



The Newsletter of the Lytham Heritage Group

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Notes from the Chairman

I always seem to start my little piece with wishing you all the best for something and this is no exception. As Easter is in mid-April this edition should reach you just in time to wish you a Happy Easter and an end to whatever you gave up for Lent!

It is not only the start to the growing year in our gardens with the flower drifts of yellow and purple but of our social calendar. We always have a quiet winter period even in the Heritage Centre which shuts for weeks either side of Christmas. That has been up and running as I write this for several weeks with the second exhibition showcasing the work of the local architect Tom Mellor. Easter is the time we open up our two museums for the summer season and together with the bank of willing volunteers we already have we can always accommodate more. If you can spare any time to help in the museums at the Windmill and Old Lifeboat House or at the Heritage Centre or the Archive please contact us at the centre.

We started our speakers in March which is linked to our double exhibition on Tom Mellor with an illustrated talk by David Mellor, Tom's son. This month we will welcome Margaret Sottile from 'across the pond' whose family have links to the Cliftons. In May we host a local historian Jennifer Ray who will talk on 'Military Hospitals of the Fylde'. The AGM will follow in June which will be held as usual in the evening.

We have changed our regular day for talks to the second Monday to see if more people can attend. All talks have a local or heritage connection and I hope I offer a varied programme with something for everyone. If you have seen an excellent speaker or have a topic you as a member can offer please contact me via the centre. We usually have one or two members a year giving the talk so this year in the Autumn we have Tony Ford and Heather Davis the latter being the Conservation Manager for Lancashire County Council who is our advisor for the museums. We ran a coach trip last July to see if the members wanted that type of event. We had a limited response for a visit to Levens Hall, in conjunction with G Line, which proved to be an excellent day out. I have no plans to run another this year although if something comes up before going to press I will insert it later.

Hope to see you all at an event or exhibition this year.

Sue Forshaw

30 Years



An Invitation

Lytham Heritage Group is 30 Years Old this year.

To Celebrate this event we would like to invite the Volunteers and Members To the Taps on Wednesday 3rd May 2017 at 6pm for refreshments including a special Lytham Heritage beer to taste.

Hope you can attend,
see you there!

*From the Lytham Times,
Friday 2nd July 1909*

Disappeared - A Peculiar Accident

A memorable occurrence was seen at Croziers shop in Park Street last Monday. Just as a lady was entering, one of the doorsteps gave way and dropped into the cellar, the lady disappearing along with it. In great alarm, one of the Misses Crozier ran down into the cellar to give assistance, but fortunately the customer's only injury was a scarred leg. It was a lucky escape.

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Lytham in 1822 (by a correspondent from Leeds visiting the Town)

As the Guilda Mercatoria of Preston is fast approaching, and will be solemnized on the second of September of this present year, I deem it my duty to give some account of that pleasant marine village, Lytham, a delightful spot for visitors, twelve miles from Preston, and much improved of late years in the number and beauty of its buildings.

Many of the nobility and gentry make it a rule to visit there during the months of May, June, July and August, and even in September and October, which are deemed the cool months for visiting the seaside; and as it may be an inducement for many to visit there, previous to the Guild commencing, so as to be in readiness to attend that grand spectacle, which takes place every twentieth year - the fame of which is known all over the three kingdoms, for its splendour and pageantry.

The road to Lytham from Preston is westward, through Ashton-on-Ribble, over the marsh of Clifton, through Freckleton and Wharton. This forms an easy- and agreeable ride - the country is fine and picturesque and exceedingly pleasant at this season. You have the River Ribble on your left as you journey onwards.

The improvements that have been made of late years are such that many who have not visited there for some years, would scarcely know the place. There are three good inns, which have been enlarged by their owner, John Clifton, Esq, they are eligibly situated in the village - are commodious - and good accommodation may be had, in the way of attention and good living, and at a moderate rate.

New cottages and elegant villas have increased within the last four years. The beach houses are extremely neat and form one continued line of genteel erections, and look surpassing fine when viewed from an open boat at sea. They say that one Richard, the son of Roger, built or endowed a Benedictine cell here, and gave it to the monks of Durham. It might be so - if they were good men then - they were better than they are now. Let us practice more and preach less - a good conscience is a jewel of great value.

Lytham is a very salubrious place - its walks are pleasingly diversified. You may walk for miles on the sand westward. You may trip to the Hay-houses, and get bad ale. Common-side offers a journey, which if you please, ends at Blackpool.

