

Chairman: Mr. G. A. McCann, O.L.A. Jun. School, Hedgefield Road,

Hon. Sec.: Mrs. S. Lewis, Grange Lodge, Grange Lane

Minutes of the tenth Annual General Meeting
of the Gateacre Society, held on the 30th October
1984 at the Gateacre Institute, Grange Lane at 8 p.m.

Present: Mr. G. A. McCann (Chairman)
 Mrs. S. Lewis (Secretary)
 Miss E. Heyworth (Treasurer)

Committee: Mrs. Bee, Miss Borrowscale, Mr. Chitty, Miss Doyle,
Miss Gnosspelius, Miss Lytton, Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Shepherd.

Members: Miss Baranska, Mrs. Castle, Mrs. Chitty, Mrs. Cohen,
Mr. & Mrs. Davenport, Mr. Denton, Mr. & Mrs. Dunne, Mr. Haddleton,
Mr. Jaques, Mr. Kirkham, Miss McAndrew, Mr. McCann, Mrs. Hyles,
Mrs. Newton, Mrs. Nicolson, Miss Pendergast, Mr. Riley, Miss
Sandland, Mr. Silcock, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Swerdlow, Mr. Tiernan,
Mr. Williams. Total 36.

At 8.00 p.m. the Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs. Bennett,
Mr. & Mrs. Gower, Mr. Wheeler.

2. Minutes of the 9th Annual General Meeting held on 25.10.83
(previously circulated) were agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising: Mr. Kirkham enquired about Mr. Ledson's
legacy and how the money had been spent. The Chairman replied
that we had looked into the possibility of a seat in the village
but were still concerned about where to site it, possible vandalism
etc. Suggestions to be invited under any other business.

4. Hon. Secretary's Report (Mrs. S. Lewis).:-

During the year since the last A.G.M. there have been 7 members'
meetings in the Gateacre Chapel Hall and two very successful outings -

29th Nov. The sources of Liverpool's Classical Architecture by
Janet B. Gnosspelius B. Arch.

24th Jan. Memories of Gateacre 50 years ago by Dr. C. W. Warner
F.R.C.G.P.

21st Feb. Norman sculpture in Herefordshire Churches by J. Dewsnap
B.A.

20th March. Roses in the North West by R. D. Squires, President of
the Royal National Rose Society.

1st May. Visit to Norton Priory.

30th May. Guided tour of Liverpool's two Cathedrals by Professor
J. N. Tarn.

26th June. Behind the scenes at the Museum by Mr. R. Wadsworth.

24th July. Isambard Kingdom Brunel F.R.S. by Harry Gascoigne Arthur.

26th Sept. Merseyside Maritime Museum by Dr. A. J. Scarth.

The Committee has met 7 times, 3 Newsletters and 6 Notices have been
circulated to members.

The Society's fund raising Jumble Sale, organised by Mrs. McKenzie
was held on the 19th May resulting in a profit of about £150.

Litter in our streets seemed to be the chief concern of members at
last year's A.G.M. when we had with us Mrs. Brookfield from the Dept.
of Environmental Health. She said she would do all she could to
help with this problem and mentioned 'Operation Spadework'. We
managed to get some rubbish removed from the central reservation
in Blackwood Avenue, with the help of Mr. Williams in the Corpora-
tion Offices in Woolton, but otherwise it is felt that things are
somewhat worse rather than better.

The Society's Work during the Year.

Each week we receive and check planning applications for our area,
and are constantly in touch with the Planning Dept. &/or the
applicants regarding any proposals which we feel would be better

for modification or indeed refusal.

The first application was one for a Wine Bar on the corner of Gateacre Brow and Halewood Road. We wrote supporting the C.P.C. against this proposal which was subsequently refused.

The refurbishment of the Conservative Club was worrying us last year. We had discussions with the Club and with Mr. Moscardini, the Deputy City Planning Officer and it is hoped that a much improved scheme will result. There was a further application to extend these premises into the garden of No. 19 Belle Vale Road and we attended a site meeting there on the 6th Sept. putting forward our objections. This application was later refused.

We wrote to the D.O.E. asking for the urgent listing of Oakfield Terrace (in December) and had the usual reply - asking for photographs - which we had already sent. We have now taken to sending them xerox copies of photographs as well as the originals, so that they have some to play with.

