



**A networking organisation of voluntary cultural societies in the Liverpool area.**  
Notices of forthcoming events should be sent to us by email on [Liverpool Heritage Forum](mailto:info@liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk)  
Previous editions of the Newsletter can be seen on our web site:  
<http://www.liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk/>

## NEWSLETTER

No 43 : 30 April 2008

### EDITORIALS

- We commented a couple of editions ago on somebody from another part of England asking what was special about Liverpool. In this Newsletter we try, month by month, to answer that question and in particular to demonstrate the influence which the city had in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, some of which survives to this day. We were therefore surprised when a prominent Liverpool accountant, to whom we were extolling the city's greatness, asked: "You mean Liverpool was known around the world as a great city?" "Yes", we said. "Before the Beatles?" he asked! Oh dear! We shall try harder to give examples of the power of the city during the last two hundred and fifty years - as a port, as a centre of shipping and commercial finance, as a place of immense wealth side-by-side with great poverty and as a place of top quality music, architecture, theatre and other art forms.
- A senior Whitehall civil servant was in Liverpool this month. He asked businessmen what were the activities which were going to bring economic growth to the region in the coming years. One of the replies was that tourists coming to see Liverpool's arts and architecture heritage would bring in big revenues - provided that the heritage and culture was safeguarded and promoted, which meant that the City Council had to organise itself properly to do this. There was comment on the new upbeat mood in the city and the widespread condemnation of negative remarks in recent months by Jimmy Tarbuck and Ringo Starr. "They can stay away", people were saying, "if all they can do was to knock the city". The upbeat mood was captured at the Classical Spectacular in the Arena on 19 April (10,000 seats sold out) when the Phil Orchestra and Choir and two soloists gave a sparkling performance to a huge and happy audience. There was *Rule Britannia, Land of Hope and Glory, You'll Never walk Alone* - no mockery of the city, no apologizing for the past, no political correctness - and the audience loved it. As we have said before, give Liverpool something to be proud of and nobody in the world will show more pride than they will.

### AROUND MERSEYSIDE

- Michael Kelly has recently published an interesting book about famous Liverpool women. His choice of women can be compared the names which appear on a stained glass window at the entrance to the Lady Chapel in the Anglican Cathedral. Agnes Jones (Superintendent of Liverpool workhouse and a person greatly admired by Florence Nightingale and who died of typhus at 35) appears on both lists. Ethel Austin, who opened her first shop in Anfield in 1934 and whose firm is in financial difficulties at the present time, [Kitty Wilkinson](#) (who opened in Liverpool the first public wash houses), [Sarah Biffen](#), who was born with no arms but became a painter of some note and who

retired to Liverpool, [Felicia Dorothea Hemans](#), born in Liverpool and author of the famous words "The boy stood on the burning deck..." feature on one list or the other.

