



THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 4

January 2003



99/100 High Street, Lewes, Sussex.

This plaque (inset) is over the centre porch and to the right of the first floor window. It was originally on the inn across the road which was demolished in the 1920's.



The Cover Picture - Lionel Joseph of Dorking Surrey has **provided this fine pen and ink drawing** of a building in Lewes, Sussex and the plaque thereon; note the **old spelling of Brighton**.

EDITORS' COMMENTS - This Newsletter follows the format of earlier issues and once again the Editors are grateful for contributions from members which leads to its production. We still find it most practical to receive these contributions by the mail, perhaps on a floppy disc in a format which agrees with our somewhat venerable computing system; in addition it saves on our telephone bill by limiting the amount of time we have to be 'on line'! We continue to report on Committee meetings so that members are informed of current thinking on the way the Society might develop, and on the Society meetings (AGM and Autumn meeting) since not all members are able to attend - indeed such was the popularity of the Devizes meeting that some late applications had to be refused because of a limit imposed by the size of the hall. In this issue we attempt to present an up-to-date list of County Coordinators; if this is in error, please inform Mike Buxton who is looking after County Coordination. If readers feel there is the need for inclusion of additional type of material in the Newsletter or improvement through alteration of the existing format, we are open to suggestions, bearing in mind that the present size is probably the most practical from a production point of view.

Although the Newsletter remains the most important way in which the Society communicates with its members, those with internet access might like to note that it does now have a website, (see later) and that this will contain data on forthcoming meetings (including application forms) as well as membership and contact information, and web-links to related websites.

COMMITTEE MEETING (Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, 22 June 2002) -

After matters arising from the last meeting (the availability of Mervyn Benford's book *Milestones* and Stuart Hands' book *Road Signs*, both from Shire), finances were discussed, particularly in relation to potentially required expenditure in the coming year (hire of venues for meetings, Newsletters, Journal, insurance, etc.). There was a positive feeling as regards providing funds for County Coordinators to help with their running expenses. Membership was discussed; reminders should be sent out with the AGM circulation to be nearer the renewal date. The tricky point of Life Membership was raised; the committee felt that the matter had not yet been thought through sufficiently to accept offers at this stage and a suggestion was made that it might be a possible reward for service to the Society. Progress towards charitable status was continuing but not yet complete. The AGM was discussed and also recent meetings, for example the Worcester milestone conference. The Chairman was to speak with Jeremy Milln our Conservation Adviser regarding the now urgently required guideline on 'best practice'. Future meetings (Devizes in Autumn 2002 and AGM in 2003) were discussed and also the progress towards a Journal, with possible articles for the initial issue. It was decided that there should be an Editorial panel (Carol Haines, Terry Keegan, and David Viner) with a production Editor, for which post a member Tim Stevens had kindly offered his services. A projected timetable of printing the first issue in January 2003 for circulation with the AGM material was

proposed. The progress on the comprehensive database was recorded; data from Berks, Bucks, Oxon and Somerset are essentially now entered. Mike Buxton has made valuable contributions regarding the County Coordinator network - at March there were 32 listed but some were inactive and some now had dropped out; some areas were not covered at all. The member John Tybjerg had shown commendable initiative in setting up a regional coordinators' newsletter. Further quotations for third party insurance are required - a sum of around £500 would need to be earmarked. Promotion and publicity - an updated A4 flier with a tear off portion for membership application - is needed as is a new officer for the Society in this area. A job description will be produced for the latter, a very important post in trying to raise the profile of the Society. Milepost theft was illustrated with an example of one on sale at an Antiques Market in Cirencester. The need for a website and how to progress this matter was raised. A date for the next meeting was set for November 2002.

COMMITTEE MEETING (Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, 23 November 2002) - Mervyn Benford sent his apologies for absence. The main matter arising from the last meeting was insurance and it was decided to proceed with the insurance scheme provided by the Council for British Archaeology. A premium of £96 provides the Society with cover up to £2 million against public liability claims. The required affiliation cost to the CBA is currently £60 p.a. making a total cost of £156 p.a. although this year's premium will be reduced since the renewal date is 31 March 2003. Finances of the Society were reviewed and were currently healthy but the impending journal costs with mailing will be considerable. Membership has the usual turnover with current non-renewals being almost exactly replaced with new members (including two from abroad which has led to a new class of membership) making a current total of 272 members. The revised Society leaflets and the website (which contains a downloadable application form) had proved successful in attracting some new members.

Mike Buxton, who has largely taken on County Coordination, reported on his survey of current efforts in the counties resulting from an enquiring letter on survey progress, restoration, council and community involvement and assistance from the centre of the Society, sent to all coordinators. A major point seemed to be low active membership in general (with lack of real 'hands on' help to back up the coordinator) but with some notable exceptions; some coordinators have produced a local newsletter and one produces a 'round-up' document. One county survey appears virtually complete but the major part of them are progressing reasonably. A variable number of markers are being, or have been restored or cleaned and some coordinators have given talks or written articles in local magazines. Some financial help is clearly desirable for coordinators (a point the Committee has now addressed - see below) and regarding preferred contact method quite a number wanted it via letter or telephone. A few worries were expressed on the daunting nature of the record sheets and it was also felt that more publicity was necessary. These replies (19 in total) were usefully summarised in tabular form.

The Committee was concerned to give financial help to County Coordinators

and it was decided that a float of £10 should be sent immediately to each Coordinator and that they should be told to send in claims to the Treasurer for stationery, photocopying and postage to cover costs incurred in running their group. Coordinators should keep a concise record of such expenses and claims.

The date of the AGM and Spring meeting was fixed as 10 May 2003 at the Tramway Museum, Crich and possible venues for the Autumn meeting were considered. Production of the Newsletter was well under way and Tim Stevens had agreed to act as Production Editor for the Journal, for which a considerable number of manuscripts had been received; these were now in the process of being edited. Laurence Dopson said that the Society should soon achieve charitable status, he having completed the required forms which he will now submit. Alan Rosevear circulated a document summarising the current state of the national survey which suggested that of the existing milestones (roughly estimated at just over 7000) approximately 15% (-1000) are now entered into the national database. Many more have had a record sheet completed but these are awaiting entry into the database.

Mervyn Benford is to be asked to review his earlier guideline sheets which appeared in Newsletter 1 and Jeremy Milln is to comment on the Preservation and Restoration advice document produced by Alan Rosevear. The Society badly needs a Publicity Officer (see advert), and it was suggested that postcards with photographs of milestones would be a way of publicising the Society. The date of the next meeting is 8 February 2003.

THE AUTUMN MEETING (Devizes, 12 October 2002). - This was held at the Wiltshire Heritage Museum in Devizes, and was hosted by the Industrial Archaeology Committee of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. The hall was filled to capacity with 74 people, a maximum having to be placed on the number of people attending because of fire regulations. After registration, the meeting commenced at 10.30 with an excellently presented lecture by Dr John Chandler on '*Turnpikes in Wiltshire*' in which he pointed out that the first county map was in 1773 and that the road pattern before this time was not clear. Wiltshire was a county travelled *through* rather than *to*, the major routes being from London to Bath and London to Salisbury. A slide showing the provision of stables and beds for soldiers in 1686 tied in with the line of modern roads. Interestingly, early maps showed obstacles *to*, rather than the means of travel and the term 'ways' rather than 'roads' was used; the word roads is rarely found in Shakespeare's texts, and the Bible apparently contains it only once. Bridges however were often indicated. Around 1706-7, three turnpike trusts were in existence and by the 1750s difficult stretches of the roads to Bath were turnpiked. Waterpumps were set up for the alleviation of dust on the roads and toll houses erected. The speaker had researched in particular the Amesbury Turnpike Trust and he compared the formation of turnpikes in modern terms with start-up companies whereby after the initial establishment subsidiary applications were made for expansion. Dishonesty amongst the toll keepers led to the practice of the letting of tolls. Road improvements in the second half of the 18th century led to a large increase in stage coach traffic and through Marlborough there were 10 a day

around this time. By 1822 this number was doubled but by 1842 the effect of the newly constructed railways was apparent leading to a dramatic decrease in traffic. Each time a railway opened income from the turnpike trusts dropped and in the period 1860-70 the sale of toll houses, lamps and associated items was well under way. After the winding-up of turnpikes there was a lessening of road traffic; interestingly, the eventual pressure for increased use of roads came from cyclists.

