

BERKELEY BUTTRESS

AUTUMN 2026

FRIENDS OF BERKELEY CASTLE NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

We have enjoyed some interesting and fun events in this, our 20th anniversary year; Henry Berkeley giving us an insight into running the Spetchley Park Estate and his plans for the future, our deferred private tour with Henry of Spetchley Park Gardens (delayed for bad weather would you believe!) and our recent memorable, enjoyable and inspiring Celebration Luncheon in the Great Hall.

It is quite a coincidence that in our 20th year, the Castle is also celebrating its 70th year of opening to the public. Those of you who live in Berkeley were able to enjoy free entry on the Celebration Day in June, as on 1st April 1956.

All these events you will read about in this edition, together with details of what we have to come.

It is a good year to once again be your chairwoman, and I would like to give credit to all those who have been members of the committee over the last twenty years.

In planning for the future, the Friends committee has decided to continue with a lighting fund. The lighting that the Friends has had fitted in the King's Gallery and in the Larders has improved beyond our expectation the look of the paintings it flatters. This lighting is expensive and we have set up a savings fund to enable us to extend the project. Our hope is to complete the lighting above all the paintings in the King's Gallery, and we will then consider extending the project.

Continued



In our early days the committee employed a caterer for some of our events, then Margaret and Claire, who had retired from the ‘Tea Rooms’, undertook our catering for quite a while and, when they retired, we began to do the catering ourselves. We have become so few members of the committee that we have chosen to return to the help of a caterer, and that expense is reflected in some of our pricing.

We would like to enlist your help with fresh eyes and new ideas, and hope that you will suggest what interests you, and what might be an event to interest and include the membership. Are you able to make a presentation, help with events or administration?

Membership of the Friends is our major source of funding; if you have friends who you feel might like what we do please ask them to consider joining us.

Remaining this year for your entertainment and interest are three events; details are later in this edition, and a booking form is attached.

There is a painting of an unknown sitter by an unidentified artist in the Berkeley Castle collection which may be a missing work of the leading seventeenth century portrait artist Sir Peter Lely. Research historian Richard Asquith has an intriguing investigative story. Come and find out.

Join us for a private tour of the Castle, highlighting items that we walk past daily and perhaps don’t see; ‘Hidden Gems’.

This will be followed by Afternoon Tea in the Kitchen Garden Restaurant.

And finally, Christmas Drinks in the Great Hall, always a lovely way to slide into winter.

We hope to see you again soon.

Eleanor Garratt-Taylor, Chairwoman



The Friends’ forthcoming addition to the Rose Walk.

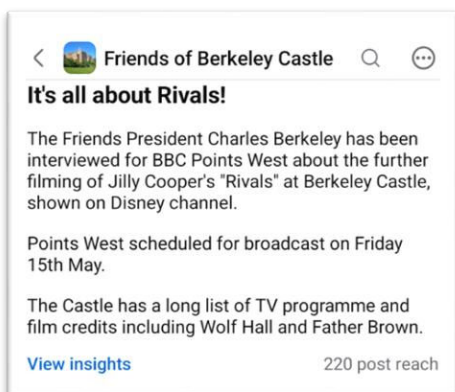
CONTENTS

Chairwoman's Introduction.....	Page 1/2
FoBC Autumn Events 2026.....	4
Berkeley Castle: Hidden Gems in Plain Sight	5
70 th Anniversary Celebration of Public Opening and 1970's guidebook excerpt	6/7
FoBC AGM	8/9
Henry Berkeley: The Spetchley Estate Legacy	10/11
Berkeley Poaching Affray 1816 – 200 th Anniversary	12/13
Spetchley Park Gardens – Tour with Henry Berkeley	14/15
FoBC 20 th Anniversary Luncheon.....	16/17
FoBC Project update – Long Case Clocks	18
Buttress - in the next Edition: February 2027	18
FoBC Membership & Benefits	19
Obituary	20

*

Two recent items from the Friends' Facebook page.

Your contributions are welcome - **FB: Friends of Berkeley Castle**



Did you see
Charles Berkeley
on Points West?

Video of the Berkeley flag
taken from the Berkeley Show,
posted by Jan Nash



2026 FoBC Autumn Events

Prices for members' guests and for non-members in brackets.

An Events order form is enclosed with this edition of the Berkeley Buttrass and can also be downloaded from www.berkeley-castle.com/friends-of-berkeley/
Specific dietary requirements should be advised when booking.

