

A WINDOW INTO OUR SUSSEX PAST

The Sussex Record Society's publications are unique says Richard Childs

Last summer I received a very interesting book in the post - *Church Surveys of Chichester Archdeaconry 1602, 1610 & 1636* - by Joan Barham and Andrew Foster, the latest book from the Sussex Record Society. I thought it would be opportune to draw Chi Soc members' attention not only to this publication but more widely to the work of the Sussex Record Society.

While *Church Surveys of Chichester Archdeaconry* may seem a somewhat dry and dusty title it is in fact a remarkable insight into the physical state of parish churches across the county in the first half of the seventeenth century, and reveals the appalling state of some of Chichester's churches in that era. In fact this volume acts as a sort of gazetteer of all the parish churches in what is now West Sussex. *Church Surveys* is comprehensively illustrated with drawings and photographs of virtually all the churches surveyed. It reveals the struggles by clergy, churchwardens and parishioners as they tried to fund the maintenance of their churches and keep them fit for worship. This is a surprisingly current theme!

Founded 1901

The Sussex Record Society was established in 1901 with the aim of publishing historical records of East and West Sussex found in the great national libraries, such as the British Library and the National Archives, and in the archives of the county's great houses and families. To date the Society has published nearly 100 volumes - nearly one new publication for every year of its existence - and topics covered from the eleventh to the twentieth centuries.

A potpourri

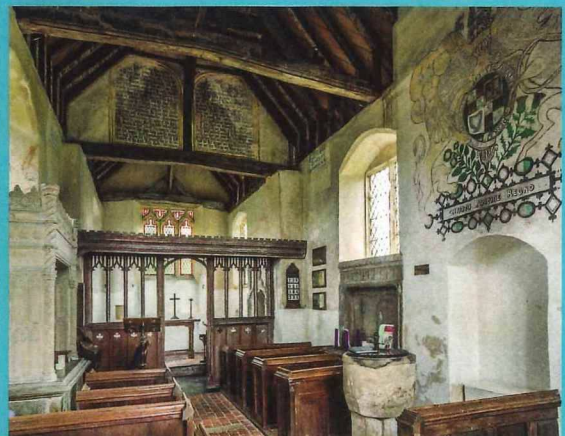
While the Society's remit covers the whole of Sussex, many of its publications focus on records and information relating specifically to Chichester. They include *Marriage Licences at Chichester 1575-1800* (vols 12, 32 & 35); *Chichester Cathedral Chartulary* (vol 46); *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of Chichester 1783-1826* (vol.62); and *St Richard of Chichester* (vol.79). Beyond Chichester, subjects and themes vary greatly like *Sussex Cricket in the Eighteenth Century* (vol.88); *Correspondence of the Dukes of Richmond and Newcastle 1724-1750* (vol.73); and *Printed Maps of Sussex 1575-1900* (vol.72).

If you would like to join the Sussex Record Society you'll be pleased to know that their annual

membership subs are very modest at £12. For this you'll receive a copy of each annual publication. There is also a guest lecture at the Society's AGM. More information about the Society may be found on their website at sussexrecordsociety.org which also includes a range of online record databases.

The Sussex Record Society's offices are based in Lewes, but we are currently very fortunate because Wendy Walker and Jennifer Mason (respectively the Society's Chairperson and Secretary) both work here in Chichester at the County Record Office. I would recommend popping into the Record Office as it sells back numbers of the Society's publications; and of course you can inspect all the Society's published volumes in the public searchroom.

CHURCH SURVEYS OF CHICHESTER ARCHDEACONRY 1602, 1610 & 1636



Joan Barham
Andrew Foster