

# THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2019

NEWSLETTER No. 117

## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2020

The annual subscription for 2020 is due on 1st January. Many members choose to pay by Standing Order, using the form which may be downloaded from the website *www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk*. If you prefer to pay by cheque, use the form at the bottom of page 3 overleaf.

## FROLICS 2019 AND 2020

In September thirty-six members gathered at New College, Oxford, for a memorable Frolic, which included viewing James Woodforde's diaries in the Bodleian Library, and the Woodforde family papers in New College's Archives. You may read a report in the accompanying Journal.

Frolic 2020 will be from **Monday 14th September to Wednesday 16th September**, at Holbrook Manor in Wincanton, Somerset, the same venue as in 2017. Details will be given in the Spring Newsletter, but put those dates in your 2020 Diary now!

## NORWICH WESTERN LINK

In the previous two Newsletters we described proposals for a major new route joining the A47 to the A1067. Norfolk County Council has chosen Route C as its preferred option. It is a dual carriageway which leaves the A47 near Honingham, runs north-east for 4 miles, and crosses the river Wensum on a 720m long viaduct. It is better news for Weston than one of the alternatives, Route B, but will nevertheless mean a major change to the landscape between Weston and Ringland.

## WOODFORDE PORTRAIT

In the last Newsletter we described concerns about the portrait of James Woodforde by Nephew Sam, R.A., which used to hang in Weston Church. The Fairhurst Gallery in Norwich has produced a report on its condition, which includes identification of mildew, and an estimate for restoration. Weston PCC is taking a second opinion to ensure that the portrait receives the correct treatment before the Fairhurst Gallery is instructed to proceed with the work.

## MARY HARDY AND HER WORLD

There is good news about Woodforde's fellow Norfolk diarist Mary Hardy, who wrote at Coltishall and Letheringsett 1773-1809. Members who attended the Norwich Frolic in 2014 will remember the talk by member Margaret Bird and her then-recently-published *Diary of Mary Hardy*. Now, after 32 years of solid work, Margaret Bird is bringing out four volumes of Commentary in April 2020, under the title *Mary Hardy and her World*. The details are on the new website for Mary Hardy: <https://www.burnham-press.co.uk>

Margaret would love to have a few members of the Parson Woodforde Society present at the book launch, which will be held in **Norwich Cathedral's Weston Room on Friday 17 April 2020 at 5.30-7.30 pm**. Our Chairman, Professor Richard Wilson will be a speaker. The event marks the culmination of the 32-year-long Mary Hardy project. The new set of volumes will be on show.

If you would like an invitation, please contact Margaret Bird on [mbirdkingston@hotmail.com](mailto:mbirdkingston@hotmail.com).

## SPEAKER AVAILABLE FOR TALKS IN HAMPSHIRE

New member Edward Rothead, who lives in Eastleigh, Hants, is an experienced speaker who has a talk called "How we used to live – an exploration of life in the late 18th Century" in his repertoire. The talk uses the diary of James Woodforde to illustrate various aspects of everyday life. If you are involved with organising talks for any local society in Hampshire or neighbouring counties, then do get in touch with him, at [rothead@rocketmail.com](mailto:rothead@rocketmail.com), or ring him on 07917 203277.

## HOLT FESTIVAL

Holt, in north Norfolk, has a week-long Festival every summer. Last July it featured a "Literary Journey around Norfolk" which included some extracts from Parson Woodforde. Amongst those chosen were the Learned Pig, the dog Pompey coming home terribly shot and the Hon. Charles Townshend's subsequent apology, and "my Great Pond full of large Toads ...".

## EDP COLUMNIST DISCOVERS WOODFORDE!

In August, a curate based in Suffolk, Revd James Marston, had a feature in the *Eastern Daily Press* about his discovery of the Diary in a Charity Shop. He wondered “how things have changed and how they might have stayed the same”, and concluded that “Parson Woodforde is a social chap”, and that life in a rural village stays much the same.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Annual subscription for 2020 is due on January 1st. It is **£16** for ordinary UK members, **£25** for Overseas members, and **£10** for Students under 25. Many members now pay their annual subscription by Standing Order, which greatly reduces the Society’s administrative burden. If you do not yet do this but would like to do so in January 2020, then please contact the Treasurer, David Atterbury Thomas, at the address below, for a standing order form, or print the forms on the Website under “Contact”.

If you wish to pay by cheque, then please use the form below.

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To the Treasurer, David Atterbury Thomas,  
47 St John’s Park, Blackheath, London SE3 7SW

I enclose my cheque for £..... payable to the Parson Woodforde Society, for my subscription for the year commencing 1st January 2020.

NAME (*Please print*) .....

ADDRESS .....

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## **WAITING IN THE WINGS**

Until 2014, the Rector of Weston Longville was the Revd Selwyn Tillet, whose wife Cassie was an important presence in the parish. She also managed the PWS website. Now Cassie is finding new recognition. In July, the Sewell Barn Theatre in Norwich staged a production of Noël Coward's "Waiting in the Wings", directed by Cassie Tillet. The play, Coward's personal tribute to older actresses who supported him at the start of his career, was described by the *Norwich Evening News* as "a surprisingly powerful piece."

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**Society's website: [www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk](http://www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk)**

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