

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

SPRING 2016

NEWSLETTER No. 105

FROLIC 2016

This year's Frolic will be held in Southwold, Suffolk, between 23rd and 25th September. We shall stay at the Swan, where James Woodforde stayed in April 1786, and will visit Great Yarmouth during the weekend, Woodforde's favourite seaside resort, where he took all his visitors from Somerset. Further details and a booking form are enclosed with this mailing.

Southwold itself has many attractions, including the pier, refurbished in 2001, and St Edmund's Church, one of the finest in Suffolk, which dates from the fifteenth century. In the eighteenth century Southwold was a centre of dissent – when Daniel Defoe visited in 1722 he found only 27 worshippers in St Edmund's Church but six to eight hundred in the Dissenters' Meeting House.

WESTON LONGVILLE – ATLAS RECYCLING WORKS

A "vast" waste processing works at Lenwade is the subject of a planning application to Norfolk County Council. According to a letter to the *Wensum Diary*, the "Atlas Works" will bring a huge increase in traffic in addition to other unwelcome features of waste processing.

The Parish Councils of Weston Longville and Great Witchingham have both objected, and local residents are running campaigns. There is concern that not only will there be increased traffic on the A1067 between Lenwade and Norwich, but also that many HGVs will cut through Weston Longville itself *en route* to the A47 trunk road.

To examine the proposal, go to NCC's website at *eplanning.norfolk.gov.uk* for application C/5/2015/5007.

WEBSITE MANAGEMENT CHANGE

For some years our Society website, *www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk*, has been managed by Cassie Tillett, who runs the company *Working Order*, and who was known to us as the wife of the former Rector of Weston

Longville, the Revd Selwyn Tillett. Now, Cassie is winding down her website activities to concentrate on other areas of her business. Her colleague of many years standing, Tim Wheeler, will be taking over responsibility for hosting and maintaining the Parson Woodforde website.

We look forward to a relationship as harmonious as that with Cassie has been. The Society thanks Cassie for her work over the years and wishes her the best of luck for the future.

WOODFORDE ON TELEVISION

On 20th January, James Woodforde was featured on daytime television, on the BBC1 cookery programme "James Martin's Home Comforts". Food Historian Dr Annie Gray described Woodforde as "One of the world's first food bloggers", before cooking two dishes he might have eaten, salt cod with egg sauce, and clary sage fritters. (Parson Woodforde hosted a Rotation dinner on 22nd February 1779 which included "salt fish & eggs" and fritters). Dr Gray remarked on Woodforde's heavy consumption of port, a pint a day, and related it to the gout from which he suffered. She concluded by describing Woodforde as "... a foodie. However, we should really regard him as a diarist, a writer, a chronicler of everyday life. He's a brilliant, brilliant bloke."

Dr Gray has appeared on "The Great British Bake-off", and on Radio 4's "The Kitchen Cabinet", and she is a NADFAS lecturer.

YVONNE BIRD

Between 2001 and 2008, this Newsletter was edited by Yvonne Bird, then of Diss, Norfolk. We are very sad to report that she died on 27th January, aged 78, in St Albans.

Yvonne was born in London in 1937, and attended Croydon High School. She worked as a secretary for a Trade Union before marrying Clifford Bird in 1958 and having four children. Yvonne and Clifford collaborated on their 1996 book "Norfolk and Norwich's Clocks and Clockmakers". They joined the Parson Woodforde Society in 1997 – Clifford was descended from Michael Haylett, Mr Custance's

gardener. Many who attended Frolics will remember Yvonne and Clifford. He wrote articles for the Journal, on Woodforde's clocks, on the Hayletts, and on Norfolk dialect. Clifford Bird sadly died in 2010. Both he and now Yvonne are much missed.

In the accompanying Journal, an obituary may be found of Cynthia Brown, who died at the beginning of January.

"TEAM VICAR" FOR WESTON LONGVILLE

The Diocese of Norwich continues its search for a new "Team Vicar" to serve the parishes of Weston Longville, Great Witchingham, Alderford with Attlebridge and Swannington, within the "Reepham & Wensum Valley Team Ministry". The long-standing vacancy has just been re-advertised in the *Church Times*. Interviews will be held on 12-13th May. In the meantime, Canon Peter Halls and other volunteers are continuing to provide cover for the four parishes.

HISTORIC WINTERS

During an exceptionally mild December, the *Eastern Daily Press* published a long feature on cold winters. Many readers will remember the hardships of the winters of 1958 and 1963, but the *EDP* journalist, Charlotte Paton, also devoted space to Parson Woodforde, citing six entries in January and February 1795. He was suffering from gout as well as enduring freezing temperatures indoors as well as out.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

In February 1766, James Woodforde had just lost his mother. Her funeral was on 12th February; Mr Penny took the service, and she was buried in the chancel of St Andrew's, Ansford. "My Poor dear Mother was buried very decently and well." Afterwards, Woodforde threw himself into parish activity: during Lent he catechised Mr Titchcomb's boys six times.

Across the Atlantic, in February 1766, American ships were seized by British men-of-war on charges of carrying official documents without stamps, in contravention of the controversial Stamp Act. This Act was repealed in March 1766, but a more exacting one, the Declaratory Act, was passed in its place. It restated that the American Colonies were subject to British laws and taxes.

Many thanks to contributors: Guy Bird; Ann Elliott; Beryl Griffiths; Revd Brian Pateman.

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