



The Newsletter of the Lytham Heritage Group

The Heritage Centre, 2 Henry Street, Lytham. FY8 5LE

Tel: (01253) 730787 Archive: (01253) 730775

email: thecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk email: archivecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk

website: www.lythamheritage.co.uk

*Young Tom in 2017 and The County
(see later article) (photo by David Forshaw)*



Young Tom, Lytham 2017 (David Forshaw7399)

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Notes from The Chairman

As I write this the weather has been glorious and with a wet May and warmer temperatures the plants in our gardens, pots and window boxes are looking colourful. That applies to our garden area at the Heritage Centre which has been a "hive" of activity over the past few weeks. With a lot of attention given to encouraging bees at the moment we will be doing our bit - excuse the pun! Audrey Kirby has been working closely with Trevor from Lytham in Bloom to put together a planting plan. A donation towards the annual flowers has been received from Bill and Andrew of Bill's Ices in memory of Alan who often chatted with them at their ice cream bike in the Square. The planting plan includes another trough to match the large one and 2 tubs. Dave Hoyle has employed his painting skills again to the planters and all is looking splendid, enhanced by FBC's hanging baskets. As you know the garden is dedicated to Alan Ashton and the plaque has been up for several months. At the moment we still cannot make plans for an official unveiling as we await Boris's announcement. If I can I will try to add any Covid updates and their effect on our events before this edition goes to print.

The clock at the centre is being refurbished and bits and pieces have been completed internally so I would encourage everybody to pop in when you are in town and support our artists and the work your Committee has been doing during lockdown.

Also working very hard on a new project is Phil Stringer. He is in the process of building our brand new website with lots of features already and more to come so definitely "a work in progress". The old "word press" website may still be available but the new link is -

www.lythamheritage.uk.

The advantage of this link is that it takes you direct to our new website and not a list of related links. Do watch our excellent video on the site and please pass on the good work that is done by LHG.

Hope to see you soon when we feel we can return to the new version of normal.

Sue Forshaw

JULY 2021



The Lytham Railway Disaster

David Hoyle

At 5.46pm on 3 November 1924, the 4.40 Liverpool Express careered out of control at a crossing, hit the bridge over the Main Drain for Lytham Moss, tearing up the track, demolishing Warton signal box in the east end of Lytham (formally called Lytham Dock signal box) and rolled over, catching fire, like a scene from a spectacular disaster film.

In 1924 a normal train ride for revellers and business folk turned into a nightmare. Travelling at 50 miles an hour, the Express shed a front left 'tyre', (the steel band on the outer edge of the wheel), and derailed. The engine ran into the signal box throwing out the Signaller and demolishing the Box, which caught fire. Some passengers, realising the train had left the track, jumped from the train and were crushed when the carriage rolled on to them. The Signal Box fire spread to one of the gas-lit carriages. The newspaper accounts of the accident were confused as to the number of dead, 'The Times' reported 5, 'The Observer' 8, with 3 trapped bodies in the wreckage. It reported a 'Midnight search for the dead'. The official investigation report accounts for a final death toll of 15, including the Train Driver. The train was full although the number of injuries was relatively low at 10 with 'more of less serious injuries. The Fireman and the Guard were injured.

It wasn't the first accident on the line near Lytham, nor the last. In 1849, at the station at Moss Side, the 9.20 train from Lytham was in collision with a Fleetwood train. Passengers were cut and bruised, but no fatalities. The Preston Guardian reported 'many injured, hats staved in and coats torn'. The cause was put down to the Station Master's signalling error. Ten years later in 1934 a car with a St Annes resident was in collision with a train at the crossing at Moss Side. The car driver, a cafe owner from Preston, was killed. Moss Side Station closed in 1961, reopening in 1983 it remains in use today, as is the crossing.



