An Icon of Public Parks — Bringing Bandstands Back to Life

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Origins Great Parks - 1830's onwards **Great Foundries** The Great Decline & Revival Relevance and Misconceptions Community assets for community use

Origins

In July 1937, music critic Jack Donaldson wrote in the Daily Express column, *Music Notes*,

'If you are fond of music, of the open air and of your fellow Londoners, why not go to the parks for your music?' Their origins lie in the design of the great pleasure gardens which with, 'their winning formula of combined music, illuminated fountains, fireworks and light refreshments in an Eden-like atmosphere' preceded the monumental parks movement of the Victorian era.



Vauxhall Gardens 1735 original Orchestra Stand



Cremorne Pleasure Gardens - Enclosed in this elegant 'Chinese' construction musicians would play all the popular tunes while couples whirled around them upon a circular dance stand

Great Parks - 1830 onwards!

"At present the workman in the large manufacturing town, was actually forced into the public house, there being no other place for him to amuse himself in" - Robert Slaney 1833

The ideology of rational recreation was good behaviour and personal improvement running hand in hand with enjoyment; leisure ought to be pleasurable, yet elevating, entertaining but useful

1856 The cessation of Sunday band concerts in London Parks under pressure from the bishops

"Recreation on the Sabbath was thoroughly unacceptable; it was widely regarded as one of the worst types of desecration".

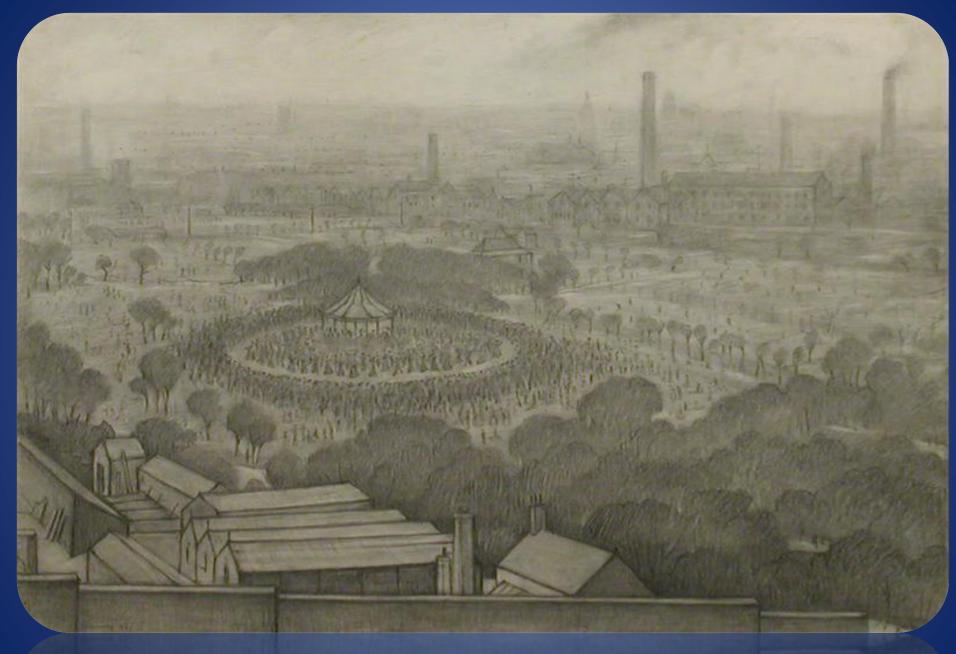
Rational amusement – became a Victorian cliché, an expression of approval only for those pleasures which were patently moral and improving in intent

27/09/2016

The Times reported in 1841 on the proposals to open Regent's Park to the public

"redemption of the working class through recreation, after all why should the lower orders not enjoy the liberty of taking a walk in the more plebeian portions of the park......

...... provided they have a decent coat on"





LEAZES PARK, HEWCASTLE.



When eleven brass bands gathered on the upper terrace of Corporation Park, Blackburn, Lancashire, in 1861, more than 50,000 people gathered to listen.



