

SACKVILLE COLLEGE



Friends' Newsletter Spring 2019

News from the Warden

Dear Friends of Sackville College,

Spring is in the air and work in the gardens is stepping up. The vegetable garden is taking shape with planting our produce and cutting flowers. The overgrown areas around the College are being cleared and shrubs planted. The Quadrangle will be a blaze of colour by the summer with lupin, delphinium, iris and other herbaceous plants.

The restoration to the Well House is now complete with the new Motto Boards in place.

The main project this year will be the West Room roof repairs. As many of you will have noticed, the scaffolding is now up and the work will hopefully start soon. When the work is completed we will open the room as a museum and archive repository. We have planned a number of fundraising events to aid with the cost, which is quite substantial: for a small charity such as ourselves finding the funds is a challenge. All donations, large or small would be most welcome.

Our grateful thanks go to East Grinstead Lions Club and East Grinstead Rotary Club for generous donations to Sackville College and to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings for a generous donation towards repair of the Well House and boards.

We appreciate the enthusiasm and support we receive from all our Friends, volunteers, visitors and benefactors, without whom the College could not function to the standard our residents appreciate on a day to day basis.

With kind regards, Rosalind Crowther

CJ's Charity Dinner November 2018

Thank you to Chris & Julie and their Staff for hosting a wonderful dinner in aid of Sackville College. The theme for this, the fifth such Dinner,



was 'Heroes'. 'Isambard Kingdom Brunel' and 'Florence Nightingale' were joined by a wartime pilot, a Suffragette who also managed to run the Raffle, 'Grace Darling', 'Mrs Incredible', a chap from Bletchley Park, a Tudor lady, and the medals of a soldier of the Great War were worn by his son. The evening raised £644 for Sackville College. Thank you to you all for coming and for your support.

A huge thank you to Penny for collecting Raffle items all year and running the Raffle. Thank you to the helpers on her table, too.

Christmas Carols in the Chapel

Three very successful evenings were held in the Chapel. Thank you to the three Residents who organised the wonderful floral decorations in the Chapel and the Common Room.

Refreshments in the Common Room afterwards always create a good opportunity to meet newcomers, tell them a bit about Sackville College, and to greet those who attend every year. Thank you to the College volunteers who helped for all their hard work serving tea and coffee and clearing up afterwards.

Thank you to Mrs Tester, the Sackville College Fire Watcher, for guarding the Common Room fire all evening, at least five times!

Sackville College sign

2019 began with the wanton removal of the beautiful new sign from the wall at the back gate on Church Lane. The sign was made by the son of a Resident and is very special to Sackville College. The sign was eventually found, rather battered, but whole. If you are local, please report anything untoward that you see near Sackville College.

Work Parties

Work parties continue to meet on the 'last Friday of the month' to tackle a variety of jobs which help to keep the College looking so pretty. In the last year we have cleared weeds from the paths around the College and Quadrangle



cleaned and preserved benches,



polished the woodwork in the Chapel and tidied up around the greenhouses. If you would like to join us, we meet at 9:30, finish around 12:30, with a break for coffee and cake.

From the Archives:

1609-2019

The Will of Robert, 2nd Earl of Dorset, dated 10 February 1609, stated that he had long wished to build and erect an Hospital or College in the town of East Grinstead, for the relief of thirty-one poor persons, single and unmarried. He wished his executors, Lord William Howard (his brother-in-law, brother of Robert's first wife) and Sir George Rivers, to 'build and erect a convenient house of brick and stone, to be called **Sackville College**'.

The Earl died some 17 days later, possibly of the plague, in his London house. A memorandum states that

*'The Right Honoble Roberte Earl of Dorset founded Sackfield Colledge at Greensted and enjoined his sonne Richard to finish ye building within three yeares. For ye perfectinge whereof hee lefte him five thousand pound.'*¹

The executors took part in securing a site, which was part of the manor of Rowses.

The architect is unknown. The design is Jacobean, not unlike medieval Oxford or Cambridge Colleges. Similarities with features on the gate tower of Old Buckhurst, within the private grounds of the Earl De La Warr, may confirm the tradition that materials including sandstone mouldings, ashlar, oak and roofing materials were carried some 8 miles from Buckhurst to East Grinstead, by cart². Some stone and rubble would have been acquired locally.

Dates for the completion of the buildings are hard to identify. Some sources refer to a door knocker dated 1616, now lost.

The triangular plaques in the Dining Hall and Chapel read:

I pray God bless my Lord of Dorset and my Ladie also and all their posteritie, Anno Domini 1619.

If original, they point to a completion date of 1619.

