

CLHS Newsletter
September 2021



Dear Member

1. Crisis

In the July Newsletter I informed you that our Membership Secretary was no longer able to continue in that role and we needed a replacement. No one has volunteered and in consequence, in addition to my other duties, I will temporarily be the recipient of membership subscriptions and payments.

I regret to tell you that two other members of the Committee are no longer able to serve as their personal circumstances have changed.

There is a very real possibility that Chichester Local History will cease operating. Though none of the tasks the Committee undertakes are onerous they cannot all be done by two or three people at the same time. PLEASE HELP?

2. Programme

Our first meeting this year will take place next **Wednesday, 8th September** in the Auditorium in New Park when Alan will give an illustrated talk on ***A Chichester Boyhood 1950-1969***

As many of you know New Park Cinema has started a its programme of films and offers full capacity in the Auditorium.

We recommend that you **wear a mask**.

We ask you **not to arrive before 19:15** to allow us to setup the Auditorium.

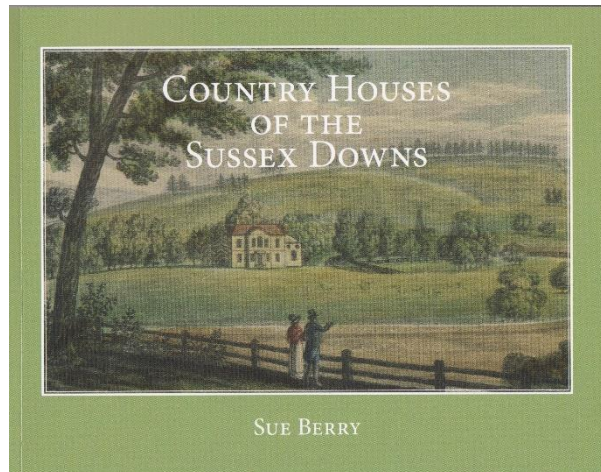
You will each be able to collect an envelope containing the excellent *Chichester History No.37*, a Programme for the Year, and a membership renewal form for 2021-22. As announced in our July Newsletter, the annual subscription is £20 for single membership and £35, Joint (as it was in 2019 – 20).

I hope this is the last Covid Newsletter as we are able, carefully, cautiously, to navigate out of the Covid miasma. We will remain vigilant and respond to the evolving environment recognising that Covid has not gone away. At all times we remain compliant to the requirement of New Park.

I look forward to welcoming you next Wednesday. Philip

3. *Country Houses of the Sussex Downs* by Sue Berry, reviewed by Alan Green

Sue Berry's name will be familiar to CLHS members from the several talks she has given us in the past, and she and her husband Pat were members for a while when they were living in Chichester. She is a prolific writer on architectural and urban history subjects and her work regularly appears in the *Georgian Group Journal*. Sue is a prominent member of Sussex Archaeological Society (SAS) and for many years organised their highly successful conferences.



This, her latest book, forms the sixth in the *South Downs Series* published by the SAS and deals with the development of Sussex country estates and their houses along the Downs from the Hampshire border in the west to Beachy Head in the east. This is no mere gazetteer, as the title might at first suggest, but a comprehensive study covering all aspects of the country house including influence, funding, costs, and inheritance as well as the all-important architectural styles and details.

No fewer than 31 houses are covered by the book, ranging in date from the Norman castles of Arundel and Lewes to the last ones to be built in the early 20th century – the new Cowdray and the rebuilt Stansted. The four chapters are arranged chronologically, and each introduces the new-built houses and chronicles the continuing changes and fortunes of the existing ones. Each chapter includes case studies covering a couple of the houses in greater detail whilst the fourth also brings all the stories up to date, including – sadly - a few demises.

There is an appendix providing a detailed case study of the evolution of West Dean House from c1600 to 2020, illustrated with superb axonometric drawings by John Warren, an architect who had worked on the house for 20 years. At the end of the book are details of how to access the houses (or their remains) where this is possible.

As one has come to expect from this author here is a book containing meticulous research presented in a most accessible manner, and profusely illustrated with engravings, drawings, and photographs, mostly in colour. It is a joy to read and a must for the bookshelf of every lover of Sussex and every country house aficionado.

It is available by post from the SAS (see their website) and is stocked by, *inter alia*, Kim's Bookshops in Arundel and Chichester.

4. Blackbush House

Andrew Berriman

We will remember 2021 as the year of the vaccine jab, or two. Back in 1758 Richard Caplin was also vaccinated, or inoculated as it was then called. This took place not in Selsey or Tangmere or Chichester's Leisure Centre, but at Blackbush House. And it was not to protect him against Covid-19. Back then, smallpox was the enemy.



