

National Trust Press Release

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Coming of Age: reimagined rooms shed light on the teenage years of Lanhydrock's Victorian children

Three newly-refurbished rooms have recently reopened at the National Trust's Lanhydrock house, outside Bodmin, including those of eldest son and heir Thomas Charles 'Tommy' Agar-Robartes, who died in action during the First World War.

Building on the stories told in the nursery rooms at Lanhydrock, which opened in March last year, visitors can now see the three 'Coming of Age' rooms which follow the teenage years of the Agar-Robartes children as they entered society.

The Bay Bedroom, a room once reserved for guests of the Victorian family, now tells the story of the Agar-Robartes girls who were educated at home before being presented at court as debutantes. Visitors can practice their best waltzing dance steps on a specially-designed mat or relax on the plush sofa beneath a regal canopy. There are displays of delicate silverware and finery next to chairs used by the family at several royal coronations. There is even a bespoke scent wafting through the air and a debutante dress taking pride of place, a replica of one worn by eldest daughter Mary Vere.

Visitors can find out what life was like for the young men of the family in eldest son Tommy's bedroom and dressing room. Sophisticated and popular, Tommy was the MP for St Austell soon after the turn of the 20th century and became known as the 'best dressed man in Parliament'. His rooms display the life of a wealthy young man at the turn of the century, including photographs, sports and leisure wear, a travelling trunk and a full set of white tie and tails from Tommy's London tailor.

When coming up with the concepts for these new rooms, Lanhydrock staff established a focus group of 16–25-year-old colleagues to find out what Tommy and Mary's modern contemporaries would like to see in these new spaces. Ideas ranged from a 'vintage' selfie stand to holographic photos of the Victorian children, which show them growing up as visitors walk by. Oliver Byram, Assistant Business Services Co-ordinator at Lanhydrock, was part of the focus group; 'It's been an incredibly rewarding experience and a wonderful opportunity to have an influence on a part of Lanhydrock I would not normally. Working with passionate colleagues to see our co-created vision come to life has been really great.'

Dr Charlotte Newman, Senior Collections and House Manager, adds; 'It was a privilege to work with young employees at the National Trust to develop this experience, about young people, for young people, by young people. The dance mat – designed by the group – has been a huge hit. It's great to see families of all ages interacting within this space.'

The children's nursery and Coming of Age rooms can both be seen on the Family route of Lanhydrock House from every day until 31 October 2023. Normal admission applies for non-National Trust members.

Visitors can contact the office at Lanhydrock by email lanhydrock@nationaltrust.org.uk or telephone 01208 265650, or for more information visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lanhydrock.

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Images: Images can be downloaded [here](#). Only to be used in conjunction with this press release. Credit and caption as per file name.

About Lanhydrock

Lanhydrock is the quintessential country house and estate, with the feel of a wealthy but unpretentious family home. After a devastating fire in 1881 the Jacobean house was refurbished in high-Victorian style, with the best in country house design and planning and the latest mod-cons. Discover two sides of Victorian life: from the kitchen which offers a thrilling glimpse into life 'below stairs', to the luxurious family areas, elegant dining room and spacious bedrooms which reveal the comforts of 'upstairs' living.

The extensive 30-acre garden enjoys year-round colour. There are beautiful herbaceous borders, a fabulous formal parterre and colourful higher gardens filled with camellias, magnolias and rhododendrons. The estate is well worth exploring too, with ancient woodlands and tranquil riverside paths. There are also off-road cycle trails, with special routes for families and novice riders, and you can even hire a bike from us to make the most of this opportunity.

About the National Trust

The National Trust is a conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people: Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, who saw the importance of the nation's heritage and open spaces and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. Today, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, we continue to look after places so people and nature can thrive.

The challenges of the coronavirus pandemic have shown this is more important than ever. From finding fresh air and open skies to tracking a bee's flight to a flower; from finding beauty in an exquisite painting or discovering the hidden history of a country house nearby - the places we care for enrich people's lives.

Entirely independent of Government, the National Trust looks after more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline and 500 historic properties, gardens and nature reserves.

The National Trust is for everyone - we were founded for the benefit of the whole nation. We receive on average more than 26.9 million visits each year to the places we care for that have an entry fee, and an estimated 100m visits to the outdoor places that are free of charge.

Paying visitors, together with our 5.6 million members and more than 53,000 volunteers, support our work to care for nature, beauty, history. For everyone, for ever.

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