

# Clarence Bicknell

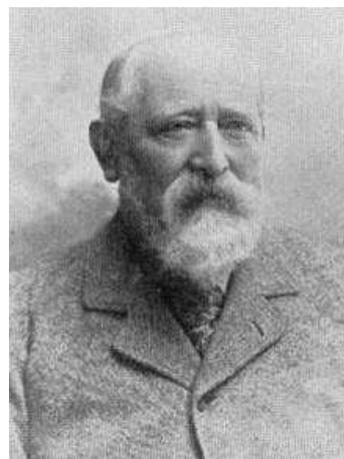
Discovering a splendid, but forgotten, European artist and naturalist

A proposal to celebrate the 2018 Centenary of Clarence Bicknell's death with new academic research, a major exhibition touring European cultural capitals, a biography and illustrated books, conferences, and television documentaries.

Draft development plan as preliminary to requests for funding

## 1. Summary

Clarence Bicknell (1842–1918) was a man of letters, an artist, author, traveller, botanist, archaeologist, pastor, humanist and Esperantist. The particular circumstances of his life meant his talent and achievements went unnoticed. Luckily a mass of his fine and varied work safely survives – vivid, colourful and lively. So there is a “freshness” about his work, and the rather singular life in which he made it. His activities across three countries of Europe and the chance to promote and exhibit Clarence Bicknell in several other countries provide a European dimension today.

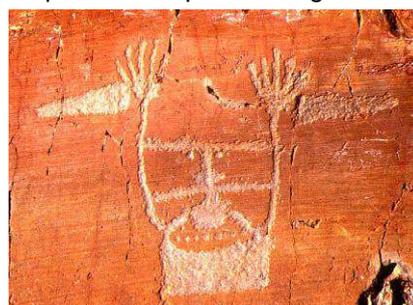


The value of Clarence Bicknell's pioneering work in several different disciplines is increasingly appreciated by experts – in particular his recording, cataloguing and publication of the prehistoric rock engravings of the Vallée des Merveilles, his drawings of the flowering plants of the Riviera, his creation of the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera, and his contribution to the idealist universal language Esperanto.

The Clarence Bicknell 2018 Centenary will celebrate his life with new research from several universities a campaign of events, a first biography, other illustrated publications and media coverage in several countries of Europe. A Clarence Bicknell Association and a high quality dedicated web site [www.clarencebicknell.com](http://www.clarencebicknell.com) have been created. The objective is to help people discover – one can say to “excavate” for he was archaeologist – his work and life as a little-known part of Europe's heritage.

Clarence Bicknell has to be seen to be believed.

Web site, books and television go so far, but much of Clarence's output needs to be experienced for real. That is why we propose **an exhibition touring European cultural capitals** throughout 2018 (possibly in advance and after). The initial proposal is for a tour of cities relevant to Clarence, the “Host locations”, with a stay of about eight



weeks in each. If demand (from participating museums willing to host the exhibition) and budget were in place then the list could be extended to Brussels, London, Paris, Milan, Rome, Berlin and other capitals (“other locations round Europe”).

#### The Host locations in 2018

Tende, Musée des Merveilles  
 Bordighera, Museo Bicknell  
 Genoa, Museum of World Culture or other  
 Nice, Musée des Beaux-Arts or other  
 Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

#### Other Locations round Europe

Triennale di Milano  
 Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
 Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles  
 Kew Library, Royal Botanic Gardens, London  
 Oxford Herbaria (with the Bodleian Library)

(The museums are listed as indicative examples in this paper, and they have not yet agreed to participate. We are seeking locations in Germany, Eastern Europe, and other parts of the European Union)

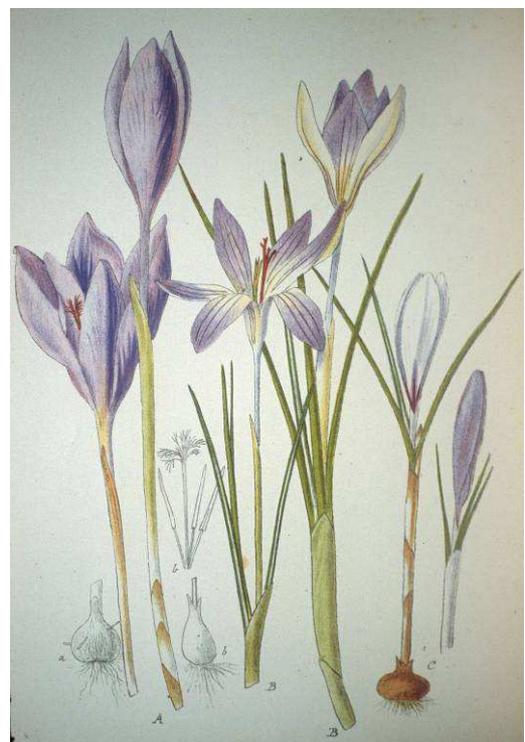
The principal elements of the show would be...

- Re-creation in full size of some of Clarence’s works of arts and crafts,
- Originals of his botanical works and vellum-bound books, protected in glass cases,
- Nearby to these originals, touch screen representations of the contents of these books, enabling the visitor to browse through the pages.
- Video and photographic re-creations of a day in Clarence’s life, copies of rock engravings,
- Samples of Clarence’s other collections, for example the glass cases of butterflies, stuffed birds, the umbrella pot and pressed flowers, and
- Samples of his printed publications, photos of Clarence in Casterino and Bordighera



The cost of the touring exhibition is presently estimated at between €250,000 and €400,000. A high quality biography would need underwriting of €80,000 (details on page 19).

New academic research proposed by Nottingham and Genoa Universities, the International Institute of Ligurian Studies and other institutions would cost several million euros. Genoa also proposes the completion of the digitisation of Clarence’s rubbings of the rock engravings of the Merveilles, his botanical drawings and his herbaria. The Clarence Bicknell Association has proposed its support in coordinating the exhibition, book and media for 2018 in conjunction with the academic research which will be run by a scientific committee now being composed. With an institutional lead partner in place, the project we will have the mechanism to apply in 2015 for funding from the Europe Union which has several relevant initiatives, the Culture and MEDIA sub-programmes and the new Creative Europe programme.



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## 2. Who was Clarence Bicknell?

Born in London, Clarence was the 13th child of Elhanan Bicknell, whale oil magnate and art patron; after studying at Cambridge University he became an Anglican priest, and from 1879 lived in the resort town of Bordighera on the Italian coast between Menton and Genoa; he died at the summer home he had built at Casterino in the high mountains of the Franco-Italian border on 17th July 1918.

Today the value of Clarence Bicknell's pioneering work in several different disciplines is increasingly appreciated by experts – in particular his recording, cataloguing and publication of the prehistoric rock engravings of the Vallée des Merveilles, his drawings of the flowering plants of the Riviera, his creation of the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera, and his contribution to the idealist international language Esperanto.

He applied his art to crafts in that elegant combination of naturalistic and geometric characteristic of *art nouveau* and the English Arts & Crafts Movement, he wrote and published several research and reference books, he was a collector of stuffed birds, butterflies, fossils, minerals. He invested time and money in the poor of Walworth in London in the 1860s, and he worked for the needy of Bordighera at the end of the century.

He was a Polymath, a person whose expertise spans a significant number of different subject areas, and a Renaissance man in the sense that humans are empowered and limitless in their capacity for development, and that people should embrace all knowledge and develop their capacities as fully as possible.

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## 3. Why does Clarence Bicknell matter?

Several unusual, even unique aspects of Clarence's *persona* are reflected in his work. The prime aspect is simple: the variety, the quality, the freshness and the liveliness of his art and works.

He left the proud Victorian Britain and its industrial revolution for Southern Europe where he won respect in the community and found energy and creativity in nature and the mountains. He discovered and created things mostly on his own; his disciplines were self taught and his ideologies therefore have an intrinsically original quality. His talents covered so many disciplines that it's hard to imagine how he found the time; clearly, at the height of his research into the prehistoric rock engravings of Mont Bego, he was up before dawn to walk up the mountain, recording engravings with wax rubbings and drawing flowers before returning home to an evening spent painting the flowers, writing up the finds of the day and corresponding with other archaeologists and botanists across Europe in the gathering dark. Clarence's humility shows in the way in which he considered his work to be the simple task of recording what he found and saw. Actually, there was great creativity, in how he found and how he saw, in how he transformed the natural forms into balanced designs.

Clarence Bicknell was an international man. Fluent in English, French and Italian, he also conversed in other languages. He travelled the world and recorded in words and colour sketches what he found. He took up the cause of Esperanto as a language which would unite different peoples of the world and used it to write lyrical poetry. Half a century before the creation of what is now the European Union, Clarence was showing an interest in the means of unifying cultures across Europe. He died in 1918, the last year of the Great War, when his optimistic flame of international community had been swallowed in darkness.

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#### 4. *Why is Clarence Bicknell worth remembering?*

Every year books are written about the famous in history – Napoleon or Churchill – and exhibitions made of work by the famous artists – Picasso or Matisse. But there are few new facts about the famous, so the new biographies have to recycle and reshape what is known already. Some great artists have left not many pieces of work, and others are familiar through repeated exposure: it is hard, perhaps impossible, to present a new insight and or vision in our understanding of van Gogh.

Alongside these famous names are a ‘second division’ of forgotten personalities and artists, who work is never given attention. Yet often it is of first-class technical quality and shows the most accomplished skill. It has a freshness because it is all new to us. And when it is less novel, less imaginative than the work of the great masters, it instead shows something different, something intriguing and instructive in the ‘spirit of the age’.

