



BERKELEY BUTTRESS

AUGUST 2015

FRIENDS OF BERKELEY CASTLE NEWSLETTER

From our President



First of all I would like to thank all the volunteers for the work done at the Castle over the past six months. It is really much appreciated.

I would like to mention one of our great disputes of the 15thc that involved the Berkeley family. This was one of the longest legal quarrels in history and was only settled in the reign of James 1st. The dispute was over the Berkeley inheritance and started with Thomas the Magnificent, 10th Lord Berkeley. Thomas married Margaret, heiress of Lord Lisle. Their daughter married Richard Beauchamp, the Earl of Warwick. They had 3 daughters but no sons. The castle passed to Thomas's younger brother James, 11th Lord Berkeley. His son, the 12th Lord, fought the Battle of Nibley Green against Viscount Lisle who had pushed his claim to the Castle.

It was interesting that there was strong fighting support for William in Bristol and this is probably due to the strong historic links with the City. The Battle of Nibley Green was the last private battle on English soil and although it is not a battle of the Wars of the Roses it was between Yorkists and Lancastrians. Lord Berkeley was Lancastrian and Viscount Lisle, who lost his life at the battle, was Yorkist. It is fair to say that King Edward IV was busy with rebellions of his own and this was a chance to settle this great dispute!

Warwick was a great favourite of Kings Henry IV and V and laid siege to Berkeley while James and his sons were there. James retaliated by attacking the Countess of Warwick and her daughters as they returned from a trip, and also by seizing three valuable manors in the Cotswolds, part of the Berkeley inheritance which had been given to Warwick.

Viscount Lisle challenged William, 12th Lord Berkeley, to prove his prowess and knighthood with a duel. Berkeley replied that a duel would not legally settle the dispute over ownership and inheritance, but agreed to meet for a battle, and took the initiative by naming the place (Nibley Green), the date(next day) and the time(8 or 9 o'clock). Apparently this seemed a mistake as Berkeley and his brothers had some retainers and professional soldiers staying and would have been able to cope well with any skirmish. Lisle only had his tenants who did not have their own armour or many weapons. He had around 300 men where as Berkeley had about 1000 men. Berkeley's men hid in the forest at Michaelwood. Lisle did not realise that there was a numerical advantage on Berkeley's side. Lisle appeared on a ridge and Berkeley sent about 250 archers to fire up at Lisle's men. Lisle thought he could charge Berkeley's men down the hill but was knocked off his horse by an arrow in the face. Berkeley's men fell on him and killed him with daggers through the side joints of his armour.

Many of Lisle's men were killed while fleeing uphill towards the church for safety. The Earl of Warwick had said, "we must kill the nobility but spare the commons", which suited Lord Berkeley.

Edward IV created William Viscount Berkeley and made him one of his Privy Council in 1482. William became Earl of Nottingham. He was present at Richard III's coronation and received all of the Mowbray manors (Norfolk estates) back when Richard died at Bosworth.

Charles Berkeley



Chairman



Welcome to the autumn edition of the Berkeley Buttress.

Our events at the Castle give us an opportunity to meet and socialise and enjoy the wisdom and enthusiasm of our speakers. This year has been, and continues to be, an interesting and varied selection, starting with our AGM which was preceded with Henry

Phythian-Adams giving information on the Berkeleys followed by a tour of the Berkeley Mausoleum, a fascinating place. In May Dr Mark Horton gave an insight into the continuing and remarkable Berkeley dig. Then in June Mark and Dr Stuart Prior gave a tour of the Dig site, always a treat.

Also in June Julian Humphrys of the Battlefields' Trust made a return visit and gave a well-illustrated talk on the Battle of Waterloo. Our annual Friends' visit this year in July was to the beautiful Chavenage house at Tetbury. We were warmly welcomed by Caroline Lowsley-Williams, a family member who gave us our privileged and private tour. As I write we are about to have our private summer party at the Castle, hosted by our President Charles Berkeley, whom we thank for all his support.

