



Friends of Lytham Hall Newsletter

Registered Charity No: 1069442

Issue 84

www.friendsoflythamhall.org.uk

Autumn 2020



The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness is now upon us after an unprecedented summer, and life is still far from normal. What a welcome relief it was to so many of us when the Hall was re-opened to visitors after lock-down. I'm sure we all appreciate this special place so much more now, as well as the amount of hard work that goes into maintaining both the parkland and the buildings.

Funding Restoration and Maintenance

The driveway at the Hall has been completely resurfaced, thanks to Fylde Council. It looks and feels wonderful after years of avoiding the potholes which the valiant team of grounds volunteers fought endlessly to repair. Now their time can be spent on more rewarding projects.

The Friends have funded materials for the stone in-fill to protect the vulnerable edges of the tarmac, and for the wooden posts along the edge which will hopefully deter drivers from straying onto the grass verges.

Restoration and painting of the South prospect

Work has now begun on improving the appearance of the South prospect of the older Jacobean part of the Hall. This is the elevation facing visitors as they come down the drive.

The Friends have committed £11,500 to fund this renovation work which needed to be done before the winter weather sets in.



Friends of Lytham Hall Membership

This year our fundraising has been severely restricted, making us even more reliant on membership subscriptions to enable us to carry on funding projects at the Hall.

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.

Annual Membership fees: £15 for Single Membership £20 for Joint Membership
Even better, become a Patron for £50.

Ansdell school visit to the Hall

We were recently delighted to hear from George James who, as a teenager, knew the gamekeeper at the Hall because he used to go rabbiting on the estate. He remembered that the gamekeeper used to collect plover eggs, boil them and send them to Harry Clifton in Monaco!

George also sent us an extract from an old Ansdell County School magazine, describing a visit made by some pupils to the hall, possibly in the 1950s:

A Visit to Lytham Hall

On the 16th March, Mr. and Mrs. Hall took two girls and two boys to look round Lytham Hall. At 2.15 we set off. The day was fine and sunny. Once inside the Hall Gates we went down a country lane, which twisted and turned. Around us were trees and flowers.

When we arrived at the Hall, we were met by Mrs. Clifton. The first thing we saw was the beautifully carved ceiling of cream and blue; around the sides were small lights which cast a glow over the whole of the roof. The walls too were similarly carved with violins and horns.

The staircase looked very beautiful with its finely carved posts; you perhaps would think that they wouldn't be able to hold all the weight but they were surprisingly strong. At the bottom of the staircase were two pictures about 100 years old.

Next, we came to the Hall. On each of the walls were several pictures of the family, one of them much like a girl because of his dress and long curly hair. Hanging on the wall was a Japanese sword in a leather case. This sword was about three feet in length.

The next room had a stone floor of black and white check. On the wall was a picture or carved picture of a Chinese Legend. It had a Pagoda and small boats with Chinese men punting them along. On the other wall was a tapestry of a Chinese tree with small blue butterflies around it. The tapestry work was beautifully done. The mantelpiece was in carved oak painted in cream.

The Dining Room, I thought was the best that we had seen so far. On one side it had a large mirror with lions' feet at the bottom. On the other side was a round arch, and in it was a round table. This table was said to be exactly half a tree trunk, this was because it hadn't one join in it. Around the room hung more pictures.

From the dining room we went to the Kitchen. It was made of stone. Inside was a huge stone bowl and a pound, in which they used to make the ears of corn into flour. On the opposite side was a stove for the baking of bread.

The study was a small room with a table and chair at one side. Around the room were shelves and shelves of books, some fiction, some non-fiction and others were about China and History. The adjoining room had a table-tennis game. By the window was a studio couch. In this room were pictures of famous race horses.

Through the supposed Haunted Gallery. The story goes that the Gallery was once a room where injured soldiers from the war were put into bed and treated. The Chief Nurse was a lady in grey, and some of the nurses who were with her still believe that she goes into the Gallery about 12 o'clock at night. The floor was very uneven wood and was patched; these patches it is said, cannot be made nowadays. Down each side of the room were large pictures of Lady Clifton, Battle at Sea and other subjects.

From the Gallery we came down the back staircase. Along the bannister were small knobs which look as though they were put there to stop people sliding down the rail.

We then came to Mrs. Clifton's own room. In this room were four fans in glass cases. The walls were a light purple, and the carpet cream. One of the ornaments was a brass Idol with a good luck sign engraved on the front, something like a German swastika but the legs turned the other way round. Adjoining the room was a bedroom and bathroom.

Next, we had afternoon tea in the dining room. In this room was an ornament which was said to be 2,000 years old. There was also a clock, the hands of which were very finely cut. While we were having a drink, a small miniature greyhound came in and Mrs. Clifton gave it a piece of bun. After a while we said, "Thank you" to Mrs. Clifton for showing us her home and for the tea. Then we started back. We got to school at four o'clock.

It was a very interesting afternoon, thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Clifton.

