



THE BERKELEY BUTTRESS

AUTUMN 2023

FRIENDS OF BERKELEY CASTLE NEWSLETTER

From the Chairman

Dear fellow Friends,

I hope you enjoy this issue of The Berkeley Buttress. Your Committee is grateful to our speakers and to the contributors to The Berkeley Buttress who share their knowledge with us. Inside, you will find reports of events which have already taken place and details of our Autumn programme. There are also photographs I have taken of some of the projects the Friends have recently funded (such as the pair of C18 card tables - see below) and a photograph of the amazing difference the picture lights make to the Castle's portraits (this, you may remember from the A.G.M., is a project we would like to support).

Also in this issue, Josh Nash has written about the drawings of participants in the Poaching Affray, which members of the Committee were fortunate to see when Josh brought them out of the Muniment Room to show us. Now read on.....

David



Talk by Jackie Lantelli

by Althea Hamlyn

After a brief but informative A.G.M., over 50 Friends were enthralled by hearing Jackie Lantelli talk about her thriving national and international business, which she started in the small Gloucestershire village of Slimbridge. She had always enjoyed making sculptures in media like clay and plaster over a wire base. A few years ago she dispensed with the clay and used just wire of various types to make fairies, aided by her hairdresser sister who helped with the hairstyles!

Early in 2018, Slimbridge History Society decided to set up an exhibition to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the ending of World War I. Research and general knowledge revealed that at least 5 residents had been soldiers who had died in the war and had graves in the churchyard. Jackie was asked to make memorials of these and produced a life sized prototype figure. News of the project was released on social media and Countryfile asked to come and film in September. By now it was known that 11 sculptures would be needed. Jackie said, in answer to a question, that as it took her about 10 days to make one figure, she had a busy summer! During the exhibition, crowds of people and organisations flocked to the village to see the figures. It was a moving experience for many. After November 2018, the soldiers were given to existing descendants, except for two for whom no living relatives were found. These remain with Slimbridge Church.

Subsequently, Jackie was asked to make some wire figures for Berkeley Castle. We've probably all admired the Jester, the Gardener with the Robin, Knights on the battlements and Queen Elizabeth I in the Picture Gallery. Her skirt was so large that she had to be brought up in pieces and assembled in situ. The Robin a popular item in the Castle shop. Jackie has also made displays using dandelion heads for memorial and meditation gardens at Gloucester and Cheltenham hospitals.

Making wire figures has grown from a hobby into a business and she brought some of her amazing animal figures to show us. The badgers were particularly realistic and have often been mistaken for the real thing on dark nights in gardens. Her wonderful figure of an angel, too big to bring, is at Slimbridge Church.

Jackie was enthusiastically applauded for her enlightening talk and the evening concluded with refreshments, more questions and convivial conversations.



Right: Jackie Lantelli speaking to the Friends.



Above: some of the amazing animal sculptures which Jackie Lantelli brought to the Castle to illustrate her talk.



Left: Jackie with a wire angel and dandelion 'clock'.

Most photographs in The Buttress are by Valerie Moores. Josh Nash illustrated the Poaching Affray, Peter Yardley photographed the Berkeley Silver at Versailles, and the editor took the pictures of the FoBC projects.

Coronation Celebration and Summer Party

This summer, we held a party in the Great Hall to celebrate the Coronation of their majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla on the day after the actual event in Westminster Abbey. In June, we held our annual Summer Party, which was also held in the Great Hall because of inclement weather. Here are some photographs of both occasions.



Above: the Coronation Celebration, with fizz and canapés.

Below left: FoBC Deputy Chairman, Diana Merrett, in charge of the raffle at the Summer Party.

Below right: FoBC President Charles Berkeley, with local artist Lorna Page.



‘Miss Willmott’s Ghosts’, a Talk by Sandra Lawrence *by David Bowd-Exworth*

Charles Berkeley’s great grandmother was Rose Willmott, from Warley Place, Essex. Rose’s more widely known sister, Ellen Willmott, was the subject of a fascinating talk by Sandra Lawrence, author of the book, ‘Miss Willmott’s Ghosts’.

