

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Founded 1974. Registered Charity No.508024.

A member of Civic Voice, the British Association for Local History and the Merseyside Civic Society

Website: www.gatsoc.org.uk Email: info@gatsoc.org.uk

DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

If so, and if would like to receive your Newsletters by email instead of by post, please let us know by sending a message to membership@gatsoc.org.uk quoting your name and postcode

Officers for 2010/11

Chairman:	Brian Doman, 6 Hayles Grove, L25 4SL (722 6368)
Vice Chairman & Local History Sec.:	Mrs Beryl Plent, 27 Grange Lane, L25 4RZ (428 5379)
Hon.Secretary:	<i>Post vacant</i>
Hon.Treasurer:	Mrs Eryl Chitty
Membership Sec.:	Mrs Rosemary Doman, 6 Hayles Grove, L25 4SL (722 6368)
Environment Sec. & Newsletter Editor:	Mike Chitty, 16 Chartmount Way, L25 5LB (428 7801)
Sales Officer:	George Mason, 83 Grange Lane, L25 4SA

Membership Subscriptions

Household £4 Single pensioner £3 Company, etc. £6

You may pay for up to three years in advance, if you wish, at these annual rates.

If you wish to join the Society, please send the appropriate subscription to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Rosemary Doman, 6 Hayles Grove, Liverpool L25 4SL: cheques payable to 'The Gateacre Society'.

If you are already a member, your address label indicates the date (e.g. 31/10/11) when your next subscription payment is due.

Our Book - Gateacre & Belle Vale: in old photographs -

was published by The History Press in October 2009 and is available, price £12.99, at Grange Lane Stores. Copies are also on sale at our meetings, and via our website - or contact Beryl Plent for further details.



The Gateacre Society

Guarding the Past - Safeguarding the Future

NEWSLETTER - September 2011

Our next meeting:

SUGAR

AN IRREVERENT GUIDE TO THE HISTORY OF 'CAPITALISM'S FAVOURER CHILD'

A talk by Ron Noon

on Monday 19th September
at 7.30 pm in Gateacre Chapel,
Gateacre Brow, L25 3PB



Ron Noon has been studying the sugar industry for many years. When we asked him to describe the subject matter of his talk, he replied as follows:

"Sugar may have delighted palates for centuries but its history is grisly even here in the land of the conny-onny butty and Tate & Lyle. There is no biological or physiological need for the sugar crystals in your breakfast cereals. Its history is based on wealth not health, want not need. The 'white stuff' has always been intensely political, producing fabulous wealth for some and great unhappiness and suffering for so many others. In the 1930s the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, referred to this special food as 'the favoured child of capitalism'. Why?

"The links between Liverpool and sugar, which were broken in 1981 with the closure of Henry Tate's mother plant, the tragically named Love Lane refinery, are part of a much bigger global story. Sugar is, from a nutritional point of view, Sweet FA! It is an 'empty calorie' shorn of any other nutrients, but achingly addictive and a perfectly legal drug for billions to be hooked on. In this historical roller coaster of a talk about sugar highs and lows I want to 'agitate' your thoughts and comments about the hitherto much neglected history of Sucrose and indeed the PRICE OF SUGAR in 2011. For further information visit my website at www.lovelanelives.com"

ALL WELCOME - Admission free (Donations invited)

MEMBERSHIP

- 7 SEP

CENTRAL

Handwritten notes: H.V. 942. 308 CAT 7/211

THE TERRIBLE TALE OF GIN

A review of our April talk - by Anna Alexander

On 11th April the Gateacre Society welcomed back Mike Murphy for another of his excellent talks, this time on gin, a spirit with an unsavoury reputation. His main topic was the gin craze in the eighteenth century, when for a while London was totally besotted with the spirit. In the sixteenth century the Russians of Muscovy invented Vodka and the Germans and the Dutch improved the recipe in the 1630s with their own distillation processes. Indeed 'spirits' are known as such because in the distillation process, the original liquid evaporates, the vapour moves down a tube (is spirited away) and then becomes liquid again. The Dutch distilled their spirit from barley and experimented with different herbs and spices to flavour it until they hit on the addition of the juniper berry (known in Dutch as Jenever) and thus was born Jenever, which the English called Geneva. It was just a short step then for the name to be shortened to GIN.

With great humour, Mike regaled us with stories about gin and its history. For example, Dutch sailors used to have a mug of gin before going into battle, and this became known as Dutch courage. When in 1689, Dutch William of Orange became King William III of England, he encouraged the export of Jenever to England and in the early eighteenth century, the distillation of gin became established in England. Farmers sold their gluts of grain to the distillers and gin soon became a popular drink in London. Unlike ale and beer which were taxed and licensed by law, there were very loose regulations on the sale of gin and excise duties were imperfectly collected. In 1722 it was estimated that five and a half million gallons of gin were produced and there were up to 16,000 outlets selling it.

