

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

www.lythamhall.org

Jan 2013

Issue 58



A Happy New Year to all Friends of Lytham Hall.

A Happy New Year to all Friends of Lytham Hall and welcome to the first newsletter of 2013.

As we move into another year it is comforting to know that the future of the Hall as a museum and visitor attraction is looking more and more secure. Most of the necessary building blocks are now in place: sound ownership and financial control by Lytham Town Trust; operational control by the experienced Heritage Trust for the North West; Heritage Lottery Funding and an enthusiastic volunteer and support base. All that is now needed is a fully refurbished Hall equipped with the capabilities to allow it to generate the income it needs to support itself.

On refurbishment John Miller of HTNW explains in his article in this Newsletter what the current situation is and the scale of the tasks relating to it. The Friends job is to remain focussed on what we do best – staging and supporting events, keeping up the profile of the Hall and fund-raising, especially with regard to matched funding.

As well as our own the Hall has another full year of events scheduled in, many of them now becoming annual ones. Where possible we will also be supporting these. If you have some time spare this year you may feel inclined to help out at some of these events. Either contact the Hall or any of the

committee members listed at the end of the Newsletter

Behind the Scenes at Lytham Hall

John Miller of HTNW writes:

Behind the scenes a lot of work is going on to prepare for the major refurbishment of the Hall. The architects are preparing Building Regulations Applications and all the tender documents (a huge exercise which will take many months before contracts are let).

In an earlier Newsletter we described the work in the grounds, and this continues, albeit held up due to the dreadful weather these past few months (the main drive was flooded for several weeks). A survey of the woodlands has revealed that many of the trees are coming to the end of their natural life; others are self sown (some would describe them as weeds). Others are dangerous and could injure our visitors (stories of visitors at neighbouring National Trust properties being injured or killed is a major concern).

Professional advice has been sought for all relevant felling and permissions have been granted. Not all the work will be completed before the bird nesting season, so this will have to be left until the Autumn. One small project will be to fell self sown sycamores, and pine trees (planted 30 years ago) around the dovecote to show off this unique Listed Building, but also protect it from damage by trees. Our overall aim is to restore the historic parkland with its vistas and specialist trees including a new Cedar of the Lebanon. The plans are on view at Lytham Hall. If anyone would like to see them please get in touch on 01253 737652 and we will be delighted to meet and discuss what is proposed.

Meanwhile it is business as usual. By the time this Newsletter reaches you the Snowdrop Season may have ended. As I write this at the end of January, we are awaiting their appearance!

Visit the Friends Website on: www.lythamhall.org

Forthcoming Events

Snowdrops Walks – 27th Jan until 3rd Mar

Be sure to make it to the ever popular Sunday Snowdrop walks, the first day being Sunday 27th January continuing through to Sunday 3rd March.

Parking in the grounds will be limited to disabled drivers only. All other vehicles can be parked for free in the Aegon Insurance car park adjacent to the Main Gates on Ballam road. Benches will be dotted along the driveway to allow respite. Dogs must be kept on a leash.

Entrance to the grounds will start at 10:30am the grounds will close at 4:30pm. The costs are: £2.50 for Adults, £1 for Children. The Hall is open for guided tours at 11.00am and 2.00pm, admission £4 per person. The tea-room will be open for light refreshments.



The Friends will again be running a shop selling pots of snowdrops, fancy goods, children's gifts and bric-a-brac. We have also decided to run a tombola this year. We urgently need items to put on these stalls, unwanted Christmas gifts, etc. Please contact Meg Hargreaves on 01235-733098 if you have any contributions. Also, volunteers to help in the shop or on the Inner Gate contact Meg on 01253-733098 or Liz Guffogg on 01253-727696.

Further information can be obtained from Lytham Hall Office, Ballam Road, Lytham FY8 4JX Tel. No. 01253 736652 or e-mail lytham.hall@htnw.co.uk

Recent Events

Evening of Xmas Cheer

The Hall looked wonderful with three Christmas Trees and traditional decorations and greenery in many rooms. As ever this is a very popular evening and 100 guests enjoyed canapés and drinks by the log fire. We made our way up the main staircase and along the candlelit Long Gallery to the West Wing where Paul Rowley and staff served a delicious festive meal. The guests enjoyed some very lively musical entertainment and carol singing to herald a wonderful start to the festive season.

Halloween Spooktacular



For the first time this year the Friends ran a Halloween Spooktacular at the Hall. About 150 children and their parents followed the spooky trail through the woods and then enjoyed making Halloween crafts in the old kitchen by the log fire. It was hard work for the Friends who were dressed as witches and warlocks but it introduced many new families to the delights of the Hall and its grounds.