The first recorded burial of a resident was in 1622, in the records of St Swithun's church.

So the College may have been partially completed by 1619 and fully occupied by 1622.³



Earl Richard was probably responsible for having the grand wing, the Dorset Lodgings, created for his own occasional use. From outside, the larger windows in this wing are obvious. The Sackvilles and their retinue would have occupied this section for short stays, with the poor residents living in the other three sections of the quadrangle.

Extract from a translation of the Royal Charter of 1631:

The Warden recently found a photographic copy of the Sackville College Royal Charter of 1631, which was granted by King Charles I on 10 July. The Charter was written in Latin.

The Charter was one of only two granted by King Charles I in 1631. The other was to the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers, on 22 August.

The photographic record was made by the Public Record Office in August 1939, when War was imminent and there was much uncertainty. The Charter is now kept at The National Archives, Kew.

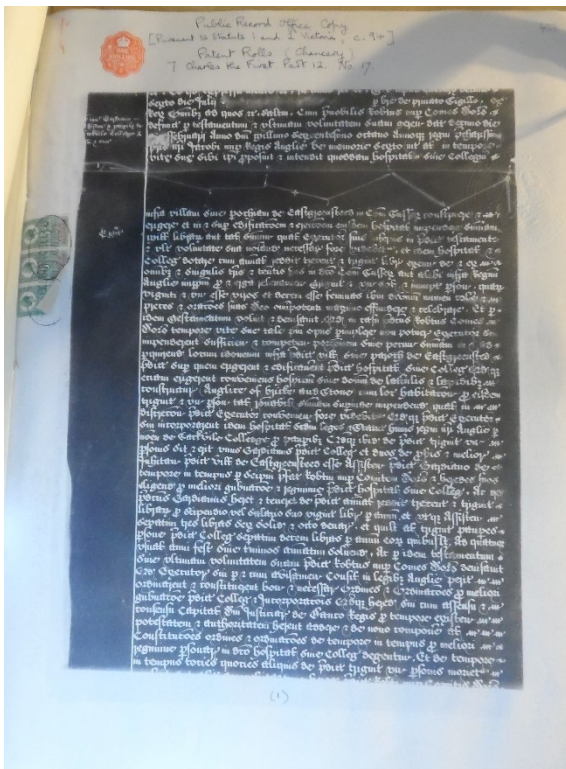
Luckily the Warden also found a translation of the Charter into English. A copy of this hangs in the Dining Hall.

This extract is a reminder of the high status of the Founder, Robert Sackville, 2nd Earl of Dorset, and his sons, Richard and Edward, the 3rd and 4th Earls.

¹ R.H. Wood, *A Short Account of Sackville College at East Grinstead in Sussex* (booklet, undated), p. 2. Apparently from Sackville documents in the Kent Archive Office.

² Wood, *Account*, p. 6.

³ Wood, *Account*, p. 2.



'Know ye therefore that we, favouring with all the charity we ought the maintenance and support of the aforesaid poor persons of the aforesaid college and greatly wishing to restore ... the lands, tenements, hereditaments, liberties and possessions of the aforesaid hospital to the due state of charity according to the last will of Robert, Earl of Dorset, by our special grace and with the love of our well beloved and most trusty cousin Edward, now Earl of Dorset, Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter, Lord of the Chamber, well beloved of our Consort Lady Henrietta Maria, Queen of England, we grant that hereafter for ever within the town and parish of East Grinstead [the College shall continue]'

Past Wardens

We marked the 200th anniversary of the birth of John Mason Neale and the 150th anniversary of his death, in 2018 and 2016 respectively, so much attention was, rightly, given to his life and work in these pages.

Other Wardens are also very interesting.

Lieutenant General Sir George Fletcher MacMunn, KCB, KCSL, DSO,

was a British General, scholar, and Warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead, from 1929 until his death in 1952.

He was born in Chelsea on 14 August 1869, and died on 23 August 1952. He married Alice Emily Watson, and they had a son and a daughter. Lady MacMunn predeceased her husband by 18 years.

He entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1888 and was a Major-General by 1917. He served in Upper Burma, South Africa and India with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force and with the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force. For his services in the Great War at the Dardanelles and in Mesopotamia, he was mentioned in despatches 10 times. He retired in 1925 and became Colonel Commandant of the Royal Artillery, 1927-39, Commissioner of The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, 1932-38, and Warden of Sackville College from 1929-52.

Whilst at Sackville College, he served the Home Guard from 1940-42, commanding, 17th Battalion (Home Guard), Sussex. The Common Room served as Head Quarters for No 1 Platoon.

