



# BERKELEY BUTTRESS

*AUTUMN 2013*

*FRIENDS OF BERKELEY CASTLE NEWSLETTER*

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

I would like to thank the Friends of Berkeley Castle for their ongoing support. The cannon carriages are being replaced and the first pair have been restored, using Estate oak, by Keith Bawden and are back in place on the Gun Terrace. We now have FoBC information boards in the Billiard Room, that refer to the restoration and repairs financed by the Friends. The Committee is undertaking a review of potential projects for 2014.

There have many excellent functions this year including a visit to Madresfield Court, near Malvern,

in June and the Garden Party was well attended later in the summer. We also had a very good talk by Julian Humphrys from the Battlefield Trust on the Battle of Flodden. Thomas Berkeley was knighted on the battlefield. The talk was a fascinating insight into the political background in Europe as well as an excellent account of the battle.

I look forward to seeing you in the coming year at Friends events, details of which will be available on the Castle website.

**Charles Berkeley**



## From the Chairman

Welcome to this latest edition of the Berkeley Buttress.

Following the AGM and my election as Chairman, the responsibility and smooth running of our Friends group falls to me, a daunting task! Outgoing Chairman David Bowd-Exworth has done an outstanding job and we thank him sincerely for his contributions and continuing help and support to the Friends group.

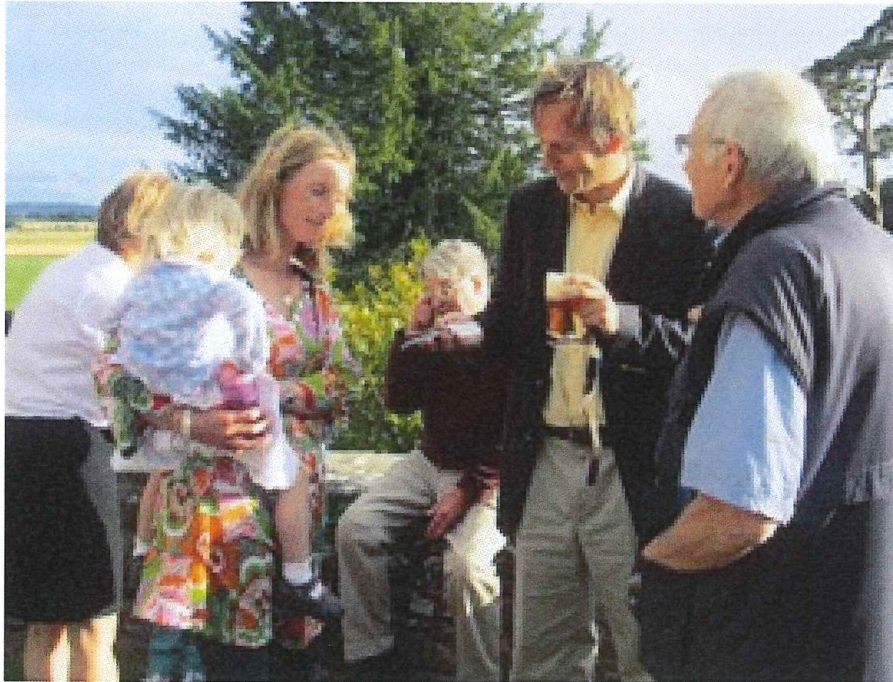
We are lucky in that we have an outstanding and dedicated committee who are keen with new ideas and the search for interesting

speakers continues. We welcomed Julian Humphrys' last minute talk on the Battle of Flodden, within days of its 500th anniversary.

Our help and support of this magnificent Castle is what we are entrusted to do, so please promote its fascination and glory to your friends, whether it is to visit or to join our group. Should you have any suggestions for events or speakers, or would like to be further involved, please get in touch.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Paul Walkden**



*Mary, Daisy & Charles Berkeley chatting with guests at the Summer Party*

## The Berkeley Dig

*by Jane Handoll*

Believe it or not, the Berkeley Dig is now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year.

