

# **MINUTES of the Thirty-third Annual General Meeting of the Gateacre Society, held on Tuesday 30th October 2007 at Gateacre Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road, Liverpool L25.**

**THE MEETING WAS ATTENDED** by 12 members, as follows: L Broadhurst, David Buckley, Mary Champion, Eryl Chitty, Mike Chitty, Joan Cohen, Brian Doman, J M Fearn, P Fearn, Esther Jones, J Pearlman, and Beryl Plent.

**THE MEETING BEGAN** at 8.10 p.m. with the Vice-Chairman, Brian Doman, extending a welcome to those present and explaining that, unfortunately, the Chairman Tony McCann was unwell.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Rosemary Doman, Joan Gadd, Tony McCann and George Mason.
- 2. The MINUTES OF THE THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**, held on 31st October 2006 had been circulated to those present. On a proposal by Peter Fearn, seconded by David Buckley, they were approved as a true record.
- 3. ANNUAL REPORT.** Mike Chitty, as Acting Hon. Secretary, read out his report outlining the past year's activities.

There had been five open meetings, held in Gateacre Chapel Hall: talks on 'Finding Out about Family History', the Belle Vale Prefabs, West Derby, 'Riding for the Disabled in Liverpool', and 'The Rise and Fall and Rise of the Sankey Canal'. There had been a coach trip to Shrewsbury, and in September an informal 'memories afternoon' in the Bear & Staff, prompted by the visit of two sisters who had grown up in Gateacre in the 1920s. We had exhibited local history material at the Belle Vale Millennium Centre, Gateacre Comprehensive School and St George's Hall, and Beryl Plent had given a talk to staff and pupils from Our Lady of the Assumption Primary School. Five Newsletters had been sent out, and there had been eight Committee meetings, most of which had been held in the Chapel Vestry.

We had commented on seven local planning proposals. In the case of the Michael Taylor Garage site, we had broadly welcomed the final plans for 7 town houses. We were less happy with the further-modified plans for the former Electric Lighting Station in Sandfield Road. Both had been granted planning permission. In Blackwood Avenue we had objected to an application to put a mobile phone mast on the central reservation. Planning permission had been refused by the City Council, but the applicant had lodged an appeal. At the Smithy Cottage Nursery in Rose Brow we had objected to an application to increase the number of children accommodated to 42 from the original 22; but planning permission had been granted. The most significant and controversial development proposal was the demolition of Gateacre Comprehensive School in Grange Lane and its replacement by a housing estate of 114 dwellings. We had expressed doubts about the proposed 'amenity area', and suggested that more of the existing landscaping should be retained within the new development. The other two planning applications on which we had commented concerned local shopping centres. At Belle Vale we had welcomed the proposal to extend the existing shopping centre and to create a new frontage and covered walkway. And at Gateacre Park Drive we had welcomed the proposed demolition of the existing run-down shopping centre, but only if the current 'mix' of shops and service uses were to be broadly retained within the replacement centre. Our views were shared by the Council's Planning Committee, and planning permission was granted with appropriate conditions attached.

In January we had met with the City Council's Conservation Officers - and Committee members of the Wavertree and Woolton Societies - to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern. We had also liaised with the Friends of Gateacre, who had continued to pursue a number of local improvement projects including Gateacre in Bloom. The home page of our website had just over 3,000 visitors during the year ending 30th September, and the site had been expanded to include a total of 313 pages of information about Gateacre past, present and future. We had continued to receive emails from all over the world, mainly asking for information about local history. At the end of September 2007 the Gateacre Society had an estimated 238 paid-up members at 178 addresses. A group of Committee members had met with the Heritage Lottery Fund's regional manager in November 2006, and the outcome was

the submission of an 'Awards for All' application to cover the cost of a project to promote Gateacre's heritage. We had heard in June that our bid for £5,800 of National Lottery money had been successful, and since that time we had been putting our ideas into action.

The report was greeted by applause. The Vice-Chairman asked whether anyone had any questions, but there were none.

4. **FINANCIAL REPORT.** An Income & Expenditure Account for the year ending 30th September 2007 had been prepared by the Hon. Treasurer, Eryl Chitty, and circulated to those present. Mrs Chitty gave a verbal report on its main features.

The two balances at the bottom of the Account revealed a large increase in the Society's funds: from £5,306 in 2006 to £9,807 in 2007. This was because of the National Lottery grant, some of which had already been used to buy computer equipment and insurance, and the rest of which was largely to be used to pay for an information lectern on the village green. Income from the sale of goods was down, compared with the previous year, and postage and printing costs were also down as we produced fewer Newsletters and no longer kept 'lapsed' members on our mailing list. More money had been spent on speakers, however.

Mrs Chitty invited questions on her report or on the accounts - but there were none. On a proposal by Joan Cohen, seconded by Joan Fearn, the Accounts were approved.

5. **VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS.** Brian Doman thanked the Committee for all their efforts during the year. He made particular mention of Mike Chitty, who had continued to produce printed lists of planning applications and to inspect the actual plans when necessary - and also Eryl Chitty whose initiative and drive had resulted in a successful Lottery bid. He also thanked those members present for their support, and asked them to hand in their subscription renewal forms and Gift Aid declarations if they hadn't done so already.
6. **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE.** Brian Doman, as Vice-Chairman, announced that one nomination had been received for the post of Chairman: Tony McCann. There being no other nominations, Mr McCann was declared elected. Mike Chitty then announced that one nomination had been received for the post of Vice-Chairman: Brian Doman. There being no other nominations, Dr Doman was declared elected. The Vice-Chairman then read out the only other Officer nomination which had been received: Eryl Chitty as Hon. Treasurer. There being no competing nominations, Mrs Chitty was declared duly elected. The Vice-Chairman asked whether there were any nominations as Hon. Secretary, but there was no response. The Vice-Chairman then read out the list of written nominations as Ordinary Committee Members (from whom the posts of Environment Secretary, Membership Secretary, etc., would be filled later): Mary Champion, Mike Chitty, Rosemary Doman, George Mason and Beryl Plent. He appealed for further nominations from the floor, but there were none. All of the people named were then declared elected on a show of hands.
7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

Mike Chitty and Brian Doman led a lengthy discussion on how we could encourage more people to join the Committee. They emphasised that many of the jobs which need doing - like booking speakers, holding and selling stock, and receiving correspondence - would be very suitable for a newcomer. Ideas put forward included an article in Merseymart, a personal letter to members, or even a threat to wind up the Society (as the Woolton Society had done, not long ago). In the end an article in the Newsletter was agreed upon; and all those present were asked to think of someone who could be invited to attend a Committee meeting as an observer, with a view to co-option.

David Buckley, on behalf of Gateacre Chapel, thanked the Society for its help and support. He suggested that the Society might consider using the Chapel rather than the Hall for its meetings in future, to get the benefit of the newly-installed heaters. He also announced some forthcoming events which might be of interest to members, including a Remembrance Service in November and Carol Singing in the village in December.

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS,** the meeting was declared closed at 8.50 p.m.