



Fall 2018

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Friends of Sulgrave Manor

New Business Plan for Sulgrave Manor

Sulgrave Manor has created a business plan to ensure its future. The parts are: to attract more visitors, to repair the Manor, and to raise money.

Conservation and Repairs to the Manor

The conservation of the Manor has been priced at approximately \$960,000. The major areas of work are Electrics and Heating at \$315,000, External works (walls, roofing, gutters, drainage) at \$380,000 and Internal Works (removal of gloss paint, re-plastering, decoration and replacement lighting) around \$265,000. Thanks to support of \$265,000 from the Friends of Sulgrave Manor, the first phase of restoration, will be carried out during the Winter of 2018.

Development and Repairs to the Estate

The two thatched cottages currently stand vacant and require comprehensive refurbishment. The Business Plan also proposes to develop the farm buildings at the rear of the cottages into detached properties for sale.

The Wool House was renovated during the Spring and Summer 2018. This \$65,000 project was funded thanks to The NSCDA Sulgrave Manor endowment fund grant of \$50,000 and the Friends of Sulgrave Manor grant of \$15,000.

Developing the Visitor Experience

It is proposed to create a separate, immersive exhibition dedicated to George Washington. Another theme is the story of Sulgrave Manor Trust itself. The history of how the Trust was formed, the purchase of the Manor and the enduring partnership with The Na-

tional Society of The Colonial Dames of America is one which visitors find fascinating and which truly reflects our objectives as a centre for friendship between the UK and the USA.

In the Manor we plan to create a more flexible system of self-managed access for visitors.

Conservation and Display of Collection

The Accredited Museum Collection at Sulgrave has been reviewed as part of our recent work, funded by the regional arm of Arts Council England, we hope to attract more ACE funding to complete this work.

Development of the garden

We recognize that the gardens at Sulgrave should be an attraction in their own right. There are a mixture of short term, low cost projects and longer term capital projects within this category. New planting in a border can cost as little as \$650 while resurfacing our paths for better wheelchair and buggy access could exceed \$64,000.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

There are opportunities to expand our schools programme into new areas and make full use of our site and assets including curriculum subjects of science and art. We are already introducing informal learning opportunities through a pilot project grant of \$1,300.

All of these plans require funding, resources of staff and often expert advice. The

next few years will be a challenging period, but one which we hope will see improved stability financially and a clearer focus on the areas which makes Sulgrave Manor so special. Thank you all so much for your continued support, it makes a huge difference to us knowing that so many people so far away are rooting for our success.

Alison Ray
CEO Sulgrave Manor



Sulgrave Manor to the right of the walled perennial path. The building at the end of the border is the café.

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The President's Letter

It is hard to believe that this is the last letter I will be writing for the Friends of Sulgrave Manor newsletter. My term as Senior Representative from the NSCDA to the Sulgrave Manor Trust and President of the Friends will terminate at the annual meeting in October. My association with Sulgrave Manor and the Friends goes back a lot longer than the past three years – or even the last six, if you include my term as Junior Representative and Vice President. For six years prior to those terms I was the Associate Trustee from Texas, and during that six years I grew to care a great deal about the future of the Manor and our relationship with it. In fact, it was during my time as an Associate that I discovered that George Washington and I shared a common ancestor. His maternal great grandfather, William Ball, was also my ancestor. So the past twelve years have been spent in a family situation!

There have been many changes at Sulgrave Manor during these years, and I am glad to say that much has been accomplished by all who have been involved. The future holds many more positive improvements and advancements. The Sulgrave Manor Trust Board is forward thinking, the CEO and her staff are working on a strategy for the future, and as always, our Friends of Sulgrave Manor is outdoing themselves each year with increased gifts.

It has been a wonderful experience to get to know so many wonderful people in England and to spend enough time in the United Kingdom to become familiar with the country. I don't intend to let that go by the wayside – as Marvin and I plan to continue traveling with the Friends to new as well as familiar places. Our incoming officers in the United States will continue the good work done by all who came before, and Sulgrave Manor will always be a touchstone for the Washington's as well as all of our ancestors who came to the new world – and made it the great place it is today.

Victoria Bradshaw
Senior Representative from the NSCDA to the Sulgrave Manor Trust
President of the Friends of Sulgrave Manor



Vicky and Board member Nick Way receiving the flags at the end of the Dames Day. Vicky with her husband Marvin.