Clarence Bicknell is one of these personalities and artists. He was a remarkable and strong character, and there luckily survives a mass of material to tell the story of an unusual life, and a life distinctive of the age in which it was spent. And there is more than a mass – there is a wealth – of exquisite and skilled art and graphics. Clarence was an Englishman abroad, in Italy and in what is now France, so his *corpus* illuminates and is illuminated by the state of Europe a century ago, when even near-by lands seemed strange and distant.

Yet before now there have been only good but modest exhibitions, at the Musée des Merveilles in Tende (Alpes-Maritimes, France) and at his Museo Bicknell in Bordighera (Italy). There is a good but very brief illustrated biographical essay in book form. Those tests have shown the material exists, that it makes a good showing, that there is interest – and therefore show a bigger venture is worthwhile and viable, about both the art and about the life and times.

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#### 5. *Why have we forgotten Clarence Bicknell?*

One can put this question the other way round: “If Clarence Bicknell is such an interesting figure and his work so good, why is he not famous already? There must be a good reason he is obscure.” No. History is capricious in who it remembers and who it forgets. A strong strand in history and in art history is the re-discovery of figures overlooked before which a later age finds intriguing, even enthralling.

Clarence is a forgotten man for three reasons.

- Firstly, he chose to take himself out of the main streams of the art world, of the church and of archaeology. His father’s *mondain* salon and the famous artists who frequented that world, did not seem to appeal to him. He forsook it. His own art began with botanical paintings for the purpose of recording his finds and cataloguing a world which he discovered on his own; his hundreds of superb and large flower paintings and botanical drawings seem never to have been exhibited.
- Secondly, he did not consider his own talent exceptional, and nothing he did was for self-aggrandisement. Few members of the public knew about him.
- Thirdly he developed his talents after leaving Britain, settling in Bordighera in North West Italy with his summer house up in mountains which are now in France. Detached from any one country he had no focal place where a group of followers might have supported him. The wonderful set of unique watercolour books he made were each dedicated to and given to a friend; no one else, certainly no public ever saw them. His collections are scattered across museums and galleries through three countries, from Bordighera in Italy, to Tende in France, and the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England. Even today, those that know him are divided between experts in separate disciplines and between British, Italians and French *cognoscenti* – who know each a fragment rather than the whole picture.

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## 6. *Why should we revive interest in him?*

The leading figures in any given period were famous and remain famous. However important they were, however good their work, both their creative work and the stories of their lives are dulled by exposure, repetition and familiarity. This where the ignorance a broad public has of Clarence – arising from his own diffidence and humility – is actually a big plus. His work, his personality are absolutely new and fresh to us. But the spread of his talents and the originality of his work will appeal to many people interested in one of his talents or in their diversity. It is surprising and interesting to find out about him. That he was not, is not an already known “star” means that Clarence Bicknell has yet to be discovered. And the variety and richness of his art and life mean each of us can explore a different aspect: each of us can “excavate” discover their “own” Clarence.

Clarence may not have the notoriety back in England of John Ruskin, William Morris, nor perhaps does he have the glamorous appeal of the Americans and English like Gordon Bennett and Isadora Duncan who at the same period were wowing Cannes and Nice. It is not unfair (because he thought so himself) to Clarence to say that, in each individual domain of activity, he is not a star player (although several archaeology and botany experts consider his work to be of the highest quality). But the spread of his talents and the originality of his work will appeal to many people interested in one of his talents or in their diversity. It is surprising and interesting to find out about him. The fact that he is not a star player means that Clarence Bicknell has yet to be discovered... he is “fresh”, he is exciting for people to discover now, a hundred years later.

The last four years of Clarence’s life were marked by the Great War, with the vast loss of life in the trenches of the European Western Front. A century on, we see 1914-18 as a great disaster of imperial expansion by the European nations, an end-result of state self-aggrandisement and the cruel diversion of the industrial revolution to mass destruction; so it is all the more important to remember and to bear witness to the work and personality of a man who gave his life to study, to the arts, to international understanding and to pacifism.

He is a personality whose influence is uplifting. His work brings a smile to the lips. If he’s a “best kept secret” then those who know about him have a duty (and desire) to take his work to a wider audience.

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## 7. What exists of his work and how good is it?

Clarence Bicknell's work is scattered now, spread across the UK, France and Italy, in varied public museums and galleries, and in private hands. It has never been brought together for exhibition purposes, and now can be. There are already indications are that the key owners and curators of Clarence's work favour pooling their resources for a travelling exhibition, the publication of one or more books, and other media coverage.



Right: Clarence on the Chiappes de Fontanalba, a valley of flat rock face ideal for early man's rock engraving

So much is the quantity that in some cases – the botanical paintings and rubbings of the rock engravings – there are hundreds of good examples to choose from. Some masterpieces are surely destroyed now, whilst others are lost. Already, after very limited publicity given to Clarence Bicknell through the first beginning of this project, unknown items are starting to surface.

**Archaeology.** Clarence's wax rubbings, photos and written studies of the prehistoric rock engravings of the Mont Bego area are held by the *Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri* in Bordighera and Genoa, Italy. Originals (transported from the mountain for safety) and duplicates of the most notable pieces are in the *Musée des Merveilles* in Tende, France. Christopher Chippindale, Reader in Archaeology at *Cambridge University* and author of works on Clarence Bicknell, has experience of exhibiting his works in different environments, notably Cambridge and Tende. He writes...

"In 1909, the senior French prehistorian Cartailhac paid Bicknell a visit. He was greatly interested by his long day's excursion into the *Val Fontanalba*. The rocks were much more wonderful than he had expected; and he said. "It is a great mystery." His antiquarian colleagues had previously escaped into *Carthaginian* fantasies. In study of the *Merviglie* today, one sees emphasis on a thorough field search, on a meticulous field record and inventory, on classification, and on considered inference from studious observation in the field and comparative analysis of the record. In short, Bicknell's efforts make his work the model for work a century later.

"Why is this so? The truth is that the then professionals had no technique to study the art, beyond what Bicknell worked out for himself. Professor Arturo Issel gave over a large portion of his large prehistory of Liguria (1903) to an account of the figures. Bicknell called this the "most important and comprehensive contribution to the subject yet written". In comparing Bicknell's writing with Issel's, it is striking how strong the "amateur" is in its systematic observation on the ground. By contrast the "professional" is weak in its striking preference for unverifiable speculation as to motives, meaning and authorship. Issel – though he wrote 70 pages on the subject – had seen very few figures himself. For the most part Bicknell was disappointed when the experts did not come to his mountain; if they did, then so briefly. The first compatriot British archaeologist to see them was Miles Burkitt, as late as 1929! But perhaps they had no need to go; Déchelette's great *Manuel d'Archéologie* (1910) provides a sufficiently large and good account, entirely from Bicknell's publications, and can date the figures securely to its Bronze Age period I.



Right: first known photograph of Le Sorcier, rock engraving in the Vallée des Merveilles. The hand-written label reads "Classe II, 326, L.Pollini (Amateur) Figure Preistoriche Nel Vallone delle Miraviglie". Luigi Pollini was Clarence Bicknell's faithful colleague and right-hand-man.

“The story of archaeology in 19th Century Europe is the giving-up of habits drawn from history and antiquarian studies in favour of different methods owing allegiance to natural history and observational science. Where speculations had drawn on ancient authors, using them to guess at ancient ethnicities, the new archaeology found better models in the field sciences, in the stratigraphic methods of the geologists, and in the classifying systems of the natural historians. Instead of supposing Phoenicians or Carthaginians or Hittites or Egyptians, which the antiquarians did for *Monte Bego* as they did across ancient Europe, Bicknell worked in the spirit of the discipline he knew, that of field botany. In prehistory, it turned out, the apparatus of antiquarian wisdom was more than an irrelevance; it was an actual, and often considerable, obstacle.

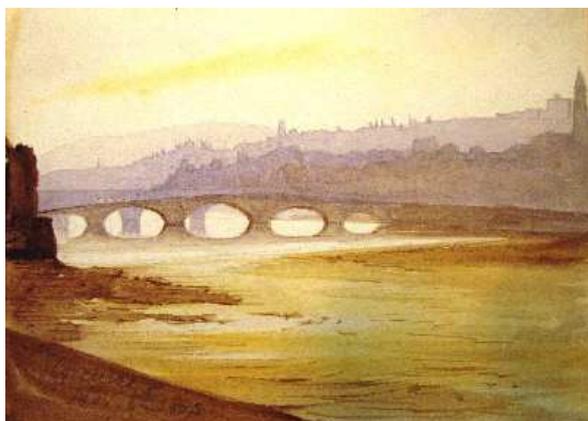
“The chief reason for the high quality of Bicknell’s work was his ignorance of what a professional would do to study the art. One can see much the same course of events in the slow acceptance, not many years before, of an ancient date for the Ice Age paintings in the deep French and Spanish caves, where the guess that fine images could not be very ancient was overwhelmed by the geological demonstration of their prehistoric context. Where Bicknell thought himself only an amateur in these matters, in truth his were the requisite skills.”

**Botany.** In 1885 Clarence published a selection of his paintings in the book *Flowering plants and ferns of the Riviera*, splendidly illustrated with 82 coloured plates (image, right, a sample) and accompanying notes on 280 species. He explained in the Preface that he was inspired by the British botanist J.T. Moggridge who, in a *Flora of neighbouring Menton*, published in London in 1864, had encouraged others to follow his example in publishing illustrations of the local flora.



Clarence commented regretfully that many of the plants of the coast and adjacent mountains ‘are now to be found no more, and many others are becoming extremely scarce, owing to the ravages committed by horticulturalists’ agents and winter visitors... Every autumn, too... a new road or villa or vineyard has caused the disappearance of some favourite old friends’. Clarence’s *Flora of Bordighera and San Remo*, published in 1896, was a work of reference - a list of species, drawn up on the basis of his excursions, without illustrations.

