



Friends of Hylands House

NEWSLETTER

June 2024



<http://www.friendsofhylandshouse.co.uk>

FRIENDS OF HYLANDS HOUSE

Reg. Charity No. 1059969

President: LORD PETRE

**Vice-Presidents: Glenda Hicks, Paul Hutchinson, Stuart Mole,
Richard Oscroft, David Thomson and Linda Knock**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Chairman:** **CHRIS RYCROFT**
35 Canford Close, Chelmsford CM2 9RG
Tel. 01245 473047; email: c.rycroft123@btinternet.com
- Vice Chairman:** **NICK WICKENDEN**
158 Maldon Road, Colchester CO3 3AY
Tel. 07856 753272 email: nickwickenden158@gmail.com
- Treasurer:** **ROS COLERIDGE**
41 Long Brandocks, Writtle CM1 3LS
Tel. 01245 421677; email: coleridgehouse@msn.com
- Secretary:** Vacant
- Membership** **ALAN MAYO**
11 Loves Walk, Writtle Chelmsford CM1 3JF
Tel 07979 540053
- Bookshop Manager:** **STAN KALUZA** 01245 256765;
email: stankaluza@blueyonder.co.uk
- Staffing:** **CYNTHIA WALKER** 01245 474781;
email: cjwalker2010@googlemail.com
Bookshop Tel No.: 01245 605509
- Newsletter Compilers:** **BERRY CORNELL** 01277 355823
CYNTHIA WALKER as above

Ann Bell, Val Chiswell, Richard Oscroft

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RATES

Adult: £18; Joint adult £34; Concessions: Single £13; Joint £24

*Existing members – you can change your payment to a Direct Debit on the new website at any time **but don't forget to cancel your existing Standing Order.** Payment will be collected on 1st March each year and if you have given your consent, we will claim Gift Aid.*

www.friendsofhylandshouse.co.uk

“The object of the Friends shall be the preservation and improvement of the listed building – Hylands House, Chelmsford – together with the associated park, for the benefit of the public, and the promotion of its use by the public, through the activities of a group of Friends.” – an extract from the Constitution.

Chairman's Annual Report to the Annual General Meeting 2024

Lord Petre, President, Vice presidents and Friends of Hylands House.

At our AGM last year I reported that we had completed the restoration of the Hanbury Memorial Garden at a total cost, over three years of £68,700. I also mentioned that we were, with the City Council, looking for our next new development project. Several possibilities had been mentioned including the Flint Cottage, the walled Kitchen Garden, the Orangery and the Ice House. All would need to be carefully researched with today's regulations much in mind. We commissioned a drone survey which was helpful in revealing the location of the soakaway ponds of the Ice House more definitively. More excitingly, some further excavation work by Stan Kaluza and Nick Wickenden revealed cast iron beams which had been used to support an extension to the building. Following a visit to the ruins by an Engineering Historian and Industrial Archaeologist in late January it was confirmed that the beams could be ascribed as being produced by a civil engineer, Thomas Tredgold in 1820. He was the nephew of the architect, William Atkison who was employed by Pierre Labouchere to build the new west wing at Hylands from scratch. The Engineering Historian comments in his report that "hardly any structures nationally have hitherto been identified as Tredgold's own work, so these are a remarkable discovery." This confirms, seemingly beyond doubt, that the Ice House was in existence well before Humphrey Repton redesigned the landscape at Hylands. At their meeting in March your Committee agreed, subject to obtaining approval from the City Council, to proceed with some restoration of the Ice House ruin: just how much will depend on the likelihood of lottery funding being available. Work is likely to be phased over a number of years.

Pleasingly during 2023 our income from membership subscriptions, donations, gift aid and interest have, after allowing for exceptional items in 2022, in total increased.

