

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

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www.lythamhall.org

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A Happy New Year to all Friends of Lytham Hall.

This year will be a massively important year for everyone associated with the Hall. The positive outcome of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Appeal is fantastic news but brings different challenges for all concerned. For the Heritage Trust for the North West (HTNW) it is the discharge of the works associated with the HLF whilst continuing to keep the Hall open for business as much as possible. For Lytham Town Trust (LTT) it is continuing to raise the matching funds to allow the granting of the complete award whilst overseeing the works at the Hall. For the Friends it is to support both HTNW & LTT in their respective endeavours. A lot of people involved in many of these activities are volunteers and it will require extraordinary amounts of effort and commitment to achieve what needs to be done this year and on through to completion.

The Hall & HLF are still working towards agreeing funding and works schedules. Until this is finalised work cannot start. It does seem to be dragging on but it is vital that both parties are clear on what needs to be done, when it should be done, when the finances need to be in place and to be comfortable with the timescales involved. Only once this is all agreed can any work start.

Looking realistically at the situation, if the HLF appeal had not been successful the future

for the Hall would have probably looked quite bleak. Without sufficient income to allow any investment to further promote the Hall there would have been real discussions on its viability as an ongoing concern. HTNW are an experienced operator of Historical estates but in no way positioned to provide the sums of money required to develop the Hall into a self-sustaining entity. LTT the Hall's owners are limited with what they can invest as they also have other responsibilities within the borough which require demands on their time and resource. The option to continue as it has been doing is just not realistic as the fabric of the building continues to deteriorate.

What we have now is a golden opportunity to secure the future of the Hall. Its one that may not come again so we must all make sure that full advantage is made of it. Failure is not an option.

On the face of it it's an awful time to be fundraising! With the all round economic situation as gloomy as it is and with so many other competing good causes, it will be a tough task to raise the extra monies required to match the HLF funding, however, we simply must all do what we need to do to reach the necessary target. Keep the faith! Ed

Forthcoming Events

Snowdrops Walks – 29th Jan until 26th Feb

The Hall will once again be hosting the ever popular Sunday Snowdrop walks, the first day being Sunday 29th January continuing through to Sunday 26th February. This is a week earlier than planned and due to the unseasonably mild weather.

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.

Visit the Friends Website on: www.lythamhall.org

Entrance to the grounds will start at 10:30am with last entry at 3:30pm. The costs are: £2.50 for Adults, £1 for Children. The Hall is closed for this event but the tea-room will be open for light refreshments.

The Hall is still looking for volunteers to support this event. If you are able to help at the Hall, either in the tearoom or at the gatehouses, on the above dates, between 10.00 and 1.30 or 1.30 and 4.30, then please contact the Estate Office using the details listed below.

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 – Friday 9th Dec.

The Friends Evening of Christmas Cheer was once again a great successes with over £1500 raised. Thanks to all those who supported the events. A very big thank you goes to the organizers, helpers and entertainers plus Paul Rowley for another wonderful meal.

Also, the Friends have been raising monies and supporting other fund-raising events including running a bar at a very successful musical evening kindly hosted by Antons of St Annes. The sale of Christmas cards from the Christmas market in Lytham plus various other outlets raised over £500 – a great effort.

Dates for your Diaries

Evening of Xmas Cheer – 7th December

Make a date in your diary for this most popular event

Lytham Hall

Whilst the order of work for the Hall is awaited there is still some work that can be done this year. To facilitate the beginning of the interior restoration the Hall will have its contents carefully removed.

Outside work on the grounds will start in the spring, with the aim of restoring the ‘South

Prospect Garden’ and the reinstatement of the ‘Italianate Garden’ on the site of the car park. Also a ‘Cedar of Lebanon’ will be planted to replace the one planted in the 18thC which blew down in the 1930’s. It is hoped that these will be completed to mark the Diamond Jubilee.

A Racing Heritage

On the inner door of the saddle room at Lytham Hall stables there is a roll of honour of all the winning horses produced by the stables between 1788 and 1795 plus one in 1889. The list reflects a remarkable degree of success during such a short period. There are 47 winners listed the most famous of which was ‘Ninety Three’ the 1793 St Leger winner of which the inscription states ‘Won 400 guineas at Doncaster’ interestingly enough it is Ninety Three’s only entry on the door as opposed to ‘Chariots’ (8) and ‘Citizens’ (6), plus numerous other horses with multiple wins.