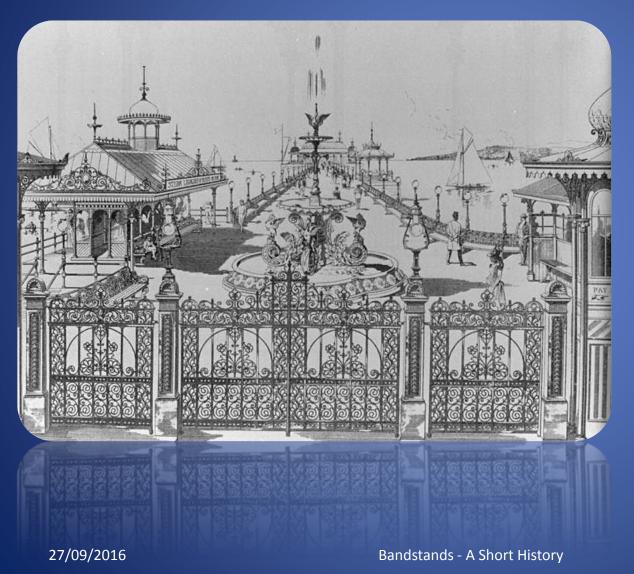


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Great Foundries

Walter Macfarlane - Saracen Foundry





GLASGOW

Malter Macharlane

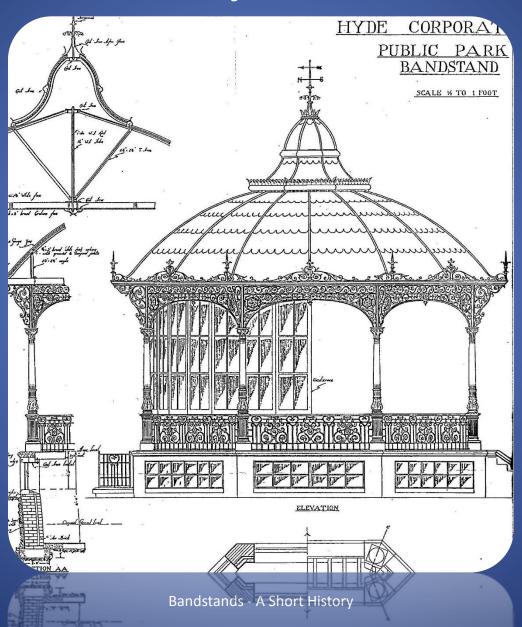


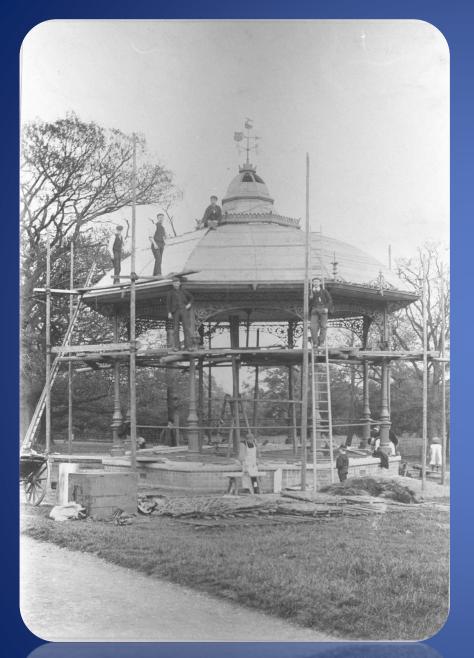


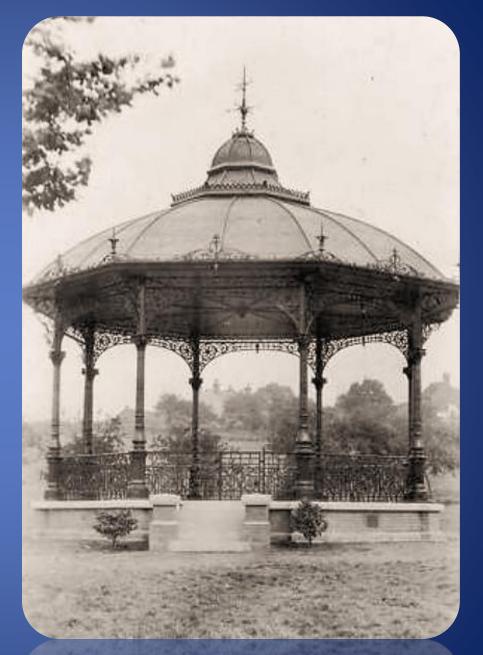




Lion Foundry - Kirkintilloch











The Great Decline







Revival





Bandstands - A Short History





Bandstands - A Short History















Relevance and misconceptions

I've spent some jolly evenings round the bandstand





Rational Recreation to Public entertainment

'Public parks were now merely one element in a broad landscape of urban recreational possibilities...many lost their distinctive character as a result'

Carole O'Reilly University of Salford

- Often the most missed feature in parks once removed
- Loss of identity of many parks once removed
- They're just about brass bands
- Hang outs for teenagers, rough sleepers and 'illicit night time activities'
- No one really cares about them
-BUT





















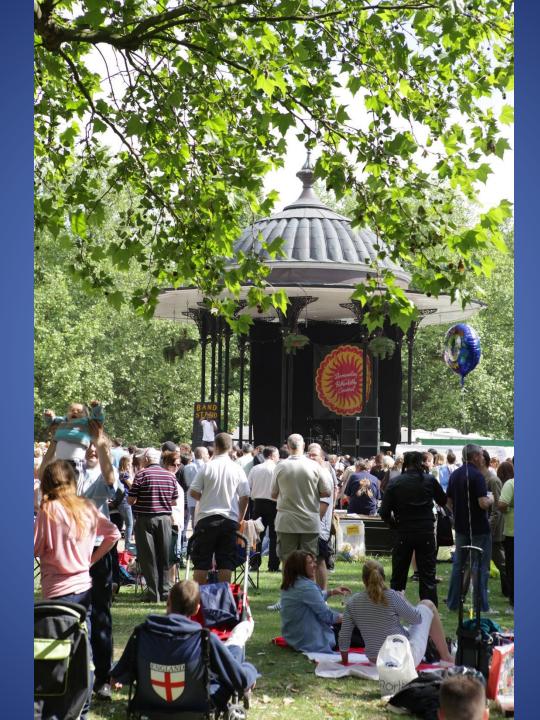
















Community assets for community use

Its not just about Brass Bands is it?

- Rock, Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Jive,
 Swing, Folk, heavy metal???
- Arts and Crafts and decoration
- Meeting places
- Dance and performance
- Marshalling of events
- Church services
- Theatre and Drama
- All day events / mini festivals

What can we do?

- The Bandstand Marathon / Our Big Gig
- Music Day <u>www.musicday.org.uk</u>
- Bottom up approach make it available and invite free usage
- Cut the red tape (Bookings / H&S / Public Entertainment Licence in place / Risk assessments / Insurance
- Promote it and partner www.makingmusic.org.uk
- Varied programmes of entertainment
- Pass responsibility to Friends Groups
- Don't let the minority dictate



