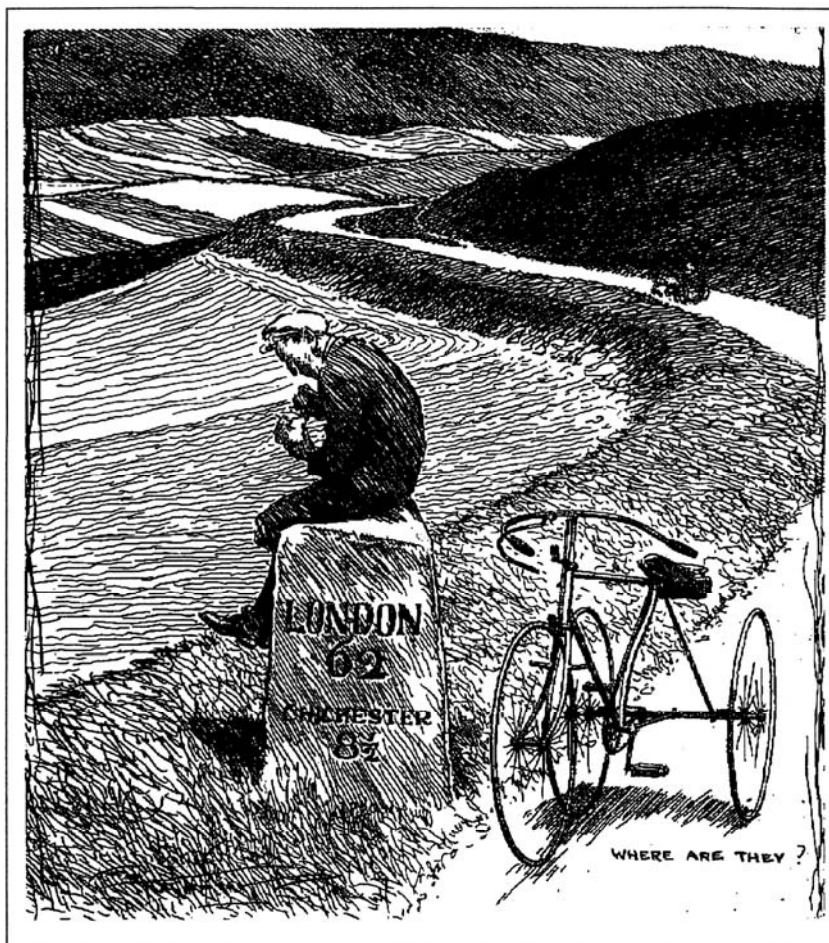




THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 14

January 2008



The Cover Picture - The cover illustration, along with the two photographs reproduced on p. 5 and p. 32, were sent in by Dave Twitchett and each pose the question "where are they?" Although no prizes are offered, readers may wish to help in identifying their location.

EDITORS' COMMENTS - This issue of the Newsletter, like the previous 13, was produced on last-century equipment - a 1997 Mac Powerbook (750 Mb hard disc, pre USB era), equipped with a dedicated zip drive, scanner, and Laser printer; WP software is Word 6 for the Macintosh. A great deal of the diverse material (text and pictures) that comes our way is from non-computer users, and the typing skills of one of us (CWH) is invaluable. Despite amazement expressed by computer buffs, floppy discs retain their usefulness because they are cheap, expendable, readily posted, and PC discs are readable by Macs. The use of e-mail to gather the large, varied amount of information and illustrations would cost a small fortune in telephone bills and bring exasperation with some attachments (but please note text RTF files are usually readable by all!). The Newsletter is 'grown' as material comes in, both for text and picture scanning, to avoid a final scramble to get everything together, although marrying pictures and text provides one of us (AHH) with an interesting exercise in the week before printing. Anyone out there with a new PC, accompanying hard- and soft-ware, Vista OS, and latent editorial skills?

NOTES AND QUERIES



Trinity House markers In an article on TH boundary markers in Hampshire (NL13 p.27) Mike Faherty asked if there were more to be found. Phil Urch (Somerset) writes that beside the coast path by the Bull Point lighthouse in North Devon is a square stone block painted white with TH incised in black. This lighthouse was built in 1879. Also in North Devon, near the approach to the lighthouse at Hartland Point, stands a rectangular, unpainted stone with a pyramidal top with TH incised on the shaft. On Lundy island in the Bristol Channel, at the foot of the path ascending the cliff, is a rectangular white-

painted stone showing T.H/LANDING/PLACE/1819' in black. Heather Burrow (Yorks.) has also found TH stones forming a rough rectangle around the Lizard Point lighthouse (see photo above).

Milestone accuracy Two small items in NL13 drew attention to how accurately milestones are spaced (p.5 - Donald Stewart walking along the A1, and p.18 - Dave Twitchett cycling along the A4). Rod Smith (Wilts.) writes that having selected a stretch of road from OS maps where a good number of stones are indicated, he locates the first then walks for 20 minutes and this invariably brings him to the next stone. Even confronted with dense vegetation, a probe with a stick often-reveals the desired object. He recommends his '20 minute rule' which can often locate stones not recorded by the OS.

TV Milestone Two final comments on the 'London 23' milestone featured in *The Avengers* on the 'Great South Road' (NL12 p.24 & NL13 p.2): The OS 1st ed. map marks a 23-mile stone in the centre of Dorking. This also features on John Rocque's *Topographical Map of Surrey* (c.1760), which is a treasurehouse for early milestones, writes Derek Renn. Knowing something about filming, Lionel Joseph (Surrey) is sure that it was a set-up job. He only knows of two existing milestones giving 23 miles to London, one on the A217 at Sidlow Bridge, the other on the A264 at Effingham, and neither are likely candidates.

EH rejection Colin Woodward (Middx) writes about listing rejections (NL13 p.5) in the London area: In 2003 the London Borough of Hounslow put forward 3 milestones at Isleworth for listing. These are the only survivors on the route of the Isleworth to Teddington turnpike. The stones were worn and the Council had restored one of them. The report of the DCMS Inspector rejected listing because the restored stone was too altered, and the other two were too worn. My impression is that EH will only recommend listing of particularly interesting, or dated, examples. They are more interested in cast iron types as these are rarer. Possibly the answer to the problem is to ask local councils to add them to their list of 'locally listed buildings'. Milestones will generally make such a list because of their unique place in local history. Also make sure that the local highway authority is informed about such local listings so that they will be preserved during highway works.

Fairmile stone, Surrey The milestone in the chain-link fence round a bungalow garden at Fairmile was mentioned in NL13 p.2. Derek Renn writes that the bungalow is on the site of a lodge to Fairmile House and the fence formed part of the estate boundary. When the milestone was recorded by Mrs Ann Thompson in 1973 she was doubtful about the first two letters (ES)HER because the figure 2 below was not centralized; HERS (HAM) abbreviated is just possible; both are two miles away. Another face has LONDON/?/ Portsmouth/? (the latter lines very faint). The oldest inscription, on the side facing away from the present road, was hidden by a tree by 1986; in 1973 it clearly read: XIX Miles/From the/Standard/in/Cornhill/ LONDON, similarly lettered to those next towards London which are marked (on a final line) 1747.

Further from London In NL12 p.24 Ron Westcott remarked on a milestone at Stranraer giving 407 miles to London and wondering if there are any greater mileages. Norman Tipping (Beds.) reports that further along the A77 is another stone reading London 415, P.Patrick 1, Stranraer 7, Dumfries 83 (see photo right).

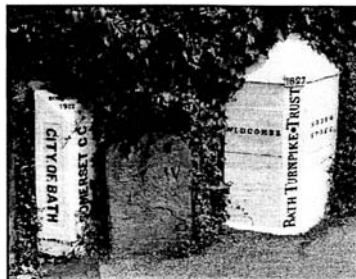
Monster signpost The Shell Advertising Art Collection is one of Britain's most important collections of commercial art and exhibitions are staged regularly at museums and art galleries across the country, notes Tony Boyce (Heref.). The collection reflects the charm and character of a long-gone motoring era.



Knocking was a common problem in early (and not so early) motors, often resulting in a loss of power. Benzole was used to reduce

the problem. References to knocking appear on a number of Shell posters, including one of a double-headed 'Loch Ness Monster', in one corner of which a fingerpost points to Knock-Less.

Triple boundary It must be very unusual to find three boundary markers all together in one spot as the photo by Janet Dowding (Somerset) shows. They are at ST 748618 at the junction of the B3110 and South Stoke Road, Combe Down, Bath. The left-hand post is a 1912 county boundary marker, the centre stone shows L and W (Lyncombe and Widcombe, now one combined parish) and the right-hand post marks the Bath Turnpike Trust boundary in 1827.



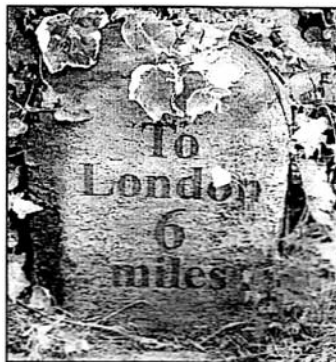
An unfortunate error After the meeting in Leeds in October, the editors spent a few days walking in the Yorkshire Dales. We stopped to examine a good halo fingerpost at Skirethorne near Threshfield which had the OS grid reference cast on it. Alan read out the grid reference from one side - 978683, while our son, standing on the other side, claimed it was 978638. On closer examination, both were right. Whoever had made the pattern for the casting had transposed the last two figures of the grid reference on one side. Our GPS reading was SD 9783 6385.

Thou shalt not... At Akebar on the A684 Leyburn-Bedale road in N. Yorks. there is a stone which was repositioned when an improvement took place. It reads 'Do no Murder', a biblical quotation (St Matthew Ch.19 v.18). Brian Burrows (Yorks.) wonders if anyone knows the circumstances of its erection and when?