Please ensure that your membership is current and that your membership number is included with your bookings.

Thursday 10th September:

Portrait of a Lady: do we have the missing Lely?

A talk by Research Historian Richard Asquith on

'A mystery worth knowing: an accidental find'

The Berkeley Castle collection includes a painting of an unknown sitter by an unidentified artist which may be a missing painting from four centuries ago by Sir Peter Lely, 1618-1680, the leading portrait painter in England in the latter half of the seventeenth century, successor to Van Dyck.

Do join us and enjoy the story behind the mystery.

Great Hall Cash Bar Gates open 7pm

Tickets: £12 (non-members £18)

Thursday 22nd October:

Berkeley Castle Hidden Gems in Plain Sight

An exclusive tour of 'Things seen but not explained'

followed by Afternoon Tea in the Kitchen Garden Restaurant.

Homemade sandwiches and cakes with tea, coffee, elderflower pressé.

See the following page for more details.

Meet in the Great Hall at 2.30pm

Tickets, including Restaurant Tea: £16 (non-members £22)

Ticket deadline: Wednesday 14th October

**Wednesday 9th December – note amended date:
20th Anniversary Friends Christmas Drinks Party,
with Musicians and Carols.**

A sociable evening in the Great Hall for Friends and their Guests, with the Castle's traditional Christmas Tree, mulled wine and a selection of festive food.

Great Hall: 6pm – 8.30pm

Tickets: £14 (Guests £20)

Ticket deadline: Wednesday 2nd December

*

The Friends are looking for new Committee Members.

Please let us know if you are willing and able to join us.

Berkeley Castle: Hidden Gems in Plain Sight

**Your invitation to an exclusive Tour of ‘Things seen but not explained’
and Afternoon Tea in the Kitchen Garden Restaurant.**

Thursday 22nd October 2026

The standard guided tour of Berkeley Castle follows a given format, but with an emphasis which changes according to the guide and their own interests. Although the Berkeley family story drives the tour, each individual guide’s personality creates a unique presentation.

Clearly, there is more in Berkeley Castle than can ever be included in any one guided tour, which is why visitors are encouraged to go around again in their own time to learn about those things that have caught their interest, and which were not included in the tour.



The Friends’ Hidden Gems Tour will highlight some of those items that we simply walk past and don’t see. There is some very fine artwork, remarkable furniture, unique china, textiles, amber and jade.

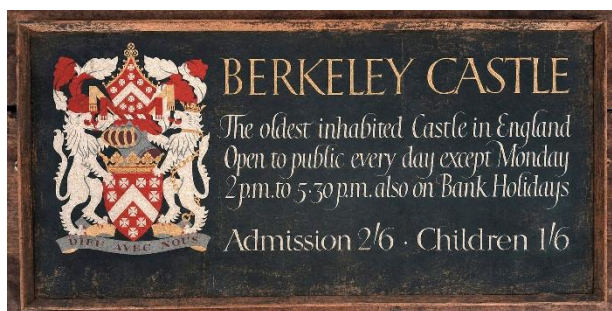
The Tour is designed to enhance our knowledge of these items, and it will be followed by Tea served in the Kitchen Garden Restaurant. When booking, please advise any dietary requirements.

Do join us. The Autumn Events booking form is enclosed with this edition of the Berkeley Butress and is also available on www.berkeley-castle.com/friends-of-berkeley

Tickets: Friends £16 Non-members £22

The Tour includes Afternoon Tea in the **Kitchen Garden Restaurant**.
Homemade sandwiches and cakes with tea, coffee, elderflower pressé.





Berkeley Castle celebrates 70 years of welcoming visitors.

Sunday 14th June was the day that Berkeley Castle threw open its gates for the 70th anniversary celebration, and at no charge to Berkeley residents, as on the opening day, Easter Sunday 1956.

It was a bright, sunny and warm day with a garden party feel. Familiar Friends were among those providing entertainment throughout the day; the Vale Community Singers, the Thornbury Songbirds, and Norm, Nik & Jack's Band - a varied, lively and enjoyable programme.



Charles Berkeley welcomed visitors, and Daisy and Mary Berkeley were also clearly enjoying the occasion; the celebration cake was quite yummy too!

A film crew was shadowing Charles for the excellent Channel 4 series Saving Country Houses, although the subsequent death of Dame Penelope Keith is expected to affect production and maybe the broadcast schedule.

