

HEBDEN BRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

Spring 2019

South Pennine Houses: their History and their People



South Pennine History Group with Pennine Horizons Day School

SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 2019

9.15 a.m. – 4.45p.m.

**UPSTAIRS @ THE BIRCHCLIFFE, THE
BIRCHCLIFFE CENTRE, HEBDEN BRIDGE
HX7 8DG**

**Published by the Hebden Bridge
Local History Society**

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The society has sections for those with a particular interest in local prehistory, family history and folklore.

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Welcome to the Spring Newsletter. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. There are reports of the lectures for 2018-2019, news from the Family History, Folklore and Prehistory sections, queries, activities and forthcoming events. If you'd like to share your research or pose a query on something historic for the Summer 2019 issue, please send it to the Secretary by 1 August 2019.

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Society Publications

Coming soon: Hebden Bridge and the railway in the nineteenth century.

For information on all the Society's publications, see

www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

South Pennine Houses: their History and their People

Discover how to find out about the history of local houses and the people who lived in them. The morning will focus on some of the documentary resources you can use. In the afternoon two case studies will examine how the buildings themselves have a story to tell which can be combined with documents to provide an overall picture.

- 9.15 **Registration and refreshments**
- 10.00 **Introduction** - Barbara Attack
- 10.10 **West Yorkshire Registry of Deeds** - West Yorkshire Archive Service
- 10.45 **Censuses and house history** - Anne Mealia
- 11.20 **Coffee**
- 11.50 **Land valuation survey 1910-1915** - Mary Twentyman and Barbara Reardon
- 12.25 **Probate records** - Hazel Seidel
- 13.00 **Lunch**
- 14.00 **Case study: Old Town Hall** - David Cant
- 15.00 **Tea**
- 15.30 **Case study: Higher Kinders** - Mike Buckley
- 16.30 **Closing remarks**

Booking in advance only. Postal bookings to Rachel Smith, Bramble Dene, Moss Lane, Hebden Bridge, HX7 7DS with your contact details and a cheque for £20 payable to Hebden Bridge Local History Society. For other payment methods email membership@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk for details.

2019 Exhibition

This year's exhibition at the Town Hall illustrated the railway and the station and how it has become linked to the fortune and prosperity of the town.

The railway and station opened in October 1840. Provision for passengers was limited and goods were the initial focus. With time, and criticism from travellers, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company developed a second platform and waiting room on the westbound side of the track. In the 1850s tickets carried this message on the back.

LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RLY CO do not guarantee that their trains shall arrive and depart at the times shown on the Time-Tables, nor will they be accountable for any loss, inconvenience or injury that may arise from delays.

The station employed dozens of workers, from porters to delivery men. It was the main point from which local businesses imported and exported goods. The parcels office was vital to the town. The picture house had films changed twice weekly, delivered by the railway van and the manager came and paid weekly, bringing with him a couple of free tickets for the staff.

The station was the place where local people went off on holiday, occasionally to war, and the place at which thousands of visitors arrived in the town.

Hebden Bridge almost lost the station in the 1980s, but it has been regenerated and almost 800,000 passengers arrived or left through its doors in 2017-18.



The exhibition was produced jointly by the **Friends of Hebden Bridge Station** and **Hebden Bridge Local History Society**. Many thanks to all those who have helped.

Mike Crawford

The Battle of Heptonstall

Back in June 2017, there was a query from a group called "The Brutish Multitude". Fast forward to February 2019 and an entertaining evening in the Town Hall with extracts from the forthcoming community play about the Battle of Heptonstall and talks on Life in Halifax before the Civil War by our secretary, Murray Seccombe, and John Spencer taking us through the costumes and weapons used by the two armies.

At the end of February, a group of Heptonstall residents performed their community play in the atmospheric setting of St Thomas's. The Parliamentarian leader, Colonel Bradshaw, was on the left-hand side and the

Royalist leader on the right-hand side of the church, each presenting their case whilst the imagined effect of this conflict on the handloom weaver's family unfolded before us with music enhancing the whole story. I wasn't convinced that the 15-year-old son of the handloom weaver would have been quite so naive and lacking in knowledge about the handloom, but it meant that the audience could be provided with explanations of everyday life at that time. <http://brutishmultitude.org.uk/>

The exciting outcome from the community play is the formation of Heptonstall History and Heritage Society. Our Society has often wondered why there was no group in such an interesting village. We have stepped in to update the Heptonstall Trail, celebrate the 150th anniversary of St Thomas's in 2004, the bicentenary of Slack Chapel in 2007, organise exhibitions and other events such as the Tower Tours with the Heptonstall Heritage Partnership, record the gravestones in Heptonstall Parish Church and answer the many queries that would arrive from all over the world. We look forward to co-operating with the new group and hearing the results of their endeavours.

Diana Monahan

Heptonstall History and Heritage Society

The launch event is taking place on Saturday 27 April at the Social and Bowling Club 3 pm. There will be a film on Heptonstall by Nick Wilding.

Folklore Section

Back at the beginning of the 1990s, I got my MA at Sheffield University's Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, England's last dedicated academic faculty for folklore and related studies. By the end of that decade, it had been renamed NATCECT, The National Centre for English Cultural Tradition. A decade later, its library had been subsumed into the university library, its museum – the Traditional Heritage Museum on Eccleshall Road – was closed, and the faculty shut down. It seemed that England, the country that coined the term 'folklore' (by W. S. Toms in 1848) and spawned the world's first Folklore Society, had turned its back on a subject that, after all, attracts little funding from multinational corporations, nor for that matter from government.

However, in the last few years, the tide seems to have started to turn. Folklore has elbowed its way back into various media, from a resurgence in collections of oral history to an acknowledgment of the value of calendar customs and similar quasi-ritual activities in community life; from an appreciation of folk art and sculpture to the new attention to magical protective customs and rituals; from explorations of the role of place in local culture in contemporary nature writing to the celebration of the 'wyrd' sub-texts that underpin so much traditional narrative; from the resurgence of storytelling to memes of hauntology and folk horror in film and music, and more. Folklore and cultural tradition is an essential element of individual and community life, and of historical studies,

and it may be that its resurgence is attributable to some degree to the transmissive potential of the Internet – certainly, as a survey by Dr Simon Young has found, it is easier to do cross-cultural research in folklore today than ever before. The second Hidden Charms conference in 2018 included papers on the magical protection of buildings from Romania, Finland, Albania and the USA as well as the UK, while the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford splashed out on the same topic area for its exhibition ‘Spellbound’ last winter.

