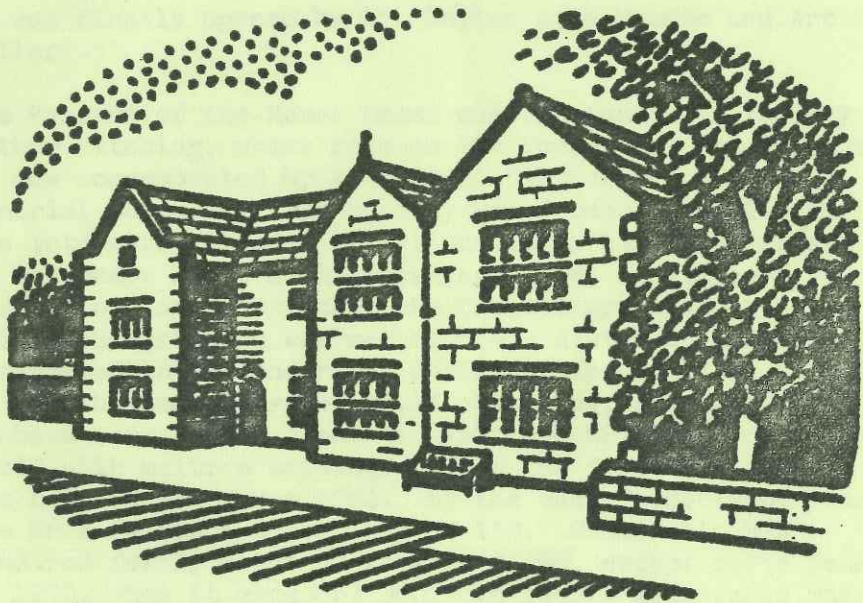


FRIENDS OF THE MANOR HOUSE



THE FIRST
TWENTY-ONE YEARS

1963 - 1984

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THE FIRST TWENTY ONE YEARS

In 1955, Mr. Percy Dalton offered to make a gift of the 16th/17th Century Manor House, Castle Yard, Ilkley, to the people of Ilkley. After lengthy discussions with the Society for the Protection of Historic Buildings, the Ministry of Works, and Mr. Dalton, Ilkley Urban District Council received the necessary financial help to enable restoration of the Manor House to take place. In 1961 it was finally opened by Mr. Dalton as a Museum and Art Gallery.

The Friends of the Manor House was instigated in 1963 by Arthur Kitching, whose role as the Founder of the Friends is now commemorated by the annual "Arthur Kitching Memorial Lecture". The society was formed primarily for the interested members of the public to have free access to the Manor House during opening times, and to any exhibitions or events that the Council arranged. The annual subscription was set at 5/-. A steering committee was formed in May under the Chairmanship of Mr. E. Satchwell. The Secretary was Mr. A. Kitching, and committee members were Miss Yeadon, Mr. East and Mr. Cockcroft, who dealt with matters arising, before the first AGM which was held in September 1963. By the end of the first year the Friends had a membership of 153. Membership has remained fairly constant at around 200, except for a peak in 1970, when it exceeded 300. In 1983/4 membership was 212.

The first committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr. East was responsible for drafting the constitution of the society. Included in the objectives was a determination "to work for the future and improved development of the Manor House as a Museum and Art Gallery, and to give encouragement, advice and assistance to the administrative sub-committee of the local authority". The means by which this was to be achieved included the organisation and promotion of meetings, concerts, lectures, and other activities subject always to the prior approval of the administrator of the Manor House.

During the twenty one years of existence, the Friends have striven to pursue an active programme of lectures, especially during the winter months. Two activities of the Friends which have proved to be very popular are the Midsummer Musical Evening and the Christmas Gathering, whilst the attendance of members at exhibition previews has made these a central focus for the visual arts in Ilkley. The practice of the Friends producing a Christmas card design for sale each year has unfortunately lapsed.

Fund-raising has been achieved by an annual Coffee Morning. For many years this was held variously at members' homes, at Ilkley College and at the Manor House. Recently the Coffee Morning has been combined with a Bring and Buy Sale and has been held in Church House.

The Friends' funds have been used for a variety of projects. In 1964 the Friends were able to present the Manor House with a tapestry designed and woven by Theo Moorman, which now hangs at the entrance to the main room downstairs. Several curtains have also been purchased for this room. It was originally hoped to purchase a work of art annually to form the nucleus of a small permanent collection. A number of paintings including works by A. Kitching and M. Firth were bought. This practice ceased in 1974 when Bradford Council took over from Ilkley Urban District Council, as it was no longer possible to have a permanent collection of paintings at the Manor House. Two engravings of Ilkley and a photographic print of a painting by T. Girton do, however, hang in the far room downstairs. In 1969, money was contributed towards the cost of paving the north side of the Manor House. In 1979, to celebrate "Olicana 79", four plaques, designed and cast by Bert Roberts, were commissioned by the Friends and positioned at the approximate locations of the four entrances to the Roman Fort. More mundane but essential purchases include equipment for the Friends social and educational activitiesscreen, projector, crockery and so forth.

The society has also been concerned with the preservation of the environs of the Manor House. In 1969 a campaign was mounted to save what was reputed to be "the oldest shop in Ilkley". It was hoped that this building, which stood in Castle Yard, could be renovated and perhaps used as a pottery. However, the campaign was unsuccessful and the building was demolished. In 1965 the Friends objected to the proposal to build twenty two lock up garages on land adjacent to the Manor House. The development went ahead, although it was stipulated that the garages should be screened by trees. In 1983 further developmental plans for this site were objected to by the Friends. This time it was planned to replace the garages by flats. Although this application was refused, the long term future of this site remains in doubt.

Indeed, the future of the Manor House itself is in doubt. In 1983, the Bradford Metropolitan District Council proposed the closure of the Manor House (and White Wells) to the general public as part of a cost-cutting programme. This plan has been shelved, following intense local protests, in which the Friends played a significant role. At the time of writing an air of uncertainty remains.

Whatever the next twenty one years may bring, the Friends can look back on many years of achievement, thanks to the enthusiasm of the membership, and the devotion of all those who have served on the committee.

D. A. Shillitoe,
June 1984

CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEE : 1963 - PRESENT

May - September 1963 (Steering Committee)	Mr. E. Satchwell
September 1963 - March 1965	Mr. East
April 1965 - March 1971	Mr. R. Marshall
April 1971 - March 1977	Mr. W. R. Hill
April 1977 - Marsh 1981	Mr. J. Smith
April 1981 - Present	Mrs. E. Greenwood

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE : 1984/5

Officers

Chairman	Mrs. E. Greenwood
Vice Chairman	Mr. J. Smith
Hon. Secretary	Mrs. M. Palmer
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs. D. A. Shillitoe
Hon. Programme Secretary	Mrs. J. Atherton
Publicity Officer	Miss E. Holt

Committee

Members	Mrs. H. Fletcher
	Mrs. E. King
	Mrs. E. Ross
	Mrs. P. Suthers
	Mr. W. R. Hill
	Mr. F. Lambert
	Mr. E. Satchwell

Anyone wishing to join the Friends of the Manor House may do so on payment of £2 Annual Subscription, at the Manor House.