

# NEWSLETTER

## Autumn 2006

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# FRIENDS OF THE EAST SUSSEX RECORD OFFICE

**Chairman**  
**Vice-Chairman**  
**Hon. Secretary**  
**Hon. Treasurer**  
**Newsletter Editor**  
**Newsletter Production**  
**County Archivist**

**Mrs Pam Combes**  
**Lady Teviot**  
**Dr Sally Dench**  
**Mr Michael Verrall**  
**Dr Gail Vines**  
**Ms Sue Rowland**  
**Mrs Elizabeth Hughes**

## Committee Members:

Ms Barbara Abbs                      Mr Ian Hilder  
Mrs Judy Brent                        Lord Teviot  
Mrs Diana Crook

President: Mrs Phyllida K. Stewart-Roberts OBE, Lord-Lieutenant, East Sussex

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Registered Charity No. 296062

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Please direct any correspondence or membership enquiries to the appropriate officer c/o the Record Office

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**EAST SUSSEX COUNTY RECORD OFFICE**  
**The Maltings, Castle Precincts, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1YT**  
**Telephone: 01273 482349**  
**e-mail: [archives@eastsussexcc.gov.uk](mailto:archives@eastsussexcc.gov.uk)**

## **Opening Times**

Mon, Tue, 8.45-4.45, Wed 9.30-4.45, Thur 8.45-4.45, Fri 8.45-4.15  
& the second Saturday in each month 9.00-1.00 & 2.00-4.45

*To book please phone the Search Room on:  
01273 482359 (Booking is essential on Saturdays)*

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*New FESRO website*

<http://www.fesro.org>

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## News from the chairman

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### The highs and lows of 2006

This year has been something of a rollercoaster ride. The lowest point was reached when we heard of the devastating report by the National Archives inspectors on the state of ESRO's storage facilities; the zenith was the decision by ESCC to establish a capital fund for the provision of a new record office, and to appoint a project manager to put together a major capital bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Between those two extremes came the disappointment of losing the Herstmonceux portfolio for lack of the ability to match the grants we had been offered, and the elation of seeing the wonderful response from members and friends that allowed us to purchase it despite the higher asking price.

Other peaks included our expertly guided visits to Firle and Winchelsea - these pleasurable events allow us both to socialise and to learn more of the history of our county in the company of experts. They are a unique benefit of membership of the Friends, and often allow access to buildings which are never open to the public. Sue Berry has kindly volunteered to take on the demanding role of coordinating the visits and organising the day schools, and the committee very much welcomes her help.

Despite the importance to our members of this social aspect of FESRO, we must never lose sight of our fundamental aim: to give support and encouragement to our County Record Office. To quote from our constitution: *'The object of the Society shall be to advance public education in all aspects of the history of East Sussex in particular by assisting in the maintenance and improvement of the services offered by East Sussex Record Office'*. Clearly over the next few years that role will become significant

as never before; events are moving fast and FESRO must move with them.

### Fundraising

Our constitution also makes clear that one of our roles is *'to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise...'*. As a charity we can take advantage of the tax benefits of the Gift Aid scheme, and we are the obvious conduit through which any substantial funds raised towards the provision of a new record office will flow.

In order to realise the dream of a new record office, ESRO will need not only our support but also the support of the wider community. I was privileged to be asked to accompany Wendy Walker and Elizabeth Hughes at one of the symposia organised as part of Wendy's fundraising course (see *Newsletter* Summer 2006, 7): this particular seminar dealt with aspects of working with Friends organisations. It was exceedingly interesting and stimulating – but nonetheless somewhat alarming. The work required to undertake a major fundraising appeal on the scale which will be necessary would be a struggle for any voluntary organisation; for FESRO, where the work of administration is carried out by a committed but small number of individuals, it is particularly daunting.

ESRO need our help and support now more than ever before. It is clear that the time has come to consider new means of recruiting support for ESRO and FESRO. If you have any expertise in the field of publicity, fundraising or recruiting support we would be delighted to hear from you.