Surrey society closure Laurence Dopson (Staffs.) sends news that the West Surrey Society which contributed to the restoration of historic mileposts has closed in its centenary year. The Society was formed in 1907 from the Godalming Footpaths and Commons Preservation Society, which was active in the area from 1889 and became the West Surrey Society in 1907 'to preserve all that is of interest in the district'.

Can you help? Mervyn Benford is trying to find the location of this smart milestone. The legend reads 'To/London/6/miles'. If you know where it is located, please contact Mervyn on 01295 780225 or mbenford@bigfoot.com.

Good sense of direction The first artefact to be conserved at the new Wiltshire and Swindon heritage centre in Chippenham was an ageing signpost arm that used to point to Pewsey Hospital reports Tony Boyce (Heref.). Belonging to Pewsey heritage centre, the wooden arm was cleaned up and had its flaking paint attended to by the conservation team. Louisa Burden, county



conservation and museums manager, said the hospital closed in 1995 and the sign reflected part of Wiltshire's history. The fingerpost, which had been in place for 60 years, was donated by a County Council highways team.

Lancashire finds The Fylde district has yielded three roadside markers, writes Michael Knight (Beds.). Located on the A583 Blackpool-Preston is a metal boundary post separating Blackpool CBC from Fylde RDC. It probably originated after 1896 but was re-erected in 1976 to mark the creation of Blackpool Civic Trust. On the same road are two milestones: Blackpool 3/Kirkham 6½; Preston 12¾ in Marton parish, and Blackpool 5/Kirkham 4½; Preston 10¾ in Westby with Plumpton.

Watling Street Survivors Michael Knight adds to Howard Price's comments on the dearth of milestones along the A5 (NL13 p10). From Weedon (Northants) via the A45 to Daventry, Coventry and Birmingham Telford's route has several survivors. On the A5 John Higgins has located stones at London 67, 66, 64, 63 and 59, many missing their metal plates. In the Milton Keynes area markers survive at London 52 to 41 inclusive. None have survived in Bedfordshire, which retains its unenviable reputation as being the nation's least endowed shire. The Beds Historic Environment Record notes two Telford stones at London 39 and 37 but these have yet to be confirmed, and Luton Museum is rumoured to have an A5 milestone from south of Dunstable. It seems that a reasonable number of milestones do survive along Watling Street and Howard Price should be commended for his near-martyrdom whilst traversing this highway!

WHERE ARE THEY?



Dave Twitchett (Essex) has found in his archives three illustrations - one shown on the front cover of this NL and one of the other two is reproduced left. He wonders if members can indulge in a bit of detective work to deduce where the milestones are - or were. The cyclists are standing next to

NORWICH/5/DEREHAM/11. The front-cover drawing is by Frank Patterson and the milestone reads: LONDON/62/CHICHESTER/8½. The remaining illustration (note the MS on the right hand side of the picture) is included as the 'END PIECE'.

MILE 'IRONS'

While reading a book called *Discovering the Westward Stage* by Margaret Baker, Jack Gould and Eric Rayner, I came across the expression 'mile irons' referring to

the metal plates on some milestones. I had not heard this description before. Has anyone else come across it?

This book comprises four of the Shire 'Discovering' guide books to the stage coach roads of England. The routes, all starting from London, follow the old coaching roads to Bath, Birmingham (along the Holyhead road), Exeter, and to Gloucester, crossing over some of the finest countryside in England - the Berkshire downs, Salisbury Plain, Dorset heathland, the Ouse Levels, and the Cotswolds - and through cities and towns like Oxford, Henley, Salisbury, Dorchester, Coventry, Marlborough and St Albans.

The book sets out in very interesting detail what the modern traveller journeying today along these old routes from London can see in the way of mementoes and remains of the coaching era, e.g. the existing buildings of the day (such as Fort Belvedere), the old inns (the Red Lion at Egham), stately homes (e.g. Syon House), old bridges (Staines Bridge across the Thames; during the years 1797-1807 three bridges were built of which two collapsed), old churches, Bath Road pumps, Georgian cottages, memorials to coaching fatalities such as that in Paulerspury, the history of the old roads themselves and their alternative routes such as those to the east of Bath. There are also anecdotes of famous travellers such as Charles Dickens and where they stayed, stories of runaway coaches and details of the coaches themselves. What is even more interesting to Society members are the many references to tollgates, tollhouses and milestones, many of which are mentioned

There are many references to milestones along these four routes, e.g. 'By 1774 most turnpike trusts responsible for road upkeep put up milestones voluntarily and in 1766 this requirement was made general. Several shapes of stones or metal plates (sometimes called mile irons) will be seen between here (Slough) and Bath, often of fine design and lettering. They were particularly valuable in coaching days for the guard with his timepiece could check the progress of the coach as precisely as a competitor in the Monte Carlo Rally would today'; 'take the A321 for Twyford and about half a mile towards the village look right at the milestone. This one reads "Hyde Park Corner 35, Reading 6, Bath 75". The presence of milestones is an excellent indication that one is on the old coaching route'.

The whole book is full of interesting information. Published in 1972 it is long out of print but well worth the search for a copy.

Janet Dowding (Somerset)

MILESTONES IN THE SKY(E)

While spending two days on Skye last summer we kept a lookout for milestones. Not many were marked on OS maps and most of these we could not find. The owner of the B&B at Luib directed us to two stones in the vicinity which were now on old by-passed roads. One of these now stands in a boggy sheep pasture (NG563277); the other was at NG538270. Another unmarked stone we came across in the car park of the Sligachan Hotel (NG485297). All the milestones were of granite, triangular with bevelled top face. Only one had an inscription; the others

had probably once had the legend painted on, similar to stones we saw between Lochgilphead and Oban. The exception was a new milestone near Ose (NG307419). This was of polished granite set in concrete and recorded distances of 7 miles to Dunvegan and 3 to Struan. The top face read '7/OSE'. As it was barely one mile to Ose, we wondered whether this was a case of the stone mason misreading instructions and mistaking a 1 for a 7.

Among a display of old photographs at the Skye Museum of Island Life at Kilmuir was one of a milestone reading 'MARBLEARCH/ 684⁷/s'. The caption stated it was located near Broadford and had been removed when the road was widened. The museum helpers did not know what had happened to it. The route to London must then have gone by ferry either to the Kyle of Lochalsh or to Mallaig. How could they have been so specific with the distance?

We did not have the time or opportunity to examine all the milestone sites on the island, so there may be more to find on Skye.

-Alan & Carol Haines (Norfolk)

UCKFIELD'S BOW BELLS POSTS

The position of the Bow Bells milepost 44 mentioned in NL13 p23 at Ridgewood needs a little clarification. It is at TQ 475194 on the southern outskirts of Uckfield in Sussex, on the old line of the A26. I have a particular interest in this post because two years ago I discovered it almost completely hidden by overgrown bushes and trees. I spent about an hour doing major trimming with hedge clippers and secateurs so that it was housed in a grotto-like opening in the greenery.

Uckfield has five Bow Bells mileposts to the east of its A22/A26 by-pass. None of these is shown on the current OS Landranger 198 map. There is 45, two 44s one on the old A26 and one on the old A22, 43 in the centre of Uckfield and 42 on its northern outskirts. My 1974 OS map shows two (45 and 44) of these, and the 1994 map shows only both 44s. What erratic behaviour the Ordnance Survey gives to milestones when they could easily, with consultation, get it virtually correct. They show stones or posts that haven't been there for years but don't show others that are clearly there. Perhaps representations could be made to the OS offering consultants for each map - possibly in exchange for a free copy of each map commented on.

Alan Kirk (E. Sussex)

FURTHER ALONG WATLING STREET

With reference to Howard Price's article on Watling Street (NL13 p. 10), there are milestones at the London end of the A5 at 6 miles (Hendon) and 4 miles (Cricklewood). These are cast iron posts which also give the destination Watford (8 and 10 miles respectively). The 5 miles to London post also survives, but to see this one has to go to Church Farm Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon. This post once stood near the junction of the North Circular Road near Staples Corner. Incredibly, there is one closer still to central London. This venerable stone can be seen in the

window of Lloyd's Bank, 195 Edgware Road, Paddington. It reads 'HALF/A MILE/FROM/TYBURN/GATE' and formerly stood outside the bank.

Of course Watling Street does not stop in London but continues to Canterbury. The turnpike route follows Watling Street except for a detour taking in Gravesend. Milestones can be found at Blackheath through Dartford, and again when the route rejoins Watling Street between Gillingham and Canterbury. All are of stone but many have had their metal plates removed. About half the originals survive. There is also the re-used Roman milestone from Shorne Warren which is now in Maidstone Museum. This commemorates the fourth century Emperors Severus II and Maximinus II Daia and presumably once adorned this Roman road.

Colin Woodward (Middx)

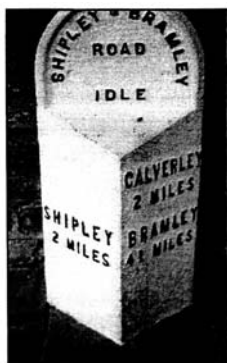
REMINISCENCES

Wartime measures The square cast iron boundary posts set up when Burton upon Trent became a county borough were probably surrounded in a cylinder of concrete in 1940. I worked there for the Borough Engineer & Surveyor from 1954 to 1958 and I think there was at least one so treated on a public footpath to Anslow through Outwoods at SK 230242. I wonder if it is still there and if so whether the concrete has been removed? There was another in a depot at the east end of Burton Bridge next to the road to Winhill. Did that ever get refixed? We did have a split cylindrical mould for casting concrete round the bases of traffic sign poles suffering from ground-level corrosion - perhaps this was part of the wartime mould.

At Bradford some milestones were defaced by chiselling - in particular an 18th-century example at School Green, Thornton which is still there. I assume also that cast iron plates were removed from mounting block stones, e.g. one at Bolton Royd, Manningham Lane which is set in the wall. I just managed to get the men lowering the wall from completely removing four inches from the top which projected above the lowered wall.

