



Friends of Lytham Hall Newsletter

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www.friendsoflythamhall.org.uk
Summer 2020



Although we have not had access to the Hall grounds for the past few months, our evening walks have rewarded us with lovely sunsets shining through the woodland seen from Ballam Road. With the reduction in road noise, we have been able to enjoy sounds of the birds and fresher air.

A Message from our Chairman

I hope that you are keeping yourself well and entertained in these challenging times.

Although it is disappointing that the Hall and its Parkland remains closed it is clearly necessary under the current circumstances. It is a significant challenge to Peter Anthony and his team as all income is being lost during a key part of the season, especially following the poor start to the year with flooding restricting access and reducing visitor numbers. The closure has been an opportunity for Peter and Paul to do some redecorating of the Tea Room and the Reception area at their own personal expense with support from Greg Anderton of Leafy Lytham and with a little help from the Friends. The exhibition areas on the top floor of the Georgian Hall are also being developed.

We have paid for some repairs to the driveway and, with a very generous donation of £4.830 from Rotary Lytham, for the painting of the North side of the Jacobean Hall. Although we are unable to visit the Parkland you can see daily posts of excellent photographs and videos of the grounds and wildlife on John Hornyak's Facebook site, 'Lytham Hall Parkland, Gardens and Wildlife'.

All our events up until, at least, Halloween have had to be cancelled and so we are investigating other ways of raising funds which is even more necessary under the present circumstances.

Any suggestions or thoughts would be appreciated.

Let us hope that we will be able to enjoy the Hall again in the near future but in the meantime take care of yourselves.

Lambert Dopping Hepenstal

Urgent Drive Repairs



The most badly damaged area of the drive, by Half-Moon Wood, has been repaired.

New Seating for the Tea Room



The lounge area of the Tea Room has had a very smart make-over.



Painting work continues

The North side of the Jacobean Part of the Hall has had a face-lift. Painting work by 'Fine Lines', has been completed while the Hall is closed.

The next step will be much-needed painting and repair work to the South side of the Jacobean Hall [overlooking the Parterre and Mount].



A Thank You from the Hall



The Hall managers have recently acknowledged the contributions made by the Friends of Lytham Hall and Rotary Lytham in a post on Facebook:

"Without the immense help of these two charities, we would not have achieved anywhere near as much.

Over the past two years these charities in particular have funded huge painting projects and transformed the image and marketability of Lytham Hall.

We thank you so much for your continuous fund raising efforts and generosity".

News from Lytham Hall Historic Parkland from John Hornyak, Lead Volunteer for the grounds and FOLH committee member.



2020 has been a year of contrasts and consternation and the Parkland has had more than its fair share of both!

The year started with huge amounts of rain leading to drive flooding and closure. The normal average rainfall in Lytham is approximately 70mm per month. We had 0mm in January, 200mm in February and 65mm in the first half of March and then virtually nothing until recently. The trees that were drowning in February were suffering drought and wind damage by April, into May and early June.

Nature's water supply was turned off and the whole estate went into lockdown.

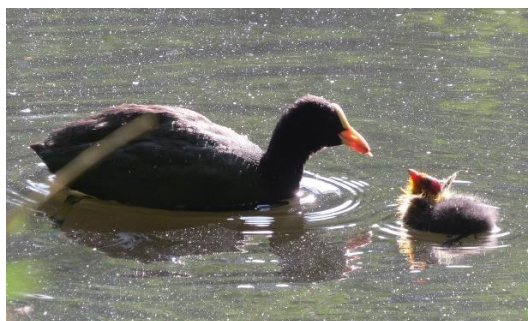
In late February I started a Facebook page (see link below) to report on the Parkland, Grounds and Wildlife within the Estate at Lytham Hall. I bought 3 Wildlife trap cameras having seen evidence of much wildlife which was difficult to capture with my normal cameras. Since installing the cameras, which are triggered by movement and body heat, I have been amazed by the diversity of wildlife in our 78-acre oasis of Nature and Heritage.

One of the key objectives of the Facebook page was to record the activities of the Grounds volunteers and the Projects and continuous work that keeps the Estate maintained year in and year out since the Volunteer group started in 2012. The Landscape Architect for the Estate, Edward Thorp had always kept a superb diary and since his migration to Cumbria there was a gap in the communication so a Facebook page was proposed and it was time for me to start learning! Nobody could have predicted the catastrophe of Covid-19 and the lockdown but I was able to show some of the progress including the new 'Nature Path' near to the rear of the Hall and of course the drive works sponsored by FOLH and the North wing Painting.

I have managed to post something on Facebook every day since 23rd of February covering not only the views and maintenance of the Parkland but pictures and videos throughout the seasons with a wealth of subjects. The list is large but includes Snowdrops, Bluebells, Flower borders and trees.



A Fox carries an egg very carefully.



Mother and baby coot.

Wildlife subjects include Deer, Foxes, Hares, Rabbits, Squirrels, and many birds including Herons, Ducks, Egrets, Buzzards, Kestrels, Woodpeckers, Robins, Coots, Moorhens and many more. The range is truly astonishing and proves the value of our Parkland not only as a heritage asset but a genuine site of diverse ecological importance. From the response of the general public it is clear that this area of interest is clearly one to exploit in the future!



