

THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

'Guarding the Past, Safeguarding the Future'

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

Officers for 2003/04

Chairman: Tony McCann
Vice Chairman: Brian Doman, 6 Hayles Grove, L25 4SL (722 6368)
Hon.Secretary: Joan Gadd, 59 Hunts Cross Avenue, L25 5NU
(428 8884)
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?

To find out whether you are a paid-up member of the Gateacre Society, please check your address label, which indicates your membership expiry date (e.g. 31/10/04).

Not a member? Want to join us?

If you wish to join the Society - or to renew - please send the appropriate annual subscription to the Membership Secretary: cheques payable to 'The Gateacre Society'.



The Gateacre Society

Registered with the Civic Trust and as a Charity

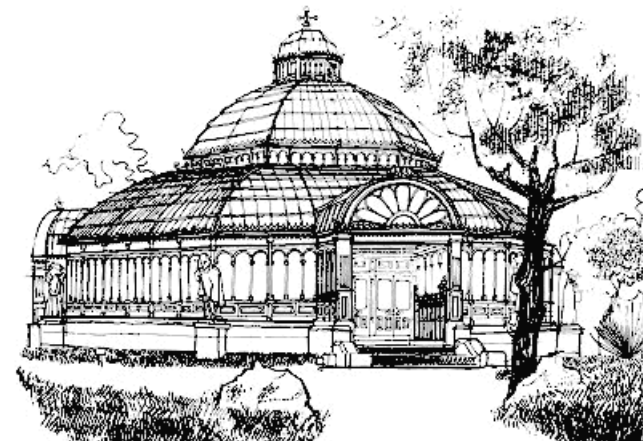
NEWSLETTER - November 2003

Our next meeting:

The History of Liverpool's Parks

by Colin Twist

An illustrated
talk on
Tuesday 25th
November
at 8 p.m. in the
Chapel Hall,
Sandfield Road,



Colin Twist last spoke to us about the wildlife of Merseyside. By popular request he now returns with a selection of slides on another of his specialist subjects. He will talk about the history of parks in Liverpool from 1767 to the present day: including those purpose-built for the people by the Council, and those donated to the town by private owners.

ALL WELCOME - Gateacre Society members free of charge - VISITORS 50p

PRINCES ROAD SYNAGOGUE

A review of our July visit *by Beryl Plent*

The word synagogue means 'meeting place', which was most appropriate when over forty of our Society's members met to enjoy an evening visit and a talk by Dr Moss at the Princes Road Jewish temple.

The first Jewish community in Liverpool arrived in 1710, and a synagogue was built in the town in 1748. By the 1780s the congregation was housed in a terraced property in Frederick Street. Ever mindful that places of worship should be within walking distance, another was sited in Hope Place with, next door, the first Jewish school. This closed in 1937 and the building, minus its dome, is now the Unity Theatre.

William and George Audsley, architect brothers from Edinburgh, built Princes Road Synagogue at a cost of £14,975 8s 11d. It was consecrated on September 2nd 1874. The Moorish and Gothic exterior belies the richness of the interior, which glows with colour. Massive wooden doors are opened to reveal glossy dark wood and gold ornamentation, a flower-painted ceiling above multi-colour marble columns in reds and greens. Painted cast iron columns support the gallery, where the ladies traditionally sit. The choir stalls are below a large rose window. All has been painstakingly restored after extensive fire damage in 1980.

We learnt something of the style of worship - of the Torah, or book of laws (some of which weigh 40 lbs) handwritten on scrolls of goatskin - why there are no representations of animals or humans (which could be construed as idol worship) - that the six-pointed star of David is not a religious symbol but that of the Zionists - and that a prayer shawl is worn only by boys after the age of 13.

Highly entertaining - and almost akin to a theatre visit - Dr Moss's talk nevertheless conveyed to us the power and strength of the Orthodox Jewish faith.

THE END OF THE WOOLTON SOCIETY?

We were surprised and disappointed to hear that, at its recent Annual General Meeting, a Motion was put forward to wind up the Woolton Society. This Motion was carried by the necessary two-thirds majority, and a simple majority at a future Special General Meeting will be sufficient to complete the process. The Woolton Society was founded in 1972 - two years earlier than the Gateacre Society - and it currently has over 500 members. We find it difficult to believe that, among this number, there are not enough people willing to form a Committee and to save our 'sister' Society from dissolution.

A.G.M. REPORT

Our 29th Annual General Meeting on 28th October was the best-attended for several years, in spite of the inclement weather.

Perhaps the pre-circulation of the Agenda papers - and the reminder that food and wine was on offer! - had something to do with it. Members were pleased to see our Chairman, Tony McCann, back 'in harness'. In his comments on the Annual Report, Tony drew our attention to the Society's relatively modest subscription rates, which in real terms are much lower now than when the Society was first founded.

This remark - together with the Treasurer's revelation that our expenditure last year was £165 more than our income - led a member, from the floor, to propose a review of the annual membership fees. The Society's Committee will be discussing this matter at its next meeting.

Meanwhile we shall continue to accept renewals at the current rates (see back page) - and you may still pay for up to 3 years, if you wish, at these same rates.

RIGHTS OF WAY MAP PUBLISHED - AT LAST!

On 31st October, a two-page Official Notice appeared in the Liverpool Daily Post, announcing the making of a Modification Order under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. At about the same time, A4-sized notices and maps were posted on (or rather wrapped around) various Public Footpath signs in Gateacre and elsewhere.

This is the procedure being used by the City Council to designate 54 footpaths as official Public Rights of Way. Since 1994 - when we assisted the Merseyside Environmental Trust in carrying out a survey of local footpaths - we have been pressing the Council to fulfil its statutory obligation to publish a Definitive Map of such rights of way. This it has now done: unless objections are received to the designation of the 54 footpaths, they will be legally protected against blockage or obliteration. It is, though, unfortunate that only the (relatively) 'non-controversial' footpaths have been included. Virtually none of the 70 or so additional footpaths identified by the M.E.T. survey has, as yet, been given any official protection, and we shall therefore be pressing for further Modification Orders to be made.

More building at the Comp.

Planning Application 03DC/3244 has been submitted to erect sports hall, changing facilities, staff office with mezzanine level fitness suite with internal link to existing swimming pool' at Gateacre Comprehensive School, Grange Lane. While appreciating that the School needs more sports facilities, local residents are concerned that the new building may be promoted as a public leisure centre: a substitute for the complex once planned for Belle Vale, which is a much more accessible location and much closer to the real 'area of need' for such facilities.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Gateacre Chapel's Christmas Fair will take place in the Chapel Hall on Saturday 22nd November between 1 and 4 p.m. Admission 30p. Father Christmas will be present!

Cleggs Closing Down

The owners of Messrs Cleggs' felt factory in Gateacre Brow have announced that the factory will close before Christmas. The parent company, W.E. Rawson Ltd, will transfer production to their plant in Wakefield, Yorkshire. The factory in Gateacre is a listed building - it was built in the mid nineteenth century as a 'country' brewery owned by the Fleetwood family, later Gregory's - and any changes to its external appearance will require listed building consent. It is rumoured that the owners envisage its conversion to (surprise, surprise) 'luxury apartments', and it is unlikely that we would oppose this - provided the character of the building is preserved and the traffic problems of the village are not exacerbated. As yet, however, no planning application has been submitted.