



RELEASE

7.01.08

The Greasy Pole returns to Egremont Market Square

A new public sculpture by Alan Kane and Jeremy Deller

Launch 19 January 12 noon

Egremont's new Greasy Pole sculpture in place at its permanent site in the Market Place of the West Cumbrian town of Egremont will be officially opened on the 19 January 2008 at 12 noon.

Present at the launch ceremony will be, Jamie Reed MP, the artists Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane and the Worshipful the Mayor of Copeland, Cllr Anne Faichney, leading the proceedings.

The pole will be climbed during the event after which the pole's decorative collar will be raised. The collar is designed to prevent attempts to scale the pole outside organised events such as the Crab Fair but also when needed hold the pole climbing prize at the Crab Fair and be raised to the top of the pole allowing climbing to happen...

The new Pole is constructed of advanced and low maintenance materials with the main structure fabricated in carbon fibre by the racing yacht mast manufacturer Formula Spars.

Greasy Mutton Pole climbing in the town has a long tradition bound up with the annual Egremont Crab Fair. This commission will bring the Pole back as a permanent feature in the town's Market Place, operating as contemporary work of art, heritage artefact, iconic landmark and sporting apparatus to be used at the Crab Fair.

The Greasy Pole is a public art commission for Egremont Regeneration Partnership. This work is the first public sculpture by Alan Kane and Jeremy Deller and comes out of a long-standing relationship between the artists and the Town of Egremont. As a result of their research and contact with Egremont's Crab Fair organisers they proposed the return of the Greasy Pole as a regular event and central feature of the town.

The Greasy Pole project has been co-ordinated by Grizedale Arts with the generous support of The Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership, West Lakes Renaissance, Lord Egremont, Copeland Borough Council, The Henry Moore Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Egremont Town Council and Arts Council England.

Rob Merrett of the Crab Fair Archive said "We are delighted; not just because we desperately wanted the Pole back, but also because it was important to get in training for the 2012 Olympics, when we hope to feel the full benefit of the Cultural Olympiad. Even up here."

- ends -

Notes to Editors:

A history of the Greasy Pole

Egremont's Crab Fair was first held in 1267, when King Henry III granted a Royal Charter to Thomas de Multon. Originally a harvest festival (the name referring to the local crab apples) it has evolved over the centuries as a showcase for local cultures and traditional country sports.

The start of the Crab Fair was until recently been marked with the erection of the Greasy Mutton Pole "at the fish stone by the Market Cross". The pole was thirty foot tall and greased with lard and the objective was to climb to the top and retrieve a prize, originally a top hat.

In line with other Crab Fair prizes this item was of high value and highly covetable. The winner, normally an agile youth, would have paraded around the town wearing this rare and valuable prize. In 1852 the hat became a side of mutton which, if not won by the end of the day, was cut up and divided amongst the poor. In latter years, ribbons were also attached to the pole, which could be grabbed from lower levels and exchanged for gifts in the town.

In 2003 the Greasy Pole stopped because public liability insurance could not be found, particularly for climbing such an unstable temporary structure. Not only was the Pole badly missed, but the festival was depleted of an important and iconic asset.

The Artists

Alan Kane and Jeremy Deller have become known for public projects and exhibitions which promote a more open view of culture, often mixing traditional cultures with contemporary life.

Their recent work with their *Folk Archive* project profiled the folk and popular culture of the British Isles as something as vital and important as the work presented in our museums and galleries. The research for the Folk Archive drew heavily on Egremont's Crab Fair and their relationship with the organisers and participants led to them proposing this solution to return the Greasy Pole as a regular event and central feature of the town.



The new greasy pole was part of the Creative Egremont public art strategy, was promoted by Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership and Grizedale Arts. This project is part of an ambitious regeneration strategy for Egremont and is funded by West Lakes Renaissance and Arts Council England.

Links:

www.virtualegremont.co.uk

www.grizedale.org/

www.creative-egremont.org/

www.mini-host.org/folkarchive/

www.egremontcrabfair.org.uk/
www.visitegremont.co.uk/

West Lakes Renaissance

West Lakes Renaissance is leading the regeneration of Furness and West Cumbria. We are:

- Investing £200 million in Furness and West Cumbria over the next 10 years to stimulate economic growth and create 5,000 new jobs
- Co-ordinating regeneration activity across an 80 mile long area in order to attract private sector investment
- Creating a knowledge-based economy based on new skills and business growth

For more information on West Lakes Renaissance visit www.westlakesrenaissance.co.uk

West Lakes Renaissance is supported by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), which leads the economic development and regeneration of England's Northwest and is responsible for: Supporting business growth and encouraging investment; Matching skills provision to employer needs; Creating the conditions for economic growth; Connecting the region through effective transport and communication infrastructure; Promoting the region's outstanding quality of life. www.nwda.co.uk

Cumbria County Council is a founding partner of and the accountable body for West Lakes Renaissance. www.cumbria.gov.uk

Press contact:

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Egremont & Area Regeneration Partnership Ltd
80 Main Street, Egremont, Copeland, Cumbria, CA22 2DJ



Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane's New Greasy Pole

On behalf of everyone involved in commissioning this new public sculpture for Egremont, we would like to invite you to celebrate its placement in the Market Place.

There will be a ceremony led by The Worshipful the Mayor of Copeland, Cllr Anne Faichney, Jamie Reid MP and the artists, in the Market Place on:

19th January 2008 starting at Midday (12pm)

Followed by refreshments in the Parish Hall of St Mary and St Michael's Church.

Please let us know if you can join us by replying to this email or phoning the Egremont and Area Regeneration Office on 01946 825546.



