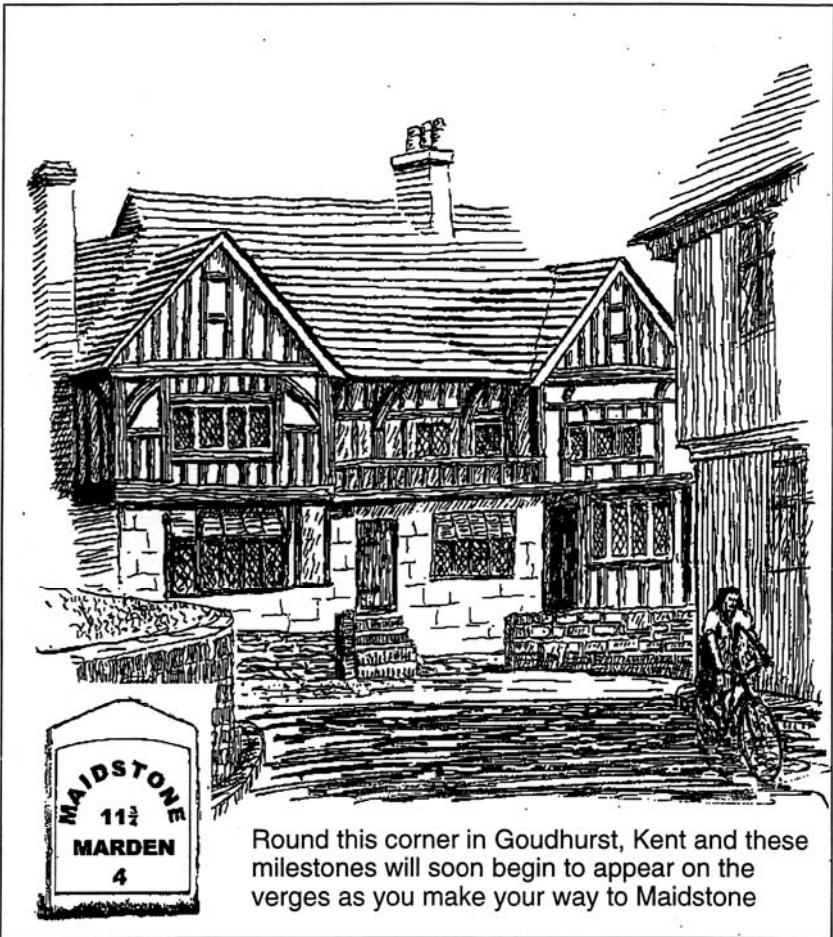




THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 15

July 2008



Round this corner in Goudhurst, Kent and these milestones will soon begin to appear on the verges as you make your way to Maidstone

The Cover Picture - The illustration is by Lionel Joseph, who has previously contributed line drawings for the covers of Newsletters 2, 4 and 8. Lionel is not only a very good graphic artist but also uses his considerable skills to make replacement milestones. Lionel comments that a drawing of a solitary milestone does not usually lend itself to use as cover material but one possibility is to 'contrive' a situation, which is what he has done in the present instance.

EDITORS' COMMENTS - Observant readers of the Newsletter will notice a subtle change to the cover of this issue, the change of logo on the top left hand side. This logo, which originated with Terry Keegan at the birth of the Society, has come to be omnipresent on material and publications of the Society, for example on our letterheads, leaflets and 'On the Ground', and it stands at the head of the website page. Although the replaced illustration gave a feeling of the 'road travelled' it was felt by the Committee that now that the Society has become increasingly recognised on a national basis, we should standardise our 'outward face' and the Newsletter was out of line in this respect. Logos representing 'brands' are important in the modern world (there is considerable value in the instant recognition provided by a symbol - those of Coca Cola, McDonalds and Marmite come to mind as examples!) and hopefully, on a minor scale, our own small symbol will provide an image for our group which will become increasingly recognised by those interested in the conservation of this aspect of our heritage.

NOTES AND QUERIES



Marker trees 'On Salisbury Plain are so many cross roads and so few homes to take directions from that Thomas, Earl of Pembroke, planted a tree at each milestone from Salisbury to Shaftesbury, for the travellers' guide'. So notes the 1889 *Haydn's Dictionary of Dates*. Laurence Dopson (Staffs.) wonders if any milestone trees are still on the road. Perhaps more trees should be planted by milestones to protect them from grass cutters.

A very fine fingerpost The photo (left) sent by Ralph Cousins (Hants) shows a magnificent fingerpost at the junction of Lichfield Road and Lanorton Road in Pelsall, West Midlands.

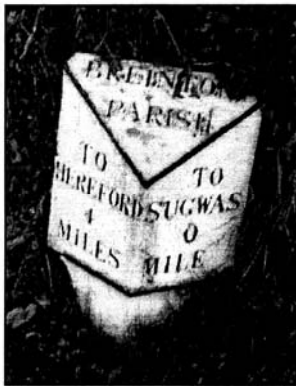
Staffs parcel posts? Careful perusal of old 6" OS maps (courtesy of *old-maps.co.uk*) shows various mileposts in Wolverhampton, writes Mike Faherty (Dorset). Apart from obvious turnpike stones there are posts shown for 'Queen's Square' (the town centre, presumably erected by the borough) and High Level Station (LNWR, now the city's station), and Low Level Station (GWR, now unused). One of the latter still stands on Cannock Road, A460, at SJ 9318 0132 (see photo right). The post's stem is



triangular, not V shaped and seems to have been cast in one with the shield-shaped top. John Higgins says there is a similar (legend, not style) post in Burton-on-Trent. Could they have something to do with estimation of parcel collection or delivery rates?

Obelisk toppled by Obelix! On a previous visit to Tong (Staffs.) to see the obelisk (SJ 7919 0911) Mike Faherty (Dorset) was surprised to see an empty plinth surrounded by mangled barriers. The landlady of the adjacent Bell explained sadly that it had been toppled by a lorry driver (French) and that Conservation thought it would be too expensive to repair. Well, it has been; the middle section of sandstone has been replaced, albeit with a stippled textured stone (perhaps to indicate that it is a replacement) and without distances. Not much help to a traveller now, but good to see it back in place.

Zero milestones This intriguing way of telling the traveller that he had arrived has prompted Jim Lawes (Heref.) to send a photo (see right) of the post at Sugwas, which also says that it is in Breinton Parish, and 4 miles from Hereford. This post was mentioned in NL5 p12, although not illustrated, and about another 15 with a zero mileage are known from around the country (see NL2 p.15, NL5 p.15, NL9 p.13). Perhaps an up-to-date list should be produced?



Further from London Christine Minto (Yorks) thinks the milestone outside the Sutherland Arms in Golspie has probably the greatest distance to London - 689 MLS (NL14 p.3). Further claims to fame may be the number of inscribed characters - 162 - perhaps only

topped by an inscription on an obelisk, the longest distance to anywhere in the British Isles - 777 to Lands End, and the total mileage recorded - 2206 - all to places in England and Scotland. For cast, raised characters on a milepost, one in South Yorkshire on the B6090 near Upper Haugh made by Brayshaw & Booth has a total of 159 plus 30 for the maker's name.

Skirethorns fingerpost (NL14 p4) Christine also reports that this fingerpost with an error in the OS grid reference has a newly cast halo and refurbished fingers. In this part of North Yorkshire that used to be the West Riding there are several of the original haloes still in situ. Not all are on the original posts and not all have original fingers. However several villages which still wish to remember their past in the WR have either had their post refurbished and/or new finials and fingers cast. A blacksmith in Settle who has also made new, similarly styled fingers and finials to indicate the Pennine Bridleway through the area, has done this work. But, Skirethorns is not the only one with reversed digits. The one at Hetton, the next village to Calendar Girls' Rylstone, has 962591 when it should be 692591.

Milestone accuracy Another comment from Christine on Donald Smith's account of checking time and distance by the milestones when walking along the old A1 (NL13 p5, NL14 p2). It is only 12 miles between Darlington and Richmond, not 17 as Donald thought. On this route there are only two mileposts left: Richmond

9/Darlington 3 is near Cleasby Grange, and Richmond 2/Darlington 10 is in Skeeby. The posts were made by F Mattison of Bedale and, surprisingly, the cast hands point the correct way. On many of their similar castings the hands were the wrong way round for the side of the road where they were placed. Another cast hand was fixed over the original. On the bevel of these triangular posts is cast RICHMOND/H.D. Probably erected at the same time there is, at 1 mile from Richmond, a similar post but it has RICHMOND/H.D on the bevel and left-hand side and RICHMOND/ BORO on the right.

