



## LIVERPOOL HERITAGE FORUM

HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY, PERFORMING ARTS, ARCHITECTURE, FINE ARTS

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**A networking organisation of voluntary cultural societies in the Liverpool area.**

**++++Please send in your news and events++++**

## NEWSLETTER No 10

**9 MARCH 2006**

### EDITORIAL

The Historic Warships exhibition in Birkenhead closed and went into bankruptcy last month. Isn't it scandalous that just as Merseyside is coming into its own again, the public authorities allow such a unique collection as this to be sold off, possibly to the breakers yard? Wirral Council is also intent on allowing developers to block the view of another of Wirral's few historic sites, Fort Perch Rock. If they get their way, posterity will have a Morrisons Supermarket and some flats to look at instead of seeing the Fort at the entrance of Liverpool's river which it was built to protect.

In similar iconoclastic vein, the once-proud Liverpool Art School building has been sold by Liverpool John Moores University to raise money and will probably become flats. Another venue of creative arts kicked out of its premises to permit conversion to flats is The Picket pub, a venue for musicians that was located for 25 years in the beautiful building in Hardman Street, originally the Liverpool Blind School (the second such in the country). Just as Liverpool Vision (the quango leading renewal of the urban fabric) appoints a "Champion" of the city's Hope Street arts quarter, two of the buildings which made it the arts quarter are losing their original roles. What is next for *apartmentisation* - the Philharmonic Hall and the two Cathedrals?

Is there somebody in Merseyside's public life big enough to save our heritage?

(Perhaps the arts will get their revenge. I understand that the painter Augustus John, who was a teacher at the Art School, once had a studio in the building in Rodney Street which now houses the headquarters of LJMU. They should watch out for his ghost!

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

# There is to be a "Liverpool Sunday City Walk" on 26 March about the "Hopes of Hope Street".

# The Maritime Museum has three upcoming lectures, open to everybody, all at 7.15. Nigel Hall of Oxford University will give the *Paget-Tomlinson Honorary Lecture* "When Cotton was King" on Thursday 30 March. Edward Paget-Tomlinson, who died in 2003, was Liverpool Museum's Keeper of Shipping and Land Transport in the 1960s. The *Peter Davies Honorary Lecture* on "The Coastal Trade" will be given on Thursday 27 April by John Armstrong of Thames Valley University. Professor Peter Davies is a Patron of the Friends of National Museums Liverpool. John Hume, Chair of the Royal Commission on the Ancient Monuments of Scotland, will speak on "*Glasgow and Liverpool: Comparisons of the Built Environment in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century*" on Thursday 20 April.

# Some superb paintings from Sudley House (now temporarily closed for refurbishment) are on display till 26 March at the Williamson Gallery in Birkenhead. The Friends of National Museums Liverpool made a gift of £40,000 towards the refurbishments. Also at the Williamson, until 26 March, are paintings by local artist Eddie Scott Jones. One of these is of the barge "Wincham", owned by the Wincham Preservation Society, which is associated with the Friends of National Museums Liverpool.

# The Travelling People play at a St Patrick's Day (17 March) Ceili at the Gild Hall in Crosby. A few tickets left: call Kevin Barga on 01704 831198. They also play at the Convention of the British Titanic Society at the Adelphi on 22 April. The public are welcome to visit displays at the hotel and at an auction the previous night. Kevin is collecting material about the White Star line.

# The Heswall Society has its AGM on Monday 3 April and a talk by Martin Grundy on the History of Punch and Judy at 8 pm. Contact [jstuart.marsden@btinternet.com](mailto:jstuart.marsden@btinternet.com)

# Liverpool Italian Opera has operatic excerpts at St Nicholas on 23 March at 7.15. (Contact [nickhardy2000@hotmail.com](mailto:nickhardy2000@hotmail.com))

# Liverpool History Society has a meeting on Sunday 19 March celebrating its fifth birthday. ([www.liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk))

# Liverpool Irish festival 11/12 March includes an concert at the Phil. (Contact 07759 451 645 or 236 3840).

# The Friends of St James' Garden (no 's' at the end!) behind the Anglican Cathedral are busy on the site on Saturdays between 9.30 and 11.30 if you would like to join them.

# The English Speaking Union has a talk at the Athenaeum on 17 March at 7 pm by Neil Petersen, Head of Liverpool Welcome.

# Liverpool Opera Circle has a talk by Richard Swanson on "Opera for Fun" at The Athenaeum on Wednesday 29 March at 7.30. Contact 01625 574 938. On 26 April, Michael Kennedy Sunday Telegraph Arts Editor, speaks to the Circle on Richard Strauss.

# Liverpool & S.W. Lancs Family History has a talk at 7.30 on 9 May at the Gateway Centre, London Road, on that fascinating topic "Was Hitler in Liverpool". This relates to stories - hotly denied by some - that Adolph Hitler stayed with a relative (in Upper Stanhope Street?) during the months when he disappeared from view after leaving Vienna for Munich.

# The city's Downtown Week this year is 11-18 June. See website [www.downtownweek.com](http://www.downtownweek.com)

# The 4<sup>th</sup> Liverpool Biennial takes place this year 16-26 November.

## **PREPARING FOR 2007**

# The Forum's general meeting on 16 February was attended by nearly 50 people. Work is in hand to produce a programme of events for 2007. Details of the meeting have been circulated. Further copies can be supplied on request. Societies are urged

to make their plans for 2007 and if they want to share in the general heritage publicity for 2007, to send in details of what they will be doing.

