

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

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Issue 45

Happy New Year to all our Members

Liz Guffogg Chairman of the Friends writes:

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2008. By the time this goes to print I hope that some of you will have already enjoyed some snowdrop walks at the Hall, if not I can highly recommend them as a pleasant way to spend a Sunday. If anyone feels fit and able to volunteer to help please contact the Hall direct.

We ended 2007 with a very successful Evening of Christmas Cheer, it seems to get better every year! We have booked again for 5th December 2008, if you would like to be put on a list for tickets please let us know.

We hope 2008 will see the Friends spending some of our hard raised cash on projects at the Hall to include the restoration of the Garden Privy and the rear courtyard bell.



The Rear Courtyard Bell needs attention

We are at present trying to update our mailing list; we would be very grateful if you could let us know if you are able to receive your copy

via email. We are increasingly conscious of the costs involved in producing the newsletter and feel that the way forward is to get as many members onto email as possible.

I look forward to seeing you at the Hall.

Forthcoming events:

Snowdrops Walks

As we go to print the Snowdrop walks have already started at Lytham Hall, the first day being Sunday 27th Jan. and will continue through until to Sunday 17th Feb.

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. Stout shoes are recommended and dogs, although welcome, must be kept on a leash.

Entrance to the grounds will start at 10:30am with last entry at 3:00pm. The costs are: £2.50 for Adults, £1 for Children. The tea-room will also be open for Light Refreshments.

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

Dates for your Diaries

Annual General Meeting – Wed. 24th Sept.
The *Friends of Lytham Hall* AGM will be held in the Ribble Room at the Assembly rooms Lytham.

Xmas Fair – Saturday 15th November.
Assembly Rooms Lytham.

Evening of Xmas Cheer – Fri. 5th December
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

Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair held in November raised over £400. This was a considerable increase on the previous year and was due to the effort of the committee in raising the awareness of the event and to local people who saw our display boards outside and just called in.

The Evening of Christmas Cheer

Once again a great success and felt to be our best one ever. Lytham St. Annes High School Band provided the guests with a selection of Christmas and other music in the entrance hall. This made for a lovely warm reception. We served the most beautiful canapés, blinis with smoked salmon, cheese, pate, olives, cheese straws, crostinis etc before the meal. After the meal Jim Dunn and Billy Charles entertained us with singing, a few jokes and lead the carols, they were brilliant and we are very indebted to them. The evening raised over £1000.



The Hall looked lovely at Christmas

Memories of the Hall

Lytham Hall (Secret Garden) The recent History

Thanks to Monty Myerscough for sending in the following article concerning his time as Nature Park Warden at Lytham Hall.

“For many years the grounds of Lytham hall were used as a private shoot by G.R.E. who owned the Hall and surrounding woodland throughout the 1970’s and 80’s. On shoot days officers from various G.R.E. branches up and down the country, with guests, would descend on Lytham hall with all guns blazing!

That all changed in 1988 when G.R.E. in their wisdom and after consulting with local and national conservation organisations, decided to turn Lytham Hall into a nature park for the benefit of the local community, schools etc.

I was fortunate enough to be offered the post of Nature Park warden, a position I enjoyed for the next 9 years or so, until G.R.E. decided that it was time to pass on the upkeep and running of the Hall.

During my time as warden and working with the ground staff, the woodland was managed and surveyed for wildlife, paths and nature trails constructed, trees and shrubs planted, nest boxes erected and various buildings including the Hall itself renovated. A major effort was put into finding the Ice House but unfortunately without success. It was generally decided that it must have been derelict and unsafe and probably demolished by the last residents of the Hall.

Rabbits were a major problem in the early days of the Nature Park and had to be drastically controlled if any tree planting or wildflower sowing were to get established. Many methods were used and the Lytham Hall rabbits were soon at a more reasonable population level.

Another cause for concern was the large areas of Rhododendron Ponticum which if left unchecked will completely take over woodland, preventing natural regeneration, swamping out native shrubs and plants and encroaching onto open grasses areas.

Completely removing even the smallest roots and burning is the only effective way of controlling this very invasive and persistent plant species. Cleared areas can then be planted up and left to regenerate naturally.

Woodland management is a very long term project, and as Lancashire is one of the least wooded counties in the whole of England, what remains needs to be preserved and managed sympathetically both for wildlife and people to enjoy.

