

Clarence Bicknell Association



NOTES ON MEETING BY ZOOM, TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2025

Attendees:

Graham Avery, Vice-Chairman
 Marcus Bicknell, Chairman (MB)
 Susie Bicknell, Secretary
 Renchi Bicknell
 Vanessa Bicknell, Treasurer
 Dssa. Daniela Gandolfi
 Raimondo Meli Lupi
 Prof. Nick Ray

Giovanni Russo
 Prof. Stefano Schiaparelli
 Prof. Humphrey Tonkin
 Gisella Merello (Apologies)
 Helen BlancFrancard (Apologies)
 Ian Fraser (Apologies)

You can find out about Committee members and Companions of the Clarence Bicknell Association on our web site at <https://clarencebicknell.com/who-we-are/>

1 MB said the **rebuilt website** www.clarencebicknell.com and web shop were much clearer as evidenced by a flurry of orders for books and prints. Some orders for books and prints directly off the new web site for the first time.

Raimondo Meli Lupi asked if there was a way to make the website to come higher in Google rankings in non-UK countries. MB has asked Titus Bicknell whether we need to add a slug of text in Italian or meta-tags. Work in progress.

2 MB said the Clarence Bicknell Association accounts for 2024 had already been approved and published at https://clarencebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/accounts_2024.pdf

3 MB said the Clarence Bicknell Association AGM minutes are available at https://clarencebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/AGM_minutes_2024.pdf but there were no comments or questions.

4. **Daniela Gandolfi and Giovanni Russo** outlined current projects at the Museo Bicknell. 70 paintings by a variety of artists well-known on the Ligurian coast, for example Piana and Nestel, and 34 by Clarence have been acquired mainly from sources close to the Pollini family in Stresa with funds by IISL. IISL programs an exposition and catalogue of this new lotto of Bicknell materials with support from to the Compagnia di San Paolo. But they need restoration which will be undertaken soon. MB asked if he could be sent a written record of this. A shortlist of the paintings will be soon available online by Daniela. The whole collection of the Museum, except for the new acquisitions, is online available in the Catalogue of Cultural Heritage [Catalogo Generale dei Beni Culturali](#)

Daniela was also preparing a paper on the famous archaeologist Grace Crowfoot to be published this spring, and organising a conference on her in the Museum on 22 May 2025. Clarence had visited the excavation at the site of Tana Bertrand near Sanremo in 1908 and then he wrote to Emile Carthailac about the excavation.

Marcus Bicknell, Chairman
 Clarence Bicknell Association
 Homefarm Orchard, Kirby Close, Threehouseholds
 Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4FF, UK
 A charitable unincorporated association as defined by, and governed by, the United Kingdom Charities Act 2011

email: info@clarencebicknell.com
 web: www.clarencebicknell.com
 phone +44 1494 872751
 mobile +44 7748 111444

5 MB thanked Daniela for her input on **Nino Lamboglia** and the Museo Bicknell in the Second World War. We had published **Giorgo Tribbioli's** video account (he is a descendant of the Museo Bicknell gardians in WWII) and were pleased to add on our web site the publication " Nino Lamboglia e la Salvaguardia del Patrimonio Artistico negli anni del Seconda Guerra Mondiale" thanks to Daniela Gandolfi. See...

<https://clarecebicknell.com/nino-lamboglia-secondo-guerra-mondiale/>

6 MB said he was having a meeting with **Francesca Boschieri** to discuss the following: Euroflora 23 April - 3 May in Genova, possible conference talk for Marcus, Clarence wild flower prints

Francesca Boschieri: "Italea" and Genova/London event in October in Genoa, exhibition on British in Liguria including Clarence and the Royals on the Riviera

Francesca Boschieri: "Via degli inglese", the British round Liguria, including analysis of dates and places of Clarence's sketches. [MB reports, after meeting Francesca, that a dozen small sketch books by Clarence, with dates and places marked in them, have been lent to Francesca for analysis and display]

7 **Prof Stefano Schiaparelli**, Professore, Dipartimento di scienze della terra, dell'ambiente e della vita - DISTAV, gave the meeting a very interesting summary with slides (attached) about the digitisation and cataloguing of the botanical water-colours by Clarence Bicknell (of which there are 3,428) in the University of Genova (Unige). First he presented the 9 notebooks on the prehistoric engravings (that Clarence had donated to Genoa thanks to his friendship with Prof. Issel), which have already been digitised and are in the process of being restored.