Doug Roseman, the host for the meeting, then gave an illustrated talk on Wiltshire Milestones. Of the 600 or so original stones there were about 400 left. There had been three separate surveys, the most methodical being due to Robert Haynes, and thus there was good documentary evidence over the last 40 years. Toll houses were also recorded. The county has abandoned routes, and in a related sense (because of the M4) the A4 road is now a pleasant route to drive along! The enclosure of much of Salisbury plain by the Army has also led to abandoned routes. The milemarkers were made locally, largely, and therefore are individual to the area. Often layers of inscriptions or paint can be observed, even to the extent of modern road numbers (eg A4) being found on an old milestone. The Robber Stone was highlighted as an oddity, commemorating the actions of four highwaymen who were eventually transported. The need for the careful recording of existing milemarkers was clear when the speaker reported that a recently disappeared stone is now in a garden and that another (Salisbury 2: Warminster 19) is for sale in an antique shop for £500. In comments from the audience, a plate from the A5 at Stafford was said to be on sale at Cirencester for £150 and there was a report that a milestone at Steeple Langford was now missing. Local interest was vital in keeping an eye on the situation and alerting the appropriate authorities when milemarkers disappeared from the roadside.

After coffee, John Tybjerg, the Dorset co-ordinator, gave a talk on Dorset milestones with slides prepared and presented using computer technology. Dorset has the distinction of having no motorways. There are over 200 milemarkers with 185 being milestones and 36 being made from cast iron. Grade II listed markers are 50 in number and one was reputedly a Roman milestone. Many had the distance from Hyde Park Corner, an important reference point for routes to the West of London. A brief diversion was made into the 27 milestones on Guernsey which are spread along 7 routes.

Before lunch, David Viner gave a brief update on the Milestone Society, which was now well established, with an active membership of over 250 members, a Newsletter, a website, and a Journal to be launched in the near future. The recording of data was well under way using the Society recording forms which will allow the eventual production of a National database and Archive. In the absence of hoped for professional and expert advice on the preservation and restoration of milestones, Alan Rosevear had stepped into the breach and produced a very useful Interim Guidance document, which would be available to members on request. He emphasised finally the need of members to support the Society through promotional skills (the Society urgently needs a Publicity Officer), by providing articles for the proposed Journal, and also through their help at local level, where personal interest even in one milestone can be valuable.

After the break David Viner gave a talk entitled '*Recording Gloucestershire's Turnpikes*', a survey which is being undertaken by the Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society. He gave examples of replacement plates on both stone and timber markers and summarised a survey of the routes around Cirencester. While the road from Cirencester to Gloucester was upgraded the 8 milestones were removed and then replaced; unfortunately one stone is missing.

After a break for tea, Dr Alan Rosevear, the Berkshire co-ordinator, gave a most informative lecture on '*Computer Recording of Milestones in Berkshire*' in which the value of information committed to a searchable database was illustrated. The A4 road to Bath, along which there is a good set of milestones, and the roads to Exeter and Gloucester were considered. Interestingly, there is no carvable stone in the Thames valley yet there is a surprisingly large percentage (around 90%) of stone milemarkers in Berkshire. Other counties with a potential supply of local stone have a much smaller proportion of stone markers. Thus, East Yorkshire has about 52% made of stone and Somerset has 41% made from metal. Such data are readily abstracted on interrogation of the database for material types and in a similar manner information on the shapes of milestones can be found readily. An example was given in which the use of such information, including the height and width of a stone, could throw light on the history of a milestone. Thus, the value of information obtained by careful completion of the Recording Sheet and its eventual transfer to an electronic database to form a National Archive is enormous when considered in the context of useful comparisons and associations which can easily be made by suitable searches on the database. Finally, the need to always look on the back of milestones when recording data was emphasised; often an earlier stone has been re-used and this will be clear if an inscription is found on the side of a milemarker away from the road.

The extremely efficient organisation of the meeting was further illustrated when Doug Roseaman brought the meeting to a close at the allotted time of 15.55.

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY GROUPS

Bedfordshire - Michael Knight's diary is filling steadily with talks to local historians, rotary clubs, civic societies and WIs. On 25 May 2002 a plaque was unveiled in High Street, Risely to commemorate 200 years since the passing of an Act of Parliament setting up a turnpike road between Great Staughton (Hunts.) and Lavendon (Bucks.). The road was divided for administrative purposes into two districts, Risely and Odell, named from two villages roughly mid-way along each half of the route. Michael has researched the history of the road, assisted by his local MP who accidentally left a copy of the Turnpike Act on the photocopier where it was found by Ken Livingstone, who was very interested in the idea of charging to use roads!

Berkshire/Buckinghamshire - The survey information on 180 milestones surviving in Old Berkshire and 154 in Buckinghamshire has been entered into the Society database. We can now respond to queries from Local Authorities and interest

groups. For example a detailed survey of the 20-Mile stone in Datchet has helped Janet Kennish in her project to move and restore the badly eroded survivor on the branch of the Colnbrook Turnpike. Data on the series of stones on the Windsor Forest Road has helped Bracknell DC to decide where to reinstate the "lost" 25-Mile stone in Winkfield. Using information from Eugene Burden, the parish are even considering making a new stone to replace a long-lost stone on this road.

Cornwall - Ian Thompson writes that he has been contacting Old Cornwall Societies for help and information. This has produced a booklet on a survey of finger stones in Penwith (which is the subject of an article to be published in the first Milestone Society Journal), another (in two volumes) on stiles in the Roseland and a history of the Saltash Turnpike, as well as details of milestones. He recommends "The Measured Mile' by F. Audrey Hosier, published in five parts in *Old Cornwall* Vol.X (1986-87), which details milestones in south-east Cornwall. Research in the Royal Institution of Cornwall library in Truro has concentrated on the Miss M.E. Philbrick Bequest which is a life's work into local history, mainly about turnpike roads, and contains a wealth of information and photographs. Some missing milestones are being investigated (at Bodmin and Liskeard), and a print-out of the County Council's database is being linked with the group's research. A newsletter has been produced, and a meeting of Cornish members was being held at the end of October.

Essex - John Nicholls took over as coordinator from Sue Adams in February. A newsletter was compiled and distributed to Essex members that outlined the coordinator's current projects, news items and requests for assistance. A second, third (August) and fourth (November) newsletter, each containing useful information to update progress, has been prepared and distributed by John, who has been extremely busy on the Society's behalf in Essex. He has produced the John Ogilby strip maps on CD ROM (copies can be obtained from him) and he has created his own website (see below) especially for the benefit of the Essex Group.

The initial survey of milestones is now complete with a total of 116 milestones, mileposts and milestone/milepost combinations recognised within the current boundary of Essex. At least a further two will be added to that total, both being in London boroughs formerly in Essex. An additional three Grade II listed sites are to be investigated during the winter although it is feared that these may turn out to be lost.

The mile plate at Margaretting (one of a continuous series of seven stones/plates on the Great Essex Road, five of which are Grade II listed) that was damaged late in 2001 has been repaired and replaced. Essex County Council is adding other roadside structures (e.g. cast iron signposts [finger posts] and boundary stones) to its heritage conservation lists. Recording of these is being done in conjunction with normal milestone recording. Essex County Council (ECC) has completed (with proof reading by John) an internal record of tollhouses, milestones and signposts entitled '*Road Transport in Essex 1750-1900 - Comparative survey of modern industrial sites and monuments. No.14*'. All Essex members receive a

copy of the occasional Essex newsletter (available as a text only version as an email attachment from john@nicholls-online.co.uk) and John's website (<http://www.milestonesonline.co.uk>) will eventually feature all the milestones of Essex. There is also a Forum page where you are invited to post messages, queries and comments.

John has cleaned five milestones and repainted the legends at Chipping Ongar. A hedging flail has damaged one of the Norton Heath stones on the A414. Several fragments have been retrieved from the area and will be stored for possible reattachment. This particular stone was moved to its current "safe" position in the 1970s when road improvements were carried out but the developing hedge has compromised its safety. Elsewhere in the county, two other milestones have been painted white by unknown persons at Ingrave Road, Brentwood and Little Maplestead.

The November issue of John's Newsletter notes that two further stones have been found, sole survivors of the Billericay to Horndon on the Hill route. A list of surviving Essex milestones is now available (hard copy or Excel file). John has also appealed for information on guideposts (signposts) and boundary markers in Essex.

