

The Victorian Society: Liverpool Group

Spring 2024

The Society for the study and protection of Victorian and Edwardian architecture and allied arts. HQ 1 Priory Gardens, Bedford Park, London W4 1TT
tel 0208 994 1019 website: www.victorian society.org.uk

2024 is already well-advanced and so, we hope, are plans for the revival of the Liverpool group, the longest established of all the Victorian Society's regional groups and in the city itself, responsible for keeping people aware of Liverpool with the most listed Victorian and Edwardian buildings outside London, some unique and remarkable townscapes, and, despite the UNESCO difficulties of the recent past, an historic centre that, with suitable development around it, will be drawing people for many more decades to come.

On the road, some dates for you to note:

50 Years in Building Conservation

Wednesday **20 March** at 6.00 for 6.30pm

Institute room, 2nd floor (lift available)

Friends Meeting House, 22 school Lane, **Liverpool**, L1 3BT

All welcome

Ken Moth is an accredited conservation architect who retired in 2010 after some 40 years in practice. He joined the Victorian Society in 1973 at a time of fierce campaigning in his home city of Manchester, and has remained an active member ever since, holding the position of Casework Trustee, chair of the Northern Buildings Committee and Vice Chair until his retirement from the board last October. He is a keen amateur historian with a long-standing interest in the history of technology.

Please let Roger Hull know if you want to attend for catering purposes: rogero2949@gmail.com or 07395148328

Tuesday 30th April - The Athenaeum History Group is holding an illustrated talk by Roger Hull on "**50 years of the Liverpool**

group of the Victorian Society' at 5.30pm at the Athenaeum, 12 Church Lane (off School Lane), Liverpool L1 3DD. Contact Diana Lane at dianatwinnlane@yahoo.co.uk if you would like to come. This will be a joint meeting.

Saturday, 11 May – 11 am walk around All Saints, Childwall (Diana Goodier) (limited to 12 people advance booking essential) charge £5 pay on the day. Please let Roger Hull know if you want to come rogero2949@gmail.com or [07395148328](tel:07395148328)

Thanks must be given to Steve Roman, the Society's membership trustee, who has led the way in starting the ball rolling again after quite a long period of abeyance partly caused by the Covid pandemic.

Not a lot to report on the buildings and issues noted in 2023. Norman Shaw's Parr's Bank will soon become a Turkish restaurant, though quite what this means for "the striking ground floor banking hall" is unclear; his domestic building, the survivor, the vicarage of St Agnes in Ullet Road remains empty; there is a new priest for the church but whether Shaw's building becomes, like the house at St Margaret's, yet more student accommodation, is also unclear; the Deaf Centre (Princes Road), on the NATIONAL "ten most endangered buildings, the year before Covid, goes ever more ruinous, without, it seems ANY 'national' interest and relatively limited local awareness; across the road, the grounds of the Welsh Presbyterian Church have been cleared ... what is to follow remains uncertain. The romantic ruins of this once wealthy part of south Liverpool remain as landmarks. Whether or not they can survive into the future is another matter but if the distinctive nature of the historic city is to survive, they must do so.

There still doesn't seem to be a strategy for the city, central or wider, as Gavin Stamp said, long ago, architecturally "Liverpool is its own worst enemy", which might be arguable given Conservative governments since 1979, but, as 'Jones the Planner' said in 2016, "Lime Street is a shambles and about to get worse"

and visually, who could argue? (HOWEVER, IN 2024 it looks much better and the full frontage of Lime Street station can now be seen and the cycle track (really needed?) has been put into the street sensitively).

There is development, of course. In case people haven't seen it, in print or online: there's an image taken from 'YM Liverpool' of 1 Park Lane, a "key dockland site" on the edge of the city centre, which will offer 90 'Manhattan style' apartments. A careful look at the image shows, on the left side and rather lost in its new surroundings, the Gustav Adolf's Kyrke, the Swedish seamen's church of 1883-4, an early work by W.D. Caroe, who obtained the commission

UK HERITAGE TOUR - VISIT TO LIVERPOOL MOSQUE AND THE WORLD MUSUEM OF LIVERPOOL

Date: Sunday, 18th August 2024

Time: 12.00 - 16.00

Addresses: 8-10 Brougham Terrace, Liverpool L6 1AE (Mosque) | William Brown St, Liverpool, United Kingdom L3 8EN (Museum)

Cost: £10

Visiting the earliest recorded mosque in Britain which was founded in a Liverpool terrace house in 1889. The Muslim Institute was established by a group of 20 British converts to Islam, led by Sheikh Abdullah William Henry Quilliam (1856-1932). Our visit will take place for 2 hours between 12: 00 pm to 02: 00 pm, also those who are Muslims, will have the chance to do their Zuhr Prayer there. After that, there will be free time for everyone to have lunch and enjoy the city.

