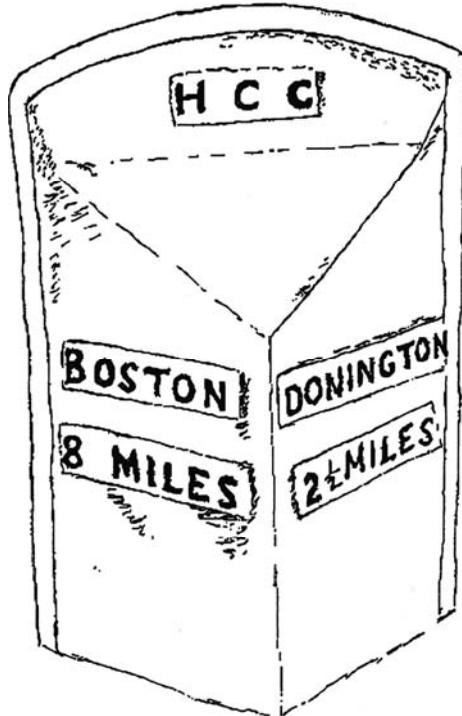




THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 1

July 2001



Cast iron milestone on A52 at Bicker Bar, Lines. (TF 237382). HCC stands for Holland County Council, an administrative division of Lincolnshire from 1889 to 1974.

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME - As the newly appointed Chairman of the Milestone Society, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all those who have expressed their interest in this fascinating aspect of our history, either by already joining the Society, by attending the inaugural meeting, or by asking to be kept informed of progress of the new Society. I feel that all of die members can make important contributions, albeit in different ways, whether they be actively involved in cataloguing milestones, searching for lost members of a series, ensuring the active interest of councils and other bodies in conservation, or in just supporting the Society through their general interest by attending our meetings. On the question of support, adequate finance is of course of vital importance and although many have made an active contribution by already joining the Society, I would hope that those who are not yet members, but who will receive this Newsletter because they have already shown an interest in some way, will decide to support the Society through taking out a membership subscription (application form enclosed). I look forward to meeting many of you personally at the first autumn meeting of the Society on Sunday 7 October 2001 in Dewsbury Town Hall; details of this meeting are included in this Newsletter. Any good society, especially a new and national one, is entirely dependent for success on the combined efforts of its membership. Local studies across the country should be a key part of oar milestone studies generally and so I and the committee want to hear what you are doing and how your work can contribute to the Society's overall aims and objectives. *David Viner.*

THE INAUGURAL MEETING (Black Country Museum, 19 May 2001).

This meeting, attended by over 60 people, was called to formally launch the Milestone Society. Displays of existing literature and photographs, including those of the remarkable Ken Diamond collection, were set out for perusal After coffee and a brief introduction to the museum by a staff member, suitably attired in typical costume, David Viner (who had held the post of Chairman of the Steering Committee which had met on two previous occasions) explained the aims of the proposed Society as suggested by the steering committee and die progress to date in setting up the Society on a charitable basis. He explained die proposed subscription rates which should allow for the publication of a Newsletter twice a year and, in the longer term, of a journal through which research work, etc., could be formally recorded. Useful comments were gathered from the floor for consideration, including possible sponsorship, and the division of the country for recording purposes. Possible future venues were also discussed.

After coffee and a sales session, Mervyn Benford gave an excellent slide-based talk illustrating the wide diversity in types and locations of milestones and included several examples from the series in the Isle of Arran, which he had just visited. Mervyn also provided two sheets for potential members, practical advice for recording research on milestones and a sheet with advice with regard to relations with relevant authorities (e.g. County Councils and Heritage groups).

Lunch was followed by a request for possible committee members. Although a firm filling of all positions was not immediately possible, interested parties were

asked to make themselves known to the Steering Committee. David Viner was proposed as Chairman by John Higgins and seconded by several others present, and those on the Steering Committee with current responsibilities expressed their willingness to continue until formal appointments had been made.

John Higgins in the talk which followed gave a case study on some "do's and don'ts" based on his hard won experience in restoring some Staffordshire milestones, and this was followed by a talk on Finger posts (especially in Dorset) by Richard Fry, who received assurance that such way-markers were indeed within the remit of the interests of the Society.

A highlight of the meeting was provided by Graham Stanton who brought along some of his excellent (and astonishing!) collection of traffic signs of yesteryear - a unique collection made by a dedicated conservationist for many aspects of roadside furniture.