Hampshire - Keith Lawrence reports that he has now finished the paper based exercise of identifying milestone sites from old OS maps and past surveys. So far there are 393 sites in Hampshire and an additional 8 on the Isle of Wight. Surveys are now well under way on three roads - the A30 from the Surrey to the Wiltshire border, A33 from Reading to Basingstoke and the A343 from Newbury to the Wiltshire border. There is currently a total of 73 fully surveyed milestones on the data base - only 320 to go! Having completed the paper work it is now down to producing the 'hit lists' and visiting sites.

Norfolk - Resurveying of the county's milestones continues and record sheets are being completed slowly but steadily. Some stones have been badly damaged within the past 15 years, and some have vanished completely, including a late 18th-century stone which was recently disposed of by the Highways Dept. who considered that it was beyond repair after being hit by a lorry. More encouragingly previously unrecorded stones are being found, including one from the All which was propped against a pine tree 4 miles from its correct site. Awareness of the Society is increasing. Someone with a rather scruffy stone outside his property, upset that the next 3 stones on the Norwich-Holt road had been dug out, reset and beautifully painted, complained to the Highways Dept. who said they were not responsible and it must have been the Milestone Society. He was put in touch with the coordinator, who also knew nothing about it. As the stones were in 3 different parishes and 2 district councils, a local estate was thought responsible. It wasn't, and enquiries are continuing so that the the phantom milestone restorer can be congratulated.

Somerset - Janet Dowding reports that another meeting was held at the home of a member in Yeovil on 22 June 2002. Five members attended, three more were unable to come, and unfortunately the appropriate member of Somerset County

Council did not reply to our invitation. So we are no nearer getting permission to do something about the state of the milestones in Somerset, some of which are in dire need of treatment and preservation. We discussed various sections of the milestone recording form and what is required, and quite a few completed forms were handed in to me to send off in due course. We had reached about No. 73 for recording Somerset's milestones by 22 June and 22 of these have actually been sent off. There are many more in the pipeline. We also discussed publicity and how to try to attract more members in Somerset - getting all the big libraries to display the Milestone Society leaflet for example, and approaching appropriate people known to present members - local councillors, people in other suitable societies etc. We all decided that we wanted to attend the Devizes meeting in October, and arranged for our own group to meet again near the end of November when the vegetation has died down and milestones are easier to locate.

Warwickshire - Mike Buxton reports that three members attended a meeting on 18 June 2002 at the Griffin Inn, Church End, Shustoke to discuss progress. Joy and Karl Stapleton had located a number of old maps including Andrews (pub.1781) and Gary (1806) which showed old turnpike roads in the County. They had a list of local historical societies and intended approaching them to advise of the Society's existence and its aims and to see if they were interested in joining. Milestone survey information was exchanged which largely confirmed that there appears to be a relatively small number of milestones remaining in the County. In view of the small number of active members in the Group so far it was agreed to split the County into two - north and south - and that Joy and Karl Stapleton would seek to survey the north of the County and Mike and Jan Buxton the south. Mike reported that he had recently written to Warwickshire County Council advising them of the Society's existence, its aims and objectives and awaited their reply. Members discussed the AGM at Dudley and thought that it was a good meeting but were disappointed that not all the scheduled speakers could attend. Mike reported that he had attended the Worcestershire Group's Conference at the Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove about 'Saving Worcestershire's Milestones' and thought it set a high standard for other groups to seek to achieve.

At the next meeting (Stag's Head, Offchurch) on 29 October 2002 it was reported that so far twenty-five milestones had been recorded, representing nearly half of those estimated to exist in the County. Since a substantial number of these were un-plated it was felt that an aim should be to get them re-plated, but a major problem was to discover what the original plates looked like. Questions raised were guardianship of the photographs of recorded milestones, responsibility for listing of milestones and publicity for the Society. Regarding the latter, articles in suitable magazines and newspapers were thought desirable. Survey work was to be continued and sources of information explored to facilitate the proposed milestone re-plating. A further meeting was arranged for Tuesday 4 March 2003.

Worcestershire - Terry Keegan has produced three more editions (June, September and November 2002) of his group's newsletter *Worcestershire Miles*, now at

number 6, each being a very good read. Number 4 reports on the conference organised by the group 'Save Worcestershire's Milestones' at the Avoncroft Museum on 28 May with 42 people attending and at which they were pleased to welcome a couple all the way from South Wales. The organising team put together a folder containing useful information on milestone preservation in Worcestershire, including notes on their history, safety practice, tips on restoration, an inventory of listed stones, a biography of books and articles on milestones, notes on the Clows Top project, some useful contacts including a list of small jobbing foundries, and a few suggestions on ways of funding milestone preservation. Resulting from the conference (which Terry was able to 'advertise' by a short talk hours before on BBC Worcester and Hereford) was the question of the way forward - only 11 of the 130 parishes in the county actually sent delegates - and it is suggested the message must be taken to them or local history societies by members speaking to groups when the opportunities arise. Personal contact with people having milestones bordering their property might also bear fruit. An article in the *Malvern Gazette* on the Society's work produced a massive plate off one of the milestones on the Upton-on-Severn to Little Malvern road, found by a farmer in a ditch some years ago! Thanks to vigilance all round the plate is now in safe hands awaiting replacement in due course. Sadly, the newsletter reports that the Bradley Stone pictured only 18 months ago on the East side of the old A38 about ½ mile north of Droitwich town centre has now vanished.

Issue 5 of the newsletter contains more on fall out from the Avoncroft meeting. Cookhill Parish Council are going to re-plate two milestones within the Parish; Malvern DC are going to try and get more of the County's milestones listed, with immediate action being taken on three stones in the ward of the councillor who attended; and positive support seems to be forthcoming from Hanley Castle Parish Council and the Upton-on-Severn civic society. Further snippets: Terry has words of encouragement and useful tips regarding filling in the official record form; he writes that Acts of Parliament setting up the toll roads and provision of milestones had provision for penalties for anyone defacing the stones (40 shillings and jail for those who could not pay!) - it seems that the penalties may still be in force; in 1835 Worcestershire had 758 miles of roads controlled by 22 Turnpikes Trusts - if there was one milestone every mile, then there are quite a few more to find above the number of 150 currently located; that there used to be a toll house by the bridge over the river Severn in Bewdley which despite local opposition was demolished in the 1960s; that Graham Stanton has been consulted by Corgi Toys for detailed information on roadside signs to go with their latest limited edition set of ten classic lorries in the 'Road Transport Heritage - The Golden Years'; Terry has just painted up his first Bradley stone; and that member Chris Jackson is particularly interested in knowing of Worcestershire milestones recording the mileage to London.

Issue 6 progresses the re-plating story further; another Parish decided to re-plate two of their milestones and hearing of this, the group suggested that a pattern could be made with the mileages omitted. These could be added at the casting stage, thus allowing the pattern to be used for other plates of that style missing from the Worcester Turnpike stones. The cost of casting a plate from a pattern is

approximately £40. Funds are being sought from the County Council and other Parishes and individuals have expressed interest in having plates cast from this pattern. Further news on the massive plate mentioned in Issue 4 above - this has been handed to the Upton-on-Severn Civic Society who intend to have it reunited with its stone. Terry has coined the appropriate term 'oops' for 'out of place stones' of which there are a number in Worcestershire. It seems they must be recorded on a special list separate from the National Database. The importance to the Society of obtaining professional advice on milestone conservation is indicated by the enquiries that the group has had from two Parishes on painting and restoration of particular milestones. Terry has included in the newsletter some relevant notes, in particular drawing attention to Keim Mineral Paints which are microporous and allow the stone to 'breathe'. They are used by English Heritage and The National Trust and have been recommended for use on milestones. (*Note: Alan Rosevear has produced a very useful document "Preservation and Restoration of Milestones — Interim Guidance" which is available (from him) to members on request - Editors.*)

Researches into Worcestershire's Turnpike Trusts are well advanced through hard work by Connie Swann with help from Neville Billington and Alan Scaplehorn. Terry has agreed to give a talk with slides to Worcester Industrial Archaeological Society in the Spring, a good way of advertising the Society and also to raise funds for the Group. (*See the website on the matter of talks - Editors.*)

The group held a coffee morning in September; in view of many members being retired, they have decided to alternate weekend meetings with mid-week ones. Another one is arranged for November. All the issues of Terry's Newsletter have excellent graphics, cartoons being mixed in with lovely drawings of local milestones; issue 5 even has a puzzle to tax the observation powers of its readers!

