

Charlton Kings Local History Society Newsletter

welcoming new members & keeping local history alive

No 4: August 2022

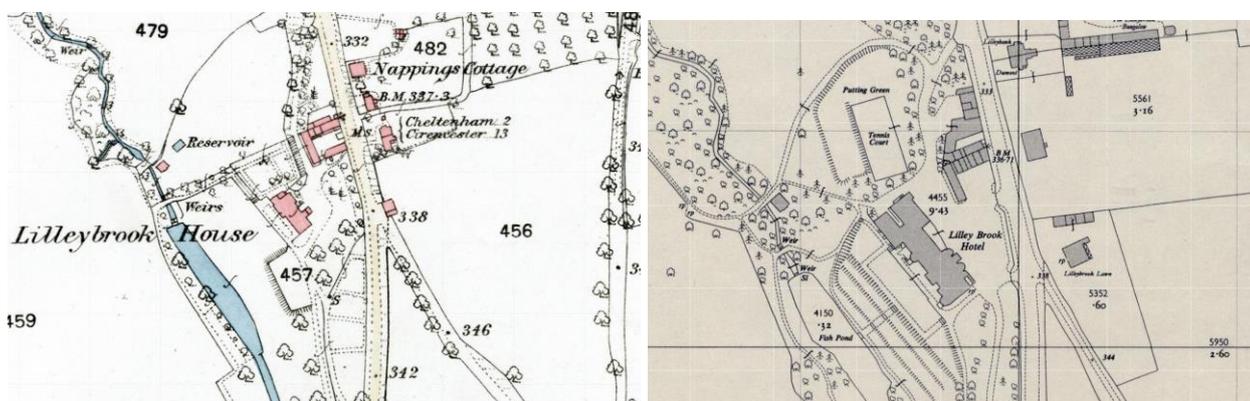


[For the first time we have a Special for August I will be doing various topics throughout the year. Lilybrook Hotel was in our August newsletter I was unable to publish more photos so more from David Hanks, collection. Enjoy.](#)

Lilybrook House

The 1826 engraving is of **Lilybrook House**, Cirencester Road. It burnt down on this date (28 July) just five years later in 1831. It was rebuilt by 1848 and in 1922 it became the **Lilley Brook Hotel**, then the **Cheltenham Park Hotel** and now the **DoubleTree By Hilton Hotel**.

The **Lilley** element of **Lilley Brook** is first seen in 1306; either from an Old English personal name *Lilla*, or means 'little enclosure'.

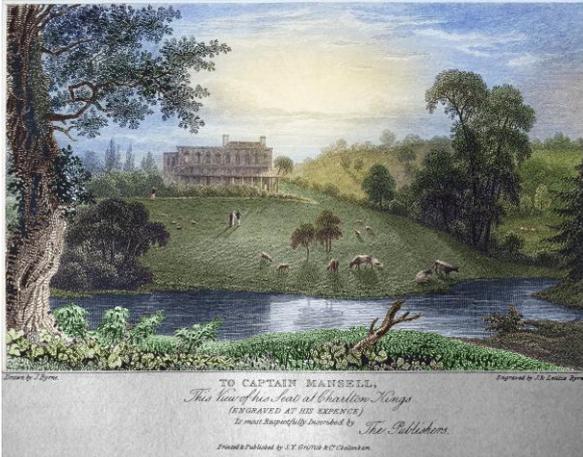


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Lilleybrook gardeners 1900s.

96 year old Olive Wrathall told CKLHS in 1996 that she was born on 1 June 1900 in the gardener's cottage at Lilleybrook. Her father, Frank May was head gardener there with a staff of 7 under-gardeners having previously worked for the Ackland family in Devon - he and Olive's mother both came from Devon. From Devon he had moved to work for Lord Pontypool in Wales and then came as head gardener to Mr and Mrs Lord at Lilleybrook. The house was being rebuilt for them at the time with a new north wing being added. Olive's father designed the garden, including making a lake out of the stream. Olive claims that it was her father who suggested the name for the house to Mrs Lord, because he was planting water lilies in the brook at the time [we know that the house was already called Lilleybrook in 1855 and perhaps he just encouraged Mrs Lord to keep the old name.]

Olive's earliest memory is of singing round the family piano on Sunday mornings - her father played hymn tunes with one finger! The piano had attached candlesticks, red satin pleating down the sides and curly legs. She went to school at 3 and remembers two of the teachers - Miss Bush and Miss Kathy, who was a pupil teacher who later went on to become a certificated teacher at St.Peter's school in Cheltenham. Miss Kathy's brother was stud groom for the hunt, and another of her brothers worked for Mr Lord and lived in the cottage next to Olive.

