

Age: 44...

wake up in  
put the tin on  
coffee then  
lawn ahead

**MO**  
MASS OBSERVATION  
Recording everyday life in Britain

Mass Observation

# Friends of [the keep] Archives

Newsletter Spring 2016

Male ☒

Today started in  
in secured by vel...  
quietly so as not  
in my ration of wa...  
o'clock, I spent the  
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**MO**  
MASS OBSERVATION  
Recording everyday life in Britain

12<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Age: 74

male ☐

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ed milk and tea - also small  
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"I donate my 12th May diary to the Mass Observ  
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broadcasts as approved by  
the role of Di

Mass Observation D

12<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Male ☒ Female ☐

Age: 46

Awoke 10 minutes before radio alarm c  
Said my morning thanksgiving prayer  
bathroom, washing and making breakfast  
Read UCB devotional for the day  
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different attitude and feel differently  
In summary training your mind to in  
switch your focus towards God. Thus y  
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over other peoples outward hostility a  
Did succeed in a small way by not  
course had still sinned in thought.  
but still offensive to God. Thank Him for

"I donate my 12th May diary to the Mass Observation Arch

# Friends of the Keep Archives

## FoTKA Officers

### **President**

Peter Field,  
Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex

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Chairman: Lady Teviot  
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Membership Secretary: Jan Boyes  
Assistant Treasurer: Sue Tompsett  
Philip Pople  
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Michael Chowen  
Annette Shelford

**Newsletter editor:** Diana Hansen

### **Visit the Friends of The Keep Archive website at**

[www.friendsofthekeeparchive.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthekeeparchive.org.uk)

Registered charity number 1159372

## Contact The Keep

### **The Keep opening hours**

Tuesday - Friday: 9.30-17.00

Saturday: 9.30-16.00

The Keep is closed to the public on  
Sunday and Monday

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**Telephone:** 01273 482349

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**Twitter:** @thekeeparchives

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# Editor's introduction

As the imaginative, expert and energetic editor of this newsletter, Pam Combes will be much missed. Chris Whittick's eulogy is reproduced later. We are hoping that, at our AGM on 26 October, the usual much-anticipated talk will be devoted to a topic close to her heart.

FoTKA has had some other personnel changes. Melissa Williams was obliged by ill-health to relinquish her post as assistant treasurer and membership secretary; our thanks go to her, and we wish her the best for her continued recovery. Sue Tompsett has again stepped into the breach as temporary assistant treasurer.

Our website is up and running at [www.friendsofthekeeparchives.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthekeeparchives.org.uk). Do take a look. Increasingly we will use it for items of news. You can book visits online, and I hope you will encourage your friends to look at it and join online.

This edition has something of a theme on volunteers at The Keep – perhaps you will be inspired to join them.

Our front cover features the Mass Observation Diary Day. We hope that on 12 May FoTKA members will enter into this serious fun. Please move quickly to get out your pen or email, and contribute to the national record of a single day's experiences. Jessica Scantlebury's article gives details of how to participate.

Diana Hansen



## Your New Membership Secretary

We are delighted to welcome Jan Boyes to the FoTKA team. Much of her working life was spent overseas with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. After her return home and move to East Sussex, she became an administrator with the Health Team at the Institute of Development Studies. An Open University degree led her to an interest in early twentieth century history. She joined FESRO in 2002 and soon after started volunteering as one of the "wills team". Now retired, she is a (fairly) regular volunteer at The Keep. You can reach Jan by email on [jan@friendsofthekeeparchive.org](mailto:jan@friendsofthekeeparchive.org)

# Remembering Pam Combes

*This is an edited version of the eulogy given by Christopher Whittick at the service of thanksgiving held for Pam Combes on 26 February 2016*

In paying tribute to Pam today, I have benefited from the assistance of her family and many friends. Although we will each have our own image of Pam, a golden thread of consistency runs through what everyone has told me – warmth, energy, style, scholarship, hospitality, integrity, effort, achievement and an attitude to life of cup half full – preferably with good claret. At home, Pam brought young and established scholars together, usually around an often al fresco dinner table – she was a wonderful cook – and inspired us all by her example.

Pam's first introduction to Sussex was when in 1954 she entered Bishop Otter College at Chichester to train as a teacher. There she was an active participant in the debating society, and developed a fascination with 20th-century art. She also met and in 1959 married David Combes, one of an established family of seafarers and boatmen from the parish of Bosham; David introduced Pam to harbours, yachting, ships and the sea. Her teaching practice at Atherstone, on the Warwickshire coalfield, had a marked effect on her political outlook.

In 1966 David, Pam and their two daughters, Sarah and Helen, returned to Sussex, this time to Crowborough in the Weald, and Pam continued teaching, at first part-time, at Whitehill School; she retired as the school's deputy head in

1989. She was already deeply involved in local history and archaeology and an active member, with David, of the Wealden Iron Research Group. Retirement and a move to Lewes in 1992 were prompted by her increasing involvement with history, archaeology and archives, and she became familiar with yet more aspects of the county – the Low Weald, the Ouse Valley and the Downland. It is no exaggeration to say that she devoted the remainder of her life to research. She was a classic example of the honourable tradition of amateur scholarship of which the Sussex Archaeological Society, when we joined it, was the embodiment. Her first article in the Society's journal, on the Crowborough Warren estate, was published in 1985. Between 1987 and 1990 she chaired the Society's council and and in 2012 she assiduously constructed a splendid powerpoint slide-show to celebrate the 150th volume of SAC – Pam took easily to the use of technology as a vital tool of research.

