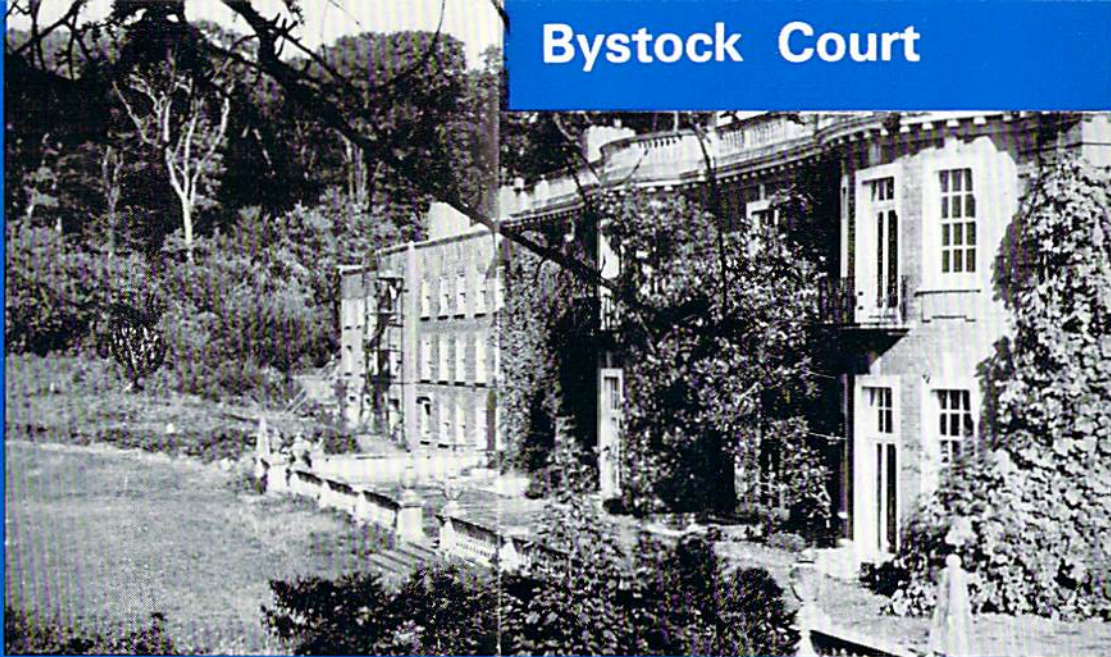


Bystock Court



Why Bystock?

In spite of the wide range of services provided by the Welfare State, and the excellent work performed by the voluntary and charitable organisations, there are many people who are faced with problems which, at a particular point in time, appear insoluble to them. They do not require professional help, but a temporary respite in a peaceful, secure and friendly atmosphere, away from the source of their trouble, where they can find themselves again and re-orientate themselves to life. It was for this purpose that the Bystock Court Association was formed.

What is Bystock?

As an INTERDENOMINATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTRE, its primary aim is to offer help to those suffering from some of the strains of modern society by giving them the opportunity to reside for an unspecified period in congenial surroundings, where they can sort out their problems with the friendship and support of the permanent Bystock community. Parents with marital difficulties, unmarried mothers, men and women on probation and those needing a half-way home after leaving hospital are some of the folk that are cared for. Those chronically ill or requiring regular nursing care normally cannot be accepted.

Families visiting Bystock are given suitable accommodation with facilities to do their own cooking. Single people share meals with the permanent residents. All are encouraged to join in the fellowship of the community, but do not themselves have to be practising Christians, though it is hoped that those who are not will find comfort—and perhaps a belief—from experiencing life in a Christian home.

Visitors are charged for board and accommodation according to their means, but the minimum charge is the sum allowed by the Ministry of Health and Social Security for this purpose. Those who are physically fit help with the maintenance of the house and grounds during their stay.

As an INTERDENOMINATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE, the Association, which supports the growing unity of the Church, offers the large rooms for conferences or retreats of any denomination. Catering arrangements are normally the responsibility of those organising the conference. Further information can be obtained from The Warden.

Bystock Court

Exmouth

Devon

The Spirit of Bystock

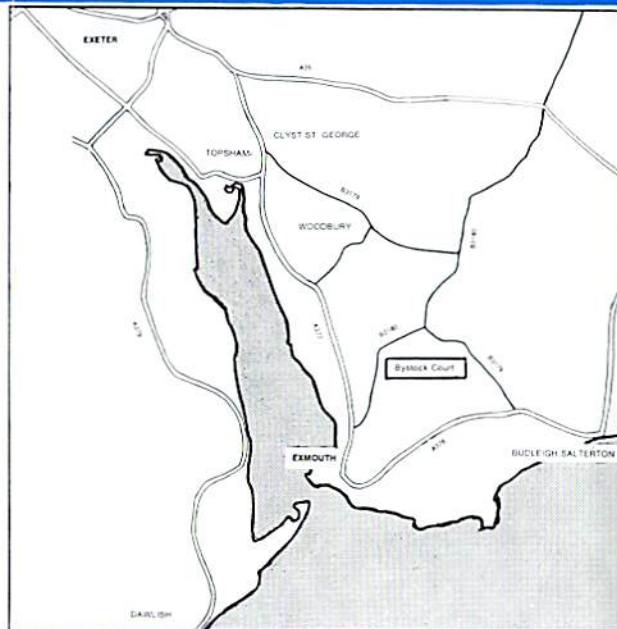
As you enter the house, you will see on the far wall a frame in which the following words are written:

And the Lord said,
 "Behold I have set aside this house
 And have blessed it
 That it may become a resting place
 And a refuge for the weary.
 Peace is to be found within its walls,
 And friendship.
 All who cross the threshold
 Shall find a welcome,
 And a comforting hand to give fresh
 courage

In place of dark despair,
 In this House shall My Name be
 glorified

For that which is shattered
 Shall be made whole."

This quotation aptly describes the spirit which is being fostered within the walls of the Court. It is not just a large house . . . it is a home . . . a Christian home.





Western Times Co.



Bystock Court - from house to home

Bystock Court is one of the largest private houses in Devon. It stands in 24 acres of grounds and woodlands close to Woodbury Common and about two miles from the sea. On a clear day, the coastline from Exmouth to Berry Head and the estuary of the River Exe can be seen from the upper windows through the screen of mature trees.

For many years the mansion was owned by the Drake family. In 1712, it was purchased by Mr. Edward Divett who was then Exeter's Member of Parliament. At the turn of the century, after changing hands many times, it was acquired by Mr. Freddie Hunter, but while it was being redecorated for his use, fire broke out and the house was completely gutted. In 1907 the red brick mansion was rebuilt with sixty rooms, including a magnificent ballroom with a floor area of 2,400 square feet. During the Second World War, Bystock was converted into a Red Cross convalescent home for servicemen.

When a group of Christians bought Bystock Court in the summer of 1965 as a home for their idea of an Interdenominational Community Centre, all but a handful of rooms has been closed and empty for two decades and the grounds, once landscaped and fastidiously tended, had become unkempt and overgrown. The house required complete redecoration,

inside and outside; a fresh connection to the mains water supply, a renewal of much of the sanitary arrangements and a new mains electricity supply. In spite of these formidable problems, Bystock soon began to regain its former charm and elegance, as groups from local church and youth clubs and a host of other volunteers moved in to clear undergrowth, to dig a trench for the mains electric cable, to install showers and other amenities, to redecorate, and so on.

Even though Bystock has come a long way in its first few years, there is still much to be done. There are now thirteen units for the visitors and permanent residents, and accommodation for nine single folk apart from the conference accommodation which is suitable for thirty people. For some time now the house has had between forty and forty-five staying regularly, of whom more than twenty are usually children.

The World Council of Churches in Geneva sponsored the first of many work camps (above left). It is hoped, as time goes on, there will be Youth conferences and work camps at least every weekend, enjoying the facilities and reaping the benefits of living and working in a community for a short while.

How is Bystock administered?

Bystock is a Registered Charity and Bystock Court Association Limited is a non-profitmaking company, limited by guarantee, but without share capital, incorporated under the Companies Act 1948 (No. 850929).

THE COUNCIL, which is responsible for the administration of the Association, is elected annually by Members at the Annual General Meeting. All Members of the Council are unpaid.

MEMBERS. Anyone can become a Member of the Association for a subscription of not less than one pound a year. A Member has the right to attend the AGM and to elect, either in person, or by proxy, the Members of the Council.

THE COMMUNITY. The permanent members of the Community comprise four self-supporting families, who give their spare time and energy to the running of the Community.

THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS and the Articles of Association are always available for inspection at Bystock Court.

How YOU can help —

There are many ways in which you can help the continued development of Bystock Court and all that it seeks to achieve:

BY REMEMBERING the Bystock Court community in your prayers, whatever your denomination.

A prayer group is held at 8 p.m. on the First Thursday of each month.

BY GIVING suitable articles of furniture, bedding, kitchenware, cutlery, etc. for furnishing the Units of accommodation.

BY OFFERING your time and skill on a working holiday for adapting, reclaiming and maintaining the house and the grounds.

BY BECOMING a Member of the Bystock Court Association. The annual subscription is not less than one pound. An application form for Membership can be found opposite. If you have a bank account you may wish to maintain your Membership by Banker's Order.

BY MAKING a donation, however small, to the Association.

As the Association is a Registered Charity, you may pay your Subscription under a Deed of Covenant, which enables the Association to reclaim the income tax you have paid. Thus, assuming you pay tax at the standard rate, now 39p in the £, your £1 is worth £1.60.

If you would like any further information about Bystock, please do not hesitate to write to: THE SECRETARY, Bystock Court, Wthycombe Exmouth, Devon. (Tel. Exmouth 6605 (staff), 2045 (guests)).