

HEBDEN BRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS

www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

FOUNDED 1949

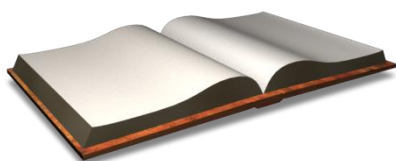


This photograph of enclosures at Highmoor, Saddleworth, sets the scene for the Landscape Study Day in September. See enclosed leaflet for details.

In this issue a full review of last season's lectures and much more.

HEBDEN BRIDGE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
 THE BIRCHCLIFFE CENTRE
 BIRCHCLIFFE ROAD
 HEBDEN BRIDGE HX7 8DG

Secretary: Diana Monahan - 01422 845982 - secretary@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk



Archive Opening Times 2011

	Wednesday 2 - 5 pm	Saturday 10 am - 1 pm
May	11th	28th
June	8th	25th
July	13th	23rd
August	10th	27rd
September	14th	24th

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

The aim of the group is to promote and assist the study of genealogy and family history; we do this by offering members an opportunity to meet like-minded people locally and to share their interests, resources and experience. See page 22 for more details.

Family History Opening Times 2011

	Saturday 2 - 5 pm	Thursday 2 - 5 pm
May	7th	19th
June	4th	16th
July	* 30th *	21st
August	-	18th

Cover photo: Seventeenth century enclosures at Highmoor, Saddleworth. Courtesy of Saddleworth Historical Society. Printed in Mapping Saddleworth Vol. 2, page 11.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 61ST AGM

FRANK J WOOLRYCH

Collaboration is a theme that runs throughout my report this year.

The Society has been instrumental in joining with Marsden and Saddleworth Local History Societies to form the South Pennine History Group. The principal reason for doing this was to prepare a collective bid for a grant to collect, transcribe and publish probate material (wills and inventories) from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries that relate to the three areas. These are located in the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research in York and the Lancashire Record Office in Preston. If the application is successful the project will run for 3 years and will include the establishment of a website that will host the transcribed materials. We have recently heard that the Group has been successful in Stage 1 of its LEADER application and work is now progressing on preparing Stage 2. If anyone is interested in being involved in this project in any way, particularly in learning how to read, transcribe and interpret historic documents, then please contact Nigel Smith for more information.

See page 4 for further details.

In other areas we have participated in a successful series of workshops on the Coiners held at the Square Chapel in Halifax.

We provided an outreach evening at Hare and Hounds in Old Town and also speakers for talks to groups in Hebden Bridge, Halifax, Mytholm, Cragg Vale and Mytholmroyd. Last May we had another successful joint evening with Mytholmroyd Historical Society.

We are helping Calderdale Council with their Conservation Area reappraisal.

The Family History group is recognised and respected for the work it has done and continues to do under the guidance of Barbara Atack assisted by Keith Stansfield. Barbara has also given fresh impetus to the recording of monumental inscriptions at Heptonstall which has been ongoing for several years; our thanks to her and her team.

St Thomas and St James history booklets have been updated and information provided for the St James Festival.

We have supported and contributed to various local publications and television programmes including BBC Countryfile and Britain by Bike with Clare Balding.

None of this would be possible without you, our members and I wish to thank you for your continued and loyal support. Of course it would be remiss of me not to also thank your Committee for all their dedication and hard work and in particular to Diana Monahan, Nigel Smith and Rachel Smith. Special thanks also to John Billingsley, our Speaker Finder who works tirelessly to bring us a wide variety of excellent speakers and topics.

I hope you agree that we are maintaining the high profile of our Society and that you will continue to enjoy being part of it.

Frank J Woolrych 27th October 2010

INTERESTED IN LEARNING HOW TO READ OLD HANDWRITING?

INTERESTED IN LOCAL FAMILIES AND WHERE THEY LIVED?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP THE SOCIETY MAKE LOCAL
DOCUMENTS MORE ACCESSIBLE?

The Hebden Bridge Local History Society has been successful in obtaining funds from the South Pennines LEADER programme to run a three year project to gather and publish original wills and inventories relating to the Upper Calder Valley between 1400 and 1750. This funding has been obtained by the South Pennine History Group, of which the Society is a founding member, and forms part of a larger project covering other parts of the South Pennines, particularly Saddleworth and Marsden. The funding is being made available through the South Pennines LEADER programme (Rural Development Programme for England), which is jointly funded by Defra and the European Union, and managed by Yorkshire Forward in the Yorkshire and Humber region and Pennine Prospects.