Do you know of any local individuals, or any businesses, prepared to become sponsors?

If you do, please let us know. It is essential that we build up a wide and varied network of support across the county. Like any voluntary organisation, FESRO does not organise itself – it is down to individual effort; and at present, although there is no lack of effort, there are just too few individuals making it.

We would also welcome comments on proposals to ask Friends to give on a regular annual or monthly basis or even to participate in a monthly lottery – a scheme that has worked well for the Victoria County History in Derbyshire.

Wendy will be putting together a fundraising strategy for the new Record Office over the next few months, and she will be looking at all of the various fundraising options available to us. We will be able to look at and comment on those ideas once the work has been completed, but in the meantime if you have any ideas or proposals do let me know and we can feed all of this into Wendy's work.

## **Subscriptions**

At the fundraising course we also discussed the legal constraints, as well as the benefits, of encouraging the use of the Gift-Aid scheme to assist charitable giving. In the course of that discussion two things gradually became clear. Our very modest annual subscription is well below that of any other similar group and, more worryingly, as we claim Gift-Aid on our subscriptions, the value of the benefits we offer to members exceeds the proper proportion by a considerable amount. While, as at present, many of our costs are met by ESRO that is not an insurmountable problem. But we cannot necessarily rely on that support in the longer term and, if we are to stand on our own financial feet as an arm's length body, neither should we.

Whichever way one addresses the question, our present subscription is far too low. We

are aware that an increasing number of our members already give generous donations in addition to their basic subscription, and we hope that trend will continue.

But we have kept the subscription at the same level for many years. I am convinced that immediate thought must be given to a more realistic minimum membership fee, in order to bring it into line with current costs, to ensure that we remain legally within the Gift-Aid scheme, and to put FESRO in a position to do its very best to support ESRO. FESRO's inability to match offers of funding for the Herstmonceux volume from national sources when it was originally offered for sale meant that this cost us all much more in the long run and I am determined that we should do everything in our power to make sure it does not happen again.

The question of FESRO's subscription income, and the benefits of membership, will form a substantial item for discussion at this year's AGM on 10 November – if you have any feelings on the issue, do please come along and give us the benefit of your views.

## **Help still needed**

Michael Verrall, who has served us so well for many years as treasurer, would like to stand down from that post at the next AGM in 2007. We urgently need to find a successor who can find the time to shadow his work over a few months and understand what the job entails. Michael feels that as the role of FESRO develops we require a treasurer with a background in accounting. If you have the requisite skills please come forward to help us – the office of treasurer is essential to the future development of the group.

Sue Tompsett has kindly agreed to serve as membership secretary. She will be standing for election to the committee at the AGM.

*Pamela Combes*

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## News from the Record Office

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### Herstmonceux – thank you

First of all, my sincere thanks to the Friends for helping us to acquire the Herstmonceux portfolio covered on page 5 in this and previous *newsletters*. Without the funds raised from this appeal to add to the grant from the V&A/MLA purchase fund, the portfolio could have been dismembered and dispersed. By the time you read this, our celebratory reception, hosted by the Lord Lieutenant at the castle itself will have taken place, successfully I'm sure, a fitting thank you to the organisers of and contributors to the appeal, and a means to raise awareness of the Record Office and its future plans.

### New Record Office

I am pleased to report that work towards the new Record Office has been gearing up. We have now had two meetings of the New Record Office Project Board, which is chaired by Councillor Bob Tidy, the County Council's lead cabinet member for Community Services. A project manager has been appointed, and I am delighted to say that it is Wendy Walker, who has already done so much work towards progressing the project. Of course, Wendy cannot work full time as project manager as well as running our Record Centre and the County Council has made funding available to backfill Wendy's post for two years. Ellen Taylor, who has been working a year's contract to reduce the backlog of archive appraisal at the Record Centre, has been appointed, and should be able to start taking on Wendy's records management work from the beginning of October.

