



The Newsletter of the Lytham Heritage Group

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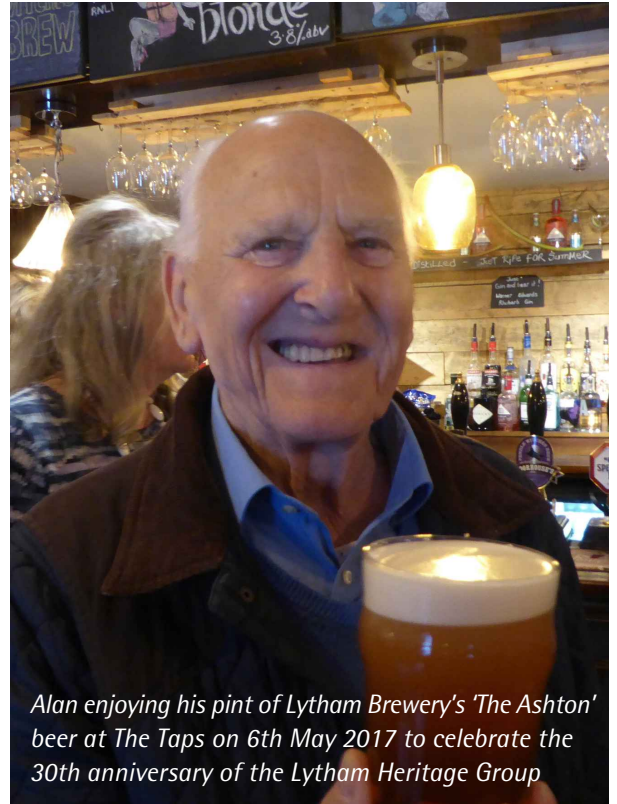
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Alan Ashton MBE

As many of you will know we are saddened at the death of our former Chairman and the main driving force behind the formation of this Group, Alan Ashton on 5th February 2019 at the age of 91. His funeral was held at St Peter's on 15th February before his burial at Saltcotes Cemetery. Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

Alan Ashton MBE 1st March 1927 - 5th February 2019

It was with great sadness we heard of the death of Alan having had a life well lived. He was a founder member of Lytham Heritage Group and was instrumental in forming its ethos and Constitution. He had served as Chairman for many years when he decided on health grounds to take a less prominent role in the group and I as Vice Chairman took over. He was always there to offer advice and I will always be grateful for his help and encouragement. He was thrilled to have a beer named after him by Lytham Brewery to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the founding of the group. This was just one of the accolades he had achieved for the tireless work he did for his Lytham! As I did not know him as well as some, I will leave it first to Steve Williams who I know Alan greatly admired as he told me so, and lastly a quote from Alan recalled by Dave Hoyle our archivist which sums up Alan's thoughts and dedication to the Town completely. *Sue Forshaw*



Alan enjoying his pint of Lytham Brewery's 'The Ashton' beer at The Taps on 6th May 2017 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Lytham Heritage Group

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Memories of Alan *By Steve Williams*

I had known Alan since I was a youngster. He and my mother, Marilyn Adams spent many hours planning exhibitions for natural conservation and Lytham's heritage before the formation of the Heritage Group. Quite often a small team would convene in our front room in the early evening, and mother would be rushing to and fro with teas, coffees and cakes. Alan always made the time to pop in say hello to me and my younger brother Phil.

On one occasion, I guess I was around 14 years old, he asked me if I would assist him in photographing some of Lytham's local buildings. I had recently taken up photography and had bought a new SLR camera, so it seemed like a great idea to give it a road test. We spent all day wandering around Lytham photographing all aspects of old houses, from doorways and window frames to roofing tiles and gardens. Not what you would expect the usual teenager to take an interest in! Alan gave a running commentary all the way through. This was the first time I really learned to appreciate the beauty of the buildings around us and was the start of a great relationship with Alan. It was also the start of my lifetime's love of everything heritage, little did I know that 40 years later I would still be completely hooked by the history

and heritage of the beautiful buildings of Lytham and the region.

In my late teens, when I was distracted by cars, I remember helping out at Alan's workshop on George Street, at the back of the Police Station. He had an old classic flat back truck that was in a bit of a sorry state. My mate Andy was struggling for a job so Alan set him off restoring the truck. I would pop in and give a lift with some of the rubbing down. They worked on the vehicle for a few weeks. It looked fabulous when painted and with Ashton's Nurseries details sign-written on the sides. Some time later they started work on Alan's next project, a WW2 Jeep.

