

## GROUP NEWS

### MEETINGS OCTOBER 2000 – JANUARY 2001

IMAGES OF ENGLAND PROJECT: BUILDING A SHOWCASE FOR 360,000 HISTORIC PICTURES, Dan Woodrow, Technical Manager of Images of England Project: 4 October 2000:

Members attending the first talk of the Group's programme for the year were treated to a fascinating account of the Images of England Project on the even of the launch of its website. It was an informal and interactive evening and questions were raised throughout Dan Woodrow's Power Point presentation. He explained that the Images of England Project is run by the National Monuments Record, the public archive of English Heritage, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and has been operating for 16 months to date. The Project team of 18 staff is based at the NMR at Swindon and fieldwork is undertaken by a team of 700 volunteer photographer members of the Royal Photographic Society.

The aim of the Project is to build a digital photo library of all 360,00 listed buildings in England, matched to the Statutory List held by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, to be available on the worldwide web for a myriad of users, including commercial, educational, government, general interest and research. Schools are the largest target audience.

Dan explained some of the problems the Project team had to confront. These included how to create a really large photo website for a Project which will be ongoing for the next two years, how to show the photographs in their best light, how to search for and retrieve the photos and how to stop photos from being misused.

We were told that the Project supplied each photographer with Kodak supra colour negative professional 35 mm film and a target list of buildings, each with details of the statutory listing so that the photographer knows what details are required to be photographed. Each building is index numbered by the Project and photographers are asked for a single defining image of each listed building. Photographers submit 35 images and a photo of the target list of their Project for processing and prints and negatives are returned to the photographer, who holds the copyright. Only one negative per building is allowed because of the cost of scanning and processing.

The quality of digital image has been and remains a problem. This can be affected by the quality of the negative, the film processing, the scanner, the cleanliness of the environment and handling, calibration and post processing,. The source of the image is all important and only negatives are used for scanning. The size of image must be downloadable from the web but of sufficiently high quality for commercial use. Dan illustrated the point by showing the different effects of scanning negatives of 50 pixels per inch compared with 2250 ppi.

The images are indexed using a numbering system on a database. The planning and organisation of

photos and their categorisation presented further problems. The Project team had to envisage how people will want to retrieve images in future. The team decided to use subject, theme, time and place as categories and to organise images in line with these perceived retrieval patterns.

The storage of images is another problem – whether to store them on hard disk, to store the digital originals on CD or DVD or on tape. The Project is using CD storage for images in TIF format, on one CD per 35 frame film, so storage will be on 10,000 CDs by the time the Project is completed.

Dan showed a chart of the Images of England system of Administrator users, Intranet users, Internet users and explained that there was a security buffer built into the website. He demonstrated the Images of England prototype website and showed how a research user can register with the Project and gain access to the biggest images. He then demonstrated how to search the website prototype by building type (categories taken from the Thesaurus of Monument types), by location (click on a map of England), by period or by people. He demonstrated a search by ‘people’, selected ‘architect’ then selected from a list of architects (which is not yet complete because it is restricted to architects of buildings of photographs already scanned) which gave a good idea of the potential of the website as a resource. The text is indexed for maximum availability of information. For example, if a Saxon church predated the current Norman church in the photograph, a word search for ‘Saxon’ would find it.

Dan said that the location search is currently crude and that the Project’s long-term aim is to improve the indexing. He added that the images are downloadable from the website and they can be printed off, the ideal size being postcard size.

Dan Woodrow concluded his fascinating presentation by inviting us all to visit the website at [www.imagesofengland.org.uk](http://www.imagesofengland.org.uk). The site is now on public trial for a year and a feedback form is prominent on the site. Feedback will mean that the project team will be able to focus the site towards user needs as it is developed over the next two years.

AMANDA BERRY

**GEORGE PHILLIPS MANNERS:** Douglas Bernhardt, 8 November 2000, chaired by Philippa Bishop. The speaker described the work of the prolific Bath architect, George Phillips Manners, 1789-1866, and illustrated his talk with a number of drawings recently brought to light from the collection made by Ken Biggs and now lodged with Bath Record Office. There is no known portrait of Manners and details of his background and private life are meagre indeed. He was born in 1789 to parents who owned the Bunch of Grapes inn. At the beginning of his architectural career he was living and working at an address in Rivers Street. After he had joined J. Elkington Gill in about 1845 the partnership was based at 3, Fountain Buildings from 1858 to 1900. Manners himself was recorded as living at Ivy Cottage, Weston Lane, whence he removed to Cheney Court, Box, and he eventually died in Surrey in 1866.