Most important junctions had fingerposts made in timber - 6" square posts with arms usually 8" deep - sometimes fixed to tram standards. I assume they were all removed and stored in the open and probably few were re-erected, being replaced by metal ones. One survivor was a cast iron arm for 'Clayton' at Lidget Green, but when nearby property was demolished a householder acquired it and erected the post and sign in his garden. Unfortunately both have now gone.

Recycling and rescuing old stones In the early 1960s a work colleague who was building his own bungalow told me that many of the wall stones were dressed by him from a load of 'boundary stones' (which may have included milestones) from the long-defunct Aireborough Urban District Council which comprised Rawdon, Guiseley and Yeadon (now in Leeds) - no doubt accumulated during the war and not re-erected. The bungalow was also roofed with old Bradford street nameplates. In the 1950s all the old plates were replaced with new die-cast, pressed aluminium plates. The old ones were stored on a gantry in the depot because they were sign-written on slate and might come in useful. Eventually they were in the way and



were bought, holed and used in the roof. A few remain on site and now show an incorrect street name, sometimes upside down because old plates were re-used. Some plates were sign-written on the back of glass and were backed with sheet zinc in a hardwood frame, but remains are rare. A selection of plates including cast iron and enamel can be seen in Bradford Industrial Museum, together with a Shipley-Bramley Turnpike milestone (see photo left) rescued by me from Idle Board Yard depot.

In Cliffe Castle Museum, Keighley is a Telford style turnpike gate mounted on

cylindrical gateposts with 'stirrup' hinges. These are the same as several on the former Low Moor Ironworks 'New Works' site so may have been cast by them. New Works site was redeveloped and the gateposts have gone.

Also in the museum is a mounting-block milestone with a metal plate showing 9 miles to Bradford, 3 to Bingley and 1 to Keighley. (see photo right) It is the same style as the mounting-block at Manningham, Bradford which has lost its plate.



Brian Burrows (Yorks.)

I WAS FOOLED!

Whilst visiting the picturesque village of Elsdon in mid-Northumberland I chanced upon a milestone which isn't shown on any of the OS maps. I was aware that there had been a turnpike road between Morpeth and Elsdon as well as it having been a drove road, an important route between Scotland and England. As usual I photographed the stone (see right), took the measurements and other details in order that the Society's record sheet could be completed. Finally I checked to see that the stone was secure. Imagine my surprise when with no effort at all the stone eased forward. It was then that I realised that the stone was fairly light and also hollow.

I called at the house by a side gate where the stone was sited, but there was no one at home. After admiring the view I left the property by the main entrance gate where there was a sign which read: Keith Maddison, Ceramic Sculptor. That explained everything. I had been fooled. Subsequently I phoned Keith and told him how I had initially been deceived by his handiwork and congratulated him on his efforts. Apparently the mix for



the stone included sheep droppings along with other ingredients[^] to make it look authentic.

The stone gives the distances to Morpeth 19 and Rothbury 12, and is located near the Pool Tower (Grid ref. NY 936933).

Iain Davison (Northumb.)

FOREIGN MEASUREMENTS

Following previous articles on the Meile (NL10 p23, NL13 p.27), and the many different distance measurements in European countries, let alone German states, research has found a number of strange measurements. Here in Britain we had our own problems over the mile: the London mile was 1668 yds, customary mile 2428 yds. Kent had great, good, little, long, middle and small miles. Oxfordshire had great, less and middle miles, the middle being 2035 yds. Ireland's was 2240 yds, Scotland's 1976 yds, and the Welsh mile 2508 yds.

Denmark had from 1683 the *landmeile* or *mil* of 12,000 alen (forearms). The state of Wegstunde, Germany, used a *meile* of 3.71 km, or one hour's journey (pre-18th century). In Switzerland the one hour journey covered 4.8 km. Norway had *rast*, an old name for a mile, which was a suitable distance between rests when walking, or 9 km (pre 1541). From Sweden came the *lantmil*, or 10.69 km, a suitable distance between inns (post 1699), and the *skogsmil/rast*, or 5 km, a distance between rests in the woods. My favourite measurements are: the Swedish *kyndemil*, 16 km, the distance a torch will last; the Finnish *peninkulma*, 10 km, the distance a barking dog can be heard in still air, and the *poronkusema*, 7.5 km, the distance a reindeer walks between two spots it urinates on (originated in Lapland).

Chris Woodard (Mons.)

(The editors can add information gleaned from an 1895 Chamber's Encyclopaedia they found in a pub. A nautical mile or knot is a 60th part of a degree of the equator, or ~1.15 English statute miles. In Germany, however, the nautical mile denotes one fifteenth part of a degree at the equator, or 4 English nautical miles.)

BENCH MARKS

Many milestones bear bench marks, and there are two sorts of broad arrow (the Government's trade mark). One has a bar above indicating the datum for the spot height, the other has no bar and is usually towards the top of the milestone and points in the direction of a small bronze button or rivet in the top of the stone which is the datum point in that case. They indicate the height above sea level, but what is sea level? That was decided by recording the mean high water point of the tides at Newlyn in Cornwall between 1 May 1915 and 30 April 1921. That computed height is marked by a bronze bolt in the harbour wall at Newlyn from which all the thousands of bench marks are calculated. So how might that affect what we do? The answer to that is that on the OS Landranger map one sometimes finds the spot height dot is the same as that for a milestone. I hasten to add that the

Hydrographic Dept. of the Royal Navy do have other tide datum points, one of those is at Liverpool.

We have a bench mark on our cottage; it was put there in the 1950s when the levels were re-surveyed. I have a feeling that I have read that the OS no longer use these data, but on several occasions surveyors have asked to use our bench mark for new buildings or depth of drains etc. Actually, if it is a developer's request we can charge a fee!

Lionel Joseph (Surrey)

WARTIME REMOVALS

With reference to the mention in NL13 p.4 of direction signs being removed in 1940, the photograph (right) shows such work in progress in Havant, reportedly 'as a ploy to confuse enemy troops'. I recall that many were replaced after the war but sadly most have now gone, although some tops have survived.

Interestingly, although Portsmouth was of such strategic importance during the war I believe that all of its and neighbouring milestones were left in position as well as the boundary stones. I suppose that it was so easy to find that it would have not made any difference anyway.



Ralph Cousins (Hants)

MILESTONES DOWN UNDER

Tasmania, Australia's smallest state, is a land of many milestones, despite the country having gone metric more than 40 years ago. The older generation, however, still tends to think in feet, acres etc.

Tasmania is very conscious of its colonial heritage, which may be one reason why its milestones have not been uprooted. Serious damage is not common as the island's traffic is generally light and major road improvements limited. The condition of milestones ranges from first-class to gentle neglect; very few are in a parlous state. They tend to be of a common V-shape, with just the first letter(s) of the place ahead and the distance inscribed (e.g. S for Stanley, OB for Opossum Bay). Their age is probably not great, inspection of one damaged stone showing it to be suspiciously concrete-like! Some of the settlements featuring on milestones are barely villages. The Stanley stone, for example, gives a distance to M, standing for Mengha, which seems to be so insignificant it did not merit mention on a milestone. At one time Mengha was the end point of a Government road.

In an act of 'modernisation', some stones have been given a metal band over their mileage inscriptions. These straps still show the distances but, in some cases, these appear to be in kilometres. Much older milestones can be seen in some places.

On the Heritage Highway, for instance, inscribed on the parapets of Ross Bridge are the legends TO HOBART TOWN LXIX MILES and to LAVNCESTON XLVIII MILES, while at Richmond (Australia's best-preserved Georgian village) are a couple of tombstone milestones, very worn but with discernible Roman numerals. A plaque records that these stones used to be on the road to Hobart.

Dating from 1836 and thus one of the oldest in Australia, Ross Bridge was constructed by convict labour. It features 186 carvings, ranging from insects and plants to the Governor of the day, George Arthur. This beautiful stonework was the work of two convict masons - Somerset-born Daniel Herbert, who was freed after the bridge's completion, and James Colbeck. They were paid one shilling (5p) a day for their work. Tasmania has a well-developed Convict Trail, the route of which is marked by yellow milepost-like metal markers featuring tell-tale convict arrows.

Tony Boyce (Herefordshire)

PRESERVING CANAL MILESTONES

The preservation of canal milestones was featured in the Shropshire Union Canal Society's historical feature at the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of St Mary's Church, Wheaton Aston (Staffs.) in September. 'The milestones along the main line of the Canal are listed structures' the exhibit pointed out.

During the last two years the Society has been carrying out a scheme to restore and reinstate the posts. Several were missing and dated replica posts have been made to replace them. Three of the posts were so dilapidated that they were on the Buildings at Risk Register but British Waterways has now been able to apply to have them removed from the register as a result of the Society's work.'

Wheaton Aston had a chantry chapel established in 1395 dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Because Wheaton Aston grew as a result of the canal coming, it was decided a bigger church was needed, so St Mary's was built in 1857.

Laurence Dopson (Staffs.)

MILESTONES FOR SALE

The thorny problem of milestones for sale has occurred again recently. Several members keep an eye on auctioneers' websites and eBay and let the committee know if any milestones are coming up for sale so that checks can be done to ascertain whether they might have been stolen. Two were spotted in August 2007. The first was a cast iron post with pointed headplate - (LHS) UPPINGHAM/11MILES; (RHS) WANSFORD/3 MILES; (top) TO/LEICESTER/30/MILES - being auctioned in Huntingdonshire. This almost certainly came from the A47 at Wittering (Cams.). Possibly the sole survivor in the series still stands at Morcott (Rutland) showing 4, 10 and 23 miles respectively. I noted seeing a post at Wittering in 1983 but could not stop to get details. Soon after this the road here was straightened and the post was never seen again. There was no evidence that it was stolen and nothing could be done to prevent its sale for £120. Cambridgeshire representative Grainne Farrington has discovered the new owner.