The Times, 5 November 1924, Reported the full list of identified dead as follows:

Commander Charles H. GRAEME, 49, Lincoln Road, Blackpool.
Miss Emma PICKUP, 48, single, Weaver, 4 Park-road, Lytham.
Miss Margaret PICKUP, 56, single, from the same address.
William Charles CROOKES, The Engine Driver, 67, Buchanan Street, Blackpool.
William WALSH, 33, married, Weaver, 42 St Chad's Road, South Shore, Blackpool.
Mary MORRISON, 44, Weaver, single, 47 Watson's Lane, South Shore, Blackpool.
Ethel COX, 32, Weaver, single, 151 Central Drive, Blackpool.
Ernest TONGE, 46, Advertising Contractor, 40 Leamington Road, Blackpool.
Isa GREENWOOD, 21, Weaver, single, 30 Thames Road, South Shore, Blackpool.
Annie GREENWOOD, 29, Weaver, single, Sister of Miss Isa Greenwood.
Thomas HARTLEY, 10 Montrose Avenue, Blackpool. (identified from papers in his possession).

Leslie DAWSON, 104 Church Road, Blackpool.
Ernest PICKUP, Goods Clerk at Kirkham Station, 11 Hall Avenue, South Shore, Blackpool.

In addition over 30 persons have been injured, but only three of them very seriously. They are the following:-
Mr. H. OLDHAM, 107 St. Helens Road, Blackpool, injuries to legs and arms. Mr. Oldham died on 6 November, bringing the death toll to 14.
Mr. R. H. Hull, 11 All Saints Road, St. Annes, Shock.
Mrs. RICHARDSON, 14 Eaves Street, North Shore, Blackpool, injuries to head and back.

The Times, 5 Nov 1924 also reported:

'The Kings Message'

'The King has learned with deep concern of the serious accident at Moss Side last evening and asks that an expression of his regret and sympathy may be conveyed to the families of those who have lost their lives or who were injured.'

'A Victim's Bravery'

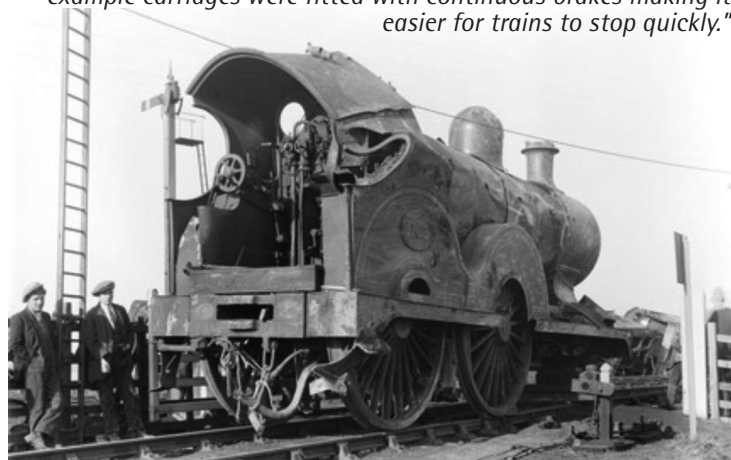
Many persons have spoken of the bravery of Commander Graeme, of whom Mr A. Tarbuck, of Clifton-street, Lytham, says:-'If ever there was a brave man it was Commander Graeme, for he never made the slightest complaint and directed his own treatment. Both legs were nearly severed, and all he asked for was a cup of tea and asked to be remembered to his people at Blackpool'. He died at midnight in Lytham Hospital, whither he had been taken after urging that others should be attended to before himself.

Commander Graeme, R.N., was on leave and travelling to Blackpool. Both of his feet were injured, and one had to be amputated.

The Times Editors Note:

Capt Charles H Graeme, 49, had been the Master of the 8010 ton, Steamship 'Bardic', of the White Star Line. The 'Bardic' had run aground in thick fog in August 1924, avoiding a collision with another ship, off the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall. She was carrying a £97500 cargo of Wool from Brisbane, along with a large quantity of Frozen Australian Beef, bound for Liverpool, London, Newcastle and Antwerp. Capt Graeme had stayed aboard the ship whilst 80 of his Crew were rescued by Lifeboat, only leaving himself some 10 hours later, landing at Falmouth. He, and a couple of his Officers, returned to the ship later to secure the Cargo from Salvage. Some months later, the Bardic was towed to Dry Dock in Falmouth where she was repaired. As was the custom for Ships Masters at the time, Graeme resigned.

"Damaged 4-4-0 locomotive number 1105 at Moss Side, Lancashire. The locomotive has been severely dented and beyond that there are some crushed and derailed carriages. Several people were killed in this accident. Accidents were more common at this time than they are now. However, safety measures were being put in place; for example carriages were fitted with continuous brakes making it easier for trains to stop quickly."



