

NEWSLETTER

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.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AMAZING LATHOM DISCOVERIES



JULY 7th

Archaeologist and historian, Nigel Neil, brings Lathom's ancient history to life.
7.30pm, Thursday 7th July
St John's RC Church Hall,
Chapel Lane, Lathom
Tickets £5 incl. light refreshments
Book now - tel. Joy Murray 01704 892996

JULY / AUG Great Lathom 'dig'
Volunteers wanted for this rare excavating opportunity. See page 2 for full details

SEPT 9th 'The Lathom Angel'*

Author John Knowles presents the latest findings on Lathom's theatrical heritage
7.30pm Lathom Park Chapel & Marquee
incl. light refreshments.

SEPT 10th & 11th *

Lathom Heritage Festival

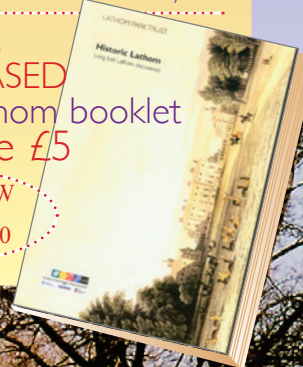
OCT Annual Dinner Dance *

Ormskirk Golf Club, Cranes Lane, Lathom

* Full details to be announced shortly

Extra copies
JUST RELEASED
Historic Lathom booklet
Great Value £5

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HISTORIC
LATHOM

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.

Rare opportunity for Lathom 'dig'
See Page 2 for exciting details



GREAT NEW GRANT AWARD FOR LATHOM EXCAVATIONS

Volunteers required NOW for exciting Lathom 'dig'



Ron Cowell



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.Hurry - places are going fast !

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
- Geophysics 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



Funding supporters

Dr. Ian Brooks of EAS Ltd shows members their new discoveries

Trust members in successful Lathom geophysics survey

The Phase Two Historic Lathom Projects started successfully this spring when Trust members and local volunteers participated in a professional geophysical survey and fieldwalking of 1 hectare (2.5 acres) of agricultural land in Lathom.

The survey report points to the existence of a series of possible, very important structures within the field. These will be further investigated by archaeological excavation by the Trust in 2006.

The project was funded by grants from the Lancashire County Council LEAF Fund and West Lancashire District Council's Community Chest.

The Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank the local volunteers for all their hard work and the landowners for their interest in this project and for allowing access to the field during the survey period.Exciting prospects ahead !

Does anyone know this lady of Lathom ?

We have received a letter from Mrs M C Ball of Ash, in Surrey who is anxious to establish whether her paternal grandmother, Zillah Wright, was employed as housekeeper at Lathom House in the early 1900's.

Mrs Wright was unmarried, although we understand that housekeepers were given the courtesy title of a married lady. She had one son, Mrs Ball's father, who was in lodgings in Skelmersdale.

He married in 1910 and we believe that Mrs Wright lived with him until she died. When that was, Mrs Ball does not know, but she was buried in Ormskirk churchyard.



Mrs Zillah Wright

This is a photograph of Mrs Wright, taken outside what is assumed to be Lathom House. Please get in touch with the Trust, if you are able to help us with this enquiry

THEY CALLED HER BABYLON

Well known folk group, Steeleye Span has just released a CD featuring the Siege of Lathom House which members will find particularly interesting. Extracts from the sleeve notes are shown below. The CD, 'They called her Babylon' is available in stores now or through Park Records, PO Box 651. Oxford, OX2 9RB

Lathom House is situated in Lancashire, and in the year of 1643 was the one Royalist stronghold left in the county that hadn't been seized by Cromwell's Parliamentarians.

In June of that year, James Stanley, the seventh Earl of Derby, heeded the King's command and left Lathom House, taking with him an army of fighting men. They headed for the Isle of Man with the intention of stopping Scottish forces en route for England in their support for Cromwell.