When in 2012 a group of her friends nominated her for fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries, we were called on to sum up her achievements. By then Pam had been a leading figure in archaeological and historical research in Sussex for over 30 years, a vice-president of SAS and in a national context active in the Society for Name-Studies in Britain and Ireland. With David she had produced outstanding geophysical surveys at University College London sites near Vix in France and locally at Lewes Priory and the Roman villas at Barcombe and





*Pam and members of her family  
at her 80th birthday party*

Beddingham. Between 2002 and 2006 she co-ordinated a major HLF funded research project on the history and archaeology of the parishes of Hamsey and Barcombe, and from 2004 to 2009 undertook an administrative role with a UCL team in Italy. Her research and publication on the pre-conquest settlement at Bishopstone provided a crucial platform for the excavation of the site by Gabor Thomas, in which she was an active participant.

My own closest contact with her involved the Friends of East Sussex Record Office, which she chaired between 2003 and 2011, at times holding it together almost single-handed. Pam was able to see with satisfaction the transformation of FESRO into the Friends of the Keep Archives; and at its meeting just days before she died, she spoke with her usual animation and good sense about the future. She was an ideal member of any committee.

Intellectually she had an ability to see things from an oblique angle, either literally – she often said that you couldn't understand the land unless you had seen it from the sea – or metaphorically.

Pam would be disappointed if we allowed her current projects to run into the sand. She wanted to bring to publication her ground-breaking work on Sussex Domesday, which had begun as an MA thesis at the University of Sussex; to complete editions of a Sussex taxation list of 1341 and of the diary of the curate of Waldron from the 1750s; and to finish a major project on the history of Newick Park and the Sclater family. Those tasks now fall to us to accomplish.

We celebrate Pam's life today, and we celebrate her capacity to live it to the full; through Pam's life, dare I say it, we have been given an opportunity to celebrate life itself.

**Christopher Whittick**

# 12th May 2016: Mass Observation Day Diary

On 12th May 2016 the Mass Observation Archive (MOA) is repeating its call for people from across the country to submit their account of how they have spent their day. The resulting diaries will be stored in The Keep and will be used by a wide range of groups for research and teaching and in school and community outreach sessions. Readers of this newsletter, and their acquaintances, are encouraged to participate in this project.

The origins of the project date back to the mid 1930s when the Mass Observation (MO) organisation was founded. As 1936 was drawing to a close, news of King Edward VIII's relationship with the American divorcee, Wallis Simpson, was finally made public. The editors of the British press had previously remained silent on the subject and rejected news articles which threatened to expose the affair. Now liberated, headlines such as "Can We Afford to Lose Him?" (The Daily Mail) and images of crowds outside the Houses of Parliament reached the breakfast table of the British public for the first time.

The journalist and poet, Charles Madge and his colleague, ornithologist and

anthropologist Tom Harrisson were critical of the media blackout of the subject and questioned whether the 'person on the street' considered the event to be a crisis at all. In early 1937 they published a pamphlet, Mass Observation, setting out the aims of their proposed group and its plans to recruit a national panel of diary writers. These writers would act as "meteorological stations from whose reports a weather map of popular feeling can be compiled". Given Mass Observation's early preoccupation with royal affairs, it seemed sensible to launch this diary project with another royal event: the Coronation of George VI on 12th May 1937.

Hundreds of Coronation diaries, from people of all walks of life, were sent to Mass Observation's headquarters in London. Diarists wrote about everything from waking in the morning to going to sleep at night. Some wrote about standing on The Mall and summarised the mood of the surrounding crowds; many wrote about celebrations in their local area, whereas for others it was just an ordinary day, and their diaries reflect this:

*"Went into the country – very quiet country, remote from towns and main roads, on the Kent-Sussex border. Even so, did not entirely escape from the Coronation atmosphere. Every habitation decorated, and from every cottage came the sound of the cheering. Very few people about in fields or gardens – evidently all listening to the broadcast commentary" – a diarist from Southend.*

The resulting diaries provide a wonderful glimpse into the everyday lives of people across Britain, and they've become an invaluable resource for those researching the era. Mass Observation continued to collect diaries written on the 12th of the month before daily diaries were requested at the start of the Second World War.

In 2010 we relaunched the 12th May diary project and since then we have been collecting accounts of the day to be used for current research and stored for posterity. Recent 12th May diaries, unlike 1937, have been on relatively

ordinary days, but diaries can offer a unique window into life in Britain in the 21st century.


Details of how to take part can be found on the Mass Observation Archive's website: [www.massobs.org.uk/write-for-us/12th-may](http://www.massobs.org.uk/write-for-us/12th-may). Diaries should be emailed to us with the copyright statement (found on the website). If you would prefer to hand write your diary please contact us and we will send you a diary writing pack. Our phone number is 01273 337515.

Jessica Scantlebury

**Mass Observation Day Diary**  
**12<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

Male ☐ Female ☒ Age: 8....

