

# LIVERPOOL HERITAGE FORUM



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A networking organisation of community cultural societies in the Liverpool area.

## NEWSLETTER No 27

7 May 2007

### **Royalty, the Culture Company and the people**

Prince Charles formally re-opened the refurbished St George's Hall on 23 April - St George's Day - and gave the Roscoe lecture. The Roscoe lectures are organised by Liverpool John Moores University and provide a platform for distinguished speakers of many kinds. The ceremony took place in the magnificently repainted Small Concert Room with the opportunity afterwards to see the Minton-tiled floor of the main hall. The protective wooden flooring which normally covers the tiles was uncovered for two weeks. It is hoped that it will again be uncovered in mid 2008 (at a cost of £19,000 a time!). The (permanent) visitor and interpretation centre at the south end of the Hall (entrance on St John's Lane) was opened on the same occasion. 25,000 people visited it during the first week.

The invited audience at the reopening was of "top" people. As to the value of such an event which could inevitably be witnessed only by a few, it can be hoped that because of the positions in the life of the city held by the people present, they will spread the word about the celebrations in 2007 and 2008. Let's hope this works. At any event, the ceremony was immaculately organized and the authorities of the JMU and of St George's' Hall deserve much credit for it.

Another event at the Hall was the concert given for the Friends of St George's Hall on 30 April, in recognition of the money they have raised towards the restoration of the Hall. This was a popular, well-organised and successful event.

The sound-and-light show on the walls of the St George's Hall after the re-opening was well attended and much enjoyed.

When Roscoe lectures are held in St George's Hall, attention is often drawn to the statue of Roscoe at the side of the great hall. A late 19th century newspaper cutting talks of this statue having had an "unfortunate accident" arising from a faulty link in a chain with which it was being lifted. The opinion was expressed that the statue, weighing 30 hundredweight, was incapable of repair. In reply to proposals that the statue be restored, Alderman Grindley said that the original plaster cast was in the possession of the Royal Academy. The meeting the City's Finance and Estates Committee accepted a proposals by Mr J. B. Smith that the best means to restore the statue be found. Supposedly, what we now see is the replacement.

A new look for the City's coat of arms was unveiled and is on permanent display in St George's Hall's interpretation centre. This personal interpretation (which will not replace the existing official coat of arms) was commissioned by the Culture Company and created by Wirral-based Amrit and Rabindra Singh to reflect the changes in Liverpool's identity, from its maritime past to a modern city of art and culture, to mark the city's 800th anniversary.

**Editorial comment:** The efforts of the staff of Liverpool Culture Company to celebrate 2007 and 2008 are now beginning to be evident. But where is the leadership, where is the razzamatazz that the public can see? Does the city LOOK as though it is celebrating something? It is time for a change of gear, time for the Chairman of Liverpool Culture Company to be seen out and about, time to appoint someone who lives in the area and knows it well as a public spokesman or Ambassador of the Culture Company (such as Wirral has), someone to be seen in the press and around the city like a Mayor or Lord Mayor. There is more to leading the people of the city in celebration of its history and its international status than sitting in Board meetings and doing the paperwork. The need is to get in touch with ordinary people in the city. Every day we hear people say that the Culture Company is "out of touch", that its people should get out and about, that too many of them came to their present jobs from elsewhere and have not taken the trouble to get to know the city. The hard working staff of the Culture Company deserve up-front leadership at Board level of their efforts to present their work to the people of the city.

If this newsletter had any money (which it doesn't) it might offer a generous 5p prize to the first ten people who can name any of the Board members of Liverpool Culture Company.

### **Conserving what our ancestors built**

■ **The Wellington Rooms** in Mount Pleasant were constructed in 1815 as an assembly rooms for wealthy local residents and mainly consists of three rooms - a ballroom, supper room and card room. It later housed the city's Irish Centre but this closed in 1998, since when it has been empty. Efforts have been made to find a new, economically viable use for the elegant building. A current plan is to build a new hotel block behind it and restore the existing building as the reception area for it. Opponents say that the new block would be unsympathetic with surrounding architecture and sight lines.