Later we will visit the World Museum of Liverpool where you will learn about its history.



Legacie reveals new images of One Park Lane as construction nears highest point



Designed by Falconer Chester Hall, the development will include 90 'Manhattan-style' apartments

LIVERPOOL-BASED PROPERTY FIRM Legacie has unveiled new CGI of its One Park Lane development as it nears the highest point of construction.

One Park Lane, which has a gross development value of £25 million, will see the transformation of a key Liverpool dockland site on the corner of Park Lane and Liver Street into 90 'Manhattan-style' apartments.

Designed by Falconer Chester Hall and promoted by international sales agent RWinvest, the 16-storey building will include a mix of studio and one, two and three-bedroom units.

Legacie is also building 620 units on the historic Heap's Rice Mill site surrounding One Park Lane, with a total gross development value of £140m.

The Liverpool property firm, which has delivered a string of developments across the city including its flagship £90m Parliament Square scheme, is on track to reach the 16th storey at One Park Lane imminently.

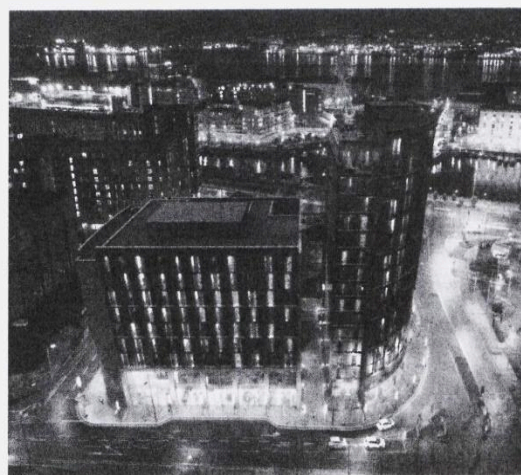
“One Park Lane will bring luxury living to an iconic area of Liverpool city centre and I am proud of the quality we are delivering.”

John Morley, CEO of Legacie, says: “This is another flagship site for Legacie which continues to reinvigorate areas of Liverpool left vacant for too long.

“Our track record of successful developments, completed on time, is second to none across the North West, and One Park Lane is no exception.

“This site will bring luxury living to an iconic area of Liverpool city centre and I am proud of the quality we are delivering.

“One Park Lane combines beautifully with the modern surrounds of the historic Albert Dock and adds further elegance to Liverpool's skyline.”



PROPERTY NEWS



Nexus Residential starts work on £35m Baltic Triangle apartment scheme

Central Park will feature 174 units and a private roof terrace with views of Liverpool Cathedral

THE £35 MILLION Central Park scheme, due for completion in the first quarter of 2025, includes a mixture of one, two and three-bedroom apartments, with a hotel-style reception and concierge, as well as a private roof terrace with views of Liverpool Cathedral.

The development will also include cycle storage, secure underground car parking and a gymnasium for residents, while £1m has been invested into an adjoining public piazza inspired by the Royal Albert Dock, which will be home to sculptures, floral arches, trees, benches, alcoves and artwork.

Central Park will also include state-of-the-art eco-friendly features such as solar panels, electric vehicle chargers, heat recovery systems, LED lighting and air source heat pumps, with Nexus set to deliver a centralised residential island in its New York City and Central Park-inspired creation.

Nexus has also pledged to plant 100 trees for every apartment purchased at the scheme.

Legacie is the main construction company behind Central Park and has previously led on



several eco-installations at sites such as Marco Pierre White Restaurants and Element – The Quarter and Reliance House in Liverpool.

The scheme is promoted by international sales agent RW Invest, which was named Best Real Estate Agency at the 2023 UK Property Awards in London.

Michael Gledhill, director of Nexus Residential, says: "Central Park is bringing luxury, first-rate living to the Baltic Triangle with world-class, eco-friendly facilities.

"Nexus Residential is proud to create a centralised residential island within the Baltic

Triangle, which is quickly becoming one of the most desirable places to live in the UK.

