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PARKGATE AND DISTRICT SOCIETY

Chairman	J R Cochrane	336 2378
Vice-Chairman	H C Vollers	336 1359
Secretary	Mrs A Clarke	336 1069
Treasurer	E P D Taylor	336 4321

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Forthcoming Events

1. Monday 7th March at 8pm in the Hall of the United Reformed Church, Moorside Lane:

Mr John Cooper, Tennis Promotions Manager of Dunlop Sports Co. Ltd, will present two films,

"WIMBLEDON 1976"
and "TENNIS GREATS"

A reminder of summer may be just what we need!

2. Sunday 27th March at 2pm. We will once again meet at the South Slip (by the Old Quay Inn) to

CLEAN UP THE SHORE

Bring wellingtons and old gloves; we will provide plastic sacks. Let us hope for kinder weather than last year. Even in a steady drizzle, though, it seemed quite fun!

3. Wednesday 4th May at 8pm at the Hall of the United Reformed Church, Moorside Lane:

"SET SAIL FOR IRELAND"

Geoffrey Place will give the third in his series of illustrated talks on the history of Parkgate. His subject this time is the passenger service between Dublin and Parkgate during the 18th century. This important topic has never before been adequately described, in or out of print, and Mr Place has done a great deal of basic research. So you may be sure that you will be attending a World Premiere!

Our New Meeting Place

Please notice that our meetings are now being held at the Hall of the United Reformed Church in Moorside Lane. The Parkgate Hotel feel that they can no longer offer us the facilities that we need, and we have expressed our gratitude to them for their help and support in the past. In our new meeting place we shall be able to offer coffee and biscuits to members after our talks, and as always, we hope that members will take these opportunities to discuss any matter touching Parkgate with your committee members.

If you need TRANSPORT, do ring Mrs Clarke at 336 1069 and she will try to provide a car for you.

Subscriptions

April 1st is the date on which annual subscriptions fall due. We shall be happy to receive yours at any of our meetings, or please send it to the Secretary, Mrs Clarke, at Sea View, The Parade, Parkgate. The subscriptions are £1 for single or family membership and 50p for Senior Citizens.

Do please bring a friend to any of our meetings, and if you can turn that friend into a member, so much the better.

The Foreshore

We reported in our last Newsletter that we had sought expert opinions about the proposals to dig an artificial channel parallel to the Parade, and that these opinions advised against the plan. Since then, Dr Pugh-Thomas of Salford University, who had already given us his advice has been kind enough to visit Parkgate in person. He looked at the problem, discussed it at length with us, and suggested that there might indeed be one solution which we could try, albeit a partial one. Much of the cause of the stagnant pools and consequent smells and disagreeable appearance was, he pointed out, the land drains which run under the roadway and out of holes in the sea wall. We have therefore mapped these outlets and approached the Dee and Clwyd River Division for their opinion. This body has declined to accept responsibility for these outlets, but nevertheless replied constructively, and has promised to pursue with the local authority the matter of certain impurities which are suspected to be issuing from one of these outlets. The River Division have suggested that an intercepting sewer which will collect all this waste water and take it away from our immediate foreshore is the answer, and we are now tackling our local Borough officials on this problem.

The Sea Wall

This venerable structure, for which we are seeking the status of a protected building, is looking in parts too much like a rock garden for its own good. We were therefore delighted when the Job Creation Scheme organized by Councillor Goldstein accepted our suggestion that they should weed, re-point and otherwise repair the Sea Wall. They have said that they will start as soon as the weather improves. Meanwhile we have supplied the history of this wall to the Ellesmere Port Conservation Officer to assist his application to the Secretary of State for the Environment to have the Sea Wall declared a listed building.

The Annual General Meeting

We were very pleased to see so many of you on October 6th. Mrs Ratcliffe spoke about her remarkable work to restore to wild life the many creatures, usually injured or helpless, which are brought to her. As always, her talk was splendidly illustrated by her husband's memorable photography. The star of her show was a baby Barn Owl, which sleepily permitted us to stroke its wonderfully soft and delicate plumage.

Our Publications

Both our publications, the pamphlet "A Stroll Through Parkgate" and the "Panorama of Parkgate" continue to sell steadily, and we are truly grateful to our generous friends who sell them for us, at the Post Office, at Mealor's and at the Green Bottle. These sales are an important form of revenue for us, so please remember our publications when you need birthday presents or souvenirs for visitors.

We hope that we never rest on our laurels, and we have a new publication at the early planning stage. Do not expect it for some time though; the researcher, the writer and the artist all have to find time for it, and we also have to find the necessary funds.

Our Activities

Mrs Clarke and Mrs Quaille represented the Society at the Civic Open Meeting in November, where they made our services known to new residents. St Thomas's Church in Parkgate held a harvest festival in October. An officer of the Society gave some flowers and some of our members arranged them in the Church.

As usual, much of your committee's work has been the sifting of planning applications, looking for possible snags, alerting our excellent local planning officers to the views and needs of Parkgate residents, and generally keeping our eyes open. We do not make blind objections to development, nor try to cast spokes in our neighbour's wheel. We try always to make as constructive comments as we can, so that the Local Authority will have before them the evidence they need to make a good decision.

History

Now that we are beginning to build up a really good picture of the history of Parkgate, we are always pleased when ways emerge of using it. Local residents and students regularly have particular enquiries which we can usually satisfy. A more far-reaching request has come recently from the County Council whose officers, based on the Wirral Country Park, are compiling resource material for teachers. We have often seen herds of schoolchildren descend on to the Parade, and apart from our own publications we know only too well that there is very little reliable information about the village available to them. Parkgate is a good place for a school visit, and we hope that the sheaf of information which we have provided for the County Council's project will make it a much better one.

An unusual and touching request came to us recently from an elderly man, a retired seaman. His father had run away to sea at the age of nine, had gained his mate's ticket at an early age and was given a silver watch by the mate who tutored him. The watch was made by "J Newbould, Parkgate". Was it made here, and when? We examined the silver case and found from the marks that it had been made in 1871. Alas, there was no watchmaker and no Newbould (as directories and the Census tell us) in Parkgate at that date. We traced no less than ten other places called Parkgate; a likely one near Southampton yielded no clues, and we are now enquiring about the one near Rotherham. All part of our service!