



HISTORY SOCIETY

SPRING 2011

An important message from the Chairman

Although no fuss has been made about it, 2011 is the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Liverpool History Society: its first proper meeting was held in the Central Library (now history itself!) on 18 February 2001, under the distinguished chairmanship of Frank Boyce. The first AGM was convened on 26 May 2002, so this year's AGM will be our ninth. Our always well-attended meetings have taken place in the Central Library, then briefly here at Hope, then at LIPA for a time, before we finally moved back to our present location. The society has been a great success and we now have nearly 300 members at home and abroad and our monthly meetings are a tribute to the hard work put in to the running of the organisation by your committee (the LHS being a Registered Charity the committee members are also Trustees under the Charities Acts).

This brings me to a serious point. Several of the committee members have been in office since the inauguration of the



society; one member has held several offices in the society since 2001. I have now been Chairman since the second AGM in 2003. The subject of committee membership and officer succession is one that I have raised with the membership several times in recent years and we are now getting to the stage where you, as members, need to think about active participation in the running of the society before the inevitability of age and connected problems takes its toll on committee members. Michael Brian, who has served since 2001 and is currently both Treasurer and Membership Secretary, has advised the committee of potentially very serious health problems which could put him out of action for a considerable time. Both of his present posts are pivotal to the successful operation of the society and there is an urgent need for members to consider standing for the committee with a view to becoming officers.

Your committee needs YOU!

(John Tiernan)

Feast Your Eyes on the Streets of Liverpool

It is highly unlikely that any LHS member has *not* heard of the Bluecoat Press and chances are that every member will have at least one of its books in his or her collection. But how many of us have heard of Colin Wilkinson, the man who founded it nearly 20 years ago? Yet Colin has probably done more than anyone else I can think of to showcase Liverpool's rich and fascinating past – the 200 or so books he has published are testament to that.

I first met Colin in 1977 when he set up the Open Eye Gallery and found that we both shared a love of photography, and especially images of bygone Liverpool.

So, I was delighted a few months ago to stumble upon Colin's "Streets of Liverpool" blog whilst browsing the web. And what a rare treat it is! Others obviously think so too for the site now gets over 9,000 "hits" each month, a very respectable number for a blog.



Colin began the blog in January last year so, if you are new to the "Streets of Liverpool", start by enjoying a journey of delight through the archive section at the bottom of the home page.

The blog allows you to leave comments about the various images for Colin and other visitors to read. Although he boasts an encyclopedic knowledge of old Liverpool images, he was stumped recently when he failed to identify a photograph of a church. However, once he had put it on the blog it was swiftly identified as All Saints at the corner of Bentley Road and Kingsley Road, L8. Coincidentally, it was also the church where my wife and I got married 48 years ago. The marriage survived, the lovely old church didn't!

To the left is Colin's favourite old Liverpool image, of Netherfield Road in 1927, just bursting with human interest. (Courtesy LRO)

(Ron Jones)

Meeting Report

20 February 2011 – David Charters

LIVERPOOL TALES

Meeting report:
Netta Dixon

The Chairman introduced David Charters, a journalist since the 1960s, who writes a weekly column in the “Daily Post”, and was awarded the accolade of Feature Writer of the Year in the North West Newspaper Awards 2000.

David started his talk with a reference to St. Mary’s Church Tower in Birkenhead from where one has an excellent view of the Liverpool waterfront; one can see there the memorial to the 99 men who died on the submarine *Thetis* in Liverpool Bay just before WW2. He thinks that people should make more use of the medieval Birkenhead Priory. He recalled a film *Carthage in Flames* which he saw in the 1950s in the Gaumont Cinema near Birkenhead Park; although, in his opinion, this was the worst epic film ever made, he thought that Liverpool, with its indomitable spirit of the underdog, was like Carthage. Coincidentally, he related that a Carthaginian coin had once been found at Meols in the Wirral.

David recalled people who have achieved distinction in their lives, such as Noel Chavasse (1884-1917) son of the 2nd Bishop of Liverpool Francis James Chavasse. Noel died in the First World War and received his second VC for gallantry when, as a doctor, he attended to his men although he was grievously wounded in action. His brother Christopher also had a distinguished military career in the Liverpool Scottish regiment. There is a fine sculpture in Abercromby Square of Noel Chavasse by Tom Murphy, the sculptor of the statues of Johnny Walker, John Lennon, Harold Wilson, Bessie Braddock and Ken Dodd.

We then sang *Davy Crockett* to remember the Everton footballer Dave Hickson!