"The residential island, including the £1 million piazza, offers professional surroundings with refined amenities covering work, leisure, and everything in between.

"We are also delighted to continue our pledge to develop eco-friendly sites which bring the Baltic Triangle and Liverpool city centre to life while putting the environment first.

"We are looking forward to working with our partners to bring another luxury scheme to a city so close to our heart."



Abdullah Quilliam Mosque & The First Muslim Community in the UK

Date: Saturday, 20th July

Time: 14.00 - 15.30

Venue: Digital

Tickets: Free, Register on Eventbrite

Hello from Liverpool!

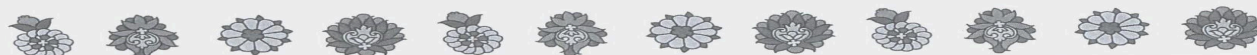
Join Professor Ron Geaves, an author and historian from Liverpool, who will be speaking about the community of Muslims established between 1889 and 1908 by Sheikh Abdullah Quilliam in Liverpool after his conversion to Islam in Morocco around 1887.

Abdullah Quilliam, also known as the "Sheikh al-Islam of the UK" created Britain's first registered Mosque in the city of Liverpool converting around 250 men and women in the city to Islam.

It was the first mosque in England situated at Brougham Terrace, Liverpool. For almost one hundred years this building was used as Liverpool Records of marriages and Births.

The staff who worked there used to refer to it as 'The Little Mosque' totally unaware that it was the first mosque in England and its historical value.

Hosted by: Mumin Khan, CEO of The Abdullah Quilliam Society.



BOOKING INFORMATION:

Book your place via www.macfest.org.uk and Eventbrite. Digital events take place over zoom and the links needed to join will be sent nearer to the time of the event. Stay up to date with our Eventbrite for any changes of dates and times.



Like the Deaf Centre, which it rather resembles, it (still) has an octagonal centre and interior, a pyramid roof, polychrome plaster reliefs c.1899 by R. Anning Bell, survivors of the additions made to the church in the 1960's, intended to maintain it as an active mission centre. It still is, but as the image illustrates, very much a 'survivor', as is the case at the other end of Park Lane, in St James Street, where, under the shadow of the Central Park scheme ("luxury first-rate living...with world-class eco-friendly facilities" says Michael Gledhill, director of Nexus Residential ... and a former pupil of mine long ago!) we find St. Vincent de Paul R.C. Church, the other 'survivor' and, ironically now served by an order of missionary priests, the Missionaries of Africa, once the White Fathers, and further irony is that this fact will probably help it to continue in what is bound to be a time of drastic change for the Catholic church in the Liverpool Archdiocese, which has, as an object of its Synodal renewal, "to make better use of our finances and resources." St. Vincent's is 1856-57, by E.W. Pugin. It has a remarkable reredos of 1867, E.W. Pugin also, with alabaster statues, a rather lovely Lady Alter of 1899; a rune-light window completely filling the east wall behind the reredos, it's something of a gem but, as the parish priest said, "our faithful hundred or so" can't really give enough to pay the heating bill, and, as for the other costs, such as maintaining "the high, delicate timber bellcote on the west gable" (Pevsner/ Pollard), who knows? The townscape, the identity of the city needs these buildings, but they need support; another example would be the Sacred Heart R.C. church on Hall Lane, distinctive in its "polychromy of yellow and red stone obscured by dirt" as it stands in the shadow of the RLUH and the new Paddington developments; inside there's a wonderful high altar and alabaster reredos, added in 1891 by Pugin & Pugin to this 1885-6 church, but the mass attendance including the figures for St. Michael's in West Derby, is only 102, and the only listed mass is on Saturday evening at 6.30 pm. Visually it is a great event in a much changed area, it's also listed, but viability is another matter.

That applies in other ways. Most people involved with the Victorians have at least a couple of Pevsners (i.e. the Pevsner architectural guides) in their armoury, like the Pevsner-Pollard I have quoted a couple of times; as Charles Saumarez-Smith says in a recent edition of *the Critic*, "I feel that my life has in

some ways been defined by the existence of Pevsner”, from the one-man enterprise to the modern multiples; from Penguin to Yale University Press in 2002; from an attic to the whole house in Bedford Square, London; to much better photographs! In June 2024, the last of the *new* Pevsners, the revised ‘Staffordshire’ will be published: 800 pages rather than 376, re-written by Christopher Wakeling, who died last year. The only part of Britain not covered is Ireland; the only major city ‘unPevsnered’ is Belfast, like Glasgow a sort of sibling of Liverpool; however, the office is now at risk of being closed down, and there will be no staff to oversee revisions, whether in print or online, so that, although there is much to be done and change endless, the familiar means of accomplishing it, and the resources for the task, will no longer be available. Saumarez-Smith concludes, “we cannot afford to lose them as a live record,” as his words, in a way, echo the tasks once in part assisted by groups like our own, as the acknowledgments of so many ‘revised Pevsners’ of the last couple of decades record.

