

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

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Issue 16

A Message from our Chairman

It has been announced that the Heritage Trust for the North West has become the lessee of Lytham Hall for the next 99 years, taking over full responsibility for it from Lytham Town Trust.

The **Friends** wish HTNW every success. We will help them in any way we can. We look forward to the day when the Hall will be fully ready for its intended use as an art gallery, museum and visitor centre.

The Hall was purchased in February 1997. During the three years since then progress has been disappointingly slow. We hope that now that the Hall is in the long term custodianship of HTNW initiatives will be taken which will lay to rest public concern that 'nothing is happening'.

It is important not only that these initiatives are taken but also that the public are kept fully and regularly informed about them. HTNW can take comfort from the knowledge that the Hall has many friends who are willing to give of their time and money to support the cause.

The **Friends'** greatest worry is the future of the Clifton Collection. It will put many people's minds at rest if an early announcement is made as to what is to happen to the collection. The Collection is integral to the heritage of the Hall and it must remain there.

Of all the organisations who have supported the Hall, the **Friends** are the only charitable body whose sole reason for existence is the support of the Hall. The **Friends** stand ready to assist in any major appeal which may be launched to raise funds to purchase the collection.

David Coupe

Forthcoming Events:

HoG Roast & HoE Down' – Sat. 1st July

Once again we will be "Stripping the Willow" in the Stable Yard of the Hall at our 3rd annual HoG Roast & HoE Down. After last years triumph against the elements we wondered whether people would have been put off this event, however to our amazement and delight the demand for tickets, especially from people who attended last year's event, has been extremely high.

We are delighted to announce that the 'Festival Ceilidh band', who provided such terrific entertainment for us last year, will once again provide the music and instructions on the night. Remember no previous country dancing experience is necessary.

Prices have been kept in line with last year at £10 for Adults and £5 for Children. Tickets are available from any committee member or by sending off the application form attached to this newsletter.

If there is anyone willing to help on the evening of the Hog Roast could they please ring Pamela Greenhill on 735045.

Other dates for your diaries:

Visit to Tabley House – Sunday 24th Sept.

As previously stated our interest in Tabley House centre's around the fact that it was also designed by Lytham Hall's designer John Carr.

Entrance to the House will be £4. The intention is for **Friends** to make their own way to the House (a map will appear in the next Newsletter). Then to meet at a pre-designated time for a conducted tour of the House by the 'Friends' of Tabley House. On their 1997 visit to Lytham Hall, the 'Friends' of Tabley impressed with their knowledge of period design and structure.

Because the size of visiting parties are strictly limited. We will need an indication of how many people intend travelling to Tabley. If you wish to be included on the tour could you please register your intention by phoning 728186 (John Martin). Also to gauge the viability of providing transportation by coach could you indicate whether or not you would be interested in travelling on a coach organised by the **Friends**. This would probably cost an additional £5.

Annual General Meeting – Wed. 27th Sept.

The **Friends of Lytham Hall** AGM will be held at the Assembly rooms Lytham on 27th September 2000 at 7:30pm.

Christmas Fair – Sat. 1st December

Although we were extremely grateful for the use of the Wesley Hall to stage our 1999 Christmas Fair, it was felt that the Assembly rooms are better positioned to catch passing trade and we have therefore already booked them for this years event.

Special Christmas event????

Unfortunately our attempts to arrange a Christmas event at the Hall have been thwarted, hopefully temporarily, by the Hall's decision not to accept any more bookings until the booking system and the pricing structure has been revised.

Recent Events:

Snowdrop Walk – 13th February

For those of you who missed this year's Snowdrop Walk I have only one message for you - don't miss it again!

The event was blessed with incredible weather and even those that had attended in previous years had to agree that the display was even better. Well over 500 people took the opportunity to look at an incredible display of Snowdrops, in places the display was so thickly covered that it looked like it had snowed during the evening.

The **Friends** led two walks around the grounds. Thanks go to Stanley Brown who

not only led both walks but also provided a very interesting commentary on the various points of interest contained within the grounds. The walks included treading the newly created path around the Lily Pond where the remains of the Boat House can still be clearly seen.

Also available on the day was an interesting leaflet about Snowdrops, their origins, names and different types. Produced by Alan Ashton of the Town Trust and supplied free, it provided additional interest to the day.

The tea-room provided an array of food, Soup, sandwiches were available as well as cakes and hot drinks.

It was pleasing to see an event, first initiated by the **Friends** being so well attended presented and enjoyed by so many people. It is definitely here to stay.

Coffee Morning – 19th February

We were well looked after by our hosts, and despite stiff competition from other coffee mornings that day, many people turned up to support the event. By parting with their money at the raffle table, plant stall and the very popular bottle tombola, the **Friends** raised £200.

However the real reason for the coffee morning was to take up the Conservative Club on their very kind invitation to view the Clifton Billiard Table which had been presented to them by Squire Harry Clifton. It was interesting comparing the actual table with the photographs on the display board showing the table in the Billiard room at Lytham Hall. This highlighted quite a number of changes/ improvements made to the table in the intervening years.

Kay Hopper

Saturday 18th March - New to you Day

It always amazes me what people will buy! Although there was a lot of good quality stock – from a brass standard lamp, bone china mugs to good quality clothes. There was a

brisk trade from 10.00am right through the morning and the Friends raised £140. We have also been able to help another deserving charity, which raises money and equipment for orphans in Romania, arranging for any left over items to be collected by their volunteers so that they too can raise funds – that’s what I call recycling at its best.

