

Welcome to PLB's Autumn/Winter newsletter for 2007. We have updates on some of our latest design and consultancy work, as well as information on our new projects. For further information you can also visit our website, www.plbltd.com, where you will find more news and recent case studies.

Interpreting A Landmark Landscape



Tarn Hows is one of the most visited places in the Lake District National Park and receives some 300,000 visitors each year. It is part of the lesser-known Monk Coniston Estate, a nationally significant designed landscape, created in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The National Trust, with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, aims to restore and reconnect key landscape elements, providing enhanced physical and intellectual access.

PLB is currently working on the interpretive planning and design phase for the Monk Coniston Project, focusing on the honeypot site Tarn Hows and its surrounding designed landscape.

The brief is to ensure that a wide range of audiences will be able to engage with, explore and enjoy the Estate, through a new range of enticing interpretive opportunities.

New car park signage across the estate, illustrative graphic panels in the garden and a self guided walk leaflet will be completed soon.

A second phase of work will include family friendly interactive displays and a flexible learning space in the newly built shelter at Tarn Hows car park.

At the Cutting Edge

The recently installed new Modern Platform exhibition, at the heart of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester, had its first public opening during the school half term holidays in May and has already welcomed several thousand visitors.



The museum is one of the most visited outside of London. Our interpretive concept for the Modern Platform deliberately moves away from the traditional process-based approach to industrial heritage sites and museums. We used key collection items as starting points to take visitors on journeys of discovery that can be updated and developed by the Gallery Team. The human story is central to each display area, giving new insights into the creativity and determination behind the people involved in the textiles industry.

Within the gallery there are a series of open and cased objects mixed in with tactile and interactive elements, which offer the flexibility to be changed as required.

The Usual Suspects Creates a Buzz

In March, PLB's Project Director Sarah Oswald gave a presentation titled 'The Usual Suspects', which raised some pertinent questions concerning audience engagement, at Heritage Link's second Embracing Difference event, held in the Tyne Tees area. The day focused on group-work and purpose-designed activities. Participants were drawn from regional heritage voluntary sector groups and regional community groups. The event had a real buzz about it with networking opportunities as well as a sharing of best practice research on heritage and diversity work. One delegate commented on the strengths of the event, "So much! The guest speakers were all motivational, and the activities superb!"

See www.plbltd.com for a copy of Sarah's presentation.

Full Steam Ahead!

PLB is currently gaining an in-depth knowledge of the industrial railway heritage network of the North East, working at both Bowes and Tanfield Railways. These railways are rare, working survivors of a huge industry that once dominated the economy and landscape of Durham.

The feasibility study for Bowes aims to help secure a vibrant and sustainable future for the railway. In undertaking a business plan for Tanfield, we are building on the access and audience development work completed earlier in the year, assisting the railway in the production of a bid for Heritage Lottery Funding.

Bowes is the only preserved railway in the country that is a scheduled monument and is the world's only remaining standard gauge rope-hauled inclined railway. Tanfield is the world's oldest working railway, with sections dating back to the 17th century.





The gallery's 'breakthrough' stories are divided into design, technology and finishing processes told through a range of dramatic media that place visitors at the heart of new discoveries and creative thinking. Social history accounts are told through 'textile heroes' past and present. In the 'Histories Revealed' audio booth, the visitor can listen to the everyday accounts of local people who worked within the textiles industry.

“Since the opening it has proved extremely popular to our visitors and is an important development, and an example of how we want MOSI to develop.”

Sean Gaffaney, Head of Gallery and New Developments

Flying the Flag in Slovenia

PLB's Managing Director, Carolyn Lloyd Brown, has been representing the UK on behalf of the British Council at an international conference on cultural heritage management in Slovenia. The aim of the conference was to discuss the challenges facing cultural managers and to share expertise and ideas for shaping and evaluating cultural management in the 21st century.

Delegates from Hungary, Estonia, Slovakia and Slovenia attended the conference, along with specialists from the UK. The teams enjoyed a programme of fascinating visits to a wide range of sites, including a maritime museum located in a stunning setting on the Adriatic coast and a social history and rural life museum housed in a redundant monastery complete with working water mill (see picture).

Carolyn was one of five UK experts sharing experiences with international colleagues. Her contribution focused on the importance of the wider cultural tourism context for institutions, the benefits of tourism and the important contributions that heritage makes to the economic success and growth of a region and country. Carolyn comments, “This was an important aspect for many of the delegates as cultural tourism within the Baltic States is relatively under-developed and hence the understanding of both the benefits and issues was a key talking-point.”

Carolyn will return next year to a follow-up conference on the partnership between tourism and heritage and the importance of creating and sustaining a unique sense of place through active conservation.



News

PLB are delighted to have been commissioned to undertake a conservation management plan for the iconic Castle Howard Estate, right on our doorstep! We will be working with specialist colleagues on this project, including landscape architect, Alison Farmer. The client team we are working with comprises the Estate, English Heritage and Ryedale District Council.



Viewers of the BBC series, Restoration Village, will be familiar with the winner, Chedhams Yard. We are pleased to say that we will be working in conjunction with David Bissonnet, Principal at architects Purcell Miller Tritton on a development plan for this fantastic heritage site in Warwickshire.

PLB and Gifford and Partners heritage team are forging a powerful partnership in Ireland where they are working together on a series of conservation management plans. Ireland is fortunate in possessing a rich heritage of early walled towns and the teams are working at Athenry and Killmallock to prepare recommendations on conservation, access and interpretation.

The final interpretive strategy and concept design report for Newcastle's Heart of the City project will be submitted this Autumn. The project aims to unify The Cathedral Church of St Nicholas with the medieval Castle Keep and the Black Gate, re-emphasising the identity and the visitor offer of the historic centre of Newcastle.

New Arrival

PLB are also delighted to welcome Sarah Darling to their team as Marketing Administrator. Sarah has been promoting her family's fine food business for the past 18 months and prior to that worked as a Marketing Executive for a national firm.

Sarah says:

"I can't wait to get to grips with all aspects of marketing for PLB and to help increase awareness of our services, it is a very exciting time for both myself and PLB."



Flying Visit

We are delighted to have played host for the last three months to Mohammed Al-Qahtani, a Marketing Specialist from the Royal Commission for Jubail & Yanbu in Saudi Arabia. PLB is working with the Royal Commission preparing masterplans for four historic towns on the Red Sea coastline, and Mohammed is playing a key role in helping us identify investment opportunities in the four towns.



Contact Us

See our website for more details of these projects and others in:

Consultancy:

Access plans | Audience development | Interpretation strategies
HLF and other funding support | Heritage-led regeneration

Design & Implementation:

Interpretive plans | Graphic design
Museum & Gallery design | Exhibition design & build

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