The meeting was closed formally at 1600 but was followed by a meeting of the Steering Committee to assess progress and to consider offers of direct involvement (Membership Secretary, Treasurer, IT for data collection, Newsletter editor, etc.).

THE MILESTONE SOCIETY COMMITTEE

Chairman David Viner.

Secretary Terry Keegan

*Membership
Secretary* Brian Barrow,

Treasurer Jan Scrine

Publicity John Higgins

*Newsletter
Editors* Carol & Alan Haines

*Coordinator of
Regional Groups* Mervyn Benford

Other members Laurence Dopson
 Jeremy Milln

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim:

- To identify, record, research, conserve and interpret for public benefit the milestones and other waymarkers of the British Isles.

Objectives:

- To publicise and promote public awareness of milestones and other waymarkers and the need for identification, recording, research and conservation, for the general benefit and education of the community at large
- To enhance public awareness and enjoyment of milestones and other waymarkers and to inform and inspire the community at large of their distinctive contribution to both the local scene and to the historic landscape in general
- To represent the historical significance and national importance of milestones and waymarkers in appropriate forums and through relevant national organisations
- To organise and co-ordinate relevant practical projects at both national and regional/local levels, thereby enhancing public access
- To protect, preserve and restore milestones and other waymarkers through the planning process, representing their significance to appropriate authorities locally and nationally
- To manage the Society's affairs in ways which maintain effective administration and appropriate activity, including the establishment of regional groupings through which to delegate and devolve the Society's business.

LOCAL GROUPS AND COORDINATORS

County/Regional Group Start-up Meeting Organisers

1. Note: In most cases these good-spirited people are helping the society in this vital activity despite other pressures on their time that mean they may not be able to make a long-term commitment to leading a local group or being other than an interested and supportive member. We are supplying names and addresses of all on our membership list from the county/region concerned who have not taken the opportunity to come off our main membership list.
2. All will welcome contact, advice, suggestions and any other help in setting a date, time and place for the meeting. They will welcome other interested persons

and organisations being told about the meeting and general publicity through the media.

In some cases we have no offers to arrange a start-up meeting. If you are willing to do this please contact Mervyn Benford before 31st. August and you will be given the same help and advice. Meanwhile some volunteers are taking on two counties but may call separate meetings. Some volunteers are not necessarily geographically central but we hope interested persons will not mind that for the first meeting.

Bedfordshire	Michael Knight		
Berkshire	Alan Rosevear		
Buckinghamshire	No Offers		
Cambridgeshire	Grainne Farrington		
Cheshire	Gillian Oakes		
Cornwall	Ian Thompson		
Cumberland	See Westmorland		
Derbyshire			
Devon	Chris Woodard		
Dorset	John Tybjerg		
Essex	Susan Adams		
Gloucestershire	No offers		
Hampshire			
Herefordshire	See Worcestershire		
Hertfordshire			
Huntingdonshire	See Bedfordshire		

Kent	Jenny Coutts		
Lancashire	John B. Priestley		
Leicestershire	Joyce Lee		
Lincolnshire	Joyce Stevenson		
<u>Middlesex</u>			
Norfolk	Carol Haines		
Northamptonshire	See Bedfordshire		
Northumberland	Iain Davison		
Nottinghamshire	See Staffordshire		
Oxfordshire	Ted Flaxman		
Rutland	See Leicestershire		
Somerset	Mrs. Janet Dowding		
Staffordshire	John Higgins		
Suffolk	See Norfolk		
Surrey			
Sussex	John Griffin		
Warwickshire			

Westmorland	Ken Broadhurst		
Wiltshire	Hugh Burn		
Worcestershire	Terry Keegan		
Yorkshire	Jan Scrine		
Scotland			
Wales	Anthony Rhys-Davies		

County Branches: *from Mervyn Benford (Co-ordinator of Regional Groups)*

In presenting here the current list of individuals volunteering to take the initiative locally we need to make the following points:

1. The Society decided it would base regional activity on county groups wherever possible, using the pre-1974 boundaries. This in no way prevents overlaps that occur naturally and spontaneously nor co-operation between groups. We recognise that the old boundaries do not necessarily conform in all cases to the modern responsible authorities with whom groups need to deal.
2. Those volunteering to take the local initiative agree at this stage to call a meeting and attempt as much local publicity as possible. They will be given details of persons on our membership list from their county and who have not specifically asked not to be involved. They will also be given what information we have already about milestones in the county. We want to show willing in terms of support and can make a very modest grant of £10 per group towards the cost of the initial meeting.
3. These persons in many cases have indicated they are not keen to take on the longer-term responsibility of running a county group but are willing to set up a first meeting. All will welcome any of you offering advice and help in doing this. We believe that what happens in a county must flow very much with what suits people locally and that if we can get a first meeting off the ground then local enthusiasm, interest, knowledge and commitment will take things forward.