The project will help us find out more about:

- Local families and farms
- The local way of life, inheritance patterns and familial relationships
- Religious views
- Farming practices in the area
- The structure and use of buildings
- Textile working in the home

The source material will be transcribed, indexed and made available as print and web publications. Although probate material is such an obvious historical resource, comparatively little work has been done on it in the Upper Calder Valley because of the difficulty and expense of obtaining access to the original documents. These are kept in the Borthwick Institute for Archives in York and charges for making copies can be prohibitive.

The project grant covers the costs of gathering and publishing the material but actually doing the work is dependent on volunteers. There are a number of activities involved:

- Compile lists of documents relating to the Upper Calder Valley from copies of the probate indexes covering the period c.1400-1750.
- Going to York and scanning or photographing the documents (expenses paid).
- Cataloguing and archiving the images.

A course run by Alan Petford will start in 26th September 2011 on Monday evenings in Hope Baptist chapel. This course will teach the skill of reading old handwriting to beginners based on practical work in transcribing some of the documents obtained. This course will be suitable for both beginners and those with some experience. The difficulty of reading old handwriting tends to increase with its age and different chronological periods can be tackled depending on experience. The art of indexing the documents will also be explained. The course fee will be £60 for a term of 10 sessions of 2 hours each.

If you would be interested in participating in the project in any way, would like to reserve a place on the course, or would just like to find out more please contact me on 01422 842847 or at librarian@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk.

Nigel Smith, Project Manager, South Pennines Probate Project



Supported in partnership by:



REVIEW OF OUR WINTER 2010-2011 LECTURES
WITH THANKS TO
SHEILA GRAHAM, ISSY SHANNON & JOHN BILLINGSLEY

'KING' WHO WAS A CRITIC OF THE FACTORY SYSTEM
DR JOHN A. HARGREAVES

SEPTEMBER 29TH 2010

The timing of this first lecture of the winter season couldn't have been more apt: 180 years to the day that Richard Oastler, dubbed the "Factory King" and saviour of Britain's infant "slaves", penned his famous letter exposing working conditions in the mills, Dr John A. Hargreaves held a packed audience engrossed as he explored the enigma of a man now largely forgotten.



Oastler's letter published in the "Leeds Mercury" was a literary bombshell which caused a furore amongst mill owners, explained Dr Hargreaves, visiting research fellow in History at Huddersfield University and visiting lecturer at Leeds Trinity University College, and chairman of Halifax Civic Trust. He is also vice-president of Halifax Antiquarian Society and edits the annual "Transactions" publication.

Appearing on September 30 1830, Oastler wrote: "Thousands of little children...from 7 to 14 years of age, are daily compelled to labour from 6 o'clock in the morning to 7 in the evening with only 30 minutes allowed for eating and recreation. Poor infants, you are sacrificed at the shrine of avarice. You are compelled to work as long as the necessity of your needy parents may require, or the cold-blooded avarice of your worse than barbarian masters may demand. You are doomed to labour from morning to night for one who cares not how soon your weak and tender frames are stretched to breaking."

Highlighting the evils of Bradford's worsted mills, Oastler compared the conditions of slaves working on the sugar plantations of the West Indies with those of British child factory hands, and came to the conclusion that the children were far worse off. Championing factory reform, in particular the Ten Hours Bill also supported by Todmorden mill owner John Fielden, Oastler suffered both personally and politically in his role as "Guardian of factory children",

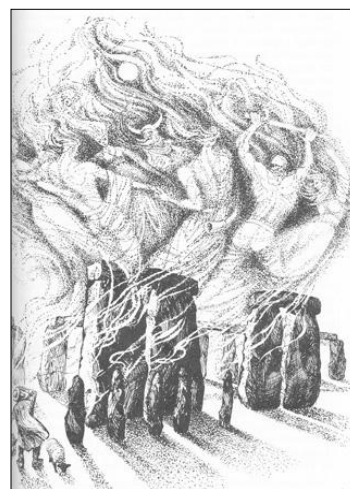
denounced as "a criminal incendiary" and "mad man" by opponents, and charged with industrial sabotage. Oastler never joined in any Chartist agitation and did not support universal suffrage, however; descended from North Riding yeomen farmers, living the life of a squire at Fixby Hall, near Huddersfield, his background was often at odds with his beliefs: was he a "Tory Radical" - or a "Revolutionary Tory?" That was the question that dogged him all his life, Dr Hargreaves declared.

