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THE GATEACRE SOCIETY
Registered with the North West Civic Trust

CHAIRMAN: Mr Anthony McCann, Our Lady's School,
Hedgefield Road Tel: 487.9301
HON. SEC: Mr M R Chitty,
16, Chartmount Way Tel: 428.7801

NEXT MEETING

Mr M. KING

Mr King is our new Conservation Officer. He has previously worked for the Council in Sefton, and in Manchester for the Civic Trust. We are very fortunate to have some one with his experience speaking to us. It is hoped that all who can will come and listen to him; it will be to our benefit.

Tuesday 5th MAY 1987 at 8.00pm

VENUE - Gateacre Institute, Grange Lane.
Visitors welcome 25p

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Articles, comments, and information about local events, will be gratefully received.

Deadlines: News-sheets - 7th of the month prior
Newsletter - 7th July.

Please forward to the Editor, Rev DM Roberts,
23 Belle Vale Road, Gateacre, L25 2PY

Thanks to all contributors. DMR 20.4.87

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

HEAVY LORRIES

In January we had complaints of an increase in lorry traffic along Belle Vale Road, arising from earthmoving operations at the new Asda site in Speke. We wrote to the company concerned reminding them of the 3 ton weight limit, and since then there have been no further reports of their lorries passing through the village.

LEE VALE ROAD/KINGS DRIVE

In January we lodged an objection to the proposed public-house on the site of the former Housing Maintenance Dept.

(STOP PRESS - Application refused).

The site forms part of the Merseyside Green Belt, and we also felt that a pub in this location would give rise to traffic, noise and other problems. We have put in a plea for the existing dereliction on the site to be cleared away as soon as possible.

MERSEYSIDE ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

M.E.T. is a new organisation launched last year to bring together people interested in safeguarding and improving the local environment. Its Chairman is Prof. Bradshaw who spoke to us in February about Urban Trees. The Gateacre Society has become a corporate member of the Trust and members will be eligible to take part in its meetings and activities.

HALEWOOD ROAD

An objection to the plan to convert the present Lindsey Fletcher florists shop into an Italian take-away and pizza delivery service has been submitted on behalf of the Society. Although the applicant assured us that his proposal is "nothing like a fish and chip shop" there is, unfortunately, no guarantee that the premises would not become a problem at some future date if planning permission were to be granted.

MRS ELIZABETH SCARLAND

Mrs Scarland has for many years been the North West Civic Trust's representative in Liverpool. She has been a regular source of friendly advice and encouragement to local societies like ours. Unfortunately the N.W.C.T. decided to retire her - and close down the Liverpool office - in November last. Discussions are in progress with a view to setting up some kind of Federation of societies to take over the NWCT office's former role.

CONSERVATIVE CLUB

In January we lodged an objection to the plan for a further extension of the Club's premises, and asked that the previous proposal to improve the appearance of the building should be put into effect as soon as possible. Planning permission for the extension has, however, now been granted.

LAND NEAR BELLE VALE SHOPS

Spring is here and it is good to see all the bulbs coming into bloom around Belle Vale Shopping centre. We feel that this initiative by the owners of the Centre deserves to be matched by the City Council, whose current efforts to tidy up the car park, Belle Vale Park and nearby areas seem to be non-existent. The state of the land between Besford Road and the old railway embankment is also a disgrace, and we have sent details of it to the Civic Trust as our contribution to the Urban Wasteland Survey. We are meanwhile, pressing the City Solicitor for urgent action.

SANDSTONE WALL IN GATEACRE BROW

A coping-stone has been dislodged by a tree branch and appears to be threatening the safety of passers-by half way up the Brow. We have reported the matter to the City Planning Officer, as the wall forms part of the Gateacre Village Conservation Area.

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MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

A rather poorly attended meeting on Tuesday 17th February heard a most interesting and enlightening talk with slides by Professor Tony Bradshaw FRs, Chairman of the Merseyside Environmental Trust, which is an alliance of Public, private and Community organisations and individuals showing a concern for our outdoor environment.

The talk opened about our green spaces, such as Parks, derelict sites etc, and how we have to fight for the spaces to ensure that they are not eroded by planners, Councils, etc who want to build on these sites.

A meeting was held in Liverpool some few years ago called "Green Towns & Cities" with representatives from all over the world, especially the USA. They visited various Parks in the area such as Sefton Park and Birkenhead Park. In fact Central Park, in New York, was modelled on Birkenhead Park.

As usual, money is a problem and that is why Prof Bradshaw and the committee of MET is trying to get every caring person, Housing Associations, Chamber of Commerce and so on to get together in preserving what we have, and extending the green areas by land reclamation.

After this talk slides were shown of waste land set aside for open spaces but with nothing done except the area levelled and left with bricks and rubbish, and then no one to look after it. Sample areas were further levelled, given fertilizer and then seeded. Such areas can be seen in the vicinity of the University.

Trees were also discussed, with the problem of "Tree Death". This is not always vandalism, in fact one quarter of the dead trees we see around our City are due to planting in soil/rubble with no nutrient added at the time of planting. Also another cause of tree death is lack of maintenance after trees are planted, such as problems of tree stakes breaking off at

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MARCH

The meeting of the 17th March was an evening of nostalgia, a talk given by Mr Gahan on Liverpool Tramways.

The tram was an American Invention, by a Francis Train in 1835.

Birkenhead had its first tram in 1860, followed in 1861 by Liverpool with the rails built above the road!

In 1897 the Corporation took over from a private firm which ran horse drawn trams from 1868.

The first electric tram was in 1898, a single decker built in Hamburg, complete with trailer, and lasted some five years.

Liverpool then had American Cars called "Philadelphia Cars" which had open trailers for smokers.

