

The 1918 Club

Edited by Janet E. Hollinshead

Private Publication Liverpool 2010

Edited by Janet E. Hollinshead

© Janet E. Hollinshead and The 1918 Club 2010

Printed by Gemini Print (Wigan) Ltd. Tel: 01942 712480

Material for this publication has been assembled from The 1918 Club Speakers' Book, from local newspapers and periodicals and from contributions by many present members of the Club.

Publication has been made possible by a grant from the Eleanor Rathbone Trust.

The 1918 Club is indebted to the Trust for this assistance.

The 1918 Club

The 1918 Club held its first meeting in June 1918 before the First World War had ended. As a club for women, it was a startling new venture; 'clubs' were regarded as male preserves. Before the War women with sufficient leisure tended to have 'at home' gatherings and social events such as sewing parties, alongside various church-based activities. Liverpool had many wealthy families connected with industries such as shipping, banking and insurance and by the early twentieth century these families tended to be based in the suburbs rather than in the city itself. Female leisure activities tended also to be based in the suburbs. Yet before the War the suffrage campaign had caused women to organise in ways that had been unheard of, whilst the four years of the War itself had provided women with employment opportunities that had been undreamed of. An article in *The Liverpolitan* of 1932 speaks of World War I leading to a 'general re-evaluation of life' by women and of women being 'liberated from the narrow confines of their own parochialism'. The 1918 Club was formed from these various circumstances.

In 2010, as in 1918, the Club is composed of women from various backgrounds, occupations and professions. Meetings afford them the opportunity for interchange of information and ideas on matters of social, philanthropic and public issue, as well as literature and the arts. Meetings are held usually fortnightly for luncheon when a speaker is invited to give an address lasting about half an hour, with opportunity for questions and discussion. The speaker may either be a member of the Club or a guest (male or female) especially invited for that day.

The Club's Foundation

The major instigators of The 1918 Club were Eleanor Rathbone and Elizabeth Macadam. After the armistice of 1918 the luncheon club idea was developed to preserve many of the friendships made through the war-period and many of the alliances forged through the suffrage campaign, and also to form new contacts amongst professional working women and social welfare workers. *The Liverpolitan* described it as a club for all women 'who might be expected to see through the four walls of their homes into their country's problems, social and political, in which they had become interested, not as the passive repositories of their husbands' views, but actively as women'. It must have been a very difficult period to attempt this new venture: the war had created so many problems and issues and the suffrage campaign itself had created dissension and diversity of opinion amongst female activists. The idea of a 'club' or social gathering to which the women might travel themselves on a regular basis was quite a radical notion.

The name of the Club perhaps originates with Eleanor Rathbone and her familiarity with The 1917 Club in Garrick Street, London. She had met here with a small group of the Family Endowment Committee in the late autumn and winter of 1917 and into the spring of 1918 when they published *Equal Pay and the Family: A Proposal for National Endowment of Motherhood*. Kathleen Courtney, Maude Royden Eleanor Burns and Mary Stocks had been members of the group but they were not founders of The 1918 Club, as far as is known.

The *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury* for the month of June 1918 does not have any account of the foundation of the Club – but then it has very little about women’s activities at all. As to be expected, the paper is full of daily accounts of the military conflict and of some business news. June 29, however, does receive some attention as it was the date upon which the new lists of electors containing the names of the new female voters were published at Post Offices in line with the recent Representation of the People Act. There was also some discussion of the likelihood of female Members of Parliament coming soon and women Justices of the Peace. At the same time there were also appeals in the paper for more women workers for various occupations, and the comment that there were now (in 1918) 2,000 trained women police officers – something that would have been unheard of before the War.

Another factor in June 1918 that may have contributed to the inaugural meeting of the Club was a different meeting held on 27 June 1918 – a gathering of the Liverpool and Birkenhead Branch of the National Union of Women Workers of Great Britain. They met for an ‘at home’ in premises in Bold Street to welcome Mrs Ogilvie Gordon, the national president, who gave an address about The Representation of the People Act. According to the newspaper, she traced the new duties, aims and possibilities for the enfranchised woman and predicted a great future for the NUWW. The chair of the meeting was the wife of Alfred Booth.

It is possible that Eleanor Rathbone and Elizabeth Macadam planned The 1918 Club in this environment in June 1918. Eleanor may well have realised that the suffrage aims were not all achieved; she wanted to educate and help women to make the most of their newly enfranchised situation, she wanted to enlarge their political role, she wanted to continue to address social issues, and she wanted to include those who had worked and gained new status during the War. In 1918 the first Club chairman was Grace Booth, the wife of Charles Booth the director of the steamship company. The secretary was Winifred Rathbone, the wife of Herbert Rathbone who had been mayor of Liverpool 1913-14. The intention of the Club was that members should meet from October to June, sometimes as frequently as once a week, for lunch and then for an address by a visiting speaker (or Club member) on a topic of interest. Specific appeals, propaganda and matters of religion were not to be countenanced.

Eleanor Rathbone: Family and Education

Florence Eleanor Rathbone was born on 12 May 1872 at 18 Princes Gardens in Knightsbridge, the London home of William Rathbone VI – her birth certificate records him as merchant and MP for Liverpool. Her mother was Emily Esther Acheson Rathbone, formerly Lyle. The Rathbone's Liverpool house was Greenbank where the 1881 census records a household with seven live-in servants. The London house required a further eight servants. William Rathbone VI had five children from his first marriage and Eleanor was the fourth of five children with his second wife. Eleanor herself by 1881 was to be found as a scholar at the Warehousemen and Clerks School, Russell Hill in Croyden, Surrey. This was a school for boys and girls aged 8 to 14. She also attended Kensington High School in London.

The 1891 census located Eleanor back at Greenbank in Liverpool with the Rathbone family. She matriculated at Somerville College, University of Oxford in 1893 and graduated with an MA in 1896. After Oxford, Eleanor returned to Liverpool where for some time she worked as private secretary to her father. He had retired from Parliament in 1895 and he died in 1902. William Rathbone had been a major supporter of the college that was a forerunner of the University of Liverpool. As early as 1880 he had funded what is now the Rathbone Chair of Ancient History and Archaeology. Eleanor moved from Greenbank and into her own house at Oakfield on Penny Lane.

From the mid-1880s the idea of 'settlement' houses for young, university-educated men in inner city working class areas had begun to get established, especially in London. In 1895 a settlement house opened in Manchester, and in early 1898 322 Netherfield Road in Everton opened as the Liverpool Victoria Women's Settlement. A settlement house for men opened in Park Street, Toxteth, in 1906. For young women, who paid for their board and keep, the settlement house could provide experience and training in the emerging profession of social work. It was also a respectable base away from home and family. During its first ten years of existence the Netherfield Road Settlement ran a dispensary to provide medical advice for women and children, and clubs and educational activities for children were organised. The Settlement also provided the premises from which other voluntary agencies could work. Recruited by Elizabeth Macadam to help with the work at the Victoria Settlement in 1903, Eleanor became an important member of the trio of women who managed its activities. While Elizabeth and Emily Jones became involved in relief work, Eleanor made herself responsible for social investigation. At that time she had come to the conclusion that the system of friendly visitors employed by the Central Relief Society in Liverpool did 'little permanent good and might even do permanent harm'. This view, further informed by the experience that she, Elizabeth and Emily had had working with the CRS in Everton, coloured her attitude to the relief of poverty and deprivation and led to her campaign for family endowment as well as to her support for the training of social workers. The result of Eleanor Rathbone's investigation into labour conditions at the docks was the publication in 1909 of *How the Casual Labourer Lives*.

The establishment of professional social work training at the Victoria Settlement became the mission of the three women, with much of the financial and academic support came from their families, particularly the Rathbones. It was Eleanor who arranged for a move to larger premises in 1904, and she who regularly gave funds to keep the work going. Eleanor's mother paid for a garden at the Settlement house and Eleanor's Aunt Augusta endowed a scholarship for training. Prominent University men, who also happened to be Rathbone family friends, were recruited to help and to assist in the establishment of a School of Social Science and Social Work Training. Its first years, from 1905, were spent at the Settlement where it was, as Elizabeth remembered, rather like 'a poor and uninteresting relation' to the University of Liverpool. However, an exacting two-year course was soon devised and some of the University's most distinguished academics began to offer courses. Eleanor herself lectured on civic administration.

Once established within the University the new School stressed the importance for its students of both academic study and practical work. It was thanks to Eleanor's efforts that she and other donors raised a fund to endow a new lectureship to be held jointly at the Settlement and the University, a post to which Elizabeth Macadam was appointed in 1911. She had used the location of the Settlement to conduct an enquiry into the condition of under-fed children in 1906. Eleanor's move into local and then national politics from 1909 gradually drew her away from direct involvement in the University department, but by then she had established an important centre which continued to train social workers until 2005. Undergraduates passing the copy of James Gunn's portrait of Eleanor that hangs at the foot of the stairs leading to the Department of Sociology and Social Policy, in the building that bears her name at the University of Liverpool, may not always realize that it is largely due to her efforts that their department first came into being. The Greenbank estate was given to the University by the Rathbone family to provide space for Derby Hall of Residence in 1939.

In 2001 The 1918 Club was represented when a Blue Plaque was unveiled at University of Liverpool to honour Eleanor Rathbone and her father William Rathbone VI.