The walks are various and many for those who love exercise; the lazy will soon tire here - but the active will never be at a loss. The sands are fine - the sea breeze pleasant - the air is impregnated with health upon its wings. Sailing may be had at tide time; boats are occasionally going to Preston, and over the water, which is six miles, to Southport. A good seminary might be established here, both for young ladies and gentlemen; the spot is well adapted for them, the walks are fine and the air pure, and this ought to be an inducement. There are baths - shower, cold and warm, for invalids. There is a free school here.

The hall of the Lords paramount of the soil is a princely building and reflects credit upon the Cliftons. Their armorial bearings I perceived, were argent, upon a bend sable, charged with estoils - and the crest imports as if they had been engaged in war, from it being an arm embowed, and clad in armour, grasping a sword. They have a chapel near the hall for the use of the Catholics, for the Cliftons are of that persuasion. The residence of the priest is more like a hermitage than a place for polished individuals. Old Hugh Holmes, the shaver, doctor, and shopkeeper, is an old man, thin and meagre - conceited to a tittle - and remarkably fond of chit chat.

Coaches come here every day in the season from Preston; they have carriers to the same place. The poor generally get their livelihood by catching flowks, getting muscles, cockles, etc. (flukes and mussels)

Riches are only vain without health. Sea bathing is a luxury, and ought to be considered a treat, by him that enjoys it. The people here bathe not at all - while those at a distance think it a blessing. Holmes, the barber, said he had never bathed in his life, nor could I persuade him to do so. He said that he was sound in body, and if so, why dip in the briny sea at all? Many physicians recommend medicine to then- patients, and a continual plan of drugging is kept up between them and the compounder, at the expense of the patients. Exercise, temperance, cleanliness and a watchful attention to the indications of nature are the best physicians in the world!

May we all learn the wisdom of age, long before we are depressed by its infirmities.

David Hoyle from a newspaper article Leeds 1822

Two French Students in Lytham

Some of you will have met Philippe and Matthieu, who helped to steward at the Centre for 3 weeks in February and March. They were on a student exchange programme called Erasmus, and I think we all found them to be very interested in our Group and very professional in their attitude.

They wrote a report for us, included below, which neatly sums up their time in Lytham (please excuse any language errors). I look forward to having more French students in the future, starting with Laurene who will be with us in April and May. (Hilary Fletcher)

"Coming from the region of Saumur and Angers, we are: Philippe (48 years old) and Matthieu (34), two students in tourism. Different background have led us to retraining: we want to become tour guides. Our school, in Gennes Val-de-Loire, has established an exchange program. Our tourism training in England is in Lytham.

On the very first day of our arrival, we received a warm welcome from the Lytham Heritage Group through Mrs. Audrey Kirby. There, she explained us the purpose of the Group and the exhibition of Tom Mellor's work in architecture and in painting.

We also discovered the town of Lytham and its patrimony: the Windmill, The Lifeboat Museum, the Lytham Hall and the Victorian streets of Lytham.

We visited the Archive Centre where David Hoyle, the joyful archivist have told us history and shown us many old documents, pieces of Lytham heritage.

We particularly appreciated the architecture of the Centre, an ancient bank, all wooden made and the strong vault that made us feel really secured.

The organization of the exhibition is very clear, the content is various and precise. It is made easy to understand the variety of Tom Mellor's work. The building pictures allow to imagine the places and the architectural realisations. There is also a logic in his paintings, very advanced for his time and in which there is always a part of architectural design.

We want to thank every volunteer of the Group who helped us to feel comfortable, especially Mr. Eric Haworth for his knowledge and sense of humour. He is a friendly tour guide and a real gentleman.

Finally, we want to thank Mrs. Hilary Fletcher for her support all along our stay and the confidence she gave us in the accomplishment of our tasks. We are sure that the trainees that will come here in the future will be received with care and sympathy.

We love Lytham.

Philippe and Matthieu"

CREATURES ARE WATCHING YOU - BUT WHAT AND WHERE?

