

Southport Visiter 16/5/08 & 23/5/08

Southport hosts the 2008 British Esperanto Congress

by Staff Reporter, Southport Visiter

SOUTHPORT welcomed visitors from eleven different countries as host of the British Esperanto Congress 2008.

Held at the Prince of Wales Hotel, delegates from as far as New Zealand were joined by guests including Dr John Pugh MP and Professor John Wells from the Department of Phonetics and Linguistics of University College London.

Former Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Richard Hands and Mrs Katy Hibbert, also attended as one of their last official engagements.

The Mayoress declared the opening of the event, addressing the delegates in Esperanto, much to their delight.

Esperanto is the most widely spoken constructed language internationally, and the North West Federation of Esperanto celebrated its centenary this year.

The South Lancashire Esperanto Group was specifically selected to hold the Congress, being particularly proactive in their promotion of the language.

Lectures, presentations and social events were held throughout the weekend, making the Congress a great success.

Professor John Wells praised the event, telling group secretary Jim Voietls it was "one of the best congresses he had ever been to".

Visitors were blessed with fine weather over the weekend, and were encouraged to explore Southport during their free time.

Mr Voietls is confident that many wanted to return to Southport "on a more social basis" and praised the Tourist Information Centre in particular for their support.

Several beginners also attended the Congress.

Esperanto fun

SOUTHPORT'S Prince of Wales Hotel hosted 2008's National Esperanto Congress last Saturday.

It is the fifth time the event has taken place here.

A well-known face at the opening ceremony was he one of Europe's most established Esperanto-speakers an ex-Southport resident Dr Paul Gubbins.



● Dr John Pugh MP addressing the delegates, alongside the Mayor and Mayoress of Sefton, Professor John Wells and Ian MacDowall

Code NA

Esperanto speakers are talk of the town

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The 'Find Out About Esperanto' groups proved very popular, demonstrating the ease with which anyone can pick up the language.