Our autumn calendar starts with our quiz night on 23rd September. In October we have a talk on the Battle of Agincourt by Neil Eddiford and in November our castle archivist David Smith's ever popular talk, this year will be on George, Lord Berkeley, 1613 - 1658. Also with two planned Christmas concerts there should be something for everyone to enjoy. Please see the centre spread for all details. We are currently working on an exciting calendar of events and talks for 2016. In January we have the 200th anniversary of 'The Great Berkeley Poaching Affray' of 1816. The painting of this event has just been returned to the castle following cleaning and frame repairs funded by the Friends, and we are planning a special evening around this!

We shall again be in attendance at the Berkeley Show on the 31st August, Bank Holiday Monday. Following two catastrophic years out of the last three, it is very good news indeed that sufficient support from local people saved this all important rural event. Also the Frampton Country Fair on the 13th September continues to support our fundraising with an annual donation. Should anyone wish to help out for a period of time at either of these events on our stand, please get in touch.

Much of our effort during 2016 will be the continuation of attention to the magnificent tapestries in the castle. A number have already had conservation and light cleaning and look stunning. The larger ones in the Great Hall are in need of more involved work and need to be washed, a task that can only be undertaken in Brussels. Obviously this is a costly undertaking, but deemed an important and worthwhile project. We are currently looking into the feasibility of this. So thank you all for your continued support to our Friends group.

Paul Walkden

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Advance notice of an exciting new book being published in the Autumn:

“Edward II: His last months and his Monument”



Berkeley Castle's Archives include many references to the imprisonment of Edward until he was murdered at the Castle on 21 September 1327. This new book details evidence of a surprisingly comfortable lifestyle and provides information about Edward's imprisonment, including him having his own household and cook. Also contained in the book is a meticulous analysis and description, highly illustrated, of Edward's Monument in Gloucester Cathedral and also a discussion of the Fieschi letter on which the legend of his escape from the Castle is mainly based.

The authors are Castle Archivist David Smith, FoBC member Jill Barlow, Richard Bryant, Carolyn Heighway, and Chris Jeens. The book is a joint publication of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society and Past Historic. Available from November at £30 from: www.pasthistoric.co.uk

**Report of Mark Horton's Talk Wednesday 13th May
and the Dig Visit Wednesday 10th June 2015**



In his inimitable way Mark Horton entertained and illuminated a gathering of Friends on Wednesday 13th May, updating us on the finds of the Berkeley Dig thus far. In little over an hour he managed to take us through nearly 2,000 years of history, explaining how Berkeley is revealing its secrets of a continuous occupation from Roman Britain through the Saxon and Medieval periods, to the Civil War and beyond.

The Dig this year, now in its 10th year, was to focus on two periods and two places – the pre-Norman period and Elizabethan Berkeley in the Paddock, and the hope of turning history on its head by proving that a square, four-towered Donjon preceded what we now know as the 'Shell Keep' on the Castle site.

And Mark's talk did not remain just in Berkeley, England, but took us across the Atlantic to the Berkeley Hundred in the new American colonies of the early 17^c.

It is known that a party of Berkeley men sailed across the Atlantic in 1619, gave thanks (the first Thanksgiving Dinner, 2 years before the one in Massachusetts following the Mayflower landing) and proceeded to establish settlements in Virginia. In 1641 Sir William Berkeley (portrait in the Dining Room) was appointed Governor of Virginia and was very largely the architect of the colony; he transformed it from pioneer colony to successful exporter of tobacco. The tobacco fields required labour and in the early days much of this labour was supplied by indentured servants, white slavery. Why did so many people leave Berkeley for the new colony – from relative stability and safety to a wild and unknown land? The discovery of skeletons, in the early days of the Dig, half under the churchyard wall, has revealed fascinating information as to the health and condition of 16/17^c inhabitants of Berkeley; examination of the remains has revealed that, in addition to a good deal of osteoarthritis, the children of the period, in particular, were suffering from scurvy. This is unusual in a rural population, but suggests malnutrition and famine. This part of Gloucestershire, the Vale, was one of the centres of the Cloth Industry which was collapsing by the early 17^c, which led to poverty amongst the working poor. To escape this, many will have been persuaded to migrate westwards to work in the tobacco fields of Virginia and seek a new, if uncertain, life.