So things are looking up and there are plenty of incentives to follow up an interest in folklore – even academically, as we hear that the University of Hertfordshire is launching a new MA in Folklore Studies from 2019/20; applications are being taken now – see www.herts.ac.uk/courses/ma-folklore-studies. And as for Sheffield... its other university, Sheffield Hallam, last autumn set up their tribute to folklore’s renaissance in the form of The Centre for Contemporary Legend whose focus lies on such things as ‘urban legends’, concepts of local identity, supernatural narratives, and folklore in films – which is the theme of their 2019 conference to be held at the university on September 13 - 14th this year. (If anyone would like to present a paper, contact them before May 1st) <https://centreforcontemporarylegend.wordpress.com/>

John Billingsley

Family History Group

Intrigue surrounding Colden School

The Family History Group often welcomes visitors from other parts of the country seeking help with identifying families that resided in the local area long ago. Towards the end of November last year, we learned of some descendants of Thomas Horsfield, an early headmaster at Colden Board School, who were keen to find out more about this man, who had been headmaster at the school from 1879 to 1896. They were already in contact with Tony Greenwood, the recently retired headmaster of the school and now welcomed the opportunity to come to Birchcliffe to meet up and explore what information might be available in our archives. Thomas had been the second headmaster at the school, following on from Alfred Crosland and, as was required, kept a logbook recording the notable events concerning the school. Tony brought a copy of this book covering most of the time of Thomas's headship. Our visitors, Thomas's great grandson and his two cousins, already knew a great deal about Thomas's family from their own researches. Now, they were hoping to find out more of Thomas's character. The primary source for judging this would be the school's logbook as Thomas had made frequent and detailed entries, including details of his relationships with his assistants and school officials.

A couple of examples from this record are worth mentioning here: firstly, in June 1884, following a fire at Jack Bridge mill, many parents were out of work and couldn't afford school fees; when parents refused to pay,

Mr Horsfield paid out of his own pocket. The second example regards the list of pupils with the most attendances in the 1891 school year; the top two places were taken by Percy and Frank Horsfield, Thomas's children.



Colden School c1900 © Pennine Heritage Digital Archive

Local newspapers also often give us some idea about a family. It seems Mr Horsfield conscientiously encouraged his children to strive for recognition; between August 1887 and April 1889 the older children, mainly Edith and Edward, submitted prose compositions on at least thirty occasions to the children's competitions run by the Burnley Express newspaper; prizes of 2 shillings and sixpence were on offer.

Census records show that Thomas and his wife Mary Elizabeth had eight children but were living apart by 1901. The probable cause for this breakup was that Thomas had been named as the father of a local girl's illegitimate child.

This accusation, heard by the magistrates in June 1896, resulted in Thomas being found guilty.

The girl was a daughter of the school's caretaker, David Hollinrake, who had been appointed by the Todmorden School Board in 1889 at ten shillings per week. The school's logbook records in December 1891 that Thomas had complained to the caretaker about the work of his two daughters with regard to sweeping and dusting at the school. At the bastardy hearing, Thomas denied any impropriety with the girl and suggested the sisters, after he complained about their work, had declared they would "do for him if they could" and this claim of paternity was their way of doing it. However, the magistrates ruled against him and he was ordered to pay 3/6d a week for 14 years.

Thomas failed to pay any of the maintenance which resulted in him being brought before the Police Court six weeks later. When asked what he proposed to do, he replied that he had no work and that he couldn't work. It was pointed out that, if the prisoner had no reasonable prospect of being able to pay, he would be committed to prison. He was sent to Wakefield jail for a calendar month.

In trying to trace Thomas's background, the family hadn't managed to find any mention of him around the time of the 1861 and 1871 censuses. We had found a newspaper report from 1873 that told of a Thomas Horsfield of Habergham Eaves National School passing the Queen's Scholarship Examination for pupil teachers and being put down for Battersea. At a later date, I was able to identify

Thomas in the 1861 and 1871 censuses: the family had been wrongly listed as Horsfall rather than Horsfield; they were living in Habergham Eaves. In 1871, Thomas's occupation is shown as "Pupil Teacher". In the same census Mary Elizabeth Millner is also shown as "Pupil Teacher". The two pupil teachers married five years later and soon moved into the schoolhouse at Colden.

The mother of the illegitimate child was identified in the court report as Betty Hollinrake and it was then easily deduced that the child was Wilfred Hollinrake. At this point, I realised that I had known Wilf Hollinrake in my youth; here are my recollections:

"I knew Wilf Hollinrake very well when I was living in Colden during the 1940s and 1950s. I didn't know at the time that he had long been associated with my family; in fact my great grandfather, James Stansfield, at the Rural District Tribunal in 1916 is recorded as appealing on Wilf's behalf, against being conscripted into WWI. The basis for the appeal was that he was required to help finish the haymaking on the farm".

"Wilf was still working for the family in 1927, helping my grandfather, Joe Stansfield with the carting business. Wilf married Alice Newbitt in 1940 but never had any children. Although Wilf's mother had married Greenwood Helliwell sometime after Wilf was born, she lost her husband and from that time on, she lived with Wilf for the rest of her life."

"When I was a youngster, my grandfather farmed at Lower Smithy keeping milking cows in the mistal at the

end of the barn near the school gates. My parents would help Joe with getting the hay from the fields around the school and then Joe and Wilf would help my parents over at Lower Strines. Wilf was a very hard worker and liked to challenge us boys to try to keep up with him. Often Wilf would visit in the evening and we always enjoyed his stories; he was a jovial soul and enjoyed having us children around. We never knew of his illegitimacy but we were aware of his closeness to his mother even following his marriage. Wilf died in 1967; his mother, Betty, died a year later, aged 93 years."

Keith Stansfield

Prehistory Section

A riveting summary of the Ancient DNA Project by Professor Ian Armit (Bradford) was presented to the Prehistoric Society in the Autumn. Techniques for examining DNA have progressed so far that secure results are now possible from a huge range of ancient human remains. More results are emerging all the time. Essentially, it seems that the Neolithic population of these islands was replaced by Bronze Age newcomers. There is no evidence of any kind of warlike invasion, rather it seems that the Bronze Age folk, originating in the European steppe, carried a pneumonic plague virus, to which the people already here had no immunity. It looks as though settlers moved into a largely unpopulated landscape.

Locally, it appears that rather than a gradual change from mobile hunting to settled farming, as ideas and techniques

spread, there is a new population with different beliefs and conceptions of the world. For iconic sites like Stonehenge, where there is evidence of continuous Neo/BA use, we now need to look at repurposing. This applies similarly to sites in Calderdale where the Neolithic is elusive but the Bronze Age presence is clear. Sorting out what was going on is our present preoccupation.

We're involved with excavations of Mesolithic sites on the western side of the Pennine watershed and comparisons with material from 'our' east side are continuing. This has been left vague as there are 'treasure hunters' out there and unrecorded Mesolithic material does crop up on eBay...

We have been giving continuing support to a PhD student undertaking fieldwork in Wharfedale.

We await a disastrous drought to press on with the possible Mesolithic tent rings located at one of our local reservoirs. Essentially we need better-preserved examples for comparison and radio-carbon dating.

Other visits have included the annual Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Student Symposium, where doctoral students give progress reports. Details of the 12+ fascinating papers from across Europe, see <https://nebarss.wordpress.com>.

Recent work at Victoria Cave above Settle was presented by Dr Phil Murphy (Leeds) at a meeting of Leeds Geological Association. The cave contains a unique succession of sediments such that 13 Ice Ages have now been distinguished, and relate our local climate to the global climate variations displayed in ice cores from

Greenland. This succession of cave deposits was used in the C19 by Tiddeman to prove that ice ages were cyclical - ground-breaking stuff then; he was a near contemporary of Darwin. There are other caves with similar succession still to be examined. Here in Calderdale there are sites that might reveal the activities of Upper Palaeolithic hunters following the movements of reindeer as the last ice age was ending. Sadly these lie on grouse moors where we are not welcome.

David Shepherd

Archive News

Opening sessions at the Archive have been particularly busy over the last few months with many visitors and members calling in to consult the wealth of material held. The Archive has benefited lately from the donation by Richard Redman of a large collection of documentation on English Fustian Manufacturing Co Ltd and its constituent firms, including Redman Brothers. A donation of the archives of Hepton Singers has also been received. It takes a huge amount of work to catalogue and package new acquisitions such as this and volunteers contribute a minimum of 55 hours a month on this work behind the scenes.

Lecture Reports 2018 - 2019

26 September 2018

CHANGING TIMES, CHANGING HEROINES

Amy Binns

If you were asked to nominate women you think of as heroines, who would you choose? Would you choose from the current day, from history, from our nation or from overseas?

Amy Binns, lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire and author of *Valley of a Hundred Chapels*, asked the audience to write down their nominations. There was quite a range, from historical figures such as Boudicea and Joan of Arc to the Pankhursts and twentieth-century politicians such as Margaret Thatcher and Barbara Castle. Writers of all kinds were represented as well as women in the fields of science and mathematics.

This is our current day view offering - a wide choice of women who have achieved great things. However, in the past it was not quite the same. During the times of the suffragettes and their struggle, warrior Joan of Arc was the most prominent heroine. However, when women gained the vote a century ago, they also gained a new status. No longer outlaws, they were now citizens, and had to learn to live with a new identity and the opportunities that offered.

This was reflected in their leisure activities. In the local non-conformist chapels the ladies of the congregation began to come together to organize events that celebrated

the role of women. They organised pageants of great women to perform a new historical narrative that would support and cement this new status. These would often take the form of a narrator in guise of Clio, the muse History, telling a child about the heroines, who would then appear in character costumes. These pageants became immensely popular from around 1916 until well into the 1930s and some still occurred in the 1950s.



Amy has found reference to these events in the local newspapers of the time. Not only was the pageant advertised, reports of the event would list the characters and the names of the participants. This was also good for the newspapers as the more local names, the more newspapers sold!

From these Amy was able to compile a list of those considered the most famous and influential women by local people. The top ten of that time was headed by Florence Nightingale, Boudicea and Grace Darling. Joan of

Arc is still there as are the Queens Elizabeth 1st and Victoria. But also several names that are associated with non-conformist religions, such as Elizabeth Fry, Susannah Wesley, mother of John and Charles Wesley, and Catherine Booth, the wife of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. These names reflected the changing society of the small working-class towns in the northern part of the country, with an emphasis on Christian values and a generally progressive attitude to the rights of women and their standing in the community.

The collection of names submitted by our audience caused much interest and left us thinking about the changes that have occurred in society since those times, and, perhaps a bit nostalgically, for the loss of the camaraderie found in the community groups in the past.

10 October 2018

**THE WHITAKERS AND THE
HOLME AT CLIVIGER**

Roger Frost

The geology of Cliviger, with its layers of limestone erratics, contributed to its wealth, as lime was a valuable commodity in agriculture and construction. The Holme itself was a grand Elizabethan period house, though its origins were much earlier. It was badly damaged by fire in 2003 and has recently been sympathetically restored and turned into private housing. Its most illustrious owner was Dr Thomas Dunham Whitaker, who, as Vicar of the extensive parish of Whalley, wrote a definitive history of Whalley and Clitheroe.

Born in Norfolk in 1759, after his ordination Dr Whitaker was granted the perpetual curacy of Holme and achieved his ambition to be Vicar of Whalley in 1809. His elite family background gave him access to the family records of the major landowners of the area, such as the Towneleys, when he was writing his history of the parish. He had an impact on the life of the parish, building a classical style chapel in Holme, at his own expense. He also opened a school which had geology on the curriculum and sponsored the study of the geology of the area. He became a prolific planter of trees on his estate, estimating that the need to bolster the defences of the nation would make timber a valuable commodity.

Old photographs give a glimpse into the life of the area, with Sunday School processions and images of the mills and coal mines that provided work in the area. As people gained a little more leisure time, the landscape of the Cliviger area, with its unusual rock formations, glens and waterfalls, became an attraction for people looking for a good day out.

Dr Whitaker's contributions to geology and natural history led to him being appointed a Fellow of the Royal Society and awarded a gold medal. Before he died in 1821 he chose a tree that he had himself planted to be cut down to make his coffin. His tree planting was more recently the inspiration for the millennium project to plant a forest of Burnley. For Roger Frost Dr Thomas Whitaker is best remembered as the founder of the study of local history.

The Alan Petford Annual Memorial Lecture

24 October 2018

PEOPLE ALL FULL OF BUSINESS

**Sheila Graham
and Barbara Hall**

This was how Daniel Defoe described what he saw as he passed through the Calder Valley in the early 1700s. This is illustrated by the probate records and wills of residents which show us how, at the last moments in their lives, men and women wanted to ensure that their families were treated fairly, that their property was secured to their heirs and that children would be cared for and educated.