Dr Hargreaves also detailed other aspects of Oastler's contradictory, often turbulent life, including his support of the anti-slavery movement and his opposition to the Poor Law Act, which he described as "hellish." Historian Asa Briggs, writing 100 years after his death in 1861, declared that Oastler laid the foundations of the future welfare state -but "today he is a largely forgotten figure who deserves to be better known." *Issy Shannon*

HUGE AND MIGHTY FORMS: THE GIANT'S CASTLE IN LANDSCAPE TRADITION - JEREMY HARTE

OCTOBER 13TH 2010

The curator of the Bourne Hall Museum in Ewell, Surrey, came all the way to Hebden Bridge to be the guest of the Local History Society on October 13th. Jeremy Harte, who has written several books on folklore interests such as holy well, fairies and the Green Man, entertained the 50-strong audience with a presentation on 'Huge and Mighty Forms' – in other words, some of the giants that are remembered in the landscape of Yorkshire and elsewhere.



Mr Harte built his ideas of giants around the stories of Wade, still remembered today in place-names of the North Yorkshire Moors and possibly other parts of the country. An important cultural figure of the Anglo-Saxon and Norse period, Wade is sometimes remembered as a giant, sometimes as a god. His exploits include the Hole of Horcum and the Roman Road across the North York Moors, and his grave is legendarily marked by a pair of prehistoric standing stones. Giants exist in a time continuum rather different from what we are used to!

With diversions into old English and Latin, and an investigation of what such figures mean to a local community, Mr Harte revealed the potential layers of meaning that can be found between local folklore and local legend, and he did so with both erudition and wit. A small group of members stayed on afterwards for a more in-depth discussion of local giant associations. *John Billingsley*

A HEBDEN BRIDGE CHILDHOOD, JOSEPH GREENWOOD'S REMINISCENCES - JUSTINE WYATT

OCTOBER 27TH 2010

Members attending our AGM were taken into the Hebden Bridge childhood of Joseph Greenwood, who rose to become a hero of the Co-operative movement and founder of the Nutclough Fustian Cutters Co-operative. Local historian Justine Wyatt, who is leading research for the Fustianopolis project, revealed something of the hard times he had lived through, and which he recorded in his seventies in his Reminiscences. He grew up as the son of handloom weavers at Stevenson House, Wadsworth Banks, and as a seven year old would wind bobbins and carry the finished piece of woven cloth on his back to Pellon, an eight mile walk. At the end of his life he also recalled the freedom of life before the factory age, with no bell to call them to their work, and time for a father to teach his children the basics of reading and writing as he worked at the loom.



When he was nine he was sent to work for a fustian cutter, which his mother saw as the trade of the future, and eventually he was put to work at the house at Machpelah which he describes as being built specifically for fustian cutting.

Though it was monotonous and weary work, the children found time for fun. Joseph Greenwood writes vividly of the excitement of sliding on home made skates down the hill into St George's Square, and the daring rides they engaged in when transporting cloth on hand carts. He also lived through changing times, and conveys the excitement of the coming of the railway to the Calder Valley. Political events were recorded too – Chartism was a powerful influence in the area, and the young Joseph was an eye witness to the Plug Plot when strikers disabled the factories by pulling out the plugs of the boilers, or draining the dams that provided water power. These were events that shook the nation.

Justine read excerpts from the Reminiscences which showed an eye for humorous detail, such as a drunken assault on a temperance speaker which ended with the assailant handcuffed to his brother, the police officer, stumbling up the hill to the lock-up in Heptonstall. He also wrote movingly of the decline of the handloom weaver, with houses scattered on the hillsides left dark, and the old families no longer to be seen. *Sheila Graham*

YORKSHIRE DALES TEXTILE MILLS

GEORGE INGLE

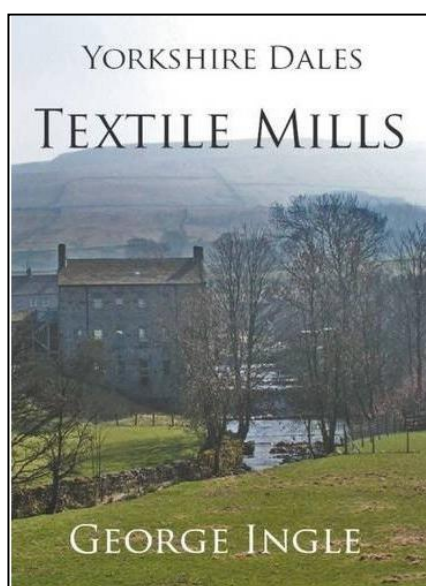
NOVEMBER 10TH 2010

Almost forgotten among the scattered villages of the Yorkshire Dales are the remains of a textile industry that was as important to the area as it was to the big industrial towns of Bradford, Keighley and Halifax. George Ingle, who has extensively researched and written about the textile mills of Yorkshire, revealed to a meeting of the Hebden Bridge Local History Society the buildings that are a hidden reminder of the industrial past of these peaceful and beautiful places. There were at least seventy such mills and even somewhere as remote as Malham Cove was home to a large spinning mill.