Wendy and I had a meeting with the Heritage Lottery Fund in August to keep them informed about progress on our Audience Development Plan (about which more below) and about our intentions to submit a major

capital bid within the next 18 months to two years. They were very helpful in giving us a clearer view of the size of the task ahead of us and also confirmed that an innovative scheme involving partners would strengthen the bid. They were also pleased that we were looking at other methods of fund-raising as well, which not all such projects do.

In July we interviewed potential consultants to carry out the audience development and access (ADP & AP) plan for both The Keep and for the digitisation of library, archive and museum maps and illustrative material (known as East Sussex Depicted) and appointed Creative Cultures, who have a great deal of experience in this field. We had an initial meeting with them in August and they have been doing some preliminary research before beginning consultations in earnest in October. They expect to finish in January 2006. The audience development and access plan will form a vital element of our application to the Heritage Lottery Fund as it will both help to provide proof of need and also inform the way in which both projects develop. The ADP & AP will look at who our users are and what they would like from the service but also at those people who do not use the service at the moment and what sort of services they might use. The study will also look at access in its widest sense, both physical and intellectual, on the premises and remote. As such, it will also assess the known potential sites for the new building. A site search is under-way and several possible sites will be identified and assessed as part of the development process.

Awareness of the project is being raised throughout the County Council, and the Community Services Scrutiny Committee visited the service to discuss developments in July.

## Other news

In the last newsletter I reported that digitisation of the tithe maps has now been completed. We have bought a computer and printer which will be installing over the next few months so that there will be public access in the searchroom and you will be able to take copies. In the meantime we are also selling copies of the tithe maps on CD at a cost of £10 each. Discussions are still under way with the County Council's web development team to make the images available on the internet.

Conscious of the importance of audience development and partnership working, we have been developing a number of potential projects to reach different audiences. Most recently, a project working with looked after children, using archives relating to children in care in past centuries, has received funding from the Museums Libraries and Archives Council South East. The project, called *Imagined Lives*, will be carried out in the autumn. Neville Gabie, the leader of the September 10 strand of the *Navigating History* project, has also received further funding to extend the project into schools.

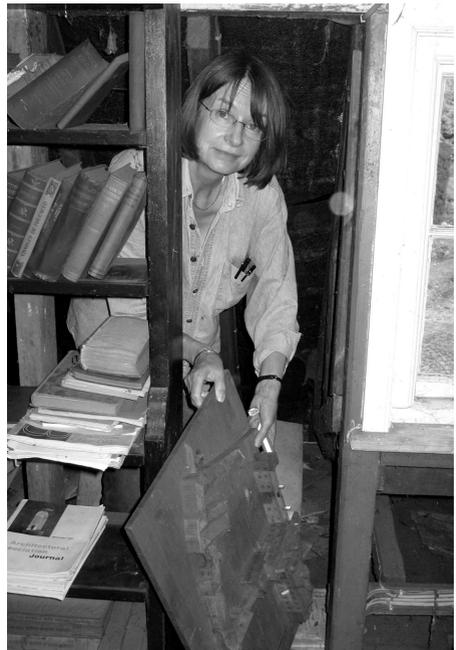
Listing of the Lady Chichester Hospital Archives, funded by the Wellcome Trust, has continued on schedule and should be completed on time at the end of October. Well done to all involved.

## Walter Godfrey archive

We continue to receive high-quality archives on deposit. Certainly the largest and most notable has been the archive of Walter H Godfrey (1881-1961), the conservation architect and antiquary, who was based in Lewes for much of his working life. The call came to collect this material just as the event at Herstmonceux (see page 5) was being planned. This stretched already taut resources, but proved a fruitful co-incidence. Godfrey had worked at the castle in the 1930s – Sir John Summerson called it his most imaginative and lucrative commission – and the exhibition

of the Lambert Portfolio on 26 September was enhanced by several of his drawings, photographs and designs. The archive, which includes that of the architectural firm of Carden and Godfrey, was housed in three stables at Steventon in Oxfordshire and, thanks to the kindness of the Godfrey family, several members of staff are spending days at a time camped out in the house as the archive is sorted, cleaned, loaded and transported to Lewes. We are also working with the British Records Association to distribute the later records of the firm to appropriate archival homes. A fuller account will appear in a future edition of the *Newsletter*, but meanwhile here is a photograph of Anna Manthorpe emerging from the roof-space with a precious and captivating 'record' – a scale model, by George Devey (1820-1886), the original founder of Godfrey's firm, of an as-yet-unidentified country house.

