

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

AUGUST 1999

Issue 13

Welcome to our third newsletter of 1999.

As you all know the Friends are a registered charity and the only group dedicated solely to the welfare of Lytham Hall. All our funds will go to the Hall – all donations legacies and proceeds of fundraising events. At present our money is earmarked for the purchase of the Clifton Collection of paintings and furniture. We intend that in future years we will enable local people and lovers of the Hall from further afield, to contribute to its upkeep and restoration in a positive way.

The Friends await patiently an announcement from Lytham Town Trust as to progress. Uncertainty about the ownership of the important items at the Hall is causing concern. It is now two and a half years since British Aerospace made its major donation to enable the Lytham Town Trust to acquire the Hall. There are pledges from Fylde Borough Council and the Town Trust has some funds. But until the collection is secure and the auction tags removed we will all continue to be concerned.

Memories of the Hall

Most of us know Stanley Brown, local historian and character. Stanley was the knowledgeable chap who led us through the grounds of the Hall during the Snowdrop walk and provided us with such interesting commentary. He has kindly written in with some of his own experiences of the Hall.

I have a vivid memory of walking with my parents in Lytham Hall Park around 1919/20. In those days 'Walking Permits' could be obtained on application at the Estate Office in Hastings place. I think that we must have entered by Church Lodge for I do not recall either the Main Gates or the 'Drive' from the Ballam road entrance at that time.

Walking round the back of the Hall, we came across, what I have since been told was, the Butler, feeding Guinea Fowl and Pea-hens near the back entrance to the Hall. He was dressed in a black uniform – knee breeches, tail-coat and silver buckled shoes – quite a portly gentleman.

Many years later, and accompanying the late Kathleen Eyre, our local historian and lecturer, we were entertained to tea by Mrs Violet Clifton, the mother of the last Squire. I suppose the meeting could have had something to do with Kathleen's book "Sand Grown - The Lytham St Annes Story" which interestingly enough has just been republished.

In the 'fifties' and 'sixties' I was fortunate to be allowed a 'Walking Permit' which was issued by the Estate in exchange for a donation to Lytham Lifeboat of which it may be recalled that John Kennedy, the agent for the Estate at the time was Honorary Secretary!"

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. A phone call (728186) or something written down on paper would be appreciated.

"Sand Grown"

Thanks to all those who ordered the reprint of Kathleen Eyre's book "Sand Grown – The Lytham St Annes Story". The Friends earned some useful money through commission.

Hidden Art Treasures

Margaret Race writes:

Friends of Lytham Hall, you will no doubt be aware of the publicity given recently to the campaign to try and get the council to do

something about the very valuable collection of art they are sitting on at the Town Hall. This present campaign – because any of you who have lived here for more than twenty years will know that it is not the first time that I have spoken out – was prompted by Sarah Kellam, the great great granddaughter of Richard Ansdell. Sarah came looking for Richard Ansdell paintings and instead found a collection which had been hidden away for many years and thought it was scandalous.

There are 230 paintings and objet d'art worth at least £2.5 million which were given to the people of Lytham St Annes, now borough of Fylde, many by my late grandfather, Alderman Dawson. He gave over fifty in the hope that one day they would be housed in an art gallery (at the very least displayed) so that they could be enjoyed by the people at large. Not just a selected few hung and looked at only by councillors and employees of the Town Hall in St Annes with the rest left stacked in the cellar - that was not their intention.

English Heritage (NW Region) wrote to Sarah Kellam last week in reply to a letter and said “Your story is compelling, and from the details that you enclosed it would be impossible for one not to read of it without being struck by the wrongness of it all”.

I am frustrated by the wrongness of it all. For half a century the excuse has been time and money. In my opinion it is the will that has been lacking, not the money – and time. How much do they need? Is fifty years not enough? I helped campaign for Lytham Hall, thanks to the hard work of a lot of public-spirited people and the generosity of BAe the local community now own it and I hoped the entire collection would find a home there, I feel it is the perfect place. I hoped that Fylde Borough Council would be anxious to negotiate and help finance such a move, but three years down the line and still nothing is done.

I would be grateful for any support. A phone

call, a letter, an opinion expressed to anyone of influence would help enormously at this time. I am determined to keep the momentum going. The collection will not go away, they have to do something with it and I will not go away either! I will be glad of your comments.

Margaret Race (nee Dawson)

Tel 01253-727268

Recent Events:

HoG Roast & ‘Throw it Down’

Thanks to everyone who turned up and made the HoG Roast & Hoe Down such an outstanding success.

The weather preceding the 19th had been quite glorious and in anticipation of more of the same the Friends committee spent a number of hours preparing the area outside the Stable Yard. However, just as people started arriving so did the rain. A quick dash with the help of Mr & Mrs Pinder (Hall Custodians) saw us re-locate to the many rooms of the Stable yard. All that is except the bar and the volunteers manning it, they were left with nothing but a golf umbrella for shelter!!

Eventually over 100 people turned up. To a person they refused to allow something as trivial as torrential rain to spoil their enjoyment. The very best side of the British character came through, everyone got stuck in and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The ‘Festival Ceilidh band’ were real stars. Squeezed into a corner of a small room they played right through the evening without complaint, many thanks to them.

Highlight of the evening was the last dance. Dancing had to that point been restricted to the small room where the band were playing, but so many people wanted to take part in the last dance that something had to give - it was the door. Out spilled all the dancers and completed the evening by dancing the Gay Gordons around the cobbled Stable Yard - in the rain! A wonderful sight.

