

NEWSLETTER

SUNNY OUTLOOK
FOR TRUST'S MEMBERS

Record crowds attend Lathom Heritage events

Record numbers visited this year's Heritage Festival which got off to a brilliant start on the Friday evening when members enjoyed a fascinating illustrated presentation on the Earls of Lathom followed by refreshments in the Trust's marquee.

Glorious weather welcomed Saturday's events in the spacious exhibition hall and grounds at Pilkingtons in Hall Lane.

West Lancashire District Council Chairman, May Blake, formally opened proceedings which covered a wide area of topics, ranging from the arts and crafts of Lathom's past to more recent discoveries.

Traditional lace making, Stonemason skills, Falconry, Clay modelling, Theatre and Glassmaking were featured. The emerging evidence of recent discoveries following the Lathom Deer Park survey and archaeological excavations were on display with Ron Cowell, David Dunn and John Hayton answering the many questions coming from the visitors.

Yet again, Lancashire Record Office has done Lathom proud, having acquired at auction a 19c Lathom House Scrapbook, which contains a mass of paintings, poems and playlets created by the first Earl of Lathom's family. Many of these items were shown on the displays.

Sunday's sunshine brought even more visitors out to experience the guided walks through the Lathom pleasure gardens with Jamie Quartermaine and John Hayton. Similarly, the archaeological tours at Duttons Farm with Ron Cowell were equally well attended.

On a more general note of optimism, the Trust is making solid progress in its many fields of activity.

The structure is functioning well and even though admin. costs have increased (mainly through postage) there will not be any increase to your membership fees for the coming year.



**OPEN DAY PICS.
CHRISTMAS EVENT
GREEN BELT SUCCESS
NEW DISCOVERIES
LATHOM LINES
SOCIAL NEWS**

Richard Newton is seen here with one of his gyr-peregrine hybrid falcons. This is typical of the type of bird of prey which would be used for hunting in Lathom's ancient parklands



'07 SUBS. NOW DUE

LATHOM PARK TRUST PROUDLY PRESENT

GEORGE FORMBY CHRISTMAS HOTPOT

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25TH 7.30PM
SCOUT HALL, HALL LANE, LATHOM

TICKETS £7.50
FROM SUE BEESLEY 01704 893 644

**HURRY !
TICKETS
GOING FAST**
Enjoy
Lancashire Hotpot
& Apple Pie
Bring your own drinks



Starring
ANTONY MASON
in a tribute
to Lancashire's
great entertainer

FRIENDS KEEP IN TOUCH

It's always good to hear from Lathom friends, now scattered around the country - and indeed the world - who keep in touch. Alison Walton, nee Sixsmith, lived in Briars Lane, attended Lathom Park school, now married with two children and living in Gosport, still retains a great interest in Lathom and it's history. On learning of the exciting Iron Age settlement discoveries in Lathom, Allison sent a postcard depicting the reconstructed Great Roundhouse at Buster Ancient Farm, Chalton in Hampshire which shows just what could be achieved, with the right sort of help, enthusiasm and support, here at our very own Iron Age site in Lathom. Alison always makes a special effort to get to our Heritage Festival and enjoys meeting up with old friends. This year was particularly enjoyable.



New Lathom discoveries amaze Ron and Trust's archaeologists



Ron Cowell, Curator of prehistoric archaeology at National Museums, Liverpool and his colleagues, along with Trust members, archaeologist Steve Baldwin, Richard Moss, Pat Boylett, Fay Alexander, Barbara Fulton and other volunteers have uncovered even more exciting 'finds' during their 'digs' this summer.

Having spent several seasons previously excavating the Iron Age and Roman farmstead at Duttons Farm, work this year has concentrated on the medieval part of the site (c1100-1300 AD). Too much was found to complete in one season and it is intended to return next year to finish it. Conclusions therefore have to be tentative. However, several features were noted that make the site's potential very high.

The main area consists of a very stony layer alongside the Newburgh - Burscough road through Lathom which also contained a large quantity of medieval pottery, much of it large and unworn. Current thinking is that this may represent the area of a former medieval house. The pottery is very well preserved and should make a good exhibition in the future.

There is also a small circular structure, possibly the remains of a house or perhaps something like a workshop, although this is not yet dated. Some ill-understood gulleys and hollows, which are probably earlier than the medieval layer, could mark an earlier phase of the medieval settlement.

A small early prehistoric camp, c4000 BC, was also found this year, witnessed by a small dense, concentration of struck flint. This represents one, or several episodes of making stone tools on the site. There is also some struck flint which may be later than this, perhaps c2500 BC. This is spread more widely than the small flint knapping site and next year it will be investigated whether any of the undated features on the site could belong to this phase of activity.