The second milestone reads (LHS) TO/LYNN/25/ MILES, (RHS) TO/NORWICH/15/MILES and was being auctioned, in south Norfolk. It is roughly square (see photo) with two adjacent faces recessed for the inscriptions. It seems to have been cut or broken just below the 'MILES'. On phoning the auctioneers I learnt that the stone had not made the reserve price (£100-£120), possibly because it was too short! They had bought it in and therefore still had it. The auctioneer was most helpful and found out that it had come from the garden of an old house south of Dereham. We later found the site; the house had been demolished and the land was destined for development. A neighbour remembered the milestone in the garden and thought it had been rescued from close by in the 1970s when the Dereham by-pass (A47 - now towering over the site on a flyover) was built.



A study of OS 6" maps showed a milestone at this point reading 'Dereham 1, London 105' on the first edition (1887) and 'Dereham 1, Watton 9' on the second edition (1907). This was the north-south road (present A1075). The present inscription is for an east-west direction, Norwich 15 being about right, but Lynn 25 being rather optimistic. The only east-west road before the by-pass was the old Norwich-Swaffham turnpike which went through the centre of Dereham, and it is unlikely that the stone came from that. The same milestone may therefore have been re-lettered several times.

As can be seen, considerable investigation is needed when milestones come up for sale. The most practical advice if members find a milestone for sale is to contact the auctioneer and enquire about the provenance of the stone, then notify the county representative or a member of the committee who may have further information. Committee member Jeremy Milln believes that if an item has been bought in a recognized open market or established car boot sale before 3 January 2005 it will be market overt and the purchaser will have acquired good title no matter if the seller's title was worthless. Even now if it had been-acquired in good faith, one has only six years to mount a challenge before it is deemed to become the property of the possessor. The question is how do you prove 'good faith'? The particular nature of milestones would probably incline the law to take the view that good private title was practically unobtainable nowadays and it would be reasonable to expect possessors to be wary.

Carol Haines (Norfolk)

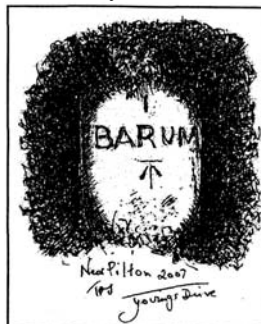
THE '1/BARUM' MILESTONES

The Barnstaple Turnpike Trust was formed in 1763 to manage all roads leading into the town.¹ At its peak the Trust covered an impressive 104 miles, making it the second largest turnpike in the county.² The network of roads included various routes from the direction of Exeter, Bideford, Ilfracombe, Bratton Fleming and Great Torrington. Just prior to its closure in 1879 Trustees agreed to set up a series

of new milestones within the boundary that would be 'measured from a common centre of the whole of Barnstaple Turnpike Roads, at an expense not exceeding £200'.³ It is probable that a complete set of 104 stones was positioned at this time.

The contract for supplying the markers was agreed with J Easton & Sons of Exeter and 'a polished reddish granite quoin engraved in gilt' was inserted into the corner of the Guildhall from which distances would be measured.⁴ The quoin remains today and is inscribed with 'CENTRE OF BARUM/TURMPIKE MILE AGE/1879'. The Trust opted for a plain tombstone style of marker to be inscribed with a simple Arabic numeral and the Medieval Latin name of 'Barum' beneath. As a result a largely uniform set of stones were set at the roadside, many of which survive today but in varying states of repair. Unfortunately, further from the town the stones have suffered from decades of neglect with many succumbing to unchecked vegetation or buried in banks during road widening. Whilst a good number can still be found it is often with a great deal of perseverance.

However, in the urban aspect around the town it is quite a different story as at least seven stones are still extant at the various one-mile points. Each marker is inscribed with '1/Barum' with several sporting an OS benchmark below the inscription (see drawing). Some even retain residues of white paint in the numbers and lettering and to find such a remarkable collection still in evidence and so close to the town is certainly unprecedented in the rest of the county. Even the cities of Exeter and Plymouth can only manage three stones apiece. Is there anywhere in the UK that can better seven different markers still intact at the one mile point from a town or city? The stones can be found at:



SS 568321 Newport/Landkey Road (Barnstaple to Swimbridge)
 SS 561345 Youngs Drive (possibly moved, Barnstaple to Ilfracombe)
 SS 550343 Bradiford (old Barnstaple to Braunton Road)
 SS 573333 Crookman's Corner (Barnstaple to Bratton Fleming)
 SS 566320 South Street Newport (Barnstaple to Exeter)
 SS 548323 Old Torrington Road (Barnstaple to Great Torrington)
 SS 547323 Sticklepeth (Barnstaple to Bideford)

References:

1. Albert, W: *The Turnpike Road System in England 1663-1840* (Cambridge, 1972).
2. Kanefsky, J: *Devon Tollhouses* (Univ. of Exeter, 1984).
3. Rogers, W H: Barnstaple Turnpike Trust, *TDA*, Ixxiv (1942), pp.139-67.
4. Rogers, W H: *op cit* (1942).

Tim Jenkinson (Devon)

SOME SCOTTISH MILESTONES: EDINBURGH AND THE LOTHIANS

Although not much has been written about Scottish milestones in the *Newsletter*, there are nevertheless a large number, many of which show various points of

interest. I hope to write a series of notes on various parts of Scotland, beginning closest to home with Edinburgh and the surrounding counties of West Lothian, Midlothian, and East Lothian. A large number of milestones have been lost through neglect, road widening and other 'improvements', and many surviving stones are little more than eroded stumps. However, quite a few survive, some have been restored, and there is at least one new milestone.

It seems logical to start with the main road east, the A1. Nowadays this is largely a new road, bypassing everywhere and mainly dual carriageway once it gets out of Edinburgh. Formerly, it appears to have gone through Joppa, Fisherrow and Musselburgh, all on the coast to the east of Edinburgh, before turning inland and passing through the towns of Tranent, Haddington and Dunbar. The first remaining stone that I know of is a weathered one at Joppa, 4 miles from the centre of



Figure 1



Figure 2

Edinburgh; the next, however, at Fisherrow, was restored a few years ago (Fig. 1). The distance is measured from the GPO in Edinburgh (a fine building at the east end of Princes Street, now offices; the post office itself has moved to a nearby shopping centre); the inscription states when and why the stone was erected, and when it was restored. The next one in good condition is a cast iron one at West Barns, near Dunbar (Fig. 2); a similar one from Dunbar itself is preserved at Heriot-Watt University, and another, very neglected, is on a minor road

(perhaps once part of the A1) near Dunglass just north of the Berwickshire border. Back to Dunbar, or rather the new A1 that bypasses it, there is a new milestone erected a few years ago in a lay-by to record the opening of the new stretch of dual carriageway (Fig. 3).

South-east from Edinburgh run the A68 and A7, which again have been largely 'improved', though some inconspicuous milestones, mostly in poor condition, remain in Edinburgh; at least two appear to have been lost in recent years as a result of housing developments. At Danderhall, on the A68 just outside Edinburgh, milestone 4 is against the garden wall of a house named 'Fourmile'.

The A701, running south from Edinburgh, leads to Penicuik, and



Figure 3



Figure 4

then on to Peebles as the A703. The fine milestones on the A703 have already been noted (NL8 p18) but there are quite a few on the road between Penicuik and Edinburgh, though I commuted to work this way for many years before I spotted them. They are small stones with a semicircular top, and the best example is one that was re-erected below the bridge carrying the Edinburgh bypass over the A701. The stones have a semicircular recess which must once have carried a metal plate, but the only surviving plate is the 2-mile one, on a garden wall on Liberton Brae in the city (Fig. 4, see p. 15).

Although one would imagine that the milestones on the A68, A7 and A701 would be measured from the GPO, the actual distances to the first stones on these roads seem to be slightly greater than this, although the remaining stones seem to be an exact number of miles apart.

(To be continued.)

Adrian Sumner (E Lothian)

THE MOST INACCESSIBLE MILESTONE?

In May John Higgins (Staffs.) sent me a copy of a page from *A Century of Sheffield 1835 - 1935*. It said that when the Redmires Reservoirs had been built the line of a track, complete with milestone, had been submerged. This track may have Roman origins connecting the fort on Wincobank Hill in Sheffield to Buxton via Anzio fort at Brough. Later the packhorse trains used it and in the 17th century it was paved, some of which still exists. During the drought of 1911 the stone was seen and SH carved his initials with the date. After the dry summer of 1975 it was again visible and also in 1991. I wondered when it would be seen again. Then, in September, a man who had been walking his dog up there rang Radio Sheffield to say the reservoir was empty and a milestone could be seen. That Saturday I was to spend the day making lace at that end of the city. So, leaving my pillow on the table, I drove to Redmires. Old trainers on feet I trudged round the banks, down onto the stony shore and across the dried up bed. Near the milestone I trod more gingerly as it got wetter. Photos and measurements taken, I aimed for a shorter way back and ended up to my knees in mud! The remarkably crisp inscription says From Sheffield 6 Miles. Three miles nearer the city centre is another stone. This is a tall post with a square stone on top. The top is a replica put up in 2002 with the original in Weston Park Museum, dated 1733 /1820, inscribed To SHEFFIELD 3 MILS(sic)/TO HOPE 7 MILES.

Is the Redmires stone the most inaccessible? There is another contender. Les Reason a fellow tricyclist from Norfolk has sent me a photo, taken by his sailor brother, of a metal milepost at NM 59 58. This is of the type made by Smith Patterson of Blaydon that can be seen between Salen and Fionnphort on Mull as well as in Northumberland. The legend is Drimnin 5¾ Miles/Dorlin 1 Mile. The photo was taken about 10 years ago and either a boat to sail round Auliston Point or a pair of boots to hike 6 miles along the track from the end of tarmac at Drimnin are needed to see if it and any others are still there. A volunteer?

Christine Minto (Yorks.)