Our own Baroness, Jill Knight

Jill Knight, Baroness Knight of Collingtree served on the Sulgrave Manor Board of Trustees for over 30 years and was its chair for many years. Now a 94 year- old English woman she also served as a member of Parliament for 50 years, 31 years in the House of Commons and 19 in the House of Lords. Born Joan Christabel, Jill is a woman ahead of her time. She grew up in Bristol, England, one of four children. Reacting to her left-wing teacher, she announced at 13 she was going to be in Parliament! Her brothers laughed. At 18 she joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. She performed ground control of aircraft and also appeared on British Forces Network Radio. Upon her return to the UK from Hamburg, she joined the Young Conservatives. At 24, she married James Knight, an optometrist, who heartedly supported her as she followed her dream to be in Parliament and her political career took off.

Jill was first elected as Councillor in the Northampton Borough and served in that role for 10 years (1956-1966) in her early thirties and forties. Only now are we encouraging more women to run for public office. She became a whip and ran unsuccessfully twice for a seat in Parliament. During her time in politics, she raised two boys, cared for her home without any assistance and supported her husband in his career. She was excited when in 1966, her name was finally submitted by the Conservative Party (at age 43) to be their selection for nomination to Parliament (House of Commons).

Her election was the first time a female member of Parliament had been succeeded by another woman. She thinks at that time in Parliament there were about 20 women and about 635 men (3% women) compared to today where over 30% are women. Already at that time, this woman had determination, spunk and a desire to make a difference.

It gives a member of Parliament great satisfaction to introduce a Private Bill and see it progress through all the procedures and eventually become a law of the land. Jill introduced



five Private Member Bills. One had to do with safety packaging for medicine including the elders being exempt from using child-proof bottles and another addressed allowing a woman to pass on her English nationality to her child even if the child was not born in England.

On average she said she received 30-40 letters a day—all which she answered or responded to—unless the letter started off “Dear Sir” which she immediately threw in the wastebasket. Jill wrote that hardly a week went by without someone raising a question or receiving a letter asking about what she

did in her role as a member of Parliament. She responded, “An aspiring MP needs the judgement of Solomon, the tact of a diplomat, the hide of an elephant, the energy of a break dancer, the persistence of a debt collector and the patience of a saint. A sense of humor is not essential but oh brother, it helps.” Although not paid what many professionals were paid, she believed, the true pay was in the currency of long hours, hard work and a great deal of criticism. But for her “Being a member of Parliament was the most varied, the lively, and



most interesting job in the world”. She loved her job which kept her there for 50 years.

Jill's dear husband died in 1986 when she was 63. His loss was devastating as he had been her understanding, supporting and loving husband for almost 40 years. But with additional support and care from her family and friends and her determination, Jill continued to follow her commitment to Parliament for another 30 years. After a serious fall in her garden in 2016 (two years ago), she

signed from Parliament. It was not an easy decision but she concluded it was time.

This British Dame named Knight is a model for other women to be in politics and serve in leadership roles... Change is happening because of women like Jill Knight and others who did not shut up but spoke up!

I end this paper with a salute to Jill who, in my mind, encapsulates her life and career “Here's to strong women. May we know they, may we be them, and may we raise them!”

Sue Ann Tempero

April 2018

This is an excerpt from a paper “A Knight and A Manor” written by Sue Ann Tempero, Recording Secretary of Friends of Sulgrave Manor for her Indianapolis Women's Literary Club. Information is based on a book [About the House](#) written by Jill Knight about her experiences in Parliament.



The ending of another glorious Dames Day celebration., after the flag ceremony.

Dames Day 2018

Biennial Dames Day at Sulgrave Manor was held on June 17, 2018. The day began with morning worship at St. James the Less Church in Sulgrave. The Reverend Brian Fairbank welcomed those in attendance. Mrs. Marvin E. Bradshaw, Jr. and Mrs. James B. Congdon each read a lesson. The church was built in the 14th century and had a porch added at the time that Lawrence Washington attended. The church has a Washington Pew and includes 4 glass panels depicting 3 generations of Washington family Coats of Arms.

After the church service Norman Hudson welcomed the group to the Manor with refreshments followed by options for morning and afternoon programs. The first program was a village walking tour that included a visit to the Wool House. Its renovation is almost complete and then it will become a rental unit. The second program provided the opportunity to tour the Manor House and to hear of future updates to enhance visitors' experiences which include a



Norman Hudson, Acting Chairman of the Trust.

new George Washington exhibition distinctive from the stories of the Washington ancestors who resided at the manor. During the tour, the use of volunteers in the house and garden was highlighted. The final program discussed learning and engagement for visitors to Sulgrave Manor. In particular it highlighted the school program and family learning activities at the property.