It was a fabulous day, and lovely to see so many local residents and others enjoying the atmosphere, the music, and the sunshine.

A fascinating display of period guidebooks was laid out for viewing in the Small Drawing Room. The admission charge on day one, Sunday 1st April 1956, was 2/6, half a crown, the equivalent of 12.5 new pence. Where have the years gone? On that day almost 2,000 people came to view the Castle and Gardens, and word travelled; on day two, Easter Monday, the number of visitors increased to almost 3,000.



Contributions by Peter Yardley, Valerie Moores and Eleanor Garratt-Taylor

Excerpt from a period guidebook (possibly 1973)

"Not many of us can boast of having our private house celebrated by Shakespeare, nor of having held it in the possession of our family for over eight hundred years, nor of having had a King of England murdered within its walls, nor of having welcomed at our table the local vicar, John Trevisa (1326 – 1402) reputed as one of the earliest translators of the Bible, nor of having a breach battered by Oliver Cromwell, which to this day we are forbidden by law to repair even should we wish to do so.

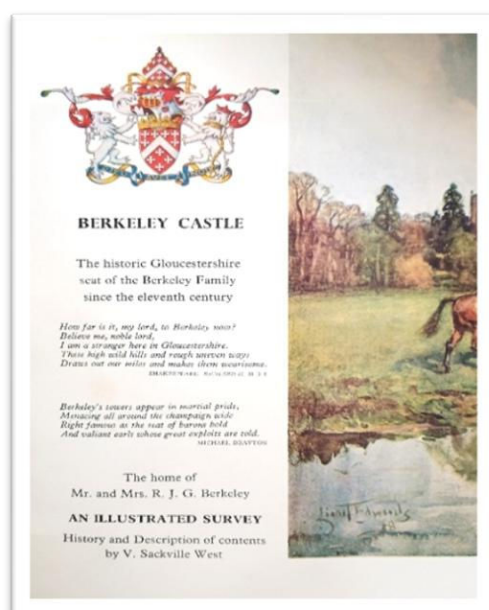
English history, and English literature, are all so wrapped up with Berkeley Castle, that most romantic of castles overlooking the Severn and the Welsh border.

Many things have been written about it, but we can hardly better the imaginative interpretation given by Miss Gertrude Jekyll:

Seen from the meadows it looks like some great fortress roughly hewn out of natural rock. Nature would seem to have taken back to herself the masses of stone reared seven-and-a-half centuries ago. The giant walls and mighty buttresses look as if they have been carved by wind and weather out of some solid rock-mass, rather than wrought by human handiwork.

When the day is coming to its close, and the light becomes a little dim, and thin mist-films arise from the meadows, it might be an enchanted castle, for in some tricks of evening light it cheats the eye into something ethereal, without substance, built up for the moment into towering masses of pearly vapour.

.....it is indeed beautiful in its rough uncouth way. People whose taste inclines to neat Queen Anne or Georgian houses will not care for Berkeley. It is neither cosy nor manageable. It is alarming. It exacts a high level of living from the soul. You cannot begin to understand Berkeley if all that you desire is comfort, security, and nice small warm convenient rooms."



Friends of Berkeley Castle - AGM 2026

On 23rd April about 35 Friends of Berkeley Castle met in the Great Hall for the 2026 AGM. The meeting opened with a welcome from our President, Charles Berkeley, and a reminder that 2026 is a very important year, as it is 20 years since the Friends was founded in 2006. Before there were Friends, it was entirely up to the Family and the Trustees to raise the money for projects and make decisions as to what needed doing to conserve and preserve the Castle. He and the family, as well as the Trustees, are all extremely grateful to the Friends for their huge contribution over the past two decades – donations have totalled almost £150,000. Charles urged members to attend the Anniversary Lunch on 30 July when we will be celebrating our achievements.

The 'business' of the meeting – approving the Treasurer's Finance Report as well as the Minutes of last year's meeting – preceded our Chairwoman's Report. Mary Frost, our Treasurer, was not able to attend and had circulated her report in advance. Some £18,000 has been donated to BCCT over the year, covering such projects as the refurbishment of Drake's Room and more picture lighting in the Kings Gallery and the Larders.

This latter project has been so successful that the Friends' committee has decided to continue it, and a new fund is being set up to ring-fence money each year towards more lighting.



Mary is having to stand down as Treasurer due to work commitments; if anyone feels they can fill her shoes, we would be delighted to hear from them!