It was the huge demand for cloth in the late 18th century that led manufacturers to widen the area where production took

place. Corn mills that for centuries had served the villages were ripe for conversion into cotton spinning mills, and the villages close by provided a ready source of labour. One advertisement boasted that 'from the ringing of a bell upwards of three hundred children may be collected in less than half an hour'. Other mill owners entered into agreements with parishes in the south to take hundreds of orphans as apprentices. The 'infernal factory bell' that called them from sleep at five in the morning was a memory that stayed with them.

While the mills provided work for the people of the Dales villages, they were seen by the old hand workers as the enemy, and there are records of pitched battles when groups of out of work hand loom weavers attacked the mills, and had to be repelled by soldiers. At the other end of the social scale, the Lord Ribblesdale protested about the establishment of a cotton mill at Malham. He feared that what was 'now a peaceful contented and happy village' would become 'full of misery vice and debauchery'. The hunger for cotton was unstoppable though, and more mills were built to house ever bigger and more efficient machines.



George Ingle's talk and the photographic evidence he has collected provided a vivid insight into a lost industrial world whose buildings have largely been absorbed into a rural landscape. However at the end of his talk he raised the intriguing possibility that the water of the Dales could again be used productively. He recalled the fact that the power generated by water turbines was in later years sufficient to provide electricity to entire villages and could perhaps do so again.

Sheila Graham

BRIDGING CENTURIES - VARIOUS SPEAKERS

NOVEMBER 24TH 2010

As the last act of the celebration of Hebden Bridge 500, a joint meeting of the Hebden Bridge Local History Society and the Hebden Bridge Camera Club enjoyed a visual feast of images of

the old bridge and the many other bridges that criss-cross the rivers and becks of the Upper Calder Valley. Evidence from wills suggests the old stone bridge was built in 1510, when it provided an essential crossing for the pack horse trains, Diana Monahan told the audience. The bridge also saw funeral processions readying themselves to carry the coffin up the steep buttress to Heptonstall Church, and happier wedding



L-R: The late Peter Coles, Diana Monahan, Sec. Local History Soc., Craig Shaw Blu Planet Photography, Jim Strom HB Camera Club, Frank Woolrych Pres. HB Local History Soc. and Paul Monahan.

parties too, no doubt. It was also the scene of skirmishes. Peter Coles' audio visual presentation reminded the audience of the part the bridge played in the Civil War battle of Heptonstall in 1643, which members of the Sealed Knot re-enacted in July.

It was fascinating too to see photographs of the area in the late 19th Century, when the bridge was far from celebrated, being hemmed in by various commercial buildings. An early film made by members of the old cinematographic society also brought the old scenes to life. The bridge featured in local stories too, being the scene of clashes between young men coming over from Haworth for a scrap in the late nineteenth century, and local youths using the Palm Sunday branches to beat them back. Other stories recalled how young dare-devils slid down the buttress on make-shift skates, and were very glad that the hump of the bridge was there to stop them!

Everyone was excited to see the magnificent magic lantern in operation, showing an amazing series of photographs, some from the early 1900s and some from the 1950s. These captured the rich variety of bridges that provide access across the streams and rivers that define our area. The audience were able to compare the old views with the series of beautiful and atmospheric photographs taken by Craig Shaw throughout the celebratory year.

Peter Coles' images sounded a note of caution, showing some of the damage caused to the stones of the bridge by time and the unchecked growth of tree seedlings. Jim Strom of the Camera Club showed the bridge at its beautiful best in an audio visual production combining photography, sound and commentary to dramatic effect. It was clear from the response of the audience that everyone loves the old bridge, and are determined that it should be cherished in the future, living on to tell its old tales. *Sheila Graham*

RELIGION AND THE PEOPLE IN THE UPPER CALDER VALLEY IN THE AGE OF RELIGIOUS REVIVAL

EDWARD ROYLE

DECEMBER 8TH 2010



For nearly a hundred years, from the middle of the 18th Century, Hebden Bridge and the Upper Calder Valley saw a flowering of religious ideas that led to its being seen as a 'hotbed of dissent' by the established Church of England that was struggling to hold on to its congregation. Edward Royle, described how during that time new religious groups were

founded, split and merged to create a kaleidoscope of religious belief and practice.

He explained how the geography of the area provided one explanation. The established Anglican churches and chapels were thinly spread and hard to get to, while the new preachers and teachers travelled into remote moorland settlements, preaching in homes where local families gathered.

In some ways such preachers were providing entertainment as they travelled from village to village. They were passionate speakers, gospel preaching from the heart, and attracting huge crowds when they spoke in the open air. John Wesley is the most famous, of course, but there was a strong Baptist tradition too, encouraged by preacher John Fawcett. The success of this branch of dissenting religion has left its mark in many of the towns and villages of the Upper Valley in the form of handsome chapels such as Hope and Luddenden Foot.