Forthcoming Events:

Express Weekend – 29th & 30th August

Don't miss this years Express Weekend at the Hall. This years' event is shaping up to be even better than last.

Highlights of the weekend are the Hoyles Antique fair and Roadshow (Sun) and a classic car contest (Mon). Look out for The Friends stall.

Fashion Show - Thursday, 30th September

Stringers of Lytham have kindly agreed to arrange on behalf of the Friends a Fashion Show at the Hall. This will be our major event of the year.

The cost of this rather special event has been set at £6 which includes a glass of wine on arrival. More wine and soft drinks can be purchased during the interval.

All Patrons of the Friends of Lytham Hall have been offered a free ticket to this event. Members of the Friends wishing to reserve tickets can do so by phoning either Margaret Race on (01253) 727268 or Pauline Hamilton (01253) 736857. Tickets are also available at Stringers Department store in Lytham.

Christmas Fair

Our Christmas Fair is lacking a venue. The Assembly rooms are not available and we have not yet found anywhere else suitable. If anyone knows of somewhere, a church hall or perhaps a Hotel! Please ring Marion Coupe on (01252) 733563.

Christmas at the Hall – *Not for the Friends!*

It is looking likely that there will be no FOLH Christmas function at the Hall this year.

Apparently the Hall is already fully booked for the few available weekend dates, and because of the commitment to weekday Christmas lunches it has been decided that no mid-week evening bookings will be taken.

Although it is nice to believe that the Hall's finances are healthy enough to allow the

turning away of bookings, we are very disappointed at the thought of the Friends having no presence at the Hall on this the last Christmas of the millennium. We need a way forward, does anyone have any suggestions?

Annual General Meeting – 23rd September

The Friends of Lytham Hall AGM will be held at the Assembly rooms Lytham on 23rd September 1999 at 7:30. Separate notices are being enclosed with this newsletter for all paid up members. If you do not know whether your membership has lapsed, or would like to make sure you renew in time please telephone Pauline Hamilton on (01253) 736857.

Snowdrop Walk

We believe that due to the success of last year's Snowdrop walk that the Hall's custodian - **The Heritage Trust for the North West** is planning a number of openings that will enable everyone to enjoy the early flowers that are such a feature during the early part of the year.

Any Ideas!

The Committee of the Friends still wants to hear from anyone with ideas for fund-raising, and even better would be from people/organisations & businesses prepared to stage and organise or even sponsor events.

Lytham Hall

Lodges

Many thanks to Janet Kitchen of Lytham who drew the attached map for us in response to the piece in issue 11 of the newsletter about the people living in the Lodges, taken from census material. The map shows the locations of the Lodges as they were in 1938. The names of some have changed over the years and several have now been demolished.

The map clearly shows the natural boundary of the parkland of the Hall, encircled by trees. This is roughly (without the cemetery) the area of the English Heritage registered parkland. It is thought that the monks of Lytham priory re-routed Liggard Brook to

form this boundary, and the tree cover was increased by Thomas Clifton in the 19th century.

Watchwood Lodge ℑ still stands at the entrance of Watchwood Drive leading to Home Farm and would have been originally approached from Green Drive. At the Saltcotes end of this delightful woodland walk is Swiss Lodge (not on the map).

Hull's Lodge ℞ named after an inhabitant, has been replaced by a very secure brick building used by Guardian to store important computer records and known as "the great grandfather tape store".

The gates of **Bowgrave Lodge** Ⓞ on the old road to Ballam (where there was another Lodge) are still there, not far from the cemetery and the site of the house can be traced.

Kendal's Lodge ⊗ has gone, but was probably named because of its proximity to the squire's dog kennels.

The gates to **Heyhouses Lodge** ⊕ are still to be seen although the road has been blocked by housing development.

Church Lodge Ø is well known, a listed building, and currently being extended.

The **Main Lodge** ℵ and gates which afford access from the centre of Lytham were moved from their original site in Hastings Place (near the back of the County Hotel) to accommodate the new railway line to Blackpool which opened in 1863. Bridges were built near Church Lodge and on the new Ballam Road.

There is some debate over the history of the actual main gatehouse. Certainly the entrance was moved – but how much if any of the original structure was re-located? It has been claimed that Christopher Wren had a hand in

the design but we must remember that St Paul's cathedral was designed in the 1670's! Whoever built it, the Lodge is unusual; on one side is a living room, a kitchen and privy. On the other side of the road were two bedrooms, one now a bathroom, as the "house" was until quite recently inhabited. An interpretation of the Arms above the arch might be helpful – any offers?

Marion Coupe

Nice Job

It is good to see that the two breaches in the cobbled wall on Ballam road have been attended to and especially pleasing that the contractor chosen has done such a professional job. Why has it taken so long?

Handy Man still required

No-one has yet volunteered to put together two portable "A" Boards to help with fund raising. If there is anyone out there who has the necessary skills to make them for us please contact us as soon as possible.

The Hall open dates for the rest of 1999 are as follows:

Aug.	Sunday	29 th (Express Weekend)
	Monday	30 th (Express Weekend)
Sept.	Sunday	26 th
Oct.	Sunday	31 st

The Hall's grounds are still open every Sunday until 31st October. This presents an excellent opportunity to spend time exploring some of the wonderful woodland trails and parkland before visiting the extremely nice tea-room in the courtyard at the back of the Hall. The cost of £1:00 includes car parking.

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