



ANNUAL REPORT

2011

FOHIA

CONTENTS

Pages

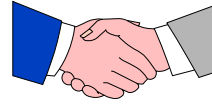
Foreword	4—5
Notice of AGM 2011	6
Agenda for AGM 2011	7
Minutes AGM	8—9
Chairman's Report 2010	12—18
Treasurer's Accounts 2010	29
Old Hall Report 2010	23—28
Friends' Gardening 2010	20—22
First Tuesday Lectures 2012	10



Dr Maureen Ille
is to give a talk
at our AGM on
The Golden
Age of Water-



Foreword



A faithful friend is a strong defence:
and he that hath
found such an one hath found a treasure.’

Ecclesiasticus 6.14 (A.V.).

Most of us know a good many people. If we are fortunate, generally they will be people with whom we get along easily and happily. They fall into the category of ‘acquaintances’ and, in various ways, they contribute to the richness of our lives. This report maps the course of our ‘friendship’ with the Old Hall during the last year. And Friendships need to be kept in ‘good repair’.

‘Real friends’ however are bound to be fewer; they constitute a rarer breed. They are those very special people on whom we can always count to stand by us in hard times as well as good. We are encouraged and sustained by their devotion and their loyalty. In this respect, communities are not so very different from individuals.

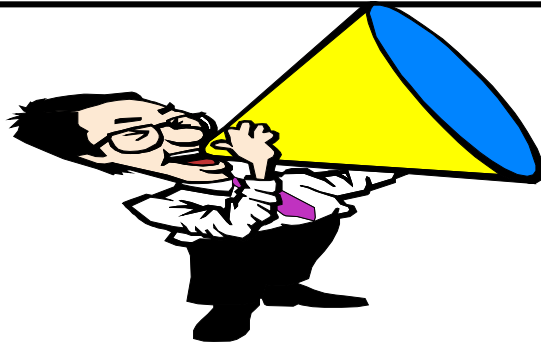
The Friends of the Old Hall is enriched by its many ‘acquaintances’; people who wish us well; who appreciate and understand what we are trying to achieve. Their support is never undervalued. Yet, we are also more than blessed in being loved by those of that rarer breed of ‘real friends’. And occasionally as in human friendships we have to take on the role of ‘critical friend’ when there are serious concerns over the future direction of the Old Hall but we do so ‘speaking the truth in love’. Neither is

our critical stance rooted solely in over exuberance and enthusiasm but after careful study and reflection.

Mike and Pat Long are Honorary members who have long enjoyed a happy association with the Old Hall .Five years ago, when Mike retired, he kindly undertook the role of Treasurer which as you can appreciate is a very demanding and exacting role. Many treasurers work anonymously behind the scenes, but not Pat and Mike. They have, and will continue to 'man' the Friends' desk at First Tuesday and the Sunderland lectures. These bare facts disguise the numerous other ways in which, for several years, they have served the Friends of the Old Hall and grateful that they intend to go on actively serving the association. At the AGM we shall be saying a huge 'thank you' to Mike on his retirement as Treasurer because he has worked tirelessly within the team [and he is by no means alone]. By theirs and your 'friendship' for the Old Hall, we are given fresh heart and renewed vigour.

PDJ Howitt-Cowan
Chairman





The Hon Secretary David Willey
hereby gives notice,

that the

62nd Annual General Meeting

of the

Friends of the Old Hall Association

is to be convened at the

Gainsborough Old Hall

Thursday 10th of November 2011

7.30pm

**After business The Friends Ladies Group
will serve refreshments, after which Dr
Maureen Ille will give a talk on;
"The Golden Age of Watercolours".**



Agenda

Welcome by Sir Nicholas Bacon President
Chair for the A.G.M.

- 1/ Apologies.
- 2/ Minutes of the AGM
held on Thursday November 11th 2010
- 3/ Chairman's Report.
- 4/ Treasurer's Report.
- 5/ Friends' Gardening Group Report.
- 6/ First Tuesday Lecture Report.
- 7/ Report from The Old Hall.

- 8/ Election of Officers:**
- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Proposed officers:- | |
| PRESIDENT | Sir Nicholas Bacon Bt; |
| VICE- PRESIDENT | Mr Neil Taylor |
| CHAIRMAN | Mr Paul DJ Howitt-Cowan |
| VICE CHAIRMAN | Miss Sue Ritchie |
| TREASURER | Mr Chris Shelton |
| SECRETARY | Mr David Willey |

9/ Election of Committee the following have put their names forward for re-election/election:-

Mike Long, Andrew Jefferson, Margaret Carter, Gwynedd Finley,
Bruce Linegar, Pat Long, Eddy Scaresbrook, Chris Shelton,
Catherine Wilson OBE, Nigel Ashley.

Retiring Committee Member/s:

Sue Allan, Roger Vorhauger.