Elizabeth Macadam

Elizabeth Macadam was born in 1871 at Chryston near Glasgow in Lanarkshire. A child of the manse, she spent part of her childhood in Canada where her father worked as a Free Church of Scotland minister and then professor of political philosophy. After the family returned to the United Kingdom, she gained some experience working in a kindergarten in London before she won a scholarship to train in social work at the Women's University Settlement in Southwark, where she stayed for four years. The 1901 census found her, aged 29, at the University Settlement in Nelson Square in Southwark, London. She was a teacher at the evening classes there.

Elizabeth's training and experience made her the ideal candidate for the wardenship of the Victoria Women's Settlement in Liverpool, when the post became vacant in 1902. There, assisted by Emily Oliver Jones and Eleanor Rathbone, she reorganised the centre's administration and began to develop services for local people. Together they established dispensaries, clinics, clubs and support for children with disabilities - pioneering forms of practical assistance which they set up alongside both statutory agencies and charitable organizations. So effective were the services that they established that they formed the foundation of many later local authority services.

Underpinning their practical activities was intellectual enquiry. Elizabeth had been shocked, on her arrival in Liverpool, to discover that Settlement workers received no training and she quickly organized classes that explored ideas about social deprivation and poverty. She was determined to establish social work as a profession and to abolish some of the haphazard ways of working that had characterized voluntary work. The training programme that she and her colleagues devised was taken over by University of Liverpool in 1910, and Elizabeth was appointed as the first lecturer with responsibility for teaching the principles and methods of social work. By 1911 census Elizabeth Macadam was living at 6 Beechbank Road in Toxteth Park and recorded her occupation as a university lecturer in the School of Sociology and Social Service. She had one housekeeper living with her.

After the First World War broke out, Elizabeth was appointed by the Ministry of Munitions to devise training courses for welfare workers and then from 1919 she acted as secretary to a new Joint Universities Council for Social Science. At the same time she became secretary to Eleanor Rathbone, who had become a close friend, and the two moved to London. When Eleanor became president of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, Elizabeth became an officer for the society and editor of its paper, *Woman's Leader*. Elizabeth also helped to spearhead Eleanor's campaign for family endowment, which eventually came into being as Family Allowances after the Second World War. The two women remained in London until Eleanor's death, in 1946, when Elizabeth moved back to Scotland. She died there two years later.

Elizabeth Macadam's important contribution to the development of professional social work has sometimes been overshadowed by her association with the activities of her close friend Eleanor Rathbone, but she was a significant figure in her own right. Although her support was essential to Eleanor's life and work, Elizabeth's own achievements included important publications as well her pioneering activities that contributed to the establishment of professional training for social workers in Liverpool. Her books included works on social work training and the evolving partnerships between voluntary and statutory social work. *The New Philanthropy*, which she published in 1934 is still consulted by scholars and others wanting to understand the changing relationship between services provided by local and national bodies and those provided by voluntary agencies. By attempting both to describe and shape them, Elizabeth was ahead of her time.

The Campaign for Women's Suffrage

During the nineteenth century various reform acts had widened the franchise for men and slowly demands had started for women to obtain voting rights. The suffrage campaign, however, was not just a political movement; it was designed to free women to take a greater place in society. In 1866 a petition was presented to Parliament by the newly formed suffrage societies of London and Manchester. From about 1870 there is evidence of suffrage activity by women in the Liverpool area and the Liverpool Women's Suffrage Society (LWSS) was established in 1894. The membership of the organisation came mainly from relatively well-educated middle-class women who were often active in other political and social causes. The two founder members were wives of Liverpool merchants: Lydia Booth and Edith Bright. Another early member was Jessie Beavan (sister of Margaret who became Liverpool's first female mayor in 1928). Eleanor Rathbone was another early supporter who became their parliamentary secretary in 1897. A number of umbrella organisations were formed, most importantly the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) in 1897 and in 1919 Eleanor Rathbone became its President on the resignation of Millicent Fawcett.

The LWSS and NUWSS adopted peaceful campaigning tactics within the law and tried, where possible, to distance themselves from the more extreme ideas of other groups. They were not tied to any political party but did want to lobby all politicians through constitutional means and to educate women for future political activity. For example, in 1908 a mass demonstration was organised in Hyde Park in London and the Merseyside branches hired a train to take supporters. Two years later a very large demonstration took place in Liverpool itself outside St George's Hall with many women's groups attending and contributing speakers. Eleanor Rathbone was one. She again was a prominent speaker, along with Keir Hardie M.P., in 1913 when NUWSS groups from all over the country organised demonstrations en route to a mass meeting again in Hyde Park. For Edwardian women any activity associated with the suffrage campaign could be seen as breaking the acceptable feminine conventions of society; heckling and appearing in the public sphere could be seen as militant activity.

The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was established in Manchester in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst. After 1905, when her daughter Christabel and friend Annie Kenney were arrested, the WSPU became increasingly militant and began to use paid local organisers. By early 1906 Eleanor Rathbone was writing to the *Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury* to explain that a disturbance at a recent meeting in Liverpool addressed by the Prime Minister Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman was not the work of the LWSS. The disruption showed the tactics of the newly formed WSPU. One of the early members in Liverpool was Alice Morrissey, a member of the Fabian Society and wife of Liverpool's first

socialist councillor. Other prominent Liverpool members were Dr Alice Ker (a Birkenhead G.P. who wrote invaluable diaries), Georgina Healiss, Bessie Morris, Patricia Woodlock and Ada Flatman who became a paid organiser for the WSPU in Liverpool. Their suffragette journal was *Votes for Women*. They disrupted meetings using microphones, paraded wearing their WSPU sashes, damaged postboxes, refused to pay fines following arrest, and some spent several periods in prison. Patricia Woodlock was sent to Holloway Prison in London but many women spent their sentences in Walton Prison where force-feeding was undertaken. From 1909 the WSPU had a shop at 28 Berry Street that acted as a meeting venue, as a public face and as a marketing location for literature and for the purple, white and green sashes and badges of the 'Cause'. By 1911 the shop had moved to 11 Renshaw Street and by 1913 to 2 South John Street.

A different tactic was presented in 1911 by the national census. The Women's Freedom League organised a boycott of the official census that was scheduled to take place early in April. The WSPU was much in favour of this census evasion as it was both a publicity stunt and a form of action against the Government's administration. Activists organised events so that women could safely be away from home during the evening and night of the census. However, since the information collected by the census enumerators was confidential it has never been possible to know with certainty how many women refused to co-operate with the 1911 census. The Pankhursts are not recorded, Dr Ker is not there – nor does Eleanor Rathbone appear to be present in the recently released 1911 returns.

In 1913 Eleanor Rathbone helped to found the Women Citizens' Association (WCA) to educate and prepare women to use the vote when it had been won. This was to be a training ground for political and civic life. Names such as Jessie Beavan, Mabel Fletcher and Margaret Todd (later Simey) were associated with this group in Liverpool. However, most suffrage activity was suspended following the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 and the years of war changed society in more ways than could have been imagined.

The Representation of the People Act 1918 was passed 6 February 1918, before the War had ended. It abolished the property qualification for male voters and gave the vote to all men over the age of 21. It also gave the vote to women over 30 years of age and allowed women to enter Parliament on the same basis as men. The legislation passed the Commons by 385 votes to 55 and the House of Lords by 134 votes to 71. The ease of the victory may have had something to do with support for women following their efforts during wartime and fear of unrest following the Russian Revolution of 1917. At the next General Election in December 1918 women provided 43% of the electorate. Had women over 21 had the vote women would have been in the majority because of the loss of men during the war. Constance Markiewicz was elected in 1918 as an MP representing Sinn Féin for the Dublin St Patrick's constituency but she chose not to take her seat at Westminster. The first female MP to sit was Nancy Astor who won the Plymouth Sutton by-election in 1919.

The NUWSS in 1919 changed its name to the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC) under the presidency of Eleanor Rathbone – the campaign was still not completed. The Equal Suffrage Act of July 1928 gave women over 21 voting rights on the same basis as men.

Eleanor Rathbone and Politics

From 1897 Eleanor was based in Liverpool where she was much involved in support for the women's suffrage campaign, as well as her social work concerns. She was also a visitor for the Liverpool Central Relief Society, a member of the Women's Industrial Council, and a manager of Granby Council School. All of these activities gave her interests in local political decisions. In 1909 she was elected to Liverpool Council as an Independent candidate for Granby ward. Eleanor Rathbone was the first female to serve on the City Council, and she remained a member of the Council until 1934. During the 1910 General Election Eleanor campaigned very actively for female suffrage and by 1911 she had persuaded Liverpool City Council to pass a resolution supporting female voting rights by 44 votes to 20, although the Council could of itself do little to advance the cause.

During the First World War many of the men who served in the forces left wives and children at home who were virtually destitute. Eleanor played an active role in gathering a band of women volunteers who raised and distributed money to assist these families.

In 1919 the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act was passed allowing women to enter a number of professions such as that of vet, solicitor and barrister and making it possible for women to undertake certain roles such as jury service and to hold the office of Justice of the Peace. One week after the act was passed Ada Summers, the Mayor of Stalybridge, was sworn in as the first female magistrate on 31 December 1919. During 1920 over 150 female magistrates were appointed in the country, including Eleanor Rathbone. Many of them had been active in the suffrage campaign and took educating themselves for their new role very seriously.

