

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Founded 1974. Registered Charity No.508024.
A member of the British Association for Local History
and the Merseyside Civic Society

Website: www.gatsoc.org.uk Email: info@gatsoc.org.uk

Executive Committee 2016/17

Brian Doman, 6 Hayles Grove, L25 4SL (0151 722 6368) *Chairman*
Beryl Plent, 27 Grange Lane, L25 4RZ (428 5379)
Vice Chairman & Local History Sec.
Mike Chitty, 16 Chartmount Way, L25 5LB (428 7801) *Environment Sec.,
Newsletter Editor, Joint Hon. Secretary & Acting Hon.Treasurer*
Eryl Chitty *Joint Hon. Secretary*
David Phythian, 26 Primrose Road, L18 2HE *Membership Sec.*
Pam Ball, Flat 1 St Stephens Court, Halewood Road, L25 3PG (428 0500)
Sales Officer
Sandra Sandland *Assistant Sales Officer*
Rosemary Doman
Margaret Gofton

Membership Subscriptions

Household £4 Single pensioner £3 Company, etc. £6

If you wish to join the Society, please send the appropriate subscription to the Membership Secretary, David Phythian, 26 Primrose Road, Liverpool L18 2HE: cheques payable to 'The Gateacre Society'.

If you are already a member, your address label indicates the date when your next subscription payment is due.

Our Book - Gateacre & Belle Vale: in old photographs - is on sale at our meetings and events, price **£10** (bookshop price £12.99).

Our Tea-towel is also available, price **£4**.

Visit our website - or contact Beryl Plent or Pam Ball for further details.

DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

If so, and if you would like to receive your Newsletters by email instead of by post, please let us know by sending a message to membership@gatsoc.org.uk quoting your name and postcode



The Gateacre Society

Guarding the Past - Safeguarding the Future

NEWSLETTER - January 2017

Our next meeting:

Forgotten Liverpool: Merchant Palaces and Personalities



**An illustrated talk by Stephen Guy in Gateacre Chapel,
Gateacre Brow L25 3PB, on Sunday 5th February at 2.30 p.m.**

Local historian Stephen Guy, journalist and broadcaster, last spoke to us nearly 10 years ago. This time he takes a look at some of his favourite historic buildings, sites and people. He follows paths in time from thatched hovels to Gothic mansions, looking at how Liverpool's tide of wealth transformed a backwater into one of the world's leading ports. Stephen, who is Chairman of the West Derby Society, examines some extraordinary people and their often bizarre homes, from the ancient Molyneux dynasty to the glitz of new money.

ALL WELCOME - Admission free - Donations invited

DIARY DATE

Sunday 19th March,
2.30 p.m.
'History of Liverpool
Botanic Garden'
by Stephen Lyus.
Further details in our
next Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

We shall be issuing personalised Final Reminders with the NEXT Newsletter. Meanwhile please take a few moments to look at the date on your address label. If (but only if) it reads '31/10/16' then your membership of the Society has expired, and we hope that you will renew - for 1, 2 or 3 years - by giving or sending your subscription to our Membership Secretary - see back page for details.

THE MERSEY GATEWAY PROJECT

Our October 2016 talk – reviewed by Mike Chitty

Rising out of the Mersey – and visible on a clear day from Woolton Road in Gateacre – is the new Runcorn-Widnes bridge, which is due to open to traffic in the autumn of 2017. Bernie Carr is one of 30 volunteers who gives talks to schools and community groups about the project.

Bernie told us that, when it opened in 1961, the existing Silver Jubilee Bridge was designed to carry 11,000 vehicles a day, but it now carries 88,000. The new bridge will relieve congestion, improve the 'reliability and resilience' of the road network, kick-start five development areas in Halton, and improve air quality. Tolls will be charged, because the project – one of the biggest in the UK – is being paid for by Halton Council – one of the smallest local authorities – using largely private finance which will have to be repaid. A DBFO (Design Build Finance Operate) company called Merseylink has been set up to do the work.