As a pupil of Charles Harcourt (previously known as Harcourt Masters) Manners was trained in a tradition of fine draughtsmanship. Appointed City Architect in 1823, he was responsible for the somewhat ruthless and controversial restoration of the Abbey between 1824 and 1833. He defended the addition of pinnacles to the flying buttresses and turrets by citing the opinion “of an eminent authority” that these had surely been the intention of the original architect. Manners cannot have been pleased when the City Council went over his head in preferring the design by the eminent Edward Blore for the organ and screen to Manners’ own beautiful drawing. On the other hand, in the case of Decimus Burton’s scheme for the development of the Tepid Bath, it seems that Manners’ variations were adopted for the final layout of the building.

Other works by Manners included the obelisk in Victoria Park, 1837, and Twerton Gaol, 1843, as well as a number of churches in Bath and the neighbourhood. In accordance with contemporary architectural practice, he was capable of designing either in the Early English Gothic style, for example, the Catholic Apostolic Church in Guinea Lane, 1840; and the chapel in the Abbey Cemetery, Prior Park Road, 1844. After forming the partnership with J. Elkington Gill, Manners and Gill built St.

Matthew, Widcombe, 1846-7, and the tower and west end of St James (a church demolished after the Second World War, as a casualty of the bombing). One of their most interesting achievements was the Bluecoat School, 1860, showing a distinctly Jacobethan influence with details derived from a great 16<sup>th</sup> century mansion such as Burghley. Much earlier in his career, Manners had drawn on simplified elements of a similar style for his rebuilding of St. Catherines's Hospital, 1829, and in his elegant design for rebuilding Bellot's Hospital (which remained no more than a project).

After Manner's death in 1866, the partnership of Gill and Morris worked on Charlecombe Church and Vicarage. The later partnership of Browne and Gill was responsible for the Crown Inn, Bathwick Street, and the Boating Station, 1887.

PHILIPPA BISHOP

“IN THE MIDST OF LIFE” – SUDDEN DEATH IN BATH: THE CORONERS' RECORDS, 1785-1833: Jan Chivers, 11 January 2001, chaired by Dr. Michael Rowe. Jan Chivers described her study of the Bath Coroners' records for a period of fifty years from the earliest that survive. She saw as an important outcome a real insight into the lives of the very poor in an city where the lives of the rich has received so much attention. The poor had to draw drinking water from a badly polluted river while their children played in or beside it. The rich came by seasons and that meant that work for the poor was also seasonal, their lives precarious and lived in squalor. Poor relief was inadequate and new-born babies might be deposited by hiding at night.

The surviving Coroners' Records are in four volumes in the City Archives. They are not well indexed but they are detailed and contain statements made by those involved in each enquiry that give the reader the impression of listening to real people talking so that the picture of their miserable lives is most vivid.

The Coroners' Court was only concerned with sudden death where there was doubt about the cause and the 487 records can be classified as 239 accidental deaths, 95 suicides, 66 natural deaths, 41 open verdicts, 20 murders, 17 infanticides, 5 “excessive drinking” and 4 “other”. There was a clear tendency to link suicide with “being of unsound mind” wherever possible since deliberate felo-de-se was a felony and raised difficulties over burial. Of the 17 infanticides, 15 mothers were unknown. Touching stories were told and sometimes a lenient view was taken of child murder: prepared bed linen was taken as showing intention to keep the child. The dreadful conditions in which the poor lived is often apparent. Many pubs had rooms for prostitutes; one in eight houses in Avon Street were licensed to sell alcohol and it is not surprising that drunkenness contributed to many accidents.

The Coroner was the Mayor so it is likely that the Council would have been kept aware of this aspect of the life of the City. The Coroners' Court was held in the Guildhall and of the 38 Mayors in this period more than half were doctors or in other work linked to medicine. The detailed statements made to the Court have already been mentioned. Each witness signed the record or made his mark and the proportion signing increased in the later years. Who informed the Coroner of these deaths? There is evidence that some of the long-term poor were caring of one another and there is a case where a milkman alerted neighbours.

Three cases were described in detail and illustrated the wide range. Though Bath had an influx of outsiders hoping for work there is evidence of many vulnerable families living for many years in the City. Jan Chivers thought that the population was not as violent as Neale had suggested.

The meeting ended with a lively discussion and evident gratitude to the speaker.