Mark then rolled back some 500 years to the pre-Norman period and to the place where the Dig left off last year. From the Saxon period to the late 11c the settlement of Berkeley was surrounded by 3 or 4 intercut ditches, and these were to be further investigated this year. This was clearly shown to us on our visit to the Dig on Wednesday 10th June – we could see the Saxon ditch which may have been dug in the 10c to withstand the Viking invasion from the west. Other ditches and pits intersected it from later periods, in particular during the 17c at the time of the Civil War. It was at this time most probably that any buildings remaining in the Paddock would have been demolished to give a clear field of fire by the defenders of the Church and Castle. One of these buildings may well have been the Crown Inn which was situated in the south west corner of the Paddock and which was to be another focus of digging this year. On our visit we could see the presumed outbuilding/stable/ smoke house of the Inn with its stone drainage channels (not dissimilar to the stone channels in the Castle outer bailey today) as well as the foundations of what was once thought to be a Norman Hall but is now thought to be of 14/15c origin. These are under what previous years have discovered of later buildings along St Michael's Lane which led from the High Street up to the west front of the church in the 15c and 16c. Next year, and beyond, it is hoped to make further investigations as to how these buildings on the east side of the High Street connected with what we see today.



Between the ditches on the east side of the Paddock, and the Inn and other buildings to the west lies a flattish open piece of ground that is suggesting Roman occupation. Signs of a trackway have already been unearthed and Mark is hopeful that further digging will reveal Roman buildings under this section. That's for next year.

This all fits into the Big Picture, suggesting that there has been continuity of settlement in Berkeley for 2,000 years, from the Romans, through the Dark Ages and Saxon period into the Middle and Tudor Ages to the present day. To prove that there has been continuous worship/Christianity on this site for two millennia is the goal, and is looking increasingly likely.

Meanwhile over at the Castle, this year's Dig appears to have uncovered the tangible signs of a Norman Donjon, or square Keep, to the north of the present 'Keep' (which may originally have been a bailey or curtain wall only). A trench was dug revealing the base stones of a tower, and over the wall are also signs of the footings of an earlier curtain wall. This is extremely exciting but is causing havoc with the guided tours around the Castle as now, not only is the future uncertain but also the past!

Our thanks to Mark, Stuart and the team for keeping us abreast of all the findings at the Berkeley Dig; we await with interest the reports of this year's labours and to seeing them all again next year.

Some Notable Anniversaries in 2015

- 800 years:** King John puts his seal to the Magna Carta. 15th June 1215
- 750 years:** Battle of Evesham 2nd Barons' War. The army of Prince Edward (future King Edward I) defeats forces of rebellious Barons led by Simon de Montfort, 6th Earl of Leicester who was killed along with many of his allies.
- 600 years:** Battle of Agincourt: the Army of King Henry V defeats the French. 25th October 1415.
- 200 years:** Battle of Waterloo. The Duke of Wellington was the allied Army Commander, against a Napoleon led French Army, near Waterloo in present day Belgium. Fought on Sunday 18th June 1815.
- 75 years:** Sir Winston Churchill gives his 'Finest Hour' speech.

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FoBC Events during Autumn/Winter 2015

(Prices for non-members, adult/child, in brackets. Events order form enclosed with this edition of The Buttriss).

Wednesday 23rd September: Quiz Night and Supper

7 for 7.15pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

Last year our "revamped" quiz was particularly successful so we will be repeating the format this year. You can make up or join a team of four and there will be something for everyone – you don't need to be a genius to do well! Supper will be provided.

