



The Newsletter of the Lytham Heritage Group

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Notes from The Chairman

Can I wish you all a somewhat belated 'Happy New Year' and hope that you had a joyful Christmas with family and friends. As at every change of year our thoughts turn to spring and for me the start of the speaker season coincides with that long awaited change in the weather. The weather in March hopefully makes us a little less inclined to stay by the fire and more to head to Lytham for a social chat and an interesting speaker at the Assembly Rooms. The first three speakers I have arranged are detailed elsewhere but briefly are a philatelist, Coastguard officer and retired librarian all with a tale to tell.

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Three of our venues have winter breaks some shorter than others but there is a lot of planning and preparation needed in this down time to get the 'show on the road' as they say ready for the new season. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the coordinators of our venues for their continued dedication to the task and to the teams of volunteers they work with. Steve Williams and Margaret Nickson in the Windmill and Old Lifeboat House, Hilary Fletcher with Audrey Kirby in the Heritage Centre and last but by no means least Dave Hoyle in the Archive still currently housed in Lytham Institute.

I will finish if I may with a cry for help. You do have a dedicated committee working hard to fulfil your expectations of us. However when Jan left partway through the year as our secretary the role has been shared out and we brought in temporary assistance to take the minutes. We are making it work but one dedicated person to the role would relieve the extra pressure on us and aid a coordinated approach. If anyone has a few hours to spare and can attend one meeting a month on the second Monday of the month please contact me on the centre website or drop me a line again to the centre.

Let us look forward to a successful 2018 for Lytham Heritage Group.

Sue Forshaw



Recollections of life at Lytham Hall

Lytham Heritage member, Mrs Beryl Hambleton, provides us with some of her recollections of her parents' experiences, when, as a child, she lived at Lytham Hall where her father, Charlie Briggs, was employed as a groom and her mother, Violet, a parlour-maid.

Although you may have heard this story before please enjoy this update

RECOLLECTIONS OF LIFE AT LYTHAM HALL B. Hambleton

The Squire was educated at Oxford University and during his studies had a whim to become a racehorse jockey and to this end he visited the racing stables of the Ancil family at Weston-on-the Green, near Bicester, Oxfordshire. My father, who was employed at the stable, recalled Harry Clifton arriving at the yard one day in a very expensive car and told Bern Ancil, the yard owner's son, of his aspirations. Returning to the yard some time later, Harry offered Bern Ancil and my father employment at his racing stables which he proposed to establish at Lytham Hall. As a consequence, Bern and my father moved to Lytham to open the racing stable and to train the horses which Harry had purchased.

The Squire entered himself as a rider and owner at many race meetings but invariably he only arrived at the course shortly before 'the off, and as a result he was disqualified on more than one occasion. Harry had little success as a rider and as his interest quickly waned, as it did with many of his whims, the stables went downhill and the rest is history.

During his employment as a groom, my father married his fiancé Violet who had followed him to Lytham and she was employed at Lytham 1934 as a parlour-maid. They were married at St Cuthbert's Parish Church in 1934 and lived in the stable flat, which remains at the hall to this day.

Following my birth, my mother resigned her post of parlour-maid but continued to assist in and around the hall as and when required. I well recall my mother recounting the celebrations at the wedding of Harry's sister, Easter Daffodil Clifton, with the wedding breakfast being served on gold plated service and entertainment provided by Scottish Pipers and Sword Dancers on the lawns a truly splendid occasion.



Beryl in the car with the staff.

My mother also recalled a well-documented incident involving Harry's American-born wife, Lillian Lowell Griswold, a professional actress, whom he married in October 1937.

Their relationship appears to have been turbulent on occasions, and following an altercation, Lillian went outside onto the ledge of the hall in an attempt to gain access to

