

SACKVILLE COLLEGE



Friends' Newsletter

Spring 2023



News from the Warden

Dear Friends of Sackville College

At Sackville College, we provide a home for people who are over 60 years old, who are in financial and social need and are capable of living independently. There are over 2,000 almshouses in England; we have been providing accommodation for over 400 years and the College ranks amongst the oldest in the county. The charity's beneficiaries live in private flats and are free to come and go as they please.

The last 3 years have been challenging with the lack of fundraising events and public tours of the building. This year is looking incredibly positive; we have numerous tours already booked and the support for our fundraising programme is very encouraging. May Day is our biggest opportunity to raise awareness locally and refill our coffers: we look forward to welcoming back our Friends old and new.

Best wishes.

Rosalind Crowther

Events at Sackville College

The season of Christmas Carols went very well at Sackville College. There were 3 evenings open to the public and all tickets were sold. We are so grateful to Cantu Amici for their wonderful evening of varied and beautiful music in the Chapel. The 2 evenings of traditional carols for all to sing with a brief telling of the Christmas story, as well as the afternoon Carols for the Friends, all finished with an unusual rendition of *Good King Wenceslas*. The Warden's husband is the proud owner of a Polyphon, a late Victorian machine that plays notched discs of music. We heard a much slower performance of the well-known hymn tune. We enjoyed learning more and hearing the polyphon again at the Sackville College Victorian Evening.

Thank you to the Warden and Mr Warden for showing the polyphon, to Linda for arranging the evenings and doing many of the readings, also to John for reading during the Carol evenings, to Marcus for all that he does for such events behind the scenes, to Cantu Amici and to organists Andrew, Darren and Janet. Above all, thank you to the Friends who attended, for all your support.

Sackville College will be open to the public for guided tours this year on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 16 June to 10 September, from 2-5pm, with the last admission at 4pm.

Groups may book visits at other times, with refreshments, if required.

Forthcoming events

May Day – Monday 1st May

Sackville College will be open to the public between 11am and 3pm for visitors to look round at a reduced rate of £3 / Adult and £1 / Child. Refreshments will be on sale.

There will be stalls selling books, bric-a-brac and plants, along with live music on the front lawn.

Offers of help to run the stalls, steward the rooms, bake cakes, serve refreshments, take admission fees, or give help with setting up and clearing up would be much appreciated.

Saturday 10th - June Summer Concert

Harp Recital By Harpist Margaret Watson see details at end of the Newsletter.

Friends BBQ Lunch – Sunday 13th August

Details nearer the time but this will be open to all Friends and their friends & family.

Work parties



These have continued to take place on the last Friday of the month. We are very grateful to everyone who comes along for giving their time and energy. They carry out clearing of leaves, weeding and other tasks and this all helps Marcus to keep Sackville College looking so pretty. If working outside does not appeal, there are always indoor tasks such as sorting out boxes of documents. Please contact friends@sackvillecollege.org.uk if you would like to join us.

Postcard From the Garden

I would like to say that with the weather warming up and the ground drying out, the thoughts in the Sackville Potting Shed are turning to Spring at last, but sadly this seems not to be the case this year.

The new fruit trees, cherry, pear and plum (planted last year) are showing the first signs of Spring, along with the rhubarb, some of which has had to be forced but has already been enjoyed by the residents.

We are looking forward to May Day and we are sorting out which seedlings/plants we have spare to sell on the day. If you have any spare flower/vegetable plants: all donations will be most welcome.

Once again the Friends' Work Parties have been a great success and we have achieved many jobs in and around the College grounds. I'm not sure if it is the homemade cake, tea/coffee and biscuits that keep them coming back but many, many thanks to all the 'Friends' for their help over the year- it is much appreciated.

Marcus

Obituaries

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Richard Lawrence, who was a long-standing Friend and supporter of Sackville College. We offer our sincere condolences to Mrs Lawrence.

From the Archives

Visit by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in 1946



This lovely photograph was very kindly given to me. Queen Elizabeth, later the Queen Mother, can be seen standing beside the Warden, Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn, outside the Warden's front porch. Another figure, perhaps a royal attendant, stands beside the car and the shadowy figure of the chauffeur can be detected behind the wheel. The royal standard is flying above the radiator of the splendid car.