In 1922 Eleanor Rathbone stood as a Parliamentary candidate for the East Toxteth constituency, with the support, in particular, of the Women Citizens' Association. She was unsuccessful at this election, although polling 10,000 votes, but in 1929 she was elected as an MP, standing as an Independent, for the Combined English Universities constituency. Thus Eleanor became the first Liverpool woman to sit in Parliament. She was one of just twenty female MPs sitting in the 1929 House of Commons.

During the 1920s and 1930s Eleanor campaigned vigorously for a number of humanitarian issues, unaided by any direct party support. Her efforts, for instance, helped to pass the Widows Pension Act. She also wrote extensively about the topics that she supported: the rights of women, not only in Britain but also in other countries especially India; family

welfare and maintenance; and she was a fierce critic of appeasement policies. From 1939 onwards she highlighted concern for refugee and relief programmes in Europe. In 1924 her book *The Disinherited Family* marked the beginning of a string of publications and later broadcasts that culminated in 1940 in *The Case for Family Allowances*. One of her major achievements was the family allowance legislation of 1945 – although she had started the crusade twenty years before.

From about 1933 Eleanor took up the cause of refugees. In 1933 in the House of Commons she denounced Hitler's policies in Germany and in 1934 she went on a visit to Palestine to see the situation there for herself. From 1938 she very actively tried to promote the cause of Czech and Jewish refugees from the Sudetenland, and she established a voluntary Parliamentary committee that attracted over 200 members. Aged 67 Eleanor went off on a visit to Prague. After the outbreak of war in 1939 she turned greater attention to the situation of enemy aliens and the alien tribunals, asking over eighty questions in the Commons. In 1940 she visited the internment camp at Huyton very shortly after it was established and in 1942 went to the camp on the Isle of Man. By this time she was dealing with an enormous workload concerning the issue.

Eleanor Rathbone died in London on 2 January 1946. A memorial service was held in Liverpool Cathedral on 9 January. An indication of her international reputation was the naming of a school after her in 1949 at Magdiel (now Ramala) in Israel. As an Independent she had contributed to giving politics a 'good' name, although without party backing she had had to fight hard for the causes she believed in. Throughout she had kept faith that politics was a way to achieve improvement in human life.

See:

Susan Cohen, *Eleanor Rathbone and the Refugees*, Vallentine Mitchell 2010

Marji van Helmond, *Votes for Women: The Events on Merseyside 1870-1928*, Liverpool 1992

Susan Pederson, *Eleanor Rathbone and the Politics of Conscience*, Yale 2004

Mary D. Stocks, *Eleanor Rathbone: A Biography*, London 1949

Membership of The 1918 Club

The Liverpolitan article of 1932 speaks of 350 members of The 1918 Club but this is probably the maximum number that the early Club constitution refers to. Whether this number of members was ever reached is unfortunately not now known. Clearly not all members would be able to attend each and every meeting but this number does suggest that the Club anticipated considerable popularity during the early years of its existence.

The Speakers' Book makes it plain that the club was able to continue to operate throughout the traumatic years of the Second World War. The difficulties with dislocation of members through wartime responsibilities and duties, rationing and problems of food supply, transport uncertainty and, not least, the devastation of bombing and the blitz must have all created havoc with 'normal' membership, yet the Club meetings somehow continued.

Certainly during the 1960s and 1970s the Club had over one hundred members and a waiting list. When meetings were held at the premises of the YMCA numbers had to be restricted to this level because of the size of the venue.

By the early twenty-first century membership had fallen to less than thirty but by 2010 had risen to fifty. At least there is now a record of where these members live and some come from perhaps a little further afield than the original Club members. Six come from the Wirral, three from Warrington, one from Formby, one from Chorley, others from Crosby, Maghull, Huyton, Knotty Ash, West Derby, Childwall, Aigburth, Mossley Hill, Garston, Woolton, Halewood, Tuebrook, Toxteth and Edge Hill.

Venues for Meetings

From its inception the Club meetings have taken the form usually of a luncheon followed by a pre-arranged talk by an invited speaker, although occasionally a member of the club provided the talk.

Sissons Café in Bold Street was perhaps the first venue of the Club when membership was quite small.

Reece's Café in Parker Street was also used at some time during the 1920s and 1930s.

Edwin Francis Café, at 12-18 Parker Street near Clayton Square was another venue that was used. On the ground floor there was a cake and confectionary shop but upstairs a private room could be hired.

The Basnett Gallery Banqueting Hall was another venue that was used by the early 1930s. This was part of the Bon Marché department store that had been founded in Liverpool in 1878 in premises formerly occupied by W. Peck and Sons. Before the First World War the Paris Bon Marché had been the largest department store in the world with a reputation for style and encouragement of the arts. Between 1912 and 1914 the Liverpool store was rebuilt to the latest designs for a fashionable department store. In 1926 at the Liverpool store the Basnett Gallery was created in which exhibitions could be housed and where lectures and concerts could take place. Promotional events were then regular features at Bon Marché such as a recital by Léon Goossens, an exhibition of modern French engravings,

an exhibition of modern embroideries and an exhibition by the Liverpool Society of Handloom Weavers. Most famously during the early 1930s, Gracie Fields sold stockings there for fifteen minutes. Not surprisingly the location was a popular venue for a women's club to hold its meetings. In 1933 the Bon Marché French Restaurant was advertising its luncheon at two shillings. Even during the Second World War Bon Marché was the first Liverpool store to hold a fashion show for the new utility styles. [In 1961 Bon Marché was acquired by the John Lewis Partnership and it was merged with the George Henry Lee store which John Lewis had acquired in 1940.]

During the 1940s arrangements for meetings must have posed enormous problems and, sadly, details are sparse but the Exchange Hotel was certainly used for meetings at times, according to the Speakers' Book. The Exchange Hotel had opened in Tithebarn Street in 1888 to serve Exchange Station, and in due course it became a British Transport Hotel.

The premises of the Central Young Men's Christian Association on Mount Pleasant housed the 1918 Club from the late 1950s until 2004. The venue provided a welcoming location serving fresh food, albeit without great variety and with a fondness for sponge puddings and custard. In the early days at the YMCA lunch cost 1/9. Meals were served in quite a formal setting with the Club committee sitting at a long top-table. As the focus of the YMCA's work changed and as a decision was made to re-locate to new premises it became essential to find an alternative venue for Club meetings.

The Britannia Adelphi Hotel in Ranelagh Place has been the venue for meetings since 2004. The first Adelphi Hotel opened in Liverpool in 1827 and was created from a pair of Georgian town houses. This structure was replaced in 1876 by a resplendent building with nearly 300 bedrooms that was designed to serve the city's transatlantic shipping trade. 'New' electric lights were installed and an army of staff and French chefs ran the hotel to extraordinary standards. This building was acquired in 1892 as a Midland Railway Hotel and was thus renamed the Midland Adelphi. The company was responsible for another rebuild on the site when a third Adelphi opened in 1914, described in its opening guidebook as 'the world's most palatial hotel'. The architect of both the exterior and interior was Frank Atkinson of the Liverpool firm of William Thornton and Sons. This time 'new' telephones were installed in all rooms, a Turkish bath, a heated indoor swimming pool, a shooting gallery and tennis courts were included. The public rooms were designed to exceptionally high standards. The Midland Adelphi passed to the control of British Transport Hotels who eventually sold it to Britannia Hotels in 1982. The building has again been extended to over 400 bedrooms and renovated. The 1918 Club is fortunate to meet for luncheon in such splendid rooms, including the Sefton Room which dates to the 1914 rebuilding when it was designed to house the English Dining Room.

Speakers at The 1918 Club

Archives relating to The 1918 Club appear to have disappeared over time, perhaps as various officials left office and ceased to be members of the Club. The major surviving record is the Speakers' Book, a leather-bound volume embossed with **1918 CLUB** on its cover. It appears to have been specially acquired for the purpose as the pages are ruled for the date, the lecturer's name and the title of the talk. The volume is then divided alphabetically. The earliest entries are not, however, from 1918 but from 1921. They then run to the present day. From the handwriting throughout the volume it would appear that an earlier book or books existed and the information was painstakingly copied into this existing volume in 1946, since all entries prior to that are made in the same handwriting.

Amongst the earliest speakers during the 1918-1921 period that are unrecorded in the Speakers' Book must have been Gilbert Frankau, Ellen Wilkinson, Sir Francis Younghusband and maybe Eleanor Rathbone herself. The first three are certainly mentioned in the 1932 *Liverpool* article as having spoken to the Club yet their names are not to be found in the book. Gilbert Frankau had established a reputation from 1916 onwards as a war poet so presumably a talk from him in the early days of the Club was particularly poignant. Ellen Wilkinson had been one of the pre-War organisers of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies before becoming a founder member of the British Communist Party in 1920. When she spoke to The 1918 Club she must have been a young female political activist. In 1923 she was to become a city councillor in Manchester before leaving the party the following year. In 1929 she became Labour M.P. for Middlesbrough – one of the few early female MPs at the same time as Eleanor Rathbone. From 1935 until 1947 she represented Jarrow and was instrumental in organising the 1936 Jarrow march. In 1945 she was to become the second female to hold a Cabinet post, as Minister of Education. Sir Francis Younghusband was the British army officer who had explored the Karakoram mountain area before leading a British expedition to Tibet in 1904. In 1919 he became President of the Royal Geographical Society and in 1921 chairman of the Mount Everest Committee that was to support the 1924 fatal expedition of Mallory and Irvine. His address to the 1918 Club must have had real poignancy as George Mallory came from Mobberley in Cheshire and Andrew 'Sandy' Irvine was an old boy of Birkenhead School.