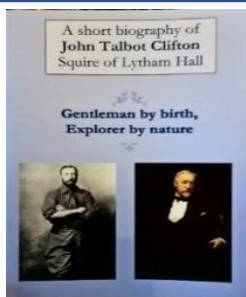
Whilst on my daily early morning security patrols it is wonderful to see the huge efforts that have ensured that the Parkland has not suffered neglect in terms of keeping Mother nature under partial control! The amount of input has been nothing short of amazing and when the time comes to open again our visitors will return to a very much cared for treasure, rather than a wilderness!

Now that the rain has thankfully returned to save most of our plants we look forward to renewed growth in all areas and will be augmenting the Wildlife camera numbers with some new ones sponsored by FOLH. This move will hopefully expand the publicity we receive and help us acquire valuable data with regards to our wildlife.



Please explore the link below. There is not enough room here to cover the hundreds of images and videos I have posted so far and hopefully for those of you not yet familiar with trying Facebook you now will. If I can - anyone can!

<https://www.facebook.com/Lytham-Hall-Parkland-Gardens-and-Wildlife-105888177679309>



A short Biography of John Talbot Clifton Squire of Lytham Hall

Copies of Marianne Blaauboer's 29-page booklet are now available at £5. This is an interesting and entertaining account of a colourful character in the history of Lytham Hall.

You can obtain them directly by emailing: friends@friendsoflythamhall.org.uk to arrange payment and delivery.

Friends of Lytham Hall Membership

If you know of anyone who may like to join us, or would like to give a membership as a gift, you will find membership forms on the Friends' website or in the Bookshop at the Hall.

Membership fees: £15 for Single Membership £20 for Joint Membership

Thomas the Tree Planter



In a large part the leafiness of Lytham can be attributed to one Thomas Joseph Clifton. Born in 1788 he was the grandson of the Thomas Clifton who built the Georgian Lytham Hall.

Thomas Joseph saw service in the Peninsula War and when in Paris he met and was smitten by the young widow Hetty Campbell. They were married at the British Embassy but lawyers questioned the validity of the marriage and consequently they remarried at the Parish Church in Ealing near Pitzhanger Abbey where Thomas Joseph's father, John, was then living.

Born into a long line of Catholics, Thomas Joseph became a protestant in 1831 and from then on became prejudiced against those of the Catholic faith. For example, he was very reluctant to lease building land to Catholics as he felt it would give them too much influence in the town!

Thomas Joseph was mostly an absentee landlord and he and Hetty would today probably be considered hypochondriacs. They stayed in places they considered beneficial to their health such as Brighton, St Leonards on Sea and the spa towns of Harrogate and Leamington, as well as spending time in London and Paris.

In spite of long absences Thomas Joseph took a close interest in his Lytham Estate. He was so keen on planting in the area that he became known as a keen agriculturalist and was nicknamed Thomas the Tree Planter. He ensured that leases of his land contained covenants to plant a specified number of trees on an annual basis. The purpose of this was to improve the poor drainage of the area and provide shelter from the strong coastal winds. Lytham started to resemble the leafy town it is today.

Astutely, Thomas Joseph employed James Fair, formerly an employee of the Earl of Derby, to be his land agent. This proved to be an excellent decision as it was the start of what turned out to be three generations of the Fair family loyally serving the estate.

During the years 1838/39 Thomas Joseph spent time at Lytham Hall overseeing some refurbishments. In this period, he gave more instructions for tree planting and for extending his estates in Warton and Blackpool. The interior of the Hall was being repainted and he was emphatic that the columns under the staircase were not painted to look like imitation marble. He had seen this effect in the house of Mr Fleetwood of Rossall Hall (now Rossall School) and he thought it most vulgar!

Thomas Joseph's correspondence with James Fair showed him to be an intelligent, well- educated gentleman with a sense of humour and a kind, sympathetic nature and who was always mindful of the welfare of his tenants. He believed "ownership of land in England is a sacred trust". It's a pity that later members of the Clifton family did not share this belief.

Thomas Joseph and Hetty had 4 sons who were often in need of money having succeeded their individual allowances. In fact, their eldest son, John Talbot, was in such serious debt he was almost disinherited by his father. Fortunately, he managed to redeem himself by hastily marrying Lady Eleanor Cecily, the granddaughter of the Earl of Lonsdale, who was due to inherit from her grandfather. When the bride and her family were on their way to Lytham Hall Thomas Joseph gave the instruction for the removal of the wall bricking up the wine cellar. Apparently, each time he and Hetty were away they took the precaution of having the wine cellar bricked up to avoid leading the servants into temptation!

As well as being responsible for a very leafy town, Thomas Joseph established the first post office and oversaw much new building together with the now famous Lytham Green. He also saw the arrival of the railway in 1846 after initially being reluctant to negotiate with the railway company because the line would divide up his land.

Thomas Joseph often suffered from periods of ill health and finally he died at his London house in 1851 at the age of 63. It is a sad fact that he and Hetty never took advantage of the sea bathing and health benefits to be found on the Lancashire coast because, by this time Lytham had become a well-known watering place.

Perhaps we should all more appreciate what is on our own doorstep.

Pam Beeden

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Lytham Hall: www.lythamhall.org.uk