The lunch was held in the Courtyard Hall and opened with a prayer by Mrs. Ken Christy, St. James the Less church member and Sulgrave Manor volunteer. Attendees included

Dames and guests, members of the staff and Sulgrave Village community members dedicated to preserving Sulgrave Manor. Next, Mrs. Marvin E. Bradshaw, Jr. recognized Baroness Jill Knight of Collingtree for her service to Sulgrave Manor and Jill became the first non-Dame to be recognized as an Honorary Trustee. During dessert Alison Ray, the CEO of Sulgrave Manor, gave her report. She indicated that Sulgrave Manor received support



from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Alison reported the findings of a recent study that clarified the mission statement of Sulgrave Manor along with recommendations to improve the quality of guests' visits. She also described repairs to the Manor along with technological upgrades. Finally, she highlighted the curriculum programming Sulgrave Manor provides to the many school groups that visit annually.

Dames Day closed with a dual flag retirement ceremony including both US military representatives and British military representatives. The day was most enjoyable for all who attended- both first time guests and return visitors to Sulgrave Manor.

Julia Drake

Friends of Sulgrave Trip - 2018

Although the official Friends of Sulgrave Manor tour began in the late afternoon of Tuesday 12 June with a meeting in the elegant bar at Flemings Hotel, by Monday evening the crowd was arriving. Thanks to the information sheets with "mug shots" done by Bess Fuchs prior to our leaving home, all the travelers were easily recognized whether in the lobby of Flemings or on Piccadilly Lane prior to the official gathering. Certainly by the time we gathered at the hotel on Tuesday night, we were all known to each other.

Wednesday morning we climbed aboard our luxury coach, home for the next six days, and headed to York. A delicious lunch and the lovely gardens at Belmont le Manor in Oxfordshire prepared us for the journey to the medieval City of York – but not the gale winds and showers that awaited us. We learned (or should I say learnt) that when it rained it was "dripping down", and if it was a minor sprinkle it was "mizzling".



Belmont le Manor aux Quatre Saisons with all of the travelers.

The magical city of York is easily explored on foot as the Centre is compact and enclosed within the ancient walls. There is much to see, so on Thursday we ventured forth to experience the Roman ruins and quaint medieval streets and parks. Most of the ladies chose to see the city while the fellows opted for the Railway Museum. While walking the tiny streets in the Shambles we were introduced to one of the shortest streets anywhere, Whip-ma-whop-ma-gate.

This is Saxon for something – not necessarily agreed upon. Our guide Kirstie translated it as "you call this a street?", however others define it as "what a street" or "neither one thing nor another". I personally like Kirstie's translation.

We reconvened at the famous Betty's Tea Room for lunch, followed by a short walk to the York Minster. We were given a private tour of the stone mason's workshop to look at the stones from the same quarry as the original ones that are being created by the masons to replace the older damaged ones. Then we were taken in an open construction elevator to the top of the Minster to learn how they go about laying them. Even those who are terrified of high places were able to enjoy all that they experienced. After returning to earth, we attended Evensong at the Minster with reserved seats in a special section as well as a welcome to the Friends of Sulgrave Manor from the pulpit. That evening we were treated to cocktails in the stunning walled garden followed by dinner at the oldest inhabited house in York, Gray's

Court. It was originally built toward the end of the 11th century, and archaeologists believe that the remains of a Roman gate lie buried just inside the grounds of this elegant house and garden.

Friday we journeyed to North Yorkshire and a private tour of Castle Howard, the home of the Howard family. Ten generations have lived there continuously since the house was built in the beginning of the 18th Century by the 3rd Earl of Carlisle. It is renowned for its architecture, rich collections and sublime landscaping. After lunch at Talbots Hotel in Malton we visited another magnificent stately home and gardens at Harewood House which would be the first of three gardens we would see that were designed by Capability Brown. Harewood House is the home of the Lascelles family. David Lascelles, the Earl of Harewood, is the grandson of the 6th Earl of Harewood and Princess Mary, sister of King George V.

We returned for our last night at the marvelous Grand York Hotel and prepared for an early departure on Saturday to Derbyshire and the house and gardens at Chatsworth, the home of the 12th Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. The house was reopened for visitors this March after completing ten years of restoration work. The cost of the repairs was met by a trust set up by the 11th Duke and Duchess when faced with the expenses of maintenance and taxes and opened their home and grounds to the public. The gardens, which were the second in our visits of those designed by Capability Brown, are absolutely marvelous, and we were extremely fortunate to have an extensive tour of the property and the home. After this extraordinary experience we headed to Broadway in the Cotswolds for three nights at the Lygon Arms Hotel.

