

Newsletter



A Message From The Chairman

Greetings to my fellow Friends of Turton Tower. I am delighted to introduce you to our new Editor, Alice O'Toole. She is already a Room Steward inside the tower and now takes over the mantle from the incredibly erudite Margaret Bragg who has served so magnificently in editing our previous newsletters.

Alice has a History degree from the University of Chester and while she is deciding where her future lies we have been lucky enough to co-opt (or was it coerce?) her onto our team of wonderful volunteers. Thank you, Alice and the very best of luck.



May I ask you why are you a friend of Turton Tower? I presume that it is because you love the Tower; you value its existence; you are proud of its heritage; you just want it to survive. Whatever the reason I need to plead with you to do more than (very kindly) pay your subscription. We need you to support us at our events. We need you to persuade your family and friends to support us and, indeed, maybe also become Friends. We need you to volunteer or persuade a friend or family member to volunteer assistance for our events. Any contribution from you, no matter how small will be immensely appreciated by my extremely hardworking fellow Committee members and me.

Perhaps the most difficult part of fundraising is a good supply of volunteers to supplement the overworked Committee. I would particularly like to thank (non-Committee Member) Jill McKay Smith for her incredible talents and stamina. She was a driving force, leading our Committee towards a successful day. Sincere thanks to everybody.

An event such as the recent Art in the Garden doesn't just happen. It takes months of planning and organising and, finally, setting up. This year the weather was perfect and it would have been so wonderful to have seen more of our Friends at the event. Sincere thanks to everybody.

Have you visited the Tower this year? If not please get down and view the magnificent gardens which are painstakingly looked after by a wonderfully talented group of our volunteers. To them, it is obviously a labour of love. They are truly magnificent.

Thank you for taking the trouble to read this and please try to assist us.

Graham Bonser

Chair of the Friends of Turton Tower

Upcoming Events

24th September

Meet the artist at the Chetham Arms with Jennifer Stevens (*for further info contact Margaret Howe, tel 01204 595265*)

25th September

Trip to Shibden Hall & Cliffe Castle. £28 FOTT members/ £30 non-members (including lunch) (*for further info contact Jan Rhodes, tel 07811 44 45 46*)

26th October

Halloween walk and buffet at the Chetham Arms (volunteers wanted to decorate woods and evening event), (*for further info contact Jill McKay Smith, tel 07940 492 056*)

29th October

Meet the artist at the Chetham Arms with Jasmine Renold (*for further info contact Margaret Howe, tel 01204 595265*)

6th November

FOTT members AGM at the Barlow Institute (includes hot pot supper)

26th November

Meet the artist at the Chetham Arms with Aruna Mene (*for further info contact Margaret Howe, tel 01204 595265*)

End of November

Trip to British India Museum, Nelson and lunch in the New Waggoners Inn (date & price to be agreed)

7th December

FOTT Xmas meal at the Chetham Arms (price to be agreed), (*for further info contact Margaret Howe, tel 01204 595265*)

10th December

Victorian Xmas at Turton Tower (volunteers needed for Xmas stalls)



Council Update

We have now settled into a good routine ensuring Duty Manager cover at the Tower with Ally and Karen sharing the duties.

Karen is the one who is on duty more often and Ally has responsibility for school group visits.

The events are going well; Wednesday @ One Group Tours are proving more popular, and Family story time fortnightly and Arty afternoons monthly add to the ever-growing list of things going on inside the Tower.

Ghost Tours will resume again once the darker nights set in and the indoor theatre production on November 16th this year will be *'High Unchartered Seas; the Real Story of Sir Walter Raleigh'*.

Keep an eye out on the Towers website and Facebook page for more details and to book tickets for this event and the Victorian Christmas Evening on December 10th: both will be popular and will be admittance with ticket only so don't miss out!

Ally Hodgson

The Walking Group

At the end of June, starting from Old Betts, we headed south-east to be treated to a clear vista from Rochdale, to Oldham and Manchester, then beyond to the Derbyshire hills and Cheshire plains.



Turning to head south, and continuing downhill, we made good progress to join the Cheesden Valley for our lunch break, still some way above the formerly industrialised brook.

After lunch, we trekked along the side of the valley, heading east and eventually catching sight of a square chimney; it's stunted remains still visible above the tree canopy.



Further along our way, now NW, as the path became wider, there, there were larger ponds on one side, then the other. Later, by the Cheesden Brook - after an exciting encounter with cows, their calves and horses - we came to the most obvious industrial remains of Cheesden Lumb Mill. From there, it was a relatively short walk back to our cars.

For further info about the walking group, contact Robin Heywood,

Tel - 07971442616

Email - raheywood48@gmail.com

Collections care group

The Tower Rooms should be looking cleaner now as the five regular ladies joined by new lady Lynne have been busy over the last few months.

The fireplace in the Library was washed by Kathryn with deionised water and cotton-buds. The same method was used to clean the windows in the Drawing room.

It was noted that the bed in the Tapestry room had been slightly damaged. All the stairways were dusted and carpets swept or vacuumed.

More dressing -up items were brought and the Costumes recently worn regularly by actors are to be dry-cleaned locally.

Anyone will be most welcome to join our group. We meet on the second Thursday of the month at 9-45am and aim to leave at noon.

