

# Formby Civic News

The Newsletter of the Formby Civic Society

## Coastal Conference

July 2004

This Society is helping organise the first ever conference looking at the history and archaeology of the Sefton Coast; to be held on Wednesday 15th September 2004 at Formby Hall Golf Club.

The Sefton Coast Partnership has underwritten the event in response to the huge amount of interest from residents and visitors to the borough's world renowned areas of Special Scientific Interest and outstanding natural beauty.

Many people are aware of the diverse wildlife and natural habitats which Sefton harbours. But this conference will also look at

the cultural history of the coast which has played an important part in its development.

During the conference delegates will hear talks on topics such as; The Shore and Mosslands in Prehistoric Times, Archaeology and History on a Changing Coastline, The Origins of Britain's First Lifeboat Service, Human Influence on Sefton Dune Landscape and Fishing and Farming.

The event is aimed at anyone who has a general interest in their natural surroundings as well as those with a more serious passion in the history and archaeology of the coastal area. It

is designed to stimulate interest and appreciation of our Coastal Heritage. There is so much to learn about the past which has influenced the contemporary coastline.

All of the talks will be given in a 'jargon free' way to make this an interesting and informative event for everyone. The Society hopes it will prove very popular. And that it will be supported by as many members as possible.

**Full information, programme and Registration Form are enclosed. Please return by August 25th**

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### (left); Norton Priory Visit 24th June

*Some 32 members of the Society travelled to Norton Priory to visit the Museum and Priory Museum Gallery. The ancient Priory Undercroft was of particular interest as were the grounds which included the award winning 2.5 acre Georgian Walled garden*

## Planning Matters- *Ray Derricott*

The summer months are relatively quiet on the planning front but the following items have been dealt with.

### **New Retail Outlet.**

Permission has been given to erect a retail outlet on part of the car park at the rear of Oxfam and other shops in that block. The planning committee considered that there would be a demand for further outlets and dismissed views that the development would take up precious parking space. The Planning Directorate believes that Formby has adequate parking facilities. No proposals were put forward about any temporary provision of public toilets during the development. No plans about the rebuilding of toilet facilities have been revealed.

### **Larkhill Farm.**

The Chair, Secretary and the Amenities Secretary met the Architect who is developing Larkhill Farm and dis-

cussed with him the plans for a new residence to be built on the site. Plans were also included to maintain the footpath from the junction of Wicks Lane and Larkhill Lane. The Architect was concerned to maintain privacy and security for the site. He was not in favour of opening the path for use by horses and their riders. The proposal has now been submitted and Mr Hardwicke from Planning sent a copy of details to the Amenities Secretary. The plan shows that the intention is to include a slight realignment of the footpath to cater for privacy and security. The plan also includes the provision of a Kissing Gate at the entry to the footpath. This will deter motor cyclists and other motorised transport from using the path. This was thought to be desirable. However, there is bound to be some opposition from horse riders about the inclusion of the gate. After discussion with some members of the committee, the Amenities Secretary wrote on behalf of the Society approving the plans.

### **Round-about Advertising.**

The Amenities Secretary wrote on behalf of the Society opposing the use of commercial advertising in and around roundabouts in Formby. Consultation with members fully approved of this position. The proposal has now been withdrawn.

### **Telephone Masts.**

The proposal from Hutchinson to build a telephone mast at the rear of the shops in Harington Road was turned down. The Society had opposed this development on aesthetic grounds as being too close to surrounding houses. The proposal to erect a mast on the roof of the Embassy building at the southern entrance to Green Lane has been opposed but a decision on this proposal has not yet been made.

## Society News. *David Willis*

Some 32 members of the Society travelled to Norton Priory to visit the Museum and Priory Museum Gallery. The ancient Priory Undercroft was of particular interest as were the grounds which included the award winning 2.5 acre Georgian Walled garden. The Group was welcomed by the manager of the museum which is now part of Halton Borough's Museum service.