On the 29th Dec. and the 4th Feb. the Merseyside Conservation Volunteers, under the supervision of Mr. Ray Kirkham, cleaned up the land at York Cottages, filling 2 skips provided free by the Corporation. Since then we have been pressing M.I.H., the owners of the land, for action on their part. We understand the Directors have allocated £2,500 to be spent here under the charge of their new landscape architect Christine Darbyshire.

In January we were asked by the Civic Trust for our views on disbanding the Merseyside County Council. We wrote saying that while we had not been happy at the time of the 1974 re-organisation, to do away with it for something unknown would probably lead to additional expenditure rather than saving.

At last in January we achieved capping stones on the low wall outside the Midland Bank, but in February we had a telephone call from the Manager asking for our reaction to replacing the Bank's black vertical timbers with sheet glass, as they had decayed. We said we would be most unhappy and thought the Planning Office would be too. Mr Harrocks asked for a letter to send to his Property Dept. which we sent with suggestions for overcoming their difficulties.

Since the opening of the Chez Philippe Disco residents have been subjected to a great deal of noisy disturbance in the early hours and sometimes vandalism has occurred. Mrs. Bee has organised a petition, and we intend opposing the renewal of the public entertainment licence when it comes up before the committee on the 16th November.

We wrote to the City and County Engineers in April asking for a zebra crossing in Halewood Road, opposite Out Lane; unfortunately we have been told that there are insufficient people crossing to justify this. Now we are trying for a lolly-pop lady.

We had discussion with the P.O. about the proposed development at McHeile's yard in Sandfield Road, withdrawing our objections to the amended scheme. This work has not yet started.

The Secretary and Membership Secretary were in touch with the P.O. about the number of signs which had been left on the Riding School after its conversion. It took a long time but they have now all been removed except for one 'For Sale' notice.

In May we had a letter from the architects Cassidy Ashton Partnership of Preston. This firm had been entrusted with the re-survey of Liverpool's Buildings of Architectural & Historic Interest. We felt that a number of local buildings had been overlooked, and we took their representative Miss Bird round Woolton and Gateacre just over one week ago.

In June there was a proposal to sell off the playing fields at S.F.X. in Beconsfield Road for housing; we felt that it would be wrong to sacrifice still more open space for housing and particularly short-sighted where a school was concerned, and were very glad to hear that this application had been turned down.

Also in June was an application to convert the stables at the

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 near Staff into a restaurant. Having made sure that the stables were not as old as we thought they might have been, we made a photographic record and raised no objection. Then in August the owners, Grenall Whitley & Co., were asking for permission to turn the bowling green into a car park. We felt very strongly that we must save this if possible, so again a petition was raised, letters were written and the bowling club alerted. On the 10th October we attended a committee meeting of the Building & Development Control sub-committee together with members of the Chapel, residents who overlooked the site and the Chairman of the bowling club. One of our members, who is a solicitor, spoke on our behalf and suggested a compromise solution - this was agreed to by the Chairman and a decision on the application has now been deferred.

We had a letter from Mr. Hughes, the veterinary surgeon in Halewood Road, suggesting that we run a competition in the village for the most attractive business premises. We thought this an excellent idea and have decided to announce it early in the Spring.

In July there was an application by the Gateacre Hall Hotel to build a disco behind their listed building, in the Nook. We were asked for our help by residents who lived in the Nook and readily agreed. Many individual letters were written, apart from the Society and on the 10th September this application was refused.

We were delighted when we found in early July that the City Estates Surveyor's Department had replaced the lamp bracket on the gate pier of Oakfield School, and we wrote to thank him. This is one of the buildings we are hoping will soon be listed.

At the beginning of September we learnt of a proposal to build a bungalow in part of the garden of Knotty Cross. Members may remember we and the Woolton Society successfully resisted an application to build a block of flats here last year. We suggested that the new owner be asked to rehabilitate Knotty Cross itself before starting any new building and this, we think, was done, as the residents say a great deal of work has already taken place.

The last application to give cause for concern is one from the Felt Factory for a further extension. This will mean the demolition of 20 Halewood Road, and a great loss of amenity to No. 18. We have written to the Planning Office and will attend the Committee meeting on the 5th Nov.

Our committee decided that it was time to have another Publicity Leaflet as, unbelievably, some people in Gateacre have never heard about us. Mr. Chitty produced the leaflets and had them printed and members of the committee have been very busy spreading 3,000 over the area. We hope that the result will be a larger number of members.

