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The 1951 Festival of Britain: A Northern Perspective

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## Intro

### Intro

- Origins of the Festival of Britain
- Hull & Manchester
- Liverpool – York saw as a rival
- York V Leeds as Leeds saw York as a rival and believed that what they had produced was much better than York's.
- [GREAT EXHIBITION] In 1943, the Royal Society of Arts suggested that the 1851 Great Exhibition of All Nations should be commemorated. In May 1948 the Festival of Britain's Council was announced in The Times<sup>1</sup>. Initially proposed by Labour as an international exhibition, the celebration that took place in 1951 focused on national and community pride, endeavouring to promote faith in the future as part of post war optimism.<sup>2</sup>
- [GAMES] The Festival was celebrated with a series of exhibitions sanctioned by central government.
- [LONDON] + [LANDSBURY]
- [HUGH WELDON]
- [RED & BLUE MAP] The Seaborne Exhibition visited ports in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland for varying periods of between ten days and two weeks.<sup>3</sup>
- The Land Travelling Exhibition, carried on over 100 lorries, called at four cities in England between May and October<sup>4</sup>.
- [ARTS FESTIVALS] Arts Festivals took place
- [NORWICH] In addition to these government backed exhibitions, all of Britain's cities, towns and villages were encouraged to participate with their own choice of celebrations, although they were advised by the Festival organisers in London to avoid making their celebrations too elite<sup>5</sup>.
- [SHEFFIELD] Local libraries info...close?
- [SOUVENIRS]

## Hull

- [CAMPANIA] + [INSIDE] + [EXHIBITION]
- [CAMPANIA PROGRAMME]+[LUNCHEON]
- [FESTIVAL HOUSE CEREMONY] +[LUNCHEON] +[NOW]+[RISING ASHES]

## Manchester

## [ADD]

- Manchester was less fussed
- [Land Travelling] NOT ARTS so MAD
- The Head of Manchester Council refused to create a Festival ommittee<sup>6</sup> whose remit was solely to look at Festival activities
- No Committee = no minutes not much knock on effect on the journalistic support

[EXHIBITIONS]+ [PAINTINGS] [SUB FESTIVALS] + [MUSIC/MISCELLANEOUS]+[SPORT]

- [BOMBED FTH] Did restore the Free Trade Hall
- [PETERLOO MASSACRE 1819] Parliamentary reform 15 killed
- Home to the Halle Orchestra
- [QUOTE]
- [SCULPTURES] = [SCULPTURES] Not middle class, pursuits

## Liverpool - York's Competitor

### SHABBY POST WAR

- [BLITZ] 1940 and 41
- [WOOLTEN PIE] Minister for Food 40-43 and Minister for Reconstruction 43-45, was vociferous in most of Liverpool Corporation's affairs. He gave a damning speech in Liverpool about the 'shabby' impression that the city gave visitor.
- When Aneurin Bevan discussed bill to turn bomb sites into temporary playgrounds. Liverpool was accused of doing the least of all cities in the country to clear up.
- Mrs Braddock, Liverpool Daily Post's Political Correspondent, commented that 'if people wanted to look at something decent during the Festival of Britain, they had better go away from Liverpool as the centre was a disgrace'. Bevan agreed hoping that visitors to the future Festival would not leave the country believing that Britain was a 'bad housewife'

### ARTS FESTIVAL STATUS

- [FESTIVAL BOOK] gave the corporation a timely platform to foster a renewed, civic pride.
- In October 48, Liverpool Festival Society Limited
- 90 members and shareholders.
- Like York, they made multiple, comprehensive, decisions at this early stage
- Kept the material
- [EPHEMERA]

### DIRECTOR

- [FRANCIS and TYRONE GUTHRIE] Francis was appointed as Festival Director from a shortlist of 8 out of the 53 who had applied.
- Other applicants - Music Department at the BBC - Music Officer for the British Council in Rome.
- 18 months at a salary of £3,000.

