



Friends' Newsletter

News from the Warden

Since the last Newsletter some of you will know that I was taken unwell in November last year and was unable to attend the Friends' Christmas Carol Service. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Friends of Sackville College who sent cards and verbal good wishes for my recovery. I am pleased to say I am now back at the helm and gaining strength back to full health.

Current news from the College is that work has commenced on the Well House. Some of the very fine new oak struts have been delivered and are being installed. The builders, Virtuoso, have assured us of a completion date of 8th April 2017, and the well house will soon be back to its former glory. As for the heating in the Chapel, we have had to make an application for Listed Building Consent to Mid Sussex District Council for a flue pipe to the boiler through the Chapel wall and have been given 17th April for a decision date from them. It is to be through a small side wall, not the front, so hopefully will not be a problem.

I would like to thank Mr Ned Foss from New York, USA and his brother & sister, for sending me a book, some letters & documents concerning his Great Grandfather, Warden Frank Hill (Warden 1909-1928).

After a milder winter, the College is looking particularly spring like with the crocus and daffodils popping up. Gladly, we have already received bookings for tours throughout the coming year. Heartfelt thanks to the many Guides and Helpers who voluntarily give up

their valuable time to help the College on these occasions.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as can come to both the Friends' AGM, and the Friends' Lunch (dates which can be found on the back of the newsletter).

News

In the last Newsletter, we mentioned Mr Leppard's *Brief History of Sackville College* but did not make it clear that this was Mr Leppard's own initiative, to mark the 150th anniversary of the death of John Mason Neale, designed to raise much needed funds. The Warden and Trustees gladly accepted this offer and arranged funding. Mr Leppard obtains no benefit from the sales of his *Brief History*. We are most grateful to Mr Leppard for giving his time, research and expertise for the writing of this book.

In November 2016, we held a fundraising dinner at **CJ's Café Bar**. Thank you to Chris & Julie and their Staff for serving delicious hot food, with vegetarian alternatives. Thank you to Penny Fisher for all her hard work in asking for and collecting Raffle items from shops on the London Road and High Street. Thank you to Joan Roberts and Margaret Wilks for all their hard work running the Raffle on the night.

We held a second evening of '**Music and Letters of John Mason Neale**' to another packed house. Thank you to Linda, to the Warden's daughters Rachel and Alice and their friends Steve & Bob, for all their help and for serving refreshments.

Thank you to Simon Kerr for his splendid performance as John Mason Neale.



Thank you to Chris Rolley for acting as MC whilst the Warden was unwell.

In Memoriam

We are sorry to learn of the death of David Griffin. He was a long standing, loyal Life Member of the Friends of Sackville College.

We have also just learned of the death of Douglas Wagstaff. Even after the sad loss of Elke, he continued to support Sackville College. We shall miss him.

Book Review

M.J. Leppard, A Brief History of Sackville College (The Trustees of Sackville College, 2016)

This book is a delight and it contains much detail of the College's story under one cover, written in an accessible way.

The format is attractive and well-chosen: the book fits easily into a handbag/rucksack pocket. The illustration is lavish, with a picture on every

page. My favourite is the flamboyant Richard Sackville, 3rd Earl of Dorset, striking the same pose as he does in the portrait in the Common Room, but in this picture, (a miniature by Isaac Oliver, kept at the V & A) he is wearing a predominantly blue costume, with blue hose, blue curtains behind him, his armour arranged next to the expensive carpet upon which he stands, and a helmet with massive plumes on a table beside him. Mr Leppard's narrative construction leads the reader skilfully through four centuries, from the foundation of Sackville College in 1609, followed by the 2nd Earl's untimely death, to the role played by Sackville College today. Mr Leppard has drawn upon his vast accumulation of local historical information to give details of all the known Wardens, and insight into the lives of the poor people who lived there. It is often said that 'the Poor' leave no records, but Mr Leppard has brought an impressive number of 'the Poor' out of the shadows.

This book is a very good companion to *Sackville College: A Short History and Guide* written by former Warden, Derek Chislett. College Guides certainly ought to read both! The *Brief History* is a great help to visitors wishing to be reminded of their tour, and to those who have questions beyond the scope of a typical tour. Long-haul readers can read the book in one go: others can read a chapter at a time. Both will be rewarded with a wealth of information, and can learn about some of the more colourful characters who have lived at Sackville College.