- 10/ Election of Honorary Officers:**
- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Solicitor : | Mr Ryan Morgan |
| Honorary Auditor: | Wright Vigar |

11th AOB

**The Minutes of the 61st AGM of
the FOHA
held at
The Gainsborough Old Hall
Thursday 11th November 2010**

Our Vice President Neil Taylor, welcomed everyone. Our President Sir Nicholas Bacon sends his apologies. Neil will chair the AGM.

At the outset, the AGM was advertised in the report for 18th November 2010 which was an error. The AGM was rescheduled for 11th November and the Committee apologise for any inconvenience caused.

1/ Apologies: Sir Nicholas Bacon; David Willey; Mrs M Grieve; Mr & Mrs Sharp; Mr & Mrs Vorhauer; Mr & Mrs Sid Pearson; Miss Peart; Mr Nigel Ashley; Mrs D Hancock; Mr W Parry; Mr & Mrs J Baird; Mrs Janet Simpson; Mrs A Boot; Mr B Linegar; Mr & Mrs Fanthorpe.

2/ Minutes: The minutes of the last AGM were taken as read. They were accepted as a true record: Proposed: Mrs M Carter Seconded: Pat Long.

REPORTS

3/ Chairman's: (pages 12-18) Prop': Bob Fotheringham. Sec': Mrs Edlington.

4/ Treasurers: (page 29) Prop': Margaret Carter. Sec': Eddy Scaresbrook.

5/ Gardening : (pages 20-22) Prop': Chris Shelton Sec': Sue Ritchie.

6/ First Tues Lectures: Accepted, a successful years events.

7/ Old Hall: (pages 23-28) Prop': Neil Taylor. Sec': Paul Howitt-Cowan

The Election of Officers took place as follows, during which any other nominations were called for:

8/ Election of OFFICERS:

President: Sir Nicholas Bacon *in absentia* Proposed: Neil Taylor Seconded: Catherine Wilson.

Vice President: Neil Taylor Proposed: Paul Howitt Cowan Sec': Sue Edlington.

Chairman: Paul Howitt Cowan Proposed: Mike Long Sec': Bob Fotheringham.

Treasurer: Mike Long Proposed: Joy Wood Seconded: Claire Shelton

Secretary: David Willey Proposed: Margaret Carter Seconded: Pat Long

9/Election of the Committee:

Any nominations were called for new Committee Members.
the election took place en-block as follows:-

Margaret Carter; Gwynedd Finley; Pat Long; Sue Allan; Bruce Linegar; Eddy Scaresbrook; Chris Shelton; Roger Vorhauger; Andrew Jefferson.

Proposed: Bob Fotheringham. Seconded: Mr M Carter.
ALL agreed.

The meeting expressed its appreciation to its retiring Honorary Solicitor, Mr Peter Vickers who has acted in that capacity since 1988. He is succeeded by his colleague at Hayes Son & Richmond, Mr Ryan Morgan. Mrs Helen Hancock has also stepped down after many years service, Wright Vigar is to undertake the responsibility for 2011.

Mr Nigel Ashley has come forward to act as IT Co-ordinator in succession to Mr Peter Lamsden, who stood down for personal reasons.

10/ Appointment Honorary Officers:

Honorary Solicitor: Mr Ryan Morgan.

Proposed: Eddie Scaresbrook. Seconded: Pat Long

Honorary Auditor: Wright Vigar

Proposed: Mike Long. Seconded: Sue Ritchie.

11/ AOB:

11a/ A letter of appreciation was asked to be sent to Bob Wise, Peter Vickers and Helen Hancock.

There being no other business the AGM was closed at 8.20pm.
Refreshments were served by the Friends Ladies Group.



First Tuesday Lectures 2012

DATE	TITLE	SPEAKER
Jan	No Meeting	
7 Feb	Tales The Dean's Verger @ Gainsborough House	John Campbell
6 March	Life in the RAF @ Gainsborough House	Chris Dean
3 April	Arabella Stuart: The Queen that Never Was	David Temple man
1 May	The Life & Times of Queen Mary	Marilyn Roberts
5 June	Iron in the Blood - the life of a Blacksmith	Bob Oates
3 July	Kill E'm or Cure Em! – Lincoln- shire's dubious remedies	Rod Fanthorpe
7 Au- gust	Amusing Tales from Behind Classroom Walls	Pauline Wilson
4 Sep- tember	Scintillating Leaves of the Tree of Life	Veronica Eden
2 Octo- ber	Always wanted to go but never managed - Sicily	Ray Goodburn
6 No- vember	New Light on Edward & Mrs Simpson	John Whitfield
4 De- cember	Variety, Nature, Xmas.	Pat Harding
Janu- ary 2013	No Meeting	

“Email Alert”



I already have over 95 members who are receiving Newsletters and other information by Email. This is a considerable saving in cost alone with four mailings a year, in the use of envelopes, labels, postage stamps and the cost of printing. Please Email me if you can help reduce overheads on:

davidwilley42@hotmail.com

David Willey
Hon' Sec.