The evening visit to Freshfield Dune Heath was also well supported and very much enjoyed, not only because of the lovely summer evening. Our hosts were Fiona Robertson of the Wildlife Trust, accompanied by fauna and flora expert Phil Smith. The 85 acres are now managed jointly by the Trust and English Nature; there is a wide range of options for preserving the best features of the site and to restore those that have been damaged by the spread of some trees and shrubs. Although the heather is an important aspect the mosaic of habitats including gorse and grassland will also need to

be retained and improved for wildlife. We were shown the main features of the extensive site and look forward to seeing it develop as a significant feature of Formby's natural areas.

Much of the practical work done by the society is carried on quietly and without fuss by a small band of volunteers – everything from delivering Newsletters to keeping abreast of new proposals from the various agencies that look after our coast and environment.

For example, the Society is represented on a number of consultative bodies in Merseyside, one of which is the Merseytravel Advisory panel on which Mike Belshaw is our representative. Recently Mike responded to and supported on the Society's behalf suggested improvements to ticketing schemes, e.g. a wider range of saver tickets. If you have a particular interest or can help in any way, we'd be pleased to hear.

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

*13 – 19 September has been designated 'Urban Design Week' by the Urban Design Alliance. Events are held throughout the UK to promote urban design for successful communities. See the Civic Society website shown above.*

*2 October sees the annual family history fair organised by the family history societies in the North West. It takes place at the Velodrome Manchester.*

*The consultants initial assessment on the Sefton Coast Access strategy will be presented in informal open Meetings to which FCS members are invited. In Formby there will be a meeting at the Gild Hall, Church Rd on Monday 20 September from 2.30 - 4.30. There will be a further meeting in Hightown the following day. If you know of forthcoming events that might be of interest to Formby Civic Society members please send details to the Secretary for inclusion in this Newsletter.*

# New Approach To Heritage Protection

The way we protect England's heritage by listing buildings, scheduling ancient monuments and registering historic parks, gardens and battle-fields is about to change. Proposals for a new system of heritage protection have been drawn up by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and will be put to the test by English Heritage on 15 pilot sites across the country. The new system will create a single unified list, called the "List of Historic Sites and Buildings of England", that will give equal statutory recognition to different components of the historic environment formerly accorded varying status as listed (buildings), registered (parks and gardens and battle-fields), and scheduled (archaeological sites). It will develop a single designation regime that allows separate archaeological, architectural and landscape elements all found on one site to be treated as one entity. This will overcome the confusing

overlap or artificial demarcation, which currently occurs where some structures are both listed and scheduled or a historic site contains individually listed buildings but the land between them is ignored. The new regime will also establish statutory management agreements that allow for strategic management over the medium to long term.

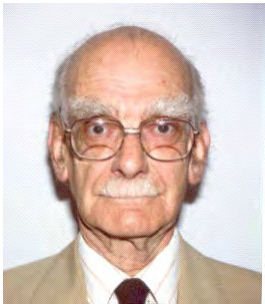
15 pilot sites comprise a whole range of different types of site, of varying degrees of complexity and with contrasting private or public ownership and management. They include Arncliffe in Bristol (a Victorian cemetery, recently featured on the BBC "Restoration" series), and other structures as diverse as the tower block, Centre Point, in central London, and a vast 19<sup>th</sup> century steel works in Sheffield that has both listed and scheduled components.

The nearest of the sites to this area is the

Langdale Neolithic landscapes in Cumbria. This is an area of the Lake District with scattered flint and cave deposits, the evidence of Neolithic axe factories, none of which are currently designated. The area is also in a National Park, an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and is largely managed by the National Trust. Difficult management issues include the threat of erosion from fell walkers

*The above information was taken from a recent edition of 'Civic Society briefing', the newsletter of the Civic Trust. This Society is a member of the Civic Trust, and individuals can also join. If you would like to see some of the publications we receive please contact the Secretary. For more information about the Civic Trust see [civicsocieties@civictrust.org.uk](mailto:civicsocieties@civictrust.org.uk)* **David Willis.**

## William Fox.



We were very sorry to learn of the death on 1<sup>st</sup> March of FCS member, William Fox. Bill was born in Liverpool in 1926. At the age of 10 he

gained a much sought after scholarship to Liverpool Institute, with whom at the start of WW2 he was evacuated to Bangor, only to return home in time for the May Blitz. As soon as he was 17½ he volunteered for the Royal Marine Commandos, who, after basic training, shipped him to Hong Kong.