1920s and 1930s

From 1921 onwards The 1918 Club was certainly organised on a firm footing with meetings held very regularly. Some distinguished speakers were invited, some speakers who were to become in later years more distinguished in their fields appeared, and some speakers whose names are now largely unknown spoke to the Club. Lantern slides are mentioned about once every two years. What characterises all of these speakers during the first decade or so is that the topics of their talks fall into several categories - many of which have remained constant with the Club to the present day. This was against a climate where women over 21 obtained the vote in 1929, a few female MPs were being elected and female councillors and JPs were slowly appearing. The European political situation was becoming

increasingly tense with the rise of fascism, and the General Strike, the depression and the world-wide economic situation all contributed to immense social problems in a world where radio, film and travel were becoming ever more accessible.

It must have been with great delight that during the 1921-2 session of the Club Nancy, Viscountess Astor was one of the speakers. She was the first female MP to take her seat in the House of Commons after she won the by-election at Plymouth Sutton in 1919. She held this seat for the Conservatives until 1945. In view of the suffrage campaigning that many Club members must have taken part in as well as the recent opportunity to vote for the first time in 1918, the opportunity to see and hear from a female member of the Commons must have been quite a coup for the Club. An interest in politics, both national and local, was a topic that was sustained by the Club with Eleanor Rathbone herself as a City Councillor speaking to the Club in 1922, and Charles Sydney Jones in the following year speaking on his first impressions of the House of Commons. The son of a Liverpool ship owner, he had been a City Councillor since 1908 and in 1923 he was elected Liberal MP for the West Derby constituency. In the later 1930s Dr Llewellyn-Jones spoke of the role women could play in local government, whilst Eleanor Rathbone herself spoke in her position as an MP in October 1935.

Associated with advances in suffrage and the status of women there was evidently an interest in the law, with talks by the stipendiary magistrate of Liverpool, Dr Kate Barratt on 'Women and the Law', and by Miss Cicely Leadley-Brown who was one of the first female barristers. She went to Lincoln's Inn in 1921 and was called to the bar in 1924. Lilian Baylis CBE had supervised 30,000 female workers at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich during World War I and then joined the Ministry of Labour during the 1920s. She became Governor of the girls' borstal institution at Aylesbury, and after her talk, in 1935, became the first female assistant commissioner of prisons in Britain. Unfortunately we cannot know what Miss W. Pratt had to say when she addressed the Club during the 1930s in her position as director of women police patrols in Liverpool. An intriguing side-aspect of this area of new opportunities for women was a talk by Professor Geoffrey Elton, who must have been at the outset of his long academic career as an historian; he spoke in 1923-4 on 'Mary Wollstonecraft and the Rights of Woman'.

In the era after the First World War, not surprisingly, The 1918 Club showed a keen interest in international affairs. During the 1920s Professor C.K. Webster spoke on the reduction in armaments, Judge Thomas spoke about the reparations question, Reverend Redfern discussed the post-war situation in Hungary and Roumania, and a Miss Caton spoke of relief work in Poland. One imagines it must have been particularly poignant to hear what Mr T.F. Lister had to say – he was the chairman of the British Legion. He had been instrumental with Field Marshal Earl Haig in amalgamating four former servicemen's associations into the Legion in 1921. There was also an interest in political developments in Soviet Russia and China during this time. Both talks were provided by people who had

recently visited these countries. At this time there was also great hope for the new institution of the League of Nations that had been established after the Versailles Peace Settlement. Sir Arthur Haworth, former MP and Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, provided an up-to-date account of progress, whilst in October 1925 Eleanor Rathbone spoke specifically about the 'League of Nations and the Child'.

The 1929 Wall Street Crash and the years of economic depression that followed impacted on the international situation as well as on the deteriorating political climate in Europe. By the 1930s all of this is reflected in the subject matter of some of the talks. Hugh Lewis spoke on the problems of foreign trade competition during the 1930-1 session whilst the following year a representative from the foreign branch of the Midland Bank attempted to deal with the current financial situation. During the same periods the Liberal MP for Birkenhead East, Henry Graham-White, gave a talk entitled 'bankrupt and battleships'. In view of the prevailing international situation there was considerable interest in the League of Nations' disarmament conference in Geneva and two speakers contributed on this topic during the 1933-4 session: Margery Corbett-Ashby who was a delegate to the conference and a Miss K.D. Courtney who was a representative of the Women's International League in Geneva.

Not surprisingly during the 1930s, there were talks on political developments in a whole range of countries as members of The 1918 Club tried to keep abreast of current affairs. Marjorie Lawrence spoke on native problems in South Africa, Warin Bushell (the headmaster of Birkenhead School) on the situation in Palestine, Professor J.C. Allen on Japan, as did Donald Grant again during 1937-8, Professor Roxby spoke on contemporary China and Mr Dao the consul for the republic of China spoke on the war in the far east in 1938-9, Mrs Watkins spoke on Yugoslavia in 1935, senorita se Lara on the Spanish republic (at the time of the civil war in Spain) and Mrs Newberry later re-visited the issue of why Spain had become a republic, and Frances Collie tried to deal with Italy and Mussolini – in 1934. Mrs Tchernavin provided a personal view of escaping from Soviet Russia in 1936. During the 1934-5 session Amy Buller, the warden of the University of Liverpool's hall of residence for women students, spoke about the struggle for good and evil in Germany, and just a year later Donald Grant posed the question 'will Germany rule Europe?'. With acute awareness of contemporary issues Rabbi Raphael Levine addressed issues of group prejudice during the 1938-9 session.

On just a few occasions the Club displayed an interest in the sea and things maritime. The marine superintendent from the Booth Line provided a talk about merchant seamen. The Reverend Lord Charles Thurlow spoke about pastoral work amongst sailors, whilst one imagines Vice Admiral Gordon Campbell VC, DSO and two bars, Croix de Guerre, Légion d'Honneur, was regarded as something of a really distinguished speaker. His decorations were awarded for actions in command of HMS Farnborough in the north Atlantic during the First World War. During the 1920s he was still in service but unfortunately his topic of 'The

Navy' gives little clue about its substance. During the 1930s Captain Trenan MBE spoke to the Club about lifeboat work in the Mersey.

Social issues had clearly long been of importance to Eleanor Rathbone and during the 1922-3 session she had already spoken to the Club on the topic of 'Should a mother be a legal parent of her own child?'. Issues like this provided the basis of a number of talks: juvenile unemployment, juvenile emigration and the sheltering homes in Myrtle Street, and the situation for prisoners after their release by Mrs Maud Taylor JP. Professor Carr Saunders of the Social Science Department at the University of Liverpool contributed one talk, although his recorded topic of 'Population' is too vague to understand now what his subject matter must have been. Likewise, Lord Leverhulme chose the pithy title of 'Ideals' for his talk so the content is again unknown. Contemporary topics such as the National Savings Association were covered by Sir William Schooling, whilst a Miss Ives spoke of a scheme to provide medical aid for women in the north end of Liverpool. Professor Caradog-Jones chose as his title simply 'Social Problems on Merseyside'. Somewhat more specifically, the Sanitary Inspector for Shrewsbury spoke about women and the problems of slum housing, and L.H. Keay, Liverpool's Director of Housing, dealt with similar issues. Throughout the 1930s there were talks dealing with issues associated with the depression and its social consequences, including David Webster speaking about the youth of 1931 and Dorothy Keeling MBE, from the National Association of Guilds of Help, speaking about work amongst the unemployed during the 1933-4 session.

Social conditions and the situation for women in foreign countries were also of interest to the Club. Hospital work in China, Dr Ivy Collier speaking of her medical work amongst women and children in India, conditions in Malaya, and in Ceylon, and circumstances in Kenya were all topics included in the 1920s programmes for the Club. Professor Charles Reilly from the Department of Architecture spoke about the Edwin Lutyens' design of New Delhi in India and Sir Richard Bevan, on his return from working in India, spoke about the position in society for women in the sub-continent. Sir Frank Noyce CBE, whose wife Enid was from Liverpool, spoke to the Club on his retirement from a senior post in the Indian civil service during the 1930s. Lucy de Faro, the consul general of Brazil spoke of feminism in that country.

Education was another major area of interest to the Club. During the 1920s C.F. Mott, Liverpool's Director of Education, spoke on educational issues in general, Charles Sydney Jones spoke of the 'Educational Ladder', and Mr J.G. Legge, at the time of his retirement as Director of Education in Liverpool, spoke about educational problems. The principal of a nursery training college contributed a talk, Miss Anthony (the head of Huyton College) spoke of difficulties in girls' education at this time, whilst Mr Bailey (head of Holt Secondary School) in the 1921-2 session spoke of the 'new' co-educational secondary education. During the next few years the heads of Liverpool Collegiate School, Queen Mary High School, Wallasey High School for Girls and the Belvedere School all spoke to the Club, as did

the superintendent of the School for the Blind. Mrs Adami, the wife of the University of Liverpool's former Vice Chancellor, provided her views on the situation of women in the older universities and on his retirement in 1930 Professor H.J.W. Hetherington, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Liverpool, gave a more general talk on higher education. Amy Buller, the warden of the University's women's hall, gave her views on how student life had changed since the end of World War I. Some of these topics concerning women and higher education may well have been very topical when they were delivered since in 1933 the University of Liverpool 'stirred up a hornets' nest' and 'the big gun of Eleanor Rathbone', according to *Liverpolitan*, by proposing that members of staff who married should tender their resignation. Dr Arthur Fitch spoke to the Club about the Child Guidance Movement, new in 1922, and Mr G.J. Shaw, Liverpool's Chief Librarian, spoke of how public libraries made a contribution to civic life. Miss Weaver, from Everton Library, spoke specifically about children and books.

