

Friends of [the keep] Archives

Newsletter Spring 2022



Friends of The Keep Archives

FoTKA Officers

President

Andrew Blackman,
Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex

Elected committee/ trustees

Chairman: Bill Shelford
Vice Chairman: Christopher Whittick
Membership Secretary: Philip Hamerton
Treasurer: Colin French
Secretary and Newsletter Editor:
Diana Hansen
Visits Coordinator: Annette Shelford
Sheena Parker
Penny Pursey
Clive Wilson
Philip Pople

Visit the Friends of The Keep Archives website at

www.fotka.org.uk

Contact the Membership Secretary at
membersfotka@gmail.com

Registered charity number 1159372

Contents page

Editor's introduction – Diana Hansen	1
FoTKA online programme – Sheena Parker	2
What's in a name? Conveyance of the Manor of Burghurst in Burwash – Christopher Whittick	4
News from The Keep – Ceris Howard	5
Unlocking our Sound Heritage – Richard Wragg	7
Recording the Pandemic – Anna Manthorpe	10

Contact The Keep

The Keep Opening Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday:
10:00-16:00

Thursday, Saturday: 10:00-13.00

The Keep is closed to the public on
Sunday and Monday

Post: The Keep, Woollards Way,
Brighton, BN1 9BP

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Website: www.thekeep.info

Twitter: @thekeeparchives

Please visit The Keep
website for up to date
visiting information

*Cover image:
COV 2-6 Seaford seafront at Easter
2020*

Editor's introduction

Recovery from the pandemic seems to be a protracted and unpredictable process. The Keep has experienced continuing difficulties, and standards of service have not yet regained pre-pandemic levels. Ceris Howard describes below a road to recovery. FoTKA will continue to monitor the position. We are all too aware that pressures on local authority funding have not been significantly eased, but we look to assert the longterm importance of archives to the heritage of our county.

The Keep, however, has been busy behind the scenes. Anna Manthorpe describes the response to the challenge of recording how the pandemic has transformed our lives. Richard Wragg praises a three year project, led by the Keep for the south east region, to bring to life and preserve for future generations our heritage in the form of sounds, from car engines to programmes from Radio Brighton.

FoTKA too has been responding to requests for grant funding for important acquisitions, which continue to appear irrespective of viruses. Christopher Whittick sets out the significance of a conveyance of the manor of Burwash from 1538; FoTKA was pleased to support its acquisition with grant funding.

We are well on our way to announcing resumption of our popular visits programme, with two planned for the summer and tantalising possibilities later in the year. We will let all members know as soon as we have finalised details.

Diana Hansen

FoTKA online programme

FoTKA Trustees recognise that increasing membership numbers will enable us to bring in a stream of income and thus funding available for supporting The Keep. We are keen to reestablish the Friends community. Not everyone will be able or comfortable to meet in person on our visits, and we are therefore planning an attractive series of online events which we hope will interest existing members and provide a reason for you to recommend FoTKA to your friends. In so doing, we will work closely with The Keep staff and indeed, with Friends of The National Archives (FTNA).

The main initiatives are:

- **Programme of Talks**

To be given, remotely, by individuals noted as experts in their field. Christopher Whittick, our Vice Chairman and ex County Archivist, has most generously agreed to give four talks in the coming year. He will describe the significance of some of the artefacts acquired for The Keep with the help of FoTKA members' funding. Another of our trustees, Clive Wilson, founder of an architectural practice and building consultancy, will speak on his long-standing interest in archaeological history research .

- ❖ It is intended to arrange one talk per month, lasting no longer than 45 minutes, perhaps with time after that for questions: and to advertise talks through on-line mailings to members.
- ❖ A simple digital link will be used, so that members can, for a small charge (between £5 and £10) watch and listen remotely. The numbers of individuals able to log-in should not need to be limited,
- ❖ All further detail will be available on the FoTKA website and also by email communication. Future newsletters will include articles based on the talks.