Regarding membership, I am delighted that Alan Mayo stepped forward and having had a briefing from Edd Price (who has been so supportive of the Friends in so many ways), agreed to take on the role of Membership Secretary. Overall our membership now stands at 386. More or less the same as last year; of the 22 new members this year two have joined as life members. I am

really pleased to report that several of our new members have joined our Bookshop team. Well done Alan on getting on with your new role so effectively. Whilst I am aware of occasional glitches in transferring the collection of annual membership fees to direct debit which required our members to cancel their standing order I confirm that Alan and Ros will get this sorted between them. My apologies to anyone who has been inconvenienced in this way. However, your Committee felt that we needed to make greater use of the technology now available.

My hopes have been fulfilled in that Sales of books have really picked up and totalled £13,840 last year, an average of £1150 per month. The introduction of a card payment machine has helped by reducing the need for cash. A huge THANK YOU to all our volunteers and especially to Cynthia Walker who works tirelessly to ensure that our shop is staffed every day. Our thanks, too, to Stan Kaluza for continuing to sort through all the donated books and to price them appropriately.

The multi-media tour of the pleasure gardens which I mentioned last year is now up and running. It is a free service which has been developed by Edd Price, Assistant House Manager, but it is hoped that users will make a donation to The Friends.

As I said last year, this is just one way in which Lorraine Thorne, Hylands House Manager, and her Team are actively supporting the Friends to try to build membership following the introduction of free public Open Estate Days on the third Sunday of each month and parking charges from last November. Any members working in the Bookshop or any member attending an event booked at Hylands House or a coach outing arranged by The Friends will be entitled to free parking. 10% discount in the Stables café has been confirmed by the new owners and an early bird discount will be available when booking afternoon teas. Edd Price continues working with us (in his own time) on upgrading/redesigning our website and it is hoped that this will link in with the membership database. The monthly Open Days are attracting over 1,000 visitors each month: The Friends have provided a defibrillator which is available 24/7 being fixed to the outside wall of the Book Shop by the City Council. We have also donated costumes for story telling/ play acting and 'large scale' games which are proving popular and attract even more families on open days.

We remain concerned that there are currently no new activities or outings to look forward to. There are many reasons for this but your Committee would like to know your preferences and learn of any suggestions as to how we can go forward – now, if time permits!

So just two dates for your diary:-

- On Monday, 16th September – A Last of the Summer Wine Lunch in the Banqueting Room.
- On Monday, 9th December – Our Annual Christmas Meal in the Banqueting Room

During the year I have been extremely grateful to Val Chiswell, elected to the Committee last year as she agreed to become our Administrator so far as the Charity Commission is concerned – a role previously held by Linda Knock. Val and I have thoroughly reviewed all the ‘best practice’ suggestions recommended by the CC, duly presenting our findings to the full Committee and, where appropriate, liaising with the City Council. By rights I should set these before you now but they are shown on our website. Our thanks too, to Berry Cornell and Cynthia Walker for readily taking on the Editorship of our Newsletter at short notice.

At an AGM it is right and proper to record with thanks the services of those no longer with us. I wish, therefore to say how much I and all the Committee feel indebted to both Shirley Harman and Babs Sargeant – two hard working, lovely ladies who would turn their hands and minds to help the Friends in any way they could. Since last April Linda Knock has returned to Yorkshire, the County of her birth – what a lot she did behind the scenes. Indeed each of your Committee puts in a lot of hard work as each one puts a large amount of effort into the planning and organising all that goes on. I am enormously grateful to everyone of them – without doubt this is team work at its very best. Many thanks to our Officers – to mention by name, our Secretary, Chris Rycroft and our Treasurer, Ros Coleridge and Membership Secretary, Alan Mayo. Not forgetting you, too, dear Friends for your support in so many generous ways.

On behalf of The Friends, I wish to thank all members and officers of the Council who supported our endeavours during the year: special thanks to Paul van Damme, Lorraine Thorne and Edd Price and their hard working teams for their help and support with our activities: it is greatly appreciated by us all, because together we are a dedicated, committed and effective group of people, totally focussed on further enhancing this truly magnificent jewel in Chelmsford’s crown – Hylands House and its associated park.