Alongside topics and issues of contemporary concern The 1918 Club arranged a number of speakers from various fields of the arts. Dr Douglas Allen, the Director of Liverpool Museum, spoke to the Club, Professor Charles Reilly from the University spoke about Liverpool's buildings, Professor Robert Newstead gave a talk on Roman Chester, and very topically during the 1922-3 session Professor Peet spoke about Tutankhamen, in view of Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb in 1922. The manager of Liverpool Playhouse contributed a talk whilst Dr J.E. Wallace, chorus master at Liverpool Philharmonic Society, spoke about what comprised an ideal musical concert. Sir Henry Hadow, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield and author of many books on music, spoke 'On Listening to Music' and there were a few opportunities to hear chamber music and solo pianoforte, such as by Frederick Dawson. Orisha Ward performed recitals on the harp, whilst during the 1935-6 session Henry Goss-Custard, the long-serving organist at Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral gave a talk to the Club and then provided the opportunity for a later visit to the organ. Charles Goulding, principal tenor with the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and Percy Herring, a member of the Royal Opera house at Covent Garden both gave talks during the 1930s.

Professor Collinson explained the constructed language Esperanto and Mrs Mott, a gifted mathematician, attempted to explain the atom to the unscientific – both topics that would be very relevant in the 1920s. Miss Haslett, the Director of the Electrical Association for Women spoke to the Club during the 1930s, and considerable interest was shown by members in the new discovery of rayon. A talk was provided for members and then an arranged visit to the factory of the British Enka Company at Aintree, where there was a workforce of over 2,000 by the early 1930s. The new opportunities of aviation were also of interest. Mary Victor Bruce was the dare-devil pilot who in 1930 flew around the world in a single-engine, open cockpit airplane. She was arrested for flying in circles around the Empire State Building in New York. She spoke to the Club during 1931-2. Later in the 1930s she went on to develop and air-freight company and continued to fly well into her 80s. Major Thornton spoke about developments in civil aviation by 1935 and during the 1938-9 session

a Mrs Clayton provided a personal memoir of fifteen years service with Imperial Airways (founded in 1924).

Literary interests were catered for by Phyllis Bentley who had trained as a teacher, but worked in a munitions factory during the First World War. During the 1920s she turned her attention to writing novels and works for children, mostly involving the Yorkshire background in which she had grown up. Lawrence du Garde Peach was the author of plays both for the stage radio and, during the 1920s, for the radio. He was especially known for his contributions to *Children's Hour* and later was to become a major writer of *Ladybird* books for children. Patrick MacGill, the Irish 'Navy Poet', provided some outline of his livelihood as a poet, dramatist and novelist, Lascelles Abercrombie also spoke about his poetry, and Walter de la Mare appeared on one occasion to read from his own poetry. Cora Gordon, with her husband Jan, had produced many travel books. Before the First World War these had involved the Balkan area, Spain, southern France and Sweden. In the late 1920 she had been to the USA and in 1930 she and her husband had toured around France, England and Ireland using motorbike and sidecar. She spoke to the Club in the early 1930s about the USA. During the 1930s there was also a talk to explain the acquisition by the University of Liverpool of the important and substantial collection of archives connected with gypsy lore.

Encompassing somewhat more diverse interests, there were also talks on topics such as Aldersey Horticultural College near Chester: a facility run as a private school for female gardeners, and a talk on bird life in the Liverpool area. In the 1931-2 session Mrs Maria Dickin OBE spoke to members about responsibility to animals. This was by the person who was responsible for the foundation in 1917 of the PDSA - which by the time of her talk to the Club had five animal hospitals, seventy-one dispensaries and eleven motor caravan dispensaries. In 1943 Maria Dickin was to establish the Dickin Medal - the animal VC. In April 1937 a more unusual topic of perhaps an unwelcome nature appeared on the 1918 Club's programme: Dr Mackie Reid speaking about air-raid precautions. The Club was at least well in advance of actual necessity for these provisions but the topic illustrated the many changes that the Club was soon to face.

1940s

For many voluntary and social organizations the 1940s were exceedingly difficult years. Their existence was not essential and any meeting had to be undertaken in the face of increasing problems and hardship. Many members faced severe dislocation and all sorts of new responsibilities during wartime. Children and grandchildren were evacuated, women were required for all sorts of 'new' occupations, life existed with gasmasks and the blackout, nights were spent in shelters or under stairs and tables, sirens became a regular feature of Liverpool life – as did bombed buildings and streets. All members of The 1918 Club must have had family in the services and the Home Guard. They themselves presumably had duties with organizations such as the Women's Voluntary Service. Life with rationing and

queuing, little choice of clothes and furniture, prefabs and all sorts of 'austerity' became features not only of the war years but of many years afterwards. The first air raids to reach Merseyside were in late June 1940 and these led to significant bombing during the winter of 1940-41. May 1941 saw the blitz reach its height in Liverpool. On 2 May the *Malakand* blew up in Huskisson No 2 Dock with 1,000 tons high explosive bombs and shells and on 3 May 1941 Blackler's and Lewis's stores were destroyed by bombing. The total devastation in the city was, of course, immense. Nonetheless, the 1918 Club sustained its activities. Meetings during the war years were reduced from usually three to two a month - but they continued. With some irony, a speaker in May 1941 dealt with the topic of post-war problems. Unfortunately exact details of how many members were able to attend at this time and what venues and the menus that were used are not available but presumably the opportunity for some social contact at midday was appreciated by those who could get to meetings.

Not surprisingly there were many meetings where the speakers dealt with topics relating directly to wartime issues and the war situation in some way or another. The Women's Voluntary Services and Army Welfare Services were perhaps obvious topics, as were the Women's Land Army and Air Raid Precautions for Housewives. In October 1942 Lady Woolton herself came to speak about food administration in wartime; one wonders what was on the menu and what comments there were about food shortages by this time (her husband was Minister of Food). In the same year the District Information Officer came to speak about propaganda in wartime. Colin Roberts, the manager of Walton hospital spoke in 1940 of how a municipal hospital was being used in wartime, whilst early in 1941 a representative of the British Council discussed how 'Our Allies' could be introduced to Liverpool. A year later a chaplain from the US Army was perhaps dealing with a similar theme. The work of the Women's Army was examined by the Chief Commandant of the Auxiliary Territorial Service and the role of the Women's Royal Naval Service was highlighted by the Superintendent of the WRNS Western Approaches. The Regional Port Director looked at the wartime situation of the docks and Mrs Mott dealt with the sometimes controversial topic of the tribunals established to deal with those regarded as aliens living in the United Kingdom.

The wider issues of the war were not forgotten. No less a person than Admiral Sir Percy Noble spoke to the Club in October 1941 about the Battle of the Atlantic; he was at the time Commander in Chief Western Approaches based at Derby House in Liverpool. As early as 1943 'steps towards Japan's defeat' were being considered. Dr Dorothy Knowles spoke in May 1944, immediately after D-Day, of the invasion and of the underground activity that was happening in France. In the same year Pastor van der Hagen spoke about the resistance and spirit of Norway. At a time of press censorship some of these talks at The 1918 Club must have been welcome opportunities to consider pertinent and poignant issues. Alongside the actual course of wartime activity, as early as 1940 some talks to the Club also considered the post-war situation. Sir Norman Angell MP spoke on the theme, 'Shall it be a

better peace next time?'; he had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1933 for his work with the League of Nations. Dr McNair, the vice-chancellor of the University of Liverpool considered 'After the war is over'; in 1946 he was to become first president of the European Court of Human Rights. The Club also still found time to worry about youth and in May 1943 Jessie Crosbie looked at the curfew and its effect on juvenile delinquency. Somewhat elusively, in the midst of these wartime talks Eleanor Rathbone MP spoke in June 1942 to the Club that she had founded. The Speakers' Book records her title as only 'The Use of Women Power': a topic that would be close to her heart but whether her talk had any specific relationship to wartime is not now known.

Notwithstanding wartime, educational and social issues continued to provide some of the topics on the Club's programmes. Mrs Pimblett addressed the issues facing the School Medical Service in 1940, in 1944 Miss Marie Crabbe (the Principal of I.M. Marsh Physical Training College) spoke of the right place for physical training, and Professor Norman Capon in 1945 looked at 'Child Health'. With great topicality, C.F. Mott appeared in November 1944 to discuss Butler's Education Act. In the immediate post-War years of 1946 Miss Creighton spoke of opportunities for girls in the new educational scene. The scope and problems of Further Education were also considered, whilst Dr James Mountford, the University of Liverpool's vice-chancellor tried in 1949 to answer the perennial conundrum of 'What do universities do?'. Over a few years in the 1940s Dr Muriel Barton Hall of the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital spoke about 'the destitute child', Miss J.C. Forster about Dr Barnardo's Homes and Miss Leadley Brown about child adoption. Miss L. Price spoke about the work of the Society for the Blind. In June 1943 Norman Wilson spoke to the Club about the Beveridge Report and so the issues that led to the welfare state provisions were behind many of these social topics. Dr MacWilliam early in 1945 spoke of a state medical service (before the National Health Service arrived), Dr Henry Cohen (later president of the British Medical Association) dealt with the future of hospitals and Miss Jones, the matron of the Liverpool Royal Infirmary, addressed nursing as a profession. Perhaps somewhat in advance of his times, Professor Walter Dilling, dean of the medical faculty at the University of Liverpool, in 1945 used 'my lady nicotine' as the title of his talk.