The photograph was taken by Harold Connold. It is a reminder of this first royal visit to Sackville College, in 1946. Queen Elizabeth returned, this time as the Queen Mother, on 5 June 1963, when Sir Harry Sinderson was the Warden. Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret visited Sackville College whilst staying with the Earl and Countess De La Warr at Buckhurst in May 1990, when the present Warden's father, Derek Chislett was the Warden. Most recently, Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, came to unveil the statue of Sir Archibald McIndoe on the lawn below Sackville College, in June 2014, when Graham Gaisburgh-Watkyn was the Warden.

Martin Jennings, the King Charles III 50 pence piece and the McIndoe statue



If you look at one of the new 50 pence pieces with the portrait of the head of King Charles III on one side, you may be able to pick out the tiny initials 'M J'. This portrait of our King was designed by the sculptor and artist, Martin Jennings.



He also designed and created the statue honouring Sir Archibald McIndoe, which stands on the lawn below Sackville College. Martin Jennings oversaw the installation of the statue, and often came into Sackville College during that time. I remember that water was needed urgently for the work one day and a long hose pipe was connected to the outside tap near the tunnel leading to the Office. The late Warden, Graham, took a keen interest in the creation of the monument and often went out to the front of the College to see what was happening.

Martin Jennings was commissioned to create the statue of Sir Archibald McIndoe, but he had a more personal connection to the pioneering surgeon. The father of Martin Jennings had been treated by McIndoe and during his research, the sculptor was able to see illustrated records of the various stages of his father's treatment at the Queen Victoria Hospital. I believe that drawings were made during the long process of treatment, because this was less invasive to the patient than flash photography. The damaged hands depicted on the young airman gazing up at the sky may owe much to the sculptor's father. The initials MJ are also visible on the statue.

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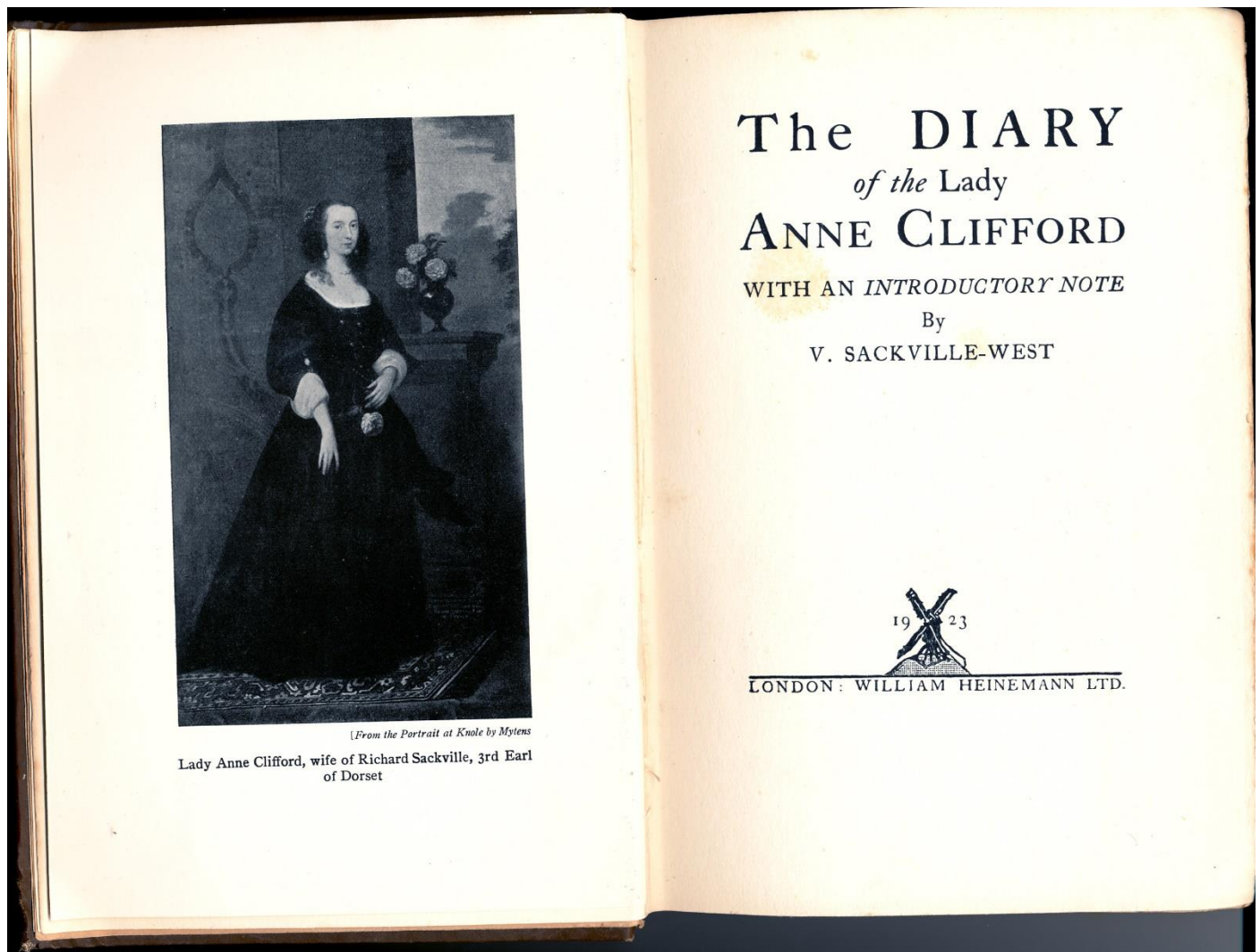