As a child, Sandra used to explore the remnants of the gardens and hothouses at Warley Place, on which Miss Willmott lavished much of her fortune, and a few years ago she joined Karen Davidson (the Berkeley Estates’ Archivist) in discovering a treasure trove of Willmott papers and photographs mouldering away in the cellars at Spetchley.

Ellen Willmott and her sister, Rose (later Rose Berkeley), were brought up in an affluent middle class household and both had a very generous benefactress in the form of Helen Tasker, a Countess of the Papal Court, who gave both girls presents of £1,000 each year from the age of seven. The Music Room at Warley had a grand piano purchased from the Royal Collection, a pipe organ, a guitar, a harp and numerous other instruments bought by the girls or their indulgent parents.



*Warley Place, near Brentwood, Essex.
(Photo: a watercolour in the collection of the Berkeley family.)*

In the 1890s, Ellen made her first known foray into the gardening world, having a three-acre Alpine Garden built at Warley Place by Backhouse & Co., the best firm of the day, with rocks brought from Derbyshire and featuring a large and realistic ravine, a grotto, a bridge and a pond. Now in her 40s, Ellen had the gardening bug. Her parents' health was deteriorating and the family went to Aix-les-Bains each year for their health and Ellen and Rose bought a villa, with extensive gardens sloping down towards the lake. Ellen took over the villa and lavished money and attention on the gardens, with a team of gardeners growing plants that were difficult or impossible to grow in Essex. This and the extensive garden at the Villa Boccanegra, on the Italian Riviera, and, of course, Warley Place, occupied much of Ellen's time.

Sandra brought these gardens - and Ellen Willmott - to life with her slides and delved into some of Ellen's other passions: magic lantern shows; daffodils; snowdrops; compiling a book, 'The Genus Rosa', with watercolours by Sir Alfred Parsons; financing plant collecting; helping to save the historic gardens at Hampton Court Palace and helping set up the Land Army in the First World War.

After Ellen's death in 1934, Warley Place and its contents was sold in a ten-day auction: the final lot, Lot 2158, being a pile of manure. The house was demolished to make way for a sewage works and New Town, neither of which were built, and the sad remnants of her magnificent gardens are now in the care of a Nature Trust. Her papers and personal effects were boxed up and taken to her nephew at Spetchley (along with, it is said, three Pickford's lorries of plants), where they were put in the cellar until Henry and Kate Berkeley moved into the house and made alterations.

With Karen Davidson's support, Sandra is unearthing more surprises every time she delves into those disintegrating boxes from Spetchley.



Miss Willmott's villa at Tresserve, in the French Alps, now the local Mairie. The veranda faced west, with stunning views over the gardens, lake and hills beyond. (Photo: Google Earth.)



Some of the Friends looking at the gardening books from the Berkeley Archives. The nearest book is Miss Willmott's copy of her own book, 'The Genus Rosa'.



Sandra Lawrence holding Miss Willmott's camera.

Summer Outing to Spetchley Park Gardens

by Linda Lewis

Following on from Sandra Lawrence's talk about Ellen Willmott, some of the Friends visited the gardens at Spetchley in August to find out more about the influence of Ellen and her sister, Rose, on the gardens there. The Berkeley family have lived at and cared for Spetchley Park gardens for over 400 years.

After worrying as to whether it would rain all day on our visit, I needn't have; the sun shone down on us all day making our visit delightful. We were greeted on our arrival and shown to the Learning Centre where we had a slide-show and very interesting talk about Ellen and Rose Willmott.

Afterwards we took to the gardens for a guided tour of the various parts of Spetchley Gardens, consisting of over 30 acres. A walk to the lake and to the horse pool (where they led the working horses down a slope into the water to wash them), both now full of water lilies. The walled gardens give shelter and protection and the deep glow of the old red brick is a fine backdrop to the flower borders. The gardens, with many areas of gorgeous colour and a variety of flowers to admire and many interesting specimen trees, made splendid views as we walked around, taking a rest in the appropriately named Rest House.

The Heritage Centre displayed the renovated Sovereign Coach which belonged to the Willmotts, enabling them to travel in great style.

The Granary Café provided us with a welcome lunch after our walkabouts and I noticed many eating ice creams while sitting out in the sunshine.

What could be a more fitting end to our day out? Thank you, Spetchley.





Friends of Berkeley Castle enjoying a sunny visit to Spetchley Park Gardens in August.