Law and order received perhaps less attention during the 1940s than in previous decades. There were talks about Juvenile Courts and about contemporary prisons, as well as Miss Rose Heilbron speaking in February 1947 with 'wig and gown' as her title. Maybe she spoke of her Liverpool school and university education before she qualified as a barrister. Overall, however, crime-related issues did not feature significantly on the 1940s programmes.

Given the enormous difficulties in holding meetings at all and in finding speakers during wartime, as well as the austerity conditions of the later 1940s it is not surprising that sometimes musical entertainment was substituted for a talk. Violin recitals were provided by Edith Allanby on several occasions, piano recitals by Dr J. Wallace and also by John Ramsden, and harp recitals by Orisha Ward. There were also a few opportunities for talks by

speakers with personal knowledge of the arts; in 1943 Alfred Francis spoke about ballet and Tyrone Guthrie about the theatre, whilst in 1947 Sir Malcolm Sargent talked on the topic of making gramophone records. He was with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra between 1942 and 1948. Mr J.L. Hodgkinson spoke of the Arts Council of Great Britain in 1946 and in 1948 J.M. Pearson dealt with the work of the British Council.

Shortly after D-Day in 1944 The 1918 Club held a reception to mark the 25th anniversary of the foundation of the Club at the Exchange Hotel – surely an achievement in itself given the extensive damage to property in Liverpool.

1950s and 1960s

The 1950s saw the final end of rationing, an increased pace of post-war reconstruction, improved employment, the ‘real’ arrival of television and the beginnings of Liverpool’s popular music reputation - all contributing to a new environment for The 1918 Club. The ‘old’ Liverpool families were largely gone and their businesses absorbed into public companies. The suffrage movement that had brought many members into the Club did not have the same relevance. Maybe something of this is discerned from the Speakers’ Book during these two decades when meetings of the Club appear to be held with a little less frequency. Judging by the total number of signatures throughout each year of these decades, meetings must have been held perhaps every three weeks during the 1950s and, for some unknown reason, speakers’ names were not recorded at all from 1964-1971. It was during this period, however, that two gifts were made to the Club: the President’s badge by Mrs Edwin Thomas and the gavel that the President uses at meetings by Maud Carpenter.

Social matters remained a key theme for speakers. The issues of child adoption, child welfare and limbless children were addressed and Julian Holt spoke about the activities of the Outward Bound Trust that had been established in 1941. Miss Murdoch dealt with the international aspect of the Young Women’s Christian Association and Mr K. Solly dealt with Boys’ Clubs. The work of the Pestalozzi villages provided the topic for another talk. The original community had been founded in 1946 and the idea spread to England in 1957 where the first village opened in 1957. Jessie Beavan OBE, JP, who must have been well-known to members of the Club, spoke on two occasions during the mid 1950s about Liverpool charities and about voluntary work in the city. Dr F.B. Julian provided a talk about an unspecified community centre, and Mrs Leonard spoke about Child Guidance Clinics. The work of the Marriage Guidance Council formed the basis of another talk, and it would be interesting to know how well Kenneth Robinson’s topic of ‘Growing Older’ was considered in 1955. The barrister Rose Heilbron spoke to the Club for a second time about Liverpool’s standing conference on women vagrants.

Medical matters seem to have grown in significance in the programmes at this time. Mrs Carter perhaps had some interesting comparisons to make when she spoke about maternity work in the United States. Occupational therapy as a career for women was maybe rather

new in the early 1950s, and Miss D. Taplin spoke about opportunities for mental nursing. Dr Elizabeth Gore considered the latest situation in psychiatric treatment in 1956. Dr J. Pugh Thomas similarly discussed the latest techniques in anaesthesia at this time. The work of the public analyst and also food hygiene were topics that had some bearing on health, as did Mr J. Stilgoe's two talks on the water supply for the city. Prescriptions and the chemist was perhaps more intriguing than it might sound. Colonel Budson told the members about his experiences as a hospital secretary and Dr C. McKendrick spoke of his work at Sefton General Hospital in 1957. Mrs Prudeaux discussed the work of the British Red Cross in Liverpool and Dr Gawne the work of the Medical Officer of Health. Dr C. Hill, a Home Office pathologist, provided a talk on the latest advances in forensic medicine in 1962.

Interest in Liverpool's nautical heritage and activity continued to be significantly represented in the Club's programmes. Peter Duff spoke on the topic of British ships and shipping in 1950. The education service for seafarers and seamen's libraries were addressed in the same year by Mr R. Hofse. Later in the decade welfare work in the docks was dealt with by Mr Fox. In the mid 1950s Mr F.W. Cave, the General Manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, spoke to the Club, as did a Mr Sutton from the same organization. Mr Mark Thornton provided a talk on his work as the Admiralty Liaison Officer in Liverpool, and in 1964 Brian O'Neil RN spoke of the then situation of the Royal Navy.

City government and administration also continued as a significant part of the post-War programmes. In 1952 the Chief Constable Martin of the Liverpool City Police force, spoke to the Club, as he did again in 1957. Dr F. Brisby, the medical officer at Walton gaol considered the treatment of delinquency, and Mrs Ethel Wormold JP examined the treatment of juvenile delinquency in Scandinavia in 1954. Ethel Wormold had been elected as a Labour councillor for Kensington in 1953 and in 1967 was to become Liverpool's second female Lord Mayor. From 1955 she served as chair of the Education Committee. Dr J. Neville considered the issue of 'the dishonest child' in 1960 and delinquent youth was again the issue in 1963. Major Wagg, somewhat mysteriously, spoke of the hinterland of crime. Mr S. Clarke, the Governor of Walton Gaol, examined what imprisonment meant in 1961. Mr A.J. Blackwood considered his work as the city's coroner, and a couple of years later the city architect explained his duties. Perhaps a reflection of increased car ownership was the talk in 1955 on road safety. Three times in the 1950s the work of magistrates was discussed. In 1958 Mrs Badsley Powell spoke about female interest in local government and, in the same session of the Club, Councillor Mrs Papworth spoke about women on the Council. In 1958 the wife of the Conservative MP for Wavertree Sir John Tilney spoke of her life as the partner of a parliamentarian. In that same year Dame Guinevere Tilney was elected Vice-President of the National Council of Women of Great Britain and three years later became its President. In 1970 she became the United Kingdom's representative to the United Nations' commission on the status of women. A matter of topical interest to the Club must have been the talk on reform of the rates in 1963.

Professor W. Lyon Blease spoke to the Club on the issue of human rights in 1952, and a year later Lewis Edwards spoke on the topic of a new approach to international understanding. In 1958 Professor Blease again spoke to the Club – this time about the Wolfenden Report of the previous year; it was Lord Wolfenden's report for the Government that recommended homosexual behaviour between consenting adults in private should no longer be criminalized. The Bishop of Liverpool who addressed the Club in February 1962 must have been Bishop Clifford Martin (bishop since 1944) but what exactly he spoke about is not recorded.

Education continued some role in the Club's programmes. Jack Edwards spoke on the growth of grammar schools in 1953 and by 1964 Dr R. Moore was speaking about comprehensive schools. Both Mr L.H. Collison, the head of Liverpool College and Mrs Abrahams the headmistress of the Belvedere School also addressed the Club. Mr J.M. Pearson dealt with the topic of special education and mentally handicapped children in 1959. In 1963 Dr Sheila Alty provided a talk to explain the careers that female graduates were then taking up. Overall, however, during the 1950s and 1960s talks by staff from the University of Liverpool played a far less prominent part in the Club programmes than they had done in previous decades.

Artistic and cultural interests were still represented on the programmes and the 'new' development of television found some recognition. The Liverpool Festival of 1951 was considered by Alfred Francis in the autumn of 1950; it was to be a local part of the Festival of Britain in 1951. The Liverpool contribution lasted from 22 July until 12 August 1951 and involved 4 destroyers, 2 frigates, and torpedo boat in the Mersey, a parade of merchant ships, the largest firework display in Britain, major concerts involving the Philharmonic orchestra and choir, the Hallé orchestra, the Welsh Choral Union, brass bands, performances by the Old Vic Theatre Company, the English Opera Company, Covent Garden Opera Company, Sadlers' Wells Ballet Company and Chipperfield's Circus. Mr S.G. Checkland speaking about early nineteenth-century Liverpool and Professor Wilfred Smith dealing with the growth of Liverpool testify to a continuing interest in the history of the city. Miss E.R. Taylor spoke of scriptwriting for broadcasts to schools in 1952 and Mr R. Jordan the local BBC representative spoke in 1958. In 1961 Muriel Levy provided 'reminiscences of 'Auntie Muriel' of the BBC; she had written many *Ladybird* books for children and provided many radio broadcasts from the early 1940s onwards. Mr J. Lawton gave a presentation to the Club in 1955 about the new developments at Burton Manor in Wirral and this was followed by a visit. Mr Gerald McDonald, the manager of the Philharmonic Hall, spoke of how the Philharmonic Society worked in 1959 and the wife of Philharmonic conductor Sir Charles Groves spoke to the Club in 1968, but overall music seems to have receded somewhat from the programmes compared with earlier decades. Millicent Ayrton MBE, the Hoylake artist, spoke in 1961 about her work in oils and watercolours and in the same year Maud Carpenter, manager of the Playhouse, talked about life at the theatre. Mr Norman Mullineux explained the Rushworth-Draper collection of musical instruments in 1959 and a

visit to collection was subsequently arranged. One of the cultural coups must have been the visit in 1958 of Sam Wanamaker; he spoke with a title of 'the new adventure'. The American actor and film director had had a successful career in the 1940s but by the early 1950s had been blacklisted for his communist sympathies and left the United States. In 1957 he was appointed director of the New Shakespeare Theatre in Liverpool, before moving in 1959 to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford.

