



Parkgate Society

(Founded 1972)

Newsletter

Autumn 2008

Issue Number 75

Meetings

We meet at 8pm at the **Boathouse**.
If you need help with transport please ring
Mrs Angela Clarke, our Secretary, giving 24 hours
notice, on 0151-336 -1069.

Diary dates for 2008/2009

2008

15 September – “Overcoming Adversity”
– *Swasie Turner MBE*

20 October - AGM at 7.30pm followed by “One
War – Two captivities” – *Meg Parkes*

24 November – “So you think you know
Parkgate”, a light-hearted quiz
by *Anthony Annakin-Smith*

2009

9th February – “As we were No.2” - *Glyn Parry*

16 March - “Thomas Brassey, Storeton Quarry
Manager, local benefactor and world
railway builder.” - *David Casement*

20 April - “Lost and re-invented houses of
Wirral” - *June Lancelyn-Green MBE*

18 May – “Liverpool 1907-2007” a film show
- *Angus Tilston*

Visitors are welcome

Articles or suggestions for future Newsletters are
most welcome, please contact:
Anne Williamson 336 6146 or
Jerry Harris 336 7406

AGM

**The AGM will take place on Monday 20
October 2008 at 7.30 pm.**

According to our constitution, nominations
for the election of Committee members
shall be made at least 14 days before the
AGM.

The following Committee members are all
willing to serve again:

Philip Owen (chairman), Moira Andrews
(Vice Chairman), Angela Clarke
(secretary), Valerie Place, Becky Ford,
Suzi Grenfell, Anne Williamson, Stephen
Gordon, Anthony Annakin-Smith and
Jerry Harris.

NOTICE OF INTENDED CHANGES TO
THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION -
please see page 2 for details.

Please note that 2008/2009 subscriptions
are due following the AGM.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

£4.00 Family or Single per year

Payment can be made at any of our
meetings, however we would prefer
payment by Banker's Standing Order.
Membership, Standing Order and Gift Aid
forms are available, from our Secretary.

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The Parkgate Society is a registered charity, no. 503718

NOTICE OF INTENDED CHANGES TO THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION

The following Special Resolutions to amend the Society's Constitution have been proposed and seconded for consideration at the AGM on Monday 20th October 2009.

(The additional words are highlighted)

2. OBJECTIVES

amend clause c. -

- c. To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of **buildings and** features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

add clause e. -

- e. **The Society may offer affiliation to other like-minded voluntary or charitable groups within the area of interest.**

Insert new POWER after (ii) **"To engage in discussions with other such organisations or charities and to undertake appropriate joint activities"**.

We hope you agree with our recommendation that these changes are intended to help us bring further benefits to Parkgate.

NESTON TO HAVE NEW PARISH/ TOWN COUNCIL

As you may know Neston is to have its own Parish /Town Council next year, with elections due to take place in May or June 2009. The Council will be made up of 17 directly elected councillors with 4 being elected in each of the following wards:- Parkgate, Neston, Little Neston, Riverside and 1 councillor from Ness.

If you are interested in serving your community in this voluntary capacity, please let us know as soon as possible, so that we can forward your names to Neston Town Hall.

NEWS AND VIEWS

The local audio trails funded by the Market Town Initiative are worth listening to. If you have a computer with sound, look at www.neston.org.uk then type audio trail into the "search" box and press GO, then click on the 1) Local audio trails- neston and parkgate where you will find the introduction to a walk, followed by the walk through Parkgate described and produced professionally (using information and trail provided by the Society) with realistic background sounds included. There are also trails of Neston Town and the Parish Church.

The old vestry room , on your right as you enter, is now a spacious easily accessible WC and washbasin, and also houses the mains services cupboard and new small gas boiler. In the main body of the church and under the balcony is a small and unobtrusive kitchen with sink, water boiler for tea and coffee, cupboard and shelves. The kitchen is contained within a large double-door compartment than can be closed off when not required. The building has been rewired throughout, with provision for outdoor lighting when the occasions arise, and the popular, large, illuminated cross has been retained within the rewiring scheme. New heating and plumbing has been almost completed.