A veteran cyclist has helped the group in uncovering a milestone for which the group had been searching (see the article in this Newsletter).

Yorkshire, E. Riding - Peter Crowther has written to the Editors to identify himself and his wife Jan as the 'two residents', mentioned by John and Janet Harland in Newsletter 3, who carried out the survey in 1988/89 of East Riding milestones. Peter says that the results of this survey, together with an almost complete set of photographic slides, will be deposited in the East Riding of Yorkshire Archive and Records Service collection at Beverley where it may be viewed by members of the public. A total of approximately 100 milestones and mileposts was documented.

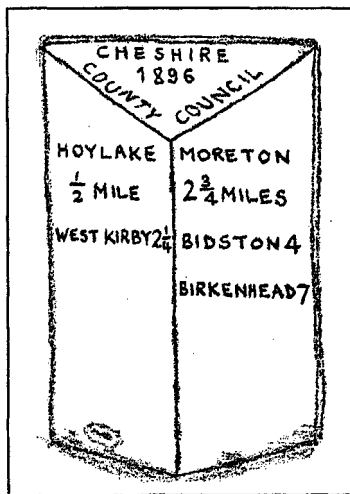
NOTES AND QUERIES

Surrey stones. On the Esher Milbourne Inclosure Map of 1821 the following are marked: Arbrook Millway Stone, North Mole Stone, and Tilworth Hatchway Stone. They are just below the Cobham/Esher Boundary on a line seeming to separate Cobham Common from Middle Pond, running SE from the Portsmouth Road at Spa Bottom towards Copsem Lane. As Arbrook and Mole are streams they could mark a watercourse, and it is thought that boundary banks and ditches still mark the line in part. The stones may have been flat on the ground which would make them

difficult to find. Joan Harlow (Surrey) is trying to find out what these stones were for and if they still exist. Have any other members met with similar stones?

Shropshire minders. While visiting Shrewsbury recently, Adrian Sumner (E. Lothian) picked up a leaflet about Bishop's Castle which included an illustration of a milestone. Inquiry from the Tourist Information elicited the information that there are a number of milestones in the area which are looked after by the South West Shropshire Historical and Archaeological Society. Does anyone have any further knowledge of this?

Of Corgis, lorries - and a milestone too! A recent brochure for Corgi model vehicles has been received. One of the models is of an AEC MkV 8-wheel sheeted lorry and trailer of Smith of Maddiston Ltd. The 1:50 scale lead replica comes complete with 'an authentic non-scale period milestone'. The illustration shows a fairly typical V-cast post with rounded top. Distances marked are Linlithgow 4 miles, Falkirk 6 miles, and Polmont Station 2 miles. Does this actually exist? It looks as though one has to buy the whole package at £64.99 just to get the milepost! One member had tried to enquire whether Corgi could supply the milepost only, but had been unable to contact them.



Multicoloured milestone. A member from Cheshire, Gillian Oakes, saw the milepost (left) at Hoylake. Although one of the 'normal' Cheshire County Council posts with a white background, the lettering on the left hand side was red, on the right blue, and the inscription on top was gold. She wondered if the local highways department had spare cash to use for refurbishment, or someone was keen to show their patriotism in the Queen's Golden Jubilee Year!

Fifty years ago. Celia Tanner (Glos.), the owner of a 1953 Austin A30, has sent a copy of an article about milestones from *The Austin Magazine and Advocate* of September 1953. The first paragraph welcomes the return of milestones to our roadsides after their removal as an anti-invasion precaution in 1940. The author, Arthur Gaunt, was obviously a great milestone enthusiast, keen to encourage others to take an interest in them. He gives a good potted history with a wide range of examples. Thankfully many of his examples are still in place after nearly fifty years. He also mentions nine-foot high cast iron signposts placed on the Warwick to Stratford road in the early nineteenth century for the benefit of stage-coach drivers who could find smaller milestones difficult to decipher from the box-seat. After the stage-coach era these posts were reduced to about five feet in height. Have any of them survived?

AA Reward. A little further light can be shed on the yellow AA disc at Spaldwick, Hunts, offering a £2 reward for information leading to the conviction of anyone damaging other adjacent signs (NL3, p. 12). In *Golden Milestone. Fifty Years of the AA* (1955) we are informed that these signs were put up to entice small boys to throw stones at them and leave the more important signs unblemished. Few people were ever prosecuted.

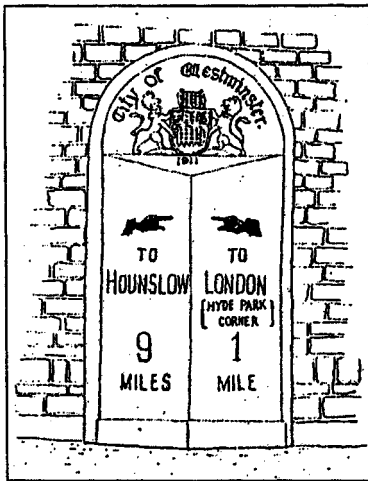
Whitney Toll Bridge. Tony Boyce (Herefordshire) sends news that one of the country's remaining toll bridges was put on the market in June 2002, following the death of its owner. The bridge crosses the River Wye in Herefordshire. Thanks to an Act of Parliament dating from 1797, the bridge is something of a tax haven as all the income derived from it remains tax-free. These days annual turnover is about £35,000. For much of the 19th century the bridge carried a horse-drawn tramway as well as road traffic.

Miscellany from the Herts. coordinator. John Donovan enquires:

Coming out of the main gate (Outer Circle) of the Zoo in Regents Park last year I noticed across the road two markers behind some railings. Both were about a foot high, one was white stone, with no text apparent, the other was metal, eight-sided with a conical roof (also eight-sided), and a text which is difficult to read on my photo, but could be 'S something' and a date in the 1880s. Can anyone throw light on these two markers?

In Bedford last year I noticed on the pavement opposite the Old County Theatre, buried up to its ears in the tarmac, a small white stone bearing the legend, B, squiggle, C JOIN..... Does anyone have any clue as to its identity?

The River Wey, heading south out of Guildford, cuts away the foot of St. Catherine's, a huge hill of pure, golden sand, hard by a ford (the Golden Ford which gives its name to the town [Hilaire Belloc, *The Old Road*]). A rectangular granite marker stands at the foot of the hill, on the river bank, bearing the legend, P.B.C. 1868 - any clues anyone?



In addition, John sends the following two contributions:

The only stone in Barnet to still display its metal plate (with Barnet spelled 'Barnett') 'disappeared' last year. It had been at the top of Kitts End Lane, hard by one of the lodge gates of Wrotham Park. After mentioning this to the Archivist of Potters Bar LHS, he reported back that the chap in the lodge had come out one morning to find the milestone stretched out, full length, on the path, with a rope tied around it, having been dragged out of the ground.

Presumably nocturnal thieves had used a lorry with which to drag the stone out, and then had not been able to lift it onto the lorry. It is now locked up in the grounds of Wrotham Park for safe keeping, along with the two halves of a Victorian, granite, roadside horse-trough, dropped during an attempted theft!

On my way to the Royal Albert Hall, turning left from the Exhibition Road into Kensington Gore, I saw a magnificent milestone, hard against the wall which I photographed, thinking it something special. I thought I had made a great discovery, but when I described the marker and its position to a colleague, he airily replied, "Oh yes, I know *that*, there's another one further down the hill, outside a hotel." One day I must photograph that one as well!

(The Editors believe that this is the milepost pictured on p. 13 which stands at 1 Kensington Gore; the drawing is reproduced with permission of AA Publishing.)

CYCLING AND MILESTONE HUNTING GO TOGETHER!

Neville Billington brought to our attention a piece in the *Bromsgrove Advertiser* which tells how veteran cyclist Bob Hampton helped out the Worcester group in uncovering the mystery of a missing milestone on an old turnpike road near Bromsgrove. The Worcester group had found four milestones on the Bradley Green to Himbleton stretch of the Worcester turnpike but had been unable to track down a fifth they were sure existed but thought it had been moved. Bob, who still covers 12000 miles a year on his bike and knew the road well, was not so sure so he set the handlebar computer on his bicycle to zero at the fourth stone, cycled one mile, then got off his bike to search. Within 3 or 4 yards of the place he stopped he found the milestone, looking almost like a tree trunk and covered by ivy and hawthorn. Such a discovery suggests that with perseverance, local knowledge, and a willingness to get on (and occasionally off) your bike, many more 'missing' milestones are out there waiting to be found. The Worcester group of the Milestone Society want to replace the plaques the stones once carried; they were originally fitted in about 1867. Those on this stretch of road were removed and destroyed in 1940 when invasion was feared.