Lytham Hall woodland is a fine example and I'm sure the present custodians will continue to manage and conserve it for many years to come, for the benefit of everyone and everything that visits it."

Please keep sending in your own **Memories of the Hall**, whether they are personal stories about Lytham Hall or about one of its inhabitants; it all helps to piece together what life was like when the Hall was a lived in property.

Alternatively, if you know someone else that you know had some association with the Hall, please ask them to get in touch - or write in on their behalf. A phone call (728186) or something written down on paper would be appreciated.

Lytham Hall

"Lytham Hall - The War Years"

A full house of 120 people enjoyed an illustrated talk entitled "Lytham Hall - The War Years", by local historian and archivist at Lytham Hall, Ann Pinder on Thursday evening 25th October. The talk, which covered both world wars of the last century, was given in the West Wing after guests were treated to canapés and drinks in the old hall with the log fire blazing and war time songs being played on the piano. Ann entertained the audience with many anecdotes about the Clifton Family, the then owners of the Hall. Her talk was illustrated by an exhibition of war-time and Clifton Family memorabilia.

She was thanked by Fiona Mackay, the Lytham Hall Operations Manager.

The archive group at the hall is made up of volunteers and they meet with Ann every Thursday. The volunteers worked tirelessly on this project and as well as the exhibition they made all the canapés, flower displays, and even put newspaper squares and carbolic soap in the toilets for that authentic wartime touch!

As the event was so popular and tickets sold out, anyone who would have liked to have gone but couldn't is being asked to contact the hall on 01253 736652 as if there is enough interest there may be a second night early in the year.

The exhibition remained up for the last of the 2007 open days at Lytham Hall on Sunday which attracted over 200 visitors.

Christmas Lunches at the Hall

This year the Hall catered for nearly 550 people during three days of Christmas Lunches and one Christmas Dinner. They all appeared to thoroughly enjoy the food and the venue and this can be proven by the fact that most have re-booked for the following year.

The Cliftons and the St. Leger

The St Leger is the oldest of the horse-racing classics having first been run in 1776 (three years before the Derby was inaugurated) and at over 1 mile 6 furlongs it is the longest of the five flat classics. Those who have been on the conducted tour of the Hall will have heard that the race was twice won by horses entered by John Clifton who was squire at Lytham Hall from 1764 to 1832.

In 1793 the horse was named, appropriately Ninety -Three. The jockey was W. Peirse and as the starting price was 15 to 1, it was obviously not one of the favourites. One hopes that the squire had backed it generously. Peirse was also successful in the Oaks of 1810 and 1812, but for other owners.

A second St Leger success for John Clifton came in 1806 when Fyldener won the race, this time ridden by jockey T. Carr but at the very short price of 7 to 4.

Those successes were in the years before there was a railway network in the country, and if a horse was to be taken from Lytham to Doncaster where the St Leger has always been run (a 115 mile journey!) it was either led on foot behind some other form of transport such as a horse-drawn coach or carried in a wagon. We can only presume that this wasn't the best preparation for an important race, especially as the roads were not the metalled highways of today. It is likely however that the racehorses were stabled more or less permanently at training establishments near the courses and were only seen by their race owners on race days.

Mistaken Coat

At the Evening of Christmas Cheer at the Hall, unfortunately one gentleman went home in the wrong coat. The missing coat is a formal dark cashmere and wool long coat to fit a tall slim man. Left behind was a less formal coat for a larger person. **COULD ALL GENTLEMEN AT THE EVENT PLEASE CHECK IF BY MISTAKE THEY TOOK THE WRONG COAT.** The owner of the missing coat is very anxious to get his back. Please telephone any of the committee if you have it.

Who said that!

Continuing with our series of articles that attempt to explain where unusual sayings originated:

Saving Face or Losing Face

The noble ladies and gentlemen of the late 1700s wore much makeup to impress each other. Since they rarely bathed, the makeup would get thicker and thicker. If they sat too close to the heat of the fireplace, the makeup would start to melt. If that happened, a servant would move the screen in front of the fireplace to block the heat, so they wouldn't "lose face."

Burning the Candle at Both Ends

When a clerk worked at night, it was hard to see by candle-light. If they did not have two candles, they would turn the candle on its side, and light both ends. This gave twice as much light, but burned out in half the time. The phrase, therefore, came to mean someone who worked very hard, but would wear themselves out (what today we call 'burn-out') very quickly.

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