



2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

28 May 1985

Re Mark

W

Dear Mark 28/5

LIVERPOOL GARDEN FESTIVAL

My Secretary of State thought the Prime Minister might be interested in seeing the attached supplement from the Liverpool Echo marking the reopening of the Liverpool Garden Festival.

Yours ever

Alan Davis

ALAN DAVIS
Private Secretary

Mark Addison Esq

S/S - to see

PREM 19/11616

Festival Gardens

SUPPLEMENT TO THE
LIVERPOOL ECHO,
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1985

New leisure area rises from the old

TEARS AT the end of Liverpool's International Garden Festival last autumn have now turned to radiant smiles at the birth of the Festival Gardens, reopening on Thursday.

Reborn really describes this most popular new riverside park because, although slightly reduced in size, it still contains many of the attractive and spectacular international features which drew 3,378,369 visits last year.

Mr. Basil Bean, chief executive, Merseyside Development Corporation said: "The concept of the festival gardens is very different from the festival of 1984.

"We have been looking for success — not in terms of the number

ARTICLES BY DEREK WHALE
ON-SITE PICTURES BY
DEREK WRIGHT

"through the gates" but rather in the re-creation of the very happy atmosphere and pleasure experienced by visitors to this lovely Merseyside parkland.

"It is difficult now to remember the original total dereliction of the site, which is now a superb example of what can be achieved, given the power and, more importantly, the commitment, to do it.

"As part of our overall regeneration strategy, this delightful parkland (many of the gardens are even more beautiful this year) will enable us to seek a commercial leisure operator for this area in order to secure the long-term future enjoyment of the people

of Merseyside," he added.

A full and exciting programme has been arranged for the season, which ends on September 8.

More than 1,000 entertainers have been booked and a completely new attraction, The Magic Garden — within the space-age Festival Hall — will be among the special features expected to draw scores of thousands of visitors once again.

Admission to the site is £2 for adults and £1 for children and senior citizens. These are day-tickets only and are available at the gates.

All the entertainment within the Festival Gardens will be free. Park-

ing for cars and coaches also will be free. Attendants will be present.

Season-tickets, so popular last year, cost £12—children under 16 and senior citizens, £6. These are now available at the Tourist Information Centre, Lime Street, and from Thursday onwards, from the ticket offices at both entrances to the Festival Gardens.

Passport-approved photographs must be supplied for the season-tickets — children, too. Children under five will be admitted free.

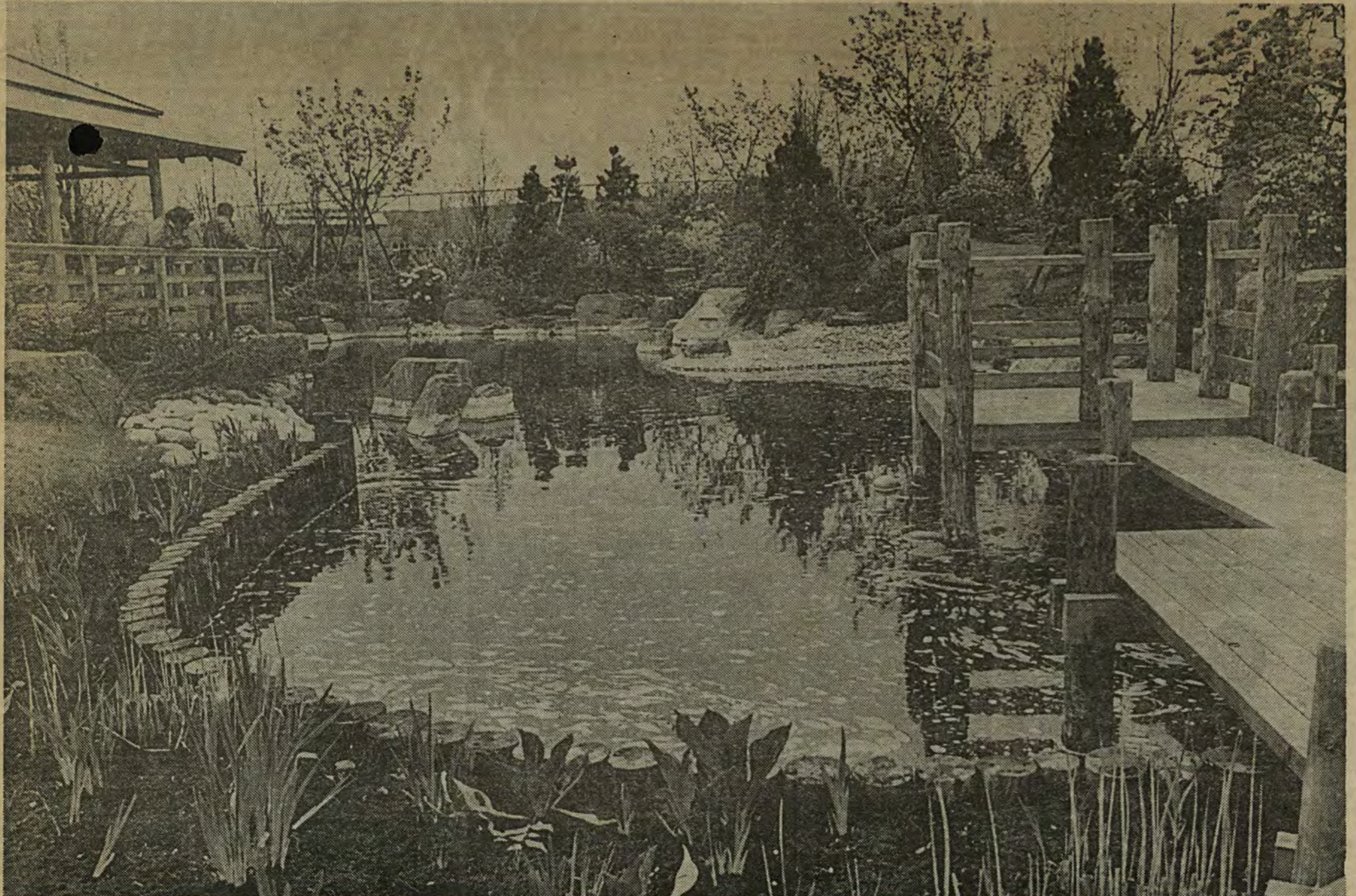
Proof of eligibility (e.g., a pension book or bus-pass) must be provided by senior citizens applying for O.A.P. concessions.