Members of the Halifax Probate group have been transcribing the probate documents of people who died between 1688 and 1700. Not everyone made a will, it was usually the custom of the more affluent; but many of those who did were in business in the town.

At that time Halifax was a compact town consisting of chiefly four streets, rising from the Parish Church in the east, uphill via the Market Cross to Bull Green and Gibbet Lane in the west. As yet there were no large mills – handloom weavers were still weaving cloth at home.

So what can we find out from these documents, and how can we use the information to speculate on what life was like at this time? Many of the wills are accompanied by an inventory of the goods owned by the testator. Most of these are domestic objects but they also include items to do with the business. The sample of wills was from a variety of establishments, some with just two or three

rooms, one with as many as sixteen rooms. Long case clocks were quite common, as were chamber pots. Despite the urban nature of the township most of the land was still given over to farming. Most of the sample had a cow or pigs, which would provide the family with milk and meat.

However, it seems that Halifax was a town of trades. It was a thriving place of business, meeting the needs of the largely traditional textile-agricultural 'dual economy' population in the outlying townships. A linen draper, a grocer and an apothecary were amongst the shopkeepers but also many of the inventories listed debts owed, those with money obviously taking on the role of granting loans.

Thomas Drake – probably a grocer – had a fabulous mixture of spices, glue, sugar, soap and brown paper. Juice of aloes, imported from India, formed the 'basis of most pills' and taken with cinnamon, ginger, mace and aniseed to treat stomach pains. Coriander expelled worms. Horse spice was a patent medicine for horses. In another chamber he had gunpowder, starch and blue powder (dolly blue). So many different commodities could be found in Mr. Drake's shop.

This information, and much more, can be found in a book published by the Probate Group under the title of '*People All Full of Business*' and available from W H Smith in Halifax and the Book Shop in the Piece Hall.

14 November 2018

**ANNE LISTER: THE LIFE AND
LOVES OF A LOCAL LADY**

Christine Booth

With the newly-filmed story of Anne Lister about to launch on TV, it was an appropriate time to hear about her story from a long-serving volunteer at Shibden Hall whose talking tours bring its most famous resident to life.

Christine Booth spoke with enthusiasm and insight of the woman whose nickname, Gentleman Jack, signified her role as a grudgingly respected outsider in early 19th century Halifax.

The young Anne Lister seems to have been a spirited child, the daughter of a soldier, who enjoyed an adventurous outdoor life but was also keen to gain an education. After school she was motivated to learn Greek, Latin, Hebrew and French and to learn to play the flute and the harpsicord. She also, to the benefit of posterity, kept the famous diaries and letters some of which have been made available to those interested in her life by the transcriptions of Helena Whitbread.

Anne made the most of her family connections, arriving at Shibden Hall in 1815, aged 24, to help her aunt and uncle. Perhaps at first she was almost in the role of poor relation, but also presumptive heiress. Shibden was a large estate with many tenant farms, coal mines and stone quarries, and Anne's involvement must have sharpened her skills as a manager and business woman, fitting her independent character as her relatives relied on her more and more.

Anne's time at school in York seems to have provided her with the first romantic lesbian encounter, with a 'girl of colour' called Eliza Raine. Anne refers to herself as 'Eliza's husband' and as one who 'loved the fairer sex'. She later met and fell in love with another fellow pupil, Mariana Belcombe, but Mariana didn't have the luxury of independence and was persuaded to marry a much older wealthy man, hoping that he wouldn't live too long. The love affair continued for a while after the marriage, and their meetings are recorded in the coded diary that Anne adopted in order maintain secrecy. She records other sexual encounters, but none that replaced the lost relationship with Mariana.

It seems that Anne was aware of and accepted what she deemed her 'oddity'. The independence of her position as an heiress allowed her to live the life she preferred. Meanwhile the figure of 'Gentleman Jack' emerged, marked out by her choice of dress – always black, sometimes a skirt, but often waistcoats and gentlemen's breeches. She must have commanded respect as well as the derision suggested by her nickname, for she was a formidable and competitive business woman, with a keen interest in politics and not afraid to bully her tenant farmers to exercise their vote in the way she preferred, despite there being no female franchise. She had an interest in the innovations of the age, investing in rail and canal projects, and selling off land for new roads. In Halifax she bought Northgate House which she operated

as a hotel and 'casino' or club. She also undertook extensive alterations to Shibden Hall.

Her great love was travel, and her aunt was often her companion. They spent months living in Paris and travelled widely in Britain, especially to wild places like the Lake District. Anne was a walker and climber, and is still remembered in France as the first woman to climb Monte Perdido in the Pyrenees and as the first tourist to conquer the Vignemale.

The most famous and lasting romantic relationship she had was with Ann Walker, another heiress of a local family. Ann Walker seems to have been less at ease with her sexual identity, and prone to anxiety and other illnesses. Eventually she was persuaded to move into Shibden Hall with Anne Lister; they exchanged rings and went through a form of marriage, when they shared the sacrament at Holy Trinity Church, Goodramgate in York in 1834.

The foreign travel intensified, with more adventures and more far-flung destinations including Moscow, where Anne records flying down the frozen Volga in a coach whose wheels had been replaced with runners. But it was on this trip in 1840 that Anne suddenly died, probably from an illness caused by a tick bite, and Ann Walker was responsible for bringing her body back home to Halifax, a journey that took from September to April.

Unsurprisingly, Ann fell into severe mental illness after this trauma, and was taken into an asylum in York, where she survived for another 15 years.

28 November 2018

ALL OUR OWN WORK

Andrew Bibby

The fustian co-operative at Nutclough Mill

The Nutclough Mill in Hebden Bridge was the home of a daring and visionary venture in industrial production: a worker-run co-operative which ran, at a profit, for almost fifty years and achieved national and international fame.

The vision of a worker-run factory producing fustian cloth and sharing the profits came from Joseph Greenwood, son of poor handloom weavers, who was put to the trade of fustian cutter at the age of eight. He continued in the skilled but tedious occupation until he was 36. He was self-educated; and determined that there must be a fairer way to organise work. The background of the growing success of Co-operation after the foundation of the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844, and with movements such as Chartism and Owenite Socialism, changed the way working people saw their roles and rights. Joseph Greenwood was one of those excited by these ideas.

