

Liverpool Cultural Heritage Forum

A network of voluntary community societies concerned with heritage and culture in the Liverpool area. Send your news to us on: zoom2222@btinternet.com. Also forward this Newsletter to anyone who may be interested or, better still, send us names for our circulation list. Our website is : www.liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

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2009

THE FORUM RE-BORN

Liverpool Cultural Heritage Forum was set up at a meeting held in the Cockerell Room of St George's Hall on 19 October. This is a formalisation of the status of Liverpool Heritage Forum which has existed for four years and among other things will strengthen the links between heritage and arts societies and Liverpool City Council. The new Forum will continue the task of networking between societies by means of this newsletter, its website and occasional meetings. Membership will be by paying a small subscription, details of which will be circulated later, and will be open to any individual or society.

Andrew Pearce was elected Chairman, Rob Ainsworth Vice Chairman and Treasurer, Kevin Barga Secretary and Anders Timms Membership Secretary. Six committee members were also elected.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Liverpool Welsh Choral has a performance of Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Jeremiah Clarke's *trumpet suite* and Vivaldi's *Gloria* in St George's Hall on Saturday 14 November at 7.30 pm. Tickets: £16 and £20 available from Mavis Owens on 0151 652 6374

St George's Hall continues to be very busy. There will be organ recitals at 1.30 on 23 November and 21 December. Lord Alton will give the Roscoe Lecture on 27 October. The next revealing of the floor is planned for early February next year. The Friends have made a contribution of £15,000 towards improvements to the souvenir shop. General info: 0151 428 2631. Roscoe lectures : 0151 231 3852.

During March 2010 the 86th Liverpool Performing Arts Festival will take to the stage – over 4,000 performers from across the North West will descend on the city over two weeks, beginning on Monday, March 5, to showcase their talents in music, speech, drama and dance from solo verse to 60 strong choirs and orchestras from ages 5 to 80 years of age. Past festival winners include Sir Simon Rattle, Claire Sweeney, BBC young musician of the year Mark Simpson and X-Factor finalist Ray Quinn. Claire McColgan, Head of Culture at Liverpool City Council, said: "It's important we continue to provide a stage to cultivate and develop the performing arts at the grass roots and nurture the confidence to excel through events such as this. This festival has a proven track record for helping to develop and encourage the stars of tomorrow and for that it is a huge

asset to the cultural health of the city. The Festival is affiliated to 'The British Federation of Music Festivals' of which Her Majesty the Queen is Patron. Its patron is Sir Simon Rattle, its President Cllr Mike Storey and its Vice President Prof. Rex Makin. See www.liverpoolperformingarts.com

Our friends in Chester tell us of a silent film screening accompanied with live musicians of the 1923 silent film *Salomé* (an adaptation of a work by Oscar Wilde) at Christ Church, Gloucester Street Chester on Thursday 29th October, 8pm. Tickets are £9/£7 (2 4 1 ticket deals). LCHF members are being offered a 241 ticket deal, (tickets £9/£7) to redeem simply quote 'SOAPBOX 2' at box office at www.chesterperforms.com call 0870 428 0785 or visit Chester Tourist Information Office, Northgate Street.

Bowersdale Resource Centre has an open day on 3 November in connection with its refurbishment. There will be a display of Seaforth's history. Further participation will be welcomed. Contact: 0151 474 8877.

'SALE' is a contemporary exhibition at ArtSpace, 08 Place, Whitechapel, Liverpool starting Monday 12 October 2009 until 20 November 2009. Open Culture working with The Royal Standard, the Liverpool based artists group, brings this exhibition of work from emerging and established artists across the UK and beyond. It includes paintings, sculpture, drawing, film and photography for sale. info@culture.org.uk

DaDaFest 09 climaxes with the UK's only annual Award ceremony celebrating the achievements of disabled and deaf artists. This year it is held for the first time at The Hilton Liverpool on 3rd December 09 as part of International Disabled Peoples Day. Five awards are offered and each winner will receive around £500 to develop their art work. See nomination form for more details as each award carries a different offer on www.dadahello.com/dadafest). Nominations are open to any disabled or deaf artists or group and can be self nominated or made on behalf of someone else. Applications can also be requested by contacting the office for a form. Further information can be obtained from: Faye Christiansen on 0151 703 2250 [direct line available 9.30am – 5pm Mon- Fri], Minicom 0151 706 0365 or e-mail faye@dadahello.com

NEWS

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Chief Conductor, Vasily Petrenko, were awarded 'Orchestral Recording of the Year' for their recording of Tchaikovsky's Manfred Symphony in the Classic FM Gramophone Awards, often called the 'Oscars' of the classical music world, at a prestigious Awards lunch at London's Dorchester Hotel. Follow the Liverpool Phil at www.liverpoolphil.com

Liverpool City Council has appointed a leading Scottish tourism entrepreneur to lead its Tourism service. **Alison** McRae, 39, will take up the post of Director of Destination Liverpool in the middle of November to oversee the city region's £1.3 bn visitor economy sector and build on the city's success as European Capital of Culture. Previously Alison worked with Scottish Enterprise as Project Director for the Scottish Government initiative "Homecoming Scotland."

The Mersey Ferries' Manchester Ship Canal tours have broken the 22,000 barrier for the first time, up six per cent on Capital of Culture year! Look out for more next year. Info: 0151 330 1444 or see www.merseyferries.co.uk

"Auld Lang Syne" by Harry B. Nelson in 1935 records This book will be the topic of a talk by Michael Corfe at Birkenhead History Society on 21 January. A three-legged calf which was sent to the Isle of Man, noted for the Legs of Man and an early cricket match between Birkenhead and an All England team - eighteen players in the former but only eleven in the latter!

Eight "Core Cities", including Liverpool, have their "Summit" at the BT Arena and Convention Centre on 3 and 4 November. The head of several City Councils including Cllr. Warren Bradley will be there together the Minister of State for Transport, Nick Clegg, Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Rory Bremner. This is an honour for Liverpool, a chance for others to see the major improvements in the city over the last two or three years and an opportunity to restate, for the benefit of politicians and investors in London, that the major provincial cities have a great deal to offer.

Liverpool 245 is the designation of a tram being preserved by Merseyside Tramway Preservation Society. The society's AGM is on 16 November at the Ship & Mitre in Dale Street, Liverpool at 8 pm. Info: Rob Jones, 103 Grive Road, Wallasey CH45 4HG

The annual conference of the British Association of Friends of Museums took place recently in York. There were discussions about relationships between Friends and the management of museums (should Friends be entirely under the control of the management or carry out their efforts in support of the museum on an independent basis?) and should museums be viewed primarily as places to conserve, display and explain beautiful and rare objects or be primarily instruments of education? If representatives of the management of museums had been present, the debate could have been vigorous indeed.

Merseyside Civic Society has been active in the plans to replace the defunct Civic Trust with some new grouping of civic societies. It is active in discussions about the future of Renshaw Street now that Rapid Hardware have moved out and in the preparation of a major planning strategy for the city. The exhibition "Making plans: 100 Years of Civic Design" continues at the Victoria Gallery in Brownlow Hill until 28 November.

We understand plans are afoot to publish a book about the firms which helped to make Liverpool such an important city. The Sunday Times has TJ Morris, the discount retailer, as No. 39 in its 2009 list of mid-market firms, the largest Liverpool entry on the list. TJ Hughes is No. 138 and Edward Billington No. 163. Of course, much of the industry of the Liverpool area is now outside the city in such places as Knowsley, Wirral, Skelmersdale and Ellesmere Port.

