

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

APRIL 2019

NEWSLETTER No. 115

FROLIC 2019

This year's Frolic will be at New College, Oxford, from Monday 23rd to Wednesday 25th September. The choice of weekdays rather than Friday to Sunday is in the hope that the middle day (Tuesday) may be more suitable for visits in Oxford, and that train-travel will be easier, as there is very limited parking at New College. It will be a great privilege to stay in New College, and to see the original Diaries themselves in the Bodleian. A form is enclosed with this mailing.

ANN BRAYNE

Ann Brayne, our Chairman Martin Brayne's wife, very sadly died in February, after several months of a serious illness. In 2015 when Dr David Case stepped down from the role of Treasurer, Ann nobly came forward to take on this essential role, and undertook it for three years until illness intervened. She will be very much missed in the Society – many Frolic-goers will remember her engaging personality. Our deepest sympathies go to Martin. Ann's funeral was held at Chinley Independent Chapel on 8th March, and was attended by several Society members.

We have two new Treasurers, who will share tasks, Peter McKay and David Atterbury Thomas. Peter is already a Committee member, while David will have been co-opted onto the Committee by the time you read this. We are very grateful to them for having volunteered and wish them good luck in the sometimes-demanding job.

REVD BRIAN PATEMAN

On February 7th, one of our long-term members, the Revd Brian Pateman, died at the age of 89 after a long illness, in the Sunderland Royal Hospital. Many members who had encountered him at Frolics will be very sad to hear this news. Brian's funeral was held on February 20th at St Andrew's Church, Chilton Moor.

Brian undertook two tasks regularly until his final illness:

(i) Annually visiting the grave of Canon Wilson, our Founder, in Lumley Churchyard, Co. Durham, and laying flowers; (ii) Reading the *Church Times* regularly and letting the Journal or Newsletter Editor know of any news of interest about either Weston Longville (Reepham and Wensum Valley), or Ansford and Castle Cary.

If you could undertake either of these tasks, please let me know (address on page 4).

DIARIES AND JOURNALS AVAILABLE

Our late member Brian Bullock had amassed a collection of all seventeen Diary volumes, plus a run of old Journals from the start of the Society in 1968 , plus some Supplements to the Journal. They are available in the Leicester area, close to Junction 22 of the M1. If you are interested and would be able to collect them, please email Mrs Bullock on jayne259@googlemail.com, or ring her on 01530 243 726.

THE “WESTERN LINK” THREATENS WESTON LONGVILLE

Norfolk County Council is near the end of a public consultation on a proposed new road, linking the A47 (trunk road to Dereham and King’s Lynn) with the A1067 to Fakenham. There are four options, all running north–south, and they will have a major impact on Weston Longville. The western-most option (A) is a single carriageway which joins the A1067 at Lenwade. Two central options (B and C) are both dual-carriageways and pass very close to Weston Longville, just to the east of it. The eastern-most option (D) is a dual-carriageway passing just west of Ringland. All four options will reduce access to the surrounding countryside, and will have a major environmental impact on the rural landscape known to James Woodforde.

There was a Consultation meeting in Weston Longville in January, and WL Parish Council has formally objected to Options A, B and C. The Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE Norfolk) has raised a strongly-worded objection to the whole scheme, which may be read on their website. Norfolk County Council’s decision is expected in May 2019. You can find more detail at the NCC website, www.norfolk.gov.uk; search for “Norwich Western Link”.

IMPROVEMENT TO THE JOURNAL INDEXES

If you are a user of the Indexes to old Journals on the PWS Website, then you may like to know of a recent improvement. On the Title page, there are now “Go To” links against each Index – Names, Places, Subjects, Authors and Book Reviews. Just click on the Index name and you will be taken straight into the Index concerned. Alternatively, you can still use the bar at the bottom of the screen as at present, and you will need to use it to return from an Index to the Title page.

Having found the date of an old Journal article in which you are interested, if that Journal is not in your own collection, you may be able to obtain it from Jenny Alderson. You may contact her on jenny@aldersons.plus.com.

THEATRICAL CONNECTIONS

In February I attended a talk at my local Arts Society (formerly NADFAS) on “The honourable and dishonourable art of acting”, a survey of the history of actors and acting. After looking at the Elizabethan and Restoration theatre, the speaker highlighted the C18th actor Charles Maclin, who pre-dated the more famous David Garrick. He also described the practice of “half-price entry” – between the third and fourth Acts, customers could get in for half-price. For popular shows, a crowd would gather outside the theatre, banging on the door and shouting “Half-price, half-price”. On 17th and 18th May 1775 Woodforde and his friend Washbourne Cooke went to the theatre in London on two successive evenings, the first to Drury Lane theatre for half-price, the second to Covent Garden theatre where they saw Charles Maclin as Shylock in the Merchant of Venice.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

In the Spring of 1769, James Woodforde was living at the Lower House, Ansford, with his brother John, and acting as the Curate of Ansford and Castle Cary for his elderly father. His eldest brother Heighes seems to have often been in Ansford, and often brought one or both of his sons, Bill and Sam, to dinner. Heighes had been present at his wife’s house in Alhampton at the end of December 1768, but by early May 1769 James wrote: “I took a Walk this Afternoon with Dr Clarke to

Allhampton, if possible to reconcile Brother Heighes with his Wife, and she would not by any means." Heighes' wife, Anne Dorville, sometimes referred to as Sister Woodforde, had a life-interest in her family home at Allhampton, so when she and Heighes quarrelled it was he who had to leave.

Meanwhile Brother John, who had been lacking direction since the failure of his apprenticeship in Bristol, started a new career as a farmer on the family estate in Ansford, taking over the holding of Farmer Gore.

Society's website: www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk
