

# THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Founded 1974. Registered Charity No.508024.  
A member of the British Association for Local History  
and the Merseyside Civic Society

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Geraldine McAndrew

## Annual Membership Subscriptions

**Household £5 Single pensioner £4 Company, etc. £10**

The Society's membership year runs from 1 Nov-31 Oct.

If you are already a member, your address label indicates  
the date when your next subscription payment is due.

If you wish to join the Society, or to renew, please send the appropriate  
subscription to the Membership Secretary, David Phythian, 26 Primrose  
Road, Liverpool L18 2HE: cheques payable to 'The Gateacre Society'.

*Subscriptions may also be paid by bank transfer.*

*Please email us for our account details.*

Owing to the Coronavirus Pandemic, no Gateacre Society indoor meetings have been held since March 2020. We continue to monitor and comment on local planning applications, and the Committee meets via Zoom. Please keep us informed of local news or issues that you feel deserve the Society's attention. Until such time as an AGM can be held, the 2019/20 Committee members (listed above) will remain in post.

## DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

If so, and if you 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](mailto:membership@gatsoc.org.uk) quoting your name and postcode.

*If you are a member of the Society and you have notified us of your email address, you will be sent details of our Zoom talks and invited to participate.*

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# The Gateacre Society

A VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

*Guarding the Past - Safeguarding the Future*

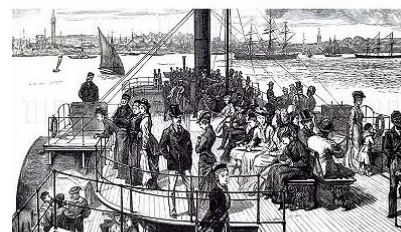
## NEWSLETTER - June 2021

*Our next talk (on Zoom):*

## THE MERSEY FERRIES

**by James Seddon**

on Monday 28th June  
at 7.30pm



James Seddon is a founder member of the Mersey Ferries Heritage Society. It was set up in 2012 by three friends: James, Bill Taylor and former ferry captain Dave Langton. The aim of the group is to celebrate the fascinating heritage of the Mersey Ferries service, from the days of the Monks of Birkenhead Priory right up to the present time. James will be giving a presentation looking at the history of the ferries, and featuring some of the vessels we have known and loved.

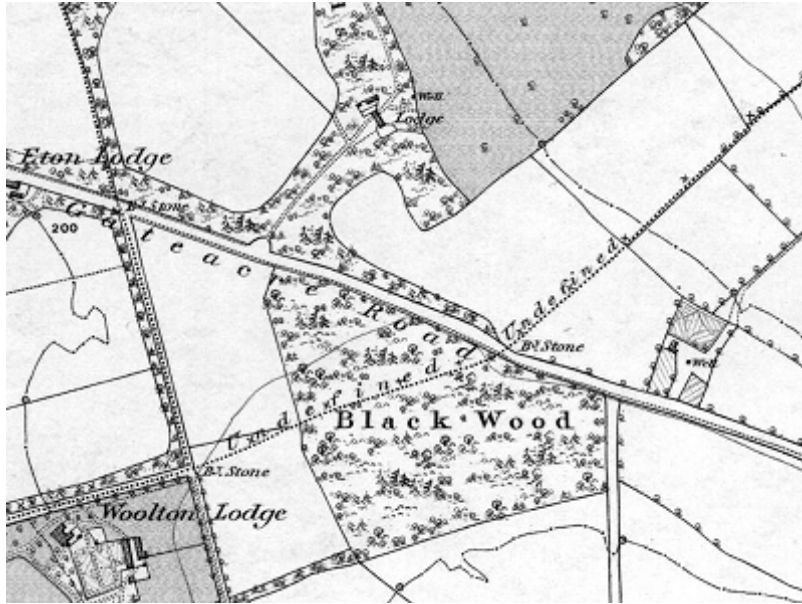
*This is a 'members only' meeting. If you've attended any of our previous four Zoom events, you'll automatically be sent a link for this one a couple of days beforehand. Otherwise, if you are a Gateacre Society member and wish to attend this talk, please email [membership@gatsoc.org.uk](mailto:membership@gatsoc.org.uk) and we'll add you to the list (and send you guidance notes, in case you're new to Zoom).*

*Left: Some pictures from the Mersey Ferries Heritage Society's Facebook page*

# THE HISTORY OF OUR GREEN SPACES

## No.6: BLACK WOOD

Yates & Perry's 1768 *Map of the Environs of Liverpool* – one of the earliest detailed maps of our area to be published – indicates Black Wood as an unnamed patch of woodland alongside the words 'Childwall Heath'. That name is a reminder that, until the mid 18th century, much of the landscape between the villages of Wavertree and Woolton consisted of uncultivated



Above: An extract from the OS Six-inch Map (Lancashire Sheet CXIV) published in 1849. 'Gateacre Road' is present-day Woolton Road.

