

# THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

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

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Pam Ball, Flat 1 St Stephens Court, Halewood Road, L25 3PG (428 0500)

*Sales Officer*

Sandra Sandland *Assistant Sales Officer*

## WE NEED NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

If you would like to know more about what is involved,  
please have a word with any existing member

## Annual 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'.

*The Society's membership year ends on 31st October, but anyone joining after 1st July 2018 is regarded as paid-up until 31/10/19. 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](mailto:membership@gatsoc.org.uk) quoting your name and postcode

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# The Gateacre Society

*Guarding the Past - Safeguarding the Future*

## NEWSLETTER - July 2018

*Our next meeting:*

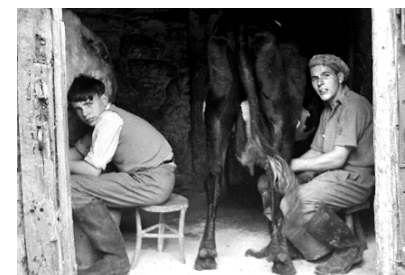
## LIVERPOOL COWKEEPERS

### - A FAMILY HISTORY

How Dales Farmers Became  
City Cowkeepers and  
Suburban Milkmen

**An illustrated  
talk by Dave Joy**

in Gateacre Chapel  
Gateacre Brow  
L25 3PB  
on Monday 9th July  
at 7.30 p.m.



The mid-1800s witnessed a mass exodus from the Pennine Dales. Farmers and miners sought a new life - some in the New World, but others closer to home. Many of the former farmers became Liverpool Cowkeepers, selling milk to a rapidly expanding city population. The cows kept in Liverpool back yards became part of the life and economy of the city and continued to serve its people for over a hundred years. The cowkeepers overcame many challenges, and survived through hard work, good Yorkshire business nous and the ability to adapt. They later became suburban milkmen - part of the best doorstep food delivery service in the world and a key part of the British way of life.

In this fully illustrated presentation Dave Joy draws on his own family's history to tell the story of the lives and times of the Liverpool Cowkeepers. The Joy family came from the Upper Wharfedale valley in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales and established city milkhouses in Wavertree and Garston.

Copies of Dave's two books, *Liverpool Cowkeepers* and *My Family & Other Scousers* (a memoir of his childhood spent at Wellington Dairy in Garston), will be on sale at the end of the talk.

**ALL WELCOME - Admission free - Donations invited**

# FROM MERSEY SHIPS TO MERCY SHIPS

Our March 2018 talk – reviewed by Mike Chitty

Dave Fryer, who lives locally, came to talk to us about 'Mercy Ships' – a charity with which he has been personally involved for many years. Founded in 1978 by an American couple, they go to parts of the world where there is no regular medical care. Almost all of the staff are volunteers, and funding for the ships comes from a variety of sources including philanthropic business people.

Dave began by outlining his personal history – hence the title of his talk – which involved a marine engineering apprenticeship and, from 1965 onwards, a spell on the 'China Boats' operated by the Alfred Holt Blue Funnel Line. Leaving from Vittoria Dock on the Birkenhead side of the River Mersey, Dave and his colleagues would not see the Liverpool skyline for another 3-4 months. After a few years with Blue Funnel, he joined Container Fleets which operated fast ships to Australia. Then he came home to lecture at Riversdale College.

It was on his retirement from paid employment that Dave joined Mercy Ships. He volunteered with them for five years, until 2011. We saw a photo of the Africa Mercy engineering staff, and heard where they came from: Sri Lanka, Texas, Norway, Ukraine, South Africa and South Shields. In all, the crew comprised 30 or 40 different nationalities – but the language of the ship was English.

The charity's first ship, the Anastasis ('resurrection') was a converted Greek cruise liner. The ship on which Dave sailed, the Africa Mercy, was similarly converted – in Hebburn shipyard on the Tyne. Its maiden voyage took place in 2007. The latest ship, Global Mercy, is under construction in China – the first 'new-build' vessel. Although based in Texas, the charity's ships are registered in Malta, because US-registered ships are only allowed to employ American officers and engineers. And although the charity is Christian, the crew don't have to be.

Dave described and showed us pictures of some of the places visited: Ghana, Sierra Leone, Benin and Liberia. The ship calls at each port by invitation, and up to 4,000 people (including carers) are taken on board in a single day, with up to 2,000 operations carried out. Eye surgery, cleft palate repair and tumour removal are all routinely undertaken, as well as dental treatment (and training), orthopaedic surgery and treatment for birth injuries. Dave described the operations as 'life changing' – not least because the patients have in many cases been ostracised by their family and their community.

Each ship is fitted out with six operating theatres, a CAT scanner, x-ray suite, etc. The wards are on the starboard side, and elsewhere on the ship is the crew accommodation. Some of the crew members are accompanied by their families, so there is an Academy to educate the 50 or so children who are on board at any one time. Mercy Ships also has 'land bases' in West Africa, and is involved in healthcare education, community development and sanitation projects.

Dave's inspiring talk made us aware of a charity that few had heard of before. The collection at the end raised £100 – a sure sign of the audience's appreciation – which we passed on to the Mercy Ships UK office in Stevenage.

## OUR COACH TRIP TO WAKEFIELD

As briefly mentioned in our last Newsletter, this summer's coach outing – organised by the Wavertree Society, but with a pickup point in Gateacre village – is to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park on SATURDAY 28th JULY. Participants can choose between spending the day at the Sculpture Park or in the nearby city of Wakefield. We have a limited allocation of tickets available for Gateacre Society members, so if you want to go please give or send the full amount (£15 per person) to Mike Chitty as soon as possible. (Cheques payable to The Wavertree Society). Departure time from the Black Bull is 9 a.m. and we shall aim to be home by 6.30.



## WHERE'S OUR PHONE BOX GONE?

The red phone box on the corner of Belle Vale Road and Grange Lane has been a local landmark for many years. In fact it was a yellow phone box in the 1980s, Gateacre having been a pilot area when Post Office Telephones became British Telecom and the new company was considering moving away from 'pillar box red'. In August 2017 BT announced that half of the UK's public payphone kiosks were to be removed, owing to the dramatic decline in usage. However, Ofcom issued a series of rules, one of which was that, if a box was the only one within a 400 metre radius, then the local Council had to be informed first, a notice displayed, and the public given six weeks to object.

As far as we are aware, none of these steps was taken in the case of our box. We always understood that, as a Giles Gilbert Scott designed 'type K6' kiosk, situated within a Conservation Area – it would be earmarked for retention. Our local councillor Alice Bennett has asked the Council's Legal Services department to investigate, and their response is currently awaited.



## AN AMENDED DIARY DATE

The BIG HISTORY SHOW at the Western Approaches HQ Museum, Liverpool, will now take place on Sat-Sun 29th-30th SEPTEMBER. Admission will be free of charge, and we hope to see you there.

## PLANNING NEWS

Members may have noticed renovation work going on at Elmsvale House, alongside the 'cricket field' in Belle Vale Road. The new owners have submitted a planning application (ref. 18H/1343) to re-slate the roof, install UPVC sash windows, convert the coach house and build a single-storey extension, and are documenting their progress online at [instagram.com/thetaleofelmsvale](https://www.instagram.com/thetaleofelmsvale)