Chairman's Report

Mr Chairman, Dr Ille, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to warmly welcome you to the 61st Annual General Meeting of the Association.

On your behalf may I extend appreciation to our retiring Solicitor, Mr Peter Vickers for his work & support, who in return, extends his best wishes to the membership. Mrs Helen Hancock, who has been our auditor for many years also retires after faithful service and we thank her for her diligent work and support.

May I also extend good wishes to the following members whom we hold in our thoughts and prayers at this time;

Mrs Thelma Pearson, Margaret Baird & Mr Michael Pickles.



2011 offers a great cocktail of events, which I hope the membership and the public will support enthusiastically.

The First Tuesday Lecture programme is already published on page 10 of the 2010 report, in addition to which, there are three confirmed Sunderland lectures and a possible fourth.

The Annual Outing will be to Oxburgh Hall and Raveningham Hall in Norfolk. The date to be confirmed. The Away break will be to Kent on the 11/12 of August calling at Chartwell, the former home of Sir Winston Churchill, and staying over night in Maidstone and visiting Penshurst Place the following day.

As with possibly many of you, I have been seduced by the TV series 'Downton Abbey'. It opened you may recall, with Lord Grantham who has lost his immediate heir in the Titanic disaster of 1912 and a distant cousin, far removed from inheritance, is now catapulted to centre stage, his name is, Matthew Crawley, a solicitor from Manchester. He stands to inherit the title and with it a huge pile with an estate in the country. In part two both Lord Grantham and Matthew take a walk in the grounds of Downton Abbey and Matthew stops to look at the view of the great house and Lord Grantham asks Matthew, who looks daunted by his future course; "What do you see? bricks and debt, for when I see that house I see my life's work".

Here is a paradigm, because when I see the Old Hall, I see the life work of a 61 year old association, whose heart beats as good as the day it was born in 1949, full of energy and vision, pulsating with ideas which would further enhance the Old Hall within the context of its remit. Moreover, the Association is not averse to constructive 'change' if the argument stacks up because the membership has the goodwill of the Old Hall very much at its heart. And the association remains deeply local, and committed to supporting this building as a Community Resource. It has little to learn from the 'Big Society' being advocated by the present Administration but welcoming of the impetus it will give to rejuvenating the jaded voluntary sector.

The Partnership meetings of the Old Hall, which have entered into

their fourth year are coming to ahead, with a way forward in 2012 Fundamentally, the options on the table reflect the Planning Application of 1999/2000 but with some interesting twists and turns.

The Old Hall has finally woke up from its slumbers and realised that it has to 'up its game' by raising far more revenue than it currently does. The Old Hall's income realised £150, 818.16 including the English Heritage grant. Last year, its expenses realised £247, 625 05 and that may not reflect its true position, there could be another 7k that is not factored in. The deficit may represent at a conservative estimate of £104k.

To compound the problem further, in 2009, English Heritage reduced its grant from £53, 315.00 to £39, 210.55 - a shortfall of 14k and no doubt there will be possible further reductions in the future which means, that English Heritage may no longer be depended upon to give more. The deficit is therefore fast approaching 120k and that is no mean sum to find in these straightened times for a small heritage site English Heritage has said that when the Old Hall begins to make 'money', it will then reduce its grant proportionately.

One of the key drivers for change or is it regress, is financial, however, what militates against proposed changes at the Old Hall are several factors ;

The Culture – the Old Hall is a county council managed property which wil prove challenging to run as a business as it demands a totally different mindset. The current management cannot run it successfully now, so what are the chances of the same team delivering in the future! A small example is when Dr Linda Porter came to talk about Katherine Parr, she was not best pleased when the member of staff she spoke to had no knowledge of Katherine Parr's association with the Old Hall. All staff, regular and panel should never be allowed to work here until sufficiently briefed, because failure by staff to know fundamental knowledge gives a negative impression to the visitor which was not lost on Dr Linda Porter. Staff development may have been helped by attendance at Dr Porter's excellent lecture!

The Logistics – in order to raise the stakes and promote civil ceremonies/ partnerships the staff of the Old Hall will have to deliver an exacting professional service. Staff may have to spend much more time removing furniture, setting up and restoring spaces for various uses on a greater scale than hitherto.

