

A networking organisation of voluntary cultural societies in the Liverpool area. Notices of forthcoming events should be sent to us on [zoom2222@btinternet.com](mailto:zoom2222@btinternet.com). Previous editions of our Newsletter can be seen on our web site: [www.liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolheritageforum.org.uk)

# NEWSLETTER

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## A SUCCESSFUL SUMMER

- The Tall Ships event was captivating. The ships themselves were magnificent. The arrangements for the very large crowds that came to see them at Wellington and Albert Docks were very efficient. Visitors had a good time and took away first rate impressions of the city. Well done, to all concerned!
- The production of "The Winter's Tale", alternately in the Anglican Cathedral and in St James's Gardens, has been a great success. The Liverpool Shakespeare Festival continues with " A Midsummer's Night's Dream" (to 7 September), Call 0151727 1703 or see [www.LodestarTheatreCompany.co.uk](http://www.LodestarTheatreCompany.co.uk)
- The Brouhaha parade on 31 August was a great, fun-day affair. It took nearly forty minutes to go past the many spectators watching from Catherine Street onwards, "Carnival", in the Latin American sense, might explain the event for those puzzled by the word Brouhaha..
- The "Held in Trust" exhibition at St Francis Xavier's Church, off Shaw Street, is of the highest quality. Vestments, ancient books and other late medieval objects are on show there until the end of September. The Church itself, newly refurbished, looks wonderful. Congratulations to Br. Ken Vance, a regular participant in the Forum, for organising this event.
- Liverpool's Parks Dept. have put up some posters in Merseyrail stations listing birds that may be seen in the parks. Liverpool has wonderful parks which deserve to be used and enjoyed by more people. We were interested to see a leaflet "Birkenhead Park News". Congratulations to both Liverpool and Birkenhead Parks on their public relations. We hope that public finance for his sort of publicity is not be confined to municipal projects.
- "Once upon a time at the Adelphi", at the Playhouse, was a fine production set in what must be the only hotel in the kingdom which, for good reasons and bad, is famous in its own right. The original Adelphi was built in 1827 but replaced by a new building in 1876, which boasted 300 bedrooms and 50 parlours. By the 1880s the hotel was famous for its turtle soup, the creatures being brought by ship and stored in subterranean tanks before meeting their culinary destiny. The third Adelphi was opened just after World War I and was billed as the world's most palatial hotel. Almost anyone of international note in the 1930s seems to have stayed there. (It is a pity that the Playhouse does not get its telephone system right. When we phoned up a few days beforehand for tickets, we were regaled with what was to take place in May! We went round the circuit of pressing buttons before being disconnected without getting to speak to a human being. Have these people heard the word "customer friendly"?) What sort of an image does this give?

- We were sceptical about the lambananas when we first heard about them. We now think they are a superb fun item and a major contribution to the festive atmosphere of our streets
- O8 Place, the tourist office in Whitechapel distributes catalogues of the main events (and now has very helpful people to help visitors who are just browsing)

## **A MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF LIVERPOOL CULTURE COMPANY!**

We have received a letter from Phil Redmond, who was appointed some months ago as Deputy Chairman of Liverpool Culture Company. He has said that he supports the work which the Forum is trying to carry out and that he and Graham Boxer of Liverpool Culture Company are keen to make sure that heritage is seen as part of the (post 2008) legacy strategy. This is a welcome communication. It is to be hoped that we will have a means of two-way communication with the Culture Company in the future, something that has been lacking of late. An example of this problem is the failure of the Town Hall authorities to accommodate our request to allow public lectures on the city's history to be held in the Council Chamber, an opportunity missed, particularly as regards the thousands of people arriving in the cruise ships who could have been given the chance to hear the city's story in that wonderful building. .

## **THE CITY COUNCIL**

A Select Committee of the City Council for Tourism and Culture, open to the public, meets on 14 August at 4.30 pm in Millennium House. It will no doubt discuss the legacy of 2008. This challenge must mean "How do keep the visitors from near and far coming into the city after 2008 to enjoy the heritage and culture provided (and spend some of their money)?" Obviously 2009 will not see anything on the scale of 2008. However, several of the events of 2008 are continuations of what went on previously albeit in some cases on a smaller scale - such as the Tall Ships, the Biennial and Brouhaha. Attention must be on keeping the momentum of these activities going. In particular, now that Liverpool has realised that it really can attract tourists and now that the word has got out around the world that Liverpool is a rewarding place to visit, a program of events of some kind during the summer months and some kind of festive atmosphere must be planned. We think that the public authorities will find that the support of some of the voluntary cultural organizations in the city will be an important ingredient in this.

## **PREVENTING OUR HERITAGE BEING DEMOLISHED**

There has been fresh controversy about the knocking down of churches which are redundant or in need of costly repair. A Roman Catholic chapel in Garston (not "listed") was knocked down to other day causing anger amongst local residents. There continues to be controversy about the domed church of St Peter and St Paul ("the dome from home") looking out over the entrance of the Mersey at New Brighton. The church (completed in 1932) is not of outstanding quality as regards its interior but its dominant position is very striking. It is "listed" so, in theory at least, cannot be knocked down but finding an alternative use for it will not be easy. Where such demolition or ending of use for church purposes takes place, local people often feel that they have not been put in the picture early enough to come up with proposals for alternative use. A priest said to me that churches are not "antiquarian societies".. However, since the earliest days of Christianity (and of Islam), beautiful architecture artifacts have been associated with religious activity and large sums of church money has been spent on them. Moreover, Christianity has been a major building block of British life as we know it and local communities do not take kindly to "their" churches disappearing. (This is equally true of buildings other than churches). We know the

churches have financial problems and other things to cope with. There is nevertheless a case for reviewing the church architecture which we have inherited and for churches and public authorities to work together to deal with what is becoming something of a crisis.

