

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442
www.lythamhall.org

Sept 2010

Issue 51

Forthcoming Events

Annual General Meeting – 22nd Sept.
7.30pm at the Assembly rooms, Lytham.

Paul Hodgkiss (HLF bid manager) has kindly agreed to give a talk on progress with the Heritage Lottery Fund bid. Please come along to what should be a very interesting evening. See the attached form for further details.

Dates for your Diaries

Autumn Fair – Saturday 13th Nov. 10.30 at the Assembly rooms, Lytham. Free entry to: Home baking, plants, tombola, raffle, bric a brac. Come along and meet your friends. Make an effort to be in Lytham on the day and pop in for a cup of coffee and a nose-around you never know what you might find!

Evening of Xmas Cheer – Friday 10th Dec.

Make a date in your diary for this most popular event. Alternatively, let us know if you would like to be put on a list for tickets

Recent Events

The Friends ran a Bar at the recent Illyria Theatre Group and Ormerod Group outdoor productions at the Hall.



The Illyria productions were "Pride & Prejudice" and "Romeo & Juliet". The Friends sold Tea, Coffee, Hot Chocolate, Wine, Beer, Crisps and Biscuits during the intervals. The Friends also ran a bar to

support the Ormerod Group Players when they performed "Alice in Wonderland" on two consecutive nights to friends and families of the Ormerod Trust, which supports adults with learning disabilities.

Fire at the Hall

In the early hours of Tuesday 15th June flames were spotted coming out of the Lytham Hall estate. Fortunately the Fire Alarms at the Hall functioned correctly and the Fire Service was promptly alerted.

Four fire engines were dispatched to tackle the blaze and arrived around 4.30am to find the grade II listed Stable block "well alight." on both the ground and first floors.

Firefighters fought the flames using two water jets and used an area ladder platform to gain better access.



It is well known that horses are not kept at the Hall, the stables are currently used for storage and the fire was contained before it reached the accommodation block at the east end of the stable blocks.

Investigations are still underway but to date the source of the fire is still unknown. .



The good news is that HTNW have stated that the fire will have no impact on the Heritage Lottery Fund bid currently being prepared.

The Cliftons

Dear Friends

Having read the piece in the Newsletter about Madeline, Lady Drummond, I thought you might be interested in the enclosed.

Madeline was my Great Great Grandmother, my Grandfather was Harry Arthur Clifton. We were always led to believe the reason Madeline did not go to live at Lytham was because ECC could not stand her.

My Grandparent's wedding in Wales was postponed because of her father's death, then had to be hurriedly rearranged when my Grandfather's regiment was sent to South Africa.

Gladys joined him but disliked living there. Having lived in India as a child, she adored that place (Kipling wrote a scathing poem about her Mother, Lady Evans "Delilah").

Yours sincerely

Sarah Clifton

The following is transcribed from an original letter to Veronica Pugh, sister of Lady Evans. It concerns the marriage of Madeline's (now Lady Drummond) son Arthur to Gladys's Evans. It is a little long winded but please

stick with what is a really interested read describing in minutest detail the wedding plans of a society wedding of the time. Ed.

From Lovesgrove – January 2nd 6pm (1903)

For Alice and Dear Aunt Veronica (Alice Green and Veronica Pugh).

My Darlings, I want to begin at once and tell you what I can and I think I will go back to the very beginning which was yesterday.

The train party consisted of the Dolaucothy two (Gen. Sir James Hills-Johns and Lady Hills Johns) with Anna (Lady Hills-Johns' maid) and Mathews (butler). Lady Drummond (formerly Mrs Clifton, mother of Arthur Clifton, the bridegroom) her sons Carol (Clifton – brother of Arthur Clifton) and Jimmie (Drummond – son of Sir James and Lady Drummond) and daughter Frances (Clifton, sister of Arthur Clifton and later Lady Kinnaird).

The Edwinsford party (Lady Drummond, Carol, Jimmie and Frances) went to the Queens (hotel at Aberstwyth – now Police HQ) and we came here in a bus – all the dear ones here looked very fagged – and strange if they had not – when one thinks that at 7pm on Wednesday the only thing settled was that the wedding was to be today. I simply marvel how so much was done in these few hours – for had it all been planned for weeks it could not have been nicer.

