

# THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

WINTER 2013

NEWSLETTER No. 96

## THE SOCIETY'S NEW PRESIDENT

Since George Bunting's death a year ago, the Society has been without a President. We are now very pleased to announce that Suzanne Custance of Oxford has agreed to take on the role. The descendant of Mr and Mrs Custance of the Diary, Suzanne was a long-term Committee member until 2011, and she has organised Frolics in the past.

## FROLIC AND AGM 2014

The Society will return to Norfolk for the Frolic and AGM in 2014. It will take place between the 3rd weekend in September and the 1st weekend in October. More details in the Spring mailing, but if you would like to know the dates before then please contact me (details on page 4), and I will let you know as soon as dates are fixed.

## THE "NORFOLK ANCESTOR"

The quarterly journal of the Norfolk Family History Society, the "Ancestor", featured Woodforde's diaries and our Society on two separate pages in their recent Autumn edition! The first page was about the new edition of Volume 10, and included details about the extreme weather in the summer of 1783, which we now know was influenced by the volcanic eruption in Iceland. Our Chairman Martin Brayne added some comments about the Society. The second page in the "Ancestor" told readers who are researching their own family history how they might use the 17 Volumes of the complete Diary held in the Heritage Library & Archive Centre in Norwich, not forgetting the overall index at the end of Volume 17 (also on our website).

## EDP REVIEW OF VOLUME 10

The *Eastern Daily Press* published a lengthy review of the new edition of the Diary, Volume 10, 1782-4, edited by Dr Heather Edwards. In a

generally very favourable review, the EDP journalist mistakenly thought that Volume 10 was the latest in a chronological publication of the complete diary, and that 1785-1802 were still to come! Despite this mistake, the writer did well in making a serious attempt to rescue Woodforde from the charge of gluttony.

### **ANSFORD CHURCHWARDEN**

Andrew Houlton is now the Church Warden of St Andrew's in Ansford. Not only is he a member of our Society but he also lives in The Old Parsonage in Ansford. It would be interesting to know what Parson Woodforde would have thought of this turn of events!

### **PITCOMBE CHURCH BELLS**

St Leonard's Church, Pitcombe, in beautiful countryside outside Castle Cary, was a church with which our late President George Bunting was much involved, and where he is buried. Cole is in the parish of Pitcombe, and when James Woodforde was staying at Cole, he attended it somewhat irregularly. "I did not go to Pitcomb Church today as Mr Pounsetts Seat there is but indifferent and very small." (7/7/1782)

Perhaps a full peal of bells calling him across the fields would have encouraged him to attend more often. Pitcombe PCC is planning to renovate the three medieval bells in the tower, and make them up to six, which will make them more harmonious. The Society is making a small donation, but if you would also like to contribute yourself, cheques should be made payable to "Friends of Pitcombe Church", and sent to: Charles Brook, Hadspen Farm, Hadspen, BA7 7LX, tel. 01963-351492. Gift Aid forms can be supplied if required.

### **WESTON LONGVILLE CHURCH – MEDIEVAL GRAFFITI**

Recently the *Wensum* Diary reported that last year the *Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey* had published an article about All Saints, Weston Longville in *Norfolk Archeology*. On a pillar in the south arcade is a late C13th or early C14th graffito, some 10-12 feet above the ground, a geometric pattern made with compasses and a straight edge. Its meaning and purpose is unclear.

## MASTERPIECES: ART AND EAST ANGLIA

What is described as a “blockbuster” exhibition is running at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia. The curator describes it as an eclectic and even eccentric collection of masterpieces from stately homes, churches, cathedrals and museums with East Anglian connections. The Exhibition runs until February 24th, 2014, and more details are available on *www.scva.ac.uk*, or on 01603-598616.

## BEEFAN APPLES

Norfolk Biffin, or as Parson Woodforde called them “Beefan” apples, were recently the subject of a long feature in the Weekend section of the *Eastern Daily Press*. As well as their occurrence in Woodforde’s Diary, Charles Dickens mentioned them in *A Christmas Carol*.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Annual subscription for 2014 is due on January 1st. It is **£16** for ordinary UK members, **£25** for Overseas members, and **£10** for Students under 25. If you pay by cheque, please use the form below (which can also be found on the PWS website). If you would like to set up a standing order, or gift-aid your subscription, then contact Dr Case, or print the forms from the Website under “Contact”.

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To the Treasurer, Dr David Case, Fairfield, 25 Archery Square, Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7JA

I enclose my cheque for £..... payable to the Parson Woodforde Society, for my subscription for the year commencing 1st January 2014.

NAME (Please print).....

ADDRESS .....

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## **GREAT YARMOUTH – PAVILION & PLAZA**

The revival of Great Yarmouth, Woodforde's favourite seaside resort, continues with the opening of a new Pavilion, a striking building next to the magnificently refurbished St George's Theatre. The Pavilion opens directly onto an outdoor performance plaza. It is anticipated that these improvements will bring benefits to local people and visitors and enliven the King St area.

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

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