Richard Oscroft, MBE, Chairman. 16th April 2024

The newly formed Events Committee are delighted to say that two new events are now planned – a Summer Lunch and a visit to the pantomime – please see details further on.

Welcome to our New Chairman: Chris Rycroft

Chris has been a member of the Friends of Hylands House for many years and enjoys swimming, walking, reading and the theatre; she is also an active member of Chelmsford U3A.

A member of Chelmsford Borough and City Council from 1986 to 2015, in 2001 Chris was elected by her fellow Councillors as Mayor of Chelmsford. Following her retirement as a Councillor, Chris joined the Committee of the Friends of Hylands House in 2016 and became Secretary in 2018. At the AGM in May 2024 Chris was elected as new chairman on the Friends of Hylands House.

Chairman's Notes for Newsletter Summer 24

I must begin by paying tribute to Richard Oscroft, our retiring Chairman. Richard was first Chairman of the Friends from 2008 to 2011 and then became a Vice President. When Linda Knock had to retire in 2021 he stepped in and kept the Friends flourishing for another three years. I would like to thank Richard for all his work and commitment. I am pleased that he has agreed to stay on the committee where his experience and counsel will be invaluable.

It is with sadness I have to report that Martin Easteal, who was Chairman of the Friends from 2005 to 2008, died on the 18th March. He suffered a stroke, from which he never recovered.

It was good to see so many of you at the AGM. The speaker was Graeme Cooper whose father was one of the original SAS members who were stationed at Hylands House at the end of the war. His talk was interesting and amusing. Unfortunately we did not manage to elect a Secretary at the AGM so that post is at present vacant. If anyone feels they could take on the job please get in touch with me.

The committee has just agreed to make a donation of £1,500 towards funding the open estate days which take place on the third Sunday of every month. This will ensure the Story Teller continues to entertain the children and will purchase resources for the craft projects and provide small prizes. It will also fund a British sign language interpreter for the tours and story telling on two occasions. If you have never been to an Open Day I would urge you to come along. Sometimes over a thousand people go through the house in a day and there are probably more in the Park. Entry is free and there are two guided tours, several of the guides being members of the Friends. Children can take part in craft projects and/or listen to the Story Teller. Afternoon tea is served in the Terrace Room. Outside there are many craft and food stalls, also in the summer you can play croquet and other outdoor games.

At present we are looking at the Ice House and taking advice on what might be done there. I hope you all have a lovely summer.

Chris Rycroft

Barbara (Babs) Sargeant - 8 September 1935 - 5 March 2024

In the April 2024 edition of our Newsletter, we were shocked to read of the passing of Babs Sargeant a real supporter and founding member of The Friends of Hylands House.

I guess I knew Babs Sargeant for about 28 years through our association with The Friends of Hylands House. Clearly we were much younger when we met and full of enthusiasm to see our beloved Hylands House restored to its former glory.

One of the early attempts at raising funds towards the restoration was serving tea and cakes to the public on Tuesday afternoons in the Blue Room (now known as the Terrace Room) and Babs was a keen helper in this project, soon to be joined by Betty Woods. The following year, 1997 I think it was, the T-Team as it came to be known and now led by Betty Woods, was moved to a marquee on the back lawn of the House, where they had to cope without a kitchen, while further restoration work was done to the House. Husbands, Alf Sargeant and Ron Woods were enlisted to help with all the fetching and carrying and by the time the T-Team was able to move back into the House a willing band of helpers had joined them. They continued to serve teas and home-made cakes on the first Sunday of each month and were very warmly supported by the public.

Sadly, Betty Woods died in March 2006. Babs took over the organisation of the T-Team and joined the Committee of the Friends of Hylands House in April 2006. Meanwhile the restoration of Hylands House was finished and with the completion of the Stables and Visitor Centre, which included a cafeteria, the Friends were no longer allowed to offer teas in the House and our wonderful T-Team ceased to exist in January 2007.