Eleanor, our Chairwoman, started her report by thanking the committee for all their hard work and commitment over the year, especially retiring members Althea Hamlyn, Carrie Steel and Mary Frost (who will continue in post until a replacement can be found). She mentioned the various projects that have been undertaken recently, especially the wonderful drapes in Drake's Room and the re-gilding of side tables in the Drawing Rooms. She encouraged Friends to encourage their friends to become members of the group, as subscriptions are our main source of income, and therefore fund-raising. She thanked Helen James in particular for her work in the Gun Room office, helping to try to sort out the databases and keeping everyone up to date with membership, tickets and general admin. As postage is now so expensive (and unreliable) Eleanor proposed not sending out tickets in future but acknowledging payment for events by email which will suffice as entry alongside lists we will compile.

Continued

Eleanor also reminded members of the proposal that was passed at last year's AGM that membership prices will rise every 2 or 3 years in line with the Castle entry fee, so that next year's subscriptions (2027) will rise by 5% (to £31.50 for an Adult concession).

Finally, she read out a letter received from Charles Wyld, Chairman of Trustees, thanking the Friends most sincerely for all the money they have raised over the years. See below.

Jane Handoll, FoBC Secretary

Letter from the Chairman of Berkeley Castle Charitable Trust read to members at the AGM:

Dear Eleanor,

I am writing on behalf of the Trustees of the Charitable Trust to thank the Friends for your generous support over so many years. I have not yet seen the gilt side table over which Mrs Berkeley presides in such splendour, but I have marvelled at the transformation of Drake's Room, in which the curtains and upholstery could not be more fitting and appropriate. What with the lighting in the King's Gallery (and the pictures from the private side now hanging in Drake's Room) that area has been transformed.

There will always be more to do in a heritage setting such as the Castle. We Charity Trustees have to preserve the building, on which we budget to spend £50,000 a year. All help with preserving the chattels is most gratefully received. I am told that the Friends have given as much as £150,000 over the years. Thank you!

I hope the plans are forming to celebrate the 70th anniversary. Michelle has been rather busy!

Please share our thanks with your committee and members.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Wyld



The business of the AGM was followed by a fascinating talk by Henry Berkeley on the Legacy of Spetchley Park, Berkeley's 'sister' estate.

After the Friends' AGM Henry Berkeley provided an insight into his plans for the future of the Spetchley Estate:

Henry began by congratulating the Friends on their 20th anniversary and added his thanks on behalf of the Family and the Trustees for the significant contribution that the Friends have made to the Castle in so many ways, totalling some £150,000.

Spetchley has been in the family since 1606 when it was bought by Rowland Berkeley, a cloth merchant in Worcester. It has witnessed or had a minor part to play in several notable historical events. Judge Robert Berkeley, who supported King Charles I in his quest for Ship Money, was imprisoned in the Tower of London where he became friendly with the soon to be executed King. On release, for which his family had to pay £20,000, he discovered his house had been burnt to the ground by the Royalist Army on the eve of the Battle of Worcester.

For the next 170 years the family lived in the converted stables until 1811 when Robert and Appolina Berkeley built the current Georgian mansion. Elgar was a friend of the family and stayed in the Gardener's cottage many times. It was said that his piece, The Dream of Gerontius, was inspired by the bank of Scots Pines that stand on the eastern edge of the garden. It was requisitioned as Churchill's family home during WWII but later became a convalescent home for the 9th US air force when Churchill decided to stay in London.

Estate History

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1606 | Estate bought by Rowland Berkeley. |
| 1651 | Phase 1 of landscaping after the original house was burnt down on the eve of the Battle of Worcester. |
| 1811 | Phase II of landscaping. Current house built by Robert Berkeley IV. |
| 1910 | Phase III of the landscaping based around the garden. |
| 1942 | The 8 th Earl of Berkeley dies, bringing together the Berkeley & Spetchley Estates. |
| 1997 | Charity formed. |
| | Since 2018 renovations have been undertaken on the house. |

Predominantly an agricultural rural estate, successive generations have adapted it to suit the political and economic climate. It is now a business encompassing two Trusts, three companies and a charity. It derives its revenue through agricultural, residential and commercial lettings whilst generating capital through its development company. It also runs its own farming business. It has five agricultural tenancies which are either livestock or arable units. Once seen as the major income generator this has now been superseded by the residential portfolio of 60 properties within the main Trust. The other trust is a land holder generating income and capital for both Berkeley and Spetchley and has been the major investor into the remainder of the estate. Berkeley Farms Ltd farms 850 acres of arable and 300 of grass. The arable is operated through a contract farming agreement with a local contractor and the grass is managed under regenerative principles.