Beware false stone! Whilst searching for AA signs in private hands Frank and Christine Minto (Yorks.) went up Imber Lane, Bratton in Wiltshire. A milestone was spotted inscribed SARUM 24 MLS. A few yards further on at the workshop where Tim Martin repairs cars and keeps his collection of 'interesting' things they found the Swallowcliffe AA sign. On leaving they decided to photograph the old milestone. Amid laughs, he admitted that he had made it himself! But it is about 24 miles across the now inaccessible Salisbury Plain.

A fine finial On the way to the Society's meeting in Battle, the editors spotted a fine finger post at the junction of the A21 and A268 in Flimwell (E. Sussex). The halo finial contained the outline of a fir tree with an A within it. Can anyone tell us what it signifies?

WHERE ARE THEY?

There was a very good response to the three puzzle pictures in NL14, most members finding information about the location of the LONDON/126/MILES post shown on p.32. John Digger (Derbys.) informs us that it stood in the Cornmarket in the centre of Derby. Until the construction of Derby's inner ring road in about 1972 this was the A6 London road. The shop Barlow & Taylor moved to new premises almost opposite, on Irongate/Market Place corner, in about 1924 and the firm closed in 1978. John doesn't know when the milepost disappeared. Both Alan Rosevear (Devon) and John Higgins (Staffs.) record that the London 123/Derby 3 bobbin post also made by Harrison of Derby exists at Alvaston, and Alan looked in the *Derby Telegraph* archives and found mention of someone joining Barlow & Taylor, gentlemen's outfitters, in the Market Place in 1926. Mervyn Benford (Oxon) comments that the post shown must have been in the centre of Derby because his photos of bobbin posts along the A6 main road show that the two distances on each, which together make the distance from London to Derby, add up to 126 miles. The one in the picture appears to claim London 126 - and presumably nothing else - in which case it may be the only one which doesn't have two distances thus placing it in the town itself. Philip Thomas (Derbys.) has sent a copy of a photo taken by Richard Keene in 1866 showing the milepost in Rotten Row before the widening of the area in about 1870. Sadly, the image would not reproduce well here. Philip thinks that the milepost was removed in 1939 and never put back. The next post north was, apparently, half a mile away and another, still in situ, on the road to Burton-on-Trent about half a mile south. Another from the north showing 4 miles to Duffield is in Derby's Industrial Museum.

Harvey Gould (Derbys.) thinks that the photo on p.32 in NL14 is another by Richard Keene. He writes that the area has now been pedestrianised and a lamp post is on the spot where the milepost once stood, but the archway to the right of the post is still there and leads to a small alleyway. He notes that early OS maps record the post and its London mileage at the spot the photograph shows.

The London 62/Chichester 8½ milestone shown in the Patterson sketch on the front cover could be on the present B2139 on the South Downs in W. Sussex about half a mile from the junction with the A29 top of Bury Hill, writes R Le Page (Surrey). It overlooks the Arun valley and Houghton and Amberley. Lionel Joseph (Surrey) suggests the road down to the Mardens from the Halting Downs, Sussex. All the Mardens are about 8½ miles from Chichester. Lionel remarks that puzzle pictures in magazines were common at the time and this may not represent an existing stone.

Obviously not many members get to Norfolk - a pity as the Norwich 5/Dereham 11 stone shown on p.5 is the only one of the three that survives. It stands on the former A47 (now bypassed) near the Royal Norfolk Showground at Costessey (pronounced Cossy!) on the old turnpike to Dereham and Swaffham. The scene today is very different, the milestone standing against a wooden fence and overhung by trees.

Thanks to all members who wrote in - and thanks again to Dave Twitchett for sending the original illustrations!

PARISH BOUNDARY STONES, PURTON, WILTS

Observant visitors to Purton in north Wiltshire can hardly fail to notice at least one of the splendid array of no less than 26 parish boundary stones, which must represent one of the largest such groupings associated with Millennium Year celebrations in 2000. Examples can be found on all the main road access points into and through the parish. Something similar was achieved more recently, with 12 stones newly created as part of a 'Beating the Bounds' project at Barnoldswick in Lancashire (see *On The Ground*, 4, p.26).

Armed with a Rural Action for the Environment grant, the working party steering the project started with 19 locations where the parish boundary crossed roads. They finished up with 17 on roadside verges and nine on footpath junctions. The project took seven years from 1996-2003, although all but four of the stones were in place by the end of Millennium Year. In one case the adjoining parish had changed some ten years before, requiring a late amendment. Other sites required more than the usual amount of permissions and environmental considerations. All remain in situ.

Each stone is inscribed PURTON PARISH 2000 with lower down the initials of the sponsors, so there is no mistaking their modernity. The adjoining parish name is inscribed either in full or as initials on the back on each stone. All this work was undertaken by Highworth Memorials, skilled in such matters. The range of sponsorship is itself of interest, a mix of local businesses and individuals, the

latter examples largely in memory of other family members, and a model perhaps for other communities to consider?

Only one earlier boundary stone survived (at SU 093913 on the B4041 Purton to Cricklade road); all other stones were newly acquired from a variety of sources including reclamation yards and antique centres. Some sources were especially interesting, one a gravestone of a horse struck by lightning on Haydon East Farm, and seven stones created from the staircase at the former Purton workhouse. Stone no. 26, at Blakehill nature reserve (SU 084915) had been the threshold stone from the Rehoboth Baptist Chapel in Prospect Hill in Swindon, dating from 1882.

A report, *Purton's Millennium Boundary Stones*, included a colour illustration and listing of each site, with the sponsors standing proudly by their respective stone. Thanks to Dr Eric Tull, President of Purton Historical Society, who cycles round the parish and keeps an eye on all the stones, and via our member Peter Roberts of Cirencester for the loan of the report to compile this note.

David Viner (Glos)

DON'T TRUST THE OS MAP

The Ordnance Survey maps are wonderful things and an essential aid to the milestone worker. They show the position of milestones with remarkable precision, but they do not record what is written on them, even if it looks as if they do. Let me explain.

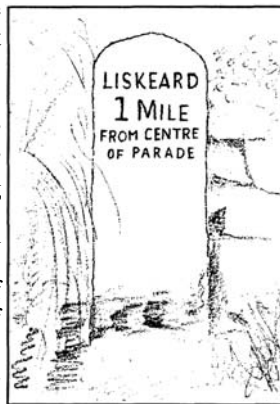
I have been using OS maps as part of my evidence when applying to English Heritage for Grade II listing of Cornish milestones. I was amazed by the digital mapping on the County Council's computers, which could superimpose the First edition 6" OS map from 1881 on a modern map to give an exact fit for the location of a milestone shown on both maps. A ten figure grid reference matched the location on both maps and could also match the location of the same milestone on the Second edition 6" OS map from 1905.

I had a problem with a milestone on the B3254. EH rejected my listing application at first, because the 1905 map recorded '*Launceston 12³/₄, Liskeard 3'* beside the '*M.S.*' symbol, while my photograph of the milestone showed it to read '*LISKEARD 3'*'. They argued that it had been defaced, the Launceston distance had been removed, so it was not of national historic importance. I appealed to DCMS, arguing that the information on the OS map was not conclusive proof of the inscription on the milestone and that they had failed to give due consideration to the supporting evidence I had supplied. My appeal was successful and the milestone was put forward for more detailed consideration for listing.

I wanted to look more carefully at the map evidence and called on the help of OS expert, Richard Oliver. His research at the British Library compared 1881 and 1905 OS 6" maps for the Liskeard 3 milestone and its neighbours. The 1881 map recorded '*LISKEARD 3'*', '*LISKEARD 2'*' and '*LISKEARD 1'*', while the 1905 map had '*Launceston 12³/₄, Liskeard 3'*', '*Launceston 13³/₄, Liskeard 2'*' and '*Launceston 14³/₄, Liskeard 1'*' for the same three milestones. For the map information to be the

correct recording of OS field surveys of the inscriptions, the milestones must have been altered between 1881 and 1905, with the addition of the distance to Launceston. But my study of the actual milestone showed no evidence of defacing. Liskeard 3 had never shown a distance to Launceston. It could be argued that this was a post-1905 milestone, replacing the one recarved with the distance to Launceston, but study of the milestones at Liskeard 2 and Liskeard 1 show the OS maps do not record the inscription, but give 'relevant distance information'.

