

BERKELEY CASTLE OPEN DAYS AND PRICES FOR 2014

1st April to 29th October: Sunday to Wednesday inclusive

Opening Times: 11:00am - 5:00pm

Always closed on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays

Butterfly House is open May - September

Castle, Gardens and Butterfly House Admission Prices:

Adult: £10.00 Junior (age 3 - 16): £5.50

Children under 3 are free

Concession (aged 60+) and full-time Student with valid student card:

£8.50

Family (2 adults and 2 children): £28.00

Tel: 01453 810303

E: info@berkeley-castle.com

W: www.berkeley-castle.com

We regret no dogs, except service dogs, are allowed anywhere on the premises

Friends of Berkeley Castle

c/o Berkeley Castle, Berkeley, Gloucestershire, GL13 9BQ

T: 01453 810303 E: friends@berkeley-castle.com

www.berkeley-castle.com/friends.html

FoBC Officers for 2013 - 2014

Chairman - Paul Walkden

Deputy Chairman - Diana Merrett

Secretary - Jane Handoll

From our President



*Charles Berkeley and
Jan Lucas Scudamore*

The Friends had a wonderful visit to Kentchurch Court on 25th June. Jan Lucas Scudamore took one tour and local author Heather Hurley the other tour. It was evident how much passion Jan had for the house and gardens since taking them on. The front hall and the door as we entered the house were put in by Thomas Tudor and there is a wonderful barrel vaulted ceiling which caught the eye. John Nash was instrumental in modernising the house during the 18thc in the Gothic style. The dining room is magnificent and there are many Grinling Gibbons carvings around it. These were commissioned for the 1st Viscount Scudamore who lived elsewhere at Holme Lacy House. The tower bedroom was where Owain Glendower (the last

Welsh Prince of Wales) took refuge after his failed rebellion against the English. There is another connection here in that his daughter Alice married John Scudamore.

In 1959 there was a freak flood and part of the house was taken down. Flood water was up to 9 feet in the kitchens and over 5 feet in the front rooms. Many of the carpets had to be carried out through the windows with the help of local farmers and their tractors and volunteers and without their help many fine pieces would have been lost and more lasting damage caused. It was 2 years before the family were able to move back in.

Jan mentioned that the house had been used for filming including the Country House Rescue with Ruth Watson, and the Regency House Party where much that had been created for that has been left, including wallpaper.

After a delicious lunch in the dining room we were able to walk around the Walled Garden and the Rhododendron Woodland Walk where there are many lovely trees and plants including Azaleas, Rhododendrons and Acers.

Continued on page 7

BERKELEY BUTTRESS

AUGUST 2014

FRIENDS OF BERKELEY CASTLE NEWSLETTER



From the Chairman



Welcome to the autumn edition of the Berkeley Buttrass. I hope you find the contents of interest. Thank you to all contributors for the time taken to write articles and all those involved with its preparation.

As we continue to fund the gun carriages I have taken an interest, so whenever I see a cannon, I feel drawn to it and enjoy checking them out, and in particular its cradle or seating arrangement. The one I am pictured with here was found on a recent trip.

Anyone care to hazard a guess of its whereabouts, first correct answer will win a bottle of wine.

As I write this we are already over half way through our calendar of events. I hope you are all enjoying your summer.

The autumn events are listed elsewhere in the Buttrass and we, your committee, are already organising another exciting list of speakers and events for next year. A number of anniversaries are looming, and we shall take full advantage of these events. Please let one of the committee members know if you have any ideas or suggestions.

It was with great sadness we heard that Derek Burgess had passed away. Derek and his wife Margaret were founder members and instrumental in the setting up of the committee and worked tirelessly for our group. Our sincere condolences to Margaret.

Thank you to you all for your continued support.

Paul Walkden
paul_walkden@hotmail.com



Friends of Berkeley Castle

PAYMENTS BY STANDING ORDER

If your membership is paid by standing order then a new form for completion at the new rate is enclosed with this edition of the Berkeley Buttrass.

Membership of the Friends is currently running between 250 and 300 per annum

This is super but has caused difficulties as many people require their membership tickets by the time the Castle opens on 1 April.

As a result, and as explained in the last edition of the Buttrass, the previous arrangement for the payment of standing orders has been amended. The due date for standing orders has been brought forward to 14 February each year to allow time for the bank to notify receipt and then for processing by FoBC volunteers.