Minster, Manor and Town was the original vision for the project at Berkeley, to see the relationship between the Castle and the Saxon Monastery believed to have been on the site from the 8<sup>th</sup> century. It is not possible to dig under the Castle now, but a good deal of the archaeology of the Castle is becoming apparent through the excavation of the wider landscape.

There seems to be no doubt that there was a large and well established settlement, probably dominated by a Double Monastic Foundation, long before the Normans arrived to build their Castle. The question is, what was the form of the Anglo Saxon landscape and what happens to it over the centuries? How does the Norman feudal landscape alter the Anglo Saxon landscape? All of this has given rise to much more historical research into the area. Berkeley is an important archaeological site and destined to become even more important.

The Dig is now on its 18<sup>th</sup> trench. From the early beginnings, excavating in the walled garden, last year a trench was dug at the end of the White Hart passage on the High Street and almost certainly confirmed that the Anglo Saxon enclosure was larger than had been previously thought, spreading across the High Street

and running down behind the gardens of the houses on the west side of the street. The original ditch was cleared and maintained regularly, but at some point this stopped. Coins have been found from c. 959 but after this the ditch began to silt up. Dr Prior is keen to spread his net even wider, possibly to Oldminster, to see whether there may have been a late Roman Christian Minster on this site.

Last year evidence of a Civil War ditch was investigated; it seems that there may well have been a cavalry attack to the west of the church, in Nelmes Paddock, due to the large number of musket balls and pistol shot found in the ditch. It is probable that until the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century there were houses down the east side of the High Street which may have been demolished ahead of, or by, skirmishes between Royalists and Parliamentarians.

The medieval buildings unearthed in the Paddock seem to date from two phases – the older buildings near to the church with later buildings to the west. These may have started as a high status building which, over the centuries, became workshops; there is evidence of metal working on the site. Under the medieval buildings are a series of pits, including a cess pit! Necessary to excavate, but not pleasant! If the building to the lower, west, side of the paddock does prove to be a

Norman Hall or House then it will be the first and only excavation of such a building in the country, and will make the National News. A new pottery expert has identified Ipswich Ware from the Anglo Saxon period; if this is correct then it marks possibly the furthest west that this sort of pottery has been discovered.

The trenches in the Jenner Museum garden have been fruitful; a collapsed wall and a 'robber' trench have revealed Anglo Saxon items. It is believed that the Anglo Saxon nunnery buildings collapsed, or were demolished, and the stone used in the building of the Castle Keep in the 1150s.

The Jenner trench has revealed post holes of an earlier building, possibly timber in structure, and fragments of Roman pottery have been found. In 2011 a skeleton was discovered, cut through by the later ditch; it seems to have been a Christian burial, in a shroud (from the way the body is lying) possibly dating to the post Roman period, the 'dark ages' of the 5th & 6th centuries.

This year's work in the Paddock concentrated on the Anglo Saxon buildings which were revealed last year, running at an angle to the later medieval and Norman buildings. There may also be an Anglo Saxon ditch below the Civil War ditch, below the churchyard wall. The other objectives for this year were to investigate the possibility of sub Roman features in the Jenner Museum garden, and to investigate the medieval pits in

the paddock, below St Michael's Lane, and potential Roman features there – some sort of road, with cart tracks, was unearthed last year under the Anglo Saxon buildings, which could be a Roman road.

So, did it all start with an Anglo Saxon Minster? Certainly that settlement was bigger than at first thought, but there may have been other earlier ones on this site; coins found are from Frisia or the continent and are possibly dated c. 695, as well as early Anglo Saxon coins minted in Britain. Berkeley below is gradually revealing its history!

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## DVD OFFER

A few years ago Halo Films, based at the Estate Yard, filmed a fascinating 24-episode TV series at the Castle and on the Berkeley and Spetchley estates from Easter to Christmas. The Castle Gift Shop has a few copies remaining.

Don't forget that one of the benefits of belonging to the Friends is that members receive a discount of 10% on most items purchased from the gift shop, so why not pop in and purchase some unique Christmas presents.

The shop closes at the end of October, so you only have a few shopping weeks left.

## Cannons Restored

*with thanks to Philip J Wells for finding this newspaper item*

The Friends have recently had the wooden carriages of two of the cannons in the Outer Bailey renewed, using Estate oak.