Question 10 Answer

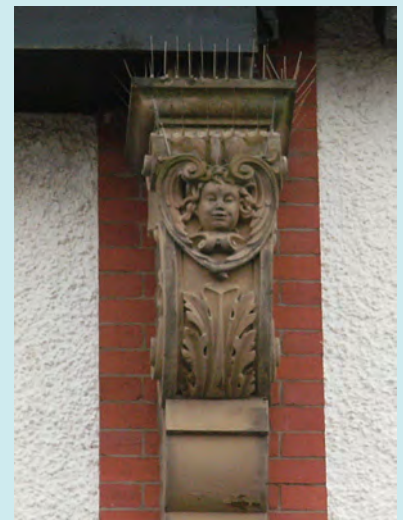


Question 10 should have been easy for all who walk the Promenade. Old Father Time stands atop the summer house belonging to Fairlawn at the seaward end of Fairlawn Road.



Question 11

You can't bank on seeing this for much longer



David Forshaw

Heritage Centre Exhibitions



First Exhibition
14 February – 9 April 2017

"Tom Mellor OBE 1914 – 1994 Architect, Artist, Designer" a Lytham Heritage exhibition.

The Main exhibition about TM is going very well and those who knew him think it displays a good balance across the many aspects of his work as an architect and his talent as a painter.



Second Exhibition
11 April – 1 May

"Rites of Spring" mixed media art by the Mill Barn Artists

A dozen or so North west artists have come together to provide excellent quality artwork, including watercolours, oils, ceramics and embroidery.



Third Exhibition 3 – 21 May

"Spring Time" art by The Blackpool Art Society

Returning after their exhibition with us last year, this art society exhibits a wide range of different media.



If you have any comments, please put them in the Visitors Book, or via the Contact details on Page 8.
Hilary Fletcher, Centre Exhibitions Coordinator

Ballam Road Railway Bridge

Set into the wall at the crest of the railway bridge in Ballam Road is a very shabby steel cabinet. Scores of people walk past it every day without any knowledge of why it is there.

If you go to the East end of Cleveland Road and watch a train disappear under "Park View Road" bridge you will see that there is only just sufficient headroom for the train to get through. And so it was also for most of the bridges on the line from Euston to Crewe. When that line was electrified, some 200 bridges had to be raised to give clearance for overhead cables.

To raise all those bridges was a major undertaking. A speedy method had to be devised which would cause minimum disruption to both rail and road traffic. Before starting on the 200 bridges the method had to be proved by a pilot scheme. Our bridge in Lytham was chosen for this pilot scheme because it was on a line carrying little rail traffic, on a road with a nearby diversion route (Park View Road), had easy vehicular access, and had facilities nearby at the station and in the town. The work necessitated the demolition of the attached wooden footbridge - whitewash traces on the old brickwork still reveal its location - so a new steel footbridge was erected at the other end of the platform.

The chosen procedure was that the span was removed (whether girders as here, or a brick arch such as we still have at Church Drive) and the materials discarded. Brickwork was then added to the piers to give the required height. Precast re-inforced concrete beams were brought by road, and a mobile crane used to swing them across the gap and lower them into position. These beams had an inverted T section, so that they touched at the bottom but had an exposed vertical section above. From each side of the verticals, steel loops protruded, long enough to overlap those of the neighbouring beam, so that the loops resembled the interlocking teeth of a zip fastener. Steel rods were then threaded in from the end, through the alternating loops, to tie the beams together. Concrete was poured in to fill all the gaps, resulting in a remarkably strong bonded structure being erected with the railway closed for only a very short time.

But this Lytham exercise was not just a trial of building speed; the integrity of the structure had to be proved. So before the concrete was poured in, strain gauges (such as are used for structural tests on aircraft at British Aerospace) were attached to the beams. Wiring from these was passed to terminal blocks in a cabinet which had been specially built into the Western wall. The original capping stones were put back onto the walls. Roadway ramps were steepened and the road surface re-instated. Instruments were brought and connected to the terminal blocks. Lorries brought many huge concrete weights, which were off-loaded by mobile crane and placed on the bridge. The bridge passed its test, so the Crewe line went ahead. (No brick arches were rebuilt in brick).

Evidence for the raising of the road bridge remains. The extra courses of new brickwork are easily seen from the station platform. More spectacular is the way when you walk up from Westby Street the unaltered railing now gets lower and lower as it climbs the hill!

Our bridge was even fitted with projecting brackets ready for the installation of catenary wires for dual-track electrified lines. So come on, Railtrack, and electrify the line to Blackpool - the job is part done!

David Hoyle

Heritage Society Website

The site includes all the latest news as well as the dates for all the exhibition and social events, plus much more.