- Trained as an accountant
- Composed for the Liverpool Philharmonic,
- Local playwright and a writer for radio in wartime Entertainment National Service Association (E.N.S.A to you and me)!
- Charismatic man, repeatedly reported as firing up his audiences when he spoke.
- The Wallasey Chronicle -'driving force', 'fast-talking and enterprising'. The Rotarians - 'inspiring'
- '[the very blitz sites will become symbols of resurrection]'.]

## BUILDINGS RESTORED

In the last few months and weeks before the Festival opened, the city centre, underwent a transformation.

- [WALKER et AL] Kenneth Clark, former Director of the National Gallery
- Mayor Cotton lamented that 'a generation of young Liverpool people, to whom the Walker Art Gallery was merely a place to obtain food tokens'.
- Bluecoat & St Nicholas's church] at the pier head had been rebuilt and reopened
- [ST GEORGES]
- [DECORATIONS] Businesses were urged to install, window boxes on their first floors, following a uniform design set out by The Festival SocietyStreet
- decorations in, gold, blue and red, costing £20,000 were installed.

## NEW BUILD

- [SPEKE Live Architecture Speke Estate (although this had Benn started pre war)

## EVENTS FOR ALL

- [VOUCHERS] six months Spread the cost.Christmas presents too sucessful
- [QUEUEs] On the first day extra cashiers worked way beyond midnight, turning away hundreds of voucher holders who'd queued for up to ten hours. When queues the next day again stretched for hundreds of yards, the WRVS handed out tea. Whole factories or other workplaces

## SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

- [FIND AN IMAGE] Liverpool Philharmonic Saddlers Wells Ballet that they would be the only place in Britain, outside of London, where a ballet had ever been performed with full orchestral support.
- Wasn't all about highbrow events

## LOWERBROW

- [ARTHUR ASKEY]
- [SPECTACLE] For the free River Spectacle in July and August, Described by the press as a 'liquid fairground', traffic came to a stand
- [FIREWORKS]
- [MYRTLE] A van with a mobile stage, loud hailers and speakers Myrtle gardens it was estimated that 5,000 adults and children
- **Change order**[DAYLIGHT ON INDUSTRY EXHIBITION]

- [SKYLON]

## PROCESSIONS

- [QUOTE] Three city centre processions took place,
- [TURN INTO SLIDE] [Processions]Merseyside and the World, 'Merseyside and Youth' 6,000 schoolchildren!
- and on the final day, 'Merseyside Resurgent'.
- Guthrie organised the processions
- [PINEAPPLE] *not* be an occasion for loads of children to dress in butter muslin'.
- 2,000 doves to be released at the closing ceremony. Francis, the overall Director, agreed to pigeons as you had to get a licence for doves.
- [ADD IMAGE OF FOB COMPACT]
- The end of the Festival was signified by a procession through the city centre where 2,000 lit torches were extinguished at St Georges plateau. The closing words were, ['Let us take with us a renewed sense of pride in our city. Liverpool stands high in the records of our nation, let us keep it there'].  
Mechanical digger

## OUTSIDE PERCEPTION / detractors

- [Manchester Guardian wrote; that even though they had questioned ['such determined celebration on the part of a naturally morose Northern city', that people venturing to the Liverpool Festival would be 'agreeably surprised']

## The 1951 Festival of Britain: A Northern Perspective York Festival for the National centre of Early Music July 12<sup>th</sup> 2011-09-02

### [LEEDS]

- Boothroyd journalist working for the Yorkshire Post
- ["Leeds Gets the Spirit of the Festival', June 25<sup>th</sup> 1951]
- [BOY/LADY] Boothroyd Leeds could be likened to a 'vigorous boy' and York, 'a dear old lady' and that York presented a Festival built on the 'dust of the past' (Boooooooooooooo)!
- I will suggest that York's Festival was not created with *just* an eye on what Boothroyd terms the 'dust of the past',
- It was focused, and understood that it could capitalise on its heritage to forge a more comprehensive identity to attract and increase its number of local, national and international cultural tourists.
- York consciously challenged the idea that they were a city locked in the past.
- **In Leeds, instead of Mystery plays there was the University rag-procession, with mobile atomic-bomb factory exploding its way hilariously down Woodhouse Lane and be vies of**