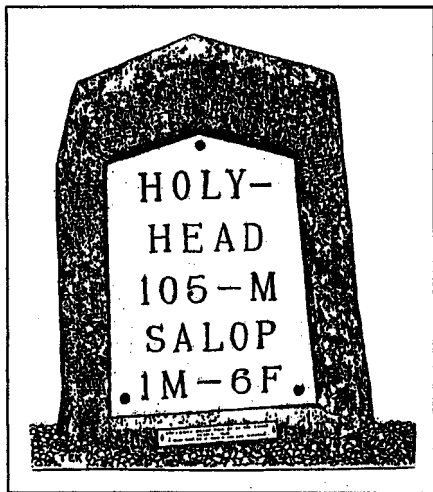
Support for the idea that cycling affords a very good way of searching the country for milestones comes from one of our newest members Dr David Boullin who is Secretary of the Oxfordshire section of the Veteran Cycle Club. He points out that VCC members (Veteran apparently refers to the bikes, not riders!) are adept at sneaking along roads looking for interesting things. He would like to hear from other keen cyclists in the Society who would like to undertake 'milestone-hunting expeditions'. *(David's address is available from the Editors.)*

SHREWSBURY MILESTONE RESTORED

The Mount in Shrewsbury is famous for at least two things. It is the birthplace of Charles Darwin and home to the first (or last) two milestones showing 'Holyhead and Salop' on the original route of the A5. Residents of The Mount formed a 'Mount Residents Group' about 4 years ago, which has the rather grand aim of

'preserving the past and influencing the future'. One tangible aspect of preservation occurred in 2001 when a Charles Darwin information plaque was commissioned and erected outside the house in which he was born and spent his childhood. As for its milestones, the first one, showing 'Holyhead 106 miles, Salop 0m 6F' (Plate 1') is set into the boundary wall of a group member who had carefully repainted the sign some years ago. As for the next stone, although it appeared on the OS map, it was missing, presumed removed, buried or stolen.

The group was looking for another project to further its aims and also to commemorate the Golden Jubilee. By good fortune, the group's treasurer, Geoff Black, out for an evening stroll, chanced on the stone - hidden in an overgrown hedgerow. It had its iron plate missing and a small piece of stone had at some point been knocked off at the top left front corner, most probably by a hedge cutter. The group agreed to fund the renovation of the stone. Its chairman, Ron Iremonger, spoke to Harley Thomas, head of natural and historic environment at Shropshire County Council, who gave his blessing to the project and agreed the wording ('Holyhead 105 miles, Salop 1m 6F') for a new plate. Ron then contacted Roger Fewtrell of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum at Blists Hill who was extremely helpful in casting the new plate, using measurements taken from Plate 1. Before the plate could be fitted, the original bolts had to be removed. It was thought that this would



*The restored Shrewsbury milestone
(Drawing by Terry Keegan)*

be a simple matter of knocking them out by using an iron bar and a hammer. However, it was soon realised that each bolt had been plugged with lead, presumably as an early anti-theft device. Eventually they were removed by using a cordless drill. Gripfill adhesive was used to fix the plate to the stone and each new bolt (after priming and painting) was secured by using a polyester resin anchor system. A very small commemorative plate was fixed underneath stating 'renovated by The Mount Residents' Group in 2002 to commemorate the golden jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth IF. The stone's official unveiling was set for 11 June 2002, and the mayors of Shrewsbury and Telford and Wrekin agreed to attend, as did representatives of the press and radio. Articles appeared in the *Shropshire Star* and *Shrewsbury Chronicle* and two interviews were broadcast during the main local news bulletin. The renovation project has sparked a lot of local interest and it is hoped that it may be a catalyst for further milestone renovation projects along the A5.

Geoff Black, Hon Treasurer, The Mount Residents' Group.

MILESTONES ON THE CHESTERFIELD CANAL

An article in *Cuckoo*, the journal of the Chesterfield Canal Trust, sent in by David Blackburn (Derbys.), details the restoration project for the canal's 46 milestones. Many of the original posts had been lost and these are gradually being replaced by new ones made of Cadeby stone at a British Waterways depot in Worksop. Sponsorship is being sought for each new stone from individuals or parish councils at a cost of £250 each, which includes a dedication plaque. The first new stone, milestone 25, was carried to its position last June on the narrowboat owned by the couple who sponsored it. The stone was erected at the back of the towpath and protected by clingfilm while being concreted into place. A small protective surround of brick block-pavers was laid around it.

A NEW OLD SIGNPOST!

The village of Blackwell in Worcestershire enjoys a very green aspect, the focal point being a cross roads adjacent to church and post office. For many years this agreeable scene has been blighted by a particularly vulgar clutch of reflective road signs, totally unnecessary for a quite rural setting. The Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council decided the eyesore had been there long enough and an initiative from them was responded to by Bromsgrove District Council with some aplomb.

In an imaginative move headed by Patrick Lees, BDC's Project Engineer, a cast iron signpost to a Victorian design was commissioned with original 1870 moulds being used to cast the finger boards. The village name appears on the masthead, a circular black finial with the lettering picked out in gold. The work was undertaken by Gregory's of Cannock, 33-41 Park Street, Bridgetown, Cannock, Staffs, WS11 3BT. It is to be hoped that following BDC's lead the traditional cast iron signpost may see a welcome come-back in suitable locations in many other parts of the country. However, it must be stressed that Gregory's of Cannock will not entertain enquiries from individuals or societies; they will only deal with local authorities.

Neville Billington

LONDON STONE

There has been considerable speculation about the history of London Stone. A few historians believe its significance goes back to the founding of a settlement called Trinovantum by Trojan refugees whose descendants were encountered by Julius Caesar in 54 BC. William Blake thought it was connected with Druid sacrifices and depicted it in the battle of the last Ancient Britons: 'They groan'd aloud on London Stone/They groan'd aloud on Tyburn's Brook' (*Jerusalem*, 1804-20).

The stone's position corresponded to the centre of the outer gate of a Roman palace, probably the governor's residence, adjacent to the Roman roadway. Since at least Elizabethan times there has been speculation that it was the central milestone from which all distances in Roman Britain were measured. A central milestone was

known to be used in most Roman provinces.

The first written record of London Stone is from the tenth century. In 1188 there was a reference to Henry son of Eylwin de Londenstane who later became Lord Mayor of London. By medieval times the stone had achieved considerable symbolical significance, possibly being regarded as the heart of London, and its oldest relic. "The bees in arms/Drive headlong from their waxen cells in swarms/Jack Straw at London Stone, with all his rout,/Struck not the city with so loud a shout' (Dryden (1631-1700): *Cock and the Fox* - Jack Straw was one of Wat Tyler's lieutenants during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381). It was one of the most venerated sites in the city, a place from which proclamations were made. Whoever had possession of London Stone was in command of the capital: 'Set up this bill on London Stone. Would it be done solemnly with drum and trumpet and look you advance my colour on the top of the steeple right over against it' (*Pasquill and Marfarius* (a minor Elizabethan play), 1589). In 1450 Jack Cade led a rebellion of Kent and Sussex yeomen who marched on London: 'Now is Mortimer lord of this city. And here, sitting upon Londonstone, I charge and command that of the city's cost, the pissing-conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign' (Shakespeare: *Henry VI, Part II*).

During the rebuilding of the city after the Great Fire in 1666 Sir Christopher Wren saw that London Stone formed part of a much larger structure below ground. Because the stone was becoming a traffic hazard, the top was broken off and moved in 1742 to the north side of Cannon Street. It was moved again in 1798 and was later saved from destruction by a local antiquary, Thomas Maiden, and was built into the wall of St Swithin's church. An ornamental metal grille was made to protect the stone in 1869, and it survived the destruction of the church by bombing in WW2. The ruined church was demolished in 1962 and replaced with an office block on the understanding that London Stone would be preserved within it. Since then it has been almost hidden behind its grille set in the wall of the Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation, nearly opposite the entrance to Cannon Street Station. The site is now to be redeveloped and London Stone, variously described as resembling a giant tea cosy or a large loaf of bread, will be displayed in a more prominent position commensurate with its long and colourful life.