Well, we had tea when we came – and after we had had ours, Lizzie arrived (Mrs. Ballard, nee Jones, a cousin of the bride and married to Capt later Brig. Gen. Ballard, Norfolk Regiment) she had a nasty cough, which she says she has had for sometime – otherwise she looks quite well. After dinner Gladys's (Evans – the bride) wedding and going away dresses were brought down for us to see. I can't describe it, but I never saw a wedding dress that I liked so much. The more one looked the more one liked it and came upon such pretty varieties in it – it seems to me in

these days every good dressmaker must have an artist on the premises for gowns are so beautiful now and this looked Gladys all over – the border of orange blossoms on the skirt above the flounce was so pretty – her beautiful Brussels three cornered veil was the finishing touch and it fell over her back today so nicely. Then her grey dress, such a tender soft shade, also beautifully made, was just right. The black velvet jacket fitted beautifully and the toque was most becoming. Others will describe these better than I can.

When we went to bed it was raining heavily and this morning one woke up to a greyish sort of day; but when we were at breakfast in the servants hall it began to clear and before we had finished the sun came out and it grew into a quite perfectly lovely day, not only bright, but so mild, that I who wrap up went to church without a jacket or anything over my shoulders. I was so thankful because of the bride and bridesmaids; after breakfast we bustled about and put the finishing touches to the flowers – after a bit we wanted more white flowers. Anna came to me in the dining room and said can I do anything, yes, I said, produce some white flowers. She left the room and came back at once with a quite big lot of them, from where I know not, but they were priceless – the table looked very smart with many vases of them.

Then the cake was on the table by the window – Gladys would not carry her bouquet, so we put it on top of the cake and just put similar (ones) only on the cake itself and when this was done we struggled into clothes as quickly as we could – Lizzie, in her own going away dress and I drove together. The church yard had pretty groups of country folk lining the pathway and when we got in there was a very fair congregation. By the time the service began quite a large one. After us came Jim Jack (Evans, brother of the bride) and his mother (Lady Evans, mother of the bride and widow of Sir Griffith Evans) – her face as she walked down the aisle looked very much as it did in February (the funeral of her husband

??). She wore no cloak and carried your silver cased prayer book.

Then came Gladys, her uncle (General Sir James Hills-Jones) and the three bridesmaids (Betty and Gwyneth Evans, sisters and Frances Clifton) such a solemn white little procession – for her uncle blinded with the white raiment – it was very dusky and Gladys was an exquisite picture only too sad looking for a bride. As she entered the Church we sang, “As with gladness men of old”. I think the Arch Deacon (J. Harvard Protheroe) felt it all very much – his face and manner were so sympathetic and he was so motherly to the young people and whispered softly directions to them as much as to say you are so young and have never been this way before. He would not have married Lizzie in the same maternal way.

The whole scene was so lovely for the chancel was so strikingly lovely. The little mother had thought even of that and had some good sized fir trees cut down and placed in pots and they made quite a beautiful avenue. Bunches of white flowers peeped out here and there in the branches – big white chrysanthemums and arum lilies stood up in the border and the candle standards gave the finishing touch of beauty. The Alter was very sweet and the Epiphany Star of white on the window I shall always love to remember. The service was so impressive and I was glad to see the choir in their cassocks and surplices. The Arch Deacon read Bishop Hons address and brought our David (Rev. David Pugh Evans husband of the writer) very near. The words that stuck to me most were, “dark days need not bring dark thoughts.” As the bridal party went to the vestry, a beautiful voice suddenly sung “Oh rest in the Lord”, and kept us all very still.

As we were leaving our seats Veronica (McNair nee Pugh, a first cousin of the bride) and family came up to the chancel. They only got to the Church as the service ended which was so sad and had the service been at 1100 hrs as first arranged instead of 1130 hrs they

would have found an empty church. Veronica looked sweet and so well – how Jimmie (Veronica's son) has grown and has blossomed into a jacket and Eton collar.

Well we drove back in lovely sunshine and I think it was quarter to one when we sat down to a very fine lunch – the old fashioned wedding breakfast. How did all that dainty food get cooked in these few hours. Anna said to me “Lady Evans ought to be a Transport Officer”, and I would agree with her for every wee detail was thought of. After lunch all we women folk came into the drawing room and stayed there. At quarter to three Baby (Gwyneth Evans) whispered to Betty (Evans) the time and I think we all felt it was much later. Betty was then admonished by her mother in these words. “Now Betty, I will have you understand that when you are married it is to be at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and you go to Borth. Had Gladys and Arthur gone there they would not have to wait for this train.” We had tea at 4pm. I should have said that Lady Drummond and small boy (Jimmie Drummond) left to catch the 3pm. Sir James Drummond intended to come up by the early train – lost it at Llanybyther – drove on to Lampster and missed it by two minutes there.