**Hawaiian maidens pirouetting in the Headrow. And instead of a Georgian Ball there was a mammoth display of fireworks' in Roundhay Park'.**

- **[Becks book] Becky Conekin - her book 'that most places outside of London represented and celebrated their identity of place with a reliance on 'something transmitted from the past'.**
- So Conekin agreed with Boothroyd that

I don't agree with Conekin that York's contribution to the Festival of Britain relied on the past and nor do I with Boothroyd, and his position that Leeds was a 'vigorous boy' and 'York a dear old

- [FEST GUIDE] the Leeds Festival guide declared itself **'a city in which the present clearly outweighs the past...its vigour is more noticeable than the intimations of a past age'**.
- 23 miles apart – Although it's worth noting here that York did not see Leeds as a rival

### **LAND TRAVELLING**

- [EPHEMERA BADGES] The Leeds Festival took place between June 23<sup>rd</sup> and July 14<sup>th</sup>. / Land Travelling Exhibition,
- At the opening ceremony of the Festival in Leeds Alderman Beevers said that after three terrible decades, there was now a need for 'colour and festivity' and this was the spirit of the Leeds celebrations<sup>7</sup>.
- [LAND TRAVELLING / AUDIENCE FIGURES]The Land Travelling Exhibition took precedence at Woodhouse Moor, after Temple Newsham and Roundhay Park, had been discounted.
- Much was made in the press about Leeds having the largest visitor numbers of all the Cities that hosted the Land Travelling Exhibition with one journalist daring to ask (and at the risk of alienating some of you out there, I repeat) *"Is the explanation that Yorkshire people are more eager to learn than those of Lancashire and the midlands?"*

### **ARCHITECTURE**

- urged by the Director of Museums for Leeds to consider the City Art Gallery and the Museum for restoration
- Unlike York, Leeds didn't see the Festival as a catalyst of restoring or protecting their architectural heritage.
- [PARKINSON] Parkinson Building at the University was opened towards the end of the year and was included in publications that referred to the city during 1951.
- [ST JOHNS /QUARRY HILL]Leeds did floodlight buildings including 1634 St Johns Briggate
- Quarry Hill was mentioned too
- Stately homes within easy reach of Leeds.
- BUT no discussion of putting on an Architecture exhibition for the Festival. Pity Ireland Wood and Seacroft that had won Ministry awards in 1950.<sup>8</sup> I believe Leeds was short-sighted in not absorbing this exhibition into its Festival celebrations.
- [BOY/LADY] For Leeds, the Festival had a clear start date and a clear end date, whereas other places capitalised on a wider period of events that linked to, yet were outside of their intense period

of Festivity e.g. York and Manchester. For Leeds its festival was like a child's birthday party where parents are under strict instructions to drop off and pick up their children at very specific times. York's old lady hung around for longer, making her glass of sherry last well beyond the hub of the celebration.

So what did Leeds see as important? What do you think of when you think of Leeds City Centre today?

## COMMERCE

- [COUNTY ARCADE] A large scale exhibition was considered<sup>9</sup>by Leeds to showcase the cities woollen and clothing industry was put forward, but when this was costed at £20,000, the council disregarded the plan.
- This link to the ready-made clothing industry [Marks & Spencers] in Leeds perhaps indicates why Leeds during the festival (and even now) predicates its own identity of place with 'shopping'.
- Knightsbridge of the North
- Shopping Festival with a brochure number

[quote] '[Leeds] sense of vigour is substantially derived from its shopping area which is varied and comprehensive...it is indeed an unusually fine shopping area built to meet the needs of ...local inhabitants..

On screen, you'll now see the range of other events that took place in Leeds over the Festival period.