[Jim Fulton (Yorks.) saw the milestone in the drained Redmires reservoir in November 2007 while out with a group from Dark Peak Fell Runners on their way up the original route to Stanage Pole. David Hey reports that he took slides of the stone in 1991 when the reservoir was last drained.]

TOLLHOUSE TOPICS

Torrington (Devon) While on holiday in Devon, John Nicholls (Essex) took an opportunity to sneak away from the family to seek out iron fingerposts. While on one of his forays he came across a tollhouse near Torrington at the junction of the A386 and Rakeham Hill. Outside were estate agent 'for sale' boards so out of curiosity the agents in Bideford were contacted. John was informed that his was the fiftieth enquiry in less than a week. The tollhouse had been subject to repossession and no price had been announced by the vendor. A week later John was contacted by the estate agent who announced that the price was £169,000. Although in need of updating there is little doubt at that price it would sell quickly.



Knighton (Radnorshire) Sadie Cole, Radnor representative, reported in the summer of 2007 that the Knighton tollhouse on the Prestiegne road has been sold. The site will be redeveloped incorporating the remains of the existing structure. A picture taken about five years ago shows the tollhouse in a very sorry state - a condition that had deteriorated further in the intervening years.

SOME AA SIGN NEWS

The yellow and black village sign in Goldsithney in Cornwall has disappeared. It was photographed in 1990 with, above it, a smaller oval yellow enamel plate saying Charles Grundy, Coal Merchant & General Dealer. Bronwen Parr reports that the builder who owned the property retired and sold the site on which there are now new houses. The village was proud of its sign and uses it as the insignia for the annual Charter Fair. However, the builder will not say what has happened to the sign and the villagers suspect he has sold it.

The Ewyas Harold, Herefordshire, plate was in a cafe in Monmouth. The news is that the cafe has been sold and the sign gone to ground somewhere. The Toft, Lincolnshire sign was put into auction with an £800 reserve. It didn't sell at that but is now in the museum in Bourne. Gillingham, Dorset - a bare patch on the wall of the Vets but no-one knows anything about it. Inglewhite in Lanes was reported missing but now displayed in its original place with a wooden surround - a village initiative. Collyweston in Northants - Bronwen Parr found this one displayed on a house on High Street.

Pembrokeshire - Michael Worman has found two more at Bosherton and Whitehill. He has also found about 12 Yorkshire ones at Roxby Garage near Thornton Dale. Wilts - tracked down, in private hands are Swallowcliffe, Emborough (Somerset) and Westbury.

Please let me know when you spot one of these signs, *in situ*, in private hands, museums or ebay (email: frankminto@beeb.net). They do go walkabout so it is good to have confirmation of their whereabouts.

Christine Minto (Yorks.)

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY GROUPS

Bedfordshire - Michael Knight continues the good work of publicising the Society by giving talks - at least 16 in 2007. Talks booked for 2008 include Hemingford Grey (Hunts.) 9 Jan., Weedon Bec (Northants) 28 Jan., Barby (Northants) 13 Feb., Northill (Beds.) 31 March, Barrington (Cambs.) 17 May, Cherry Hinton (Cambs.) 28 July. Contact Michael (01234 709518) for further details.

Michael has come across a toll board dated 1846 for the Stagsden Gate, Bedford-Newport Pagnell Turnpike (1754) on display in Bedford Museum. The original tollhouse, now a private residence, stands at the junction of the A428 to Northampton and is on the Bedford Heritage Trail.

Derbyshire - Although still representative-less after seven years, Derbyshire has a good membership base. John Higgins tried unsuccessfully to recruit a coordinator many years ago, and would still like to see someone pull everything together. If you think that you can help, and live in or close to Derbyshire, ring John on 01538 703331 and he'll talk you through it.

Devon - County representative Tim Jenkinson and fellow member Geoffrey Harding have given a number of talks to local groups about milestones, turnpikes, tollhouses etc., resulting in further information and discoveries. More talks are scheduled for 2008. Devon CC has repaired and repositioned two milestones near Petrockstow, and is repairing a stone from the old A30 at Tedburn St Mary. Records on the county's cast iron fingerposts is being compiled. Well-maintained posts can be seen in the Torridge district and there are some distinctive wooden signs near Crediton.

Dorset - John Tybjerg has finished searching all milestone sites that he knows of throughout the county. Of course, more may turn up even though a site has been visited several times. Attention is now turning to bridge plates. Sixteen Transportation Plates have been found and 12 Weight Warning plates of two types.

John was contacted by Brian Toop of Dorchester who used to work for Dorset CC in the 1970s. Brian became concerned that the finials with grid references on fingerposts were disappearing so he photographed as many as possible, and also wrote an article in *Dorset Life* about them. He has loaned John his photographs and records of 266 finials and John and Mike Faherty are finding out how many survive. Of 174 sites visited so far, 77 still exist, together with other finials with just DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL. If any members spot any on their travels, particularly on the minor roads of Dorset, please let John know.

Essex - John Nicholls reports that no new milestones have been found in the county, but a few more old fingerposts have been located, including the only known Essex survivor, with halo finial, made by the Royal Label Factory, Stratford on Avon at Thundersley (TQ 815886). Another Maldon Iron Works fingerpost, with semi-circular finial, has been located at Wivenhoe. John has been advising Rayleigh Town Council on restoration of a fingerpost which was once assumed to have a halo finial. An old photo then came to light which showed the post with a gas lamp on top. The plan is now to provide the post with a replica lamp, possibly solar powered.

At least 14 Cheshire milestones have recently come to light on Essex Wildlife Trust property at Warley near Brentwood. Some are arranged as steps. As the gardens at Warley Place were laid out in late 19th/early 20th centuries, it is possible that Cheshire CC disposed of their milestones and replaced them with the present 1890s cast iron ones.

Gloucestershire - James Weightmann and Keith Walker report that a survey of surviving milestones in the west of the county has been completed (71 found). The results have been put on a CD, available to local councils. They are now looking for help with surveying the eastern area. Professional milestone restorer and conservation officer David McDougal has restored the milestone at Playley Green. Ways are being sought of lobbying the County Council for a milestone conservation policy.

Herefordshire - Member Tony Boyce and John Higgins (Staffs.) are attempting to put together a survey of the county. If you have any Herefordshire photographs (with OS grid ref.), then send them to John Higgins and he'll put them into our database.

Huntingdonshire - Michael Knight reports that three damaged milestones from the 1755 turnpike between the Gt North Road and present A14 were lifted by a road team from Huntingdon District Council and taken for repair to a stone mason in Grantham (Lincs.). Where possible smaller broken pieces were cemented back onto the main column. In Sept. 2007 they were returned and replaced in safer places near their original positions. They are now on the B645 near Gt Staughton (London 59), Hail Weston (London 57) and B660 near Kimbolton (London 64). It has taken six years of badgering to get the restoration done, but efforts eventually proved worthwhile.

Grainne Farrington has located London 63, missing from the Gt North Road since development of the A14 (M1-A1 Link). The stone was 'saved' by a road worker. Further developments are awaited!

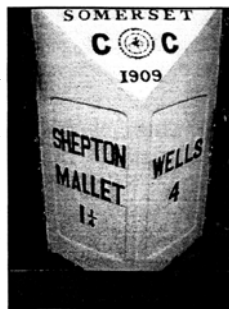
Norfolk - In November Carol and Alan Haines did a 120+ mile round trip to get details of un-surveyed milestones between King's Lynn and Wisbech for the database. Although a few marked on modern maps could not be found, we located a previously unknown member of the series of cast iron posts between Upwell and Welney - Wisbech 9, Ely 15. Milestone awareness seems to be increasing around the county as several have been recently painted.

There has been some progress on restoring the 1921-pattern place name sign in Taverham. The Parish Council has agreed a budget and we have been asked to obtain some quotations for the work.

Oxfordshire - There is a further twist to the story of the fall and rise of the Didcott milestone (Wantage 8, Wallingford 7) reported in OTG4 (p. 13-14), writes Derek Turner. An observant inhabitant of Harwell (the stone is actually in Harwell parish) reported the stone missing and Oxon CC informed the Society. Robert Caldicott visited the site and found the stone once again in the ditch. OCC, on being informed, promised to re-erect it, and at the end of October it was back in place with reinforcements (an adjacent sturdy metal post set in concrete) to discourage further vandalism.

Many of the old 'halo' fingerposts in the county have now been recorded and most of the posts are being repaired and repainted by OCC.

Somerset - Janet Dowding writes that the group met on 27 October at a member's home. Membership of the group is slowly increasing. One topic covered was tollhouses and members volunteered to investigate some on Alan Rosevear's database. Of the 26 milestones in the 'Shepton 21' project, three have so far been cleaned and repainted. This was mainly thanks to the closure of part of the A371 near Wells for pavement repairs, making the work totally safe. The main delay is the requirement, under safety regulations, of having a trained certificated person overseeing the work on more dangerously placed stones. The photos (right) show two of the repainted milestones on the Wells Trust; A371 near Croscombe.



Janet was recently sent details of a mystery stone found near St Catherine near Bath (ST 762712). It has '2 Marshfield' crudely carved on it and is obviously very old. At present no one knows its history or purpose. Ideas for a Somerset milestone postcard were discussed, and the possibility of a Somerset website.



Staffordshire - More mileposts have been repainted around Newcastle and Eccleshall. Following continued damage by flails John Higgins has suggested again to Staffs Highways that marks be painted on the road to alert mowers to the presence of hidden milestones. The subject is to be brought up at their next meeting, which is encouraging. After chasing up proposed repairs to several broken stones and posts, it seems that the county authorities are about to do something.

Proofs of the thematic review of mile markers in the county are being worked on with the county council's design team, and it is hoped publication will take place before too long. John has been given the go-ahead for the second in the series - Staffordshire Fingerposts. He would welcome help in assembling information on the whereabouts of all traditional Staffs Fingerposts (contact him to check the information required).