Work continuing this year includes treatment of woodworm, refurbishment and cleaning of the historic windows, redecoration of the whole interior and surface finishing of the floors throughout. Exterior work includes connection of the toilet to the main drain in the road, installation of a new gas meter, infilling of the old boiler house and major uprooting and relaying of the sandstone entrance approach path to give it a gentle slope up to the front door thus eliminating steps into the church and up to the graveyard/garden area.

The aim is to get the building open by spring 2009 and if funds allow, new chairs, some fold up tables and other furnishing and equipment will be purchased. The small side extensions will be postponed for a future date.

Thanks to all those who have donated money and/or time. Donations are still required, as are volunteers.

TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO – Parkgate in 1983

The Old Quay

Over the last year the Old Quay had developed further as a motor bikers' pub causing a clash with the residents. There was concern in the area about noise and the situation was being monitored by the Environmental Health Officer. In return the Old Quay had attempted to foster responsibility by forming an official club for the bikers and also appointed a car park attendant to ensure the patrons left the pub quietly. The Parkgate Society newsletter of the time noted that although new motorbikes had to comply with low noise level exhausts, there was no such legal restriction for modified replacement exhausts which were popular and noisy.

Proposed Lake at Parkgate

"A lively and interesting meeting" took place at Neston Town Hall to look at plans drawn up for a boating lake and car parks for Parkgate marsh. Understandably there was much interest and concern about this huge change to the area and numerous residents spoke out against the proposal.

The RSPB were also against giving up their land for this purpose and the scheme was eventually abandoned!

The Chairmen

The former Chairman (1972-1974), Mr Steven Norris, formerly of Brooke House, the Parade, was elected as Conservative Member of Parliament for Oxford East. Also in this year, the then Chairman of the Society, Hendrik Vollers, moved house to Angelsey and therefore resigned his leadership of the Society, a position that was filled by Geoffrey Place.

Flowers, Trees and Tubs

Once again the Society decorated the pulpit of St Thomas's Church for the summer festival. They also installed large concrete tubs on the Donkey Stand that were planted and looked after by Parkgate Nurseries. Thankfully the summer passed by without any vandalism. The new trees to replace those lost to Dutch Elm Disease were planted in the churchyard at St Thomas's.

Neston

The Society presented a framed Panorama of Parkgate to Neston Library on its 75th Anniversary (it opened 3rd Jan. 1908) and held a month long exhibition in the library. Neston produced its first Town Trail leaflet written by Geoffrey Place and illustrated by Bernadette and Naomi Bowes.

THE RIVER DEE CHANGES

Twenty five years ago there was a proposal to construct a lake on the marsh at Parkgate (see Twenty Five Years Ago article). However, it has been demonstrated that those who alter the natural evolution of the Dee estuary run the risk that they may induce greater changes than they bargain for. For example, just look what happened to the flow of the river when it was canalised into the New Cut; Parkgate became marooned in ever expanding zones of marsh as the river flow to this side of the estuary slowed and debris was deposited.

A petition was presented to the House of Lords in 1733 in opposition to the Bill to canalise the Dee into the New Cut, which actually was built four years later.

"The humble petition of several masters of ships and traders living at or near Park Gate whose names are hereunto subscribed on behalf of themselves and many others, sheweth – That there is a Bill now depending in this Honourable House to recover and preserve the navigation of the River Dee, which if it passes into law and anything be done in consequence thereof to alter the channel as proposed by the said Bill, your petitioners apprehend that the greatest part of the water will be thereby diverted from Park Gate which is at present the safest and most convenient place on the said river for ships and vessels to lie or anchor in, and that the passage thereto will be choaked and destroyed to the great prejudice of the navigation of the said river and the ruine of your petitioners."