Clarence gave many books to the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera; about a third of its volumes for the period from 1880 to 1910 are botanical works, including his own publications and those of his botanical friends. The Fitzwilliam Museum has some of Clarence’s books and art, 416 items, mostly botanical drawings and some illustrated vellum-bound books. In addition to these two collection, the Bicknell family holds other illustrated vellum-bound books and copies of the botanical drawings suitable for exhibition.



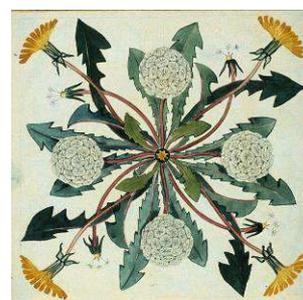
**Art.** Although Clarence is known as a painter of botanical water colours, he painted and drew sketches all his life. The Bicknell family collection and the Museo Bicknell have many examples of architecture, landscapes and images which Clarence observed on his travels. His watercolour of Florence (left) dated 1885 is of excellent quality; the influence of Turner, whom he had often met in his father’s house near London, is evident in the shaded colouring, the amorphous shadows and the hazy background.

**Arts and Crafts.** Clarence's painting and drawing was not limited to his water colours of plants. He sketched landscapes, architectural detail, and other subjects especially when he was walking or travelling. Much of his illustration is enhanced into patterns, such as the repetitive use of the stem of a flower and its blossom to create a frame for a page in one of the visitors' books or other vellum albums. He decorated the whole of the interior of the Casa Fontanalba in these floral designs and the umbrella pots of the Museo Bicknell (image right). His proverbs in Esperanto are most often illuminated with the same floral surrounds.



In these ways one can consider Clarence a master of “arts and crafts”. Certainly, the Arts and Crafts movement flourished between 1860 and 1910, the period of Clarence's greatest output, and he cannot have avoided influence from some of his peers. For example the movement was inspired by the writings of John Ruskin (1819–1900), among others, the same Ruskin who was a friend of Clarence's father and a frequent guest at the family home in Herne Hill. It is likely that Clarence knew from the world around him that there was value in painted creativity other than just landscapes and portraits on canvas.

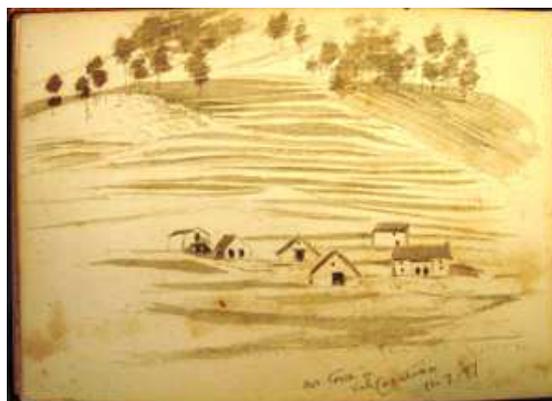
One of Clarence's favourite flowers was the dandelion. This repetitive image (right) is from the Casa Fontanalba VIP book.



When one thinks of Arts and Crafts, one thinks of its greatest exponent, the artist and writer William Morris (1834–1896, just 10 years older) who was in his stride in the 1860s when Clarence was going through university. Morris's use of floral themes to make designs for wallpaper and china might have inspired Clarence to use his brushwork talents to decorate the vellum books and other items round the house. Many of Clarence's patterns, such as those which dominate the collection in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, are formed in geometric patterns such that they could easily be adopted by today's design-hungry consumers as table mats, tea cloths and kitchen tiles.

It is our intention at the Clarence Bicknell Association to invite an expert in the Arts and Crafts world to assess Clarence's contribution to the movement and or the creation by him of a new style.

**The Casa Fontanalba.** In the summer of 1886, Clarence Bicknell rented a house at Casterino on the gentler slopes of Mount Bego, where he could combine his studies of alpine plants and the rock engravings. Increasingly his summers were spent in amassing his collection of drawings, rubbings, and photographs, on which he based his first papers in Italian scientific journals. His 1897 drawing of 6 small buildings (below, right) is titled, ironically or not, “our town”. In 1902 he published in Bordighera “*The Prehistoric Rock Engravings in the Italian Maritime Alps*”, and a further account of his explorations followed in 1903. The unwelcome news that year that his rented base in Casterino had been sold, and that no other was available, was met with his decision to build a place of his own. All materials had to be transported by mules from Tende. Work began in 1905 and a year later. The plot of land was provided for Clarence's lifetime by the Count Guido d'Alberti de la Briga whose family estate covered, and still covers, a large part of the Mercantour from La Brigue to Tende and the *Vallée des Merveilles*.



The architect Robert MacDonald conceived a simple rectangular plan on two floors in a colonial style with terrace and balconies on three sides.



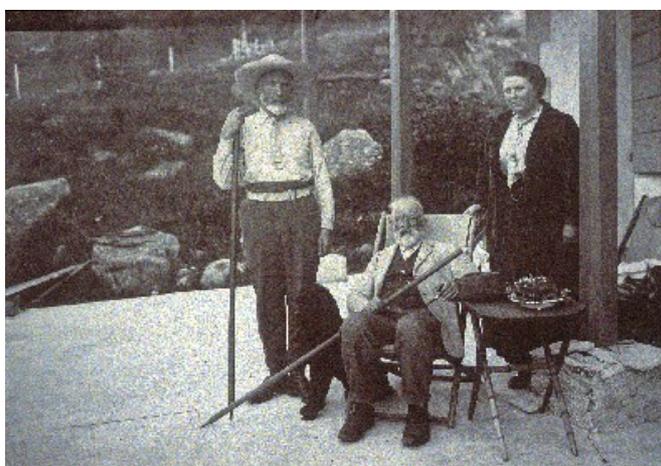
The Casa Fontanalba was built by Clarence Bicknell and his contractor Signor Lanteri of Tenda in summer 1905 and the spring of 1906 in what is now the village of Casterino. Casa Fontanalba was ready for use in June 1906 so that Bicknell could stay there for his annual visit in 'my beloved mountain cottage and the free life I so enjoy'.

The decoration of the building by Clarence Bicknell is outstanding in the detail of the execution, the coherent whole and the way in which it summarises Clarence's life and

works. Features like fireplaces and the position of beds are suitably framed and decorated. The walls of many of the rooms are framed with friezes painted in colour on the plaster, together with patterns composed of the flowers found around the house, motifs drawn from his archaeological discoveries – the rock engravings – proverbs in English and Esperanto mounted in heraldic shields and illuminated initials of his friends and visitors. A visitor wrote in his diary "By the time I got up the following day, Clarence had already painted my initials in the next available space on the wall."

The proverbs in Esperanto feature also on the windows and doors of the house, where Clarence used oil paints. Happily, the shutters, when closed, protect the decoration from the elements; these decorations are visible when the shutters are fully opened. Only in a few cases has the painting of the shutters suffered the passage of time and the elements. The d'Alberti family has maintained the Casa Fontanalba with significant care and investment over the years; considering the mountain location and the 6-8 month long coverage by snow every year, the exterior and interior of the house are in good condition. The proximity of the stream to the North side and the melting of the snows in spring put the Casa at significant risk of dampness, so the family is obliged to find the means to ensure its condition.

The splendour of Clarence's decorations were featured with full colour photos (sample, right) by Jean Pierre Naudal in the magazine "World of Interiors" of June 1990<sup>3</sup> and in Christopher Chippindale's "A High Way to Heaven"<sup>4</sup>. At the request of the d'Alberti family, pending their decisions on future funding of the maintenance of the house, we do not display here a multitude of the Naudal photos (nor are any shown on the Clarence Bicknell web site). It is not clear how the photos could be monetised, but the Clarence Bicknell Association would hope to be able to cooperate with the family in finding the means of doing so and in making images available on a suitable basis. It is to be hoped that images of the interior of the house, or even reconstructions, could be made available for the 2018 Clarence Bicknell touring exhibition.



The Casa Fontanalba is not open to visits by the public. Because of the risk of damage to the decorations it would be necessary to have the house attended at all times. The traffic of tourists to Casterino is not big enough to hope for a regular flow of visitors,

especially as most visitors are there to go walking in the Fontanalbe and the Vallée des Merveilles. Tourist interest is catered for by the excellent Musée des Merveilles at Tende <http://www.museedesmerveilles.com>

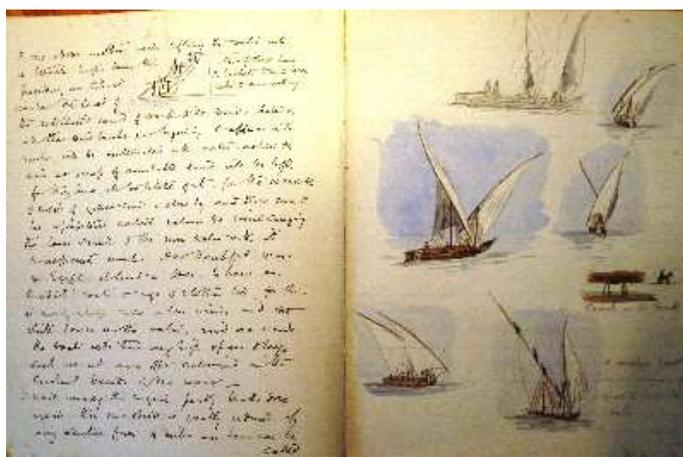
**Writing:** Clarence Bicknell expressed himself in many ways; in his disciplines like botany and archaeology, in his collecting and recording which underpinned those two disciplines, his art (especially botanical), his beliefs (Christianity, Esperanto and pacifism in that order), his friends (the visitors' book at the Casa Fontanalba and his activities in Bordighera bear witness) and his writing.