- At the Philharmonic members' conference on 14 April an account was given of the remarkably successes, musically and in business terms, which the orchestra is currently having. The orchestra will be touring this year to the Czech Republic, Germany and Holland and has an extensive programme for children in Merseyside, of whom 17,000 have attended Phil concerts this season. The Phil has made more broadcasts this season than any other non-BBC orchestra. New rehearsal rooms in Everton at the Friary Church (built by Vatican craftsmen, some of who settled nearby in "Little Italy") are being prepared. Work there will include contacts with the community in north Liverpool. The future for the orchestra is bright - provided that the essential public funding continues.
- Local heritage enthusiasts at Garston have unveiled a plaque on Horrocks Avenue to commemorate the Toxteth born scientist who discovered the transit of Venus in 1639. [Jeremiah Horrocks](#) was one of the pioneers of scientific discovery. Local children helped with the design of the mosaic plaque depicting among other things modern space travel which in part depends upon such early discoveries. Info: alexartworks.com
- Wirral Council has put up an improved information panel at Eastham Ferry, where the boats from Liverpool used to put in. The ferry ran from 1357 to 1928. The ticket office of 1857 and the stumps of the 1874 pier are still there. The panel was put up by a partnership of Wirral History Forum and the Council. This Forum was to some extent modeled on Liverpool Heritage Forum. It is nice to see that it has been taken into Wirral Council's bosom.
- During World War II, the government was afraid that the Mersey, the only big port that remained open despite German bombing, would eventually succumb and be closed. A short line of railway was therefore built to connect the little port of Cairnryan to the main line to Stranraer in south west Scotland as an alternative to Liverpool for military traffic. The line carried such traffic from 1942 and remained in limited use until 1959. [The Ark Royal](#), launched at Cammell Laird at Birkenhead in 1950, was dismantled at Cairnryan in 1980.
- A recent Daily Telegraph magazine included a drawing of the Three Graces at the Pier Head from the south, the view which will be blocked by the two new black buildings to be built at Mann Island. The paper laments that fact that "the clarity of this bold ensemble is now being marred by a rash of new developments". Understanding the impact of the new Museum of Liverpool and the proposed black blocks depends on what the computer graphics show. Such models can be very misleading. It is right to protest about destruction of fine old buildings and about ugly new ones but the city needs new buildings to fill derelict spaces - provided they are of good quality and do not destroy fine existing panoramas. Whether the new Mann island buildings are good or bad is a matter of opinion.
- Sir Jeremy Isaacs, former chief of the Royal Opera House and of Channel 4 television was at Pacific Road Arts Centre on 17 April to see the UK premiere of "Into the Little Hill", based on the Pied Piper of Hamelin story. George Benjamin, its composer, describes the orchestration as employing some "highly unusual timbres", ranging from flute and cimbalom to banjo and basset-horn.

- Michael Henderson spoke to the English Speaking Union about Liverpool children who were sent to north America in World War II to escape the bombing. 10,000 went in the summer of 1940. 200,000 more planned to go but the scheme did not proceed after 70 children died when the ship *Benares* was sunk in the Atlantic. Michael said much about the generosity of the American and Canadian families who looked after the children until the war ended.

## LIVERPOOL AND THE AMERICAS

- The office building at No1 Broadway in New York City, down by Battery Park where the first Dutch and later British fort was built, has doors marked "First Class" and "Cabin". Over the doors and windows are the coats of arms of a dozen or more ports around the world including Liverpool, whose coat of arms contains what appears to be a book, a cormorant and a sailing ship. Staff of the bank now occupying the building say that this was where people booked to sail on the Titanic. The building, to some extent, mirrors the Cunard Building at Liverpool's Pier Head both in style and function.
- At Seaport Museum at the bottom of Manhattan, two sailing ships are moored, their sterns prominently seen by the thousands of people using the numerous ferries in New York harbour. One of them is the [Wavertree](#), registered in Liverpool. She was built in Southampton for R. W. Leyland & Co. of Liverpool. Frederick Leyland (1832-1892) started as an apprentice with Bibby Line and worked himself up into a key position learning French, Italian and Spanish. After some years Bibbys sold their line to Leyland. Leyland used his own name for his new line but kept the Bibby flag. At one time he had twenty three large, iron, screw steamers.

[The Wavertree](#) was at first used to carry jute, rope and sacks between what is now Bangladesh and Scotland. When less than two years old, it changed to tramping - sailing wherever custom took it rather than following regular lines. It collided with the *Morayshire* in Ellesmere Port and later, in 1910, its mast was smashed in a gale off Cape Horn and it limped into the Falklands where it was put to use as a floating warehouse. It was later moved to Buenos Aires for use as a sand barge. It is the largest iron sailing ship still afloat.

