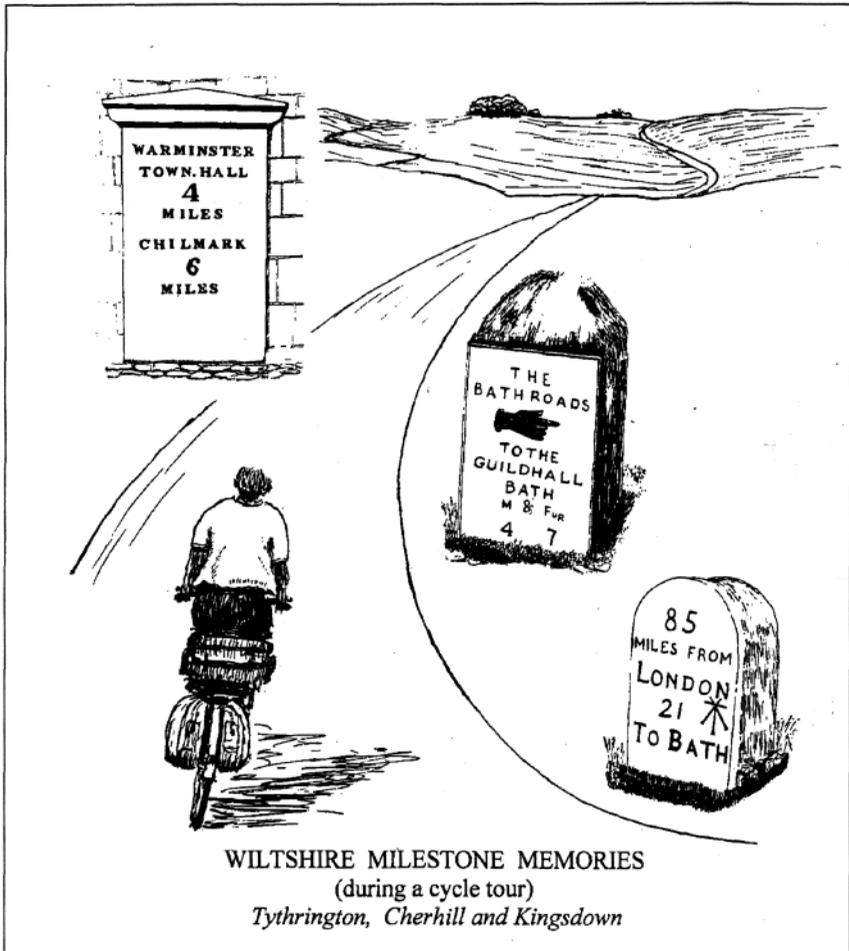




THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 8

January 2005



WILTSHIRE MILESTONE MEMORIES
(during a cycle tour)
Tythington, Cherhill and Kingsdown

The Cover Picture - The cover picture was provided by Lionel Joseph of Dorking Surrey. He writes: 'The three Wiltshire milestones (Tytherington *ST915410*, Cherhill *SU 031699*, and Kingsdown *ST 813671*) are an example of inscription in both stone and cast iron. The inscriptions appear as they are seen on the actual milestones. The distance shown for Chilmark is interesting since there is no direct route today, therefore the distance must have been measured over a downland track.'

Officers of the Milestone Society: *Chairman:* David Viner; *Secretary:* Terry Keegan; *Treasurer:* Jan Scrine; *Database & Recording:* Alan Rosevear; *National Coordinators:* Mervyn Benford and Mike Buxton; *Newsletter Editors:* Alan and Carol Haines; *Conservation Advice:* Jeremy Milln; *Constitution & Charitable Status:* Laurence Dopson; *Membership Secretary:* Brian Barrow.

EDITORS' COMMENTS - Since the last issue of the Newsletter, the Editors are pleased to note that there have been two important developments regarding the provision of information to members. Importantly, the first issue of the Journal of the Milestone Society *Milestones & Waymarkers* has been completed, printed and circulated after a very long gestation period, which is understandable in view of the learning curve required for all of those involved in its preparation. Hopefully, with the experience now attained, future issues will appear with less delay, and members are encouraged to prepare suitable articles for submission to the Editorial panel of the Journal. The purpose of the Journal is to provide a medium whereby the work of the Society involving identification, recording, research, conservation and interpretation which is carried out by members, supporters and specialists can be described in some depth with suitable reference to related existing knowledge, and thereby provide a permanent record of the Society's interests, working within its key aim.