This also has the added benefit of not causing delay when AGM and event tickets have been requested.

Those paying by standing order on 14 February 2015 **at the new rate** will receive their membership tickets as soon as possible and in advance of the Castle opening for the season.

The Godwin Cup

Taken from the conservation Management Plan 2009

The best known and oldest piece in the silver collection at Berkeley is the Godwin Cup. It has long attracted interest and because of the inscription added in the eighteenth century makes claims to have originated as the drinking cup of the Saxon magnate, Godwine Earl of Wessex who died in c. 1053.

Marklove recorded the inscription inside the cover, which was still clear in 1840:

"Earl Godwin, 1066." New gilt for the present Earl of Berkeley coming of age, 1766. "This was a favour of Earl Godwin's, from which, on every morning, he used to quaff; but, as the legend runs, he neglected once his usual custom, and on that occasion the sea swallowed up the chief of his estates, now known as the Godwin sands. May the Lord prosper us."



Godwin certainly had close connections with both the Berkeley area and royal circles; his sons received earldoms and his daughter Edith married the king, Edward the Confessor; in 1051 Godwin and his sons led a rebellion against King Edward, gathering "their men at Beverston, part of the manor of Berkeley."

But the Godwin Cup is no earlier than the sixteenth century. It bears the crowned badges of the Tudor dynasty - a portcullis, rose and harp. The cover is later still, engraved with the Stuart arms and the date letter for 1610. Could the Godwin Cup be the "one gilt cupp with a cover bought of Gilbert Tunkes the 3 of September 1610" as described in later additions to the 1608 inventory? In 1766 the cup was re-gilded for the coming of age of Frederick

Augustus, the 5th Earl. At this time an inscription recorded by Marklove was added, giving the extra antiquity deemed necessary for the event.

'Strange Sale of Antiquities'

The following article is taken from a report in a Bristol newspaper from about 1859. It was found in a scrapbook so neither the name of the newspaper nor the date of publication is known.

"The modern annals of Berkeley Castle furnish proof of the commercial spirit of the age. By order of Admiral Sir Maurice Berkeley a sale of the 'cleanings out' of the old feudal family residence took place last week. The bedstead, hangings etc (the borders embroidered in needlework) on which Edward II was murdered sold for 17s 6d and is now in the possession of Tilley the broker of Wotton-under-Edge. The fine old steel fender, brass and steel pillars alternately, used (we think) in the Great Hall was bought for 2s; one piano fetched 2s 3d!!! (Music for the Million) and the stuffed birds, which like the Ibis and other objects of Egyptian worship were ranged in the chapel and which the late Earl spent hundreds in collecting, could hardly find a purchaser.

It is a very common thing when aught occurs in an old house which, it is presumed, the former possessor might not have liked, to exclaim what would so and so say if he were alive. We need not speculate... for if he were in the land of the living no clearance out sale would have taken place. But if the old boy's spirit could 'revisit the glimpses of the moon' and see Tilley removing the antique fourposter which has been for centuries the great showpiece of the Castle

The Royal Edward's bloody bed

wouldn't he let the inhabitants in general, and the lord of the Castle in particular, know a little of his mind. Only fancy his seeing his Penates [household goods] divided amongst purchasers for petty sums - the old fender on which, after many a day's hunt, he reposed his tired legs, perhaps transferred to the common room of a public house, to be kicked by 'clouten shoes' - the piano which may have been touched by 'fairy fingers' ...now jangled out of tune to 'Villikins and his Dinah' in some country concert - and his stuffed British birds flying almost ownerless. We need not repeat what the plain spoken ghost might utter did the spectacle greet his eyes; all who had the pleasure of the late noble lord's acquaintance may easily imagine the fashion in which he might express himself...For though we question whether the Royal Edward ever reposed himself on the bed in question, antiquarians being of the opinion that it was not made when the poor King was murdered; still, as it had passed for some centuries as the identical article of furniture (as generations of housekeepers who have had their palms profitably touched to see it know) it

might as well have remained and continued to be shown as a 'lion' to persons visiting the Castle; unless indeed the Admiral (and for this we ought to commend him) thinking the historical incident reflected no lustre on the annals of the old house, was glad to get an opportunity of removing the mute witness of the bloody deed from within the Castle walls altogether...