Continued

Spetchley Developments Ltd was set up in 2015 to manage the development sales and has a Tripartite agreement with Worcestershire County Council and our developer partner, Stoford. It has developed 1.4million square feet of B8 use with companies such as Siemens, Kohler Mira, Victoria Carpets, Bidfoods and MiTek being some of the beneficiaries. There is



also Spetchley Property Ltd whose role is to take on some of the myriad redundant farm buildings, converting them into residential or commercial uses. Currently we are undertaking a Parkland Restoration project utilising grants from Natural England and The English Woodland Creation Scheme, to restore the old parkland. This includes planting 50,000 trees as a protective screen, reverting some arable land to wood pasture and planting over 350 parkland trees. Added to this will be an hydrology project designed to improve the water quality entering the estate from the M5 and Worcester.

The Trusts and Companies are run by a small but highly dedicated team, supported by the Berkeley office. This team is key to current success of the estate which is now legally separated from Berkeley.

The garden, a charity since 1997, is historically significant and well known. It attracts 23,000 visitors a year and has undergone much investment, not only internally but also through funding from both Rural England and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Its team of 4 full-time gardeners is augmented by an army of 35 volunteers – key to ensuring the gardens look fantastic year-round. The Head Gardener and his team are overseeing some of the biggest changes the gardens have seen since the early 1900s. Very soon a new café will help attract a different clientele to the garden making it a worthy destination for many.



The Great Dragon Egg Quest – August 2026

Formulating a coherent strategy is vital to ensure that the Estate is preserved for future generations. The family's vision is critical in helping to achieve this. Key is ensuring that the estate's businesses are solvent. Difficult decisions do have to be made and as an estate we must be open to change and have flex in our system to meet the challenges that seem to appear on a daily basis. Politics, tax, compliance, all want to trip us up, but robust policy, clear thinking and good leadership will steer us through. It is a very exciting time for Spetchley.

***Henry Berkeley, Spetchley Park Estate
Trustee, Berkeley Castle Charitable Trust***

The Great Berkeley Poaching Affray 1816

Ten years ago, the Friends committee agreed to mark the 200th anniversary of the notorious 'Berkeley Poaching Affray' which had occurred on 18th January 1816, and the decision was taken to repair the frame and clean the painting that had been commissioned by Colonel Berkeley, painted by the Victorian artist Henry Corbould who is famous for sketching Queen Victoria for the Penny Black Stamp.

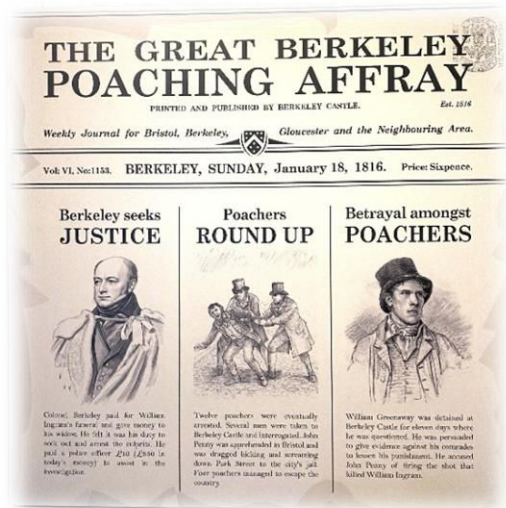


This project was achieved in time for the Friends' event to mark the anniversary, held in the Great Hall on 18th January 2016, 200 years to the day. Some sixty guests enjoyed an excellent dinner, together with the enlightening tale of the Affray and its devastating fallout, presented by Eleanor. The painting took centre stage during the evening and created much interest, as reported by Paul Walkden, Friends' Chairman at the time.

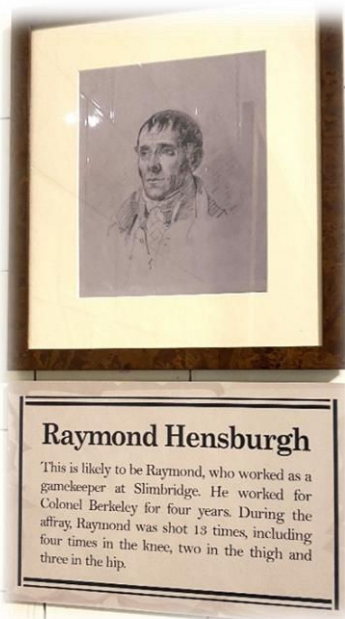
This season the Castle are marking that 1816 shocking event with an exhibition, described by committee member Helen James.

