

Leith Flag now flying high



Alex Wilson is a local historian who has worked hard over the last two years to restore the Leith flag to the city, and he was excited to attend the formal event this morning when the letters patent were officially handed over to the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership.

After years of gathering the evidence required by the Lord Lyon, the Letters Patent which are required to issue the flag have been formally released to the Neighbourhood Partnership.

The historian had very much hoped that the flag would be released in time for the Leith Pageant in June, but unfortunately that was just not possible. It seems that things move slowly in the world of heraldry and every box must of course be ticked to ensure the provenance of any claim.

Part of the work to obtain the rights to the coat of arms was directed by former Deputy Lord Provost Rob Munn who was also present at the ceremony today. Following the bestowal by Mrs Elizabeth Rhodes from the Court of the Lord Lyon, the Sea Cadets helped fold the flag properly and it was then taken to roof of Leith Library where it is now flying. Mackenzie & Millar transported Mrs Rhodes with the Letters Patent to the Leith Library this morning in a very fancy chauffeur driven car as their contribution to this big Leith Community event.

The history of the flag is a very old one.

Alex explained:-“For more than 770 years, this flag flew proudly over the town of Leith. It was such an iconic image that it was selected to become the Coat of Arms of Leith in 1833 when Leith achieved Burgh status. It was at this time that the legend ‘Persevere’ first appeared to be added to the cartouche along with the Latin inscription Sigillum Oppidi de

Leith, the Emblem of the Port of Leith.

“As the rights to the flag/Coat of Arms could only be awarded by the office of the Lord Lyon to a Leith-wide organisation it was the decision by the Deputy Lord Provost, Rob Munn, who was very helpful in moving the flag forward while in office, that it should be the Neighborhood Partnership that should receive this, once granted.”

Alex is hopeful that the principal idea to have the flag flying from as many buildings in Leith as possible will now be fulfilled

We spoke to him and some of the others attending the ceremony today to find out more about how the process unfolded and what it means in the future:-

[listen to 'Bestowal of Leith Coat of Arms' on Audioboo](#)

And we took some photos of the event too:-