CONTACTS

We cannot find contact detail of South Sefton Local History Forum. Can you help? We are aware of:

- Crosby and District Historical Society andrea.louis@blueyonder.co.uk
- Knowsley Historical Society knowsley.Sandra@blueyonder.co.uk
- Old Christ Church Waterloo johnbramham@uwclub.net

THIS AND THAT

Dominic Poggi was a wealthy Italian who came to Liverpool in the middle of the nineteenth century as part of the Grand Tour, which at that time included Liverpool. He met and married the daughter of Liverpool's Port Medical Officer and settled down in New Brighton where he opened a school in Magazine Lane. This was damaged by fire and later used as a baker's shop and demolished in 1899, probably as a result of the reconstruction of Egremont promenade and the development of Vale Park. A shelter now erected on the corner of magazine commemorates the location of the school. Poggi later became headmaster of the grammar school at Audlem in south Cheshire and is buried in the grave yard there. It is said that two sons of Garibaldi, the statesman who led the campaign to unify the different states of Italy, were educated at the New Brighton school.

Liverpool was one of several towns where pottery was made in 18th and 19th centuries. Much of it was exported to America. Liverpool-made items on display include a jug inscribed "Rowland

1863' (who was Rowland?), a coffee pot on which the decoration had run due to incorrect firing, a sauceboat copying the design of a piece of silverware, a jug and a bottle made in "Fazackerley" colours, a plate by William Chaffers bearing Chinese patterns and a punchbowl copying an engraving by William Hogarth. There are two tiles each bearing the image of an elephant, one made in Bristol, one in Liverpool, one design being the reverse image of the other. All these, by the way, are on display in Bristol City Museum.

The excellent York Railway Museum has two carriages of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, one named *Traveller* and the other *Huskisson*, named after the government minister and Liverpool MP who was killed by a train drawn by *The Rocket* as he tried to board another train to speak with the Duke of Wellington. There is an old print of carriages entitled *Times, Marquis of Stafford, Treasurer, Despatch and Trade*. The naming of individual carriages no doubt followed the practice of naming horse-drawn stage coaches. Eighteenth century stage coaches serving Liverpool included the *Hirondelle*, the *Beehive* and the *Red Rover*. The early railway L & M carriages have a strong look of three stage coaches joined together.

Those who knock Liverpool about its crime rate might like to note that the city was not in the worst twenty cities for car thefts. Chislehurst in Kent was worst. Three parts of Ilford and two parts of Hornchurch in Essex were among the towns with the worst problems of this kind.

The Brownlow Hill premises of the University of Liverpool were the origin of the term "red brick" universities. The University is a member of the prestige Russell group of twenty research-intensive universities. The university was founded in 1881 as University College. In 1884 it became part of Victoria University, which also had colleges in Manchester and Leeds. It was granted a Royal Charter in 1903 enabling it to grant its own degrees and to be entitled the University of Liverpool. Initially the Earl of Derby was appointed President and Mr William Rathbone MP was one of the Vice Presidents. Recently, the Sunday Times rating system rated the university 29th in the UK and Ireland, 55th in Europe and 137th in the world. The research activities of its History Department, of interest to those interested in heritage, was rated among the very top in the UK, according to the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise. Its teaching was rated 'excellent' under the most recent teaching quality assessment. However, not good for its image, is a notice still attached last week to the railings outside the School of Music advertising an event to come in 2008!)

A lecture on climate change by Jonathan Porritt at the Phil, part of the University of Liverpool's lecture series is obviously not a heritage topic. Of interest, though, was his statement that refurbishing old houses rather than demolition and new-build is much better ecologically. Heritage supporters who condemn the demolish and new-build policies favoured by the government will welcome this support. On leaving the Phil, the skeleton of Josephine Butler House across the street stands as a monument of how not to operate a municipal conservation policy for the city's fine buildings, a perfectly good building destroyed by weak planning policy giving in to the financial ambitions of developers.

We often find ourselves using the expression "supporters of heritage". There seems to be no single word to describe ourselves. So can we adopt the word "heritager" to describe us? We think that "gobmacked" is a word invented in Liverpool. We have previously wondered if "bigosity" (fondness for being big and important) is a Liverpool word which might also catch on nationally. So why should we not give "heritager" and the wider English speaking world. Your views?

Joke for scouse-o-phones: sign outside a hairdressers in Kirkdale: "Hairs and Sirs".

Andrew Pearce, Editor.