

# 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 **Instagram:** @TheGatSoc  
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## Executive Committee (2021-22)

Brian Doman, 6 Hayles Grove, L25 4SL (0151 722 6368) *Chairman*  
Rosemary Doman *Vice Chair*  
Mike Chitty, 16 Chartmount Way, L25 5LB (0151 428 7801)  
*Environment Sec., Newsletter Editor & Acting Hon.Treasurer*  
Eryl Chitty *Hon.Secretary*  
David Phythian, 26 Primrose Road, L18 2HE *Membership Sec.*  
Sue Coldwell, 30 Killester Road, L25 3QD *Local History Sec.*  
Pam Ball, Flat 1 St Stephens Court, Halewood Road, L25 3PG (0151 428 0500)  
*Sales Officer*  
John Wood, 3 Soarer Cottages, Grange Lane, L25 5LF *Assistant Environment Sec.*  
Sandra Sandland *Assistant Sales Officer*  
Paula Jones

## Annual Membership Subscriptions

**Household £5 Single pensioner £4 Company, etc. £10**

The Society's membership year runs from 1 Nov-31 Oct.  
If you are already a member, your address label indicates  
the date when your next subscription payment is due.

*New members joining the Society after 1 July are regarded  
as 'paid up' until 31 Oct the following year.*

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

*Subscriptions may also be paid by bank transfer.  
Please email us for our account 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.

*If you are a member of the Society and you have notified us of your email  
address, you will be sent details of our Zoom talks and invited to participate.*

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redistributed electronically – without the written consent of The Gateacre Society.



*Our next meeting:*

**Sunday 21st  
November,  
2.30pm**

in Gateacre  
Unitarian Chapel,  
Gateacre Brow,  
Liverpool L25 3PB



## THE DAMBUSTERS RAID

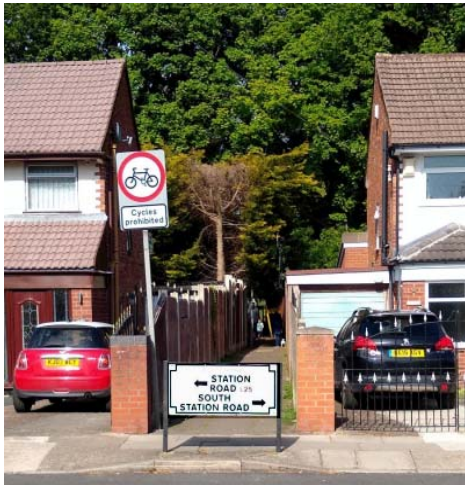
16/17.5.1943 **An illustrated talk by Rob Kirby**

The dams raid of May 1943 is arguably the most audacious and skilful operation ever staged in modern warfare. The novel bouncing bomb used in the raid was devised by inventor and engineer, Barnes Wallis. Though the general circumstances, and indeed details, of the raid are well known, the speaker will offer a new dimension arising from his detailed discussions with one of the pilots. The talk will focus on the intensity of demands on the bomb aimers, flight engineers and especially the pilots.

To succeed, every crew needed to attack at the exact height, speed, heading and range, with wings absolutely level, from a height of just 60 feet. The specially-created, hastily-trained, unit included a number of less-experienced recruits, and faced anti-aircraft gunfire, yet managed to burst both the Mohne and Eder dams, causing severe flooding and the loss of hydro-electric power in the Ruhr cities for many weeks. Sadly, though, this achievement came at a heavy price.

Rob Kirby, who lives locally and is a committee member of the Woolton Society, has had a lifelong interest in aviation history. Meanwhile, he tells us, his professional career has 'slid' from geology to oceanography, thence into 'ocean engineering'. He has been an adviser to governments and port authorities around the world, and holds a number of prestigious engineering awards.

*Various 'Covid safe' procedures will be in force within the Chapel. Face coverings are optional. To regulate the number of people attending, this will be a 'Gateacre Society members only' event – though membership application forms will be available at the door for anyone wishing to join on the day.*



## WHAT'S IN A NAME? No.1 in an occasional series **STATION ROAD, GATEACRE**

One of the images in our Instagram 'Lockdown picture quiz' last year was of the two-street nameplate: Station Road and South Station Road. The questions were: "What was the full name (as displayed on the platform in the early 20th century) of the station referred to here?" and "In what road was the entrance to the station?". The answers were 'Gateacre & Woolton' and 'Belle

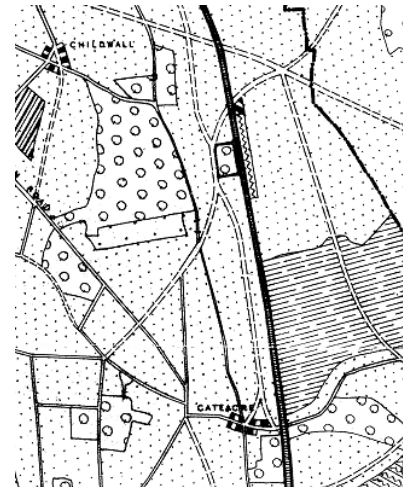
Vale Road' respectively; the point being that, as far as we're aware, neither Station Road nor South Station Road ever led to the station.

