



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.

NOTE FOLLOWING GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE ATHENAEUM ON 16 FEBRUARY 2006 (attended by about 50 People)

Plans of Liverpool Culture Company.

Graham Boxer, and Eileen Willshaw of Liverpool Culture Company spoke of official plans for 2007. These two officers are a channel of communication for our societies to the Culture Company. Additionally, Graham and I are among the seven members of the Liverpool Heritage and Regeneration Advisory Group which advises the Culture Company on heritage matters. The Culture Company is of course the arm of the City Council charged with making 2008 and the years before and after it a success.

Many of the plans for major activities in 2007 are still at the stage of contract negotiations and cannot therefore be made public yet but preparations are advanced and plans will be announced in July. It is intended that there should be links between the official website of the Culture Company and the Forum's new website which is in course of development.

Both 2007 and 2008 will celebrate Liverpool's heritage and cultural achievements with 2007 aimed at the people of the city and 2008 at the wider world. There are three groups of plans - heritage and the arts, community-based projects and other projects, although it is anticipated that these categories will overlap to a great degree.

There will be major events at the beginning and end of the year. Included in the programme will be the commemoration on 28 August of the granting of the charter, a pageant possibly linked with the Lord Mayor's parade, firework displays, concerts, the Cavern's 50th birthday celebrations, the Chinese New Year, contacts with other European "fringe" cities, twin cities and other 'Liverpools', Roscoe lectures, St George's Day celebrations, events in parks & gardens, festivals (e.g. African OYE, the Comedy and Mathew Street festivals), the reopening of the Bluecoat School, the Tennis Tournament, the opening of the National Museum of Slavery at the Albert Dock and Heritage Open Days on a larger and longer scale than last year.

"Creative Communities" is a fundamental part of 2007/2008. Grants under this scheme have been available for the run-up years 2004-2006. In 2007 and 2008 it will be focused on heritage. The programme has so far involved 48,000 people and has had audiences adding up to 1,691,000. (Extracts from the Culture Company's website about this topic are appended to this note.)

The principal officers of the Culture Company relevant to the Forum are:

Chief **Executive** Officer
Chief Operating Officer

to be appointed
Jason Harborow

Artistic Director
Publicity Director
Heritage Development Officer
Heritage and Environment Manager
Neil Petersen

Robyn Archer
Kris Donaldson
Graham Boxer
Eileen Willshaw
Liverpool Welcome Manager

Events for 2007 being organised by societies participating in the Forum

A large number of ideas for events in 2007, some more definite than others, were discussed at the meeting. The Forum wishes to make a proper list of these so that everybody knows what is going on. Please send in descriptions of your plans, however provisional, using the spreadsheets already circulated or by simple e-mail. This will help to avoid undesired duplication of activities. There is already evidence that several separate ideas for walks around the city and for publications are being prepared. Societies would be well advised to be aware of what others are doing to avoid clashes of dates, to co-operate in certain cases and to facilitate publication of events in a way likely to attract the greater interest of and understanding by the public (This can be done on the spread sheets which have been distributed or by simple e-mail).

Here is some broad information about plans announced at the meeting. If the details are not correct, this will underline the need to communicate the correct information so that everyone knows what is going on:

- + An extensive Greeters operation, welcoming visitors to the city, being organised by Mike Corfe and James Mansell, alongside the Culture Company and the Blue Badge Guides. Academy of Excellence for Customer Care involved.
- + Merchant Navy Day – first Sunday in September. An activity by veterans.
- + Further publicity of the book resulting from the University's Liverpool 800 project - book to be launched in October 2006, £15 a copy.
- + "Rock around Liverpool" by Liverpool Geological Society. Guided tours. National Science Week in March. Field mapping.
- + A major project to publicise drinking fountains, especially those established by George Melly. Some of them will be made to function again, courtesy of The Friends of Liverpool Monuments and United Utilities.
- + Stories behind gargoyles and other sculpture in the city, organised by Lark Lane Writers. Johnny Walker, James Carling and the Liver Birds included. Talks, pavement artists and perhaps a film.
- + A special edition of the Liverpool History Society Journal and new Walks.
- + Activities by societies in the suburbs. Walton already organising something.
- + the Travelling People are organising three events: "Strauss meets Scouse", an event in the Palm House and a presentation of the history of shanties.
- + Expansion of visitor opportunities at the Williamson Tunnels, plus the Chatsworth tunnel, organised by the Friends of the Tunnels.
- + New walks around the city, run by the 20th Century Society.
- + An event at the National Wildflower Centre. (2009 will be the Year of the Environment).
- + A new edition of a publication by Merseyside Archaeological Society.
- + The national conference of the British Association of Friends of Museums, hosted by the Friends of National Museums Liverpool. Possibly also a

publication about Liverpool people in the arts in days gone by, linked with an exhibition to be mounted by NML.

- + An event mounted by The Athenaeum about its former members.
- + A new website of information about the city's heritage and culture, linked with Mersey Gateway. This would include a list of local history societies, bibliography about the city and a list of the Top One Hundred Liverpudlians.
- + An event at the Florence Institute, Toxteth.