In much of his work, writing is used to record; to record items in a collection, to record details of a rock engraving, to record the events of a day cruising up the Nile or to annotate a botanical find. Writing is therefore a discipline for Clarence, more the product of a graduate in maths than a romantic. Even in his long-form works, those published as books, the bulk of the material is in list form. There are exceptions, such as his poems in the Esperanto language, but examples of writing from within his heart are rare.

The childhood influences on Clarence, around the house of his father Elhanan Bicknell, patron of great artists like Turner, Landseer and Roberts, were primarily artistic. But he cannot have been unaware of the great importance attached to fiction writing in the middle of the 19th century in London. His cousin was Phiz, Charles Dickens' illustrator, his celebrated brother Herman wrote history and translations, and his brother Sydney hobnobbed with Irving, Thackeray, Trollope, Dickens and other writers.

If Clarence wrote much at Cambridge or during his years as a priest in England, we are not aware of it. But when he settled in 1878-9, aged thirty six, in Bordighera, on the Italian Riviera, he was writing quite profusely, in addition to his botanising and drawing. By 1884 Clarence had completed over a thousand botanical drawings. A few years later he found his drawings and written descriptions of plants complete enough to proceed to their publication and in 1885 Clarence's first oeuvre *Flowering Plants and Ferns of the Riviera and Neighbouring Mountains* was published.

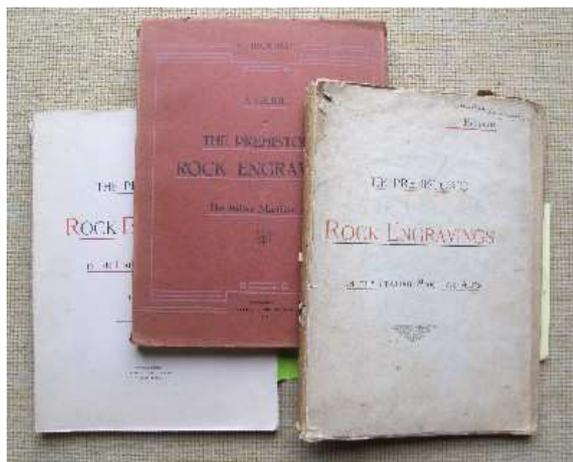
Although he had visited the Vallée des Merveilles already, he was more occupied in Bordighera. In 1888 his Museo Bicknell opened. He was travelling, for fun; the family collection contains his diaries from his mini Grand Tours such as his cruise up the Nile in December 1889 to January 1890 (reproduction, right). This diary is mostly in text form; description of the individuals on the boat with him (but referred to as a, b, c rather than by their names – how frustrating for a researcher), the daily pattern and visiting key sites. The text is delightfully adorned with a multitude of little water-colours, framed by the text. It seems clear that he drew the images during the day and then wrote the text around them later in the evening. The images are not of the temple of Abu Simbel or the Pyramids of Giza but of other aspects of the backdrop to the Nile which caught his fancy ... and I can only describe these items as "collections". Not content to draw one Nile fisherman's boat, he drew 26 in the one book (one of these pages is shown above right). He picked up the theme of sheep and blessed us with even more. In each case he is developing on the shape and angles of the subject to better understand their function and their form.



This regrouping of many similar items when he's drawing comes to define Clarence's botanical and archaeological work... the painstaking recording by drawing of every example of the items he was working on.

During the late 80s and early 90s, evidence suggests Clarence found the plants around him as the principal interest. His Bordighera excursion notebooks of 1893 are listings of flower species and his "*Flora of Bordighera and San Remo*" published in 1896 is an unillustrated list of species written by hand.

Clarence had made his second visit to the *Vallée des Merveilles* as early as 1885 and sketched about 50 rock engravings; this is the date at which Clarence's interest was first captivated by the mysterious marks on the rock. In 1897 Clarence made the third visits and made enough rubbing to be able to report to the Society of Antiquarians of London (published in its proceedings) and read a paper to the *Società Ligustica* in Genoa. But it was not until 1902 that he was able to spend several months in the high mountains. Between the end of the summer and November 1902 he had researched and written his first substantive report on the rock engravings in "A Guide to the Prehistoric Rock Engravings in the Italian Maritime Alps". One cannot imagine getting a book written and published in hard form today, even with our electronic aids. Indeed, Clarence continued the work on the rock engravings for a decade and the last edition of this book was published in 1913.



In 1897 Clarence had joined the Esperanto movement and had started writing poems in this universal language and translating church hymns from English. Some of this work is undated but it's evident that he fitted his Esperanto in between his multiple other activities. In the years before he died he was producing Esperanto texts in Brail for the blind.

In conclusion, Clarence was not a great writer. But he was a prolific writer. And he used it as a means of recording his passions, his works, his travels and his collections.

**Esperanto.** Clarence Bicknell learned Esperanto in 1897, having previously studied Volapuk which enjoyed some success as a planned international language before being largely superseded by Esperanto. Bicknell must have started writing Esperanto around 1900 because his piece "La Piemonta Valo Pesio" (The Piedmont Pesio Valley) appeared in the collection *Esperantaj Prozaĵoj* (Pieces of Esperanto Prose) in 1902 edited by Louis de Beaufront. He attended the first major international gathering of Esperanto-speakers which took place in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France, in 1905, at which the creator of Esperanto, the Polish ophthalmologist Ludoviko Lazaro Zamenhof, gave the keynote speech. Around this time Bicknell began writing poetry in Esperanto and became the first laureate of the *Internaciaj Floraj Ludoj* (International Floral Games) held in Barcelona, Spain, in 1909. His original poems ("popular but somewhat primitive"<sup>1</sup>) appeared in contemporary periodicals including *La Revuo* (The Review) (1906-1914) and *The British Esperantist*. Many poems, however, remained in manuscript form.



In 1966, Kalocsay wrote in his study on Bicknell in *Norda Prismo* (Northern Prism): "One can ponder on C. Bicknell's learning Esperanto at the age of 55 and his being probably over 60 when

he produced his first poems, having to strive more than ten years before he succeeded in expressing himself directly in poetry.”

Bicknell was also a translator into Esperanto of works including Thomas Macaulay's "Horacio" in 1906; Tennyson's "Gvinevero" (Guinevere) in 1907, Julian Sturgis's "Rikoltado de la Pecoĵ" (the one-act comedy "Harvesting the Pieces), "Ŝakludo" in 1915 (from Giacosa's *Una partita a scacchi* 1915) and William Wordsworth's "La Narcisoĵ" (The Daffodils) published in 1926.

He produced a number of hymns that are still in use (seven translations and one original in *Adoru Kantante* (1971), and nine texts in *Adoru* (2001).

The walls of his mountain home, the Casa Fontanalba, and other items like the umbrella pots in the *Museo Bicknell* in Bordighera (photo, above right), are painted with inscriptions in Esperanto.



His VIP book at the *Casa Fontanalba* consists of mini-bios of the people who visited him, all in Esperanto.

He was active in work on behalf of the blind, and transcribed many Esperanto books into Braille. He gave financial support to Esperanto organisations, transcribed Esperanto texts into Braille produced several of them as publications. He founded an Esperanto group in Bordighera, Italy (photo, left), and remained its president until his death.

**Collections.** Throughout his life Clarence drew sketches in pencil, ink or watercolour. Other subjects became a brief obsession for him as he analysed them in the variations...

- On his trip up the Nile over New Year 1889-90 Clarence made numerous "flying sketches" of Nile sail boats as he calls them in the diary which they illustrate. We count 44 exquisite and detailed water colours of these boats, with apparent fascination for the angle of the boat in the water and of the sail to the boat.
- On his first trips up to Casterino his eye was taken with the sheep in the upland pastures. For days on end his sketch book is full of sheep, single, together, from all angles.
- His landscapes show themes as any artist's would; but in Clarence's case he would stay for several days with one theme at a time such as architectural details in Swiss and Italian cathedrals (1882-3), the rocky west coast of Ireland (earlier in 1889), the mountains viewed from different points in Casterino and the area (1898-1900) or a village in the Cuneo valley; each subject shown in a multitude of sketches.
- In his early days in Bordighera, Clarence collected hundreds of different species of butterflies. Mounted and glassed in wooden drawers, the butterfly collection can be viewed at the *Museo Bicknell* in Bordighera (image, right).
- Clarence's collection of stuffed birds is less well known but just as impressive.
- Clarence collected fossils and minerals which he showed to visitors to the Casa Fontanalba
- In the *Casa Fontanalba*, Clarence's instinct for repetitive themes in decoration came to a delightful fulfilment. He was aware that he was creating a building, decorations and books which would be part of his legacy "for those that come afterwards" and here was a place



where he had solo control. The wall decorations use the forms of the rock engravings and the flora of the area in the friezes and door surrounds. The window shutters use both the flora and his “collection” of proverbs in the Esperanto language.