In 1808, the eldest child of the liaison between Lord Berkeley and Mary Cole, known by the courtesy title of Lord Dursley, came of age amid great celebrations, including a Royal visit by the Duke of Clarence, the future King William IV, and the firing of two 21-gun salutes, one for the heir and one for the Royal Duke.

The event was reported in the newspapers a few days later:

*'The birth-day of Lord Dursley, son and heir to the Earl of Berkeley, was celebrated on Saturday last, at the venerable castle of Berkeley, on the*

*occasion of his coming of age. The Noble Earl, with his accustomed hospitality, invited the whole of his tenantry, to celebrate the joyful event. The tables in the great hall, were spread profusely with Old English fare and four*

*hogs-heads of strong beer (brewed when the young heir was born), were tapped, and the company did honour to it, and fully justified the expectation formed of its potent effect.*

*After the cloth was removed, the health of Lord Dursley was drunk with three times three, and immediately a salute of 21 guns, answering to his Lordship's age, was fired from the walls of the castle. Whilst the tenantry were enjoying themselves, his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence arrived, and the event was announced to the surrounding country by a salute of 21 guns.'*

*Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc (Portsmouth), England. Monday, 4th January, 1808.*



*One of the renewed gun carriages*

## Myth creation at Berkeley Castle: the 'Godwin Cup'

by David Smith, Castle Archivist

In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century land travel became much easier in England. Turnpike roads were being created, improving the main roads, and better sprung and lighter carriages were being built, making road travel quicker and more comfortable. Travel books were being published highlighting places of interest. So by end of the century there was a flourishing culture of visiting country houses. The housekeepers were usually willing to show visitors round in return for a tip, whether or not the family was in residence. And they found by experience that the more interesting they could make the tour, the better their efforts were received. So they developed a range of myths and legends about the Castle for the entertainment of credulous visitors; evidently not realising that the better informed of them would laugh up their sleeves at the tall tales they told. I suggest that the story of the 'Godwin Cup' is one of these.

Here is part of a description of Berkeley Castle from *La Belle Assemblée*...published in London in 1806.

*'...The last [picture] the housekeeper told me was valued at five hundred guineas; but I quote her authority with some diffidence; for she shewed me a portrait of William the Conqueror, which I knew to be that of William*

*the Third; and the stuffed skin of a unique toad, found in one of the dungeons of the Castle, which was that of a seal...*

*An ancient painting on board, hung in an obscure corner, as if not designed to be observed by the passing visitor, attracted my notice. It represented two nuns at full length, holding a cup, and my oracle delivered the following history of the legend: - "On the scite of the Castle was formerly a nunnery, and in the days of Edward the Confessor two of the nuns were unfortunately seduced by some great man. The godly King was so scandalized at their frailty that he obliged the poor girls to take poison; and, this not sufficiently appeasing his wrath, he demolished their habitation, and gave the lands to Earl Godwin, who founded the present castle."- The painting is much injured by time; I was almost tempted to believe it was as old as the event it commemorates....'*

There is no record of the 'Godwin Cup' being known by that name before 1800. Sotheby's silver expert believes that the cup was made in about the 1580s. The cover is a little later, with a hallmark, now barely visible, for 1610. The Scottish devices on the cup imply that it may have been a gift from James VI to George Carey, later 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Hunsdon,

who held diplomatic appointments at his court. George's daughter, Elizabeth, married Thomas Berkeley in 1596 and as his only child she inherited much of his personal property, which thus passed into the Berkeley family.

So why was the cup given its misleading nickname? I suggest that the coincidence of such a picture being in the Castle and the story about Earl Godwin suppressing the nunnery, as told by Smyth, suggested yet another myth to the housekeeper. What more natural than that the Castle staff should capitalise on the increased public interest in the Castle and the family by linking the old cup with the story in the picture, thus inventing more 'history' to entertain their visitors?

