



SussexLink



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A Newsletter for the Sussex Family History Group

Vol 1 No 3

Projects

This edition of *SussexLink* is all about recent developments in our Projects, particular the Sussex People and Census indexes and the opportunities provided by Family History On Line. The breaking news, however, is that Don Burgess has offered to help co-ordinate the development of a Sussex Burial Index. Although much has been achieved already in conjunction with the Monumental Inscriptions Index, thanks to the hard work of Christine Payne and her volunteers, a Sussex wide burial index will be big undertaking and one that will need a lot of support from both existing and hopefully new volunteers.

PPV and Sussex Census

We have signed up to the Federation Pay Per View PPV and this means that people from all over the world will have better access to our records .

The profile of the Federation of Family History Societies, who are responsible for the site, will increase enormously, as Society members log on to their PPV site and use the material that they have co-ordinated from all over the World.

This is a phenomenal move for the Sussex Family History Group and will increase the momentum to complete projects like the indexing of all census years. For those who think that maybe it might be a waste of time duplicating work already programmed to be undertaken by private concerns, I can assure you that our work will outshine anything they can produce. Our facilities to check and cross check entries and for experienced family historians to check against original census sheets means that the quality of our material will be impossible to match. We also aim to update and alter the small number of errors that might creep in, as we are responsible to our members and no one else.

The interest that this generates should

form a base from which we can computerise all the material that we currently hold.

Plans are afoot to put areas of the census on CD, for those who wish to purchase rather than go on to PPV, and this will be followed by Monumental Inscriptions. We aim to have all our census material available for members to purchase electronically.

Of course your Committee cannot undertake all of this work and I hope that the creation of modern day "Parish Clerks" for areas in Sussex will help stimulate the work and serve as a platform from which to type up all our extant records. If you have an area that you are interested in, then please do sign up to this project, as it is so important. I have decided myself take East Dean, if no one has nabbed it yet, so come and choose your area of interest before it disappears!

Do not be overwhelmed by the task—you will be supported. All journeys start with just one step.

So, all this interest will make for a much larger and more international Society. The SFHG is going to expand and grow, but we need your help and co-operation...today.

Do help by putting something back now that we have given you so much.

Mick Henry

SUSSEX PEOPLE INDEX

Judy Excell gives more details about this important resource that is now actively being developed.

When Frank Leeson was organizing the slipping of Sussex Marriages to make up the Sussex Marriage Index sometimes there was a dearth of data for his volunteers. To keep them happy and active he requested that they slip various items from other sources. These were kept alongside the Sussex Marriage Index as the Sussex People Index.

As the Marriage Index inputting progressed I mentioned to Frank that I would like to form the People Index into a database some day if he agreed, and with the help of some other volunteers a start was made about two years ago.

There were a number of initial difficulties that had to be overcome: the identity of the source was not always apparent from the slips (they have now been coded by Frank so that only a number has to be entered by the volunteer), the various software programmes do not always communicate with each other easily, and some volunteers found that changed circumstances meant that they could not continue.

THE DATABASE (Skip this if you are not interested in database design!)

The database is set up so that each main entry is in only once, regardless of how many people or places are contained in the entry. Each source is numbered and is only in once. Each main entry is also numbered and is linked to its source.

The people mentioned in the entry are listed and linked to the entry, whilst places and occupations are linked to the individuals. If people are in more than one entry then they are in more often, and places and occupations, being linked to individuals, are also replicated. As the original slip index was organised on an individual rather than entry basis, some post input work is required to re-establish the links and minimise the overall size of the database.

PROGRESS

Thanks to the work of Jenny Sealey, Andrew Barnes, Barbara and John Smith, Ernest Pitcher, Mike Snatt, Llinos Edgeley, Ron Cresswell, and Judy Excell significant progress has been made in the last two years. Slips relating to the letters A, BA, MI-MY, PH-Q, SMITH have been fully entered into the database, whilst the letters BO-BU, BR, CA-CH, SA-SI are searchable but lack some refinements when the results are displayed. Volunteers are currently working on BE-BL, CL-COOK, COOPER-CU, DA-DR, DU-E, HO-HY, SK-

SZ, and TA-TR, with FA-FY, K-LA, LE-LY and R (and soon MA-ME, PA-PE) awaiting volunteers to input them. (GA-GO, GR-GY+I+J, HA-HEL, HEM-HI, N-O, TU-WA, WE-WILLEY, WILLIAMS-Z are not yet available.)

OTHER SOURCES

The Sussex People Index consists of any names that anyone submits from anywhere, - the only condition are that they must be Sussex people, the event must happen in Sussex and there must be an identifiable source which is not baptisms, burials (or monumental inscriptions), census, marriages, which have their own indexes (but could include information from birth, marriage or death certificates). The database already includes, or will shortly include, information from books thanks to Julie Cheesman, Patricia Watson, Trevor Hanson and lists from family history data thanks to Joan Goddard.

If you have any additional data that could be entered into the Index I would be pleased to receive it. I am always happy to advise the format in which it should be submitted (but as computer data - our volunteer inputters have enough with working through the boxes of slips).

VOLUNTEERS

Are you in a position to become an inputter?

You need a computer with a word processing, database or spreadsheet programme (but not MSWorks). I will supply guidance to help you set up the tables or spread sheets correctly.

If you are able to help in any way, either inputting from slips, or supplying data ready for inclusion in the database, please contact Judy Excell (membersinterests@sfhg.org.uk).

Library News

It is now possible to browse the first two sections of the Library Catalogue on the web site. Have a look. You may find that we have the source that you are looking for.

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