

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

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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)
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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' you are no longer a paid-up member - so please send Beryl 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 - March 2002

*OUR NEXT
MEETING:*

Tuesday
19th March
at 8 p.m.,
in
Gateacre
Chapel
Hall,
Sandfield



PETER WOOLLEY is an author and local historian. He has been collecting picture postcards of Liverpool and Bootle scenes for many years, and has written eight books based on these old photographs. On Tuesday 19th March he will be giving us a slide show: taking us on a pictorial journey from Liverpool Exchange to Aintree Central station, then back past the 'other' Black Bull pub towards Orrell Park. Peter will also be bringing copies of some of his books for sale.

ALL WELCOME - Gateacre Society members free, visitors 50p.

BY SPECIAL INVITATION: Cheese and Wine at the Bear & Staff, Tuesday 9th April, 7.30 p.m.

We have been invited to a 'getting to know you' function at the newly-refurbished Bear & Staff. The manager Yvonne will be laying-on a variety of wines, plus a selection of cheeses, the idea being that Gateacre Society members will be able to sample what the pub has to offer. This free-of-charge event is for 40 paid-up members only, and we shall be issuing tickets on a first come first served basis. Collect yours at our meeting on 19th March - or telephone our Social Secretary Joan Gadd (428 8884) who will be taking names and allocating places.

WILLIAM HESKETH LEVER, 1st LORD LEVERHULME

A review of our January meeting

On 22nd January we should have had a talk by a Liverpool Ranger about Mrs Maybrick. Unfortunately the speaker could not come and, at very short notice, Margaret Benham regaled us with a talk on William Lever (1851-1925).

William was born in Bolton - a 7th child after 6 daughters. His father was a wholesale grocer who took his son out of school and put him in the business for one shilling a week. At first his main task was to cut chunks of sugar and stack it, but after two years he went into the office and eventually became a traveller, against his father's better judgement. He was able to marry Elizabeth Hulme, whom he had met at school.

Having decided to specialise in soap, William founded Lever Brothers in Warrington with his younger brother. Then, wanting to expand, he found suitable land in Cheshire, which became 'Port Sunlight'. His first boiling of Sunlight soap at the new factory was in 1889. As well as his factory, he built houses for his workers - together with a pub and two churches.

William Lever himself lived in Port Sunlight for a while, but then moved out to Thornton Manor. Later on he built a bungalow at Rivington. He enjoyed visiting art exhibitions and buying paintings. After the death of his wife in 1913, he built an Art Gallery at Port Sunlight in her memory - the Lady Lever Gallery. He also bought land in the Hebrides and went into commercial fishing, founding MacFisheries which had shops in all the major towns. He rebuilt Stornoway, had a castle on Harris - and took the title Viscount Leverhulme of the Western Isles.

MSC

RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were 20 planning applications (including listed building and tree works applications) submitted within our area during February - one of the highest monthly totals on record. Most of them were for house extensions but the following, we feel, are of wider interest.

Further details of these and other local applications may be obtained by visiting the ground-floor reception area of Millennium House, Victoria Street, Liverpool L1 6JF (or by phoning 233 4547). Any comments should be sent to the Planning Department, at the same address, *as soon as possible*; please note that decisions now tend to be made much more rapidly than in the past.

Black Bull, Gateacre Brow (ref. 02L/0366 & 02A/0368): to erect wall-mounted sign, i.e. a PVC banner to the right of the entrance, advertising the pub's food and quiz nights.

185 Grange Lane (ref. 02F/0480): to use as a breakfast and coffee shop, 8 am-7 pm

only, "not a Fish & Chips shop or Takeaway".

Plot A, Hunts Cross Ave (ref. 02T/0603): to carry out tree works. It seems that the owner of the new house, currently under construction, would like to fell all four of the large pine trees (not just the one which was mentioned in our January Newsletter). His exact words on the application form are: *"The first two pines are very close to my new house build & the ground is clay, so the roots are very small for size of trees, this could be very dangerous in strong winds could fall on my house, & 2nd two block out sun and also encroach on the house"*.

It is worth noting that the four trees have been the subject of a Tree Preservation Order for many years. The house, on the other hand, has not yet been built.

The Planners say 'No' in Halewood Road

As mentioned in our last Newsletter, the new owner of 8 Halewood Road (Mark Legros) has drawn up plans to change its appearance from a shop to a house. Planning permission was, however, refused by the City Council on 31st January. We were surprised by this decision and, if Mr Legros lodges an appeal, we shall be sending the following comments to the Planning Inspectorate:

- We have no objection to the removal of the existing shopfront. It was only added, we understand, in the 1960s and we do not regard it as an essential part of the character of the Gateacre Village Conservation Area.
- We have no objection to the bricking-up of the ground-floor front elevation and the insertion of a 'cottage-style' window. This would restore the building to its pre-1960s appearance. If this is to be done, however, it is essential that matching bricks (reclaimed) are used.
- We have no objection in principle to the use of UPVC as a window-frame material. However, we consider it essential that the three-dimensional profile of the glazing bars of any new windows should be similar to the timber originals, i.e. not 'plastic strips sandwiched between the panes'.
- We have no objection in principle to the erection of a fence and sandstone pillars - such as originally existed - in front of the building, provided the railings are of an appropriate nineteenth-century design. However, in order not to hinder or endanger pedestrians on the adjacent footway, we consider that any such railings should be in line with the front wall of the Brown Cow public-house rather than along the boundary of the original curtilage.
- While the application envisages the creation of a retail unit on the ground floor, we would have no objection to its use as a solicitor's office (i.e. the building's last use) or for some other professional purpose. Nor, indeed, the conversion of the whole building to residential use. The building has been vacant and decaying for several years and the priority, we feel, is to bring it back into use and a good state of repair while retaining its historic character.

A Right of Way retained

We were pleased to receive a letter from the City Council in late February, confirming that it does not intend to proceed with the closure of the footpath leading from Sandfield Road to Glenville Close (see our November 2001 Newsletter). The letter states:

"There are several reasons to support this decision, however the most important issue which stands out during our consultation is the fact that the footpath serves as an integral link for the local community. It is also very important to stress that pupils from both Gateacre Comprehensive and Woolton Primary Schools utilise the footpath as a safe route to school, a policy which is actively promoted by the City Council. Also, it is clearly evident from letters received from local residents that the footpath serves as a vital link for them to commute between Woolton and Gateacre Villages. It is worth mentioning that current legislation does not allow for a public highway to be closed on the grounds of anti-social behaviour and it would therefore be difficult for the Highway Authority to justify this case in the Magistrates Court."