Already a keen student with wide interests, following military service he had a short period at Cambridge but then elected to continue his studies at Liverpool. Here he gained a First Class Honours degree together with a re-

search Fellowship which took him to Germany where he gave lectures on English Literature.

Returning to Liverpool he joined the teaching staff of the University where he continued a distinguished career in German Studies, winning great admiration from his students and colleagues

A keen student of literature and history, a connoisseur of art, and a lover of music he was a pianist and regular subscriber to Liverpool Philharmonic concerts. Bill and Audrey first joined the Society many years ago and recently renewed their interest. Reflecting his lifelong interest in small boats and the sea, Bill gave the History Group a memorable talk on John Masefield.

At the age 70, Bill realised his lifelong ambition and bought a boat, which he sailed mostly on the river Shannon. We share our most sincere sympathies with Audrey and their family Patrick, Anna and Rachel. R.A.Y.

## Consultations

Going the rounds at the moment for comment by Sefton residents are two sets of proposals that, after finalisation and adoption, are set to influence our community over the coming decade. One is a Coast Access Strategy. This is still in its early stages and is involving consultants seeking information on coastal users' activities, any barriers or constraints on access to the coast (i.e. broadly, the area between railway and sea) and suggestions for enhancing coastal paths and related facilities. Rather more advanced is a draft Merseyside Cycle Strategy; its aim is to promote and increase cycle use throughout Merseyside. It contains proposed targets and solutions for, amongst other things, safety of cyclists and pedestrians, an improved cycle route network, cycle parking and security and better integration with public transport. The Society has responded to both consultation documents and will aim to keep alert to new developments.

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## The Newsletter of the Formby Civic Society

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## Formby Civic Society

Winter Programme, 2004—5

### GENERAL MEETINGS, (organised by Dr John Turner);

- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September “Mersey Tides and their Prediction”  
Dr Philip Woodworth,, The Proudman Oceanographic Lab,
- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October “Sand-blow on the Sefton Coast”  
Graham Lymbery, Sefton MBC, Technical Services.
- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November “Formby Footpaths”  
Val Hough, Sefton MBC, Technical Services.

### HISTORY GROUP MEETINGS, (Organised by Barbara Yorke),

- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October ‘St Luke’s “Old Burying Ground”, Dr Jen Lewis,
- Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November ‘Bootle Memories’, Mr J. Woolley
- Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December Films on Martin Mere and Southport’s Lord Street  
Jim Morris

### CONFERENCE; ‘Sefton’s Coastal Heritage’;

**Wednesday, 15th September at Formby Hall Golf Club.**

.....Details and Registration form enclosed.

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## Art Group.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Art Exhibition was held on 26<sup>th</sup> June and was noteworthy mainly due to the inclement weather. However, members braved the wind and the rain and with help from the Chairman in the shape of flasks of coffee and a very large umbrella, they remained cheerful and were even heard discussing next year’s Exhibition. There were few people in the village; let’s face it , we wouldn’t have been there either if we hadn’t needed to be. Few paintings were sold but at least we did not make a loss on the day.

To date we have only been sketching once this summer when we went to Lydiate Hall Farm, painting the

many hens, ducks and peacocks, or ruined buildings. A sunny day and an enjoyable outing!

### Future Programme.

**September.** Would any members who indicated they might be prepared to help set up next year’s Exhibition come to the first General Meeting of the Society in September at 7. 30 pm so that we can discuss this before the General Meeting starts?

**October.** Earlier this year we had a speaker talking about the Victorian Parks of Liverpool. If members would like to visit Liverpool Museum to see the preserved plants and paintings of flowers, please con-

tact me by 20<sup>th</sup> September, so that I can arrange a suitable date.

### October/ November/December.

During these months we usually visit exhibitions in Ribchester, Goosenargh or New Longton. Dates not yet to hand - if interested please contact me on 873920 early in October for details. *Barbara Mossop.*