My name is Chloe. I am 8. I live in Horley. I have 2 brothers. I go to school at Yattendon School. Today I met my nanny and grandad and we went to the allotments. An allotment is like a garden but much bigger. After we had a caramel waffer and a carton of orange juice. For lunch we had poached egg and toast. For pudding we had chocolate egg. I practised my spellings and my times tables. For tea we had chips, beans and fish fingers. I went on the computer on Moshi Monsters. It is a game where you can look after a pet monster. It was a normal day because we normally go out. We were lucky because we normally have reg on Sunday but we didn't. We tidied my bedroom today and now it looks much better. My dad did some painting and moved the furniture.



Please use extra sheets...

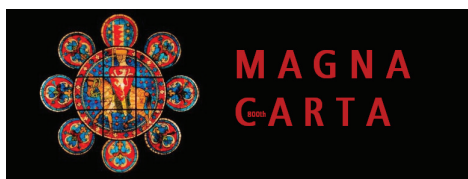
"I donate my 12th May Day Diary to the Mass Observation Archive. I consent to it being made publicly available as part of the Archive and assign my copyright in the diary to the Mass Observation Archive Trustees, so that it can be reproduced in full or in part on websites, in publications and in broadcasts as approved by the MOA Trustees"

Chloe's day, 12 May 2013

## News from The Keep

Last November we were delighted to host the exhibition on The Road to Democracy, courtesy of the Parliamentary Archives, which looked very splendid in our reception area. The public lecture on Magna Carta by expert David Carpenter, sponsored by the Friends, was a highlight. We also worked with children from the Pestalozzi school, linking ideas of democracy in the UK and abroad. We are keen to welcome primary and secondary school children to The Keep. If we can enthuse younger generations with an understanding of the importance of archives, we can help to ensure their future preservation. Some school visits are supported by external funding and can be free but we have to charge for other sessions. We are delighted that The Friends have agreed to maintain an annual fund to subsidise the costs for schools in more deprived areas .

Another project funded by The Friends is reaching a conclusion. Laurie Smith, our Discoverability Officer, has spent a year working on ESRO's online catalogue to make it easier to search. He has made a huge difference to the online catalogue and thanks are due both to Laurie and to the Friends, without whose support we would not have been able to employ him. Researchers are also benefiting from work recently carried out by the Brighton staff on their own area of the online catalogue, which now displays more information on the holdings which have come in from the Brighton History Centre.



The Keep continues to be much in demand as a partner in national and regional projects. With Sussex University as lead, The Keep has been chosen as the regional hub in the British Library's project, *Save our Sounds*, which has received a first stage approval from the Heritage Lottery Fund. If we receive second stage approval the project will pay for equipment and staff to digitise 5,000 items of analogue sound archives in repositories across the south east.

Watch out for our summer events as we join in this Olympic year with a sporting theme!

