

PARKGATE AND DISTRICT SOCIETY

Chairman:	J.R. Cochrane	336-2378
Vice-Chairman:	Mrs. H. Wall-Jones	336-2420
Secretary:	Mrs. A. Clarke	336-1069
Treasurer:	E.P.D. Taylor	336-4321

NEWSLETTER NO.10, FEBRUARY, 1976

For your Diary

On WEDNESDAY, 3rd March, 1976, Mr. J.K. Hume, the Director of the Botanic Gardens at Ness, will give an illustrated talk at 8 p.m. at the Parkgate Hotel on

NESS GARDENS

This will be in a different room from our usual meeting place, on the left of the hotel rather than the right.

Ness Gardens will be the subject of two television programmes, to be broadcast on 21st and 28th April, and Mr. Hume's talk should enhance our enjoyment of these programmes.

On Sunday, 21st March, at 2.30 p.m., we will again welcome all able-bodied supporters to help

CLEAN UP THE SHORE

We will meet at the South Slip (by the Old Quay Inn), where Chris Morrison will have plastic sacks to hand out. Old gloves and wellingtons are strongly recommended.

On Thursday, 22nd April, Geoffrey Place will give the second of his talks on the history of Parkgate. His theme will be

PARKGATE AND THE SEA-WATER CURE

which will trace Parkgate's fame as a watering-place between 1760 and 1830, and will include that brief but romantic light shed on Parkgate by Emma, Lady Hamilton. We are sure that everyone who heard Mr. Place describe the Origins of Parkgate last April will be looking forward to hearing this instalment.

APRIL 1ST is, alas, the date on which the annual subscription falls due. We will be happy to receive your subscription at either of the talks, or it may be paid to any Committee member, whose names appear at the beginning or end of this letter. If you prefer to send it, the Membership Secretary is Mrs. J. Quaile, 38 The Looms, Parkgate. The Subscription is £1 for single or family membership, and 50p for Senior Citizens.

Membership

The generosity of a friend of the Society has enabled us to print some leaflets which give basic information about the Society and it's work, and invite new members to join. One of these leaflets has been or should soon be delivered to your house. We do need members, not merely because we need funds to operate at all, but more especially because we need to be able to speak from strength. Please bring a friend to one or both of the meetings detailed above, and let us hope that the talk will interest them in joining the Society.

Our Publications

We are proud to announce our new project, a

PANORAMA OF PARKGATE

We have been preparing it for two years, and it will be publicly unveiled at our meeting on 3rd March. In the form of a poster, it is a panorama of present-day Parkgate drawn by the local artist Michael Barton, whom you may well have glimpsed on the marsh, sketching away for this project throughout last summer. As well

as nearly all the houses along the Parade, the poster also shows the view of the Welsh Hills, and there is a summary of the history of the village. We are sure that all our members will wish to have a charming memento of Parkgate which also provides a minutely accurate record of the houses as they are now. Nicholls' (The Post Office) have with great generosity agreed to sell the Panorama for us.

Our leaflets, "A Stroll Through Parkgate", has continued to sell well, and at last is beginning to show a modest profit towards the Society's funds. We are extremely grateful to our good friends who allow these leaflets to be sold at their premises in Parkgate; Nicholls', Meador's, and the Green Bottle. We have at long last received the Certificate which the leaflet won in a competition organised by the Civic Trust, and we shall have this Certificate on view at our next two meetings.

The Annual General Meeting

We were glad to welcome a large audience to hear Mr. E.J. Abraham speak about "Birds of the Dee Estuary". Mr. Abraham's slides and information were thoroughly up to date, and he left some of us wondering at all that we had failed to notice in all these years.

Several members have pointed out, with justice, that there was quite inadequate opportunity to ask questions or raise points at this meeting about the work and interests of the Society. We are very penitent about this, and agree that such an opportunity should have been provided. The fact was that the Chairman announced that question and discussion time would be found after the talk, which ended too late for the meeting to continue other than informally. We will manage things better next time; by beginning the AGM a littler earlier, and by having the talk at a set time, a proper space will be left for discussion which nothing can erode.

Meanwhile, the officers and Committee members of the Society will be present, if it is humanly possible, at the next two meetings, and will be only too glad to meet members then.