The Nutclough venture started small, but with big ambitions, in 1870. Greenwood and his fellow workers had clubbed together to pay for the funeral of an old man whose death from exhaustion at work fired them with a sense of injustice. They decided to continue to make these small contributions to run their own fustian cutting business. They set up in premises in Crown Street with an initial plan to buy cloth which would be cut and dyed before being sold on. However, it soon became clear that they needed more capital than the 3d per week

contributed by the 13 members. They made the crucial decisions to sell shares to outsiders and also to make and sell garments from the finished cloth.



These decisions enabled them to buy the abandoned Nutclough Mill and to establish a profitable business making heavy cotton corduroy clothing. The business ran at a profit for every single half year of its life. There were three types of membership – workers, outside investors and the co-operative stores, who were the main customers. Joseph Greenwood insisted on the ‘bonus to labour’ as essential to his original vision, but there was much discussion about what constituted a fair return for those who invested money rather than labour.

There were wider social influences on the life of Hebden Bridge. The Society was a significant employer, including large numbers of women machinists. It was also instrumental in furthering the education of the people of

Hebden Bridge, making links with the University of Oxford which were life changing for many. Some of the major influencers of working class education and political ideas sprang from the Hebden Bridge Fustian Society. Weaver Robert Halstead went on to be one of the founders of the Workers' Educational Association. Martha Helliwell was involved in the first Women's Co-operative Guild in Hebden Bridge. Jesse Gray rose to become a significant force in the national and international Co-operative movement.

A hundred years ago, in 1919, this 'heroic little company', a beacon and exemplar of how co-operation could work in manufacturing, was taken over by the Co-operative Wholesale Society – an omnipotent multinational. The Society ceased to exist, though it had continued to be profitable until the end and its influence in the wider civic character of Hebden Bridge endures.

Andrew's book '*All our own work*', exploring this fascinating topic is available locally.

12 December 2018

BREWERIES AND LICENSED TRADE Peter Robinson
IN THE UPPER CALDER VALLEY FROM 1800

The story of the inns and beerhouses of the area during the period of industrialisation and population growth after 1800. The development of steam power meant that the factories and workforce were concentrated in the valley bottoms instead of the hill tops and demand for new drinking places also grew. Government had long

kept a hold on the sale of spirits and ale through licensing laws and in 1830 responded to demand, and to alarm about a proliferation of gin shops, with a new kind of licence to sell only beer. The Beerhouse Act of 1830 changed the way people consumed alcohol and the places where they drank. After this time the number of beerhouses grew faster than the alehouses which had a licence to sell a full range of alcohol.

Locally, Peter has found that houses were converted for the sale of beer, as farm houses such as Upper Hanroyd Farm in Midgley set aside one of the downstairs rooms for the purpose. Other such conversions are found throughout the area, including some like the White Horse at Friendly which was operating as a licensed beerhouse in 1840 and is still a public house. Most of these places brewed their own beer, but soon demand was such that purpose-built pubs became more common, often owned by breweries which supplied numerous houses.

The concerns of the anti-drink lobby were far from abated, and by 1869 the granting of licences was tightened up so that the beerhouses could be made more respectable – the licensee had to be of good character and keep good order. Peter's researches have revealed plenty of examples where this was far from the case, especially when the beerhouse was in a remote place, like the Travellers' Rest at Widdop. When the reservoirs were being built, its clientele of construction workers were considered far from respectable. In such isolated places they might be playing banned games like pitch and toss; licensees brought to court had to protect their reputation by pleading that they

were at the mercy of a 'rougher element.' In an account of an affray at the Travellers' Rest the publican claimed he was threatened by his customers who couldn't be persuaded to leave at closing time and trashed the place. The evidence was confused however, and it is just as likely that the publican happily colluded with a profitable 'lock in.'

The tradition of each alehouse owner being a maltster who brewed their own beer declined in the second half of the century with the establishment of 'Licensed Common Brewers' who could supply the widely dispersed new beerhouses. They would have a network of agents and with improved transport links get their product to the new customers. The brewers took more control by purchasing properties and by vetting licensees so that many of the pubs became tied houses. One of the most successful breweries was the Grove Brewery at Brearley, which had an empire of pubs in Hebden Bridge, Todmorden and Mytholmroyd. By 1899 the premises at Brearley was extended with a malt kiln, stables and reservoir, and they even began to brew temperance drinks.

The clash between proponents of temperance and the licensed trade did not abate and in the early 20th century there was a move to make pubs more respectable and appealing to a wider and more diverse clientele, including women. It is from this period that some of the larger, more impressive public houses date. The breweries, which had over time consolidated their numbers and extended their power, commissioned notable architects to design

public houses that had an air of confidence and grandeur. They included large function rooms and improved facilities and favoured classical neo-Georgian or Mock Tudor architectural styles.

The twentieth century saw public houses change in nature, culminating in the relaxing of licensing laws during the 1980s and 90s, but as Peter noted, the 21st century has seen a continuing decline in the licensed trade. The many reasons largely reflect changes in culture such as supermarkets selling alcohol for home consumption. Many public houses have closed during the last twenty years, some of the old ones reverting to private houses - just as in earlier times owners had seized an opportunity to sell alcohol from their front rooms. The recent phenomenon of micro-breweries suggest that the story hasn't yet come to an end.

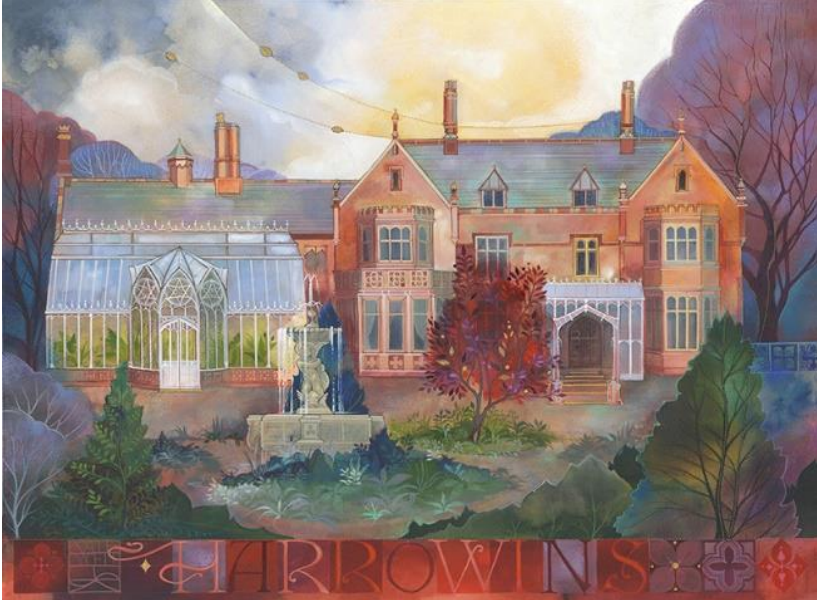
9 January 2019

LOST HOUSES OF THE SOUTH PENNINES

Kate Lycett

There was standing room only when local artist Kate Lycett related the stories behind her hugely successful paintings of the Lost Houses of the South Pennines. Kate traced her fascination back to a 'crinkle-crankle' wall of her childhood, when her imagination created a fantasy house. As an artist settled in Hebden Bridge, she found that many grand local houses had disappeared almost without trace and set about seeking material to give enough detail for paintings which celebrated their individual styles and moods.