Gateacre Station – to give it its later name – was open to passengers from 1879 until 1972. In its heyday trains ran to Aintree and Southport in one direction and Liverpool or Manchester in the other. At the time of closure the only service was to Liverpool Central via Garston.

The reason for the name Station Road can be found in the Liverpool Town Planning Scheme No.2, which envisaged it as part of a through route between Broad Green and Halewood. Grange Lane, at that time, was a gated road, badly potholed, having been the subject of a long-standing dispute between the Marquess of Salisbury (as Lord of the Manor of Little Woolton) and the Council. The Town Planning Scheme map published in the 1930s showed a number of new roads, designed to facilitate the development of the district for suburban housing. One of these new roads was what became Gateacre Park Drive. Station Road, if completed according to the plan, would have run all the way from Alderman John Village Gardens to Belle Vale Road, where it would have branched two ways: left to the railway station and right towards the crossroads.

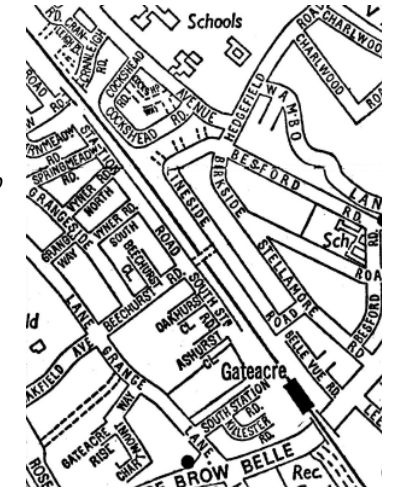
In the event, only part of the new road was built – mainly because Grange Lane had been designated as a through route, and resurfaced, following a court hearing in 1955. The vital link between Station Road and the station in Belle Vale Road was omitted.

A puzzling feature is the name 'South Station Road'. The house numbers in Station Road run from north to south, so there would seem to be no reason why they could not have been continued beyond Beechurst Road (or 'Grange Hill', as it was named on some street maps in the 1950s).



On the left is an extract from the 1930s 'Town Planning Scheme' map. The thick line running from top to bottom is the Cheshire Lines railway.

On the right is an extract from a 1960s edition of the 'A to Z Atlas of Liverpool'.



### PLANNING NEWS

**On 5th October** the owner of the former Gorsey Cop/ Crying Tree pub in Grange Lane received planning permission and listed building consent for the conversion works outlined in our June Newsletter. We hope it will not be too long before the work begins.

**On 26th October** an application (reference 21PT/2199) to erect a 20-metre high 5G phone mast in Belle Vale Road, outside the St Stephen's Parish Centre, was Refused. The reasons given by the Council were that:

- "1. The proposal would fail to preserve the settings and important views of the Listed Buildings: ... St Stephen's Church, ... Church Cottages and a 3m high Victorian signpost.
2. The proposed mast and associated cabinets, by virtue of height, siting and bulk, would appear as an undesirable and incongruous focal point in the street scene at a prominent location and would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding residential area ..."

### THE 'LOST' PHONE BOX

It is now more than two years since the K6 telephone kiosk disappeared from the centre of Gateacre Village.

The City Council's Chief Executive has, as yet, been unable to tell us why the correct procedures were not followed, and why we were denied the opportunity to keep it as a local landmark, a feature of the Conservation Area – and, potentially, to house a defibrillator or other community facility.

### AGM REPORT

We had a successful 'face-to-face' Annual General Meeting (and an enjoyable quiz and refreshments) in the Chapel on 24th October. A Committee was elected for the coming year, consisting of 9 existing members plus new member Paula Jones, whom we particularly welcome.

The 'biennial report' for 2019-21, which was read out by Mike Chitty at the meeting, will be available on our website.

### DATES FOR 2022

We have arranged two talks in the New Year:

- Monday 31st January** 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. 'The Welsh in Liverpool' by Dr D Ben Rees
- Sunday 13th March** 2:30 p.m. in the Chapel. 'Lost Manors' by Stuart Rimmer. Confirmation and further details will be given in a Newsletter, and on our website, nearer the time.