Another person who impressed David was James William Carling who is commemorated in Mike Kelly’s book *Liverpool’s Irish Connection*. Carling, a pavement artist, was sent to Father Nugent’s industrial school after he was arrested for begging. In his teens he went to America where he worked as a caricaturist. Most notably, he produced 40 drawings for a competition to illustrate *The Raven* by Edgar Allan Poe; unfortunately, he lost to the famous French illustrator Gustave Dore. Eventually, Carling returned penniless to Liverpool in Spring 1887. A few months later he died in Brownlow Hill Workhouse, aged 29, and was buried in a paupers’ grave in Walton Park Cemetery.

Someone who contributed much to Liverpool and the Wirral was William Hesketh Lever who built his folly of Liverpool Castle which can still be seen in Rivington.

David wondered why there was one black face carved on the Steble Fountain (1879); this could have been Gordon Strachen (formerly Masters) who sang in a Jamaican choir and came to Liverpool.

David Charters has always been impressed by the courage of Ken Dodd, and he admired the former Prime Minister Harold Wilson, a tolerant and witty man, who kept us out of the Vietnam War.

Finally he read his poem *Towers* which he wrote in memory of 9/11, and he spoke about our strong links with New York where John Lennon had chosen to live; David reminded us that 9 million people passed through Liverpool for the USA in the 19th Century, and that the designers of New York’s Central Park were influenced by Joseph Paxton’s Birkenhead Park.

Throughout his talk David stressed the importance of history and said that – “History is part of us and we are all part of history”.



Tom Murphy's statues of Ken Dodd and Bessie Braddock at Lime Street Station. (Photo: Ron Jones)



Joseph Paxton's original design for Birkenhead Park. Courtesy LRO.

20 March 2011 – Ron Bather

THE ORANGE LODGE IN LIVERPOOL

Meeting report:
Netta Dixon

Mr. William Owens, Provincial Grand Master of the Royal Orange Institution attended with Mr. Ron Bather, Grand Master of the Orange Lodge in England and Imperial President of the Grand Lodge of the World.

Mr. Bather spoke to us about the history and the organisation of the Orange Lodges. He explained that Mr. Owens is Provincial Grand Master in Liverpool, where there are 10 districts and 70 Lodges which have anything between 6 and 50 members each.

The History: The first Grand Lodge was founded in Armagh, Ireland, in September 1795 at a time when there frequent skirmishes between Catholics and Protestants. Colonel John Blackler, a wealthy landowner in Armagh and Tyrone, was one of the first members who encouraged the Orangemen to join the local yeomanry. In 1798 there was a united Irishmen’s uprising against the established church. Orange Lodges were formed within British regiments and the movement spread to England where it first flourished in Manchester and the mill towns. By 1803 the first Liverpool lodge was formed which, due to its regimental associations at that time, sat in Barbados! In 1807 a parade to a church (now Manchester Cathedral) was attacked on its way back; this led to the foundation of the Institution which spread over England, to Scotland and to other countries. Every regiment would have an Orange Lodge.

The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 was strongly opposed in Parliament. At this time the Hanoverian King’s brother the Duke of York (who has a statue in London) was Grand Master and he was succeeded by his brother the Duke of Cumberland. A Parliamentary

Meeting Report

Committee was set up to inquire into the power of the Orange Lodge in the country. Parliament agreed that the Institution was too powerful, and it would have to be disbanded, so the Royal Institution of Royal Lodges ceased in 1836. However, between 1836 and 1876 work went on behind the scenes to keep the Orange Lodge alive. On the 7th July 1876 a new Institution was formed as a Royal Orange Institution of England and the first meeting was held in Manchester in July of the following year.

Orange Lodges in Liverpool and elsewhere in the World: The main Orange Lodge hall in Liverpool in 1876/77 was in St. Anne's Street and the Provincial Master was George Thomas Haig. Amongst others, there were lodges in Edge Hill, the Toxteth area, Gt. Homer Street, the Scotland Road area, and the Conservative rooms in Low Hill; Ron Bather's Lodge moved around Garston, and eventually settled in Heald Street. There were Lodges in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA; in 1878 there were Orange Lodge riots in New York. The movement was very powerful in Canada, where membership prior to WW1 was over 360,000; the first PM of Canada was an Orangeman and, in Toronto, there was a sense that you had to be an Orangemen in order to become mayor. There was a general decline after WW1 – some 80,000 Canadian Orangemen were killed during the war. The first Lodges in West Africa were formed in Nigeria at the beginning of the last century – the Institution is still strong in Ghana and Togo.