Anton Evening

Paul and Peter from Antons Cafe in St. Annes staged a Cabaret Evening with a superb Christmas buffet provide by the Hall. Over eighty guests enjoyed a variety of artistes who had all give their services free to raise money for the Hall. The event was attended by the Mayor of Fylde Heather Speake and toastmaster Colin Ballard compered the evening. The Friends were pleased to support the evening by running the bar and helping Peter and Paul who are great supporters of the Hall raise £1,400

Lytham Hall

Lytham Hall Estate Land Agents

The primary purpose of a Land Agent was to manage the estate for which he was responsible to produce income for the owners. The appointment of a Land Agent freed up the owners from the mundane day-to-day tasks associated with the running of an estate and allowed them the freedom to pursue other life style choices.

The land agent of an estate the size of Lytham Hall would be a very prominent figure in the community. With many of the squires being absentee landlords he would be the point of contact for all things connected with an estate that owned all the land from the borders of Freckleton to Blackpool and much of rural Fylde. He had the power to influence the granting of leases for new dwellings, businesses and even entire towns. Many of the readers of this Newsletter will be living in houses built with the approval of the Lytham Hall Estate Land Agent on land leased to provide income for the estate.

An Agent's responsibilities would include dealing with every problem arising out of the ownership of an estate: farms and town properties, plantations, the building of new houses and work places and the repair of old, the preservation of game, the collection of rents and keeping of accounts. The Lytham Hall Estate's agent would also be responsible for the Hall and home farm staff. He would be a go-between for the squire and his tenants, dealing with complaints, disputes and family feuds referred to him for settlement. With Lytham Hall Estate situated so close to the sea, a primary task would be to keep water away from the estate by the building and maintenance of sea embankments and drainage watercourses.

The position was a very responsible one and integral to the well being of a landed family. The agent was the single point of contact from which all monies derived from the estate would be drawn. The agent would understand exactly how much money could be drawn

from the estate without damaging its ongoing viability and therefore often acted as a financial brake to the more lofty financial ambitions of some of the owners. On the whole the owners understood this and appreciated that the agent's cautious behaviour protected their best interests. Working relationships like this worked best when there was an understanding and mutual respect between the two families.

All the funds required by the squire and the allocated allowances to the younger members of the family were provided through the Agent. Because of this and the wandering nature of many squires and their family members, the Estate Office became the place that all family members kept in touch with no matter what part of the world they might be in. Almost inevitably they all overspent their allowances long before the next instalment was due. The agent would subsequently be sent letters of explanation and request for advances which would contain meticulous often calculated heart rendering details of the reasons for the current financial shortfalls. On the whole it would be up to the agent to decide on the best course of action. It was therefore in everyone's interest to maintain an effective, and often confidential, relationship with the land agent.

The relationship between the Cliftons and their agents was very generally strong and effective. The Cliftons were blessed with men of high integrity and work ethic, people who had a natural understanding of estate management. Indeed such was the regard for James Fair the first Lytham Estates land agent that St Annes church was erected in memory of him with monies provided by Lady Cecily Clifton.

On the whole landed people have historically understood their responsibility to the estates that provided their families with the means for their privileged lifestyles and the duty of preserving and passing it on to future generations. In the case of Lytham Hall Estate there had been a number of Clifton squires

that had spent far beyond the advice of their land agents fortunately without inflicting irrevocably damage to the estate. It was an incumbent squire, without issue, who felt none of these responsibilities and whose reckless spending first threatened then ended the Clifton families 450 year association with Lytham Hall and mortally damaged the Clifton heritage.

More on the Land Agents of Lytham Hall Estate in the next Newsletter.

Events at the Hall

Open Days: Easter to Christmas 2013

There is free entry to the Grounds every weekday (excluding Bank Holidays) until 20th December.

The grounds are also open to the public every Sunday (Please note charges may apply on Sundays). 10.30am to 4.30pm winter

The Tearoom is open serving Hot and Cold Food on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Fridays & Sunday

Other Events

The Friends of Lytham Hall Easter Family Fun Day - Easter Sunday – 31st March

Easter Egg Hunt, Vintage Fair and other activities for the Children

Grounds open: 10.30am - 4.30pm. Egg Hunts starts from 12.00 pm

Admission: Free entry to the grounds, £1.00 parking

Mega Mini Meet – Sunday 21st April

Flower Power Show - Sunday 28th July

Classic Car Show – Sunday 4th August

Art in the Park – Sunday 11th August

Heritage Open Day -Sunday 15th September

Lytham Hall 5K Run - Sunday 13th October

Plays in the Park

The Chapterhouse and Illyria, two of England's leading outdoor touring companies will perform the following outdoor plays:

Friday 14th June - Jane Austin's **Pride and Prejudice**. Charterhouse 7.30 pm

Sunday 7th July - Shakespeare's **As you like it**. Illyria. 6.00 pm

Tuesday 16th July - Gilbert & Sullivan's **The Mikado** -. Illyria. 7.30 pm

Sunday 25th Aug. - Dick King-Smith's **Babe, the Sheep-Pig** - Illyria. 4.00 pm

Tickets cost:- £12.00 Adults, £9.50 Senior Citizens, £6.00 School children. To book call Lytham Hall Estate Office on 01253 736652



A typical outdoor theatre scene at Lytham Hall

For more details on any of the events listed visit the Lytham Hall web site

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