

Scottish Stone Liaison Group

NEWSLETTER

Stone Industry Project Team

Issue No. 12 Winter 2005

Culture report (White Paper)

Reading this Report one wonders if it was supposed to address the needs of the built heritage, concentrating as it does on museums, arts, dance, music and modern architectural developments but ignoring the needs of the very buildings that provide the space in which these cultural activities are housed.

The SSLG has written to the Minister expressing the view that the Report deals with matters the SSLG has classified as NOW events and below is an extract of that letter:

The SSLG suggests to the Commission that Scotland's built heritage is THE ONE cultural issue that confronts EVERY single person EVERY single day. In fact, one could go even further and suggest that it is the ONLY cultural issues that confronts EVERY person EVERY single day.

In Section 2 of the "Foreword" (page 5) the Commission defines its interpretation of "The Culture Case" as being focused in three specific areas, namely "creativity", "confidence" and "well-being". The SSLG contends that these issues can generally be interpreted as "now" events and they pay little attention to nurturing and addressing the long-term needs of past creativity. We refer to the very buildings that this generation has inherited and the way in which these buildings have to be maintained to ensure that our children, and their children's children, can enjoy and appreciate the creativity and skills of past generations.

The Commission has failed to consider the potential

Scottish Stone Show 29-30th Nov 2005

It is appropriate to state that the London Stone Show Ltd, which runs similar events in London and Dublin, initiated this event and was responsible for its promotion and organisation. The company is NOT associated with the biennial "Natural Stone Show" held in ExCeL, London (this year 14–16th March '06).

However, to assist, the SSLG undertook to distribute promotional material and the NSI arranged speakers for two of the lectures that were held during the two-day event. (See the [NSI Newsletter](#) for more information)

The event was the first Scottish Stone Show (Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh Airport) and, along with Scottish producers, numerous other bodies and contractors, the SSLG had stand space throughout the two-days.

It is recognised that, as this was the first such event, there was a fairly rapid learning curve but, whilst there were some aspects that could have been handled better, it would be churlish not to applaud the efforts of the organisers.

Contrary to the views of the organisers, the SSLG is of the opinion that the Scottish stone market is not likely to sustain an annual stone show and has advised the organisers of its view. It is felt that a greater lead in time, picking up on the lessons learned in '05, would result in a more

The Commission has failed to recognise the material needs of the very buildings that invariably house the other cultures named within the above Report, namely art, music, drama, opera etc. **End**

The SSLG has been advised that the submission has been received and issues relating to Scotland's built heritage are indeed being addressed.

Association Europeenne des Entreprises de Restauration du Patrimoine Architecture

The SSLG office was contacted by the above European heritage employers organisation which was planning to hold its AGM in Edinburgh on the 23rd September 05. On the 17th August the SSLG Chief Executive met with its Secretary and the incoming President to assist them and offer some agenda suggestions. (The meeting, starting with a glass of champagne at 11.00 was certainly a different start to the day for the CEO – but one he get used to!).

The event, held in the Thistle Hotel, Edinburgh, was addressed by Mr Murdo MacLeod, Principal Conservation Officer of the City of Edinburgh, Dr Ewan Hyslop and Mr A McMillan (both from the BGS). The organisers had also arranged for the new Chief Executive of the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust to speak. In addition, the SSLG had arranged for Councillor B Fallon to open the event and he extended a warm welcome from the City of Edinburgh.

As the 24th September (Saturday) was Edinburgh's "Doors Open Day" the SSLG CEO had arranged a visit by the delegates from Spain, France, Croatia, Turkey, Belgium, Switzerland and England to the offices of the BGS before the premises were opened to the public. Mr Martin Smith, Head of Station at the BGS offices in Edinburgh, welcomed the delegation with BGS staff then providing a conducted tour.

successful show in the future. Perhaps every second year!

HEACS

In Edinburgh, on the 22nd September, the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland (HEACS) delivered its annual report 2004/2005 with its various Working Groups subsequently reporting to a Public Meeting that was held later in the day. The SSLG, having contributed to the deliberations of the "Skills and Materials Working Group", received a mention in the Report.

The SSLG looks forward to the final Report from this Group and hopes that its contribution has been of some value.

Masonry skills

Good News – the number of training places being offered by Scottish masonry companies has again improved. Whilst this is warmly welcomed, the Glasgow Project Report, due in the summer, will determine whether sufficient

Heritage training advisor

As advised in Newsletter No.12, Mr Richard Groom has been appointed as the Heritage Training Adviser (CITB-ConstructionSkills) in Scotland and he took up his position in September. Richard, who was previously a stone

the summer, will determine whether sufficient training is being achieved.

The SSLG is aware that Colleges, having adjusted (reduced) their operations due to a lack of young people being recruited, are now virtually fully subscribed and, with no spaces available in the Autumn, some trades had to delay to January '06 before trainees could attend the College courses. The question of College funding continues to be a source of some concern.

September. Richard, who was previously a stone carver and lectured at Telford College, has had to "hit the ground running" as he is now responsible, with the assistance of other CITBConstructionSkills staff, of securing the skills data for the "Glasgow Project" (see Glasgow Project).

Mr G Ogilvy, the Scottish Manager CITB-ConstructionSkills, has asked Richard to attend the SSLG meetings on his behalf.

National Heritage Training Group

Due to increasing time pressures, it has become more difficult for the SSLG CEO to attend the National Heritage Training Group meetings, invariably held in London, and in future the SSLG will be represented by one of its Directors, Mrs R Artis-Young who is also the Director of the Scottish Lime Centre Trust.

A survey of the skills available within Scotland, commissioned by Historic Scotland and the NHTG, is being progressed by Pye Tait, Edinburgh with the results anticipated in Spring '06.

Aberdeen City Council

The SSLG offices received a copy of the new "*Aberdeen's Granite Trail*" publication which "is one of a series of themed trails being developed around the City".

It is an excellent publication providing a snap shot of the history of the industry and leading the reader through a trail of significant buildings. It is interesting to note that in the 1860s, in order to cut costs (it happened then as well), it was suggested that the new Town House could be built in sandstone!!

See

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/acc_data/publication/granitecity_trail_leaflet.pdf

Editor: Alan McKinney
Scottish Stone Liaison Group
Room 133, Pentlandfield Business Park, The Bush, Roslin EH25 9RE
Tel: 0131 448 0313 Fax: 0131 440 4032