The Saddle Room Door

Courses listed include Nottingham; Manchester; Knutsford; Perth; Richmond; Catterick and even Preston. Competing in some of these races must have been an enormous logistical challenge as the horses must have been walked to the courses where they were competing. Because it was believed that horses couldn't walk the long distances and still succeed great odds were offered against them. This thinking is backed up on the Saddle room door with none of the winning horses having run with odds of less than 50-1. In fact the 1889 winner Scorpion won at Manchester with odds of 300-1. The Squire at the time was a very young John Talbot Clifton who must have been very pleased with that result!



There must have been huge costs associated with running a racing stable large enough in some years to contain five different winners. This halcyon period occurs shortly after the completion of Lytham Hall in 1764 by Squire Thomas Clifton and reflects the improved fortunes of a family receiving increased land rents due to improvements they had made to their large estate.

With horse power being the only method of transportation overland, a stable block would have been essential to any large Georgian house. Just as typical would have been the racing of horses. However, it appears to have

been a particular passion of Thomas's son and next Squire John Clifton. The stable block itself shows signs of being built in stages with parts of it even pre-dating the existing Hall. It is quite likely that John enlarged the original stables to something more like it is today to accommodate his passion for horse racing.

In 1806 Squire John had another St Leger winner in the appropriately named 'Fyldener'. Its name however, doesn't appear on the door and it is likely that there were many other winners around that time and certainly during the lifetime of John who passed away in 1832.

Apart from the 1889 winner 'Scorpion', the only other Clifton who appeared to take horse racing seriously was the last Squire Henry 'Harry' Clifton. In his attempt to produce a winner that could be added to the list on the saddle room door he engaged a number of respected trainers. Unfortunately, and much to their annoyance, he had a habit of taking the highly trained horses out for a ride to 'see how they go' the day before important races which probably accounted for his high turnover of trainers. Ed

Memories of the Hall

We've recently had contact from Lucille Hughes of Melbourne, Australia. She writes:

My family emigrated to Australia from Lytham in 1963.

We lived in Lytham from 1958, originally coming from Denton, Manchester. My mother was a teacher at Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School and my father worked at Lanigan's. My older sisters were at Layton Hill School and I and my younger sisters went to Cross and Passion Convent in Lytham.

I remember Lady Clifton as a very tall old lady in a large hat sitting in the front pew at St Peter's Catholic Church every Sunday. She offered my father a staff position at Clifton Hall, which my mother persuaded him to

refuse (she was horrified at the thought of him being 'in service!').

My younger sisters and I sometimes used to trespass in the woods on the Lytham Hall grounds, hoping to see a stag. Lytham was a magical place to us after growing up in Denton. My eldest sister remembers taking the train from Lytham Station and seeing a stag in winter with snow on its antlers.

I would be very happy to be a 'Friend of Lytham Hall.

Lucille Hughes

Events at the Hall

At time of press the events schedule is still in a draft state due to the yet unknown schedule of works associated with the HLF appeal.

Open Days: Easter to Christmas 2012

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

Times: 10.00am - 4.00pm, (last entry 3.00pm)

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

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

The House is open every Sunday until the end of October for conducted tours. Adults £4, Children £2.

With the appointment of a new catering officer Michael Atkinson, the Tea Room will, from Easter, also be open every weekday plus Sunday and Bank Holiday until the end of Christmas.

Other Events

Easter Open Day – 8th & 9th April
Guided tours at 1.00pm & 2.30pm
Friends Easter Bunny Hunt

Mega Mini Meet – Sunday 20th May

Art in the Park – Sunday 10th June

Cycle Sunday – 17th June

Flower Power Show - Sunday 8th July

Classic Car Show – Sunday 12th August

Plays in the Park

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

Friday 15th June - Jane Austin's **Emma**.
Charterhouse 7.30 pm

Tuesday 3rd July - Shakespeare's **Henry V**
Illyria. 7.30 pm

Thursday 12th July - Gilbert & Sullivan's
HMS Pinafore - Illyria. 7.30 pm

Sunday 26th Aug. - Roald Dahl's **The Twits** -
Illyria. 4.00 pm

All plays: £12 for Adults, £9.50 for Senior Citizens, £6 for Schoolchildren. Tickets can be purchased from Lytham Hall, Lowther Pavillion and a number of retailers around LSA

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

Contacts:

Lambert Dopping, Chairman (01253) 736408

Kath Smith, Secretary: (01253) 737548

Zoe Rushworth, Treasurer: (01253) 731538

John Martin, Newsletter: (01253) 728186

Pauline Hamilton, Membership:

(01253) 736857

Marion Coupe, Committee (01253) 733563

Liz Guffogg, Committee (01253) 727696

Hall: Bookings: (01253) 736652

Internet: lythamhall.co.uk