The Berkeley Poaching Affray was a violent confrontation between local men and gamekeepers on the Berkeley Estate in Gloucestershire, England, on the night of 18 January 1816. It grew out of long-standing rural tensions over land rights, game laws, and class inequality following the Enclosure Acts.

In late 1815, a young farmer named Thomas Till was killed by a spring gun – a trap set by landowners to deter poachers – on land belonging to Lord Ducie of Tortworth. This death enraged local villagers in Thornbury and Berkeley, who saw it as emblematic of the cruelty of the gentry. Poaching by poor but skilled rural workers was often both a means of survival and a form of protest against laws that restricted hunting to landowners with property worth £100 a year or more.



Continued



In response to Till's death, John Allen, a Thornbury farmer, gathered a band of about sixteen men – farmers, tradesmen, and labourers – to seek revenge against Colonel William Berkeley of Berkeley Castle, known for his zealous anti-poaching measures. At Allen's house, the men swore an oath of secrecy "not to peach" (inform) on each other and blacked their faces for disguise – acts that themselves could carry the death penalty under the Waltham Black Act of 1723*. They then set out under a moonlit sky, armed and intent on poaching as a show of defiance.

Meanwhile, Berkeley's gamekeepers, forewarned of their approach, were lying in wait. When the two groups met at Catgrove Wood, a fight broke out. Though the keepers were armed mainly with clubs, shots were fired, and one keeper, William Ingram, was killed, with several others wounded.

The reprisal was swift. Footprints in the snow led the keepers to Allen's farm, and soon fourteen men were arrested. Allen and Penny were later convicted of murder and hanged at Gloucester Gaol. The others were sentenced to transportation or imprisonment.

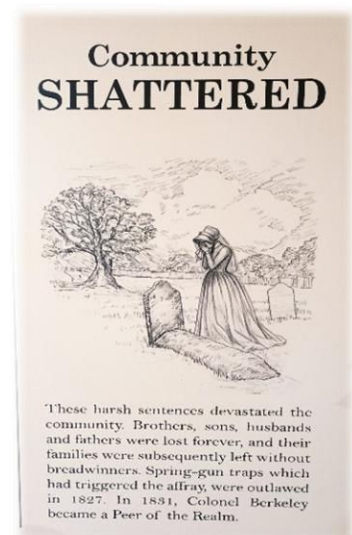
The affair became notorious across rural England as a symbol of the 'poaching wars'; bitter, sometimes violent class conflicts over the right to hunt, the control of land, and the harshness of the game laws. It exposed the divide between wealthy landowners defending their estates and rural people resisting a system that criminalized their survival and traditions.

**1723: The Waltham Black Act made poaching game and damaging forests and parks capital offences. Over the next few years, the wide provisions of the Act increased the number of capital crimes from 30 to 150. These extended to such 'appalling crimes' as blacking the face or using a disguise whilst committing a crime. In 1810 English and Welsh law listed 222 capital felonies.*

1804 – 1813: Prisoners convicted of a first-time felony (other than murder, treason, forgery and arson) frequently had their death sentences commuted to transportation, and this practice continued until 1867, by which time no one was hanged for a crime other than murder. The minimum time of transportation was two years; however, criminals could also be sentenced to 5, 7, 10, 14, 20 or 21 years, or for life.

Only some 5% of those sentenced to transportation ever returned to Britain.

1887: Transportation was formally abolished.



*

Compiled with contributions from
Helen James, Valerie Moores, Paul Walkden and Eleanor Garratt-Taylor.
Photographs by Valerie Moores and Helen James.

Spetchley Park Gardens

A private Friends tour with Henry Berkeley – 16th July 2026

by Eleanor Garratt-Taylor

Henry began by pointing out where the original house stood which burned down at the time of the battle of Worcester, pointed out where the old stables stood that the family moved into until the new house was built, the house that stands there now.

What a treat, you missed a gem. Henry's vision and enthusiasm is infectious. You must visit. An oasis within 52,000 trees, that's the vision, with vistas through and across.



