

## **FRIENDS OF LYTHAM HALL.**

### **NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 1998.**

The first anniversary of the sale of the Hall is upon us. Many of us will cast our minds back to Club Day 1996 when we had our first stall outside Stringers selling the famous teddies and pens. We were frequently asked "What will you do with the money if you don't get the Hall?" - our determination to win through was clearly infectious and the money and offers of support started to roll in.

The events we have held have become more and more ambitious with a raffle held at each one. Local businesses and "Friends" have been extremely generous in their donations of prizes small and large and we are grateful for their continued support.

There is still much to be done however.

As you are aware the deadline for the purchase of the Clifton Collection falls due in February. This is currently the subject of a lottery bid made by the Heritage Trust for the North West on behalf of the Town Trust. Although the outcome cannot of course be predicted we are keen that the contents in their entirety should remain at the Hall without which the place would surely become an empty shell. We hope that the money we have raised will therefore be put to good use in acquiring the Collection.

#### **Events at the Hall in 1997.**

There has been some correspondence in the Lytham St. Annes Express and the Gazette about the amount of access there has been to the Hall for the public during 1997. The "Friends" have done their best to make the Hall available by holding events there. These were:-

- May 97 Gala Dinner jointly arranged by the Mayor of Fylde, Coun. Jealous and the "Friends" and attended by HRH Prince Andrew.
- May 97 Open Day with many other local groups participating. £4,500 raised for the appeal.
- Christmas carol evening with mulled wine and mince pies, entertainment by Hall Park School

A delightful evening, thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended (despite the cold). It was very popular and tickets could have been sold twice over. We hope to do something similar in 1998 so if you were disappointed last year watch this space for advance notice!

- Victorian Christmas buffet

Again very well attended, the musical entertainment being particularly enjoyable from the High School Renaissance Group and Opera Singers led by Don Sheerin.

There have also been many fundraising events outside the Hall all very popular and successful. These included a Midsummer Barbeque and an Autumn Fair.

We have also entertained at the Hall visiting groups from Tabley Hall (another John Carr building) and the American "Boeing" families currently based at British Aerospace at Warton.

During 1998 we will continue to endeavour to involve local people in voluntary work at the Hall co-operating with those who are operating the Hall on a daily basis. We were pleased to be asked to decorate the Christmas Tree and the Ballroom at Christmas and would willingly have done more.

Financially, the "Friends" will be restricted as to the number and type of events they can sensibly hold at the Hall in 1998. This is because the "Friends" have been told that in future they will be charged for their use of the Hall.

### **The Newsletter.**

This Newsletter is "helped along its way" by a number of people and we save a good deal in postage by our hand delivery system. If you can help with that please let us know.

Up until now it has been edited by Chris Lane who has worked hard at putting previous issues together. Unfortunately Chris has other commitments and feels no longer able to give up so much of his time. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking Chris for all his hard work and to appeal to other "Friends" who may be able to take this task on board.

We are also looking for someone to take over the maintenance of the mailing list. This involves keeping the list up to date and printing the address labels for the quarterly newsletter.

The Newsletter is the best way we have of communicating with our members and keeping them informed of progress at the Hall. If there is anybody out there with some spare time and access to a computer/printer who would like to take on either of these tasks then please contact the secretary Elizabeth Guffogg on tel no 727696.

### **Lytham Hall Christmas Cards.**

Everyone will have seen these lovely cards from an original painting by Tom Eccles. We have sold will over 2000 of these and are grateful to Tom and Mary for their support. Our Autumn coffee morning was timed to boost sales of the card and Tom was there to sign them. £500 was raised at the event with card sales of £300 on top.

Nearer Christmas we held a shop at 7, Bath Street, Lytham to sell the cards, mugs etc. Very many thanks to all those who gave up time to help keep it open. The items will be there for a short time yet before disappearing into the basement of the Assembly Rooms once more.

### **Memories.**

We have asked in previous newsletters for memories and reminiscences about the Hall during the last century. Many local people worked at the Hall or visited there as tradesmen and their impressions are really valuable. There are old photographs around which can help gain an impression of life on the Estate. There was much more to it than just the Cliftons! After all they were not in residence a great deal. The Hall was let to tenants for long periods and we are very keen to find out about them and their experiences.