Blackbush House is shown on the adjacent Ordnance Survey map, deep in the woods on the northern slopes of Bow Hill. Today it is almost totally hidden behind a high fence and dense vegetation. It was an early private isolation hospital where members of the Peachey family of West Dean, plus their domestic servants and tenants, were inoculated against smallpox. Smallpox was a major scourge in the 18th century, so remedies were sought. The most effective was to take matter from a smallpox scab and transfer it to an open cut of the person being inoculated. Even the king, George II, favoured this procedure. This procedure, by the way, was being carried out well over fifty years before Dr. Edward Jenner published his work on administering a milder dose of cowpox, to treat smallpox, in 1796.

Blackbush House was on the West Dean Estate, then owned by Sir James Peachey, who moved in Royal circles. He was Groom of the Bedchamber in 1751, Master of the Robes by 1760. So, he would undoubtedly have been aware of the efficacy of this remedy against smallpox. It was he who decided to build Blackbush House. A local Chichester surgeon, Mr. Newland, was also at this time inoculating some of his patients at St. James Hospital, the former leper house. It was he who carried out the inoculations at Blackbush House, which was probably built in the mid-18th century. A rare photo of the house, taken in the 1950s, shows that it had no windows on the side facing towards West Dean House, two miles to the east. This was to prevent any possibility of infection escaping from a window and being blown to West Dean by the prevailing wind.

But where does Richard Caplin fit in to all this? During renovation of Blackbush House, two doors from the original house were found in a shed. Deeply carved on them were over thirty names and initials, with dates from 1752 to 1781. There was PEACHEY, the Lord of the Manor; there was NEWLAND, the surgeon. And, amazingly, there was this: ***'Richard Caplin came to Bow Hill, inoculated 5th November 1758'***. His sister Sarah, two years older, had similarly been inoculated in 1752, aged 14, the usual age at which a girl was taken into domestic service. Both lived in Mid Lavant, the children of John and Sarah Caplin; she died in 1758, aged 43, and her gravestone is still visible in St Nicholas' churchyard.

It is probable that Richard and Sarah worked on the West Dean Estate as they lived locally in Lavant. Before starting their employment they would have been inoculated against smallpox, as a precaution. No doubt during their work they would come into contact with members of the Peachey family. After having received their jab they would have been isolated at Blackbush House to ensure that they

showed no symptoms of smallpox. In other words, a sort of quarantine, another term which has become all too familiar this year in 2021.

5. Power and Influence Before the Dukes

Philip Robinson

In previous editions of the Newsletter, I've looked at some of the dukes who exercised power and influence over the citizens of Chichester. Amongst these, the Richmonds might be considered parvenu; direct descendants of the illegitimate child born to Charles II and his mistress Louise de K rouaille. In the June Newsletter I reminded you that the 1st Duke, a title he was given when he was three years old, bought Goodwood in 1697. He was rich, as aged five, in 1677, he was awarded the duty on every chaldron of coal shipped from Newcastle upon Tyne (*a chaldron is the equivalent of 12 sacks of coal each of which weighs 8 stone*). England was at the start of an industrial revolution fuelled by coal, the demands for which would grow as would the revenue received by the Duke of Richmond.

The Richmonds didn't begin to exercise power and influence before the 18th Century so how was this exercised earlier? A convenient place to start is 1660 and the restoration of Charles II. The King had landed at Dover on Friday 25th May 1660 and reached London the following Tuesday. His arrival had been approved by a Convention summoned to Westminster on 16th March 1660 that assembled on Wednesday 25th April. Chichester sent two representatives, Henry Peckham and John Farrington.

Peckham (bap. 20th August 1615 buried 27th April 1673) was the eldest son of William and Mary Peckham of Aldingbourne. He was a lawyer, educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, and Middle Temple. He was a Justice of the Peace for Sussex and Recorder of Chichester. On 8th May 1644 he married Judith, daughter of Henry Goring of Highden (just south of Washington). Henry Peckham was returned unopposed for Chichester on 26th March 1661 to the 1st Parliament of Charles II, the so-called Cavalier Parliament, a position he held until his death.

We know rather a lot about Henry Peckham, thanks to one of our members, James McInnes. James has transcribed 339 wills of individuals living in Chichester during the period 1487 to 1694. This is an invaluable resource for local historians as through the wills one can hear the voices of the testator. Listen to Henry Peckham in 1673, and his love for his wife, Judith:

"And I doe herby declare I would have given her more had she not declared to me that this was too much in regard wee had many Children to Provide for which hath abundantly satisfied mee of her great love and care of her Children which God of his wonted mercy to me continue And I thus speake to make by Children sensible of her love"

transcribed by Dr. James McInnes

One of their sons, Henry, was Mayor of Chichester in 1681 and 1686, and another, John, was father to another Henry, also known as 'Lisbon' Peckham, who built Pallant House in 1713.