Franchising the tea shop –who would want to take on an outlet that struggled to make in 2009, £22, 171.53p and with take away costs of £8,336.73, left with £13, 834.80, which is £266.05p per week . That is the floor level on which to build but there are factors mitigating against such an enterprise. Initially the franchise is worth next to nothing towards offsetting the deficit. A franchise is worth pursuing if it has customers to begin with. If for instance the Old Hall had visitors of 100, 000 plus, outlets, such as Costa Coffee, would pay a handsomely for the franchise to provide catering

here. The Visitor numbers are not forthcoming to attract such a private undertaking and reliance on 'passing trade' has not been quantified.' The Collections' at Lincoln failed to make a success of franchising its cafe.

Further to that, the modern kitchen, originally due for a refit, has not materialised. Management changed direction and abandoned plans to invest 15k in the kitchen thereby reducing its viability and potential for extended corporate hospitality. Does that make business sense? - good business acumen speculates to make! The Friends' have an interest in the modern kitchen in that it was their creation in the 1970's and they have continued to contribute to towards its improvement.

There is a further idea of moving the gift shop over to the East Range locating it into the area which is now occupied by the tea shop. This will result in a much reduced sized gift shop because respect has to be shown to the west wall which displays remnants of the wall painting and furthermore, to a much welcomed wall painting exhibition. The gift shop will therefore be intrusive in that space competing with the wall painting. But will the micro gift shop yield the returns anticipated!

There is a further proposition to locate the school children on the ground floor of the West Range currently occupied by the gift shop. This space will be licensed for civil and partnership ceremonies. My concern is that changes will not have a negative impact on the schools The school children provide 50% in both admissions and gift shop takings and therefore they are significant patrons.

I have concern for the inadequate heating within this space and for the distance from the toilets & kitchen facilities.

it will restrict public access to appreciate the archaeological features within that space whilst school children are in the building aesthetically that space is not suitable for civil ceremonies, especially when you consider the Long Gallery at Doddington Hall used for such ceremonies.

Moreover and significantly, it challenges the existing visitor route which is the best fix for the interpretation of the building as a medieval manor house.

These changes will impact significantly upon the current layout of the Old Hall but *will they bring in that desperately needed revenue to bridge the ever widening gap between expenditure and income*, I cannot possibly know that, however, there are several factors that challenge wild optimism,

There are too many food and catering outlets in Gainsborough which are in direct competition

The economic down turn will impact on families and possibly school budgets long term.

No feasibility studies have been done to ascertain the success of this enterprise. It is a stab in the dark!

Visitors are not clamouring for these changes and there is no evidence to support these changes. It is being imposed by management &. I remain suspicious of projects that are not evidence based.

The new revenue streams will take time to bed in and accrue financial returns, it will not be immediate – there is no quick fix.

More significantly, the proposed changes ignore the Old Hall's basic problem of Marketing and Promotion, such as leaflets out on time, a far better website etc The Old Hall needs far more paying visitors which is on the 'downturn'.

There are areas in the Old Hall requiring urgent investment such as the Upper Great Chamber and where is the money coming from for such investment?

Neither am I totally convinced that the Lower Great Chamber will accommodate the numbers we welcome to our lectures which can be between 87 to 120 people.

You are left wondering if LCC is going to be in the situation of 'throwing good money after bad'. It will definitely be their last gamble to correct the financial position of the Old Hall.

We are now facing an unprecedented time of austerity in living memory. Lincolnshire County Council is cutting back considerably, Church Farm Skegness and the two museums of Grantham and Stamford are apparently to go. This is challenging and I guess that these sites will in time flourish better without LCC .The Old Hall is vulnerable financially and much of that responsibility is directed at it's management. If the Old Hall had acted on the advice proffered by this association 11 years ago, to register for civil ceremonies and had stepped up corporate hospitality etc the Old Hall would have been in a much better financial situation to ride the present economic storm, which will gather momentum in 2011 and well beyond.

The key word is 'sustainability' and the Old Hall needs to be sustainable, be on sounder footings, in order for it to pay its way. In the time that the Old Hall has significantly slipped one historic property, namely Doddington Hall, has surpassed all expectations. Doddington had stood in time for many years however it has recently experienced a change in its fortunes. Doddington cannot rely on the tax payer to survive , it's a private business, having constantly to be open to exploring various avenues in order to be sustainable to survive. And money alone will not ensure its survival, it needs innovative ideas and, projects that will attract the visitors to come to Doddington, enabling that 17c pile to remain in the Jarvis family for many decades to come.

The 2009 financial returns for the Old Hall make interesting reading; Admissions accounted for £48, 094.59 nearly 50% of which were from the 7, 525 school children who pay £3.20 each & if every child spends on average

£3 in the gift shop that too raises over 50% of its takings. To be too dependent upon schools is an unhealthy position to be in.

Visitor Figures:

The Visitor Figures for 2009 in comparison with 2008 show a marked decline in the Paying Visitors.

