

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

October 2001

Issue 22

Autumn Fair – 10th Nov. Assembly rooms, Lytham. 10:00 am – 12 pm.

We have brought the date of this year's Xmas fair forward to avoid clashes with other Xmas fairs. It will still follow the same successful format as previous years, Tea/Coffee, Stalls, Bottle Tombola, Raffle, Poinsettias, Cakes, Bric-a-Brac etc. Tom Eccles will be on hand to sign Christmas cards. However, this year will see a couple of new features:

- Silent Auction where people will bid for items by writing their names and bid on a piece of paper. At the end of the fair the person with the highest bid for any particular item wins.
- Bean Pal Tombola for the children.

We have a promise of a international star to perform the grand draw. However at time of press their presence has not been confirmed. Keep your eyes on the local press for details

Please contact any member of the committee with donations for the Raffle, Tombola, Bric-a-brac, Home Baking, or Christmas decoration stalls. If you can help on the day please let us know. Remember the Grand Draw will take place here at 11:30 am. Bring your friends for a cup of coffee. Entrance is just 50p which includes a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits.

Evening of Christmas Cheer at the Hall – Friday 14th Dec.

Keep this date open. If this year's event is anything like as good as previous, we should be in for another memorable evening. Local singers Jane Curtis, Don Sheerin & friends will provide entertainment.

Because of the renovations the Hall will not be grandly decorated by Myerscough College however the friends will do what they can to inject a real feeling of Xmas cheer –

something that we have been very good at in the past.

The menu for the evening is as follows:

- Vegetable soup and roll (choice of brown or white)
- Cold buffet: Roast turkey with trimmings, sausages, pork pie, prawn vol au vents, crab stuffed tomatoes, Mediterranean pasta salad, green salad.
- Choice of warm Xmas pudding or sherry trifle
- Tea or coffee

There will be port sherry and brandy available as well as wine by the bottle and glass and beer.

The evening will finish with Carol singing in the main Hall.

Tickets for this event are £15. Unfortunately because of the restriction in numbers to just 70 there can be no reduction for children.

Friends have a two-week priority window to order tickets, before any remaining go on sale to the general public.

To order tickets please use the form at the end of the newsletter, or phone any of the committee – listed at the end of the newsletter. Remember though – last year's event sold out very early and this year it is the only festive event at the Hall!

Recent Events:

Annual General Meeting

We are pleased to report that our AGM on Wed. 26th Sept. was well attended and enjoyed by all who came.

Over 30 members (including committee) listened attentively to Liz Guffogg give her Chairman's report. Liz thanked the committee for their sterling work over the past 12 months and paid a special tribute to former Chairman David Coupe who had been so

instrumental in most of the good work already done by the Friends. Also thanks went to former committee member Margaret Race who left earlier in the year to concentrate her efforts on the Arts Centre project. She then reported that although there was no concrete news on the Clifton Collection that the prospects for a successful lottery bid was looking very promising.

Liz later went on to promote a discussion on the Friends efforts to purchase the set of Gillow chairs that had come up for auction at Sotherbies during the summer. She was seeking an opinion, from the membership, on whether it thought that the purchase of the chairs and indeed future articles of interest and additions to the Clifton Collection was a correct use of Friends funds.

A lively debate ensued; the conclusion of which was to empower the committee with the following proposal that was put forward by Mr D. Lever and seconded by Mrs R. Midgely that:

‘The committee be given authority to purchase original items from Lytham Hall as and when available (subject to funds in the Friends account). Failing that, to put the monies towards partnership funding for the Clifton Collection’ The proposal was carried unanimously.

Liz thanked the meeting for the endorsement, but went on to say that the identification of authentic Clifton furniture and articles would prove very difficult and the opportunity to purchase them even more so. However, despite the failure to secure the chairs that the experience gained would put us in a strong position for future bids.

Tom Stringer concluded the evening with a slide show of old photos of Kildalton castle on the Isle of Islay, which included John Talbot’s grave. Tom added a bit of background to the reasons why the Cliftons chose to live there in preference to Lytham, then added some personal memories of the

Isle and Kildalton. Our thanks go to Tom for an extremely interesting evening and one that re-enforces our commitment to organise a trip to Islay. – perhaps during 2002/03

Thank You

A big thank you to everyone who volunteered their support in manning the Friends stall at many of the local events during the year. A special thanks goes to Kath Smith and Eric & Sue Hornby who did more than their fair share.