The main market for gin was London north of the Thames, where the population lived in a small area of tightly packed streets in squalid conditions. Life was brutal and short and gin brought people brief relief from reality. But it became a major problem with a huge amount of drunkenness and people even dropped dead in the streets. The government made half-hearted attempts to control the problem with an Act in 1729, which said it could only be sold for medicinal purposes, so the spirit was relabelled and sales went on. Mike mentioned horror stories such as that of Judith Dufour, a woman who was executed for apparently murdering her child whilst drunk with gin, and of a woman who died of spontaneous combustion caused by gin.

The most famous depictions of the horrors of the effects of gin were of course created by artist William Hogarth and in particular his drawing "Gin Lane". Campaigners continued to speak of the dangers of gin and in 1751, an Act at last laid down firm principles for the manufacture, sale and tax of the spirit. By the 1760s the problem had faded away.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Sunday 30th October, the Gateacre Society's 37th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held in Gateacre Unitarian Chapel, Gateacre Brow, Liverpool L25 3PB, starting at 2pm.

Nominations for Committee membership will be invited, and anyone interested in helping us run the Society will be very welcome to put themselves forward. (Please contact any existing Committee member for details of what is involved). As usual, the business part of the meeting will be followed by refreshments. All members of the Society - and prospective members - are encouraged to attend.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

**Saturdays
10th and
17th
September**

GATEACRE CHAPEL, Gateacre Brow, will be open to visitors from 10am-4pm on the 10th.

ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH, Belle Vale Road, will be open 10.30am-4.30pm on the 17th.

We shall have our own pictures, etc., on display and books/tea-towels for sale at both events.

GATEACRE MEMORIES - Part 2

by Carole Frayne (née Wilkinson).

For a school fundraiser we had to collect jam jars. Me and my friend Marie knocked at a house (not a prefab - the road backed on to the garden of the Fitzmaurice family's no.9 Lineside). Well, when they opened the garage there seemed to be hundreds of jars there, and the owners took them to the school in their car. We were very proud of that! The Fitzmaurice family had three boys: Michael, Patrick and Dermot. Dermot was born in Lineside Road and when the midwife arrived we all thought the baby was in her bag! I remember being very fond of Dermot and taking him for walks to the cricket field in his pram.

I had to go to the doctor's because I had a sty on my eye. I remember going into his room. All the patient records were in a suitcase and he had his overcoat and trilby on because it was so cold. He put a piece of wire over the Bunsen burner and lanced my eye. No small-talk in those days! I also clearly remember the Sunday school in Belle Vale. We weren't allowed to play out on a Sunday; it was best dress and off to Sunday school.

Sadly my life in Gateacre came to a sudden end on 20th April 1955. My wonderful Dad died at the age of 33. He was a merchant seaman and contracted malaria. Medicine then was not what it is like to-day and he could not be saved. Our neighbours Mr Smith and Mr Napper walked to the hospital in the middle of the night to be with my Mum. I was ten when we moved to South Wales, where my Mum's family lived, but I can honestly say that those ten years in Gateacre were wonderful.

PLANNING UPDATE

The applications for planning permission mentioned in the last Newsletter - for Gateacre Park Shopping Centre, Walnut Cottage and 179 Grange Lane - were approved by the City Council on 29th June, 1st July and 14th June respectively.

The owners of the **Bear & Staff** have received advertisement consent (ref.11A/1449) for a reduced-size replacement for the existing pole-mounted sign, and they have also removed the large sign adjacent to 10 Gateacre Brow for which consent had previously been refused. Now they have submitted a planning application (11F/1926) to retain the loose slate surfacing in front of the building, and to install two floodlights.

Vodafone Ltd are applying to install a 14 metre high phone mast at a site described as 'Gateacre Brewery Shed, Gateacre Brow'. It turns out that this is the metal-roofed building to the south of Lower Sandfield, adjacent to the Travis Perkins yard. The proposal (ref.11F/1928) is for a 'replica telegraph pole' mast protruding through the roof of the building.

The owners of the former **Gateacre Chapel Hall** - who have already obtained planning permission to convert the building into 2 dwellings - are now seeking permission to convert it instead into a single dwelling (ref.11F/1878).

EDITOR'S POSTSCRIPT:

The venue of Ron Noon's talk on Sugar (19th September, see front page) is an appropriate one. Henry Tate lived in Woolton Park in the 1870s and, as a Unitarian, was an active member of Gateacre Chapel. In later life he supported many charitable institutions, and of course today he is remembered as the founder of the Tate Gallery. But that, as they say, is another story!