AUTUMN EVENTS

An Events Order Form is included with this e-mail

Thursday 21st September: Talk by Tracy Borman

The Mother & Daughter who Changed History

In her third talk to the Friends, Tracy will detail the lives of Anne Boleyn and her daughter Elizabeth I. Both enjoyed the life of the court before falling from favour. Anne was executed on the orders of her husband after failing to give him the longed-for male heir and Elizabeth was banished to Hatfield Palace on the orders of her elder sister, Queen Mary. Later, Elizabeth became one of England's best known and popular queens and her reign became known as the Elizabethan Golden Age. After the talk, a light Ploughman's Supper will be served.

A few tickets are still available - BOOK NOW!

7.30pm. £16 (non-members £19) including supper.

Gates open & Cash Bar open from 7pm.

Thursday 19th October: Talk by Sarah Davis

The History and Modern Making of Stained Glass

Sarah is a local artist in the traditional craft of glass making and with a particular interest in glass painting. Her work often follows natural themes in abstract and figurative styles using a variety of glass techniques. Her inspiration includes the beauty of the Severn Valley and the Cotswolds. Sarah is an experienced designer who exhibits across the West Country and has conducted workshops at Berkeley Castle. There will be a display of pieces in progress, and items for sale.

7.30pm. £12 (non-members £15).

Gates open & Cash Bar open from 7pm.

Sunday 26th November: Bill Church's Winter Tales - Mulled Wine, Mince Pies and Seasonal Stories

Bill is a popular history storyteller and he will regale us with stories from the past while we enjoy mulled wine and mince pies in front of a crackling log fire on a dark winter afternoon. Here he is in his own words, "I am known as Bill, 'The Story Traveller', as I tell my stories anywhere, cycling to destinations as much as I can. I am a former teacher (rumour has it I started when the Romans landed in Britain) and Gloucestershire Primary Head Teacher. I really enjoy the challenge of finding a story on a particular theme and then performing it. I am currently Story Teller in residence at the Farm for City Children's Wick Court."

4.30pm. £15 (non-members £18) including refreshments.

Gates open from 4pm.



A new project. The portrait of George, Baron Berkeley, which the Friends recently had cleaned. The picture lights, on loan from the lighting company, show how much better the portrait looks when well lit. We hope to finance this and other picture lights in the future.

CHAMPAGNE TEA with MARY COLE

Enjoy a fabulous Champagne Afternoon Tea with Mary, Countess of Berkeley

Thursday 28th September 2023, 2pm-5.30pm.

Included in the experience is exclusive access to Berkeley Castle, a scrumptious afternoon tea, with Champagne, in the magnificent Great Hall, a guided tour with one of our most experienced guides and an encounter with Mary Cole.

Mary Cole played an important part in the history of Berkeley Castle. Born to a butcher and his wife, she rose to the esteemed position of Countess of Berkeley in 1796 - a feat almost unheard of at its time! The road to riches was not a smooth one, and she was not only shunned by the 'bon ton' of society, but also by King George III & Queen Charlotte. Meet Mary in the Castle she loved and learn more about her scandalous story set in the ravishing Georgian era.



Left: this portrait of Mary (Cole), Countess of Berkeley, by Hopner, hangs over the chimneypiece in the Long Drawing Room.

You will see this portrait, along with that of her husband, on your Private Tour of the Castle.

This is not an FoBC event. To book tickets, please visit the Castle website: www.berkeley-castle.com/whats-on/champagne-afternoon-tea-with-mary-cole

Tickets cost £55 per person and must be booked by 14th September.

Right: Afternoon Tea, with Champagne, will be provided by Napier Catering, who supply food at weddings held at the Castle and have run the pop-up café, 'The Pantry' in 2023, while the new café in the Walled Garden is being built.



Exhibition of the Berkeley Silver

Earlier this year, Peter Yardley visited the Palace of Versailles to see an exhibition of French silver. Included was part of the Berkeley Silver. The dinner service was commissioned by James, 3rd Earl of Berkeley, probably to commemorate the coming of age of his son, Augustus, Lord Dursley. It was made between 1736-1739 by Jacques Roettiers, who was the silversmith to King Louis XIV. Lord Berkeley had to obtain Royal permission for the service to be made and exported.