JOHN

EDE

## MEMBERS' NEWS

Warm congratulations to Susan Sloman on achieving her Bristol University Ph.D. with a thesis on ‘Gainsborough in Bath, 1758-1774’.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

*Bath History*, vol. 8, 2000 includes:

Aquae Sulis – The Origins and Development of a Roman Town by Peter Davenport;

Barracks Farm, Wellsway, Bath, the Estate and its Holders by A.J. Keevil;

The Development of the Saw Close from the Middle Ages by Mike Chapman and Elisabeth Holland;

Sir John (later Lord) Ligonier (1680-1770), Military Commander and Member of Parliament for Bath by Brenda J. Buchanan;

The Rise and Fall of Bath Breweries, 1736-1960 by Mike Bone;

Social Decline and Slum Conditions, Irish Migrants in Bath's History by Graham Davis;

Bath and the Crimean War, 1854-1856 by William Hanna;

Patrick Abercrombie and Planning in Bath by Robin Lambert.

## THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION FOR DEFENCE OF THE REALM, February-April 1798

‘The French are still busy in preparing rafts, floating-islands, and row-boats’, commented the *Bath Chronicle*, half-joking, half in earnest, on 1 February 1798. The likelihood of invasion seemed real enough. The previous year 2000 French troops had been captured at Fishguard before they had a chance to descend on Bristol (said to be their ultimate objective). And just months before that, bad weather alone stopped a much larger force from landing at Bantry Bay where they hoped to spur Irish Catholics into outright rebellion. So on 15 February 1798, as the Bath magistrates compiled lists of able-bodied men (aged 15-60) for immediate mobilisation should the invasion come about, the Mayor, Charles Phillott, held a public meeting to launch a great funding appeal - just one of many started up across the country under the terms of a hasty Act of Parliament. A committee of two dozen (a sprinkling of senior army officers among them) agreed to sit daily at the Guildhall, four at a time, to receive contributions great and small from patriotic citizens. The heavily indebted Corporation immediately pitched in with £1000, followed by ten individuals most of whom pledged £50-£100 a year for the duration of the war.

As often with charity appeals of the time, donors were individually listed in the local press (always with the amount given recorded against their name). Besides being a public record of devotion to King and country and a device for shaming backward contributors into action, the weekly listing afforded Bathonians a rich source of gossip about contributors and the size of their contributions. What was unusual about the lists, though, was the catholicity of the donors and the fact that what they gave seems to have been set down in order of receipt. After the first rush of donations of at least £25 (well over £1000 in modern terms) and then of around £5 to £10, the smaller sums began to creep in: half-a-guinea from one footman, 2s.6d. from another, 7s.6d. from five sisters (their pocket money), £2 from the Amicable Society meeting at the *Belvedere Inn* (Walcot) ‘inclosed in a very loyal and patriotic letter’, 3s. from ‘Two children’. The range was huge - £1000 from the Rev M. Stafford Smith of Prior Park down to one shilling from the billiard’s ‘marker’ at the Upper Assembly Rooms. Most of the sedan chairmen contributed in a lump sum, but a few paid separately and took care to advertise their chair licence numbers (it might pay dividends). Altogether the lists reveal the names (and sometimes the addresses) of many resident (and visiting?) gentry of both sexes, professional men, tradespeople, servants, military personnel, friendly societies, schools – all cheek by jowl, all given equal prominence.

Here and there some element of regimentation appears. For instance, contributions from the ten employees of the upholsterer William Evill were itemised after that of their boss, and similarly with the much bigger staff of the *White Hart*; Eleazor Pickwick first with £50, seven senior staff next with a guinea each and then lower servants in descending order of rank giving carefully graded sums of 10s.6d. to 2s.6d. But often the gesture appears to have been more spontaneous - the private sacrifice of a week’s wages by a sergeant, corporal and drummer of the 76<sup>th</sup> Regiment, sums voted from club funds (e.g. 5 guineas each from the Amicable Societies meeting at the *Druid’s Head* and *Black Swan*), perhaps a voluntary collection at the workplace (as when a tailor and his journeymen handed over £1 18s.6d. ‘as a token of their loyalty to King and Constitution’.