John Farrington was also a lawyer, educated at Brasenose College, Oxford and Gray's Inn, the eldest son of John Farrington and his first wife Dorothy n e Payne. His father had been mayor of Chichester on four occasions. John married Anne , daughter of John May of Rawmere (Raughmere) in June 1638. They had three sons, the youngest of whom, Richard, was also to become M.P. for Chichester in January 1681.

In the election of March 1660, there was, to put it politely, some confusion over the results. The Mayor of Chichester, Richard Mitchell declared that the election of the freemen of the city had favoured Henry Peckham and William Cawley, son of the regicide. It appears, however, that not all the votes had been counted and the matter was referred to the Convention Parliament.

The committee for Privileges and Elections was asked "*whether the free Citizens alone, or the Commonality at large, ought to elect*". The precedent for Chichester over the past twenty-one Parliaments was to include the Commonality, that is those electors liable for 'scot and lot', the ratepayers, who carried a liability for the poor and for church maintenance within the city, and thereby eligible to vote. Richard Mitchell was called to the Bar of the House, "*and kneeling there, Mr Speaker (Sir Harbottle Grimston) did let him know, that the House had considered of the Return by him made for the City of Chichester, and that they look upon his Carriage therein as a wilful Contempt, having refused to admit the Voices of the Commonality to make Election*" This contempt of authority deserved a severe punishment but as there was "*a Disposition in this House to extend Mercy, they have contented themselves with his Restraint; and that therefore he stands committed for his Contempt to the Serjeant at Arms*". (Source: British-history.ac.uk/commons-jrnl/vol18/pp38-40). John Farrington, rather than William Cawley, was declared elected on 21st May though only served until 29th December 1660 when the Convention was dissolved.

In the Cavalier Parliament as well as Henry Peckham Chichester was represented by William Garway, the son of a London merchant who had inherited five farms in Sussex on the death of his mother in 1657, one of which, in Ford, he made his principal residence.

The point is, after the restoration of the King, Chichester was represented in Parliament by merchants and members of the professions. Henry Peckham had not taken part in the Civil Wars (1642 – 1651) though was a supporter of the monarchy. John Farrington also kept a low profile during the wars and was a strong Protestant, suggesting he might have been a supporter of those wishing to restrain the authority of monarchy. Those who supported the monarchy without Parliamentary restraint, became known as the Court Party and those who wanted a constitutional monarchy, the County Party. These divisions morphed towards the end of the century into Tory and Whig. Each is a term of abuse used by the other, Tory stems from *toraighe*, Irish for bandit or bog-trotter, and Whig from Whiggamore an insult applied to Scottish presbyterian who opposed any royal interference in their pattern of worship.

6. **Chichester History No. 37: letters to the Editor, Greg Slay**

In our most recent Journal, there is an article by Richard Childs on *Chichester's Sloe Fair*. This prompted Rodney Duggua, Town Clerk of Chichester, to write to the Editor, with additional information that will be of interest.

Dear Greg,

Bank Holiday Monday spent at a rather a bleak Emsworth Show presented the ideal opportunity to read through another excellent edition of 'Chichester History'.

May I just add a piece to Richard Childs article about the Sloe Fair ?

I was appointed in June 1988 after 20 years before the mast at the District Council and my very first outing in ceremonial wig and gown took place in October that year. This was at a rather special little ceremony, I'm sure the brainchild of City Councillor Jennifer Wright. This ceremony was to mark Harry Stroud's contribution to the maintenance of the Sloe Fair by the planting of a Sloe Tree.

The civic party, including representatives of the Showmen's Guild and Dr Harry Stroud, processed to the little triangle of grassed land at the Oaklands Way car park entrance, where Mayor Barry Fletcher planted the tree and speeches were made. How we negotiated Oaklands Way I cannot remember, perhaps we went via the Northgate Underpass ?

The tree on site is not the original, we had rather a run of (bad) luck and I think this is the third replacement, but it is marked by a commemorative plaque that I will photograph and send on to you when we have a sunny day.

Several years ago I noticed that the plaque had been removed or perhaps more likely stolen. Enquires of the District Council revealed that they had decided to remove it as they didn't know who to whom it belonged. I will leave your readers to decide the logic behind this decision when they see the photograph. Anyway, it has been returned to site.

Upon reading references to 'The Buttermarket', I would imagine that as far as fairground rides are concerned, Alan Green booked slot on the Wall of Death.

With best wishes. Rodney Duggua

And a response from Richard Childs

Dear Rodney

The Chichester Society also had an attempt in 2015 to replant a sloe tree (see p.7 of The Chichester Society Newsletter, No. 184, March 2015). I don't know if that one has survived.

All the best Richard.

This Newsletter will be the final Newsletter of the Covid 2021 Lockdown as we return to our schedule of meetings. On the other hand!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Philip