- The *Casa Fontanalba* visitors’ book, signed by everyone who came to the house, is illustrated, page after page, with simple but beautiful water colours of flowers of the region. The borders of each page are illuminated with repetitive use of a feature of the flower, in a style reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement of William Morris and others. The book in which he wrote snippets about the more important people (and dogs) in his life (which I refer to as the VIP book) and the vellum album of four-to-a-page flowers from the Casa Fontanalba garden are treated similarly: formatted, in orderly form, and decorated ...as collections.
- Even when expressing his sense of humour, Clarence made a collection out of every gesture. Clarence wrote many letters, so he received many. The incorrect spellings of his names were so numerous that Clarence kept, for his amusement, every single envelope in a collection still in the family’s possession. For Margaret Berry, Bicknell made a botanical version of the Victorian game “Happy Families”. There are four flowers each from 16 flower families, plus six extra jokers, each painted in watercolour. Each year, in a family tradition, he painted for Margaret Berry a watercolour album on a chosen theme: a book of marguerites for Margaret, a book of Berries for the Berrys, and “The Triumph of the Dandelion” in which flowers compete for the crown as Beauty Queen of Fontanalba.<sup>4</sup>

That makes at least nine different aspects of Clarence’s creative output which can be considered collections. Clarence acknowledged indirectly his instinct as a collector. Of the rock engravings, in the early stages of research, he wrote “We are only the collectors of facts, and must leave to others the task of studying them more profoundly”. This might be false modesty because he was inexorably led up the path of curiosity and comprehension. But his interpretation was always based on his own findings in the field. He became very good at identifying the forms of the engravings: farmers working, tools and implements, oxen ploughing, cattle enclosures and sacred images. His interpretations (and the way in which similar icons are grouped on the page... collections) pervade his writing including “*A Guide to the Prehistoric Rock Engravings in the Italian Maritime Alps*”.

Christopher Chippindale says; “What is a field naturalist to do? First, to search and find. Then, to record and describe. Then, to classify. All these things Bicknell did...”

The instinct to collect was a fundamental part of Clarence’s work and play, and therefore of his legacy. Clarence himself is rather collectable which is why we enjoy researching his life and work. In this case, there is only one of him.

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In summarising this chapter “What exists and how good is it?” we can say that there is a wealth of evidence of his talents in the different domains. There is certainly too much to show in one exhibition so the task of the proponents will be the selection of exhibition material from what’s available. We discuss in the next paragraph the way in which Clarence’s work can be displayed or otherwise propagated.

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## 8. *The Plan... preparing for 2018*

This paper is a proposal for the activities in 2018 to commemorate the centenary of Clarence Bicknell's death. To bring his talents and the essence of the man to a larger audience, we need the following.

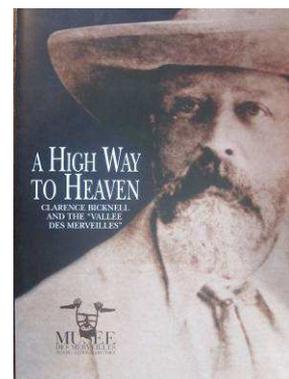
**New academic research** is proposed by Nottingham and Genoa Universities, the International Institute of Ligurian Studies and other institutions. Genoa also proposes the completion of the digitisation of Clarence's rubbings of the rock engravings of the Merveilles, his botanical drawings and his herbaria. The Clarence Bicknell Association has proposed its support in coordinating the exhibition, book and media for 2018 in conjunction with the academic research which will be run by a scientific committee now being composed. With an institutional lead partner in place, the project we will have the mechanism to apply in 2015 for funding from the Europe Union which has several relevant initiatives, the Culture and MEDIA sub-programmes and the new Creative Europe programme.

These research projects are at an early stage and depend on further work by professors and staff at the participating universities in organising their suitable researchers during the rest of 2014. Genoa and Nottingham Universities and the culture department of the Region of Liguria have already suggested some topics:

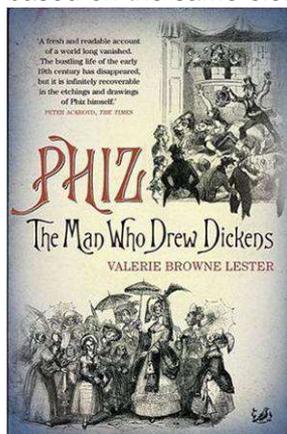
- a) how the Merveilles people lived
- b) emerging archaeology end 18<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- c) comparisons of Clarence Bicknell's work in the Merveilles with that of Henry de Lumley in output, technique and conclusions including comparing de Lumley's latest records with Clarence's to see which engraving are now flooded under the Lac des Mesches created during the war for hydro-electric power.
- d) influence of Clarence Bicknell on studies in the French and Italian Mediterranean Alps under the ALCOTRA programme (Alpi Latini Cooperazione Transfrontaliere) and the twinning of two neighbouring but trans-border national parks
- e) Sustainable Management of Floriculture
- f) Comparison of the presence of botanical species today in each detailed location, in comparison with 100 years ago. Historical geographers want to show the effect of man, erosion and climate change on wild flowers.

**A web site.** Having decided on the bones of this plan in early 2013, we have already acted on two aspects... the creation of the Clarence Bicknell Association and a web site dedicated at Clarence Bicknell. The results are excellent and can be seen at [www.clarencebicknell.com](http://www.clarencebicknell.com). Note that the pages are available not only in three current languages (English, Italian and French) but also in the universal Esperanto language which Clarence promoted so actively. The web site contains research materials and is designed to support and promote further research by individuals all over the world. News of events and research are carried in a blog and traffic is generated from more than one Facebook page, notably <https://www.facebook.com/clarencebicknell>. The web site is a useful resource for displaying a much greater range of Clarence's output than could be shown in an exhibition. The Clarence Bicknell Association is initially active in France, Italy and Great Britain, attracting members who want to promote knowledge of Clarence talents, benefit from exclusive events, conduct further research into his work and share this through the web site and at other events.

**Books.** Clarence Bicknell has never been the subject of a serious biography and it is time this oversight were rectified. We have made estimates of any underwriting that might be needed to ensure the creation of one or more significant books, and carried these costs forward into the overall cost of the plan.



We anticipate an all-encompassing book by Christopher Chippindale, Lecturer in Archaeology at Cambridge University and Clarence Bicknell expert. He is the author of a 1998 booklet published by the Conseil General des Alpes Maritimes for their Musée des Merveilles “*L'Echelle du Paradis: Clarence Bicknell et la Vallée des Merveilles*” in French, Italian and English. An expanded work based on the same elements will have appeal both as a biography of Clarence and as a pictorial album of his life, times and work.



We expect new research by specialist author Valerie Browne Lester to culminate in a) a new, different, book about an aspect of Clarence’s character or b) collaboration with Christopher Chippindale on one definitive book. Valerie is descended from Clarence Bicknell’s maternal grandfather and from Clarence’s cousin Phiz. Valerie’s book *Phiz: The Man Who Drew Dickens* (Random House 2006, cover image left) revealed hitherto unknown aspects of Phiz’s origins and has been very successful. Her biography of Giambattista *Bodoni* (1740–1813) the Italian typographer, type-designer, compositor, printer and publisher, will be published in 2014.

We expect to be able to encourage, without necessarily deploying resources, other written works, whether academic papers or more populist books, for publication in the lead-up to 2018. Both the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera and the Musée des Merveilles in Tende have sponsored and published papers on various topics around Clarence Bicknell, and it is likely that such work would develop into full-bodied works for 2018. We propose to make available these books and those already available from other Clarence-specialist institutions via our online activities and at the touring exhibition alongside the other merchandise discussed below.

**Seminars and conferences.** Clarence Bicknell has been remembered, again at the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera and the Musée des Merveilles in Tende, with seminars and conferences by specialist speakers such as researchers, scientifics, Bicknell family members and writers. They have attracted small but appreciative audiences. It is our intention to use this plan and the preparation for the 2018 centenary to encourage more significant series of seminars on topics surrounding Clarence, a couple of years in advance, and to spread them geographically to all parts of Europe.

**Touring exhibition.** Clarence Bicknell has to be seen to be believed. Web site, books and television go so far, but much of Clarence’s output needs to be experienced for real. That is why we propose an exhibition touring European cultural capitals throughout 2018 (possibly in advance and after). The initial proposal is for a tour of cities relevant to Clarence, eg, Tende, Bordighera, Genoa, Casterino, Nice, Cambridge etc. (the “host locations”) with a stay of about eight weeks in each. If demand (from participating museums willing to host the exhibition) and budget were in place then the list could be extended to Brussels, London, Paris, Milan, Florence, Rome, Berlin and other capitals (“other locations round Europe”).

