



Dear Member

1. Programme

Despite the easing of “lockdown”, your Committee feels that the restrictions on numbers, plus the Covid protocols operating at New Park, would inhibit your enjoyment of both the lecture planned for June 9th and socialising with fellow members. **The June 9th lecture is cancelled.**

As with the rest of the nation we await, with eager anticipation, the post-Covid world as defined on June 21st. We will take a decision in early July in respect of our planned meeting for 14th July. **What is going ahead is.....**

Wednesday 21st July: **An evening stroll around Georgian Midhurst,** led by Alan Green

This year’s summer visit is to the market town of Midhurst – Chichester’s neighbour in the north. Although essentially still medieval in character, much development took place in Georgian times and in this walk Alan will explore some of the people and places of Georgian Midhurst and include some surprising features which you might not otherwise have spotted.

The walk begins at **1700 at Midhurst Bus Stand**, at the top of North Street and near the North Street car park. Travel to Midhurst by bus (Service 60) is easy and the times are given below.

There will be no charge for the walk, but a retiring collection will be taken to boost the Society’s Covid-depleted funds – provided you enjoyed it that is!

Places will be limited to 20 so please register in advance with Alan Green by email (agreenzone@aol.com) by phone (01243 784915) or post to The Grumpium 10 Stockbridge Road, Chichester, PO19 8DP

Suggested bus times:

Chichester South St d	15.47	Midhurst d	18.42	19.12
Chi Cathedral d	15.50	Chichester a	19.21	19.51
Midhurst bus stand a	16.32			

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2. 'Country Houses on the South Downs' – Dr. Sue Berry - a new title in the South Downs Series

Dr. Sue Berry

The Sussex Archaeological Society publishes a series of books about the landscape of the South Downs. The full list of titles is on the website of the Society – see sussexpast.co.uk

The latest is about the development of the country house estate on the Sussex Downs which developed during the Middle Ages. As England became wealthier so ownership of an estate with a country house became an aspiration of people who profited from business, from their dealings as holders of government posts, or by being very dishonest. Some very grand houses were developed on and around the Sussex Downs in the Tudor period. A few of the owners, such as the Gorings of Danny and the Shirleys (or Sherleys) of Wiston pushed the boundaries of 'profits of office' too far and lost their estates.

During the 'long' eighteenth century more new houses were built, and old ones such as Petworth were totally and expensively revamped in a variety of architectural styles. From the 1840s the role of landed estates changed rapidly. Their political power declined, income from agricultural land fell, and the debts which many owners had been serving from rents were unaffordable. Most estates sold land to pay debts, some estates were split up and the houses sold with a smaller estate, or simply with the park. The new owners made their money from whisky (the Buchanans of Lavington Park), engineering (Weetham Pearson of Cowdray), textiles (Courtaulds of Burton Park) or set up schools and hotels. A few dominantly rural estates survived by the often diversified into allowing large scale chalk quarrying (Norfolks of Arundel, Brand of Glynde) or a bit later, into tourism (Goodwood). The world of the country house on the Downs (or elsewhere) today would astound the Georgians and owners of earlier periods.



Findon Place – now hidden beside Findon Church.

This print of the house in the early nineteenth century captures the essence of a small country gentleman's estate. The house still has that feel.

This is the cover picture for the book © SAS

Sue Berry has published in books, and in regional, national and international journals, on both tourism and history. She has also been a trustee of national and regional bodies such as the National Trust, and the Sussex Archaeological Society. She also does lectures.

How to buy. This 160 page book in colour with over 100 images costs £12.50 including postage. Cheques payable to *Sussex Past* should be posted with your address details to Sussex Archaeological Society, Bull House, 92 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XH. Its purpose is to raise funds for the Society. The costs of it have been met by a member acting

as sponsor and the author and her husband Pat. There is a considerable amount of new research in the book.

3. Burndell Canal Bridge, Yapton

Roger Thomson

Most members will know that what is now known as Chichester Canal is in fact part of a former inland waterway known as the Portsmouth and Arundel Navigation whose main line linked the River Arun at Ford with the sea at Birdham. Chichester was served by a short branch from Hunston. It finally opened throughout in 1823, completing an inland waterway route from London to Portsmouth.

On its main line there were no fewer than 18 brick arch overbridges across the canal between Ford and Hunston of which only three now survive. Well known is Tack Lee bridge in Yapton which, although now surrounded by a housing estate, is complete.

Less well known is the existence of another canal bridge in Yapton on open ground beside a footpath running between Downview Road and Navigation Drive, which is due to be developed as part of the Emerald Gardens Estate. Covered in undergrowth and encroached on by trees it is easily missed.

Now a group of Yapton residents have formed a society (the Burndell Bridge Society) to see that this particular bridge may be preserved and restored. Arun District Council, Chichester District Council, and West Sussex County Council, all have policies in place to preserve the remains and line of the P&A Canal.