"The season tickets are really great value for money," said ticket-



APPLYING the finishing touches to one of the giant sunflowers, which vary in height from 16ft to 26ft in the Magic Garden

Continued on
Page Two



Still retained on the site is the serene beauty of the Japanese garden

Festival Gardens

It's magic for the children in a garden that's made for giants

THE MOST exciting children's playground ever devised for Merseyside will open at Liverpool's Festival Gardens, on Thursday.

Called The Magic Garden, this is a make-believe, larger-than-life garden, filling the Festival Hall with gigantic man-made plants, implements

and toys, that make Alice's Adventures in Wonderland tame by comparison.

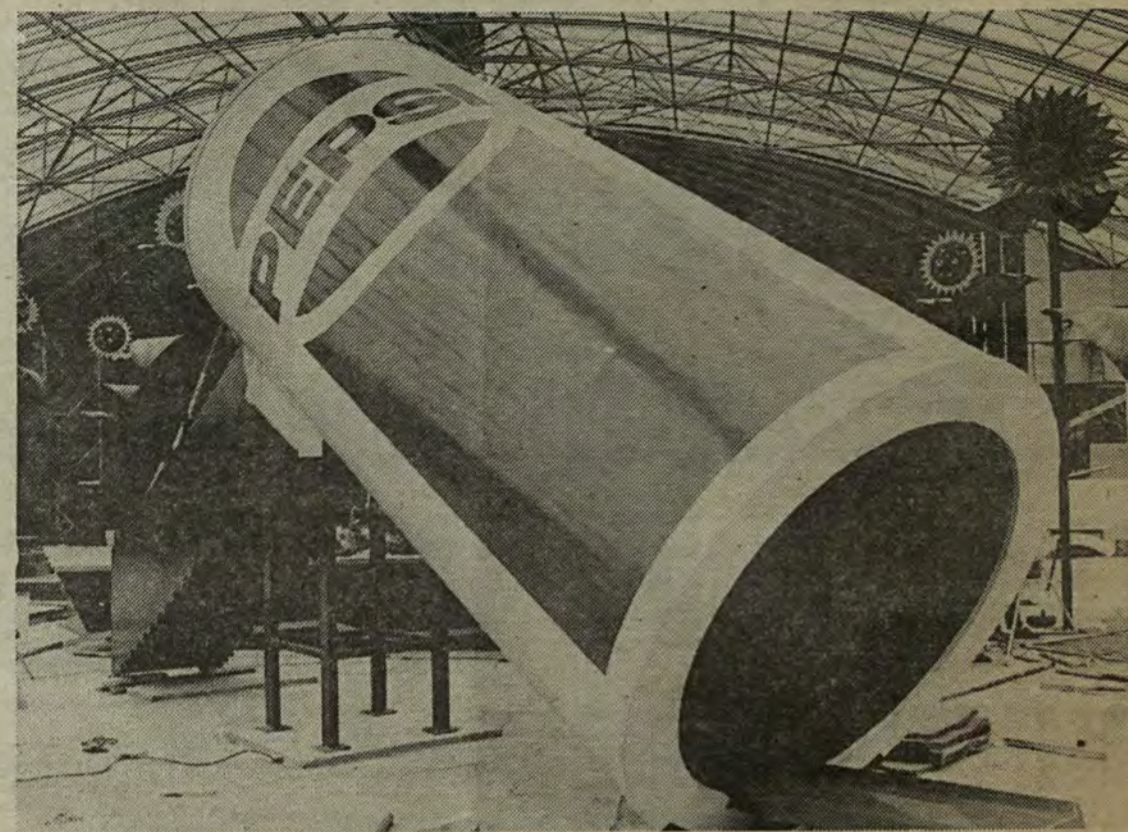
Indeed, with 38ft garden spades and forks, 7ft flower pots, sunflowers up to 26ft high, 10ft matchsticks and a 20ft teddy bear—just to mention a few of the items in this gargantuan garden—visitors will feel like Lilliputians in Brobdingnag.

Green carpeting forms the lawns of this huge

playground, which has a painted sky background and bridge shaped and coloured as a rainbow.

From the pathway on a high surrounding wall, visitors will be able to look down on this spectacular scene, where youngsters can frolic in a "swamp" comprising 120,000 small plastic balls and which is also the home of a monstrous frog.

Great apples and oranges, a watering-can, tap, and a teapot... one is given almost an ant's eye-view of these



Sliding down this outside soft-drink can will satisfy a few thirsts for adventure.

towering toys, making the event the major attraction of the festival.

The teddy, securely tethered in another playpen, can be cuddled by a small army of youngsters.

There are five separate play areas, packed with a host of thrilling oversized objects, like building bricks, tubes and cubes. Children can climb, jump, push and play hide-and-seek.

Even the butterflies in this magic garden are more like the fabled Roc, with 4ft to 5ft multi-coloured wings—and all flying merrily around a 30ft flower.

On the border of the garden there is a restaurant, and an ice-cream shop (in an upturned flower-pot) with lots of "outdoor" flower-shaped tables, where visitors may sit and contemplate this incredible wonderland.