The much-missed Andrew Richardson is an example. His ‘West Derby Publishing’ from his home in Seton Road, was a tour-de-force of exploration, writing, on-line and print, and one of his books, ‘The wonders of Widnes’, his *new book of old town* of 1998, is perhaps the kind of inspiration needed for a revival of the once successful ‘Victorian walks.’ Most people nowadays speed through and around, to use the Mersey Gateway Bridge, so that even the wonderful Silver Jubilee Bridge is, in a way, ‘historic’; yet, if one stops and looks, there certainly are wonders, well worth leaving the expressways, to explore. For a start, there is the surviving jetty of the transporter bridge, just off the Promenade, a reminder of the possible ‘industrial tourism’ there might have been... just like the Liverpool Overhead Railway... but when they were both dismissed as inefficient and unsuitable for the ‘new age’, *Industrial Tourism* had yet to be invented. Widnes had the biggest and most ornate transporter bridge in the world, in Andrew Richardson’s words “truly magnificent and breath taking in its size and imposing majesty”: towers 190 feet high, the span 1000 feet, the load a quarter of a million vehicles each year, even in the pre-car world of the 1950’s. It’s a remarkable story. Nearby is St. Mary’s Church, the parish church, one of the late masterworks of Paley and Austin, “the last of the firm’s great urban churches, “ says Pollard/Pesvner, paid for by the chemical kings with splendid internal spaces and details and, outside,

a contemporary (1910) wayside pulpit, a very rare survival, with its text, rather plaintive in context now, of "Go out into the highways and compel them to come in that my house may be filled." Not much chance of reading that nowadays, as the cars speed past high above.

The church was opened in 1871 and designed by Henry Clutton for a Jesuit foundation which had been forced to leave Germany.