It is important that Liverpool City Council makes some rapid progress towards completion of a local list of worthy buildings (not confined to churches!) so that the overall financial perspective may become clear. Such a list would not be confined to city centre buildings but could include buildings of note in the suburbs. Of course not all old buildings could or should be saved. What we need to move away from is the feeling that our heritage is disappearing before our eyes without anybody realising it until it is too late.

## EDITOR'S JOTTINGS

Have you seen "History of Liverpool" published by the Daily Post? It is an interesting photographic record of the city's life. It prints seven times a photo of the Toxteth riots. This may be just journalistic zeal but few Liverpoolians can deny that the riots were a turning point in the city's history and perhaps a moment when even the national press and the government in London were forced to understand that here was something wrong about the unemployment and poverty which was the lot of many,

The Community Foundation for Merseyside (0151 966 3594) tells us that it exists to help persons and organisations wishing to make charitable donations to handle the legal and procedural issues which arise. Potential givers and receivers could contact them.

We are pleased to report that Tony Bradshaw has been appointed as the City of Liverpool's first Citizen of Honour. His contribution to heritage affairs generally, to the Friends of St James' Gardens and to Merseyside Civic Society have been remarkable.

The Churches Conservation Trust cares for English churches of historic and architectural importance that are no longer used for worship. St James', Toxteth (for which plans for reopening for services are afoot) and Old Christ church, Waterloo are among those in its care.

- The Liverpool Biennial festival of contemporary art is from 29 September to 30 November. Info: 0151 709 4444. Works by contemporary artists from around the world will be on display.

The Festival of Science, run by the British Association for the Advancement of Science is to be held in Liverpool from 6 to 11 September, Info: 020 7019 4947. Dozens of events will be held in Liverpool University, National Museums Liverpool and other venues. The work of Liverpool's Proudman Oceanographic Centre (formerly the Liverpool Observatory at Bidston) will be on display at the Sherrington Building on Tuesday 9 September and in the atrium of the Proudman building on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday of that week. The event will be an opportunity for local people to get a better idea of what our university does.

- The university's new museum in the Victoria Building is now open.
- Southport Flower Show is from 21 to 24 August. Info: 0844 847 1555
- International Beatle Week is from 20 to 26 August.
- We are interested to see foreign language provision for tourists. *Entente Cordiale Tours* provides French speaking guides. For Spanish speakers, *Guias de Liverpool* says " Nuestras guias hispanohablantes son tambien fans de los Beatles ...." Info via 08 Place. And Merseytravel has a booklet in Spanish about trains and buses.

- Paula Nield ([paulaniield@hotmail.com](mailto:paulaniield@hotmail.com)) is looking for info about a pub on the corner of West Derby Road and Boundary Street which was bombed during the war. Marion MacKenzie was the landlady.
- Heritage Open Days are 11 – 21 September. Many interesting churches and other buildings will be open to the public. O8 Place has details.

## THE GARDEN SOCIETY'S CONFERENCE

Over 100 delegates from the Garden History Society, a charity devoted to the study and appreciation of the history of designed landscapes, met in the delightful Greenbank setting of Derby & Rathbone Hall for their annual general meeting and conference from 3-6 July. It began with a 'magical mystery tour' of inner city sites and parks, including Newsham, Stanley and Calderstones Parks, views of the Liverpool One landscaping, the garden festival site, and other points of interest. The Friday excursion took in Ince Blundell and Knowsley parks before visiting Croxteth's walled garden and Wavertree's Victorian scroll beds. The new leaflet about Wavertree Botanic Garden was greatly welcomed, as was the new seating, and the historic nature of the site was applauded. We attracted some high-powered delegates and speakers including Gilly Drummond, an English Heritage commissioner with a special interest in promoting historic parks and gardens; Charles Birnbaum, President of the Historic Landscapes Foundation, gave the keynote address, where he warned against the inappropriate juxtaposition of old and new. The conference culminated, at a reception in Sefton Park Palm House, with the launch of the new English Heritage book on Liverpool parks. Its co-author, Professor Robert Lee, gave a scintillating introduction to the book and the GHS Chairman, Dr Colin Treen, had some warm words for the HELP project. (Note by John Edmondson)

## GRUMBLE AREA

Why can't the authorities see how bad the frontage of the old "Packet" pub (the former police headquarters) in Hardman Street looks. OK, some of the litter had been picked up but can't the City Council or the developer do something about the weeds. It's on the way to the Phil and must give a thumbs down rating to a great many visitors. Can't the authorities remove the derelict telephone booth in the taxi rank near the Playhouse. I am told that it has NEVER been connected to the telephone network. There is disgraceful litter at the entrances to a property on the corner of Rodney Street and Hardman Street. Could local residents persuade the owners not to let the area down? Why can't the graffiti on the street sign in St John's Lane be cleaned off?

If Town Hall mandarins walked the streets, they might see these and other examples of blight - and possibly even do something about them. We are happy to acknowledge that there has been a big improvement in street cleaning in the city. Unfortunately It's the glaringly obvious bits that have not been attended to that stick in the mind.

- One comment heard from the lips of a lady visitor from London was that she hadn't heard very much scouse! She also pointed out that the lions outside St George's Hall were like those in Trafalgar Square in London. The lady should have said that the ones in Trafalgar Square in London are like ours!

Andrew Pearce, Editor.