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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

Tuesday 10th NOVEMBER 1987 at 8.00pm
THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
For full details and Agenda see back pages

Tuesday 24th NOVEMBER 1987 at 8.00pm
Mr R Capper of the Huyton Historic Society

VENUE for both - Gateacre Institute, Grange Lane
Visitors welcome 25p

NB. Saturday 21st NOVEMBER 1987 at 2.00pm
JUMBLE SALE
with preparation Friday 20th at 7.30
Goods needed, and helpers on both occasions
Venue - Gateacre Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road

*** NO Meeting in December ***
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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 April 1988
Please forward to Rev DM Roberts,
23 Belle Vale Road, Gateacre, L25 2PY

Thanks to all contributors. DMR 10.10.87

Mr King introduced himself as someone who had grown up among the old buildings of Chester, begun practising as an architect using industrialised building techniques in the early '60s, then joined the Civic Trust for the North West and now works for Liverpool City Council as their Conservation Officer. He reviewed the relevant legislation, explaining how it had been tightened up; so Conservation Areas (originally just 'lines on a map') now have controls attached, and buildings only 30 years old are now eligible for 'listing'. He reminded members that Liverpool now has more Listed Buildings than any of the 'historic towns' of Britain (Chester, York, etc), or any of the industrial cities (Manchester, Leeds, etc). But the city doesn't have the resources to cope.

English Heritage - the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, funded by the Government - is now the main source of finance for conservation work in Liverpool. The Civic Trust no longer gives grants, the County Council has been abolished, and the City chooses to concentrate its spending on the designated housing priority areas. And English Heritage will only assist in the Canning Street, Princes Park and Sefton Park Conservation Areas at present.

Mr King then showed a selection of slides, mainly illustrating cases he had encountered in his previous post with Sefton Council. He highlighted the problems of natural decay - sometimes exacerbated by ignorance, eg. the application of plastic emulsion paint to church walls causing dry rot - sheer neglect, and the gradual loss of character caused by building with the wrong materials, to the wrong scale, or by putting up modern signboards. There were, though, some encouraging signs; the old skills

are not quite dead (he had found firms capable of producing decorative ironwork and craftsmen capable of tackling masonry, joinery and pointing to traditional standards) but they need searching out. Property owners need persuading that it is worth the effort; and that it can actually be cheaper than using modern substitutes.

Mr King then invited questions from the audience. Are any grants available for Gateacre Chapel? Answer: No, the City Council hasn't had a budget for conservation grants for some time now, and the Government will only aid Grade 1 and '2 starred' buildings. What about the future of St Georges Hall? Answer: 'That's the least of my problems' because so many other people are concerned about it. The main worry in Liverpool is over the ordinary Grade 2 listed buildings in the old villages and the city centre.

As a final thought, Mr King expressed the hope that conservation in Liverpool could become non-controversial politically, as it is in towns like Norwich where several departments of the Council (including housing, education and tourism) are all actively involved. He encouraged the Gateacre Society and others like them to keep the arguments for conservation in the public eye; and more especially in the minds of the next generation. MRC

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GATEACRE TEA TOWELS

We still have a few left and they make excellent small presents - price £1.45 from Mrs Lewis, Grange Lodge, Grange Lane.

RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

B7P/1743 1 QUICKSWOOD GREEN - To erect utility room, new snug and alter existing bathroom.
B7P/1784 WEST END MOTORS, Grange Lane - To install jet spray car wash machine.

PILKINGTON GLASS MUSEUM

Wednesday 17th June saw an evening visit to the Pilkington Glass Museum at St Helens by twenty four members and their friends.

The museum is housed on two floors in a building which is part of the Pilkington Head Office, a complex of modern design which was opened in 1964. One could not help thinking that the Minister for the Environment must wish that many other offices and factories gave as much attention to their layout. The waterside position with immaculately kept lawns and flower beds is a credit to the company.

In the museum itself we were able to see static displays showing the complete history of glass from its beginnings in the first century AD to the present time. In addition there were holograms, a submarine periscope, distorting mirrors and many other items to educate and amuse.

The highlight of the evening, however, was a demonstration of the making of complex scientific glassware by hand by a master craftsman (one of only two hundred and forty in the United Kingdom). In addition to his most interesting talk whilst demonstrating, he answered many questions from his fascinated audience.

The only disappointment of the evening was the fact that so few members had supported the Society in what was such a memorable visit. JC

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PAINTING COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION - part of a new campaign to change the image of the North West. Open to anyone over 18 years, entrants are invited to submit one watercolour which depicts contemporary landscape and celebrates the many beautiful aspects of the region. Entry forms (large SAE) from Alison Riley, Coloroll Group plc, 1 King Street, Manchester M2 6AW.

You will know Speke Hall, and many will have been round it. Now run by the National Trust, improvements have been made, so it is well worth another visit. However, this talk was by the nature of an "on the spot" story, as Mr Watmore had lived in the Hall for 20 years, since a boy of 6 years old, so we had inside information.

The first record of Speke was in 1086 in the Domesday Book. It was a Manor owned by the Molyneux family 100 years later, and then the Norris family from the 14th Century. Between 1506 and 1524 the Hall was developed as a 'U' shape. By 1600 the north side was built to complete the square, and the two Yew trees were planted. In 1797 the Hall was purchased by Richard Watt for £75,500 including the whole estate. He made his money in Jamaica and had £500,000 when he bought Speke Hall. It stayed in his family for four generations.

