

The Manor House & Gardens

at Lee from 1772

1772 House built as a private residence by Thomas Lucas, a wealthy merchant and treasurer of Guy's Hospital, on the site of a mediaeval farmhouse.



c1773 Garden laid out, lake made and ice house built.



Part of the ice house after it was restored in 2000.

1796 Sir Francis Baring bought the house and grounds from Mrs Angerstein, formerly Mrs Lucas. He then bought the Manor of Lee and the house became the Manor House.

1810 Sir Francis Baring died. The estate was inherited by his son Sir Thomas Baring. He leased the house and gardens to private tenants.



1848 Sir Francis Thomhill Baring, (1796 - 1866) 1st Baron Northbrook, Chancellor of the Exchequer and grandson of Sir Francis inherited the estate. His son, Thomas George Baring (1826 - 1904) 1st Earl of Northbrook, was very generous with gifts of land for schools and churches in the community.



1884 Group photograph of Mr H C A Wolffram's Military 'grammar' School in front of the extension, demolished in 1901. Below Photograph of the gardens from the boathouse.



c1902 Earliest known photograph of The Gardens in use by the public.



c1904 View of the island and lake.



c1936 View of the Manor House from the Gardens.



c1957 Uniformed LCC Park Keeper.

1986 The Greater London Council was dissolved and the Gardens transferred to London Borough of Lewisham.



1990 Children's playground and other areas in the Gardens had fallen into serious decline.

1993 Local residents form Manor House Gardens User Group.



1997 Presentation by Heritage Lottery Fund to User Group after successful bid for funding to restore Gardens.



Saturday 18 May 2002 Opening of the new bridge across the Quaggy as part of the first centenary of public ownership celebrations. In November, the Gardens were granted the Green Flag Award.

1750	1800	1850	1900	1950	2000
P R I V A T E O W N E R S H I P			P U B L I C O W N E R S H I P		
1750	1800	1850	1900	1950	2000

1784 Mr Lucas died. The property was inherited by Mrs Lucas.



1790 Portrait of the former Mrs Lucas by Sir Joshua Reynolds, after her marriage to Mr Julius Angerstein.



1834 Watercolour painting by Copley Fielding.

1898 The 1st Earl of Northbrook sold the Manor House and grounds to the London County Council for £8,835 18s 4d. The estate was in a 'somewhat neglected condition' but was restored by the LCC.

Tuesday 24 June 1941. At a meeting of the Civil Defence Emergency Committee, Lewisham Council closes one of the three air raid shelters in the Gardens. Construction was sub standard and the shelter dangerous.

1976 Lee Manor Society formed by local residents for Conservation Area.



May 1966 View of the Manor House from the lake.

2003 Lewisham Council submits an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore and expand the Manor House.



June 2000 Official opening after restoration of the Gardens completed. Bidget Prentice MP (right), Lord Ashburton, Carolyn Bosworth-Davies (left) with her daughter, Robyn. Below Part of the children's playground and the lawn during the opening day celebrations.



c1797 An extensive system of elaborate greenhouses was planned. Not all were built. This one was for growing pineapples.



Saturday 16 June 1860 Presentation of a silver bugle by the ladies of Blackheath and Lee to Captain H B Farnall, commanding the 3rd Company of Kent Volunteer Rifles. Capt & Mrs Farnall were residents in the Manor House.



Whit Monday 19 May 1902 First page of a booklet produced to commemorate the opening of the Gardens to the public. The Manor House was opened as a library in November of the same year. In 2000, ninety eight years on, local residents formed Friends and Users of Manor House Library.



1949 Local family on the lawn by the lake.



Friday 16 October 1987 Hurricane destroyed many trees.



Captain's acknowledgement is made to the following sources for individual input:

CAPTIONS The Manor House, Lee and Its Associations, Edith S. Josephine Bloch through 2nd ed. London Borough of Lewisham, 1971. Manor House Gardens Landscape Strategy, Ian and Lisa Consultants, 1996. The Manor House, Lewisham Conservation Report, London Borough of Lewisham, 2002. **ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS** Alan and Sylvia Lewis, Photo (left) 1970. In Courtesy of The National Trust, London 1796. Lewisham Local Studies & Archives, c1797, 1834, 1848, 1860, 1884, 1902, c1902, c1904, c1936. Mrs. C. Lucas, 1940. M. G. W. W. 1957. A. G. 1966. 1966. The Manor House, 1997. London Borough of Lewisham, 2000. Mrs J. G. 1987, 2002.

The Manor House Gardens, as of 2009. Has won seven consecutive Green Flag Awards. The Manor House, a listed Georgian building, has also been refurbished. The historic link has been restored so as to provide unhindered access between the library and the Gardens.