



SussexLink



February 2003

A Newsletter for the Sussex Family History Group

Vol 1 No 1

Group Secretary – a challenge waiting to be grasped!

With just about a month to go before nominations close for the election of officers we still do not have a volunteer to take up the challenge of becoming the Group Secretary. This post is central to the organisation of the Group, ensuring that we work effectively, efficiently and legally, and it is essential that we find someone willing to take it on. Yes it is a commitment, but a commitment that should be both fun and rewarding. Joan Goddard has done a great job in this role for many years, and although she agreed to take up the reigns again when Jean Hare had to step down, she has made it clear that she does not wish to continue beyond March. So if you like a challenge, live somewhere that is reasonably accessible, and have administrative and keyboard skills do give me a ring (01444 412790) or Email me (chairman@sfhg.org.uk).

One Place Genealogy

As family historians we adopt a wide variety of approaches to our subject. Some of us get involved in one name studies providing a valuable resource to other researchers with an interest in the same surname. As an alternative others prefer to study specific local communities – One Place Genealogy. There has been added interest in this approach recently and some family history societies now have what they call 'Online Parish Clerks', members who have a particular interest in, and knowledge of, specific parishes.

A number of members have suggested that we set up a similar arrangement within the Group and this is certainly a possibility, although we really would need quite a number of volunteers to make it work well. Obvi-

ously the level of knowledge of particular parishes will vary, but might include having transcripts of parish records or censuses, knowledge of the local history or of the topography, industry and families in that parish. Although this is the sort of project that lends itself to making information available via the Internet, and this seems to be the approach adopted in other countries, this is certainly not essential and we would be pleased to hear from any member wishing to take part, internet user or not.

If you feel that you know enough about a parish to take part, please contact Mrs Sheila Maynard, our Local History Database Co-ordinator at 7, Wood Drive, Stevenage, Herts. SG2 8PA, email localhistory@sfhg.org.uk.

Sussex Map

Our new Sussex Parishes Map is now available. Printed on A3 card folded to A5, the Sussex Parishes Map lists nearly 500 local communities and includes adjacent parishes in bordering counties and the date of the earliest known registers. It has been very well received by professionals at both Sussex University and West Sussex Record Office. The map, price 80p, is available from our bookshops, or directly from publications@sfhg.org.uk.

Situations Vacant

Hon. Secretary

This is the key administrative position in the Group, ensuring that we function efficiently, effectively and legally at all times. Challenging and rewarding. Computer literacy essential. Central location in Sussex desirable.

Conference Organizer

Required **now** to start planning our 2004 Conference. Experience of event organisation would clearly be an advantage, but is not essential.

Please contact Brian Cutler if you are interested in either of the above jobs (chairman@sfhg.org.uk).

Library Helpers

Volunteers always welcome, especially male. Contact Rosemary Appleton, (01273 505206 or library@sfhg.org.uk).

Annual Conference

Saturday 29th March 2003

Yes, another plug! But do come to the Annual Conference at Hassocks if you can.

We have an opportunity in the morning to hear Janet Pennington talk on Sussex Inns and their Architecture, a topic that Janet has studied extensively in the last few years. The theme of social history will continue with John Vigar talking about Bedrooms, Banquets and Balls, and in the afternoon Professor Paul Harvey will tell us how to use Manorial Records.

As always a day not to be missed. If you haven't already **BOOK NOW!**

Family History On Line

The Federation of Family History Societies has launched its new service, Family History On Line (www.familyhistoryonline.net). This pay per view service is currently based on data submitted by the family history societies in Cornwall, Berkshire, Leicestershire, Glamorgan and Rutland, with others coming along shortly. This co-operative approach is certainly seen by many to be one answer to the burgeoning commercial market in genealogy data. £5 vouchers are available from our bookstalls (together with 1901 Census On Line vouchers).

Other On Line News

A new website giving access to the GRO Indexes was announced in December, but is still not live (www.1837online.com). This is a commercial venture by a bona fide genealogical research company, although they seem to be having some technical difficulties at present.

Curious Fox (www.curiousfox.com) is the genealogical and local history equivalent of "friends reunited", with the potential to become a fascinating if unchecked UK information base.

Gazettes (www.gazette-online.co.uk), the official site for the London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes, now has a searchable archive. At present this only covers the two world wars but it is intended eventually to cover all available material. (The web address was wrongly cited in the January edition of Family History Monthly.)

Thinking about the future

In the launch issue of SussexLink I wrote about the need to think through our relationship with other organisations, both commercial and not for profit, that are also involved in making genealogical data more accessible. In January there was a debate on the Group Mailing List about this and related issues, particularly the most appropriate medium in which we should publish data.

For a few days there was an exciting exchange of widely varying opinion and it was helpful to learn how members are responding to new technology. Given the range of views it is not going to be possible to satisfy everyone, but the discussion has certainly given us a lot to think about.

Library News

The additional West Sussex Parish Register fiche have now arrived at the library, filling in the majority of the missing parishes and adding later records for many others. As a result, however, there will be a slight delay in publishing our revised library catalogue.