

The History of Advertising Trust Ghostsigns Archive



Advertisements painted by hand directly onto the brickwork of buildings were once a common sight in cities, towns and villages across the country. The rise of printed billboards soon led to their decline but many still survive, often faded, clinging to the walls that host them. These 'Ghostsigns' provide a window into the past and evidence of the craftsmanship that once went into their production. However, they are disappearing fast, often due to weathering but also as a result of property development and demolition.

For the last year a nationwide effort has been underway to photograph, research and archive the last survivors of this fading advertising medium. The results of this work are now available via a series of online galleries hosted by The History of Advertising Trust, a charity committed to the preservation of our advertising heritage through its extensive collections and educational work.

Over 600 examples have been documented for this archive, touting many different products and services, some familiar, some less so. Alongside advertisements for Hovis, Nestle and Boots are others for Bile Beans, Puck Matches and Peterkin's Custard. The collections also showcase the styles and techniques employed by the craftsmen responsible for producing the signs. The diversity of lettering forms and illustration highlight the skill and flair that each signwriter once brought to their work, in contrast to the 'carbon copy' posters of today.

The History of Advertising Trust Ghostsigns Archive is available online from 19th March 2010 at www.hatads.org.uk or via www.ghostsigns.co.uk/archive. The History of Advertising Trust thank Rank Hovis for their generous sponsorship of the archive.

Images for Press

The following pages feature quotes and images which are available for use in articles about the archive. Please reference the photograph code indicated for any required.

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Said Barry Cox, Chief Executive, The History of Advertising Trust:

"This archive brings together a unique collection of material which has, until now, been overlooked in many accounts of the history of advertising in this country. It complements our existing collections and adds to the stories of the brands and companies that once used this most eye-catching form of outdoor advertising. By making this collection available via our online gallery we are also supporting the aim of ensuring our resources are accessible for study and research to the greatest number of people at the lowest possible cost."

Said Sam Roberts, Project Manager, Ghostsigns Archive:

"The archive has been made possible by the collective efforts of photographers across the country offering their work as charitable gifts to The History of Advertising Trust (HAT). This nationwide effort has resulted in a collection that showcases the art and craft that once went into producing these hand painted signs. This would otherwise have been lost as many photographs capture examples that no longer exist and their number will only increase over time. I would like to thank all the photographers involved for their generosity, HAT for supporting the project idea, and Rank Hovis for providing the necessary sponsorship to make it happen."

Said Sara Reid, Marketing Manager, Rank Hovis:

"Rank Hovis are delighted to be involved as our support has enabled these 'lost treasures' of advertising to be captured and celebrated. We are also grateful for all the time and energy given by the team led by Sam Roberts to bring this collection together."



Registered charity
No: 276194



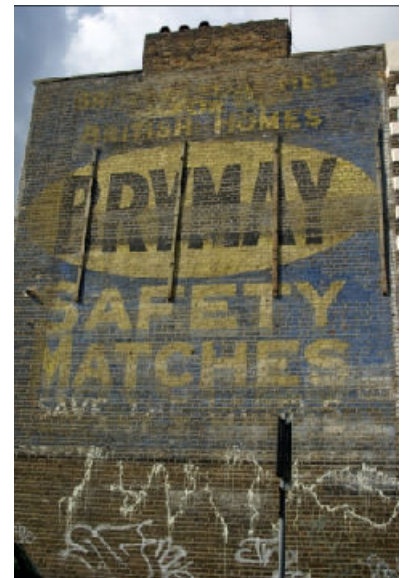
Sponsored by
Rank Hovis



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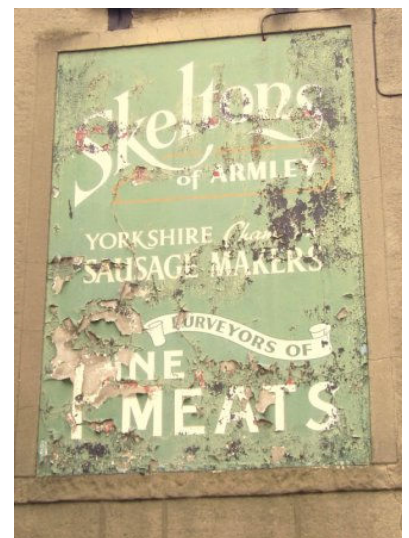
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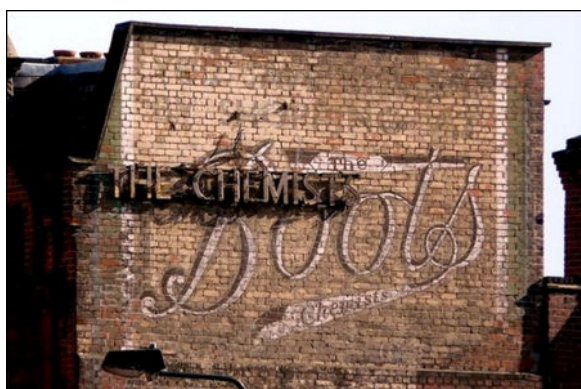
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