

Bold Street welcomes blue plaque in tribute to Liverpool man who was an electricity pioneer

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• BY JOE THOMAS

Plaque installed in tribute to Sebastien De Ferranti

James Maloney



Frances Ross, great-granddaughter of Sebastian De Ferranti, at his birthplace The Havelock Building, 130 Bold Street, with the blue plaque in his memory

Liverpool has a new blue plaque - to celebrate one of the city's bright sparks.

Sebastian De Ferranti - acclaimed as a pioneer in the development of electricity - was born in [Bold Street](#) in 1864.

Now a sign to commemorate his birthplace has been installed by the [Liverpool BID Company](#).

The son of a Belgian-born photographer, whose studio was based at the Havelock Building on Bold Street, Mr De Ferranti is hailed as the father of the modern electricity production and distribution system.

He became known as the "man who lit London", creating one of the largest companies in pre-war Britain and forcing America to dump Thomas Edison's DC system in favour of AC.

Within three years of lodging the patent for his famous alternator, in 1882, he was appointed chief engineer of the London Electric Supply Corporation and at the age of 24 helped establish the world's first High voltage AC power station at Deptford with the ability to create 10,000 volts.

Several members of his family, including great-granddaughter Frances Ross, were present as the plaque was installed.

James Maloney



Frances Ross, left, great-granddaughter of Sebastian De Ferranti, with relative Marcus Ferranti next to the blue plaque commemorating the electrical pioneer

Welcoming the tribute, commissioned by the BID, she said: “He particularly wanted to help relieve the drudgery of life for women in the home and saw that electricity would be able to do this.

“By producing strong AC electricity in a few huge power stations, distributing it through a national grid and transforming it to a weak current suitable for the home, it would be possible to have cheap electricity for all. This is much the same system as is still in use all over the world today.

“His amazing story began in Bold Street and we are delighted to see this plaque installed to honour his memory and achievements.”