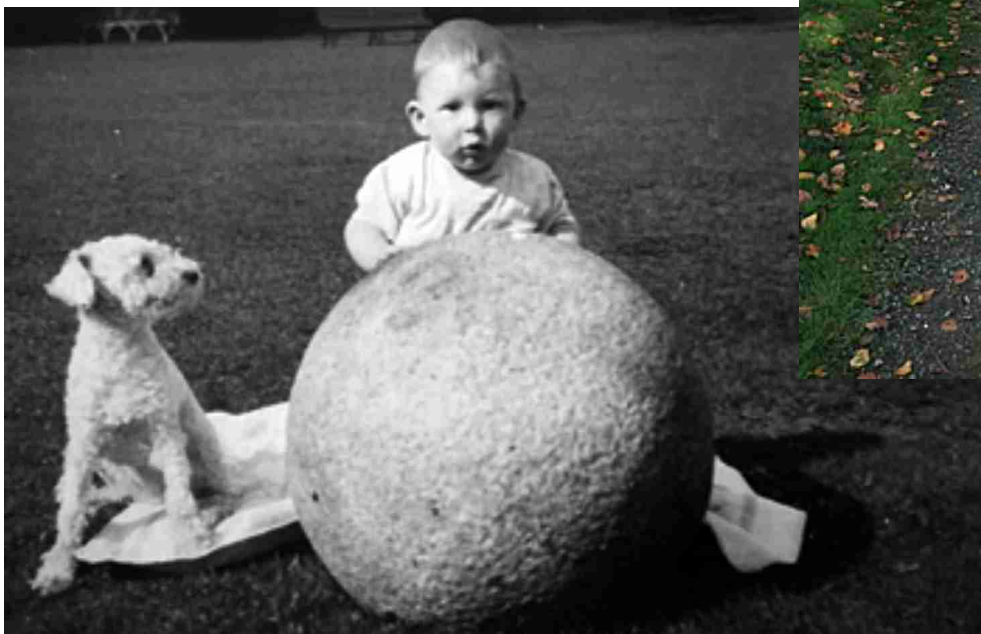
another upstairs room. However, she fell from the ledge and sustained injuries, which resulted in her being confined to her room for some days. It was during this time when my mother was attending her that Lillian instructed her to get rid of the dress she was wearing the night of her accident. My mother pointed out that the dress was far too beautiful to destroy, but Lillian insisted that the dress should be burnt since she didn't want to see it ever again. Before carrying out Lillian's wishes, my mother removed a pearl clasp from the dress, which she kept and wore on a belt. I still retain the clasp, which I keep as a piece of Clifton memorabilia and, of course, with fond memories of my parents and my time as a child spent at Lytham Hall.

On Friday 27th of October Beryl, Pam and I went back to visit the Hall to see where it all began.

We were treated to cream teas in the lovely Café and were given the Special tour of the Stables by Peter and Paul at the Hall.

We listened to Beryl talk of her time at the hall as a very young girl living above the stables.

Beryl with the Canon ball in the Hall Grounds.



As a special treat we went to see the accommodation she left in 1940, her room seemed so large and she related to us they had a lodger and times were very happy living here.

To see the beaming smile on Beryl's face made everything so worthwhile.

I would like to thank all the staff at Lytham Hall for making this day a special one to remember for someone who gives so much pleasure to so many people.

David Hoyle



Peter Anthony, Beryl and Myself David Hoyle with the Stable flat behind us.

The birth of Lytham Hospital, August 3rd 1871



The Proposal for a hospital had been talked about for some years and the recent developments in anaesthetics and antiseptics were opening up new avenues in surgery. In there was an outbreak of low fever in Lytham which brought the proposal to a head and Colonel John Talbot Clifton, Squire of Lytham, undertook to give a site, put up a building and furnish it entirely at his own expense. The Foundation Stone of the hospital was laid on September 2nd, 1870 by Mrs. John Talbot Clifton.

The Lytham cottage hospital and convalescent home was erected 'for

the purpose of relief to poor people in case of accidents and sickness'. There were two upstairs wards so that the original bed complement appears to have been '16.

The Central part of the building on the ground floor contained a room for the Matron, a Committee Room, Surgery, bathroom and wash house. There was a mortuary in the yard and an operating room for cases of a severe nature.

The grounds were in fact designed by the Squire, who himself drew the outline of the circular lawn at the front of the hospital - a design that has been retained to the present day. The total cost was £1,200.

The first Matron was Mrs. St. Clair who for many years was one of the principal nurses at Georges Hospital London.

Doctor Luke Fisher was appointed the first Medical Superintendent and Secretary of the

Hospital. On his death on January 30th, 1899 a public subscription was launched which raised £600. The money was used to build Fisher Ward and was opened in September 1901 by Lady Drummond a member of the Clifton family and a great personal friend of the late Doctor.

In 1891 Mr. Edward W. Mellor of Fairlawn, Lytham, joined the Committee and in 1903 he became Chairman, an office he was to retain until 1930.

By 1920 it was evident the hospital was too small to serve the growing population hence a bold scheme was born to sweep away the old buildings and erect new ones. The first instalment of the re-building was completed in 1923 when Ashley Ward was opened in memory of Mrs. Maud Ashley, the wife of Colonel W. W. Ashley, M.P. for Blackpool 190'6. Years later their daughter Edwina, better remembered as Lady Louis Mountbatten was to visit Lytham Hospital to see the ward erected in memory of her mother.

The foundation stone of the new hospital was laid in October 1929 by Mr. Mellor who said: "It is my desire that the Hospital shall be regarded as the Hospital of Lytham people, for it is the outcome of a great effort on the part of the people of Lytham." In order that the rebuilding might be completed as speedily as possible Mr. Mellor presented the Committee with a cheque for £15,000.

Sadly, Mr. Mellor did not live to see the day of the official opening, he had been in failing health for some time and died suddenly on March 19th, 1930. The official opening was performed on Saturday, October 4th, 1930 by Lord Derby the 17th Earl and Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire.