In 1987 he encouraged my mother to set up an exhibition on the history of Lytham, within the recently restored windmill. The Council had been looking for a use for the building and an exhibition seemed like a great idea. It was opened by the then Mayor, John Tavernor. It was such a great success that Fylde Borough Council invited the then newly formed Lytham Heritage Group to come back the next year and set up a permanent seasonal exhibition, soon to become the Lytham Windmill museum.



Memories of Alan By Steve Williams

Mother ran this as the curator until she sadly died in 2008. Later that year, Alan asked me if I would like to continue her legacy at the Windmill and I was pleased to accept, hence starting a whole new era for me with the Heritage Group. Alan was always hugely supportive.

Alan always had time to talk, despite having his own large family, many friends and a busy job. He often made the point of asking how the family all were and regularly remembered the details of what they were up to. I will miss my evenings at number 1 Warton Street fondly listening to Alan reminiscing about local history.

Alan was a true gentleman and he will be greatly missed. He gave a huge part of his life to the heritage of Lytham. Key building projects, including Lytham Hall, Lytham Windmill Museum, the Old Lifeboat House, the Heritage Centre and the Assembly Rooms, would not have been the success stories they are today without his intervention and leadership. He was the instigator of Lytham Heritage Group, Lytham Town Trust and was hugely instrumental in securing Lytham Hall for the people of Lytham. His passing is the end of an era.



Alan Ashton outside the family shop on the corner of Station Road and Warton Street. An article about the shop and Alan's house next door is later in this issue.

Quote from Alan to Dave Hoyle -

"Keep the Heritage alive because this is what Lytham is all about and spread the word to them all. Write everything down as although you might not forget, others will!"

Where has our daily band gone?



Market Square with a military band entertaining a large crowd c1905 before the Clifton Memorial was moved to Sparrow Park in 1909. This is a Raphael Tuck & Sons' 'Oilette' postcard (No 7546).

The caption on the reverse reads:

"Lytham, an attractive Lancashire watering place, is much quieter, and therefore is sought by a different type of tourists to the excursionists who fill Blackpool and Southport to overflowing. Lytham caters for its visitors' pleasure by an adequate provision of music, which may be heard daily in the Market Square, the busiest thoroughfare in the little town."

Notes from The Chairman *Sue Forshaw*

As I write this the sun is streaming through the windows and I have already been pottering in the garden. Unfortunately we all know this early warm spring weather is unusual for February and will not last but it gives us a taste of what is to come. It is a bit like this version of the Antiquarian when we start a new year and look forward to everything the Heritage Group is offering in 2019.

On a sad note as you have already read, the group lost its founder member Alan Ashton MBE in February.

The monthly talks started in March with a talk by David Hewitt. All the details are on the website, in the blue leaflet included with the January edition or in the Antiquarian. The Heritage Centre has reopened after its Christmas break with its 300th Exhibition which is quite a feat for a small charity. We have started with a departure from our usual format with a tantalising glimpse of 6 paintings by women artists. This is just some of the art work currently housed at the Town Hall as part of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection.

The Windmill and Old Lifeboat House museums open for business at Easter until mid - September with the same opening days as 2019. The dates and times will be available on our website. The Archive goes from strength to strength as far as visitors are concerned. Despite the convenience of Google and other internet platforms, researchers still like tactile artefacts that someone has crafted or written or even touched, hence our appeal! We are currently compiling our stewards rotas for the museums, archive and centre so if you feel able to fill a slot do get in touch via the centre e mail or phone.

In the Antiquarian we all enjoy reading the articles but it tends to fall to a small band of people. If you would like to contribute something such as photos with details, family reminiscences of an event or landmark in the town or a snapshot of a family member or friend who has made a difference to our town do get in touch. Please send to David Forshaw, the compiler of the Antiquarian, at davidzforshaw@gmail.com

On that note I will wish you a Happy Easter and look forward to seeing you at an event or exhibition.

Membership

It is that time of year when membership is due and we have enclosed a form to fill in please. Please consider a standing order which is convenient for you as it takes the uncertainty out of the equation and more convenient for us to track payments. Thank you to those who already participate in the scheme. There is also room on the form for you to indicate any volunteer roles you consider you can help us with and any help is very welcome. One of the roles is Antiquarian deliverer and this leads me to think of the future.

