

Friends of Lytham Hall

Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

Issue 24

May 2002

This newsletter arrives at a time of great change for the Hall. The development of the West wing and other facility improvements are well under way. Plans for the development of the grounds into a Country Park are progressing well and a commencement of work is expected shortly.

Having said all that 2002 is proving a quiet year for the Friends despite all the development activity currently associated with the Hall. The Snowdrops walk has taken place, but plans for the Easter Bunny Hunt and the Hog Roast have both had to be scrapped for this year. We therefore have to apologise for the limited content of this edition of the newsletter.

We will attempt to give an update on the position of the Clifton Collection in the next edition of the Newsletter where we would also hope to have a better understanding of re-opening dates for the Hall.

Forthcoming Events:

Summer Lunch - 9th June.

CAROLE PLEASE MAKE THIS THE BIG FEATURE THIS MONTH - TA

David and Marion Coupe have graciously agreed to host a Summer lunch at their splendid home - Church Farmhouse, Ansdell. The event scheduled for Sunday 9th June starting 12:00pm will cost £10 per person.

The lunch will be a cold buffet, which includes a selection of cold meats and salad followed by a dessert. The ticket cost includes the first glass of wine. A number of games will be arranged for those who wish to participate, others may prefer to simply sit back and enjoy the occasion. A similar event in 1999 was extremely successful and provided all that attended with a wonderful afternoon.

Tickets, although restricted due to space limitations, are now available for this event and can be purchased by filling in the

application form at the back of this newsletter or by contacting Kath Smith on (01253) 737548).

Other dates for your Diaries

AGM – 25th September. Assembly Rooms, Lytham

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

Evening of Christmas cheer. – 13th Dec.

Due to the unavailability of the Hall, the Friends have decided to hold their 2002 “Evening of Christmas Cheer” at Green Drive Golf Club. Details will follow in future Newsletters, as will an article on the unique association Green Drive has with the Hall.

Recent Events

Snowdrop Sundays

We are pleased to announce that the Snowdrop walks during February were a great success. Despite the weather not being too kind, literally thousands of people passed through the gates too get a look at the snowdrops.

The arrangement with Axa for the use of their car park was again very successful. Anyone with a requirement to drive through to the internal parking such as the very old and disabled was allowed to do so. Amusingly though, there were a small number of complaints by people not wanting to park in the Axa car park - it had to be pointed out to them that the event was a Snowdrop walk!

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

We have received a couple of stories concerning the Hall taken from a conversation

with Mike Pemberton of Birks Farm Lytham and Abbie Boulton of South Africa during a 2001 visit to Lytham.

The first concerns Abbie's Mother-in-law Nancy Carr.

Nancy's parents, John and Elizabeth Carr lived at Peg's Lane End estate cottages, and both worked on the estate. Nancy was born in 1910 and attended Ballam School. She remembered as a child hiding behind the skirts of her mother if the squire went past, as children were not to be seen. She did however play in the bathrooms at the Hall and marvelled at the scented water. She also remembered talk of the ice-house in the grounds.

Nancy became an upstairs maid for the Cliftons in 1922. One day Emily Pankhurst came to stay and the young maid was told to light the fire for her. She turned on the new fangled gas fire and left it - thinking that was all she had to do - and nearly put an end to the suffragette!

Nancy lived with her brother Frank at Kendal's Lodge until about 1953. They were probably its last inhabitants. Frank was an estate worker who lost an eye as a child by another child's catapult. End

* * * * *

Mike's family has lived in Lytham since the 1820s' when John Pemberton came from near Wigan to be estate manager at Lytham. He later acquired the tenancy of Birks Farm and the family eventually bought it in 1952/3 and are still there.

The Fairs lived at The Birks and made it into a large house. Gates that led into the Hall grounds are still there although the house has been replaced. A drive linked it to Bowgrave Lodge.

This particular tale was initially told by a Mr Draper, a local man who used to shoot with Mike Pemberton's father:

As a child he did deliveries for Miss Brewster who kept a china shop in Henry Street. This was until recently Thelma's music shop, now a hairdresser's. It was snowing and Miss Brewster had an order to be delivered to the Hall. Draper set out on foot via Church Lodge and met John Talbot Clifton well wrapped up in a muffler. JT told him never to work for the woman again, threw the china into a pit, took him to the kitchen for a hot meal and gave him a gold sovereign.

This tale is said to date from before 1853 when the railway was put through, as the path went alongside the pond behind the vicarage, which may still contain the china.

