

PARKGATE AND DISTRICT SOCIETY

Chairman	J R Cochrane	336 2378
Secretary	Mrs A M Clarke	336 1069
Treasurer	E P D Taylor	336 4321

NEWSLETTER NO 11, SEPTEMBER 1976

Forthcoming Events

1. Saturday 11th September:

GUIDED TOUR OF PARKGATE

Mr Place will meet members at 11.30 am at the South Slip in front of the Old Quay Inn. How long the tour takes is apt to be governed by the weather, but it is of course an easy matter for members to slip away when they have had enough!

2. Monday 4th October:

There is a Public Meeting to discuss the County Structure Plan at 7.30 pm at the Civic Hall in Neston! This is a follow-up meeting to the one held in November 1975, and we urge members to attend if they can.

3. Wednesday 6th October:

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society at 7.30 pm followed at 8 pm by

"RETURN TO THE WILD"

a talk by Mrs J Ratcliffe, author of "Through the Badger Gate" at the Parkgate Hotel.

The Annual General Meeting

As explained in our last newsletter, we have fixed Mrs Ratcliffe's talk at 8 pm so that there is certain to be adequate time for proper discussion at the AGM which begins at 7.30.

Members are very welcome to bring guests to Mrs Ratcliffe's talk. However, the rules for an AGM require that it be restricted to members; we must therefore ask that guests be parked at the back of the hall (or still further back, in the bar!) until the meeting is over.

Our Constitution lays down that "Nominations for the election of Officers shall be made in writing at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations shall be supported by proposer and seconder and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained. The election of Officers shall be completed prior to the election of further committee members." Any nominations should therefore be sent to the Secretary (Mrs A M Clarke, Sea View, The Parade, Parkgate) by September 22nd at the latest.

We are sorry to report that Mrs Hylda Wall-Jones will not be seeking re-election as Vice-Chairman. She was in at the birth of the Society and has been very much involved in all our affairs ever since. Fortunately she has agreed to continue her hard work as a member of the Executive Committee, and so she is seeking re-election in that capacity.

Mr H O Vollers, who has guided the Committee for some years on matters of Conservation, has accepted nomination as Vice-Chairman. All the other serving officers and members of the Committee are willing to continue and offer themselves for re-election. Therefore the nominations already received are as follows:

Officers: Chairman, J R Cochrane. Vice-Chairman, H O Vollers.
Secretary, Mrs A M Clarke. Treasurer, E P D Taylor.
Committee: F W French (Trees), A D J Grenfell, Major P V Moore,
Mrs B Moore, C Morrison (Litter), G W Place (History),
Mrs J Quaile (Membership), Mrs H Wall-Jones.

If you need TRANSPORT to reach the meeting, contact Mrs Clarke at 336 1069. She will arrange for someone to pick you up.

The Foreshore

You may have read in the local paper of a plan put forward by two residents of Parkgate, Mr Derek Hill and Mr Derek Bryan, which they hope might bring the water back to Parkgate. Mr Hill and Mr Bryan came to one of our committee meetings and explained in detail what they proposed. In essence their suggestion is that if an artificial ditch were to be dug along the length of the Parade, a short distance from the sea wall, it would be possible to link the remains of the Parkgate Deep which stretches along the shore from the Heswall direction, with an arm of the web of channels which reach toward the south end of Parkgate from the centre of the estuary. They expressed the hope that if a flow of water could be induced to join the two channels, a circular movement of tidal water might result which would scour out the channel and prevent further silting. We were very interested to hear their plans, but felt that we needed expert advice before we gave any support to a scheme which might well provide us with ugly mud rather than attractive water. Mr Hill and Mr Bryan had brought with them Mrs Joan Brown, who is a local geologist with experience of the action of estuaries. She gave us a closely-argued description of the water flow and silting action of estuaries like the Dee. Her conclusion was that, while she thought it unlikely that the plan would work, it would be well worth our while to write to certain research institutions to seek their opinions. Accordingly we have followed her advice, and we have received most helpful replies from Dr Meredith of Liverpool University, from the Hydraulics Research Station at Wallingford, from the Institute of Oceanographic Sciences at Bidston, and from Dr Pugh Thomas of Salford University. Dr Pugh Thomas also offered to meet the interested parties at Parkgate to discuss the problems on the spot, but unfortunately he has been ill and the meeting has not yet taken place.

All four of these replies advised us that the proposal to obtain a regular flow of water at Parkgate by digging an artificial channel was unlikely to succeed.

"My feeling is," wrote Dr Pugh Thomas, "that you would be wasting your time digging your proposed trenches. It seems to me that the very rapid accretion of the salt marsh in this part of the Dee will undo your work almost as quickly as you produce it. With regard to the increased rate of silting, the steady reduction in the amount of free water in the estuary due to the spread of the saltmarsh will be reducing the scour when the tide goes out and this will in itself tend to increase the rate of silting."

"We feel, therefore, that the proposed junction of the two estuary channels by an artificial cut along Parkgate Parade is not likely to be successful or even to be self-maintaining, in isolation."
(Wallingford).

"I consider the process of marsh formation to be inevitable in the Dee estuary and that its rate is likely to increase," wrote Dr Meredith.

In the light of these opinions, we feel that the Society should not pursue this proposal any further.

Meetings

Our three meetings this year have gone very well. In March Mr J K Hume spoke about the changing seasons at Ness Gardens and showed us some excellent slides of flowers. In the same month a band of hardy members braved the most daunting weather to clear the foreshore of litter. Although the spread of litter after any fine weekend may make us wonder why we bother to pick it up, in fact this willingness to help ourselves is a useful lever in the constant pressure we apply to the local authority to keep our surroundings clean.

In April there was a record audience of over 90 to hear Mr Place's talk, "Parkgate and the Sea-Water Cure"; we had to strip the adjoining bar of all its chairs to accommodate members and their guests. Once again, Mr Place fascinated us with his research into the history of Parkgate, and we appreciate the amount of time he puts into providing such detailed and entertaining accounts. We were gratified by the interest shown by local newspapers and radio in this talk; somewhat less gratified though, by the headline, "Nude Bathing at Parkgate", a topic over which Mr Place thought he had gently tiptoed with the utmost delicacy!

The Society's Other Affairs

Leighton Court: Mrs Quaile represented the Society at the public enquiry into the car park at this Club. It would appear that although the Club may be wrong in law, consideration may be given to the fact that the car park removes congestion from the roads. We await the Inspector's report with interest.

Music Licences: The Parkgate Hotel and the Boathouse applied for music licences until 2 am, six nights a week. The Society represented to the Council that, from the point of view of local residents, occasional music licences were reasonable, but blanket permission of the kind sought was unreasonable. The licences were not granted.

Clatterbridge Hospital: Mrs Clarke represented the Society at the Public Meeting on the partial closure of Clatterbridge Hospital when the new Arrowe Park Hospital opens in 1980. Perhaps members may not be fully aware of the consequences of this act. It is intended that all general surgery, out-patients and accidents will be transferred to Arrowe Park, and Clatterbridge will then cater only for Geriatric, Medical, Radiotherapy, Orthopaedic and Psychiatric patients.

Our Publications: The sales of both our publications are going steadily. So far we have sold about 4,200 copies of the leaflet A Stroll Through Parkgate, and about 320 copies of the Panorama of Parkgate.