Mr Watmore's father went to Speke Hall in 1920, as Butler to Miss Watt. When she died the house was left in trust. In 1926 the Trustees said that all the inside staff must go, but kept outside staff until they died or retired.

The Watmores moved in as a family in 1926 and had the use of kitchen, butler's pantry, blue drawing room (used as a lounge/sitting room, with its William Morris wallpaper) and the servants' bedrooms. A water tank in the yard was filled by the Speke dams. The old chapel was turned into a servants hall in 1650 and remained so. In the kitchen the old range was replaced in 1917 and until 1933 was the only means of cooking. Electric light came in 1935.

The kitchen table was about the size of a table tennis table and Mr Watmore and his brother used it as such, and that table is still there. Miss Watt's invalid carriage was used by the boys as a chariot! (This carriage is now in the Liverpool Museum). The cobblestoned yard was put in in Mr Watmore's time.

This is only a brief outline and a visit to Speke Hall will give you all the information.

BEACONSFIELD WALK

On 15th September we welcomed Miss Grosspelius as our speaker and had a good audience for our walk-with-slides down Beaconsfield Road. We were introduced to early maps of the area, previously common grazing land before the 1813 enclosures. In 1816 Sheriff mapped just two houses - John Okill's High Lee on the north side (now demolished) and Mr Ross perhaps at Knolle Park, but called Rose Mount on Hennet's map of 1830. By 1835 Bennison also showed Beaconsfield and Newstead but it was not until the 25" O.S. of 1891 that all the houses were plotted.

First we looked at Knolle Park possibly built c.1828 for Thomas Foster, town clerk of Liverpool and maybe designed by his brother John although the capitals on the columns are less scholarly than would be expected from this architect. Then we crossed the road to Beaconsfield (demolished 1933), a large Tudorish sort of house compared with the classical Knolle Park. Built for Ambrose Lace, solicitor in 1833 bought by Charles Mozely in 1861 and sold, owing to his bankruptcy, in 1867 to Daniel James, merchant. Next we saw the very attractive coachman's house with all its Gothick leitmotifs - dripstones, mullions, ogee arch etc. then on to 35 & 37 the lodge and gardener's cottage which, though gothicised by Ambrose Lace show a earlier origin in the round headed window to the west.

Stoneleigh, known as 'Fortfield House' when built in 1858/9 for Barton Wrigley Esquire. Beautifully built of Woolton stone with monolith columns and meticulous stonework visible in the quoins and the quality of the joints. We saw a photograph of High Lee built c.1868 for David Jardine, timber broker and director of Cunard Steamship Co. - a High Victorian house with elaborate barge boards now demolished.

To be continued

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED !

Members who attended the last AGM will know that the Committee was reorganised last year in order to involve more people in the Society's administration. After 12 years as Hon. Secretary, Sylvia Lewis took on the new post of Assistant Secretary (Environment), responsible for the inspection of local planning applications, etc. Daphne Roberts took over from her the production of the Newsletter and notices about meetings. And Michael Chitty took on the title of Hon. Secretary but with a more limited range of responsibilities than had been the case in the past; basically acting as the Society's official point of contact with outside bodies, sending and receiving correspondence, and preparing Committee agendas.

Owing to work and family commitments, Michael Chitty finds it impossible to continue as Hon. Sec., and we are therefore urgently looking for a replacement. Joan Cohen - who has done a magnificent job for the past two years in organising the Society's programme of talks and visits - is also standing down as Assistant Sec. (Public Relations). Please, therefore, consider whether you could spare the time to play a more active part in the running of YOUR Society by taking on one of these posts; or simply by helping out as an Ordinary member of the Committee. Mr Chitty (428.7801) or Mrs Cohen (428.5442) will be pleased to discuss the duties involved with anyone at all interested - or who knows someone else who may be!

JUMBLE SALE - at last we are able to have this event to boost the Society funds. It will be held in the Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road on SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21st at 2.00pm. Items for sale are needed, especially household goods and toys for Christmas. We need helpers on the day too please - if you can spare an hour from 2-3pm please ring Mrs Lewis 428.3671, or a Comm member

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the
Thirteenth Annual General Meeting
of the Gateacre Society
will be held on

TUESDAY 10th NOVEMBER 1987 at 8.00pm,

in the Gateacre Institute, Grange Lane, L25.

The AGENDA will be as follows :-

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the
twelfth Annual General Meeting held 21.10.86
3. Hon. Secretary's Report
4. Hon. Treasurer's Report
5. Membership Secretary's Report
6. Chairman's Remarks
7. Election of Officers :
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Vice-Chairman
 - c. Hon. Secretary
 - d. Hon. Treasurer
 - e. Assistant Sec. (Environment)
 - f. Membership Secretary
8. Election of ordinary Committee Members.
9. Any Other Business

All Officers and Committee Members retire each
year but are eligible for re-election.

NOMINATION FORMS are available from the Hon.
Secretary now and at the meeting.

NB: SUBSCRIPTIONS are due from 1st November.