Leyland bought Speke Hall, the timbered building near modern Liverpool airport. This had been the ancestral home of the Norrises who had preceded him in trading with the Mediterranean and the New World. Here he was visited by the American artist Whistler who painted his portrait and went partridge shooting with him. Whistler later helped with internal rearrangements of a palatial house Leyland bought by London's Hyde Park with the intention of living in the style of the ancient Venetian merchants. In Victorian times there were flag poles on Bidston Hill for signaling to Liverpool the arrival of ships sighted off the coast. By 1900 the Bibby pole was one of the last two remaining.

- Near Seaport Museum is a lovingly preserved light ship. By contrast, [Liverpool's Bar lightship](#) alongside the city's Dock Road at Wapping has a "For Sale" sign on it and is said to be going to end up in Salford. Such is the way Liverpool regards its heritage.
- One of the possessions of New York Library is a catalogue of books in Liverpool's Athenaeum library.

- The *Mimosa* (460 tons) left Liverpool carrying some 153 Welsh emigrants to Puerto Madryn in Patagonia in 1865. The fare was £12 for adults and £6 for children. These Welsh people had been led to believe that Patagonia was like Wales whereas in fact it is almost flat and very dry. Settlements were built at the towns of Rawson (named after an American who emigrated to Argentina and as its Interior Minister helped the Welsh settlers) Gaiman and Trelew, "the town of Lewis" named after Lewis Jones, one of the original settlers, who was born in Caernarvon in 1836 and later moved to Liverpool where he married. In 1875 the Argentine government granted the Welsh settlers ownership of the land which encouraged hundreds of others from Wales to join the colony. The colony became known, in Welsh, as Y Wladfa (the "colony" or "settlement"). The Welsh influence survives today with the Welsh language spoken, various chapels still in use, an eisteddfod and Welsh afternoon tea for tourists (with sandwiches and cakes). Some of the emigrants used the Cambrian Emigration Office at 41 Union Street, Liverpool, or Lerpwl or Llynlleifiad (liver bird) as it is spelt in documents displayed in the museum there. The Chubut railway on which Puerto Madryn is situated was set up and financed by Lewis Jones in Liverpool in 1884.

## TRAINS OF THOUGHT

Liverpool was in the forefront of the development of railways. The Liverpool & Manchester Railway was not the first railway of any kind in the world. There had been industrial railways in Durham, Cornwall, the Midlands and elsewhere, including some on the continent. But the L & M was the first properly organized passenger railway running scheduled steam-powered services. It was opened in 1830 from a passenger terminus at Crown Street and, a year earlier, from a freight terminal on the docks at Wapping, reached through a now-disused tunnel from Edge Hill. When Lime Street station was opened a few years later, trains were hauled up to Edge Hill by rope. The river end of the Wapping tunnel was at one fairly recent time used as a furniture factory. One of the main aims of the line was to cut the cost of moving goods along the waterways and poor roads to East Lancashire from the port of Liverpool.

[George Stephenson](#) was in charge of the building of this railway. He had built the Stockton & Darlington line a few years earlier. Then at competitive trials carried out at Rainhill his "Rocket" locomotive was the winner.

The sandstone "skew" bridge at Rainhill that takes the main road over the railway is at an unusual diagonal angle. A wooden model of it was laid out nearby to help the builders. The bridge was later widened to accommodate increases in road traffic. The milestone on the bridge that gives the distances to Warrington, Prescot and Liverpool was moved to the opposite side at the time of the expansion. Therefore, the distance markers pointed to the wrong destinations. This quirk was corrected in 2005 when the milestone was returned to the correct side of the bridge.

In 1830 [Charles Tayleur](#), a Liverpool engineer, founded the Vulcan Foundry at Newton-le-Willows or to be more exact at Earlestown - named after Sir Hardman Earle, the company chairman. (Vulcan was the mythological god of fire). Newton-le-Willows is in the easternmost corner of Merseyside. Here the original line from Liverpool to London diverged from the still-in-use main line from Liverpool to Manchester. In 1832 Robert Stephenson, by then a well known railway engineer and the son of George Stephenson, joined him in partnership.