Lytham Hall & Archives has asked this question

Does anyone remember Violet Clifton's Mark IV Jaguar?

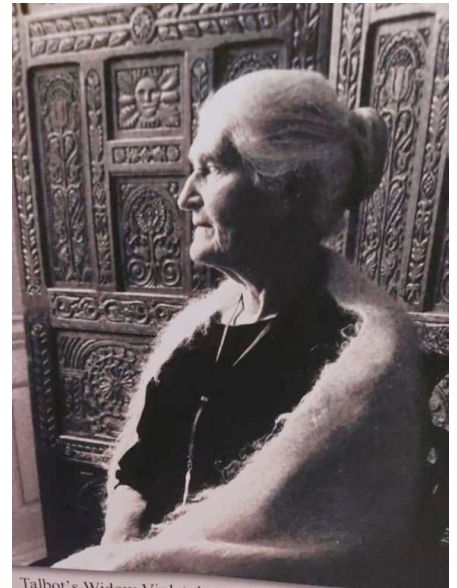
She was chauffeured about in it by her Portuguese butler / chauffeur in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Please contact the Heritage Group or Steve if you have any recollections or information. Thank you.

thecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk stephenmwilliams@hotmail.co.uk



Violet Clifton
(Lytham Hall / Steve
Williams)



NB: this photo of the Jaguar Mark IV is for illustration purposes to show the make and model, this was not her actual car. (Steve Williams)

Helen Hornby asked a question:

Is there any information concerning a Memorial in Lytham Park Cemetery to six youths who lost their lives on 9th July 1930? I see this on my local walk.

A memorial to six youths drowned on 9th July 1930 is to be found in Lytham Hall Park Cemetery and is a designated local heritage asset. Janet Turner has provided the following excerpt from the Lytham St Annes Express from the 11th July 1930.

SIX YOUTHS DROWNED AT ST. ANNES. - The most terrible bathing tragedy in the history of Lytham St. Annes occurred on Wednesday, six boys being drowned and another gallantly rescued and brought back to life. The boys belonged to St. Aidan's School, Farnworth, near Widnes, a Home Office School, and formed part of a group of 91 who are encamped on Blackpool Road, St. Annes, opposite Jameson's Farm. They came to camp yesterday week for a fortnight, and it is stated that Wednesday was the first time they had been down to the sea to bathe.

The disaster occurred near the Blackburn Home, about a mile and a half to the north of St. Annes Pier, where the coastline is fringed with sandhills. The boys entered the water about high tide, shortly after 11 a.m., and were soon enjoying themselves, under the charge of masters, in the manner of high-spirited boys, splashing and enjoying frolics in the water.

The first indication of anything wrong was an alarm that one of the boys was in difficulties. A school friend went to his rescue and brought him ashore. It was noticed that other boys were throwing up their arms, but it was thought this was only in fun. The boys were ordered out of the water, and then it was discovered that six were missing. Three bodies were quickly discovered. Assistance was obtained, and later the three other bodies were found.

The fullest sympathy of everybody in the Borough will go out to the bereaved parents and the authorities of the school in the terrible disaster.

[LSA Ex editorial] This is the most serious bathing disaster that has

occurred at St. Annes. Twenty-four years ago, on Wednesday, 25th July, 1906, twenty-two girl students were bathing off the North Promenade an hour and a half before full tide. Between a sandbank and the shore the incoming tide filled the channel rapidly, and when some of the girls tried to get across they found the water too deep, and, with a strong current running, were overwhelmed. Two girls lost their lives.

The question arose at that time as to the safety of the north shore for bathers, and at the inquest the Clerk of the Council said the north beach was unsafe for bathing, and offered the opinion that the town should construct public baths.

Open-air baths have since been constructed, but many bathers prefer the open sea, and during the summer, hundreds of people visit the shore between St. Leonard's Road and the Thursby Home. Opinions differ as to the safety of this part of the coast. Men who have a long experience of the sea and its vagaries express the opinion that the north beach is safe for bathing, as confirmed by the fact that hundreds of people have bathed there this summer without alarming incident or accident.