A list of surviving tollhouses is being compiled, and attention is now turning to wayside crosses.

A milepost that went missing from roadworks near Lichfield is to be replaced by a new cast. Although not as good as the original, the contractors accepted blame when approached by the County Council, and will pay for the work. Surrey - Fourteen people attended an autumn meeting of the group at Send Manor near Ripley on 3 November 2007, reports Janet Dowding. Details of all existing tollhouses have been sent in for the database and members agreed to help search out other possible buildings named Tollhouse, which may or may not be genuine. Colin Woodward (Middx) gave out copies of his new pamphlet on a survey of milestones between London and Canterbury, and John Nicholls (Essex) spoke about old fingerposts (only 5 known in Surrey).

Looking at old maps has proved fruitful as member John Payne has located two more milestones not previously found and surveyed. These are on the Croydon-Sanderstead-Limpsfield road (B269). This brings the county total to 155. The possibility of a Surrey milestone postcard was also discussed. Another group meeting will be held in April 2008.

Wales - Chris Woodard sends the following updates to earlier reports: The Traveller's Rest Stone (Monmouth) (NL13 p.3) - on the wall by the seat the date 1913 is inscribed. It seems that a cottage nearby was demolished and the milestone saved for posterity. Apparently travellers did rest at this road junction to await the coach. Mail Coach Pillar, A40 (Carmarthenshire) (NL13 p.7) - recent restoration has taken place on the obelisk. Late in 2006 the upper part was removed and was still not restored in September 2007. Viatorum solatio et commoditati, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant (Powys) (NL13 p.3 & NL13 p.3) - this translates as 'For the comfort and convenience of the wayfarer'. This was possibly carved by the only person in the area who understood Latin - the local vicar in about 1770, some years before the roads through the parish were turnpiked.

The tollhouse about 1 mile south of Knighton (Radnorshire) on the B4355 to Presteigne has a reprieve. A plot of land adjacent to the ruins was up for sale, planning permission was granted on 15.2.2007 for the erection of a new dwelling and change of use of former tollhouse to work/studio. Purchasers must be aware that before the new dwelling can be occupied the site owner will be required to re-instate the old toll house. Congratulations to Powys CC for preserving its county history.

On 5 September 2007 the milestones on the A40 between Carmarthen and Llandeilo were restored. A gentleman drove up to each stone and sandblasted it. This was quickly followed by a paint job on the lettering before he drove off to the next stone. Whoever he was, he used no form of warning signs and did not do a very good job. He missed out the 8-mile stone at SN532215 and painted an unmarked stone opposite the Half Way inn, Llanegwad.

Worcestershire - Terry Keegan reports that several more milestones have been added to the records and other new finds have appeared from undergrowth and require further investigation. The replating of stones between Stanford Bridge and

Ham Bridge is now complete. The wet summer set back repainting projects, but a start was made in August on some Bradley stones on the B4204.

Four group members have now finished a book on Worcestershire's milestones entitled *Finding Worcestershire Milestones*. It shows photos, details and a few interesting facts about each stone, and include maps and is reviewed in this Newsletter. The group continues to receive publicity in the local press (including a recent article in *Worcestershire Life*) and requests for talks.

A West Midlands regional meeting was held on 10 November to cater for members in neighbouring counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and the West Midlands conurbation. As many of these areas do not hold regular members' meetings, it was felt to be a good way of getting more people together (see report on p.31).

Yorkshire - In 2004 Killinghall Parish Council received some 19C photographs one of which showed a milestone they had 'lost' writes Christine Minto. We featured it in the Yorks NL that autumn. Heather Burrow knew where it was, we found and photographed it and the PC was told. They followed this up and have now been successful in getting it Grade II listed. It is not only a milestone but a Constabulary boundary stone too. One face dated 1738 has 'Here endeth the Constable of Kilinghall. A second face has Knaresbrough MIIIi and Skipton MXi with these Anglicised Roman mileages inside hands. There are also the initials of the SURVAOR.

CUTTINGS

Irish milestones There can be little doubt that the current comprehensive national programme of road-building and realignment is daily disturbing, uncovering and irrevocably changing the landscape and archaeology of this country in a widespread and unprecedented manner' begins an article by Brian McCabe in *Archaeology Ireland* (Autumn 2006) sent in by Derek Renn (Surrey). Many interesting and valuable finds have been preserved but the humble milestone falls outside this category. Surviving milestones in Ireland date mostly from the 18th and 19th centuries when many roads were the responsibility of either grand juries, turnpike trusts, or in the 19th century the Post Office. From 1826 the English system of measurement was adopted, and therefore stones bearing the longer Irish mile (2,240 yards) were erected before this date. The difference arose from the use of a different linear perch measuring 7 yards (the English perch being 5½ yards). Originally mileages from Dublin were measured from the castle, but after the completion of the GPO building in Sackville (O'Connell) Street in 1818, this became the datum point.



*Johnstown, Co. Kildare
(by Pat and John Byrne)*

There has been an attempt to date Irish milestones by their lettering style [see Joan & Kieron Murphy, *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. 35 (1981)], and it was felt the oldest in the Dublin area was in Kilcullen, Co. Kildare, measuring 21 Irish miles. It was possibly from the Dublin-Kilcullen turnpike set up in 1729. Spurred on by impending roadworks on the N7, a group searched for milestones along this road and found seven, mostly in by-passed stretches of the road. All show 'Irish' mileages and are therefore probably pre-1826. All are illustrated in the article, and the author makes a plea to engineers and archaeologists to look out for more across the country.

Odd socs For the first piece in a new series of profiles of voluntary heritage societies (under the general title of 'Odd Socs'), the August 2007 issue of *Current Archaeology*, (issue 211, p44) featured the Milestone Society. The author had obviously read the rather mocking article in *The Independent* in April 2006 (see NL11 p.25) and thought members of the Society were very restrained in not feeling hurt 'by being held up as the epitome of British battiness', but instead have revelled in the free publicity. Mervyn Benford was quoted as saying that milestones are precious and should be respected and cherished as an important part of the history of travel. Thanks to Jeremy Milln for sending the cutting.

Swapping signs Under the heading 'No sign of the Belton signpost?', a report in the *Dorset Evening Echo* (Dec./Jan 2006/7) sent by Chris Woodard (Mons.) notes that a stolen Dorset signpost had mysteriously appeared on the Norfolk/Suffolk border and was seen by motorists on the Belton to Lound road who must have been puzzled by directions to Bishop's Caundle, Sturminster Newton and Blandford Forum. It proved of such interest that people went out of their way to drive past it. Since then one of the signposts in Belton has disappeared. It is suggested that motorists in Dorset should look out for it!

Digital Domesday Book The Daily Telegraph (27.9.07) carried a half-page article about the launch of the English Heritage website containing 315,000 images of buildings of architectural importance. Over 2,000 volunteers spent seven years taking the photographs which include 2,146 telephone boxes, 420 castles, 55 garden sheds, and 2,700 milestones. They can be viewed at www.imagesofengland.org.uk.

Canal milestones The August 2007 edition of the *Canal Boat* magazine had a page of canal mileposts etc. including a 1999 boundary post erected by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Society, notes Brian Burrows (Yorks.). The location was not given but was presumably $\frac{3}{8}$ mile south-west of Wightwick Bridge.

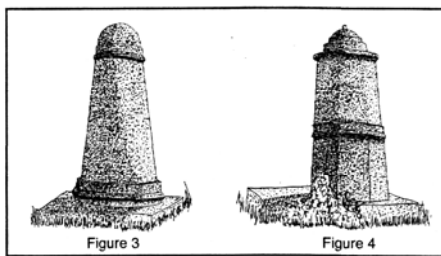
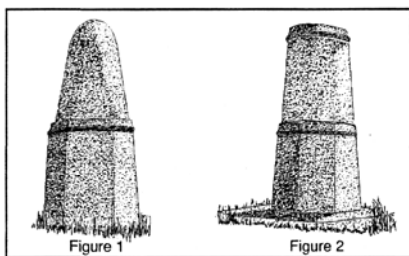
Historic cuttings Although a Wirral historian for over 40 years, Jim O'Neill has only just come across a little booklet entitled *History of the Hundred of Wirral Past and Present* by A Vance Speer. It is undated but he thinks was printed between 1903 and 1930. The following passage caught his attention: 'The County Council with rare vandalism rooted up the old mile-stones along the King's line of march, some five years ago, the very mile-stones which saw the troops and the last stage-coach pass by, flung them into a ditch intending to break them up for Macadam, and substituted some cast iron abominations in their place, bearing all sorts of information in vulgar fractions for the modern cycling housemaid.' The road referred to is the present A540 in Cheshire.

ON THE GROUND 2008

The editor for 2008 is once again John V Nicholls to whom material may be sent. Deadline is the last week of July although short items (snippets) accepted until mid-August.

FOREIGN PARTS

Mughal milestones Hazel Armstrong (Yorks.) had heard of very old Persian Milestones in Northern India and during a recent visit with her sister and mother decided to try and find one. None of the guides or drivers knew of them but they heard of a possible one on the road to Dikandra, 4km north-west of Agra. After a couple of drives up and down they decided the only possible candidate was a huge stone structure behind a 10ft railing outside the city jail, with a sign in Hindi saying this was under the protection of the Archaeological Survey of India (equivalent of English Heritage). More enquiries revealed that this 30+ ft high stone was the old milestone, or 'Kos Minar' (Coss or Kos, a Mughal measurement of distance amounting to just over 3 miles; Minar, Persian for tower or high turret as in minaret on a mosque). A quick photo was taken (Fig. 1) as they were already arousing interest due to the close proximity to the jail.