Margaret Clegg 4S

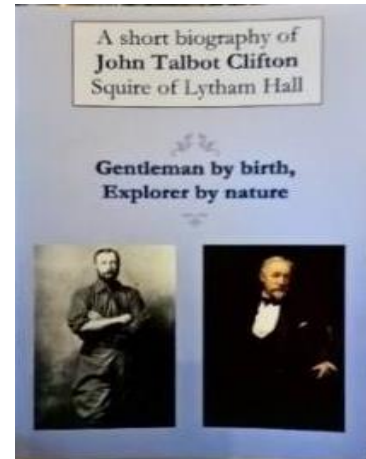
Memories like these give us a fascinating glimpse into the past life of the Hall and how it has changed. We love to hear from anyone who has stories, pictures or connections with the Hall or Clifton family.

John Talbot Clifton Exhibition

The Long Gallery is well worth a visit to see the recently installed John Talbot Exhibition. The very informative collection of artefacts and illustrations brings the story of John Talbot's exploits to life. This Squire of Lytham Hall had a life full of adventure and extravagance. He was the father of the last Clifton Squire of Lytham, Harry Clifton.

The booklet, 'A short Biography of John Talbot Clifton' by Marianne Blaauboer, is available from the Hall, or directly from the Friends by emailing:

friends@friendsoflythamhall.org.uk to arrange payment and delivery.



Outdoor Theatre

Although most of the outdoor theatre performances had to be cancelled this summer, Illyria staged two performances of 'The Wind in the Willows' in August. Tickets were limited to 200 for each performance and quickly sold out. The social distancing of the audience was well-managed and the performances provided a welcome bit of fun at an otherwise stressful time. Due to Covid19 restrictions, the Friends were not able to have their usual refreshment stall, but a generous donation to the Friends from the organiser, Julian Wilde will be used to fund some much-needed redecoration inside the Hall. Hopefully we will be able to enjoy a full program of five performances next summer – fingers crossed!



Ratty and Mole boating down the river



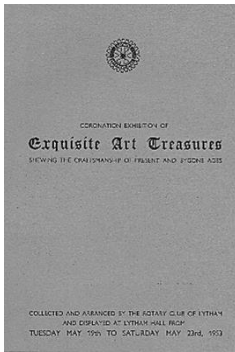
The Friends' Bookshop



Don't forget to visit our second- hand bookshop opposite the Tearoom.

When the Hall re-opened after the lock-down we were overwhelmed with donations of books for the bookshop. Our limited storage space and the requirement to quarantine everything for 72 hours have made the task of running of the shop more difficult, but the volunteer team are doing a great job. The income from the bookshop makes a welcome contribution to fundraising which has been so limited this year, so your support is much appreciated.

Rotary Exhibition Catalogue



I recently came across a catalogue for a “Coronation Exhibition of Exquisite Art Treasures” which was collected and arranged by Lytham Rotary Club and displayed at Lytham Hall in May 1953. The photographs of the interior of the Hall show it to be then unfurnished. It is without colour in the paintwork with the exception of the “lounge”, which we later called the “ballroom” and is now called the “gold room”. In the exhibition there were Chinese vases, a Sevres vase and a reproduction Roman silver bowl from Traprain. Thanks are given to Mr. Clifton, “who has always shown such a great appreciation of the Arts”.

It’s great to see the continuing support and interest which Rotary still has in the Hall today.
M. Coupe

The following is an excerpt from the catalogue which is a wonderful introduction to the Hall:

“By the courtesy of H.T. de Vere Clifton Esq., Squire of Lytham and Laird of Kildalton, you are given the opportunity – and undoubtedly the pleasure – of seeing this most charming and delightful Mansion, not only from the outside, but from the inside, with all its exquisite and perfect craftsmanship in plasterwork and every manner of builder’s art in perfection. It is a perfect, classical example of Georgian Architecture with a finely balanced elevation and Ionic columns supporting its noble centre pediment.

Here are rooms in exact proportion wherein every accessory is original, made for its setting and perfect in its part. In short this Mansion House is one of the very few in the country which is today in its own perfect original state, exactly as it was completed by its builder and creator, the famous Carr of York, and handed to its owner who was Thomas Clifton Esq.

The Mansion was commenced in 1751 and was completed in 1764. It is difficult to imagine that this house, with its inescapable air of grace, dignity and freshness, is almost 200 years old. What a setting for us to see the wonderful array of fine and precious possessions today displayed, such as were in days gone by – the furnishings of this graceful and proud house – and such as we hope will, one day, again be installed.

This Mansion is a treasure, an example of unrivalled craftsmanship.

The opportunity presented to you to see it – and in it – these rare and precious things in craftsmanship and decorative art, is something of an event.

May you derive much pleasure from both, and may you treat them both as things beyond price – and be glad.”

The Friends of Lytham Hall AGM 2020

As a result of Covid-19 restrictions on meetings, we will be holding this year’s AGM by Zoom on **Wednesday 23rd October at 7p.m.**

Meeting ID: 934 3939 9524 Passcode 8FjfuM

Contacts:

Lambert Dopping, Chairman (01253) 736408 email: lambert@friendsoflythamhall.org.uk

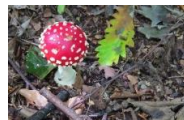
Kath Smith Secretary & Newsletter: (01253)737548

Terry Jones..... Treasurer: (01253) 794524

Pam Beeden..... Membership (01253) 733418 email: folhmembership@yahoo.com

Websites: Friends of Lytham Hall: www.friendsoflythamhall.org.uk

Lytham Hall: www.lythamhall.org.uk



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