I was so touched by Arthur, he brought up his cup and sat by me and was so very nice and I said will you let me be Aunt Jeannie to you and let me call you Arthur. I was so glad it did not seem like losing Gladys then and he told me he so enjoyed his day at Carmarthen so I am always his now with much affection. Gladys looked very lovely in her going away do and had more colour and looked less tired. In the gloaming she and Arthur drove away with a good crowd to wish them “God speed to the next milestone and beyond.”

I don't know what happened downstairs for I went straight to my room as I wanted to begin my letter and before I had finished the first sheet, tired little mother (Lady Evans) came to me and we sat and talked over the fire till the gong sounded. The funny thing about this

gong, and really everything after we came back from church, was that we were always a good hour in advance, the same feeling ran through the whole house for Willie (Cubith) rang it by mistake at 6.30. At 9 o'clock cards were suggested and I said isn't it rather too late to begin – it must be bed time. Baby ran to see the time and came back and said 9 o'clock. I think if Mr. Betty goes on strike and says he will have an early morning quiet wedding he will have to pack his portmanteau and go off into single blessedness.

Well we have to be so thankful for the wonderful sunshine of the day, it seemed to give its benediction and one felt one ought to say a grace for it. What should we have felt if it had been wet and dull? The things most stamped on my mind were Gladys on the eve of her marriage playing (on the piano) a few of her Aunt Betha's (Lady Hills-Johns) favourites her dear face looking such unspeakable things (in the sane, beautiful thoughts) then the mother's face as she walked down the aisle the whole scene in church and the lovely sunshine.

I am writing now in the drawing room on Saturday morning, the Dolaucothy ladies are writing, Mother is knitting a red comforter, Betty and Kickie (Griffith Evans – the bride's eldest brother) have just finished writing out the notice of the wedding for the Times – Sir James left for Carmarthen by the early train, the Ladies go at 3pm. I have ventured to tell them there is a rival trio now, Alice, Gladys and Dick (Alice, the bride's eldest sister and Dick Green her husband). Your telegram arrived just before Gladys left also one from Capt Ballard from Marseilles.

(The letter is to Veronica Pugh, sister of Lady Evans.)

Volunteers needed

The Friends need a couple of new Posties to help with the distribution the Newsletter. If you live in St Annes or the Clifton Drive/Fairhaven area and you can spare a little time once every few months please phone any of

the committee at the end of the newsletter.

The FOLH would also like to thank the retiring posties for all their hard work over the last few years

Volunteers are also required to help when the Friends support events at the Hall. If you feel able to contribute in this way then please contact Lambert Dopping on (01253) 736408.

Events at the Hall

Open Days: to 31st October 2010

There is free entry to the Grounds every Tues, Wed & Thurs until the end of October.

Sundays and Bank Holidays there will be a small charge of £1 Adults/50p Children.

Times: 12.30pm - 4.30pm, (last entry 3.30pm)

The House is open every Sunday for a Conducted Tour starting at 2pm. Adults £4, Children £2, except on the last Sunday of every month and Bank Holidays when the House will be open to the public from 1.30 pm - 4.30pm. Adults £2.50, Children £1

Tea Room open every Sunday and Bank Holiday.

Heritage Open Day - Sunday 12th Sept

Part of England's yearly celebration of architecture and culture which allows visitors free access to interesting properties that are

either not usually open, or would normally charge an entrance fee. England's biggest and most popular voluntary cultural event. The Friends will be selling Trails and running a shop.

Lectures

The following lectures organized by HNTW and based on the Hall, its history and development are the last of the programme for this year's Lytham Hall lectures:

Thursday 21 October at 6.30pm

'Lytham Hall and John Carr's Other Houses West of the Pennines'

By John Champness

Thursday 18 November at 6.30pm

'Furniture of the North West'

By Susan Bourne

Tickets available from the office at Lytham Hall. Please phone 01253 736652

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