**The Host locations**

Tende, Muse des Merveilles  
 Bordighera, Museo Bicknell  
 Genoa, Museum of World Culture, MUMA or other  
 Nice, Musée des Beaux-Arts or other  
 Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

The museums are listed as indicative examples in this paper, and they have not yet agreed to participate

**Other Locations round Europe**

Triennale di Milano  
 Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
 Palais des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles  
 Kew Library, Royal Botanic Gardens, London  
 Oxford Herbaria (with the Bodleian Library)  
 British Institute, Florence

Seeking locations in Germany, Eastern Europe, and other parts of the European Union

The principal elements of the show would be...

a)	Re-creation in full size of some of Clarence's works of arts and crafts, such as, if permission of the owners could be obtained, the interior of some of the rooms of the Casa Fontanalba which show his talent and his philosophy with such warmth <sup>1</sup> . 5m by 4m per room times 2 makes 40 m <sup>2</sup> , circulation space makes	60 m <sup>2</sup>
b)	Originals of his botanical works, protected in glass cases. 5 cases 1m x 2m	20 m <sup>2</sup>
c)	Originals of his other vellum-bound books such as the Visitors book and the VIP book from the Casa Fontanalba, the books made for Margaret Berry and other humourful works. Same again	20 m <sup>2</sup>
d)	Nearby to these originals (both 2. and 3.), touch screen representations of the contents of these books, enabling the visitor to browse through the pages. Slide shows and videos where suitable. Much of the art material in the Fitzwilliam Museum and in the Bicknell family collection has never been shown in public, and the touring exhibition would therefore benefit from this exclusivity. 5 screens	20 m <sup>2</sup>
e)	Archaeological records, rubbings, recording. Some wall flats, cases, screens.	30 m <sup>2</sup>
f)	Video and photographic re-creations of a day in Clarence's life including his work in the high altitudes of the Mont Bego region collecting reproductions of the prehistoric rock engravings and of rare botanical specimens.	20 m <sup>2</sup>
g)	Get the rock engravings brought to life by computer animations in the way which has so vividly illustrated the hunters of the Val Camonica in the Italian Alps.	10 m <sup>2</sup>
h)	Copies of rock engravings and other archaeological exhibits to demonstrate the most important of the 10,000 rock engravings which Clarence Bicknell discovered and recorded in the Vallée des Merveilles, his groupings of the engravings into types, his interpretation of their meaning and their place in a wider pre-history of <i>Homo Sapiens</i> in Europe.	20 m <sup>2</sup> .
i)	Samples of Clarence's other collections, for example the glass cases of butterflies, stuffed birds, the umbrella pot and pressed flowers.	10 m <sup>2</sup>
j)	Author: Samples of his printed publications	10 m <sup>2</sup>
k)	Photos of Clarence in Casterino and Bordighera	10 m <sup>2</sup>
l)	The Struggles of Idealisms ... the church, rejection of the church, things that troubled him like the plant hunters (p.s. CC to inform MB of sources) Esperanto, pacifism, doing good for the poor of Walworth and Bordighera, Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, role in Bordighera, establishment of the museum and library.	10 m <sup>2</sup>
m)	Life in Bordighera	10 m <sup>2</sup>
n)	Short film by Remy in it own room	20 m <sup>2</sup>
o)	Contemporary responses; landscapes, installation or a modern take on Clarence. Botanical Art Prize	10 m <sup>2</sup>
p)	Clarence and early environmentalism	10 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>TOTAL exhibition area required</b>		<b>290 m<sup>2</sup></b>

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<sup>1</sup> Susie Bicknell and others believe that the masterpiece of all Clarence's work is his house, the Casa Fontanalba at Casterino. It is rare that the owners give permission for visits to the house, so their inclusion in an exhibition would have added value. Nor is it certain they would approve images or reproductions being included in the exhibition. If it were allowed, we propose that life size reproductions of the best wall paintings in the house are made into movable panels would make be displayed as "rooms" in the exhibition. Each room, for example, would have a focus: rock engravings, botany, his life, etc. Constructing these panels and making them transportable will be costly but valuable to the exhibition visitor. They could provide the foundation for a permanent exhibition.

The exhibition could be divided into groups or genres to help newcomers navigate the life and work of Clarence Bicknell...

**Major Groups:**

- Archaeology
- Botany
- Art (arts and craft)
- Life (Clarence the Man)

The team behind this proposal has experience, on a smaller scale, of presenting an exhibition of Clarence Bicknell. Christopher Chippindale worked with the Musée des Merveilles in Tende for the 1998 exhibition (and book which the Musée published), then transferred the entire exhibition to Cambridge for a further period.

If the take-up of this 2018 plan is taken up with enthusiasm by museums in the host locations and round Europe, then it is likely that the exhibition would be touring for more than just the 12 months of 2018. Assuming each exhibition would be open for about two months and we should leave a few weeks for transport and set-up, we can only get four exhibitions into a year. On this basis we should be planning on exhibitions in 2017 and possibly 2019, aiming for an optimum 12 locations. We anticipate also that Bordighera and Tende/Casterino are seasonal locations and the exhibitions there should be in summer, for example Bordighera April-May 2018 and Tenda July-August 2018. This would leave an opportunity for Nice, Genoa or Cambridge in Feb-March and Oct-Nov 2018. The other locations round Europe would be organised into the 2017 and 2019 time frames and permanent location for the exhibition could be set up thereafter.

**Merchandise.** People like to select, touch and own artefacts pertaining to an artist, a scientist or a movement. Museums and exhibitions have brought the art of merchandising to new levels of excellence, in our opinion.



Take a single striking example; the René Magritte Museum at the Brussels Beaux Arts offers items which look as good as the artist's originals and material manifestations of objects which only appeared on canvas or in the mind of this great surrealist (1898-1967).



In addition to the usual repro paintings, posters, post cards, DVDs, mouse pads, table ware, toys, puzzles, stationery and books the Museum offers neck ties, jewellery, cuff links, textiles, playing cards, desk lamps, "Malédiction" umbrellas, "Ceci n'est pas une pomme" apples in various sizes, surrealist soap and watches. <http://www.musee-magritte-museum.be> and <http://www.magritteshop.be>

In planning a similar range for Clarence Bicknell, we can start from the excellent items available in the shop at the Musée des Merveilles in Tende (sample plates, right, using one of the iconic rock engraving images).



Although the museum's owners the Conseil General des Alpes Maritime would not normally permit us to sell

these items outside the museum, we propose to continue to seek the rights to sell these items to a wider public, both online and alongside the touring exhibition. The Musée des Merveilles does not have an online shop, just some images of what is available in the museum's boutique.

We propose to launch an additional series of Clarence Bicknell items along these lines, a range showing his originality, his sense of arts and crafts design, his sense of humour and practical use. The most obvious items are table ware, table mats, tea towels and jewellery with his formatted botanical designs (one of Clarence's designs, his favourite plant, the dandelion, Fr. *pisse-en-lit*). We would like to see the set of *Happy Families* playing cards, to Clarence's simplified-botanical designs, manufactured for general distribution. Plants and garden ware items, including packets of seeds of the wild flowers he favoured (*saxifraga*, *acqualiga*, *gentian* etc) would reflect Clarence's botanical leanings. There are suitable themes for walking sticks and umbrellas, items which are unusual in museum shops.



Later versions of this paper will show a list of further merchandising ideas. We would propose to originate and manufacture these items ourselves, outside the scope of the funding required for the exhibition(s), and take the risk and the potential benefit. If an entity were identified who would take this on for us then we would consider contracting the process out.

**Media coverage.** We are confident that we can trigger printed press and radio coverage in three countries in the short term which would give us the visibility to attempt to secure more significant agreements for the creation of television documentaries about Clarence Bicknell. There are many channels in Europe<sup>2</sup> which carry biopics and historical insights and even more production companies making such programmes. Several British commentators and programme presenters<sup>3</sup> would find the subject of Clarence Bicknell fresh and programme-worthy. The team behind this proposal has experience of, and current contacts in, the television industry and we are confident that the decision-makers will find the subject worthy of their efforts. We do not consider that we will need to underwrite press, radio or such TV documentaries.

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<sup>2</sup> In France: France 5, specialist channels in the Canal+ group, Planète+. In the UK: BBC 2, Channel 4. In Germany: Phoenix, Da Vinci Learning. In Italy: RAI Storia, Viasat History. Channels aimed at more than one country: Arte, Discovery Channel, National Geographic Channel.

<sup>3</sup> Melvyn Bragg and Alan Yentob, for example. Film actor Richard E Grant presented an excellent TV series called *The Riviera: A History in Pictures* on BBC 4 in 2013 (producer Spike Geilinger, Executive Producer Franny Moyle)

## 9. How much will it cost?

In this version of the proposal for the 2018 Centenary of Clarence Bicknell's death, we can only make rough estimates. We expect to have refined proposals (on both the commercial and academic activities) by late 2014 for applications for funding during 2015.

For the **commercial (or "media") activities**, the initial figures show a need to raise about €240,000 to €500,000 to be able to proceed.

	Minimum 6 exhibitions	Optimal 12 exhibitions
<b><i>Touring exhibition</i></b>		
Creative work in planning and conceiving the exhibition	10,000 €	20,000 €
Other cultural and international manpower support	40,000 €	60,000 €
Start up costs for merchandising as underwriting	20,000 €	20,000 €
Video footage	20,000 €	50,000 €
Cost of photographic reproductions	10,000 €	10,000 €
Construction of 20 self supporting panels, 4m x 2m	40,000 €	60,000 €
Construction of glass cabinets for books	20,000 €	30,000 €
Construction of shipping crates for panels and cabinets	15,000 €	20,000 €
High definition plasma screens 2 or 5 @ 1000	2,000 €	5,000 €
Touch screens for page turning 2 or 5 @ 1000	2,000 €	5,000 €
Printwork (catalogues in 3 languages, advance flyers)	10,000 €	40,000 €
Transport	30,000 €	60,000 €
Insurance @ 3.5%	10,465 €	15,750 €
Contingency @ 5%	14,950 €	22,500 €
<b>Sub total, touring exhibition</b>	<b>244,415 €</b>	<b>418,250 €</b>
<b><i>Underwriting of definitive biography of Bicknell</i></b>	<b>80,000 €</b>	<b>80,000 €</b>
<b>Total Clarence Bicknell 2018 Centenary</b>	<b>324,415 €</b>	<b>498,250 €</b>

We are assuming for these costings that museums in the chosen locations would not charge for rental of space but would take the ticket income (if any is charged) and a percentage of merchandising sold at the location. Therefore no income line is shown in this version; there might be income from the book, or the costs might be underwritten by a publisher, in which case the budget required could be reduced accordingly or the surplus could be absorbed by the Clarence Bicknell Association to continue after 2018 the work of bringing Clarence to a wider public, for example with a permanent exhibition.