4. Presently we do not have volunteers in every county so more would be welcome. Perhaps when you read this you may be encouraged to come forward. In some cases, at this present stage, we have combined counties at the suggestion of the volunteers concerned but part of developing local action will be to know if and when to separate those regional groupings.

5. We suggest that meetings be planned for early September, after the main holiday season and in time to start a local programme of activities as the vegetation dies down. A first meeting need only set such a programme and perhaps one or two dates for local meetings. It needs no more than a practical working arrangement for management unless people want to set something up with formal structures. We think of local groups more as clubs but ask only that there is some organisation and system behind it in order to ensure effective activity and liaison with the National Society.

6. Organisers may wish to contact names provided by us or people on our local lists may contact them. But we enclose a draft of a possible letter that may serve eventually to announce the meeting and which can be photocopied. Please note that this may be sent to any other people or organisations known to be interested and not just to our existing members. The Society has no policy yet on persons working locally who may not be members of the National Society.

7. The National Society remains the local group's main source of advice and support. The essential duties of a branch are to implement the aims of the national society in identifying, recording and seeking the conservation and care of milestones in their area. Each group will be free to organise other local projects of its own but we do ask that the priority in the early work be to find as many of the remaining stones as possible and record them.

8. We also urge that when a stone or stones are found and seem in need of TLC the local group does not simply in its enthusiasm set about the work of its own accord. Most local authorities are sympathetic these days and our aim is to work in partnership, sharing their expertise and what resources they may be able to make available. Contact should also be sought with local branches of organisations engaged in heritage conservation and the advice of specialist companies that undertake heritage restoration and conservation. It should no longer be a case of local volunteers, concerned for what seems like ages of neglect, rushing out with a paint pot and chisel in valiant but possibly misguided DIY effort. The existence of the National Society means we can develop a systematic and responsible approach.

9. The Society remains in need of copies of the information you develop and where there are matters that have national significance will do what it can to intercede with the appropriate bodies. The Society also wishes to develop wider awareness of milestones so news of your work will be disseminated through our regular newsletters.

10. You are strongly recommended to engage the media in your work as much as possible. Whilst there remains some risk in highlighting the importance of milestones, because of the heightened risk of theft, the Society feels that on balance the wiser course is to convince the antiques and heritage trade that milestones are public property and that any offered to them are very likely to be stolen and that to buy or sell in future is very likely to be trading in stolen goods. Some milestones may have come into the hands of some individuals innocently, through accidental circumstance induced by previous official neglect. However, unless there is good provenance a dealer should not take the risk and certainly the Society and its branches should be discouraging public interest in such undesirable activity. One of our Committee bought such a stone in Ludlow recently, to ensure it goes back to its rightful location. Milestones should be where they can be seen increasingly for their worth as part of local and national travel history. This is an area where good links with the local authority will prove very helpful and their support in outlawing such trade will be very important.

Two leaflets containing some practical advice for those actively involved in searching for, and in recording and preserving milestones will be available from the County Coordinators but their contents are reproduced at the end of this Newsletter for general information and for those who would like to get under way as soon as possible.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

At the inaugural meeting it was agreed that there should be two national meetings each year for members. The Spring meeting should include the Society's A.G.M. as well as a number of talks or slide shows, etc. This meeting should continue to be held centrally so that a maximum number of members can attend. The second, or Autumn meeting should travel to different parts of the country and be held at venues of interest to Society members. Your committee would like to hear from the membership of suitable venues for such meetings. At the same time it would help the committee to plan these meetings if members were to write in with their ideas on the format of these gatherings, i.e. how many and what type of talks should we organise? How long should we allow for general mixing and talking about milestones amongst ourselves?

If you do have any suggestions about these meetings, please let your secretary know and they will be put to the committee.

WORCESTERSHIRE GROUP INITIAL MEETING - On Saturday 18 August there will be a meeting of the Worcestershire Group to discuss how we progress towards our aims of, firstly, recording all the remaining Worcestershire stones and posts and secondly what we can do to help preserve this part of our national heritage. The meeting will be held at the home of Terry Keegan, the co-ordinator for the area. His address is (8 miles

SW of Kidderminster, on the A456). The meeting will start at 11am. Any member from Worcestershire or the surrounding areas is welcome to attend. Please ring on

The Ken Diamond collection of over 2,500 photographs of milestones, and all his other fascinating bits and pieces will be available for study.

SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2001 - Milestone Society visit to see Les Oakes' collection of memorabilia, and local milestones. Meet Cheadle (Staffs.) long stay car park 10.30 a.m. for minibus collection. Morning spent touring local milestones in Staffordshire Moorlands; visit England's most unusual pub at lunchtime (lunch/drinks not included in price), and afternoon visiting Les Oakes' fantastic collection of horse-drawn carriages and associated paraphernalia (including milestones, street names and piles of junk). We aim to finish by 4.30 latest. Cost £12 per person for minibus hire only; Les Oakes' is free but donations to charity are expected. Numbers strictly limited to 24. Please send cheques, payable to 'The Milestone Society', to John Higgins

[Please note that no insurance is available for viewing Les Oakes' collection, and the Milestone Society accepts no responsibility for any person injuring themselves in any way.]

SUNDAY 7 OCTOBER 2001 - The Autumn meeting of the Society will be held in the Reception Room at Dewsbury Town Hall. To cover cost of room hire/ coffee/tea, a registration fee of £4 per person is requested. Please complete the application form enclosed with this Newsletter and send, with a cheque payable to "*The Milestone Society*", to:

The Treasurer,
The Milestone Society:

Dewsbury is readily accessible from J25 of the M62 or J40 of the M1. There is a small car park behind the Town Hall and free parking on the side streets. The Town Hall is a short walk from the town's rail and bus stations. Directions and location details will be sent nearer the time to those who register.

NEWS

Herefordshire

Visiting Ludlow antiques market recently, your secretary was able to rescue a milepost from the certain fate of becoming a garden ornament. The trader 'purchased it from a farmer who had rescued it some years ago when a new lay-by on the A49 was being constructed and the milepost abandoned in a ditch'! The

milepost has not been in position for at least 3 years. Up till the last 2 or 3 years the local highway authority has not been too fussy about their mileposts disappearing. However, the trader was informed that all the mileposts were now being photographed and any that are subsequently illegally removed could lead to court action. It is hoped that when the Herefordshire group is established, they will be able to arrange for the milepost to be replaced in its original position.

Wiltshire

On a more cheerful note, we have been told of the restoration of a milestone in Liddington, Wiltshire. The Chairman of the Parish Council, Marion Warren, reports that a gas company laying a new main through the village was asked to restore the old stone which stood beside the former Hereford to Hungerford coach road. A small ceremony took place beside the road on 29 June this year, with the local press in attendance, to unveil the stone, straightened, newly painted and re-sited out of the way of verge mowers.

GRAHAM STANTON (Collector extraordinary)

Those who attended the inaugural meeting at The Black Country Museum cannot but have been impressed by the fascinating collection of roadside signing which Graham put on display. This was just a fraction of the amazing collection of similar objects which he has amassed over the past 30 years. Ever since he was a lad Graham has been smitten by road signs and whenever the opportunity arose to acquire a redundant sign he was there to add it to his collection. Soon he began to acquire a reputation among Highway Authority officials and whenever road signs were being renewed they would often offer the old sign to Graham for his growing collection.

Not just content to build up a collection of old road signs, Graham set about building up a vast library of information on the road sign industry. Firms within that industry soon got to know of Graham's interest and passed on many items to add to his collection. The Managing Director of one firm which was being bought up by an overseas competitor, presented Graham with the firm's archives, rather than see them destroyed by the new owners.

With all this knowledge built up over the past 30 years, Graham has been able to act as a consultant for a superb book on the road sign industry, written by a Spanish author, and soon to be published in an English format. Graham and his collection have appeared on the television screen on a number of occasions and he has been asked to give talks on the history of road signs at a number of venues. He emphasises that all the material in his collection has been donated by Highway Authorities or the road sign industry to save these items from ending up in the scrapyard.

Graham will be of immense help, not only to the Worcestershire Group, but to many other local groups because of his personal contacts with so many District Highway Engineers.

PUBLICATIONS

Book Review

Ruth and Alan Thompson: *The Milestones of Arran*. Published privately, 2000.

When the first *Daily Telegraph* article appeared about my interest in milestones the Thompsons contacted me and described the work they had done to identify, record and conserve the 73 milestones existing on the few roads on their island. They had built on earlier work by the Campbells. They had also published a book on their work, the subject of this review.