Fear of a French invasion, genuine patriotism, public spiritedness, calculation of private interest, coercion by employers, all kind of motives no doubt impelled people to donate. For public servants, officials, professionals, shopkeepers and the like it was prudent as well as loyal to have one’s contributions so publicly listed. For the authorities, the gentry, the clergy, it was also a matter of leadership, of setting a generous example. While the degree of generosity must have varied from person to person, the amounts given are also an indication of private financial circumstances and social status, and so invite speculation both about individuals and social groups – as with the specimens that follow: Daniel Lysons (physician) £100, William Falconer (physician) £50, William Falconer’s servants 1 guinea, Henry Harington (physician) 10 guineas, Henry Richmond (physician) 5 guineas, Rev John Chapman (Master of St John’s) £50 and another £50 donated directly to the Bank of England, Rev John Sibley (Rector of Walcot) £50, Rev Dr James Phillott (Rector of Bath) £25, Rev Dr John Gardiner (Octagon Chapel) £25, Rev Nathaniel Morgan (Headmaster of the Grammar School) £20, Rev Richard Graves (Rector of Claverton) 5 guineas, William Dawson (retired Master of Ceremonies) £300, Richard Tyson and James King (current Masters of Ceremonies) 10 guineas each, John Jefferys (retired attorney and former Town Clerk) £50, George Watts (attorney) 10 guineas, Venanzio Rauzzini (director of Bath concerts) 5 guineas, John Ford (statuary mason) £20, Thomas Beach (portrait painter) £5, Charles Mercie (dancing master) £5, John Plura (retired auctioneer) £50, Messrs Williams (brewers) £50, J.D. Christmaz (brewer) £5, G.H. Tugwell (banker) £30, John Perry (wine merchant) £30, Thomas West (retired apothecary) £40, Joseph Spry (apothecary) 10 guineas, William Sole (apothecary) £5, Samuel Hazard (bookseller) 5 guineas, Messrs Shum (pork butchers) 10 guineas, William Turner (butcher) 5 guineas, James Evill (jeweller) 10 guineas, John Roubel (jeweller) 5 guineas, Philip Nonnet (staymaker) £5, his four children 10s., his journeyman half-a-guinea, his cook 5s., Eleazor Pickwick (keeper of the *White Hart*) £50, George Arnold (keeper of the *White Lion*) £10, Mrs Granger (keeper of the *Christopher*) 5 guineas, Joseph Bickham (keeper of the *Castle & Ball*) 5 guineas, Charles Griffin

(keeper of the *Horse & Jockey*) 2 guineas, Bar Maid and Cloak Maid at the Upper Assembly Rooms half-a-guinea each, James Noble (journeyman hairdresser) 1 guinea, Lady Bath (i.e. Henrietta Laura Pulteney) £300, Walter Wiltshire £50, Christopher Anstey £50, Mrs Isted (Kathleen Plymley's elderly relative) £50, her three spinster daughters £10 each, her servants 11s 6d, Lady Nelson £25, James Leigh Perrott and Mrs Leigh Perrott (Jane Austen's uncle and aunt) £25 and £10 respectively, Thomas Clarke (Town Crier) 1 guinea, George Griffin (Gaoler) 1 guinea, Thomas Morgan (postman from Bath to Batheaston) 1 guinea, Mary Wadman (laundress) 5s., the Band at the Theatre Royal £9 19s.6d., the Actors there £20, a special fund-raising performance there £144 10s.6d., boys at the Grammar School £41 17s.6d., 10 boys at Florian's Academy £15, girls at Mrs Habersham's School £6 9s., Mrs Habersham herself 1 guinea.

A week or so after the appeal began, the incumbents and churchwardens in each parish received letters from the central organising committee in London requesting parish collections. By then many individuals and communities had already donated to the Bath collection or directly to the Bank of England (e.g. Duke of Beaufort's household £110 4s.3d., hamlet of Wick £4 14s.6d.). For this reason the subsequent lists of donations reported for individual parishes at Bath and its neighbourhood are far from being a full record for those parishes though still quite revealing. Taking the lists as a whole they serve too as a partial (if haphazard) directory of Bath inhabitants just prior to the first reasonably full listing of the more substantial residents in Robbins' *Bath Directory*, 1800. They can also be compared with the signatories in the Loyalist Association book of 1793, which contains over 6000 names but of course no donations.

**BATH SPA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE** is holding a Day School on Georgian Bath at the Newton Park campus on **10 February, 9.30 - 4.00**. Registration in advance costs £25 and further information can be had from Dr. Elaine Chalus, School of Historical and Cultural Studies, Bath Spa University College, Newton Park, Bath, BA2 9BN, telephone Bath 875592. The speakers will be Dr. Roey Sweet, Dr. Steve Poole (on food rioting), Dr. Philip Carter (on the Rev. John Penrose), Dr. Anne Borsay (on the General Hospital), Dr. Susan Skedd (on girls' schools) and Professor Peter Borsay (on images of Georgian Bath).

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*The Newsletter is compiled and typed by Judith Samuel.*