

MANOR POINT DEVELOPMENT WILL HELP PRESERVE RARE MOSAIC

The concave mosaic of Three Ships on the front of British Home Stores, home of the co-op building in Hull, is a well-known city centre landmark. However, there is an equally important artwork on the interior of the building which was recently rediscovered by the developers of the of the five storey property.

Manor Property Group is currently developing plans to refurbish the former co-op store and recently unveiled the interior mosaic on the top floor in the former Skyline Restaurant and ballroom. It is 6.85m (22.5 feet) long and made of ceramic tiles, marble and stone that depict ceramic fish swimming freely in a tile background of bubbling water. The whole piece is set between massive columns of kelp-like fronds in stone.

The significance of both the exterior and interior mosaics only came to light when Manor was contacted by Christopher Marsden, a researcher writing a paper for the Journal of the Tile and Architectural Society.

Robert Lane a director of Manor Property Group says the interior mosaic has survived very well and only requires a clean to bring it back to its original state. He commented: "We were delighted to hear from Christopher and to know we have a piece of history on the front of our building, and even more excited to rediscover the fish mural on the fourth floor of the building.

"This work has been covered up and forgotten for many years, but it has survived very well and we have plans to clean and refurbish it and incorporate it into the exciting plans for the redevelopment of the building now known as Manor Point, Hull.

"The exterior *Three Ships* requires some repair work as there are many scaffold holes in the face of the mural and we will be addressing this work as part of the buildings refurbishment with specialist contractors."

Both mosaics were created by Alan Boyson who was commissioned to design *Three Ships* in Hull by Co-op project architect Philip Andrew in 1963. He created the iconic exterior 'fishing town' image, which was executed in glass tile mosaic as it was too big for traditional ceramic work.

Christopher Marsden explained: "The Hull mosaic symbolises the city's fishing industry and captures the important role it played in the city's heritage. I hope this research will re-awaken interest in the mosaic which has been on the front of the store for over 40 years. It looks as good today as it did when it was first created. It remains a testament and a reminder to residents and visitors to Hull of the importance and associated dangers the fishing industry brought to the city."

The whole piece is 66 feet high x 64 feet wide. The face of the mural includes 4,224 foot-square slabs (each made up of 225 tiny glass cubes); altogether there are 1,061,775 pieces. The mosaic work was carried out by Richards Tiles Ltd from (now part of Johnsons Tiles Ltd) and affixed by A. Andrews & Sons (Marble & Tiles) Ltd of Leeds who is still trading today.

Boyson was commissioned to produce the second mural for a prominent position under what was regarded at the time as 'an innovative and daringly thin concrete handkerchief shell roof' on the

fourth floor of the building. The work was re discovered when Mr Marsden visited Hull to research the work and made contact with the owners of the building.

Manor Property Group has a continuing application for ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) grant funding with regional development agency Yorkshire Forward towards the £28 million conversion and refurbishment of part of the 5-storey vacant store to convert it into Grade A commercial floor-space to bring the building back into beneficial use.

Please contact Claire Levy to arrange for a photographer to visit Manor Point, Hull to photograph the fish mosaic.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Marsden, Christopher R, Anything with Anything: An introduction to the art and craft of Alan Boyson, Journal of the Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society Vol 16

www.tilesoc.org.uk/tacs_journal.htm

Manor Property Group has a broad base of property developments worth in excess of £625 million development value. Manor has over 30 years' experience with a wide range of projects which span leisure, retail, commercial, residential and student developments

More information at: www.ManorPropertyGroup.com

Manor Point Architect - Robinson Architects - Robinson Architects is one of the North's leading practices working within the multi-disciplinary umbrella of Robinson Design Ltd

www.robinsonarchitects.co.uk

Boyson in the press:

http://menmedia.co.uk/manchestereveningnews/news/s/1424480_hidden-treasure-artwork-is-discovered-in-denton-furniture-store?rss=yes

<http://salfordstar.com/article.asp?id=1005>

<http://www.creativetimes.co.uk/events/the-60-s-murals-of-alan-boyson>

Hull Daily Mail archives:

The wall of a million pieces, *Hull Daily Mail*, 17 October 1963, p. 10; Co-op's new skyline pantry the last word in table lore, *Hull Daily Mail*, 21 November 1963 p. 15 ; Grand opening, *Hull Daily Mail*, 21 November 1963 p. 14.