The Local History Unit. We have given help and supplied maps to about 1 dozen children from schools reaching from Halewood to West Derby, also to a student on a course with Recreation & Open Spaces who is doing a project on the Black Wood.

We had an inquiry from St. Albans about the Duttons who were at the Lee in the last century, and a visit from a lady from Leeds whose Grandparents, the Sedgwicks, used to live at Grange Farm. She kindly added some new old photographs to our collection.

Miss Borrowdale has been recording the census returns and we have these complete from 1841 to 1881 for anyone who wishes to consult them. She has also started calendaring the L.W.L.B. minutes, held by the Record Office in the Central Library.

Miss Gnosspelius and I have almost finished the survey of the Chapel Graveyard. This was made possible with the help of Mr. Kirkham and an assistant who cleared 6 gravestones of earth which had been left by the masons who rebuilt the wall. A copy of this survey will be sent to the Lancashire Parish Register Society as soon as it is completed.

We have copies of nearly all the C16. & C17. wills and inventories for people living in Little Woolton; and with these, and the Manor Court Rolls and other documents are gradually building up a picture of life in the area since Domesday which, one day, will turn into a fascinating book.

We have recently received a report from Mr. Cowell, the County Field Archaeologist, on the archaeological potential of Little Woolton. Copies of this can be made available to anyone who would like one.

Copies of Newsletters have been exchanged with our fellow societies - Woolton, Invertree, West Derby, St. Michaels, and Wallasey, and we have to announce sadly the deaths of Arthur McKay who founded the St. Michael Society and Bert Simpson the Chairman of the West Derby Society.

In our own committee there have been changes - Miss Beswick left us half way through the year but happily continues with her work of stamping, folding, labelling and handing out our communications to the deliverers. Mrs. Bee has resigned as Membership Secretary after seven years excellent work, and we would like to record our thanks to her and her family for all they do for the Society. In April our Treasurer took off for a six months holiday in Europe leaving her job in the capable hands of Miss Gnosspelius to whom we owe thanks for keeping our financial affairs in order, and this year we have been asked by Mr. Brakell to accept his resignation as Vice-Chairman after serving us well first as Chairman from 1976 - 1980 and since then as Vice-Chairman. We are sorry to lose him from the committee but have been assured of his continued support and interest. Lastly, I want to thank the Chairman for his very welcome guidance, the committee for all the work they do for the Society, and indeed all the members, those who give up some of their time to help us and indeed all who help by just being members because without members there could be no Gateacre Society.

5. Hon. Treasurer's Report (Miss J. Gnosspelius).

Our real Treasurer has been away since mid-April. I became Assistant Hon. Treasurer on Friday the 13th: Elaine Heywood came back to us last night - so this report is also a handing-back-to-the-Treasurer of the financial affairs of the Society. I hope that if anything is not clear, or if I have made mistakes, Miss Heywood and I will have a dialogue here and now - and that you will join in.

We have had a 'healthy' financial year - our money assets when I drew up the Receipts and Payments Account - now before you - yesterday are just a bit more than at the last A.G.M.

The amount of Subscriptions is down by over £30, and Donations are also less than last year. Receipts from our annual Jumble Sale are also rather less than last year. On the other hand among our fringe activities we have sold more of other people's publications than last year, and are doing useful business with tea towels. Our excursion to Horton Priory broke exactly even - if the Hon. Secretary and I had been a little more experienced we ought to have made a pound or two profit from it.

Turning to payments, we have spent marginally less on Postage, but a good deal more on Printing and Stationery, largely because of the £55 cost of 3,000 publicity leaflets for distribution to non-members in our area. Subscriptions to other bodies look increased, but this is an oddity of book-keeping; Donations this year include £20 to the Liverpool Buildings Preservation Trust and £35 to the Conservation Volunteers in appreciation of work in Gateacre. We have been more generous to our Speakers this year. The sum of £77 for Photographs and Xeroxes covers the cost of the splendid collection of 16th and 17th Century Little Woolton Wills and Inventories that the Hon. Secretary is building up; the sure foundation for those chapters of the History of Little Woolton yet to be written - as well as the usual recording work of the Society and Gateacre, done by camera. You will see 362.50 described as 'Purchase of Tea Towels' - this should not simply be set against or beside receipts for their sale - there are still many in stock; and these minor trading activities go on from year to year, so do not 'balance' - but we do aim to further the objectives of the Society by the "stimulation of public interest in Gateacre" through them.