On the other hand, bathers who use this part of the shore qualify the safety statement by saying that it is perfectly safe to bathe there one hour before full tide, but to bathe on a receding tide is dangerous because there are runs or channels to entrap one. The tide was just on the turn when Wednesday's disaster happened.

As we observed 22 years ago after the school disaster, something might be done to warn visitors from venturing in the sea when the currents are strong or when the tide is receding-. Visitors do not understand the hidden dangers of the sea at such times. One day the sea may be like a mill pond with a gentle undertow, but with a wind and a choppy sea the undertow may be sufficient to drag one down. Bathe on the incoming tide and the rational bather is safe.

In an interview yesterday, the Town Clerk of Lytham St. Annes (Mr. W. Heap) said, "We have always regarded this as a very safe foreshore, and we have no reason to regard it as dangerous. Its danger lies in its absence of danger. That may sound paradoxical,

but there is always a danger that some bathers are apt to take too many risks, more than they should do. It is because the beach is so safe that no notices are erected. There are two patrols, whose principal duty is to watch the conduct of bathers. There is a sandbank which visitors, not bathers, are apt to get on to, and part of the duties of the patrol men is to see that visitors do not stop there when the tide is coming in. There are no currents except the usual current when the tide is going out."

Mr. Heap pointed out that there had been no fatality on this beach for about twenty years. "The Corporation regard the shore as quite as safe as any other for bathing, and if people get out of their depth that is something the Corporation cannot help. Any action which the Corporation may take will depend upon the proceedings at the inquest, but at the moment it is difficult to see what the Corporation can do. We have regulations regarding bathing, but

they only effect the dress and behaviour of bathers. We do not prohibit bathing from any section of the shore."

Conn. Fred Heyes, the Chairman of the Parks and Pleasure Grounds Committee, which controls the foreshore, said it was very distressing that such a terrible tragedy should have occurred, especially at the height of the season.

Mr. Richard Hodge, the chief of the beach patrol, said he had not known of a tragedy of this nature for the last 20 years. The beach patrol, he said, go as far as Thursby Home, and the present tragedy occurred beyond that point. The reason the beach patrol did not go any further was that it was considered safe for bathing. The shore is as flat as a board, he said.

Janet Turner

A Hard Act to Follow - OLD TOM, a Venerable Elm Tree

Memories don't always give an accurate assessment of the size of things. The photo on the front page shows YOUNG TOM standing in the centre of the road between The County Hotel and the Market Hall. Its predecessor OLD TOM, a massive and venerable elm tree, had occupied the same site since the mid 18th Century. "Leafy Lytham" was hard hit by the Dutch Elm disease of the 1970s / 80s and many fine trees fell victim including, sadly, Old Tom.

Photo 1 shows Old Tom in his prime a few years before he had to be felled for safety reasons as the disease spread.

To give an idea of scale **Photos 2 + 3** taken on the day he finally came down, 25th January 1981, shows one of the tree fellers (or should we say lumberjacks?) who carried out the deed standing on top of the trunk.

Photo 4 should be accompanied by the cry of "TIMBER."

A rough "wet" count of Tom's rings at the time made Tom around 240 years old.

Many trees had to be felled as the disease gripped the area including the fine avenue of elms at the Seafeld end of Clifton Drive, with their almost cathedral like "roof" joining over the carriageway. Fortunately the trees on Clifton Drive are becoming a feature

(all photos by David Forshaw)

Photo 2 - the tree fellers move in on 25th February 1981



Photo 3 - (detail from 2). Obviously a head for heights is needed for the job.



Photo 1 - Old Tom in his glory a few years before succumbing to Dutch Elm disease



again around forty years later but Young Tom has a long way to go following in the footsteps of Old Tom.

The sign board fastened to Old Tom in Photo 1 says "Keep Left No Parking."

David Forshaw

Photo 4 - TIMBER! Old Tom finally falls. Health & Safety concerns today would surely have the road closed and not allow the crowd anywhere near.



Heritage Centre Exhibitions Programme 2021 Revised

2021 The Programme has Changed

Once again, for various reasons, our Programme has been revised, although for once, it is not purely because of Covid issues - there have been several cancellations all for other reasons.

That said the delayed "Freedom" Day has caused us to open with extra Covid restrictions.



We will reopen on 22 June with a versatile new artist, Glynn Ward and his scenic paintings, many based on Lancashire themes.