*Elizabeth Hughes*



# An evening of archive magic at Herstmonceux Castle

On an enchanting autumn evening about 150 guests gathered at Herstmonceux Castle to celebrate the acquisition of the portfolio of drawings, prepared for Lord Dacre by the James Lamberts of Lewes in 1776. The evening was hosted by the Lord Lieutenant Mrs Phyllida Stewart-Roberts, our president; ESRO staff (who had earlier mounted the exhibition) acted as stewards and musical entertainment was provided by Heather Doi, a student at Queen's University, which now runs the castle as its European campus.

The Lord Lieutenant described the struggle to acquire the portfolio, and both she and Elizabeth Hughes set out the County Council's plans for the future of the Record Office. John Farrant, author of the entry on Lambert in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, gave a short talk on the commission for Lord Dacre; his text will appear in the next *Newsletter*.

But the portfolio itself was the star attraction; only one page could be shown, but

an AV display of all the pictures ran throughout the evening on four different screens. Also on display were the Lamberts' preliminary sketches and a portrait of Lambert himself, loaned by the Sussex Archaeological Society. Lord Dacre's bank book, recording the payment to Lambert, was kindly loaned by the Essex Record Office, along with a superb household account book for the castle in the 1640s. Finally we were able to include the architectural drawings of Walter Godfrey, who restored the castle for Sir Paul Latham between 1932 and 1935 (see page 4), and material relating to the occupation of the castle by the Hearts of Oak Friendly Society during the war.

The gathering – composed of donors to the appeal, the major depositors at the Record Office and members and senior staff of East Sussex County Council – were unanimous in their praise of the event: 'what a triumph for the Record Office' were the words on many lips at Herstmonceux on 26 September.



L-R: Cllr Mrs Pat Kennedy (chairman Wealden DC), Cllr Bob Tidy (ESCC), Janet Davies (V&A Purchase Grant Fund), Elizabeth Hughes (County Archivist), Mrs Phyllida Stewart-Roberts (Lord Lieutenant), Pam Combes (Chariman, FESRO), Cllr Peter Jones (leader, ESCC)

# Archives For Sale!

As I write there are 2 hours, 16 minutes left before bidding ends on item number: 220024617558 at on-line auctioneer eBay.....  
**Ian Hilder** tells the tale:

I was browsing the Internet one evening, hoping to find items to add to my collection of Barcombe postcards. There was nothing to be found, so I tried a few local place-names and surnames, still without result, until I typed in 'Grantham' (the surname of the owners of Barcombe Place from 1839-1940). This triggered a long list of items for sale. After wading through postcards and guides to Grantham, Lincolnshire and signed photographs of the actor Leslie Grantham, I came on the following:

*Indenture dated 7th April 1808, relating to a property in Saint John's under-the-Castle, Lewes. This property was 'formerly in the occupation of Mary Davey, and which said tenement faces North on the Street there and abuts East and West upon the Parsonage House in the Parish of Saint John'. The parties to the deed were John Marten of Lewes, Draper and his trustees; Richard Watts of Lewes, Gentleman, William English of Lewes, Cutler and George Grantham of Lewes Basket Maker.*

These deeds had somehow found their way from the hands of one of the original parties to the transaction, or their solicitor, to a private individual named Barry in Bournemouth.

## Dilemma?

I was aware that ESRO often purchased items at auction, through Gorrings of Lewes and Stride's of Chichester, but would they sanction a purchase through the on-line equivalent? Would bidding for a single document, divorced from its original context, be considered supporting the trade in documents, while discouraging free and voluntary deposit? On the other hand, the rescuing of documents,

which would otherwise fall into private hands, is one of the remits of FESRO.