This newsletter heard the suggestion a few weeks ago that the building would make an excellent joint staff room for teachers at the two universities both of which have premises within a few yards. This might help to bond staff at the two together in the joint effort to increase the impact of hi-tec education in the city. There would need to be access facilities for the public. Contact [nick.coligan@liverpool.com](mailto:nick.coligan@liverpool.com)

■ **Galkoff's Kosher butcher's** shop in Pembroke Place has been officially "listed" - after a campaign lasting 17 years!

■ There is a proposal that the **Manchester Dock**, recently uncovered next to the Pier Head, should be "listed" for preservation. This would be stoutly opposed by National Museums Liverpool which is building the new Museum of Liverpool on the site. The ground cutting ceremony for the new museum was held recently. Loyd Grossman and David Fleming, Chairman and Director of National Museums Liverpool, operated a digger on the site in front of local press men.

The museum is billed as innovative and a great new asset for Liverpool's heritage tourism appeal. It will focus on four main themes: **Port City, Global City, People's City and Creative City**. Exhibits will include *Lion*, a 1838 steam locomotive which ran on the Liverpool – Manchester Railway, an original third class Overhead Railway carriage, the original stage on which John Lennon's band, The Quarrymen, played in 1957, a model of Liverpool's medieval castle and a model of a Roman Catholic Cathedral proposed for Liverpool by Edwin Lutyens but never built. The museum will also cover themes such as housing and health, opportunity and deprivation, social reform, religion and trade unionism - and hopefully the city's great achievements in commerce and the classical arts.

■ Knowsley Council are bidding for a lottery grant to reconstruct the **Cockpit theatre in Prescott Town Centre**, where (some believe) Shakespeare wrote and produced some early works, being, at the time, under the patronage of the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Derby who lived at nearby Knowsley. Part of the proposal is that plays should be produced there, not just brought in from other theatres. Shakespeare is also thought to have visited Rufford Old Hall near Ormskirk.

■ This newsletter has long wondered why the **Marks & Spencer building in Church Street** has, at first floor level, an American coat of arms (with 13 stars) at one end and the British coat of arms at the other. We now hear that this is because the building included the national trade relations office of the United States when it was opened in 1856, primarily as a department store, the first in Europe and five years before the renowned Bon Marché in Paris. M&S are shortly to move most of their departments into the present John Lewis building when John Lewis moves into their new premises in the Liverpool One (Grosvenor) development. The interior of the M&S building will then be removed and replaced by a new structure. This interior was originally a courtyard into which horse drawn carriages could bring clients. Older fittings are likely to be revealed in the renovations.

■ The **Calderstones** are the oldest “structures” in Liverpool, perhaps 4,000 years old. The six of them were originally the supporting structure of an earth-covered burial chamber. Calderstones Park itself is truly magnificent, rivaling any public park in the land (and a recipient of a Green Flag award) but the stones are located in a somewhat dilapidated greenhouse within it. This also houses a palm tree which, to the untrained eye, greatly needs water. This seems to be another example of Liverpool City Council’s record of excellent work in many of its public places but its failure to see deficiencies which, though small, create an overall bad impression.

■ The **National Wildflower Centre** at Broad Green had a superb display of cowslips and will shortly, they say, have a wonderful crop of poppies. Also on display there are square stones which were the “sleepers” on which the original rails of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway were laid.

■ German bombs in World War II destroyed the **Custom House** which stood roughly where the modern Police Headquarters is. The building was pulled down as being deemed unsafe. Some of the stones from which it was built have been in a “secret” location ever since. Rumour has it that some of them will be used in the construction of the new cruise liner terminal now being built, (to which 40 cruise ships a year are expected). Let us hope that this is realized.