Sulgrave Manor and Dames Day at Sulgrave Manor was our destination on Sunday morning, arriving in time for worship at the church of the Washington Family, St. James the Less, built in the 1300's. The weather was perfect, and we were able to spend the day visiting the property and grounds, meeting with the staff and returning to Broadway for the evening.

On Monday, our final day of touring, we left for Wiltshire and the wonderful medieval home of Robert and Patsy Floyd, Gt. Chalfield – which has been featured in the current version of Poldark. After strolling through the gardens with Patsy, a leading garden expert, Robert took us through the house and chapel giving us the history, pointing out the very special items, and then leading us to the large central hall for a very grand luncheon. From there we headed to Tewkesbury and Wightfield Manor for a tour and tea with Angus and Clare Scrimgeour, who have recently settled there. They are restoring the house and buildings and were pleased to be able to show it to us. After tea we returned to our final dinner at the Lygon Arms and packed to leave the next morning – either for home or on to Cornwall.

Tuesday 19 June was departure day for those of us traveling on to Cornwall and the magnificent coast, villages and countryside, stopping at Ugbrooke House in a valley between Exeter and Newton Abbot in Devon. Ugbrooke House is a private home that is over 900 years old and is featured in the Domesday Book and was our final visit to a Capability Brown landscape. It has been the Clifford family seat since 1604. After lunch we were off to Boconnoc, a privately owned estate in Cornwall, where we were treated to a traditional Cornish cream tea in addition to a lovely tour of the home as well as the Boconnic Parish Church dating from the early 14th Century. Then it was on to St. Mawes and the Tresanton Hotel overlooking the bay. Sitting on the patio and watching the boats and seeing the ancient St. Mawes Castle

The Wool House

The Wool House which was built in the early 18th Century is an attractive stone and tiled roof character property lying directly opposite Sulgrave Manor and forming part of the grounds and estate owned by Sulgrave Manor Trust (SMT). The property was originally bought by Sulgrave Manor Trust in 1960 thanks to a donation of \$10,521.50 by the NSCDA.

The property was tenanted on a commercial basis until 1988 when Mr. & Mrs. Robbins moved in. Mr. Robbins was Curator of the Manor for many years and on his retirement he was permitted by the Trustees to occupy the Wool House. Following the death of Mr. Robbins, Mrs. Robbins continued to live in the property until her health deteriorated in 2016.



The Wool House, garden view.

During the later years of this tenancy the Wool house became dated and the lack of a comprehensive maintenance schedule allowed problems such as rainwater ingress and failing window frames to take

hold. This in turn has placed a financial burden on the Trust with no rental to cover these works.

The Wool House has now been refurbished thanks to a grants from the NSCDA of \$50,000 and the Friends of Sulgrave Manor of \$15,000. Estimated rental income is expected to be about \$15,000 per year.

was absolutely super. The castle, built between 1539 and 1545, is among the best-preserved of Henry VIII's coastal artillery fortresses.

Wednesday was "Exploring Daphne du Maurier" day including a stop at Jamaica Inn and the quaint fishing port of Fowey where she made her home for many years. We started our final day with a walk through the churchyard gardens of St. Just in Roseland Church. The ancient church and cemetery nestles on a tidal creek, an arm of the River Fal and near an ancient Holy Well. We then visited the famous Gardens at Heligan which had been lost for nearly seventy years before they were found and restored to gardens of today. After lunch we visited Trelissick, the former home of the Copelands (Spode China) and built from the income of Cornish mining. After a wander through St. Mawes we returned to the Tresanton to prepare for leaving this magical place.

As we left Cornwall on Friday morning for Heathrow, we ran into a strong traffic delay on the motorway. It was due to the fact that it was Midsummer Day and the night before was Midsummer's Eve, and we were in the middle of those coming from or going to Stonehenge. The Druid celebrations had passed, but the crowd remained. Fortunately we were able to view Stonehenge and all of the mob of people from the motorway. Our final night was spent at Heathrow at the Sofitel Hotel. It was an absolutely fabulous trip, and there are many places that we visited that all would be happy to see again – but not right away!

Victoria Bradshaw
Senior Representative to the Sulgrave Manor Trust
President of the Friends of Sulgrave Manor



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Bess Fuchs, Editor

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Holes from masonry Bees in the Manor's walls.



Another view of the Manor.



Please friend Sulgrave Manor on Facebook. Find out about everything happening there as it happens.

Supported by the Dames for more than a century.