One of Glynn's paintings is shown left.

The full Programme is below and it promises to be fresh and exciting, with some very favourite artists returning with all their new art produced during the Covid lockdowns.



Artist Glynn Ward whose painting exhibition opens the season at the Heritage Centre (photo David Forshaw)

Hilary Fletcher

THE FULL PROGRAMME

29 June - 18 July	"CAPTURED ON CANVAS" From the botanical to mechanical, a unique collection of art inspired in Lancashire by Glynn Ward
20 July - 08 Aug	"A CREATIVE SPACE - ARTISTS' GARDENS" Paintings by Brian Spooner & Eileen Tupling
10-29 Aug	"NATURAL INSPIRATIONS" Contemporary Art by Joan Aitchison
30 Aug - 19 Sep	"TO FRAME OR NOT TO FRAME" Mixed media paintings by Margaret Rodwell
21 Sept - 10 Oct	"AUTUMN EXHIBITION" by LSA Art Society
12 Oct - 21 Nov	"THE Mexico DISASTER" Lytham Heritage Group exhibition to commemorate the 135th Anniversary of the worst ever Lifeboat disaster that occurred locally on 9th December 1886.
30 Nov - 05 Dec	"CHRISTMAS FAYRE WEEK" buy original gifts by local artists and crafts people

Donation to the LHG

Dave Hoyle reports from the Archive that many local books have been donated to the Lytham Heritage Group by Pippa Greenway. These are rare and valuable and it is hoped they will generate some income for the Group.

Thank you to Pippa for her generous donation.

Heritage Talks at the Assembly Rooms

Boris's pronouncement on June 14th is to essentially keep the status quo until mid-July so the talks can go ahead as planned within the current restrictions. Leanne who is our liaison with the Assembly Rooms has advised me, after the announcement, that refreshments should not be offered at the moment. Also, Moyra Dore, who used to help us with raffle tickets and refreshments, is unable to do so at the moment and we thank her for her help in the past. If anyone is a regular at the talks and would like to lend a hand it would be much appreciated so just let me know please so we can be up and running when we can. There will be all the advised protocols in place such as limits on numbers, social distancing, masks/visors, track and trace etc.

The AGM in September will go ahead whatever the situation but may have to be Zoom only if things change dramatically. I have included a nomination form with this edition. All current officers and committee members have expressed a wish to stand again and there are a further 2 who need to be confirmed at the meeting. These are Phil Stringer who is doing a marvellous job with the new website and Peter Anthony with his extensive expertise in publicity and running a Heritage facility at Lytham Hall. We are seeking a Membership Secretary as Dave Hoyle is currently filling the role on a temporary basis and has at least 2 other roles so his hands are full!

The planned talks are: -

Monday 9th August: - David Forshaw with an illustrated talk entitled - "The Mexico disaster of 1886" This is an introduction to the exhibition on the Mexico exhibition commencing on October 12th in the Heritage Centre.

Monday 13th September: - Annual AGM commencing at 7.30pm.

Monday 11th October: - Peter Anthony talking about Lytham Hall entitled - "A sustainable plan for a heritage asset"

Monday 8th November: - Brian Topping with his "Tales of a Customs Officer"

All commence at 2.30pm (except the AGM) in the Assembly Rooms and the entrance fee for members and non-members is £2.

Hope to see you there.

Sue Forshaw

Membership and Volunteers

This might not seem to be two issues normally put together but in fact they are currently for us. Unfortunately, a significant number of our members have not renewed their membership subscriptions due at the end of April 2021. Hopefully this reminder will help you to decide to renew but if not for whatever reason this will have to be the last issue you will receive unfortunately. Membership income is important to us to help with the ongoing costs of maintaining the Antiquarian and the running costs of the Heritage Centre mainly. Over the last few years, we have found the membership has reduced year on year for the obvious reasons, but that does not explain all.

This leads to the second issue about stewarding. We do run 4 venues, when fully functioning, all requiring stewarding and we have been struggling to fill those slots post Covid, again for understandable reasons. The fewer members we have the smaller the pool we have access to. If you can spare some time to steward at the Windmill, the Old Lifeboat House, the Centre or Archive or to assist at the talks do drop us a line or email us and we will get back to you and thank you.