The Donkey Stand

We were very pleased to be able to suggest the refurbishment of the Donkey Stand as a contribution to European Architectural Year, to assist with the plans for it, and to offer a contribution from our meagre funds towards it's cost. We are rather less pleased with the results so far, and we will continue to urge the completion of the plan. The chief culprit has been inflation, which has gobbled up £1,600 on the project, and the Borough has no more funds to spare for it. We are assured, though, that when supplies of York stone, and of course money, become available, the remaining areas of concrete will be replaced. We also need more seats, with cast-iron frames of the Victorian or Edwardian type, but no more can be found at the moment.

Several members have enquired about the house which used to stand on this site, and whose foundations now form the Donkey Stand. If you come to Mr. Place's talk on 22nd April, you will be able to see a sketch of this house as it was in 1628.

Parks Fields

We were alarmed at Press reports that work was about to start on the conversion of Parks Fields to football pitches, and hastened to make our views known. Luckily the reports turned out to be premature, and no decision about the future of this land has been taken. The fact is that these fields were bought by the old Neston Council for recreation purposes, and that this purchase staved off a threat that houses would be built on this land. The Society's view is that recreation is a far better use of this space than housing, but we expect an adequate screen of trees to protect nearby houses, discreet and well screened provision for car parking, and a more sensitive development than the plonking down of nine unrelieved football pitches. We have been assured that any plans will, when they are made, be offered for proper local discussion.

Other Conservation Matters

We have continued to keep an eagleeye on all events and proposals which concern the Parkgate Conservation Area, and once again we are very pleased to record our appreciation of the help and sympathy we have had from the officers of Ellesmere Port Borough Council, especially from Mr. McGarva the Borough Engineer, and Mr. Griffiths the Conservation Officer. Although there was little we could do to speed up the completion of the pumping station by the Old Quay Inn, we were able to get certain details put right. For example, the appearance of crude sewage when one of the temporary pumps broke down, and the pile of concrete which was dumped on the South Slip and which has only just been removed at our request. Our representatives attended a meeting at the Neston Civic Hall on 10th October to discuss the County Plan, and we answered a questionnaire about it for the Cheshire County Council.

Members may have seen press reports that a number of plaques commemorating European Architectural Heritage Year are to be placed on historic buildings in the Borough, and that one is destined for Parkgate. The Borough Conservation Officer, Mr. Griffiths, paid us a visit to show us one of these plaques, which he proposes to place on one of the houses at the Station Road end of the Parade, to draw attention to the 18th Century group which stands at that corner. The plaques have been essentially a schools project, having been planned by a primary school and made at a secondary school, with great enthusiasm and modest cost. Viewed in this context they are, we think, attractive.

The proposal to limit traffic in School Lane, which the Society discussed at length with the old Neston Council, has recently been resurrected by the Ellesmere Port Council, although the Society's proposals had seemingly been lost in the transfer of local government. We had suggested a "No Right Turn" sign at the Brookfield Road end of School Lane, which would prevent a bottleneck without affecting the houses on School Lane, and without cluttering the place with signs. So we repeated this suggestion. The official plan at the moment is to make the upper end of School Lane one-way, which we suspect has exactly the same effect as our plan, but needs more signs and so costs more. The whole idea has now been shelved for lack of money!

There are some other planning applications looming on which we are keeping a wary eye; for a house in Brooke House garden which we feel should not cause the destruction of the sandstone wall to provide entry; and a plan to erect several new houses on the site of Riverside in Manorial Road.

History

Olive Wilcox, who died last year and who was a keen student of local history had compiled with loving care a scrapbook of items on Parkgate and Wirral history. Miss Wilcox's sister, Mrs. D.M. Turner, has generously given this scrapbook to the Society, in the hope that it will interest or even inspire others. Olive was very proud of her scrapbook and was usually unwilling to let it go far from her sight. We feel that we should remember her feelings towards her collection while making it possible for others to see it. The scrapbook has been entrusted to Geoffrey Place (336 2891), and he will be very glad to show it to members by appointment and then, if desired, to lend it for more prolonged study.

From time to time Mr. Place is able to assist schoolchildren or students at universities, colleges of education and the like who need information about Parkgate for their projects on local history. Any member who encounters such a person is welcome to steer them in Mr. Place's direction.

The Committee

The Four elected officers of the Society are listed at the head of this letter. These are the other members of the Committee:

F.W. French	Trees	336-3113	C. Morrison	Litter	336-4319
A.D.J. Grenfell		336-1010	G.W. Place	History	336-2891
Major P.V. Moore		336-2882	Mrs. J. Quaile	Membership	336-2096
Mrs. B. Moore		336-2882	H.O. Vollers	Conservation	336-1359