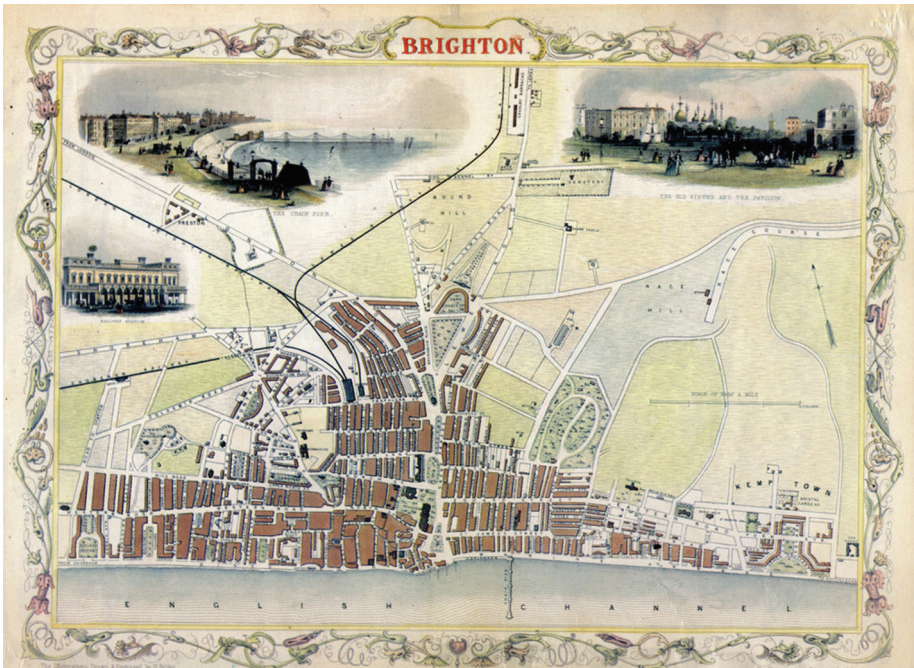
Elizabeth Hughes, County Archivist



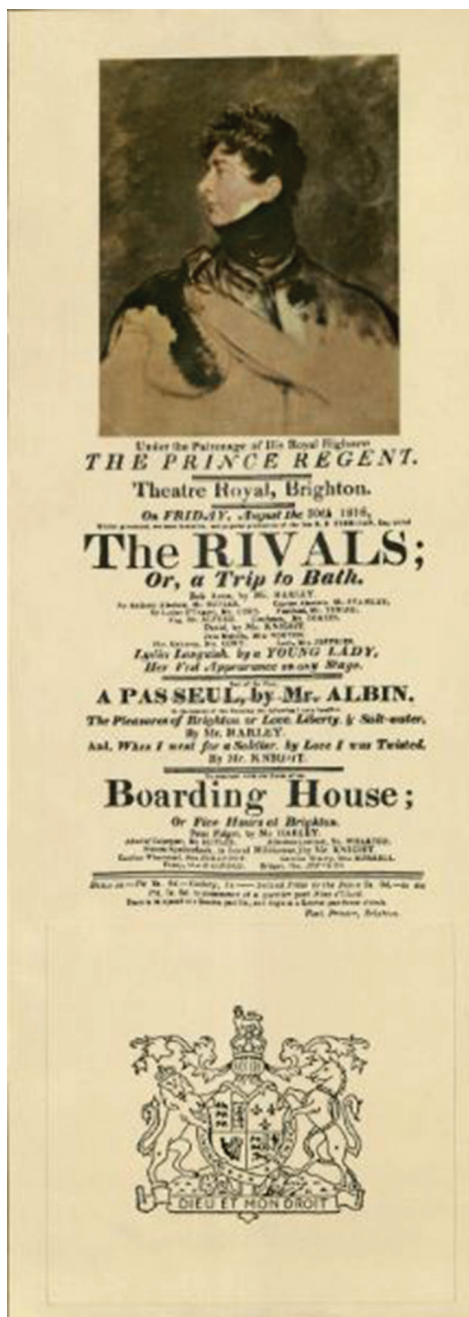
# Brighton's history – separating myth from reality

One of the most rewarding aspects of our move from Brighton History Centre to The Keep has been the opportunity to work collaboratively with our new partners, combining resources and looking at them in new ways. A case in point is the history of Brighton itself. Not surprisingly, The Keep receives many enquiries on the subject, and by drawing on collections held by the Royal Pavilion & Museums and by East Sussex Record Office we have a wealth of complementary material at our disposal.

Many myths abound about the growth of Brighton as a resort town, not least the idea that it was transformed from a small fishing village into a fashionable resort by the arrival in 1783 of the Prince of Wales. But as historian and author Dr Sue Berry has suggested, 'Myths can become so well-established that they overshadow the history of a place'. In fact, Brighton was the largest town in Sussex by the early 17th century. The decline of the fishing industry in the mid-17th century did



1852 map of Brighton by J Rankin BH800171



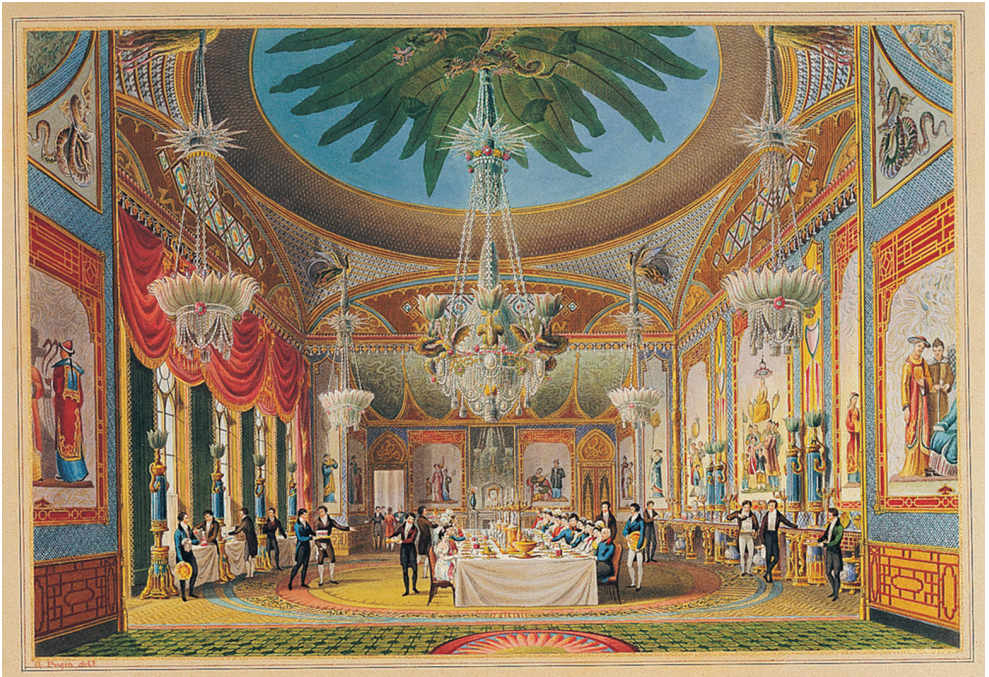
Theatre programme from the Theatre Royal Archive TRB2/111/31

cause its population to shrink, but from 1730 to 1780 the town was able to reinvent itself. How was this possible? The fashion for sea-bathing brought wealthy visitors to this part of the coast; its closeness to London, and its good transport links, made it accessible for them, and the willingness of prominent, well-connected local people to promote and invest in Brighton helped put it on the map. Lodging houses, assembly rooms, theatres and libraries developed to meet the needs of this affluent clientele, contributing to Brighton's reputation as a leading seaside resort.

It was this reputation that attracted the young Prince of Wales. Of course, his subsequent patronage was important. Between 1811 and 1821, for example, Brighton was the fastest-growing town in the country and the presence of the Prince and his entourage created jobs for builders and labourers, saddlers and blacksmiths, butchers, bakers, wine merchants and more. Without his bold, extravagant tastes, there would surely be no Royal Pavilion, which remains a key part of Brighton's identity.