Kay Hopper

Easter Bunny Treasure Trail

The Friends Easter Bunny Treasure Trail was once again well attended. Approximately 100 children and parents had great fun following the clues and trail, answering a quiz which was aimed at the children but which stumped even one or two of the parents!! Every child received a prize of a crème egg or wooden egg. A children’s raffle was also held. The general view of all those who took part was that they had a “hopping” time and would certainly visit the Hall again. The Easter Bunny however got a little damp on the Monday but should recover.

Pamela Greenhill

Volunteers Afternoon - Thurs. 23rd March

About 60 people turned up for the volunteers afternoon at Lytham Hall, arranged so as to allow the Hall’s management a chance to thank them for all the help and assistance over the past year. Mr John Millar offered thanks and gave a presentation on some of the challenges facing the Hall and it’s management team. A pleasant afternoon was rounded off with an excellent finger buffet.

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.

Memories of the Hall

In a previous issue we have enjoyed the recollections of Margaret Shenton one of the two sisters that worked as Lady’s Maids to Lilian Clifton. This time Phyllis Coreless, the

other sister, casts her mind back to the four happy years she spent with the Cliftons.

Phyllis came with her sister from Sheffield when she was just 14 years old to work at the Hall as a Chamber-maid and within a few months became Lady’s Maid to Lilian Clifton. It was a happy and successful relationship and Phyllis stayed with the Cliftons for 4 years.

She remembers the Hall as a wonderful place, full of atmosphere and sumptuous furniture. Christmas time was her favourite time of year, Lilian would buy a huge tree for the Hall and there would be presents for everyone.

The Cliftons spent a large amount of their time in London but invariably at different locations. Harry would stay at his Gentleman’s Club and Lilian would stay at the family’s London address – Kents Terrace at Regents Park. In fact Phyllis remembers seeing the house on television back in 1990 on the BBC news - it was being looked at by Margaret Thatcher during her search for a house at the end of her time as Prime Minister.

Her recollection of the sizeable indoor Staff is as follows:

- Housekeeper – Madam Cornier. French, originally believed to be Harry’s Nanny. Had a mutual dislike with Lilian.
- 2 Upstairs Maids
- 2 Downstairs Maids
- 2 Chamber Maids
- Ladies Maid – It was very fashionable for the Ladies Maid to be French, but the Cliftons found it difficult to get one that would stay.
- Butler/Valet
- Parlour Maid
- Cook - German
- Scullery Maid
- Kitchen Maid

Phyllis remembers the day the German Cook vanished, interned by the British Government

for the duration of the war! From that moment on Mollie Holt, the Kitchen Maid, became the cook. Mollie eventually married one of the many Market Gardeners employed by the Hall, became Mollie Wade and they were allocated Church Lodge to live in.

Phyllis remembers that the Squire was an unwitting provider of additional funds for the Staff. Whenever any of them found themselves a 'bit short' they would go into the library and root through the leaves of books. Apparently the Squire had a habit of using 10-shilling notes as book-marks and then forgetting which of the books he was reading.

We shall hear more of Phyllis's recollections in future Newsletters.

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.

Tabley House

Designed by the same architect, but slightly later than Lytham, Tabley House is more obviously Palladian in design and contains a wonderful collection of paintings and furniture.

It was commissioned by Sir Peter Byrne Leicester and completed in 1769. Sir Peter was a patron of a number of British painters, but it was his son, Sir John Fleming Leicester, later 1st Lord de Tabley who became the first great patron and collector of British paintings. He assembled a splendid collection at Tabley during the first decade of the 19th century, ultimately with the intention of establishing a National Gallery of British Art.

JMW Turner, Henry Thompson, and James Ward were among the many painters who stayed at Tabley. Today important works by them can be seen in the rooms for which they

were created, together with fine paintings by Dobson, Lely, Reynolds, Cotes, Northcote, Callcott, Fuseli, Lawrence and Martin (what no Ansdell's?).

The famous Gallery, created for Sir John before 1809, has been restored to its appearance in the early 1840s when it was remodelled by the second Lord de Tabley with sumptuous, red flock wallpaper. The collection of paintings has been re-hung in the staterooms of the main floor, with furniture by Chippendale, Bullock, and Gillow and memorabilia acquired by the family.

The Hall open dates for the rest of 2000 are as follows:

May	Sunday	28 th	
	Monday	29 th	(Bank Holiday)
June*	Saturday	17 th	(Craft Fair)
June*	Sunday	18 th	(")
June	Sunday	25 th	
July	Sunday	30 th	
Aug	Sunday	19 th	(Express Weekend)
	Monday	20 th	
Aug	Sunday	27 th	
Aug	Monday	28 th	(Bank Holiday)
Sept	Sunday	24 th	
Dec	Sunday	10 th	

* Grounds & Tea- room only

Admission charges:

On normal open days: Adults £3.00 Children £1.50 for entry to Hall & grounds.

For entry to Grounds only: Adults £1:00 Children 50p

Charges for the Express Funday will be different.

Contacts:

David Coupe, Chairman: (01253) 733563

Liz Guffogg, Secretary: (01253) 727696

Kay Hopper, Treasurer: (01253) 736688

John Martin, Newsletter: (01253) 728186

P. Hamilton, Membership: (01253) 736857

Kath Smith, Volunteers: (01253) 737548

Anne Pinder, Hall Custodian: (01253) 736652