

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

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Issue 23

A Happy New Year to all Friends of Lytham Hall and welcome to the first newsletter of 2002.

This year is scheduled to be a very important one for the Hall with two large-scale developments hopefully going ahead. The first which is the 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. Also the Entrance Lodge is to be repaired and developed as an information centre.

This work is already underway and progressing well. The initial phase of work is to repair the roof on the west wing, which was leaking quite badly.

The second, a proposal to turn the grounds into a Country Park, is still in the planning stage but hopes are high that it will receive the necessary approvals to enable it to go ahead.

The Lytham Hall Country Park

The proposals for the country park put forward by Lancashire County Council were on show in the Lytham Heritage Centre in November 2001. Many people looked at them and commented. A planning application has now been submitted to Fylde Borough Council.

Background

The grounds of Lytham Hall are listed Grade 2 in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The registered area also includes Fairhaven Golf Course, and part of the Home Farm.

The Heritage Trust for the North West (HTNW) which operates the Hall is seeking funding to secure the future of both Hall and grounds. It also looks forward to increasing

access. The country park proposal will allow free access all year round and be funded by the County Council (LCC). The historic landscape will be preserved and visitor facilities improved.

Outline plans

Entrances:

The main entrance will still be on Ballam Road. There is a possibility that an alternative entrance for coaches could be constructed via Clifton House nearby, thereby avoiding the likelihood of damage to the archway.

The Forest Drive entrance would be used for staff and volunteers, services and emergencies.

Parking:

A car park will be provided in the field on the left of the drive for country park visitors, initially for 60 cars and 4 coaches. Additional parking for events at the Hall will be either side of the drive near the metal gates and railings, for 40 cars. There will be extra passing places on the road. Cycle racks will be provided.

Footpaths:

A new 3 metre wide path will be created from the Ballam road entrance to the inner gates. A new north path along the line of the old Ballam Road (which went up to Ballam Lodge) will give access to the front lawn. There will be restored woodland trails and bridges.

The woodland:

There will be some clearance of rhododendron and bramble where they are overgrown, and of birch along the edges of the front lawn. Extra shrubs such as holly will be planted along the South Park boundary. Parts of the pinewood to the north west, the location of the pheasant pens, will be cleared to allow for play space and picnicking.

The lily pond (with the ruined boathouse) is

intended to become a focal point for visitors. There will be some tree felling to create glades and picnic area (with tables) and allow more light to the pond. A fountain is to be installed.

The trees on the Mount will be cleared, a spiral footpath reinstated and a flagpole put on top. The ice house may be found.

Gardens:

The existing tarmac car park will be removed and returned to grass. It was formerly a parterre and paths will be laid out in formal style. Gardens around the Mount to be restored.

Vistas:

These will be much improved by the removal of the present car park. Outlooks to and from the Hall will be more as originally intended.

Events:

The Country Park will be closed on days when large events are held such as the Express Fun Day, and a charge made for entry. Areas will be cordoned off when there is a wedding on the lawn.

Management:

A Countryside Ranger will be appointed and the park will be locked at night. Dog waste bins will be provided and interpretation boards and signs will be strategically placed.

Time:

The works are intended to be phased over three years.

There has been some concern over the increased activity in the area from local residents. This is understandable. However we must welcome the conservation of the park and the increased access. We hope that sufficient new planting will be made to screen the park from South Park.

Forthcoming Events:
Lytham Hall

Due to the extensive changes occurring at the Hall, the Heritage Trust for the North West has decided not to accept any bookings for the Hall in 2002 apart from Weddings and group guided tours. This obviously includes Friends events and in particular our Hog Roast and Christmas event. However we have determined to minimise the affect on our events calendar.

Snowdrop Sundays – 3rd, 10th 17th & 24th February.

We are pleased to announce that the building work has not affected the Snowdrop walks. There will be four special days for the Snowdrops in 2002 - Every Sunday in February.

Those of you who have been before will need no encouragement. For those that haven't yet seen the snowdrops in the grounds of Lytham Hall in full bloom, don't miss what is a lovely highlight to, what can be, a very long winter.

Parking in the grounds will be limited to disabled drivers only. All other vehicles can be parked in the AXA 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 be between 11.00am – 4.00pm and will cost £1.00 for Adults, 50p for Children. The tearoom will be open with a menu limited to Soup and hot beverages.

Summer Lunch - 9th June.

Mr & Mrs Coupe have graciously agreed to host a Summer lunch at Church Farmhouse. Details will follow in future newsletters.

Guest Speaker evenings

During the Friends visit to Tabley House in September of 2000 we were very impressed by the depth and range of knowledge possessed by the Friends of Tabley House on all aspects of their prized possession. We determined at the time that we should also

endeavour to bring our membership to a similar standard, thus ensuring a better understanding of what we are all so keen to preserve.

To this end we intend to run series of lectures/talks with guest speakers who will talk on subjects relating either directly or indirectly to the Hall and the Cliftons. The evenings will be supplemented with a supper and any additional information about the Hall. Details will appear in future newsletters.

Visit to the Gillow Museum, Lancaster.

In our quest to increase the knowledge of the Friends a visit to the Gillow Museum in Lancaster is to be arranged for later in the year. Details to follow in future Newsletters.

Autumn Fair – Saturday 26th October.
Assembly Rooms, Lytham.

Recent Events

Evening of Christmas cheer at the Hall.

Our “Evening of Christmas Cheer”, maybe the last in the Hall, was again a roaring success. Despite lacking the professional touch normally supplied by Myerscough College, the Hall looked lovely thanks to the decorating done by the friends and in particular Anne Pollitt.

