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**January  
1992**

**Gateacre  
Society  
Newsletter**



## The Mersey Estuary

**Killed and Cured  
by Mr. Graham Olsen**

In 1846 James Newlands and William Duncan were appointed respectively as Civil Engineer and Medical Officer of Health to Liverpool. Newlands pioneered the construction of underground tunnels and drains which were to carry away sewage which was discharged, untreated into the Mersey.

This it was hoped would eradicate diseases such as cholera, at a time when medical opinion was divided on the cause, and treatment was none existent.

Polluting the river for the sake of public health has been unnecessary for many years; the reverse is probably true. 150 years on, 1996 will mark the completion of a new generation of engineering works designed to give us a sewage free river to which marine life is restored.

Mr. Olsen is a founder member of our Society, he was formerly employed by the City Engineer in Liverpool, and is now working as Group Manager for the North West Water Company based in Warrington.

**Tuesday 21st January 1992  
at 8pm**

**Gateacre Institute, Grange Lane, Gateacre.**

Visitors Welcome.

**Best Wishes and a Happy New Year to all our members**

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|-----------------------|--|
| <b>CHAIRMAN</b>       | <b>Tony McCann O.L.A.School Hedgefield Rd<br/>051 428 9301</b>   |
| <b>HON. SECS</b>      | <b>Joan and Harold Gadd, 59 Hunts Cross Av<br/>051 428 8884</b>  |
| <b>MEMBERSHIP SEC</b> | <b>Mrs. Beryl Plent 27 Grange Lane Gateacre<br/>051 428 5379</b> |

## SPEKE HALL

"Hands On" experience.

In 1986 the National Trust took over responsibility for Speke Hall and appointed Roy Boardman Custodian and he had been going to come to talk to us but was urgently required elsewhere by the trust.

So Mrs. Parr, one of the long serving stewards, valiantly came at short notice to tell about her experiences as one of the volunteers who are stationed around the hall while it is open to the public.

The Stewards are not 'guides', but because they are there while visitors are looking and asking questions, they develop a kind of "hands on" experience of what people find most fascinating - though what Stewards most often have to say is "Please don't touch!"

Miss Adelaide Watt inherited Speke while still a child; one tenant during her minority was F.R.Leyland, the shipowner who did a lot of work at the hall - in the library is still a William Morris Wallpaper of 1868.

The Ghost Story is a great attraction; there was an unexpected crowd of visitors one afternoon in the Great Hall - traced to someone having said 'she' might be coming at 4 o'clock

In the hall the fossils in the paving stones show that they originated in Sweden. The furnishings of the Blue Drawing Room, all blue silk, a Dreaper piano and rosewood and sandalwood furniture, was a wedding present to Miss Watt's mother. No one yet knows who the designer was of the parlour ceiling.

In the Royal Bedroom are portraits of Charles I and Henrietta Maria. The bells in the servants wing are tuned in a tonic-sol-fa scale so that maids could tell by note which room needed them. And don't miss "Thunder Box" on the stairs! say the Stewards.

Mrs. Parr revealed herself as a student of Bible references in the sculptures around Speke; Abraham and Isaac; Christ with two women, the Virgin and her mother ?; a Creation sequence - the Garden of Eden, taking the rib, the apple, and the expulsion; the story of Esther; Jacob and the Angel and more. Then one Last Supper.

For a generation who are not good at Sunday School, a visit to Speke may be some compensation. We are most grateful to our speaker for giving us this different view of the great house and made resolutions to go again ourselves.

## SOME RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

91/P 2591	Strawberry House Glenrose Road	Erect Conservatory at rear
91P/2893	The Lower Grange Grange Lane	Erect S/S extension - garage utility room and study.
91P/2852	Elmsvale Bungalow	Erect Japanese style pergola.
91P/2944	Prime Minister Blocks Kings Drive	Erect residential development - 116 semi detached and terraced dwellings, footpaths and landscaping.
91L/2900'	Gateacre Grange	Alterations to building.

## News from the Gateacre area.

### SEATS ON THE GREEN.

After many years of discussion about whether we should replace the seats on the Village Green - seen in photographs taken earlier this century - we are happy to say that two seats arrived on 19th November - courtesy of the City Engineer's Department.

They are 'free standing' seats, and to guard them from thieves, Ray Kirkham, a member of the committee, arranged for iron straps to be fixed in concrete - thus preventing their removal.

We hope that they will be appreciated and well used during the better weather.

### MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN.

While they were there, the men from the City Engineers Department cleaned out the gutters on the J.H. Wilson Memorial, which we had drawn to their attention some time ago.

### HEALTH CENTRE.

During Christmas week the new Health Centre was opened in the former Midland Bank premises on Gateacre Brow. We have not seen the interior yet, but it is good to see this cherished modern building in use once more.

### 4 GATEACRE BROW.

We have been asked by the new owners of this listed house if we have evidence of the type of iron railings formerly set in the stone surrounding their front garden. Railings which were presumably removed during the war.

We do have a photograph which shows them, rather obliquely and we look forward to their renewal.

More news from the Gateacre area.

### LITTER BINS.

Additional litter bins which we asked for some time ago, have now appeared in Grange Lane. Now we can only hope that they are put to good use.

### LOCAL HISTORY.

A new book has just been published. Entitled "In and around Broad Green" written by Eddie Barker, it also covers parts of Wavertree, Old Swan, and Childwall.

It is a most informative and enjoyable read, and we will have copies on sale at our next meeting - price £4.95

### Mr. GOODISON.

George William Goodison, architect and civil engineer was employed as a surveyor by the Little Woolton Board from its formation in 1867. He lived in Gateacre house, on the site of Grangehurst Court, and during the following years he tried to devise a scheme to cope with the drainage problems here (much hampered by the Much Woolton Local Board and their non cooperation!)

We have recently learned that he was previously employed on Sewage works in Walton. He was so highly thought of, that he had a road, a park, and later a football ground named after him.

Has anyone any further information about him please?

### CHILDWALL ABBEY PLAYING FIELDS.

We have no up to date news about this land but understand that the last date for tenders to be submitted to the Council was the 31st December 1991.

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS.**

Many thanks to those who have already paid -  
next month will be the time of the dreaded

**BLACK SPOT!!**

If you have already paid, you should have  
received your new Membership Card for 1991/92

NOTE: The report of the HON. Secretaries on the work of the Society during 1990/91 will be circulated with this newsletter. S.M.L. 1/92