The second development has been the launching of a second Newsletter called *On the Ground* as additional to and complementing the current Newsletter. This is seen as a means of increasing contact with members and is planned for the autumn of each year with a different Editor for each edition (note: a volunteer is sought to edit the next edition). Mervyn Benford who put forward the idea has produced an excellent first edition in A4 format with illustrations, and has pointed out it will be focused mainly on news from branches, and will draw on more detailed information published in some of the excellent county newsletters produced by some coordinators, but which, understandably, have a restricted circulation. The Editors of the current Newsletter would, however, strongly encourage the county coordinators to still submit to them short *summaries* of activities for inclusion in the section 'News from the County Groups', even though a county newsletter has been produced; we feel this news makes a valuable addition in the form of an overview of county activities.

COMMITTEE MEETING (Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, 10 July 2004) - There was a very full Agenda, conveniently divided into (a) Society business (Minutes, etc.), (b) publications programme, (c) meetings programme, (d) Society policy on funding, (e) Society policy on grants, (f) promotion and publicity, (g) Society policy on theft alert and acquisition, (h) Society policy on

conservation/restoration of milestones and mileplates, and (i) the Recording programme.

Under (b), the new Generic Risk Assessment was discussed and agreed, this being a short document that persons engaged in restoration or preservation should complete in order to increase self-awareness of the possible risks that could be present in the work to be undertaken; this type of 'forward thinking' is now a standard part of safety measures for most working practices and the document will be available with the latest version of Guidance Notes on preservation and restoration of milestones.

Under (c) suitable venues, themes and speakers for future meetings were discussed and under (d) and (e) recent success in fund raising and the means of overseeing expenditure on grants were considered. The major item under (f) was the production of an updated leaflet to advertise the Society; a format was agreed together with the required funding. Thefts have been an important recent concern for the Society, especially with items appearing for auction on the internet, and under (g) the progress in this area was summarised together with a discussion on the required policy when theft was discovered or suspected. The Society has obtained the services of a retired police officer to advise on such matters. Under (h), the continual updating of the Guidance Notes was reported and the good progress in the ever expanding National Database was included in item (i). The date of the next meeting was set for Saturday 21 November 2004.

COMMITTEE MEETING (Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, 20 November 2004) - Apologies were received from Alan Rosevear, Jeremy Milln, Carol & Alan Haines, and Mervyn Benford. Jan Scrine acted as Minute Secretary. A report from the Treasurer indicated that the Society was financially sound, with journal costs coming in under budget. The Membership Secretary said that the Society had 355 paid up memberships which includes 56 joint memberships, and 13 corporate memberships - this year 40 have not yet renewed but there are 59 new members to date. Some donations had been received with membership renewal.

Laurence Dopson reported on the satisfactory conclusion to the Society's application to become a registered charity - our Charity number is 1105688 and should be shown on all documentation, correspondence, and on the website. The move towards charitable status is to be summarised in a piece he has written for the Newsletter. Charitable status brings obligations and responsibilities, too.

Regarding future Committee Meetings, it was agreed to keep to 3 times per annum and use e-mail for circulating agenda items and reports in advance. Dates of future Committee meetings were set at 12 March 05, 9 July 05, and 19 Nov 05.

As part of the publications programme, volume 1 of the Society's journal *MILESTONES & WAYMARKERS* had been published and copies had been distributed at Basingstoke, Worcestershire and Yorkshire meetings; the rest had been mailed. A print run of 800 had been made and 400 distributed already. The remaining copies were a valuable promotional tool. A retail price of £4 incl 2nd class postage was agreed. An appreciation of the Editorial Committee's work was expressed. Volume 2 of the journal is in preparation.

There had been a positive response to the publication *On the Ground*, aimed to reflect activities, what is being done, etc., but continued publication requires a guest editor for each edition. The coming Newsletter should include Society officers' names or Society contact details.

The Autumn meeting at Basingstoke was successful and Laurence Dopson had written on it for the Hampshire magazine. A meeting of County Coordinators had been scheduled for 21 November. Regarding future meetings, the Annual Conference with AGM was set for the Avoncroft Museum on 11 June 2005, and a Cambridgeshire location for the Autumn meeting 2005 would be explored.

As regards promotion and publicity, a publicity officer is still a prime requirement. A promotional leaflet is available and two postcards have been produced by Mervyn Benford, the costs of the latter being recouped by sales. Articles have appeared to publicise our work; Mervyn Benford has written an review article for the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings and also entertained the Banbury Methodist Men's group with a short talk.

The level of insurance needs to be considered and may have to be increased. Thefts continue to be of concern to the Society. Despite relevant authorities being given evidence of items for sale via the web, there has been no success in getting prosecutions taken forward but the Committee agreed to support any action taken by the local authorities. Contractors undertaking roadside work may sometimes be responsible for temporary removal of milemarkers and vigilance is necessary in such cases to ensure that they are reinstated when work is complete.