As part of my introduction to this exciting year I think we also need to move with the times as other groups have done before. It would be helpful if you would complete the email address section if you have one please. We intend to send out, hopefully the next edition, by email with any additions also sent as attachments. If you do not have an email address or would still prefer a hard copy please let us know via a note to the Centre (or by email) or mark it on your membership form. We may be a Heritage Group but do need to keep up with popular demand for an emailed copy, if you prefer one.

Any membership queries -
please mark for the attention of David Hoyle, Membership Secretary

and subscriptions / payments -
please mark for the attention of Michael Bell, Treasurer.

Thank you in anticipation
Sue Forshaw

Future Events *Sue Forshaw*

Entry is £2 per head including refreshments and we always have a raffle at £1 per strip. If you have a raffle prize you could like to donate please bring it along to the meeting as all monies collected go towards maintaining the group's activities and venues. All meetings will be in Lytham Assembly Rooms commencing at 2.30 pm unless otherwise stated.

May 13th Speaker Phillip Stringer with a compilation of archive film entitled 'Lytham on film in the 1960's' Phillip is an enthusiastic photographer and local historian following in the footsteps of his father Tom Stringer. He has a vast collection of his father's material and has put together family footage which will bring back memories of certainly my childhood growing up in this town but also for others born in that era. An afternoon of nostalgia no doubt!

June 13th AGM This is a **Thursday** as the rooms are unavailable on the Monday and will commence at **7.30pm** followed by light refreshments. There will be some changes to the Committee for 2019/20. If you feel you would like to be considered please apply in writing at least 14 days before the 13th June using the form enclosed.

Please add to your calendar the date for the 2019 Christmas meal. I have just booked the date and time but details will be in the October Antiquarian.

It will be at Lytham Hall at 12.30 for 1.00pm on Monday 9th December, hopefully again in the Gold Room.

NEW MEMBER

Welcome to new member -
Joyce P Hurst,
Lytham St Annes

OBITUARY

We are sorry to have to report the death at the end of January 2019 of Tony Taylor, a member for many years. Among other things, he gave considerable help with setting up the exhibitions in the Centre after it was first opened.

CAPTAIN THOMAS RYMER, MASTER MARINER, BUILDER OF THE FIRST PROPERTIES IN THE EAST END OF LYTHAM IN 1838

by Lytham heritage Group Archivist Dave Hoyle
(The houses today are 12 Station Road and 1, 3, 5 and 7 Warton Street)

Up to the early part of the nineteenth century, the land upon which these properties now stand was flooded by the tide and is shown in the maps and drawings up to this time as the MARSH and let by the Lord of the Manor to the tenant farmers on which to graze their cattle. This situation existed up to the building in 1809 of the new promenade by John Clifton, the renowned racehorse owner.

The sandhills which stretched westerly from where the Land Registry now stands, provided a natural sea defence and their value was to be proved, for not many years later the promenade was washed away in one of the many inundations that have created so much damage along this coast for centuries and had to be rebuilt, lessons having been learnt. This was the situation when Captain Thomas Rymer, a sea trader, decided to settle down and make his home in Lytham. He had frequented the Lytham anchorage in his sailing vessel, the schooner "Mary and Ann" bringing cargoes from Drogheda and other ports, together with wine from the continent. The Lytham Dock had not yet been built and sailing ships discharged their cargoes from Lodge Pool in Nancy's Bay to be carted ashore, or lightered up to Preston, for the Ribble was not navigable for the deeper draught vessels at that time.

The reclaimed land, now that the promenade had been built, was offered by the landlord, described as Land on the Marsh to be built upon. There is no doubt that Thomas Rymer had fallen in love with this fascinating sleepy village, emerging from the mists of time and decided to settle here on his retirement. He leased just over three thousand square yards of land for a term of sixty-one years. The Clifton's at that time would not extend over this term. Thomas then built five cottages; the corner part of these premises was to provide a wine store and he continued in the wine trade for some time.

The corner store and the cottages (today Numbered 1, 3, 5 and 7 Warton Street) were the first houses to be built in the East end of Lytham in 1838. It was five years before the next terrace of six properties was to be built 'Numbers 17 to 27 ' and more to follow on the arrival of the Railway in 1846.

