

Grange Lido: the archive & future plans

SAVE GRANGE LIDO



The Grange Lido archive

Save Grange Lido (SGL) holds a rich archive of photos, documents and artefacts which tell the history of Grange Lido. Some of these items date back to the design and build of the lido in the 1930s. The lido's archive also includes items held by the Lancashire Archives, Cumbria Archives, and other local archives.

In 2022, SGL secured funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help us to properly catalogue, protect and store the Grange Lido archive.

This board shows some of the items from the Grange Lido archive. We hope that, when the lido is restored and reopened, items from the archive will be on display in a dedicated area celebrating the pool's history.

But the archive is by no means complete. If you have any photos, memories, mementos, or objects related to Grange Lido, we would love to learn about them. Visit our website www.savegrangelido.co.uk to find out how you can contribute to our ever-growing archive.



Plans for an Open Air Bathing and Swimming Pool, 1930

Some of the earliest items in the lido archive are the original plans, which date from 1930. The decision to build a lido was taken in 1930, with funding from the Unemployed Grants Committee of the Ministry of Health. The funding was aimed at projects that would have public benefit and provide work for locally unemployed men.



Photos of the lido under construction, 1931/32

These unique photos capture the lido being built, either in 1931 or 1932. The photos were donated to SGL at one of our local history days in November 2022. Look at how different the construction site is from a modern construction site - not a hard hat in sight!



Opening brochure, 1932

The lido opened in 1932. This opening brochure marked this exciting occasion. A wide range of displays and activities took place during the opening ceremony. These included swimming and diving displays, and a fashion parade of 'Windsor Water Woollies, Lido Suits and Beach Ensembles'!



Archive amateur film, 1932

The North West Film Archive includes two pieces of archive film, recorded by visitors to Grange Lido. The films provide a snapshot of the fashion and styles of the day, as well as allowing us to really see what the building and pool looked like at the time it opened.

Scan the QR code to watch one of the films for free on the British Film Institute website.



WATCH NOW



Brochure from Beauty Contest, 1933

Grange Lido has a long tradition of swimming races and galas, but it also used to hold other competitions, like beauty contests. This brochure is from the 'Miss Grange-over-Sands' Beauty Contest, held in 1933. The brochure lists the varied events that took place on the day, including an 'Exhibition of Sensational Diving by Mr. Arthur Wilkie including the Fire Dive, Bike Dive and Monte Cristo Sack Dive'. There are also some fascinating adverts for woollen swimsuits which were all the rage at the time!



Oral history: Memories of swimming at the lido

Not all the items in our archive are material objects. We also have a growing collection of 'oral histories' - recorded stories and memories that people have told us about their recollections of the pool. We are hoping to collect more oral histories at future events.



Grange Amateur Swimming Club trophies

There are over 35 swimming and diving trophies in the lido archive, dating from when the lido first opened in 1932 to the 1990s. Some trophies continued to be awarded even later, as competitions moved to other pools after the lido's closure.



Visitor photo, 1970s

We have hundreds of photos in the Grange Lido archive. Many of them are holiday snaps, captured by tourists who remember visiting the pool on their holidays. By the 1970s, the highest diving board was no longer open to the public, for safety reasons, though the lower boards continued to be popular. Thanks to Graham Broome for this great photo of the diving boards in action.



Caution deep water sign, date unknown

Some of the largest items from the lido archive are a collection of original wooden signs, rescued from the lido after it closed. The signs are currently in the possession of SGL. We hope to preserve them and to have them on display when the lido reopens.



School newspaper, 1980s

We have many official and formal documents in our archive, including newspaper articles, council documents and tourism brochures. But we also have personal documents like this school newspaper - telling the story of a schoolgirl breaking her arm during a visit to the lido. The paper's headline asks 'will the boards be bann(ed)?'



Paper hats, 1990s

When the lido closed in 1993, the site was abandoned, leaving the poolside buildings feeling a bit like the abandoned Mary Celeste! Over recent years, SGL have been rescuing items left behind when the lido closed suddenly. As well as signage and larger artefacts, this also includes ephemera like 100s of these fetching paper hats.

Restoring & reopening Grange Lido

Save Grange Lido (SGL) has been working closely with South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) and is now working with the newly formed Westmorland and Furness Council to reopen Grange Lido as an outdoor swimming pool.

The first phase of renovations - currently underway behind this hoarding - is focused on making the site stable, safe, and accessible, as part of an initial refurbishment. This work is being funded by Westmorland and Furness Council and is due to be complete in late 2024.

SGL are currently fundraising to undertake the second phase of renovations, which will bring the buildings and the pool back into community use. It is hoped that the pool will be heated using renewable energy, and a new gym and community space will be created, as well as new café and kitchen area.



To find out more about the work of Save Grange Lido (SGL) and to learn how you can get involved and support our work, visit our website www.savegrangelido.co.uk.



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