Over the past two years, we have worked with groups of primary and secondary school students to show how historical documents can be interpreted and used to separate myth from reality. Groups have included Year 6 children from Moulsecoomb Primary School in Brighton, who were investigating the growth and development of their home town, and Year 11 students from Warden Park School in Cuckfield, whose GCSE history project focused on George IV and the Royal Pavilion. They studied a range of resources, including

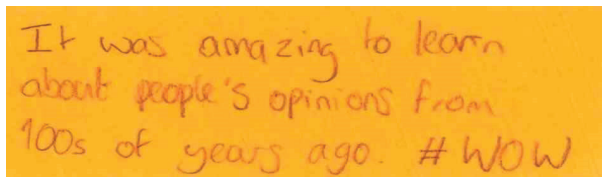




*From Nash's Views of the Royal Pavilion*

early maps and population figures that show how and when the town grew; information about medical practitioners such as Dr Richard Russell, who moved his practice from Lewes to Brighton to facilitate his seawater cures; early 19th-century travel guides; and documents and reference books relating to the Pavilion itself. The students responded to the material, and their tour of The Keep, with great enthusiasm. The Moulsecomb pupils produced some lovely drawings inspired by what they had learned, while the

Warden Park students tweeted their views:



An early version of this text was originally published on The Keep's blog: <http://www.thekeep.info/category/education-and-outreach-2/>

Kate Elms, Collections Officer  
(Royal Pavilion & Museums)

# Keep Volunteering

Volunteers play an invaluable role at The Keep, building on the work of the core staff to make what we do even bigger and better. We provide training, supervision and plenty of tea and coffee. Volunteers repay us with their time, skills and enthusiasm. We could not have completed preparations for the move to The Keep without their help. In 2015 we welcomed over 65 volunteers and this article is a tribute to them.

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes, ages, interests and skills. Some are university students taking advantage of The Keep's proximity to gain work experience and skills in the heritage sector. Some are hoping to be accepted onto a postgraduate archive course, for which competition is fierce. Others are older, sometimes retired (including retired former members of staff) seeking to make a contribution in an area that interests them. Some volunteers have been with us for many years, while others have responded to 'The Keep Effect' and have volunteered since we opened two years ago. Some come regularly over long periods, others in shorter, more concentrated bursts. One size definitely does not fit all. A few examples can perhaps illustrate the range of volunteering opportunities, the types of volunteers that we have and the importance of the work that they do.

We have several volunteers who boost our capacity for digitisation, using both flatbed and more sophisticated scanners. Much of this work is done to produce

surrogates – digital copies allowing us to provide instant access to archives that would otherwise be impossible or difficult to consult. Sometimes this will involve providing digital access to material that the owner does not wish to deposit. In most cases, though, we do it to save the originals. One volunteer, who has been with us since we opened, is digitising parish registers, still very popular for family history research, and at the time of writing he had just completed 1,900 registers and well over 100,000 images. These are regularly transferred to our digital image viewers in the reference room. Another major area of digitisation work is with glass negatives, which can only be viewed by scanning and reversing the polarity to create a positive image. Perhaps the biggest such project has been the digitisation of glass negatives from The Brighton Argus. These have benefited from the tender loving care of the conservation gang, who come every Thursday to clean and package archives, and over 26,000 of these glass negatives are now safely shelved in the cold store .

Cataloguing volunteers work with the professional staff to unlock the contents of our fascinating holdings, often adding detail that will improve the user's ability to identify exactly which documents will help them with their research. Recent projects have included listing returns to Mass Observation directives, calendaring bastardy bonds, indexing early Brighton hospital records and Hastings engineers'



plans, expanding the catalogue entries for the Glynde Place archives and for wills, and processing the award papers of the Sussex Heritage Trust.

Outreach volunteers have assisted with the Mass Observation education and outreach programme, devised resources for use in teaching and learning, participated in teaching sessions with schools and community groups and helped us run our Open Day.

To find out more about the volunteer experience, have a look at the Meet the Volunteer blog section of our website: <http://www.thekeep.info/category/behind-the-scenes/meet-the-volunteers/>. And if the idea of volunteering appeals to you, you can find out more at <http://www.thekeep.info/getting-involved/>

Elizabeth Hughes

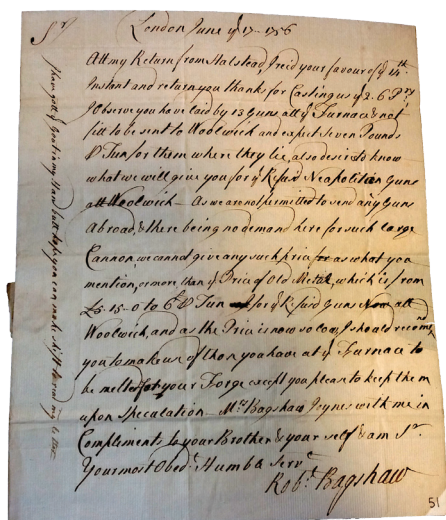
## Meeting Sussex Characters

After visiting the Yorkshire Film Archive and the Borthwick Institute in the course of my history degree at the University of York, I moved back home to Brighton in July 2015. Friends and family recommended The Keep as *the* archive to inquire at in East Sussex. Luckily, they were looking for volunteers!