The Warton Street houses - Hand-made brick, produced at the kiln near the Windmill on the beach; the clay for these bricks came from a deep excavation converted into the town tip by the Improvement Commissioners and served its purpose well for many years. The front and rear walls of these houses are 15" thick, raised on cobble foundations in a trench of sand. There were good quality slate roofs on timber frames, in fact one could make their way from one end to the other in the open roof space, three centre beams of pine 30 ft long resting on the front and rear walls supported the two upper floor rooms, the beams can be seen from the rear room. When the bay windows were added, a wooden imitation of the beautiful stone bay windows now being the accepted style for the better-quality houses in Lytham, the wooden bay windows were a much cheaper version, but extended the now important front room, a ceiling fixed to the lower part of the beams and

plaster cornice moulding gave the extended room some style, a wooden floor completed this room. The rear rooms were flagged, the back door opened onto a small walled area with a privy built into the rear wall.

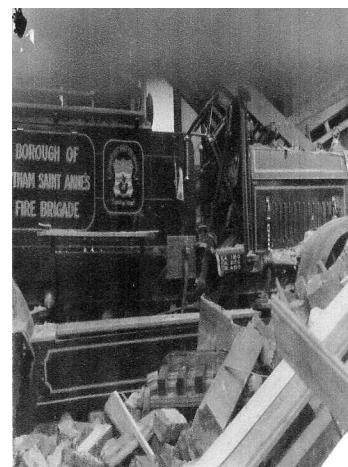
In 1879 the corner store of the block was converted into a double fronted shop and with the numbering of the houses in Warton Street and Station Road became 12 Station Road and the adjoined houses 1, 3, 5 and 7 Warton Street. In 1930, 12 Station Road was demolished by a fire engine, which ran out of control down Clifton Street. The building you see today, rebuilt in Accrington brick, which differs from the original hand bricks, is a result of this accident. At this time the shop premises were occupied by the old firm of Ashton's Nursery, garden nurserymen, seedsmen and florists. Five people were in the shop at the time of the crash including two elderly Miss Ashtons and a mother of a child and pram. Whilst a beam fell across the pram, the baby was unhurt as were the four other occupants. An elderly lady in bed resting in the room above the shop slid down in the bed, which came to rest on top of the fire engine wedged under the upper floor. A miraculous escape since nobody was seriously injured.

Thomas Rymer sold off the area of land in Warton Street and Station Road on which his properties stood in 1851 for the sum of £1,150 10s. The houses, substantially built and owned by Thomas Rymer, stand as good today as the day they were built. Upon leaving Warton Street, Captain Rymer had built 3 Banister Street for his daughter and whilst the house has since been extended at the side and rear, the original front facade in hand made brick is still evident. The Captain, always on the lookout for a new enterprise, also leased shop premises on Clifton Street, now occupied by Hampson's, for his daughter who ran a bakery and confectionery business. This business was in complete contrast to that of a former leaseholder, a Mrs Cottam, who operated as a blacksmith.



The shop after the fire engine crash in 1930

The Fire Engine embedded in Ashton's shop in 1930



The shop today on the corner of Station Road and Warton Street (photo by David Hoyle)

Past Events

Christmas meal at Lytham Hall, December 2018

We were in for a very pleasant surprise when we arrived at Lytham Hall for our annual lunch. I had assumed we would be in the function room as last year but there was to be a large function in the evening so I was asked if I minded moving into the Hall instead. There was a 'meet and greet' with a reception room to gather in with a roaring log fire and two beautifully decorated Christmas trees. We then went into the Gold Room for lunch and that was equally splendid. The food was very good as always and the staff so pleasant and helpful. We passed a very pleasant few hours and eventually the 30 guests wended their way home full of Christmas cheer. We can see how much the Hall has started to return to its former glory and developments are moving apace under its current stewardship and long may it continue.

Lytham Heritage Group Members enjoy their Christmas Meal in the Gold Room at Lytham Hall on 7th December 2018

(photo David Forshaw)



Members were received into the former entrance hall, now acting as a reception room, before going into the Gold Room.

(photo David Forshaw)



"Joseph 1917 " a talk by David Hewitt in March 2019

David is a Lawyer and author of 5 books. Research is something he enjoys, especially if it has some element linking it to the law and this latest book is no exception. He wove an interesting narrative around Joseph Blackburn who was a market gardener in Thornton and the policy of conscription in the 1st World War. There was a likelihood that probable injustice had been metered out to Joseph. He was given exemption by the local review board but the army appealed and the last appeal panel in London overturned it. As a result he went to war and was killed on August 1918 in action in France leaving a wife and 2 children. There is now a commemorative bench for Joseph in Thornton. It was a very interesting and thought provoking afternoon.

