



FOLLOWING THE ALE TRAIL

Phil Silver, our Past President led a very happy group of Society members on a very pleasant evening's walk around some historic establishments



Phil Silver

On a very pleasant October evening a group of accountants from the LSCA met at the Old Hall Street entrance to Moorfield's station having signed up for the second Historic Ale trail.

The Historic Ale Trails are run by the very interesting and informative Steve and Alan of Liverpool Tavern Trails.

The first one was held last November and we visited the Georgian area of Liverpool, this time we were promised a tour of the seven original streets of Liverpool, I'll buy you a pint if you can name all seven.

The tour involves being regaled with interesting facts by Steve and Alan, visiting a selection of local pubs and having a pub supper.

One of the early facts was that the entrance to Moorfields from Old Hall Street used to be the location of Ma Boyle's pub famous for its oysters, they had ban on smoking until 2:30 in the afternoon so that the fine taste of the oysters wasn't ruined.

From Moorfields we headed to Exchange Station, which opened in 1850 and closed to passengers in 1977, in its heyday there were 10 platforms at Exchange station. Of the four Liverpool terminal stations, Exchange Station was the only one not to be accessed by a tunnel. When it closed the medium and long distance routes were transferred to Lime Street and the local services were transferred to the newly opened Moorfields. We crossed Tithebarn Street and headed for our first pub The Railway, this was the second choice as many of you will be aware the Lion is unfortunately closed, hopefully it will be open again soon. The railway is a great pub with a number of rooms leading off from the bar, this must have been a very busy pub in the days of Exchange Station being open. You can enjoy the very old stained glass windows that are displayed.

From The Railway we headed down Tithebarn Street towards the river, we stopped when we reached Rumford Place when we were shown the unofficial home of the Confederate fleet during the American Civil War, you will notice that the stars and stripes are flying in Rumford Place. A very interesting story, if you would like to know more Google Rumford Place and be prepared to be amazed.

We next stopped at the church of Our Lady & St Nicholas, the church was once the tallest building in Liverpool at 53 metres from 1813-

1868 and was used by sailors as a landmark as they entered the Mersey. On Sunday 11 February 1810, as the bells rang and people were gathering for the morning service, the spire crashed into the nave below, killing 25 people.

We passed through the nearby church garden square on our way to Ma Boyle's in its current location, on the way we paused at The Liverpool Blitz Memorial by Tom Murphy, a tribute to the thousands of people of Liverpool who were killed or injured during the Blitz, if you haven't seen it, you should.

We looked up at the Liver Building with its lit up clock faces, so our guides told us that they are the largest electrically driven clocks in the UK and that the Liver Building was one of the first buildings in the world to be built using reinforced concrete.

At Ma Boyles we had another well served pint and enjoyed a fish and chip supper while seated in the downstairs bar area. By this time there was a lot of chatter amongst and between the groups making up our party, live music was being played in the bar upstairs, it was turning into a great evening.

We left Ma Boyle's and headed for Water Street, we stopped at Oriol Chambers, which was one of the world's first buildings featuring a metal framed glass curtain wall. Designed by architect Peter Ellis and built in 1864, a forerunner of the New York skyscrapers.

When we came to the corner of Water Street and Castle Street we stopped again to discuss the Seamen's Revolt of 1755, the Revolt was finally ended by 100 cavalry sent from Manchester to round up the sailors and take them to Lancaster for trial, we were reliably informed that this is why people of Liverpool don't like people from Manchester, it certainly can't have helped. If you want to know more get Googling.

We turned into Exchange Flags passing the two telephone boxes at the side of the Town Hall, ever wondered why there should be two telephone boxes so close together? Think Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, a bit more help, one of the phone boxes is a K2 and the other a K6.

We continued into Exchange Flags to look at the magnificent street sculpture, that you will have rushed by it on the way to and from work or to meetings so many times, have you ever had a proper look. I had noticed the chains and thought slavery and hadn't looked

any closer, the inscription at the top of the pedestal is a big clue as to why it is there, a public subscription fund was launched to raise the money for the sculpture, it cost £8,930 in 1805 equivalent to more than £650,000 in today's money. Next time you are passing pause and take a look, you won't be disappointed.

Surely time for another beer, moving swiftly on we headed for Ye Olde Hole in the Wall on Hackins Hey, just off Dale Street. This was a new pub for me, others in the group had very fond memories of distant extended lunches, wonder what happened to those. A great pub, small on the outside big and friendly inside, good tasting beer with lots of choice. It is reputed to be the oldest pub in Liverpool dating back to 1726, the stories it would be able to tell.

We returned to Dale Street and headed for the Vernon Arms, we were told that this was the meeting place of the Militant Tendency. We sat where they sat, drank our last pint and talked about beer and football and Liverpool.

We all dispersed a few of us headed back towards Moorfields, ever wondered why you have to go up to the station only to go down again to the platforms? Well when the station was built there was going to be a walkway above the streets below to keep pedestrians away from the traffic, wouldn't that have been a good idea.

The evening was a great success, thoroughly enjoyed by all who came. The company was excellent, our guides Steve and Alan were great fun, we visited some wonderful pubs and enjoyed some very good beer.

There is talk of doing the third of Steve and Alan's Historic Ale Trails, the final one has a marine theme, hopefully you have been tempted and will be able to join us.

Steve and Alan are liverpooltaverntrails.com
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Phil Silver