A number of people have loaned or given us photographs and other bits and pieces. We hope to arrange an exhibition or an evening event to try and piece together as much of the past as we can and so that people can get together and share their memories. If anyone

does have any pictures or other memorabilia regarding the Hall during this period please let the secretary Elizabeth Guffogg know on tel no. 727696.

Christine Nuttall lived at the Hall as a child. She writes....

“I was born in Lytham Hall on Sunday May 18th 1924, the fourth and youngest daughter of Capt. and Mrs W E Nuttall who rented Lytham Hall, furnished, for about 15 years... If you went up those magnificent stairs, and stood at the top, in the middle, with your back to them, then the room immediately in front of you was our nursery. The room on your right, the South East corner of the house, were my parents rooms and that was where I was born. At the opposite end, on the left hand side of that landing was the bedroom that we shared. We did not use the third floor except for occasional rather scary visits, there were some amazing things up there, many of them brought back from Mr Cliftons travels. The room I remeber best had a four poster bed in it, and the four corner posts were life size terracotta figures, each with a head that was specially mounter so as it could nod gently if the bed was moved. This was very frightening to a small girl, though I do not recall being afraid of the stuffed polar bear that stood on its hind legs half way up the back stairs.”

We will print more of these wonderfully evocative reminiscences another time.

#### **December storm damage.**

The recent storms have done a fair amount of damage to the trees and woodland areas on the estate. Some of you may have seen the tree that has come down just beyond the Gatehouse. Some of the older trees such as oak and beech have also been damaged and have had to be felled. This has been an expensive business and has been funded by the Town Trust.

As far as we know there has been no damage to the Hall itself, testimony to the good custodianship of Guardian.

#### **The Gatehouse.**

This building was lived in until fairly recently by we believe the widow of a former Clifton Estate worker. On the right was her living room and kitchen and across the road was her bedroom and bathroom. There was a privy at the back before the modern bathroom was put in. Does anyone have tales to tell of this eccentric building when it was lived in? We have already been lent a lovely photograph of it taken during a very snowy winter during the sixties before it was taken over by Guardian.

Our offer to take over one half of this building stemmed from a desire to have a base where “Friends” could drop in as they did at our previous office above the Assembly Rooms.

We would be able to fund renovation and use it to promote events at the Hall thereby increasing awareness locally. The presence of the “Friends” will enhance the security of the Hall, fulfilling the original purpose of the Gatehouse.

We are optimistic that an agreement can now be reached with the Town Trust and that the Spring will see new life back in this delightful building.

**AND FINALLY.....**

**St Annes Rotary Club Open Air Theatre.**

As you may know St. Annes Rotary Club are putting on a production of *A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM* from 15th - 21st June 1998. Enclosed is a special advanced booking form. This is a first for Rotary and the Hall and the proceeds will be divided between the MRI Scanner Appeal and the Lytham Town Trust. The producer is Carole Morley and the audience will of course be following the actors around the Park. So be ready for any kind of weather. The performances are not really suitable for children and tickets are limited so do take advantage of this opportunity to buy tickets if you would like to go. There will be a bar and buffet. This should be a really lovely event and the "Friends" are keen to support it in any way possible.

**Open Days at Lytham Hall**

The Hall will be open on the following days this year:-

April 12th - Easter Sunday

April 13th - Easter Monday

May 4th - May Day Bank Holiday

May 25th - Spring Bank Holiday

October 24th - Saturday

October 25th - Sunday

Volunteers will be needed to help steward the Hall, sell entrance tickets, help steward the car parking etc.

If you would like to help on any or all of these days please contact the secretary Elizabeth Guffogg on tel 727696.

The Heritage Trust for the North West also wishes to set up a training scheme for people who have an interest in local history and would like to act as tour guides for the Hall.

Further information is available from Mrs Ann Pinder the Custodian on tel 736652.

**"Friends" contacts.**

Chairman - Mr David Coupe

Church Farmhouse, Commonsides, Ansdell. Tel no. 733563

Secretary - Mrs Elizabeth Guffogg

15, St. Patricks Road North, St. Annes. Tel no. 727696

Treasurer - Mrs Kath Smith

28, Park View Road, Lytham. Tel no. 737548