'LISKEARD 2' or 'Launceston 13³/₄, Liskeard 2' is actually inscribed 'L 2' in huge antique letters with a very curly 2. In 1770, the Liskeard Turnpike Trust added a new stretch of road from 'Lux Street (in Liskeard) to Crattick Ford' two miles away on the Launceston road (10 GIII C/LXXXVII). Crattick Ford is the parish boundary. Next to the 'L 2' milestone is a stone with a large 'B' on it. 'L 2' is an original turnpike trust milestone and could never be mistaken for a post 1905 replacement. 'LISKEARD 1' or 'Launceston 14³/₄, Liskeard 1' is a listed milestone. If you look on Images of England under 382240 you will see it described as 'Probably early C19. Painted round-headed monolith inscribed: LISKEARD/1 MILE/FROM CENTRE/OF PARADE.' Unfortunately, this milestone is no longer in place, but there is a milestone (see drawing right) identical in description on the B3254 one mile south of Liskeard, a road established under the same Act of Parliament by the Liskeard Turnpike Trust in 1770; Carol Haines notes another 'LISKEARD 1 MILE FROM THE CENTRE OF PARADE' in her book *Marking the Miles* (p.42).



Located at SX245633 on the B3254, south of Liskeard. This is identical to listed milestone 1 mile north on Images of England Website.

From these three examples, and from many, many more throughout Cornwall, I conclude that the OS early maps give valuable information about the location of milestones, but they do not attempt to give an accurate record of the inscription.

Ian Thompson (Cornwall)

MILESTONES IN EDINBURGH AND THE LOTHIANS: PART 2

In NL14 (pp. 14-16) roads running mostly east and south from Edinburgh were dealt with. Several roads radiate from the west end of Princes Street or thereabouts. On the A702 to Biggar, milestones 2, 3, and 4 are extant. The first two are unremarkable, but the third, in the fork between the A702 and A703 at Hillend, is a nice one (see Fig. 1 on next page), well painted when I photographed it, with a neat kerb round it, though I haven't seen it for some years. Again, the distances seem rather too great to be measured from the west end of Princes Street.

About half-a-mile west of Princes Street is Haymarket, where there is a big road junction. The southerly branch, Dairy Road, has a rather eroded stone, a mile

from the west end of Princes Street; the distance to Edinburgh is shown as 1 mile, but the distance to Glasgow is not clear. Shortly after, the road forks, the more southerly branch being the A70 Lanark Road, on which the first stone, a mile from Haymarket, is a corroded stone in the wall of the Caledonian Brewery. Further out, there are a couple of milestones 5 and 6 miles from 'Edinburgh', although it is not clear from where in Edinburgh. The other branch is the ATI Kilmarnock Road, on which there seem to be no milestones until the little settlement of Hermiston, on the edge of Edinburgh; this has now been bypassed by the main road, which no doubt accounts for the survival of this stone.



Fig. 1

Going back to Haymarket, the A8 Glasgow road leads west, and has a complete set of fine milestones of a distinctive design, measured from the west end of Princes Street. The one at Corstorphine (Fig. 2) is particularly noteworthy, being on two levels, and set into a modern bank building. Further out, past the airport near Ratho Station, is another stone of a different type, evidently defaced during the war.



Fig. 2

The old A9 to Linlithgow and the north used to branch off from the A8 on the edge of Edinburgh until it was cut in two when the airport runway was extended across the line of the road. The 1" Ordnance Survey map of 1965 shows various milestones and mileposts on this route. The one between the airport and Kirkliston, on the truncated section of this road, is still there, but I have not had a chance to look for any others.



Fig. 3

Finally, the A90 Queensferry Road heads north-west out of Edinburgh towards South

Queensferry and the Forth Road Bridge. Within the city boundary, this has a complete series of massive cylindrical milestones with domed tops (Fig. 3), which were presumably once painted with the distances to various places, but are now

completely bare. Again, the distances are presumably measured from the west end of Princes Street.

Adrian Sumner (East Lothian)

ANGLO-SAXON WARRIOR MILE MARKERS

The 200 mile National Cycle Route 45 from Salisbury to Chester passes through five counties and the section from the Worcestershire/Shropshire border in the Wyre Forest near Bewdley northwards that crosses the ancient kingdom of Mercia associated with King Offa is known as the Mercian Way. To commemorate this past history, a mile marker in the form of an Anglo Saxon warrior has been designed by the potter Owen Thorpe of Priestweston in Shropshire and to date ten have been installed with a further two in the planning stages. These black painted four foot high iron warriors were cast at the James W Shenton works in Tipton with Blists Hill producing the attached distance plates showing the mileages to Bewdley and Chester. A further small bronze plate acknowledges the generous financial contributions of various authorities. The warriors are located at the start and finish of the Way and at various key locations along the route. These include two near Whitchurch, two at each end of the Ironbridge Gorge and at Bridgnorth, Chelmarsh, Hampton Loade and by the new bridge over the river Severn at the Alverley/Highley Country Park. Alan Scaplehorn (Worcs.) has sent the above history of the posts, and the photo was sent in by Rodney Marshall (Beds.).



ROEHAMPTON UPPING BLOCK AND MILESTONE

Having heard of a mounting block/milestone at Tibbets Corner (A3) West Hill I searched the area around the present day underpass several times, all to no avail. I had received an old photograph which purported to be the stone situated in West Hill, Wandsworth and seemingly by a garden wall. With that photograph was the information that it was mentioned in *Kingston Then and Now* (1977) as being near Beverley Bridge some 1.6 miles west of Tibbets Corner on the boundary of Roehampton and Kingston.

This confusion led me to enquire of the Heritage Officer at Wandsworth who kindly sent me copies of two illustrated newspaper cuttings from *Daily Chronicle* (14.12.1921) and *Wandsworth Borough News* (27.1.1922). They tell of an old mounting block, which formerly served as a milestone on the London-Portsmouth road in Putney Vale (now called Roehampton Vale) near Beverley Brook. It had been built into a wall of a barn which was being demolished behind the Spread

Eagle Hotel in Wandsworth. Manning and Bray, historians of the time writing in 1814, mention it as standing at the foot of the hill going from Putney Heath to Kingston and there is legend that it was set up by Thomas Nuthall, of Roehampton in 1654. The original inscription was: FROM LONDON/TOWNE TO/PORTSE DOWNE/THEY SAYE/TIS MYLS THREE SCORE/OUT OF 4 TEAMS I/TOOKE 5 HORSE AND/LEFT THEM 5 IN 4/WITH WHICH I SENT/YOU UP THIS STONE/... NOT MORE

When Mr. Johnson was writing his history of Wimbledon Common in 1911 he could learn nothing of the stone's whereabouts, but Mr Dixon, who recognised the stone in the demolished barn, displayed it at his nurseries on West Hill in 1921. By then only part of the legend was readable.

Lionel Joseph (Surrey)

INVASION THREAT IS OVER!

In Cornwall, the ordinance of 30 May 1940 resulted in milestones being pushed over and buried, to be re-erected once peace was declared. But in one corner of the county the locals went a step further to confuse Mr Hitler. The milestones at two adjacent crossroads between Fowey and Looe were moved so far from their true locations that only now have they been restored. The stone from Bake Cross had been used as a gatepost, hidden from public view in a farmyard in Pelynt. The stone from Longcross had made its way to Polperro, where it stood halfway up a hill, not at a road junction, pointing nowhere.

In 2003 a talk was given to Looe Old Cornwall Society. Afterwards a



*Restored stone at Bake Cross
(SX 187546)*

member of the audience mentioned the milestone in the farmyard. The Milestone Society began negotiating with the farmer about a replacement gatepost, which the Society found through work on the A30 dual carriageway scheme, and sorting out planning consent with the District Council. In February Steve Ewing, Cornwall CC Divisional Surveyor, wrote to me as county representative saying that the milestones at Bake Cross and at Longcross had

been reinstated (see photos, left and right, respectively).



*Restored stone at
Longcross (SX 184530)*

When painted they make clear the spelling, mixture of lettering and forward planning of the mason who carved them originally!

The large number of more or less similar milestones between Looe and Fowey emphasises the importance of this route in the past. In the 17th century this was *the* road to the west from London, one of the six principal roads of England as defined by the Post Office at the time. If you are in Cornwall it is worth exploring the little roads between Looe and Fowey. There are some milestone treasures hidden here, but you will need to look hard to find them.

Ian Thompson (Cornwall)

FROM ANTIQUE SHOP TO MUSEUM

When friends from Basingstoke visited Honiton they found an unexpected souvenir of home whilst rooting around an antique shop: an iron plate of, what was to be later identified as, the Common Seal of the Town of Basingstoke in the County of Southampton complete with St Michael slaying a dragon (clearly a different dragon from that bothering St George). Subsequent local publicity indicated that the plate had come from a boundary stone; in particular, a local historian had recorded a conversation in 1935 with a then old inhabitant who recollected when a boy Beating the Bounds round the stones, and he knew of six stones, three with plates, still then surviving in the very rural Manor of Up Nately (Basingstoke Council was Lord of the Manor).