Also don't forget to check out Lytham Heritage's web pages on Facebook for the latest goings on.

Just search 'Lytham Heritage' on Facebook.



Talk by David Mellor OBE

Talk by David Mellor O.B.E. on the 13th March 2017

David gave an interesting and thoughtful presentation on the life and work of his father Tom Mellor O.B.E. the celebrated architect, designer and artist to a large appreciative audience. David charted his father's life beginning with his earliest influences, though it was obvious he had an artistic flair as at the age of just 4 years old he produced a three dimensional drawing. In his early career he was influenced by European architects such as Le Corbusier. He also used his artistic skills later on to include planting and other external features around his drawings of both domestic and commercial buildings to bring them to life. He not only produced architectural plans but designed furniture and later on fabrics. A tangible piece of this departure from his main focus can be found at 'The Stork' at Condor Green where the ironwork stork which adorns the pub was in collaboration with a local blacksmith. There are many buildings in the Fylde he designed which when they were built were ground breaking. He always enjoyed getting the detail right and won many awards for his designs. David was ably helped in his research by Michael Tooley his brother in law.

Sue Forshaw and photo by David Forshaw



Future Events

Monday 8th May – "The Military Hospitals of the Fylde"

This talk is by a local historian Jennifer Ray. She has completed in depth research into a variety of aspects of Lancashire social history and her talks are always entertaining. This is the first time she has visited the Heritage Group but as she has a selection of talks she offers probably not the last. It is to be held in our usual venue Lytham Assembly Rooms at 2.30pm

{Pictured Right: This is a modern shot of Chaseside which was one of the V.A.D.(Voluntary Aid Detachment) hospitals / convalescent homes for the military in Lytham & St Annes in WW1 along with the likes of Starr Hills, Pembroke House School and the Imperial Hydro.}



CHASESIDE, St Georges Square, Lytham St Annes (03.05.2016 David Forshaw 011)

Membership Renewal

It is that time of year when we ask you to send in your renewal subscriptions.

The form to do this is enclosed with this issue. Many thanks for your continued support.

Membership Information

We are delighted to welcome the following new members:

Mr and Mrs Brady

Mr Haley

Sadly the following member has passed away:

Mrs D Gardener Royle from Wigan

Committee and AGM

Committee Changes:

Our Secretary Jan Platel has decided to move to pastures new and sadly, we have lost her role on the Committee. We are very grateful to Jan for helping us for several years, and wish her well in the future.

Monday June 12 – AGM

This will commence at 7.30 pm in the Assembly Rooms; the documents such as the Agenda and last year's Minutes will be provided in the room, plus light refreshments. We look forward to seeing you there.

We would welcome new members to the Committee, there are several vacancies – details and Nomination Forms are below. Please complete the form(s) if you or anyone you know wish to be considered.

Please note that if you are interested but unsure about any of the roles, please **DO** speak to one of the Committee, as the roles can be split / changed.

Vacancies on the Committee exist for :

- **Group Secretary**, tasks include:
 - Minute taking and writing up in Microsoft Word, and issuing by email
 - Administration of the Members Database, using the Microsoft Access package (this can be taught) Using the database for the production of letters and labels when required.
 - Dealing with correspondence for the Committee, writing letters in Word, filing etc.
 - Checking the Group's email Inbox and directing emails to other Committee members as required.
- **Antiquarian Editor**, tasks include:
 - Seeking out articles for inclusion eg from Committee Members and the Archive team
 - Liaison with the printers who also lay out the pages
 - Checking for errors and seeking agreement to draft versions from the Committee and contributors
 - Arranging the printing, and inclusions, enveloping and delivery (via delivery members)
 - This will require the use of a computer and email system
- **Centre Rota Coordinator**, tasks include:
 - Creating the stewards' rota for each exhibition, including Openers and Closers
 - Ensuring the stewards understand and follow their list of tasks
 - Liaise with the Centre Exhibitions Coordinator and other Committee Members re new ideas, extra tasks, Centre Facility issues etc.
 - Maintaining the list of stewards, openers and closers and their contact details (possibly with help)

Nomination Form

Committee Role:

Name:

Proposed by:

Seconded by:

Nomination Form

Committee Role:

Name:

Proposed by:

Seconded by:

Sue Forshaw / Hilary Fletcher



Contact Details:

We welcome all queries and suggestions. Please send emails to

thecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk

or leave a note addressed to The Editor, at the Heritage Centre.