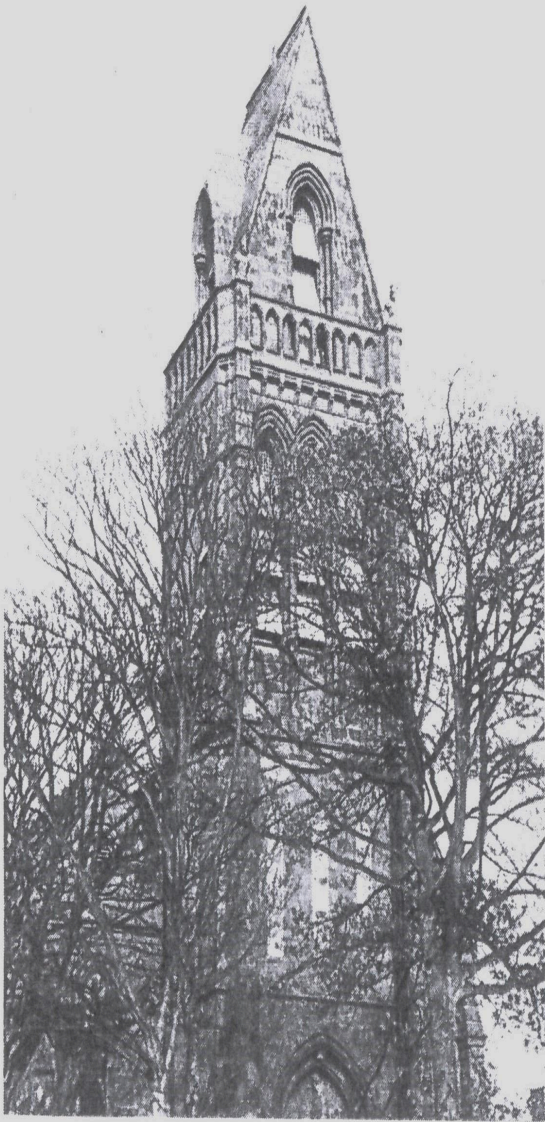


Fig.51 St.Michael's Church

St. Mary's Church

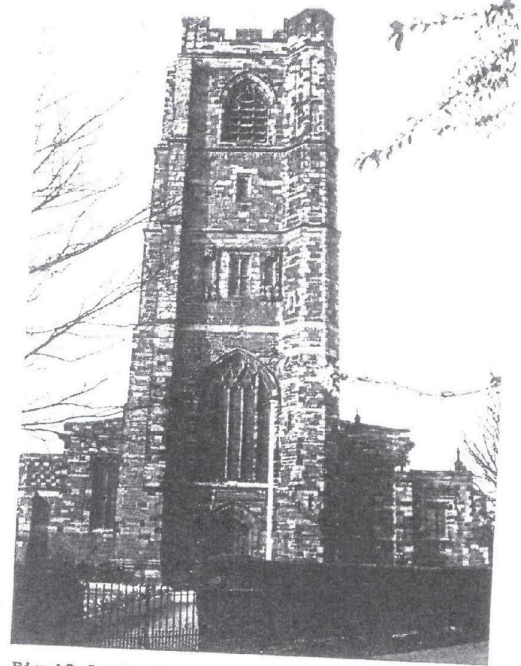


Fig.12 St.Mary's Church

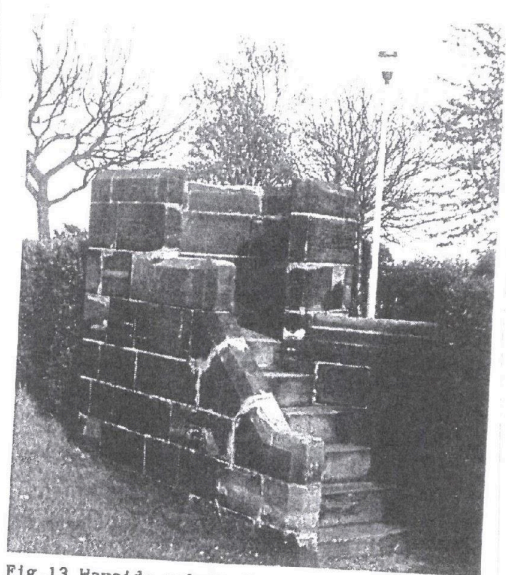
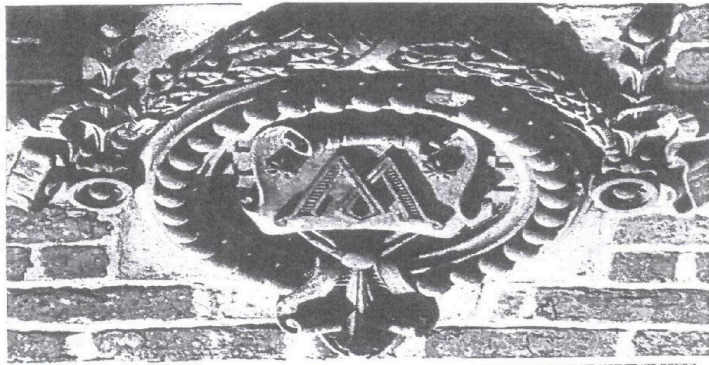