This May I finally went to Arran to see for myself and, meeting them, soon sensed their delightful enthusiasm for the milestones. They had dug some up from oblivion, repaired and re-furbished others, cleared masses of vegetation and generally ensured that all 73 stones, all but two original, were visible. Two had been lost but replacements made, one, the final one on the main island circuit road, No. 55, dedicated and inscribed to Anthony Campbell.

The island has its 55 miles and a bit perimeter road as well as two roads that run across from east to west, known locally as The Ross and The String. All the milestones are described, with references to their condition and history. They are all the same style of stone, simple, unpainted, with just the relevant number incised into a slightly sloping upper surface. There is also a memorial tablet in the wall of the Brodick Castle estate, near the old Brodick Quay, marking where Edward VII and Alexandra stepped ashore and recording also the fact of 0-55 miles of perimeter road at the time.

Readers are warned which stones remain difficult to detect readily and so travellers can be appropriately alert. The book also describes associated features such as the sheep that apparently come with No. 17 and the seals that emerge by No. 55. Nos. 9 and 10 are said to be enriched by the resident swans in Whiting Bay who each year drive their previous offspring away from the beach to prevent them usurping the parental territory.

The beauty of the book was that in each case these things did indeed happen. We saw the parent swan driving off the younger intruder, two lambs huddled round stone 17 and two seals basking on rocks near No. 55. It was then I finally realised how effective and original was the milestone book as a basic tourist guide to Arran.

Each stone has a page of text and after the location is noted there follows a lot of fine detail about what else can be seen or found in that particular spot. The book is more than a guide for tourists, though, because each description strongly reflects their own love of their island and their enthusiasm for all it has to offer through the passing seasons. Flowers, birds, animals, trees, history, geology and general topography are all treated.

In recommending it as a milestone text I must add that buyers will find it a perfect and delightful guide should they ever decide to visit Arran for any reason. And just as a read you will warm to this text. The island is readily reached by regular car ferry services, notably from Ardrossan in Ayrshire to Brodick but there

is another shorter crossing from Lochranza to Claonaig on the Mull of Kintyre. The Ardossan route requires booking but the other is a matter of just turn up and wait. May is usually a very stable time in terms of weather.

The book costs just £6 including p&p and may be obtained direct from Ruth and Alan Thompsom at 47, Murray Crescent, Lamlash, Isle of Arran KA27 8NS.

Mervyn Benford

Background to Publications by Society Members

At the Society's inaugural meeting two members had their publications on sale. The following short accounts relate how they came to write them.

Carol Haines:

Norfolk Milestones (£5) and *Marking the Miles, A History of English Milestones* (£12).

Once my attention had been drawn to milestones, and the difficulty of finding information about them had made me determined to investigate them further, my first idea was to track down all those surviving in Britain, but starting with my home county of Norfolk. It soon became clear what a huge task just a single-handed survey of one county would be, and eventually the project was reduced to a detailed survey of Norfolk and a general history of milestones in England.

When my first article on the county survey was published in 1986 in the *Journal of the Norfolk Industrial Archaeological Society* and the editor asked for more, there was no going back, and eleven years later the seventh article appeared to complete the survey. The articles have now been amalgamated and updated into one booklet. Information acquired about local roads could provide material for much more research, and a history of pumps installed for watering part of the Norwich to Thetford Turnpike is being worked on at present.

The book on English milestones took about 12 years to research and write. Every opportunity was taken on family journeys and holidays to look for milestones, visit libraries and gather information. Many obscure publications had to be obtained through inter-library loans, and some were so precious I was not allowed to take them home to study. A major setback occurred when Norwich Central Library burnt down in 1994. I then built up my own collection of OS maps from secondhand bookshops. From small beginnings the material grew steadily and it then became difficult to know when to stop. The decision came when some milestones mentioned in the early stages of writing were found to have disappeared when re-checked. It was by great good fortune that, just as I had despaired of finding a publisher and had decided to do the job myself with the aid of a local printer, I heard of the proposed Milestone Society and was able to launch the book at the conference last October.

The formation of the Milestone Society has come none too soon. On the journey home from the inaugural meeting a stop was made to search a grass verge

in west Norfolk for a fine cast iron County Council post. It had vanished. In 1985 I had recorded five posts in the series; now only one remains. A week later the headplate of the milepost in our neighbouring village was broken off. The job of milestone coordinator/warden for Norfolk has now begun!