Bernie explained the challenges that the bridge designers had faced: three canals and three railways to cross, a fast flowing river with a 6.5 metre tidal range and salt marshes on each side, with some of the most heavily contaminated land in the UK and an existing road network that had to be kept running. The solution chosen was a 'cable-stayed bridge' – the type now almost universal for new bridges worldwide – upstream from the existing bridge, about 1 km long with 1.5 km of elevated approach roads over the marsh. The cables supporting the road deck will be tied to three concrete 'pylons', all of different heights (115, 80 and 125 metres) which will be one of the bridge's most distinctive features. The height difference is because each pylon supports a different length of roadway, the location of the piers having been selected so as to minimise the scouring of the river banks by the tide.

Bernie described in detail the way in which the pylons had been constructed using poured concrete – no easy task, bearing in mind that they are hexagonal and tapering, and stand directly on the rock below the bed of the river. 12 months of the 42 month 'design and construction' period was spent building the coffer dams and the bases of the pylons. Altogether 1,500km of cable will be needed – "enough to stretch from Lands End to John O'Groats", we were told. Components for the bridge – and the staff responsible for building it – have been brought in from all over the world, but we were pleased to hear that the wire for the cables is being manufactured in Warrington.

Bernie talked about how the £2-a-car and £8 HGV tolls will be collected. There will be no toll booths, and users will have to pay by phone or online within 24 hours of crossing the bridge. People will be able to register as regular users (or 'free' users, in the case of Halton residents) to simplify the process. Finally, he explained that the existing Silver Jubilee bridge will be closed for a while, but will then reopen as a 'local' bridge (with the same system of tolls). Pedestrians and cyclists – who will be banned from the new bridge – will be able to use the old one free of charge.

Bernie left us well-informed about the project, and keen to find out more. Several members of the audience said that they would take up his suggestion of regular trips to the Visitor Centre in Widnes, which gives a panoramic view of the work in progress.

PLANNING NEWS

The **Conservative Club** planning application mentioned in the last Newsletter (16F/2198 to use part of the building as a children's day nursery) was GRANTED by the City Council on 28th November. The Planning Officer considered that – despite the objections received from ourselves and from 6 local residents – the proposal is unlikely to result in traffic or parking problems, will not adversely affect the amenity of adjoining residents, and will not detract from the character of the Conservation Area.

A planning and listed building consent application for **Grange Hollies**, Grange Lane, was submitted in August 2016 (ref. 16F/1905 & 16L/0792). The plan was to extend and convert the existing care home to 10 flats, and build a detached house to the rear. We objected to the height of the proposed extension, which we felt would detract from the appearance of the listed building. We are pleased to say that amended drawings have now been submitted, omitting the top storey.

Meanwhile a planning and listed building consent application for **The Crying Tree/ Gorsey Cop** (ref. 16F/1122 & 16L/1123) proposes conversion of the 'original' part of the building to 8 apartments, demolition of some later additions, conversion of the former coachhouse to 2 dwellings, plus the erection of 5 newbuild dwellings. Although the application was submitted in May 2016, no decision has yet been made.

BUS ROUTES 173 & 174

We have suggested to Merseytravel that route 173 should be diverted so as to travel along Gateacre Park Drive (past the Gateacre Comp housing development site and the Aldi store) rather than along Childwall Park Avenue. We have also suggested that an extra bus stop for the 174 should be provided in Grange Lane, as at present there is a 1,000yd gap between the Grange Hollies stop and the one in Belle Vale Road. The initial response was not favourable – we were told that the diversion of the 173 "would impact on the bus service provision for communities in the Childwall Park Avenue area so would not be possible", and that the provision of more stops on Grange Lane has "not been possible [owing to the] various restrictions which we have to adhere to" – but we are asking for this to be reconsidered.

RIGHT OF WAY ORDER PUBLISHED

The 'Liverpool City Council Definitive Map and Statement Modification No.5 Order 2016' was published on 8th December 2016, in respect of the footpath from Acrefield Road to Woolton Park via Glenacres and Byron Court. As mentioned in our last Newsletter, representations were invited – with a closing date of 20th January. We know that many local residents have written to the City Solicitor in support of the Order, which – if confirmed – will establish the path as a Public Right of Way. Both the Gateacre Society and the Woolton Society have submitted statements emphasising the importance of the route in terms of access to local facilities including Reynolds Park, bus stops and churches. You can read the Gateacre Society's submission on our website.