Since starting here, I have worked on a wide variety of cataloguing projects, including writing descriptions for fascinating photographs of the streets of mid nineteenth-century Brighton, sorting out several bundles of engineers' plans that originated from obsolete district councils, and summarising the collection of a genealogist's stupendously detailed

notebooks filled with sixty years of research into the history of his family in Sussex. Some of the skills which I learnt on my history degree have helped with this: in particular, a familiarity with reading and summarising complicated primary texts, writing coherent prose, and adapting easily to different IT systems and databases.

One of the most interesting projects I have worked on has been cataloguing the business papers of Stephen Fuller, an eighteenth-century Sussex landowner and ironmaster (SAS/RF 22). Although I knew nothing about this subject beforehand, the joy of coming to know the quirks and flair of individuals through their own words has been wonderful. Stephen Fuller was a shrewd, successful businessman who did not hold back from berating his employees and associates: on 2 January 1756, he accused Richard Tapsell of



Robert Bagshaw describes some problems of arms dealing (SAS/RF22/151)

## Friends of the Keep Archives

creating 'an artifice unworthy of you or any man of honour' that would 'unfallibly cut off any communication for the future' between them (SAS/RF 22/1/2/15). Similarly, in 21 June 1755, he threatened Andrews Harrison and Robert Bagshaw, fellow ironmasters, that he was 'ready to give you any form of satisfaction you can demand.' An even more scathing draft reply, angrily struck through, survives on the back of this letter (SAS-RF 22/1/1/10). I found a rather more delightful touch of humanity in Robert Bagshaw's letter of 17 June 1756 to Stephen Fuller (below) where he apologises that he has "got the gout in my hand but hope you can make shift to read my letter." In fact, Bagshaw's handwriting is one of the easier amongst the variety of manuscripts that I have had the chance to read: in my experience, I have found that the cursive scripts of personal, nineteenth-century texts are the most difficult, whereas legal documents like title deeds, although clearly written,

require an understanding of the very particular vocabulary and style used by their authors. However, they also often yield the most rewarding and interesting types of information for the archivist or historian.

A challenge of a different type presented itself when I was assigned a large, unsorted accession from the Old Police Cells Museum in Brighton: it comprised assorted photographs and documents that had been collected from ex-police officers over the years. Given the complexity of the project, I created a spreadsheet to sort and describe the items, checking their provenance with a catalogue provided by the OPCM where possible, before integrating them into the large archive of Sussex Police material already held by The Keep. It also required the de-framing of over thirty large photographs in order for them to be scanned by the digitisation department, packing photographic prints in 'silversafe' envelopes,



*The underwater police in action (SPA/1/16/56)*

and encasing oversize or mounted photographs in protective Melinex plastic or acid-free cardboard wrappers. I found the photographs particularly interesting for showing the ways in which different aspects of the police force have changed over the years, from uniforms – we have several photographs showing the former Brighton and Eastbourne divisions in their distinctive white summer helmets – to trends in facial hair and style of portraiture!

I hope that my experience at The Keep will be the first step towards becoming a qualified archivist. Meanwhile, I will continue to enjoy meeting the vivid characters of Sussex past and preserving them for introduction to future generations.

Rosemary Lynch

### HER volunteers at The Keep

*Jenny and Crispin are currently assisting with projects relating to the Historic Environment Record (HER), under the supervision of the HER Record Officer, Sophie Unger.*

Jenny is currently amending HER records from the Palaeolithic period. As a user of the HER herself, and as a retired archaeologist, Jenny spotted that the data provided for the Palaeolithic period wasn't completely accurate and offered to volunteer to help improve the user experience for others. From this experience, Jenny has learnt a lot about this period in Sussex and how data held by Sussex differs from that of other Historic Environment Records.



*HER volunteer Jenny*

Crispin is currently volunteering as a moderator for the 'Recording Remembrances' website ([www.recordingremembrance.org.uk](http://www.recordingremembrance.org.uk)). Several County Councils are undertaking an exciting project recording War Memorials across England. The aim of the project is to ensure that there is a lasting record of all War Memorials within the Counties detailing their inscriptions, locations and condition. All the information that is collected is made available through the HER to the public, and is particularly useful for family history purposes, as the project records fallen soldiers and their military record. It is also important that the conditions of the memorials are noted, so that they don't fall into disrepair and can continue to commemorate the bravery of those who have served and died for us.

## Friends of the Keep Archives



*HER volunteer Crispin*

For Crispin, as a History undergraduate student, this volunteer opportunity has allowed him to experience the types of work undertaken in an archive that is pertinent to the wider community and how the internet and digital advances can make this information easily accessible.

County Archaeologist Casper Johnson has taken the opportunity to express his thanks to the volunteers:

*'we owe a debt of gratitude to all our volunteers for the time and effort they put in to helping protect the heritage of the county, particularly through their efforts to improve and extend the quality of data within the Historic Environment Record (HER).'*

Sophie Unger



# Summer visits

*Sheena Parker introduces the enticing summer visit programme*

**On Monday June 6th there will be a visit to Ashburnham Place, near Battle**, providing an opportunity to see Ashburnham Place (listed Grade II), its Orangery and Stables (both Grade II\* listed) together with St Peter's Church (Grade I listed). The ensemble of buildings is set in Ashburnham Park, overlooking a beautiful landscape of lakes and woodland, developed in C18 by Lancelot (Capability) Brown. After a morning session, seeing the main buildings, visitors will be able to explore the magnificent grounds in their own time.