For the academic activities, it is likely that research into relevant aspects of Clarence Bicknell's work and his influence on others would be up to € 3,000,000 euros. This figure is based on our initial discussions with Genoa and Nottingham Universities and will be refined by them during 2014 alongside their partner institutions including the International Institute for Ligurian Studies, owner of the Museo Bicknell and archive in Bordighera. We know that the Conseil General des Alpes Maritimes is another possible partner institution because they have worked with us before on the 1988 and 1998 Clarence events, Chippindale's book *A High Way to Heaven*, the Musée des Merveilles and bringing knowledge of the Vallée des Merveilles to a wider public. We have brought this paper to the attention of Sylvie de Galléani, *Chef du Service du Patrimoine Culturel* at the Conseil General in Nice, with whom we already have a positive rapport, and are proceeding in discussions with her colleagues there.

The lead partner from these institutions, and their scientific committee(s), would organise and administrate the research in their normal way.

The consortium (*tour de table*) of these institutions presently propose to get the support of the European Union as the funding partner, because of the international and cultural dimensions of Clarence Bicknell and of this project. There are several relevant initiatives of the Europe Union including the Culture and MEDIA sub-programmes and the new Creative Europe programme.



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## 10. Who will execute the plan?

The team behind this proposal is essentially those professionals who have volunteered their services free of charge to the Clarence Bicknell Association and to the 2018 Centenary of Clarence Bicknell's death.

### a) Commercial activities

The authors of this proposal, the executive team (bios and contact details in the next version)

- Marcus Bicknell SES Luxembourg, RADA and NMF, Bicknell Family historian
- Susie Bicknell Marcus's wife, writer, London region
- Christopher Chippindale Author and Archaeology Lecturer, University of Cambridge
- Graham Avery University of Oxford, author, botanist, Europe expert
- Maria Pia Luly Jones Botanical Artist, Bordighera
- Helen Blanc-Francard Botanist and estate manager, Paris region
- Valerie Browne Lester Bicknell family member, author and researcher, USA-based

### Clarence Bicknell experts working with the executive team

- Julian Bicknell Architect and 2013 Chair of the Art Workers' Guild, London
- Trelde Bicknell Artist and publisher, London
- Titus Bicknell Television, IT and new media expert, Washington DC
- Laurence *Renchi* Bicknell Artist, Glastonbury
- Olga Kerzjuk London Esperanto Club and Curator, Ukrainian, Belarusian & Esperanto Collections, European Studies, The British Library, London
- Dr. Nancy Proctor Head of Mobile Strategy, Smithsonian Institution, Washington
- Carolyn Hanbury Giardini Botanici Hanbury, Ventimiglia
- Henrietta Usherwood Art gallery and historical exhibition expert, London

With the support of other members of the Bicknell family...

Caroline Bicknell Messenger	Peter Gerard Bicknell
Catherine Bicknell Matthews	Sarah Bicknell
Frank Bicknell	Clare Bicknell Shelley

... and key personalities associated with Clarence Bicknell

La Comtesse Roberta d'Alberti de la Briga, Marquise de Breteuil	
Claudia d'Alberti Dumon	Sa fille, propriétaire de la Casa Fontanalba
Dr. Daniela Gandalfi,	Museo Biblioteca Clarence Bicknell, Bordighera
Ada Dutto	Rechercheuse Clarence Bicknell, Cuneo
Elena Zappa	Giardini Botanici Hanbury, Ventimiglia
Eric De Backer	Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritimes, Mission arts visuels et architecture, Nice
Nicoletta Bianchi	Laboratoire départemental de préhistoire du Lazaret

Liliane Pastorelli	AMONT – Association Montagne et Patrimoine, Centre des Etudes Vésubiennes
Mme Françoise Villain	Author, Clarence Bicknell expert
Pierre Machu	archéologue, Clarence Bicknell expert
Livio Mano	Musée de Cuneo
Selby Whittingham	Turner Society
Mr.Turcat,	Musée de Tende, Directeur
Silvia Sandrone,	Musée de Tende, Attachée de conservation

The following early potential members of the Clarence Bicknell Association will be invited to consult on aspects of the planning process...

Alessandro Cecchi	Direttore della Galleria Palatina e del Giardino di Boboli, Firenze
André Dalmasso	Tende <alexis3701@gmail.com>
Andrea Capano *	
Annalisa Cecchi	Oxford & Firenze
Charles Ginésy, * Président,	Conseil Général des Alpes-Maritime
Cosimo Costa, * Presidente	Istituto Internazionale di Studi Liguri, Genova
Cristina Lindqvist	Writer, Nice
David Ward-Perkins	
Enzo Bernardini (livre au sujet de Clarence et Edward Berry). Works for Edizione d'Agostini Novara.	
Gabriele Boschetto, *	Presidente Provincia di Imperia
Giorgio Spina *	
Giovanni Russo	Thesis on literary works belonging to Clarence
Giuseppe Bessone *	
Giuseppe Mercenaro *	
Giuseppe Vicino *	
Jane Emery	
Jean-Claude Guibal	Maire de Menton
John Alexander Fowler	
Katherine Benbow	
Laura Fiore *	
Leland Bryant Ross	Esperanto
Liliana Ughetto *	
Lindsay Leggat Smith	Monaco
Luigi Viacava *	
M Vassalo, adjoint du Maire	Conseil Municipal de Tende;
Madame Eugenie Isett,	Musée de Gênes
Maddalena Cataldi	Museum of Natural History, Paris
Mario Mercenaro *	
Nicola Shulman, Marchioness of Normanby	biographer of Reginald Farrer
Nicholas Robinson	Fitzwilliam Museum
Nicoletta Bianchi	ADEVREPAM, Nice
Odile Romain	ADEVREPAM
Paolo Profumo *	
Paolo Scati *	
Patia Leggat Smith	Monaco
Patrick Didier	University of Nice
Paul Gubbins	
Prof. Domenico Astengo *	
Professeur Henry De Lumley	Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle
Rebecca Place	Chateau de Castellaras
Remy Massaglia	Lez'Art Creation, Breil
Robert Alberti	Association Patrimoine Traditions Brigasque
Rosa Junck	Esperantist
Rosangela Barone *	
Rossella Pera *	

Seila Covezza \*  
Susan Maitland \*  
Tito Schiva \*  
Tiziana Ginocchio, Musée de Gênes  
Valerie Wadsworth  
Verena Beccaria, Bordighera  
British Institute, Florence British Council covers Northern Italy,  
see <http://www.britishinstitute.it/en/aboutus.asp> (Graham Avery)

†

## 11. What is the time line?

We have started the planning of the 2018 Centenary far enough in advance to be able to complete the preparations with time to spare. The writing of new books, the raising of funds for the exhibition(s) and the creation of the exhibition itself are the jobs which will be time consuming.

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Δ Create the clarencebicknell.com web site</li><li>Δ Complete web site translations</li><li>Δ Inaugural meeting of the Clarence Bicknell Association. May 2014.</li><li>Δ Write plan and circulate to interested parties, identify funding partners</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Δ Announce the plan for the Clarence Bicknell 2018 Centenary and start publicising it</li><li>Δ Perfect the plan and adapt it for submission to chosen funding partners</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Solicit press and broadcasters for documentary coverage</li><li>Δ Secure funding. Plan exhibition in more detail. Solicit contractors.</li><li>Δ Select exhibition contractors and contract the work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contract range of merchandising for sale</li><li>Δ Build the exhibition elements</li><li>Δ Test exhibition in selected locations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Δ 12 months of exhibitions</li><li>Δ Centenary event(s)</li></ul>

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### Update history

V2g 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014. Exhibition square metrage given, major groups.

V2h 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014. Input from Genoa and Nottingham Universities including possible research subjects, separate budget for academia, bios attached.

*This version by Marcus and Susie Bicknell in their own name and on behalf of the Bicknell family and the Clarence Bicknell Association*  
[www.clarencebicknell.com](http://www.clarencebicknell.com)

[info@clarencebicknell.com](mailto:info@clarencebicknell.com)

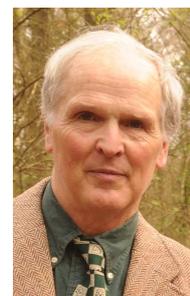
[marcus@bicknell.com](mailto:marcus@bicknell.com)



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## Marcus Bicknell      Chairman

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Marcus Bicknell is a marketer in high tech products. He managed Genesis and worked for CBS and A&M Records in the 70s, then with Luxembourg based satellite SES Astra 1986-1990. MD Europe for TV channels BBC World and BBC Prime, and President of CMGI Europe (AltaVista, Geocities, Lycos &c.). Founder partner of RainwaterHarvesting.co.uk in 2006. He is now active as a Member of the Board of one of the world's biggest satellite operators SES Astra in Luxembourg, as a Member of the Development Board of RADA, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts, in London, and as an investor and board director in other smaller companies. Born in the USA, British national, M.A. in Physical Anthropology from Cambridge University, ex-private pilot, motor-racer, horse-rider, has lived in 7 countries, speaks English, German and French and lives with his family in the Chiltern Hills west of London.

Clarence Bicknell's father Elhanan Bicknell is Marcus's great great grandfather. Marcus has studied Clarence's work since the 1970s and has led study trips to Casterino, Tende and Bordighera on several occasions, notably 1988 and 1998. He is the curator of the Bicknell family's collection of Clarence's works and he has created much of the web site [www.ClarenceBicknell.com](http://www.ClarenceBicknell.com). He is the author of the plan to celebrate the centenary of Clarence's death in 2018.

Marcus also has experience in the administration of small and medium-sized not-for-profit organisations. He has been Chairman of the Hodgemoor Riding Association (220 members, income £4,000 to £6,000 per year) since 1999. He was secretary of the Clubmans Register (a motor-racing club, 80 members, income about £8,500) from 2002 to 2006. He was a board member and trustee of Thorpe House School, Gerards Cross, from 2003 to 2010, part of a small team raising £150,000 for the creation of a related senior school.