THE AUTUMN MEETING (Milestones, Basingstoke, 9 October 2004) - The meeting was held at the excellent facilities available at the Milestones museum in Basingstoke and was attended by just over 50 members. One important aspect of the meeting was the distribution of the first volume of the Journal of the Milestone Society, *Milestones and Waymarkers*. Non-attending members were to receive their copies by post. The meeting opened with a talk by the Hampshire co-ordinator Dr Keith Lawrence on *The Development of Hampshire's Turnpikes*, a most professional computer-based presentation which covered the 33 turnpike trusts which were established between 1710 and 1841. The first one was set up between Portsmouth and Sheet Bridge, probably reflecting the importance of the naval dockyard. The point was made that the geology of a county plays a part in where turnpikes were established, there being less pressure to build across well-drained chalk soils than across wet, peat containing land. The shortest turnpike stretched no more than 3 miles from Warren Farm station to Andover, presumably an attempt to improve access to the railway, which could only lead to its own demise. In 1837 there were 36 trusts, the extra ones resulting from N and S and E and W divisions. There were 627 miles of turnpike roads with an average of 17 miles per trust. The great post roads were to Exeter, Southampton, and Portsmouth, the first via Salisbury, the second via Winchester. The original road to Portsmouth now comprises mainly B roads as a result of by-passes, the part from Portsmouth to Petersfield being the county's first turnpike in 1711. One original milestone still exists! The turnpike across the Harford flats had the distinction of hosting the land

speed record for coaching when 10 miles were covered at around 14 mph. The explosive growth in turnpikes between 1750 and 1760 can be related to social history, reflecting the transport revolution which lay between the agricultural and industrial revolutions. The importance of communications to Southampton was stressed, with goods arriving from as far afield as the Lake District. The period 1792 to 1815 was the tail end of the Acts for turnpikes; the road from Southampton to Fareham was extremely bad and was left to the very end; apparently Jane Austen preferred to travel by boat from Fareham to Devon! Although Basingstoke to Andover took 2½ hours by coach and today only 20 minutes by car, the improvements in journey time may not be quite so dramatic in central London. As a further comparison, in 1830, there were 200 coach movements per week between Basingstoke and Southampton, which represents 1600 travellers assuming 8 per coach. This number might now be expected to be carried in one train. What remains of this important era? Probably only 6 turnpike houses to remind us of the heyday of the turnpike in Hampshire.

David Viner then gave a talk illustrated with slides on *The Industrial Archaeology of Hampshire's Roads: 35 years on [1969-2004]* which recalled a series of earlier studies undertaken by the University of Southampton Industrial Archaeology group involving projects on a range of subjects which included toll houses, roadside furniture including milestones, wind and watermills, breweries and aerodromes. Records of these investigations are held in the university libraries of Southampton and Bath. These early studies laid a foundation for later years and highlighted the threat to such items of our industrial past. No one had been prepared to travel to the Isle of Wight at that time which therefore is unreported in those records! The talk with pictured information from around 40 years ago illustrated the importance of research in providing data for coming generations.

Keith Lawrence continued his Hampshire theme with his personal experience in compiling the Hampshire milestone database. Around 400 sites had been visited and 307 milemarkers identified, 285 from stone 18 metal and 4 from concrete. Of these, 123 had evidence of plates having been attached, of which 76 still retained, with 10 replacements. Re-used stones, early bench marks, and the 'geology' of stones (that is the type and origin of the stone material) was considered, and a warning of the danger of gorse bushes in the search of New Forest stones was highlighted!

After lunch Dr Alan Rosevear gave a talk entitled *Long and Short Miles*, which firstly highlighted how the method of distance measurement, that is direct point to point or one following the hill and dale contour of the road, could lead to quite different numbers. The type of mile implied (great, middle and small) would also make for differences. The importance of a knowledge of exact distance followed from the charges made for letters and the rate at which coaching horses were let out.

The many apparent discrepancies in distances to London are often to be explained in the variation in turnpike termini, for example Hyde Park Corner, Tyburn gate or Whitechapel church. Clearly it is also dependent on which side one is coming from as to which terminus is the one in question. In comments from the

floor, it was pointed out that in 3 turnpike Acts for Hampshire, there was a difference of 6 furlongs in the measured distance of the point from which distances from London were taken. Postal charges were thought to be measured from the GPO near Cornhill.

The final talk, *On the way to Aviemore*, was based on Terry Keegan's summer trip to Scotland which took a route up the spine of England and included a visit to the Roman milestone still standing in a field in Chesterholme. Terry has a special interest in 'zero' milestones and was able to add to his collection.