### People of the Liverpool area

■ The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham, Vincent Nichols, celebrated mass in Crosby on 21 April in thanksgiving for the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **St Joseph’s Hospice** in Thornton. The Archbishop had earlier been a priest in inner Liverpool and later was an adviser to Archbishop Derek Worlock (he of the “fish-and-chips” duo with Anglican Bishop David Shepherd). Vincent Nichols was educated in Crosby. Another former Archbishop (of Canterbury) educated in Crosby was Robert Runcie. There must be something episcopal in the air of this suburb!

■ The **Malmaison Hotel** at Princes Dock and the bistro at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, both serve Scouse. We are told that a number of local takeaways also serve it. We await, however, a definitive ruling on what it should be made of. It is this newsletter’s policy that all who call themselves supporters of the city should have some in this our anniversary year. (The Editor’s spell check mechanism refuses to recognize the word “scouse”. Shame on it!

■ The 7<sup>th</sup> of May was Organ Day. Winifried Böning, organist of Cologne Cathedral played at the Anglican Cathedral - ending with, as an encore, “In my Liverpool Home”, a 1960s Spinners hit. This was followed by a recital at the Roman Catholic Cathedral. In the evening, Ian Tracey, the Anglican Cathedral’s organist, played on the refurbished organ at St Margaret’s, Anfield. Works by three Belgians were included in the program, including one by Flor Peeters, who gave the inaugural concert at Liverpool’s Roman Catholic Cathedral in 1967. (He referred to Noel Rawsthorne, former organist at the Anglican Cathedral, as his honorary musical son and jokingly to Ian Tracey as his musical grandson.) Prof. Böning also played a piece by Bach which was the first piece heard on the newly completed organ in the Anglican Cathedral in 1926. Ian Tracey was organist at St Margaret’s from 1970 to 1973. Congratulations to Joe Riley of the Echo for excellent program notes.

(The organ at the Anglican Cathedral, with 9765 stops, was the largest in the country until the instrument at London's Royal Albert Hall was rebuilt recently with 9999 stops. Can we not find another 235 stops to regain pole position? After all, most of the people running the Albert Hall may be mostly Chelsea supporters, so we can hardly be happy with the situation!)

■ Two snapshots of life in Liverpool in earlier times come to our notice. One is that the Merchant's Guild was set up and funded by wealthy local men and women to provide pensions for people who fell on hard times - but only middle class and professional people! The charity still exists. The second is that, according to our information, at one time, ladies shopping in Bold Street before lunch had to wear gloves!

■ A talk was given on 19 April at the **Lee Jones Centre** in the Vauxhall area about Gerrard Gardens, a large block of Council flats which used to stand behind the Central Library. The building and others like it in the city have been compared to the vast Karl Marx Hof complex of flats in Vienna, built by the socialist administration in what was then known as Red Vienna. The history of these buildings is part of Liverpool's social history. The buildings were greatly welcomed at the time as a big advance for the people who went to live in them. The demolition of Gerrard Gardens to make way for a new road was greatly regretted by many of its residents. But this style of dwelling is now out of favour with many in Town Hall Circles.

The organisers of the event were disappointed at the non-attendance of local councillors and other VIPs who had been invited. There is much talk that the celebrations of 2007 and 2008 must not be confined to the central area of the city. This was an opportunity for city VIPs to take the celebrations out into one of the suburbs - an opportunity not taken up. (It is true that the great and the good fail to show up at various events (and are criticised for this) because they have not been invited or even informed (organisers please note) but we understand that councillors and other VIPs were specifically invited on this particular occasion.

■ An interesting collection of photos of Liverpool during the World War II blitz is attached to the fence around St Luke's Church. Liverpool suffered more bomb damage than any city in England apart from London but this was hushed up by the government of the time because Liverpool was the only port open throughout the war and the government did not wish it to appear to be greatly damaged. One of the panels of this exhibition says that the people of Liverpool suffered greatly (true) but that they did not know what they were suffering for! Relatives of those who strove (and died) to maintain public services in extremely difficult circumstances at the time would say that their ancestors had the clearest possible idea of what the war was about - stopping Nazi brutality taking over our country! Political correctness should respect some limits!

■ Is there any interest in organising an exhibition in celebration of Liverpool's markets since King John's time? St John's market has held a special place in Liverpool's life for many years and has traders from Ghana, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Holland and even Manchester! (contact [wjfflood@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:wjfflood@blueyonder.co.uk))

■ We have had another enquiry about the **Quill Club**, off Castle Street. Does anybody know anything?

### **Forthcoming events**

Events known to Liverpool Heritage Forum are mostly to be found on our website. We would make special mention the "**Secret Gardens of Oxton**" event on Sunday 13th May, a unique opportunity to explore Oxton Village and to view 24 gardens that are open to public view for this one day only. Refreshments will be available. A heritage bus service provided by Wirral Transport Museum will operate between Woodside Ferry and Oxton. Additional heritage buses will provide complimentary transport around the village. Tickets £6. see [www.oxtonsociety.org.uk](http://www.oxtonsociety.org.uk)  
Or call 0151 652 4621.

## HERITAGE EVENTS

**NADFAS will be holding its AGM in Liverpool on 13th and 14th May 2008**

- **Wednesday, 16th May** "The Stained Glass of the City of York"
- **Wednesday, 20th June** A Room with a View: Banqueting Houses 1550-1770" More details of NADFAS are available on [www.nadfas.org.uk](http://www.nadfas.org.uk).
- **Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade** 2007 is the bicentenary of the abolition of the British slave trade. There are lots of free events taking place at National Museums Liverpool throughout the year to commemorate this important anniversary, including debates, talks and lectures. Our programme culminates in the annual Slavery Remembrance Day celebrations on 23 August, which will be extra special this year as we will be launching the **new International Slavery Museum**.
- **The Long Way Home: Bernard Fallon's Liverpool Images** National Conservation Centre until **15 July 2007** [www.nationalconservationcentre.org.uk/fallon](http://www.nationalconservationcentre.org.uk/fallon)
- **The Hope Street Association** is running a HOTFOOT concert day on Hope Street on Sunday 15 July.

**Events for Old Christ Church Waterloo** <http://oldchristchurch.tripod.com/>

- Phone: (0151) 924 5738 Mail: Friends of Old Christ Church, c/o 45 St Andrews Road, Great Crosby, Lancashire. L23 8UA. Or send us an e-mail! [johnbramham@uwcub.net](mailto:johnbramham@uwcub.net)
- **Saturday 12th May 10am to 4pm** - A 'Local History Display' with more groups participating and with the main attraction being a re-enactment of the Vikings way of life\*  
\*. This is an event not to be missed especially by the children especially as it forms part of the national curriculum Key Stage 2 and 3.
- **15th to 17th June** – An 'Arts & Crafts Selling Exhibition' There will be a preview of the exhibition at a ticketed reception on the Friday evening and if you would like an invitation. The event will be open to the public, free of charge, on the Saturday and Sunday between 10am and 4pm. The exhibition will involve local art groups displaying their members works and there will also be stalls selling craft work.
- **Friday 29th June** - A 'Folk Concert' has been arranged (7.30pm for 8pm) on similar lines to last year. The tickets are provisionally priced at £6 which we consider very reasonable as it is inclusive of 'nibbles' at the tables. If you came last year you will know what a thoroughly good evening it was.
- **8th & 9th September** – This is the 'Heritage Weekend' when the church is open between 10am and 4pm, free of charge to visitors. As in past years, we will arrange for stalls to be manned by local interest groups, charities etc. and we trust there will be items for sale including craft work, collectibles, books and general gifts.
- **September – Crosby Rotary Club** are organising a 'Beer Festival' over a period of two or three days. Details have yet to be finalised so do watch out for further details on this. The event will be by pre-booked tickets only.