While some of the silver was sold in 1960, other pieces remain with the family and, until recently, were displayed in the Billiard Room.



Above: The display of the Berkeley Silver at Versailles included plates, tureens with stands, cutlery, cruet stands (the glass cruets have silver mounts), sugar casters and candlesticks. (Photo: Peter Yardley.)

Below: This small section of a painting of 1738, 'Still Life with Dead Game and a Silver Tureen on a Turkish Carpet' by Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1707-1784), includes a tureen and integral stand from the Berkeley Silver dinner service. The Berkeley shield is displayed on the cartouche. (Photo: Wikimedia.)





Comparing the lid of the tureen today with the print below (on its original tureen and stand), one can see that the lobster has been turned to face into the vegetation instead of facing outwards.

As in the oil painting on the previous page, the Berkeley shield is clearly visible.

The items of the Berkeley Silver on display at Versailles now belong to a foreign collector.

(Photos: Peter Yardley)



The Poaching Affray Portraits

by Josh Nash, Castle Custodian



In the Kitchen at Berkeley Castle hangs a painting, by Henry Corbould, which depicts the Berkeley Poaching Affray of 18th January, 1816. Much has been written regarding this incident but here is a brief overview: fueled by anger at the death of Thomas Till, a poacher killed by a spring gun trap on the nearby Tortworth Estate, a gang of poachers fought gamekeepers in Cat Grove wood. An assistant keeper, William Ingram, was killed and as a result two of the poaching gang were hung, the rest were transported to Australia, except for one poacher who was freed after he gave evidence against his former comrades.

Consistently poor harvests at the end of the C18th and beginning of the C19th resulted in increasing food prices and more and more frustrated people took to stealing landowners' live game to provide food for their families. There are no official crime statistics for the years leading up to 1816 and, from 1800, there are no specific mentions in the Berkeley Estate Stewards Accounts of 'poachers' until 1814, when Thomas Ford, (gamekeeper for Wotton Borough from 1811-1814), was paid a supplementary £5:14:6 'for taking Poachers & Expenses'.

Thos Ford half a Years Wages to Lady day	}	31 8
last as Gamekeeper		
Do for taking Poachers & Expenses		5 11 6

Quite exactly what ‘taking poachers’ means is unclear, but it almost certainly involved the gamekeepers using a dog to ‘hunt’ poachers from dusk till dawn, the dog catching the poacher and ‘holding’ them till their master arrived. Keepers needed a dog to track and catch a poacher: the English Mastiff was used as a guard dog, but was too slow to chase a fleeing poacher, and the Bulldog, still used to legally bait bulls until 1835, was far too vicious to simply ‘hold’ a poacher, so the two breeds were crossed to create the Bullmastiff.

Rather than relying just on dogs to curb poaching, the Berkeley Estate took more drastic action and, on 25th May 1814, traps (presumably man traps) and spring guns were purchased from Bowell & Co for £28:1:6d. It is worth noting here that the use of spring guns (a type of lethal booby trap) resulted in Thomas Till’s death in November 1815 and were a major contributing factor in the build up to the Poaching Affray on 18th January 1816, the murder of William Ingram and the execution and deportation of the poachers.

Bowell Co for Traps & Spring Guns		28 1 6
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The next mention of poachers in the accounts comes in November 1814, when Mark Cullimore is paid an additional £20:11:7d for ‘taking Poachers, etc.’.

Mark Cullimore half a Years Wages to Mich ^v	}	29 2 6
last as Gamekeeper		
Do for taking Poachers &c		20 11 7

On 27th May 1815, John Powell, the gamekeeper responsible for the Parish of Hinton, was paid £16:9:0d exclusively for taking poachers. The equivalent amount would have been worth over £1000 in 2023, which highlights how much of a problem poaching was becoming!