## [MUSIC]

### Music

- Lunchtime concerts
- Church and sacred Music
- Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra Concerts
- Festival of British Music
- 49th div Band

### Sport [SPORT]

- Football Matches
- Cricket Matches
- Roundhay Golf Tournament
- Festival Regatta
- Cycle Races
- Flat Races
- Youth Swimming Gala
- Seacroft Show & Gymkhana

Undoubtedly, sport is of the moment

### **Exhibitions [EXHIBITIONS]**

- Victorian ways of life
- Life of a Monk
- Philosophical Society Exhibition
- Music Scores
- Festival Books
- Chippendale Furniture
- Leeds Pottery
- General Post Office
- Daily Graphic Photographs
- Road Safety
- William Hogarth Exhibition
- Red Cross

All of the Exhibitions with the exception of the Daily Graphic, Road safety Campaign and Red Cross were based around the material culture of the past.

### **Miscellaneous [DONNA ROMA BALLET]**

- Donna Roma Ballet
  - Shopping Festival
  - Children's Festival
  - Festival Films
  - Roundhay Horticultural Show
  - Fireworks display
  - RAF Display\*
- None of this sounds that vigorous until you delve further - RAF parachuted into Roundhay's Waterloo Lake, clearly appealing to the 'vigorous boy' in all of us?

I have found no evidence that Leeds saw the Festival of Britain in 1951 as being an opportunity to create a specific sense of identity for the future by creating anything new. Although it consolidates its identity as a Mecca for shopping - maybe this is where Leeds present day identity as a shopping destination came from this time?

Leeds was, it seems very much interested in the here and now and it did not have a grand plan to change people's perceptions of their identity in the same way that York did.

## **York**

- [DENT] Edward Dent (later Lord Grimethorpe, Chancellor and Vicar General of York)
- Kings Cross Railway Station.

**ARTS FESTIVAL STATUS** like Liverpool



- [THOMPSON] / RYMER & HESS]
- [FESTIVAL COMPANY LTD] York civic trust 1946
- Sheldon, Shannon & Morell
- Keith Thompson, Secretary of York University,

## PLANNING

- official Festival would run for two weeks, from the 3rd June to the 17th , events were planned for the
  - whole of the summer of 1951.
  - Detailed report in January 1948, titled, 'First thoughts on the York Festival of 1951'
  - Edinburgh Festival started in 1947, Directors to see how that Festival ran, what was a success and so on. They were clear that they wished their festival to run 'administratively smoothly'.
  - Three aims / tourism / standards and / 'greatness' are outlined as being at the heart of the plan.
  - [COINS] urged to remember that it was 1951 not 951!
  - The dramatic arts, would give people a chance to relax, while visiting York and that highbrow events should be balanced, with less taxing entertainments because, 'The danger in York is cultural indigestion; we must provide palliatives on occasions'.
  - 'York Morality Plays'
  - [EMPIRE / ROYAL OPERA] theatre director Geoffrey Staines was persuaded that the Empire should show itself in its true colours as a 'Victorian Music hall' , as Thompson points out it would have been foolish to try to 'turn it into something that it was not'
  - This was, he believed, how the tourists and locals could access 'real entertainment such as we used to have in England, instead of the present scratchy, mediocre, pseudo-American chromium plated variety'.<sup>10</sup> not and can never be'
  - Wanted to emphasise the choral tradition in York and Yorkshire ... 'make an outstanding musical contribution to the whole Festival of Britain'<sup>11</sup> by using 'Northern choirs...British orchestras, with conductors and soloists, not of local, but of national (and very probably international) standing.
- [VAUGHAN WILLIAMS]

## INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

- York was interested in the Festival having an international audience from very early on In 1950, the then, Lord mayor of York, Mr J.B. Morrell and his Alderman Mr A.S. Rymer undertook a ten-day tour of America and Canada travelling to New York, York in Pennsylvania, York Boston and OTTOWA?? (formerly known as York) Canada.<sup>12</sup>
- Lord Mayor of Brisbane Lord Mayor of York Pennsylvania attended the opening ceremony
- To welcome foreign visitors [GUIDE / RICHARDSON] After a call was sent out in September 1950 list of guides available for taking tours around the city was m
- Morrell and Rymers engagement Stateside appeared to have a lasting effect on the residents of York during the Festival. The press reported the existence of people in York, coming down with

multiple cases of 'Festivalitus', 'early symptoms' were 'label[ing] each other extravagantly as American tourists'. One visitor from London, with a clear southern accent was asked twice what life was like in 'the States'. The Londoner who had been accosted, suggested that it might be because he was wearing a gabardine suit.<sup>13</sup>

- On May 21<sup>st</sup> 1951 the Lord Mayor Alderman J H Kaye was elected.<sup>14</sup>

#### ARCHITECTURE - confirm its heritage

- Thompson and Hess made a conscious decision to hold concerts and exhibitions in York's grand buildings to prevent them from being seen as just empty historical vessels.
- More importantly, it wanted to compete with other European cities, by deciding to pursue the restoration of some of its great buildings
- This was a bold move by York and emphasises how it saw the festival not just as a 'here and now' opportunity, but as a time for laying the groundwork for future heritage and cultural tourism.

#### FLOODLIT

- [FLOODLIT] Trees in the Museum Gardens. The Guildhall and the Blind School
- Minister was provided by the Searchlight Regiment of the army.<sup>15</sup>
- [MINSTER DONATION]

#### RESTORATION

- [ART GALLERY]The Art Gallery underwent reconstruction, re-opening fully, during 1951. Exhibition of Paintings from the collections of Yorkshire grand Houses  
[PAINTINGS]

#### ASSEMBLEY

- [ASSEMBLY]Just before the Second World War, York Corporation took ownership of Lord Burlington's Eighteenth century Assembly Rooms underpinning the foundations of the building.
- The building was used by the Ministry of Food during the war and returned to the council in 1950,
- [CHANDELIERS]Restoration and decoration costing £30,000 were continued and finished.
- In conjunction with the Georgian Society,
- Venetian artisans 15 crystal Chandeliers.<sup>16</sup>
- This attention to detail and expertise shows the level of commitment that those involved with the restoration of the Assembly Rooms were willing to give. Reopened on June 1<sup>st</sup> 1951<sup>17</sup> A Festival Club was Suggested as Early as April 1949 and came to fruition<sup>18</sup>.
- Assembly rooms were restored and commandeered as a Festival Office for the planning of the Festival and a 'Festival Club' where members could stop for refreshments

#### GEORGIAN BALL

- [MAYOR]+[BALL] York referred back to Sir Francis Drakes Eboracum which documented the original members of the Assembly rooms.
- Living relatives
- Roof
- a great success and was clearly a spectacle for the inhabitants of York and its visitors.
- Crowds were held back by roped areas and policemen had to act as human barriers when spectators gathered to watch the dancers arrive.

The enthusiasm of the crowds may at first seem strange. However, there had been a long build up to the ball with original Eighteenth century garments exhibited in both shop windows and the Castle Museum. A fashion parade took place in the April of 51 and an advisor on Georgian fashion had been appointed.<sup>19</sup>

#### [SHAMBLES]

- The Medieval, commercial area of The Shambles<sup>20</sup> was also restored for the Festival
- At the Jaggergate end of the Shambles a market place '**similar to the one at Bruges**' was planned, but not completed during the Festival Period.

York understood and exploited its cultural heritage, revealing a complex understanding of how its choice of events would outlast 1951 and put York back on the map of cultural tourism. focus for the marketing of evening entertainment to visitors by Mediaevalist actors.

#### NOT JUST RESTORATION / NEW BUILDS TOO

- [RIETVELD]In York local studies library a hand written note<sup>21</sup> outlines a suggestion for commissioning five '**world class architects**' with a brief to design for families in York, homes of the future '**twenty years ahead of our time**'.<sup>22</sup>
- Gerrit Rietveld, mooted as an example of the calibre of architect York wished this scheme to attract.