In 2009, there were 9,119 paying visitors to the Old Hall whereas in 2008 there were 10,084, a decline of 965 paying visitors, if those were adults @ 4.10p that would equal a loss of almost 4k income, besides the potential income in the tea shop and gift shop! And the problem is further compounded by the fact, that despite the fall of almost 1,000 paying visitors in 2009, the Old Hall spent 33.5k more on staffing, than in the previous year! Doddington Hall could not operate on this scale and neither should the Old Hall.

The Visitor Figures from April to October 2009 reveal 7,454 Paying Visitors and for same period this year there were 6,932, a difference of 520 and there are another five months to go before the end of the fiscal year. 520 adult paying visitors equates to £2,600 loss of income, which the Old Hall cannot afford to lose. It is made worse by the fact that nationally there has been a 3% upturn in visitors to museums, art galleries and historic properties which has not been experienced by the Old Hall. Neither can I make sense of including the virtual visitor to the Old Hall's website in the total calculations they release. The Old Hall wants for physical visitors not virtual visitors!

And at the same period last year, there were 4,302 schoolchildren to 4,008 this year a difference of 294, which equates to almost 1k loss of revenue, and that with loss of paying visitors, its almost 4k lost income!

There is a widening imbalance in the Paying sector to the non paying, for example 2009/10 there were 20,955 non paying visitors to 9119 paying visitors and the Old Hall has got to work harder to get more paying visitors into the Old Hall. The lesson is obvious, far greater marketing and promotion of the Old Hall to attract the paying visitors, that is where the 'bread and butter' is to be realised.

The Friends' were hugely disappointed that the admission charges for this year increased in excess of inflation.

Moreover, the hiring charges for the Old Hall doubled by introducing a 'staff surcharge' for the week days and week ends which conflicts with the recommendation made in the Conservation Plan of 2004. Small income groups are unable to afford these charges which almost makes the Old Hall a 'no go' venue for local Community groups to hire. Even The Friends' would struggle to meet these charges for the use of the Old Hall. This should be a Community Resource. However it is fast becoming inaccessible to the Community and members of the public to hire when faced with these charges of £60 an hour and more at the weekend. The Old Hall continues to out price itself out of the letting market, which is a retrograde step.

Guiding

Since The Friends' was formed it has offered a free guiding service for parties to the Old Hall. The Friends have maintained a team of guides, who are a rich resource to be harnessed and treasured. However, developments of late give rise for concern. The Old Hall has had a campaign to recruit guides

who will be put into costume and to all intents and purposes the traditional guide in civvies will be surplus to requirements. The Old Hall has had no prior discussions with The Friends – it has extended an invitation to members to join the costume guides, but consultation is only courtesy. I believe that there is room for both the traditional guide and the costume guide.

Costume guides have their place, but oh how 'twee'! everyone is doing it and what the public likes is individuality, making a historic property different from the rest. The Old Hall, as in many things, is a 'Johnny come lately' fashions and trends come and go!

The Friends' are members of the Interpretation of the Old Hall group. It has not met since March of this year, [that's seven months ago] and there are developments at the Old Hall which are being pursued without reference to this group challenging the integrity of the project. And fundamental to the Interpretation of the Old Hall with the unanimous agreement at its first meeting, was that the building is primarily a Medieval Manor House.

According to Peter Brears, the current interpretation of the Medieval Kitchen is completely incorrect and the Old Hall has known this since 2003. The publication of his book, *Cooking and Dining in Medieval England*, in 2008, has further expanded upon his notes which he submitted to the Old Hall. Visitors who have read this excellent book will be completely confused that the Kitchen reflects a Kitchen that makes little sense whatsoever. The Old Hall has a responsibility to accommodate findings in research more positively and at a greater speed than this.

What is at stake is the very future of the Old Hall. And any consideration of that future starts with what Alexander Pope called consulting, 'the Genius of Place'. And these proposed changes threaten the very 'product', that of the medieval manor house.

The Old Hall is key to the success in marketing, it is what they call the USP - Unique Selling Proposition - the 'genius of place'. And often that uniqueness is obscured by a veneer of standard interpretation boards, text panels, costumed interpreters, audios, pda's replica objects and furnishings, scale models, gift shop and tea shop. And what is lost in all this is the 'uniqueness' of the building itself, which dictates what you can and cannot do.