The bedstead just sold, with a cast of King Charles I which used to be shown as Edward's, was kept in the small room at the right hand of the Keep staircase."

* * * * *

Let's support our local Country Shows!



A reminder that the annual Berkeley Show will take place on:

25th August (August Bank Holiday Monday)

on the Castle Meadow,

and

the Frampton Country Fair will be held on

Sunday 14th September.

There are strong links between Berkeley Castle and these annual shows, and our volunteers will be manning the FoBC stands at both events.

Do come along, mingle and have a chat, and enjoy the many attractions on offer.

Berkeley Castle Number 4085

By Paul Walkden

The age of steam trains was for me as many other children a fascination. Being on a bridge overlooking the railway lines and awaiting the arrival of the trains was a great pastime. Our local bridge was on a long climb and so the massive engines had to work hard up the incline, and so puffed an amazing amount of smoke from the funnels. The excitement of being covered in smoke and the smell, I can taste it now!

Berkeley Castle number 4085 was a Castle class 4-6-0. The Great Western Railway built 171 of this class between August 1923 and August 1950. Berkeley Castle was built in 1925 and withdrawn in May 1962. The original name-plate hangs in the Castle.



G J Churchward was Chief Mechanical Engineer on the Great Western Railway from 1902 – 1922. Following his retirement he was tragically killed whilst checking a defective sleeper on the main line, being hard of hearing he did not hear the approaching train or its warning whistle and was hit by one of his own engines the Berkeley Castle!

Of the 171 Castle class built just 8 remain; locally, Caerphilly Castle is at the Swindon Steam Railway Museum. Another local one is Pendennis Castle which was bought by Hamersley Iron company and shipped out to Australia in 1978. She was then shipped back to Bristol in 2000, she is now at Didcot Railway Centre and restoration started in 2005. Earl Bathurst is also at Didcot, she was originally built as Dryslwyn Castle. Locally named Thornbury Castle is at the Crewe Heritage Centre. Defiant originally built as Ogmores Castle is at the Buckinghamshire railway Centre. Nunnery Castle is privately owned. Two engines are at the Tyseley Locomotive Works; Clun Castle which is currently being overhauled and Earl of Mount Edgcombe which was originally built as Barbary Castle.

Paintings in the Kings Gallery

JAMES I (VI of Scotland) by JANSSENS (facing the stairs to the Stratton Gallery)
James was the son of Mary Queen of Scots and Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, who was murdered when James was only a baby. He succeeded to the English throne on the death of Elizabeth I, being her cousin twice removed (his great grandmother, Margaret, was Henry VIII's sister, Elizabeth's aunt)

He was married to **ANNE of DENMARK** (2 portraits in the Gallery, one over the Misericords by Van Somer, and one, from the Janssens School at the far end next to Henry, Prince of Wales) and they had 3 surviving children, **Henry**, Prince of Wales who died young, **Charles** who became King on the death of his father in 1625, and **Elizabeth** who married into European Royalty and became Queen of Bohemia (briefly the Winter Queen - her portrait by Van Somer hangs at the bottom of the stairs leading up to the Stratton Gallery.) and grandmother to George I through her daughter Sophia – hence his claim to the English throne on the death of Queen Anne in 1714.

James I considered himself to be King of Great Britain (Wales, England & Scotland) although the Act of Union was not passed until his granddaughter, Queen Anne's reign, 100 years later. He also believed in his 'Divine Right' to rule without there being any need for him to take advice from Parliament, something continued by his son Charles I (which ultimately and largely led to his downfall and execution). James was a Protestant and the most notable challenge to his reign was the Catholic Gunpowder Plot in 1605.

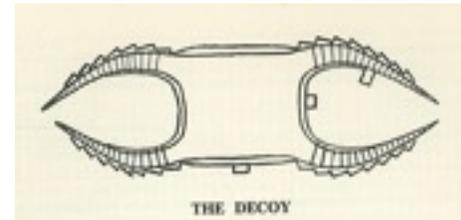
Personally he was reputed to be homosexual; it is said that his tongue was too big for his mouth so that he drooled and slobbered, and that he never washed, so that his black hands felt like satin! Although to some he appeared a drivelling idiot, he was a well read scholar who published collections of verse as well as books on the paranormal, political theory and the health hazards of smoking! (tobacco growing was increasing both in the new colonies of America and in England during his reign). He personally supervised the team of Bishops and scholars which produced the Authorised Version of the Bible in 1611. He supported all forms of theatrical entertainment, becoming patron of Shakespeare's acting company - The Lord Chamberlain's Men of the 1590s being renamed The King's Men in the early 17C

(it is said that Shakespeare produced his Scottish play, Macbeth, as a compliment to James I and his interest in witchcraft). He introduced two sports into England – Horse Running (he started racing at Epsom) and Golf.