The statue was unveiled by Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, for whom a reception was held inside the Dining Hall. She met a number of the Residents of Sackville College at the time and there are photographs of her visit to Sackville College on display in the Common Room.

So next time you find one of the new 50 pence pieces in your loose change, remember that there is a connection to Sackville College and to the visit of the Princess Royal.

The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford, edited by Vita Sackville-West

The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford, ed. Vita Sackville-West (London: Heinemann, 1923)



There is a new old book in the College Study or Library. The Warden cleverly found a copy for sale and bought it quickly before others realised its importance. We felt that Sackville College should have this book.

Lady Anne Clifford was the wife of Richard Sackville, 3rd Earl of Dorset. She lived from 1590-1676, an astonishingly long life for the times. The Earl lived from 1589-1624. Theirs was a brilliant match, uniting 2 families with long established histories. Lady Anne bore 3 sons who died and had 2 surviving daughters, Margaret and Isabella. She spent parts of the years of her first marriage at Knole. She had a household of 111 servants there.

After the death of Richard, 3rd Earl of Dorset, Lady Anne married the Earl of Pembroke. At the end of the English Civil War, after she was widowed again, the death of her uncle and his son, her cousin, finally brought her father's inheritance to her and she travelled to the north of England to claim her extensive estates, which included Appleby, Skipton, Brough, Brougham and Pendragon castles. She never came back to London and spent her days travelling between her estates, maintaining her properties, being the matriarch of a large family through her daughters, and writing extensive records.

Lady Anne may or may not have visited Sackville College, or the site upon which it was being built. Many years later, she went on to found her own almshouse, St Anne's, in Appleby, Cumbria and to restore the almshouse founded by her mother at Beamsley.

Vita Sackville-West

Vita was the daughter of Lionel Sackville-West, 3rd Baron Sackville, and his cousin, Victoria Sackville-West. Vita lived from 1892-1962. She grew up at Knole and loved the house and its history, sometimes, as a child, imagining herself to be Edward Sackville, the handsome Cavalier knight, whose portrait is at Knole. She became a successful writer and garden designer. In 1913 she married Sir Harold Nicolson. Latterly they lived at Sissinghurst in Kent. They had 2 sons, Benedict (1914-78) and Nigel (1917-2004). Vita's grandchildren include the writers Adam Nicolson and Juliet Nicolson.

According to the laws of the time, Vita, as a woman, did not inherit Knole. Her father bequeathed it to his brother, who became the 4th Baron Sackville. Vita's friend, Virginia Woolf, wrote *Orlando* for her. In the novel, Sir Loyal Heart (based on the Sackville motto 'Toujours loyal', which can be found at Sackville College on some of the heraldry) lives at a house with as many rooms as there are days of the year, as many staircases as there are months of the year and as many courtyards as there are days of the week- which all provide a fictional depiction of Knole.

Vita wrote *Knole and the Sackvilles*, described by *The Times* in 1922 as 'a volume worthy in every respect of Knole's romantic past'.

Next, one Maurice Hewlett wrote to Heinemann publishers:

'What I really want of Miss Sackville-West ...is an edition of Lady Anne Clifford's Diary...We are awfully behind the French in seventeenth-century memoirs. You will be doing a service to your country'.