Ashburnham Place was the home of the Ashburnham family from the medieval period until 1953. The family became wealthy from land holdings and the Wealden iron industry. Of the earliest known house, only the cellars remain on the site, abandoned in the 16th century and confiscated by Queen Elizabeth I. The Ashburnham family recovered the estate under Charles I and built the house to its present form in 1665. It was the subject of enlargement and many improvements over the following centuries. However, by the late 19th century the family was under financial pressure, and by the mid twentieth century the house had reduced to a state of decay. The estate remained in the family until in 1960 the Rev J Bickersteth, a grandson of the sixth Earl, gave Ashburnham Place and the main gardens and grounds to

the Ashburnham Christian Trust, which has since developed it as a Christian Conference Centre. The House exists no more as a family home, but much of the mid-C18 suite of staterooms remains, with rich plasterwork and marble chimneypieces. The Orangery, designed by Lancelot Brown, survives intact.

**Our second visit will be to Knole on Tuesday 5 July.** Many will already be familiar with Knole – enormous, complex and full of interest at many levels. Knole House, which sits in Knole Park in Sevenoaks, is one of England's largest houses, and the seat of the Barons Sackville. What exists today is a remarkably preserved and complete early Jacobean remodelling of a medieval archbishop's palace. Its Grade I listing reflects its mix of Elizabethan to late Stuart structures, particularly in the case of the central façade and state rooms. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, Knole came into the possession of her cousin, Thomas Sackville, whose descendants – the Earls and Dukes of Dorset and Barons Sackville – have lived there from 1603 to the present day. He made extensive improvements to the state rooms. His descendants rebuilt and then furnished Knole in two further bursts of activity: first, at the end of the 17th century, when the 6th Earl acquired Stuart furniture and textiles from royal palaces, and again at the end of the 18th century, with the 3rd Duke's art collection.

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When the National Trust acquired the house in 1946, the majority of the rooms were leased back to the Sackville family, the Trust retaining some of the most important and formal spaces.

FoTKA members will have the privilege of meeting Lord Sackville who will guide us on a private tour of some of the rooms not generally on show at Knole. After an hour or so, there will be free time to have lunch or explore the gardens. There will then be an opportunity to see the public rooms in the afternoon.

**Our last visit will be to Great Ote Hall on Wednesday 24 August**, a Grade I listed timber framed building in Wivelsfield, East Sussex. We shall meet the owner, Carola Godman Irvine, for coffee/tea and cake, following which there will be a talk and tour of this delightful family house, set in grounds with far-reaching views.

In the 13th Century the Estate was held by Richard de Ottehale, and in the 14th Century by Richard Kentish, who held court here from 1395 till 1419. The house then passed to the Attree family. In 1537 Thomas Attree conveyed Otehall to Thomas Godman, probably his son in law.

The old portion of this house, the West wing, is a T-shaped building. The East wing was added in 1600 by Thomas Godman, timber framed with Horsham slab roof and casement windows. The north front forms an L and has a chimney breast on the west walls of both the west and north wings, with a gable oversailing on brackets. The centre window bay has an oriel window on the first floor with a pediment over containing the initials G. T. M [Godman, Thomas and Mary] and the date 1600 on the tympanum. The house contains a staircase of circa 1600 and contemporary panelling and stone fireplaces.

## Visit to Compton Place, Eastbourne, on Tuesday 7 October 2015

Colin Brent then gave a short talk sketching the role of the Cavendish family in speeding the majestic rise of Eastbourne as an ultra-fashionable resort. Even before the railway arrived in 1849 the second Earl of Burlington, reigning at Compton Place from 1834, promoted a seaside nucleus still embodied in Cavendish Place and the Burlington and Claremont Hotels. But after becoming

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seventh Duke of Devonshire in 1858 he planned, partly funded and delivered development on an imperial scale – the massive three-tier two -mile-long seaside promenade (the finest in Europe); the vast vistas of the Meads Estate, its grid of wide avenues lined with imposing many gabled villas: the Winter Gardens (now destroyed by Tennis), the Salt Baths (so loathed by prep-school pupils), the gas, the water, the sewage; the College and suitably enticing Neo-Gothic parish churches. The Duke meanwhile was also creating Barrow in Furness, serving Gladstone as a trusted colleague and presiding as Chancellor of Cambridge University. Indeed as such he may still be admired, modelled in bronze by Goscombe John, gazing out to sea from Devonshire Place. It was said Lytton Strachey wanted him in *Eminent Victorians*, but could find nothing to subtly denigrate.

After the talk and some light refreshment Susan and the Principal of the Language School, Paul Clark, guided the Friends through the mansion. Its stately Palladian interiors, mostly designed by Colen Campbell, are richly embellished with superb woodwork carved by James Richards and with sumptuous stucco ceilings, uncertainly attributed to Charles Stanley, though the Palladian furnishings have gone. Friends will find these interiors usefully photographed in Christopher Hussey's *English Country Houses: Early Georgian* (Country Life 1955) and the mansion's architecture reassessed by the late Nicholas Antram in his masterly revision of Pevsner' – *The Buildings of England: Sussex: East* (Yale University Press 2013).