A reception in the Main Hall around a blazing log fire was followed by an impressive 3-course buffet on tables that filled both the Ballroom & Dining room. At the end of the meal, local celebrities Jane Curtis, Don Sheerin & friends supplied some wonderful entertainment.

A vote of thanks by our Chairman Liz Guffogg went to all that had attended, contributed and worked to make the event a success. The draw of the raffle then took place, before the evening was brought to a close with a number of Christmas Carols, the harmony of which sounded quite delightful and a definite improvement on the previous year (practice makes perfect!) A splendid

evening raised another £365 towards the cause.

We must also add our thanks to the staff at the Hall who went out of their way to help. In particular Mr Tony Pinder who not only waited patiently for the last of the revellers to amble out, but also for not blowing his top when a couple of logs were thoughtlessly put on the fire shortly before the end. It meant he had to wait until the logs burnt completely out before he could lock-up and go home!

Apologies to all those who unsuccessfully applied for tickets. The Hall despite its apparent stature is just not designed to accommodate large numbers of people. Such is its attraction at Christmas time that we feel sure that we could sell out at least two more times – something to bear in mind in future years!

Autumn Fair

The **Friends** Autumn Fair took place on Sat. 10th November at the Assembly Rooms, Lytham raising £370 for the cause.

The decision to move away from December proved to be the right one. There was a noticeable increase in the amount of visitors compared to the past couple of years. We will continue with the autumn date this year.

Thanks go to everyone who turned out, many of them familiar faces. Special thanks go to all those who donated prizes and articles for sale, in particular Pam & Charlie Greenhill who once again provided some wonderful potted plants, this year the ever popular poinsettias were complimented by some beautiful pink & white Cyclamen. Thanks also to all those that helped on the day, and finally the ever-popular Tom Eccles who turned out once again to support the cause by signing Christmas cards.

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.

Grand Draw

The Grand Draw was made during the Autumn Fair. A great effort by all concerned helped achieve a net profit of £854. The winners and their prizes are listed below.

Dalmeny Hotel Weekend - *Mrs Heyworth*.
Portable Colour Television – *Tony Ellison*.
£50 Voucher for Arcobaleno – *M. Worsfold*.
£30 Voucher for Ribby Hall Leisure Centre – *Mary Martin*.
Ribby Hall Leisure Centre Voucher – *Mrs Kirkham*.
£30 Voucher for Mr Chows – *Mrs Gallagher*.
Lunch for 2 at St Ives Hotel – *Mavis Winton*.
Meal for 2 at the Lindum Hotel – *Mrs Angus*.
Meal for 2 at the Grand Hotel – *J. Drake*.
2 Pheasants, Lanigans – *Marilyn Smith*.
Tickets for the Grand Theatre – *Lis Banner*.
Pleasure Beach Ride Tickets – *Mr Nickson*.
Bottle of Champagne – *John Hesketh*.
Voucher for Grant Smith's Physio Centre – *John Hesketh*.
£10 Voucher for Stringers – *Vanessa Smith*.
£10 Voucher - Barton Grange Garden Centre – *Allan Crosby*
Designer Candlestick – *Liz Hicks*.

Once again many thanks to all those who supported the draw, whether by selling/buying tickets or contributing prizes. Finally a special thank you to Meg Hargreaves for the work putting together the prizes.

Memories of the Hall

Len Roslyn.

Len's father was Tom Roslyn the blacksmith on Smithy Lane. One of Len's favourite hobbies during his childhood was egg collecting (not illegal then). However some of his expeditions were a little risky than others.

Len was a bit of a lad who used to go 'egging' on Lytham Hall estate for Water-hens, pigeon, pheasant, wood pigeon and even geese eggs (from the farm). He remembers one visit around 1947 in particular....

Len and a friend started by ducking under the gate of Hey Houses lodge at the bottom of Regent Ave. Proceeding along the Rhododendron lined track to the small bridge crossing Liggard Brook, a choice was then to be made. They had to either to run past Kendall's lodge and across the golf course with the possibility of incurring the wrath of the golfers; or to turn left and follow the course around to the farm road. They took the latter owing to the availability of Water Hen's eggs in the pits that lay between the Orchard and Ring Wood.

Arriving at Home Farm they tried for some Geese eggs. However the sheer volume of noise given off by the indignant Geese persuaded Len to move on rather than incur the wrath of the Farmer.

Progressing through the grounds of the Hall they were mindful of the legendary gamekeeper 'Matthews' who the boys believed carried around a shotgun and laid waste to anyone caught illegally trespassing. Approaching the Hall from through the woods Len and his friend made their way to the back with the intention of visiting the Pheasantry. Suddenly they heard Matthews approaching and without thinking they dived over the nearest wall – into the middle pig-sty!! Luckily it was the only unoccupied sty of the three. They stayed there, petrified, for a good 15 minutes, not even looking over the top of the wall, until they dare venture further.

Most young boys would have been more a little put off by this frightening experience! Not Len, after a quick visit to the Pheasantry, they finished off in the Dovecote where all hell let loose as every bird tried to exit while the boys climbed the revolving ladder to avail themselves of a few pigeon eggs. A quick retrace of their journey then followed before arriving home, rather smellier than when they started, but with eggs for Mum and their collections.

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.

Friends of Lytham Hall Web-Site

The launch of our Web-site, has been delayed by an unforeseen hitch. It is anticipated that the glitches will not take long to iron out. Until then keep looking for our Web-site on www.lythamhall.org.

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