Fig.13 Wayside pulpit from the inside



Transporter ticket



Fig. 22 The Transporter Jetty

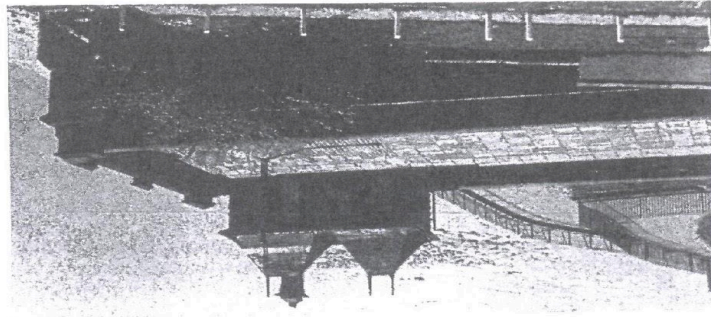
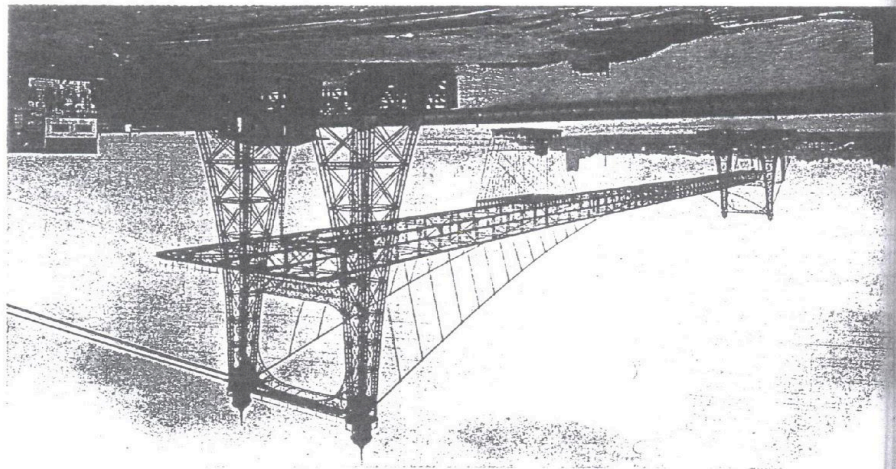


Fig. 21 The Transporter Bridge



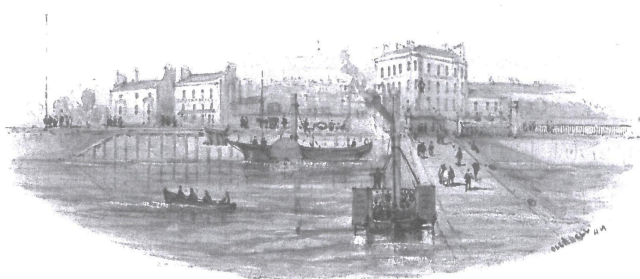
Widnes has a town hall too. It's not one of the great Lancashire municipal mansions, 1885 by F. & G. Holme, and the planned central tower was never built which perhaps spoils the effect of the main body façade, but it does have some remarkable sculptural details, which are matched by the nearby Gladstone fountain, with its little-boy fishermen on top and lots more fish down below, all remembering "the late W.E. Gladstone, his life-long devotion to the country's good." However, perhaps the most striking Victorian building in the town is a result of another politician's determination to control his country's mind: it's the Catholic church of St. Michael in Ditton, to the west of the town, which was built and paid for by Lady May Stapleton-Bretherton for the exiled Jesuit community of Maria-Looch on the Rhine, driven out of Germany by Otto von Bismarck's 'kulturkampf', a policy not so different in essence from that of Xi Jin-Ping in contemporary China! "By the end of 1878, more than half of Prussia's Catholic bishops were in exile or in prison, more than 1800 priests the same...in the first few months of 1875 alone, 241 priests, 136 Catholic journalists, 210 laymen fined or imprisoned..." Just a small example, so that the seventy-two Jesuits given Ditton Hall to live in and a new cathedral-like church, had certainly seen their prayers answered. It is a magnificent church, by Henry Clutton, its remarkable tower is topped by four very German 'grotesques'; the tower is exactly as high as the building is long, and the width of the nave and aisles exactly half, Cluttonian Germanic proportions, and he has tried to give the whole a 'Rhineland Romanesque' look. A lot of the carving and woodwork of the German lay brothers has gone but there is a remarkable survival in the wooden tester now above the tabernacle, a unique work of art in six sections with not a screw or peg in it, and found inside it when dismantled for re-ordering (1979, very sympathetic, by Bartlett and Purnell) a note stating "Peter Eckers, lay brother of the Society of Jesus, carved this." The world around St. Michael's has changed enormously: no priests now, nor nuns, no industry as it once was, so, given the possibilities of 'restructuring' in the Catholic world and the realities (Sunday mass 9.30 am. No other listed services, just a 2* listed building), it might be good idea to visit Widnes in the near future. After all, as Pollard reminds us, "rural west bank was a popular destination for early nineteenth century day trippers from Liverpool," so why not a new Victorian Society trend for the early twenty-first century?