#### [MAP]

- Open competition was held to find the Architects for this project
- Judged by Mr Eden Head of the Architecture School in Leeds was judge.<sup>23</sup>
- Meadows and Topliss<sup>24</sup> of London were chosen.
- Furnished by Smallpage Ltd, a local company.

[SHEPHERD]The Castlegate flats tender was awarded to F. Shepherd and Son

[CASTLEGATE]+[NEOGEORGIAN]+[END of FLATS] + [CORNER]

[DUKE & DUCHESS of GLOUCESTER] On the left of the entrance hall are lock up cages for the storage of prams, trolleys' and bicycles. To the back was a yard for bins and coal. Each flat had an

airing cupboard, a cooker and a refrigerator. Land at behind the flats was to be landscaped with shrubs and provide seating for tenants with hanging and drying facilities for clothes.

- Entrance fee's to look at the Festival Flats were set at 6d person

## **FESTIVAL FLATS**

[MAP] Paragon Street were named the Festival Flats,

- decided to appoint an 'eminent architect'<sup>25 26</sup> from a shortlist that the City Engineer and Architects Panel of the Council had compiled.
- The chosen architects were Charles Holden, Robert Atkinson and Charles Holloway James<sup>27</sup>. All were highly revered internationally, with design portfolios that had provenance of both historical and contemporary styles.
- Holden had been Vice President of RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architecture), and worked alongside Sir William Holford on the modernization of the South Bank in London 1947-48.<sup>28</sup>
- Charles Holloway James had won the RIBA London Architecture Medal and a Ministry of Housing Medal for a 1949 housing scheme in London<sup>29</sup>.
- Robert Atkinson had been Head of the Architectural Association School in London.<sup>30</sup> Was a RIBA Bronze Medallist<sup>31</sup> and had been involved in the 'Bath improvement scheme.'<sup>32</sup>
- [OLSO COURT] He agreed to act as a 'consulting architect'.<sup>33</sup>
- [ROAD SIDE ELEVATION] eight person maisonette to single person flats.<sup>34</sup>
- Each flat had points for gas cookers and some had points for refrigerators.
- coal cupboards accessible from the inside (to make things easy for older residents).
- These flats were open plan with balconies

[DRYING AREA] + [BALCONY]+ [CUPBOARDS/LAUDRY]

[RIBA SIDE] RIBA Journal of August 1954 critiqued these flats and this is where these images are taken from. [INTERIOR LIVING / DINING ROOM]

[LUCKIEST ADVERT] Built by Sorrell & Sons

furnished by the co-operative society and Messrs Whitby C Oliver and Sons.

## **MYSTERY PLAYS**

[ADVERT] resurrected for the first time since 1580<sup>35</sup>

- were already understood, before the Festival period was over to be something that could create a legacy for York.
- The Festival Director Keith Thompson wrote that "York knows that no other city in the world can perform the plays, for they spring from the very heart of York itself"<sup>36</sup>.
- 200 hundred performers
- Fifteen or 17 performances of the Mystery Plays.<sup>37</sup>
- 3 hours

- [MARY URE] script was edited by Dr J S Purvis who was interviewed for the BBC Home Service on the first day of the Festival. 'In view of the nature of the subject of the Plays, it is expected that the audience will not wish to applaud'.<sup>38</sup>
- Producer E Martin-Browne wrote that 'It is always significant verse, whether from the august or the rougher sort and it cries aloud to be spoken'.<sup>39</sup>  
[MARY URE LATER]
- four hundred people a night were unable to get in to the Mystery Play performances in the museum gardens.
- Proudly noted that people from 18 different countries.<sup>40</sup>

[PLAY GUIDE ADVICE] Thomson warned that after the success of the Mystery Plays, that York should be weary of believing that they were the only reason for the success of the Festival. He cautioned the Committee to not be 'hoodwinked or blinded' into repeating the Plays every year and risk turning them into an over commercialised event, which might end up with the Plays being reduced to 'wretched souvenirs', the postcards, the so-called pilgrimages organised by Cooks – all of which is out of character with their great theme and would do no service to[York]'.  
 [FEST CELEBRATIONS] 200 guilds countrywide who had originated in the Medieval period descended on York for a grand procession