Examination of the 6":1 mile OS 1873 map and revisions produced sites for 39 stones - 29 around the town and ten around Up Nately with two of the latter still shown on the current Explorer map, although one appears incorrectly positioned. A survey of those sites still accessible - some now being under buildings or roads - found none remaining. However, the publicity did bring to light a stone complete with plate being safeguarded on a nearby estate. That is being exhibited by Basingstoke's Milestones Museum. The Honiton plate is now displayed in the town's own museum.

Colin Williams (Hants.)

AN AA SIGN AND PETROL PRICES FROM ANOTHER AGE

On the harbour front in St. Mawes, Cornwall on the wall of an old and now closed garage is an AA sign which I photographed as recently as September 2007. However, it hung only by its upper nail, screw or whatever and so, on a rather windy day, was flapping a bit. As I thought it might get lost or stolen, I tried to find the person living in the flat above, but to no avail, and nor did an adjacent shop staff member know a lot about who should be informed and asked to secure it. The garage still has two very old Shell petrol pumps standing outside with petrol priced on one at 2s 1d a gallon and the other at 2s 3d. Both say 'sold out.' Happy memory! There are also two slightly more modern Shellmex types but they are almost antiques now. It makes a nice photo!

Mervyn Benford (Oxon)

[A photo of the sign and petrol pump appeared in Heritage Today (March 2008) - see illustration on the right. English Heritage is trying to track down surviving examples of old filling stations. Eds.]



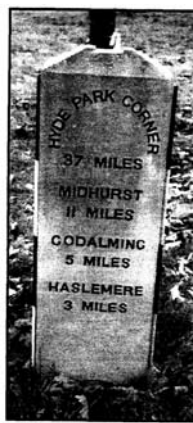
CHICHESTER ROAD RAGE

I suppose that happenings in the turnpike era have sometimes affected this present day, but local to me there is a classic case, and it involves large sums of money. The London to Portsmouth turnpike followed an ancient route that ran across a high spot near the Surrey/Hampshire border near Hindhead. From each side it was a heavy climb for horse-drawn vehicles and at the highest point was the start of the Chichester turnpike. Over the years traffic from Chichester avoided the climb and chose a route through Petworth. A route that followed the lower ground was therefore proposed, so the Chichester turnpike left the Portsmouth road at Mousehill, nowadays Milford, through to Haslemere and a mile beyond at Carpenters Green, nowadays Camelsdale, and picked up the old route from Hindhead. The plan was to construct a road from there to pick up the Portsmouth route near Milland Church. However this plan was thwarted by a local Lord of the Manor, land owner, and Iron Master by the name of Butler. This area was at the western end of the wealden iron industry and so this man, not wishing to pay tolls for the transport of iron products and charcoal for fuel, had sufficient power to put paid to the scheme. If it had gone ahead the traffic over Hindhead would have dwindled over the coming years this lower route would have been upgraded, and part of it did get built but not as a turnpike, and not a through road.



Haslemere High St.
(SU905329)

With many bypasses the Portsmouth road has become dual carriageway from London to Portsmouth except that section in Surrey across much that is common land across Hindhead, and with today's traffic has become a major bottleneck. Now a new landowner in the form of the National Trust has got its way in claiming the common is of outstanding natural beauty and that part of the Portsmouth road that now crosses the common is being buried in a massive tunnel. How things change; William Cobbett in his *Rural Rides* thought it a villainous spot. The first part of the Chichester Turnpike to Haslemere fell



Upper Birtley
(SU929369)

into decay and its route is difficult to follow, but the newer section from Milford is the present-day A286 and many of its milestones survive (see photos on previous page), some in good condition, but this is not always the case as the road heads south towards Midhurst and Chichester.

Peter Le Page (Surrey)

TO REPAIR OR REPLACE?

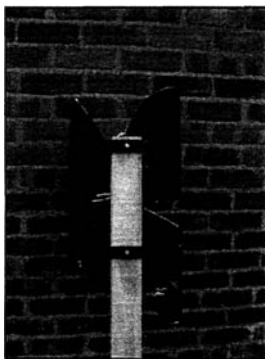
Good series of cast mileposts survive on the verges of the A458 and A442 and one in particular close to the entrance to Dudmaston seemed to welcome visitors to the park. Then one day, noticing it had vanished, I stopped the car and collected the road kill. With the help of Harley Thomas, then Head of the Historic Environment Team at Shropshire County Council and amateur metal detectorist Wally Berry, we recovered a steel cutter from a farm implement and enough fragments of the milepost to make up about two-thirds of it. The legend still visible on the fragments is shown in **BOLD** in the following, the non-bold characters being surmised from a consideration of other posts in the series: TO LONDON 133 MILES/TO **BRID_3**/TO **KID_10**/FOSTER RASTRICK & Co **STOURBRIDGE**.

That was back in 2001. I offer no excuses for the years of limbo when so many members of this Society have in the meantime had scores of mileposts



repaired and refer to this one only because of the interesting philosophical conundrum offered by having just two-thirds of the original. If it had been entirely lost, or even if only a fragment of the original had survived, one would have gone for a new replacement.

At two thirds we felt that there was enough of the historic item to keep, but two-thirds isn't quite enough to hold together, not as say three-quarters might



be. So the solution was to mount the re-assembled fragments on an oak post (see photos), to which it is held with discreet steel straps and bolts. The result looks awkward and I make no apologies for that, for it does dramatically demonstrate both how vulnerable are our milestones and how much they are valued.

The total cost of reassembly, preparation, painting and mounting over an oak post to provide strength and support, together with welding rods, coach screws and labour, came to £254.65 which cost was borne by the County. I am grateful to Alan Reade, the Shropshire County representative, for organising the re-assembly and to Cyril Gittins of the National Trust's Estate Yard at Attingham, for the conservation. Thanks are also due to Brian Bennett, the new Divisional Surveyor

with Shropshire County Highways, for honouring his predecessor's (Ian Holland's) promise to defray the cost.

Jeremy Milln (Salop)

TRUST TERMINUS STONES IN DEVON

Several of the Turnpike Trusts in the county of Devon opted for the use of so called terminus stones to mark the limit of their responsibility for road repairs. Although nowadays quite rare there are nonetheless a number of these remarkable artefacts still surviving at the roadside. Most recently one inscribed with the legend 'Here/Ends/the/Exeter/ Trust' was discovered by Dick Passmore on the old pre-1820s road between the city and Chudleigh at Dunchideock, a road that passes through the very heart of Haldon Forest. Another of the Exeter stones can be seen in Crockernwell on the old A30 road to Cornwall. Here there are three Turnpike stones set in a wall at a point where the road passed over from the city to the town of Okehampton.

The Okehampton Turnpike Trust made use of large terminus stones on all of their roads and there is a good example of a surviving marker at Thorndon Cross on the road to Holsworthy some four miles from the town (see illustration left). In South Devon there are examples from the Torquay and Dartmouth Trust still extant at Brixham Quay (see postcard 17) and low down in a wall in East Street, Newton Abbot. The Teignmouth and Dawlish Turnpike have two such stones, one outside the town's museum and another on the A379 to Exeter at Blackheath Cross just beyond the Powderham Pound tollhouse, where the road passed over to the Exeter Trust.

The ongoing discovery of these stones continues to help with our understanding of the various Turnpike Trusts' remit for responsibility of roads in the county during the late 18th and 19th centuries.

Tim Jenkinson (Devon)

'BOW BELLS' MILEPOSTS

At the Society's May meeting, held at Battle in Sussex, a question was posed to me that the last 'bell' on the plates of the A22 mileposts did not appear to be much like a bell! As my thoughts were elsewhere at the time I suggested one cause might be loose sand in the mould being washed, by the molten metal, into the impression within the mould which could result in that effect. Driving home my mind turned to the horticultural aspect. Charles Harper in the *CTC Gazette* in September 1924 dismissed the 'Bow Bells' as myth, saying the decoration was a swag based on



Garrya Catkins and, inset, a detail of a Hepplewhite chair

Garrya elliptica. Such a swag would be in a stylised form much as the stylised acanthus leaf in Greek architecture (see illustration provided by L. J.).

Garrya is an ornamental shrub sometimes known as the silk tassel bush. The grey-green flowers or catkins are up to nine inches long in a male plant and somewhat shorter and less spectacular in a female plant. The catkins are closed up tightly in early life and open out during flowering, so the stylised version would follow that form and thus the last would not appear looking like a 'bell'.

