



# Clarence Bicknell Association

## NOTES FROM ZOOM CALL Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Our group chat happens once every six months. In case anyone reading this is wondering whether to attend in future, you might like to know that we handled all these topics in just half an hour. Very efficient meeting and everyone got a say. Everyone attended except for Graham Avery, Tamsin Treverton Jones, Titus Bicknell, Christopher Chippendale. For the full list of Committee members, see below.

Marcus had covered most of the points discussed at this zoom call in his agenda (SEE BELOW) for the meeting, except...

**Exhibition at the Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge.** Nicolas Bell from the Wren Library had contacted Marcus asking if material could be lent to a botanical art exhibition being organised by art students led by Audrey Campillo Perry from 22 February for a week. Marcus had asked the Fitzwilliam if they might lend one of their original Clarence albums. Marcus reminded the meeting that it was thanks to Nicolas that the first exhibition including Clarence took place. Subsequently, he had written to the organising student suggesting that Clarence would be a suitable subject for a PHD thesis and will relaunch this possibility. Note that Nick Ray, based in Cambridge, has also taken up the PhD idea with a colleague and with Audrey Campillo Perry.

**Promoting the sale of Clarence Prints.** Helen said Alice and James in their strategy should jump on the “wellness” bandwagon, i.e. a market for well-to-do people interested in health and self-improvement: his life style in the mountains in association with his botanical interests would fit in well.

**News from Bordighera.** Daniella and Giovanni explained that the museum had had an association with Vilnius since 2017 and in fact Clarence was quite well known in Baltic countries. Students come from Vilnius to study at the Museum. Giovanni also said improvements were being made to the online index system to make research easier. Members of staff from the Musée des Merveilles in Tende had come just yesterday to visit and develop ideas for further cooperation. Silvia Sandrone, the director who is so affirmative about Clarence, had come with some colleagues. Daniela said she had a big budget! She said souvenirs were important for visitors and maybe the Museo Bicknell should have more? Marcus said the 144 Clarence flower prints had sold out in the Museo Bicknell in two months and that he would endeavour to get new stock to them, probably when he next goes down there.

**Humphrey Tonkin** updated the meeting on his many Esperanto projects. He also offered to host the next meeting as he has a full Zoom subscription, so the meetings could go on for longer! Thank you.

### ***Le Venezie Watercolor Festival, Treviso 17-31 Oct***

Since the meeting, there has been more positive progress on this. Sr Padovan has invited Marcus to be on the jury of judges for the festival overall and will meet us more than once as he and his Chinese sponsor are in London for the Royal Society of Portrait Painters exhibition.

Our meetings are on the third Tuesday of January and the third Tuesday of July every year... Date of next meetings:

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2026 at 3 pm London time (AGM)  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2027 at 3 pm London time

Susie and Marcus Bicknell, 26 Jan 2026



### **POINTS SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING...**

#### **Botanical prints – fund-raising update**

The campaign to raise funds for the Woodland Trust by selling prints of Clarence Bicknell alpine flower watercolours has been running since February 2024. As the prints (run-ons from the printing of the Casa Fontanalba Visitors' Book) are Susie and Marcus's, the Clarence Bicknell Association benefits from 10% of sales made off the web site or an Association activity. You can read my update to stakeholders including the four personalities who signed copies at...

[https://clarecebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/Woodland\\_Trust\\_UPDATE\\_9\\_MB\\_14Nov2025.pdf](https://clarecebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/Woodland_Trust_UPDATE_9_MB_14Nov2025.pdf)

In summary

- We had ten means of selling the prints, including real-world retail, but none of them delivered big sales for the Woodland Trust. Net income to the Woodland Trust, after 20 months' activities, was only £253.19
- In contrast, £3,040 has been raised by three other charities (not Woodland Trust) with 158 prints provided by us free-of-charge (See Oakwood, Fingest Opera and Museo Bicknell in the update).
- At this stage we have a good stock of prints remaining and are open to suggestions from all our stakeholders as to how best to raise money effectively. Providing copies free of charge to a charity for their own fundraising is acceptable to us and has proved to be successful.
- We have recently entered into an informal agreement with a start-up, *Clarence Botanica*, run by our daughter Alice and her husband James Frearson, whose parallel activities in crafts have been very successful thanks to influencer posts and short-video marketing on TikTok and Instagram. They think the prints have appeal to GenZ purchasers for home decoration and we are supporting them for stock and fulfilment.

Here are some other items which I posted on our web site or Facebook since our last call (the AGM) in July 2025 ...

- I was asked in early December by Jürgen Schlieszeit of Bordighera, researcher into the villas and buildings in the town, whether it is possible that **Edward Berry** never ran a bank in Bordighera, but only a real estate agency, a luggage storage and removal service, and the agency for the tour operator Thomas Cook & Sons? He mentions that "The 'English Bank' was a branch of the Sanremo brothers 'Frères of Sanremo'." Gisella and I were able to give him the answer; Berry embarked on a similar career to his father's, starting his work as director of the Bordighera branch of the *Banca Fratelli Asquasciati* of Sanremo, the English Bank....  
<https://clarecebicknell.com/edward-berry-the-english-bank-in-bordighera/>
- Daniela Gandolfi at the **Museo Bicknell has a new arrangement with Vilnius for student exchanges...**  
[https://clarecebicknell.com/vilnius\\_university\\_exchanges/](https://clarecebicknell.com/vilnius_university_exchanges/)
- My article about Clarence for **Art Culture Tourism, Marysia Zipser's Nottingham-oriented association** and blog, has had some very positive response, thank you.  
<https://www.artculturetourism.co.uk/post/clarence-bicknell-the-victorian-polymath-and-nottingham>  
and <https://clarecebicknell.com/clarence-triggers-interest-in-nottingham/>  
Efforts to organise an exhibition and seminar on Clarence there have not borne fruit yet
- The latest in our **pop-up exhibitions**, i.e. on our web site, is dedicated to the work of **Elisabetta Massardo**, one of our Companions of the Clarence Bicknell Association. To view the gallery, click on one of the images then click the arrow which appears middle right to advance. They truly are remarkable images, even when viewed on your PC screen or tablet...  
<https://clarecebicknell.com/in-clarences-footsteps-elisabetta-massardo/>  
There are two more **pop-up exhibitions** on our web site, Valentina Pulinetti at  
<https://clarecebicknell.com/in-clarences-footsteps-valentina-pulinetti/>  
and Maria Pia Luly Jones at <https://clarecebicknell.com/maria-pia-luly-jones/>
- I am pleased that **Le Venezie Watercolor Festival** are considering showing some of the watercolours of Alpine flowers by Clarence Bicknell at their next exhibition 17 October - 1 November 2026 in Treviso, at the historical medieval City Palace "Palazzo dei Trecento". I will work hard to make sure we can take up this opportunity and provide them what they need. I plan to meet Giandomenico Padovan in London in May.
- I received an interesting email in late July from London resident Jane Winter, member of the Clarence Bicknell Association, today. Can you help her in her research for her biography of Will Arnold-Forster and his wife Ka Cox? <https://clarecebicknell.com/jane-winters-and-will-arnold-forster-ka-cox/>

