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THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

The Honorary Secretary's Report for the year 1990/91.

LIVERPOOL
CITY LIBRARIES

20 JAN 1992

During the year eight Members meetings have been held :-

19th November 1990	The Mersey, a living system"	David Holland
26th February 1991	"A Glasgow Childhood"	Patricia McKinnon Day
26th March 1991	"Aerial Archaeology"	Michael Royden
30th April 1991	"Chemicals in the Environment"	Dr. Alan Tully
21st May 1991	"Dowsing or Divining"	L.M. Shepherd L.R.P.S.
18th June 1991	"Liverpool today & tomorrow"	Marie Crawford
23rd July 1991	"A walk around Little Crosby"	Bob Wright
24th September 1991	"Think you know your Merseyside"	Fred. Camenisch

Eight Committee Meetings have been held at the Gateacre Institute for which our grateful thanks go to their Chairman and Committee. Nine Newsletters have been circulated, these have been printed by the Rev. Daphne Roberts (the last two typeset by Bill Whiteside). They have been folded, labelled and distributed to our deliverers by Miss Phyllis Howie, to all go our very sincere thanks. We would like to thank Mrs. Lothian particularly for booking such interesting speakers in the early part of the year.

Shortly after the A.G.M. last October we heard that the application to build a 32 bedroom hotel at Grange Manor had been refused, and another application to which we had objected, to build a house in the garden of Knotty Cross, had also been refused. We wrote to the City Planning Officer welcoming the application to convert the former Midland Bank building on Gateacre Brow into a Health Centre and visited the Architect with suggested amendments to the scheme to retain more of the character of the building. These were accepted and incorporated into his design.

On the 14th January work started on improvements to the Recreation Ground as part of the Liverpool Loop Line Nature Park. In the same month we wrote to Environmental Health asking for 5 more litter bins in Grange Lane - we only received 1, but understand there is now a possibility of obtaining more.

We were asked for help by the parents of children at Oakfield Special School threatened with closure. The house was built in 1865 for Elkanah Healey, a Liverpool coachbuilder; as it now belongs to the Corporation we feared demolition followed by sale of the land to a developer. We tried to get the house listed by the Department of the Environment, but were unsuccessful. We were unsuccessful too when we opposed the building of a garage at 10 Belle Vale Road, because we felt it interfered with the visual amenity of Elmsvale House.

Also in January we had the two missing Conservation Area Signs replaced by the City Engineers Dept., 1 in Belle Vale Road, and 1 in Grange Lane. Knotty Cross came up again when there was an application for a Day Nursery for 50 children. We objected strongly on the grounds of heavy traffic on Halewood Road and no parking facilities, and we were thankful when this application was refused.

The application for the re-use of the former C. of E. School in Halewood Rd. caused some anxiety, but it was felt that use as flats would generate less traffic than some other possibilities and was preferable to the building becoming derelict.

We are pleased that Mr. L. Collins of Lyndhurst, Mossley Hill is the new owner of Aymestrey Court, and we are delighted that he has removed the 'plumbers paradise' from the front of the house. But we are still worried about the wall and the very fine trees on Acrefield Road.

In April we were successful in having the hours of opening at Grange Manor restricted to 11.0 p.m. by the Councillors on the Licensing Committee - this has made a great improvement in the quality of life for residents living along Grange Lane, but the owner of the chip shop at 103 Gateacre Park Drive has decided to open on Sundays. He was served with an enforcement notice by the City Planning Officer, but he appealed against this and we are now awaiting for a decision from the D.O.E.

Environment Week was from the 11th - 19th May. On the first Saturday we had a stall in Church Street from which we sold books and 'Gateacre' tea towels. In June we had a stall at the Woolton Garden Fete, courtesy of The Woolton Society.

On the 21st May we wrote to the C.P.O. asking for an extension to the Conservation Area to cover Linden Lea, Grange Lodge, and Grange Farm. We enclosed a history of the site dating from 1240 with photographs, but we have had no further news as yet.

In May No. 10 Gateacre Brow became 'Hair by Stephen' and we extend a warm welcome to our new neighbours.

In June we wrote to the C.P.O. opposing an application to build on land in the Green Belt, adjacent to Kelvin Cottage, Wheathill Road (the last house in Little Woolton before you go under the motorway into Knowsley). There was a site visit there on the 16th September attended by several members of our Society, the Woolton Society, and the Merseyside Environmental Trust, the local press. The Development Control Sub-committee refused to grant the application.

We were invited to a meeting held in the Gateacre Chapel, on the 14th June, to discuss the future use of the Chapel Hall in Sandfield Road. A number of useful suggestions were put forward and it is hoped that the Hall will remain a valuable amenity to the life of the village.

Throughout the year we have been keeping a watchful eye on our trees, objecting to the CPO if we have felt any were being threatened. We hear from the Director of Environmental Services at Calderstones that the tree on the pavement outside the Conservative Club must be felled as it is dying back through old age. We will press for a replacement to be planted on the Green.

In July we welcomed our new Conservation Officer, Mrs. Mary King. We wish her great success in a difficult job covering the whole of the City. We hope that she will come and talk to the Society when she has had a chance to settle down in her new job. We have written to her recently about the deteriorating condition of Beaconsfield House which is causing anxiety.

We were glad that the application for a swimming pool at the top house of the three new ones on the La Girelle site, in Oakfield Avenue was refused on the 28th August. We have asked the CPO for a Tree Preservation Order to cover all the trees on the south side of Oakfield Avenue.

Several members complained about the large builders advertisement board left on the pavement outside 36 Halewood Road so we informed the Highways Dept. who had it removed. Another problem is the closure of the public convenience outside the Black Bull - we would like to see it reinstated, but if this proves impossible we must see that the means of closure is more appropriate to its situation alongside a listed building in the centre of the Conservation Area. We have recently asked for the gutters on the Wilson Memorial to be cleared of the grass, and we have been assured this will be done shortly.

There were applications in August from Nos. 5, 7, & 9 Halewood Road to restore their front wrought iron railings and gates, removed during the last war. These houses were built in the 1850s as 6 back-to-backs, and we are delighted at this enhancement of the Conservation Area. We note that work is also in hand at 4 Halewood Road which we hope will also lead to an improvement. We have, once again written to the CPO about the long awaited replacement weather vane on top of Cleggs factory, and at last our new 'Gateacre' sign, designed by Miss Gnosselius, was erected outside Knotty Cross.

Outside our area we have supported the Childwall Society in their successful efforts to protect their listed buildings; We have written to the Merseyside Development Corporation opposing the design of the large, and we fear unsympathetic, building to be erected in a very prominent position at the Queens Dock by Customs and Excise (being a Crown building, this needs no planning permission), and on the 1st July we attended the A.G.M. of the Merseyside Civic Society with whom we are affiliated.

From January this year we have been represented on the Civic Trust by two members of the National Council of Civic Trust Societies - Kathy Fishwick of Rawtenstall and Gill Robinson of Wilmslow. We have filled in questionnaires designed to let them know how our planning office works, and the nature of our particular problems. We attended a Civic Trust Forum in Chester on the 12th March and we have taken part in a Market Research exercise for the Civic Trust held at the Leasowe Castle Hotel on the 6th June.

A year without any great drama, but we think a useful year, at the end of which we hope you feel that perhaps Gateacre is all the better for the Society's presence.

Finally we extend our warm thanks to the Chairman and members of the Committee for all their help during the past year.