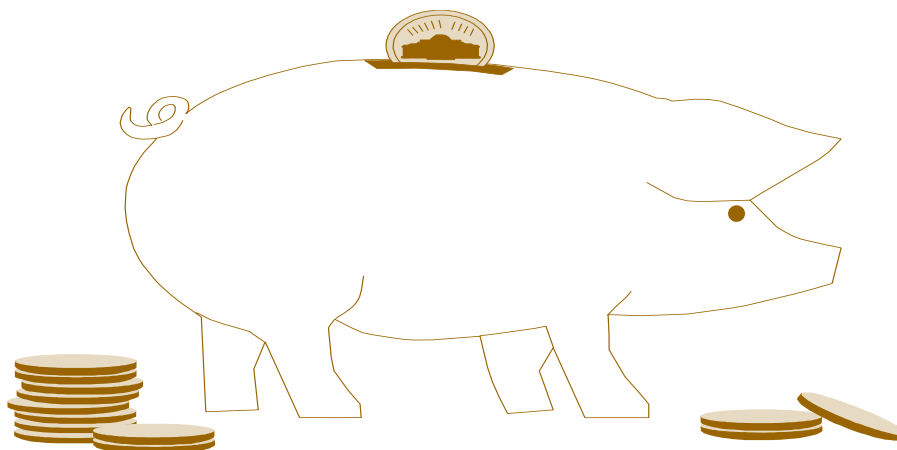
If we are not careful, we may be guilty of 'industrial espionage'. We must resist the temptation to borrow too many ideas from other heritage sites, to use solutions that worked well elsewhere. We must invent our own, drawing primary inspiration from the Old Hall and its localism. That is the challenge, to be 'best in heritage' means learning to be different from other sites and interestingly, many visitors enjoy the Old Hall because it is different, that USP is now endangered. Let us beware of monoculture, its a threat nationally and globally to individuality and creativity'; It's mediocrity a 'dumbing down' and the Old Hall deserves far better than this.

I commend this report to the membership.

Paul Howitt-Cowan Chairman.



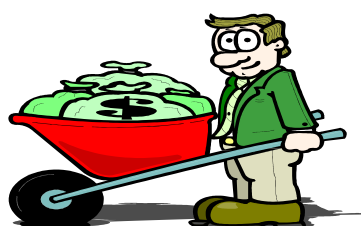
Gardening Group



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David Hon' Sec'

FRIENDS OF THE OLD HALL GARDENING GROUP
Annual report 2009

In spite of long frosty spells last Winter and some periods of drought in the Spring, most plants have performed well this



year. A few plants flowered later than usual and were shorter in height but that just meant that fewer supports were needed. The Woad and Weld growing in the Tower border have done particularly well. They yield a blue dye and yellow dye respectively, which when combined produce the colour known as Lincoln Green.



There are too many plants to mention individually which look spectacular at different times throughout the season so it would be

better if you could visit the garden as often as you can

to appreciate them.

Many visitors to the Hall admire the sight of the garden but also ask questions about the herbs which they can smell, and want to know what they would have been used for in past centuries. We can usually supply some answers to satisfy their curiosity.



We had an enquiry this Summer from a “Real Ale” enthusiast about any

herbs in the garden which he might be able to use in making an experimental brew. We were happy to oblige with some Costmary (also known as Alecost) which has been used to clear, preserve and flavour ale for hun-



dreds of years. We haven't heard yet if it produced a drinkable product!

All the fruit trees have had bumper crops this year, including mulber-

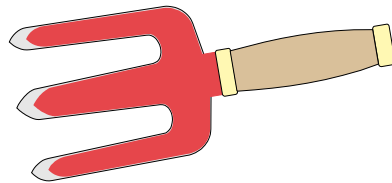


ries, medlars, apples, crabapples, cherries and plums. The large walnut tree on the North side is now dropping its abundant crop.

Thankfully, there has not been much vandal-

ism this year so we hope that trend will continue.

We are desperately in need of new helpers to learn how to carry out the work when we become too old and decrepit to do the job (and that time could be quite soon!) We usually garden on Wednesday afternoons, about 2 to 4 pm., throughout the year. Whether you are an experienced gardener or a beginner we would appreciate your help, be it occasionally or on a regular basis. Just contact Joy Woods (01427 615367) or Margaret Carter (01427 612671).





Gainsborough Old Hall
Site Co-ordinator's Report for FOHA AGM Nov 11th 2010

Once again there has been a busy programme of events throughout the year here at the Hall, beginning with the **Christmas Craft Fair Nov 2009**. Unfortunately the weekend was marred by bad weather, with torrential rain as the stallholders were arriving. Visitor numbers were down on the previous year, but visitor and stall holder satisfaction with the event was high. The Craft Fair was the first opportunity for the catering staff to benefit from the industrial dishwasher which was kindly purchased for the Hall by FOHA. I can report that this machine has given good service throughout the year and has been appreciated both by staff and by other users of the Hall and its facilities.

The **Thank You Party** on the 11th of December was well attended, giving the opportunity for our supporters and friends to meet and socialise as we celebrate the festive time of year.

Lord Burgh's Retinue came to remind us of how our customs have developed through the centuries with their **Medieval Christmas** on December 12th.

The Hall was closed for a two week period over the Christmas break. During this period flooring repairs were undertaken in both the East and West Wing (where Death Watch Beetle had been discovered) and new carpet was laid in the East Wing Corridor.