Stefano described the huge task of digitising the 3,428 botanical prints of Clarence, with two people working on it full-time to database all the available data reported on them, now close to completion. 1,500 would now be included in the Italian Catalogue of Cultural Heritage by March 2025 and there is a dedicated professional cataloguer in cultural heritage, specialized in drawings, working on them. The expected release in the web of these first 1,500 botanical watercolours is March 2025. We look forward to getting links to the data online when it's ready.

Stefano also had curated the exhibition in Genova "L'impronta dell'uomo - l'Antropocene in Liguria" 25 Nov 2023 to Jan 7 2024 about the impact of man on our environment, which included an avatar of Clarence in conversation with Arturo Issel. <https://unige.it/news/chronos>". Stefano said this successful exhibition had been in different locations after they had been given an extra grant. It is now on display in Acqui Terme, in Piemonte (<https://turismo.comuneacqui.it/event/chronos/>) until May 4th and will open in Cogoletto, in parallel to Acqui, Terme by the end of February. It is expected to travel to Sestri Levante, Finale Ligure, Toirano. Daniela very much hoped it could come to the Museo Bicknell with added input from the Museo. This was already agreed with Stefano.

There was much discussion that Giovanni, Daniela and Stefano needed to collaborate more to combine and share their respective considerable digitised (and other) resources. Marcus expressed his desire to see a single spreadsheet or database in the public domain showing the dates and places Clarence did each watercolour, rubbing or other artefact. Marcus's list already has over 2,000 such date and place correlations which is being made

available to Francesca Boschieri for her "Via degli inglese" exhibition, the British round Liguria.

A list of all the specimens of the Herbarium Bicknell preserved in Bordighera will be available in the website www.museobicknell.com. A previous published GIS map with the same data is currently "under maintenance". Some editions of Bicknell Library preserved in Bordighera Museum were digitised in the Biblioteca Digitale Ligure <https://shorturl.at/LDYKz> and also researchable in the Catalogo delle Biblioteche Liguri [OPAC Catalogo Biblioteche Liguri](#)

Graham Avery asked if Stefano had been able to correlate the plates, for example, in Clarence's "Flowering plants of the Riviera" with the Genoa plates. Stefano said he hadn't, and he thought Clarence would actually have made several versions of the same plant. This will surely be done after all the drawings will be databased. Graham also asked if the locations of these plants had been found. Stefano answered that all drawings report the locality in which the flower has been collected. Stefano also said that it is possible that the depicted flowers are those in the herbarium of the Genoa University. This match has still to be fully verified, of course taking into account also the *exiccata* present at the Bicknell's Museum in Bordighera.

Stefano said a much larger exhibition was planned which would include Clarence material but much more, with a strong message on the loss of species in the recent past. Renchi asked if it would show what species were left. Stefano said that this is indeed possible, but it takes a lot of effort. For example the Natural History Museum "G. Doria" in Genoa has 5 millions of specimens in its collection but so far only very little had been digitised. We are still far from being able to carry out a proper estimation of the fauna and flora loss but specimens are there in the collections and this is technically possible.

8. MB was delighted to say that **Graham Avery's** most recent paper had been published on our website: "Arthur Evans and the rock engravings" <https://clarecebicknell.com/6337-2/> and https://clarecebicknell.com/wp-content/uploads/evans_bicknell_petroglyphs_by_graham_avery.pdf.

Graham said this would be the last of his papers on Clarence and he was hoping to publish a collection of all 25 of his papers at some stage. MB emphasised how grateful the Association was for all the knowledge Graham had contributed to Clarence over the years.

9. **Prof. Nick Ray** wondered if there was any architectural material in Clarence's work, as he found a website "Drawing Matters" was particularly useful in gathering new resources. Marcus has now sent to Nick some sketches by Clarence of architectural features and patterns but with the advice that there is maybe not enough to warrant an essay.

10. **Prof. Humphrey Tonkin** wondered if there was any Clarence Esperanto material in the Museo Bicknell. Giovanni could only recollect 2 postcards. Humphrey reminded the meeting that 110 poems by Clarence in Esperanto had already been published. He had a copy of 200 or so poems by other poets which Clarence translated, some of which might be worth publishing.

Next meeting Tuesday 15 July 2025 at 3pm London time, with short AGM.
Marcus Bicknell, Chairman

Marcus Bicknell, Chairman
Clarence Bicknell Association
Homefarm Orchard, Kirby Close, Threehouseholds
Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4FF, UK
A charitable unincorporated association as defined by, and governed by, the United Kingdom Charities Act 2011

email: info@clarecebicknell.com
web: www.clarecebicknell.com
phone +44 1494 872751
mobile +44 7748 111444