



LYNFORD HALL

COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL



A Brief History

Set in the heart of Thetford Forest, Lynford Hall Hotel is the ideal setting for a woodland walk; bird watching, fishing, or you could just relax and take in the lovely scenery.

We are less than an hour drive away from all the main towns and cities within the East Anglian region and are ideally located for day trips to the North and South Coast Line.

Lynford Hall originally belonged to a family named Sutton. The last member of the family to live here was Sir Richard Sutton, who was a great lover of Horse and Hounds and he kept a pack on the grounds at Lynford Hall.

The property extended to 7,718 acres and was renowned as one of the finest sporting estates in East Anglia. The Halcyon days before and after the turn of the century saw many Royal visitors in the magnificent ballroom, which is now named the 'Duvernay Restaurant'. The Duvernay was the main scene for many hunt balls hosted by the Lord and Lady of the Manors of Lynford, Mundford and Cranwich.

When Sir Richard Sutton died in 1856, his eldest son and heir Sir John Sutton took over the Hall. Sir J Sutton became a catholic and he retired from Lynford Hall to Burges. He had purchased several houses and turned them into a seminary for the Education and Training for the English Mission. In spring of 1857 Mr and Mrs Lyne Stephens took up residence in the old hall at Lynford. In the same year he began to build the present Lynford Hall which was designed by William Burn.

Mr Lyne Stephens became a merchant banker after he made his fortune by inventing Dolls Eyes which opened and closed. The hall took seven years to build and when it was finished in 1869. Lynford Hall became a Grade II Mansion. Madame Lyne Stephens took possession of it as a widow when Mr Lyne Stephens passed away in 1860, at the age of sixty. At the time of his death he was considered to be the richest commoner in the reign of Queen Victoria and left one million pounds.



It was at Lynford Hall where Madame Lyne Stephens spent the greatest part of her widowhood life devoting herself to the duties of a great Landowner. She owned about eight thousand acres of land. She was a "Lady Bountiful" and made generous gifts to every man, woman and child on the estate at Christmas. Lynford was not her only residence, for she had a splendid property in Roehampton and owned one of the finest houses in Paris. Before she married Mr Lyne Stephens, Yolande Marie Louise Duvernay was a world famous Danseuse and was mentioned in the Ingolby Legends. She retired from the stage some eight years before her marriage at the age of thirty-two. The Estate changed hands a number of times around the turn of the century and in September 1924 Captian Fedrick James Osbaldeston Montague MC JP sold 6,200 acres to the Forestry Commission, which subsequently became Thetford Forest Park. In 1928 a fire in the east wing destroyed the Hall. This was never replaced and the basement still remains.

In 1930 Lynford Hall was purchased by the forestry commission and refurbished as a grace and favour residence for Sir James Calder. Sir J Calder frequently entertained his Great American Friend Joseph Kennedy, then known as the 'United States Ambassador', and his son John F Kennedy at Lynford Hall.

After World War II, when the hall was used as an officer Convalescent Hospital, it became a training college for Foresters and gradually fell into some disrepair at the time.

In recent years Lynford Hall has been the setting for many popular TV series including 'Allo Allo', 'Love on the Branch Line', 'You Rang My Lord' and 'Dads Army'.

Lynford Hall Country House Hotel allows an opportunity for everybody to share the beautiful setting such as enjoying a quiet leisurely weekend amongst the Lakes, Parkland and thousands of acres of Forest. Alternatively it is an ideal setting for your business, meeting, corporate event, wedding day or just a special day out with your friends and family.

We welcome you to Lynford Hall Hotel.