After 1830, railways took off around the world. Vulcan became a major locomotive manufacturer to customers all over the world. The Foundry supplied 6,210 locomotives in its time, over a third going to the Indian sub-continent. The first locomotives for Russia and Japan were supplied in

1837 and 1871 respectively. Ten went to Argentina between 1905 and 1930, others to Chile, Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay. Some Vulcan locomotives can still be seen, defunct or "in steam", on tourist lines in South America such as at Asuncion in Paraguay, where the booking hall, now only used for enthusiasts' trains, has a history of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway on the wall. Buenos Aires railway museum has many reminders of the [Vulcan Foundry](#). There is a statue of George Stephenson outside the now disused railway terminal in Montevideo, Uruguay.

With the demise of steam, Vulcan turned to diesel and electric locomotives, in conjunction with the English Electric Co., Ltd., later part of the General Electric Company, later still of Rushton Paxton Diesels Ltd. The foundry closed in 1970, the last locomotive being for Ghana.

The railway from Leipzig to Dresden in Germany had many Liverpool connotations. The first train on the full route ran in 1839. It comprised of 1 third class, 10 second class and 4 first class coaches. These were pulled by two locomotives, one of them, *Robert Stephenson*, being driven by John Greener. Behind this train came the German-built *Saxonia* which crashed into a stationary British locomotive! Two German businessmen had visited the Sharp Roberts Company in Manchester which was diversifying from making textile machinery into locomotive building. It had received an order from the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Board in 1831 to build a locomotive that had to be "equal or superior to the best engines at present in use on the Liverpool and Manchester Line." The German company's agent had earlier sent a note to the Liverpool to Manchester Committee whose Minutes of 7 May 1838 record his request for "permission to try two new engines made by Mr Edward Bury, on the Liverpool and Manchester line - Leave granted, under proper regulations and restrictions."

[Edward Bury's](#) Clarence Foundry in Love Lane, Liverpool (where over the years a total of over 415 locomotives were built) supplied several locomotives to the Dresden line. They were assembled in Leipzig with the technical assistance of British drivers and mechanics. (Horses were still used at night to haul goods trains, and stables were an important building for some years at most of the railway stations.)

The Vulcan Foundry has recently been knocked down and new industrial buildings are being built on the site. The Vulcan village containing the original houses, recently modernized, in Liverpool Row and Manchester Row and the *Vulcan* inn (which has old photos of the works) are still there. A local man told the Newsletter's editor how, when he worked a 54-hour week there, life was strictly regulated. Even going to the loo was timed and two pieces of toilet paper were handed out to each user. Apprentices would amuse themselves by floating a piece of burning paper down the channel of water flowing underneath the sedentary users of the facility. Those were the good old days!

One of Liverpool's best known locomotives was [the Lion](#), built in 1838 in Leeds to haul goods trains on the Liverpool & Manchester line. In 1850 it was sold for use as a stationary pump at Princes Dock. It was rescued and pulled a train commemorating the centenary of the L & M in 1839 and then displayed at Lime Street station until removed for fear of being destroyed in the bombing in the 1940s. It appeared in three films including *The Titfield Thunderbolt*. Currently in Manchester, it will be displayed in the new Museum of Liverpool which is due to open in 2010 and is now under construction, in the midst of various legal difficulties, at the Pier Head.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- **April 18** and runs until August 10 The Walker Art Gallery's spring blockbuster exhibition Art in the Age of Steam opens today Friday, April 18 and runs until August 10.
- Until June 8. UK artists AL and AL first solo exhibition also opens today. A new commission at FACT - Eternal Youth runs until June 8. Media contact: [laura.finn@fact.co.uk](mailto:laura.finn@fact.co.uk) / 0151 707 4405.
- 27 April The first of three public art Pavilions for 08 will open to the public at Rotunda in Kirkdale
  