I fired off emails to Elizabeth Hughes and Christopher Whittick at ESRO, to find out whether the Record Office would be interested in this document, and agree to its purchase on their behalf. As the deadline was tight, I also contacted the FESRO chair and treasurer, to confirm that FESRO would be able to support the purchase. The answers were 'yes' on all counts!

## What information does this document hold?

Apart from the history of the property to which it refers, the indenture gives details of the adjoining properties (abutments). A small plan shows a message belonging to St. John's Rectory to the West, bounded by St. Mary's Lane. A passage led from the lane to a yard and detached 'privy' to the back of the property, between land belonging to the trustees of Revd. P.G. CROFTS to the North, and the trustees of Thomas FIGG to the South.

There are signatures of all parties, including George GRANTHAM snr. & George jnr. (later of Barcombe Place). Each person's occupation or status and place of residence are given, information that may not be available from any other source.

Oh yes, that auction.....we 'won' the document, and have since reunited several other documents for the same property (all sold separately). They are now safely stored at ESRO, where they have been listed and will be preserved for future researchers [AMS 6722]. All thanks to the backing of FESRO.

## Postscript

I have agreed to monitor eBay and keep ESRO informed of any items of potential interest. If you come across an item or document of East Sussex history for sale or auction, please let me or Christopher know, so that further enquiries can be made.

*Ian Hilder, 'The Nook', Barcombe, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 5TJ eMail:Hildergen@aol.com*

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## Recent events

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### A tour of historic Winchelsea

On Saturday 10 June, while an enchanting light bathed its exquisite gardens, the deputy mayor of Winchelsea greeted FESRO members in the medieval, if truncated, Court House of his ancient Cinque Port. Malcolm Pratt, author of *Winchelsea: A Port of Stranded Pride* (1998) and *Winchelsea: The Tale of a Medieval Town* (2005), sketched out the abiding role of its mayor and jurats in the still-resilient Cinque Ports Federation and exhibited its earlier municipal status by wielding three maces, the earliest dating from c.1485. Members then examined the many relics of civic life displayed in the Court House before being conducted by Ken Chetwood, jurat, to view a vaulted wine cellar beneath his front lawn, dating from the re-foundation of the port, and also the sumptuous remnant of the church of St Thomas. Then

back at the Court House some jurats and their ladies served an equally sumptuous tea.

*Colin Brent*

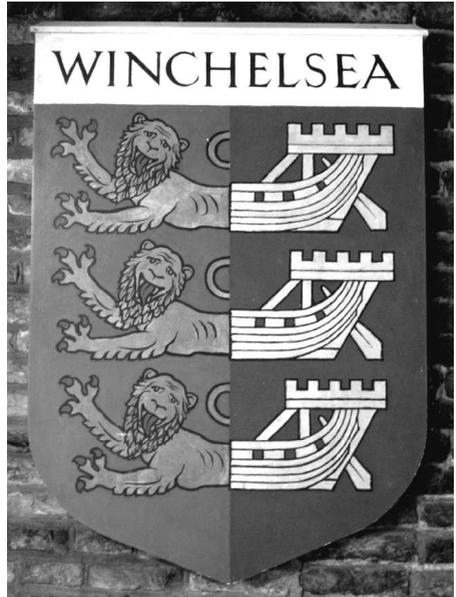
### *Malcolm Pratt adds:*

During the afternoon of the FESRO Winchelsea tour, I talked with one of the visiting ladies who, I gather, had a relation who used to be on the staff of the Clerk to the Corporation of London. We discussed the late-thirteenth century suspension of London's mayoralty; because of the persons involved this is mixed up with Winchelsea's history! Unfortunately, I didn't ask the lady's name, but if she would like more information I have looked up the details and could provide them.

*Malcolm Pratt, 16 Downlands Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN39 3PL*



Malcolm Pratt shows the civic maces



Arms of the borough of Winchelsea

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## Future events

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### **FESRO visit to the Mass Observation and Special Collections at the University of Sussex on Friday 20 April 2007, 10am -12noon**

Sussex University Library is the custodian of an intriguing variety of special collections. They include not only Sussex material but also the Mass Observation Collection, which includes memoirs and diaries collected to reflect contemporary views from the 1930s onwards. There will be a general display and introduction to the library's holdings which include the Bloomsbury Archives, the Rudyard Kipling Collection and the Bob Copper Collection. Lockers are available for personal possessions.

