

# THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

**Website:** www.gatsoc.org.uk **E-mail:** info@gatsoc.org.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.  
You may pay for up to three years in advance if you wish.

## Not a member? Want to join us?

Please send the appropriate annual subscription to the  
Membership Secretary.



Our next meeting:

# MONSIGNOR JAMES NUGENT



## An ILLUSTRATED TALK by Rev. Dr D. BEN REES

Father Nugent, born in Liverpool in 1822, was a Catholic priest who died in 1905 and is commemorated by a statue in St John's Gardens. The inscription reads: 'Apostle of Temperance, Protector of the Orphan Child, Consoler of the Prisoner, Reformer of the Criminal, Saviour of Fallen Womanhood, Friend of All in Poverty and Affliction', which sums up the life and work of one of the most famous figures in Victorian Liverpool.

Dr Ben Rees is an authority on the city's social history, and as many members will know he is an eloquent speaker. This meeting will be held in the Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road, Liverpool L25, starting at 8 p.m.

**TUESDAY 24th SEPTEMBER at Gateacre Chapel Hall**

ALL WELCOME - VISITORS 50p

**... and please make a note of our Annual General Meeting date:  
Tuesday 22nd October (further details inside)**

# IN SEARCH OF THE DIDDYMEN

A review of our July event *by Mike Chitty*

At 7.30 p.m. on 9th July our intrepid group of explorers met Blue Badge Guide Pam Krueger in Brookside Avenue, just off East Prescott Road in Knotty Ash. Pam set the scene by talking about the big old houses such as Ackers Hall and Dovecot House which today are only commemorated by street names. Then we walked towards the Village Hall, passing the Knotty Ash Hotel whose hanging sign depicts the ash tree which gave the area its name. Pam explained that there were three inns here, alongside the turnpike road, and in 1830 the Turk's Head became the terminal for horse-drawn omnibuses into the town of Liverpool.

We continued walking past quaint cottages (ideal for diddymen!) now mostly converted into shops and other business premises. Then we stopped outside another pub, still retaining its etched-glass windows advertising Joseph Jones' Knotty Ash Ales. Ahead of us was the former brewery building, and yet another pub: the 'Lord Nelson'. Pam told us the story of Mr Downward, a sugar refiner living at Springfield nearby, who paid for an obelisk in honour of the great naval hero and offered it to Liverpool town council for erection near the Town Hall. But the council didn't think it grand enough, so Mr Downward put it in his own garden instead. Today that garden is Springfield Park, and we could see the obelisk from where we were standing in East Prescott Road.

We re-traced our steps and - with some difficulty! - found Little Bongs: a picturesque group of cottages and gardens, reached through an archway and along a cobbled passageway. Then it was on to Old Thomas Lane, past the old National School and round the churchyard of St John: said to be 'home' to more Mayors of Liverpool than any other graveyard or cemetery in the city.

Finally we reached our journey's end: the lifelong home of Ken Dodd who put Knotty Ash well and truly 'on the map'. As we stood outside the Georgian house, Pam regaled us with stories of the family, including Ken's diminutive great-uncle Jack who was the original 'diddy man'. She talked of jam butties and treacle mines - the latter, it seems, not being confined to Knotty Ash but being the stuff of folklore in Norfolk and elsewhere. By now it was almost 9.30 - and time to go back home to Gateacre at the end of a pleasant evening.

## Q. When is a Takeaway not a Takeaway?

### A. When it's the 'Rising Sun Cafe'?

A banner has recently appeared on the gable-end wall of 185 Grange Lane, advertising the premises as an 'English & Chinese - Café - Take Away'. Yet when the planning application was submitted (see our March Newsletter) the applicant described it as "Breakfast and coffee shop 8am-7pm only, serving breakfast and snacks inside the shop (NOT a Fish & Chips shop or Takeaway)".

Further along the same wall, a large, obtrusive metal vent pipe has also recently been installed. Yet the planning permission, granted in April, stated explicitly that "Working drawings of all external ventilation or similar systems, including colour of coatings, shall be approved by the local planning authority before work commences ... bearing in mind the location of the premises within the Gateacre Village Conservation Area". We are currently trying to find out whether such approval has, in fact, been given.

## Notice of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 28th A.G.M. of the Gateacre Society will be held on Tuesday 22nd October 2002, starting at 8 p.m., in the Chapel Hall, Sandfield Road, Liverpool L25. The purpose of the meeting is to receive reports on the year's activities, to approve the Accounts, to elect a Committee for the coming year, and to allow members to have their say on local issues. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting, and encourage friends and neighbours to attend, especially those who may be willing to fill the vacant places on our Committee. This year we shall particularly be remembering Lionel Shepherd - always an A.G.M. regular - and discussing ways in which the Society could commemorate him.

## Goodbye tarmac, hello greenspace?

Temporary classrooms and a car park were built on part of Gateacre Comp's sports field, at the north end of Grange Lane, over two years ago. Now that the new, permanent school buildings are ready for use, we look forward to the restoration of the site to its original state, in accordance with the planning permission.

## BUS NEWS

At the request of some of our Lee Park members, we asked Merseytravel why the 89 bus could not pick up and set down passengers in Gateacre Brow. Although there has been a bus stop right outside the Chapel (and another by the Black Bull) for many years, it was reserved for the H24 service - withdrawn about 15 years ago! - and people attending the Chapel had to walk to and from the stops in Belle Vale Road. We were pleased to receive a reply stating that, in future, drivers would be told to observe the Gateacre Brow stops; and this has recently been confirmed by the installation of timetable panels.

## BELLE VALE NEWS

Having studied the plans for the new Morrisons supermarket (see last Newsletter) we wrote to the City Council welcoming the

scheme in principle, but suggesting the need for a further and more direct pedestrian link between the new store and the existing Belle Vale Shopping Centre. The Planning Officer agreed with us, and we are pleased to say that the plans have now been modified accordingly. We did not pursue our earlier objection to the loss of the landscaped area in Besford Road, because the plans include a complete refurbishment of the existing car park, and fairly lavish planting around the entire perimeter of the site.

Meanwhile Wilkinsons - the well-known hardware/discount store - will shortly be taking over from Tesco within the main shopping mall, and work has begun on the building of the new McDonalds drive-through restaurant on Childwall Valley Road.

## Our Website ...

has had more than 2,500 'visitors' since its launch. It now has a new and simpler address: [www.gatsoc.org.uk](http://www.gatsoc.org.uk). We use the site to publicise the Society's activities, and we are also able to include material which cannot easily be reproduced in our Newsletter: like, for example, a colour 'visual' of the proposed Morrisons store, kindly supplied by the architects.