*Right: the Godwin Cup, which is on display in the Housekeeper's Room.*



# A Day in the Life of a Duty Manager

by Eleanor Garratt-Taylor

I usually get in around 8.30am and plan the day. Yesterday I wrote out the daily running order, which shows which guides will be in, who is working in the shop and who will be the duty manager. This is delivered to each department so that everyone knows, if they read it, what is expected. The unexpected can be interesting!

Sometimes it is necessary to postpone a guided tour because of the number of people in the Castle (if there are more than 100 people, I prefer to postpone a tour). The visitors' tours leave on the hour and half-hour, while tours for booked parties leave at 15 and 45 minutes past each hour.

Having delivered the lists, radios, floats and opened the gates, the day begins. There is always a visitor who has arrived early and wonders why they can't get in, "We open at 10.50 first guided tour at 11.00am. Coffee is served from 10.00am, Sir".

Once we are up and running it's back to the office to look at emails; "I am related to the family, what information can you give me?" "I live in a former Berkeley-owned property, what information can you give me?" "My grandmother worked at the Castle, what information can you give me?" "Do you offer reduced rates for home-educated families?" "I'd like to bring 118 children and 29 adults, I'd like to bring 35 - 40 Rolls Royce and Bentley cars, can

we park in front of the Castle for photographs?"

"We're organising a charity bike ride and can we put up a gazebo in the car park?"

Then there are those people I meet who say "Oh the gates were open. We're only having a look; we're not doing any harm."

"Why don't you have disabled access?" As a listed building we aren't able to make those changes.

"Where can we park the car in the shade?" There isn't any.

"Where can I find a camp site?"

"Eleanor, Eleanor first aid please, at the shop, urgent." (The person in question went to Hospital.)

"Eleanor, a man by the lily pond has had a heart attack!" (He had not and he didn't go to Hospital.)

"This place is awful, there's nothing to do!"

On coming upon a lady in one of the borders tugging at a rose, I asked, "Would you like a pair of scissors?" She turned and said, "Yes please, I'd like to give a flower to my daughter!"

"If I get caught in a traffic jam what shall I do with the children?"

"Can you come and be on the Steps?"

"Can you take a guided tour?"

"Do you have any dragons?" Yes, they only come out when it's quiet!

"Does a Princess live here?"

"Eleanor, there's no milk."

**There's never a dull moment!**

# Visitors Always Welcome

Just enjoy the 'stories' and give the Housekeeper a generous tip!

In common with many other great houses, the tradition of viewing by the public has a long history at Berkeley. By the late seventeenth century two little rooms in a tower were shown to visitors "where King Edward the Seacond was kept prisoner and murderd".

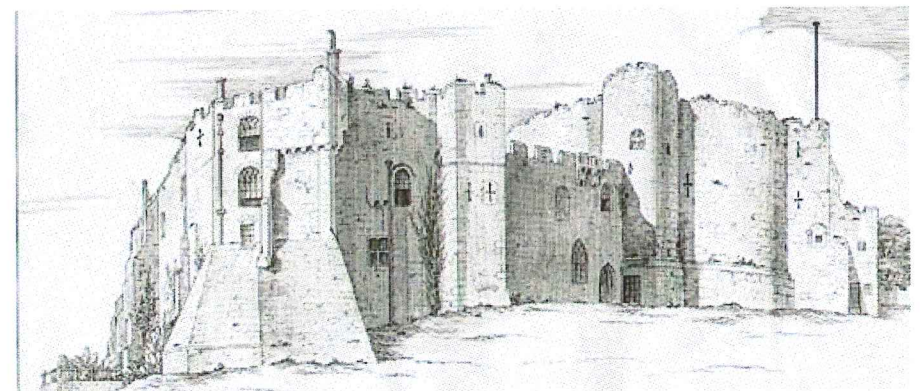
In the eighteenth century it was usual for the housekeeper to show visitors the interior of a country house. For the housekeeper this could be quite profitable and her success in part depended on how she could engage sufficiently with her audience to warrant tips. Embroidering the tour with the kind of creative romance or antique curiosity, which the visitor sought, is well evidenced across the country.

At Berkeley that "embroidery" is witnessed by the account of a visit in 1806, when the visitor was told by the housekeeper that a portrait of King William III was William the Conqueror; no doubt the battle in the distance was also the scene at Hastings in 1066!

