

Liverpool History Society



**Autumn 2001
Issue 1**

Progress So Far

While flourishing local history societies have existed for several years of the towns and villages of the S. West Lancashire area, until recently no society was known for the study of the history of the City of Liverpool and its immediate environs.

In consequence, when a meeting was held in the Roscoe Rooms of Liverpool Central Library in November 2000 to assess whether there would be support for the establishment of such a society, well over 60 interested people attended. It was explained that in making good this apparent lacuna, any new body would complement, rather than compete with, the work of these existing societies. Much positive interest was shown, and an *ad hoc* committee was set up to explore this proposal, produce a draft constitution, and report to a further meeting early in 2001.

This was held on 18th February 2001, and the formal decision to establish such a society being taken and the draft constitution adopted, the new LIVERPOOL HISTORY SOCIETY was born. As if to justify this decision, within three months, membership of the fledgling society had grown to over 50, with attendances at its meetings averaging about 35.

Apart from the members' contributions given at the inaugural meeting, topics covered at subsequent meetings have been "The Life of Kitty Wilkinson", "Liverpool – The Best and the Worst", and on Liverpool Maps and Map-makers. The Spring and Summer Session ended with a visit to the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth.

Your committee feels that the Society has made a good start, and looks forward to an even better future as the Autumn and Winter Session (please see within), and 2002 approach.

We Are On The Web

Web site <http://liverpoolhistorysociety@mersyside.org>

The Website Administrator will be happy to respond to e-mailed enquiries about the membership of the Society, and its aims and the future programme sent to;

liverpoolhistsoc@merseymail.com

30th September: Museum of Liverpool Life

Introduction and Visit to Museum of Liverpool Life led by Janet Dugdale.

1.30pm. Janet Dugdale, Curator of the Museum of Liverpool Life, will talk about the Museum, its collections and role.

2.00pm. Visit the museum.

3.30pm. Waterfront room – Tea and discussion/questions.

New Venue

After the September meeting at the Museum of Liverpool Life the new venue for our monthly meetings will be Room 114 in the Hope at Everton complex of Liverpool Hope University. This is the old St. Francis Xavier's Grammar School building, which has recently been renovated to a very high standard. The entrance to the complex is on Shaw St., opposite what was once Liverpool Collegiate School. There is car parking nearby and a bus service.

Room 114 is on the first floor and can be reached by lift. The room is light and airy with wonderful views from its windows. This outreach of 'Hope' is the home of the Fine Arts And Design Dept., and this is reflected by the wealth of material displayed throughout the building.

Room 114 is booked for 1.30pm. Meetings will commence at approx. 1.40pm, with news and notices followed by a monthly talk at 2pm. Refreshments will also be available so it should be possible to relax and talk.

21st October: History of Wellington Rooms

Speaker: Tom Walsh.

The Wellington rooms, situated at the corner of Orford Street and Mount Pleasant, were opened in 1816 to provide a worthy setting for the dance-loving Liverpool merchant princes and their friends and families. The building quickly became the centre of fashionable Liverpool life, with its architecture, gracious interior designs, and its conditions of membership making it Liverpool's most exclusive cultural centre and the envy of other neighbouring towns.

Now the building is in a sorry sight, derelict, with more than its fair share of tatty fly-posters desecrating its walls and elegant Grecian columns, and saved from demolition only by virtue of its status as a listed building.

The story of the Wellington Rooms from its heyday as an exclusive gentlemen's club in the nineteenth century, to its closure and subsequent abandonment in the twentieth, encapsulates much of Liverpool's social and cultural history.

Tom Walsh has not only researched the history of the building but chaired a committee which, in the 1960s, succeeded in acquiring the rooms for use as Liverpool's Irish Centre. Tom managed the centre for over thirty years.

18th November: John Charles Ryle 1819 – 1900



“The first Protestant Lord Bishop of Liverpool 1880 – 1900”
Speaker: Mike Brian.

How the cricketing son of a Macclesfield bankrupt became the first Anglican Bishop of this great city and some of the highlights of, and misconceptions about, his Episcopate.

16th December: Winter Mixture

The title of this meeting, ‘Winter Mixture’ really describes what we hope it will be; - a ‘mixture’ – a winter social event which encompasses a bit of history.

To this end there will be Christmas refreshments - mince pies, glass of wine, whatever. We also thought that a short ‘history’ quiz, with some prizes would fulfil the history remit.

Of course people chat a lot at this sort of gathering, but we would welcome any other ideas that would make the occasion memorable! Please contact any committee member.



Queries

The following queries have been submitted by members:

- 1) Leeds St. Peter Leylands' Business Carters (file available)
- 2) Who was Myers of Everton? William Myers of Mere Bank House, Everton was a Liverpool salt merchant and broker, in the early 1800s. His house was described in Syers' History of Everton, as the most elegant mansion for many miles around, with a moat and useful bridges, and a new wood. He was a very wealthy man but modest. His brother, John, had a house with a 5-acre farm in Crosby, which is now Nazareth house. Myers produced a weekly trade journal called Myers Mercantile Advertiser from 1817 – 1875. Myers Road, Crosby was called after the family when the road was built on their land after 1865.

Liverpool History Society Committee

Frank Boyce	Chairman
Jo McCann	Secretary
Michael Brian	Membership Secretary
Joyce Culling	Treasurer
Brenda Murray	Committee Member
Charles Collier	Committee Member
Kathy Donaldson	Committee Member
Brenda Downey	Committee Member

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Research Projects

One of the chief *raison d'être* of any local history society is to promote the pursuit of research projects by its members, either as individuals or in small groups. The LHS is no exception (see paragraph 2.1 of its Constitution), and some of the projects being undertaken by its members are already known. Amongst others, these include (in no particular order):

19 th Century Watch Committee Books	Everton Village
The city's "lost" churches	Old Trades and Occupations
Docks and Railways	World War II evacuation experiences

This last is being undertaken by member Dick Hunter, as part of an Open University project. He is particularly keen to contact former pupils of Beaufort Street School, Toxteth, who attended the school in 1939. If you, or someone known to you, can assist Dick, you or they are invited to contact him at **16 Millfield Rd., York, YO23 1NQ** or on **01904 647537**.

Anyone undertaking a "Liverpool related" project that they would like to let members know about, or who requires advice on how to begin (or continue) is invited to contact any member of the committee. If space allows, requests similar to that above will be included, free of charge, in future Newsletters.

Trades and Occupations in 18th Century Liverpool

Joyce Culling is interested in trades and occupations and the contribution they made to a community, in particular the influence on individual families. The occupation of the bread winner usually determined the lifestyle of a family dictating how and where they lived in the community. A rewarding line of research.

In 1734 the burgeoning town of Liverpool boasted more than a hundred occupations according to the Poll Lists of that year. The Corporation Officials included "1 Sexton to new church, 1 of Town Waits, 1 Clark to the new church, 1 Sergeant at Mace, 1 Clark to the Committee of Council, 1 Clark to the old church.