Babs continued serving on the Committee and, with the opening of the Friends Second-hand Bookshop in March 2008, Babs took on the daunting task of Book Team Organiser, which entailed having to find suitable volunteers to staff the Bookshop, seven days a week for fifty-two weeks of the year.

It should be put on record that Babs also helped with the catering at virtually every fund-raising function that the Friends put on, from 1996 until 2015 when she left the Committee, on which she had served for 9yrs. However, Babs and Alf continued as volunteers in the Bookshop.

An amazing woman was our Babs. She quietly and determinedly got on with any task presented to her and the Friends of Hylands owe her a huge debt of thanks.

Rest in peace dear Babs. We will miss you.

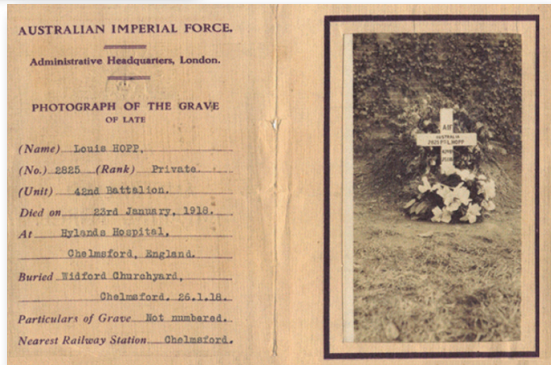
Glenda Hicks 17 May 2024

Letter from Yorkshire from Linda Knock



When I arrived here in Menston my daughter was determined I would not get bored and looked around for things for ‘mum to do’! One of them is a group which goes to different towns each week and I have enjoyed these mornings out, even if the weather had not always been good! I loved seeing the Piece Hall in Halifax.

My most treasured record found for Hylands was the photo showing the original wooden grave marker placed in Widford churchyard after the death of Private Louis Hopp in Hylands Military Hospital. I enjoyed researching the families of Hylands, but WW1 was my favourite as



there were previously no records for the men of the Hospital during WW1. So, when my nine-year old grandson was ‘doing’ WW1 at school, I thought I would look for war graves locally. I found just four men buried in the local cemetery – called God’s Acre. The four men died in Military Hospitals in

different parts of the country and were brought ‘home’ to be buried. I researched their families and am in touch with three families who let me use family photos. I then put the stories together and made a ‘book’ [If you have been to an exhibition, you may have seen the kind of books I make.] The families have copies, and so have local libraries and archives. I am now part of the village heritage group which is planning for next year’s Bradford’s City of Culture.





HYLANDS HOUSE ALFRESCO STYLE SUMMER LUNCH

‘The Last of the Summer Wine’

MONDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2024

The new Events Committee has arranged an Alfresco style Summer lunch to take place in the Banqueting Room, Hylands House on: Monday 16th September 2024.