With the growth of an internal tourist industry in the nineteenth century Berkeley Castle was firmly established as a visitor destination by the 1850s. A guidebook, which also included the church and town, was issued. Its successor, then in its tenth edition, was still available on the eve of the First World War. By then though public access to castles and houses like Berkeley, Eastnor and Penshurst was more restricted than it had been half a century earlier. The Castle was "shown to visitors on Tuesdays and Fridays between 12 and 4, for which an order of admission must be obtained at an office in the town."

St. Clair Baddeley recorded the practice of visitors desirous of souvenirs:

*The coverlets, from which the nimble scissors of visitors of all kinds used to snip collectors' relics of Edward II were provided (1896-1915) from the Tottenham Court-road. The roll of stuff used*



to last about three years.

But if the opening arrangements were more restricted on the eve of the First World War and the quality of the visit was marred by souvenir hunters, it was better than what was to follow. When the 8<sup>th</sup> Earl inherited, the doors were finally closed for the whole of his ownership from 1917 to 1942. As he informed his second wife, "I loathe humanity".

The witty, but acerbic, Horace Walpole visited the Castle on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1774:

*"Today I have been at Berkeley and Thornbury Castles. The first disappointed me much."*

Later, Walpole made notes in his copy of Richard Sullivan's book 'Observations made during a Tour through parts of England' (1780).

*"We next proceeded to Berkeley... This in every respect is inferior to Thornbury. .. Whatever it might have been, it is now destitute of even the commonest pretension to magnificence. Neither are the grounds or prospects to be spoken of; the whole place indeed, is as indifferent as a place can be... In the name of Common sense, what is there to be admired in an old oaken japanned bed, daubed with gold, the work of some needy upholsterer in 1330?"* Walpole notes that *"It was bought and put in by the present Countess Dowager [Mary Cole]. What ignorance to think a Japan bed was made in 1330!"* Is this the day bed from the suite of furniture in the Tower Room?

Also, the Murder Hole between the Guard Room and the bottom

of the Trip Steps was shown as the means of Edward's murder.

*"In coming down [the Trip Steps] I was desired to look at a square hole in the arched roof, and was told through that was thrust the barbarous instrument of destruction, while Edward was sitting on a chair above and held down fast by aiding assassins."*

A visitor who stayed at the Castle for the Puppy Show, wrote on 2nd May 1912:

*"In one of the drawing rooms, there is a beautifully embroidered cover over the whole length of the big piano. This was worked by Queen Elizabeth. Lion [Lord Fitzhardinge's cat] is rather fond of sticking his great claws into it."*

Is this the origin of the Queen Elizabeth's Bedspreed story? As the Management Plan says, *"The fine floral embroidery in coloured silks and metal thread on a quilted ground is typical of the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, around 1730."*

The Godwin Cup story also appears to have originated with eighteenth century Housekeepers, who showed visitors a picture of two nuns, repeated the Earl Godwin story of how the monastic foundation came to an end, and then showed visitors Earl Godwin's cup.

The modern Guides are much more accurate, and at least use the phrase, "According to tradition" when showing visitors round the castle.

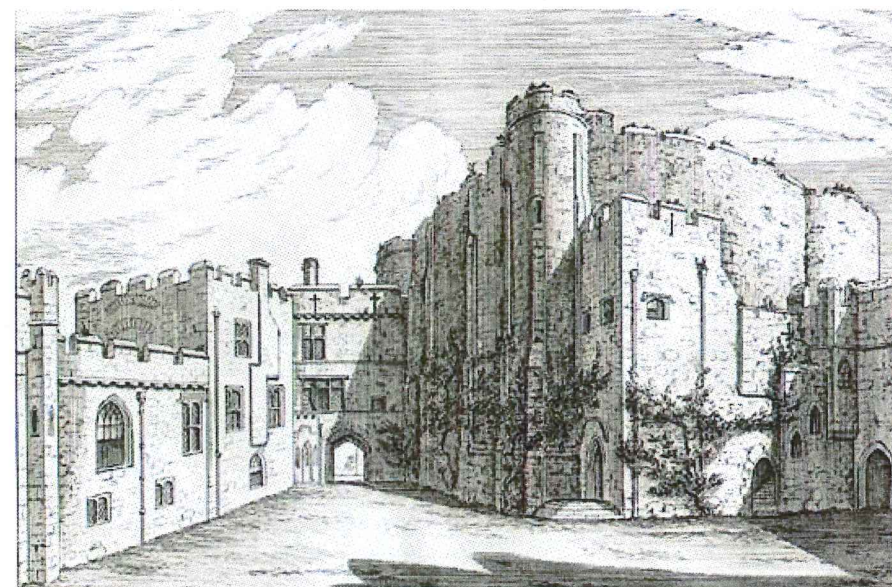
*Extracts partly taken from the Conservation Management Plan by Stephen Price Associates, 2009*