Delving into its use as a swag in the furniture trade, the stylised form appears on a Hepplewhite satinwood chair c.1785 illustrated in a book on English furniture by Cescinsky and Hunter (1929) (see illustration). Another chair in mahogany of the Chinese Chippendale School 1755 is similarly adorned, and both are identical in form to the style

seen on the A22 mileposts. In addition, a veneer merchant Crispin & Co, Curtain Road, London EC1 is said to have advertised 'Garrya swags' in birch or mahogany in their 1930s catalogue. These most likely would have been made by stamp cutting the shape and compressing the wood into a die all in one single process, the result being glued in place on the item of furniture and stained to match the timber in use. This would have been far cheaper than hand carving. Many of the headings seen on furniture made in the early part of the 20th century were made by this mechanical process for the mass production of furniture.

My practical mind leaves me in little doubt that the 'Bow Bells' tag is a myth if only for the fact that the Sussex mileposts follow on correctly from the Surrey stones, engraved 'Cornhill' and from London Bridge. Bow church is a quarter of a mile further in distance than the Cornhill datum point.

Lionel Joseph (Surrey)

The problem with *Garrya* The genus *Garrya* consists of 14 New World species' according to Dr Wayne Shepperd, an American silviculturist. It was first discovered by the Scottish plant hunter David Douglas in 1826 and named in honour of Nicholas Garry, first secretary of the Hudson Bay Company.

It is generally thought that the Bow Bells mileposts were made in the late 18th century, presumably before *Garrya* was known in this country. Was some other plant therefore used as a model by the posts' makers and by Chippendale? Frank Bunce, in 'The Rebus Stones of Sussex' (*The Home Owner*, No.105 (1961)) includes a photo of the 35 mile post at Wych Cross which clearly shows the figure of a man hanging from the lowest bell. He suggests it was to mark the site of a gibbet. The design of the 'extra' 35-mile post near Wych Cross is supposed to depict a classical stylised honeysuckle (an anthemion) according to Austin and Upton in their survey of East Sussex milestones (*Sussex Industrial History*,

1972/73). Perhaps this was continuing a botanical theme, but we need to find another model for the bells.

Carol Haines (Norfolk)

WALTON BRIDGE TOLLHOUSE: DEMOLITION

An historic tollhouse at Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, is to be demolished as part of a scheme to build a new bridge, despite the Milestone Society's objection to the planning application. The tollhouse, on the Middlesex side of the River Thames at Lower Halliford, Shepperton, is a much-altered survivor from an earlier bridge and is marked on early 19th-century OS maps. Tolls ceased to be collected in 1869 and the building was then adapted for agricultural or residential purposes. Much of its original appearance has been lost, but its double-hipped roof form and position aligning with remnants of the old bridge approach remain distinctive (see illustration right by the contributor). Surviving Thames Bridge tollhouses are very rare as they were mostly removed following the abolition of tolls; there is another one remaining on the Middlesex side of Hampton Court Bridge which has been incorporated into the Mitre Hotel.

The Society lodged an objection with Spelthorne Borough Council, suggesting that the alignment of the new bridge should be altered slightly to enable the tollhouse to be kept and sympathetically restored. However, Surrey County Council approved the scheme in a planning decision dated 5



Walton Bridge Toll Cottage

March 2008. The Society's objection was successful to a limited extent, in so far as that prior to its demolition the building and its foundations will be carefully recorded and a report lodged for posterity at Surrey County Council's Sites and Monuments Record, and at the National Monuments Record Centre in Swindon.

There have been several bridges over the Thames at Walton, the first in 1750 which lasted about 30 years; the second late 18th-century bridge lasted until 1859, when it collapsed. The third bridge was built in 1863, not long before the abolition of tolls. It was severely damaged by bombing in the Second World War, with the fourth 'temporary' bridge then being built alongside. The new replacement bridge has been talked about for over 20 years, and should provide an elegant structure, in contrast to the present one, which is arguably the ugliest bridge on the River Thames.

The early bridges to Walton provided prosperity for the locality, as the roads in that part of Surrey were very poorly maintained, in contrast to those on the other side of the River Thames where the roads between London and Windsor were

well maintained because of their use by the Royal Family. Only two milestones referring to Walton seem to have survived. These are both 18th-century monuments. The obelisk on Richmond Bridge gives 8¾ miles to Walton amongst other destinations. The other is the famous 'White Lady' column at Esher, which again with other destinations, gives 5 miles to Walton Bridge. Both confirm the importance in the 18th century of the new route across the Thames opened up by the then recently-constructed toll bridge.

Colin Woodward (Middlesex)

MORE AA SIGN NEWS

Alan Sutton reports that the Gillingham (Dorset) sign is in their museum (see NL14, p. 17). Mike Faherty has found a new one in Chedington (Dorset) although it has two 'd's on the plate. Norman Tipping has sent photos taken in 2004 of five in Ireland. They are at Westport (Mayo), Newmarket (Cork), Duncormick (Wexford) and Lissycasey and Kilnihil (in private hands) in Clare. Maurice Barrett in Dublin has sent a photo of one at Inistiogue (Kilkenny).

Welsh AA signs: I have reports of Blaenporth, 8 miles ENE of Cardigan (at Betws Ifan?), Abersychon (Monmouth) and New Mills (Montgomery). If anybody visits these areas I'd be pleased to hear whether they are *in situ* or not. In Scotland, the small private museum in Newton Stewart has the sign from Knowe on the B7027 to the north of the town. Why is there a sign in this hamlet? Now there seems to be only two cottages although there is a derelict partly demolished larger building that may have been a hotel.

Christine Minto (Yorks.)

PROGRESSING THE NORFOLK DATABASE - A major initial aim of the Milestone Society was to collect data on all of the existing milestones in the UK with at least two photographs of each marker, a close up and a second one illustrating its location. A data sheet was prepared which indicated the information required that could be entered either on site (construction material, dimensions, legends, etc. and, most importantly, its OS grid reference, preferably measured by GPS) or off site (local authority, turnpike trust, etc.). This information is entered into a Microsoft Excel database, and this is combined with similar Excel files from other the counties to form the National Database. The latter database now contains information on the majority of extant milemarkers. This collection of data represents the most valuable resource of the Society and the ability to search it for specific information is one of its most important and valuable features.

An ultimate goal would be to make all of this information and corresponding photographs readily available to the general public. A given entry should allow recovery of the relevant milemarker photos through a link to its JPG files and along with the OS grid reference would allow its location to be pinpointed, and thus its position noted on a suitable map. In fact this has already been achieved by the Yorkshire group for their region with the help of external funding (see <http://www.yorkshire-milestones.co.uk>), and it is a good example of how the

Society's data collection might best be presented. A major problem with extending this approach to the whole collection is one of cost and time, in particular scanning in photos in a suitable digital format where such photos are not already available. Our realisation that it was unlikely that the Yorkshire initiative could be repeated for the whole database in the foreseeable future, prompted us to attempt a move in this direction by a simple addition of two columns to our existing Norfolk Excel database, with the view of producing a CD rom which would allow access to similar information. This could be of use, for example, to local councils and highway authorities. An added advantage of this method is that *all* of the information in the database would be available, rather than the more limited data that can be obtained by the current internet based procedure.

The two extra columns are named 'Click for Picture' and 'Click for Map', the first column containing a milestone number within the Norfolk series (eg NO/123) and the second one the number of a map giving the road outline for the relevant section of highway and the position of the milestone in question. Access to the pictures and maps is by the use of hyperlinks to the relevant files, which are stored within the same folder as the Excel file. Thus, to the JPG file of a milemarker photo, scanned at 200 dpi and scaled to be no larger than 150k, and from within the Excel programme, a hyperlink is created from the new cell in the relevant row corresponding to the milemarker entry. Clicking on this cell will produce the required picture and similarly, a hyperlink is made to the JPG file of the map which indicates the position of the marker on the road.

By this simple means the value of the database at the county level can be upgraded, the major expenditure of time being that required to scan the photos, which in our view should be of restricted file size (and not the enormous files produced directly by modern digital cameras). At a future date, an amalgamation of all such databases could be made, giving realistic download times and storage requirements on an Internet Service Provider. With our present arrangement, the memory requirement for Norfolk's *ca.* 350 milemarkers is less than 100 Mb.