Our 2010 events began in March with the **Discover Greater Lincolnshire Weekend**; this was a very successful event for us with over 400 visitors taking advantage of the free entry and free guided tours on offer. Our events leaflet for 2010 was also available.

The **Easter Family Fun Weekend** was run in conjunction with the Library Service. The 'hemed book was the 'Gruffalo' and 'monstrous' activities led by the Community Engagement Team were on offer to all.

St Georges Day in April was marked by Lord Burgh's Retinue giving Archery Displays on the North Lawn; these were appreciated both by our own visitors and children from the local primary school, who came to watch the demonstrations.

We offered free costume guided tours to our visitors on both of the **May Bank Holidays**, Sue Allen was excellent as Lady Rose Hickman, enchanting and terrifying her tour groups with tales of her years as owner of the Hall.

The **Hickman Bacon Classic Car Rally** was run on the 15th May, this year in conjunction with a **Mini Craft Fair and Plant Sale**. We do thank the Friends' Gardeners for their help and support with this event.

This year's **Riverside Festival** in June had an environmental theme of 'Water Wind and Willow'. In partnership with the Riverside Festival Committee, the Hall was transformed into 'Toad Hall' for the day and open free of charge to visitors. The **Dressed to Impress Exhibition** came to a close in the West Wing, although the costume is on display in the Solar and East Wing of the Hall,

The **Summer Exhibition** this year was provided by the Morton Art Group, the art on show was to a very high standard and was greatly appreciated by our visitors.

Other summer events included **Tales from the Dark Side** a theatrical performance of spine-chilling tales, magic and illusion.

August began with **Children's Activity Workshops**; this year's theme was the Medieval Age. This led into the **Under Siege** Living History event with Lord Burgh's Retinue recreating the attack by Lord Welles and his men on the Manor House.

Gainsborough Old Hall was present at the **Lark in the Park** event at Richmond Park, raising awareness of the Hall and its activities to local people.

Another successful **Mini Craft Fair** was held, with free entrance for visitors to the fair. The **August Bank Holiday** offer was free costume guided tours for visitors.

September's Heritage Weekend 'Lincolnshire at War' saw the Hall once again under Military control as Allied Forces Movement Control requisitioned the Lower Great Chamber and surrounding areas for classified war work. This part of the building was transported back to WWII, Visitors and Staff experienced air raids and were informed about the Midget Submarine - worked on in secret at Gainsborough Marshalls' Engineering Works. The Home Guard and WRVS were also in attendance.

Lord Burgh's Retinue were also in attendance with a display of Medieval Arms in the Great Hall.

The **Murder Mystery Evening** ran over two nights, with over 100 detectives arriving at the Hall to solve this year's dastardly crime.

Gainsborough's Octoberfest was celebrated at the Hall with themed food in the Tearoom on **Lincolnshire Day** and the Lincolnshire Flag was flying from the Tower. The 2nd **Gainsborough Beer Festival** was held in the Great Hall from the 14th 16th October. Gainsborough Folk Club held the majority of their **Folk Festival** events here in the Lower Great Chamber on the Friday and Saturday. The Medieval Kitchen was also in use with a log fire burning in the grate. These events brought people from far and wide to the Hall and Town.

Use Your Loaf was a new event this year, run in conjunction with the Social Justice Action Group. A chance to have your apples identified and juiced, Explore Organic and Fairtrade food and clothing, and find out about alternative energy sources. This was a wonderful day with support from a vast range of groups and individuals.

The final event of the month was the **Hogwarts Hog Roast for All Hallow's Eve**, This featured two sittings of Hog, the earlier one aimed at families and the later one at adults. This event was managed by the Community Engagement Team.

In addition to these events we have continued to have a fully booked schools program, coach and group tours, private hire of the building for Events, Wedding Reception's, Parties and Ghost Nights.

We have had some changes to the Staff over the past year, Victoria Mason returned from Maternity Leave but Gill Fraser left the service in March, her duties are now undertaken by Mike Cavanagh. Rick Berry left the Hall to take up a post with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (although he is a signed up volunteer). In August, Victoria Mason and Joan Smithson began a job share of the Site Co-ordinator Post with Victoria working for three days a week as SCO. Joan continues in her CSA post on these days.

Latest figures show that our performance was 14% ahead of our target for Quarter 1 of this year (April – June 2010) and ahead by 7% by the end of Quarter 2 (July – September)

The **Interpretation and Partnership Groups** have continued to meet to plan the future development of the Hall with emphasis on how the spaces could be used for maximum visitor benefit and income generation. Other ongoing works include the replacement of the **Fire Alarm System** and the **CCTV Cameras**. Maintenance and repairs to the fabric of the building continue and the site is regularly reviewed by building personnel. Work to repair and replace lead on the roof is imminent. Unfortunately the high price of scrap metal makes the Hall vulnerable, the copper lightening conductors being a prime target for thieves recently.

