



BULLETIN OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

BULLETIN 2.2

1975

ALL CHANGE AT LIVERPOOL STREET

Public indignation over the threat to Liverpool Street Station increases daily — if the volume of press coverage is anything to go by. Soon after British Rail announced proposals last year to redevelop and modernise the station, L.I.S.S.C.A. the Liverpool Street Station Campaign was mobilised under the presidency of Sir John Betjeman to publicise the threat to the existing station buildings and to investigate ways in which modernisation could proceed with the minimum destruction of better aspects of the present terminus. Admittedly the present station has its critics on grounds of convenience and layout. The original station, designed by Edward Wilson of the Eastern Counties Railway Company and opened in 1874, was increased to its present size in 1891 by the addition of eight more platforms on the Bishopsgate side. Due to the physical constraints of the site, the gap between the original ten platforms on the west side and the additions of 1891 are still obvious. Some platforms were later extended back under the adjacent Great Eastern Hotel, also threatened by the new proposals, to accommodate longer main line trains and the layout of the Station can still be confusing to those who do not use it regularly.

The aim of L.I.S.S.C.A. is not to block all redevelopment, but to ensure that this proceeds sensitively and without wholesale destruction of the building; widely acknowledged merits. British Rail reportedly wants to demolish the present train sheds as part of a 10 year plan to provide a new 22 platform terminus replacing both Liverpool Street and the adjacent Broad Street Stations. The Great Eastern Hotel, celebrated for its lavishly decorated Abercorn Rooms for banqueting functions and for its stained glass dome in the dining room will be replaced by a modern 300 bedroom hotel. Early in August it was announced that the Environment Secretary had agreed to the listing of the two bays of the train shed spanning the western side of the station, and the original office frontage. But the later parts of the station dating from the 1891 extension and the Great Eastern Hotel, were excluded from the listing. Pressure continues for a public inquiry, if only to avoid precipitate action such as lost us the propylaeum at Euston in 1961 and James Burnings' iron framed Coal Exchange of 1849, demolished the following year and now the site of a car park. Cash and support are urgently required by L.I.S.S.C.A.; the Treasurer is at Flat B, 3 Wentworth Street, Aldgate, London E.1.

B.P. HELPS I.A.

Hard on the heels of publication of 'The B.P. Book of Industrial Archaeology' comes the announcement of a new scheme of grants towards industrial archaeological projects in Great Britain and Northern Ireland which the Industrial Division of B.P. Marketing Limited has set up as a contribution to E.A.H.Y. Grants will not normally exceed 50% of the total cost of a project, and the upper limit of grant-aid to any one project is expected to be £500. Applications must be submitted by 30 September 1975 and will be considered by a joint committee of B.P. and A.I.A. representatives. It is hoped that the new grants will provide help and encouragement in those fields not already eligible for grants from official sources; two examples of these are suggested as recording and educational programmes

The first awards will be announced in October, and it is not expected that winners will be arranged in any order of merit, the practice of awarding cash prizes as part of the B.B.C. T.V. 'Chronicle' I.A. series in 1970-71 made clear the difficulties of making precise quantitative assessments of a number of equally deserving projects.

Individuals or organisations may apply, and will be required to summarise their project in not more than 500 words, supplemented by a budget and other supporting material where necessary. Further details of the scheme and application forms are available from :-

B. P. Industrial Heritage Scheme,
Room 516, P.O. Box 148,
Strand, London W.C.2.

Telephone enquiries to Jack Trent (Information Officer, B.P. Marketing Ltd.) on 01-438-2893.

NEATH AND BRIDGEND STATIONS THREATENED

Further from the metropolis it is not always so easy to mobilise the national press where historic buildings are similarly threatened with wholesale redevelopment at prodigious expense to the taxpayer. At Neath the single-storied station building completed by Joseph Rees in 1877 and still retaining most of its original Great Western furnishings was to be replaced by an all-new structure at a cost estimated at £200,000 and demolition had actually started when the Welsh Office intervened early in April and announced that the station building had been listed together with that at Bridgend which was similarly threatened. AIA Council member Douglas Hague took a leading part in the campaign to 'recycle' the buildings by judicious repair and consolidation rather than wholesale demolition, the easier and lazier alternative. The normal limitations on alterations to listed buildings will now apply before redevelopment can proceed.

PUBLICATIONS

'Dictionary of tools used in the woodworking and allied Trades ca. 1700-1970' by R. A. Salaman. George Allen and Unwin, 545 pages, over 2000 illustrations £18.95. Based on over 50 years study and experience of hand tools in the woodworking and allied trades, including sailmaking and millstone dressing. Some of the illustrations are reproduced from engravings in early catalogues.