

WORLD

The League of Historical Cities Bulletin

HISTORICAL CITIES

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Amsterdam municipal department for the preservation of monuments and sites at Keizers-graent canal

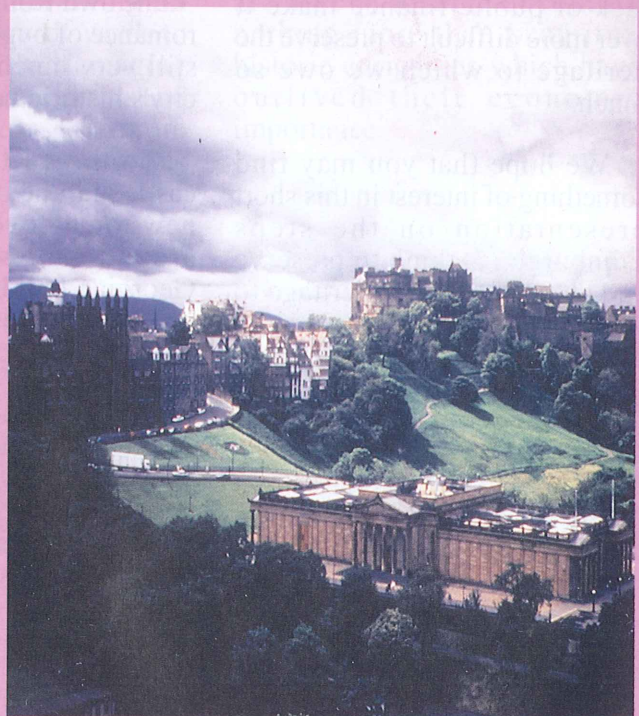
Edinburgh

Amsterdam

Report from Moscow

Meeting of Board of Directors

Interview



Edinburgh Castle and National Galleries

Edinburgh



Edinburgh at night

As we prepare to tackle the challenges of the 21st century, each of us is constantly having to reconcile the needs of the ancient and that of the modern as the present day challenges from housing and traffic management, the expansion of tourism and a lack of public finance make it ever more difficult to preserve the heritage to which we owe so much.

We hope that you may find something of interest in this short presentation on the steps Edinburgh is taking to preserve and also to utilize its heritage to improve its economy and the quality of life of its citizens.

Edinburgh in the 1990's has a population of about 450,000 and is a beautiful, dynamic, prosperous, historic, European capital city with a growing economy.

The modern city of Edinburgh has a unique natural and physical environment. At its heart lies the Edinburgh castle, with a documented history dating back

to the 7th century, although it is thought that there may have been habitation there as long ago as 5,000 B.C.

Edinburgh was described by Scotland's famous poet and novelist, Sir Walter Scott, as "mine own Romantic town". The romance of bygone Edinburgh is still very much apparent in the city's historic heart.

To the north of Edinburgh castle and the old town, lies the new town covering an area of around four square miles of Georgian buildings - the largest example in Britain of 18th and 19th century town planning.

Both Edinburgh's medieval old town and Georgian new town have recently been awarded World Heritage Site status by UNESCO making the city ever more conscious of its duty to protect its heritage and environment.

The importance of preserving our historic cities is beyond question. Our heritage must not

be sacrificed for economic gain and yet economic success is vital to the future life of our cities. Therefore, we must find ways of using our heritage to compete in the 21st century, to become successful, vibrant, thriving communities where people live, work and play.

Edinburgh in recent years has achieved some success in this regard. There was a time when Edinburgh was losing its way. Where buildings were demolished they were replaced by ugly, modern designs or perhaps worse still, were replaced with nothing at all, leaving gap sites all over the city center.

New housing estates characterized by multi - story flats sprung up around the periphery of the city offering little by way of quality of life to their occupants.

However, over the last two decades, we have been experiencing a Renaissance with city center gap sites being filled by new imaginative buildings.

designed to accommodate business and the arts.

We have embarked on a successful program of investment in the fabric of our city and are regenerating the areas around the world heritage site of our old town to complement the beauty of this medieval city.

We are revitalizing housing both in the city center and in the peripheral areas. We are refurbishing many public buildings and theaters and have built a major new financial district and international conference center.

All of this has been demanded by and is vital to an expanding local economy which owes much to the heritage of Edinburgh.