## Berkeley Castle 200 Years Ago

The only changes from the 1802 view of the Inner Bailey in the picture above is the addition of the Clock Tower and the removal of the trees.

In the picture below, the former entrance to the private apartments can be seen to the left of the archway, the glazing bars of the nearer window in the Long Drawing Room has been modified and the roof above the arch altered to a pitched roof of Cotswold stone. (Samuel Lysons, 1802)



## Remaining 2013 FoBC Events

*Prices for non-members in brackets.*  
Tickets are available c/o the Castle office

### **Wednesday 16 October, 7.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle: Quiz Night and Supper.**

Make up, or join, a team of four. Everyone welcome: you don't have to be an Egghead or a mastermind to take part!

Interval Supper included.

Gates open at 6.45pm. Cash Bar available from 7.00pm.

£9 (£12) per person, including Supper.

### **Sunday 17 November, 3.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle: Talk by David Smith: 'The 5th Lord Berkeley, his Countess & their Legacy'.**

David Smith will introduce members to Frederick Augustus Berkeley, 5th Earl of Berkeley (1745-1810), his wife, Mary Cole, and his legacy. Documents will be on display from 3.00pm and the talk will begin at 3.30pm. Afternoon Tea will be served afterwards in the Long Drawing Room.

Gates open at 2.55pm.

£10 (£13) including tea.



Portraits of Mary Cole (by Hoppner) and the 5th Earl (by Pompeo Batoni) in the Long Drawing Room. They and their legacy are the topic of David Smith's talk to the Friends on Sunday 17th November (see above for details).

## FoBC Visit to Madresfield Court

by Eleanor Garratt-Taylor

Madresfield Court is the ancestral home of the Lygon family, the head of which bore the title Earl Beauchamp between 1815 - 1979, when the eighth and last Earl died.

One not so bright Thursday morning we met and car shared and drove to Worcestershire to visit the stately home of the Lygon family. On arrival we met in the play room where we were given an introduction to the history of the house and its architecture. The original Great Hall was built in the 12th century, and stands at the core of the building. In 1593 Madresfield Court was rebuilt, replacing a 15th century medieval building. It was again remodeled in the 19th century, to resemble a moated Elizabethan house, with the result that it contains 136 rooms. We saw some of them.

We moved from the play room to the Great Hall where we were welcomed by our hostess, Lucy, and then divided into two groups. Each group was given two guides. Gosh what a treat! The house contains outstanding collections of furniture, pictures, porcelain and objets d'art, and a wonderful library by Arts & Crafts designer C.R. Ashbee.

The Chapel, commissioned from Birmingham artists and craftsmen in 1902, is widely regarded as the most complete, and perhaps the most lovely, of all British Arts & Crafts achievements. Fittings and other commissions from the period

are found throughout the house.

The house has connections with novelist Evelyn Waugh, who visited frequently. In *Brideshead Revisited*, his imaginary house (especially the chapel) was partly modelled on Madresfield, and many characters are members of the Lygon family.

Simon Jenkins rated Madresfield highly, being among the 50 best houses in his book on Britain's Best 1000 Houses.

Today, the Elmley Foundation assists with conservation, research and archiving the house's historical records.