Gates open from 6.45pm; cash bar from 7pm. **£10 (£12/£6) including supper.**

Thursday 22nd October: Talk on the Battle of Agincourt by Neil Eddiford

7 for 7.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

We are pleased to welcome back to Berkeley Castle Neil Eddiford, an expert on medieval archery and its history, to talk about the Battle of Agincourt which took place on 25th October 1415 and was a major English Victory in the Hundred Years' War.

Gates open from 6.45pm, cash bar from 7pm. **£12 (£14/£6)**

Sunday 22nd November: Talk by David Smith, Castle Archivist

3.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

This year David's popular annual talk will be about "George, Baron Berkeley, 1601-1658". George was a notable traveller in Europe and a patron of scholarship, but his most notable achievement was to preserve the Castle and estate for the family during the Civil War and Commonwealth period. This promises to be a fascinating event. 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.

£12 (£15/£6) including afternoon tea.

Christmas Concerts

This year the FoBC will not be organising or selling tickets for a Christmas concert, but the following seasonal events will take place:

Sunday 6th December: English String Orchestra Annual Christmas Concert

6pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle (Reception from 5pm)

This year the programme for this much loved Christmas event will include music

by Strauss, Corelli, Bach, Debussy, Ireland, Warlock, Anderson and Vivaldi. The concert will be preceded by a wine and mince pie reception from 5pm in the Long Drawing Room. Further details are available on the ESO's website.

Tickets at £39.50 (including wine & mince pie reception) can be purchased from the Orpheus Box Office on 01905 570979.

Sunday 20th December:

The Dursley Male Voice Choir will give a Christmas concert. This is organised by the Castle Office and further details, including arrangements for booking tickets online, will appear on the Castle website in due course.

Tickets £20

Monday 18th January 2016 – "The Poaching Affray"

6.30pm in the Great Hall, Berkeley Castle

This will be a special fundraising event to commemorate the bicentenary of the infamous Poaching Affray. On 18th January 1816 a group of local poachers assaulted gamekeepers on the Berkeley estate, resulting in "death, escape, execution & transportation".

We will also be celebrating the return to the Castle of the painting depicting the events of that night, following its cleaning & repair which was funded by FoBC.

There will be a talk followed by a 4-course buffet supper – the menu is shown below. A cash bar will be available.

Gates open 6pm, talk 6.30pm, supper 7.30pm

£25 (£30) including supper. Tickets will be limited to Friends only until 31st October and thereafter available to the general public.

STARTER: canapés of potted pigeon, coronation rabbit with fresh mango, smoked venison, and cold-smoked trout

MAIN COURSE: venison bourgignon and/or wild goose casserole, with baked potatoes and seasonal vegetables

DESSERT: summer pudding with cream

CHEESE BOARD

A vegetarian option can be provided – please give advance notice.

The Visit to Chavenage



Castle Friends had a thoroughly entertaining time when they visited Chavenage recently. The effervescent Caroline Lowsley-Williams met and greeted us in the Great Hall and gave us a brief history of the house. Parts of the house date from the 14c but it was in 1576 that the Elizabethan house we now see was completed by Edward Stephens of Eastington. Timbers from old galleons broken up on the river Severn support hundreds of tons of Cotswold tiles, large windows incorporate ecclesiastical stained glass and richly decorated

oak panelling surround the rooms. English and Flemish tapestries adorn the principal bedrooms and Caroline gave us a glorious account of the part Chavenage played during the Civil War when Cromwell's Troops were charged with besieging a Royalist family at Beverston - the Berkeleys!

In 1891 Chavenage Estate was purchased by George Lowsley-Williams, a wealthy industrialist from Yorkshire who had inherited other nearby estates. The Lowsley-Williams family has been there ever since and Caroline regaled us with stories of various family ancestors. They have quite close connections to our present royal family, and when in 1970 a portfolio of drawings was found, showing designs for the redecoration of Windsor Castle, they weren't surprised to hear that they were purchased on behalf of the Queen.

Going outside after the tour of the house we crossed the grounds to visit the Chapel whose tower with buttresses, parapet and pinnacles was constructed around 1780 to resemble a ruined castle before its completion in the early 19c.