- **Easyfundraising**

This is a 'free and simple way for UK schools, charities, sports clubs, community groups and any other good causes to raise money by shopping online'. The system links to over 4000 retailers who donate funds to charities when subscribers shop online. The system will be available on the FoTKA website. It will allow members to subscribe, free of charge, and to shop online at the listed retailers. The benefits to FoTKA come at no cost to our members. It is already widely used by Charities including FTNA.

- **Website refresh**

The FoTKA website and that of The Keep are to be updated to reflect closer working between the organisations. The FoTKA site will be adapted to facilitate the remote Talks Programme and Easyfundraising, and also to make it simpler for members who wish to make a donation to FoTKA, or to leave a legacy.

- **Working with FTNA**

We have been invited by FTNA to join them in a partnership, which could include enabling online access to FTNA events, sharing publications and cross-promoting links on websites. This work is still in early stages.

FoTKA Trustees sincerely hope that the above initiatives will be of interest to members and will create a true partnership to support The Keep.

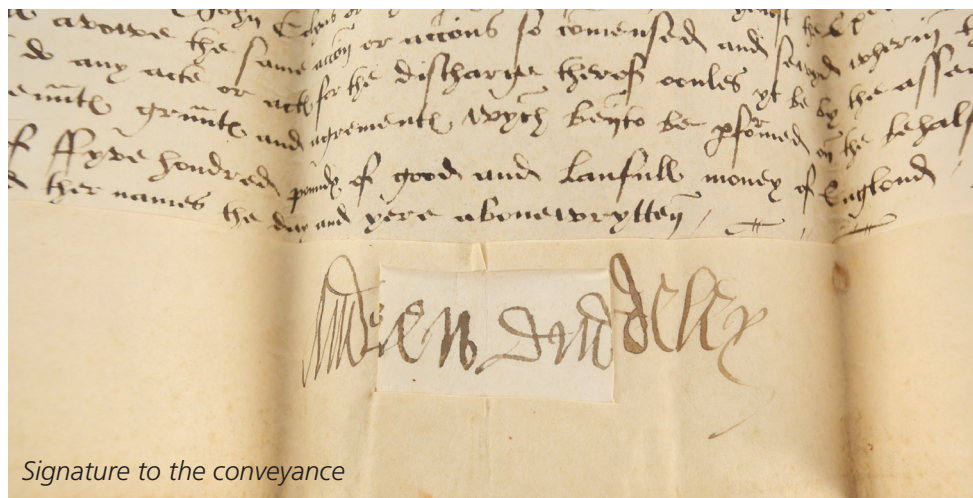
Sheena Parker

What's in a name? Conveyance of the Manor of Burghurst in Burwash

This important document came up for sale on 17 February at Dawsons Auctions Maidenhead. FoTKA responded quickly to secure it for the Keep.

The manor of Burghurst was based at Burwash by the date of a rental of 1540 (AMS 5692/1 f50) but its tenements lay spread across the eastern Weald in the parishes of Burwash, Ticehurst, Mayfield, Heathfield, Brightling, Westfield, Herstmonceux, Westham and Hailsham. The spelling *Burghurst* – an archaic form of the parish name, used in the cadet title of the earls

of Westmorland – was retained to distinguish it from another manor in the parish, rendered as *Burwash*, which was one of the three demesne manors of the Rape of Hastings. The means of distinguishing between the two manors, previously achieved by adding the name of the lord, became impossible in 1688 when the Pelham family, owners of Burwash since their acquisition of the Rape in the fifteenth century, acquired Burghurst. In 1768 both manors were sold to the Ashburnham estate, in the archive of which the court rolls and rentals remain.