Previously, the Forum was given to understand that the following might be in the course of planning:

- + The centenary of Bibby Line.
- + An event by the Friends of the Anglican Cathedral.
- + Events in St James' Garden.
- + An event in St John's Gardens.
- + An event organised by the Friends of Sefton Park.
- + Further work on commemorative plaques around the city.
- + A Liverpool-Irish event.
- + A Christian-Muslim event.
- + Celebration of the Leeds-Liverpool canal, associated with its extension across the Pier Head. (2007 is also Leeds' 800th anniversary).
- + An event relating to Jewish music.

Suggestions made to Liverpool Culture Company for 2007

People at the meeting said that there were interesting ideas for events which required initiatives by the Culture Company, being beyond the capacity of the voluntary sector working alone. In order to approach these in an organised way a "wish list" of, say, half a dozen proposals will be drawn up by the LHF and discussed with the Culture Company with progress on it being monitored. Initially, the following would be on the list:

- Publicising the existence of Liverpool Castle, indicating its location and explaining its history through publications and panels in the streets.
- There should be full publicity about the Old Dock (including the traces of St Thomas's church, formerly adjoining it).
- There is need for a small exhibition hall in which some of our societies can display material of public interest describing the city's history.
- Similarly, there is need for a room in which lectures can be given.
- A listing of printed material about the city's heritage.
- Presentation of medallions and/or books for children.

Merseyside Archaeology Service

Sarah-Jane Farr spoke briefly at the meeting about the service, which keeps extensive records of all archaeological remains. She will give a presentation at the next LHF meeting.

Forthcoming societies' events

Societies are reminded to send in details of forthcoming events for inclusion in the LHF Newsletters, which are now being published at the end of each month.

NB

I would draw attention to the need to consider overlaps in societies' programmes. While these may be no bad thing in themselves (indeed they could be a good thing in some cases), thought should be given on how the events are to be presented. The published information about events, aimed at tourists as well as locals, needs to be coherent and understandable, not full of conflicts which people will not understand. This word of caution applies particularly to publications and walks. This is certainly not to say "don't do it" but rather to say "talk to other societies doing something similar and see how to blend together the different plans, so that all events are enhanced".

Andrew Pearce
26.2.06

Extracts from the 08 website about Liverpool Culture Company

The Liverpool Culture Company is the organisation set up by Liverpool City Council to deliver the culture programme up to and beyond 2008.

Liverpool won the 2008 race because people - our city's greatest asset - were at the heart of the bid and we want to ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to take part when Liverpool takes its curtain call before the eyes of the world in 2008.

We are working closely with all our stakeholders - including cultural organisations, communities, creative industries, artists, schools and businesses - to help Liverpool shine on the world stage by delivering the best-ever European Capital of Culture in 2008. As a result, we hope to leave a lasting and positive legacy for the people of Liverpool, including more jobs, a stronger economy and a better place to live.

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Being named European Capital of Culture in 2008 is firing the imagination of the city and the Creative Communities programme is unleashing the potential of our people. Our Creative Communities initiative is the largest programme of public and community art in the UK and is being held up by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as an example of how other cities should use culture and creativity for regenerating a city. Unheard voices are now being given their say and spectators are becoming participants, as thousands of local people are playing a role in defining and shaping the cultural and everyday life of the city.

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The Liverpool Culture Company is working to ensure that the city's cultural infrastructure and the community development programme together deliver a holistic cultural framework for 2008 and beyond. We will support the development of a robust infrastructure by working in partnership with key organisations across the community and cultural sectors on the following areas. We offer advice and guidance to individual cultural practitioners, community and voluntary groups and arts organisations on progression routes, organisational review and development, accessing other potential funding, and other sources of information and support.

Stimulating culture in neighbourhoods and homes is the focus of Creative Neighbourhoods. This is not just about homes, bricks and mortar, but about the people who live in them.

Working with the Housing Market Renewal Initiative as well as the private and public sector, we will build and act on the aspirations of families whilst keeping hold of a history of their neighbourhoods to celebrate and share with the rest of the city. We will build links, bridges and bonds between neighbourhoods through Creativity (a tool for social interaction), Participation (sharing skills) and Regeneration (addressing issues through creative thinking). By co-ordinating the artistic contribution of housing partners and delivering creative projects in neighbourhoods, we will develop an innovative programme to ensure Liverpool becomes a city of European excellence for creative inclusion of neighbourhoods.

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Liverpool's historic environment will be a dynamic part of the city's future. Developing innovative projects with community groups and young people, Creative Heritage will challenge established notions of 'heritage' in order to identify and celebrate elements of the city's townscape that have important local resonance. Exploring themes of heritage and learning, public art and the historic environment, Creative Heritage will harness some of the stories of the multi-cultural and many-layered development of Liverpool as the World in One City. The expertise and knowledge of local communities, English Heritage, city council officers and the HELP project manager will help us deliver our objectives.

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