- [FEST CELEBRATIONS] 200 guilds countrywide who had originated in the Medieval period descended on York for a grand procession

### **Music** [MUSIC]

- Halle Orchestra
- London Philharmonic Orchestra
- Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra
- Amadeus Quartet
- Lemare Orchestra
- London baroque Ensemble
- London string Trio
- Organ Recitals
- Geraldo Concert Orchestra

### Leeds Festival chorus

- Huddersfield Choral Society

[QUOTE NOT HIGHBROW] + [VICTOR dE SABATA]+[JOHNADDISON]

All pretty highbrow offerings here.

### **Exhibitions** [EXHIBITIONS]

- Grandmother's treasures Exhibition
- Folk dancing display

- Yorkshire Houses paintings
- Education Exhibition
- Castlegate Flats
- Festival Flats (Paragon Street)
- Railway Museum Exhibition (most popular attraction)
- Castle Museum
- Medieval Sculpture Exhibition

Apart from the flats, everything else was historical.

### **Miscellaneous [MISCELLANEOUS]**

- Georgian Ball
- Festival Club
- York Regatta
- Illuminations
- Fireworks
- Dancing in the 'big top'
- Country dancing
- Morris dancing

[ATTENDANCE FIGURES] +[INCOME] +[DEFECIT TODAY]

### **A SUCCESS?**

Editorial comment in the Evening Press had just been the beginning, or a catalyst for them '...the Festival became what we always wanted and designed it to be – a real Festival with everyone joining in, on a somewhat more continental model than London or Edinburgh could ever be'. [QUOTE CAPITAL OF NORTH] Mr Scruton, suggested that the idea of another festival was ridiculous as the people of

**York 'needed bread in the form of much needed housing...and it would be very wrong to give them no more than cake in the form of another Festival'<sup>41</sup>**

### **CONCLUSION**

- [OLD LADY / BOY] In conclusion, The Festivals in Hull, Liverpool and York all created a legacy for their future citizens through their choices of restoration and new build architecture.
- Both Liverpool and York had charismatic full time Festival Directors and large supportive committee members from their corporations and other bodies
- Boothroyd the Leeds Journalist was perhaps a little short-sighted in surmising that Leeds contribution to the Festival of Britain was about the present and the recent past and York's as being very clearly of the past.
- Dismissing York as a 'Dear old lady' in favour of Leeds as a 'young boy' is not a fair comparison.
- Yes, perhaps Leeds had the exuberance of Youth in its celebrations, but it didn't have the same foresight and understanding that we know old ladies have.

- Leeds wanted instant gratification for its identity of place.
- York, appeared to be more focused on what the Festival of Britain could do for them, not only during the time they were en fete but they also seemed to understand and capitalise on what it could provide for the city in terms of an identity that could serve them in the future.
- So, maybe York should be seen as the more vigorous of the two cities as it had a clear plan of what it wanted the Festival to do.
- York, in 1951 had a clear eye on how its future identity of place would be bound up with heritage.
- In 1926 Leeds had marketed itself with the slogan 'Leeds Leads'. In 1951, they missed an opportunity to do just that.
- For York, the Festival of Britain wasn't about the dust of the past, it was all about the sewing the seeds of its future.

• [ABOUT BRITAIN] + [BREWERS] + [WALMSLEY] + [YORKSHIRE] + [CLEETHORPES]

<sup>1</sup> [http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/294/189/16983651w16/purl=rc1\\_TTDA](http://infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/294/189/16983651w16/purl=rc1_TTDA) accessed 02.02.2008

<sup>2</sup> Rennie, Paul, *Festival of Britain. Design 1951* (London, 2007), p.13

<sup>3</sup> Conekin, Becky, *The Autobiography of a Nation The 1951 Festival of Britain* (London 2003), p.127).