As religious differences were perceived, there were splits, and new congregations moved and demanded their own buildings. The Baptists for example split into 'particular baptists' and 'general baptists' and then there was a branch called 'strict and particular baptists'. Methodism both absorbed small new sects and saw its own splits, as did the Presbyterians. The tangible result was the proliferation of chapel buildings in every small hamlet. The Anglican Church underwent its own revival at this time, with a move to evangelical style of worship and the building of new churches in more remote places like St John's at Crag Vale. Stainland's Church was a wonderful compromise – a non-denominational chapel where the whole range of different beliefs could be accommodated for worship.

The intensity and passion of these religious differences has faded, just as many of the chapel buildings have fallen into decay or been rescued to become desirable living or working spaces. Edward Royle's talk left the audience with a sense of vibrant and exciting times in these valleys and hills.

Sheila Graham

THE BUILDINGS OF HEBDEN BRIDGE

ALAN PETFORD

JANUARY 12TH 2011

Sometimes it seems that we walk around our own town with only half an eye to our surroundings. At this packed meeting we were treated to a closer inspection of the fine buildings that we tend to take for granted, when local history lecturer Alan Petford talked about the Buildings of Hebden Bridge.

A mainly nineteenth century development, Hebden Bridge grew rapidly, and Alan showed how the buildings in the town were

influenced by the coming of canals and railways and by the growth of the textile industry, as well as its geography. Canals and railways brought their own architectural style, marrying local building traditions with utilitarian requirements. A lock keeper's cottage required a corner window to provide a clear view of the canal traffic, but the mullion details were true to the local style. Hebden Bridge Station follows the house style of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, with cast iron providing the framework of a flexible prefabricated building, while the stonework shows high quality local craftsmanship.

The textile industry has left its mark everywhere in the town, with the mullion windows common in the area providing light for workshops. Machpelah house showed how a stylish house could be combined with a working environment, with the imposing proportions of the front contrasting with the long row of mullion windows marking the fustian cutters' workshop.

Flexibility seems to be the watchword. More humble houses, such as those found in Royd Terrace, were also able to be used for living and working: for the handloom weaver, a loom and a bed would fit into the same space. The stack houses that are such a feature of Hebden Bridge were a response to particular needs. The builders of the nineteenth century turned the problems of the steep hillsides into an advantage. Stack houses meant that more dwellings could be built on the same amount of



land, and also gave landlords flexibility in being able to meet a demand for different sized houses.

The spirit of commerce also flowered in Hebden Bridge. The architect of the Co-operative Building was trying to emulate the commercial glories of Venice, and Banks also chose buildings which were designed to impress and instil confidence with their solidity and seriousness. Market Street still has a row of shop fronts with the first floor display windows designed to tempt in the customers. The civic buildings of the town aimed for an architectural style which carried a sense of aspiration. The Council Buildings harked back to a renaissance 'free Italian' style, while the Post Office opted for a Tudor take on modernity.

The value placed on education was sometimes reflected in the elements of a gothic style, reminiscent of Church architecture. Churches and Chapels thrived too, and have left Hebden Bridge with some of its finest buildings. The first Baptist Chapel was built on the new turnpike road, to meet the needs of a far flung congregation. The building's elegant proportions and classical features exude a confident public face, while the back of the chapel adopts a more humble local style. When the congregation grew and a bigger building was needed, Hope Chapel was built with no expense spared. The Anglican Church of St James the Greater was built with a tight budget, using stone quarried close by, and opting for less showy decoration. However, the first-rate quality of the stone work is a mark of the skill of local builders.

Alan's photographs and talk revealed something new to everyone who thought they knew the town, and inspired the audience to look around with a more appreciative eye.

Sheila Graham

WEST YORKSHIRE PLACE-NAMES IN CONTEXT

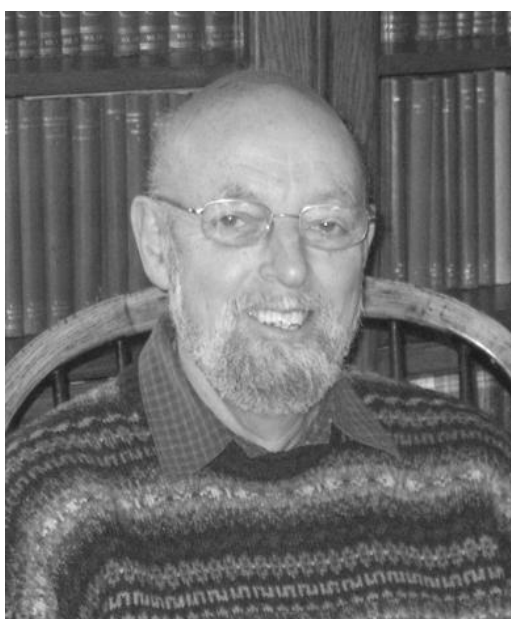
GEORGE REDMONDS

JANUARY 27TH 2011

Words can be slippery things, especially when it comes to assigning a meaning to place names and surnames. Dr George Redmonds, writer, presenter of a Radio 4 series, and an authority on the subject, intrigued a packed meeting with some of the fascinating origins of place names he has discovered.

