

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

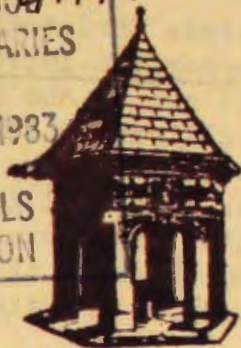
LIVERPOOL

Registered with the North West Civic Trust CITY LIBRARIES

Chairman: G. Anthony McCann, O.L.A. School  
Hedgefield Road 487 - 9301

Hon. Sec: Mrs. Sylvia Lewis, Grange Lodge,  
Grange Lane 428 - 3671

23 APR 1983  
SERIALS  
SECTION



SPRING NEWSLETTER - 1983

Next meeting -

THE HISTORY OF WEST DERBY

by

JACK COOPER AND DAVID POWER

This will be a lecture with slides based on their recent book of the same title. It will cover the period from before the ice age - which formed a suitable landscape for settlement - evidence of the Vikings, to West Derby's first peak of importance with the coming of the Normans. This importance was to continue in a legal sense up to the last century as we will hear and we will be introduced to a number of famous people and families and the houses in which they lived. Copies of the book will be on sale at the meeting, price £4.95.

WEDNESDAY 20th April 8 pm.

Gateacre Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road.

Tea 10p.

Visitors welcome - 25p.

Advance Notice - 16th May "Trees & Shrubs for the small garden"  
by Mr. Gardiner - Curator, Botanic Gardens.

Before Christmas we welcomed Mr. Grek, an architect working for Merseyside Improved Houses who told us that in 1978 Merseyside had one of the highest concentrations of unsatisfactory dwellings in the country - with 1 house in 3 considered sub-standard. Mr. Grek explained how it was his job to look for the potential in old houses with a view to renovation/conversion into self contained flats, and while this was in progress to try and maintain the buildings character - not destroying beautiful features for the sake of modern convenience.

Mr. Grek's work centered round Birkenhead Park but he showed us slides of many well known places in Liverpool on which M.I.H. had worked such as Princes Boulevard, Gambier Terrace and our own York Cottages. The 'before' and 'after' slides were quite amazing - it was hard to believe that such delapidation could be transformed into such impressive homes.

An average flat conversion would cost between £15,000 and £20,000 and M.I.H. depend on loans from the Local Authority, money from registered charities and from the Government. The latter having increased their funding since Michael Heseltine became personally involved with Merseyside.

Working on old buildings can be dangerous, and another hazard is theft from the site of things like kitchen units, wall fires and plumbing so that it is not unusual for some of these items to be installed after residents have moved in.

M.I.H. are also concerned with the environment and are involved with the Otterspool link to the Pier Head in connection with the Garden Festival which will take place next year.

Mr. Grek started his talk by showing slides of the great demolition of the sixties and the type of building which went up as a result, and he left us with the hope that efforts are being made to see that such mistakes are not made in the future. P.A.W.

#### LIVERPOOL SCULPTURES & MONUMENTS -

Our speaker on the 17th Jan. was Harry Gascoign Arthur who gave us a most interesting and enjoyable evening showing slides of buildings in the City and introducing us to the many sculptures surrounding them. We saw monuments to the men who had helped to make Liverpool the great port that it was, like the one by Sir George Frampton R.A. to Sir Alfred Lewis Jones of the Elder Dempster line who promoted trade, technical education and health services in West Africa



but who is perhaps best remembered as the founder of the School of Tropical Medicine.

We started with the three buildings at the Pier Head, built on reclaimed land where the old George's Dock used to be, and their sculptures. First in 1907 was the Port of Liverpool Building (M.D.H.C.) designed by Sir Arnold Thornely, next in 1911 was the Royal Liver Building - one of the first multi-storey buildings in the world with a reinforced concrete frame. This building was the work of W. Aubrey Thomas - who over 20 years before designed our Prudential Building (1889) on Gateacre Brow. The last to be erected was the Cunard Building by Willink and Thickness, built during the Great War in Italian palazzo style and opened in 1916 as the head office of the Cunard Company. While we looked at the statue of Edward VII on his horse by Sir W. Goscombe John we were reminded that there are only twenty six equestrian statues in the country and Liverpool has 4.

Leaving the Pier Head we made our way to the Town Hall, by John Wood of Bath 1754 and afterwards up William Brown St. to St. George's Hall taking in several other buildings of interest on the way - like Keans Hotel in Park Lane (NOT YET LISTED), a rococo building built in the 1840s when the brewery concerned thought there was to be a railway station nearby. Now in a sad state of disrepair & used for storage.