Grand Draw

Many thanks to all of you who have made such a fine effort to support the Grand Draw. A special thank you goes to those who have asked for more books of tickets. If you still have tickets to sell – keep selling. Stubs can be returned any time leading up to and including the day of the Draw.

Thanks to all the sponsors of prizes, please make an effort to remember them when you next make a decision where to go shopping or for a meal out.

Weekend for 2 at the Dalmeny Hotel.

Portable Colour Television.

£50 Meal Voucher for Arcobaleno, Lytham.

Meal for 2 at the Lindum Hotel

£30 Meal Voucher for Mr Chow’s, St Annes.

Meal for 2 at the Grand Hotel.

£30 Voucher for Ribby Hall Leisure Centre.

Sunday Lunch for 2 at St Ives Hotel.

4 tickets for the Xmas Panto at the Grand Theatre.

2 sets of White Knuckle ride tickets at the Pleasure Beach.

Bottle of Champagne from CopyCats Communications.

Brace of Pheasants from Lanigans, Lytham.

Voucher for Grant Smith’s Physio Centre.

£10 Voucher for Stringers, Lytham.

£10 Voucher - Barton Grange Garden Centre.

This list is still not complete as more prizes are being pledged every week. The draw will take place at our Autumn Fair at 11:30 pm on

10th November at the Assembly rooms, Lytham.

Please return all stubs and unused books to our Treasurer: Mrs Kay Hopper 48 Trent St. Lytham St Annes. Lancs. FY8 5DD

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

Harry's Bentley.

We have a story that is steeped in nostalgia but also bang up to date. It has been sent in by Ruthmary Paul who works in the offices at the Hall.

“A gentleman from Scotland appeared out of the blue one day last summer (2000) saying he owned the Bentley which once belonged to Harry Clifton, he wasn't in the car that day but assured me next time he came down from Scotland he would bring the Bentley. Twelve months past and to be honest I had forgotten, so imagine my surprise when I answered the door at the Hall one day in September to see this beautiful car parked up. It was originally yellow but had been re sprayed maroon by the time the present owner bought it.

When he first visited 12 months ago I told him a tale my Father told me about Harry and the car. The story goes that Harry was in a foul mood one night and told his chauffeur that if he stopped at all on the journey home he would be sacked immediately. The chauffeur was hoping and praying that the main gates would still be open and fortunately they were. However, the inner gates were shut, the chauffeur began to slow down until Harry reminded him of the threat, so he drove through the gates (which were then made of wood).

The present owner of the Bentley has the full history of the car and when he returned home he sent me an e-mail saying that the car had

gone in for repair of the front bumper! He very kindly took myself, and John the caretaker, for a spin down the drive...what fun!”

Wartime at the Hall

The last newsletter contained the memories of Pat Moorhouse one of two friends who worked at the Hall during the War. This month it is the turn of Betty Kershaw to cast her mind back to recall some of her wartime experiences.

Betty went to work at the Hall following her call-up in 1942, when she was 19 years old, and stayed until 1946. She was initially trained at St Annes (War memorial) Hospital before moving onto the Hall, which was then an Army convalescence Hospital - it was later upgraded to an auxiliary Military Hospital.

One day she was walking to the Hall along the main entrance and passing the time of day with two people she did not know, a rather scruffily turned out person and his mother. It wasn't until they reached the Hall that they introduced themselves as Squire Harry and his mother Violet Clifton. Harry insisted on taking Betty down into the wine cellars and presenting her with two bottles of wine “to be shared with the rest of the staff”.

She remembers the Americans arriving at Warton Aerodrome in November 1942. Lots of them went down with pneumonia and were horrified at the severity of that winter. The American officer ranks would invite the Nursing staff to dances at the Weeton AAF base. Transportation would be provided and, even better, quality food such as steaks and tinned fruit were served to all that came. Betty remembers the officers as well mannered and extremely well behaved.