Project manager for the Festival Gardens, Mr. Mark Mitchelmore explained that the idea for The Magic Garden



The popular Blue Peter Dragon will be disgorging thousands more excited youngsters this year.

began to form last January.

A team from Leisure Recreation Management, co-ordinated the festival for Merseyside Development Corporation, suggested the giant garden theme and began to work on it.

"We thought that the festival gardens should include a theme-park

and that a spectacular effect could be created by reversing the scale of its contents to make it a great fun product, lively and active, and one in which children could enjoy playing and where parents and guardians could also enjoy watching them," he said.

"There are many park themes in the country,

but certainly there is nothing like this one!" Designer of The Magic Garden is Tim Goodchild, the internationally-known theatre designer. The construction was master-minded by Norwest Holst.

Landscape architects are Brock Carmichael Associates



Dinosaurs still roam the earth—at the Festival Gardens, anyway, much to the youngsters' delight.

So much to remember from last year's show

Continued from Page One

ing administrator, Mr. David Morris.

"We have had a terrific response to these—principally from senior citizens, who, last year, visited the site for the entertainment time and again.

"A person has to make only six visits to the festival and the cost of the season ticket is covered. And many people visited

last year's festival far more times than that!

"Elderly people bring along their flasks and sandwiches and feel safe in the security afforded on the site," he said.

All the general facilities on the site last year will be available again, including the wheelchairs. These are free but it is advisable to book beforehand.

Day-ticket visitors leaving the Festival Gardens will not be permitted to re-enter. Those with season-tickets, of course, may do so.

The International Garden Festival will not be staged in Liverpool again but national garden festivals will be held elsewhere in the country, like that at Stoke-on-Trent, this year.

Because the International show was a one-off event, it was intended that, when the

I.G.F. finished, part of the land would be used for industry, part for housing and part would remain as a riverside, landscaped area and a permanent amenity within the city.

Even so, the public could not have expected that such a high proportion of the site (80 per cent) would have been retained. So, most Merseysiders and others who visited the festival last year will be delighted that so many of the features they enjoyed are still present.

These include the Festival Hall, the Arena, the Japanese, Chinese, Indian and American Gardens, the lake and other water features.

Children's favourites, like the Blue Peter Dragon and the Yellow Submarine

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Tel: 051-709 3330.

Festival Gardens

Grand parade

A GRAND parade is being planned for the opening of the Festival Gardens, on Thursday morning, and the general public is invited to take part.

This will take the form of a long and lively musical procession, starting at the Herculeanum entrance to the site.

At 11 a.m., Merlin the Wizard will open the gates, amid thunder flashes and clouds of coloured smoke, to lead the procession into the grounds like the Pied Piper.

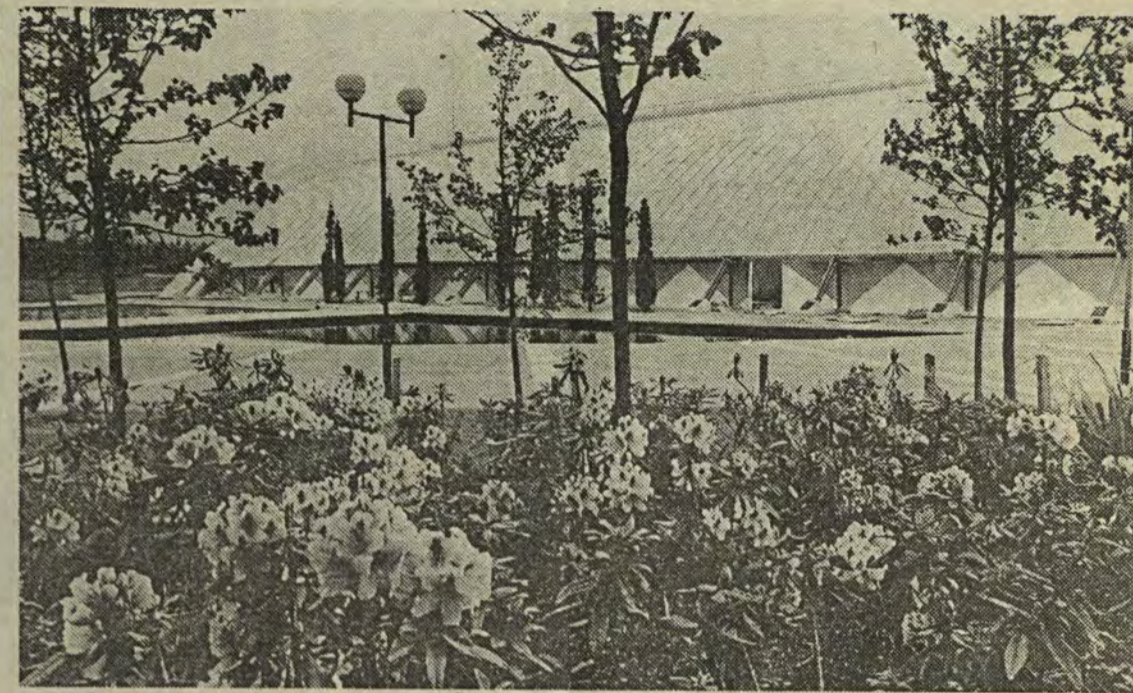
"We hope that members of the public will come along about 10.45 a.m. to join in the procession," say the organisers.

"All those who turn up in fancy-dress, of any sort, will be allowed in free of charge."

Enlivening the big parade will be clowns, a juggler, vintage cars, dancers, still-walkers, a unicyclist, a marching jazz band, a theatre company and Echo Ted.