The rain then drove us inside to be served with a delicious lunch in the ballroom after which we were privileged to meet Caroline's father, David, who guided us into the Oak Room where we heard about the exploits of the Australian and New Zealand servicemen who were stationed there during the first World War. Some disastrous landings were made when learning to fly the early planes, and the ANZACS have a cemetery at Leighterton where 23 men now lie.



Nowadays Chavenage is much in demand as a film location and credits include Lark Rise to Candleford, Tess of the D'Urbervilles, Cider with Rosie and of course, Poldark.

The visit and lunch were most enjoyable, and listening to Caroline and David's humorous delivery of their family history was a sheer delight. Well worth a second visit, if only to hear the story of a young Caroline's weekly Beano being ironed by a member of staff!

Diana Merrett

Let's Support our Local Country Shows!

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

31st August (August Bank Holiday Monday)
at the Castle Meadow

and

the annual Frampton Country Fair will be held on
Sunday 13th September
at Frampton-on-Severn.

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

Both shows offer an excellent day out, with a wealth of fascinating exhibits and enjoyable activities. Do come along, mingle & have a chat, and enjoy the many attractions on offer.

The Berkeley Family Mausoleum Report on Talk and Tour by Henry Phythian-Adams – 27th April 2015



Henry commenced by giving us a short presentation explaining the background and purpose of chantry chapels. The Berkeley mausoleum was originally a chantry chapel founded by James, Lord Berkeley (died 1463). Chantry chapels were places where masses were sung especially on the anniversary of the death of a family member and the payment of alms to safeguard the soul from purgatory. One of the most famous chantry

chapels in England is that of Richard Beauchamp, the husband of Katherine, Lady Berkeley.

With the move towards the Protestant faith the need for chantry chapels reduced. Acts were passed in 1529 and 1545 which had the effect of banning further building of chantry chapels, and from the time of King Edward VI their use was forbidden.

Henry then showed us slides illustrating some key features of chantry chapels. These include a *piscina* – a special basin where priests washed their hands, and from which the water ran down a drain into sacred ground – and an altar. In the Berkeley Chapel there would have been an east window now blocked by Henry Berkeley's tomb.

Henry then led the way to the Berkeley Mausoleum in the church of St Mary the Virgin. At the entrance he pointed out the coat of arms of the founder, James, Lord Berkeley, with that of Thomas of Brotherton, son of Edward I and a carving of St George above the doorway. We then entered the Ante Chapel, suggested by a screen which may have had stalls for the priest(s) on its eastern side. Its features now include a heraldic memorial to the 8th Earl of Berkeley and his Countess, and a boss depicting the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. We moved into the Main Chapel, dominated by the large and ornate tombs of James and Henry, Lord Berkeley (died 1613). Henry pointed out features of the building which indicate that James's tomb would originally have been in the centre of the chapel. Other notable memorials in the main chapel include those of Charles, second Earl of Berkeley and Lady Elizabeth Berkeley (wife of



Sir Thomas Berkeley). The Berkeley coat of arms above Lord Henry's tomb includes the quarterings of Mowbray and Brotherton. The ceiling is beautifully adorned with carving of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a large and interesting variety of other bosses.

Henry pointed out that the mausoleum had been roofless for many years, but was refurbished in the 1970s and at this time more bodies were placed in the vault, including that of the last Countess of Berkeley, who died in 1975.

The Friends greatly enjoyed Henry's interesting informative talk and tour, and much appreciated the opportunity of access to the fascinating and atmospheric mausoleum and the insights it gave us into the Berkeley family.

Sue Walker

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"We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for

a moment believe, this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the new world, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old".

This is the final paragraph of what many believe to be Sir Winston Churchill's greatest wartime speech, delivered to House of Commons on 4 June 1940.

Prepared by Paul Walkden

The Battle of Waterloo

Report on talk by Julian Humphrys, 11th June 2015

Julian commenced his talk by referring to the exceptional significance of the Battle of Waterloo and the immediate national recognition of this, exemplified by the unusually rapid issue of campaign medals.