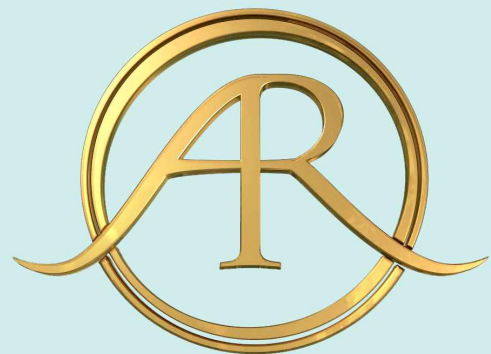
Sue Forshaw

The Lytham Heritage Archive

by Dave Hoyle

It has been busier than ever over the winter period. There are many books that people are putting together and we have had many visits to the archive to collect information which we are happy to help with.

We are still open each Wednesday afternoon from 1pm till 4pm and we will make sure one of the 5 Volunteers will be there to greet you with your requests. Everyone is welcome and you will also get a cup of tea, why not come and see us sometime at Lytham Library side entrance



Great news also that the BBC Antiques Road show is coming to Lytham Hall in June, I wonder if we can take a treasure from the archive.

The Windmill and Lifeboat Museums

The two museums open on Wednesday 17th April for the start of the 2019 Season
(Note - The Lifeboat Museum is open weekends and Bank Holidays only)

Dates for this year are :

Easter Period	Weekends and Bank Holidays only	17th April to 28th April
Spring Season	Weekends and Bank Holidays only	4th May to 27th May
Summer Season	29th May to 15th September	
Autumn Season	Weekends only -	21st September to 29th September
Special Local Events	St George's Festival -	23rd to 28th April
	National Mills Week -	11th May & 12th May
	1940s Wartime Weekend -	17th & 18th August
	Heritage Open Days -	13th to 15th and 19th & 22nd September
The Museums will be closed on :	Lytham Club Day -	Saturday 2nd June
	Lytham Festival -	10th July to 14th July
	All Mondays (except Bank Holidays) and Tuesdays	
School Parties :	Only Mondays and Tuesdays by appointment	
Opening Times :	10.30am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 4.30pm	

Why not pop in and see the inside of the Mill and check out our 119 year old 36 foot long Victorian Lifeboat Chapman in the Lifeboat Museum.

Steve Williams

Museum Co-ordinator www.lythamwindmill.co.uk phone 07842 178470

Stewards for both venues are also needed. Why not spend a few enjoyable hours meeting people on a regular or even an occasional basis. Please ring Steve Williams if you would like to show off either of our great museums to the many interested visitors.

300th Exhibition at the Centre !

Lytham St Annes Art Collection, Waymaking: Women Artists Of The Region, 12 Feb – 7 April

We decided that our 300th exhibition should echo the very first exhibition at the Centre, in 1997, which were paintings from the Art Collection.

Our 300th was fully curated by Sophie Fuce, FBC Collections Development Officer, whose remit is to gain accreditation for the collection to be deemed to be national gallery standard by the Arts Council England. This will encourage funding for the collection and its conservation, and ultimately, more potential to make the works available to the public.

Whilst we had hoped to have quite a lot of paintings we were somewhat bemused when only six paintings were displayed – it caused quite a few discussions! However, the exhibition theme of Women Artists of the Region, was very topical and the story of the plight of women artists was well explained in the handouts.



Yorkshire Terrier by Maude Alice Earl

The exhibition was a forerunner of future exhibitions of the Collection, when "less is more" will help to focus visitor's minds on the artwork telling different stories or raising debate about an associated theme.

Our own exhibition was a first with related activities:

- Sophie did four guided tours of the paintings which were extremely interesting and really brought home the environment for female painters over the years.
- Veronica McDonnell gave a talk about Kathleen White – one of the artists exhibited.
- A Still Life Drawing Class for female painters was arranged for early April.

"KALEIDOSCOPE" An Eclectic Mix of Colours and Styles by Members of the Blackpool Art Society 30 April – 19 May

This will be another full display of high quality art from local artists.



"Nature's Bounty" Paintings by Margaret Rodwell, 9 – 28 April

Popular local artist Margaret will bring together a fresh plethora of colour and form – you can almost smell the scent of her flowers. This exhibition should not be missed.



"Oilgraph & Floriography" – Art on Canvas by photographic artist Elizabeth McMorran, 21 May – 9 June

The return of wonderful photography displayed on various media – beautiful images of nature.



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.