The Berkeley Decoys *by Paul Walkden*

The Berkeley estate has two Duck Decoys, the original one at Purton and later in 1843 a second one was constructed at the New Grounds (Slimbridge) because it was feared with the construction of the Berkeley Gloucester canal (1840) passing so close to the old decoy it would be disturbed and as such unworkable.

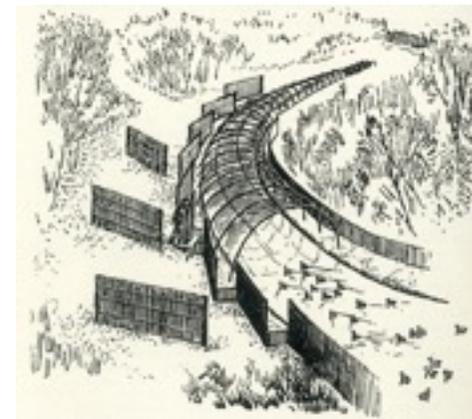
Decoys were invented and first used in Holland in the sixteenth century. The word decoy is derived from two Dutch words for 'duck' and 'cage'. The first description of a decoy in England for catching duck was referred to by Evelyn in his memoirs, March 29th 1665, "His Majesty is now finishing the Decoy in the park", (St James Park). The designs were brought to this country with the Dutch engineers who were employed to drain the fens.



A decoy had to be in a secluded spot to work. A pond of about an acre was required surrounded by woods. The Berkeley decoys were a

four pipe decoy with nets radiating out from the main pool in a crab shape.

Ducks will naturally look for secluded areas in the daytime when at rest, but to help matters tame ducks named 'call ducks' were used on the pond. You then had to entice the birds into one of the curved ditches or pipes as they are called. These lead away from the pond into an ever decreasing and curved netted area. The operator called the decoyman is hidden from view by some cleverly overlapping reed screens. In gaps between these screens are small jumps, this is the clever part as a dog bred to look like a fox is trained to jump over these small jumps so that the ducks on the pond can see it. On seeing this the ducks amazingly all swim toward this danger, the mobbing instinct! As the ducks come into the pipe, the dog (traditionally called Piper) goes out of view and is then sent on ahead



higher up the pipe, so the ducks follow radiating away from the pond. At the crucial moment the decoyman shows himself to the birds in the pipe which are flushed into the ever-decreasing nets until they are netted at the end in a detachable tunnel net.

At the peak of duck decoying in the early nineteenth century there were about 200 decoys, mainly in the eastern counties. Many were used by estates



to supply their own kitchens, with surplus birds being sent to the markets for sale. A decoy could give an income to the equivalent of a 100 acre farm!

In his book of 1886 : 'The Book of Duck Decoys' by Sir Ralph Payne-Galway he quotes from Earl Fitzhardinge; "the operation of the Ground Game Act has nearly ruined these decoys; the constant shooting scaring the wildfowl away". Before the passing of the act, the average take every year in the Berkeley decoy was 1,370, but has now dropped to about 500 head.



Over the intervening years both decoys fell into disrepair. It was in 1946 with the arrival of Peter Scott who took a lease on the New Grounds at Slimbridge that he reconstructed the decoy to catch birds for ringing as part of the trust's scientific programme. The first catch was 3 Mallard on 10th November 1946, the day the Severn Wildfowl Trust was formed. The catch increased and from

August 1947 to April 1948 was 133 duck. As a dog was trained catches continued to rise 1955/56: 1047 total, 1961/62: 1933 total. In 36 years 1946 to 1981 a total of 24,834 ducks were ringed at Slimbridge. In the 1970s many of the duck caught were in the swan trap on the Rushy Pen, as the Bewick's Swans study had started. A fascinating scientific study started by Sir Peter Scott who had noted that all the Bewick's Swans had a different bill pattern. This has become the longest running scientific study of a single species anywhere in the world and has just celebrated 50 years.

we thought we knew as the Thorpe Tower, one of the several towers around the Keep, may in fact have been the 'back wall' of an earlier Don Jon or square Keep, a miniature Tower of London. The Shell Keep and the Inner Bailey followed on. He suggested that the reprinting of the Castle guidebook last year might have been a bit premature... Hmmmm.