I would draw attention to the need to be aware of the possibility of clashes and duplication of three types of activity – walks, talks and publications. The Liverpool Culture Company produces a leaflet “Liverpool Sunday City Walks” and National Museums Liverpool has a leaflet advertising talks.

# Members of the Forum are working on a list of the 100 “greatest” Liverpudlians. Such a list may simply point to existing literature describing their work but, more importantly, may bring forward details of people who don’t qualify for much coverage in national literature but may nevertheless be of significance in the local context. It could include people after whom streets in the city are named (e.g. Hardman, Leece, Lord, Brown, Sir Thomas etc.

# The Friends of Liverpool Monuments have produced an excellent booklet about the drinking fountains in Liverpool installed by George Melly, a philanthropic cotton broker. The first of these was erected in 1854 (five years before London had any). The idea came from Geneva where, Melly observed, the council had charge of the water supply and provided many free drinking fountains. In Liverpool at the time, piped water was only supplied to those who could afford to pay for it, the few. It was said that dockers could only quench their thirst in pubs or from horse troughs. The first granite fountain was erected at Princes Dock in March 1854. On one day, 5 April 1855, 2308 people were counted using it. It is hoped that some of the fountains will shortly be brought back into use. (contact [liverpoolmonuments@gmail.com](mailto:liverpoolmonuments@gmail.com))

# The Friends of Liverpool Monuments has a new project – to repair the grave in Toxteth Cemetery containing the ashes of Irvine Stephens Bulloch (uncle of US President Teddy Roosevelt), who is said to have fired the last shot from the American Confederate ship “Alabama” before she was sunk in the English Channel in June 1864. Alongside Stephen’s grave is that of his half brother, James Dunwoody Bulloch, who ordered the building of the “Alabama” from Laird’s in Birkenhead and the “Florida” from Millers of Toxteth.

# Knowsley Historical Society is producing a book about “Knowsley people old and new” for 2008. It would be great if the long connection between the Earls of Derby, their home at Knowsley and the city of Liverpool, where the family occupied the White Tower (where Tower Buildings is now situated at the bottom of Water Street), could be marked in some way.

# Liverpool Nautical Research Society plans a 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary publication for January 2008.

# In different venues in Liverpool I often come across books for sale that I’ve never heard of previously. I’m sure I’m not the only person who has little knowledge of the vast range of material available. Liverpool does not suffer from a lack of research information - the problem is to know what is available and how to get hold of it. Should there not be lists of books and pamphlets about the city which are currently for sale? Will anyone help to make such lists and/or send in names of publications? (I recently saw “Fabulous Liverpool” by Paul Terence Madden, “Picture Palaces of Liverpool” by Harold Ackroyd, “Pictorial Liverpool and the art of W.G. and W. Herdman” by Kay Parrott and “Scotland Road – the old neighbourhood” by Terry Cole, all on sale at the Ferry terminal.)

# The Friends of National Museums had a private viewing of the pre-Raphaelite drawings on show (till 14 May) at the Lady Lever. Merseyside is very privileged in having such wonderful examples of the work of this school.

## **AROUND TOWN**

# Baroness Cox of Queensbury was installed as Chancellor of the new Liverpool Hope University at the Metropolitan Cathedral on 25 January. Liverpool Hope College was founded in 1980 by the merger of the Anglican St Katherine's College (founded 1844), the Catholic Notre Dame College (founded 1856 and formerly located where Hope Street joins Mount Pleasant and another Catholic College, Christ's', founded in 1964. Full university status was accorded in July 2005. It is the UK's only fully ecumenical higher education institution. Its crest include two liver birds. Its motto, written in Greek, is "in faith, hope and love" - the last being the Greek word *agape*, meaning love of one's fellow man or friendship, as opposed to other Greek words for "love" such as *eros*, referring to sexual and romantic love and *storgos philia*, love of one's family.

# The North West Development Agency has announced that Andrew Backhouse has been appointed as heritage tourism executive at the Culture Northwest. We await with interest any impact this appointment may have on the work of societies participating in the Forum.

# I made two suggestions at a recent discussion with top people from English Heritage. Firstly, that there should be a list of buildings which don't qualify for official Listed Building status but which are nevertheless worthy, in the context of the city's history, of preservation or at least documentation before demolition or change of use Secondly, that a means should be found whereby heritage enthusiasts can discuss proposed demolitions and changes of use earlier enough to have an impact on decisions by the Planning Committee.

# The North West Film Archive showed films of the river Mersey filmed in 1897, Port Sunlight in 1931, the Arrowe Park Scout Jamboree of 1929 and transport of yesteryear in Merseyside including the Overhead. This was at Wirral Museum, with other shows, of different material in Sefton and St Helens - but not apparently in Liverpool. (Contact 0161 247 3097)

# A striking feature of Liverpool's recent history has been the close co-operation now existing between the Anglican, Roman Catholic and free churches in the city (and indeed the friendly relations between the Christian churches and people of other faiths). The list of cathedral Sunday services published in the Daily Telegraph on 11 February showed the services at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, the first time I have noticed a non-Anglican cathedral in the list. Have I been missing something or is this a first?

# We await news about whether there will be another Local History Show on BBC Radio Merseyside. This is important because local radio often reaches parts of the population that newspapers don't reach.

# A retired Post Office worker, Ron Taylor, has succeeded in getting Tyson Smith's Post Office War Memorial put back into the old Post Office building, now the Met Quarter.

Andrew Pearce