

Sefton Stories!

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Ahead of Sefton's Borough of Culture year, we want residents and visitors to tell us what stories they want us to celebrate throughout 2020.

The Borough of Culture (BoC) title is awarded by the Liverpool City Region's Combined Authority to one of its six local authorities (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral) on a rotating, annual basis.

2019 is currently Wirral's year while 2020 will be dedicated to Sefton with a raft of new, existing and community led events planned for the year.

The focus of Sefton's year will be on stories, looking at two key elements, local history and the environment.

Through the Sefton Stories Project, we are already planning to celebrate narrative around the Bootle Blitz, Red Rum and the Grand National, the borough's amazing coastline, Southport's tourism and Maghull amateur astronomer Isaac Roberts.

But as the borough is blessed with so many other different and unique stories and individuals behind them, we want the public to decide on who else to celebrate in 2020.

After much deliberation, a list of 10 stories has been chosen to vote on with at least 4 more being added to the final list. A blank box has also been added enabling people to champion stories or individuals they think we have missed and one of these will be included as well.

An online poll has now been set up on www.mysefton.co.uk for people to cast their votes and we are encouraging groups and individuals to champion different stories telling us why they should be celebrated.

The poll will run until January 13, 2020 with the full list for the Sefton Stories Project announced shortly afterwards.

The list to vote for includes:

Christiana Hartley Social and welfare rights activist, philanthropist	Thomas Fresh Pioneer in British environmental health	Dame Beryl Bainbridge Acclaimed British writer
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Sefton's Maritime History The Heroes of the Lusitania, Captain Frederic 'Johnnie' Walker and Captain Edward Smith of the Titanic	FJ Hooper Polar explorer, member of Scott expedition	James Dunwoody Bulloch Confederacy's chief foreign agent during the US Civil War
Albert Pierrepoint The last hangman	Sir Henry Seagrave Land speed record in 1926	Frank Hornby Meccano, Hornby Model Railways and Dinky Toys
Kenny Everett Comedian and radio disc jockey	Other stories? Who or what have we missed – famous or should-be famous	

Dwayne Johnson, Chief Executive at Sefton Council, said: "There are so many stories synonymous with Sefton and everyone has their own favorite so we want people to tell us which ones to celebrate.

"The Sefton Stories project is not necessarily about celebrity, it is more about recognizing stories and individuals that have helped shaped the borough's history over time. Some of these are not that well known but once you delve deeper into them they make a great talking point.

"We also recognize that some of them have elements of controversy behind them but we believe they have all played an important part in our past.

"After much debate, we have come up with 10 stories and through the MySefton website people can find out a bit more about them and their links to Sefton. We then want people to champion a story, tell their friends about it and more importantly vote for someone.

"We have left a box blank for other suggestions and pending a real swell of support for someone, we will add them to the list as well.

"Once we have the final list, these will be weaved into our busy Borough of Culture calendar to celebrate them accordingly and should also form part of a special history trail looking at their own unique story.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for people of all ages to learn more about Sefton's history and help define our important Borough of Culture year."

For more information and to get involved in the Sefton Stories Project, visit www.mysefton.co.uk. Further details on all the stories in the vote are on the website as well. People can also vote by emailing BOC2020@sefton.gov.uk

The Borough of Culture initiative is part of the Metro Mayor's Culture programme that sees Liverpool City Region commit to spending the equivalent of 1% of its annual £30 million devolution funding from government to stimulate cultural and creative activities.

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