane, Hardingstone, Northants.

Mr. and Mrs. L. Weller, Pythingdean House, Pulborough.

Sir Charles Wolseley Bt., Estate Office, Petworth.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Vyner, Duncton Mill, Petworth.

We regret to record the death of the following Members:-

The Reverend Hugh Owen Jones, Rector of Petworth (1953 to 1974), the first Rector to die in office since Thomas Sockett (1816 - 1859);

Mr. Robert D. Webber, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Leconfield Memorial Hall; and Mrs. Rachel Lawson-Walton, who bequeathed her house, Byworth Bend, Petworth, to the National Trust.

A distinguished former resident in Petworth, who died on November 30 at Sutton after a long illness, was Mr. Claude Muncaster, R.B.A., landscape and marine painter, author and lecturer.

MORE BOOKS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Most of these are available in bookshops or may be consulted in the Petworth Library. Some of them, however, are now rare and will need to be sought in second-hand bookshops. (A previous list was published in Bulletin 2.)

Belloc, H. Hills and the Sea, Essays including 'The Valley of the Rother'. Methuen. First edition 1906.

Elphick, G.P. Sussex Bells and Belfries
1970. pp. 427. Illus. 8 vo. Phillimore, Chichester.

Fisher, E.A. The Saxon Churches of Sussex
1970. 8vo, pp. 252. Illus. David and Charles, £3.15.

Hemming, P. Windmills in Sussex
1936. Daniel.

Horsfield, Thomas W. The History, Antiquities and Topography of the County of Sussex 2 vols. (592 pp. and 364 pp.)

First published in Lewes 1835. New edition published by Kohler and Coombes, Dorking, 1974, with Introduction by Francis W. Steer, M.A., F.S.A. £50. Vol II contains article on Petworth on pp. 174-180.

Leslie, K.C. and McCann T.J. Local History in West Sussex; a guide to sources; Record Office, Chichester.

Lucas, E.V. West Sussex Highways and Byways Booklets.
Macmillan and Co. London. 1937.

Manning, R.B. Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex, 1962.

- Meynell, E. Sussex (County Books Series)
8vo, pp. 264. Illus. First published 1947, 8th impression
1972. Robert Hale.
- Mosse, H.R. The Monumental Effigies of Sussex 1250-1650
- Page, William, edited by, The Victoria History of the County of
Sussex. 4 vols, Royal 4to. Univ. of London, Institute of
Historical Research, 1905, reprinted by Dawson's of Pall Mall,
Folkestone and London, 1973. This massive work includes sections
on Botany, Zoology and Forestry as well as a Domesday Book Survey.
One volume is devoted to Chichester.
- Parish, Rev. W.D. A Dictionary of the Sussex Dialect
8vo. pp. 185.
Originally published in 1875, expanded and enlarged by Helena
Hall and republished by Gardners of Bexhill, 1957.
- Poland, E.P. The Friars in Sussex 1228-1928
- Spence, Keith. The Companion Guide to Kent and Sussex
Collins, 8vo. 1973, £3.
- Stanford, Thomas. Sussex in the Great Civil War
- Steer, F.W. and Osborne, N.H. The Petworth House Archives
A catalogue, Vol.1 8vo. pp.208. West Sussex County Council, 1968.
- Winbolt, S.E. and Herbert, George. The Roman Villa at Bignor, Sussex
Moore and Tillyer, Chichester, 8vo. pp.18, paper bound, 1959. Is.
A general guide.
- Woodford, Cecile. Portrait of Sussex
8vo. pp.224. 1972. Robert Hale.
- Wymer, Norman. Companion into Sussex
Spur Books, 8vo. 1972, £1.

PETWORTH CERAMICS CIRCLE

In November a small group met to form a Society for the purpose
of studying antique pottery and porcelain. There is no formal
membership or subscription, and they would be delighted to hear

from anyone with an interest in this field.

For information about future meetings contact Mrs. Sandell,
Denne Court, East Street.

THE GIRL GUIDES

We have received the following appeal from Mrs. Woodford,
District Commissioner of the Girl Guides:-

There are Girl Guides in Petworth who are very sad that
there is no-one to organise their meetings and help them with
their programme.

The programme is very wide with a great deal of free
choice - according to the capabilities of both the girls and
the people who are training them. I am sure there are many
people in Petworth willing to "Lend a Hand"; can you find
someone willing to co-ordinate this help? Or maybe two or
three - the more there are the easier it becomes. I can
explain how to do this and I am very willing to come to several
meetings to get things going.

Anything in connection with working with children can
be very rewarding, please contact me if you would like to
know any more about it.

(Mrs.) June Woodford.

District Commissioner.

(Tel. Loxwood 752589)

CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU

A Citizens' Advice Bureau is now open at the Red Cross
Centre, East Street, Petworth, on Tuesdays from 12 noon to
3 p.m.

It is based on Chichester, where the office at 6 Theatre

Lane, PO 19/LSR; is open from Monday to Friday for personal or telephone inquiries.

Some Sussex Societies, most of which publish material of specialist interest

Sussex Archaeological Society, Barbican House, Lewes.

Publications include an annual volume. Vols. 96-100 are in the Petworth Library. Vols. 65, 69, 71-80 and 100-111 may be consulted at Stone House, High Street, by appointment. (Tel. 42314).

Sussex Records Society

Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation, Woods Mill, Henfield.

This trust publishes a News Letter of interest to naturalists in the county. It administers the new Nature Reserve of the Mans and the Cuts woodland, North East of Petworth, as well as other Nature Reserves.

There is a Midhurst and Petworth Regional Group which has a programme of lectures, films and excursions. Secretary - Prof. Marion Bowley, Brook Orchard, Graffham.

Society of Sussex Downsmen, 93 Church Road, Hove.