Today: New UK Lodges have been formed in Cardiff and in Kent. The background of most members of the Orange Lodge in Liverpool is English rather than Irish, and this was the case in 1876. In America, Lodges in Florida, New York City and Nevada are opening this year. Every State in Australia has an Orange Lodge.

Principles: According to Mr. Bather, the Orange Lodge is not a secret organisation but "...an organisation of secrets"; within the organisation, members aspire to civil and religious liberty for all, based on the Bible and its teaching. The Orange Lodge's overall aim is to seek freedom for all, not just for Protestants. However, its main thesis is Protestantism. Mr Bather said that nowadays the Orange Lodge was much more open with the press and had a website that was accessible to anyone. (For an in-depth historical account of the Orange Lodge and other useful information, visit – www.grandorangelodge.co.uk)

Organisation: There are separate Ladies' and Junior Lodges. There are three degrees which relate to a set of values based on Bible teaching which each member is asked to attain: an Orange, Purple and then a Royal Arch Purple degree; the degrees of attainment are denoted by emblems on the sashes worn by members.

Bookshelf reviews by Fred Forrest

John Moss of Otterspool (1782-1858) Railway Pioneer - Slave Owner - Banker. Graham Trust (2010). Author House UK Ltd, Milton Keynes. ISBN: 978-1-4520-0444-0

After reading this excellent book about a remarkable man, I was surprised that its subject is not better known to Liverpool local historians. Here was a man who the author quite rightly describes as "one of Liverpool's leading Georgian/Victorian businessmen". Moss was first chairman of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company and involved with other railways nationally and internationally. He was also the owner of over 1000 slaves in the West Indies and, following abolition of slavery in the British Empire in the 1830s, was involved controversially with John Gladstone in the shipping of voluntary, paid, indentured labourers from India to the West Indies in an attempt to resolve labour problems. In addition to all this, he ran "his internationally renowned bank" through more than 50 years "of chaotic financial times which make the credit crunch of the 2000's look like a storm in a teacup". Leaving aside current thinking on the morals and mores of the slavery question, Moss appears to have been tremendously respected by his peers locally and nationally and, apart from the Gladstones, he had a dialogue with such major figures as Peel, Wellington, Huskisson, Wilberforce, Stephenson and Roscoe.

The author treats the three strands of Moss's business life separately to help the reader's understanding so it is easy to forget that Moss would, at times, have been juggling all three balls simultaneously.

Don't miss author Graham Trust speaking about "John Moss and the Liverpool Railway" at LHS's May 2011 meeting.

Liverpool: The Confederate Years John Hussey, 173pp, paperback, £9.99. Countyvise Ltd., 2010. ISBN 978 1 906823 41 2.
Hussey's book on the fascinating topic of Liverpool's unusually close



The Coronation Female LOL 508 marches up Leice Street in the 1960s. (Photo: Ron Jones)

relationship with the Confederacy during the American Civil War (while Manchester seemed to side with the Union and the official Government position was a neutral one) does throw some new light on the subject. Its opening chapter on the four day Grand Southern Bazaar in October 1864 at St George's Hall illustrates well how openly, keenly and generously local people, supported by aristocracy from all over the country, commiserated with the plight of Confederate prisoners of war. There are also interesting chapters on largely unknown personages such as locally born blockade runner Henry Lafone and Southerner Gazaway Bugg Lamar, as well as information on the connections of Jefferson Davis and Teddy Roosevelt with Liverpool. More information would have been interesting on the local properties (many still existing) mentioned in the Introduction as having been lived in by "Confederates".

The Strangling Angel Elizabeth Tyrrell, 357pp paperback. CreateSpace 2010 ISBN 978-1-45647-1323

Liverpool-born author, and LHS member, Elizabeth Tyrrell, has recently had her debut novel published. Set in Ireland and Liverpool during the 1800s, it follows the harrowing journey of a young girl who flees Donegal after witnessing her mother's murder.

She survives starvation and danger and eventually arrives in Liverpool, en-route to a new life in America, but is robbed on the quayside and exposed to dangers of a very different kind among the Irish who flooded into Liverpool in the wake of The Great Famine.

Elizabeth says her story is – "A rich Irish stew of adventure, danger, tragedy and romance, seasoned with just the right amount of Scouse humour." She points out that although the book is not a memoir, it was inspired by more than thirty years of research into her family history, during which time she unearthed many fascinating characters but no murderous skeletons hiding in her ancestral closets!