Mr Lord was Master of Foxhounds, and the Hunt often met at Lilleybrook. She remembers the occasions well with the men in their pink coats and the ladies with top hats with veils and riding side-saddle - 'very sedate'. Mrs Lord was the daughter of a cotton magnate from Lancashire. Her sister married another Cheltenham man - Major Shewell, and the sisters rivalled each other in society

The Lords were excellent employers - Olive has never heard a word said against them. Every Christmas there was a staff party, held in the Billiards Room with a Christmas tree cut from the estate. Every little girl had a new frock made for her by Miss Farmer and her assistant who worked in the Needlework Room at the house. Women were given dress lengths and the men had two shirts. The children also had toys. The staff at Lilleybrook included a butler, two footmen, a housekeeper, nanny and cook. Olive's father was on good terms with the cook, so the children got lots of

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treats - beef broth when they were ill and sometimes fruit like a melon from the greenhouses. There were fine greenhouses at Lilleybrook with palms, and Olive's father grew early potatoes and strawberries in them ready for Miss Violet Lord's birthday parties on 1st March.

The cottage where Olive was born was one of a pair which had been built by the Lords for their head groom and head gardener. It had a small hall, a sitting room and a living kitchen with sink and water laid on. Upstairs there were three bedrooms. There was a washhouse for each cottage, and Olive remembers a Mrs Gardner who came in once a week to do the washing - she was very small, wore a cotton cap and lived in a cottage along in the village. Olive also remembered Palmer the baker who delivered bread to the big house. She once went to a birthday party at the Palmers and had wonderful cake.

1903 with Mary and Herbert Lord (MFH) about to join the Cotswold Hunt. Whilst living at Lilleybrook House with their two daughters. Herbert Lord became Master of the Cotswold Hunt and Mary President of the Red Cross. They hosted numerous events at Lilleybrook over the years including horticultural shows, scouts, fetes and during WW1 hundreds of convalescing soldiers from the many Red Cross (VAD) hospitals in the town enjoyed the hospitality of Mr and Mrs Lord in the beautiful grounds.



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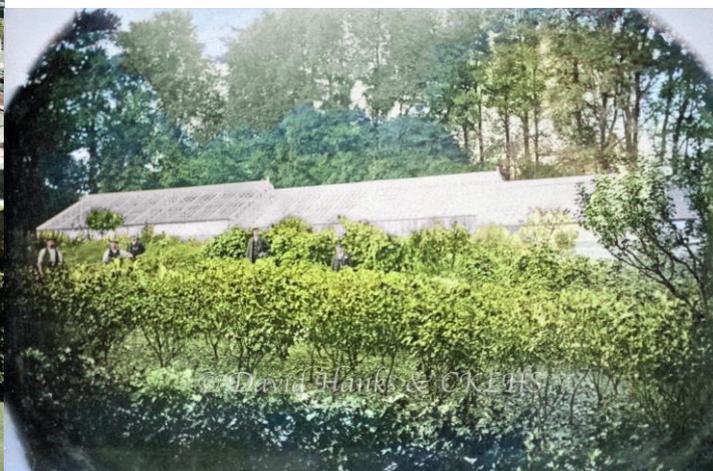
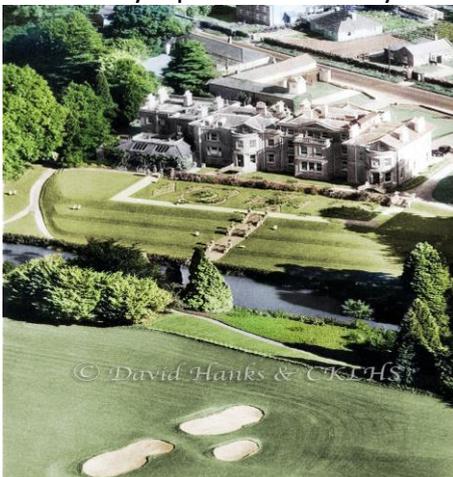
c1920 at the front of the hotel. I've often wondered if it records the departure of Mr and Mrs Lord but don't know.

Another anecdote:

A Mr. Palmer related a story (to CKLHS) about Mr Herbert Lord of Lilleybrook who a great practical joker was, "he betted he would get the whole fire brigade drunk. So, he set some pigsties on his own property alight, called the fire brigade, and then got them all roaring. The whole lot were sacked but Mr Lord owned up, and as Charlton Kings was left without a fire brigade, and there was another fire next day, they had to reinstate them! This story seems to have grown a little in the telling, for the Neither's at any rate were strict teetotallers - Mr Neither boasts that he went through the 1914-18 War, and never touched the rum issue, and never got trench feet in consequence!"



And Fiinally a picture for today . And also Finally the Glass Houses.



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