Also in the parade will be 60 children, in fancy-dress, from St. Michael's Primary School, and 80 young artists from the Elliott Clarke College of Dance and Drama, dressed in various national costumes.

The exciting Marlboro aerobic team will be flying overhead.



The great Festival Hall remains as the hub of the site.

Team spirit of many nations

LATE IN 1981, Merseyside Development Corporation undertook the daunting task of organising the reclamation of 250 acres of derelict and polluted land between Otterspool and the Dingle.

And one of the greatest landscaping and botanical achievements since the Hanging Gardens of Babylon was created on this site.

Cheek by jowl with the city and airport, in only two and a half years, was constructed a garden centre that became Britain's top tourist attraction—the International Garden Festival.

This great work was symbolic of the fine achievements which can be wrought by nations working as a team.

East and West—the twin rivers did meet here at Liverpool.

Together they wove a brilliant and colourful tapestry of artistically landscaped gardens and waterways and seas of glorious blooms, to fashion one of the wonders of the modern world.

Sadly, some of this great landscaping and botanical achievements had to be unpicked—the gardens of Belgium, Egypt, Greece, Spain and Australia have gone to make room for further housing.

Housing development is also taking place in and adjoining the Home and Garden area.

But 31 of the I.G.F.'s original gardens are still incorporated.

The fascinating little masterpiece, the Model Forest, with its thousand of tiny living trees, has been dismantled. So, too, have the Disabled Persons' Garden, the Ceramic Gar-

den, Gardening for Everyone, and the Staffordshire, Cheshire and Stoke-on-Trent Gardens.

Many of these garden exhibits were leased.

The miniature railway is no longer there. The 45-acre hub of the site, however, which includes the £2.6 million, 80,000 square-foot Festival Hall, the Arena, the Japanese, Chinese, Indian and American Gardens, the lake and some other water features, are being kept as permanent landscaped parkland.

And (this year, at least) the public still will be able to enjoy many of the other gardens and features in the Domestic Theme Gardens and the remainder of the International Gardens not required for immediate redevelopment.



There'll be plenty of "oos" from youngsters boarding this high-perched ship.



A mighty toadstool makes an exciting shelter for Suzanne Byrne, aged five, and Caroline Garnett, aged six, in the Magic Garden.

Two main entrances

THE Festival Gardens are quite easy to reach, from whichever direction visitors come.

Free space is available for 6,000 cars and for 500 coaches.

Car-parks are situated at both ends of the site at the Britannia

entrance (via the Dock Road and Herculeanum), and at Fulwood entrance (via Aigburth Road and Jericho Lane).

There are two main entrances to the gardens—the Britannia Inn, on the promenade and accessible from Herculeanum) and Fulwood (adjacent to the show houses, at the Aigburth end of the site).

The latter entrance may be reached by car along the now-public roadway leading from the bottom of Jericho Lane, Aigburth, and from Priory Wood (pedestrians only) at the end of St. Michael's Road, off Aigburth Road.

Priory Wood serves

visitors arriving by bus on Aigburth Road and also those coming by train to St. Michael's Station.

A regular 20-minute bus shuttle-service (No. 401) between the city centre and the Festival Gardens will be operating.

Subject to weather and tidal conditions, a ferry service will operate from Liverpool Pier Head and Woodside, Birkenhead, at weekends only and during school summer holidays, to the promenade alongside the Gardens.

The ferry trips proved to be extremely popular last year and intending passengers should inquire about sailing times by phoning (051) 630-1030.



This fascinating cascade may be found in the Japanese Garden.

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Festival Gardens

Over 1,000 performers ready to entertain



Jacquie and Bridie—the ever-popular Liverpool duo, famous for their "Scouse" songs.



The Medieval Street Band... musicians of old producing a relatively-new sound.

WITH more than 1,000 performers booked over its 16-week season, Liverpool's Festival Gardens promises to be Britain's biggest and brightest entertainment centre.

An incredible variety of acts are lining up, with international, national and local events ranging from the University of the Philippines Chorus (the visitors from farthest afield), to St. Michael's G.P. School, only a stone's throw from the festival site.

Bands of all descriptions, dancers, singers, clowns, jugglers, puppets, musicians, competitions and contests (including haggis-throwing), fire-eating, folk-music, tightrope-walking, thrilling aerial and parachuting displays, and more, will all add up to a giant package of jollity and interest.

"We are working on a programme which will provide events from about noon up to the 7 p.m. closure for every day of the festival," said deputy events manager Mr. Andrew Bennett.

"This is going to be a marvellous centre, particularly for family outings, and we think that, in addition to the beautiful gardens here, the events themselves will prove a great attraction... and wonderful value for money."

One of the highlights will be the longest-running festival of street-theatre in the country, with acts ranging from a single clown to a performing theatre company.

The festival will be one of constant surprises, too, with acts being performed in all parts of the ground.

Musicians will be strolling about the grounds and a visitor could simply be admiring a bed of roses when a fire-eating or juggler suddenly appears," said Mr. Bennett.

"Nobody will be sure of what is happening around the corner!"

Many events will be staged in the Amphitheatre and, although the site's largest theatre, the Arena, is now roofless, this also will be used extensively in fine weather.

"Venues for performances on the site will be flexible," said Mr. Bennett.

"We know, for example, that the Haifa Youth Orchestra will draw a big crowd and hope that we shall be able to accommodate them in the larger Arena Theatre."

"However, if the weather is inclement, they will appear in the Amphitheatre."



One of the famous Marlboro Aerobatic Team makes smoke over a familiar Merseyside scene



The Liverpool Ladies' Barbershop Singers will be "on song" again at this year's festival.



Harvey and the Wallbangers.

Festival Gardens

This year's shows still have an international flavour

THE INTERNATIONAL flavour of last year's world-famous festival is still being preserved in a smaller measure at this year's show.