Vita thought that 'the idea seemed a good one' and took up the challenge. She wrote that 'the question of footnotes was difficult to decide, for in common, I hope, with most readers, I dislike their constant small interruption, whether good, accurate, lively or otherwise; but at the same time it was necessary to identify the various persons mentioned, and even more necessary to include the numerous notes which are written into the margin of the actual manuscript. They must, therefore, stand, irritating but inevitable'.¹

Her edition of *The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford* was published in 1923. A biography of Lady Anne had already been written by George Williamson in 1922. Vita acknowledged his help in her Introduction. Others have continued to write about Lady Anne: David Clifford edited the Diaries in 1990 and Richard T. Spence wrote a biography in 1997. The most recent and comprehensive edition of the writings of Lady Anne was compiled by Jessica Malay: *Anne Clifford's Autobiographical Writing, 1590-1676*, ed. J. L. Malay (Manchester, 2018).

There is something rather touching about Vita Sackville-West putting herself in Lady Anne's shoes to write her edition:

'Knole I have seen as Lady Anne saw it, quietly magnificent, down there in Kent, with its grey towers and wide lawns and glinting windows, and the flag floating high up in the cool empty blue...As for the differences, it is easy to allow for them...to multiply the servants by ten and send them hurrying about their business. The scrivener, the falconer, the huntsman, the armourer, the slaughterman, the pages, the footmen, the grooms, the men to carry wood, Solomon the bird-catcher, John Morocco ... all this life pullulated about the kitchens, the buttery, the outbuildings, and the stable-yard. In the laundry Mrs Judith Simpton and Mrs Grace Simpton presided over Anne Howse and Faith Husband and Goodwife Small; Anne Mills scrubbed the dairy; Penelope Tutty waited on the small Lady Margaret; Diggory Dyer and Marfidy Snipt clattered the pans in the scullery'.²

Vita Sackville-West also wrote a very brief *Guide to Sackville College*. In particular she noted in the 1930s, how pleasant it was to see the Residents wearing their uniforms, 'in these less than picturesque times'. The

¹ *The Diary of the Lady Anne Clifford*, ed. V. Sackville-West, (London: Heinemann, 1923), Editor's Note, lxiv.

² *Diary*, Sackville-West, Introduction, xxiii-iv.

Guides know that the Residents burnt all their uniforms in the 1950s, when they started paying rent because by then they received their State Pensions. The Residents waited until the Warden at the time was away to burn their uniforms. They apparently did not find them pleasant or picturesque!

Who owned the land before Sackville College was built?

Whilst going through papers of the late Michael Leppard, the Warden noticed a paragraph about the ownership of the land before 1609. Richard Lisney was the last East Grinstead person to own the manor of Rowses upon part of which Sackville College was built. After his death in 1609, the executors of Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset, who were Lord William Howard (his brother in law) and Sir George Rivers, acquired the manor of Rowses in 1610 from Richard Lisney's son and executor, William Lisney.

The will of Richard Lisney was made on 20 January 1604/05 and proved on 22 July 1609.

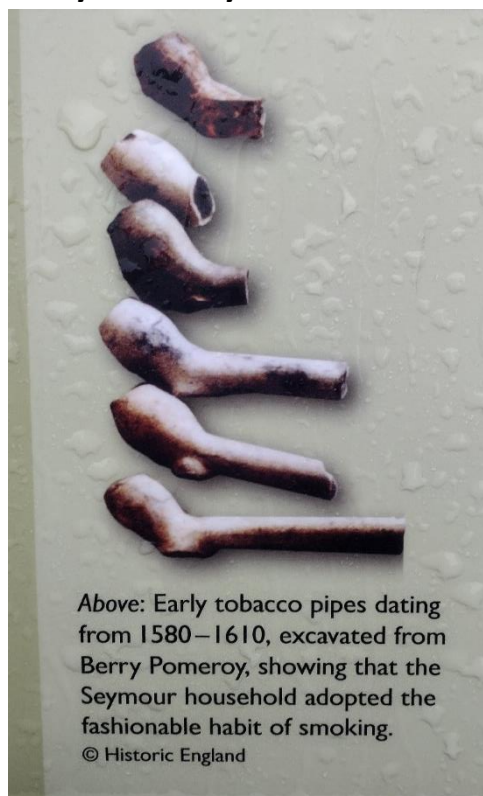
The grandson of Richard Lisney was William Kidder (1589-1671), who became a resident at Sackville College from 1655/60 until his death in 1671, aged 82.

William's daughter, Rachel Kidder (1622-95), also came to live at Sackville College and lived there for 30 years.

[This information is from the work of Beth Chase-Grey, who used to be a Sackville College Guide, before she moved away. Beth researched the Kidder family. We are grateful to Beth for this research. The Kidder family are fascinating and deserve a full article in another Newsletter].