Alan Haines (Norfolk)

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY GROUPS

Bedfordshire - Michael Knight is continuing to spread the word, and is giving the following talks: 28 July, Cherry Hinton (Cambs.); 26 Aug., Biggleswade (Beds.); 2 Sept., Buckden (Hunts.); 2 Oct., Pertenhall (Beds.); 14 Oct., Northill (Beds.); 4 Nov., Alconbury (Hunts.); 5 Nov., Flore (Northants.); 12 Nov., p.m. Cottingham (Northants), eve. Market Harborough (Leics.). For further information contact Michael.

Cheshire - Details of a milestone restoration at Adlington have been sent in by John Langdill. A new metal plate for the stone on the A523 was cast using others in the series as a model. Full details and photographs will be included in OTG5.

Cumbria - Colin Smith reports: Cumbria only has a handful of members who are spread over a wide geographical area so group activities are not practical. It mainly relies on individual members to get things done. Requests for talks continue to

come as a result of our Penrith to Keswick Milestone Restoration Project with sales of our postcards and booklet going steadily. Talks in Greystoke, Appleby and Keswick have taken place over the past few months.

We have made representations to Cumbria CC reminding them of their obligations regarding the care and maintenance of the 300 plus milestones in the county. It has not carried out any planned work on them for many years - a matter that we have pointed out. Whilst we did receive a reply from the Chief Executive congratulating us on our work he offered little hope of any funds being available to change things. It is a matter made all the more poignant as we currently have three bypasses under construction by three different construction companies on behalf of CCC. The level of briefing about milestones to these companies is something that concerns us. One cast iron milepost has disappeared without trace. Another has been removed and put in a secure place - to be replaced, we have been informed, when work is completed on the bypass. We are keeping our eyes open regarding the third bypass.

Cornwall - Ian Thompson reports that the first 90 applications for Grade II listed building status for Cornish milestones were sent to English Heritage in 2007. Of these, 6 were already listed, 3 disappeared during the listing application process and 18 have been listed. Monthly updates are sent to our man in Cornwall by EH in Bristol to reassure him that progress is being made. New applications continue to be written. All are being recorded in detail by Cornwall CC on their Historic Environment Record (HER) which is to be cross-referenced to the digital map system employed by the county's road engineers.

An overgrown milestone has been cleared of undergrowth, and two milestones hit by traffic have been re-erected near Callington. All three milestones have been re-painted. Following the work of a Cornwall CC Single Issue Panel, a Pilot Study has been set up by the Council in St Endellion Parish and in Breage and Germoe Parishes. The Milestone Society has sent details of milestones in these two areas. In particular there is a granite guidepost with a rectangular capstone in St Endellion Parish, which may be linked to the will of Hender Molesworth in 1731, and in Breage Parish there is one of a series of late 19th century milestones that has lost its cast iron plates. It is hoped that the Pilot Study team will be able to investigate ways of providing replacement plates.

The Highways Agency contractor in Cornwall, Accord, has refurbished all the milestones on the A38 trunk road between Saltash and Bodmin. The work was undertaken when the road was closed during the night through the winter and early spring of 2008. Plans are at an early stage to continue this work on the A30 trunk road in 2009 and 2010. The contractor has appointed an Environmental Specialist who is liaising with the Milestone Society on this project. The Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project is moving towards the stage when things may start to be done on the ground! Several milestones and some early guidestones are to be refurbished. One of Bodmin Moor's unique granite fingerposts is to be "re-armed". The area is part of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site, where the mineral railway has its own granite milestones, and there is a canal road and a canal guidestone in the area.

Devon - County representative Tim Jenkinson reports that the new Devon postcard (No. 17) depicting nine images of mile markers across the county is now available and is proving popular locally. So far this year several 'new' milestones have been discovered as a result of a series of talks at various local history groups. Devon is fortunate to have several members who regularly give talks on related subjects giving an opportunity to explain the Society's objectives and recruit new members. Roads continue to be surveyed and milestones and boundary markers are being added to the national database, including those on the unclassified road between Bratton Fleming and Barnstaple which retains all but one of its six milestones marked with distances to 'BARUM', the Medieval Latin name for the town.

Resurfacing work on the east-bound A3 8 at Haldon Hill will necessitate the moving of an 1820s Exeter marker. The contractors and Devon CC have contacted Tim to discuss options and the stone, 7 miles from the city, will be moved a few feet back from the road edge to ensure its protection. Two boundary stones in Plymouth have been reinstated after member Mark Fenlon reported their disappearance to Plymouth City Council (PCC). The stones, which date from mid-to late-19th century, are part of an extensive series along the city streets. They mysteriously disappeared during building work and Mark liaised with PCC over their recovery and reinstatement.

An old tollhouse in South Brent on the old A38 between Exeter and Plymouth is under threat of demolition to improve access to a housing development. A nearby milestone and county bridge 'C' stone are also at risk, but the future of these markers seems more assured. South Brent Parish Council is liaising with developers and authorities including DCC, DNPA and the Milestone Society to see if the tollhouse can be saved. A milestone at Torcross on the A379 between Kingsbridge and Dartmouth has been uncovered from a bank at Slapton Sands. For many years just the top of the stone was visible, but recently someone has taken the time to dig it right out of the bank.

Norfolk - Carol Haines reports: I have given the Society publicity in a talk on Street Furniture to the Norfolk Industrial Archaeology Society, and in an interview, mostly about where milestones were measured from, for BBC Radio Essex.

An early road sign has been found on Coast Road, Overstrand. The stout grey post is topped by a solid red disc, as authorised for prohibition signs after the 1903 Motor Car Act. It now supports a modern neighbourhood watch sign. Early 20th-century maps show that the easternmost part of the road had not yet fallen into the sea, so what its original sign prohibited is unknown.

After giving up in frustration at trying, without success, to get the Thetford 4 milestone put back at Bridgham on the A11, a further attempt is to be made. The stone is lying 4 miles away where it was dumped during road works some years ago.

Oxfordshire - Negotiations are under way between local authorities and the Milestone Society to try to restore the ancient milestone on the Iffley road in Oxford. An Act of Elizabeth I gave the upkeep of roads for a mile beyond the gates of Oxford to the care of the townspeople and markers were later put up to denote the boundary where the parishes took over the upkeep. Four stones dated 1667

survive. The Iffley stone is Grade II listed but is in poor condition, being cracked and the legend not easily read.

Somerset - At the group's spring meeting the safety aspect of repainting milestones was discussed. Somerset Highways cite The New Roads & Street Works Act 1991 which requires a certificated person to oversee work in more dangerous places. They would, however, allow work in other locations by people in yellow jackets with someone acting as look-out, and armed with a copy of the Society's insurance certificate.

Janet Dowding reported that a mileplate had been made and replaced in the Box Bridge area of Bathford Parish. Two milestones thought to be missing had now been found. Their plates had become so rusty that they blended with the surroundings and had become almost invisible. Janet had been approached by a freelance writer who wished to write an article for *Somerset Life* on the county's milestones; she has sent him information. On 5 May the group took part in the Somerset Heritage Roadshow in the grounds of Glastonbury Abbey. Our table display proved very successful, with many Society leaflets taken and interest shown in our milestone and tollhouse photos. Useful contacts were also made with other heritage organisations, and particularly with local Somerset museums.

Staffordshire - In his January Newsletter, John Higgins praises Staffs CC for their excellent working relationship with the group. All milestones in the county have been given a Primary Record Number, which may in future become the main source of information about monuments nationwide. John has received lists of fingerposts from some district councils and is finding more. A booklet on Staffs milestones is being compiled. There has been thanks for members' work on repainting milestones, and a cheque for £25 from the Eccelian Society (dedicated to the preservation of historical Eccleshall) in recognition of repainting their mileposts. The April 2008 group newsletter reports the find of several more milestones in the county, just when John thought the list was complete! At a group meeting the topic of producing a Staffs milestone website was discussed, and also the possibility of producing a county postcard. John and David will be repainting mileposts around Stafford borough this summer. David has produced a small leaflet appealing for information on missing mileposts and has distributed to some pubs. John has given several talks and has received information on former milestone sites.

Surrey - Fifteen people gathered in Send Manor on 12 April for a group meeting, including 3 other county representatives: John Nicholls (Essex), Colin Woodward (Middx.), and Terry Keegan (Worcs.), reports Janet Dowding. The loss of Bow Bells milestone 48 from the A26 near Barcombe (Sussex) was reported, along with the impending loss of Walton Bridge tollhouse which is to be demolished to widen the bridge. Janet has obtained details of Grade II listed milestones from the Surrey History Centre, and for those in the part of Surrey now in Greater London from English Heritage. From the Surrey History Centre she also has details of several vanished tollhouses. Only three existing ones are listed, possibly because the others have been too altered over time.