If we can all try to find a new member that would double our membership. Application forms are on the new website - see my notes to find the link or at our venues. Let us move forward with renewed interest in our Heritage and put the last 15 months behind us.

I look forward to seeing you all soon

Sue Forshaw

Members

We are sorry to report the sudden death in February 2021 of **Graham Mason**, a long time regular volunteer steward at the Heritage Centre. He was also a volunteer at Lytham Hall where he conducted tours of the house. Our condolences go to his family and friends.

Bill Cartmell sadly passed away in January 2021 and our sympathy goes to his wife Kate and family. He was a friendly and well respected gentleman and a loss to the community.

Sources & Further Information on the Lytham Railway Disaster

Foley, M., 2013, Britain's Railway Disasters: fatal accidents from the 1830s to the present day, Wharncliffe Transport (Pen & Sword Books), Barnsley Yorks, Available Online via Google Books, accessed 25/08/2014)

Newspaper account of the 1846 accident, Online at: www.amounderness.co.uk/railway_history.html

Video report of the 1924 Accident, Online at: www.amounderness.co.uk/lytham_accident_1924.html

Pathe News Report, Online at: www.britishpathe.com/video/terrible-rail-disaster-lytham-liverpool-blackpool

The 1846 Accident Investigation Report, Online at: ribblesteam.wordpress.com/2011/07/27/railway-accident-moss-side-lytham-1849/

The official Railway Accident Investigation Report, Online at: www.railwaysarchive.co.uk/documents/MoT_Lytham1924.pdf

Brief account on Page 5 at: www.lythamheritage.co.uk/THE%20ANTIQUARIAN%20NO%2093.pdf

A single, copyrighted picture of the damaged Engine at: www.ssplprints.com/image/221015/steam-train-accident-at-moss-side-lancashire-3-november-1924

Source: www.encyclopedia-titanica.org/forums/white-star-line/25463-news-1924-bardic-aground-lizard.html

ADDENDUM: Additional info supplied by 'AMC on the Blog, in June 2015. The source reference is given.
MPC Aug 2014 Posted on December 11, 2014

Dave Hoyle

Contact Details

We welcome all queries and suggestions. Please send emails to

thecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk

or leave a note addressed to The Editor, at the Heritage Centre.

Archive – Dave Hoyle dave@davidhoyle.co.uk

Exhibitions – Hilary Fletcher [via The Centre](#)

Social Events – Sue Forshaw [via The Centre](#)

Press & Publicity – Peter Anthony [via The Centre](#)

Windmill and Old Lifeboat House – Steve Williams
stephenm.williams@hotmail.co.uk





Lytham Heritage Group

Charity Registration No 701152

2 Henry Street
LYTHAM Lancashire FY8 5LE

Tel: (01253) 730787

e-mail: thecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk
e-mail: archivecentre@lythamheritage.co.uk
email: enquiries@lythamwindmill.co.uk
website: www.lythamheritage.co.uk
website: www.lythamwindmill.co.uk

PRESIDENT: MRS. AUDREY KIRBY



CURRENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 2019-2021

OFFICERS

Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Treasurer
Secretary
Honorary Solicitor

Sue Forshaw
Michael Bell
Michael Bell
Jennifer Trueman
Neville Dickinson

MEMBER POSITIONS

Archive Co-ordinator
Centre Exhibitions Co-ordinator
Centre Exhibitions Supporter
Centre Stewards Co-ordinator
Press & Publicity Co-ordinator *
Digital Media Co-ordinator *
Social / Speakers Co-ordinator
Windmill Exhibitions Co-ordinator
Windmill Stewards Co-ordinator
Old Lifeboat House Exhibitions Co-ordinator
Old Lifeboat House Stewards Co-ordinator
Accreditation

David Hoyle
Hilary Fletcher
Audrey Kirby
Jennifer Trueman
Peter Anthony *
Phil Stringer *
Sue Forshaw
Steve Williams
Steve Williams
Steve Williams
Steve Williams
Michael Bell

* Note that these positions need to be formally endorsed at the September 2021 AGM.

All the Executive Committee will stand down and be available for re-election.

Please use this slip for any nominations for the above positions and send to the Secretary at the above address by

NOMINATION:

NAME

OFFICE

PROPOSER:

SECONDER:
