

## 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

Household £3 Single pensioner £2 Company, etc. £5  
(all plus £1.50 postage if outside hand-delivery area)  
You may pay for up to three years in advance, if you wish, at these annual rates.

### 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'.

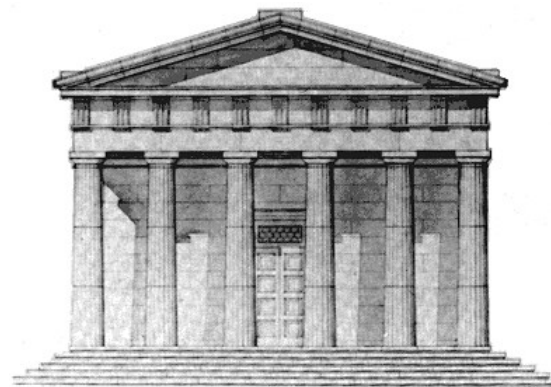


*Our next meeting:*

## A new Architectural Guide to Liverpool

by Joseph Sharples

A talk on  
Tuesday 3rd  
February  
at 8 p.m. in  
Gateacre  
Chapel  
Hall, Sandfield  
Road



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

**Joseph Sharples** was formerly a Curator at the Walker Art Gallery, where he organised a major exhibition on Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture in 1996-7. He is now carrying out research at the University of Liverpool into the architectural activities of Liverpool merchants from the 18th to the early 20th century. For the past three years he has been working on the forthcoming **Pevsner Architectural Guide** to Liverpool, to be published in May of this year. He will speak to us about the process of researching and writing this long-awaited new guidebook to the city's buildings.

# THE HISTORY OF LIVERPOOL'S PARKS

Our November talk - reviewed by Rosemary Doman

Liverpool is outstanding in the quality and quantity of its parks: ten per cent of the city's area being public parkland. On 25th November, thirty-four members were taken on a beautifully illustrated and illuminating tour by Colin Twist. Colin explained that he used to work for the City Council, and had organised guided walks through the parks in 1984-94 before the present-day 'ranger' service existed.

Many parks were purpose built by the Council, starting with St. James's Mount (site of the present Anglican Cathedral) in 1767 - an unemployment relief scheme. The former quarry alongside later served as a cemetery, interring William Huskisson in 1830 and finally 57,773 others.

Three large parks were created by the Council in the 1860s, to provide recreational space for the vast increase in population which followed the Irish potato famine. Newsham Park was established in 1868 on land purchased from the Molyneux family. Two years later came Stanley Park, then in 1872 Sefton Park was opened, on a site purchased by the Council for one quarter of a million pounds from the Earl of Sefton. Its layout was designed by Edouard André and Lewis Hornblower, who won the competition prize of three hundred guineas.

Some parks are linked to famous Liverpool names or events. William Roscoe (slavery abolitionist) raised funds to gather plants worldwide, mainly of economic importance, for the 240 ft greenhouse of the Botanic Garden begun in 1802 on the corner of Myrtle and Olive Streets. In the 1830s the gardens moved to Edge Lane, and became public property ten years later. Queen Victoria opened the great Liverpool Shipperies Exhibition of 1886 in Wavertree Park, which had been established alongside the Botanic Gardens in 1850.

In 1918 the City Council acquired Princes Park, which - when privately owned by Richard Vaughan Yates - had been designed by Joseph Paxton primarily for the benefit of those who lived in the villas round the edge. The park still features James Pennethorne's beautiful 'sunburst' gates at the entrance.

Locally, Calderstones Park was acquired in 1902 for £43,000 from the McIver family, of the Cunard Line, and developed as a vast horticultural park. Its Victorian kitchen garden has been rated 'the best free garden in the country'! Our nearby Woolton Woods were once owned by Holbrook Gaskell, a chemical industrialist, but were opened to the public in 1914. There are hopes that its much loved cuckoo clock (originally installed in 1927) will soon be fully restored.

Altogether a brilliant talk, to which a brief note such as this does scant justice.

## OUR NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Following the resolution passed at the AGM in October, the Society's Committee has been discussing the question of membership subscriptions. In order to increase income, and at the same time to simplify the Society's administration, the following scale of charges has been agreed: **Household £3 per annum, Single pensioner £2 per annum, Company etc. £5 per annum.**

These new rates have been introduced with immediate effect, for all new memberships and renewals. The last time the Society's subscriptions were increased was in 1986, and we hope members will agree that the new charges still represent good value for money. The annual surcharge for those members who receive their Newsletters by post remains at **£1.50**.

## GATEACRE BROW FLATS UPDATE

The plans for an apartment block at the top of Gateacre Brow - on the site of the modern houses 'Hillside' and 'Atalaya' - have been redrawn following objections from several nearby residents, as well as from the Gateacre Society. Instead of a single three-storey block of 12 flats (as illustrated in our September 2003 Newsletter) the proposal is now for a three-storey block of 6 flats and a two-storey block of 4 flats, separated by a driveway giving access to 14 car parking spaces at the back.

We have written to the Planning Department reiterating our previous objection: we still feel that too much traffic will be generated by the development (on a road which has become noticeably busier since the construction of the mini-roundabout at the top), that the new buildings will be over-dominant at the approach to the Gateacre Village Conservation Area, and that they will have an adverse effect on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.



## THE 'HAPPY FAMILY' WANTS TO STAY

A planning application (ref. 03F/3944) has been submitted to allow 185 Grange Lane to remain open until 10 pm each evening, and to operate as a hot food takeaway rather than solely as a café/restaurant. As reported in a previous Newsletter, permission for these changes was granted on a temporary basis in August 2003, but this permission will expire on 29th February. Meanwhile a new shopfront has been installed: the 'Rising Sun Café' has become the 'Happy Family Chinese & Cantonese Take-Away'. Although the business appears to be attracting very few customers at present, we are concerned that this may change in future - bringing about an increase in litter, anti-social behaviour and parking problems in Grange Lane. We have therefore reiterated our previous objection to the use of the premises as a takeaway.

## SANDFIELD ROAD - nearer a solution?

For several years now we have been concerned about the problems caused by large and heavy vehicles accessing (or attempting to access) Sandfield Road from Gateacre Brow. In 1997 a public meeting in the Chapel Hall resulted in a promise from Travis Perkins - who had taken over the long-established Rees Jones builders' merchants yard - that they would no longer accept deliveries from articulated vehicles. But it is not only such lorries - and not only Travis Perkins - that are the source of the problem. A variety of large vehicles have continued to uproot bollards, graze the sandstone boundary wall of the Chapel, and cause damage to the 'black-and-white' listed building on the corner of Gateacre Brow.

Council officers said initially that they could not impose a width or weight restriction, because there were established businesses in Sandfield Road which were entitled to access their premises. But we pointed out that there is, in fact, a physical limit to the size of vehicle which can safely enter the road - and unfortunately some lorry drivers only become aware of this when it is too late! We suggested that, at the very least, warning signs should be erected at the entrance to the road, and the pavement should be widened to keep vehicles away from the walls on either side. Shortly before Christmas, Councillor Malcolm Kelly arranged a site visit, attended by the relevant Council officers, our Environment Secretary, and the owner of 28a-d Gateacre Brow. The officers undertook to give the matter further consideration, and to report back with some suggestions for improvement. We await this report with interest.