Wanderings

Berry Pomeroy Castle and Smoking



From this information board it appears that the Seymour household, who held Berry Pomeroy Castle, in Devon, embraced the new habit of smoking tobacco.

At the court of King James I (who ruled from 1603-25), 3 members of the Sackville family sometimes attended the King: Robert, 2nd Earl of Dorset, and his sons Richard, 3rd Earl from 1609 and Edward, 4th Earl from 1624. They did not embrace the habit of smoking.

As the Guides know, one of the rules by which the almsfolk of the College lived was **No Smoking**.



I smoke too much, it makes me retch,
Ah look away now, I beseech !

King James I detested the idea of tobacco so much that he wrote a book called *A Counterblaste to Tobacco*. It contains graphic woodcut illustrations of the ill effects caused by tobacco. King James did not like Sir Waler Raleigh, who brought back tobacco leaves back from the New World. When Raleigh was imprisoned in the Tower of London, the eldest son of King James 1, Prince Henry wrote

‘Only my father would keep such a bird in a cage’.

When Prince Henry died tragically, aged 18, after swimming in the river Thames and becoming ill, Richard Sackville, 3rd Earl of Dorset, wrote to Sir Thomas Edmondes ‘Our Rising Sun is set ere scarce he had shone’ and referred to ‘this kingdom’s loss’.³

The no smoking rule is a reflection of prominence of the Sackvilles at the court of King James I.

General Matters

Legacies to Sackville College

Leaving a legacy gift to Sackville College is easily arranged with your solicitor. There are 3 main types: residuary, pecuniary and specific gift (personal possession).

Fundraising with Ebay.

Sackville College is now an Ebay registered charity. Place items for sale in the usual way and follow the link to the donation site and pick us! Please ask family and friends who use Ebay to give a percentage of their sales to a good cause. Grateful thanks go to those who have done this, for their support. Sackville College is receiving regular small donations this way.

Accommodation Availability

There are flats available at the College. If you know of anyone who may be eligible, please contact the Almoner at the College Office on 01342 323414 for more details.

Visits to Sackville College

The College is currently closed until mid June. It will be open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 16 June to 10 September, from 2-5pm, with the last admission at 4pm.

To arrange a Group Visit please call the Office.

Welcome to new Friends and Thank you to all Friends.

We hope that new Friends will enjoy being Friends and supporting Sackville College.

Thank you to the growing number of Friends. Your continuing support is very much appreciated and brings funds, practical help and additional support to the life of the community at Sackville College.

As the College has had only limited opening recently, your support is particularly valuable.

The newsletter can be downloaded from

https://sackvillecollege.org.uk/Files/Friends/Newsletters/Current_Newsletter.pdf

³ R. Strong, *Henry, Prince of Wales and England’s Lost Renaissance* (London, 2000), p. 167.

We have used email addresses where possible to save printing and postage costs.

Sackville College Contacts

Patron	The Earl De La Warr	
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Trustees	The Countess De La Warr Mr Christopher J. Rolley Mrs Alexandra Durrant	
Sackville College Office	Open Weekday mornings 9am-1pm	01342 323414 admin@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Almoner	Mrs Linda Bryant	01342 323414 almoner@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Maintenance	Mr Marcus Bryant	thepottingshed@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Chaplain	The Rev'd Andrew Hawken	St Swithun's Church
Guides	Contact the Office - Mrs Linda Bryant	01342 323414
Friends' Secretaries & Newsletter Editors	Steve and Caroline Metcalfe	friends@sackvillecollege.org.uk

Important Dates for Your Diary 2022 (**Friends' Events**)

Monday 1 st May	Lions May Day, College Open 11am-3pm	
Saturday 10 th June	Harp Recital by renowned local Harpist Margaret Watson Reception drinks 6:30pm - Dinner 8:00pm in the Common Room Dress Code: Formal Wear	Tickets £40 each from College Office See next page
Sunday 13 th August 12:30pm	BBQ lunch for Friends on back lawn, bring a friend as well, details to follow.	Details later
1 st week December	Christmas Music	Details to Follow
Friday 8 th December	Carols for Friends	

Other Events

- For Events run by The Bookshop at Sackville College see <https://www.eastgrinsteadbookshop.co.uk/events-2>

SUMMER CONCERT

HARP RECITAL BY RENOWNED



LOCAL HARPIST

MARGARET WATSON

**Saturday 10th June 2023 in the
Chapel 7pm**

**Reception drinks 6:30 - Dinner 8:00pm in the
Common Room**

Tickets £40 each

Dress Code: Formal Wear