He wrote articles and novels on military and historical themes, and was a founder of the [Rudyard] Kipling Society, serving as its Honorary Treasurer for a number of years.

By tradition, pock marks on the back of the Common Room door date back to the Second World War, when the Home Guard met there, keeping watch from the West Room above. Apparently a dart board hung on the back of the Common Room door. Some of the Home Guard clearly missed the board altogether.

MacMunn was the Warden when Queen Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, first visited Sackville College in 1947.

Life for the Residents was quite tough: all rooms had gas lighting, but water was taken from a standpipe. One bucketful for each resident was

drawn at 7 am daily. One W.C. served for all the men.

A few years ago a Home Guard helmet dating from the Second World War was presented to Sackville College. It had been repainted to honour Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn.

A brick dating back 5,000 years, with ancient writing inscribed upon it, may have belonged to Sir George MacMunn. By tradition, his maid dropped it, which is why it is broken.

There is some uncertainty about the donor of this brick, however, and it might have been from MacMunn's successor, Sir Harry Sinderson.



In St Swithun's church, there are monuments to Sir George and Lady MacMunn.

Sir Harry Chapman Sinderson, Pasha (1891-1974), Warden of Sackville College 1952-68

He was born in Lincolnshire, undertook medical training at Edinburgh University and graduated in 1914. He served as a Medical Officer in the First World War, commanding hospital ships. On board a 500 bed hospital ship bound for Basra from Salonika, there was another medical officer called **Sanderson** and a **Captain Sandison**. A VAD Nurse who was personal assistant to the Matron, suggested calling **Sinderson 'Sinbad' or 'Sindbad'**, to avoid confusion. The VAD, Elsie MunGavin, and Sinderson married two years later.

Sinderson went to Baghdad to become registrar at a new hospital. Iraq's new King, Faisal I, fell ill with

what had been diagnosed as indigestion.

Sinderson, when asked to give a second opinion, diagnosed appendicitis. Sinderson became personal Physician to King Faisal, and was called the '**salt of the earth**' by Gertrude Bell, the famous lady traveller. Sinderson, who was fluent in Arabic, also wrote speeches for King Faisal.

Sinderson became Dean and Professor of Medicine at the Baghdad Medical School, founded in 1927. He survived political turmoil after the death of King Faisal, the death of the next King and the murder of the British Governor in Mosul. Sinderson served the Prince Regent, who became King Faisal II, as Royal Physician.

During World War II, Sinderson and his wife set up Noah's Ark, a welfare centre in Baghdad for servicemen. In 3 years a million patients were treated. By 1946, 500 Doctors had graduated from Iraq's Royal College of Medicine.

Sinderson returned to England in 1946 and settled in Sussex. He was appointed the county's director of the St John Ambulance Brigade, reorganizing the division.

Sinderson was Warden of Sackville College from 1952-68. With grants, legacies and a public appeal, Sinderson had water supplied to rooms, electric lighting installed, central heating, bathrooms and internal sanitation installed, and drainage improved. A flat for a resident Matron was created. The Hall was renovated and the heraldic shields were repainted. The Common Room was refurnished and provided with a television. Outside, fencing was replaced by a stone wall on Church Lane. At the front of the College, the house 'Kennedys' was dismantled, improving the public area outside the College (where the McIndoe statue now stands) and enhancing the approach to the College.

Sinderson was a member of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). In the Common Room, there is a framed score card from the match **Politicians against the Stage**, which took place in September

1955. There are famous names on the card, testifying to Sinderson's circle of connections. Occasionally, a visitor says that he or she was there, as a child. The match raised £1,000 for the Roof Repair Fund.

Lady Sinderson died in 1967. The clock on the Chapel gable at Sackville College was given in her memory by the Fitton Trust.

Sinderson retired as Warden of Sackville College in 1968, passing on the baton to Peter Williams, one of his Assistant Wardens. Sinderson's parting gift to the College was the pair of wrought iron gates at the Church Lane entrance, with the initials H and S entwined.

Sir Harry Sinderson died in 1974. He was buried locally, but there was a memorial service for him at the Priory Church in Clerkenwell, the church of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John, where there is a plaque to him in the crypt. He became a Commander or Brother of the Order in 1956 and later a Knight Justice of this Order.

He bequeathed his home, Little Steddings, Forest Row, to the National Children's Home. He and Lady Sinderson had no surviving children.

In the church at Forest Row there is the Sinderson Chapel.

Sir Harry Sinderson was clearly an important player on the world stage. As Warden of Sackville College, he presided over great changes in the post War world. This can only be a brief account of his life and work. If you have more information about him to share, please let the Warden or Caroline know.