Grizedale Arts
The Henry Moore Foundation

Grizedale Arts/Creative Egremont/Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership

The Greasy Pole

A public sculpture by Alan Kane and Jeremy Deller



The Greasy Pole is a public art commission for the West Cumbrian town of Egremont. This work is the first public sculpture by Alan Kane and Jeremy Deller and comes out of a long-standing relationship between the artists and town.

The aim is to bring back the town's historic Greasy Pole event by creating a new Pole in the centre of the town. This event was held for centuries within the Egremont Crab Fair but stopped in 2003 when public liability insurance could not be found. This commission will bring the Pole back as a permanent feature in the town's Market Place, operating as contemporary work of art, heritage artefact, iconic landmark and dangerous sporting apparatus.

Alan Kane and Jeremy Deller have become known for public projects and exhibitions which promote a more open view of culture, often mixing traditional cultures with contemporary life.

Their recent work with their *Folk Archive* project profiled the folk and popular culture of the British Isles as something as vital and important as the work presented in our museums and galleries. The research for the Folk Archive drew heavily on Egremont's Crab Fair and their relationship with the organisers and participants led to them proposing this solution to return the Greasy Pole as a regular event and central feature of the town.

A quick history of the Greasy Pole

Egremont's Crab Fair was first held in 1267, when King Henry III granted a Royal Charter to Thomas de Multon. Originally a harvest festival (the name referring to the local crab apples) it has evolved over the centuries as a showcase for local cultures and traditional country sports.

The start of the Crab Fair was until recently been marked with the erection of the *Greasy Mutton Pole* "at the fish stone by the Market Cross". The pole was thirty foot tall and greased with lard and the objective was to climb to the top and retrieve a prize, originally a top hat.

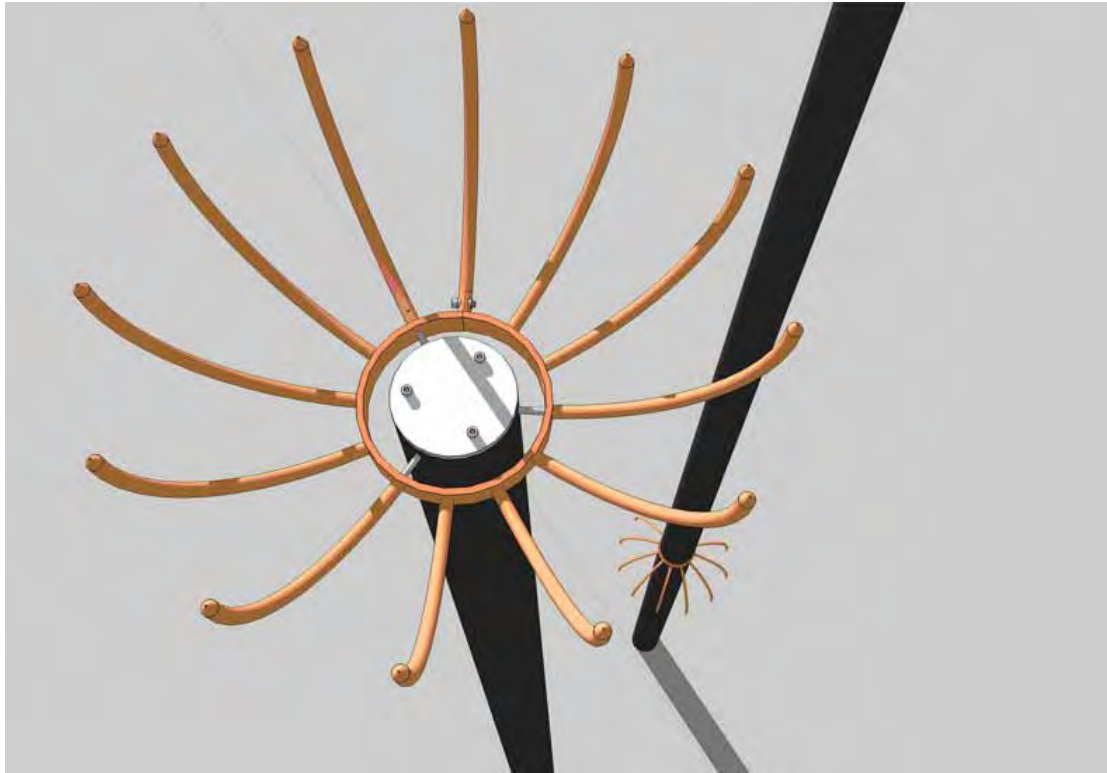
In line with other Crab Fair prizes this item was of high value and highly covetable. The winner, normally an agile youth, would have paraded around the town wearing this rare and valuable prize. In 1852 the hat became a side of mutton which, if not won by the end of the day, was cut up and divided amongst the poor. In latter years, ribbons were also attached to the pole, which could be grabbed from lower levels and exchanged for gifts in the town.



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The New Greasy Pole

In 2004 the artists developed an idea to bring the Pole back as a permanent feature using the latest materials - a Pole for the 21st Century.



The new Pole is constructed of advanced and low maintenance materials with the main structure fabricated in carbon fibre by the racing yacht mast manufacturer Formula Spars.

The new pole has the addition of a decorative collar which prevents the structure from being climbed outside the Crab Fair, yet can be ritually raised to its top at the start of Crab Fair week, in order to hold the prize.

The Pole has been designed to be located in a site currently occupied by a redundant tree guard in the centre of the market place and the centre of the town, with vistas from the approach roads and the wide Georgian Main Street.



The Greasy Pole will mark the centre of the town with both a contemporary work of art and a historic icon, which will once again be the focus of Egremont's lively and boisterous folk culture.

This project has been co-ordinated by Grizedale Arts with the generous support of The Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership, West Lakes Renaissance, Lord Egremont, Copeland Borough Council, The Henry Moore Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Egremont Town Council and Arts Council England.