Carol Haines

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS

Mention has been made of the Smith Patterson mileposts on Mull and also in Northumberland (Newsletter 3, p. 14). They are in fact more widespread than that, also being found in the Ardnamurchan peninsula and in Roxburghshire. Salen, quoted as being 16 miles distant on the Mull milepost, is in fact in Ardnamurchan, and has a Smith Patterson milepost, which is marked as 'MS' on the OS map, and others are found further west along the B8007, at least as far as Glenborrodale. There is one at Smailholm in Roxburghshire, next to an older milestone, and some along the B6404 to St Boswells.

While on the Isle of Islay recently, I noticed many milestones had recently

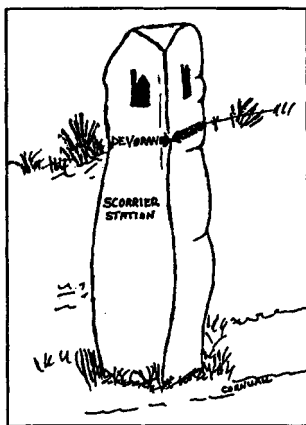
been repainted, and bore pictures of ships and maps of the island. Not the original design I'm sure, but rather attractive. Apparently they have been done by an American who visits Islay from time to time. The milestones on Islay seem to be an almost complete set.

Adrian Sumner (E. Lothian)

The author notes that manpower is stretched thinly in Scotland and he can do little more than record what he sees in passing. Perhaps recording in this area could be someone's holiday project? (Eds.)

CORNISH WAYMARKERS

The drawing on the left depicts one of many granite direction stones positioned along the Cornwall Mineral Tramway that has been opened up for leisure purposes - walkers, cyclists and horse riders as well as wheelchair users. The route stretches from Portreath to Devoran taking in many remains of mineral workings (beam engine houses, buddies, leats, stamps, setts, stacks), along with wonderful views of surrounding countryside. Local granite has been used to produce these posts but the style is in keeping with the area. This post is sited on the roadside near the Fox and Hounds pub and railway bridge at Scorrier, Redruth.



Direction stone, Scorrier



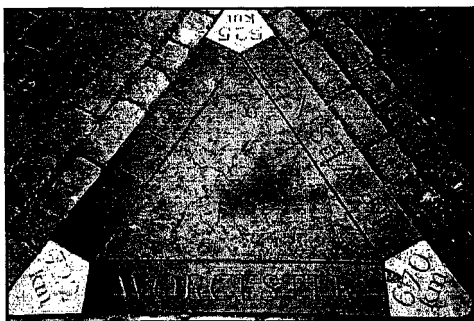
Milestone and cross beside A30

The right-hand drawing is of one of the Falmouth to Penzance milestones situated beside the A30 at the junction of the road from Crows-an-Wra to the B3306. The ornate milestone here stands beside a granite cross. Other milestones in the series can be seen at regular intervals along the road to Land's End. All are in excellent condition.

Hazel Perham (Cornwall)

KILOMETRES AND CUSTOMARY MILES

Kilometres are creeping into Britain. Ron Bubb (Worcs.) has sent a picture of a triangular stone slab set in cobbles in Worcester (grid ref. SO 8485 5485). Along each side of the grey stone is a town name, with its distance from the town on the adjoining side given on a white stone in each corner: Worcester 670 km Le Vesinet 525 km Kleve 722 km (and so back to Worcester). In the centre is a map of Western Europe with a line from each town name to its position on the map.



A kilometre milestone in Worcester



Mystery milestone

In the south parapet of the bridge over Tosside Beck on the B6478 in Yorkshire (grid ref. SD 778561) is a large stone slab with crudely-cut lettering indicating TO SKIPTON/[hand pointing left] 10 MS/TO SLAID/BURN 3 MS/[hand pointing right]. The mileage on a nearby signpost makes Slaidburn about 6 miles west in modern measurement, meaning that this milestone is giving the old customary miles.

David Lyle (Wilts.) sends a few notes on French kilometre stones. Apart from the autoroutes, French main roads are either Routes Nationales (N) or Routes Departmental (D). The rectangular-plan kilometre markers on N roads usually have a red band on the rounded top, whereas yellow identifies D roads. Some are marked with the initial letter of a town and the distance figures, others with just a distance from the point of origin and an arrowhead (e.g. 75 D>). In mountain areas the height above sea level is also shown. He has seen some markers of the conventional shape in the Alpes de Haute Provence which were mounted on poles to bring them to eye level, presumably to raise them above snow drifts. Plastic kilometre posts are now replacing stone, but in a few places earlier metal signs have survived. They are rectangular plates with arrows in appropriate directions and usually at horse-rider's eye level.

Finally, a French N-route post (see drawing above) was spotted by the Editors in an unfamiliar location. Its inscription showed that it was 500 miles or 800 km from La Chapelle des Marais. Where is it? *The answer is given in code at the end of the Newsletter!*

TO LIST OR NOT TO LIST?

When is a milestone considered an ancient monument or listed structure, asks Brian Davey (W.Yorks.)? When part or all of it is replaced, recut or restored does it still retain this status, or must it be contemporary? Or is it merely because of its historical links to the past? Brian was reminded recently of the story of the blacksmith who was still using the same hammer his great grandfather had used 100 years go. In all that time it had only needed two new heads and three new handles!

While listing milestones might give them some legal protection, unfortunately it does not completely guarantee their security as there is nothing to stop the verge mowing contractor knocking bits off them. It can also cause problems with any repair or restoration as special permission needs to be granted and only approved materials used.

The following guidance to listing milestones was produced by Terry Keegan for the Worcestershire Conference; details about listing can also be found on the English Heritage website: www.english-heritage.org.uk.

Requests for individual milestones to be spotlisted can be made to The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport at any time, although priority treatment will be given to those which are under threat. It is important to draw attention to any new evidence which may explain why the milestone's special interest has previously been overlooked. Requests to list milestones should be sent to the Listing Branch, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 1a Cockspur Street, London SW1Y SDH, Tel: 0207 211 2145.

As well as your reasons for wanting the milestone to be listed you should include:

- a location plan
- a clear, up to date photograph
- any information about the stone, e.g. date
- historical associations.

The Secretary of State consults English Heritage on all applications for listing. They aim to try and reach a decision within 3 months.

It was reported in the press in October 2002 that all Britain's 113,000 post boxes are going to be listed by English Heritage, instead of just the rarer types. Under a special agreement with the Post Office they will be repainted every three years, and have damage repaired and graffiti removed. Could Britain's milestones be treated in the same way, and if so which authority could be prevailed upon to help? Further comments and opinions on this topic would be welcomed.

MILESTONES ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Following mention of milestones on the Isle of Wight on p. 14 of Newsletter 3, R. Smith (Wilts.) writes that he has compared two OS maps he has acquired during walking holidays on the island over some years. His 1971 map (Sheet 180) marks the following milestones:

- (1) SZ 579805 - Opposite Shanklin old church; (2) SZ 485772 - E of Chale;
- (3) SZ 482776 - W of Chale; (4) SZ 444828 - Limerstone
- (5) SZ 485788 - N of Chale; (6) SZ 460847 - N of Shorwell;
- (7) SZ 604907 - S of Ryde; (8) SZ 428827 - Brighstone;
- (9) SZ 521806 - W of Godshill; (10) SZ 506848 - N of Rookley

His OS Outdoor Leisure No.29 of 1987 marks numbers 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 above, plus:

- (11) SZ 575795 - W of Luccombe; (12) SZ 579784 - NE of Bonchurch.

It also shows Toll Gate Cottages NE of Freshwater at SZ 357866.

During a cycling holiday on the island in 2001, the editors found and photographed numbers 1 (defaced), 2 (only RT decipherable), 3 (defaced), 4 (6 Miles from Newport), 5 (8 Miles from Newport), 8 (7 Miles to Newport), and another which was not marked on our OS Landranger (Sheet 196) of 1997:

- (13) SZ 457831 - Shorwell (5 Miles from Newport).

We also have a vague recollection of a toll cottage W of Brighstone. Investigation of toll roads and milestones on the Isle of Wight sounds like a useful holiday project!

