

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Registered with the North West Civic Trust

Chairman: G. Anthony McCann, O.L.A. School
Hedgefield Road, Tel: 487-9301
Hon. Sec: Mrs. Sylvia Lewis, Grange Lodge,
Grange Lane Tel: 428-3671

NEW YEAR NEWSLETTER - 1984

Next meeting -

MEMORIES OF GATEACRE
FIFTY YEARS AGO

by

DR. CARL WARNER
F.R.C.G.P.

Dr. Warner, who was born in Liverpool and qualified at Liverpool University, came to Woolton in 1935. He will talk about the Gateacre he remembers at that time, the people he has met and the changes there have been both in the village and in his own medical practice. Slides.

TUESDAY, 24th JANUARY 1984 at 8 p.m.

Gateacre Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road. Tea 10p.

Come - bring a friend who might be interested in joining the Society - but be early if you want a seat !

A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.

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SECTION



'GEORGIAN' LIVERPOOL.

What is the connection between Stonehenge, the Greek temples at Delphi, and the Roman City of Leptis Magna, North Africa? Answer: Janet Gnosspelius used colour-slides of all of them to illustrate her talk on the 29th November. Her theme was 'the sources of Liverpool's Classical architecture', and we were treated to a tour of columns, pediments, entablatures, triglyphs, guttae and other assorted architectural features amid blue skies and Mediterranean sunshine.

Liverpool's Mortuary Chapel, St. James's Road (1829) we saw was a near replica of a Greek temple, but this was the exception rather than the rule. Liverpool architects instead tended to build in Classical 'style', incorporating fluted columns, carved friezes or pediments in buildings of all shapes, sizes and types. St. Bride's Church, Percy St. (1830), the Huskisson Monument in St. James's Cemetery (1836), the Medical Institution, Hope Street (1836), the Wellington Rooms, Mount Pleasant (1815) and - most famous of all - St. George's Hall, Lime Street (1842) were all shown to us as examples of 'Liverpool Greek' or 'Liverpool Roman' buildings. Their architects had often never been to Greece or Rome, but based their designs on textbook engravings of the Classical originals.

New churches and public buildings were in great demand in Georgian Liverpool - such was the town's pace of growth - and the Classical style was 'in fashion' for this purpose throughout the period. (Miss Gnosspelius traced the fashion as far back as the Old Town Hall of 1673, and demonstrated its persistence through to 1875 and the Picton Reading Room). Classical features were also incorporated in the houses of the wealthy; they became part of the 'new English tradition' of building represented by Mornington Terrace, Abercromby Square and Rodney Street (c.1785-1830). Miss Gnosspelius's slides took us on an instructive 'architectural ramble' along Rodney St., observing how the doorways differed in size and detail, the window sills varied in height, the courses of bricks did not always match up within a terrace; yet the overall effect was one of impressive unity of design.

During the later nineteenth C.19 Classical designs became

less commonplace among Liverpool architects as the Gothic and other styles became fashionable; but in the C.20 Sir Lancelot Keay revived the tradition in the new suburban council estates. With pictures of one of these - Hunts Cross Avenue - and of 'Liverpool's last Classical building that never was' - Sir Edwin Lutyens' 1930 design for the Roman Catholic cathedral - Miss Gnosspelius concluded her fascinating talk. She also let slip that this evening's selection of slides was just the tip of the iceberg; she has many more both of Greece and Georgian Liverpool, and maybe can be persuaded to show them on some future occasion.

M.R.C.

LAND AT YORK COTTAGES -

Those of you who pass along Grange Lane will have noticed that AT LAST work has started on this scruffy piece of land - in the centre of the Gateacre Village Conservation Area. Our very grateful thanks go to one of the Society's members - Mr. J.R. Kirkham, the co-ordinator of the Merseyside Conservation Volunteers who are sponsored by the Merseyside Council for Voluntary Service - and to the Environmental Health Dept. who provided a skip.

The volunteers, assisted by Mr. Green and Mr. Azzopardi - residents in York Cottages, the Hon. Sec. and one 'impressed' young lady from Grange Lane set to work early on the 29th December trimming bushes and trees, collecting dozens of bottles - spirit and milk - and other yuk and finally, as light was failing, erecting chestnut paling around the site.

We have made, I think, a good start but Mr. Kirkham and his volunteers are to return on Saturday 4th February, when it is hoped to finish the job and leave the land ready for planting. Please may we have the help of volunteers from among the members of the Society? You are promised a day of physically hard but extremely satisfying labour. Tools and mugs of tea will be provided and old clothes and strong boots are recommended. Will you please let the Hon. Sec. know if you are able and willing to lend a hand - 428-3671 (or drop a note through her door).

We must also thank Mr. Rees-Jones of Sandfield Rd. who offered us the use of a skip in his yard if we were unable to obtain one on the site. Other news from Sandfield Road is that the old Turner's offices and store are very soon to be demolished: and that Telecom are to bury their wires

underground in Lower Sandfield - would that M.A.N.W.E.B. were equally concerned with the environment !

OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS - these were due on the 25th Oct. at the A.G.M. So far we have received about half, PLEASE would the other half let us have yours this next week ? Has anyone any good ideas about how we should go about getting in subscriptions quickly without all this extra work each year ? It's not that members don't intend to pay, they just don't get around to it - if you are one of these a reminder will accompany this Newsletter.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS - Refurbishment of Conservative Club.

We understand that the Deputy City Planning Officer has asked for a meeting with the architect concerned. We hope that from this will come a scheme which does credit to the Club and enhances the centre of the Conservation Area.

44 Gateacre Brow - We wrote to the C.P.O. objecting to the proposal of a wine bar here. We felt the site to be inappropriate being between traffic lights on such a busy corner, and having no car parking facilities. If you object, and have intended to write, please do so quickly as a decision will be made towards the end of this month.

LIVERPOOL BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST - It has been agreed to set up a Building Preservation Trust in Liverpool. This will be a non-profit making body obtaining finance - either grants or low-interest loans - from the Architectural Heritage Fund and other non-local sources. It will operate on the 'rolling fund' principle, where a listed building in decay is bought, rehabilitated and then sold. Any profit that is made going towards the purchase of the next building.

Such schemes have worked very well indeed in e.g. Kendal, Derbyshire and Manchester - saving buildings which would otherwise have been demolished. We feel that this is a well worthwhile project and hope that other amenity societies on Merseyside will also give the scheme their support.

VILLAGE GREEN-

For some time now members have been anxious about the dead tree alongside Gateacre Brow. Recreation & Open Spaces Dept. have now agreed to have it taken down by their forestry department.

S.M.L. 10.1.84