## Graham Avery      Vice-Chairman

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Graham Avery CMG is a Senior Member of St. Antony's College, Oxford University, and Honorary Director-General of the European Commission, Brussels. He has been Secretary General of the Trans European Policy Studies Association, Fellow at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, and Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute, Florence. His recent publications include:

- 'Robert Schuman on Hungary and Europe', Hungarian Quarterly, 2010
- 'EU Expansion and Wider Europe' in 'The European Union: How Does it Work?', Oxford University Press, 2011
- 'The European External Action Service: new actor on the scene', European Policy Centre, Brussels, 2011

Graham's interest in Clarence arises from his interest in botany, in particular the flowers and plants of the Alps. His research into Reginald Farrer (1880 –1920), traveller and plant collector brought him to Clarence's Casa Fontanalba visitor's book, published by Marcus Bicknell online, and the realisation that Farrer and Bicknell had met there. He has developed a knowledge of some of the other parts of the Alps where Clarence studied the flora and has provided original research from other part of Italy, France and the UK. He speaks English, French and Italian. See Graham Avery's paper at [http://www.clarencebicknell.com/images/downloads\\_news/obh12\\_avery\\_bicknell\\_and\\_farrer\\_v4.pdf](http://www.clarencebicknell.com/images/downloads_news/obh12_avery_bicknell_and_farrer_v4.pdf)

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## Christopher Chippindale      Committee Member

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Christopher Ralph Chippindale, BA Hons MA PhD MIFA FSA (born 13 October 1951) is a British archaeologist, researcher and writer.

He was educated at Sedbergh School and at St John's College, Cambridge, graduating Bachelor of Arts (BA Hons). He then studied for a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at Girton College, Cambridge.



He worked at Penguin Books and Hutchinson Publishing Group 1974-82, and edited *Antiquity* magazine 1987-97. Chippindale was a Research Fellow in Archaeology at Girton College, Cambridge from 1985 to 1988 and Bye-Fellow from 1988 to 1991. In 1987, he was appointed Assistant Curator of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. He was promoted to Senior Assistant Curator in 1993. From 2001 to 2013, he was Reader in archaeology at the University of Cambridge. Chippindale was elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA) in 1991.

One of his research interests is rock art, the ancient images placed on or cut into natural surfaces, especially in Alpine Europe and north Australia. Other research interests include the contemporary commercial market in antiquities, quantitative approaches to artefacts and collections, the modern history and meaning of Stonehenge and the relationship between what actually happened in the past and what is remembered as 'heritage' today.

Chippindale has taken a close interest since the 1970s in Clarence Bicknell, the man, and his archaeological works. He has published several learned papers on the rock engravings of the Vallée des Merveilles on the border of Italy and France in the Southern Alps and wrote the definitive mini-biography of Clarence "*A High Way to Heaven*" (Conseil Général des Alpes Maritimes, 1998) which was also issued in French and Italian. More recently he has worked on the rock engravings at Val Camonica in Lombardy, Italy; here a Copper Age tribe may have enjoyed a primitive cinematic experience by making stone engravings in an echo-filled Alpine valley. Torchlight and flickering shadows would have made the engravings on stone walls seem to come alive at night. And spoken words that became magnified in a natural outdoor theatre could have awakened the storytelling imaginations of observers. With this in mind, Chippindale and others have used 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to animate the images into movies... prehistoric man walking, running and hunting.

His publications include:

- *Stonehenge Complete* (first published 1983)
- *Who Owns Stonehenge?* (1990)
- *The Archaeology of Rock Art* (1998)
- *A High Way to Heaven (Clarence Bicknell and the Vallée des Merveilles)* (1998) also published in French and Italian language versions.

## Susie Bicknell

## Secretary

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Susie Bicknell has been a researcher and writer for the BBC, Midem/MipCom, Time Life Books, SES ASTRA, Rainwater Harvesting Ltd and other organisations in a 45 year career. She runs the Hodgemoor Riding Association with 200 members and has raised about £80,000 in 10 years for the creation and maintenance of horse trails to encourage riders off the roads. She is a horse-rider herself, competing in dressage on a Dutch warmblood (Ozwald) and an Andalusian (Mango)



She is an amateur artist specialising in sketches and water-colours of horses and dogs; she has recently taken to printing the same subjects but from wood-cuts. BA in French and History from the University of Sussex, she speaks English and French with notions of German, Italian and Spanish. She has studied Clarence Bicknell alongside her husband Marcus since the 70s and has contributed significantly to the Clarence Bicknell web site and the Association.

## Valerie Browne Lester

## Committee Member

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Valerie Browne Lester is an independent scholar, writer, and translator living in the Boston area. She is the author of [\*Fasten Your Seat Belts! History and Heroism in the Pan Am Cabin\*](#) (1995), which is a history of Pan American told in the voices of its cabin crew; and [\*Phiz. The Man Who Drew Dickens\*](#) (London, 2004 - ISBN 0-7011-7742-X and ISBN 1-84413-534-9 (2006 edition), a biography of Hablot Knight Browne, Dickens's principal illustrator (who was also her great-great-grandfather). Her biography of the great Italian printer Giambattista Bodoni (1710-1813) [\*Giambattista Bodoni: His Life and His World\*](#) will be published by David Godine in September 2014.



In addition to her books and her translation of Alain-Fournier's [\*Le Grand Meaulnes\*](#) (*The Magnificent Meaulnes*, 2009), she has written poetry, plays, and articles, including "A Bird's Eye View of Nepal," for *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Valerie spent her early childhood in the West Indies, and then went to boarding school in England and Switzerland. She became a flight attendant for Pan Am in 1962, and flew for two years before marrying a passenger, Jim Lester. A psychologist, musician, and member of the first American Mount Everest Expedition, Jim subsequently became a writer and published *Too Marvelous for Words: The Life and Genius of Art Tatum* (1994). Together they raised two children, the writers Toby Lester and Alison Jean Lester. During Toby and Alison's childhood, Valerie worked and studied part time at Harvard. She completed her B.A. at George Washington University and her M.A. at Georgetown. Valerie taught English and Western Civilization at George Washington University for 10 years, and then worked as a writing tutor and workshop leader at the U.S. Naval Academy for seven years. She now devotes her time to her own writing and makes sure that the subjects she chooses take her to interesting places. A study of Clarence Bicknell is her next project as of 2014.

## Helen Blanc-Francard

## Committee Member

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Helen was a researcher and writer on the Sunday Times Insight team in London before settling in France. She is a garden and botanical expert, having run the gardens and estates in the Paris area, southeast France and Switzerland of a world business leader for 15 years. She is presently researching Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Clarence Bicknell's contribution to botany.



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A very young Maria Pia, her artistic studies just finished, newly married and living in Monaco, begins her professional career in Nice with a company specialised in drawings for fabrics. The choice naturally falls on flowers. Maria Pia creates floral subjects with freshness of style, vibrant in colours and full of light: joyful golden ear of corn, garlands chase themselves in blue skies, small bunches of wild flowers stand out on a sunny background, roses are the stars of the situation lit by the blue of the gentians. In these drawings there is all the happiness of a person who has absorbed all the Midi's nature and light: it comes spontaneously to think of the same roses, and the same flowers that another lover of the Riviera, Raoul Dufy, used to create in the Twenties and Thirties for Bianchini-Ferrier

She paints with passion, almost rage, except that this last word is in complete contradiction with her particularly gentle and reserved nature. What is striking about this painter is her absolute sense of humility, a priceless virtue, towards the great botanical illustration of the past. From such an approach have their beginnings the works which she calls "tribute" inspired or dictated by the affection which she has for the works of the *maestri* about which she has meditated for a long time: the peony and the ipomea in homage to Redoute, the vase with the muscaris bulbs and the one with the primroses, a clear reference to Georg Ehret, the chaste violets which associate her to a more recent and much loved maestro, the Australian Paul Jones.

But it would not be possible to understand Maria Pia Luly Jones's choices if we don't think of the environmental and cultural surroundings in which she lives and works : that very much loved Bordighera, full of blinding colours, a real challenge for Claude Monet, that since the beginning of the eighteenth century has drawn lots of curious and cultural travellers coming mainly from Great Britain: the successors of the Grand Tour. " During these days" we can read in a guide published in 1931 *At the Western Gate of Italy* and up to fifty or so years ago, wild flowers were copiously growing in Bordighera, fields and woods of olive trees were not closed, anemones, violets, narcissus, tulips and gladiolus were freely growing nearby the first villas and hotels. While a few kilometres away the Hanbury family created the gardens at Mortola attracting visitors from all over Europe, Clarence Bicknell, a clergyman, but also a mathematician, botanist, archaeologist, discoverer of the rock carvings on Mount Bego, donates to Bordighera his immense cultural wealth, creating the museum which bears his name. Here, in a way protected by the shade of the giant *Ficus magnoloides* that he had acclimatised, are kept in custody the results of his discoveries and research, the books, the butterfly collection, the herbariums, and the hundreds of watercolours of wild flowers. It is in this atmosphere full of elegance and culture that Maria Pia Luly Jones paints; may the link with an illustrious past provide the strength and incentive for new aims.

As part of her proposed role for the Clarence Bicknell Association, Maria Pia Luly Jones is one of the prime movers of the upcoming biennial Clarence Bicknell Botanical Art Prize so she will take a role in coordinating this international contest. She sees this as one of the ways of continuing to animate the Museo Bicknell in Bordighera in the way that Clarence intended.

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