A couple of days later, going south-west to Jaipur via the deserted desert city of Fatehpur Sikri, the guide said he had heard of more of these structures on the road they were travelling along. Three of the five remaining Persian milestones along that road were photographed (Figs. 2,3,4). All the Kos Minars are of a similar massive height and when built would have been clearly visible across the plains. All are easily accessible at the side of modern-day roads; none bear any marks or carvings to identify what they are or show any distances, but given their age they are all in remarkably good condition and each is of a slightly different design. There is possibly another in Delhi south of the Delhi gate on the road to Humayun's tomb (Mughal emperor 1530-1556), so another search is needed.

Many thanks to John Harland who has once again made excellent drawings from the original photographs.

Italy Despite travelling at Italian bus drivers' speed along the eastern side of Lake Garda, Colin Williams (Hants.) managed to glimpse an older stone milestone adjacent to a modern metal sign (see sketch on next page); also a triangular stone

again with large Roman numerals was seen. Somewhat earlier stones are apparently to be found in the museum attached to the Grotte di Catullo Roman site at Sermione; the museum was closed when the site was visited so no information obtainable.

Adrian Sumner (E Lothian) has also sent details of milestones in the Abruzzi and Marche areas. The tombstone-shaped stones have Arabic numerals for whole kilometres and smaller versions show tenth of a kilometre in Roman numerals.

More from down south In NL13 p.27 there was a report about (perhaps) the most southerly milestone in the world on East Falkland. It now seems that the 'STANLEY/ 1 m' stone was just the most northerly of a series stretching all the way from Stanley to Mount Pleasant Airport (MPA), a distance of 35 miles. MSS member Dave Taylor (Wirral) spends a lot of time in the



South Atlantic and believes that the stones were probably erected about the same time as the 'Stanley Arms' pub, about seven or eight years ago. Dave has travelled the Stanley to MPA road but never had the opportunity to take photos along the way. The stones are set 90° to the road into a bank behind a roadside ditch. The son of John Nicholls (Essex) did manage to stop at the STANLEY 21 and take pictures of both sides (see left). Dave points out that there are almost certainly distance markers further south on the South American mainland.

Dave Taylor also offered a contender for the most southerly fingerpost. Most, if not all, of the Antarctic bases have some sort of post with boards indicating distances to places worldwide. However, the post at the British base at Halley (located at 76° S/27° W) has all the appearances of a real fingerpost complete with an annulus finial.

The kilometre zero marker from which distances in Argentina are measured is in the Plaza Congreso in Buenos Aires, writes Adrian Sumner (E Lothian). At the other end of the Ruta Nacional No.3 in Tierra del Fuego is a large board showing the distance as 3063 km from Buenos Aires (and 17,848 km from Alaska, which must be one of the longest marked distances in the world). Another contender for the most southerly distance marker?

French 'mile' stones Frank and I have cycled in various parts of France writes Christine Minto (Yorks.). The distance markers that we've come across fall into five categories. The ubiquitous stone or concrete kilometre posts along the D roads are a chunky tombstone shape with the rounded top painted yellow with the road number. Older ones have place names but most now just have an arrow and a number so you have to know where you've come from or where you are going. A similar shaped plastic marker had replaced many of these. Now flat plates of varying sizes are appearing and these have been seen with the Department name and logo but again, no town names. A variation around Cap Blanc Nez is yellow triangular plastic with a pyramidal top.

In northern France there are the post-war Voie de la Liberté 'Daleks' with missing ones replaced in plastic for the 60th anniversary of the D Day Landings. In a few villages, high up on a building, there may be a rectangular cast plate with the name of the village plus nearby place names, arrows and distances. Different styles of canal kilometre stones have been seen on the Canal du Calais, the Canal d'Ille et Rance near Rennes and the Canal latéral de la Garonne. Presumably these older stones survived the war because of their relative inaccessibility.

But most interesting of all are the white and dark blue enamel Michelin markers we've seen in Deux Sèvres, the Vendée and Lot et Garonne. These may be a plaque on a wall or fixed to a very substantial flat, triangular or square topped concrete post like the one shown in NL10 p.25. A warning road sign constructed in the same way has a Michelin man and 1966 cast in the concrete on the back. There are also enamel village signs and direction boards which, by their appearance, may date from the same era. Appalachian series An unbroken series of slender concrete milestones (see right) line the picturesque Skyline Drive that follows the grain of the Appalachian Mountain chain through Virginia USA, reports Michael Knight (Beds.).



PUBLICATION - BOOK REVIEWS

David Viner: *Roads, Tracks & Turnpikes*. The Dovecote Press, 2007. Pp. 80. ISBN: 9781904349143. £4.95.

This book is part of the Discover Dorset Series and it can be summarised as "a gem of a book about a gem of a county." The book is divided into 10 chapters with, in addition, a further reading list. The chapters are an introduction to the book and map evidence for the old roads in Dorset. The remainder of the chapters are set out chronologically, dealing with the prehistoric, Roman and Medieval roads systems before moving on to turnpikes and modern roads. Each of the chapters on the road systems gives a general introduction to the subject before using a wide range of local examples. The book is therefore worth purchasing even if you never go near Dorset, but once you have read it I do not know how you will avoid arranging a trip. Dorset has no motorway and relatively few bye-passes and dual carriageways so we have ended up with an astonishing number of survivals. The ancient ridgeways are claimed by some to prove long distance travel in prehistoric times; others remember the experience of the first European explorers in Africa. They walked across the continent from east to west following village-to-village paths -the explorers travelled long distances but the locals just to the nearest village. Some of the most outstanding remains of Roman road in the country can be seen in Dorset and an extensive network of turnpike roads with a well-preserved collection of milestones.

In this short book is a well set out holiday guide for anyone interested in road history. The use of Ordnance Survey six figure references enables the tracking down of a Roman milestone, but there are references for those of the turnpike era.

I was lucky I lived in Hampshire for over 20 years and travelled widely in Dorset. If I had had David's book as a guide I would have seen so much more, indeed it has made me consider re-visiting the county from my northern haunt.

Keith Lawrence (Cheshire)

Andrew Emmerson and Peter Bancroft : *A, B, C and M : road numbering revealed*. Capital History, 2007. 94pp. Paperback. £7.95. ISBN 978 185414 307 5 (Available from the society's bookstall £8.70 including postage).

My memory of the A382 on the edge of Dartmoor, is of something approaching a very winding country lane, whereas the B4368 which passes our house heading towards Clun, is spacious and fast by comparison. Why is one classed 'A' and the other 'B'? Alas, this book will not enlighten the reader. But then, it never set out to. Its purpose is to explain the numbering of the roads after classification, and as an introduction to the subject, it succeeds.

Peter Bancroft undertook the research, but sadly, died before he could complete his text. Andrew Emmerson agreed to finish the book, and I am afraid this is evident throughout. However, despite alternating between polished prose and near research notes, there is enough in this slim and inexpensive work to make it an enjoyable and informative book for Milestone Society members.

Chapter 3 : *The twentieth century* is the key section, and explains how Great Britain was divided into nine numbered sectors, defined by major roads. Thus, road numbers in sector 4 between the newly numbered A4 London to Bath, and the A5 London to Holy head would start with the digit 4. Both A and B roads. Once allocated, numbers appeared on road signs (well illustrated here) and eventually on maps. Besides A, B, C and M, the letters D and U have also been, and still are, used for road numbering. After explaining how numbers were allocated, we have a chapter on motorways and orbital roads (in the 1960s, the number of rings around London was reduced to three, of which only the M25 was built).

London has a chapter to itself (as always), followed by all the odds and ends such research produces and which, thankfully, the author cannot resist including. Splits, swaps, re-aligned routes, re-used numbers and so on, not to mention the grid system of Milton Keynes and Euroroutes. Islands and Ireland finish the book.

Reading for a review has the advantage that one concentrates more, with the disadvantage that one notes 'faults' not otherwise worrying. Most in this work, I will assume would not have appeared under other circumstances. However, I do like full references, and statements such as "There is evidence in print that..." and "A contemporary note indicates that..." really upset me. Without full bibliographic references, I consider the "Further reading" list inadequate—but then I have always enjoyed following up references more than reading a text. Poor concentration,

easily diverted. Less than full references meant that I read the whole of this book without distractions, enjoyed it, learnt a lot and believe that others will as well.

David Archer (Montgomeryshire)

The Worcestershire Group of the Milestone Society: *Finding Worcestershire Milestones*. The Milestone Society, 2007. Pp. 32. ISBN: 978-0-9557538-0-0. £3.50 + 50p p&p. Copies available from Terry Keegan.

The Worcestershire section of the Milestone Society has been one of the most successful of the County groups, both in the number of local members and in raising awareness of the importance of the heritage on their doorstep. It has also achieved considerable success in renovating milestones and replacing them when missing. It is entirely appropriate therefore that the Worcestershire group has produced this booklet describing the history of turnpikes in their own area (with a good introduction to the general history of turnpike roads and milestones) and giving descriptions of the various types of milemarkers still to be found there, with emphasis on the evolution of designs over the years.

The A5 size booklet is most pleasingly produced, in a double column format, with a great number of high quality photographs, some of which are in colour. The centre fold gives an excellent, clear representation of the distribution of the various types of Worcestershire milemarkers along roads in a surprisingly successful manner, in view of the potential hazard of producing a cluttered appearance. A full Gazetteer of the milestones and their inscriptions is provided and for each one a grid reference, road position and parish is listed. I particularly like the classification of 'Out of Position Stones', conveniently shortened to OOPSs!

This industrious group has set a fine example of what can be achieved with enthusiasm and hard work in a valuable cause, and this publication, which forms a valuable reference work, is to be recommended as necessary reading for all those with an interest in the history of turnpikes and their associated milemarkers.

Alan Haines (Norfolk)

(a) Francis Bennett: *Road-Books, Road-Maps, & Itineraries of Great Britain 1535 to 1850. A Catalogue annotated for Devon & Cornwall* (Self published; 2007) Softback: 245x176, 148 pp, Illustrated; Price £14.00 + £2.00 p&p.