Elizabeth, who currently lives in Canada, welcomes readers' feedback and comments. (email: bettyandbob130@rogers.com)

LIVERPOOL HISTORY SOCIETY – 2011 MEETINGS PROGRAMME

15 May	Ninth Annual General Meeting followed by – John Moss and the Liverpool Railway	Graham Trust
26 June	(Sunday) Visit to Cunard Building (limited to 25 people)	
Jul/Aug	No Meetings – Summer Break	
18 Sep	Liverpool Sailors on the Waterfront in the 19c.	Graeme Milne
16 Oct	My Year as Lord Mayor of Liverpool	Gerry Scott
20 Nov	Josephine Butler & Women's Rights	Brenda Murray
*11 Dec	Musical Memories of the Sixties	Ray O'Brien

*The meeting in December will be held on the second Sunday of the month and not, as normally, on the third Sunday.

With the exception of our June meeting, all meetings will take place in the Grace Room, 1st Floor, Hope at Everton, Shaw Street, Liverpool. This is the former St Francis Xavier College building. All meetings start at 2pm (doors open 1.30pm).

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

23/24 April 2011 (10am-5pm) – BBC Radio Merseyside Big History Weekend, St George's Hall. The Liverpool History Society will be amongst scores of local history organisations exhibiting at the event.

29 October 2011 (10am-4pm) – North West Group of Family History Societies “Family History Day Fair 2011”, Bowlers Exhibition Centre, Longridge Road, Trafford Park, Manchester M17 1SN.

The “Grand Old Man” returns to Seaforth

There will be a memorial erected in Seaforth to William Ewart Gladstone, who lived there for 17 years, from 1813 to 1830. He was the only man who was Prime Minister four times, and he was also three times Chancellor of the Exchequer. This will be a tourist attraction to add to the Gormley Iron Men, just half a mile away, and is intended to raise the profile of Seaforth village which has been badly treated by being divided into two wards, Church, in Sefton and Linacre in Bootle and was also cut in two by the building of Princess Way, to carry the heavy traffic from Liverpool Freeport in Seaforth to the M57.

The memorial will be a bronze bust of Gladstone, on top of a 5ft stone column, standing in the grounds of Star of the Sea church, to be exactly opposite the site of St Thomas's church, built by his father and demolished in 1880. The cost will be £18k, but the charity set up by LHS stalwart Brenda Murray has already raised £10k.

Under the banner of SEAGLAM (Seaforth Gladstone Memorial), Brenda is busy trying to raise the remaining £8k and has organised a number of events: on Sunday, May 8th, at 3p.m. (admission free) there's a talk about ten interesting people who lived in Seaforth in the 19c; on Sunday, May 22nd at 12.30 for 1 p.m., there will be a lunch, price £11, followed by a Grand Auction conducted, with humour, by Ken Pye. If you would like to support Brenda's venture, please email her for details at – brendamurray300@gmail.com

STOP PRESS..STOP PRESS..STOP PRESS

To mark the start of the American Civil War 150 years ago, and its numerous Merseyside connections, National Museums has created an interesting American Civil War Trail around the Maritime Museum. It will be in place for the next five years and displays will change over that period. Download the trail leaflet now at: www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime/collections/americancivilwar

THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Officers

Chairman: John Tiernan (2012)
Administration Secretary: Fred Forrest (2012)
Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Michael Brian (2010)
Programme Secretary: Brenda Murray (2010)
Webmaster: Rob Ainsworth (P) (2010)

Committee

Sheila Binks (2012) Joyce Culling (2012)
Netta Dixon (2010) Betty Gamble (2012)
Mary Harrison (2010) Ron Jones (2012)
Brenda Murray (2010) Cynthia Stonall (Librarian) (2012)
N.B. () denotes end of current term of office.

Postal Correspondence

Administration Secretary
32 Rugby Drive, Aintree Village, Liverpool L10 8JU
Treasurer & Membership Secretary
L H S, 55 Greenloons Drive, Formby, Merseyside, L37 2LX
LHS Email: enquiries@liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk
LHS Website: www.liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk
Webmaster Email:
webmaster@liverpoolhistorysociety.org.uk
LHS Questions Blog –
<http://liverpoolhistorysocietyquestions.blogspot.com>
LHS Requests –
<http://liverpoolhistorysocietyrequests.blogspot.com>
Newsletter Editor: Ron Jones: ron@rja-mpl.com



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