The results of our efforts have been seen in recent studies which have found that Edinburgh is currently one of the most successful, wealth creating and advantageous cities in the United Kingdom offering an outstanding environment in which to live or work.

While we are proud of our success, we can not sit back complacently expecting that in the future, success will be handed to us on a plate. Much more requires to be done and it requires to be done within the financial constraints placed upon us.

As people have more leisure time and as travel around the world becomes easier, it is essential for historic cities to develop their tourist industries.

As a beautiful, historic city famous for its international arts festival and large scale events, Edinburgh is a cultural magnet to millions of tourists who are vital to our economy, bringing considerable amounts of money

and jobs to the city.

To continue to attract such large numbers, we must ensure that the heritage they come to see is not damaged in any way. We must continue to regenerate the areas which have been allowed to deteriorate, and bring them up to a high standard. We must create new attractions and new events which will bring greater numbers of people to the city.

Projects on which we are currently working in Edinburgh include the recent creation of a new year festival which last year attracted 300,000 people onto Princes street at 12 midnight on 31 January.

While the expansion of tourism is of great importance, it can at the same time create its own problems. Over use of fragile structures can cause erosion and increased numbers in our cities can result in increased waste and pollution.

We have made transportation a key priority for the development of the city and we are currently undertaking an extensive program of work to seek to mitigate the damaging environmental effects of cars and to encourage the use of more environmentally friendly forms of transport.

By reducing the number of cars in the center of Edinburgh and making it safer, we are aiming to make it more attractive to visitors and locals.

By reducing people's reliance on the car, we hope to breathe new life into the center of the city. With the current trends for out of town shopping and living, it is important to tackle the threats of the doughnut which leaves city centers bereft of life at the end of the day.

In Edinburgh we are working hard to counteract this by regenerating the heart of the city to provide new housing and to encourage mixed use of the city.

If our cities are to be successful, they must use their assets to make them as attractive as possible to those who live and work in them as well as to tourists and investors. While we must preserve our heritage, in an increasingly competitive world, we must also enhance and find new ways of utilizing it.

If we do not, then our cities are likely to die, becoming nothing more than beautiful, historic curiosities which have outlived their economic importance.



Edinburgh from Calton Hill

Amsterdam

Amsterdam's old city center is home to many historic buildings. Inside this former fortified city, there is an infrastructure of canals and streets which was completed at the end of seventeenth century.

It is the combination of canals, streets, bridges and historic buildings which gives the city the special character appreciated by so many visitors.

A boat trip along the Herengracht, Keizersgracht and Prinsengracht, the concentric canals surrounding the heart of the city, which dates back to the middle ages, leaves an unforgettable impression.

A special feature of all the buildings is that they have piled foundations. This is because the subsoil is peat, which has no load-bearing capacity.

Bricks were the primary building material because there is virtually no rock in this part of the country. It is this brick-based architecture that has made Amsterdam world famous.

A tour through this historic city shows the variety of facades. Amsterdam is not a city of huge palaces, but along the canals, there are many substantial buildings which in the past have served as urban palaces for Amsterdammers who made their fortunes in overseas trade.

Jacob van Campen, Philip Vingboons and Hendrik de Keyser were among the most influential seventeenth-century architects.

The historic interest of Amsterdam's architectural monuments extends beyond the city center. The city expanded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and in so doing created an interesting legacy of architecture and urban planning.

The City of Amsterdam's Municipal Department for the Preservation of Monuments and Sites plays an important part in the conservation of this precious heritage. The department was set up by the city council more than

forty years ago. Its most important task is to advise the city council and private residents about how to protect and maintain their architectural legacy.

There are some 7000 listed buildings, a large proportion of which are residences. An important part of the department's work is the supervision of restoration activities for which a listed building permit is required.

The Dutch government provides about twenty million guilders a year in the form of grants for restoration and improvements.

The fine-meshed urban infrastructure also needs a great deal of looking after. New buildings are designed with painstaking care so that the building line, height and volume are in harmony with existing properties.

It is expected that the seventeenth century city center



Late 17th century canal houses along Herengracht canal



Ice sport at one of the famous canals of Amsterdam

will soon be designated as a protected urban area. This will have the effect of giving the whole area a protected status under the 1988 Monuments and Historic Buildings Act.