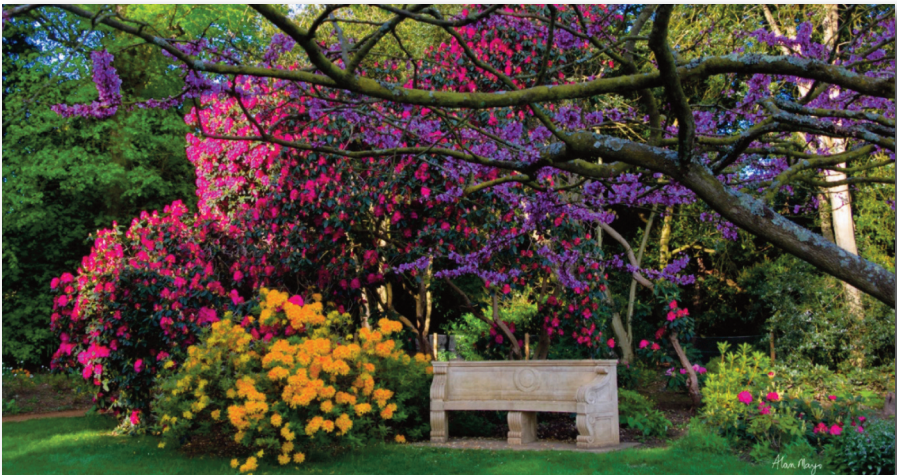
Members £32.00 Non Members £34.00

To apply for tickets, please complete the enclosed flyer and send to Cynthia Walker, together with your cheque and a stamped addressed envelope for your tickets. Closing date for lunch is August 25th 2024

Doors will open at 12.15 for Prosecco, Bucks Fizz or fruit juice in the Terrace room followed by lunch at 1pm in the Banqueting Room

(Parking is free as you will be able to park in front of the House)

***For your diary: Visit to Mercury Theatre panto PETER PAN
18th January 2025***



Carriage Rides on Hylands Estate Open Days



Hawthorn Heavy Horses provide carriage rides on Open Estate Days (weather permitting) – *see opposite*. Times run between 11am and 3pm and cost £4 pp for a short ride near the House. Children in particular enjoy the unique experience of travelling by horse and carriage and finding out more about Joe, Roy and Falcon.

Joe is a Shire horse and Roy and Falcon are Suffolk Punches. These magnificent animals help manage the park in an environmentally friendly manner focusing on woodland management and timber extraction. If you are walking in the park early in the morning you will often see the horses in their field enjoying some leisure time.



Matt and Claudia established the Hawthorn Heavy Horses at Home Farm in 2004 believing that horses play an essential role in land management. *Further details are available online.*

Before mechanical power was introduced, much of the work on the Hylands Estate would have been carried out using heavy working horses such as Joe, Roy and Falcon. Suffolk punches were kept by Mrs Hanbury the last private owner of the estate.

OPEN ESTATE DAYS & EVENTS

5th July – Sunset by Candlelight – Concert on back lawn Hylands House

21st July – House Open Day

18th August – National Radio Day (2 days early) House open

21st August – Peter Pan Childrens Theatre – back lawn Hylands House

23rd – 26th August – Adventure Outdoor Cinema info at *Hylands Estate/Outdoor Cinema in Chelmsford (adventurecinema.co.uk)*

14th & 15th September – National County Show at Writtle end of the park

15th September – House Open Day

15th September – Air Ambulance joining staff & public for activities

4th, 5th & 6th October – Adventure Outdoor Cinema – info at *Hylands Estate/Outdoor Cinema in Chelmsford (adventurecinema.co.uk)*

20th October – World Wars at Hylands Open Day

17th November – The ‘People’ who worked at Hylands – Open Day

29th December– 4th January – Enlightened

15th December – Christmas Open House & Estate Day



HYLANDS OPENING TIMES

For up to date information please check on www.hylandsestate.co.uk

Park and Gardens

Hylands Park is open to the public every day of the year. The gates at the park entrances are opened at 7.30 am and are closed and locked at the following times:

January	5pm	August	9pm
February and March	6pm	September	8pm
April	8pm	October	7pm
May	9pm	November	5pm
June and July	10pm	December	5pm

Hylands House

The House opens its doors Free of Charge on the third Sunday of each month, 10am - 3pm as part of the Open Estate Day.

Stables Information Point

Monday – Friday – 10.00am – 4.00pm

Saturday and Sunday – 10.00am – 5.00pm

The Deli Hylands (in the stables)

From April – 8.00am to 5.00pm every day

Castle Playground changing place and toilets

open every day from 9.30am to 2.00pm.

The Friends' Book Shop

Spring Summer – [1st April – 30th September]

10.30am – 3.45pm, weekdays and 10.30am – 4.30pm, weekends

Autumn – Winter [1st October to 31st March]:

10.30am - 3.00pm, weekdays and 10.30am - 3.30pm, weekends