

TUDOR MANSION UP FOR SALE FOR £1.4M IN EAST SUSSEX



A Tudor mansion where Neil Diamond and Leonard Cohen sang and formerly owned by the founder of the Guinness Book of Records has gone up auction with a guide price of £1.4million.

The Grade-II listed Luxford House in East Sussex was originally a Tudor 'smokehouse' dating from the early 16th century but was substantially extended and renovated in the 1930s when it was purchased by Sir Hugh Beaver, the director general of the Ministry of Works during the Second World War.

After the war Sir Hugh became managing director of Guinness where he came up with the idea of the Guinness Book of Records following an argument about what was the fastest game bird in Europe.

After Beaver's death in 1967, the property became famous for its musical connections.

Luxford House, a grade II listed Tudor property with musical connections, has gone up for auction for a guide price of £1.4m

The house has period features throughout, including inglenook fireplaces, historic carvings and oak-panelled walls

The house made an appearance on Neil Diamond's *Stones*, which featured an image of the singer sitting by the garden memorial to Beaver's wife

The bench and the statue have changed and the wisteria has grown a lot since then but the spot is still easily recognisable

The house includes six bedrooms, four reception rooms, four bathrooms, a shower room, a library and about two acres of land

It was let by Sir Hugh's daughter to Tony Stratton-Smith, the rock music manager, who hosted many stars of the day there including Neil Diamond, Leonard Cohen and Genesis.

Genesis singer Phil Collins described the 'beautiful Tudor pile' as a 'picture postcard mansion' with 'rolling lawns to play croquet' when he stayed there.

As well as bands recording records at Luxford House it also featured in album artwork.

Van Der Graaf Generator recorded much of their album 'Pawn Hearts' at the mansion and the sleeve of their 1971 album features a photograph of the band on the south lawn.

The house also made an appearance on the sleeve of Bert Jansch's LA Turnaround, which was recorded in the grounds, and on Neil Diamond's Stones, which featured an image of the singer sitting by the garden memorial to Beaver's wife, Adaline.

The home was rented by Tony Stratton-Smith the rock music manager whose signings included Genesis and Van der Graaf Generator

The spacious house in the six-bedroom property in East Sussex is up for sale at auction

The spacious home in East Sussex has six bedrooms, as well as a rich musical history

Originally a three-bay smokehouse dating from the early 16th century, it was substantially extended and renovated in the 1930s

One of the four bathrooms in the property that will go on sale at auction for £1.4million on December 7

Genesis spent the summer at the house in 1971 recording their third album, but the first to feature Collins, called 'Nursery Cryme'. This album saw the band move away from their folk-oriented sound into progressive rock.

Writing in his autobiography 'Not Dead Yet', Collins wrote: 'But here in summer 1971, a year on from my joining Genesis, band life rolls inexorably distractingly on and we decamp to Luxford House in Crowborough.

'It's Strat's rented home, and also his suggestion: bands getting it together in the country - that is, writing some songs away from hurly-burly of the city - is very much the in-thing. If it's all right for Traffic and Led Zeppelin, it's all right for Genesis.

'The house is a beautiful Tudor pile, a picture-postcard mansion with a decent outbuilding that will do for the songwriting sessions.

'We eat great meals prepared by one of the roadies, we drink red wine by the barrel, we repair to the rolling lawns to play croquet.'

Describing the house, Mr Stratton-Smith said: 'It was a lovely old Tudor house, which was in the centre spread of Van Der Graaf's Pawn Hearts album cover.

'The sort of house with its sixteenth century timbers that appeared to have very good vibes for musicians.

'Many have worked and stayed there - Neil Diamond, Leonard Cohen, Van Der Graaf, Bert Jansch, Bob Johnson, Mike Nesmith.'

Bert Jansch recorded LA Turnaround (1974) at Luxford, using the library as the live room, and had Mike Nesmith of The Monkees producing and playing on some of the tracks.

After Sir Hugh Beaver's death in 1967, the property became awash with musical connections

The kitchen in the property has granite work surfaces, an island unit, a four-oven Aga and a walk-in larder

The six-bedroom property has two acres of land and is going under the hammer at auction tomorrow

The Grade II listed property is now going up for auction with estate agents Austin Gray with a guide price of £1.4million.

It includes six bedrooms, four reception rooms, four bathrooms, a shower room, a library and about two acres of land.

The house has period features throughout, including inglenook fireplaces, historic carvings and oak-panelled walls depicting Tudor roses and Scottish thistles.

The kitchen has granite work surfaces, an island unit, a four-oven Aga and a walk-in larder.

The current owners, Adrian Paye and Anna Lawford, have lived at Luxford House since 2004 and are looking to relocate

The current owners, Adrian Paye and Anna Lawford, have lived there since 2004 and are looking to relocate.

Mr Paye said: 'We have carefully restored and enhanced the property - renewed the roof, drainage, plumbing, heating and electrics, and added sensitive adaptations to ensure the house is ready for the next phase of its life.

'The few repairs which were needed to the oak frame were carried out by McCurdy, who recreated Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

'The gardens are a delight - a mixture of mature shrubs, trees, and herbaceous, lots of rare mature rhododendrons, camellias and azaleas in the spring.

'With mature hedging around the property, the house and gardens are wonderfully private.

'The historic stone wall which features on Neil Diamond's Stones album cover, still has the mature wisteria arching across it.

'Now we have decided to relocate to the Lake District so the house is on the market for only the fifth time in 100 years.'

The house will be sold at auction on December 7, 2017.