Henry had spoken to us after our AGM about changes and regenerative farming, but nothing prepared me for today, for the changes that have taken place since I made my last visit to Spetchley and its 30 acres of garden. Leaving beds fallow to try to get rid of pernicious weeds, where there were once roses, a new planting scheme. Plans to take out trees and put in others, there will be a view of cherry blossom, a rebuilt Ha-Ha to keep out deer. We walked to the lake and watched the swans, and a dragonfly came to watch us, simply perfect.

Henry admitted to having ideas that the head gardener Chris had to rein in but could chat about and build on. We learned about a summer house which had stained glass windows in it until two small boys started throwing stones at each-other. Can you guess which two small boys? A glass house filled with vines, dessert grapes, the melon yard full of tropical reds and a pomegranate tree in flower. The knobbly knees tree, gunnera that edges a long water course, the Cork oak, the Luccombe oak, the Churchill oak, acers going in, rhododendrons coming out, the kitchen garden that will feed the house, the café, and the staff, and the plan to replace one area overfilled to be replaced with peonies.

Our original date was rained off, it had started windy and wet; today was hot; Henry kept us in the shade where possible and led us back to the conserved coach kept behind glass and where artists were making specimen drawings of plants chosen by Henry to be recorded, you know those specimen drawings/paintings, records of plants made by Darwin and the Victorian plant hunters, specimens so well recorded it felt as though I could reach down and pick them off the page.



2028 will see the garden beginning to mature, time for the next visit, and the café was very good.

Photographs by Helen James

More Photos from Spetchley Park Gardens tour – 16th July 2026



FoBC 20th Anniversary Luncheon 30th July 2026

On a sunny Thursday at the end of July, in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I and two other guests, all old friends of the Castle and the Friends, 40 Friends of Berkeley Castle met for a lunch in the Great Hall to celebrate 20 years since the Friends' group was founded. There was another significant milestone to be celebrated by two of our oldest and most loyal Friends – the Diamond Wedding of Jill and Tony Hastings! We were honoured that they should choose to spend their special day with us!

Members and guests were welcomed on the Gun Terrace with a glass of Fizz and canapes before moving into the Great Hall for a buffet lunch. Sarah Beale Catering, a fortuitous recommendation, exceeded all expectations and provided a sumptuous and delicious meal, fit for a Queen! Members of the committee had worked hard to dress the Hall, which looked splendid with three long tables of happy lunchers. We were particularly pleased to welcome 'home' Althea Hamlyn, old Friend and committee member, who had travelled from her new home in West Wales.



After lunch Mark Horton, a well-known figure around the Castle and the Friends over many years, amused us with anecdotes of his dealings with and memories of Berkeley. The fact that he had recently broken his leg and was having to hobble around not the easiest of venues did not deter him nor blunt his ever-ebullient self.



Matt Gupwell, aka Monty the Jester, our second guest, followed and entertained us with a bit of juggling but mainly with an explanation as to what he has been doing since he ceased working at the castle some years ago. He thanked the Castle for opening his eyes

to his own neurodiversity, which he realised whilst working with so many children in the courtyard over many years. Many amongst us find it difficult to 'fit in' with 'normal' society and to relate easily to others; today there are many labels, but Matt has moved on from 'fooling' and 'jestering' to helping, teaching and championing others like himself who may be misunderstood by many of us. Interestingly, it seems that one of the kinds of Jester or Fool of yesteryear may have been those in society with disabilities, physical or mental, but back then they were nurtured and looked after in a way that we could perhaps learn from today. Of course, Berkeley had its own Fool, Dicky Pearce.



Speeches and coffee were followed by the Raffle draw – very many thanks to Diana Merrett for selling so many tickets for us. Prizes had been kindly donated by local businesses and the Trustees, and, fittingly, the first ticket drawn, for a case of 12 bottles of wine, was won by our Diamond couple, Jill and Tony Hastings!

A wonderful day for a special celebration. See you all in 10 years' time!

Jane Handoll



Photographs by Valerie Moores

FoBC Project update – Long Case Clocks

Some years ago, the Friends took responsibility for the ongoing repair and maintenance of the Long Case clocks now situated in the Billiard/ Dining Room and the Long Drawing Room.

The clock cases have been under review for a while, and they are now scheduled for repair.

Friends may remember last year's fascinating talk by clock specialist Toby Birch who maintains the mechanisms on the Castle's Thomas Tompion and others.

