

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

APRIL 2020

NEWSLETTER No. 118

WOODFORDE PORTRAIT – APPEAL FOR FUNDS

In recent Newsletters, we have described concerns over the condition of the portrait of Parson Woodforde by Samuel Woodforde, R.A., which normally hangs in All Saints, Weston Longville. The portrait is now being restored by the firm of Kiffy Stainer Hutchins, but it has been found to be more damaged by mould than previously realised. The cost of its restoration will be considerable, and as the portrait is so important to our Society, an Appeal is enclosed with this mailing. We hope you will consider supporting it.

FROLIC 2020

This year's Frolic will take place between **Monday 14th September and Wednesday 16th September**. We shall be based at Holbrook Manor (as the hotel is now called), the same venue in Wincanton as in 2017. A Booking Form is enclosed with this mailing.

On Tuesday 15th September we shall have a trip to Stourhead, known for its beautiful lake, the surrounding trees, and evocative follies and temples. James Woodforde visited Stourhead many times. In those days it was owned by the Hoare family who became the patrons of Samuel Woodforde, R.A. We shall see some of Sam's greatest paintings in the house.

CASTLE CARY AND ANSFORD CHURCHES

The Revd Liz Mortimer, who had been Rector of Ansford and Vicar of Castle Cary since 2010, departed in January for a new parish, St Mary's, Frome, where she was inducted on 5th February. The lengthy process of seeking a new incumbent has started. During the Interregnum several retired clergymen will be taking services; one of them is the Revd Hilary Jalland, a member of our Society, who is a regular Frolic-attender.

Meanwhile, the repairs to Castle Cary Church roof will be under way soon, following a successful appeal for funds. More funding is still

needed – a recent event was a “Murder Mystery Evening” set in the 1920s, period costume welcome!

A huge house-building programme is in progress in Castle Cary, which will mean a significant expansion of the town. One of the new estates, in Station Road, is to be called “Woodforde Meadow”!

5-VOLUME BERESFORD SET FOR SALE

Mrs Daphne Wyatt, whose late husband Alan was a member, wishes to sell a 5-volume set of the Beresford edition of the Diaries, the 1968 reprint edition. It is in very good condition, and she will consider offers of £120. She also has a few old PWS diaries available for purchase: Vol 1 (1776/7), Vol 9 (1780/81), Vol 14 (1794/5), and Vol 15 (1796/7). She lives in Cambridge, and you may contact her on 01223 860332 or email her on alan.landbeach@btinternet.com.

BAROQUE CONCERT INCLUDES WOODFORDE

In February, the United Reformed Church in Princes St, Norwich, was the scene of a “Baroque Banquet” concert which had a theme of food! It was performed by Norwich Baroque, and, in addition to the music, featured readings which included extracts from Woodforde’s Diaries. The readings were given by Simon Heighes, who in Summer 2006 contributed an article to the PWS Journal about Philip Hayes, Woodforde’s music teacher, and the Hayes family of Oxford.

“CASTLE CARY VISITOR” NOW ONLINE

The “Castle Cary Visitor” magazine was produced by the Macmillan family between 1896 and 1915, and was the first place where extracts from Woodforde’s diaries were published. Now Castle Cary Museum has digitised all the *Visitors* and they can be found on the Museum website, www.castlecarymuseum.org.uk. Looking at 1899, I found a reminiscence of Nephew Bill, “Colonel Woodforde”.

Bill had died in 1844 aged 86, but his memory lived on: “Colonel Woodforde was an enthusiastic antiquarian and possessed a large collection of curiosities from every part of the world. His pleasure grounds both at Galhampton and Castle Cary were full of images,

carved stone-work and natural history specimens.” How different from the diary-entries about the bored, sulky young man in 1776-8. But Bill’s antiquarian interests are shown on March 10th 1786 when he was on a visit to Weston: “My Nephew took a ride this Morning to Elmham to see an ancient Roman Lamp lately dug up here ... it was rather small but well-preserved & is of Copper. He drew a Sketch of it on Paper with his Pencil.”

WESTON LONGVILLE’S NEW YEAR’S DAY WALK

There is a tradition in Weston Longville of a New Year’s Day walk through local countryside, finishing with a communal lunch. This year some 60 villagers took part, covering part of the route of the proposed new “Western Link” from the A47 to the A1067. They walked along lanes, fields and tracks in the rural area which lies between Weston and Ringland, which in due course will be dominated by a new dual-carriageway.

NELSON MUSEUM HAS CLOSED

Norfolk’s only museum dedicated to Admiral Lord Nelson has closed, and its collection put into storage. Members who attended the Southwold Frolic in 2016 will remember our visit to the museum on South Quay, Great Yarmouth. We were fortunate to see it; it has closed due to withdrawal of Council funding and declining visitor numbers.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

In the Spring of 1770, James Woodforde was living in Ansford, acting as Curate for his father whose health was failing, an intimation of the disease from which he would die in a year’s time. “My Father had but a very indifferent Night last Night having a most violent Pain in his Stomach occasioned by Wind, he has complained of the same for some time ...”. [25th March 1770] Both James’ brothers, Heighes and John, were living in Ansford, and their immoderate alcohol-consumption was also a frequent cause of concern to him.

On April 18th there were great celebrations in Castle Cary to mark John Wilkes' "enlargement", the expunging from House of Commons records of his previous expulsions. Flags were flown, the Church bells rang all day, and toasts were drunk.

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