Signature to the conveyance

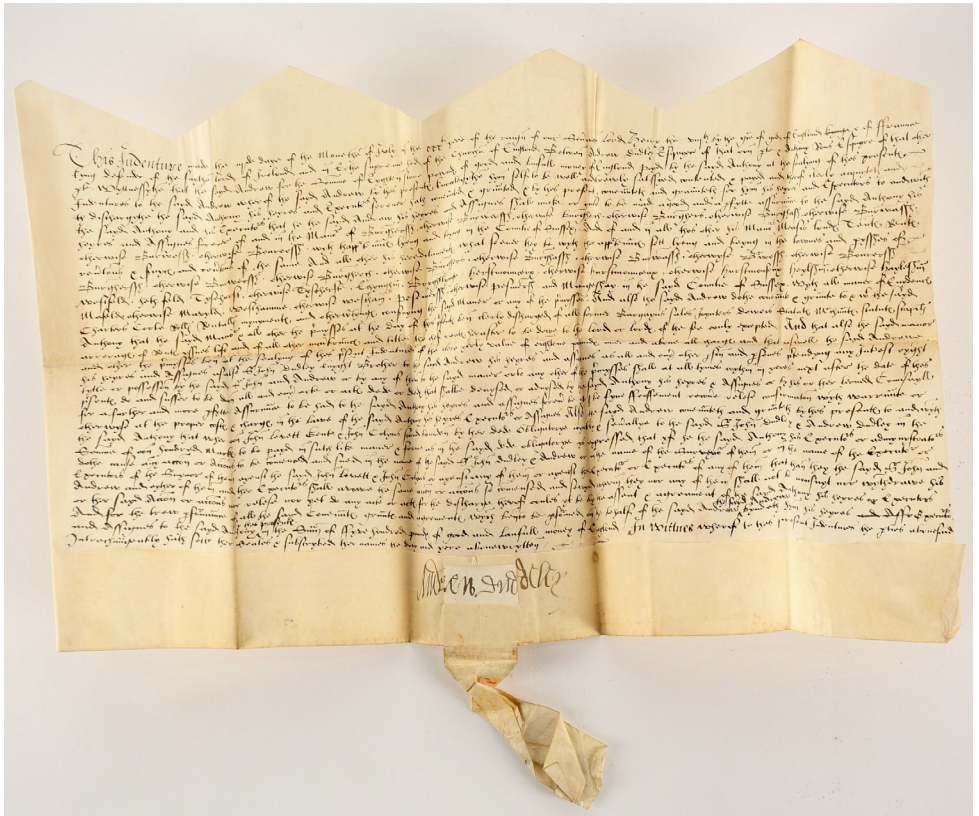
During the reign of Henry VII Burghurst was acquired by the king's minister Edmund Dudley (c1462-1510, *ODNB*), a Sussex man and a lawyer of Gray's Inn, MP for both Lewes and Sussex in the 1490s and Speaker of the Commons in 1504; in 1506 he was appointed as steward of the Rape of Hastings. With Richard Empson, Dudley was notorious for the financial extortions of the first Tudor king, and following the accession of Henry VIII both were executed in 1510. Dudley managed to retain his property – his two sons Sir John and Andrew Dudley sold Burghurst to Anthony Rous in 1538, the transaction represented by this deed. Andrew Dudley's signature as vendor is reproduced above. The sale was confirmed by fine and recovery in the Trinity and Michaelmas terms of the same year (TNA CP40/1098m350).

This conveyance of manor on 3 July 1538 is recited in a subsequent sale, by

Anthony Rous to William Wybarne and his son John, on 20 November 1538 (AMS 6779/1/18), found among the deeds of Goodsoal Farm in Burwash, a tenement of the manor. The latter transaction recites five sales off in the intervening period, a process by which Rous made a quick profit during the four months of his ownership. The manor descended in the Wybarne family until 1630, when Benjamin Wybarne sold it to William Langham, the builder of Batemans in Burwash.

This document is significant for East Sussex on account of its association with figures and events of national importance, and its fit both with the deeds of Goodsoal Farm and the records of the manor of Burghurst in the Ashburnham archive. It is a welcome addition to the Keep holdings.

Christopher Whittick



News from The Keep

As we welcome in spring, so we welcome in more visitors to The Keep. In line with County Council guidelines, we removed social distancing in our public and staff areas from 19th April. This means there will be more seats available in the Reading Room and drop-ins will once again be welcome (although we still advise visitors book a seat as we hope to get busier as the warmer weather comes along).

We hope to welcome volunteers back on site soon and will reinstate our popular tours and Welcome Wednesdays this summer. Please keep up to date with our latest news by signing up to our [newsletter](#), following us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), or via our [website](#).