There will be more from Betty in the next edition.

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 of 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

Renovation of Hall

As reported in the local newspapers, the Heritage Trust for the North West have announced that in line with their short term strategy, the Hall will shortly be undergoing extensive renovation.

The proposed changes, which are still in the planning stage, are basically an upgrade of facilities to allow the Hall to more effectively generate income. The West wing will receive the brunt of the work that will include the relocation of the Tea-room/Café and new toilet facilities. The Cottage will be converted into a gift shop, with staff accommodation on the upper floor.

To allow the work to be completed in the shortest possible timescales Heritage Trust for the North West has reluctantly decided to close the Hall and grounds from the end of October until Easter. There are some outstanding bookings that will have to be honoured, including special events like the Snowdrop walk.

Grounds to become a Country Park

There is also a Lancashire County Council proposal to turn the Hall's grounds into a Country Park. What this means and what impact it might have on the Hall Estate can be viewed at Lytham Heritage centre from 23rd October running through to 4th November.

Dovecote

The door to the Dovecote has visibly deteriorated over the past couple of years. We were extremely pleased to hear that the Civic

society has offered to pay for the repair of the door and that HNTW has gratefully accepted their offer.

Kendal's Lodge

We reported in the last newsletter that the remains of Kendal's Lodge had been re-discovered, located within Big Wood inside the grounds of Fairhaven Golf.

The local historical importance of the lodge is well understood. What is less clear at this moment in time is what we, as an interest group, would want to have done with the lodge apart from the prevention of further deterioration. To this end an application was made to the Department of Culture for a 'listing' under the 1990 Act for buildings of special architectural or historical interest. The application argued the case on both architectural and local interest grounds.

We have to report that the application was turned down on the advice of English Heritage for a number of reasons; the main ones being the poor state of repair and the absence of original internal fittings.

The most interesting feature of Kendal's Lodge is that, unlike the other remaining lodges, it has remained unaltered and more importantly not modernised from the time it was first built. Although at this moment in time we lack an understanding and probably the finances to secure a future for the lodge, we must not preclude the vision and energies of people who will follow on in our footsteps.

The only certainty is that it is not possible to preserve something that is no longer there. If the lodge is left to deteriorate further there will be nothing left to conserve.

We are all endowed with the responsibility of conserving our heritage for future generations. Those that find themselves in a position to influence the preservation of heritage are lucky people indeed. How they use that influence will determine the quality

and quantity of heritage that will be passed on.

A small exhibition showing the layout and the past and present external appearance of the lodge was present at the Friends AGM. This exhibition will also be shown at the Autumn Fair at the Assembly rooms Lytham on November 11th. Extracts from it will be included in future editions of the newsletter.

If anyone knows of any stories, information or even photographs of this lodge, could they please contact any of the Friends committee.

Friends of Lytham Hall Web-Site

The launch of our Web-site, although delayed longer than originally thought, is still imminent. The final few links and registration details are currently being finalised. Keep looking for our Web-site on www.lythamhall.org.

Book Reviews

Due to amount of content available for this edition of the newsletter, the book reviews on the “*Catalogue of Books from the Library of Lytham Hall*” & the “*The Life and Works of John Carr of York.*” will now be included in a future edition.

Contacts:

- Liz Guffogg*, Chairman: (01253) 727696
- Kath Smith*, Secretary: (01253) 737548
- Kay Hopper*, Treasurer: (01253) 736688
- John Martin*, Newsletter: (01253) 728186
- P. Hamilton*, Membership: (01253) 736857
- Marion Coupe*, Events: (01253) 733563
- Ann Pinder*, Hall Custodian: (01253) 736652

I should like to attend the Evening of Christmas Cheer on December 14th at Lytham Hall.

Name

Address.

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Post Code. *Telephone*

Please send me _ _ _ tickets at £15.00 each

I enclose my remittance of £

Cheques should be made payable to: The Friends of Lytham Hall.

Please return with remittance to:

*Mrs Kath Smith
28 Park View Road
Lytham
Lytham St Annes. FY8 4JE*

If any further information is required Kath can also be contacted on (01253) 737548