(b) Francis Bennett: *The Roads of Devon & Cornwall* (Self published; 2007) Softback: 245x176, 194 pp, Illustrated; Price £14.00 + £2.00 p&p. Copies of both of these books are available from Terry Keegan.

The original intention to publish a catalogue of the road books of Devon and Cornwall changed during the research stages and these two excellent books emerged. As the author states in the introduction, they 'can be considered separately or as one with the catalogue listing in detail the works referred to in the history.' There is obviously a focus on the counties of Devon and Cornwall but the two books provide a wealth of information and background detail that is relevant to the

whole country and anyone interested in maps and the development and use of the road network will find both totally absorbing.

The first book relates to a specific subset of maps and books dealing with roads that are of particular relevance to Society members. Road books describe in tables or strip maps actual roads between two places and itineraries deal with specific routes and give an account of the journey, road conditions, towns on the way and a host of other information. The book covers Great Britain but excludes 'guide books' dealing with topographical matters although a number of county maps of Devon and Cornwall are included where they show specific detail of the road network. The road books and itineraries are listed chronologically with many illustrations. In addition to the full title of the work, the publisher, contents, page size, scale, there are details of subsequent issues and changes. Specific extra information is given where the listed work refers to roads in the two counties. The catalogue ends at 1850 but it does include in an appendix details of a number of later maps produced specifically for cyclists and then for car drivers. A further appendix lists the copies of plans, now in the Cornwall County Record Office or one or other of the depositories in Devon, that were drawn specifically for the repair, maintenance or establishment of roads and especially turnpikes after 1794.

The second book describes the roads and road network in the two counties throughout history with, in the later periods, copious references and illustrations from contemporary material. The early chapters deal with ancient routes and track ways and the later Roman roads revealed by archaeologists and antiquarians. Documentary evidence from Anglo-Saxon charters and the location of village settlements provide detail from the Dark Ages. In the post Norman period through to the dissolution of the monasteries increasing numbers of documents survive that describe roads and bridges, their maintenance and repair. The book devotes chapters to the Tudor, Stuart and Georgian postal services and the author gives a comprehensive review of the appearances and development of road books accompanied with illustrations of the various types. There are chapters on the turnpikes, stage coaches and travel in Georgian times. The last two chapters bring the story up to date with the ending of the turnpikes, the advent of mass movement with the cycle and motor car and the associated controls and regulations, road numbering, traffic signs and signals. Finally there are descriptions of the recent roads, bypasses and motorways that augment a road network that had existed essentially unchanged for hundreds of years.

Alan Scaplehorn (Worcs.)

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM (Saturday 6th October 2007 at Armley Mills Museum, Leeds) - Jan Scrine arranged an excellent venue for this Autumn meeting which for the first time included the AGM, previously held during the Spring meeting. Refreshments were provided by the Yorkshire group and the meeting started with general notices from chairman David Viner; the new issue (number 4) of the 'On the Ground', once again very nicely prepared by John Nicholls, was available for members to collect. An important internal milestone for the Society was reached when the Hon. Sec. Terry Keegan announced his retirement

from the post, a position which he had occupied and performed with great skill and dedication since the founding of the Society. The Society were very pleased to welcome his replacement, John Atkinson, who as part of the Worcestershire group, will benefit from Terry's experience. Brian Barrow reported that membership at the end of the 2006-7 period was up by 50 on the number at the start and that the total number was above 500 for the first time. Treasurer Jan Scrine reported a steady growth in reserves and reminded members of the availability of £250 pump priming towards projects. David Viner summarised the excellent progress made by the Society since its foundation under the headings of membership, the regional network, data capture, conservation, restoration and maintenance, publications, archival work, and charity status. Current officers, with the exception of the change in Hon. Sec. position mentioned previously, were re-elected and no change in the subscription was proposed. Regarding 'term membership', it was resolved that a payment of up to 10 times the current membership subscription would secure



membership for 10 years. At the end of the AGM, Alan Haines presented Terry Keegan with an indexed bound volume of the first ten issues of the Newsletter as a token of the Society's appreciation for Terry's unending enthusiasm and long service which ensured its foundation and continued success (see the adjoining photograph taken by David Webb). David Hey gave the first talk, on 'South Pennine Packhorse Routes and Turnpike Roads' in which he pointed out that Turnpikes were generally upgraded old

packhorse routes (the transport of lead from Derbyshire was of importance in this area), and that there had been a weekly carrier route to London from Doncaster already in 1637. He gave examples of hollow-ways and causeys, and packhorse bridges, which were in use before the turnpikes, and pointed out early maps don't show roads but do show bridges. Justices of the Peace could order the erection of guide stoops, "where intelligence was hard to find" (!) and interestingly, a buried one had been dug up based on old OS maps. After 1738, Yorkshire stoops generally had distances in miles but used customary miles (in Yorkshire 2200 yards). The continuity of early turnpikes with packhorse routes was pointed out and that it was the later turnpikes that developed new routes.

Jan Scrine then gave an interesting, wide-ranging visual tour of the milestones and waymarkers of West Yorkshire (and further afield) which included the Dyall stone at Marsden, and other items such as packhorse bridges, cutwater stones, guide stoops and tollhouses. After lunch Colin Smith from Cumbria gave an excellent well-structured talk on the Cumbria restoration project with which he had been associated, which involved replacement or restoring milemarkers along the Keswick to Penrith road. The project was chosen for its iconic nature, its demonstration of neglected milemarkers, the possibility of partnership, and the potential for achieving a good result. The Milestone Society provided a useful

pump-priming contribution of £250 which was matched by a similar amount from Friends of the Lake District, and both of these were seen as having vital importance in obtaining a large (>£6000) Local Heritage initiative grant. As a result, seven additional stones were now in place, a photographic record, resources and a booklet produced, along with exhibition materials and much good publicity for the Society. The meeting finished with an enthusiastic presentation from our guest speaker Katy Hallett on behalf of Sustrans (an organisation now 30 years old), who described the commissioning of public art along the cycle routes adopted by their society.

The meeting closed at 16.00 allowing time to visit the exhibition of carding, spinning and weaving machines, together with tailoring methods. For those who managed to get to the next floor there was a fascinating display of cinema projection equipment, but as usual with our museum venues, their historical displays deserved a full day's attention rather than the few minutes left after our meetings.

WORCESTERSHIRE REGIONAL MEETING

As an experiment, the Society called a regional meeting near Worcester for West Midlands members, and a very good move it proved to be, particularly as a most enjoyable buffet lunch was provided by the Worcestershire group. About 40 people attended and the Society's chairman, David Viner, was able to report that membership now topped 500. He stressed the importance of publishing the work of the Society, saying its publication record was good and, in some cases, very good.

Speakers covered a variety of topics, with Chris Jackson from the Midlands Postal History Group explaining the difference between milestone mileages and postal mileages. For his part Terry Keegan, the Society's Irish-born vice-chairman, threw light on the origin of the Irish mile, which was used officially until 1825 (although in at least one instance until very much later). It was Oliver Cromwell who decreed that the Irish mile should be 2,240 yards. The importance of the Society's help to the Historic Environment Record was stressed by Victoria Bryant, Worcestershire HER manager, who said she was delighted when contacted by Terry, the county's representative. Until then she had known of only 28 listed milestones and 12 others but, thanks to the group, there was now information on 184.

There are some 400 milestones in Staffordshire, where John Higgins is not afraid to remind local authorities of their statutory duties. He is a great one for 'gently hammering away' and advised fellow members not to give up. 'You will get there', he assured them. Alan Scaplehorn, who put together the Worcestershire group's newly published *Finding Worcestershire Milestones*, said the county had an 'incredibly complicated' turnpike system, with records no longer existing for many of its trusts. Production of the book was very much a team effort, the cost of its 500 copies being met from giving talks.

There seemed to be agreement that, with Herefordshire's milestone recording lagging far behind that of other Midland groups and few members in the county to rectify matters, some outside help was needed. (Step forward, John Higgins.)

Tony Boyce (Heref.)

YORKSHIRE GROUP SPRING MEETING - Calling all members north of Watford! The Spring meeting run by the Yorkshire Group will be held at Hebden (near Grassington) on Sunday 20th April 2008. The usual mix of serious and light-hearted items and displays - £1 admission covers free drinks and delicious cake. Doors open 10 for 10.30 start, ends mid afternoon. Why not take a weekend break in this lovely part of the country? Please let Jan or Christine know that you plan to attend.

FUTURE SOCIETY MEETINGS The Society's Spring Meeting will be held in the Town Hall at Battle in East Sussex on Saturday 10 May 2008, with a strong local theme based around the milestones and waymarkers of East & West Sussex, with table displays planned on Surrey, Kent and adjoining counties. Other displays are welcomed, as always. This will be our first national meeting in this attractive part of the country and a good attendance is hoped for. Ideal for a weekend break!

The Annual Conference & AGM will take place on Saturday 4 October 2008 in the Coventry Transport Museum in Millennium Place, which is in the city centre and only 15 minutes, walk from the railway station. The museum pays tribute to the birthplace of the British cycle, motorcycle and motor car, and also houses three fine examples of Coventry city boundary markers, which it is hoped to have on display. Further details in due course; enquiries to John Atkinson via Terry Keegan.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER FOR JULY 2008 - Contributions for inclusion in the July 2008 Newsletter should reach the Editors by Monday 16 June 2008. Submission of articles in electronic form (floppy disc) using Microsoft Word is particularly convenient. However, if you have a recent PC with Microsoft Office XP (or Vista), or Word 97 please use the "SAVE AS" option (not "SAVE") and save files in Word 5.1 for Macintosh format. If this is not an option, please save in RTF (Rich Text Format), Word 6.0/97, or (from Windows XP/Vista) Word 97-2003 + 6.0/95-RTF(*.doc) format.

END PIECE



Can anyone identify the location of this picture? The milepost to the right of the shop window reads: LONDON/126/MILES, with the maker's mark: HARRISON DERBY down the post

ISSN 1476-3109