In addition to the many attractive foreign gardens retained, the general entertainers' programme also includes some international events, with items from the United States, Canada, the Philippines, West Germany and Israel.

Performers are being brought from Texas and Tranmere — and most places in between," said a spokesman for the organisers, the Albert Dock Company.

A programme of continuous events from 12

noon onwards will be held every day.

Certain weeks will have special themes, like National Dance Week, Medieval Week and Folk Week, and there will be a three-day Jazz Festival.

Some of the days also will have theme programmes, like Health Day, Brass Band Day, Gospel Music Day, and even a day called Women Entertain — mime, song, dance and theatre performers.

Resident artists will include: The Risible Street Circus, with stilt-walking, unicycles and circus skills, and The Great Cabbage Cabaret, with strolling musi-

cians, clowning, magic — and assorted vegetables!

Codman's Punch and Judy Theatre established almost as part of Liverpool itself!

A Dutch Organ, with melodies of yesteryear, and Merseyside Young People's Theatre, specially commissioned to engross youngsters of all ages.

The open-air Natural Theatre Company will be returning — and a special Youth Theatre Festival will take place in three sections over the festival season.

That established Merseyside duo, Jacqui and Bridie, specialising in local folk songs and humour, are back.

Rachel Laurence and friends have concocted Tea and Muffins to delight their audiences; Albert The Idiot (and Henrietta, his car) will bring music, magic and mayhem, and some of the days could be interrupted by John Sampson, the crazy Scottish whistle-player, popping up anywhere.



Eccentric city slicker Tim Bat in a pose from his businessman burlesque show.



Cathy Hunt, events manager for the Festival site, and Mark Sterry-Blunt, maintenance duty manager.

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Room For Talent

THERE is still room for more good local talent at the Festival Gardens this season.

Those who think that they have presentable acts, either as individuals or as groups, whatever these may be, should ring Cathy Hunter, the festival events manager, on 051-727 0227.

"We shall pay reasonable expenses but cannot guarantee bookings," says the organisers.

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Popular folk singer Bob Buckle.



Professor Ronald Codman and his Punch and Judy Show... "part of Liverpool"

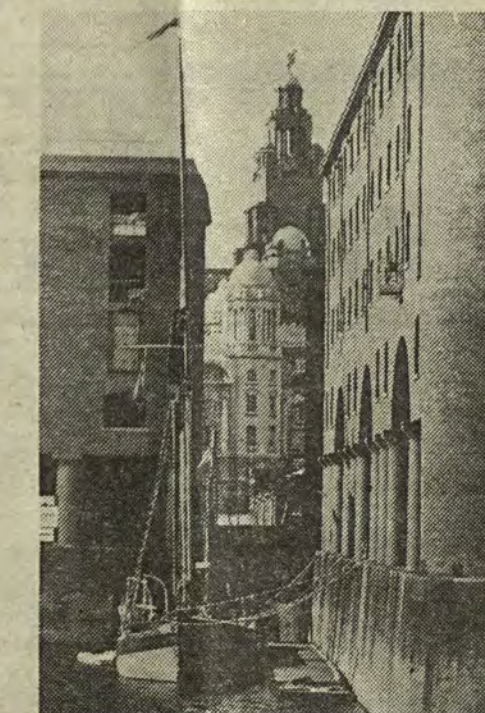


No mean entertainer, goggle-eyed J. J. Waller is a fire-eater, juggler and escapologist.

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Festival Gardens

Security chief loves poetry and parachutes

PARACHUTING and poetry might seem to be a strange mixture in the top man responsible for the security of the festival site.

But the long experience and expertise of Keith Gardner, the Festival Gardens security liaison officer, is ensuring that Liverpool's greatest attraction remains one of the best maintained and trouble-free public areas.

Keith, aged 52, married with four children and two grandchildren, arrived on the site in March, 1983, as security liaison officer with the main contractor, who shaped the wilderness that was to become an international beauty spot.

Keith's word also was the passport for the use of "courtesy" cars in

conveying celebrities, and for all passes issued.

His excellent record and long experience of security, including 10 years in the fire service and many years working abroad for famous international companies, has resulted in the successive bodies controlling the festival site.

As a former parachutist with the 16th Airborne Division, who saw service at Suez, Keith set up the radio-communication system for the security of the festival site.

"Vandalism was rife in the early days, until we became organised and then, in liaison with Neptune Security and Alsatian dog patrols, incidents dropped dramatically," he said.

"During the whole of the festival there were

hardly any serious incidents of crime."

Keith believes that this happy state, paradoxically, was considerably aided by the vast crowds in daily attendance.

"Vandals and thieves cannot operate with thousands of eyes watching them," he said.

Vigil and verse

A CAREER that has involved many quiet, long night vigils, in which he has had the opportunity to martial his thoughts, has enabled Keith Gardner to compose poems.

One of these, broadcast to the nation at the time of the I.G.F.'s closure, is "Remembering".

This, supposedly, is related by the Spirit of the Festival and verses of nostalgia sum up the event as most will remember it.

Here are the last two verses:
"In years to come, when you look back,
You'll find to your surprise,
Remembering my glorious past
It's then you'll realise.

It wasn't just a Festival
We made — Yes, you and me.
Oh! no, my friend, 'twas much, much more,
Friend, we made history!"

Riverside dream coming true

THE LIVERPOOL citizens' dream for many years — a riverside walk from Garston to the Dingle — is becoming reality at last...

The opening shortly of the new Marine Esplanade (formerly part of the International Garden Festival) as a continuation of Otterspool Promenade, will give a big boost to the city's attraction.

It will permit nearly a three-mile walkway alongside the Mersey,

flanked by grassland, gardens and the festival site, to provide Liverpool with a resort-like amenity unrivalled by any other city in the country.

