

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

AUGUST 2018

NEWSLETTER No. 113

AGM AND FROLIC, 28-30th SEPTEMBER 2018

All members are invited to attend the AGM at the Maid's Head Hotel, Norwich, whether they have booked for the Frolic or not. The AGM will take place on Friday, 28th September, at 6 pm.

A few places are still available for the weekend. If you are interested, a booking form was enclosed with the April mailing, or contact Martin Brayne on editor@parsonwoodforde.org.uk, or telephone 01663-750354.

Those members who have booked for the Frolic will be looking forward to our weekend at the Maid's Head. The Hotel has recently completed a refurbishment project in the most historic part of the building. Eight bedrooms now have a new high-tech heating system, with capillary mats in the walls and ceilings which distribute heat around the room. Temperature is controlled by an in-room iPad!

As well as our booked visit to the Castle Museum for a guided tour of the gallery of the Norwich School of Painters, and our self-guided visit to the Cathedral, members might also find time to visit the Bridewell Museum with its Woodforde audio-exhibit which our Society funded in 2012. The Strangers' Hall, a fascinating Tudor house, is also very close.

On Sunday many of us will travel to Weston Longville for the morning service, a first opportunity to see one of the new incumbents, Rector Keith Rengert or Curate Helen Rengert.

OUR PUBLICATIONS

If you are gradually collecting the seventeen volumes of the Society's edition of the unabridged Diary, then you may be aware that Volumes 5, 6 and 9 are out-of-print, covering 1772-3, 1774-5 and 1780-81. This will be rectified soon by a limited reprint to satisfy demand in the short-term. New, updated editions will take longer. All the other volumes are available, either from the Bookstall at the Frolic, or by post from Jenny Alderson, who can also supply back-numbers of the Journal. You may contact her on jenny@aldersons.plus.com.

Meanwhile the Society's 50th Anniversary publication, whose nature remains a mystery, will be launched at the Frolic, and distributed free to members with the December mailing.

DATA PROTECTION

You will probably be aware of the new Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which came into force in May 2018. Your Committee have looked into the implications for the Society and are satisfied that in our communications with you we are operating within the law. We don't supply your personal data to anyone outside the Society. Our Gift Aid Form gives specific consent to reclaim gift aid on subscriptions. We have in place a Privacy Policy, which may be viewed on our Website www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk under "The Society". Scroll down to "Data Privacy Notice". If you would like a paper copy, please contact me (address on page 4).

RON FISKE, R.I.P.

"I am myself a Norfolk man, and glory in being so." This remark is attributed to Admiral Nelson, but could also have been said by our late member Ron Fiske, whose death was briefly reported in our last Newsletter, and at greater length in the *Eastern Daily Press*. He died in March at the age of 80. Born in North Walsham, from the 1990s he had lived at and restored Morningthorpe Manor, between Diss and Norwich, which had Woodfordean associations with the Howes family and the Roupes. He was well-known in Norfolk as a collector of historic documents and artefacts, and as the "go-to" expert on Norfolk history.

"GARGANTUAN INTAKE"

Yet again, Parson Woodforde has been unjustly accused of over-eating, this time in the *Daily Telegraph*. In his Saturday column, columnist Simon Heffer referred to *The Reading Cure* by Laura Freeman, who suffered from anorexia; over a period of time, she cured herself by reading books containing accounts of large meals, including "Parson Woodforde's gargantuan intake".

The same newspaper, the *Daily Telegraph*, has more recently redeemed itself with a better-informed review by Christopher Howse, of Kenneth Baker's new "chrestomathy of vice", *On the Seven Deadly Sins*. The *Telegraph's* review was headed "Poor Parson Woodforde was no dammed glutton" (!) As we know, Woodforde listed all the dishes set out on the table, their provision being a sign of hospitality and elegance. Woodforde probably only sampled two or three dishes himself – over-eating was bad manners, and so was stretching over the table to reach a dish. An excellent book, *Jane Austen and Food*, by Maggie Lane (1995) explains this important aspect of etiquette.

THE DUKE OF SUSSEX

Many congratulations to the new Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Harry and Meghan. We hope their marriage will be happier than that of the previous Duke of Sussex, Prince Augustus (1773-1843), the sixth son of George III. He married Lady Augusta Murray twice, first in Rome and then in London, but under the terms of the Royal Marriages Act, the Court of Arches annulled his marriage and his two children were declared illegitimate. Prince Augustus was created Duke of Sussex in 1801. He was a keen Freemason, and he was Queen Victoria's favourite uncle.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

In Ansford, the summer of 1768 was full of activity for James Woodforde. In June, his Brother Heighes brought his 10-year old son William (Nephew Bill) to dine at the Lower House, but James reported that Bill was "a very cross, ill tempered Little Boy", anticipating the disagreements he and Bill were to have 10 years later in Weston, when James often found Bill "surly". On 6th August 1768, James visited Stourhead and met Mr Hoare who was to be so important to his nephew Sam's future career as an artist. In 1768, Sam was only five, but perhaps already good at drawing. On 9th August 1768, local diva Mrs Melliar celebrated the coming-of-age of Lord Stavordale, Lord Ilchester's heir, by throwing an extravagant party. Then James made a quick trip to Oxford to vote for the new Warden, but his candidate was defeated, and

John Oglander became Warden. Meanwhile the long drawn-out dispute over the Castle Cary Church gallery had started with “a kind of Riot” – James tried not to become involved.

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