The last slide, which came all too quickly, was of the Wilson Memorial in the centre of the Village - a nice thought. We thank Mr. Arthur for a fascinating evening and hope to have him to talk to us again before long. J.B.

LIVERPOOL'S CHINESE COMMUNITY - When Mr. Edwards came to Gateacre on March 15th I think most of us expected to hear about the newly opened Pagoda Club, but we were in for a surprise, and a pleasant one too, for Mr. Edwards traced the development of the Chinese settlement in Liverpool.

I remember, as others will, being taken by my parents to see the 1935 Silver Jubilee and 1937 Coronation decorations in Pitt St. The whole of Liverpool was gaily decorated for both these events, but Pitt St. outshone them all. The whole place was magically transformed - a sight to be remembered down the years - and yet Pitt Street was the heart of Chinatown.

cont. on page 6.



Rescue Archaeology (Industrial) at 2 Paradise Row

Members and friends familiar with Gateacre Walk I and our Vernacular work will recall that along Grange Lane from the Green, on the left - just beyond the Riding School - the stone built cottages called Paradise Row have been the subject of much speculation. The back elevation of the 3-storey cottages, built 1700-1750 ?, especially No.2, show long windows at first floor level, now bricked up, suggesting some sort of workshop use.

The owner, Mr. Sam Prince, has a daughter Susan who is engaged to marry a young joiner, David Ball, in September, and we send our best wishes to the young people. Susan and David are now proud owners of 2 Paradise Row & have set about rehabilitation.

On Monday 7 February Sylvia Lewis noticed a skip outside and on Friday that week, a day they will long remember, she and Janet Gnosspelius called. The work of removing the woodworm infested softwood - floor boards, joists, partitions, almost everything ! - was far advanced and the floor of the 'workshop' area had gone. Susan is already such a good housewife that all rubbish had been swept up and removed and the would-be investigators despaired of finding any traces of what had once been done in that 'workshop'.

Sylvia, with Janet's new dustpan, set about retrieving dust and fragments from any possible hole and unswept surface - like the top of the partition round the back door - that Susan might have missed. Janet took steel tape and notebook and measured the remaining internal features in haste before they also were removed - to record the plan as far as possible as it had been originally. The size of the 'workshop' was 11'6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long by 5'0" wide, and the height of the window sill, 3'0" from where the floor had been - just right for a bench - and the fact that the long windows had occupied the whole of the external wall, all added up to the idea of 'workshop'. Nothing has been left of the bench for years, indeed a secondary stair from the first floor upwards was fitted, possibly as much as 100 years ago, at the inner end of the 'workshop'. The boarded partition at the other end, made in the old fashioned way, seems to have been original because its boards went right through the original plaster to the stone wall. And the winter sun streaming in through the present small windows showed what good natural light the 'workshop' used to enjoy.

After this first session of site investigation each went home, Janet to her drawing board, Sylvia to her kitchen table with many plastic bags with samples of swoopings from known positions. By



8.15 Sylvia was able to ring Janet with news of the first real find as she applied magnet to her piles of dust. It was a little piece of file, no bigger than this, and broken, but with teeth clearly visible on both sides.



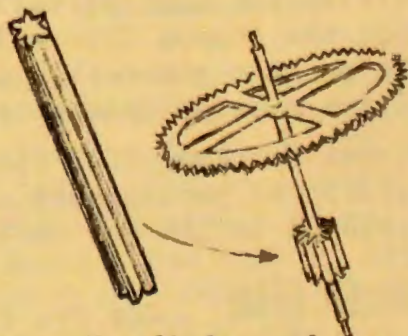
This was a great excitement because in the last few months, work on Deeds of the Beaconsfield estate had revealed a family called Holyneux in Childwall and Little Woolton who, in the later 18th and early 19th century, had been file cutters - working probably in association with the Prescott or Liverpool watchmaking trade.

Next day they were at it again, Janet correcting & extending her survey - with nothing to stand on - Sylvia rooting in every nook and cranny and, when David removed the kitchen skirting below the 'workshop', pouncing on the dust behind it. By the end of that evenings analysis of the dust by magnet, and under magnifying glass, the finds were: -

the fragment of file	brass wheel grooved like a pulley
12 lengths of wire	9 tiny shavings of brass (bright)
heaps of 'magnetic' dust	a number of scraps of leather.