While many people turn to existing dictionaries of place names and surnames to find an answer to their queries about how such names came to be, Dr Redmonds showed that searching out the truth is a more complex matter.

Words change and develop different meanings over time, as the word 'boycott' illustrates. Its current meaning derives from action against an Irish landlord called 'Boycott', which in its turn is linked to a place called Boycott – the cottage of someone with the personal name 'Boy'. So places are named after people, and in turn people take their names from places.



The key for Dr Redmonds is to look at the whole context in which a word is found. Breaking down names into their constituent parts can lead historians to some mistaken conclusions. Beacroft is usually described as originating from a field in which bees were kept, and a collection of 'Bea' related place-names might suggest a flourishing occupation in some areas. Dr Redmonds' researches, however, have shown that 'Bea' in this case is a corruption of 'Big', a local word for Barley, an entirely different crop.

How a word is pronounced locally can also lead to mistaken assumptions. Skyreholme is usually taken as a combination of 'holme' – a water meadow, and 'skyre' meaning bright. The local pronunciation 'Skiram' was assumed to be a later variation. In fact it turns out that this version came first, with the 'am' part of the word meaning 'at the' and 'skir' being a hovel or shack – quite a different picture!

As well as studying old documents for evidence of place names and personal names, Dr Redmonds pointed out how important it is to look at the geographical features linked with common place names. Places called 'Bowl Hill' are assumed to relate to the rounded shape of the hill, but the fact that they are often linked to lead seams, and that the surname 'Bowler' or 'Baler' means someone who tended lead smelting, leads to entirely different conclusions.

Establishing the probable meanings and origins of place and surnames involves painstaking research and an awareness of how words slip and slide over time and place. The examples that Dr Redmonds explored showed how fascinating and wide-ranging such a study can be, revealing much about the history of the landscape and the way people lived long ago. A thoroughly stimulated audience were keen for him to return and tell them more. *Sheila Graham*

THE LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RAILWAY

NOEL COATES

FEBRUARY 9TH 2011

The glory days of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway

A trip from Bacup to Manchester in 1830 would have been at least a day's journey travelling on foot; by 1840 you could make it in 6 hours if you walked to Rochdale to catch the train, while in 1852 the entire journey could be completed in 75 minutes.

A packed meeting of local history and railway enthusiasts were struck by how the everyday lives of our ancestors were transformed by the coming of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in a fascinating talk by Noel Coates. Through to the end of the century the railway expanded, absorbing smaller railways, meeting the demands of the region's mining and textiles industries and businesses. The heyday of the railway was from 1910 to 1925 when it grew to be one of the largest and most innovative networks in Britain. The resort of Blackpool and the deep sea fishing port of Fleetwood existed because of the L&YR, Noel explained, and the railway also owned shipping fleets, allowing a journey from Ireland to Denmark entirely on an L&YR ticket.



The railway was noted for its efficient goods handling, with specialist vans for fresh fish and cattle imported from Ireland, as well as catering for commuters with a very cheap workman's ticket, and experimenting with electrification. The richness of the heritage of the Lancashire and Yorkshire is still to be seen in some of the buildings, tunnels, bridges, and magnificent viaducts. Noel also

reminded us how lucky we were to be able to enjoy the beautifully preserved Hebden Bridge Station.

The real stars of the age of steam are the locomotives, captured in black and white in all their atmospheric glory at full steam through the countryside. For most members of the audience, the photographs seemed to carry with them recollections of the smell of the smoke and the slam of the carriage door. During the tea break and as people dispersed at the end of the evening, everyone seemed to be talking with affection about their memories of railway trips of the past.

Sheila Graham

SUMMAT ABOUT NOWT - WHAT'S NOT IN T'BOOK!

STEVE MURTY

FEBRUARY 23RD 2011

“Stubb township in Erringdon was, by freak of circumstances, placed in a time warp for over half a century. “

So writes Steven Murty in his recent publication “Summat A Nowt”. In his talk, he recounted his personal look at the history of the Calder Valley with particular reference to his home at Stubb and included many things that he didn't manage to get into his popular book.