After all, the Society is not about objection to change. That very eminent Victorian, John Henry Newman, said, "To live is to change. To be perfect is to have changed often", but what he didn't say was that change needs to be for the better, and in terms of building and townscape that has hardly been true for Liverpool, or for many other places. Jones the Planner, Ian Mason, Gavin Stamp, Owen Hatherly and others too have made that very clear. However, there are some hopeful signs. Everton's new stadium at Bramley-Moore dock looks to be magnificent in itself and should help, all being well, to regenerate a forgotten part of north Liverpool. The main features of the dock buildings, part of the 1848 group of four, have been maintained and conserved, and assuming successful development at the key Stanley Dock, and its magnificent warehouses there could be an exciting future for the area. Another positive development, of a very different building, is in a very different part of the city, Edge Lane, where the former Littlewoods Building is set to become the centre of a campus of film and tv studios, so that Liverpool's claim to be 'the Hollywood of the North' is literally cemented, or concreted in place. It was always, in its way, a massive advertisement, clean and commanding on its hilly site, almost like a 'third cathedral'; in Pollard/ Pevsner's words "a monumental symmetrical Art Deco building, still classically committed" so part of the earlier tradition of eighteenth-century elegance still so important to the city's sense of place, yet with a touch of Herbert Rowse and a 'towering' nod to Giles Gilbert Scott. It will be interesting to see how these developments progress, and although 'Hollywood' is a long way from the 'New York' comparisons of the past, the more Liverpool's American connections are re-built, the better things are likely to be for the younger people we'd like to see as 'Victorians' in the future, to keep the picture in balance and blend the best of the past with the hopes of what may be to come. In a recent survey, *Time Out* magazine listed Liverpool 7th of its 'best world cities to visit', behind London, Berlin and Tokyo, but ahead of Paris and Rome, believe it or not, and comfortably in front of 15th placed Manchester, a 'league position' which still matters, even away from Anfield. There were various factors, economy being one, but sense of pace and life were significant too, and the 'look' of the city, which, in the end, is what we are all about. The Murphy archives can seem to be a bit too extensive these days, as Father Time makes his points and the limitations of persons and place become ever clearer; however, in them is a catalogue from 1987 of

‘Liverpool illustrated’ by Charles Warren Clennell, 1844, held at the Lyver at Boydell Galleries off Castle Street. All drawings are for sale, and they reveal a growing town, of Georgian elegance in many parts, to which the Victorian city of the near future, even the new St. George’s Hall which was begun in 1841 (and opened in 1854, even years after Elme’s death) was hardly imaginable. Regulars at the Philharmonic will know the newly-established Mechanics Institute on Mount Street, Castle Street and Dale Street are, in a way, familiar, but nearly everything shown in Clennell’s Liverpool has gone, change: inevitable, decay: probable, revival: possible., hope: eternal, so let’s hope that the new directions for the Liverpool group this year really will lead to a new life and interest, so that the new age of AI will be a part of ‘our’ history too.

A small committee, temporarily led by Steve Roman, have arranged meetings which are there to be attended; visits have been arranged and more certainly could be, including a look at Park Street and around, Victorian and new, and even a trip in the footsteps of those intrepid Victorians who enjoyed the views from pre-alkali Widnes; but the support has to be there if the group is to survive. Thanks for your interest, especially to those who have stayed involved, but to end on a personal note. One of the new developments, Nexus and Michael Gledhill again, is of Heap’s Mill, the last surviving rice mill building and a large presence behind Wapping, soon to be ‘Manhattan Style,’ but long ago the workplace of my maternal grandfather, Joseph Albertina, who lived with his wife and six children, my mother being daughter two of five, in Maghull Street, in the shadow of the mill and the sounds of docks, warehousing and all, and no luxuries. It might be interesting to complete the circle of generations; sadly, pensions don’t stretch that far! “All change” indeed, as the conductor on the bus or tram used to say, so let’s hope that 2024 really is a year of ‘change and challenge’ (remember that one!) for the Liverpool Victorians.

Every good wish to you all, Tony Murphy (and the provisional committee)



WOODSIDE FERRY IN 1844

52. (4 1/4 x 8 signed and dated.)
A busy harbour with Gough's Hotel at the top of the slipway. The green fields of the Wirral can be seen in the background with the Telegraph, Signal Poles and Lighthouse atop Bidston Hill. A ferry on this site dates back to 1282.



ST. GEORGES QUAY AND JAMES STREET, IN 1844

8. (4 1/4 x 6 1/4 signed and dated.)
Looking from the New Baths, across the Quay and Mann Island to James Street. The corner of Georges Dock is to the left, the Goree Buildings ahead, James Street and St. Georges Church centre and beyond. Note the low bridge (centre) crossing the cut joining the Canning Dock and Georges Dock.