This petition was signed by 35 people, and they were proved correct!

COACHES AND HORSES AT PARKGATE

At the commencement of this century (1800s editor's note) it was no unusual occurrence for wealthy visitors to Parkgate to arrive in coaches to which as many as six horses were attached, not as a matter of pride, but of necessity, for the bad state of the roads required the assistance of so large a number to secure comfort in travelling. When the roads were improved, a covered stage wagon was used for passengers, the horses having bells on the head gear so that even in the night their jingling might announce its arrival.

(Extracted from the book 'Twixt Mersey and Dee, by Mrs Hilda Gamlin. Publ. Liverpool D. Marples and Co. 1897)

Moving forward a century to a time when horses were still the main form of transport, there is a print of Parkgate that shows a covered wagon drawn by one horse rounding the corner at the south end of the Parade with the words NESTON AND PARKGATE HYGIENIC LAUNDRY & CLEANING Co. Ltd. NESTON, on the side of the covered area and the words No. 3. The laundry, which opened in 1896, was sited down Old Quay Lane, and employed as many as 80 people in the early 1900s and obviously had at least three wagons.

AND HERE IS THE NEWS.... (continued)

**News, just as it was reported, from Parkgate and the
surrounding area**

(Our thanks again to Anthony Annakin-Smith for unearthing these articles)

200 Years Ago - 1808

Tragedy frequently lurked in the waters off Parkgate. Here is one such account, concerning a coal-carrying ship, the *Industry*:

'The Industry, of Chester, John Simpson, master, bound to Dublin, with coals, having the beginning of last week met with contrary winds, came to on the Wild Roads¹, and afterwards a gale of wind coming on, the Captain was obliged to slip his cable, and run up to Parkgate. On Thursday morning last, Simpson took his boat, with three men and a boy, to recover the anchor and cable, but was prevented by the severity of the evening; and on their return, they were unable to find their way with the boat, and agreed to walk over the sands, with a view of getting to Flint, but unfortunately were prevented by the deep waters, and were obliged to return towards Parkgate, in order to find the

boat again, when one of the men and the boy were taken ill, and the others carried them on their backs; not long after, the boy expired, and the man being nearly dead, they were obliged to leave them both on the sands, and with great difficulty the Captain and two men got to their boat, and were picked up the next morning, nearly lifeless, by the Flint ferry-boat.'

The Times, 24th February 1808

[¹ A 'Road' is a partly sheltered stretch of water near a shore in which ships can ride at anchor. The 'Wild Road' was situated at the northern end of the Welsh side of the Dee Estuary]

100 Years Ago – 1908

Finally, if you're into the property market, you are unfortunately too late to pick up some bargains in Olive Road, Neston:

'Business in the country sale-rooms has been fairly active, among the sales reported to us this week being that of six freehold houses in Olive Road, Neston for £1,050 by Messrs. Boulton, Son, and Maples at Liverpool, and, at the same place, six lots of long leasehold and house property by Mr. William Thompson, for a total of £3,750.

The Times, 9th May 1908

HISTORIC MAPS OF CHESHIRE

Prior to the advent of Ordnance Survey maps in the mid 1800s, there were few accurate maps of this area, that were based on systematic and scientific surveys. Peter Burdett's 1777 Map of Cheshire was one such notable example, and the local section is reproduced overleaf. He used scientific methods of triangulation to devise his map, and being one inch to the mile, was of sufficient scale to show some local detail.

A previous map, Saxton's 1577, is widely available as a decorative print, but at ½ inch to the mile, is less useful for "spotting local landmarks". This map was reproduced in the Spring 2006 newsletter.

Following on after Burdett's map, notable ones include Greenwood's 1819, Swire & Hutchings' 1830, Bryant's 1831, followed by regularly produced editions of "1 inch to 1 mile" Ordnance Survey maps. Copies of all these maps are available to view at the Cheshire Records Office, Duke Street, Chester.