The hope is to restore the bridge and to make it safe, whilst also creating a pathway under it to make it accessible to all users. The area around could be managed to retain the wildlife habitat. If successful, the work could be completed in time for the canal's 200th anniversary in May 2023. To generate funds and to raise the profile of the bridge the society is in the process of seeking registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

The canal intersected the road here at an angle and so Burndell Bridge was built on a skew. This means that the archway is not at right angles to the line of the canal and the brick courses in the arch, instead of being parallel with the abutment, have to be inclined. Although the method of building an arch on a skew had been known for many years it was a specialised skill, one the contractors employed to construct the canal (Dyson and Thornton), signally failed to possess as the resultant bonding is rather crude. Despite this the bridge is relatively sound and has withstood many of the ravages of time for nearly 200 years.



Burndell Bridge is not in the best condition. The bridge is heavily overgrown and only the underside of the arch and parts of the approach walls are visible. Once the undergrowth has been cleared a better assessment of the work to be undertaken can be made. It is believed that any distortion and cracking of the bricks can be overcome by careful repair without the need for rebuilding. The wing walls are cracked and pushed

out of line caused by the tree growth on the ramps and across the bridge. Some parts of the parapet walls have collapsed and not all the pilasters are intact.

The bridge is not listed by Historic England, although Tack Lee bridge is. Listing would certainly strengthen the case for giving the society charity registration. An attempt to obtain listing has been made earlier but was unsuccessful. There are plans to re-submit, with more expert evidence and local authority support, once Burndell Bridge Society is registered and in the process of active fund raising for restoration and conservation.

4. **A Wonderful Story – Well Almost**

Richard Childs

For my interest I have been looking at who was living at Friary Close/St John's House, Chichester in the late 19th/early 20th century. Alan Green has covered the history of the property in the early nineteenth century in both *The Building of Georgian Chichester* and *St John's Chapel and the New Town*.

I had been having difficulty finding the property in the 1871 census. I thought that one way to find the property in 1871 was to take a less common name that appears on the same page for St John's House in the 1881 census and hope the person was at the same address in 1871.

I chose one **Augustus Pinckney** who was living at St John's Mews next door to St John's House. In 1881 he was aged 38 and is described as Post Master. He was born in Hertfordshire. I guessed that he must have been the Post Master for Chichester as he could afford to have 2 coachmen and 2 grooms who were also described as servants in his house.

How many Augustus Pinckneys must there be in the 1871 census? Of course, there is only one. In 1871 Augustus Pinckney was a convict at Portland Prison, Dorset! It is definitely him as the ages tally and he states he was born in Hertfordshire.

Via *Ancestry* and *Find My Past* I then found that in 1868 Augustus Henry Frederick Pinckney had been tried at the Old Bailey, found guilty of embezzlement, and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment.

After his 5 year stay at Her Majesty's pleasure at Portland Prison, he hot footed it to Chichester because the next reference I find for him is that he married one Annie Briant in Chichester on 1 May 1873 (where exactly I do not know).

This would make a brilliant story if a chap who had served time for embezzlement ended up as Post Master of Chichester. Though this is his occupation as stated on the 1881 census, there was some doubt as I found that entries in the *Kelly's Sussex trades directories* for 1878, 1882 and 1887 gave his occupation as 'job master'.

The *Kelly's Directory* for 1874, the year after his arrival in Chichester, gave his occupation as fruiterer and his address as 33, East Street. On the other hand, *Moore's Chichester Directories* for 1883, 1887 and 1888 all gave his occupation as Postmaster. So which directories to believe, county or city? Jobmaster is a term I have never heard before but is defined by the OED as, 'a man who lets out horses and carriages by the job or for a limited time.' Hence the two coachmen and two grooms in the 1881 census. I suppose it was a latter-day taxi firm.

Checking *Find My Past*, a newspaper report from the *Horsham, Petworth, Midhurst, and Steyning Express* reporting his wife Annie's death in August 1882 stated that Pinckney was a livery stable proprietor.

One further double check was to look at information for Chichester Post Office. The 1874 Sussex directory states that John Berry is the Postmaster and the 1882 and 1887 directories state that Miss Annie Berry is Postmistress. Coincidentally *Ancestry* has just made available the *UK Postal Service Appointment Books, 1737-1969*. A search of these revealed no Augustus Pinckney.

But for a sloppy census enumerator in 1881 we could have had a cracking story. Though the variance of occupation among the trades directories is intriguing Pinckney died aged 46 on 26 May 1888. Whether or not he was Post Master he certainly must have made some money in the eight years between his release from prison and the 1881 census to be able to have four servants living with him. Perhaps he had squirreled some money away from his embezzling days?