**Liverpool Culture Company**

- **Liverpool Culture Company** has an update meeting on 10 May from 6.30 pm at Lifestyles Cardinal Heenan ([www.liverpool08.com/events](http://www.liverpool08.com/events))
- **Liverpool Culture Company** has an update meeting on 21 June from 6.30 pm at Lifestyles Ellergreen ([www.liverpool08.com/events](http://www.liverpool08.com/events))
- **Liverpool Culture Company** has an update meeting on 12 September from 6.30 pm at Lifestyles Picton ([www.liverpool08.com/events](http://www.liverpool08.com/events))
- **Liverpool Culture Company** has an update meeting on 12 December from 6.30 pm at Lifestyles Austin Rawlinson ([www.liverpool08.com/events](http://www.liverpool08.com/events))

#### **Liverpool History Society**

- **20th May 2007 6th Annual General Meeting** Followed by Adolf Hitler - Did he visit Liverpool in 1912-1913 Sunday afternoons in the Cornerstone Building, Hope at Everton, Shaw Street, Liverpool. L3 8QB Doors open at 1:30 Visitors welcome
- **23 September 2007** Nathaniel Hawthorne at the Port of Liverpool Sunday afternoons in the Cornerstone Building, Hope at Everton, Shaw Street, Liverpool. L3 8QB Doors open at 1:30 Visitors welcome
- **21st October** Charles P Melly and his Drinking Fountains by Patrick Neil Sunday afternoons in the Cornerstone Building, Hope at Everton, Shaw Street, Liverpool. L3 8QB Doors open at 1:30 Visitors welcome
- **18th November 2007** Britain's First Lifeboat Station by Barbera Yorke Sunday afternoons in the Cornerstone Building, Hope at Everton, Shaw Street, Liverpool. L3 8QB Doors open at 1:30 Visitors welcome
- **16th December 2007** Poppies - The Discovery of a Liverpool Journal Sunday afternoons in the Cornerstone Building, Hope at Everton, Shaw Street, Liverpool. L3 8QB Doors open at 1:30 Visitors welcome

#### • **Wirral Postcard Collectors Club**

- June 7: Dennis Rosser *A Mixed Bag*
- **Sunday 10 June: Wirral Postcard & Local History Fair at Thornton Hough Village Hall 10.00 to 4.00pm – entrance £1.25 concessions £1.00**
- July 5: Harry Watson *Humerous Side of Being a Policeman*
- Aug 2: Chairman's Choice - *Outing*
- Sept 6: Glynn Parry *Victorian Transport*
- Oct 4: Bob Currams *Wirral Coastline*
- Sunday 21 Oct: Wirral Postcard & Local History Fair at Thornton Hough Village Hall **10.00 to 4.00pm – entrance £1.25 concessions £1.00**
- Nov 1: Colin Millington *Nature Naturally*
- Dec 6: Wine & Christmas Buffet *'Guess the Postcard Dates' - Prizes!*
- Jan 3: 2008 AGM *also 'bring an album'*
- 
- **21 June. Cunard Yanks**, Fifties pop-culture pioneers captured on film Tickets are on sale for the Cunard Yanks, a one-hour documentary paying homage to the ex-Merchant

Seamen travelling on the world famous Cunard Liners, who brought clothes and music from New York to 1950s Liverpool. The film premieres at the Philharmonic Hall.

- **Lectures in the Anglican Cathedral to mark the city's 800 years history. (In the Lady Chapel, 10m – 2 pm)**
- **16 May** – Peter Kennerley – Twentieth century Cathedral: the establishment of a building and a community
- **23 May**- Prof. John Belchem –Celebrating Liverpool.
- 26 May : Celebration at the Anglican Cathedral of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Sir Edward Elgar: The Dream of Gerontius – Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir. Tickets from the Phil: 0151 709 3789.
- **Anglican Cathedral**
- **22 May:** Music and readings at the Anglican Cathedral to mark the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade: Girls' choir of the Cathedral, Chamber Choir of Notre Dame School, Ken Dodd. Tickets £20 from the Cathedral 0151 709 6271.
- **16 June:** Sir Paul McCartney's Liverpool Oratorio performed by Carl Davies and the Phil orchestra at the Cathedral. Tickets £15 from the Phil 0151 709 3789.
- **28 June – 1 July.** Flower Festival at the Anglican Cathedral. Admission by programme £6. Opening by Ken Dodd on 28 June at 12 noon.
- **21 April.** Royal Marines concert at the Phil for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the Falkands.

