

## THE GATEACRE SOCIETY

Founded 1974. Charity Registration No.508024.  
'Guarding the Past, Safeguarding the Future'

Website: [www.gatsoc.org.uk](http://www.gatsoc.org.uk) E-mail: [info@gatsoc.org.uk](mailto:info@gatsoc.org.uk)

### Officers for 2004/05

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. 31/10/05).

### Not a member? Want to join us?

If you wish to join the Society - or to renew - please send the appropriate subscription to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Beryl Plent, at 27 Grange Lane, Liverpool L25 4RZ: cheques payable to 'The Gateacre Society'.



## The Gateacre Society

Registered with the Civic Trust and as a Charity

### NEWSLETTER - July 2005

Our next meeting:

## THE HISTORY OF CUSTOMS & EXCISE

A talk with  
slides by  
Ron Davies  
on Tuesday  
19th July  
at 8 pm



in Gateacre  
Chapel Hall,  
Sandfield  
Road,  
Liverpool  
L25

Ron Davies is a retired schoolmaster who now promotes the Customs & Excise Museum - situated at the Albert Dock - on behalf of the Friends of the National Museums Liverpool. His talk will cover the story of Customs from the earliest times to the present day, from traditional 'smugglers' to current issues such as drugs and endangered species.

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

### OTHER DIARY DATES:

**Tuesday 19th July** is also Gateacre in Bloom Judgement Day 2005. Please support the Friends of Gateacre by keeping the village tidy - and your hanging baskets watered!

**Sunday 21st August** is the new date for the Home Front Recall day - organised by the Friends of Gateacre to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of World War 2 - postponed from 10th July. Look out for local publicity!

**Saturday 10th September** is Heritage Open Day in Gateacre, with St Stephen's Church open to visitors 11am-4pm, the Chapel open 1pm-4pm and guided historical walks starting from the Chapel at 11am & 2 pm, and from St Stephen's at 12.30 & 3.30 pm.

# CAPITAL OF CULTURE PLANS

A review of our May talk *by Mike Chitty*

Neil Peterson, the newly-appointed 'Head of Liverpool Welcome', came to talk to us on Tuesday 17th May. He began his talk with two questions: 'Why did we bid?' and 'Why did we win?'. In answer to the first, he quoted the Mayor of Barcelona as saying that 25 years physical regeneration work gets done in five when a city wins a major award like the Olympics (in Barcelona's case) or European Capital of Culture (in Liverpool's). There was also the prospect of 14,000 new jobs in leisure and tourism for Liverpool's young people. The answer to the second question was Liverpool's heritage waterfront, its international fame as a musical and sporting city - and the fact that the whole community was seen to be behind the bid. It was this latter aspect which the Liverpool Culture Company - an organisation created partly from existing City Council staff and partly from new appointees like Neil - was aiming to build on, to ensure that the people of Liverpool, and organisations like the Gateacre Society, feel that they have a role to play in 2008 and the years leading up to it.

Neil then ran through the 'themed years' which have already taken place - 2003 Learning, 2004 Faith, and 2005 Sea Liverpool - or are still to come: 2006 Liverpool Performs (including the Biennial and the Golf Open), 2007 Heritage (Liverpool's 800th birthday) and 2008 Culture (in 'a new and reborn city - a great place for our children to be'). The future events programme will be masterminded by Robyn Archer, an Australian former opera singer whom Neil described as 'a buzz of energy'. Projects already planned include 'See Liverpool through my eyes' - a sharing of experiences by the old and the young - a cruise liner facility at the Pier Head, a study of how the current Beatle 'offer' can be improved, and the '08 Place': a new information centre in Whitechapel. Other ideas are a well-publicised scoring system for customer service, special training for taxi drivers, and a team of '08 Volunteers' to reinforce the existing heritage and other organisations. Liverpool's gateways and routeways will be improved, street entertainers will be encouraged, and contacts will be established (or re-established) with Liverpool's twin cities and ex-pats abroad.

The evening ended with a lively and wide-ranging question-and-answer session. This brought out numerous snippets of further information about forthcoming events: a children's summer art festival, a production of Jason and the Argonauts in Otterspool Park, a visitor centre in St George's Hall, the extension of the current 'public realm' improvements throughout Church Street, new temporary performance venues, an interactive website with music clips, a series of 'two for one' cultural offers for local residents, and the encouragement of families to 'reclaim the city centre'. And yes, some of the problems which visitor surveys had revealed - like too much chewing gum on the streets and too few public toilets - are being seriously looked at. The evening ended with a promise from Neil that - if invited - he would return each year to report on progress and to obtain feedback from our members. We may well take him up on that offer!

## PLANNING NEWS

The application to convert the (Listed) **Cleggs building** into flats, and to build new blocks to the rear, was WITHDRAWN by the applicant on 13th June. While welcoming the conversion plan, we had lodged an objection to the overall number of apartments proposed, and to the design and materials of the new blocks. We understand that the architects are in the process of modifying the plans, so as to reduce the number of dwelling units and to use the existing Gateacre Brow gateway as an entry (though not exit) point for vehicles.

Meanwhile the application to build 10 flats on the site of **Michael Taylor's garage** at 167 -169 Grange Lane was REFUSED by the City Council on 3rd June. The reasons for refusal were that the proposed building 'would constitute an intrusive and overly imposing feature on the surrounding street scene', it would adversely affect both the character of the Gateacre Village Conservation Area and the setting of Listed Buildings, and that the proposed car parking area would be 'detrimental to the visual amenities of the site' and a source of noise and disturbance to its neighbours.

## PUBLIC FOOTPATHS

A public inquiry took place on 21st June, to hear objections to the City Council's new Definitive Map of rights of way. Altogether six of the proposed paths were challenged, including the long-standing right of way from Grange Weint to Cuckoo Lane. The objection was on the grounds of anti-social behaviour, but we submitted a written statement drawing the Inspector's attention to the value of the path as a traffic-free short cut for schoolchildren, shoppers, bus passengers and local residents.

## WILSON MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN

We asked a firm of stonemasons to give us an estimate of the cost of restoring the former drinking fountain at the corner of Grange Lane and Gateacre Brow. This restoration work was to include the removal of the unsightly concrete 'plug' which had been inserted, many years ago, into the sandstone basin. But before we knew it, the firm phoned to say that they had gone ahead (without asking anyone's permission) and taken the concrete out. This revealed that the stone basin itself was quite badly damaged, and we are currently discussing what to do next. Meanwhile, the Friends of Gateacre have filled the basin with compost and turned it into an attractive floral feature - which Mr Moran, of Moran Sound across the road, has kindly kept watered.

## CLEANING THE QUEEN

An enthusiastic group of pupils from Gateacre Comprehensive School gave the bust of Queen Victoria her annual wash and brush-up on 19th May. We are hoping that the pupils will return this month to apply the special microcrystalline wax - kindly supplied to us by the Conservation Centre in Whitechapel - which will prevent the bronze developing verdigris.

## 'HISTORY ON YOUR DOORSTEP'

Thanks to a grant obtained by the Friends of Gateacre, we have had 5,000 copies of a leaflet printed, containing a potted history of Gateacre, a map of the village and pictures of some of its historic buildings. The idea is that 3,000 of these will be distributed door-to-door, free of charge, within the area around the village centre, and the remainder made available at meetings and via local shops, etc. (Gateacre Society members living outside the village distribution area can expect to receive a copy with their September Newsletter).

***If you are willing to join the team of volunteers who will be delivering the leaflets - some time in early August - please phone Lynn Cheng (222 4006) as soon as possible.***

## THE PREFABS PROJECT

The Millennium Centre at Belle Vale has held three very successful meetings, and built up a database of over 100 former residents of the prefab estate which used to exist just north of Belle Vale Road. They are collecting memories of the area, and 22nd July will be a 'bring and scan' day when anyone with old photographs of the estate can take them in and have them transferred to the Project's computer. There will be another meeting at 7 p.m. on 25th August, which anyone interested is invited to attend. ***For further details please phone Celia Kelly at Lee Valley DISC on 288 8326.***