He left the house in charge of his intrepid wife, Charlotte de la Tremouille.

The enemy now looked upon this house as their own, and it was decided that Lathom must be surrendered.

One Puritan minister at Wigan preached the following sermon against Lady Derby upon a text from Jeremiah:

"Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow shoot at her, spare no arrows, for she has sinned against the Lord." (Chap. 50. v.14)

When a commission was obtained by the Parliamentarians to seize Lathom House, and this was made known to Lady Derby, in great secrecy she proceeded to furnish herself with men, arms and ammunition.

With considerable determination, and unflinching loyalty to her husband and to the King, against all odds, she successfully resisted and held back the aggressors up until their shameful retreat in the month of May 1644.

THEY CALLED HER BABYLON

To the halls of Lathom House the king he did proclaim that the seventh Earl of Derby James Stanley was his name should resist the Scottish force bound for the Isle of Man so he gathered up his fighters and obeyed the king's command

The Countess was of noble blood, though not of royalty yet brave and as intrepid as any man was she so the house became a fortress with her good Lord gone her name was Lady Charlotte but they called her Babylon

Chorus:

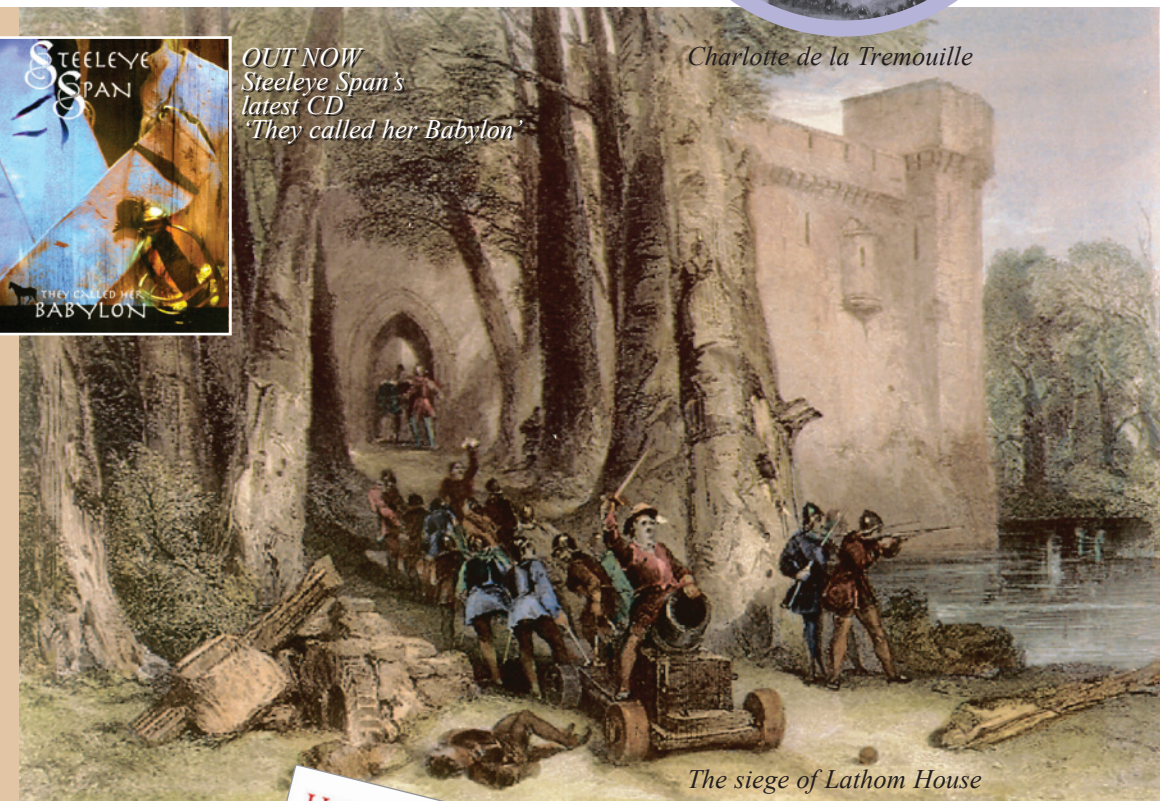
So put yourselves in line against Babylon all ye that bend the bow against the crown train the gunners sights against Babylon till the eagle tower does fall and the walls they are thrown down