<sup>4</sup> Rennie, p37

<sup>5</sup> *Progress* (London, Autumn 1949), p.231

<sup>6</sup> Add ref from Manchester Evening News February 1951.

<sup>77</sup> The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury, June 25<sup>th</sup> 1951

Leeds Gets the Festival Spirit, Derrick Boothroyd June 15<sup>th</sup> 1951.

Not of course that there was nothing for the more serious minded in Leeds on Saturday...in addition to the Land Travelling Exhibition. [Sgn displaying arrows to the RAF displays](#), Road Safety Exhibition, Fair, National Savings, Lost Children, Red Cross. What more could you want? [Sounds like a blast!](#)

<sup>8</sup> Town Clerks Letter from Ministry of Health's 5<sup>th</sup> July 1950

<sup>9</sup> FOB Draft Committee Minutes 28 June 1950 LLC/02History of Engineering, Clothing etc.) Loose Notes dated March 1950 Agenda. LLC/02

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p11

<sup>11</sup> Ibid p.7

<sup>12</sup> Yorkshire Gazette December 29<sup>th</sup> 1950

<sup>13</sup> Yorkshire Evening Press, 'Mayor of York Will Have Story to Tell', June 5<sup>th</sup> 1951

<sup>14</sup> 'Get Festival Spirit in York', Yorkshire Evening Press, may 21<sup>st</sup> 1951

<sup>15</sup> Festival Committee Minute Book B.C.88 6<sup>th</sup> December 1950 p.806

<sup>16</sup> Yorkshire gazette April 27<sup>th</sup> 1951

<sup>17</sup> Assembly Rooms are reopened, Yorkshire evening Press, June 2<sup>nd</sup>

<sup>18</sup> York Festival Society Limited Minute books 21<sup>st</sup> april 1949

<sup>19</sup> Yorkshire gazette April 27<sup>th</sup> 1951

<sup>20</sup> 'Restoring York's Shambles' *Manchester Guardian* 1 Sept. 1949, p.3.

<sup>21</sup> Hand written note Y394 York Local Studies Archive

<sup>22</sup> Hand written note Y394 York Local Studies Archive

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<sup>24</sup> Festival Committee Minute Book B.C.88 8<sup>th</sup> February 1950 p.806

<sup>25</sup> Festival Committee Minute Book B.C.88 29<sup>th</sup> Sept 1949 p.36

<sup>26</sup> Festival Committee Minute Book 4<sup>th</sup> April 1951

<sup>27</sup> Festival Committee Minute Book B.C.88 29<sup>th</sup> Sept 1949 p.36

<sup>28</sup> Lawrence, David, *Underground Architecture*, Capital transport POublishing, Harrow, 1994, p.202

<sup>29</sup> Lawrence, David, *Underground Architecture*, Capital transport POublishing, Harrow, 1994, p.202

<sup>30</sup> Architectural Training in America, The Times, March o1 1922, p7

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<sup>31</sup> Mr Robert Atkinson, Obituary. The Times Dec 29 1952 Pg8

<sup>32</sup> Institute of Fine Arts for Birmingham. Aug 18 1934 p.8

<sup>33</sup> Festival Committee Minute Book B.C.88 8<sup>th</sup> February 1950 p.806

<sup>34</sup> Super in a building context means the gross area of the dwelling, i.e. including the walls. A net reading would just include the floor space. Mr John Bush March 18<sup>th</sup> Huddersfield University.

<sup>35</sup> Yorkshire Illustrated April 1951 "Yorks Cycle of Mystery Plays' p.8

<sup>36</sup> Ibid p.9.

<sup>37</sup> The Festival in Yorjkshire, Yorkshire Life The County magazine April – June 1951 Vol 2 no 8.

<sup>38</sup> Play Guide – City Library York

<sup>39</sup> Yorks Festival Fortnight

Recapturing the atmosphere of the old Mystery plays June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1951 p.3

<sup>40</sup> Festival Committee Minutes, 20<sup>th</sup> June 1951

<sup>41</sup> Yorkshire Evening Press July 31<sup>st</sup> 1951