A.S. Jawad, 'Sir Harry C. Sinderson Pasha (1891-1974): physician, medical educator and royal confidant' in *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians*, 2013, 43, 82-87.

<http://museumstjohn.org.uk/salt-earth-sir-harry-chapman-sinderson-pasha/> [accessed 23 March 2019].

R.H. Wood, *A Short Account of Sackville College*.

Dates for your Diary

May Day, Monday, 6th May 2019

Sackville College **will be open to the public from 11am to 4pm**. All offers of help are welcome.

There will be stalls selling: **Bric-A-Brac, Plants and Books** at the Front of Sackville College.

Items for these stalls are welcome and can be left at the Office on a weekday morning.

Help to run these stalls would be wonderful, even for just an hour.

Friends can also help by selling the merchandise and souvenirs connected with Sackville College, or by taking Entrance money at the front entrance.

Disco Saturday, 18 May 7.30pm- Midnight.

Nikki Todd, who often caters for private events at Sackville College, is holding a fundraising evening in aid of Sackville College Roof Repair Fund

Boogie Nights Disco with live band & DJ, playing music from the 70s, 80s and beyond, at

The Yoghurt Rooms, Busses Farm, Harwoods Lane, East Grinstead RH19 4NL.

Tickets £12, include food by Nikki Todd.

Licensed Bar. Fancy Dress optional, prizes.

Tickets from Louise 07790 992735

or Dean 07715 007890.

Friends' Afternoon Tea Party, from 3pm, Sunday, 26 May 2019

This year afternoon tea will be held at Sackville College for all of the Friends. Hilary Waddingham and Ivor Humphries, **The Grenestede Duo**, are very kindly giving us a short concert from 3pm.

This will be followed by tea, sandwiches and cakes. Small contributions, sweet or savoury, for the tea table would be most welcome, but are not compulsory. If you can let us or the Office know what you plan to bring, then hopefully we will have a good variety.

**Founder's Day Mid Summer Soirée,
Friday, 21 June 2019, 6.30 pm**

Ticket price: £50 each.

Tickets for this event are limited, so contact the Office to buy tickets soon.

The evening includes a welcome drink, a classical recital in the Chapel by George Clifford, accompanied by the 'cello, followed by Dinner.

Black Tie.

**No Strings Attached, 7 for 7.30pm,
Saturday, 20 July 2019.**

The group begin by singing unaccompanied, but later on they bring in instruments as well. This will be their 6th visit to Sackville College. They love performing here and make Sackville College one of their two charity performances a year. They sing a range of folk and traditional songs, arranged and performed in the group's own distinctive way.

General Matters

Publicity Officer appeal

Sackville College is seeking a volunteer, with experience, to help increase the profile of the College. Please contact the Office if you can help.

Visits

Although the College is closed for the winter months, booked Groups can still visit, by prior arrangement. If you know of, or belong to, an organisation that would like to visit, please contact the Office.

Fund Raising

Sackville College is grateful for the obsolete and foreign currency donated by supporters of the College, for sale in aid of College funds. The College can also accept cigarette cards and tea cards, to sell for College funds.

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 much appreciated and brings funds, practical help and additional support to the life of the community at Sackville College.

Sackville College

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

Important Dates for Your Diary 2019 (Friends' Events)

Monday, May 6 th	East Grinstead May Fair, College open 11am-4pm Offers of help welcome	Reduced rate for visitors
Sunday, 26 th May	Friends' Afternoon Tea: 3pm short Concert by Hilary Waddingham & Ivor Humphries, The Grenestede Duo, followed by tea, sandwiches and cake	
Friday, June 21 st	Founder's Day: Sackville College Midsummer Soirée Black Tie Concert & Dinner, 6:30pm	Tickets £50 each
Saturday 20 th July	No Strings Attached Concert 7 for 7:30pm	Tickets £12.50 £11 for Friends of Sackville College
Monday 2 nd Dec	Christmas Music details TBA	Tickets TBA
Tuesday 3 rd Dec	Christmas Music details TBA	Tickets TBA
Wednesday 4 th Dec	Christmas Music details TBA	Tickets TBA
Monday 9 th December	The Carol Service for Friends, Guides and Helpers will be held in the afternoon at 4pm	No Tickets, but please let the Office know if you are attending, for catering purposes.

We hope that you will enjoy our coming events and look forward to seeing you

Notes

We have used email addresses where possible to save printing and postage costs, but if you would like a printed copy as well, please collect one from the College Office (open on weekday mornings, 9am- 1 pm).