The plan to add the area to the World Heritage List reflects the international recognition of the importance of the historic city center.

An important principle behind the policy is that Amsterdam must not become a static open-air museum, where nothing is allowed.

The approach to caring for monuments and historic buildings is therefore geared to creating new opportunities for buildings and urban development structures.

In the long run the maintenance of a cycle of use and reuse is the best guarantee of the preservation of a historic city.

Such an approach also means that the Municipal Department for the Preservation of Monuments and Sites is

becoming increasingly involved in advising on major infrastructural projects.

We must study the options-contained in the old structure-which can be utilized in the development of new plans. In this way the interests of conserving old buildings can be incorporated in the decision-making process.

This approach holds out a great deal of promise for the future of a beautiful and historic city.



Impression at night of some houses in the historic center

INRECON in Moscow, Russia



An article for World Historical Cities from the Scientific and Design Institute on Reconstruction of Historic Towns (INRECON), Moscow, Russia.

Russian Specialists; local authorities' officers, architects, town planners, conservationists are attentively and approvingly observing the activity of World Conferences of the League of Historical Cities.

It is a great satisfaction to know that the problems common for all historical cities and towns have become the subject of care for the most part of countries all over the world.

The World Conferences of Historical Cities and establishment of the League of Historical Cities are the striking proof of this fact.

The historical cities of Russia, Moscow and Sankt Petersburg were first represented at the 5th World Conference in Xian.

In Russia the outstanding architectural monuments are dispersed throughout the vast national territory in more than 400 historical cities.

Our country is experiencing now a rather complicated period in its history related to the pivotal changes in policy and economy.

In spite of this and perhaps owing to this, the problem of historic urban environment's conservation is the important subject of care both for historical cities' local authorities and for the Federal Government.

Last year the Government had resolved to establish

the State Program on Rehabilitation and Restoration of Historic Towns of Russia. Such a revival program had been initiated by our Institute on Reconstruction of Historic Towns (INRECON) and approved by the Government of Russian Federation.

Now the program is beginning to be implemented. It has to unite the means from different sources - inner and outer, national and international. The program proposes the consentient solving of a whole range of historical towns' problems.

The Program created some economic and organizational stimuli for the non governmental bodies, private and public enterprises, separate developers and renovators to direct their investments and forces on conservation and sustainable development of unique urban areas and sites.

On the base of this national Program our Institute is making and up to now has made more than 10 special revival programs for separate historical towns in which we take into consideration their individual singularities of history.

Each such Program is supposed to be the plan of actions for the local municipal authority. In order to implement these programs it is urgently needed to hold international contacts, exchange information both on successes and failures, and get the friendly help.

The League of Historical Cities and the world Conference of Historical Cities have a large role to play in setting the aims and quantifying achievements in this field. We believe this generous and highly useful movement would continue with success.

The 2nd Meeting of the Board of Directors Information on the 6th Conference

The delegation from the League of Historical Cities Secretariat in Kyoto visited Cracow, Poland on July 14th and discussed further details concerning the 6th World Conference of Historical Cities with Cracow, the host city of next Conference. It is decided that the 6th Conference will be held from May 25th to 28th, 1998 at the Stowacki Theatre in Cracow, Poland.

New members admitted

The 2nd meeting of the Board of Directors was held concurrently with this meeting on July 15th. City of Kyoto, Cracow, and Rio de Janeiro participated in and City of Xian, Zurich, and Alexandria submitted their "delegation of Powers to the Chairperson". All of the 4 applications from City of Baghdad(Iraq), Nara(Japan), Konya(Turkey), and Algiers(Algeria) to become a member of the League was approved at this meeting



Stowacki Theatre in Cracow, Poland. The next Conference will be held here..