Meet at the bottom of the main steps of the University of Sussex Library (or just

inside if it is wet) at 9.45. The organiser is Sally Dench, who will meet you there. There are toilets in the entrance hall to the library down the stairs to the right as you walk in. Car parking on campus is charged (£4) and difficult in the week during term time. If you arrive by train (or bus) at Falmer station, it is a short walk to the library via the underpass. Head straight on to the campus until you see the library on your left, on a rise, with steep steps up to it. There is a café in the basement of the library, and others on campus, as well as a bookshop. Maximum number of 16, charge £6.

### **FESRO visit to Danny House, Hurstpierpoint on Saturday 5 May 2007**

Mr Richard Burrows has kindly allowed us to see Danny. This event is run jointly with West Sussex Archives Society and so places will be limited to 30.

Assemble outside the main house by 2pm when we will start promptly. Please park only in the visitors' car park. Dr Colin Brent will give a brief talk and lead a short tour of the main rooms of this fascinating Elizabethan House with its spectacular ceilings. Some residents will permit access to their private rooms. The exterior is also interesting; on the south front is a façade of the 1720s. Anna Manthorpe has very kindly agreed to take a

display of documents from the Danny Estate to this event.

Tea is included. Cost £7.50

Danny lies off the road connecting Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks, the B2116, and to the south of this road. You need to find New Way Lane and turn down it. A couple of hundred yards down on the right is the drive to the house, clearly marked by a finger-post. Most road atlases do not mark Danny, so you are advised to use an OS map or to download a suitable map from the internet. Danny has a web site with a good map, see <http://www.dannyhouse.org.uk>

*Sue Berry*

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In spring 2007 we will be reviving our highly popular seminar series, run jointly with the Sussex Archaeological Society. If you have any suggestions about topics or seminar leaders, please contact Sue Berry. Professor Brian Short has offered a seminar on using documents to study Ashdown Forest, and Geoffrey Mead will discuss studying interwar suburbs. Setting up a research project and writing it up for publication are also possible seminar themes. For each session we need a volunteer to help with setting up the room – but all we can offer is a free place! Sue's email is: [pat.sueberry@bopenworld.com](mailto:pat.sueberry@bopenworld.com)

Friends of the East Sussex Record Office

## 26th Annual General Meeting

Friday 10 November 2006, at 7.30pm  
in the Council Chamber, Lewes Town Hall

*After the AGM, Geoffrey Mead of the University of Sussex  
will give a talk entitled*

*'Scattered Squalor: aspects of  
Patcham's interwar housing'*

**Please note the change of venue.** For the first time we have arranged for the meeting to be held outside the Record Office.

This has been a momentous year for both ESRO and FESRO. With progress being made towards the provision of a new record office, we felt a larger than usual number of members might wish to attend.

## DATES FOR YOUR 2006/7 DIARY

Nov 10 - **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, Lewes Town Hall

Nov 11 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

Dec 6 - FESRO Committee meeting at 6.15pm

Dec 9 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

### **2007**

Jan 10 - Newsletter deadline. Copy to ESRO Reception

Jan 13 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

Feb 10 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

Mar 10 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

Apr 14 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

Apr 20 - **FESRO visit to the Mass Observation and Special Collections at the University of Sussex**, 10am -12noon

May 5 - **FESRO visit to Danny House, Hurstpierpoint**

May 12 - Saturday opening (please phone to book)

To book an event please use the enclosed booking form. Payment within 7 days (cheques to FESRO) must be made to secure bookings of events. *Please include an sae with all correspondence and send to the Events Secretary, 30 Preston Mansions, Preston Park Avenue, Brighton BN1 6HP*

For booking Saturday openings please phone the Search Room on:  
01273 482359