Many of the houses were built in the nineteenth century for industrialists who wanted a residence to reflect their wealth and success. The Foster family of Black Dyke Mills built Harrowins and Littlemoor Castle at Queensbury; sadly both fell into disrepair and all but disappeared in the twentieth century.



Drawings revealed a feast of decorative detail, though it isn't clear that all these were incorporated in the final building. All that remains are the garden steps in Littlemoor Park which feature in Kate's painting. Another house that came and went in a burst of extravagance was Castle Carr, unloved in its isolated splendour above Luddenden. Its story is marked with disputes, court cases and accidental deaths, but the archives reveal a very grand house, with spectacular water gardens and powerful fountains to impress visitors. It was rarely occupied and in

the second world war its location made it ideal for the storage of TNT. Kate said that she wanted to capture some of the menace of the place in her painting.

Another industrialist who made his mark with a spectacular house was Sir Isaac Holden, whose Oakworth House near Keighley might have been the most luxurious of all. It was in the Italianate style and gloried in silver fixtures, pale marble and white plaster decorative details. As an inventor, Sir Isaac also wanted to equip his house with cutting edge utilities – gas, electricity, heating and air conditioning. There were Turkish baths and forty glass houses, noted as the finest in England, growing exotic fruit. When Sir Isaac Holden died at the end of the century, there was no buyer for the house, which fell into disrepair and finally burnt down in 1909. What remains is in Holden Park – a portico, some stone paths and concrete grottos.

While many of the lost houses had a short-lived blaze of glory in the nineteenth century, some lasted longer. These were the homes of the successful industrialists of an earlier era – the rich clothiers who made their fortunes and built their houses in the Halifax area. High Sunderland was one such house, extended and stone clad in the seventeenth century and decorated with stone carvings, statues, gargoyles and griffins. Like many such houses it was subdivided over the years, and eventually abandoned and demolished.

Kate was fascinated by the probable link with Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* – the description of that

house, especially the 'gargoyles and shameless boys' over the front porch uncannily matches the photographic evidence. There is even a ghost story with a tapping hand that echoes the experience of Brontë's narrator when he first sleeps at Wuthering Heights. After its demolition in the mid twentieth century, some of the decorative stones were donated to Shibden Hall.

Kate also had an interesting search for the remains of Norland Hall, which was demolished after being struck by lightning in 1912. It looked set for a brighter future when the wealthy American publisher William Randolph Hearst arranged for the stones to be shipped to California in 812 crates to build an English country house. In the end the crates were abandoned on the quayside while he went ahead with a Spanish style house. Some of the stones had been incorporated into a Presbyterian church, and an inquiry on social media brought her photographs of a date stone, stone carvings and a plaque recording their origins.

Those who have seen Kate's paintings, or the prints in the book that she produced, will have been struck by the glowing colours and the fairy-tale atmosphere they evoke. The combination of historical research, personal stories, exploring the landscape and artistic imagination has produced something quite magical.

23 January 2019

**MILESTONES AND WAYMARKERS
IN THE SOUTH PENNINES**

David Garside

As we walk along country lanes, bridle paths and canal tow-paths we perhaps don't always notice the waymarkers and milestones that guided our forebears. When we do, we see their idiosyncrasies: place names and distances carefully or crudely carved in the stone; the variations in shape and size; the neat little cuffed hands with a finger pointing us on our way.

The earliest milestones found in Yorkshire are Roman. These are cylindrical stones, some with carved inscriptions but others just painted. Most of the 10 that remain are in museums, although one was discovered quite recently near Golcar. David also pointed out the remains of wayside crosses that marked the cross roads and perhaps provided some religious solace to travellers. There are several of these on the ancient Long Causeway route between Heptonstall and Burnley. The area of the South Pennines around Hebden Bridge is particularly rich in old markers, perhaps because so many tracks and lanes have been undisturbed over the years.

The location of old markers allows something of the history of old roads to be tracked. The presence of waymarkers on remote moorland paths, such as Reaps Cross on Heptonstall moor, mark ways that were once important links between towns for the traders of the time. Many are simply tall standing stones, designed to keep the

traveller on the right path in deep snow. By the end of the 17th century it became the duty of the county justices to ensure that markers at cross roads were erected, and later to show distances to the next market town, and especially on the moors, where 'intelligence is difficult to be had.' One interesting milestone in Blackshaw Head not only points to Hebden Bridge and Halifax but also to 'London, 206 miles'.

Some of the most detailed milestones are found on the turnpike roads, private enterprises designed to improve transportation and raise money for the founders. Many of these stones are triangular and show towns and distances on the two outward facing sides. These signs are reminders of how some roads which are now country lanes were the major arteries of the time. By the end of the nineteenth century, County Councils took over responsibility for the roads and there was some standardisation of the milestone markers. The West Riding of Yorkshire commissioned over 600 metal plated stones, now known as Brayshaw-Booth markers. (Brayshaw was the metal worker; Booth provided the stone.) The markers had a triangular base and an arched upper part. They were originally painted in a smart blue and gold livery. They gave information about distances and also the location of the stone, recording in the landscape the names of some now forgotten townships.

David also showed pictures of some more unusual stones in Huddersfield which marked distances from the town rather than to it. These are thought to be unique and were used to indicate the correct fare for transporting people or

goods from the town. Canal markers also often show the distance from a place, usually the starting point, probably for similar reasons.