The problems of producing a Surrey postcard were discussed, and after Terry offered to produce a mock-up, it was agreed to approach a few museums etc.

to gauge possible interest. Terry then gave a lively talk to fire up members' enthusiasm!

Worcestershire - The group's Newsletters report that it is hoped to continue replating the milestones on the Worcester to Bradley Green road. Once this is achieved, they can move on to a similar project on the Worcester to Upton-on-Severn road. A previously unrecorded stone has been found near Martley. Nine talks had been arranged in the first half of the year. Graham Stanton's expertise on historic road signs has been called for by a film company needing to authenticate 1960s signs for a film they are shooting in north-east England.

The group had a stand at the Worcestershire Local History Fair in Kidderminster in February which generated much interest, information and talk bookings. The pieces of a Bradley stone near Himbleton which had been knocked into a ditch some years ago have been retrieved using much spade work and Connie Swann's metal detector to find the broken plate. A replacement plate is to be cast.

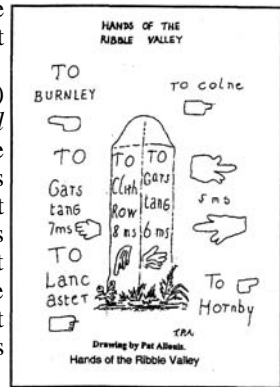
Yorkshire - In her Spring 2008 Newsletter Christine Minto lists a good number of new records for milestones and guide stones in the county. Yorkshire also has many boundary and 'liberty' stones (ancient administrative units owing allegiance to the lord of the manor) which might one day warrant a database. Mileposts are also being erected on cycle routes. Should these be added to the database? Milestones have featured in articles in several local newspapers: *Northern Echo*, *Darlington & Stockton Times*, *Yorkshire Post* and *Country Week*.

A tollhouse at Brayton on the Doncaster to Selby turnpike is causing concern as, following the death of the owner, the site may be redeveloped. Several members have been painting stones or approaching local councils to undertake the work and generally keeping an eye on milestones.

CUTTINGS

Pointing the way Any readers of *Old Glory* will already have spotted a double page spread in the January 2008 issue of the magazine, writes Chairman David Viner (Glouc.). It's called 'Fingerpost revival points the way' (couldn't resist it!), and I hope will raise interest amongst readers in the Milestone Society. The pictures were taken in Dorset, West Somerset, Rutland and (just) into Northants.

Ribble Valley guide stones Margaret Panikkar (Lancs.) has contributed a short article to the *Lancashire Local Historian* (no.20, 2007/8, pp.85-9) on surviving guide stones of the Ribble Valley. They were erected at cross roads to give directions and distances to the next market town, and usually predate turnpike milestones. There is no standard size or style and some had a finger post inserted into the top at a convenient level for a horse rider or carriage driver to read. Where the finger post has survived this often gives the distance in statute miles whilst the stone was engraved in old Lancashire miles.



The stones described are at Dunsop Bridge (dated 1739), Higher Hodder Bridge (1766), Annell Cross, Grindleton, Chipping (two stones dated 1769 reused as gateposts), Slaidburn (1815), Four Lane Ends in Clitheroe, Downham, Rimington, Padiham and Huncoat. Margaret particularly notes the varied designs of the engraved hands (see drawing by Pat Allouis on the previous page).

Bus versus stage coach When You and Yours (BBC Radio 4, 11.4.08) were doing a piece about the new over-60s bus passes, they challenged Biff Vernon (Lincs.) to find ways of travelling from London to Edinburgh using local buses. Biff, who has done a great deal of research on the history of the Great North Road, found that today you would need four days' travelling time to do the journey. At the height of the coaching era it also took four days, but if the traveller did not stop at inns overnight, the journey by stage coach could be done in 48 hours.

Colourful eccentrics - we are special! The following is quoted from a review by Terry Oliver, owner of the Bridport Bookshop, of David Viner's book *Discover Dorset: Roads, Tracks & Turnpikes* (see review in NL14 pp.26-7): 'Often this country has proved a land of esoteric enthusiasts. Small wonder, then, that there is such an organisation as the Milestone Society, of which the author is chairman. In this monochrome world, it is heartening to see these rays of eccentric sunshine'. So there you are folks, writes David, we are all rays of eccentric sunshine now!

Historic cuttings Rodney Marshall (Beds.) has come across a piece entitled 'Removal of Direction Signs' which appeared in *Roads and Road Construction* (1.7.1940) and which sheds more light on sign removal during WW2. 'The Home Secretary has made an Order under the Defence Regulations prohibiting the display of any sign, including any direction post, place name or map, which furnishes any indication of the name of, the situation of, the direction of or the distance to any place, if it can be seen and understood from the highway. The owner of any such sign, and the occupier of any land or premises where it is placed, are obliged under the terms of the Order to remove it at once, and if they do not do so, the police are empowered to act in default. As regards small notices of such a character that the place name cannot easily be read from the highway, Chief Officers of Police have discretion to give an exemption to such extent and subject to such conditions as they may think fit. Failure to comply with the terms of the Order is an offence under the Defence Regulations.'

A cutting sent by Gerry Moore (Norfolk) from *Cycling* (17.8.1950) implies that most milestones had been re-instated after the war. The article, entitled 'There's Romance in Milestones' draws attention to some unusual ones such as the post at Thirsk showing a cow and calf and a man with a mug of ale, and the stone at Woodhead with a skull and cross bones to emphasise the danger of the junction. A photograph of the London Stone is included (then still in the wall outside 'war-damaged' St Swithin's church). Also illustrated is a mileage plate on a mounting block, very similar to the stone featured in NL14 p.9, with similar pointing hands, but this one reads To Bradford 9 Miles/To Harrogate 10 Miles. It stands on the road between Leeds and Otley.

Stolen from Staffs David Archer (Montgom.) has sent a cutting from *Art Loss Review* (May 2008) with an appeal by Staffordshire police for information

following the theft of a 200 year old milestone. The cast iron post was taken from outside The Wharf public house on 13 or 14 February. It was inscribed with the mileage to Audley, Nantwich and Norbury. Anyone with information is asked to contact Crimestoppers.

Dolben Obelisk An article in the Northants *Chronicle & Echo* (11.2.2008) featured the Dolben Obelisk located near Finedon at the junction of the A6 and A510, writes Michael Knight (Beds.). It is claimed to be the work of Sir English Dolben whose diary records: 'This day I laid the first stone of the Finedon obelisk at the cross Turnpikes as a direction pillar ... and to record the many blessings of 1789'. Today the stocky obelisk, protected by iron railings, shows no evidence of directions or distances. Could the 'blessings' have been George III's recovery from illness, or perhaps the summer revolution in France? The monument is not apparently related to a turnpike.

FOREIGN PARTS

Adrian Sumner (E Lothian) has sent several observations on overseas distance markers. In France *The Point zero des routes de France* is set in the ground in front of Notre Dame in Paris [see right]. [The marker has been renewed since being described in *Marking the Miles*, when it was similar to a metal compass rose. It was probably worn away by Japanese tourists standing on it to have their photos taken!. CH]



Iceland has few roads and even fewer kilometre stones. However, simple stones appear to be placed every 5 km between Reykjavik and Selfoss. These are small rough stones with a rounded top, with the lettering incised on the flat front surface. Letters are painted white or gold, and in addition the 40 km stone



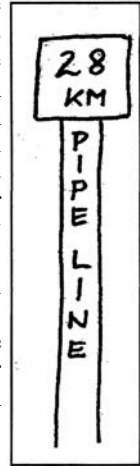
bears the words "FRA RK" (from Reykjavik). Majorca is also well supplied with kilometre stones: massive ones, presumably of concrete, but painted white with a domed green top, on principal routes [see left] and with a domed yellow top on less important roads. The latter also have metal plates on posts, and small markers for every tenth of a kilometre. Few roads in Madeira appear to have kilometre stones, but on an



older road in the mountains at Eira do Serrado, now by-passed, there were a couple of stones; the one illustrated [see p.24, bottom right] indicates 12.2 km.



Further afield, the standard South African kilometre stone (at least in Cape province) consists of a massive concrete base (apparently cast in an oil drum) with the distance marked on a concrete slab set in the base and leaning backwards [see photo left]. In Tanzania there were two types of stones on the road between Arusha and Moshi when I visited early in 2006: old triangular milestones, and presumably newer triangular kilometre signs which carry advertisements for Coca-Cola. Does anyone know of any other distance markers that carry advertising? No milestones were seen on any other roads in Tanzania. Western



Australian main routes have simple posts of wood or metal with the distance vertically on them, every 1 km; every 5 km there is a taller post carrying a green plate indicating the distance to the next town. A curiosity parallel to Route 30 north of Albany was a pipeline, complete with its own kilometre posts [see drawing upper right].