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 Volunteers Day - May 16th

The HTNW has arranged a meeting for Lytham Hall volunteers, on 16th May at 2.00pm at the Hall. Included will be an update on progress with the West Wing. However, because of limited space the invitation is for Hall volunteers only, anyone else will be turned away.

Book Review

Catalogue of Books in the Library of Lytham Hall.

One of the 'Friends' - Zoe Rushworth has found and purchased from the Internet, a book entitled "Catalogue of Books in the Library of Lytham Hall." Dated 1878 the catalogue was arranged & catalogued by Matthew Robinson of Portico, Manchester. Printed by Charles

Sever of Long Millgate. It gives a fascinating insight into the contents of a library of the English landed gentry in the C19.

The book, 9.5” long by 6” wide, catalogues approximately 4,000 individual volumes within 159 pages. It is bound in blue morocco with title in gold on spine and has embossed decoration on front & rear covers.

Pasted on the inside of the front flyleaf is a hand-written letter in black ink from “Estate Offices, Lytham” dated 26th January 1886 to Joseph Gillow Esq. from Thomas Fair.

In it Fair gifts the catalogue to Mr Gillow then apologises for it being out of date. He then declares that the collection is not very rich in the ‘SS’ (does anyone understand this abbreviation?). He goes on to say that he had not yet managed to speak to Mrs Clifton on the subject of the painting Mr Gillow had expressed interest in, stating that she was very poorly and only allowing access from her children.

The catalogue from page 1 to 100 is arranged A to Z by both book title and by Author. Other details given per entry are: Compartment, Shelf, and No. of volumes.

The Compartments relate to the bookcases within the three rooms in the Hall where the books were stored.

- Compartments A to M - Library.
- Compartment N - Vestibule.
- Compartments O to R - Morning Room.

Pages 101 to 159, at over a third of the book quite a surprisingly high proportion, are devoted to Books in Foreign languages, again arranged alphabetically.

The collection was diverse, with books on religion, farming, history, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, biographies, travel, poetry, sport, fables, architecture, the Army etc. There were also numerous novels including a substantial collection of works by Sir Walter Scott & Shakespeare, plus the odd volume by

Bronte, Dickens, Voltaire etc.

Of particular note were the following sets:
50 volumes of critical essays on various novels, e.g. Robinson Crusoe, Tom Jones etc.
34 volumes on Theatre productions such as The Beggar’s Opera.
20 volumes on natural history.
25 volumes on Debates of the House of Commons 1774-1782.
9 volumes of “Lady’s Magazine or Entertaining Companion for the fair sex 1771-1779”

The catalogue is a real find, not only for the interest it gives us in identifying the contents of the Library but also as an aid if an attempt on the re-creation of the collection was ever made – don’t rule it out!

PS. Zoe has kindly offered to bring the book along to the Summer Lunch and the AGM for Friends who may wish to peruse its contents.

Lytham Hall

The Clifton Treasures

An old newspaper cutting – probably from the Evening Gazette and recently removed from the bottom of an old drawer demonstrates, probably as well as any other article, how substantial the Clifton fortune actually was. It reports on a talk given by Mr William Latham, the Squires personal agent to the Lytham St Annes Rotary Club, and describes a mission he was sent on to New York in 1941 to dispose of the Clifton’s private art collection.

In it Mr Latham explained that Mr Clifton had been inspired by “patriotic motives” to sell his works of art – at a time when the British Government was in need of all the United States currency it could mobilise.

The collection had been inspected at Lytham by an expert from the Victoria and Albert Museum who described it as “one of the most important ever brought together by a private collector.” Among the 200 masterpieces of art and craftsmanship were pieces associated

with imperial Russia. Many were of jade enriched with diamonds and other gems.

They included the Emperor of Russia's gold baton, encrusted with diamonds, and a 1759 snuff box in mother of pearl which had originally cost over £1000.

The sum the collection fetched in total is not revealed but one American dealer spent £13,000 dollars during a visit to the gallery where the treasures were displayed.

It is not explained whether or not the proceeds were handed over to the British Government. However, it does ease the heart a little to think that the demise of the Clifton Heritage could in part be due to such a noble and patriotic gesture.

Guest Speaker evenings

It is still very much our intention to run a series of lectures/talks with guest speakers talking 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

Contacts:

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

I should like to attend the Summer Lunch on June 9th at Church Farmhouse.

Name.

Address.
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Post Code. Telephone

Please send me __ _ tickets at £10.00 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

Carole can you please spread this, as a tear off strip across a page.