The battle was initiated by Napoleon, who in March 1815 left the island of Elba, landed in the South of France and travelled to Paris, overthrowing the French monarchy. Hoping to win a quick victory before the forces of Europe could combine against him, Napoleon raised an army to attack two armies, one British under Wellington and one Prussian under Blucher, which were quartered in Belgium. Julian pointed out that Wellington's army in Belgium comprised some 30,000 men but that not many of them were actually British. However, the army did include the 28th Gloucestershire regiment, and also the Berkeley family were represented at Waterloo: the son of Admiral Sir George Cranfield Berkeley, who was made Liaison Officer to the Prince of Orange. It was explained that troops would have been hired by army recruitment teams who typically would go to country fairs, offering prospective soldiers "jobs for life" and a bounty!

In June 1815 Napoleon assembled 120,000 men on the Belgian border. Opposing him were 115,000 Prussians, and the Duke of Wellington's allied army. Napoleon struck on 15th June. Using his strategy of "central position", he attacked the Prussians first whilst holding off the British Army. Wellington was taken completely by surprise and ordered his troops to concentrate around Nivelles, over 20km away from the Prussian position at Ligny. This would have left the British & Prussian armies dangerously separated, but fortunately a Dutch staff officer, Baron Constant-Rebecque, recognised this, disregarded Wellington's orders and sent a force to occupy the key crossroads of Quatre Bras, much nearer to the Prussians.

On 16th June the Prussian Army was defeated, but at Quatre Bras Wellington's army beat back Napoleon's Marshal Ney. The two allied armies stayed in contact and on 17th June Wellington was able to retreat to a ridge at Mont St John near the village of Waterloo and to make a stand there until the Prussians arrived.

On 18th June the armies prepared for battle. The allied troops' position was protected by three important outposts: a group of farms to the left, the farm of La Haie Sainte in front, and the chateau of Hougoumont to the right. Napoleon's army began by attacking Hougoumont and some of his men managed to get inside the chateau. But Wellington's troops managed to

close the chateau gates and slaughter the French troops inside. Wellington later commented that this was a turning point in the battle. A massed French infantry assault was then driven back by the British cavalry with the Royal Dragoons and Scots Greys both capturing French Eagle standards. The British troops then formed "squares" with a hedge of bayonets which the French horses could not charge. Whilst Wellington was thus resisting Napoleon's attack, the Prussian forces were arriving in force. Finally in the evening, the French Imperial Guard were driven back by the heavy fire of Wellington's army. Napoleon was defeated.

The British and Russian troops marched to Paris, where hostilities continued in a somewhat different form. Julian provided amazing insights into the bizarre and humorous aspects of army behaviour, even under the pressure of fighting. For instance:

- Wellington disapproved of his men carrying umbrellas.
- A "badge of honour" was, on being (potentially seriously) wounded, to make a witty remark whilst being carried away.
- The Earl of Uxbridge had to have his leg amputated – but returned years later to eat dinner off the table where the operation had taken place!
- It was said that whilst in Paris, the British were fairly well behaved, the Prussians not, and Wellington had to intervene to prevent them from blowing up the Pont de Jena. Duels between English and French were a regular occurrence (one was fought after an English officer hit a Frenchman over the head with a baguette). The French, having lost the war, were determined to win the peace. For example, the Paris Théâtre des Variétés staged a play called "Les Anglais pour rire", ridiculing British women; not surprisingly, the British response was to storm the stage.

Julian gave us an excellent and informative of the account of the Battle of Waterloo, with the bonus of these surprising glimpses into army behaviour. We also learned that "Bistro" is Russian for "quick"! To quote one of the attendees – "A cracking talk"!

Sue Walker

BERKELEY CASTLE OPEN DAYS AND PRICES FOR 2015

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
Sunday to Wednesday inclusive

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

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

Friends of Berkeley Castle

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FoBC Officers for 2015- 2016

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