'waste' or common land. The extensive tree cover which had existed in ancient times had been eroded to such an extent that only a few areas remained. The patch of woodland on the map straddled a road (the present-day Woolton Road) which on the 1768 Wavertree Enclosure Map was described as the new "Road from Hamiltons Firs Nook towards Gateacre".

As was the case with much of the other land in the Childwall and Little Woolton townships, Black Wood was owned, in the mid-19th century, by the 2nd Marquess of Salisbury. He had inherited it (along with the title of Lord of the Manor) as a result of his marriage to Fanny Gascoyne, the only child of Bamber Gascoyne of Childwall Hall. By the mid-20th century, with the rapid expansion of suburban Liverpool, there was intense pressure on land for development – but also recognition of the amenity value of features such as the ancient woodlands. A plan – the Liverpool Town Planning Scheme No.2 – was adopted in 1933 to regulate the development of Childwall, Gateacre and the surrounding area. It specified areas for low density and higher-density housing, and for business uses. It proposed a network of new roads (such as Childwall Park Avenue and Gateacre Park Drive) to open up these areas for development. The Town Planning Scheme also identified areas to be left undeveloped, either as private or public open spaces. One of the "proposed public open spaces" was Black Wood.

On 19th April 1939, the 4th Marquess of Salisbury and his company – Gascoyne Cecil Estates – transferred six "pieces or parcels of land" to the Liverpool Corporation. These included the Cistern Pit (featured in our May 2021 Newsletter) as well as the Black Wood. It is not clear whether the land was given or sold, but it seems likely that it was a gift in return for the right to develop the rest of the Gascoyne Cecil Estates' land in the vicinity. Various covenants were imposed. The Corporation was to "keep, maintain and preserve the same in perpetuity as [public] open spaces" and, in the case of Black Wood it was to "preserve and keep the trees thereon in a proper manner and in accordance with the practice of good forestry".

Black Wood remained as a much-appreciated public amenity until sadly, in February 2020, a falling branch caused the death of Mr Don Baxter while walking his dog. The result was that the City Council had to carry out a thoroughgoing safety assessment, and the Wood was closed for over a year while the necessary remedial work was undertaken. Reopened in April 2021, it will hopefully remain accessible to the public for many decades to come.

### 'LOST MANORS' – an update

Regrettably, the uncertainty over Covid regulations means that Stuart Rimmer's proposed talk on his new book (as mentioned in our last Newsletter) has had to be postponed. We now hope that the talk will take place towards the end of September. Meanwhile the book – not just a history of our local pubs, but an account of the development of the townships of Little Woolton and Childwall, based on Stuart's original research – is on sale; see our website for details of where to find it.

## GORSEY COP/ CRYING TREE – WHAT'S HAPPENING?

In April 2017, planning permission 16F/1122 and listed building consent 16L/1123 was granted for the conversion of the former Crying Tree pub in Grange Lane (originally a house called Gorse Cop) into 8 flats, and the redevelopment of the grounds to include 5 newbuild dwellings – plus 2 units within the converted barn/coach-house – following partial demolition of the former Penrods function suite. Since that time, very little seems to have happened. Now the owner, Mr Lee Goldsmith, has submitted a further planning application (21F/1249) to reconfigure the interior of the listed building in a slightly different way.

The amendments proposed are: (i) to extend two ground floor flats into the lower ground floor, to form duplex units, (ii) to create 3 instead of 2 flats on the first floor, (iii) to incorporate the attic space below the roof lantern into a second-floor unit, and (iv) to omit the proposed lower ground floor flat, but to create a small communal gym there. The application says these changes are the result of "market appraisal and advice on the saleability of the proposed apartments". The owner's objective is for work on the conversion to begin "in the near future".