#### **250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sankey 1757-2007 Programme of Events**

**May 13th:** "Green Fingers" The Sankey at Bewsey, Winwick and Callens Meet at Bewsey Hall Bridge (or "The Maltings" pub if wet!) at 1.15pm

**June 24th:** "Industrial Parklands" Newton Common, Bold, Bradley, Burtonwood Meet at St. Helens Junction Station at 1.15pm

**July 15th :** "Widnes Waterfront" Spike Island, Pickerings Pasture, Hale Meet at the Spike Island Visitors Centre at 1.15pm

**September 16th :** "The Newton Heritage Trail" Meet at Newton-le-Willows Station at 1.15pm (Please note this date has been changed)

**Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>** The World Canals Conference Tour of the Sankey  
<http://www.iwashop.com/ecommerce/products.asp?cat=160>

**July 7th and 8<sup>th</sup>** The St. Helens Festival in Sherdley Park SCARS will stage an exhibition in the Heritage Network's marquee

September 14th - 16<sup>th</sup> The Merseyside Heritage 2007 Event St. George's Hall, Liverpool SCARS will take part in conjunction with the St. Helens Heritage Network

**September 17<sup>th</sup>** Public Lecture at St. Helens College to mark the 250th Anniversary of the opening of the Sankey, presented by the St. Helens Historical Society. The Lecture will be delivered by Joseph Boughey, Canal Historian and biographer of Charles Hadfield (1909 - 1996), the world's leading waterways historian. The meeting will be chaired by Sir John

Johnson, SCARS' President, a local man, who was Chairman of the Countryside Commission, and is presently Chairman of the Chilterns Conservation Board.

Other Events are being organised, and there will also be associated Events featuring other aspects of Transport in the area as part of "Transport Heritage 2007", St. Helens Borough's contribution to the Merseyside-wide "Year of Heritage", marking the 800th Anniversary of the granting of Liverpool's Charter by King John.

A series of special leaflets are being published to publicise all the Events taking place during the year, in conjunction with other heritage and transport societies and organisations in St. Helens and Merseyside. Entitled "Moving Histories", the first issue has been funded mainly by SCARS, and is widely available within St. Helens Borough. Copies may be obtained for a limited period only by sending an SAE (it's A4 sized) to the Society's Hon. Treasurer (for contact details see About SCARS).

**See also for further details <http://www.scars.org.uk/news/250.html>**

- **The reunion of ex members of the Liverpool City Police "To celebrate the "City of Culture 2008"**

The reunion of ex members of the Liverpool City Police which ceased to exist 1967. Is to be held at the Police Club Fairfield on Friday 18 April 2008 from 1.0.p.m. All ex members and their wives, widows/widowers and the children of those who served are most especially welcome. All those who worked for the Liverpool City Police as civilians are cordially invited. I would appreciate any photo's taken relating to the City Police, I would copy them and return, also any other memorabilia relating to that time. If you wish to attend please contact Tony Hynes (Ex 617'K' 55'G,' 52 'F' 52 'D': Tele: 01744 894 108 e-mail: [ajhynesuk@btinternet.com](mailto:ajhynesuk@btinternet.com))

**St Francis Xavier's Church in Everton**

- is holding a Flower Festival in the church over the Heritage **Weekend 14th-16th September**. If anybody is interested in taking part then please contact Debbie Reynolds on 0151-298 1911 or [d.reynolds@sfxchurchliverpool.com](mailto:d.reynolds@sfxchurchliverpool.com)

**If your society or heritage group has an event or talk you would like us to promote please send details to [info@liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk](mailto:info@liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk)**