The visitor offer has been enhanced by the production on site of an orientation leaflet; this is appreciated as it includes a map of the site marked with the visitor facilities and Audio Guide points.

The Collections Team have been responsible for the movement of stored objects at the Hall to purpose built storage at the Archives in Lincoln. The Bacon Family have also taken some objects back for their own use or for repair, under the terms of the loan agreement. This work means that eventually the storerooms here at the Hall will be available for alternative use.

The Volunteer Historical Costume Project is progressing well; fabric has now been purchased, and garment making will commence shortly. A Volunteer Co-ordinator is soon to be appointed to oversee activities both here and at the Castle. If anyone would like more information about the sewing project or training as a room guide please contact the Hall.

Another ongoing project in 'Access All Areas' this is the development of a film to be shown via a DVD to allow visitors to see the upstairs of the House. Although primarily for visitors who have mobility issues, it will have mass appeal, as it takes the viewer on a tour through the history of the Hall. This project was developed with the assistance of the Interpretation Group.

2010 Renaissance East Midland Awards.

Gainsborough Old Hall was voted 2nd out of 19 entries in the 'Peoples Choice Awards'. Thanks to everyone who voted for us on paper and online. (Church Farm at Skegness were the winners)

Looking Ahead

The full effects of the Government spending review are still to be realised, but it is without doubt that the nation and local authorities face a very financially challenging and uncertain future. Locally however, we will continue our work with FOHA and our other partners to improve services, attract visitors to the Old Hall and raise its status as a national treasure.

We continue to work towards agreeing a visitor route around the building, when resolved this will allow development of a family trail and publication of a revised Guidebook for the Hall.

Work to de-clutter and rationalise staff and storage areas continues.

Work on the development of a KS3 educational program is continuing.

Links with other heritage attractions in the area continue to be developed, and the Old Hall's place as a prime attraction in West Lindsey and surrounding areas established.



THE FRIENDS OF THE OLD HALL ASSOCIATION
Accounts for the year 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010

2008/09	INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£	2008/09
2,231.00	Subscriptions	2,641.00	Lecture fees	502.00	371.00
1,177.67	Lecture proceeds	1,327.10	BAFM Insurance and subscription	226.00	228.00
27.15	Donations	238.50	Raffle prizes	189.57	129.78
95.87	FOHA Collection box	158.28	Telephone, post & stat	618.70	590.59
1,032.00	Raffle proceeds	1,179.00	Printing newsletters & notices	775.20	515.55
338.00	FOHA Christmas cards	294.00	Christmas cards		461.78
696.85	Publication sales	504.00	Gardening Guide/Publications		112.96
	Commercial books	494.64	Commercial books	373.47	
80.00	Guided tours	65.00	Refreshments	48.35	41.20
2,952.00	Tom Sunderland lectures	3,096.00	Tom Sunderland lectures	1,638.32	693.20
1,117.88	National savings interest	188.54	AGM speaker		30.00
0.00	Deposit account interest		Equipment for lectures	10.40	408.00
2.25	Gardening Group (net income)	29.20	Power point equipment		1,084.97
2,096.00	Jubilee Dinner		Jubilee Dinner		2,303.85
392.50	Lincoln Cath Choir		Lincoln Cath Choir		352.50
924.00	Rockingham Trip		Rockingham Trip		824.80
5,862.00	Hampton Court Trip		Hampton Court Trip		5,267.00
405.00	Liverpool trip		Liverpool Trip		480.00
344.50	Desert Island Discs		Pilgrim Fathers CD exps		25.00
	Blenheim and Windsor	6,200.50	Blenheim and Windsor	5,865.50	
	Haddon Hall	854.05	Haddon Hall	766.75	
			Henry V111 female model		890.00
			Old Hall Flagpole	395.00	
			Old Hall Dishwasher	2,491.50	
			Website	65.00	65.00
			Auditors remuneration	60.00	60.00
			Bishops Discretionary fund		160.00
			Excess of income over expenditure	3,244.05	3,791.29
18,874.47		17,269.81		17,269.81	18,874.47

STATEMENT OF ASSETS

As at 31 July 2009:	£	Represented by:	£
Current account	7,404.81	Current account	6,606.31
National Savings account	32,668.35	National Savings account	36,856.89
Stationery float		Gardening Group fund	158.45
Gardening Group fund	129.25		
Income in advance	(574.85)	Income in advance:	
Excess of income over expenditure	3,244.05	Annual outing	(750.24)
	42,871.41		42,871.41

I have examined the records of the Friends of the Old Hall Association and I certify them as being true and correct from the information supplied to me.

Mrs H Hancock
Honorary Auditor

CONTACTS



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