Friends of The Keep Archives

There have been a number of staff changes. Of particular interest to FoTKA members, Lynn MacDonald is our new Development and Communications Officer and brings a wealth of experience, having previously worked for local authority communications teams and as a journalist. We also welcome three new Archive Assistants, Alex, Clair and Simon. Another new face for the team is actually quite familiar. Ellie King previously worked for the University Special Collections team, on the Attenborough collection. Since then she's worked in various roles, including at the V&A, but now returns to The Keep as an ESBHRO Archivist until September. She will be working on updating our cataloguing standards and addressing accessibility of language within our catalogue entries and search terms.

We continue our work to develop our digital preservation capacity for the archive and all of the other ESCC departments. As with any new technology, it seems we've opened a complex but interesting can of worms. Project Officer Ruth has been surveying the needs of the whole County Council and investigating potential solutions, working with Archive and Records professionals from all over the world via the Digital Preservation Coalition. This isn't something you'll initially be able to see or feel when you visit The Keep, but is a vital part of preserving important records for the future.

Conservator Charlie Grimsdell continues work on various projects, including a second folio Shakespeare for the University, repairing posters from Peacehaven for East Sussex and cleaning up some rather damp building plans from Brighton and Hove (and disposing of the family of spiders she found when she opened those up).

We are working closely with our colleagues from East Sussex Libraries to bring several local history collections to The Keep. The Troak collection, previously housed in Peacehaven Library, has already been received and Anna Mancroft and Tim Evendell have almost completed cataloguing this fascinating collection. Several more are set to follow throughout the year as we support the permanent preservation of the county's local history resources.

Once again, our thanks are due to FoTKA for the generous donations to our collections. I hope everyone has the opportunity to enjoy some spring sunshine and we look forward to seeing more people on site at The Keep soon.

Ceris Howard MA
Team Manager Archive Services
and The Keep

Unlocking our Sound Heritage

Earlier this year, the Unlocking our Sound Heritage Project (USOH) came to an end after three years. Funded by the National Lottery Fund and managed by the British Library, USOH was a major UK-wide project to preserve and make accessible the nation's sound recordings. The Keep was one of ten hubs working across the UK and we led activities in the south east region. It's a testament to the careful planning that went into the Keep building and a demonstration of how we can position ourselves nationally as a centre of excellence that we were able to take on the role of regional hub, setting up a digitisation

studio and welcoming a wonderful team of colleagues: Esther Gill, Henry Rowsell, Duncan Harrison, Katie Tevini, Angela Bachini and Natasha Witts.

Thanks to the hard work of the USOH team, the list of achievements makes for impressive reading. In the course of three years,:

- 3273 physical sound items were digitised, helping to ensure their long-term accessibility
- 14 learning events took place with 200 people attending



The Digitisation Studio at the Keep



Ferrograph Magnetic Tape, one of the different formats that needed to be digitised

- 37 volunteers gave 423 days of their time, learning new skills and engaging with sound collections
- 18 days of training were offered to the wider heritage sector with 246 people attending.

In amongst all of that, the team navigated the problems created by the pandemic, not least how to continue a project that requires access to physical collections while working from home.

The range of sound recordings preserved through the UOSH project has been incredibly varied. It was always a pleasure to pop into the digitisation studio and listen to what Duncan and Katie were working on. One day it might be a recording from BBC Radio Brighton, another day would bring sounds from the natural world around us. Ask Angela and Natasha what they were cataloguing – UOSH has created or greatly improved catalogue records for the sound recordings which were already digitised, including those held at the Keep – and they might roll their eyes at having to listen to yet another recording of a car engine from the National Motor Museum (they enjoyed them really). Henry worked on rights clearance, ensuring that as many as possible of the digitised recordings can be made available online by the British Library. This has included many oral history recordings and lectures that capture so much of our local history. The team was expertly led by Esther who, amongst many tasks, liaised with the south east region collections that we worked with, including Hampshire Archives, Southampton Archive and the Eden Valley Museum.

