LATHOM TRUST’S UNHERALDED HEROES

Behind four years of unimagined success in historical and archaeological Roman, Ironage and Medieval discoveries - has been an absolutely crucial group of Trust members, quietly working away, laying the financial foundations for many of the Lathom Park Trust’s achievements. It is of course the Social Events Committee.

Their various fund raising events, from Strawberry Teas, Historical Tours, Dinner Dances to Brass Band Concerts and Casino Evenings have raised over a staggering six thousand pounds. It provides a financial base which allows the Trust to consider ambitious projects and commitments which otherwise would not be possible.

In some cases we have been fortunate in receiving funding from Grant schemes, but these are not just awarded on historic or archaeological merit - there also needs to be clear evidence that members and the local community are involved.

This is yet another very real contribution the Social Events Committee bring to the Trust and our thanks go to all committee members, many of whom have been there from the very start of things.

We were all sorry to hear the sad news of Isobel Carrington’s death.

Isobel, who was a very active member of the Committee and one of its first secretaries, died in April and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Our thoughts are with Mike and his family.

The Briars Brook Culvert is a Grade 2 Listed Building. Built in 1771 by John Longtham, resident engineer for the Leeds-Liverpool Canal Company, it carries the canal over the Eller Brook and is one of the earliest trunk canal structures in the country.
GREAT NEW GRANT AWARD FOR LATHOM EXCAVATIONS

Volunteers required NOW for exciting Lathom ‘dig’

The LPT has received a second grant from the Heritage Lottery Funded, Local Heritage Initiative (LHI). The grant will be used to fund fieldwork and archaeological excavation at the Iron Age and Romano-British site, Duttons farm in Lathom. Volunteers from the Trust, local community and elsewhere in West Lancashire are invited to participate in the excavations this summer and full training will be provided by the Trust in collaboration with National Museums Liverpool free of charge.

Work in July and August 2005 will be associated primarily with increasing our understanding of the medieval landscape of a large oval enclosure which surrounds the post-medieval farm. This will also have the added bonus for enhancing the work already undertaken by the Trust as part of the previous LHI grant on the adjacent medieval deer park of Lathom.

Great and rare opportunities for public involvement include:
- Fieldwalking and topographical survey
- Geophysical survey
- Excavation training / participation. Participation available for up to 6 weeks on-site.
- Participation in post-excavation work / compiling archive, including computer finds database, finds recognition for up to 3 weeks.
- Local schools and local people will be invited to site open days and presentations, including National Archaeology week and National Heritage weekend.

The Lathom Park Trust has again invited Ron Cowell, Curator of Prehistoric Archaeology with National Museums Liverpool to direct and manage the project on behalf of the Trust and the local community. Places are very limited this year and will be restricted to a maximum of 30 volunteers.

If you would like to join our excavation team at the farm then please contact Susan Dunn on 01695-422550 for details on how to get involved in this rare opportunity and to receive your enrolment form.

The excavation starts at 9AM Monday 11th July. You can participate as much or as little as you like, the project runs on weekdays Monday to Friday, and occasional weekends for those with commitments during the week.

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Yet another major Lathom discovery?

Mr M C Ball of Ash, in Surrey who is anxious to establish whether her paternal grandmother, Mrs Zillah Wright, was unmarried, although we 

When that was, Mrs Ball does not know, but she was buried in Ormskirk churchyard. Mrs Wright was unmarried, although we understand that housekeepers were given the courtesy title of a married lady. She had one son, Mr M C Ball’s father, who was in postings in Staines, Middlesex. He married in 1910 and we believe that Mrs Wright lived with him until she died. When that was, Mrs M C Ball does not know, but she was buried in Ormskirk churchyard.
2004 - Heritage Festival of revelations

The first public viewing of the recently discovered Sir Humphry Repton’s ‘Red Book’ of Lathom Park brought a huge number of visitors to our Heritage Open Day. Acquired at a Sotherby’s New York auction, the ‘Red Book’ was an amazing coup for the Trust and the nation, particularly when such unique items are usually snapped up by the likes of the Getty museum.

Our thanks go to Sir Richard Baker-Wilbraham of Rode Hall who first brought it to our attention and to the Lancashire Records Office for so rapidly raising over Seventy Thousand dollars to win the bidding.

Many other activities also created great interest. Iron age and Roman findings from the Dutton’s Farm archaeological site (volunteers wanted for more digs this July and August), Nigel Neil’s presentation of the Lathom Park survey (full to capacity - but there’s another chance to catch Nigel with even more discoveries - 600 new sites, at his talk on July 7th), Victorian foods and table settings, children’s corner; theatre group displays and a host of other features gave a broad picture of the Trust’s progress.

The weekend started with a function in Lathom Park Chapel - a fascinating evening with Ron Cowell, hearing all about Lathom’s Iron age settlement, followed by wine and refreshments in the marquee in the Chapel grounds (this very marquee was later seen mysteriously ‘walking in the rain’ over the soaking fields and roads of Lathom).

Amongst many of the Trust’s talented members we are fortunate to have our very own horticultural expert, John Hayton. Coupled with his knowledge of Lathom’s parklands and pleasure gardens he has also experienced working the Walled Garden over many years and his guided tours in conjunction with Trustee archaeologist, Mark Fletcher, have stimulated great interest in one of the most prestigious gardens of its period.

Recent tours have also included the Lathom Pleasure Garden and a visit to the Croxteth Hall restored walled garden which, although on a much smaller scale than Lathom’s, gave members a clear idea of the layout and buildings which were characteristic of the historic Lathom garden.