5. **Underneath – or rather Behind – the Arches: Chichester Council House**

Alan H. J. Green

The City Council's recent planning application to enclose the arcade beneath the Council House met with strong public opposition, expressed in objections submitted to the planning portal and letters in the *Chichester Observer*. It was quickly withdrawn. The principal objections were about removing the public access to the space and drastic

alteration to the appearance of a building which had hardly changed since it was built 290 years ago. It is thus a good time to recall how the Council House came into being, and why it is in the form that it is.



*An early 19th century engraving of the Council House
looking much the same as it is today
(Author's collection)*

In Georgian times there was tremendous appetite for fine public buildings, and often these would be enthusiastically funded by public subscription, the initiative being led by some local dignitary or member of the aristocracy. Chichester was no exception to this and, although it was to acquire nothing to rival the grandeur of the equivalent buildings in Bath or Edinburgh, a clutch of Georgian public buildings did arise, one of which was the Council House of 1731.

At the start of the Georgian era the seat of Chichester governance was split between two sites. The first was in the Market House which stood, raised on stilts, in the carriageway in North Street between the junctions with Custom House Lane (now Lion Street) and the Crooked S. No engraving of this exists but such market houses were common in England and a good example, rescued from Titchfield in Hampshire, has been re-erected at the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton. The open space beneath these buildings provided shelter for market traders whilst the upper storey served as the council chamber.

The second seat of Chichester power was the Guildhall in what is now Priory Park. Having two draughty buildings, neither terribly well appointed, obviously made the City Fathers long for something grander and more comfortable, for on 28 November 1728/29* the following decision is recorded in the Common Council minute book:

* At this time the dates were reckoned on the "old style" with New Year's Day being on 25 March, when the Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1752 New Year moved to 1 January

The Assembly agreed that the Market House & Council House may be taken down and rebuilt in place and sufficient sum of money shall be raised by Gn subscription for the purpose...

The site chosen for the new Council House was on the east side of North Street on the corner of Custom House Lane and was bought from John Miller for £280. This piece of land had been the site of a Roman temple to Neptune and Minerva and a stone commemorating this fact had been discovered in 1723 by workmen digging a trench; it was excavated and presented to the Second Duke of Richmond who housed it in purpose-built temple at Goodwood.

The driving force behind the new Council House Committee was Charles Lennox, the said Second Duke of Richmond, a powerful force within the city who appointed his friend Richard Boyle, Lord Burlington, to produce a design.

Burlington in fact submitted two designs for the Council House, both arcaded as it happens (a *Burlington Arcade* perhaps? (!)) but the first was rejected, probably for being too grand, and the second because he was late submitting it for the Corporation's approval. The Corporation then appointed Roger Morris to produce an alternative which was adopted and provided the building we have today.

At their meeting of 9 March 1730 the Corporation agreed to make a £400 contribution and open a public subscription list, and the donors (all of whom are commemorated on a board in the Council Chamber together with - rather disingenuously - the amounts they gave) included the Mayor, the Bishop of Chichester, three dukes (Richmond, Newcastle & Somerset), two earls (Scarborough and Tankerville) and the local MPs, along with several less exalted citizens. This was to be *their* building.

The Palladian design that Roger Morris produced had certain similarities with Burlington's second effort, namely a two-storey, five-bay frontage to North Street and arcading to the ground floor.

The arcade, however, was not provided purely for architectural effect but for a very practical reason. The frontage of the building was set well ahead of the general building line on the edge of the carriageway in order to maximise the space available, but as this engulfed the pavement, the open arcade maintained the public right of way, and its covered area was also used to re-house the market traders. By setting the building in front of the general building line the new Council House became the most prominent edifice in the view along North Street, as doubtless the City Fathers felt befitted their high office, and they equally doubtless enjoyed the sense of their subjects passing beneath them whilst they deliberated the affairs of the city. The first recorded meeting in the new building was that of 11 August 1732.

Although the aforementioned commemorative board cites that the new building was a *Council House and Corn Market*, the corn market was generally held in the street at

Northgate until the Corn Exchange opened in 1832, and most general market trading was carried on in the streets until the new Market House opened in 1808, after which street trading was banned.

The Assembly Room, to the design of James Wyatt, was added to the rear of the Council House in 1783 for which again a public subscription was raised. Its entrance was shared with the Council House so the open arcade afforded welcome shelter for those queueing for events on wet days.

When a two-storey extension was added to the south side of the Council House in 1880 to house a court room and mayor's parlour, it was set on the general building line so as not to affect the pavement or compromise Roger Morris' building. Another alteration was made to the exterior in 1909 when the Roman Minerva Stone made a welcome return from Goodwood to its original site, and was set in the wall, behind glass, within the arcade. An informative interpretation board was provided.

Envoi

When the city centre was pedestrianised in 1975 the carriageway was paved over with York Stone. With traffic removed pedestrians were no longer constrained to walk through the arcade, although many still chose to do so, and the fact that it was still part of the Queen's Highway was acknowledged by the County Council's extension of their new, York Stone, paving through it.