There is a warm foreword by Earl De La Warr, the Patron of Sackville College and a direct descendant of the Founder. Wise words from the Warden remind us of the role played by this almshouse in the past, and the need to care for the buildings and the community within, for present and future generations to enjoy.

Caroline Metcalfe

The Well and Well house

The water supply was a vital part of this almshouse, with residents entitled to one bucket of water from the well each day, for all their needs. John Mason Neale, according to an article in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1848 caused 'an unsightly pump' to be replaced by a well house, designed by his friend, William Butterfield. The faded Gospel phrases '*Oh ye Wells, bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever*' and '*Whoever shall drink this water shall thirst again, but whoever drinketh the water that I shall give him shall never thirst*' are typical of Neale's love of the beauty of holiness. During Neale's time, the porter's tasks may have included hauling up buckets of water every day.

During the Second World War, in the event of an invasion, Sackville College could have become a 'nodal fort'. It had its own water supply. The Home Guard met there, under the command of Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn for a time. After the Second World War, as rooms were gradually joined together to create self-contained flats with running water, the need for the well diminished.

The well head was restored in 1982 by the generosity of The East Grinstead Society in memory of R.H. Wood Esq.

A group of potholers explored the well in 1992 and found it to be about 90 feet deep, still holding water. They thought that the well had been dug in the 17th century, when the College was built. They found recesses which probably once took horizontal timbers and supported a pumping mechanism. The well increases in diameter with depth, from .8m at the surface to 1.6 m at the water level.

More details including a plan can be found at the Wealden Cave & Mine Society website http://www.wcms.org.uk/cgi-bin/wcmsarchive.pl?archid=sackville_cq3

The acro-props holding up the well house have been in place for several years. It is wonderful that grants, fund-raising, help and ideas from several people, and the skilled craftsmanship of Virtuoso Joinery will soon see the end of the props.



New Internal Frame

Interestingly the photo below shows a similar internal frame!

From the Archives

Robin Whalley found this picture of schoolchildren about to present Harvest Festival produce to Residents of Sackville College in 1960. Do you recognise anyone in the picture?



Trivia

The Anglo-Omani Society has its headquarters in London in **Sackville Street**.

Guides

Sackville College needs more people to act as Guides for Visitors. If you know someone who loves history and would enjoy taking people round Sackville College, please ask them to contact the Almoner or the Warden.

Accommodation Availability

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

- 2 First Floor Flats
- First Floor Bedsit

Sackville College

Patron	The Earl De La Warr	
Trustees	Graham Gaisburgh-Watkyn The Countess De La Warr Mr Christopher J Rolley	
Sackville College Office	Open Weekday mornings 9am-1pm	01342 323414
Almoner	Mrs Linda Bryant	admin@sackvillecollege.org.uk
Warden	Graham Gaisburgh-Watkyn	01342 326561
Chaplain	The Revd. Andrew Hawken	St Swithun's Church
Head Guides	Contact the Office- Mrs Linda Bryant	01342 323414
Friends' Secretaries	Steve and Caroline Metcalfe	01342 312722 metcas2@gmail.com
Honorary Organist	Diana Harris	
General Miracle Worker	Stephen Pearson	

Important Dates for Your Diary 2017

Tue 16 th May	Friends' AGM 7:00pm in the Common Room	
Sun 11 th June	Friends' Lunch - Bring and Share, from 12.30, followed by a Performance by Cantu Amici in the Chapel from 2pm.	Please let the Office know if you are coming
Sat 8 th July	Concert by The Grenestede Duo, Hilary Needham & Ivor Humphreys 7:30pm	Tickets from Office
16 th Sept	Concert arranged by Marion Small. Trinity Methodist Church, 7pm. Retiring Collection. Profits to be divided between Street Pastors and Sackville College	
Mon 4 th Dec	Public Carols in the Chapel 7.30pm	Tickets from Office
Tues 5 th Dec	Public Carols in the Chapel 7.30pm	Tickets from Office
Wed 6 th Dec	Christmas Music by Cantu Amici in the Chapel 7.30pm	Tickets from Office
Mon 11 th Dec	Carols in the Chapel for Friends, Guides and Helpers 7.30pm	Please let the Office know if you are coming

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).