Stuart continued to go through various slides of the trenches and 'finds' to date both in the Jenner garden and in the Paddock below the church. Pottery lamps, rare in the west of England, have been found as well as some Roman material of the late 5thC. Numerous coins and horse accoutrements have been unearthed, and it is probable that this religious house was a very important foundation. The demise of the Monastery c1043, possibly at the hands of Earl Godwin, led to industrial use on the site as demonstrated by metal slag in the trenches in the Jenner garden.

In the first year or so of excavation digging started in the Paddock below the churchyard wall, and exposed a number of skeletons. These are now telling their own story and are what may connect Berkeley with the Americas. They date post Civil War, and before the building of the wall in the mid 18th C. 1720-60 was a period of US colonisation. Research has revealed that all these skeletons had scurvy which suggests poor diet and famine, which, according to Parish Records, did indeed follow a period of success due to the explosion of the cloth industry, and a subsequent decline. Starving communities look for pastures new, very often overseas.

This year's Dig will concentrate on the Paddock, hoping to find more evidence of Robert Fitzharding's 'Norman Town' with its houses down both sides of High Street; the Norman Hall, or house, discovered a couple of years ago at the west end of the paddock, alongside the High Street, is very similar in layout to a rare 'Jew's House' and indeed to Robert Fitzharding's own house in Bristol which was excavated in the 1980's. Also under investigation will be Anglo Saxon layers in the Paddock and the Norman Cess Pits which were placed on

top of a massive Anglo Saxon ditch and which have already yielded good finds. As there are also signs of a Roman road or trackway, it looks as if there may have been continuity of Christianity in Berkeley from Roman times to the present day!

The 10th year of the Berkeley Dig

Stuart Prior, Great Hall Berkeley Castle,

Friday 2nd May 2014

Once again, a large group of Friends of Berkeley Castle were enlightened and entertained by the inimitable Stuart Prior as he brought us up to date on the Berkeley Dig, now in its 10th year, and in the process managed to turn history on its head!

In past years Stuart has given us an overview of the project but this year there was more analysis and a change in emphasis. Changing, too, the way the world sees us, and we see it – ancient history is being brought right into the 21st century with the help and explosion of Social Media. The University of Bristol has agreed to fund how the Berkeley Dig interacts with the outside world by encouraging Community Engagement through the posting of signs around the Dig, the establishment of a Press Office in the old Shop with its own Press Team, encouraging the handling of artefacts found, setting up community meetings to find out what's wanted next... and much more! Moreover, the University will be attending a conference in Glasgow promoting Social Media in excavation. What



would our ancestors have made of all of this??

The research so far has been to establish the presence of an Anglo Saxon Minster at Berkeley, of which there now seems very little doubt. The findings – including the Anglo-Saxon ring from earlier discoveries - further support the contention that the Minster housed both monks and nuns; and that it was of royal status. The ongoing work also helps us understand what happened to this very large estate on the arrival of the Normans. Now it seems the Dig can tell us about Berkeley's connections with the new colonies in America, in the 17thC. It is to be hoped that a joint project will be set up between Bristol, UK and Berkeley, USA, for archaeological Field Trips. So the future looks rosy and interesting.

A few months ago Stuart came to Berkeley with the Secretary of the Castle Studies Group. What they discovered when exploring the Norman Shell Keep is transforming our understanding of the Castle and its development. Stuart now believes, through the discovery of a staircase within the walls, that what

Because so many duck were being caught in the swan pipe the Berkeley New Decoy fell again into disrepair. In 1979 the Gloucestershire Wildfowlers Association were looking for a conservation project and undertook the restoration again at their cost. The then Chairman Richard Chappell took on the job as decoyman, completely restoring the decoy. He continued running the decoy and very soon was catching numbers that Peter Scott had previously done. Following a tour with Peter around the decoy one day, Peter was explaining that the number of trees surrounding the decoy had been encroached upon as the Wildfowl Trust pen area's had increased, outlining that once Nightingales sang in the wood. Richard then instigated a tree planting scheme that created what we now see. And Nightingales have since been heard singing in the wood. Richard continued as decoyman until 2000.