Alan Rosevear:

14 monographs on roads in the Upper Thames Valley: *Ancient Tracks across the Vale of White Horse* (£2); *Ogilby's Road to Hungerford* (90p); *The Turnpike Network in the Upper Thames Valley* (£3.80); *The Besselsleigh Turnpike* (£2.80); *The Wallingford, Wantage & Faringdon Turnpike* (£3.80); *The St John's Bridge to Fyfield Turnpike* (£3.80); *Turnpike Roads through Abingdon* (£4.60); *Turnpike Roads around Oxford* (£5.80); *The King's Highway - recorded journeys in the Thames Valley* (£3.50); *Milestones and Toll Houses on Old Turnpike Roads* (£2.60); *Coach & Wagon Services on Roads in the Upper Thames Valley* (£5); *Response of Thames Valley Turnpikes to the coming of the Railway* (£1.60); *Early Maps of the Upper Thames Region* (£3.60); *Turnpike Roads to Banbury* (£8.50).

My interest in milestones grew from studies of the turnpike roads across Berkshire and Oxfordshire. I began by "writing up" my own notes on the two turnpike roads that cross at my home town of Wantage. This "comprehensive" booklet seemed too large to publish, but I thought individual sections might make useful monographs for the local Museum. And so the series on Turnpikes across the Upper Thames Valley was born. Although the booklets on the Wantage Road and the Besselsleigh Turnpike included short sections on the roadside paraphernalia, I thought there was scope for a study of milestones and tollhouses across a wider area. This then drove my hunt for turnpike material further and further from Wantage to cover groups of turnpikes around transport hubs, first minor ones such as Abingdon and Faringdon and later the large centres of Oxford, Banbury and more recently, my on-going study of Reading.

As I searched the records I realised others had trodden some of these paths before me. Many of the Old North Berks milestones had been recorded in a "there/not there" survey by a local historian in the 1970s. A retired Oxfordshire surveyor gave me a copy of a copy of a record of the Pre-1974 Oxfordshire stones undertaken by Keith Lawrence. Importantly this attempted to classify the stones based on their design and condition. Sadly Old Oxfordshire had been far less diligent than Berkshire in returning and preserving stones after the war so he had had limited scope to develop this idea. I began to fill in the gaps between these areas and re-record the milestones located in these earlier surveys. There was good news and bad; some stones had been missed, usually because the surveyor had not known where the turnpike road ran, in some cases now on unclassified roads. Some had been plain missed or someone told me in confidence where a marker had gone. Sadly others had been stolen, smashed or disappeared since the earlier survey.

Hopefully I took the best of the ideas from the earlier, local studies and developed them; particularly the need for good records and a systematic

classification system. It certainly achieved my initial objective of creating a monograph that would have a market outside the small town at the centre of my initial study. I hope that on balance drawing people's attention to the stones will make it less likely that official neglect will continue. Unfortunately when I realise how many of the stones have "disappeared" since I first published the monograph in 1993, I worry that I provided pilferers with their best shopping list.

For further details of these publications -write to:
Carol Haines or
Alan Rosevear.

MILESTONE SHOPPING

The Society hold stocks of the following books:

Geoffrey N. Wright: *Turnpike Roads* . A Shire Album with lots of information on milestones and the turnpike system. £2.50 + 50p P&p.

Ruth & Alan Thompson: *The Milestones of Arran* £5.50 + £1 P&p.
See above for Mervyn Hertford's review of this delightful book.

Famous Milestones and Passing the Milestones. £3.00 + £1. P&p.
A combined replica of two booklets produced in the 1920s in a larger format.

A Present with a Difference

The well known North Country modeller STEF'S, has produced in her collectable range a delightful model of a milestone standing in front of a moorland wall. We can individualise these by printing on to the three faces of the stone whatever towns and mileages you would like. One of these models would make a very special present for a milestone fanatic! Price, including printing £15. + £2 P&p.

Ordering of the above items: Please send your orders to the secretary (Terry Keegan) and make cheques out to 'The Milestone Society'.

NOTES AND QUERIES

Stitched up. The Editor has received a postcard showing part of an embroidered parish map of Fordingbridge, Hants which was made in 1989. One item featured is the milepost reading '0 Miles to Fordingbridge'. The parish map can be viewed in the local library.

Wike milestone. Derek Gaunt from Wetherby would be pleased to receive information about a stone at a road junction in the village of Wike near Leeds (OS map ref. 338420). Phone.