An interest in the new animals at Chester Zoo and also in Britain's new forests, both in the session 1950-51, may well reflect some return to more normal life in the post-war world. Indeed, there seems to have been less interest in the international political situation than there had been in previous decades. There was a talk by Mr Warin Bushell, the head of Birkenhead School, entitled Malta GC but to what extent it was about the island's wartime experiences is now not possible to know. Mr H.R. Cheeseman speaking about the history of Malaya may well have been providing pertinent background to topical material in 1952, as was Eva Clarke speaking on Singapore in 1953. A similar trend may also have been behind Mrs H. Lowe's talk on East Africa in 1954. Issues connected with colonial and post-colonial areas were subjects of considerable relevance, just as Frances Baldwin's talk about Australia must have been in 1953. At a time of cheap emigration to the southern hemisphere, Lily Edie speaking on education in the outback and Alison Brery dealing with nurses on horseback must have been new subject material for the Club.

Germany in the post-war era received much less attention than a decade earlier. It was the subject of a talk in 1953. In the same year there was a talk about Soviet Russia and in 1956 on Japan and on Finland. Also in that year Mr A, McKie-Reid spoke about life behind the Iron Curtain. This was followed a year later by Professor Mead speaking of life on the border of the Iron Curtain. A major reflection of the times in 1957 was a representative of the WVS speaking on simple precautions in nuclear warfare!

A 'tradition' that appears to have become established during the 1950s was to invite the Lady Mayoress as a guest to The 1918 Club during her year of office. The Speakers' Book also makes it plain that in 1958 the ruby jubilee of The 1918 Club was noted and marked: in October of that year Mr L.H. Collison (headmaster of Liverpool College) was the speaker but exactly upon what he spoke is not recorded. In 1964 Jean Harris, the Registrar of George Henry Lee's store from the John Lewis Partnership, spoke to the Club. Again it is not known whether she knew and referred to the early decades of the Club when it met in the Bon Marché building that had become part of the Partnership.

1970s and 1980s

From 1971 the entries in the Speakers' Book resume with regularity and Club meetings appear to continue at intervals of about three weeks. By this time and throughout the 1970s and 1980s meetings were being held at the YMCA venue on Brownlow Hill. In some respects it was a time of considerable stability for the Club but it was also a time when the Club had

to face competition from many other associations, societies, and rival interests. More and more women had jobs and not necessarily ones that gave them access to the city centre at lunch-time. In consequence it did become more and more difficult to attract new members to the Club. At its YMCA venue the Club did have a talk on the history of the Young Women's Christian Association in 1974, on the Young Men's Christian Association in 1978, on the YMCA's worldwide activities in 1982, and from the secretary of the YMCA in Bombay India in 1985. Of considerable interest also must have been the talks given in November 1983 and again in 1990 by Mrs Betty Rushworth Smith about the history of The 1918 Club itself – would that the text of those talks existed now!

Some topics for speakers were those that the Club had always had an interest in; others reflected the times. In 1971 George Eustace spoke of young people and the community; ever since the 1920s the issues of youth had exercised the Club. A decade later Ken Pye spoke about the work of Dr Barnardo's in the Liverpool area. In the same year Dorothy Kaya provide a talk that dealt with the community – but this time addressing issues of race relations. By 1981 Brian Tai-Shen Wang was speaking to the Club about Liverpool's Chinese community (having signed the Speakers' Book with beautiful Chinese calligraphy) and in 1983 Harry Arthur spoke about Liverpool's China town. Don Glass, the regional organiser of the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children spoke in 1974. Married women's property rights was another issue that was very topical as society and employment changed. In 1974 Anita Samuels the chairman of the Liverpool Standing Conference of Women's Organisations addressed the Club. One imagines that Councillor Ethel Wormold must have had some pertinent and perhaps thought-provoking observations to make about 'Women in the Seventies' when she spoke to the Club in 1975. International Women's Year was a topic in 1976 and in 1988 Tilly Boyce spoke of a visit to Women's Committees in the Soviet Union. Myra FitzSimmons OBE spoke about women in politics in 1986 and again about citizenship in 1989. Care of the elderly was a subject that had been addressed in earlier decades but appeared again on the programme in 1974. A decade later Age Concern Liverpool was the topic Jean Evans spoke about. In the late 1970s Mr R. Campbell of Liverpool Personal Service Society spoke to the Club. In 1979 the WRVSO organiser for Liverpool spoke of the peacetime work of her organisation.

As previously, several Lady Mayoresses were invited to the Club and in December 1979 Councillor Doreen Jones was invited to speak – as Lord Mayor of the city. Eric Ogden MP for Liverpool West Derby spoke to the Club in March 1982. He had been a Labour Member since 1964 and had defected to the recently formed Social Democrat Party in 1981. He lost the seat in 1983. Arthur Bagot provided the talk in 1982 – looking back on his time as a magistrate. The Consul of Panama spoke to the Club on two occasions – in 1980 and 1981.

Gerde Kummins spoke about her escape from Latvia in 1945 and in 1978 there was a talk about Burma. Also in that year W.F.W. Smith spoke of his wartime experiences but by the 1970s wartime associations were undoubtedly fading as programme topics.

Service and voluntary organisations provided the subject material for several talks. Mr J. Backley of Mersey Metropolitan Ambulance Service spoke in 1978. Mr P.W. Beaman spoke of the Board of Visitors at Walton Gaol in 1985. In February 1986 Ken Oxford, Chief Constable of Merseyside, spoke to the Club. Lesley Wardale spoke about Police in the Community, Bill Grass spoke about Merseyside Probation Service and the area organiser for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution addressed the Club, as did John Harrison on behalf of HM Coastguard Formby. Sergeant Bowstead, a Crime Prevention Officer for Merseyside Police, spoke to Club members in 1983 and in 1988 Ken London from Merseyside Fire Brigade spoke to the Club about Fire Prevention. Helena Danham provided a talk about the activities of the British Red Cross in 1986 and in the same year Mr K. Stainton about the League of Welldoers. The director of the Liverpool Branch of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals spoke to the Club in 1977. Twice during the 1980s Charles Hubbard the Chairman of Merseyside Civic Society addressed the Club.

In November 1971 the Common Market was a topical matter. Britain had applied to join the organisation in 1970 and did so in 1972. By November 1975 the Common Market had gained the additional initials of 'EEC' in the Speakers' Book when it was again considered. The latest developments at Pilkington Brothers Ltd was a talk about an important local business. The Uranium Fuel Industry in the North-West must have been a glimpse of new economic developments in the early 1970s and a decade later Frank Moran spoke of the work of the British Aluminium Company Limited. James Fitzpatrick spoke about the port of Liverpool in 1986 and a year later Mr F. Robottom provided a talk about Liverpool Freeport, but overall maritime matters do seem to have largely disappeared from programmes in these decades. The Stock Exchange and Banking provided two financially related talks in 1974 and the bank in the community was the subject of a talk by Patrick Rathbone in 1976. A new development in 1975 was the talk by Mr A.R. Smith on consumer protection on Merseyside, as was Mr D. Taplin in 1980 talking about convenience foods. By the mid 1980s Mr B. Adcock was speaking to the Club about the Merseyside Development Corporation. Marcia Hughes gave a talk about her duties as Public Relations Officer at Liverpool Airport and Tony Butler spoke about what he did as Marketing Assistant at the airport in the mid-1980s. The Mersey Tunnels continued to provide a topic for the programme with John Gillard in 1989.

Cultural matters, in particular music, were well-represented during the 1970s and 1980s. Bob Azurdia spoke about BBC Radio Merseyside in 1971 and in February 1976 Billy Butler from BBC Radio Merseyside spoke to the Club. By 1982 Paula Ridley was telling the Club about the Independent Broadcasting Authority. Teresa Collard spoke about life in the theatre in the same year, and Kenneth Lawrence presented his favourite readings from Shakespeare and Dickens. Jean Tickle spoke about Charles Dickens in 1981. Maynah Lewis the novelist spoke to the Club in 1977. She had been writing since the 1960s and had won the award for the Parker Romantic Novel of the Year in 1972 for *The Pride of Innocence*. Catherine Clift spoke about the Everyman Theatre in 1979 and R. Brandon on Liverpool

Playhouse in 1984. Tutankhamen had a certain popularity in 1972 with the exhibition at the British Museum, as did the Montreal Olympics in 1976. Oliver Fairclough spoke about the clocks and watches in Liverpool Museum in the mid-1970s and a decade later John Griffiths from Prescott Museum spoke of the horology collection there. Gordon Read gave an explanation of Merseyside County Archives, Janet Smith spoke of the city's archive service, Diane Tiernan spoke of the work at Liverpool City Libraries in 1981 and in the same year Margaret Warhurst spoke about Merseyside Museums. The Curator at Lady Lever Art Gallery, John McDonald, provided a talk in 1982 and two years later Lucy Wood provided a detailed talk on the Chinese ceramics that are housed there. Mary Greenough dealt with Merseyside Maritime Museum. Freda Dean spoke of the work of the Embroiderers' Guild and Alex Balmer and Walter Francis both spoke about photography. June Green provided a talk about eighteenth-century family recipes. Hilary Groves presented a talk on touring with music and J.A. Rosie spoke about Beniamino Gigli and then Kathleen Ferrier in 1976. Stephen Pratt, a lecturer from Christ's College, spoke twice about issues connected with musical composition. Andrew Burn spoke of the latest developments with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in 1981 and again in 1985. Celia van Mullen provided the Club members with a history of the Bluecoat Chambers in 1982 and Mrs Barbara Yorke spoke of the history of Formby's lifeboat. Ancient Toxteth and the work of Kitty Wilkinson were also on the programme in the 1980s.