Ron Cowell 10/106



Archaeologists and volunteers working on the excavation site and (right) Ron explaining the 'findings' to visitors



heritage open days
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

MORE LATHOM 'SUPERLATIVES' FOLLOWING TRUST'S DEER PARK FINDINGS

Lathom - greater than Windsor or Hampton Court

Nigel Neil, one of the Trust's archaeological consultants and Lathom archaeologist and Trustee, Steve Baldwin, who along with Trust member volunteers, discovered many new and previously unknown aspects of Lathom's past during their comprehensive research on the Deer Park. As is often the case, the more we discover, the more questions are raised. One such case in point is the legendary Lathom Park Lines - or avenues of trees - so we asked Nigel, to throw a little more light on the subject.

We are well used, now, to finding that Lathom has achieved superlatives in the past. It had one of the country's largest medieval deer parks (over 2700 acres), reputedly the largest private house in England (the 1st earl of Derby's, c.1485), and during World War I one of the four largest remount depots in England. Now we can add another **record-beater**, the 1.8 miles long, Lines tree avenue.

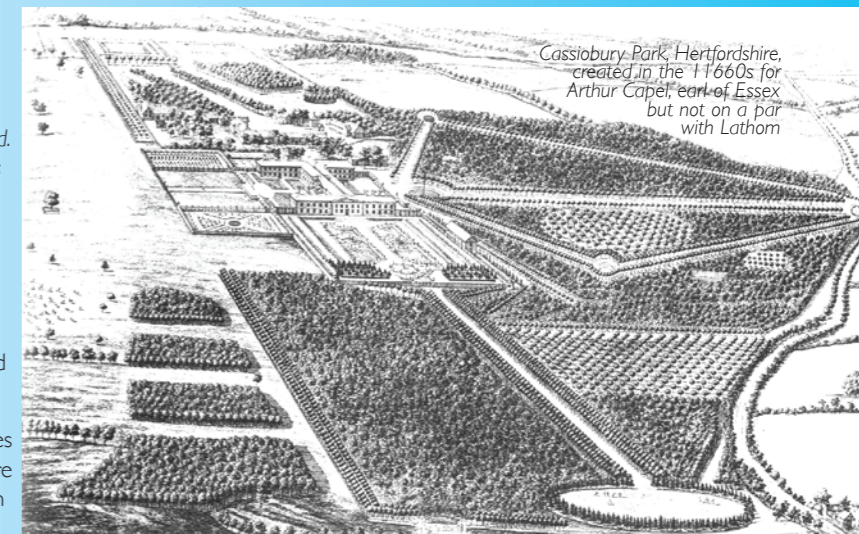
This avenue, comprising parallel earthwork embankments 200 metres apart, and topped with very large trees, planted when already mature - once stretched from Hall Lane in the West to Cobbs Brow Lane in the East. It is shown complete on Yates' (1786) and Greenwood's (1818) maps, but was much reduced by 1848, aerial photographs also show radiating narrower avenues.

The Lines were not aligned on the front or rear elevations of Leoni's 1730s house, but on the 1485 house, as rebuilt by the 8th and 9th earls between 1653 and 1702. In 1670 Thomas Matley of Lancaster complained to a friend that "you cannot get masons and carpenters because all the masons in this part of the country are employed in the building up of the Eagle tower at Lathom". The same might have been true of the gardeners !

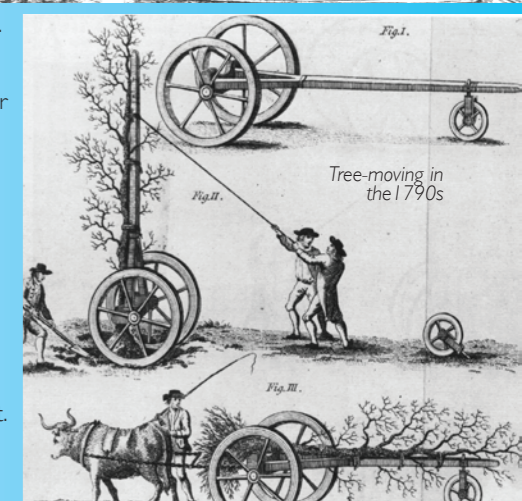
Avenues were rarely planted in England before the Civil War. Sarah Couch of Oxford, a leading avenue authority, considers that - as befitted the social status of the 8th and 9th Earls - the Lathom avenue was comparable in length with those at Windsor and Hampton Court, **but much wider**, inviting comparison with Le Notre's work at Vaux-le-Vicomte and Versailles for Louis XIV of France. Wide avenues, **not on a par with Lathom**, were planted in the 1670s to 1690s at Cassiobury-Hertfordshire, (see picture) Euston-Suffolk, Althorp-Northamptonshire, Wimpole-Cambridgeshire, Badminton-Gloucestershire, Newby-North Yorkshire, and Lancashire at Hoghton Tower and Stoneyhurst.

The Trust is keen to make walk-over surveys of the eastward extent of the avenue a priority, in order to determine its historical and ecological potential - more exciting work ahead !