Talk by Heather Davis on Monday 13th November

Heather spared time from her busy work schedule to talk to an expectant audience of 32 members and interested parties primarily on the conservation of Lancashire's treasures and heritage. I do not think anyone knew the tremendous work they are doing in their centre in Preston where experts in their field show infinite patience in bring the treasures from the past back to somewhere near their former glory. They have also worked with our own Art Collection team to conserve some of our treasures. She tried out an experiment on us which thankfully was not painful but so successful she will use the technique again. She googled the postcode for the Assembly Rooms and found images of archaeological artefacts found within 1000 metres. From the Roman coinage unearthed it could indicate a trade route in Fylde. The fate of the majority of the museums in Lancashire is still in the balance she inferred with decisions still to be made. An interesting and informative afternoon. The image is of The Bourne Casket a fine example of a late Stuart embroidered chest which received some attention by the conservation teams experts



Sue Forshaw

Centre Exhibitions 2017 and 2018

We hope you all will agree that the 2017 Programme of exhibitions at the Centre was a super mix of new faces and old favourites, with a plethora of media and styles encompassed. We started with our own wonderful displays about Tom Mellor in all his guises – all the comments echoed the general view re how talented and important he was nationally.

The art exhibitions included paintings, ceramics, jewellery, photography – too many exhibits to count, but more than one exhibition had over 100 items for sale. We are proud to know that artists continue to enjoy the space available and ask to come back, plus we all make a bit of money to help keep the Centre and the art world turning. The last exhibition with more Heritage photographs by Alfred Thompson, taken well over 100 years ago, has been received very well by our visitors. So much nostalgia has touched many people.

Over the year we have entertained over 11,000 people – 11,270 to be exact.

Of course none of this would be possible without our STEWARDS and HELPERS –

THANK YOU ALL so much for all your hours and hours of support, assistance, and sometimes quite hard work.

The Centre is vibrant and 2018 should be no exception, with another great mix of Heritage and art; the new Programme is enclosed with this issue of the Antiquarian.

Don't miss our first exhibition all about St Johns School – the result of many months of effort by our Archive team and helpers. It will be a joy to see so many memories of local people caught in different ways.



Let's hope 2018 brings us all a very bright and enjoyable year, we wish you the very best of health and happiness.

Hilary Fletcher

Future Events

All meetings are in the Lytham Assembly Rooms, Dicconson Terrace, Lytham FY8 5JY commencing at 2.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Monday 12th March

Speaker - Bernard Worsfold

Title - "The First Day Covers produced in conjunction with the Royal Mail sold to raise funds for the building of the RAF Museum at Hendon"

This is the second of Bernard's talks for the Heritage group related to his lifelong hobby of stamp collecting. He is an active member of RAFA and his fee will go to that worthwhile charity. He has in his collection a variety of covers produced to raise specific funds for the building of the museum to house the artefacts from the RAF collections. Some of Bernard's first day covers are rare examples so do come along and see a unique piece of history.



RAF Museum at Hendon



Paul Little, Coastguard at work (David Forshaw)

Monday 9th April

Speaker - Paul Little

Title - "The work of the Coastguard and the recent events from our coast."

Paul is the Search and Rescue Officer for Lytham St Annes. His "patch" extends as far as Gynn Square Blackpool and Preston Dock. The Coastguard is the first call when anyone is in trouble on the shore or at sea and works with a host of partners including the RNLi, police, ambulance and any other relevant agencies. To find out what happens when that pager goes off do come along for an entertaining afternoon.

Future Events

Monday 14th May

Speaker - Derek Timms

Title - "Days with a Bookworm - my life in Libraries."

Many local people will remember Derek from his work in Lytham. He was working as Borough Librarian in Fleetwood when reorganisation of Local Government came in and was subsequently appointed to the position of District Librarian (Fylde). When he moved jobs in 1974 Lytham was one of the full time libraries in his area with Peter Sharman as the Librarian in Charge. Derek is passionate about the role of libraries in the community and has been a keen supporter of the campaign to reinstate a library in Lytham. A very entertaining speaker with lots of stories to tell!



Lytham Library (David Forshaw)

Membership

New Members

SYD CHESNEY

PROFESSOR MICHAEL TOOLEY



CREATURES ARE WATCHING YOU - BUT WHAT AND WHERE?

David Forshaw

Question 13 Answer

The deer is the friend of Diana, daughter of Jupiter and the Goddess of the Hunt with the power to talk and control animals. She resided on a plinth in the centre of what had been a formal garden to the south (left side of the front) of Lytham Hall. The remains of this garden, by then mainly grass covered, was converted to a car park by Guardian in the 80s and the statue of Diana removed. This formal garden at the Hall has been reinstated over the last few years. Hopefully Diana will find her way home.



Quiz question 14

The shrimp watching over you is in the top right quarter of the Lytham crest, (the older pre-UDC crest) but which building does it grace? As the crest is slightly weather worn a separate photo is also included for clarity.

Obituary

It is with great sadness to tell you that in November we have lost Maureen Newsham

A stalwart of the community and volunteer for Lytham Heritage for many years.

Very involved in Lytham's Cancer Research Committee and highly commended for her dedication to the charity at the inaugural Fylde Woman of the year awards in 2015

Maureen always had a smile for everyone and would help if she could at any time.

She will be missed by us all.



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.