Examination of the bits of wire, various lengths from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " and  $\frac{1}{8}$ " or more thick - most of them of course very rusty - showed that they looked striped along their length.

They are pinion wire ! Most of us have seen the works of a clock - a train of toothed brass wheels on steel axles. Pinion wire is the material from which the axles with their 6,7, 8,9 or 10 (etc) teeth -leaves- were made. We have 6,7 & 10 tooth types.



Mr. Burman of the County Museum and Mr.Griffiths of the Prescot Watch Museum have both visited the house and seen the finds, and are having them tested to find out whether they are cementation or crucible steel, and so date them.

We have not yet been able to name the resident of Gateacre who built Paradise Row with this workshop, & probably worked here. So far we have collected the names of 11 men 'of Little Woolton' and 3 'of Much Woolton' who were involved in the watchmaking business in one branch or another, from 1694 to 1851. Probably most of them plied their trade in Prescott or Liverpool; one, William Barrow, spent some years in London; but now we know that some had their 'outworkshops' in our area.

J.B.G. & S.M.L.



Although there was an early settlement in London, there were no Chinese in Liverpool before 1834, after that date the long-held monopoly of the East India Company was broken and a trade route to China opened up. At that time there was a preference for Chinese and Lascar crews (cheaper ?) and some began to jump ship and settle in the port, gravitating to the Cleveland Square and Pitt Street area. Thus the nearby Customs House became a landmark for would-be Chinese settlers.

These early settlers sent money home and settled down comfortably - though not without some opposition from the townsfolk. But the Chinese held on to their culture and tried to keep themselves to themselves. At the same time, the Irish potato famine brought in Irish immigrants and many Irish girls intermarried with Chinese men. Businesses were started, the Chinese worked long hours and laundries sprang up - increasing at one time to over 100 - now only 1 remains, catering having taken over from washing.

From those early days the Chinese community has expanded and become part of our cosmopolitan City, while still retaining the ancient culture and tradition. It is hoped that the Pagoda Club will keep alive these traditions among the present generation and, maybe, give the people of our City a greater understanding of the Chinese living here.

It was an altogether interesting evening, Mr. Edwards brought slides and photographs of old Liverpool and we could have listened to him for another hour - but alas, time rules all.

E.Q.

JUMBLE SALE - Our one big fund-raising effort of the year will be held in the Chapel Hall on SATURDAY 23 APRIL 2 pm. Mrs. McKenzie of 7 Grange Weint, who organises this event, asks for as many members as possible to come and lend a hand. Sorting will take place on the evening before, starting about 7 p.m. Goods to sell are also required and can be collected if necessary. Please contact Mrs. McKenzie 428 - 2938 any evening or the Secretary.

KNOTTY CROSS - A successful conclusion we think - in that the planning application for a block of flats on the front lawn of this listed building has now been withdrawn.

YORK COTTAGES LAND - There is good news here too, (dare we say this after so long ?) we have been successful in gaining the interest of the Environmental Programme Unit ( a part of the Planning Dept.) in the plan drawn up last year by M.I.H. The scheme has been agreed by the Highways and Environment Committee of the Council, it will now go before the Policy and Finance Committee and finally, we hope, be approved by the City Council on April 20th. Keep an eye on this tatty space - if all goes well work could be starting here quite soon.

LONG OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS - To those few who have still not paid their dues (a RED CROSS on your label will once again remind you) we are afraid that this must be our last communication with you. We shall be sad to lose you but 6 months grace is twice the length of time allowed by our Constitution - PLEASE send them this week.

DISCO AT CHEZ PHILIPPE - We have been receiving reports from our members in Acresgate Court of noise and rowdiness in the early hours of the morning made by people leaving this newly-opened disco - any other residents who may have been affected are asked to get in touch with Mr. L. Symonds of 46 Acresgate Court tel: 428-7128 or the Secretary.

VILLAGE GREEN - The saga of the Village Green and the City Solicitor's refusal to agree that it is a Green continues. At present our Solicitor member Mr. Wheeler is preparing to visit people who can remember it being used as a Green for more than 20 years and record their memories. Please will our older residents cast back their minds and let the Secretary know if he may call on them. Any Green-like activities will serve - like drinking water from the fountain, sitting on the seats admiring the flowers or watching the pigeons. We don't want it to lose its status do we ?

NEWS FROM OUTSIDE OUR AREA - Nos. 93 & 95 Shaw St. both listed buildings, were recently demolished by the firm who had permission for flat conversion. They were fined £500 by the Stipendiary Magistrate after a successful prosecution brought by the Planning Department.