Nigel Neil 10/106



Cassiobury Park, Hertfordshire, created in the 1160s for Arthur Capel, earl of Essex but not on a par with Lathom



Tree-moving in the 1790s

Interested in Lathom's World War I Remount Depot ?



Nigel Neil, the Trust's archaeological consultant, has found some useful information about the huge reception depot for horses shipped from the USA and Canada, in the National Archives at Kew and plans to make another visit shortly. Anyone else who is possibly interested in the Remount Depot, its rail links and veterinary functions etc., please get in touch with us. We will be featuring the Lathom Remount Depot in our forthcoming booklet and fresh sources for research are constantly coming to light, which need to be pursued if we want to present a well rounded account. But, as usual it all takes time and patience, so any offer of help will be greatly appreciated.

One step forward - Ten steps back !

Joint efforts help preserve Lathom's Green Belt - but criminals have no respect !



FLY-TIPPING AT ENTRANCE TO LATHOM PARK



THEFT OF COPING STONES

"I have had regard to the historical significance of the adjoining Lathom Park and environs which Lathom Park Trust notes, dates back over a thousand years and includes features of medieval and Civil War interests",

A quote from the Planning Inspector's Report following the Public Inquiry into the release of Green Belt land in Spa Lane for industrial use. This was a significant factor in his decision to protect the threatened historic Lathom. The victory followed concerted efforts from many residents and support groups including Lathom Park Trust, Ormskirk Historical Society, West Lancs. Civic Trust, South Lathom Residents Association, Lathom Parish Council and Parish Councils from Newburgh, Dalton and Burscough, - BUT - with criminal damage and fly-tipping in Lathom, as elsewhere, we must be constantly alert and vigilant in defending our historic environment.

Strawberry Tea at the Priory

Members of the Trust and their friends enjoyed a rare opportunity to experience the pleasures and tranquillity of strawberries and cream in the grounds of Burscough Priory. All our thanks go to Mrs Musker for making it such a memorable occasion.



Social Events Notes

The Social Events Committee has been as active as ever, raising valuable funds for the Trust, with a variety of activities, perhaps culminating in the strawberry teas at the Priory and the ambitious Antiques Roadshow, attracting masses of interesting Lathom memorabilia, which is now being carefully collated and catalogued. Changes took place on the Committee when Jenny Coombes relinquished her secretarial role after many successful years. Our thanks go to Jenny for all her creative work and organisation. Pam Nanson remains as Chairman but at the time of going to press Pam is in Germany following an unfortunate accident whilst visiting her grandchildren and is unable to travel home at the moment. We send Pam our best wishes for a very speedy return. In the Spring the Committee is arranging another popular supper/theatre visit - and finally - don't miss the George Formby Christmas Hotpot later this month - it will be a great evening - we look forward to seeing all of you there.

Another enjoyable Trust event

Emma Tate, Curator of Collections at Knowsley Hall, gave us a fascinating illustrated presentation of Knowsley & the Earls of Derby, with a special focus on the 7th Earl and his Countess, Charlotte de la Tremouille.

This was followed by Wine & Cheese refreshments in the marquee beside the lovely Chapel garden. Proceeds from the event are shared equally between the Trust and Lathom Chapel. Pictured below, with Emma are, from l to r, David Dunn, Pam Nanson, Howard Whitaker, Emma Tate, Bruce Fulton and Susan Dunn



Shakespeare in Lathom



William Shakespeare is believed to have written some of his earlier plays at Lathom House and the Shakespearian theme was extended to young visitors at last month's Heritage Day.

Edge Hill University drama lecturer, Jill Pimblett, brought along Shakespearian props and costumes, giving youngsters a great opportunity to enact the witches scene from Macbeth and create their own little fun playlets.

It proved to be a very popular feature and hopefully it can be developed further in the years ahead.

LATHOM PARK BOYS FOOTBALL TEAM-1896

Do you recognise any of them ?



This photograph which was taken in 1896 has been kindly donated by Mrs. E. J. Ashcroft of Tarleton.

It shows Mrs. Ashcroft's great uncle, Robert Leyland, (circled) who was born in 1883.

Great uncle Robert was born and bred at Nelsons Cottages in Hall Lane and had 10 siblings. He served in the 1914-1918 war and then became chauffeur to Lord Roberts, but whilst in London he was unfortunately mugged and killed. Robert Leyland's grandfather was coachman to Lord Lathom, and his father, (Mrs. Ashcroft's great grandfather) was gasman for Lathom House and the Chapel. When the buildings were converted to electricity Lord Lathom made 'Bobby', as he was known, caretaker of the Lathom Club and some senior Lathom locals may still know the kitchen there as 'Bobby's Kitchen'. Perhaps other people know some of the other boys on the photograph, if so, please let us hear from you, these gems are so valuable and give such a vivid picture of earlier Lathom life.

REMINDER

Membership renewal fees are now due
~~~~~ No increase in fees again !  
Please don't forget to complete the enclosed form and return it to Barbara. Thank you for your continuing support.