In the past, many people lived all their lives in the place where they were born. Nowadays this is unusual, but not so in Steve's case, and his personal account of the changes in his lifetime have been supplemented by extensive research into the history of Stubb and the surrounding area.

Stubb is a small township, a cluster of buildings, close to Mytholmroyd on the Erringden side of the Calder Valley. Its recorded history stretches back to the end of the 15th century when it was the site of a fine timber framed house and barn. Throughout the following centuries it underwent several changes of state, many of which resulted in modifications and modernisations including the splitting of the larger buildings into smaller cottages.

This was the state of affairs when Steve was born at Stubb in the 1950s. He told us of his childhood growing up there, where little had changed from Victorian times, with flag floors, rag rugs, tin baths in front of the fire and a tub toilet at the bottom of the garden. He related tales of the close knit community who lived there at that time, coupled with memories of the people and their way of life. Like many older buildings in the district at this time, the housing at Stubb was considered sub standard and ripe for demolition. We were shown pictures of some of the many renovations that Steve and his wife Leone have undertaken since buying one of the cottages on their marriage in 1972, accompanied by tales of the ups and downs of such a big undertaking.



Steve went on to relate some of the historical events that effected the Calder Valley throughout the ages, especially that of the Cragg Vale Coiners which was very close to home. Throughout all times but particularly in the 18th century, coining involved clipping gold from the edge of a genuine coin and melting this down and forging then engraving new coins. The upper reaches of the Calder Valley were sufficiently isolated for this to be an ideal area for these practices and in the 1770 events came to a head with the resulting convictions and hangings of several local men, including 'King' David Hartley at York. Steve speculated on the hierarchy of the gang, that there must have been a network of others behind the practice, especially as it was reported that David Hartley was well looked after and informed whilst in York goal.

Steve has a love and fascination for the local area and especially for his home at Stubb and we all thoroughly enjoyed his reminiscences and the extent of his knowledge of this particular region of the Upper Calder Valley.

DISCOVERING LUMBUTTS AND MANKINHOLES

GLYN LEE

MARCH 9TH 2011

Glyn Lee, local author and longstanding member of the Hebden Bridge Local History Society treated a packed meeting of the Hebden Bridge Local History Society to a pictorial journey around Lumbutts and Mankinholes.

A keen walker, Mr Lee showed the audience how the local landscape is full of interest and layers of history. His photographs reminded the group of the many substantial pack horse roads which criss-cross our local hillsides and which provide easy walking with the ever present resonance of those lines of pack horses carrying goods across England.



The village of Lumbutts itself owes its present form largely to the Fieldens of Todmorden, who developed their mills on these hillsides, making spectacular use of the water resources. The 3 wheel water tower at Lumbutts must have been cutting edge technology of the time. The mill owners also built many cottages close to the mills and provided schools for the educational and spiritual well being of their work-force.

At Mankinholes, many of the farm houses date back to the 17th century, such as Mankinholes Hall, now a successful YHA hostel. There was a Quaker Meeting House and burial ground in the area, and Mr Lee showed how stone walls and gateways can provide clues about the forgotten functions of some houses, such as the Quaker Meeting House and burial ground at Pilkington Farm. As at Lumbutts there was considerable 19th

century development. A Methodist Church built to the same plan as Blackshaw Head Chapel was opened in 1814, and in 1878 the Todmorden Workhouse was sited close to Lumbutts, following a long fought battle against the imposition of new laws for dealing with the poor introduced in 1832.

Walkers and visitors have been catered for over the years, with Gaddings Reservoir providing a destination for Sunday afternoon excursions and Stoodley Pike a landmark for walkers over many years. Basin Stones, above Walsden was a meeting place for local Chartists fighting for the right to vote – a famous painting by Lumbutts artist Alfred Walter Bayes records the scene. The area still attracts visitors: Lumbutts Methodist Chapel is famed now for its afternoon teas, the Shepherd's Rest provides hospitality and the New Year Swim at Lee Dam is a longstanding local tradition.

Despite the cold and damp of the March evening, many in the audience, enthused by Mr Lee's descriptions and photographs, were planning to get out their boots and explore the paths around Lumbutts and Mankinholes. *Sheila Graham*

CALENDAR CUSTOMS IN CALDERDALE

JOHN BILLINGSLEY

MARCH 24TH 2011



Whether it be the dock pudding world championships in Spring or the Lee Dam New Year swim, communities in Calderdale still gather to mark the rhythm of the year, as John Billingsley, local historian and folklore expert reminded the meeting. The calendar customs found in this area are a mix of old and new, religious and secular, but all serve the purpose of bringing people together.