David's talk stimulated a lot of interest for people to search out some of these stone markers which seem to bring history into the present in a very solid form. Anyone interested can access maps which show the precise locations by visiting the Yorkshire Milestone Society website – www.yorkshire-milestones.co.uk and clicking on 'Find Yorkshire's Milestones'.

13 February 2019

**THE HISTORY OF FARMING
IN THE INDUSTRIAL PENNINES**

Stephen Counce

Does it seem like a contradiction to speak on the topic of 'farming in the industrial Pennines'? That was the question put to members of the audience at a meeting of the Hebden Bridge Local History Society by Dr Stephen Counce, formerly senior lecturer in history with the University of Central Lancashire. His background as an academic historian has always been partnered by an interest in finding other voices, and in working with museums to bring those experiences to life. He reminded his audience that in this part of the industrial Pennines the town belongs to the surrounding countryside, and pointed to the thriving agricultural shows in Todmorden and Halifax as evidence of the continued importance of agriculture in the Calder Valley.

The geology of the area was significant in the kind of agriculture that developed – the steep dark valleys gave rise to scattered settlements on the more fertile shelves on the hillsides. These were not villages, but clusters of houses within shouting distance, making use of pockets of good soil. The small farms relied on family labour and combined agriculture with textiles. Stephen pointed to the 1555 Act of Parliament (the Halifax Act) which acknowledged the exceptional position of the people of Halifax whose farming was on such poor ground that they relied on small scale cloth production. He described how the thinly populated uplands were also used productively, with animals taken to graze on the moorlands in summer, and the temporary summer settlements eventually being made permanent.

Even when cloth making was their main source of income and clothiers became very wealthy, industry was still combined with agriculture. Stephen looked at Red House in Gomersal, built and extended by a wealthy cloth manufacturer, but keeping its fields and links with farming. Inventories of house contents made in the seventeenth century also showed textile and farming equipment side by side. In the nineteenth century new farms were still being built, especially those of the laith house type which combined modest living quarters with the laith - housing for the animals and a barn where grain could be threshed and stored. Farming remained a family occupation, with little use of paid labour except at busy times like harvest, when handloom weavers might be employed. The closeness of the growing industrial towns

provided a market for produce, especially milk, which would be taken house to house and sold fresh from the farm.

Although the ground was not well suited for sheep, the development of a local breed – the Lonk sheep – which is a low maintenance animal, is evidence of adaptability. There was also the phenomenon of the so-called ‘flying herd’ where farmers, instead of raising cattle, bought cows which were ready for milking and sold them on when they were no longer of use. Stephen felt that agriculture had survived because of the willingness of farmers to adapt. History had always seen farmers combine other economic activity with their chosen way of life, and he saw this reflected in the diversification and experimentation of the present day. The ‘yeoman’ spirit of determined independence lives on.

27 February 2019

**WOODLANDS OF THE SOUTH PENNINES: Hywel Lewis
THEIR INDUSTRIAL HISTORY**

For modern day residents and visitors to the Calder Valley our woodlands are largely a place of leisure, serving as an escape from the industrial towns, but as Hywel Lewis explained, their history shows how closely they were integrated in the industrial economic life of this area. Hywel is nearing the end of a PhD study of the management and use of woodlands in the South Pennines - a study which combines mapping of various landscape features of the woodlands; detailed scientific analysis of

archaeological finds; searching for documentary evidence, and practical re-creation of ancient techniques.

The steep, unpromising woodlands of our valleys actually played an important part in the industrialisation of the region - the legacy of which can be seen to this day. With teams of volunteers organised by Pennine Prospects, 150 hectares of woodland at Hardcastle Craggs have been surveyed and features such as walls, tracks and charcoal burning circles recorded. In medieval times these steep wooded hillsides would have been open common, not fenced or closely managed, but by late medieval times there is evidence that boundary walls were being constructed. Stock would have certainly been grazing in the woodlands, and the tracks and ways linking with farm settlements on the higher flatter ground provide some evidence of this. Maps show that the woodlands were parcelled up and often became known by the name of the adjoining farms; these divisions too can be seen in the remains of old boundary walls.

The link between the woodland and the local industries is most clearly shown in the almost ubiquitous presence of charcoal burning sites – level circular areas which often have a wall base. The smallish branches of the trees would be allowed to smoulder under a blanket of bracken, turf and earth to produce the valuable charcoal. 84 such sites were found in Hardcastle Craggs, and scientific analysis of the cellular structure of the wood showed that the most common was oak, but with birch and hazel also used. The growth rings showed an annual 10 or 20 years of growth to reach a diameter of about 2". All this feeds into an

understanding of how the woodlands were being managed. The earliest date found by radio carbon dating was 1386, confirming that the exploitation of wood for charcoal was of long standing. The production of charcoal did not tail off in this area as it did in other parts of the country as industry moved to use other fuels. Charcoal was important to the local textile industry during the late 1700s and through much of the nineteenth century as the production of worsted cloth relied on the woolcombers who in turn relied on charcoal burners to heat the special combs that provided the long straight wool threads essential for this superior fabric.

Another industry that was part of the woodlands was iron smelting. The evidence of small scale 'bloomery' smelting sites, which used clay cylinders, remains in the mounds of iron slag which can be found, often close to paths. There is documentary evidence of itinerant workers who would carry out this process, and scoops out of the hillside in parts of the wood suggest that the iron ore was mined locally. Both bloomery smelting and charcoal burning were featured in a recent Woodland Archaeology Festival held in Hardcastle Crag.

In Hebden Bridge archives Hywel found documents which give a real and detailed insight into the management of woods during the later nineteenth century. George Sutcliffe of Stoneshey Gate left notebooks recording in detail the different kinds of trees, their management, felling and the value they made when they were sold. There were timber merchants who bid for the wood and sold it on to local industries, and oak bark, that

made a third of the price of the timber, was sent to local tanneries.

Over time however, the long wait required for a coppice or trees to grow to the requisite size meant that the economic value of the woodland diminished. Nowadays their value is mainly recreational, and that is of course an important part of our local economy. Woodland has always been tied to the local economy, despite our imaginings of dark and dangerous wildwoods in ancient times.

13 March 2019

**REMEMBERING PETERLOO:
“it was downright murder”**

Alan Fowler

A sunny Monday on August 16th, 1819. A peaceful, lively meeting of 60,000 men, women and children, calling for ‘manhood suffrage’ and political reform. Cavalry charging with sabres drawn. By the end of the day, 15 were dead, including 4 women and a child of two, and as many as 600 injured.