Old French provincial boundary stone An article entitled 'Une borne pour deux provinces' has been sent by Margaret Panikkar (Lancs.) whose daughter lives near Toulouse. The journal of the local history society recently had an article about this stone ('borne' can mean milestone, direction or boundary stone) which stands on a brick pedestal beside the D1 between Cornebarrieu and Mondonville. In 1988 someone tried to remove it to use it as a doorstep, but its weight proved too much and it was abandoned in a ditch. One face of the stone is engraved with 'Guyenne', another with 'Languedoc'. The north side reads '7690 toise'; the toise is about 2 metres, making the distance approximately 15. km, probably measured either from the basilica of St Sermin, Toulouse (an important pilgrimage site) or from the Chateau Narbonnais, residence of the Counts of Toulouse. One historian thinks the stone may have had an iron cross on top and date from the Hundred Years War, marking the provincial boundaries designated in 1416. The town council of Cornebarrieu restored the stone in 1967.



Some old French measurements were: 12 lignes = 1 pouce (an inch, lit. 'thumb'); 12 pouces = 1 pied (foot); 6 pieds = 1 toise; 2000 toises = 1 lieue (league).

Somewhere in Germany This well-preserved milestone (right) was photographed by the editors' son when he stopped his motorbike on the B279 somewhere between

Bad Königshofen and Holzfurt (which he couldn't find on the map), northwest of Nürnberg. The attractive script reads: 35,0/nach/Holzfurt; 3,7/nach/Königshofen.

THE SPRING MEETING (Saturday 10th May 2008 at the Memorial Hall Battle, East Sussex) - On a glorious day in Battle, Chairman David Viner welcomed 48 members and guests to our first meeting in East Sussex. John Griffin, who had arranged the excellent venue, gave the opening talk on the John Upton Archive. Although the Archive focuses on East Sussex, it is a wide-ranging collection of photographs and 22 books covering all aspects of industrial archaeology and includes the survey of Sussex completed in 1973 by John Upton and Brian Austen of The Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society. Prompted by questions on John's talk, the Chairman emphasised the need, if artefacts are to be preserved, to get information into databases which can be accessed by planning authorities etc. Alan Rosevear displayed the Society's national database, available on request to any member. Counties hold photographs of items on the database and access varies by county and image format. Alan has placed all his photographs on FLICKR and recommends this to others. Alan Haines suggested linking photographs to the database via a hyperlink, making self-contained records in the form of a CD for each county (for more details see pp. 17-18 of this Newsletter). For Terry Keegan, traditional media are best: counties should publish their information in book form.

Chris Broad, Chairman of The Charles Close Society (named after Colonel Sir Charles Arden-Close, the inspirational and innovative Director General of the Ordnance Survey between 1911 and 1922) described its growth from foundation in 1980 by a small group interested in the history and work of the OS to a society of 580 members, producing over 200 pages each year in publications and having an annual turnover of almost £65,000.

After lunch, Lionel Joseph told us 'How It Was Done' in a lively talk which left no scope for snoozing. Sprightly in his mid-80s, Lionel described his post-war career-change from 'unestablished civil servant' to being '...not a proper teacher. You're the woodwork man ...' who could nonetheless produce items of high quality craftsmanship in a variety of materials. Tools will do what you want to do when you know what they will do.' Lionel displayed a variety of special chisels and files and screws for fixing, but he also clearly knew what he was doing with whatever came to hand: find a crucible (stainless steel saucepan); make a furnace (concrete building blocks); heat (brazing torch). His practical demonstration of how to cast a plate gave us an education in 'drags' and 'copes', 'risers' and 'downgates'. Knowing your materials is also crucial: when smelting aluminium, 'There are 54 different types of aluminium. Chuck 'em all in - it doesn't matter.' However, you must know your stone for stone milestones: Cotswold is easily worked, but Yorkshire paving slab is 'hard as old boots'. To conclude, Lionel proved himself a poet, quoting from his ode describing the restoration of a stone for Southwater History Society. Follow that! He took the opportunity of presenting the Newsletter Editors with a fine example of his handiwork, a carved stone table lamp inscribed with appropriate Norfolk mileages.

Glenda Law then gave a detailed, excellently illustrated talk that took us through the Bow Bells mile posts from No. 29, one mile north of East Grinstead, which disappeared and then reappeared on a post specially made by builders (some builders do care); through No. 33 in Forest Row, once screened behind the clutter of a junk-shop, but now in proud prominence as the junk-shop has been reincarnated into an upmarket antique shop; to the bell-less oddity No. 35; on through the posts surmounted by the Pelham Buckle, including No. 47 with its oddly angled 7; via the second Nos 44-50 on the Lewes road from Uckfield; and back to the main route, the last proper Bow Bell post No. 55 and the concluding bell-less No. 59. Glenda commented on the variation in fonts as a result of the replacement of plates and suggested that the bell may not be a ringing bell at all, but a design based on a flower which once grew in the area. As the records of the Bow Bells Trust no longer exist, we may never know for sure.

In the General Forum, Terry Keegan spoke of his recent visit to the Trossachs and work being done there to renovate milestones; stronger links were urged with the Ramblers' Association, whose members may find milestones; and the Chairman of The Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society recommended the prompt publication of material in order to stimulate feedback and also made a plea that tollhouses be not forgotten.

The meeting concluded towards 4 p.m., allowing time for further inspection of the Society's publications, displays by The Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society, by the Surrey Group of Surrey and Kent milestones and tollhouse information and by the Norfolk Group (Carol & Alan Haines) and displays of material from The John Upton Archive, from Lancashire (Chris Marcus) and on the Bow Bells series (Glenda Law).

John Atkinson (Worcs.)

NORTHERN REGIONAL MEETING - Following the success of the West Midlands Regional meeting, we will be holding a Northern Regional Meeting on Sunday 19th October at Saddleworth Museum, High Street, Uppermill, OL3 6HS, formerly in West Yorkshire, but now in Oldham. We will be featuring speakers, including Mike Buckley, Chair of Saddleworth Historical Society, on ancient highways and on the abundance of turnpike features in the area (with an opportunity to perambulate around these), plus the usual range of informative discussion and displays, from 10.30 until mid-afternoon. Nominal admission charge, teas / coffees included. Full details will follow with the AGM mailing, but put the date in your diary NOW!

YORKSHIRE GROUP SPRING MEETING - Thirty-five enthusiasts attended the Spring Meeting hosted by the Yorkshire Group at Hebden - a Kent member took the award for the longest journey! Chris Marcus introduced us to the research on Fingerposts that he and John Nicholls have been doing, relating this to the Signpost(s) of Saddleworth, then Brian Ellis shared some anecdotes about his restorations (one passer-by complained that he should be repairing the roads instead, and a small child peered through the hedge to ask if he was a rabbit!). Jan

Scrine took us back to the 1770s to look at the Highways Surveyor's costs for repairing roads in Cornwall and Richard Heywood gave a comprehensive presentation on Boundary Markers. Christine Minto updated the meeting with the latest findings about Brayshaw & Booth MS, from the original contract for installing these that had come to light recently via the Yorkshire website - it must have been a difficult logistical exercise collecting over 600 backing stones from various quarries and the cast iron plates from the foundry at Liversedge in the 1890s, then installing them throughout West Yorkshire in the space of a year. As usual, there was time to view the displays and sample Terry Witham's excellent cakes while chatting with friends old and new.

Jan Scrine (Yorkshire)

FUTURE SOCIETY MEETINGS 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 a 15 minute 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.

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.

BACK ISSUES OF THE NEWSLETTER Copies of certain issues are still available. The current availability for the numbered Newsletters is as follows: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. The cost of each issue is £1, and the cost of postage for the number of issues ordered is as follows: Number Ordered (postage cost): 1 (27p), 2 (27p), 3 (66p), 4, (66p), 5 (£1.24), 6 (£1.63), 7 (£1.63), 8 (£1.63), 9 (£1.63), 10 (£1.63). Should you wish to purchase a copy or copies, please write to the Editors (see address below) enclosing a cheque made payable to 'The Milestone Society' for the total cost of the Newsletters plus the appropriate postage.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY 2009 - Contributions for inclusion in the January 2009 Newsletter should reach the Editors by Friday 12 December 2008. Submission of articles in electronic form (floppy disc) using Microsoft Word is convenient. Please use the "SAVE AS" option (not "SAVE") and save in RTF (Rich Text Format).

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