

LANCASTER JUDGES' LODGINGS

UPDATE

Newsletter of the Friends of Lancaster Judges' Lodgings

Issue no 38

January 2020



The Judges' Lodgings in January

Work is going on apace in and under the Judges' Lodgings and it seems as though the porch will be fully installed in time for the Museum to reopen on Friday 27 March – fantastic news. There will be more changes on the ground floor when the building reopens – the shop will be moved to be in the main hall as the visitor enters through the glass porch, and the room to the left which was the shop will become a new Welcome Centre, for visitors to gain some information about the Judges' Lodgings before they start to look around. It's great to be able to consider all the advances and changes in the JL in just one year. Congratulations to Lynda and her team – and many thanks for all the support from Lancashire County Council – and the Friends of JL.

Lynda is putting together a lively programme of talks and events for the coming season, which we should be able to feature in the next Newsletter.

The Friends' Christmas Appeal

So very many thanks to all who generously donated to the Friends of JL's Christmas Appeal to help conserve and early painting of the Judges' Lodgings looking up Castle Hill. The appeal reached its target and the conservation work on the painting has begun. The difference in the before and after versions is astounding – even though the cleaning has not yet been finished. The painting will have pride of place in the new Welcome Gallery, with acknowledgements of those who have donated.



Before conservation



During conservation

Exhibition of Costume

A major exhibition which will run throughout the open season has been agreed by Gawthorpe Hall, to loan a series of costumes and other textiles of the early 19 Century, from about the time of the painting. As well as being displayed in a gallery setting, it is envisaged that some of the costumes will be arrayed on mannequins and set up in the period rooms. This will give a clearer impression of the period rooms as places where the families living in the Judges' Lodgings carried on their lives. The costumes and accessories will also be the focus for events and activities.

Corporate Friends

We are very pleased to welcome Lancaster Law Society as our first Corporate Friends and look forward to seeing their representatives at Friends' events. If you belong to or know of an organisation which shares The Friends' passion for helping to develop the Judges' Lodgings as a key player in Lancaster's heritage and would like to become a Corporate Friend, please contact me for more information.

Care of Collections Training



The County Council Conservation team has run some training on how to look after various types of vulnerable and fragile items in the collection. A group of us donned our purple gloves and tried some hands-on care for selected items (not the most vulnerable or delicate). We were introduced to the specialist equipment and learnt that the safest method is to use ordinary water, where the item can be wetted securely. We were given a couple of large plates to clean, which hadn't been very

well treated in the past, with rusty metal hangers attached, so that they could be wall-hung. We also learnt that as well as cleaning or treating an item, we would need to note its condition – cracks in the glaze, loose threads in fabric, signs of infestation etc – quite fascinating.



The JL Green Team

Jenny, the JL site supervisor, has convened a Green Team, not so much to work on the garden, but to consider ways of making the JL as environmentally friendly as possible. The Team has already met once and come up with some ideas, such as switching from tea bags to loose leaf tea, swapping all of the light bulbs in the building to LED bulbs,

installing cycle racks for visitors to use, encouraging use of public transport transportation by offering incentives to visitors who can prove they came by bus or train and installation of a "hot" composting bin in the garden to allow for breaking down both garden and food waste. A professional energy audit has also been proposed – scary to think what it might reveal, but very useful to see where action should be taken. Any other thoughts from readers on possible action would be more than welcome.

Dementia Project

One of the Trustees is looking to lead on a Dementia Project within the JL, opening up the Museum and its objects for people with dementia and their carers. The plan is to make up memory boxes with items which may be meaningful to people with memory loss, and to offer a session for socializing as well as stimulating early recollections. If anyone is interested in joining in such a project please let me know. Appropriate training will be given.

Volunteering at JL

You can volunteer at JL through the LCC Volunteering Programme either to act as a Room Steward or to join the Gardening Team – follow the link <https://lancsvp.org.uk/opportunities>

Join Us

If you have not yet joined the Friends, or you have friends and neighbours who would be interested in supporting our work to ensure that Lancaster Judges' Lodgings remains open and accessible to the public, please contact me, and encourage them to do the same – sue.widden@outlook.com – and I'll send joining details. Please feel free to forward these newsletters to your friends and relatives and encourage them to join us in our work.

Comments and ideas from everyone are always welcome and we are happy to share them widely. If you have a view or a comment to contribute to UPDATE, please email me at the address below.

Sue Widden
Newsletter Editor
sue.widden@outlook.com