In 1900 electric trams ran from Lambeth Road depot in colours of red and cream, with the driver in open front.

Early in 1900 came the first covered top deck, with a few trams for 1st class passengers, painted white. The fare cost 2d. extra and they were fitted with carpets, curtains, etc.

1914 - larger trams with stairs either end but still open deck.

1924 - Top decks were enclosed.

1927 - Windscreens fitted for comfort of driver.

1933 - Separate cabin for drivers, "Green Goddess" trams

1935 - Some single deck trams for use under Mersey Tunnel.

1936 - Further radical improvements, rounded front trams called "Baby Grands", 8-wheeled. About this time buses were introduced on some routes, with 27 miles of reserved tracks for trams only (Menlove Avenue, etc).

1957 - The last tram 1897 - 1957 6A.

THE ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY HAS HER SAY :

RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS not mentioned:

34 Gateacre Brow, 2-storey extension - refused.
42 Gateacre Brow. Concerned to see the applcn for demolition. This Georgian house built pre-1840, within the curtilage of the Felt Factory, "listed" and very much a part of the streetscape of the Village Conservation Area needs your help. Please write to City Planning Officer, 25 The Strand L2, objecting to this application.

ENVIRONMENT WEEK 25th April to 3rd May

On SATURDAY 2nd MAY there will be a combined Gateacre/Woolton Societies ARCHITECTURAL WALK through Woolton Park. Our guides will be John Dawsnap BA of the Victorian Society and Janet Gnosspelius B.Arch. They will discuss the architecture we see and tell us about the people who were building. We will meet at 2.00pm at the Church Road entrance to the Park and a cup of tea on the way is being arranged with a small charge. As usual notes will be provided free to members present and the walk will take place wet or fine! Numbers will be limited (15 from each Society). Ring Mrs Lewis 428.3571 asap

In welcoming the new POST OFFICE we report extracts from Local Board meeting of 2nd Feb 1891 - "Plans..corner of Belle Vale Rd..Butchers shop dwelling houses/slaughter houses..Site inspected ..the ground..in front of shop had been given up and dedicated to the public and had been crossed by the public for many years. Resolved - Board unable to consent to erection of any building in advance of any line of the present front wall."

GATEACRE CHAPEL - One of the oldest buildings in village facing large bill for dry-rot; holding GARDEN PARTY Sat. 16th May at 2.00, to be opened by Diane Poulson (Mrs Tim Brakell). Support appreciated. Tckt 20p with free draw. 428.2712

JUMBLE SALE - Date unknown, but please save.

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LEE PARK NEWS

Householders and tenants of Westbrook Road, Lulworth Road and Lee Park Avenue on the Lee Park estate are up in arms over the dumping of hundreds of tons of hardcore and soil on the waste ground enclosed by these roads. A hill has been created about 10ft high which runs the length of the field. This of course means that peeping-toms and would-be burglars can, not only see into the down stairs rooms, but into the bedrooms also!

Rumour has it that the site is to be landscaped, but if so, will it be maintained? Cynics have it that the site was used as a dump for the spoil, from the Asda site under construction on Speke Hall Road. Needless to say the householders and tenants were not consulted as to what use this site would be put to, and it is known for a fact that the site was scheduled for the building of Pensioners Flats and maisonettes over ten years ago, surely it would have been more intelligent to have gone through with this building programme as there is a desperate shortage of this type of accommodation? A petition objecting to the desecration of this site has been sent to the Council. One thing for sure, it will cost an awful lot of money to return the site to its original state.

DISUSED LOOPLINE, HALEWOOD TO AINTREE

There appears to be a definite possibility that this Loopline will be purchased by a private Company, who have indicated their desire to liaise with various bodies who are concerned with Conservation and Recreation with a view to developing the line as a Linear Park Nature Trail, and Cycle track, etc.

Merseyside Environmental Trust has formed a sub-committee to serve on the Management Team. Representatives from the Merseyside Cycling Campaign are also involved. Whether in the future people will be able to walk from Halewood to Southport remains as yet to be seen.

Ray Kirkham

BACK PAGE CONTINUATION....

SECRETARY..LISTED BUILDINGS, CONSERVATION AREAS AND TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS - Most properties in and around Gateacre Village come under one or more of these headings, all of which impose restrictions on what owners and occupiers can do to their buildings, land or trees. We are preparing a leaflet explaining what the various terms mean and who is affected by them locally. We hope to deliver these throughout the area during May.

NEWS OF OTHER SOCIETIES - Congratulations to the Wavertree Society on their 10th anniversary next month. They are planning a celebratory revival of the old Wavertree Wakes Fair on Saturday 16th May. Two days later, on Monday 18th May, the Sefton Park Civic Society have an illustrated talk by Mr Ron Jones on theme of "Liverpool's American Connections", and have specifically invited our members to attend. The talk starts at 7.30 (50p admission including refreshments) and is in church hall to rear of 1 Linnet Lane.

FEB MEETING..the base, the ties used to hold the tree to the stake are not loosened and the tree is strangled. Tree guards are too small and the tree "grows" into them, so cutting off the supply of water. Also, many of the trees are of poor quality and practically dead when planted.

Finally, Prof Bradshaw told us this is "European Year of Environment" (as if we did not know!) and he wants to get everyone involved, including YOU as well as Industry, Councils etc.

So come on Gateacre Society members, don't just complain about our environment, do something positive and tell your Committee. HG

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY..COACH TRIP TO WORCESTER arranged by Woolton Society on June 16th, from Woolton 9.30am. Cost £6.00 including visit to Royal Worcester china factory. E Mooney 428.1764
EVENING OUTING Wed 17th June to Pilkington Glass Museum, St Helens. Leave 6.43 Midland Bank, back 9.30. Cost £1.00 incl. Tkts Mrs Cohen 428.5442