- **1 May:** Liverpooljazz at the Bluecoat at 8 pm. (£3/£6). Tickets 0151 702 5324.
- 1 May: Friends of St George's Hall have a talk by Anne Walton on the Trial of Mrs Maybrick .Tickets from 0151 255 6909.
- 5 May: Ian Tracey plays the organ in St George's Hall. Tel: 0151 225 6909.
- 4 May: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 8 May, 15 May and 29 June. Luncheon talks about Liverpool's buildings at St George's Hall. Tel: 0151 233 3007.
- 9 May; Northern School of Contemporary Dance perform specially commissioned work at the Bluecoat at 8 pm. (£9/£7). Tickets 0151 702 5324.
- 11 May: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 11 May: The Secret Gardens of Oxtou are open from 10 am to 5 pm. Info: 07963 248 268 or 0151 652 8452 or [www.oxtonsociety.org.uk](http://www.oxtonsociety.org.uk). Park at the junction of Woodchurch Road and Storeton Road.
- 15 May: Creative Communities conference (Dept. for Culture, Media and Sport)/Heritage Lottery Fund. Andy Burnham, Culture Minister will speak. BT Convention Centre. Book: [www.neilstewartassociates.com.se216](http://www.neilstewartassociates.com.se216) or phone 020 7324 4330.
- 14 June: Festival of Hope involving both Cathedrals. Large free Gospel Arts celebration. See:[www.liverpoolcathedral.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolcathedral.org.uk) or phone 0151 709 3789
- 14 May: Peter Rooney speaks to the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire on "Modernisin Liverpool 1818-1839: Urban Planning and Technological Innovation in the Work of John Foster Jnr". 12.30 in the Gornby Room of the Central Library.
- 14 May: Knowsley Historical Society's Tony Parkinson - D Day Landings
- 17 May: Showtime at St Helens. Gilbert & Sullivan etc. [www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)
- 18 May: Valerie Warr's piano and wind sextet play at Williamson Art Gallery at 3 pm. Info: 0151 651 2748.
- 24 May: Singers from Crosby and Germany join forces to perform sacred and secular music at St Nick's. 7.30. Tickets at the door.
- 24 May: *Voices from Across the Ocean* at Mossley Hill Parish Church T 7.30. Info: 0151 652 6374 or [mavis@freeserve.co.uk](mailto:mavis@freeserve.co.uk)
- 17 May: Three of the best musical societies in St Helens perform songs from musical theatre, past and present at the Town Hall. Contact: 01744 455305.
- 18 May: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 18 May: Liverpool History Society has a talk by Ken Pye on "Liverpool – a true capital of
- 19 May: Friends of St George's Hall AGM. 1.30 pm.29 May – 1 June: Southport International Jazz Festival. Info: 01704 500036.
- 26 May: Ian Tracey plays the organ at St George's Hall 12.45 to 1.30 pm. Free.
  
- **1 June:** Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909
- 1 – 30 June: St Nicks displays paintings by Liverpool artists Alan Joyce.
- 5 June: Ian Tracey performs on the organ at St George's Hall at 7.30 pm. £5.
- 8 June: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 10 June: Ian Tracey plays the organ at St George's Hall 12.45 to 1.30 pm. Free
- 10 June: Guided tour of St Nick's by David Brazendale. 2-4 pm. Free.
- 14th June: An Exhibition of Photographs of *Old Knowsley and its People* in Knowsley Village Hall. A new book of reminiscences from residents, old and new, will be launched at the event. Info: [knowsley.sandra@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:knowsley.sandra@blueyonder.co.uk) or 0151 546 9671.
- 15 June: You can walk (Yes! Walk!) through the Birkenhead Tunnel. Info: [deniseevents.co.uk](http://deniseevents.co.uk) or call 01695 682020.
- 23 June: Piano recital at St Nick's by Llyr Williams. Tickets £12 from 0151 724 1989.
- 14 June: Festival of Hope involving both Cathedrals. Large free Gospel Arts celebration. See:<http://www.liverpoolcathedral.org.uk> or phone 0151 709 3789.
- 14th June: Exhibition of Photographs of Old Knowsley and its People in Knowsley Village Hall. A new book of reminiscences from residents old and new, will be launched at the event. Info: 0151 546 967 or [knowsley.sandra@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:knowsley.sandra@blueyonder.co.uk).
- 14 June: Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire has day conference at LACE "Liverpool's Catholics 1750-1930". Contact: Denise Jones on [05009062@hope.ac.uk](mailto:05009062@hope.ac.uk)
- 14 June: Festival of Hope involving both Cathedrals, following the International Youth Congress. (Info 0151 709 6271.