Otterspool Prom already is an established summertime picnic and play area, with its delightful park close by. The promenade also is used by strollers and joggers every day of the year.

Another bonus the extension will bring is

that, with the shrinkage of the original I.G.F. site, to provide Liverpool with a large tract of open land between Otterspool Prom and the new Festival Gardens boundary will become available for leisure and recreation.

The esplanade is no longer part of the Festival Gardens but runs alongside its riverside boundary and access to the gardens on this side is by way of the entrance close to the Britannia Inn.

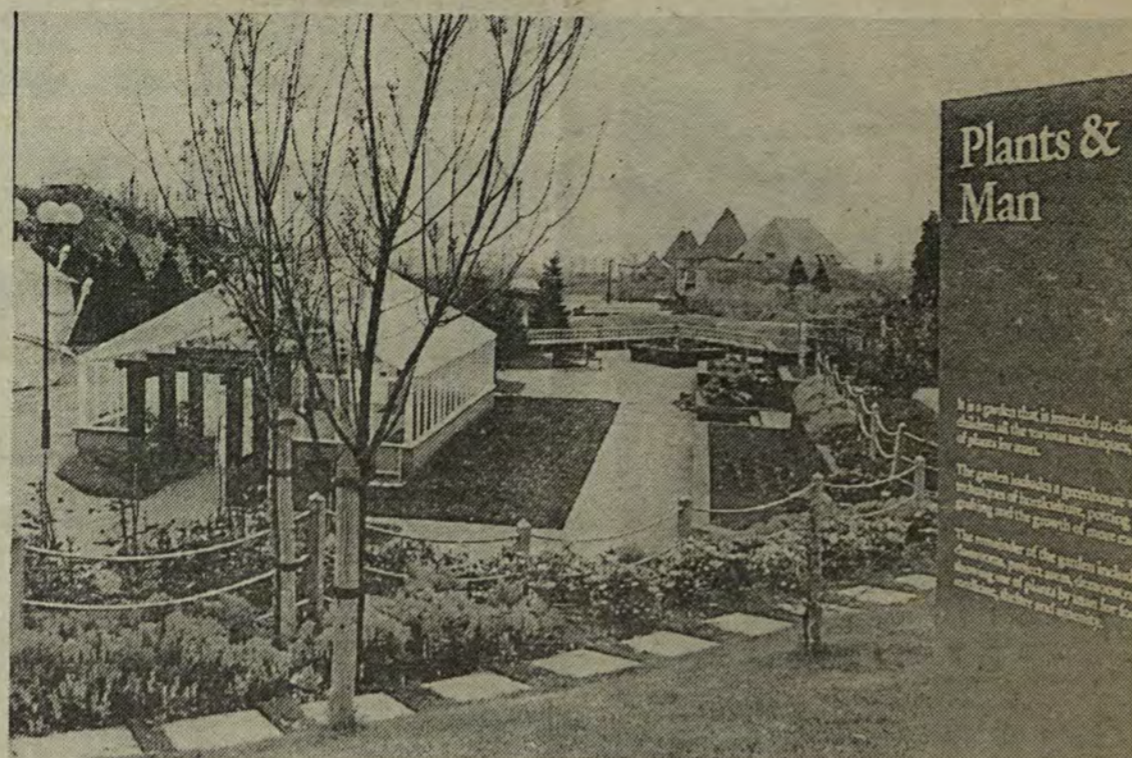
For those who might feel thirsty after long prom walks, the Britannia Inn, which became so popular when it was situated within the I.G.F. grounds last year, is now a permanent pub.

* A pre-war hope that, one day, there will be a public riverside walk from Hale to the Pier Head has yet to be realised!

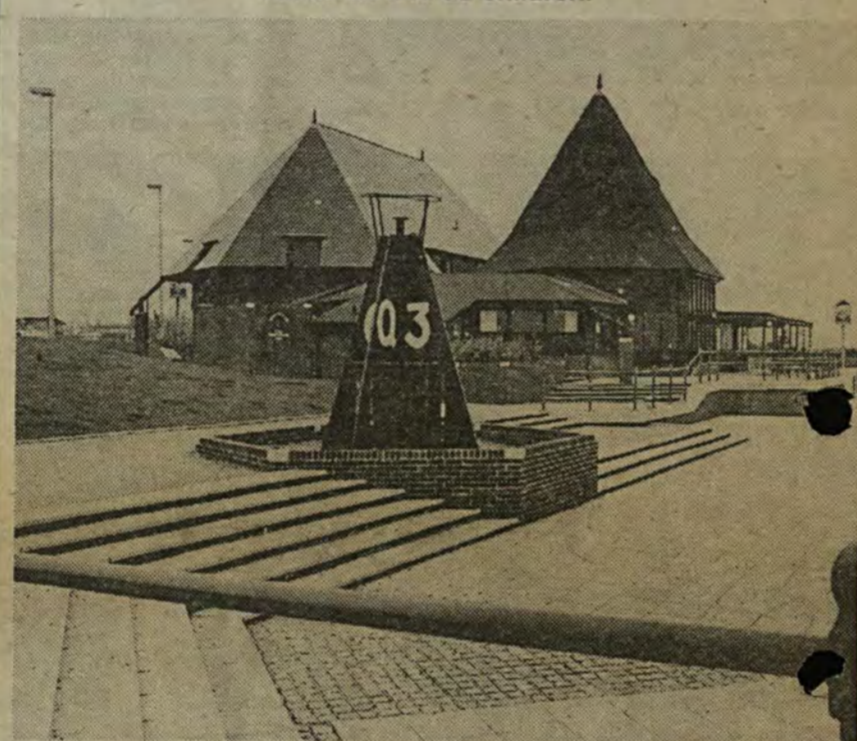
HOTLINE

THE Festival Gardens site has its own "hotline" for general information.