Both the puritans and Fairfax, together they did call for this one last royal stronghold in Lancashire to fall so the garrison she strengthened and the eagle tower was manned and refusing all conditions, it was then the siege began

Twice in two good months when those rebels did retreat they were cast out from the earthworks and driven to defeat with dishonour and in shame, their siege came to an end they were routed by a lady and two hundred loyal men



OUT NOW Steeleye Span's latest CD 'They called her Babylon'



Charlotte de la Tremouille

The siege of Lathom House



Repton's Red Book launch

The Walled and Pleasure Gardens at Lathom Park

Pilkington plc have kindly given Lathom Park Trust a 5 year licence to carry out further investigations at these Gardens.

However, this will require careful planning and control of what work we do and it does not give any member of the Trust or the general public the right to visit, unless organised by the Gardens Committee of the Trust.

Over the coming autumn and winter it is anticipated that working parties will be arranged to do a simple measure of the areas involved, with trees and plants plotted and named, but before this it will be necessary to carefully clear any hazards from the two sites.

It is a great opportunity for the Trust to link all this work and compare the findings with the proposals in Sir Humphry Repton's 'Red Book' for the gardens and landscape at Lathom Park.

The 'Red Book' had its first public viewing last year at our Festival and it was subsequently featured in the worldwide 'Historic Gardens Review' publication.

More details will be given in future newsletters and at the Heritage Open Days Weekend - 'Lathom Heritage Festival' in September.

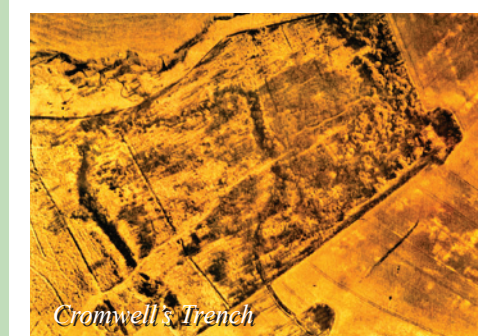
HISTORIC LATHOM UNDER SIEGE ONCE AGAIN ?

Historic Lathom is once again under attack from a group of local landowners who are objecting to the West Lancs. District Council's development plans.

A Local Plan Inquiry is scheduled for August when the landowners objections will be heard. They are proposing removal of the green belt status for land in Spa Lane / Vale Lane to allow further expansion of a Business-Industrial park.

Should they be successful it will result in a major encroachment into the existing green belt - crucially threatening historic parklands, the settings of ancient monuments, listed buildings and new potential sites identified in the Trust's recent archaeological survey.

The Lathom Park Trust, along with West Lancs. Civic Trust, Ormskirk Historical Society, Lathom Parish Council, South Lathom Residents Association and many other groups are playing important roles in supporting the WLDC defence of Lathom.



Cromwell's Trench

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 Sotheby'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, Ironage 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, childrens 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 Ironage 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).



Mystery of the Walking Tent



..... taking to the open road



HELP!

Interested in helping with our Website?

Please give us a call on 01704 893083 NOW!



home - but not unfortunately dry!

THANKS!

We send our thanks to Ailsa Bennett, a founder Trust member, Trustee, Company Secretary and original Membership Secretary for her great contribution since our formation. Ailsa has decided to have a well earned break and we welcome Susan Dunn who has agreed to take on the position of Company Secretary



Paradise revisited for Lathom gardeners

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 Croxeth 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.



Croxeth Hall Walled Garden



Lathom Pleasure Gardens