Please ring Avril on 07528027645 or avrilbinns@gmail.com

For further info about the collections care group, contact Avril Binns,

Tel - 01204 302830

Email – avrilbinns@gmail.com



Gardening Group

The summer time seems extra busy for the gardening group. The Friends have funded good supplies of new plants for the gardens, particularly the round garden, supervised by Ian; which is looking very colourful at this time of year.

The roses have just begun to show their colours after the earlier daffodils and tulips, which supporting flowers and foliage provided an excellent blend.



The flower beds by the tower, maintained by Lorna, Eileen and Janet, are equally colourful. Visitors often comment on the displays.

Rick and Margaret have cleared and established a small herb garden by the cafe and planted poppies in the small round bed near the drive gates.



Peter has done further work to assist drainage by the gates as well as varnishing the garden benches.

Further afield, we grow plenty of nettles, brambles (rabbits too!) and now Himalayan balsam - anyone fancy joining the combat team on Wednesdays?

For further info about the tower gardening group, contact Robin Heywood,

Tel - 07971442616

Email - raheywood48@gmail.com

Kitchen Garden Group

What a wonderful picture the kitchen garden looks like at the moment!! A cacophony of colour and design bursts over the bed edges creating an energy and vitality for the public to enjoy. This has been achieved and brilliantly designed and grown by the garden volunteers.

I think it has been one of the best summer collections I have seen...Herbs...lovage, chives, basil. Flowers...ligularia, roses, cat mint, dahlias, wallflowers. Just a taster...there are many more but you will have to come and visit to see them all! Blackberries, gooseberries, raspberries as well...

Very much looking like a kitchen garden...but we have an added asset that not many kitchen gardens have. A Japanese garden within it! The idea came from the volunteers as we felt a section of one of the beds needed to look more interesting. Research was done, visits to other Japanese gardens was carried out, plans drawn up and creation of it began. Design was meticulous making sure we were correct in every inch of it...even cutting grass with scissors! Moss, stones of varying shapes are included....and true bamboo canes creating a "wall" around it.

Another redesign has been the Herb garden. It has always been in the garden but we decided to give it a makeover as it was looking rather forlorn. The bricks and stones were completely removed and the geometric design was inserted with spaces for the herbs. It is looking very grand and the herbs are looking very healthy. A big thank you to the volunteers who carried out the work.

We are continually reviewing and checking how we are developing. We look at the future and structures that could be included in the garden that will remain long after we have popped our clogs!!



The regular and necessary elements of running a garden still carry on...weeding, planting new material and dead heading. Watering is essential in the summer and Peter is our chief waterer! He is a star as he goes up to the garden most days to carry out this task.

This year we have also visited other gardens as I think this gives us an opportunity to enjoy the design and planting and maybe gain ideas we may use in our garden - luckily, we have had reasonable weather!

Alongside the practical aspects of gardening we have to plan events to raise funds as we have no regular income. Fashion shows, quizzes, coffee mornings are part of our year now; they bring in much needed income to enable us to keep going. A very steady income is the donations and plant selling at the garden which the general public are very generous in donating to. A very big thank you to you all.

I hope you will try and visit the garden during the summer and at other times; it is open all year and is free.

Thank you for supporting us; we cannot manage without you!

Enjoy your summer

The Kitchen Team



For further info about the kitchen garden group, contact Anna Harvey,

Email - annaharvey451@btinternet.com

Art In The Garden

A big thank you to Jill McKay-Smith who headed this event's organising committee ensuring we all knew what needed to be done and who was responsible for what.

Jill also did a huge amount of work including camping overnight with her husband (Billy) to ensure our equipment was safe.



Sue Brown worked alongside Jill giving the marquees and gazebos a festival feeling with bunting and other decorations.

Billy was a terrific help to Frank Delacey in helping to erect marquees and gazebos and moving equipment from the stables to the Tower lawn.



Jan Rhodes also camped overnight with her partner Mike to keep our equipment safe and worked really hard moving and erecting equipment.

Kate Bonser and her helpers did sterling work, as ever, on Kate's Cake Stall and keeping us all fed and watered. All Kate's cakes were terrific as ever – our guests agreed as the stall raised over £400.



Our Chairman - Graham Bonser, made an attempt to manage the traffic coming to the event - not an enviable job!"

Pat Nelson, Margaret Howe and Margot Jones manned (womaned!!) the Friends gazebo giving out tickets and they also sold raffle tickets which also raised money.



Sarah Wild and her partner Simon were also a tremendous help to Frank in erecting Marquees and Gazebos.

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone who attended as a volunteer or a visitor and helped to make this marvellous day the success that it turned out to be.

Volunteering At Turton Tower

Currently we have 27 volunteers which includes 2 students who have joined us over their summer break. It's lovely for us to work alongside young people and share their ideas and enthusiasm.

We have also welcomed one other new volunteer (slightly older!) and there is hopefully another about to join.

BUT, we still need more help; either receptionists or room stewards so if you know of anyone who might be interested in joining us please ask them to get in touch with me.

As ever a very big 'thank you' to all our volunteers, they really are a fantastic group of people.

Eileen Prestwich - 01204853201