For up-to-the-minute reports on what is happening and when, potential visitors should phone (051) 277 8000.



Plants and Man—the educational garden which has much to offer adults as well as children.



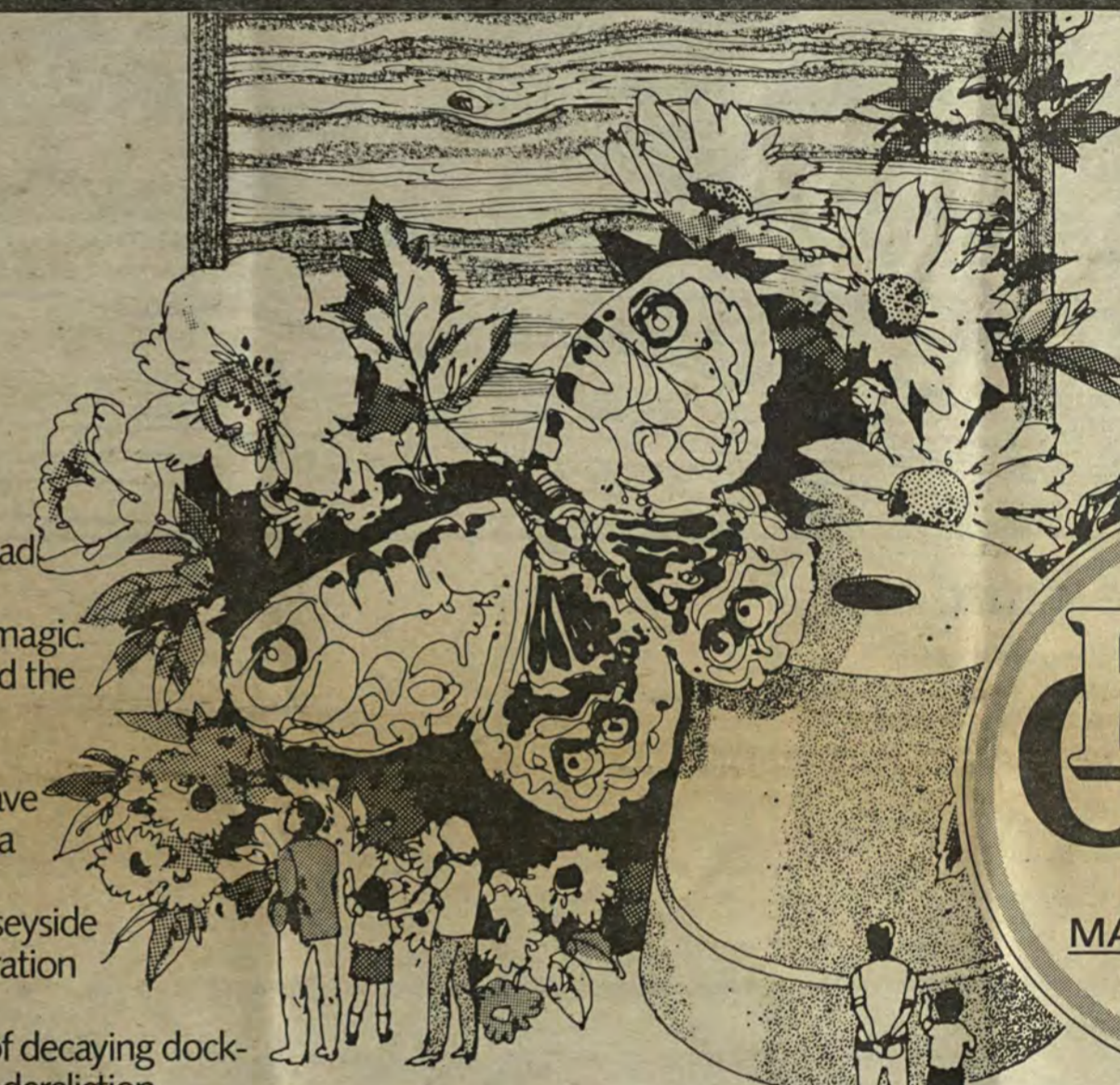
The riverside Britannia Inn is still a big "extra-mural" attraction.



The Turkish Garden will delight many people again this season.

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Mary Poppins had the right idea.

A little word of magic. Snap your fingers. And the job's well done.

But even Mary Poppins might not have been able to take on a job as big as the one inherited by the Merseyside Development Corporation in 1981.

Mile after mile of decaying docklands — near hopeless dereliction.

But something very magical did happen.

A vast riverside rubbish tip became a parkland paradise — and the setting for the International Garden Festival of 1984.

Albert Dock, Britain's largest Grade 1 listed building, crumbling alongside silt filled dock basins — came alive.

In fact there's magic at work all along the Development Corporation's Mersey waterfront.

This year, for example, much of the International Garden

Festival site will again be open to the public — as a fabulous leisure park — 'Festival Gardens'.

A wonderland of fun, flowers and family entertainment, the 'Festival Gardens' have retained most of the spectacular gardens and features that proved such a success in 1984. And like last year, once inside, the full programme

*Adults £2.00, OAP's/Children £1.00. All entertainments on site are free.

FESTIVAL GARDENS

LIVERPOOL
MAY 23rd — SEPT 8th

OPEN EVERY DAY
11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

of events is free.*

And this year there's a special kind of magic — the 'Magic Garden'. Filling most of the Festival Hall, the 'Magic Garden' is where everything — flowers, insects, even the garden tools and toys — have grown and tower above your head.

See for yourself the magic the Merseyside Development Corporation is working on Merseyside. Mary Poppins had a word for it...

