

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Website: <http://gateacresociety.web.com> **E-mail:** gatsoc@liverpool.ndo.co.uk

Officers for 1999/2000

Chairman: Tony McCann
Vice Chairman: Joe Brannigan
Hon. Secretary: *Post vacant*
Hon. Treasurer: Sylvia Davis
Membership Sec.: Beryl Plent, 27 Grange Lane, L25 4RZ (428 5379)
Environment Sec.: Mike Chitty, 16 Chartmount Way, L25 5LB (428 7801)

Membership Subscriptions

Individual £2 Pensioner £1 Family £3
Two pensioners £1.50 Company, etc. £5
(all plus £2 postage if outside hand-delivery area)

Already a member?

Your address label indicates the date on which your membership expires. Our thanks go to those who have recently renewed. *If the label reads '31/10/99', please help us by renewing as soon as possible. You can pay for up to 3 years in advance if you wish.*

Not a member? Want to join us?

Please send the appropriate annual subscription to the Membership Secretary.

Newsletter sponsored by



E.H. Williams (Environment) Ltd



The Gateacre Society

Registered with the Civic Trust and as a Charity

NEWSLETTER - July 2000

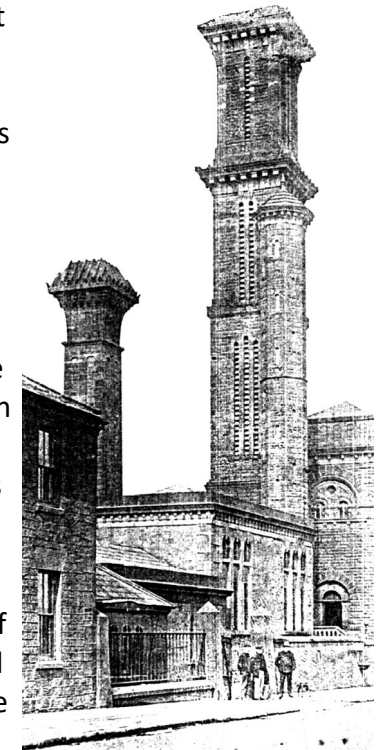
Our next meeting: ALL WELCOME. VISITORS 50p.

How Liverpool got its water

An illustrated talk by Peter Cahill: Tuesday 18th July

Two hundred years ago the prohibitive cost of water, together with its poor quality, were responsible for much illness and disease in Liverpool. Two private companies were set up to supply piped water, but the rapid expansion in population in the 1840s and the high incidence of illness and premature death associated with lack of adequate water led to the Corporation Water Works being formed and the private companies purchased. Even the Corporation struggled for much of the nineteenth century to provide adequate supplies to its customers.

Peter Cahill is a senior North West Water manager who has made a personal study of early water supply in Liverpool. His talk will be illustrated with slides made from archive photographs and drawings.



(Above: Dudlow Lane water pumping station, Woolton Road)

CINEMA MEMORIES: A review of our May event.

We had a very interesting talk by Clive Garner, who broadcasts regularly on Radio Merseyside. He brought with him slides and film sequences, and talked to us for nearly 2 hours about Merseyside cinemas, cinema organs and organists.

His first cinema memory was going into the Plaza foyer, Allerton Road, as a small child and seeing the goldfish pond while his mother booked seats. He loved the luxurious atmosphere, the uniforms of the staff, and the big cut-outs advertising future attractions. His first visit to a performance was an evening one with an aunt to see Shirley Temple. He loved the curtains, the lights, the Wurlitzer organ (the best part) - and, of course, the film seen through a haze of cigarette smoke!

Our readers will know many of the cinemas he showed us: the Grand, Smithdown Road; the Victoria, Walton; the Empress, Tuebrook; the Capitol, Overton Street; and many more. We saw the Astoria, the first 'super cinema'; the Rio, Fazakerley, the first to have colour changes in auditorium lighting; the Regal, Norris Green, the first with Cinemascope; the Curzon, Prescott Road, with its Art Deco styling, Compton organ and two sets of curtains; the Rialto with its cafe and dance floor; the Carlton, Tuebrook, with its organist James Bell who eventually went on to the Odeon Leicester Square. We saw several cinemas designed by the Liverpool architect Alfred Ernest Shennan: the Granada, Dovecot; the Mayfair, Aigburth Road; the Abbey, Wavertree (later to be first with Cinerama); and the Plaza, Crosby (last to open before war broke out).

We were treated to Gaumont trailers of 1930s films with Jessie Matthews, John Mills and Betty Balfour - a Wallasey girl. We saw film sequences of Reginald Foort at the organ. Finally, we saw a 'command performance' at the Ritz, Birkenhead (which is shortly to be demolished) graced by the Mayor and Mayoress, Margaret Lockwood, Valerie Hobson and Gregory Peck in 1949.

A wonderful evening, in the company of an expert.

MSC

PICTURES FOR SALE

In response to popular demand, we are reproducing some of the most interesting old photographs of Gateacre from our collection. Mounted A5 size laser prints, priced at just £1.50 each or 4 for £5, will be on sale at our next and future meetings. (A4 size also available at £2.50). Enquiries to Beryl



BROAD HEY CLOSE footpath closure (see last issue):

On 3rd July the Stipendiary Magistrate announced his decision to allow the closure of the footpath from Halewood Road, on the grounds that the suffering endured by a small number of residents of the Close outweighed the inconvenience to users. Our thanks go to our member Fiona Langdon, who presented the case against closure at the court hearing.

POWER to PEOPLE



A planning application has been submitted (ref. 00F/1058) to convert the former 'electric lighting station' in Sandfield Road into 7 residential apartments. The building is currently used as a bedroom furniture workshop, having for many years been an Education Department warehouse. The inscription 'A D 1898 L D L Co Lmtd' is a reminder of its origins, generating electric power (from coal) for the Liverpool District Lighting Company, and so enabling the residents of the 'big houses' in Gateacre to be among the first to enjoy the new form of lighting.

We very much welcome the proposed refurbishment and conversion of the building - and the demolition of the more recent southern extension - but, like the residents of Sandfield Road, we are worried that the existing car parking and access problems in the road will be exacerbated. We have written to the Council suggesting that only 6 apartments should be allowed (with 9 off-street parking spaces) and also that the design and materials of the new south elevation should be modified to match the existing building.

DO now, ASK later

During the weekend of 20th May, a part of the green field alongside Gateacre Comprehensive School's swimming pool in Grange Lane was fenced off. On 22nd May work began on laying a tarmac car park and the foundations for new temporary classrooms. On 25th May, local residents received letters from the City Planning Department, telling them that an application had been submitted to carry out the work, and inviting comments by 12th June! The residents' protests got front-page coverage in Merseymart, and we added our voice to their concerns about the loss of officially-designated Green Space.

Planning permission has now been granted (retrospectively) but on condition that the site is returned to its original condition ('i.e. grass turfed') by mid-2002. The reason for the classrooms is the closure of Lee Manor school, which will increase Gateacre's pupil numbers this September from 1,350 to 1,700. Over £3 million is being spent on two permanent new buildings, and on improvements to the existing school, and when this work is completed the temporary classrooms will be dismantled. The School's Headmaster has been very co-operative, having invited nearby residents to a special meeting to discuss the plans. He is aware of the existing traffic problems in Grange Lane, and would very much welcome suggestions for improvement.