The Minerva Stone, one of the most important of the city's Roman artefacts, has been a destination for countless generations of school 'crocodiles' (me included!) and is very much on the trail of the Blue Badge guided walks. The open arcade means that the stone can be viewed at any time on every day of the week, and it also affords welcome shelter from a sudden shower where those so seeking refuge can while away the time, until the rain stops, reading the public notices displayed therein. As public opinion has shewn, 290 years on Cicestrians still value this space below *their* building.

6. The Duke and the Wheelbarrow Club

Philip Robinson

In the last Newsletter I wrote about the Earl of Chichester who lives in Wiltshire, a direct descendant of the 1st Earl created by George III on 15th June 1801. We might call him an 'invisible earl' and in this newsletter I will explore an invented Duke, none other than the 1st Duke of Richmond.

Of course, there was a Duke of Richmond, erroneously linked, I will argue, with another Chichester institution, The Corporation of St. Pancras, also known as 'The Wheelbarrow Club'. A foundation myth of the Club, the oldest continuous dining club in England, is that at its inaugural dinner, held at the Unicorn Inn on Monday 4th November 1689, the guests enjoyed "*a fatte Bucke, which was presented by the Duke of Richmond at Goodwoode.*" The writer, Thomas Osborne, who was present, continues, "*There was no one but could walk home by himself, tho' they kept up till nearly 2 of the clock in the morning.*"

There are several problems associated with Thomas Osborne's report beginning with the Duke of Richmond. The Duke, christened Charles, was born to Louise de K erouaille, mistress to Charles II on 29th July 1672. Louise was a French catholic and her only child found favour with his father. King Charles created his youngest natural child, Duke of Richmond on 9th August 1675, at the age of three, and a month later Duke of Lennox. His mother had been created Duchess of Portsmouth in August 1673. The benefits continued and the Duke of Richmond, aged 8, was created Knight of the Garter and in January 1682 Master of the Horse. Not bad going for someone of primary school age, though things began to change following the death of Charles II in February 1685. Louise returned to France where her son was naturalized and, in front of King Louis XIV, professed his faith in the Roman Catholic Church in October 1685.

The Corporation of St. Pancras was formed to celebrate the Protestant accession of William and Mary. Why would a 17-year-old French Roman Catholic honour those events with a gift of "*a fatte Bucke*?" Especially as on 25th August 1689, two months before the inaugural dinner, Richmond was serving with the French at the battle of Walcourt. A battle in which the French lost, as the duc of Humi eres faced a European Grand Alliance including troops led by John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough. In May 1690, the Duke wrote to his mother from Landau, then in France on route to Neustadt as aide-de-camp to the Duc d'Orl ans. There is no hint in his letter that he had returned to England between August 1689 and May 1690. Sometime in 1691, however, Richmond judged that it would be to his advantage to make this journey and left France secretly in February 1692. He re-converted to the Church of England, pledged allegiance to William and Mary and took his place in the House of Lords.

The story of the '*fatte Bucke*' first appeared in the *Sussex Archaeological Collections* vol. 24, 1872, pp. 135-38. Its author Eugene Street reported that he had seen a book with the title "*Cheape and Good Husbandry for the well-Ordering of all Beasts and Fowles, &c*", first published in 1614. The book's owner was Mr Henderson of Chichester and his copy, no longer extant, originally belonged to Thomas Osborne. It was the custom of Thomas to write notes on significant events in Chichester for the benefit of his children. In this instance, and seen by Eugene Street, on the fly leaf of "*Cheape and Good Husbandry*".

However, there is a part of the story missed by Eugene Street. In the *West Sussex Gazette* of 19th March 1863, page 3, column 7, there is the account of the dinner and the foundation of the Corporation of St. Pancras, which ends, "*I certify this to be afore God. Come from my note booke, I mean this is copied from my rough booke, but the actual entry in this booke is done on the first day of September 1701*".

In Thomas Osborne's account reproduced in the *West Sussex Gazette* he gives his age in 1685 as 82 years. When he attended the inaugural dinner of the Corporation of St. Pancras, he would have been 86 but he copied out his 'rough' notes, 12 years later in 1701, when he was 98.

By that time, the Duke of Richmond had bought Goodwood, in 1697, he was Master of a Lodge of Freemasons in Chichester. Maybe a tradition was started then in which Richmond provided a '*fatte Bucke*' for the benefit of Members of the St. Pancras

Corporation. A tradition that Thomas Osborne's memory conflated into his account of the inaugural meeting. This was not the action of a 17 year-old French Catholic, enrolled in an army fighting against England, as was the young Duke of Richmond in November 1689. He was an invented Duke in a foundation myth of the Wheelbarrow Club.