Toll roads. Richard Webber would like to hear of any Toll Roads still operating in the UK today, where they are, why they are there and what their charges are, etc. Richard can be contacted at

1940 clearance. "Old milestones were a constant source of pleasure to the pre-war traveller on highways in all parts of Britain. Their speedy removal in 1940, when invasion threatened, gave rise to fears for their safety which was partly allayed by the care with which some highway authorities replaced them soon after hostilities ended. Other county councils have been much less zealous, including one which showed its paces by removing all its signposts as well as its mileposts in the course of a single day. No doubt some stones were damaged and plates broken in so hasty an operation." From *The Countryman*, Winter 1948.

I am collecting information on how different highway authorities tackled the task of complying with the ordinance of 30 May 1940 that all signposts and milestones were to be 'mutilated'. I would be grateful for any local information. Were the milestones buried? Were they taken into store? Were the plates removed and sent for scrap to help the war effort or were they taken back to the highway depots and kept until the emergency was over when they could be replaced? Any information on how the milestones were treated at this time would be appreciated. Terry Keegan.

[In the Local Studies Library in Derby I found one surviving typewritten page listing what had happened to Derbyshire milestones in 1940. Most were buried, some taken to council depots, one had lettering filled with cement, and one was given to a local resident. Were they ever recovered? Have other county lists survived? Ed.]

EDITORS' COMMENTS

The first Newsletter of the Milestone Society has been produced as quickly as possible in order to get vital initial information to members and to others who have expressed an interest, and to reassure everyone that the Society is indeed in operation.

The format of the Newsletter is still experimental and we hope gradually to settle into an acceptable style. While this issue has, necessarily, concentrated on the setting up of the Society, in future issues we also hope to include items such as letters, news from regional groups, notification of other relevant societies and events, and short articles. Our current intention is for the front cover of each issue to feature a line drawing of a different milestone (photographs are more difficult to

reproduce satisfactorily) and submission of such pictures would be welcomed for consideration. Any comments and suggestions about the Newsletter and contributions to it will be appreciated.

All statements and views published in this Newsletter are those of the contributor alone and neither the Editors nor the Society may be held responsible.

Milestone Society Leaflet Number 1 **Out and About - Some Practical Advice**

This leaflet, issued by the Milestone Society, is not about grandmothers and eggs. We realise our members are rational, common-sense individuals. We wish only to offer some general guidance as to the cautions that in our collective experience seem to apply to the process of fulfilling the Society's aims, namely the identification, recording and conserving of milestones and other way-markers.

1. Watch for traffic, especially on busy roads, when standing by milestones.
2. Never brake suddenly when spotting a milestone. Look for a convenient place to pull up safely and, if feasible, drive back to find a nearer spot safely to park, preferably off the road.
3. Try to avoid blocking anyone's access to their drives, homes or approach lanes/roads.
4. Where close-up photography is difficult stand further back safely out of harm's way and use a zoom lens if you have one.
5. Use fill-in flash, if you have it, when a stone sits against a bright background or when sun illuminates one side of a two-sided text leaving the other in shadow. Alternatively allow a longer exposure, if you can, than any metering suggests.
6. Close-up pictures with little other background of interest are ideal for recording but may be supplemented with pictures composed to show the item and the road it serves.
7. On old trackways, green lanes and the like be sure any bicycle being used has good tyres.
8. Record using the society's sheet whenever possible but, if spotting one when not on an official milestone-hunting journey be sure to note the exact location, using road number and any nearby features, left or right side of the road etc. If in a relatively isolated area or quiet rural location record nearest main roads and access details.
9. Record all visible, legible information. Sometimes rubbing wet dock leaves or similar plant leaves, even grass across the text, but not into any surviving markings, can help bring out enough of a text to decipher it. Note manufacturer's details where available and legible.

10. When time is not available to record a whole series record one and note which others are in place as you pass them, if possible. This will enable a picture of the area to emerge and help determine priority for conservation.
11. Try to secure any information about the stone available locally, its history and any local interest in preserving/renovating it

Milestone Society Leaflet Number 2

Relations with Local Authorities and Heritage Groups

Advice for individuals and Local Groups

The Local Authority, usually the County Council, remain the responsible body and, in most cases, the legal owners. Their Highways Divisions may no longer be able to justify maintenance funding for items not regarded any more as being essential aids to travellers. However the society argues milestones have become important heritage items and English Heritage and CADW in Wales have begun listing them. Those certainly require statutory conservation care whilst the same protection should be available for any not yet listed using heritage and conservation budgets.

