

THE PARSON WOODFORDE SOCIETY

AUTUMN 2014

NEWSLETTER No. 99

FROLIC 2014

As I write, the Frolic is still some weeks away, but it will be upon us by the time you read this. Always a memorable element of Norfolk Frolics is the visit to Weston Longville. On Sunday, 5th October, we will be in All Saints Church for the Harvest Festival service, followed by lunch in the “Parson Woodforde” restaurant. We hope that the Frolic is successful and has good weather.

REV. SELWYN TILLET

The Rev. Selwyn Tillett, who has been Rector of Weston Longville since 2005, is leaving the Wensum benefice, and taking on responsibility for a group of parishes around Winterton-on-Sea, north of Great Yarmouth. We wish him well in his new post. As I write, there is not yet any news of his successor in Weston.

Frolic-goers will have their own memories of Selwyn, but one of my own dates from the Frolic of June 2010, at the concert *Musick for the Parson* in All Saints’ Church. As part of a sextet accompanying four singers, Selwyn played an electronic harpsichord to provide *continuo*. He reminded us that he was a successor to James Woodforde not only as Rector of Weston Longville, but also as a keyboard player: as an Oxford undergraduate, Woodforde learnt the spinet, the harpsichord and the organ.

ANNIVERSARIES OF ORDINATION

The Reverend Brian Pateman was an early member of the Society and preached a “Woodforde sermon” at some early Frolics. In May 1979, at the annual “Gathering” (as the Frolics were then known), he preached in St Andrew’s, Ansford about the importance of home, in Woodforde’s case Ansford Parsonage.

Just recently, on June 15th, Brian celebrated the 60th anniversary of his Ordination, performed by Bishop Michael Ramsey in Durham

Cathedral. We congratulate him on the milestone. Brian has spent almost all his ministry in the Diocese of Durham. In the early years of the Society, our founder, Canon Wilson, was serving in the same Diocese, and Brian joined the Society then. Our Chairman Martin Brayne has sent him a book token on behalf of the Society to mark the anniversary.

Another significant event is the 250th anniversary of James Woodforde's Ordination, on September 23rd, 1764, in the Chapel of the Bishop's Palace in Wells.

WOODFORDE TALKS

Suffolk member Sheila Harrison has recently given two talks which focus on Nancy's life and the lives of the women who formed her social circle in Norfolk. A short version was presented to members of a Stroke Club associated with Ipswich Hospital. She reports that the audience loved it. The full version was given in a talk to the Taverham History Society and received an enthusiastic response from the audience of 35 people.

NANCY WOODFORDE'S HEALTH

A Norfolk member, Dr Madeleine Devey, who is a retired medical scientist, is researching Nancy Woodforde's medical history and her bad knee. In March 1776 Nancy was diagnosed with "The King's Evil" (scrofula, a tubercular condition). But Dr Devey thinks Nancy might actually have had a form of arthritis which relapsed and remitted and which also affected the skin, such as lupus or psoriatic arthritis. We shall be fascinated to hear more of this investigation in due course.

A NEWFOUNDLAND MEMBER

In the last Journal, there was a very interesting article on Nephew Bill's son and grandson, who both practised as doctors in Canada. The article was written by a member who lives on "a small rocky island off the coast of Newfoundland", Randolph Lieb-Warmsworth. He is a retired fisherman, has ten children, has had a novel published, and

used to write a newspaper column. He also paints, and has sold some 300 works. He would love to find a chatty but intelligent pen-pal to share his interest in history and, perhaps, Gilbert & Sullivan. If you would like to correspond with him, his email address is: randyliebofwarmsworth@gmail.com.

THE QUEST FOR ODDNAM GREEN

The *Wensum Diary*, the Parish magazine of Weston Longville, has a regular "Parson Woodforde" page of extracts from his diary. In July it included July 24th, 1780: "*The Press Gang from Norwich came to Weston last night and carried off a man from Oddnam Green.*" In August, the Wensum Diary editorial team queried where "Oddnam Green" was, and this led to an investigation into its location.

Woodforde's diary provides a clue from June 3rd 1785, when Mr Du Quesne visited Woodforde with his "measuring wheel". Woodforde walked back with him as far as "Odnam Green" and the wheel measured exactly one mile. In later years Woodforde spelt "Oddnam" as "Oldham". This led Dr David Case, who has written many articles for the Journal on the history of Weston, to suggest that "Oddnam" and "Oldham" were Woodforde's phonetic representation of the Norfolk pronunciation of "Aldenham". The Enclosure map of 1826 marks "Aldenham Green" in the place where today we find "Weston Green", south of the village centre and on Mr Du Quesne's route home to Berries Hall.

FILM NEWS

Some readers may have seen the film "Belle", which was released this summer. Set in the eighteenth century, it features William Murray, Earl of Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice, played in the film by Tom Wilkinson. Lord Mansfield is remembered for a judgement in 1772 about the inapplicability of slavery in England. The film proposes a connection between that judgement and his domestic circumstances, especially his mixed-race great-niece, Dido Belle. Parson Woodforde once saw Lord Mansfield in action on a visit to London in May 1775.

DON'T FORGET THE WEBSITE !

Not all of us have access to the Internet, but some of those who do know that the Society website, *www.parsonwoodforde.org.uk*, is a useful resource for Woodfordean studies. It contains the Index to the complete diary (as at the end of Volume 17), and a multi-category Index to all past Journals from 1968 onwards. For example, to see the whole series of "British Diarists" go to the "Subject" Index and scroll down to "Diarists". Other information on the Website includes details of the print status and cost of Diary volumes, and forms for setting up Gift Aid and Standing orders for subscriptions.

Many thanks to all contributors.

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