

LANCASTER JUDGES' LODGINGS

UPDATE

Newsletter of the Friends of Lancaster Judges' Lodgings

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The Judges' Lodgings in March

It's rather sad to think that this time last month we were looking forward eagerly to the start of a new season, with changes in the Judges' Lodgings which will make it more welcoming to visitors and a new acquisition to form a major addition to the history of the building and a new focus of attraction. But none of that will go to waste – this crisis will pass and all our cultural buildings will reawaken like the Sleeping Princess's palace – not sure who will play the role of the handsome prince.

The work has gone ahead on the inner porch, now complete, and the fitting out of the hall as the entrance and shop, and the former reception and shop will become the Welcome Gallery, giving a preview of the JL to visitors and flagging up major points of interest.

The JL also has a successful base from which to move forward – Arts Council England has given it full Museum Accreditation, which is not only welcome confirmation that the management team has ensured that the JL is being properly maintained and cared for, but is also of immense importance for future fundraising. The whole collection has been given a thorough clean – sparkling and shining enough to please any eye. Kitchen handling objects have been acquired from the National Trust and have been properly documented with the help of a Lancaster University student. Programmes of events have been put together for both museum visitors and for the Friends of JL for the coming season – so far outside speakers have indicated their willingness to feed into the programmes at whatever stage they actually start – although everything has been out on hold the plans are there, ready and waiting to be implemented as soon as possible.

Manager Lynda and Site Manager Jenny are going into the JL once a week to keep an eye on things – must be a bit like the Marie Celeste.



In the Garden

Gardens do not stand still, no matter how many viruses (or should it be viri?) are roaming the country. Spring flowers are showing through and Jenny is carrying out essential works. It will be fascinating to see what developments there are when once we're allowed back in.



National Gallery Masterpiece Tour

A bid was put in for the loan of a painting from the National Gallery – House of Cards (1737) by Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin – and the JL's application has been short-listed for selection. The painting is particularly appropriate for the Judges' Lodgings – it depicts a young boy standing at a small wooden table fully absorbed in building a house out of playing cards. He is Jean-Alexandre Le Noir, whose father, Jean-Jacques Le Noir, was a furniture dealer and cabinet-maker, who commissioned several paintings from Chardin. We wait to hear whether the JL has been selected to hold the painting for the three years of the loan period.

The Green Team

A bid for £4900 has been put in by JL to the Museum Development North West Sustainable Improvement Fund for training for the Green Team and for a proper environmental audit. In the meantime, while the premises are closed the Carbon Literacy Project has put forward a list of 10 Low-Carbon Self-Isolation Activities in its Carbon Literacy Update for covid-19. <https://carbonliteracy.com/top-10-low-carbon-self-isolation-activities/>

Developments on Hold

The projects which the Friends were expecting to roll out this season – the Dementia Friendly project and the new website have been put on hold until the JL can reopen – very disappointing for us just now but we know that they can be reactivated once life starts again.

Thanks to all the supporters of the Judges' Lodgings in Lancaster – although at the moment there is little tangible return on your support, we feel we need it more than ever so that the momentum and good will built up during our first year of opening will not be lost.

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.

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