## Visit to Stanmer Place on Tuesday 23 February 2016

Gathering in its former state dining room, thirty or so Friends were saddened to hear that a family accident precluded Sue Berry being present to interpret for us the history of the mansion. Fortunately the ever-ready Christopher Whittick stood in, distributing copies of documents unlocking the story of the Stanmer estate till 1712 – most arresting a charter of c765 whereby Ealdwulf, last king of the South Saxons, granted it, with wide Wealden appendages reaching to the Kent border, to a nobleman to build and endow a minster church. By the Norman Conquest the estate was held from the Archbishop

of Canterbury by the college of canons at South Malling. After that minster church was dissolved in 1545 the estate was sold to 'Buskyne' Palmer, a lanky histrionic courtier, executed in 1553 soon after his black taffeta nightgown, trimmed with gold lace and black coney, was delivered to him in the Tower.

Thanks to a patient strategy pursued from 1547 onwards, the Michelbornes from Horsted Keynes steadily eliminated the customary tenants farming the arable and sheepdown attached to Stanmer village – such that two surviving Michelborne daughters could sell in





*Christopher Whittick makes a point*

1700 the estate, now almost entirely demesne, to Peter Gott, enriched by his father's ironworks at Battle. But he allegedly shot himself dead in 1712, allowing Henry Pelham to purchase it. Christopher doubled back at this point to illustrate the extraordinary ascent of Sir John Pelham (c1355-1429). Brutal and ambitious, the son and grandson of Wealden coroners, he aided to power the regicide Bolingbroke, becoming his Treasurer at War, royal sword-bearer and official gaoler at Pevensey castle, acquiring thereby his crests of a buckle and a cage – later garbled into rewards for an ancestor capturing the French king at Poitiers. Christopher then took us through a slide sequence, supplied by Sue, illustrating the rebuilding of the

mansion and creation of the park by successive Pelhams.

After a gracious interval for coffee Philip Pople and Colin Brent jointly conducted the Friends through the ground floor former state rooms and then outside to admire the facade, the structure sheltering the horse gin, the stables (now gated flats) and the former kitchen gardens, which in the 1960s supplied Brighton Corporation each year with 40,000 bushes and shrubs, along with 250,000 hardy plants. Designed by the King's Master Mason, Nicolas Dubois, the new mansion was built between 1722 and 1730 by Henry Pelham II and continued by his brother Thomas. The original austere sandstone

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seven-bay facade survives, 'a plain and gentlemanly classicism...barely Neo-Palladian' – a Whig contrast to the lively brick Baroque south front being erected at Danny by the fitful Jacobite, Henry Campion. The state rooms also were austere, with a fine staircase supplied by Richard Boston, joiner of Lewes. But they were partially enriched in the 1770s with exquisite plaster work, possibly by Thomas Clarke, best seen in the dining room. Thereafter changes to these rooms were few, apart from a library extension in the 1860s housed in a reticent eighth bay. But much

plasterwork was destroyed by damp and rot between 1940 and 1999 when the army, then Brighton Council, had custody. However from 1999 Michael Holland, a local 'property entrepreneur', who had restored much of Brunswick Terrace, spent several million pounds saving what could be rescued.

And perhaps finally the Friends should pause to salute the shade of Arthur Morris, master-mason of Lewes, who supplied the enduring fabric to all three of our recent visits – at Coombe Place, Compton Place and Stanmer House.

## Dates for your diary

Booking is generally essential for these events. Booking forms for FoTKA visits are enclosed. For Keep events, book through Reception on 01273 482349. Charges are made for talks, events and workshops.

Keep events for the autumn, including the Open Day with a sporting theme, will appear on the Keep website.

2016		
Wednesday 11 May 5.30-6.30pm	Keep talk	Early illustrated books of the Royal Pavilion Dr Alexandra Loske
Monday 6 June 10am	FoTKA visit	Ashburnham Place
Tuesday 7 June 2-4pm	Keep talk	Dating and understanding family photographs 1840-1940 Jayne Shrimpton

Thursday 23 June 2pm-5pm	Keep workshop	Jewish history collections at The Keep, celebrating 250th anniversary of Jewish settlement in Brighton
Wednesday 29 June 5.30-6.30pm	Keep talk	Lowther's Lambs at the Boar's Head; the Southdowns Battalions at the first day of the Somme Dr Chris Kempshall
Tuesday 5 July 11am	FoTKA visit	Knole
Thursday 7 July 5.30pm-6.30pm	Keep talk	The History of Brighton Swimming Club Paul Farrington
Wednesday 13 July 1pm-1.30pm	Keep tour	
Wednesday 3 August 5.30pm-6.30pm	Keep talk	Female Sporting Pioneers in Victorian Sussex Andrew Lusted
Wednesday 24 August 10am	FoTKA visit	Great Ote Hall
Wednesday 26 October 5.30pm-7.30pm	FoTKA Annual General Meeting Booking not required	Including talk in memory of Pam Combes

# MASS-OBSERVATION DAY-SURVEY

WEDNESDAY

12

MAY

Sunrise 4.15;

Sunset 7.38

What infinite heart's ease  
Must kings neglect that private men enjoy!  
*King Henry V., iv. i.*

FABER & FABER

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