27 ^y see fo. 42 Do Powell for half a Years Wages to Lady day	}	34 5 0
last as Gamekeeper including £4 5 6 for one years repairs to the Lady day last		
Do for an assistant from 25 Aug 1814 to 26 Feb 1815		23 1 0
Do for taking Poachers		16 9 0

*William Ingram's Widow, 2 Weeks Wages of William
Ingram deceased, who was killed by a Gang
of Poachers at Catgrove in the Parish of Hill. X 18*

Recently, five preparatory portrait sketches by the artist Henry Corbould, for his oil painting of *The Poaching Affray*, have been rediscovered and photographed. Four sitters in the portraits are named in pencil on the front; the fifth picture is not inscribed. Unfortunately, there is no mention of a payment to Henry Corbould in the Stewards Accounts and it is certain Corbould would have been paid directly by Colonel Berkeley (later created 1st Earl Fitzhardinge).



Above, left to right:

William Booth is listed in the Stewards Accounts as being employed as a gamekeeper from 1814 until 1821, taking over from Thomas Ford as the gamekeeper for Wotton Borough.

Mark Cullimore lived in a Keeper's cottage in Michaelwood Chase from 1812 until 1819.

John Powell first appears in the Stewards Accounts as a gamekeeper of Hinton in 1805 and he finally retired in 1856.



Left: The fourth portrait is not inscribed but it is likely to be Raymond Hensburgh, the fourth main gamekeeper employed on the estate at the time of the Affray. He was responsible for the Parish of Slimbridge between 1813 to 1817.

Right: The fifth portrait is inscribed with the surname Greenaway. He was a member of the poaching party who testified against the other members and, as a result, was not prosecuted.



Using the sketches it is possible to identify some of the people in the painting:

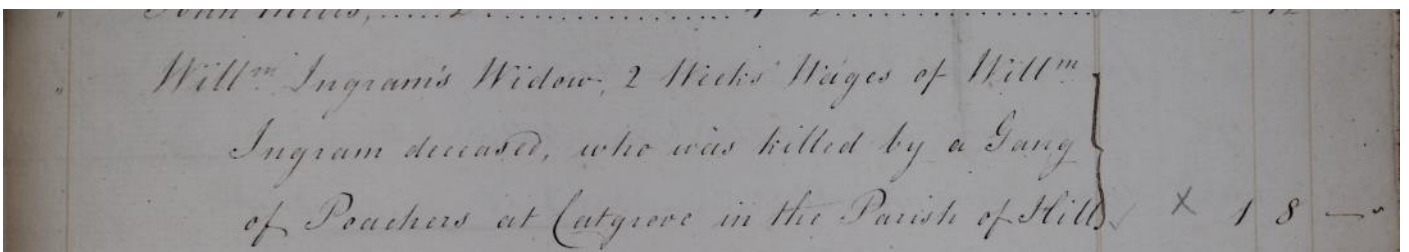
A. Powell; B. Cullimore; C. Booth; D. Greenaway; E. Hensburgh; F. Ingram.



An over-exposed photograph of the bottom left-hand corner of the painting (below) shows Ingram, lying dead on the ground.



A payment to Anne Ingram, his widow, is listed in the Stewards Accounts two days after his death and she received a quarterly annuity of £5 for the rest of her life.



The five sketches are in a poor condition and are currently being conserved by Sarah Bull, A.C.R., who is based in Arlingham.



Above: Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, and George, Baron Berkeley, under the new picture lights.

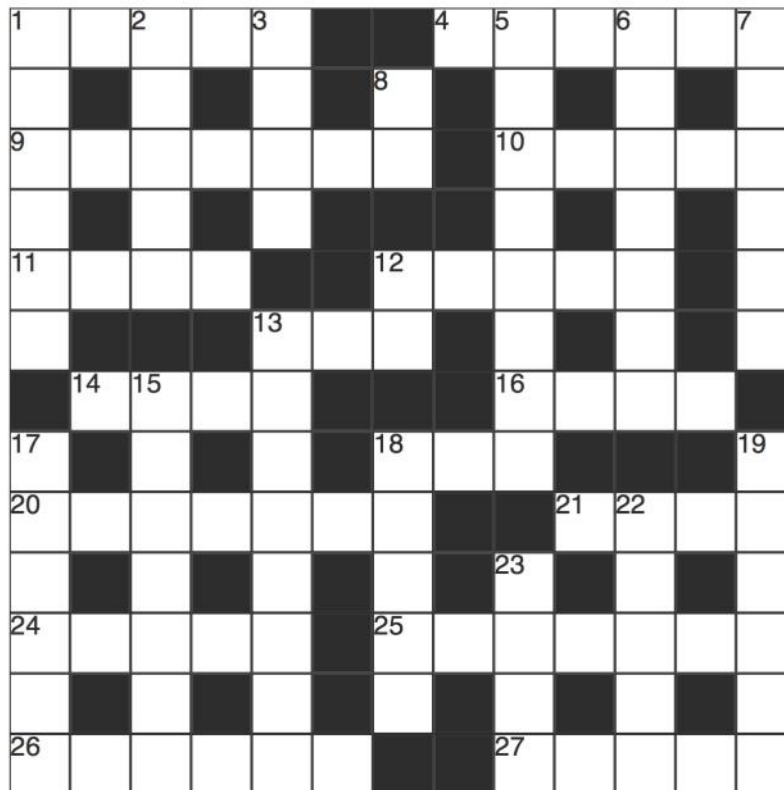
Below: The leather screen in the Billiard Room, which recently had a large hole repaired. The hole was caused by staff moving the screen on an almost daily basis for nearly 50 years.