Our guides took it in turns to speak to us. We were a little difficult to keep together there was so much of interest to hold us and, although our tour lasted much longer than is usual, there wasn't enough time to drink it in.

So much, so lovely, so interesting. Thank you Charles, for suggesting the visit.



# UNDERSTANDING OLD TITLE DEEDS (c1750-c1920)

A workshop for the Friends of Berkeley Castle, at Berkeley Castle  
on 30 November 2013, led by David Smith

Title deeds are essential sources for the history of a property, and also provide unique information about the development of streets, villages and towns; family relationships; farming practices; landscape; and local customs. But they are often not used because at first sight they seem difficult to read and understand.

In this fully interactive workshop you will learn how to find out quickly what you want to know. Working in pairs and using a combination of facsimiles and original documents, you will see how deeds are structured and discover what the legal jargon really means. You will see some of the more unusual types of document. Your folder will include a glossary. You will **not** need prior knowledge of Latin or legal handwriting. If time permits David will give you individual advice on your own research problems or documents. Only 12 places are available so early booking is advised.

The workshop will run from **10.00 to 3.30**. Tea/coffee will be provided but please bring your own packed lunch. The cost is: Friends or staff of Berkeley Castle: £25; others £35. Please complete the application form below and send it with your cheque to

David Smith, 22 Beaumont Road, Gloucester, GL2 0EJ.  
Please make cheques payable to the **Friends of Berkeley Castle**.

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**To: David Smith, 22 Beaumont Road, Gloucester, GL2 0EJ**

Name.....email address .....

Phone number.....

Postal address.....

I wish to attend the workshop on Title Deeds on 30 November and enclose my cheque (*made out to the Friends of Berkeley Castle*) for **either** £25 (Friends/staff) or £35 (others)

I shall/shall not be coming by car (*required for Castle security*)

(signed).....

**Applications will be accepted in strict order of receipt.  
Further information will be sent to those attending.**

# The Battle of Flodden, 1513

by David Bowd-Exworth

A last-minute addition to the Friends' summer programme was an extremely interesting talk about the Battle of Flodden by Julian Humphrys of the Battlefield Trust.

Julian is a very entertaining speaker and, whilst not minimising the horror and carnage of the battle, held his listeners spellbound.

The battle in Northumberland was totally unnecessary. James IV, King of Scots, was married to Margaret Tudor, the sister of his adversary Henry VIII. He invaded England, as a diversion, in support of his Auld Alliance partner, France.

Thomas Berkeley (later 5th Baron Berkeley) and his followers were among the very small band of

southerners in the army raised by the aged Earl of Hertford. Thomas distinguished himself in the three hour conflict and was knighted on the field. The tattered banner in the Great Hall was at Flodden, though stories conflict as to whether it is Thomas' own banner or one captured from the Scots.

The death of King James (the last monarch from the British Isles to die in battle) and many leading advisers lowered Scotland's ability to resist its stronger southern neighbour. But, in one of the ironies of history, James' great-grandson became James VI & I of the united kingdoms of Scotland & England less than 100 years later.



Julian Humphrys and the Flodden Information Centre - a former telephone box



## The Back Page

### Antiphony

FoBC member, Liz Lane, has written a musical piece, 'Antiphony', which was inspired by the 15th century antiphony (below) in the Morning Room. It is being premiered in a brass band version at Barcelona Cathedral, Spain, on 29th October as part of Lydbrook Band's 90th anniversary tour.

Congratulations, Liz!

### New Faces

At the AGM, David Bowd-Exworth's term of office having ended, Paul Walkden was elected Chairman. Chris Smith has joined the FoBC Committee as a new member. The Committee would be delighted to welcome other members.

Richard Pring has kindly agreed to become Editor of the Berkeley Buttress.



#### Friends of Berkeley Castle

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

T: 01453 - 810 303 E: friends@berkeley-castle.com

[www.berkeley-castle.com/friends.html](http://www.berkeley-castle.com/friends.html)

#### FoBC Officers for 2013-2014

Chairman - Paul Walkden

Deputy Chairman - Diana Merrett

Treasurer - vacant (*Kalpna Shah resigned in August 2013*)

Secretary - Jane Handoll