Although the UOSH project has concluded at the Keep, its legacy lives on. As a team we are better placed to work with sound recordings, be that integrating them into our engagement activities or making them accessible to researchers. We are also part of an ongoing network which we hope will allow us the opportunity to share knowledge and skill in the future.

Although I'm writing this, all credit, and the last word, belongs to the UOSH team. So, if you haven't already, I'd encourage you to look at the Keep Sounds website and blog- <https://keep-sounds.com/>. You can also find further background on this UK wide project on the British Library website.

**Richard Wragg,
Collections Manager,
University of Sussex**

Recording the Pandemic

It is just over two years since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and the first total lockdown in the UK which commenced on 23 March 2020. We were facing the unknown – no one really knew what the full extent of the pandemic would be, whether the NHS would be overwhelmed, whether and when vaccines might be found, or unknown new variants might materialise. It was a time of deserted streets with only essential shopping and brief periods for exercise permitted. Many were forced to live in complete isolation. We stood outside our homes to clap for the NHS on Thursday evenings.

East Sussex and Brighton Record Office (ESBHRO) and our colleagues from the Mass Observation archive quickly realised the importance of recording these historical events. ESBHRO's archive (reference COV), is a collection of material which records the varying range of local responses.

A team in East Dean quickly responded to the start of the crisis and organised the sewing of bags and scrubs for the NHS East Sussex Appeal. They were the first to answer our appeal for records to illustrate the emergency.



COVID-19 East Dean team sewing for the NHS East Sussex Appeal

The cover of this Newsletter reproduces one of our photographs of Seaford seafront deserted during the Easter weekend of April 2020 during beautiful sunny weather, something that has surely never happened before. Brighton is also pictured exceptionally quiet.

HELP!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO OFFER OR RECEIVE HELP DURING THE CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN?

GET INVOLVED

FACEBOOK
LEWES CORONAVIRUS VOLUNTEERS

EMAIL
LEWESCORONAVIRUSVOLUNTEERS@GMAIL.COM

PHONE
01273 569190

SHOPPING & DELIVERIES
PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION
DOG WALKING
FOOD HUB
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
A CHAT ON THE PHONE

LEWES
CORONAVIRUS
VOLUNTEERS

COV 4-3 Lewes Coronavirus Volunteers poster

The Lewes Coronavirus Volunteers Facebook group, which was set up at that very start of the pandemic, played a pivotal role in supporting the whole town through lockdown. Reflections are shared in various media. Some responded to the enforced seclusion by writing poetry or recording their thoughts. One Eastbourne resident wrote of her experiences as an expatriate stranded in Tenerife while wintering there. We hold a podcast of conversations of residents of St Leonards Street, Portslade. There are photographic records of the Ticehurst Vaccination Centre, and the residents of South Street, Lewes in lockdown.

Seaford Museum organised its own 'Living History Project' which recorded the experiences of local children aged 10-16 during the pandemic. It donated a digital file containing newsletters, photographs, and other information regarding the work.

The Keep closed to the public from Monday 23 March, as did most public buildings and offices. All staff worked from home initially, apart from the Building Manager who visited the site regularly to check on security and store conditions. Some staff were later allowed to come in for essential work, with limited numbers of people on site to maintain social distancing. For a time, The Keep became a hub for the packaging and distribution of Covid testing kits, with staff seconded to assist.

We reopened to the public on Tuesday 28 July, with distancing measures in place and a limit of 8 members of the public allowed into the Reading Room each day. Bookings had to be made online in advance, with a limit of three items per person; the Reference Room was closed temporarily.

This relief was temporary. A second national lockdown was announced on 5 November 2020, followed by a third on 6 January 2021. Since then, the service has been expanded gradually, but two years on staffing continues to be affected by Covid-related sickness.

Friends of The Keep Archives



*COV 18/1
The Keep Distribution
centre for Covid 19 tests*



*Protective screens in the
Reading Room*

From an archival perspective the whole experience illustrates the importance of recording history as it happens. Today's current events are tomorrow's history, and an archive does not need to be old to be relevant.

We are still interested in taking experiences, in whatever medium, of life in East Sussex, Brighton and Hove during these unprecedented times.

Anna Manthorpe, ESBHRO