Crossword Puzzle

(answers at the foot of the last page)

(‘BC’ is an abbreviation of Berkeley Castle in the crossword clues and is not part of the clue)



Across

1. The War re-enacted by the Sealed Knot at Berkeley Castle (BC) in 2014 (5)
4. Platform, dais or apron are all examples (6)
9. Mary Oldacre had worked for 17 years for Lady Berkeley in the capacity of ——— maid when she was cross examined in Court in 1794 regarding the Berkeley Peerage (7)
10. Fruit similar to a nectarine (5)
11. Archaic term for to or until (4)
12. What BC gardeners would have used to sweep the paths and lawns in the Castle grounds (5)
13. A plaything (3)
14. Operator (4)
16. Unusual, atypical (4)
18. The name for wages in Victorian times (3)
20. A sailing ship built for speed, e.g. *The Cutty Sark*, c.1869 Portraits to be found at BC (7)
21. Antlered animals with a park of their own at BC (4)
24. Strangely (5)
25. Ross & Demelza were filmed at BC in 2016 and 2017 (7)
26. What BC gardeners would have used to cut the grass at BC (6)
27. BC has more than one pair (5)

Down

1. Tincture used in a coat of arms: e.g. gules, vert, sable, azure, purple (6)
2. An arched roof (5)
3. Katharine ——— Berkeley founded 6D and 7D in Wotton-Under-Edge in 1384 for six scholars (4)
5. Draft excluder at BC (8)
6. See 3D; syntax (7)
7. See 3D; educational establishment (6)
8. Exclamation! Mine (2)
12. Near, beside (2)
13. Icon or painting in three parts, usually religious (8)
15. Long, tall or thin (7)
17. Thespians in the films made at BC (6)
18. What 17D would have used making 25A (5)
19. Male ducks (6)
22. What 17D would do during filming (5)
23. Unpopular predator in the world's vegetable and flower gardens (4)

A Message from our volunteer Admin Team

1. Payment of subscription by Standing Order: It would help the volunteer administrators greatly if you could check that any Standing Order payment is dated **14th February** and directed to the **Friends of Berkeley Castle** account (not BCCT).
Bank: NatWest Bank
Sort code: 55-61-38
Account name: Friends of Berkeley Castle
Account number: 76584054
2. When paying for any FoBC subscription or event online, please would you send the administrators an email to say exactly what the payment is for. It can be hard to disentangle a mix of events and/or subscription payments without such information.

Many thanks,

Althea Hamlyn and Reg Clarke

friends@berkeley-castle.com

The Editor (e-mail address below) will be pleased to hear from any members who have relevant pictures or articles to contribute to The Berkeley Buttress.

Friends of Berkeley Castle

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www.berkeley-castle.com/friends.html

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Crossword Solutions

Across: 1.Civil 4.Stages 9.Laundry 10.Peach 11.Unto 12.Besom 13.Toy 14.User 16.Rare
18.Pay 20.Clipper 21.Deer 24.Oddly 25.Poldark 26.Scythe 27.Gates
Down: 1.Colour 2.Vault 3.Lady 5.Tapestry 6.Grammar 7.School 8.My 13.By 15.Spindly
17.Actors 18.Props 19.Drakes 22.Enact 23.Sing