I finish with this epitaph that was written on Andrew Williams, who died in 1776, aged 84 and who served the Lloyds of Aston, in Shropshire, for sixty years as Decoyman.

“Here lies the Decoyman who lived like an otter,
Dividing his time betwixt land and water;
His hide he oft soaked in the waters of Perry,*
Whilst Aston old beer his spirits kept cheery.
Amphibious his life, death was puzzled to say
How to dust to reduce such well-moistened clay.
So death turned Decoyman, and 'coyed him to land,
Where he fixed his abode till quite dried to the hand.
He then found him fitting for crumbling to dust;
And here he lies mouldering as you and I must”.

*The river that passed near the decoy.

Illustrations by Peter Scott, with thanks to Dafila Scott for permission to use them.

Kentchurch Visit by Charles Berkeley continued....

The Kitchen Garden inspired most of us with some good original planting and lots of colour. There are many Geranium and Azalea plants as well as some wonderful roses and Clematis and their herbaceous borders looked stunning. The vegetable plot was well laid out and a tribute to the volunteers who look after the garden. This was a lovely end to the day and we wish Jan well in all she does with her team for Kentchurch and its gardens which will be there for all to enjoy for years to come.

Charles Berkeley

FoBC Events during 2014

(Prices for non-members, adult/child, in brackets).

Events order form enclosed with this edition of The Buttriss).

Sunday 7th September:

Talk and tour - St Mary's Church and the Berkeley Family by Peter Yardley

2.15 for 2.30pm, meet in the Castle Car Park

Peter's talk will focus on the centuries-old link between the church and the Berkeley Family and we will tour the memorials in the church.

This event is for FoBC and Members of St Mary's only.

Tea/coffee and cakes will be served after the event. **£9 including refreshments.**

Thursday 23rd October

Quiz Night and Supper

7 for 7.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

Make up, or join a team of 4 at this popular annual event – you don't need to be a Mastermind to take part! A "finger food" supper will be provided and a cash bar will be available from 7pm.

Gates open at 6.45 pm. **£9.50 (£12.50/£5.50) including supper.**

Sunday 23rd November

Talk by David Smith

3 for 3.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

This year David's popular annual talk will be about "Myths and Legends of Berkeley Castle". After the talk, afternoon tea will be served in the Long Drawing Room.

Gates open at 2.45pm, documents on display in the Great Hall from 3pm.
£10.50 (£13.50/£5.50) including afternoon tea.

Monday 8th December

FoBC Christmas concert

7 for 7.30 in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

This year the choir of the University of the West of England (UWE) will provide the music at our annual Christmas concert. During the Interval, mulled wine & mince pies will be served in the Long Drawing Room. A cash bar will be available from 7pm

Gates open at 6.45pm. **£12 (£14/£6.50) including mulled wine or non-alcoholic alternative and mince pies.**

Why I love my job

*By Eleanor Taylor
House Manager*

Heard on the Castle radio; Josh, Josh could you come to the King's Gallery please, a child has lost its shoe in the dungeon. Reply, Eleanor here, it'll have to stay where it is, we can't get it out.

Eleanor meets the leader of the group, "I'm sorry we can't do anything about it", "oh that's alright he'll manage, I'll tell his mum".

A little later, teacher, "do you have any lost property shoes"? Jackie suggests contacting Berkeley Primary School for help. I'll telephone the school; "hello do you have any shoes that you can give a child please"? "What size"? "Oh, yes, hang on I'll get back to you. Size 12" "I'll go and have a look".

"Is the child okay, oh yes he's not embarrassed or upset he's walking around happily".

Half an hour later the school telephoned to say all spares and lost property had gone into the recycling, it is the end of term no spares here.

The BREAK charity shop in Berkeley doesn't sell children's shoes. The Cotswold Care charity shop had only one pair of size 3 children's shoes.

The little boy was very happy, it was a lovely sunny day and it didn't seem to matter.

Three years ago a little girl lost her pretty pink shoe in the dungeon, perhaps these two shoes will keep each other company.