- 15 June: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 18 June: Knowsley Historical Society's Knowsley Historical Society's June Corner- Curiosity Corner
- 20 June: Ken Pye will speak to the English Speaking Union on his book "Discover Liverpool – the complete history" at the Athenaeum at 12.30. Book on 0151 636 5512.
- 21 June: Southport Bach Choir perform "A German Requiem by Brahms. At 7.45 pm. Tickets from 99 Cambridge Road, Southport PR9 9SB. People interested in joining the choir should call 01704 229 416.
- 22 June: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 28th June to 5th July: Wirral-based No Nonsense Theatre, in collaboration with Dutch artist Boukje Landsman, are offering Mask Making and Puppetry workshops at Chez Le Pre in France - a beautifully renovated farmhouse near the village of Trezelles, 350 km South East of Paris. Info: <http://www.artsjobs.org.uk/index>
- 29 June: Guided walk through St George's Hall at 11am. £3.50. Info: 0151 225 6909.
- 20-29 June: Prescott Arts Festival. St Helens Sinfonietta, Birkenhead Operatic, Fairey Band, music drama and dance. See: <http://www.prescotfestival/> or phone 0151 430 7787.
  
- **7 July:** Conference "Roscoe and Italy" sponsored by the Society for Renaissance Studies, to be held at The Athenaeum, Church Alley, Liverpool L1 3DD. Liverpool's cultural heritage owes much to the career and collections of William Roscoe (1753-1831), but his abiding interest in Italian history and culture is rarely singled out for appreciation. Tickets £20 (concessions £15). Info: Dr Stella Fletcher, School of History, University of Liverpool, 9 Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7WZ
- 8 - 12 July: Exhibition of quilts at St Nick's reflecting connection between the city and Ireland and the Isle of Man.
- 19 July: Beating the retreat by the Clan Wallace Pipe Band. 4 pm. Free.
- 17 July 2008: A day conference entitled "Roscoe and Italy", sponsored by the Society for Renaissance Studies, at The Athenaeum, Church Alley, Liverpool L1 3DD. Fees: £20 (£15 concessions. Bookings and info : Dr Stella Fletcher, School of History, University of Liverpool, 9 Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7WZ, [stella@ravenna123.freemove.co.uk](mailto:stella@ravenna123.freemove.co.uk).
- 16 July: Knowsley Historical Society's Mrs Gidman - Effigies of Ormskirk Church
  
- **20 August:** Knowsley Historical Society Annual Outing
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- **1 -13 September:** South Liverpool Arts Group exhibit in the Anglican Cathedral.
- **1 – 30 September:** Tracey Emin brings an especially commissioned neon work to the Anglican Cathedral.
- **17 September:** Knowsley Historical Society's Ann Holt - Family History
- **29 September:** Merseyside Industrial heritage Society have a Social at the Garston Brick Museum. Info: 01928 724 804.
  
- **15 October:** Knowsley Historical Society's AGM
  
- **19 November:** Knowsley Historical Society's Shirley Addy - History of Dry Stone Walling.
  
- Cains Brewery tours (Stanhope Street L8 5XJ) start at 6.30 Mondays to Fridays and 1 pm on Saturdays. Prebooking required. 0151 708 8395.