MILES AWAY

In March 1825 the editor of the *Devizes Gazette* received a letter for publication in his newspaper:

'We, the MILE STONES of the vicinity of Devizes, feel ourselves degraded in no small degree by an arrangement that has lately been effected to our injury. It is true, that from time immemorial, our countenances have been defaced, and our usefulness obscured by a set of thoughtless urchins, who have taken a delight in casting stones in our faces, battering our mouths, and destroying the power we possessed of giving directions to travellers. But these things were effected by our enemies, in the folly of their minds, for the want of being better taught. But what we now complain of is, that our friends have deceived us; for under the pretence of enabling us to speak to travellers (in spite of our former enemies) they have provided us with iron armour, from which, it is true, we speak securely, but yet not with that correctness, which we used to do. At a distance of a mile or thereabout, two of us are placed, telling travellers that we are three miles apart, one being eighty-seven, and the other ninety miles from London. Some persons have stopped and scrutinized us, as if we had been criminals, declaring that we are vagabonds and liars, deceivers of the public, and worse than useless; and had it not been for our own metallic protection, the falsehoods would soon have been obliterated, and we should have been left as speechless as we had been many years before ...

'We should have had another cause of complaint from the alteration of our form had we not been so strongly protected; as we are likely to be often made use of as stepping stones, to help the infirm and lazy on their horses. These are only parts of our complaints, which, if you will condescend to insert in your impartial paper, and communicate to our friends, the public, we may be emboldened again to present more of our grievances. We have the honour to remain, etc. etc., MILE STONES, Bishops Cannings, March 9th.'

This was found by John Chandler (Wilts.) who adds the footnote that it was common to add metal plates or casings to milestones when they were becoming illegible, and the series around Devizes was supplied by the town's ironmonger, Burt. The date is surprising, since it was not until a few months later, in July 1825, that commissioners were empowered to make this kind of improvement around Devizes.

STAMPED

Ian Davison (Northumb.) has enquired about the possibility of the Royal Mail issuing a set of stamps marking the milestones of Britain. He has heard that it has been included on the 'long' list of possible stamp subjects for 2005, the final selection to be completed later next year.

The manner of subject selection may be of interest. The head of Stamp Programme Research writes: 'The number of subjects that can be included in the Special Stamps Programme each year is normally limited to around 9 or 10. With so many varied subjects to consider and our need to balance the stamp programme with regards the agreed conventions and criteria, you will appreciate that the final choice is a very difficult one indeed. Initially, from approximately 200 possibilities, we select a list of potential subjects for each year. These subjects then go to market research. This is carried out amongst a representative cross-section of the UK population to determine the potential popularity of each subject. From the results of the research, a short-list is made up for consideration by the independent Stamp Advisory Committee. Their agreed short list is then submitted to the Post Office Board, the DTI and finally to Her Majesty, for approval. This final list is then briefed to our design team.'

Perhaps we should start thinking about which milestones to choose, in anticipation.

FROM MILESTONE TO HEADSTONE - AN ESSEX PECULIARITY

Groping through the roadside hedgerows, suffering the assaults of brambles and nettles, are all part of the enjoyment of milestone hunting. Occasionally there is greater pleasure to be gained in places less hostile to the person. One such place is Colchester cemetery in Essex. 'A milestone in the cemetery?' you ask. Yes indeed, now a grave marker, the obelisk on the Wire family plot was once the '51 miles from London' milestone that stood in Colchester High Street for almost 100 years. During 2002 I had been assisting (along with Susan Adams, former MSS

coordinator) the heritage conservation officer for Essex County Council who was compiling a report on surviving milestones, tollhouses and signposts in the county. He was very sceptical about including the Colchester obelisk in the report although there was abundant written evidence that seemed to confirm that the grave marker and the milestone obelisk were the same article.

The obelisk was commissioned for the Essex Trust in 1760 by Charles Gray. When erected it cost the princely sum of £3 6s (£3.30 in today's money) which seems a very reasonable price. The architect, James Deane, was paid half a guinea (52½p) for his work and the same amount to a workman for painting and lettering. This seems to indicate that the obelisk was never engraved. A depiction of its use is shown on the 1777 *Map of Essex* by Chapman and André. On the plate of Colchester can be clearly seen 'Obelisk 51 M from London' but even this was not conclusive evidence.

By the mid C19 its original purpose was apparently lost (lending credence to painting and not engraving) and as the obelisk, some houses known as Middle Row and St Runwald's church, were causing restrictions in the centre of the High Street it was decided to remove them. Middle Row was cleared by 1857. Demolition of the obelisk was put on hold due to differences of opinion between the supporters of progress and the lovers of antiquities. (Does that sound familiar even today?) However, progress won the argument but the obelisk hung on a while longer in case someone might put in an offer. Although an offer of £20 had been made for the obelisk and contents, it eventually went up for auction in 1858. The opening bid was half a crown (12½p) but after some time bids reached £3 5s (£3.25) for which sum it was purchased by Mr. Charles Wire.

Charles Wire soon put it to good purpose, using it as a headstone over his wife's grave when she died in June 1859. The earliest engraving on the obelisk, after taking up its new position reads:

THIS/ANCIENT OBELISK/REMOVED FROM THE/HIGH STREET COLCHESTER/IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO/MARY ANN/THE MUCH-BELOVED WIFE OF/CHARLES WIRE/OF THE PARISH OF/SAINT BOTOLPH/OBT JUNE 15 1859 ET 47 YEARS/MY FLESH SHALL REST IN HOPE

But was this the same obelisk that was once the milestone? In a last attempt to get at the truth there was only one thing left - consult the Internet. By chance I found a web page about Colchester public houses and the entry for The Bear pub



THE PIEMAN.

was illustrated with a copy of an old print. Dated 1792 and named 'The Pieman', the print also showed the distinctive obelisk. Just discernible were '[] miles

from Ipswich / [] miles from Norwich / [] miles from Yarmouth.' Here was the proof and the obelisk has now been added to the Essex County Council Heritage Conservation Records along with a recommendation for grade II listing.

John V Nicholls

MILESTONES AS MEMORIALS

Those people who ramble in the countryside, walking along well known trails will have often come across a seat erected for the weary traveller - *"In memory of Joe Bloggs - 19XX-XXXX, who spent many happy hours enjoying the beautiful view from this spot"* - a nice way of celebrating both an individual and pleasure that can be derived from Nature. However, there have been instances where authorities have not been overkeen on yet another wooden seat along a well worn path.

Perhaps the public should consider a long lasting alternative by restoring an existing milestone or the replacement of one that is missing in a series of milemarkers, with a suitable dedication attached naming the person in whose memory the work has been done. There is a good precedent for this in Thurton, Norfolk where in 1985 the Capps family decided to set up a memorial to their



parents and chose a useful milestone (see photo). The dedication on the milestone (actually made of cast iron at Thurton foundry) reads: *"THIS MILESTONE WAS ERECTED IN MEMORY OF ARNALL AND ELIZABETH CAPPS OF THIS PARISH WHO PASSED AWAY IN 1960"*

This milepost (Grid ref. TG 328009) is less than half a mile from a stone reading *Norwich 7 Beccles 10*.

Clearly, the restoration or re-erection of milestones could also be used to commemorate an important event, just as the Shrewsbury milestone restoration described earlier in this Newsletter commemorated the golden jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

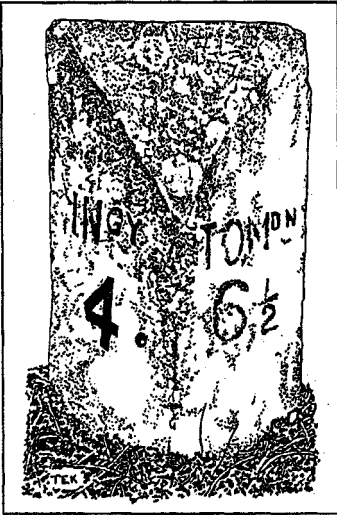
For those with rambling adventures further afield, why not restore or erect a guide post on the moors?