These accounts have not been audited - it is our practice to have that done after the A.G.M. and then submit them to the Charity Commissioners - and for that Miss Heywood will, I hope, be responsible.

I would like to thank the Society and Elaine for this opportunity to measure up as Treasurer for a half-year, and to pay tribute to the analysis book which is the basis of her system. I have never 'struck a balance' before last night; it came out 'right' with a click at only the third attempt and leaves me with a profound mistrust of my own figures.

6. Membership Secretary's Report.

Number of members, 313. Mrs. Bee gave her retiring speech, thanking the committee and members and saying that she had enjoyed the work. The Chairman thanked Mrs. Bee and her family for the hard work they had done for the society. Mrs. Bee is retiring from this post but remaining on the committee. Best wishes expressed to Miss Lythgoe who is taking over the job.

7. Chairman's Remarks.

The Chairman described the society's work over the last twelve months as being concentrated on presentation, consolidation, publicity and conservation. Liverpool city has faced many problems and changes causing stress and financial problems. The society had worked within these limits to the best of its ability. Preservation of the village's way of life - e.g. monitoring applications for a disco in Belle Vale Road, restaurant extension at the Bear & Staff - the society had ensured that local opinion would be considered. Leaflets had been produced to publicise the society's activities and it is obvious that the society is now a force to be reckoned with in many circles, e.g. local planners ask our advice before making applications, not after.

The Chairman thanked the Secretary for her continued hard work, the Vice-Chairman (now unfortunately to retire on the grounds of ill-health), the Acting Treasurer for taking over during the Treasurer's absence, the committee and the membership for their continuing support.

7. Election of Officers

Nominations:	Chairman:	Mr. G. A. McCann	Agreed nem. con.
	Vice-Chairman:	Mr. L. Wheeler	" " "
	Secretary:	Mrs. S. Lewis	" " "
	Treasurer:	Miss E. Heyworth	" " "

8. Election of Committee

Mr. Chitty, Miss Borrowscale, Miss Doyle, Mrs. Roberts, Miss Gnosspelius, Mr. Shepherd, Miss Lythgoe, Mrs. McKenzie, Mrs. Bee plus 2 new members Mrs. Cohen and Mrs Myles. Agreed nem. con.

9. Any Other Business:

a. Mr. Ledson's bequest discussed. Suggested sites - Gateacre Green, Smithy Tuckshop, Sandfield Road, half way up the Brow (Dawson's shop), York Cottages (not likely to be possible because the land is private). A possible design for a seat had been found and would not be costed.

b. Mrs. Brookfield, Environmental Health, had spoken to Mrs. Lewis. She apologised for not doing as much as she had hoped for Gateacre because of internal politics. She invited members to write in re any litter problems etc. and offered the use of a bottle bank. Possible sites to be looked into by the committee.

c. One of the Gateacre signs needs straightening - Council to be informed.

d. Attention drawn to the entry from South Station Road/Beechhurst Road to the schools - it is extremely dirty, covered in rubbish. Committee will write to the Council and also suggested that residents write or send a petition.

e. It was asked if St. Stephen's Church could be stone cleaned like other buildings in Liverpool

f. Attention drawn to the state of the gutters and gullies and the recent flooding.

g. Pedestrian traffic lights at the crossroads. Although these had been installed only recently, pedestrians were still having trouble as the lights only allowed people to cross Belle Vale Road and the Brow on the green man. Society has written but no satisfactory reply as yet. Also there is no audible signal for people with poor sight

- h. Disused railway - still problems with motorbikes. As yet the Council has taken no action to improve the situation for nearby residents.
- i. It was asked if it was appropriate for the society to write and ask that St. George's Hall be kept in good order and in use. The committee will write and it was suggested that individuals also write.
- j. Mrs. Bee asked interested people to sign a petition to protest against the Chez Philippe's disco licence being renewed as it resulted in a lot of disturbance for local residents.
- k. Church cottages renovation - what is happening? No news since initial work last year.
- l. The footpath by the Post Office is very narrow, so people often had to step into the busy road. Could the Council do anything to widen it? As the road is very narrow here, it was felt that unfortunately nothing could be done.
10. The meeting was declared closed at 9.15 p.m. Subscriptions for the new year were invited.