

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Website: www.liverpool.ndo.co.uk/gatsoc

E-mail: gatsoc@liverpool.ndo.co.uk

Officers for 2001/02

Chairman: Tony McCann
Vice Chairman: Brian Doman
Hon. Secretary: *Post vacant*
Hon. Treasurer: Eryl Chitty
Membership Sec.: Beryl Plent, 27 Grange Lane, L25 4RZ (428 5379)
Environment Sec./
Newsletter Editor: 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 £1.50 postage if outside hand-delivery area)

Already a member?

Your address label indicates the date on which your membership **expires**.
If the date is '31/10/01', please make Beryl's job easier by sending her your subs as soon as possible.

Not a member? Want to join us? Or want to renew?

Please send the appropriate annual subscription to the Membership Secretary. You may pay for up to three years at a time if you wish.



The Gateacre Society

Registered with the Civic Trust and as a Charity

NEWSLETTER - January 2002

Our next meeting:

ALL WELCOME -

A talk by a
Liverpool Ranger on
TUESDAY 22nd
JANUARY
in Gateacre
Chapel Hall,
Sandfield Road,

THE SENSATIONAL STORY OF MRS MAYBRICK



The American-born Mrs Florence Maybrick, 26, of Battlecrease House, Aigburth, stood trial at St George's Hall, Liverpool, in 1889. She was accused of the murder of her cotton-broker husband by arsenic poisoning. The case hit the headlines on both sides of the Atlantic, and has been a source of controversy ever since.

HALE VILLAGE - THEN & NOW

A review of our November meeting

Almost 60 members and friends came along to the Chapel Hall on 27th November to see Ralph Mills give a very original and inspiring slide show and talk. Original, because Ralph used two projectors and two screens, side by side, to compare and contrast Hale village scenes old and new. Inspiring, because he reminded us what a wealth of interest there is, virtually on our doorstep, which would repay a visit.

Hale was a medieval market town, with its own Mayor. We saw pictures of the old market hall, demolished in the late nineteenth century. More familiar were Ralph's pictures of the lighthouse, including an interesting shot of the 'new' structure (1906) standing alongside its predecessor. Also several views of the cottage which was the birthplace in 1573 of 'Ye Childe of Hale' - the 9 ft 3 in tall John Middleton - and which featured on many an old postcard of the village.

Thatched roofs remain a characteristic feature of Hale, but once they were even more common, many having been replaced by slate after fire damage. The village had two schools, identifiable by their distinctive weather-vanes: one in the shape of a galleon (having been founded by a seafarer) the other a cock and trumpet (symbol of the Ireland-Blackburne family), the school having been nicknamed 'the Cocky' as a result. Hale also once had a primitive railway, taking Whiston coal to the Mersey shore for export; and a small fishing settlement in Dungeon Lane (the name a reminder of the caves under the quay, where Cheshire rock salt was dissolved before being refined at the adjacent salt works).

Ralph showed us pictures of former 'Paddy houses' - farm buildings which provided sleeping accommodation for itinerant potato pickers - and, by way of contrast, showed us the imposing Manor House (still there) and Hale Hall (only the stables of which now remain). Finally, he described the famous Duck Decoy: an ingenious device designed to trap unsuspecting wild birds 'for the pot', while keeping poachers at bay.

For almost 90 minutes, we were kept entertained and enthralled by Ralph's constantly-changing images. By the end, one thing was very clear - Hale is much more than just the picturesque birthplace of a very tall man!

MRC

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

THE CHAIRMAN
AND COMMITTEE
OF THE SOCIETY
SEND BEST
WISHES FOR 2002
TO ALL OUR
MEMBERS AND

Membership Subscriptions

Eagle-eyed members may notice a small change in the Society's subscription rates, as listed on the back page of this Newsletter. Following a review of our costs, we have decided to reduce the postal 'surcharge' (payable by members who live outside our hand-delivery area) to £1.50 per annum. As we always ask at this time of year, **please check** your address label to see whether your membership is in need of renewal.

Gateacre Grange latest

The plans for the grounds of Gateacre Grange (see our September 2001 Newsletter) were considered by the Council's Planning Committee just before Christmas. Permission for the proposed new 'cottages' was granted, subject to the applicants entering into a legal agreement. This agreement will state that no parts of the new dwellings shall be commenced until such time as:

(i) all the works of internal and external repair of The Grange have been completed, and

(ii) full details of the long term maintenance arrangements have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Trees Under Threat

A likely casualty of the approved plans for Gateacre Grange is the very distinctive old beech tree alongside Rose Brow Cottages. Our objection to the proposed felling of this tree was overruled, the Council's Trees and Woodland Manager agreeing with the applicant that it is 'old and becoming dangerous, and that its removal is therefore justified'.

Also threatened - though for very different reasons - is a large pine tree in Hunts Cross Avenue, not far from Glenville Close. Planning permission for a new house (the last of three to be built within the former grounds of Aymestry Court) was granted some time ago. The Council imposed conditions to safeguard the tree: in particular specifying that any digging near the roots should be done by hand. However, building work has now started, and a JCB has been used to clear the site right up to the base of the tree. The Planning Department is, we are told, considering serving the owners with a Breach of Condition Notice, which carries a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction in the Magistrates Court.

Finally, an application (ref. 01T/2807) has been submitted to fell the lime tree within the front garden of 2 Gateacre Rise, on the corner of Grange Lane.

A CHANGE OF SCENE IN HALEWOOD ROAD?

Among recent planning applications is a proposal (ref. 01F/2828) to convert the former solicitor's office, next door to the Brown Cow, into a 'cottage style' property with a small front garden, enclosed by railings. There would still be a shop unit on the ground floor - with a flat above - but the existing shopfront would be replaced by a house type sash window. The property has recently changed hands, having been vacant for several years since plans to incorporate it within the pub were turned down by the City Council.

A forum for Liverpool Future

Do you have internet access? Do you have views on the future of our city? Then please send an email to Liverpool-Future-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. You will then be able to participate in a new, free, discussion forum, which has been set up jointly by the Gateacre Society and other local conservation groups. In case of difficulty - or for further information - contact us directly at our usual email address: gatsoc@liverpool.ndo.co.uk