

County at play

Heritage Open Days 2008 Thursday 11th to Sunday 14th September

Words and photographs: David Robinson

The theme this year is Lincolnshire at Play, with more than eighty opportunities to find out about theatres, cinemas, seaside holidays, hobbies, allotments, playground games, fairs and shows, football, rugby and even polo. Events over the weekend range from Barton and Crowle to Sutton Bridge and Woolsthorpe, and some have been specially designed for families.

There is a chance to peek behind doors usually closed, see some spectacular buildings and to find out how Lincolnshire people spent their leisure time in the past. Special features this year are activity and audience participation events, such as how to twirl with majorettes at the Central Hall in Grimsby, woodland tales at Holt Wood, Norton Disney, hobbies and games at The Collection in Lincoln, dressing up at Alford Manor House and the Museum of Lincolnshire Life at Lincoln, train rides at the 1940s weekend at the Wolds Railway, Ludborough and at Stickney miniature railway, historical playdays at the North Lincolnshire Museum, Scunthorpe, an autumn bird walk



EPWORTH OLD RECTORY



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GIBRALTAR POINT NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

at the Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve, family activities during the working woodlands weekend at Chambers Farm near Wragby, traditional games at the Navigation House, Sleaford, playground games at the Wilderspin National School, Barton on Humber, a children's detective trail at Boston Guildhall and croquet next door at Fydell House, and traditional games at Woolsthorpe Manor.

Unusual events are a rare opportunity to visit Lincolnshire's only Polo Club in action at Leadenham, guided tours of Grimsby Town Football Club's stadium at Blundell Park (actually in Cleethorpes) and Boston United's football stadium. Also at Grimsby a rugby match played as it was in 1885 (Springfield Road, Scartho).

If it is other guided visits you are looking for, there is a wide choice: Brackenborough deserted medieval village site, Fulbeck Manor, Harlaxton Manor (life and leisure in a Victorian country house), Humberston Fitties including a 1940s garden party and traditional games, St Anne's Bedehouses, the Arboretum, the Cathedral, BBC Radio Lincolnshire, Monks Abbey and Hartsholme Country Park in Lincoln, Westgate House in Louth, Mablethorpe, Owston Ferry Pumping Station, Sleaford Playhouse (the fourth oldest working theatre in England), the Stones of Spalding Priory, St Mary's Church Whaplode and St James's Church Grimsby.

Music is provided at St Mary's Guildhall, Lincoln, St Denys, Sleaford (an organ recital), St Martin's, Waithe and St John the Baptist, Yarburgh (handbells), and a talk about the Grand Organ at St Katherine's Heritage Centre, Lincoln.

The weekend programme also includes talks on Boston cinemas at Fydell House, on Tennyson at Leisure and on pleasure excursions at the

Lincoln Central Library, and on the history of the Lincolnshire Show at Lincoln University.

Among 'don't miss' are free access to St Peter's, Barton on Humber with interactive exhibition of the archaeology and lives of 2,800 people buried there over nine centuries, the heritage trail at

Crowle, the clock tower at Aubourn, the steam pumping station at Dogdyke (the last in the UK), all about feuds, farming and families at St Clement's, Fiskerton, the Pilgrim Story at Gainsborough Old Hall, a hundred years of the Jolly Fisherman at Skegness, the Amy Howson sloop at South Ferriby Sluice, and the Broadbent Theatre at Wickenby.

There's more - including free openings of Belton House, the medieval Bishop's Palace at Lincoln, Epworth Old Rectory, Cranwell Aviation Centre and Thornton Abbey, and village at play displays at Holbeach, Osbournby and Saxilby.

The choice is so wonderful and varied that you will need a leaflet in order to plan your weekend visits, especially since some have to be booked in advance. Copies are available

from Tourist Information Centres, museums and libraries - or from the organisers, the Heritage Trust for Lincolnshire, Old School, Cameron Street, Heckington NG34 9RW (tel 01529 461499; email info@lincsheritage.org or website www.lincsheritage.org). Enjoy.



FULBECK MANOR

