

NEWSLETTER

LONG LOST 1885 DRAWINGS OF LATHOM HOUSE FOUND IN LONDON

It is amazing how more and more connections to Lathom House continue to come to light from nowhere, unearth fascinating artifacts and information and add immeasurably to the Trust's body of knowledge.

At the beginning of this year, Elizabeth Gowans, the grand-daughter of Alfred Butler who had been in charge of the Earl of Lathom's stud, came from London to visit Lathom Park to trace her family's history. She was thrilled when Louise Wallace from WLDC gave her a guided tour of the West Wing and the courtyard where her grandfather must have spent much of his working life, before he was injured by a horse. (The Earl of Lathom then retired him as the licensee of The Stanley Arms, off the Buxton Road in the Peak District) She was of course delighted to see the buildings being sensitively restored and being made ready for re-use. She then went to Ormskirk Library and was excited to find a reference to her (putative!) ancestors, "Cousin Butler and I dined at the Wheatsheaf with my Lord Derby, Sir Edward Stanley" on their way back from the horse races at Aughton Moss on 14th June 1726.



Trustees Ailsa Bennett and David Dunn examine the detailed drawings

continued on back page

Glittering 'Glitterati' reviews



The Lathom Park Trust's World Premiere 'Glitterati', written and produced by author and trust member, John Knowles exceeded all expectations, receiving glowing tributes from the press and media.

Press coverage doesn't just 'happen' - a double page spread in the Daily Express, a four page article in Lancashire Life, a full page story in the Daily Post, local coverage in the Champion and Advertiser and international coverage in the Noel Coward Society magazine.

Press Officer for the LPT Theatre Group, Madeleine Were, deserves a special mention and thanks for all her efforts and expertise.

Interest is such that demand for future events has been overwhelming and the Trust are considering how we may take this forward.

'Glitterati' is already lined up for performances around the country and the International Noel Coward Society is taking a very keen interest in the project.

There will be another chance to see John Knowles at the Lathom Heritage Weekend in September when he will be presenting an update on all the exciting events in his own inimitable style.

BOOK EARLY- 01695 585102

BOOK NOW
Lathom
Heritage Weekend
Sat 14th & Sun 15th
September
'phone Louise Wallace
01695 585102

Pilkingtons Conference Centre
2pm Saturday
& guided tours from
11am Sunday
Lathom Scout Hall
Hall Lane, Lathom,
Nr. Ormskirk

**LATHOM'S ESCALATION
OF ANCIENT BUILDING
DISCOVERIES**

Archaeologist Jamie Quartermaine

**LATHOM'S GLITTERATI
THEATRICAL INFLUENCES
THROUGH THE AGES**

Author & Playwrite John Knowles

**LATHOM'S SECRET
GARDENS REVEALED**

Archaeologist Mark Fletcher &
Horticultural Historian John Hayton

**LATHOM OPEN HOUSE
FORUM**

With our panel of experts
- an amalgam of
Gardeners Question Time,
Points of View, Any Questions
and The Antiques Roadshow

SUNDAY GUIDED TOURS

See Lathom's latest archaeological
discoveries.

Visit the Pilkington Gardens &
the beautiful 15th century
Lathom Park Chapel
Explore the renovated Lathom House
West Wing, & experience the craft
of the Stonemason.
Discover the secrets of
Lathom's Walled Garden

DISPLAYS & REFRESHMENTS

Admission is free, however a nominal
charge may be made for
access to the walled garden.
Please book in advance to avoid
disappointment.

HISTORIC
LATHOM

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE

The vernacular building survey of Lathom, undertaken as part of the Local Heritage Initiative project, has proven to be a great success. It involved the examination, at varying levels, of all the pre-twentieth century buildings within the parish of Lathom, where the owners had given permission, in order to identify the wealth of the architectural heritage in the area and also to reconstruct the history of the parish through its buildings.

The most fascinating aspect of the study is to discover the extent to which every building has developed its own unique character in terms of fabric, form and function, as the buildings have evolved to keep up with changing fashions, maintenance and the changing ways of life. The vernacular buildings group have found a rich mine of blocked doors, windows, extensions and different styles and forms of bricks enough for any buildings detective to be kept busy.

In general the buildings date from the late seventeenth century onwards, and this corresponds with the 'Great Rebuild' trend of the seventeenth century when many vernacular buildings throughout the country were rebuilt in a more durable form. The general pattern in the sectors was one of a scattered settlement pattern. This pattern changes in the northern part of the parish where it is more industrial mainly in the form of brick cottages. One of the most interesting buildings had clear evidence of successive phases of building, including a number of extensions reflected in the changing fabric of stone and brick, and the exciting discovery of a blocked mullioned window (typically of seventeenth century data)



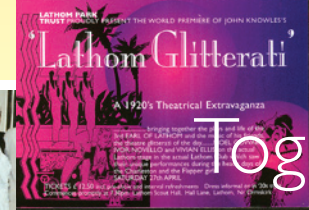
One of the many ancient building surveys being carried out by Lathom Park Trust members

Most buildings were constructed from brick, the most common brick bond was English garden wall bond, though some examples were Flemish and these were generally displayed on the front elevations where there was a definite brick hierarchy.

Most of the more substantial changes to the fabric were extensions, which often resulted in L-shaped plans which had clearly evolved over an extended period. They had a brick front elevation, but stone side elevations suggesting possibly a brick refacing of an original stone elevation.

Out-buildings such as barns, stables and wash houses seem to have survived the greater onset of 20th century changes, and still retain much of their character. A good example was found which was by far the largest barn recorded, with a long history of alterations, with large king post trusses and Flemish brick bonding on the earlier portion of the front elevation.

Our thanks must go to all the owners of the buildings, who have been very generous in their hospitality, extending from cups of tea to primary and secondary history about their buildings. All the volunteers have greatly enjoyed the experience and feel valued for their considerable contribution, and our thanks must go to all of them, especially Vicky Hodge for her almost supernatural observations and also Paul Smith for giving us constant debate and insight.



An unexpected wealth of information has arisen from the initial phase of the 'Lathom Park' survey, creating great anticipation for more discoveries in Newburgh and other peripheral areas.

...word keeps spreading ATHENS TO LATHOM



Greek archaeologist, Helen Moissi explaining her geophysical survey at the Duttons Farm site

Trust members, local volunteers and BTCV students were introduced to geophysical survey techniques when they worked alongside Greek archaeologist Helen Moissi, who had heard about the fantastic potential of the Dutton's Farm project from Ron Cowell of Liverpool University.

After living on site in a tiny caravan and working ten hours a day, Helen left with a wealth of material for the dissertation she is writing for her M.Sc in Archaeological Prospection at Bradford University.

Coming from Athens where remarkable artefacts abound, she was visibly impressed by the variety of the Lathom discoveries which span over 5,000 years.

'Geophysics are important because they can indicate where to investigate. Methods are non-intrusive and can save time and resources,' she says.

The students and volunteers assisted her with earth resistance surveys. They helped to set up a grid system and took measurements of earth resistance using instruments which probed the ground surface.

They found indications of what could be a prehistoric boundary near to where a Roman trackway has already been discovered, and another boundary near to where Romano-British and medieval pottery has been found.

MW

COLIN PILKINGTON - the man who was right

COLIN PILKINGTON, Author, Historian, Broadcaster and Teacher, passed away peacefully on the 21st of April after a short illness. Colin was a Trustee of the Lathom Park Trust and a founder member, his contribution to the historical knowledge of Lathom was immense.

He was perhaps best known for his book 'To play the man', the story of Lady Derby and the siege of Lathom House, 1643-1645. Published in 1991, his theory, particularly in relation to the siting of the original Lathom House, 'a nine towered and turreted palace - fortress' joined academic debate which had persisted for hundreds of years in trying to predict its exact location or whether indeed it was just the 'stuff of legends' and even existed at all.

Since the formation of the Trust he was able to learn and see at first hand that his long held beliefs were correct, when a team of Lathom Park Trust's archaeologists actually uncovered the foundations of the huge Medieval palace - fortress during recent excavations.

It was timely that one of Colin's rare public speaking appearances was at last year's Lathom Heritage Weekend when he eventually received the recognition that his insight and views deserved. For the many who were present at the Pilkingtons Conference Centre, it was a privilege to have witnessed his fascinating talk and presence.

Colin was born in Ormskirk and lived most of his adult life in Burscough. He taught at Ruffwood School, worked for the BBC, was a short story writer for many national publications, an expert quiz participant, appearing on BBC Mastermind and other TV quiz competitions as well as being keenly involved with the local quiz league fraternities.

Colin's lasting legacy will possibly be his (at the time contentious) book 'To play the man'. Ironically, the recent archaeological discoveries, whilst proving Colin's long held beliefs, had also re-opened publishers interest in further books and possibilities of a TV drama based on his writings. Colin Pilkington's Lathom theories proved right and will live forever. He will be greatly missed.



ARCHIVE RESEARCH GROUP PROJECT



MORE IRONAGE, MEDIEVAL & 1st WORLD WAR DISCOVERIES IN LATHOM



HELP!

Our overstretched Archive Research Group has just discovered a mass of dusty un-opened boxes of ancient Lathom documents & pictures. Please contact Steve Baldwin on 01704 893716 if you can offer a helping hand to disseminate this important find

The photograph shows soldiers from the cavalry unit tending to their horses in temporary stable buildings erected inside the park

The archive research group are currently undertaking a detailed documentary study of the putative medieval park boundaries in the township of Lathom. Information will be collected from a wide range of sources including primary and secondary archives, aerial photographs, old and modern maps and the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record. The Eighteenth century Park was investigated by archaeologists in 1999, when over 300 sites of interest were identified relating to an area of over 400 acres.

The 2002-03 study will investigate an additional 2,000 acres both to the east and west of the 1720's park in an attempt to find evidence of former deer park boundaries. Medieval parks were essentially hunting-grounds and venison farms, enclosed with a substantial earthwork bank and ditch, which was surmounted by a fence of cleft oak stakes (the park pale), a hedge or stone wall. The second stage of the project will see trained volunteers go out into the field and adjacent villages to try to find traces of these massive banks and ditches, probably now levelled by modern agriculture.

The Trust feels that it is important to identify the original park boundary in order that any archaeological features and monuments contained within it can be given the appropriate statutory designations to protect them for future understanding and enjoyment. The whole of the Eighteenth century Park is now designated a conservation area.

The Remount Depot: Soon after the 1914-18 war broke out the Third Earl of Lathom, through his trustees, offered his spacious park and Lathom House to the Government for conversion into a remount depot. In a remarkably short time, through the agency of hundreds of workmen, stables and the necessary buildings

SOCIAL EVENTS GROUP

STRAWBERRY TEA AT 'THE MEADOWS'



Yet another successful event from the Social Events group, raising valuable funds for the Trust's activities and providing an enjoyable social environment for the people of Lathom. Amanda Mercer and Jean Taylor hosted the delightful Strawberry Tea in their picturesque garden setting at 'The Meadows' in Lathom.

We thank them for all their hard work and organisation - even arranging the sun to come out precisely on time.

for the training of horses were erected. Horses came here to be trained for the army from all parts of the world, and when the Armistice was signed it was calculated that over a quarter of a million horses and mules had passed through the depot. The total complement of staff in 1919 was 27 officers and 6,688 NCO's and men.



The 1999 park survey identified very extensive and well preserved earthworks relating to the Lathom Remount Depot. These were most evident from the air and can be clearly seen as cropmarks



pic. C. Coombes

Together we made it

The resounding success of Lathom Park Trust's World Premiere of John Knowles's 'Lathom Glitterati' has created an explosion of interest from both the media and public alike, raising the Trust's profile enormously and creating demands for more. It would not have been possible without the support of the following businesses and organisations. ALAN ASHCROFT GARDEN CENTRE. LATHOM HIGH SCHOOL. FARM POWER LTD. FMS JOHN HAYTON FLORIST. DOUG ALLEN ELECTRICAL. LATHOM PARK CHAPEL. ICM MEDIA. DOUGLAS VALLEY LIONS. NOEL COWARD SOCIETY. SKELMERSDALE MASONIC LODGE. LATHOM PARK SCHOOL. ORMSKIRK & DISTRICT SCOUTS. LATHOM PARISH COUNCIL. PREMIER TURF. MAHOOD BROS. THE MEADOWS. EDGE HILL COLLEGE. STANLEY GASKELL

...and behind the scenes

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE - 12 YEARS ON

From rubbish tip to tranquillity



For years the canal bank at Lathom's Moss Bridge was just a dumping ground for everyone's rubbish. Repeated efforts to have it cleared fell on deaf ears. It was then that the community in conjunction with the Parish Council and Lathom Park Scouts took things into their own hands, clearing the site and implementing hedge and tree planting schemes. Today's landscaped sculpture trail is a lasting tribute to their twelve years of determined efforts.

THEN

ABOVE: Scout Leader, Derek Mitchell with Charles Holland and Lathom Park Scouts in 1990 start their tree and hedge planting scheme



NOW

One of Thompson Dagnall's fascinating sculptures at Moss Bridge made from old beams and lock gates

Charity
COMMISSION

Following sterling work by John Hinchliffe and Ailsa Bennett the Lathom Park Trust is now established as a Registered Charity.

The objects of the charity are to advance the education of the public in the history of Lathom Park primarily - but not exclusively, through :

- Carrying out and supporting historical and archaeological research and surveys within the Lathom Park and the dissemination of the results of such research.
- Promoting the historical and archaeological significance of Lathom Park and encouraging the identification, protection and preservation of significant sites.
- Offering and supporting training for the general public in historical research.

Whilst the reference to Lathom Park may possibly imply limitations it must be emphasised that the Medieval Park boundaries extend far beyond Lathom as we know it today.

Our initial archive researches, building surveys and excavations already indicate huge areas of West Lancashire's surrounding villages falling within the 'Lathom Park' estates

The board of Lathom Park Trustees is made up of archaeologists, historians and lay people, all with a common fascination for Lathom's rich and yet mostly undiscovered heritage.

They are: Stephen Baldwin, Ailsa Bennett, David Dunn, Peter Ferguson, Mark Fletcher, John Hinchliffe, Robert Pendleton, Jamie Quartermaine, Kenneth Vincent

LOST DRAWINGS

continued from page one

As a mark of gratitude for the current good work of the Trust, Ms Gowans decided to donate to the Trust two original 19th century pen and ink drawings of the front and back of Lathom House, which had presumably been in her family since they were drawn.

The Trust is in turn most grateful to Ms Gowans, because not only do the drawings have such an interesting provenance; but they are remarkably detailed, showing hitherto unknown features of the building and the gardens. The drawings are dated 1885 and signed G. Apps. A comprehensive search through the encyclopedia of 19th century British artists at Liverpool Central Library turned up no reference to the artist. However, an exhausting search through catalogues of art sales finally revealed that a painting by G.C. Apps, entitled 'Returning from church, Loose, Kent' had been sold at Bonhams in Chelsea in January 1995 for £800.

The Trust has decided to make a limited number of prints from the drawings and offer them for sale on a first come first served basis at the Heritage Open Day at Pilkington's Conference Centre on 14th September. This will be a good opportunity to see and purchase these unique images of the great Palladian mansion. All proceeds will go towards supporting the work of the Trust;

If anyone can throw more light on the subject we would be extremely grateful to hear from them.

SPECIAL LATHOM HERITAGE WEEKEND LIMITED OFFER



WALLED GARDEN
PROJECT GROUP

MIXING WORK
WITH PLEASURE

Come rain or shine, the Walled Garden project group's enthusiasm carries them through, but at their June meeting they enjoyed the best of all worlds - thanks to the generous hospitality of John and Elizabeth Hayton. Sunshine and a delicious 'working lunch' encouraged subject research and discussion well into the evening. The Walled Garden has created a great deal of interest and Mark Fletcher, trustee and archaeologist, who heads the project is arranging special tours during the Lathom Heritage Weekend in September. - BOOK NOW

pic. C. Coombes