

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

'Guarding the Past, Safeguarding the Future'

Website: www.gatsoc.org.uk E-mail: info@gatsoc.org.uk

Officers for 2002/03

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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.

Not a member? Want to join us?

Please send the appropriate annual subscription to the
Membership Secretary: cheques payable to 'The Gateacre Society'.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Subscriptions for the current year became due at the A.G.M. last October. If your label reads '31/10/02', we regret that your membership of the Gateacre Society has now LAPSED.

In order to be sure of receiving future issues of this Newsletter, please renew your subscription as soon as possible. You can pay for up to three years in advance if you wish.



The Gateacre Society

Registered with the Civic Trust and as a Charity

NEWSLETTER - March 2003

GATEACRE GRANGE Update

We last reported on Gateacre Grange - and the threat to the fine old copper beech tree in Rose Brow - in January 2002. Since then, the conversion work has been slowly progressing. We recently asked the owners, Mr & Mrs Doyle, for an update on their plans, and Mrs Doyle has replied as follows:

THE STABLE BLOCK & BARCLAY HOUSE

"This development is for seven luxury apartments and will be completed in the next couple of months. These are all very individual, very spacious and attractive units. As you are aware the apartments are not for sale. We hope to be able to let the apartments to retired people who possibly do not want the responsibility and upkeep of a home with all the maintenance and gardening required, but do wish to keep their independence and live in beautiful surroundings."

Our next meeting: NATURAL HISTORY OF MERSEYSIDE



by Colin Twist
Tuesday 18th
March, 8 pm,
Gateacre Chapel
Hall, Sandfield
Road, L25

Colin Twist comes recommended to us as 'a great speaker'.

With the help of numerous slides he will give us an overview of the wide range of birds, plants, butterflies and other wildlife that can be found in Liverpool and the surrounding districts.

THE GARDENS

"All our property is managed by us personally and maintained by our skilled workforce and full-time gardeners. Good maintenance of the buildings and gardens is an essential task, I am sure you would agree. The property is set in four and a half acres. We are just completing extensive work to restore the gardens which will be for the enjoyment and pleasure of all the residents of Gateacre Grange."

THE MAIN HOUSE

"We will not be working on the main house until completion of the Stable Block."

THE BEECH TREE

"We accept the tree has significant interest in the area and after due consideration we hope to leave it in place if possible. However, if the tree should become a danger to people or buildings we will have to reconsider its fate. I hope this is some encouragement for the Gateacre Society regarding our intentions."

BELFAST AT PEACE

A Review of our January talk by Mary Champion

On 28th January Alan Kennedy, minister of Gateacre Chapel, gave us an illustrated talk on the city of Belfast. He had many slides and gave us a most interesting evening.

Belfast suffered a great deal of devastation in the Troubles, but we saw scenes of normality in a vibrant city: Arthur Square with its attractive circular bandstand - a school band playing that day - and Royal Avenue, the main shopping area and scene of the worst devastation, which now has Jaeger and other designer shops, a modern Virgin record store and multi-storey shopping centre.

There was a slide of the Europa Hotel on Great Victoria Street - said to be the most bombed hotel in Europe. Next door is the restored Grand Opera House, boasting a bar on stilts. Belfast Castle, on Cave Hill, is now a hotel very popular for weddings, with lovely grounds looking down to Belfast Lough. On Shore Road is a Pentecostal Church, the largest in Northern Ireland, with 3-4,000 worshippers on Sundays. Its restaurant serves supper to 1500 people free of charge on Sunday nights. There is a robed choir of 400 behind the preacher, and we saw slides of the foyer - just like a hotel.

The view of the City Hall, along Donegall Place, looked very much like Liverpool's Castle Street. In the City Hall grounds are a statue of Queen Victoria, a small obelisk dedicated to Gen. Eisenhower, and a memorial to the Titanic which was built by Harland & Wolff. We also saw pictures of Stormont - a wonderful white building - and the statue of Lord Carson, an opponent of Home Rule. Church House, the H.Q. of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, has a Scottish feel to it. The Kings Hall, an Art Deco building, houses the Royal Agricultural Society's shows and various sporting events.

Alan showed us slides of St Anne's Anglican Cathedral. The area in front has become a piazza with wine bars and restaurants. Inside, the baptistery has a particularly fine mosaic ceiling depicting the Creation. A new transept is dedicated to the Fallen of the Province, with a window based on Celtic crosses. Ecumenical services and meetings are held there. We also saw slides of Belfast's first departmental store - Robinson & Cleaver - and of the Crown Bar, the most ornate public house in the city, which has been restored in recent years by the National Trust.

In spite of everything, Belfast still has many fine buildings. Alan told us about many more than those mentioned here. His slides were good - and his commentary excellent.

If you wish to complain about unswept litter, faulty street lamps, etc., simply phone LIVERPOOL DIRECT on 233 3001. This is the City Council's special 'hotline' for reporting such problems. You will normally be asked for your name, address and postcode, so the complaint can be properly logged. In our experience this is a very effective service - the results often being

Consulting on the Unitary Development Plan

A review of the Gateacre 'workshop' evening on 21st January

About 30 local residents took part in the City Council's Planning Workshop at the Millennium Centre. Most people seemed to find the event interesting and worthwhile. After an introductory talk from Mike Eccles of the Planning Department, we split into three groups, each standing around a large map of the Gateacre/Netherley/Woolton area. We used colour-coded 'Post-it' notes and pins to indicate local strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement which the UDP might focus on. The results of each group's deliberations were then summarised by a spokesperson, before all the material was taken away by the Planners to feed into their report.

The main **strengths** identified were:

- The existence of conservation groups - like the Gateacre and Woolton Societies
- The pleasant walks to be enjoyed - through woodland and over Woolton Hill
- The existence of the Millennium Centre itself
- Valley Community Theatre
- Community Transport facilities

The **weaknesses** included:

- The loss of green spaces and mature trees
- Too much, too fast traffic - and the lack of safe crossing facilities
- The lack of recycling points in Gateacre and Belle Vale
- Poor lighting in Belle Vale Park, Grangemeadow Road and elsewhere
- Derelict land left behind after 'estate action' schemes

Among the '**opportunities**' were:

- The suitability of the former Lee Manor School for community use
- Replacement of the present traffic-calming measures by CCTV cameras
- A new sports centre and swimming pool in Belle Vale Park
- Refurbishment of Belle Vale Shopping Centre following the Morrisons development

Will this, and the events like it in other areas of the city, make any difference? Only time will tell. But, as Mr Eccles said in his introduction, "If we don't know what people want, we can't

A Takeaway TURNED DOWN

In our last Newsletter we mentioned that the owner of the Rising Sun Café in Grange Lane was trying, once again, to obtain planning permission to sell takeaway food. The application, which was recommended by Council officers for approval, was considered by the Planning Committee on 25th February.

We are pleased to report that the members of the Committee took note of our objections - together with those of local residents, the Gateacre Area Committee and Councillor Barbara Mace. They resolved that they are 'MINDED TO REFUSE' the application, subject to a further report from the Planning Officer on the possible consequences

Are you interested in distributing MERSEYMART within the Gateacre area - and earning extra cash? This free newspaper provides, we think, a useful service in reporting local news and events - but the existing distribution arrangements are in need of improvement, and the company is seeking 'dedicated people with time on