MDC Merseyside Development Corporation

Royal Liver Building, Liverpool L3 1JH. Telephone: 051-236 6090.

THERE'S MAGIC ON MERSEYSIDE

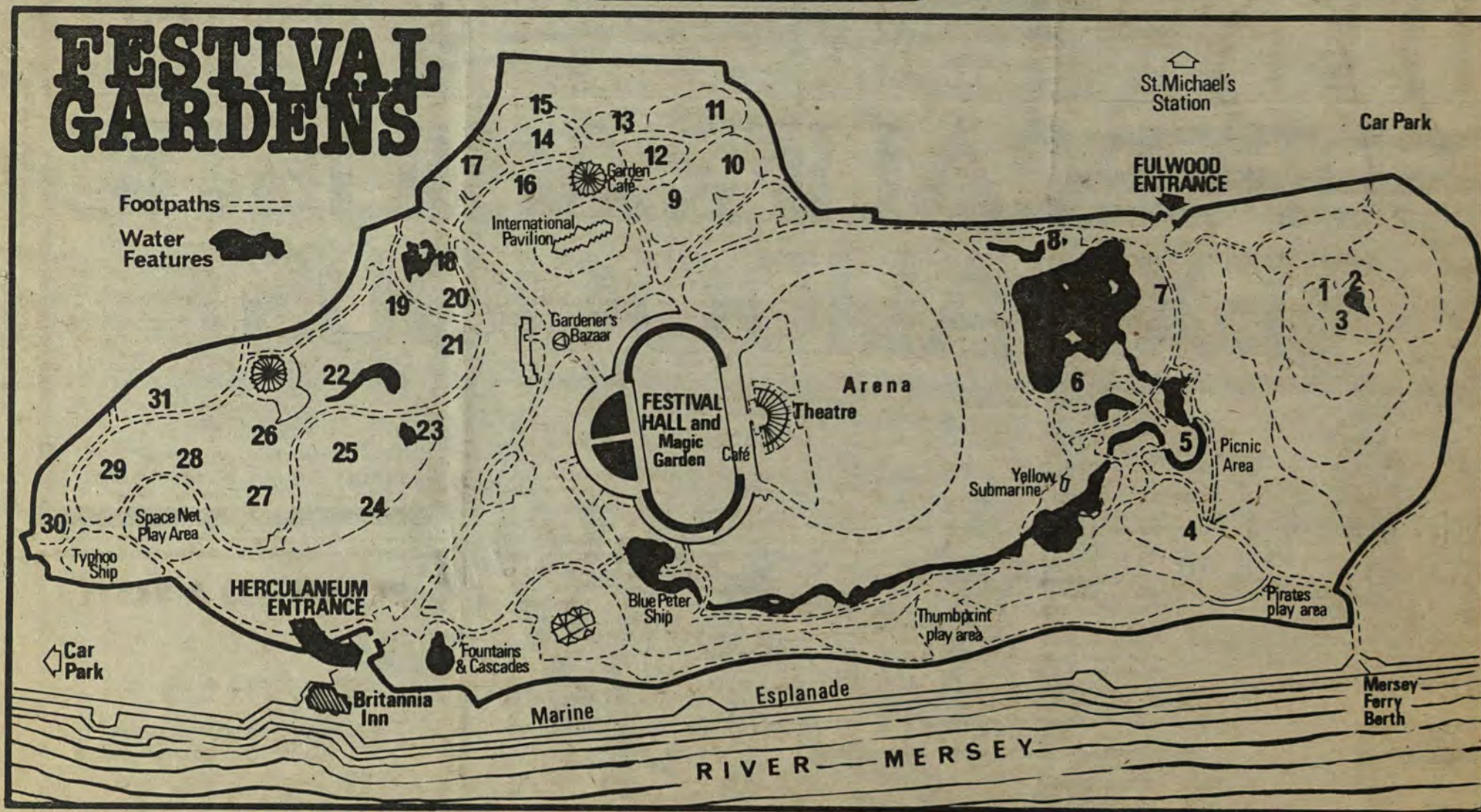
INTERNATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL SALE!
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 Large quantity of nearly new office furniture and machines, surplus from last year's festival.
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Preem 19/1616

Festival Gardens



Key to theme gardens

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Nature Garden | 17 Canadian Rockies |
| 2 Wild Garden | 18 Scottish Garden |
| 3 Wild Plants We Use | 19 Plantsman's Corner |
| 4 Indian Garden | 20 Grass Garden |
| 5 Cologne Garden | 21 Land Treatment Maze |
| 6 Chinese Garden | 22 Rock Garden |
| 7 American Garden | 23 Water Margin |
| 8 Japanese Garden | 24 Woodland Garden |
| 9 Patio Garden | 26 Garden of Hope |
| 10 Classical Garden | 27 Rose Garden |
| 11 Town Garden | 28 Alpine Garden |
| 12 German Garden | 29 Heather and Conifer Garden |
| 13 Turkish Garden | 30 Promenade Garden |
| 14 Courtyard Garden | 31 Nursery Garden |
| 15 Mediterranean Garden | |
| 16 British Garden | |



One of the Echo-sponsored "Adventurers' Camps" by the riverside.

OPENING HOURS

THE FESTIVAL Gardens will be open from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. each day and the last tickets sold at 6 p.m.

Last year, the I.G.F. opened at 10 a.m. every day and, in June and July, closed at 9 p.m.

Economy is the reason for the shorter hours of opening, said Mr. David Morse, financial director, Merseyside Development Corporation.

"We recognise that people would like the gardens to be kept open later but we are anxious to keep running costs and administration costs down.

"It is also a rather different event this year. We are not expecting the same numbers of visitors as last year. And admission charges are less."



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