The Local Authority may be interested in establishing local support groups, for example parish councils, and our members are advised to co-operate with any such activity and to co-ordinate their own efforts where appropriate.

English Heritage remain the body capable of listing an item and thereby according statutory protection. They should be asked to list any items deemed of merit locally and they may be approached directly by individuals or groups. They will then arrange a survey/evaluation and make a decision. Even if listing nationally does not result Local Authorities may be asked to give their listing status which, though not statutory, may ensure future sympathetic attention for the milestones and for those who value them.

The Ordnance Survey should be informed of any stones that you identify but not recorded on those of their maps that claim to show milestones/mileposts and of any that your efforts manage to restore, for example any rescued from where they may have long been buried and therefore overlooked by surveyors. Similarly any you believe actually to be missing should be notified to them if they remain marked on those map series that purport to show milestones/mileposts.

However, note that OS maps showing stones which you believe no longer in place provide a chance to test the possibility of wartime or other burial, for example simply by neglect and growing over, through well-targeted digging or use of a metal detector. Many found in this way are often in remarkably good condition in terms of legibility.

We reiterate here our advice in our conservation leaflet, namely that before any individual or group undertakes such work, often done out of sheer pity, they should consult the Local Authority and ask official advice. Most will be helpful and some may even accept a bid for cost of materials. They will give advice on techniques which should complement ours.

We acknowledge that in some cases, some stones *very long neglected* may have important lichens and other plant life growing on them and any cleaning process needs to ensure adequate protection. It may be that when consulting the relevant authorities in such a case it may be better not ultimately to re-paint a stone, although in most cases stones have at some time been re-painted and will usually be suitable for re-painting following appropriate advice.

Local Authorities should be informed of the results of individual and local group identification of milestones and asked to note the evidence in their own records. They should be invited to undertake simple and immediate protection if deemed necessary, for example clearing vegetation, returning leaning stones to an upright position, if necessary a little back from anywhere that seems vulnerable. They may be willing to re-paint/restore any such stones found.

Stones obviously damaged, lying flat, or rather loose and metal examples with portions missing should be the subject of immediate efforts at restoration.

Damage to milestones often occurs during road repair, maintenance activity, new building projects, for example on the edges of towns, and during basic grass verge cutting. All of these activities are subject to Local Authority scrutiny and oversight, usually through the offering of contracts. We should approach every Local Authority via our local groups with a request that specific protection for milestones be written into any such contracts and that oversight by officials include checking to see that milestones are not damaged, or, if damaged, are repaired as part of the contract, or, if moved to enable construction work, are replaced at the same place or somewhere as close as possible.

Local Authorities should be encouraged to understand that they should not consider selling milestones and should make it clear that any such trading is dealing with stolen goods.

Local Authorities may have their own records which they may share with individuals or local groups. These may assist in tracing the history of milestones in the area and the extent of present levels of loss. Original contracts may have survived in the archives. The potential for research in county museums and Local Authority records is considerable. Local museum staff may well be interested and co-operative.

Parish Councils may also be interested and should be contacted when you are dealing with stones in their areas. District Councils may have funds available for such work. Grants may be secured from the Lottery Commission and other sources. Local industries are often willing to help, for example in supplying materials needed. Rural charities and conservation/countryside organisations may prove helpful and certainly may be interested to hear of your work and perhaps publicise it.

The National Trust is a very interested body and may own the land on which some milestones stand. They will be happy to advise and should be consulted, as they may be able to offer practical support.

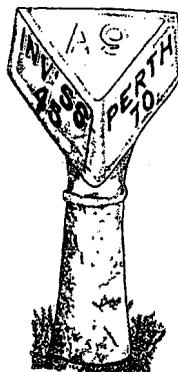
The society has a small collection of newspaper cuttings evidencing the consistent interest of the media in milestone news and local Press, radio and TV should be used to generate sympathy, support, help whilst at the same time spreading at every opportunity the status of milestones/mileposts as national monuments, in national ownership, and that any buying and selling is in effect dealing in stolen property unless clear evidence be available of bona fide ownership....for example having saved an item from scrap or bought it seemingly legitimately from a county council or other original owner. Just buying from a trader/friend/contact one believes to be the legitimate owner does not in fact convey right of possession and the objects will usually be expected to be returned if discovered in private ownership.

Nottinghamshire



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Inverness-shire



B9152 (ex A9)