At another well-attended lecture for the Hebden Bridge Local History Society, these awful events were brought vividly to life by society member, Alan Fowler. Alan, formerly Principal Lecturer of Economic and Social History at Manchester Metropolitan University, drew on a rich collection of contemporary prints and cartoons to build up the context behind the event and the panic and confusion of the day itself.

The background was one of economic distress after the Napoleonic wars, high bread prices following the Corn Laws, and political frustration as the town's population, having reached 100,000, still lacked even a single MP to address the problems of industrial growth. 15,000 had already attended a meeting in January 1819, resulting in the abortive march of the 'Blanketeers' to London. This time the hand loom weavers and millworkers of the industrial districts around Manchester came in force, and the Manchester Tory landowners and magistrates, alerted by spies, mobilised the Manchester Yeomanry as well as summoning regular cavalry units such as the 15th Hussars.

Alan pointed out that almost nothing is left of St Peter's Field, a large open space near the modern St Peter's Sq. tram stop, which is sited immediately above the crypt of the old church. But it was easy to imagine the panic as the Manchester Yeomanry charged through the crowd to arrest the main speaker, Henry Hunt, slashing as they went. The watching magistrates then ordered in the regulars who made matters worse. It was an event bound to cause rioting, which continued across the Manchester area for two days.

Alan contrasted the obvious horror of the day with the long campaign to come to terms with the event. The name Peterloo stuck, an ironic coinage just four years after the battle of Waterloo – and Alan cited the words of John Lees, a witness of both events, who died a month later: "At Waterloo there was man to man, but at Manchester, it was downright murder." The immediate aftermath was prosecution of Hunt and several prominent radicals,

including the Middleton weaver and writer, Samuel Bamford. Repression led to the imprisonment of all the leading radicals and the Six Acts, including a tax of 4d on periodicals.

The only public memorial in Manchester is a red plaque on the wall of the former Free Trade Hall, now the Radisson Hotel on Peter St. In 2007 the plaque was replaced to emphasise the brutality of the day. A mural from 1951 inside the hotel is hidden away. Commemorative events are expected later in this bicentenary year.

27 March 2019

**LIFE AND DEATH IN HEBDEN BRIDGE
1851 - 1901**

Anne Mealia

For those searching for clues about their family history, census returns, which are collected every ten years and are now available to search on-line, have provided a rich source of information. But the records can also give a picture of a community, to create a picture of life and death in the town, revealing changes in population, families and occupations over half a century. They sometimes challenge our established ideas about the lives of our forebears.

Population was growing nationally at this time, but there was a steeper rise in Hebden Bridge from 1881, probably caused by people moving to find work. There is a general perception that people didn't move much in these times.

Indeed, more than half of the residents over this period were born either in the town, or in nearby townships, and fewer than 1% came from outside England. But there was hardly a part of the world which was not represented in this small group, with most from Ireland and Scotland, but other individuals born in India, Russia, West Africa and India. A family named Gibson had three children born in Moscow, where their engineer father had presumably moved for work. We can also see the effects of the British Empire, with three children born in British Honduras (Belize) to a teacher mother also born there, but with the very local name Greenwood. Indeed, the surnames that dominated these census returns – Greenwood, Sutcliffe, Crabtree and Horsfall – are still ones which we associate with Hebden Bridge.

We tend to have an idea of much larger households at this period, but the average size of about 4.9 fell a little to 4.1 over the fifty years. Non-family members were included in the household totals. The largest household of 17 people was in fact a school at Thorn Bank, which included two governesses and ten boarding scholars. Ten percent of households had servants living in, and 11 percent had lodgers or boarders. There were also a number of apprentices – stone mason, dressmaker, printer and hairdresser – who lived with their ‘masters’. A small number of people lived alone, but unmarried adult children were quite likely to stay in the family home, such as one mother living with her seven adult offspring. Most families were made up of parents and children, with an

average of five to six children and here were plenty of examples of three generations living together.

Unsurprisingly the main occupations in the town were related to the production of cotton or tailoring, but there were some unusual trades. The census captured the family owners of a travelling show, resident in a caravan, whose children were all born in different places. A coffee tavern manager might have been employed at the Fielden temperance tavern in Todmorden. Hebden Bridge also hosted a landscape painter – William Mitchell – who had previously been a bookseller in Manchester. The records sometimes reveal a darker side of life, recording the presence of an elderly Irish woman, a rag-sorter, who was held as a prisoner in Hope Street police station on the night of the census in 1901. She was charged with begging, and sent out of the district the next day.

Anne's enthusiasm for her research was obvious, and she is keen to expand to other parts of Hebden Bridge, and to include the 1911 census. For the audience it was fascinating to see snap shots of real lives emerging from the paper documents. Anyone interested in pursuing their own family histories is reminded that the Family History section of the society meets regularly at Birchcliffe Centre, where Anne and others can offer their expertise. Details of this and other society activities can be found on the website www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk and on the Facebook page.

Family History Meeting Times 2019

	Saturday	Thursday
April	6	18
May	4	16
June	1	20
July	6	18
August	3	15
September	7	19

Archive Opening Times 2019

The Archive at Birchcliffe will be open on the afternoon of the second Wednesday of the month; and on the morning of the fourth Saturday of the month.

2019	Wednesday 2 - 5 pm	Saturday 10 am - 1 pm
April	10	27
May	8	25
June	12	22
July	10	27
August	14	24
September	11	28

Hebden Bridge Local History Society
The Birchcliffe Centre,
Birchcliffe Road, Hebden Bridge HX7 8DG

Local History Events (ours and others)

Events in Hebden Bridge unless stated

April	Event	Where
1 - 30	Rochdale Canal displays	Library - upstairs
19	Pace Egg Play	Several locations
21	Heptonstall Shadows	Heritage Walks from Heptonstall Bowling Club 2.15 pm
22	Heptonstall Edges	
27	Heptonstall launch	See page 5
May		
1 - 31	Rochdale Canal	As for April
6	Heritage Walk Lumbutts	Former Lumbutts Chapel 2.15 pm
11	Mytholmroyd Heritage Day	Check with Mytholmroyd Hist Soc
25 - 27	Narrow Boats Event	Rochdale Canal
27	Heritage Walk	Walsden station 2.15pm
June		
14	Prehistory walk Midgley Moor	Check with Mytholmroyd Hist Soc
July		
21	Heritage Walk Midgley	Midgley School car park 2.15pm
28	Heritage Walk Dobroyd Castle	Booking via Halifax Visitor Centre