Medical matters continued to have their part in the Club programmes. Dr Hugh Alistair Reid OBE considered the work of Liverpool's School of Tropical Medicine in 1972. A decade earlier he had founded the Penang Institute of Snake and Venom Research in Malaya. Also in 1972 Rodney Glynn-Morris took Hugh Owen Thomas, the founder of orthopaedics as his topic. This nineteenth-century Liverpoolian had been little appreciated in his lifetime but during and after World War I his work had gained much wider recognition. Ethel Williams spoke about the Royal Southern Hospital and in 1979 John McFarland about the Royal Liverpool Hospital. Professor Andrew Semple spoke to the Club twice in the mid-1970s about the Area Health Authority and about the reorganisation of the National Health Authority. Again in 1983 it was possible for Mrs D.J. Cain to speak about the National Health Service. A.R. Wignell spoke about multiple sclerosis and Helen Gorton about the work of speech therapists. Perhaps as a sign of the times, in 1978 Helena Downham gave a talk about drug use and abuse.

As they had done since its foundation, educational issues retained some part of the programmes. Elizabeth Reese, the headmistress of Huyton College addressed the Club in 1972 and the head of Liverpool College in 1974. Early in 1978 Mr Alex McMinn, the Director of External Relations at Liverpool Polytechnic spoke to the Club. Music and education were considered in 1975 and soon after its publication in that year the Bullock Report into the teaching of language was the subject of another talk. In 1980 Derek Marks spoke of the work at the Royal School for the Blind in Liverpool and in 1989 Colin McDowall spoke about teaching deaf children.

Environmental issues became perhaps a little more prominent in programmes at this time. Cecilia Lockett discussed the history of gardens in 1972 and Barbara Bailey spoke of life on Hilbre Island. Albert Cliffe encouraged Club members to walk the canal towpaths of England. In the same year Frank White, the head ranger of Wirral Country Park, spoke of the developments there and a year later John Gray spoke about Nature Conservation on Merseyside. Mr P. McCormack, Liverpool's Director of Recreation and Open Spaces, was on the programme in 1973, and in 1989 Colin Twist, the development officer of Liverpool's city parks, spoke to the Club. Janet Kear spoke of the new developments at the Wildfowl Trust at Martin Mere in 1977. A decade later Sarah Bedford spoke about Landlife Urban Wildlife Unit.

In September 1971 the Bishop of Warrington reported to the Club on the World Council of Churches. Thelma Tomlinson spoke of church life in the USA and there was also a talk in the early 1980s on the Mormon Church. In 1972 William Fulton spoke about Tanzania's approach to under-development and Margaret Patey spoke of a visit to Lesotho in 1980. In 1977 M.A. Ashworth spoke of missionary work in China. Bob Evans entitled his talk 'A Dog Collar in the Docks' and spoke of the work of the Mersey Mission to Seamen. Major Raynor provided a talk about the caring ministry of the Salvation Army.

1990-2010

Talks have continued to cover much the same range of topics as in previous decades, with some modifications. International politics, although represented, have perhaps reduced in their share of the programmes. Educational topics have also reduced in their overall programme share, although the Club is always keen to hear of new developments such as the University of the Third Age in 1997 and the city's third university when Professor G. Pillay, the Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool Hope University, spoke in 2007. Contributions by senior academic figures have also reduced significantly compared with the 1920s and 1930s – perhaps a sign of changing work patterns.

New developments in what have been traditional areas of interest form significant sections of the programmes. During these two decades there have been talks on Liverpool's Trading Standards officers, the work of the Citizens Advice Bureaux, the Blue Badge Guide Scheme in Liverpool, new activity at BBC Radio Merseyside and in 2004 the new activity with the North West Air Ambulance Service. Church ministry also showed developments into new areas with, for example, Revd Nicholas Frayling speaking about the work of St Nicholas's parish church in Liverpool's city and business centre in 1990, and speakers later in the decade giving talks on retail chaplaincy and the airport chaplaincy. The Club also heard about the TypeTalk scheme for hard-of-hearing people, and the Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. Steve Binns spoke to the Club about Talking Newspapers for blind people in 2002 and in 2006 the chief executive of the Wirral Autistic Society was on the programme.

Medical matters again have had some part to play in programmes during these two decades. The replacement Women's Hospital in Liverpool was the subject of a talk in 1996. In 1995 laser treatment for disfigurement was discussed and two years later Virginia Giffin spoke about a hospice for babies.

Merseyside constabulary continued to appear from time to time in programmes, with Chief Constable Norman Bettison speaking to the Club in 1999. Mostly contributions from the police were from specialist units such as Merseyside Police Air Support Group in 1992, the Underwater Search Unit in 1997, the Merseyside Police Dog Section in 2000, and the Merseyside Mounted Police Section in 2006. There was also a talk from HM Customs and Excise Dog Unit in 2000.

Topics of cultural interest were interspersed throughout the programmes with matters relevant to local libraries, museums, archives, theatres and music being included. For instance, in 1991 Catherine Micklesfield a writer with *Lancashire Life* spoke to the Club about the Lancashire dialect, whilst in 1995 Celia Franklin spoke about the new developments at National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside with the Conservation Centre. In May 2004 resident of Knotty Ash and entertainer Ken Dodd handsomely 'entertained' the Club. In 2010 some members of the Club have been invited to co-operate with the staff of the new Museum of Liverpool in selecting exhibits for the suffrage section of a forthcoming display when the museum opens.

Frank Field MP for Birkenhead spoke to the Club in 1996 about the achievements of Eleanor Rathbone, and a year later Revd Ben Rees spoke similarly about Margaret Bevan, Liverpool's first female Lord Mayor. David Alton spoke to the Club twice - in 1993 when he was MP for Mossley Hill and again in 1999, by which time he was a life peer - dealing mainly with issues connected with citizenship. In 1996 Stanley Airey spoke about his reflections on his time as Lord Mayor in the period 1982-3, whilst in 1997 Tilly Boyce spoke of her role as Deputy Lord Lieutenant. In 2002 Lord Lieutenant Alan Waterworth addressed the Club. In 2005 Rosemary Hawley was able to speak of her experience as High Sheriff of Merseyside. In 2002 Councillor Michael Storey, the leader of Liverpool City Council spoke to the Club, and in May 2009 Councillor Steve Rotheram was able to speak very entertainingly to the Club about his experiences and memories as Lord Mayor during the period when Liverpool was European Capital of Culture in 2008.

Outings

During the 1930s, 1950s and 1960s there had been very occasional outings by the Club. These had been arranged usually to follow a specific talk. At times in the 1960s and 1970s there was an annual afternoon tea that was held in the Bluecoat Chambers in Liverpool. During the 1980s and 1990s, however, annual outings became a regular feature of the Club programme, thanks largely to the efforts of the then secretary, Miss Churchill-Nixon. The events took place usually in May to some stately home and garden or place of interest and

where suitable refreshments were to be found. Townley Hall, the Forest of Bowland, Windermere in Cumbria, and several Cheshire villages were all within range and were much enjoyed by members. This aspect of the Club's activities lasted until 2001 when numbers became unviable for the transport. This 'special' aspect of the programme was replaced with a luncheon meeting in May to which a 'special' guest was invited.

2014

During the 1990s membership of The 1918 Club had continued its slow decline that had begun some while before. To an extent this was exacerbated by plans to close the meeting venue at the YMCA and uncertainty about a suitable alternative. In the event a decision was made in 2004 to move meetings to the Britannia Adelphi Hotel. Since then numbers have slowly begun to rally and stand now at around eighty.

In May 2008 the 90th anniversary of the Club was celebrated with guests Frank Field MP and Deputy Mayor Councillor Michael Storey. On succeeding as Lord Mayor, Councillor Storey kindly invited Club members in December 2009 to a reception at Liverpool Town Hall in recognition of the centenary of the election of Eleanor Rathbone as Liverpool's first female city councillor.

The 1918 Club continues to celebrate the work of Eleanor Rathbone, the supporters of the suffrage campaign and the founders of the Club. They helped to change the status of all women. Members of The 1918 Club have included many women who have made their mark in society in various ways. The 1918 Club provides a common meeting ground for women of various interests and professions and thereby affords them an opportunity for interchange of ideas and discussion on questions of common interest. The Club does not itself engage in fund-raising events or campaigns but it is a sounding board for people to hear about and to discuss issues of the day. Indeed, The 1918 Club may well be the oldest continuously existing women's club in Liverpool.