Many traditional activities involved an element of misrule that might now attract an ASBO, Mr Billingsley noted. There were the Mischief nights close to April

Fools' day, when you might have found your doors blocked, your windows whitewashed or your sheep kidnapped. There was similar riotous behaviour on Palm Sunday a century or more ago, when there was traditionally a brawl between the Haworth and Hebden Bridge men at the Buttreass.

Calderdale's ancient Good Friday Pace Egg plays have been revived in recent years and re-established as a welcome event in the calendar. Easter in past times also saw the start of the knurr and spell season, and of road bowls races at the Packhorse Inn, when stone discs would be rolled down the road. May celebrations saw the ancient customs of maypole dancing, but also the proud parades of dressed carts and horses by drivers from the mills. Calderdale also had its own well dressing celebrations, though the 'brownish water with little worms' described by Mr Billingsley seems unlikely to prompt a revival of the drinking of the waters of the Cragg Vale spa.

The September rushbearing festivals have been sustained in places such as Sowerby Bridge, combining religious and secular celebrations. The start of the dark months of Autumn are traditionally marked by festivals involving fire and more mischief events such as those linked to Plot night and now revived in trick or treating.

Now as much as ever people like to take part in traditional events that break the tedium of the everyday with an outbreak of fun. As Mr Billingsley pointed out, traditions evolve and change in order to survive, and calendar customs continue to celebrate human relationships, and strengthen the ties of the community. *Sheila Graham*

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

BARBARA ATACK

The aim of the group is to promote and assist the study of genealogy and family history, the prime interest being the study of people and where they live. We do this by offering members an opportunity to meet like-minded people locally and to share their interests, resources and experience.

There are two meetings each month at the Birchcliffe Centre, usually on the first Saturday and the third Thursday; see page 21 for opening times. This year we have welcomed several new

members, some beginning their research and others looking for local information about their families, alongside a small group of seasoned genealogists who come to help others and discuss their own research. More experienced members are always needed at these sessions

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS

As family historians we recognise the usefulness of information to be found on gravestones. Many of our local churchyards are becoming neglected, overgrown and sometimes quite unsafe. We need to make transcriptions of the graves whilst we are able.

The Group has taken on the task of finishing the transcription of the graves in the churchyard at Heptonstall, which the Society began several years ago. Like many, this was very overgrown, but thanks to two volunteers, it was cleared so we could access all the graves. This is now very near completion but it is our intention to begin soon at some of the many graveyards in the area, which are at risk of becoming inaccessible

If you would be interested in helping with this task, we are always looking for more volunteers.

OPENING TIMES

The afternoon sessions at the Birchcliffe Centre are now **open for anyone** so you are welcome to pop in with a query, for research or just for a chat.

The dates of these meetings are below.

Saturday 7th May

Saturday 4th June

Saturday 2nd July **No Meeting**

Saturday 30th **JULY**

Thursday 19th May

Thursday 16th June

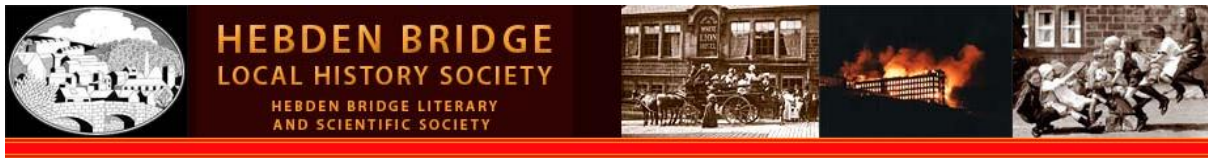
Thursday 21st July

Thursday 18th August

We look forward to meeting you at some of our events. If you would like any information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Barbara Atack

ataxjb@btinternet.com



www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk

There are a number of changes to the Society's website including a major update of the Archive catalogue, and an improved search facility enabling you to search both the catalogue and website. It is easy to find, top right on each page.

You will also find information on our other activities, a list of members' publications, pictures, a very useful links page, and a range of information to support local history research and events. The Prehistoric section is worth a visit as well with several interesting articles and many examples of local finds.

The Family History section will soon be getting a fresh look including its own gallery of images. Watch out for this during the summer.

For your interest, there is already a selection of images on the home page, which will change each time you visit or refresh.

If you have questions, suggestions or contributions for the Website, please email info@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk with your ideas.

Receive your Newsletter via email

Every year we use a large amount of paper and ink printing the newsletter so a big thank you those of you who have Internet access and chose to receive theirs via email.

To receive yours, and other updates electronically, simply email membership@hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk with your name and membership number and leave the rest to us.

Newsletters will also be posted on our Website.

**EMAIL ADDRESSES WILL ONLY BE USED FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED
AND WILL NOT BE PASSED ON TO THIRD PARTIES**