On Toby's recommendation the cases are going to receive attention from an appropriate specialist.



*

The Berkeley Buttress

The twice-yearly Friends' newsletter is crucial to communications with Friends.

We need a new Editor.

CAN YOU and your preferred publishing package HELP?

This edition was produced on standard Word.

*

The Berkeley Buttress NEXT EDITION - February 2027

Copy deadline: mid-January 2027

Events in 2027 will include a talk on The Bayeaux Tapestry.
The exhibition opens shortly at the British Museum until July 2027.

FoBC Projects: a regular feature, past, present or planned.

A story from the Castle Custodian, Josh Nash.

Eleanor's Tales from the Past; having already featured the bridge over the dry ditch,
next will be the Western Castle Approach.

Filming at the Castle: there have been almost too many to identify over the years,
and this may prove to be quite a research project, proposed by Jane Handoll.

Features on Friends' events in 2026, after the current edition.

..... and more!

Please ensure we have your correct email address, so you can be notified of events and any alterations to the published times and deadlines.

Membership

Membership runs annually from 1 March, and cards are sent out after full payment has been received. Under-payment will result in delays.

Please update Standing Order details and check your membership renewal letter sent out by email each January.

Admission and Discounts

To receive Friends benefits, your membership card must be shown.

In addition to free admission to the Castle and Gardens on normal open days, Friends receive a 10% discount on most items purchased in the Kitchen Garden Restaurant and in the Castle Shop (not to be used in conjunction with other discounts).

Friends have complimentary access to Dr Jenner's House on production of their FoBC membership card. Complimentary entry tickets to Spetchley Park Gardens are despatched with FoBC membership cards.

FoBC Website & Social Media

Please do look at the Friends' section of the Castle website. You will find past copies of the Berkeley Buttrese and a reminder of the Benefits of Membership.
www.berkeley-castle.com/friends-of-berkeley/

Contributions are welcome on the Friends' Facebook group.
FB: Friends of Berkeley Castle

Friends of Berkeley Castle

c/o Berkeley Castle, Berkeley Gloucestershire GL13 9BQ
e: friends@berkeley-castle.com/friends-of-berkeley/
Supporting Berkeley Castle Charitable Trust

Current FoBC Officers & Committee

Chairwoman: Eleanor Garratt-Taylor Deputy: Vacant
Treasurer: Vacant Secretary: Jane Handoll
Keith Badsey Helen James Valerie Moores

The Berkeley Buttrese

Temporary editor: Valerie Moores

Henry Phythian-Adams 1939-2026

We were saddened
to hear of the death of
long-standing supporter
and honorary FoBC member
Henry Phythian-Adams
a short while ago.



The Friends were beneficiaries of Henry's knowledge on many occasions, particularly in our earlier years.

I fondly remember him as a charming gentleman and took this photo of him with Charles Berkeley during his detailed private FoBC talk and tour of the atmospheric Berkeley Family Mausoleum in 2015.

In 2020, with Henry's help, the Friends planned a day in Warwick to visit Lord Leycester's Hospital and the Beauchamp Chapel, both of which have links to Berkeley. However, that year's events were disrupted by Covid.

Henry gained a Master of Arts in History at Queens' College, Cambridge, and later a second MA in English Local History from Leicester University. Henry taught initially at Mattersey Hall College, and Clifton College Prep School. He later became Keeper of the Education Department at Warwick Museum. From 1970 until retirement, he taught history at Emscote Lawn Prep School, Warwick.

Henry's former pupils remember his vivid teaching and his kindness. He was involved with summer camps, themed projects from Roman Carnivals to Regency 'living history', and memorable performances in school plays such as the villain in "Hiss the Villain" and Fagin in "What the Dickens".

Henry was a long-standing supporter and office holder of Warwickshire Local History Society for some 32 years and gave several lectures to the Society. He taught evening classes on the local history of Warwick and Leamington and gave talks on heraldry, the Earls of Warwick, and the Beauchamp Chapel, which left attendees in awe of his expertise.

Henry lectured for the National Trust, Durham University, Warwickshire College and bicentenary festivals at Aberaeron, and at Southsea. He helped arrange the Kingmaker exhibition at Warwick Castle. His lifelong research into genealogy revealed ancestral ties to the Earls of Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire and he gave several talks there to support its preservation.

Valerie Moores, with acknowledgement to Warwickshire Local History Society