Meeting of Kyoto city, the secretariat of the League and Cracow city, the next host city of the Conference

The League of Historical Cities List

Accra (Republic of Ghana)	Fez (Kingdom of Morocco)	Montreal (Canada)
Alexandria (Arab Republic of Egypt)	Florence (Republic of Italy)	Montpellier(France)
Algiers(Algeria)	Guadalajara (United Mexican States)	Nanjing (People's Republic of China)
Amsterdam (Kingdom of the Netherlands)	Hanoi (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam)	Nara(Japan)
Athens (Hellenic Republic)	Helsingborg(Sweden)	Paris (French Republic)
Baghdad(Iraq)	Iasi(Romania)	Prague (Czech Republic)
Barcelona (Spain)	Isfahan (Islamic Republic of Iran)	Quebec (Canada)
Bordeaux (French Republic)	Istanbul (Republic of Turkey)	Rio de Janeiro (Federative Republic of Brazil)
Boston (United States of America)	Jerusalem (State of Israel)	Rome (Republic of Italy)
Bratislava (Slovak Republic)	Kaesong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)	Santiago de Compostela(Spain)
Brussels (Kingdom of Belgium)	Katmandu (Kingdom of Nepal)	Tashkent (Republic of Uzbekistan)
Budapest (Republic of Hungary)	Kiev (Ukraine)	Tunis (Republic of Tunisia)
Chiang Mai (Kingdom of Thailand)	Konya(Turkey)	Ulan Bator (Mongolia)
Cologne (Federal Republic of Germany)	Kyongju (Republic of Korea)	Varanasi (India)
Cordoba(Spain)	Kyoto (Japan)	Vienna (Republic of Austria)
Cracow (Republic of Poland)	Lahore (Islamic Republic of Pakistan)	Xian (People's Republic of China)
Cusco (Republic of Peru)	Lisbon (Portuguese Republic)	Yangon(Myanmar)
Dublin (Ireland)	Melbourne (Australia)	Yogyakarta (Republic of Indonesia)
Edinburgh (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	Mexico City (United Mexican States)	Zagreb (Republic of Croatia)
		Zurich(Swiss Confederation)

INTERVIEW

Augusto Ivan Pinheiro**Deputy Mayor for the Central District of Rio de Janeiro**

Your city is selected as Vice-chairperson of the League of Historical Cities, what is your aspiration as one of Principal Officers ?

In 1979 the city of Rio De Janeiro launched an effort to protect its historical heritage and through this program around 10,000 old buildings have been placed under protection by municipal law.

Most of these buildings are located in the city center or in its immediate neighborhood.

World-renown for its beautiful landscape, Rio De Janeiro owes its fame to the presence of the sea, beaches and huge forested mountains that crisscross it.

However few people know of the city's role in the history of Brazil. Before the country's independence from Portugal, Rio De Janeiro was the capital of Brazil for more than one century.

The city contains a wide range of Brazilian architecture ranging from baroque to neoclassic, and eclectic to modern.

Therefore, maintaining this historical heritage and harmonizing it with the present-day developments in the city will be the task of the municipal government for many years.

As Deputy Mayor in charge of the central district of Rio De Janeiro, my main task is to manage the delicate balance between the protection of our historical heritage and the



need to modernize our city center.

This task requires meeting the challenge of increasing traffic demands while creating more pedestrian space as well as attracting modern enterprises to support already existing traditional activities.

This effort will only succeed with the local population's involvement. I think that we must increase the consciousness among the people of the need to conserve old buildings while reinforcing the attractiveness of the city center against the competition of new development areas outside of it.

The meetings and activities of the League of Historical Cities made us aware that we are not alone in this fight to preserve our historical heritage.

Despite the social, economic and environmental differences between our cities, we have learned about new experiences that should be

shared in order to keep our cities in touch with problems and solutions commonly found around the world.

Rio De Janeiro is ready to contribute to this process by showing how a relatively new city is dealing with the task of protecting its natural and cultural landscape while modernizing the city.

These efforts must take into account the 12 million inhabitants in Rio's metropolitan area and the enormous social and economic problems in the region.

What do you expect of the League when each member city of the League deals with the common theme of conservation and development ?

Rio De Janeiro counts on the League of Historical Cities to help member cities to keep in contact with common problems and their solutions found around the globe.

Please give your message to members of the League of Historical Cities ?

We hope that the League will put into place a program of cooperation between its affiliates, in which technicians and city directors can interchange their experiences through topical seminars and working visits in order to better learn how best to protect their heritage.

Secretariat has now e-mail access.

e-mail address: lhcs@city.kyoto.or.jp

If you have your own e-mail address, please let us know.

The League of Historical Cities Secretariat

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