Alan and Carol Haines

ON THE OLD ROAD TO THE ISLES

The 'Road to the Isles' leaves the Great Glen, Fort William to Inverness road, at Invergarry and heads west along the shores of Loch Garry. Today, the new road soon climbs out of Glen Garry to cross over into Glen Loyne, but the old single track road continues to hug the shore of the loch for the next seven miles to the

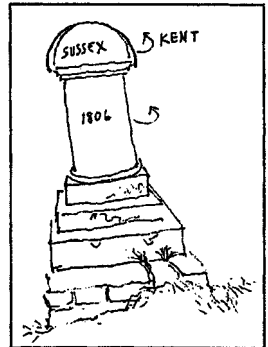
once busy hostelry at Tomdoun. I had travelled this road in the 1950s in an old Ford Prefect when to do so was quite an adventure and the camaraderie engendered with the other road users by the need to dash to the next passing place was unforgettable. For nostalgic reasons I recently took the old road as far as Tomdoun and was pleased to find that most of the granite milestones were still in place, though in rather a neglected state. Even though the new road from Invergarry misses Tomdoun by as much as six miles, the milestones from Invergarry still have the mileages to Tomdoun on them. At Tomdoun the old road left the comfort of Glen Garry and climbed over the hills to Cluaine Lodge by way of Glen Loyne. Though the old road has now deteriorated into a track and is a walker's paradise, I am told that many of the old milestones are still to be seen. The illustration on the left shows one of the granite milestones on the old road to the isles between Invergarry and Tomdoun.



Terry Keegan

COUNTY BOUNDARY STONE, KENT/SUSSEX

Jenny Coumts (Kent) sends a sketch of a county boundary stone beside the military road between Rye and Appledore, grid ref. TQ 941253. It is dated 1806 and sits on, and parallel to, the bank above the Hythe Military Canal. It was probably put there when the canal was being dug, but before the road had been constructed. It may have been in anticipation of the road or, if the line of the Kent Ditch had been broken before, while making this part of the canal. The stone has some particularly attractive lichens growing on it.



PUBLICATIONS - BOOK REVIEW

Patrick Taylor: *The Toll-houses of Cornwall*, (Federation of Old Cornwall Societies; 2001); iv + 80pp, ISBN 0 90266 029 2. Price £7.95 (plus £2 p&p from Royal Cornwall Museum, River Street, Truro TR1 2SJ).

Surveys of toll-houses are as important to compile for the national record as of milestones, and for the same reasons. They represent the principal surviving evidence of the old road system, especially in its turnpike period, and each is constantly under threat. Toll-houses by their very nature were constructed close to the roadside and

often in the past have been seen as no more than redundant buildings inconveniently in the way of essential road improvements.

Any county-based assessment of surviving numbers, recording their individual quality as buildings as well as their relevance to the overall road network, can only serve to heighten awareness and improve chances for protection of at least the best examples. They can also record the rate of loss over the years. So, for example, surveys in Devon (in 1976) and twenty years later for Herefordshire have helped and now we have another very useful study for Cornwall, produced by a conservation architect native to the county for whom this has been a long-time study.

This is indeed a fascinating account, nicely presented in a format which allows for a brief introductory essay, with its reminders of local distinctiveness value, and then a gazetteer of 50 examples (listed west to east up the county) which reflects the various trusts established in Cornwall between 1754 and 1863. There is a page for each entry, which creates an instant feel-good factor that so many have survived. However, one quickly discovers that nearly 20% of these have "been lost" (as the author so graphically describes it) although a photo and description has been included. On each page are notes of other now-disappeared toll-houses in the same area as the one described, a most useful way of presenting associated information.

Fourteen turnpike acts are listed and almost all of them have at least one surviving toll-house as an example. There are obvious groups around towns, especially Bodmin and Launceston, with an especially interesting (and early) group around Truro. Amongst the casualties is the Lockengate toll cottage from the china clay lands north of St. Austell, a classic gothic design with half-hexagonal frontage, which graces the front cover of this most useful exemplar for county studies elsewhere.

David Viner

DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER FOR JULY 2003 - Contributions for inclusion in the July 2003 Newsletter should reach the Editors by Friday 20 June 2003 at the following address:

A. & C. Haines,

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 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, save in RTF (Rich Text Format), Word 6.0/97, or Wordperfect 5.x for Windows format. We have difficulty with other formats.

PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF MILESTONES: INTERIM GUIDANCE - Alan Rosevear has produced this document based on observations made by members of the Society and advice from those with some experience working with roadside items. Members of the Society wishing to obtain a copy should contact Alan.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL - Subscriptions for 2003-2004 fall due on 1 June 2003. Details and forms will be sent with the AGM agenda.

MILESTONE SOCIETY WEBSITE - The Society now has a website <http://www.milestone-society.co.uk> which contains basic information (objectives, Society officers, application forms for membership and meetings, links to related websites, etc.) and some details of more topical matters (brief synopsis of meetings, photographs of speakers, information and pictures of recently missing milestones, etc.). By 'clicking' on one of the coloured, underlined pieces of text on the Society's web page, which describes either a web-link or an e-mail address, then the web page or blank addressed e-mail will open automatically. If anyone feels that other information should be posted on the website, please forward suggestions to the Newsletter Editors.

Interestingly, our own website and some information about the Society has now been picked up by other websites. These can be discovered easily by using the excellent search engine Google (internet address: www.google.com) and using together the two search terms *milestone* and *society*. Although there are many non-relevant 'hits', the first two usually refer directly to the Society page and there are an increasing number which contain useful information.

COUNTY COORDINATORS

The following is the list of County Coordinators to the best current knowledge of the Committee. If there are any mistaken entries, or any omissions, please inform the Coordinator of Coordinators, Mike Buxton (address below), and also the Newsletter Editors. There are a number of Counties without Coordinators; if any member in such a county is willing to help the Society by taking on this role* for their county, the committee would be extremely grateful. In such an instance, please inform Mike Buxton and the Editors.

Anyone wishing to contact their County Coordinator can obtain details from Mike Buxton by writing to him (or via e-mail):

Bedfordshire. Michael Knight
Buckinghamshire. Alan Rosevear
Cardiganshire. Chris Woodard
Derbyshire. John Higgins
Dorset. John Tybjerg
Hampshire. Keith Lawrence
Huntingdonshire. Michael Knight
Leicestershire. Joyce Lee
Northamptonshire. Michael Knight
Oxfordshire. Ted Flaxman

Berkshire. Alan Rosevear
Cambridgeshire. Grainne Farrington
Cornwall. Ian Thompson S.
Cumbria/N.Lancs. Ken Broadhurst
Essex. John Nicholls
Hertfordshire. John Donovan
Lancashire. John Priestly
Norfolk. Carol Haines
Northumberland. Ian Davison
Pembrokeshire. Anthony Rhys-Davies

Radnorshire. Tony Boyce
Somerset... Janet Dowding
Suffolk. Richard Mudhar
Warwickshire , Mike Buxton
Worcestershire. Terry Keegan
Yorkshire. Jan Scrine

Rutland. Joyce Lee
Staffordshire. John Higgins
Sussex. John Griffin
Wiltshire. The Chairman,
Industrial Archaeology Committee,
Wilts.Arch.& Nat. HistSoc.,
The Museum, 41 Long St. Devizes,
Wiltshire SN10 INS.

* This can involve some or many of the aspects involved in the recording and preservation of milestones but most importantly the coordinator is the local contact for members in a particular county and helps to organise and deal with the various matters that arise (eg recording, restoration, local authority liaison, etc) and also to act as a link between the group of county members and the main Society committee.

WANTED! - The Society desperately needs an unpaid volunteer to fill the post of Publicity Officer. The successful candidate will be required to liaise with the media (press releases, TV and radio interviews, as necessary), to promote the aims and image of the Society, to have an interest in our National Heritage, a knowledge of relevant literature (magazines, journals, newsletters, etc), to be able to generate ideas for advertising the Society and its aims, and to be able to communicate easily, write lucidly, talk eloquently, and to be computer literate. The position would suit a media studies student or graduate.

Seriously and more realistically, if you have any or just a few of these abilities or aspirations towards them, the Chairman (David Viner) would be extremely pleased to hear from you and welcome you onto the Committee to fill this most important role.

SPRING MEETING OF THE SOCIETY - SATURDAY 10 MAY 2003 - This meeting, which will include the AGM, will be held in the Crich Tramway Museum, near Matlock, Derbyshire. A programme for the meeting and an agenda for the AGM will be sent to members. There is no charge for the meeting but those requiring tea/coffee, etc., will need to purchase their own drinks. It is planned to allow sufficient time after the meeting for those attending to visit the Museum. The Museum has been designated as one with an outstanding collection. As well as the possibility of travelling on vintage trams from all over the world, through a period townscape to open country side, it offers many indoor attractions. It is situated 15 miles north of Derby, 6 miles from Matlock, and 8 miles from the M1 Junction 28.

Answer to the mystery milestone: The milestone is located, in code, at Hmfkdsnm. To get the answer, replace each letter by one that follows it in the alphabet.

ISSN 1476-3109