The meeting closed at 15.00 in order to allow time for members to visit the museum.

THE MILESTONE SOCIETY IS A REGISTERED CHARITY NOW

The Milestone Society is registered now. The Charity Commission approved it on 1 September 2004. Its registered number is 1105688. To achieve this there had to be negotiations with the commission, which, between July and September, had 1,685 applications. The Milestone Society was one of the 1,482 charities which gained their registration during this quarter. During the same period 1,337 were removed from the register, 'largely because they had ceased to exist'. The total number of charities registered at the end of September was 189,000.

Being a registered charity brings advantages to an organization. But it imposes obligations as well. The first thing people think about is that a registered charity can get money from the Inland Revenue. Provided the subscriber or donor pays income tax, the charity receives a rebate - but only if the individual is a taxpayer. People who don't pay but make a claim are likely to have to pay any rebate back to the taxman themselves.

The great advantage of registration is that the public knows that the charity is regulated. And the Charity Commission really do check up and regulate. You can see the enquiries it carries out, and the thoroughness with which they are conducted, by looking at the Charity Commission's website. Another advantage of registration is that the name of the society appears on an official public web site.

With advantages come obligations. The charity has to submit annual accounts and annual reports of its activities. It can only operate within the objectives and constitution under which the Commissioners have registered it. So far as the regulations about what information the charity has to supply to the Commission are concerned, there are two sorts of charities, those with an income of up to £10,000 a year and those with an income of over £10,000. At the moment the Milestone Society comes in the first category.

The Charity Commission covers England and Wales only. The charity law in Scotland is different. However, the Milestone Society will still get rebates from donors and subscribers living north of the border.

In both parts of the United Kingdom charity law is about to change. New legislation is on the way, or at least on the horizon.

The Charity Commissioners have a good objective for charity trustees. 'Charities,' they say, 'should be effective, not just well run.' The Milestone Society,

as a new boy, is going to aim at that.

The formal objectives of the Milestone Society are:

The preservation and conservation for the public benefit of milestones, the term milestones to be interpreted as including indications of distances and places, whether provided in stone, metal or wood, waymarks, fingerposts, boundary posts, crosses or inscriptions, and wherever situated.'

Laurence Dopson

[The Charity Commission has a website: www.charitycommission.gov.uk - Eds]

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY GROUPS

Bedfordshire - The coordinator, Michael Knight, is already well booked for talks for 2005 to a variety of groups in four counties. He has also found a source for up to 23 original turnpike acts affecting parishes within Bedfordshire. These documents can be purchased at very moderate prices, they are in good condition and date from the 1790s through the 1800s. Anyone interested should contact Michael.

Berkshire & Buckinghamshire - The majority of the surviving milestones have been surveyed but conversations with local history enthusiasts recently led to identification of two stones that were thought lost, one on the Bath Road at Littlewick Green (the 32-mile-stone), and the other at the Skew Bridge in Basildon.

From the store of digital images and an electronic database, Alan Rosevear has compiled tables containing all the basic information on the surviving milestones and picture sheets with the two illustrations of each stone. The colour pictures sorted by Parish and by individual route along with the details of location and condition make a rather thick booklet. Master copies of this *Milestones in the Thames Valley* have been lodged with the Local Studies libraries at Oxford, Reading and Buckingham. Separate booklets were printed for each District in the three old counties and these were sent to the individual Conservation Officers.

At an exhibition by the Maidenhead Heritage Centre between 26 August and 23 October, Alan Rosevear provided three display boards on the history of the milestones in the area around Maidenhead.

Regarding restoration work, the Vale of White Horse DC have given Alan Rosevear approval to restore and repaint 15 milestones to the North and West of Wantage and they gave advice on getting a Heritage Grant to pay the £200 for materials. Unfortunately, Alan assumed one bit of the Council automatically told another what was going on. Highways were not involved so questions were asked when these repainted stones started to appear by the road. They needed to give careful consideration and so work was on hold throughout August. An important lesson is to consult with both County Highways and District Planning before starting work. Thankfully, renovation work in Kennet District of Wiltshire is going problem free as both were told. Three stones on the Bath Road east of Marlborough are almost done. Cutting the grass and perennial weeds from around milestones on

the verge makes the biggest single impact on visibility and awareness, with satisfying results.

Cambridgeshire - Grainne Farrington reports: In September 2003, I and Michael Knight were invited to attend and help with the re-siting of the Hemmingford Abbots milestone to a place as near to its original site as possible. We hope that Huntingdonshire District Conservation Department will use this as an example of good practice. Some expensive restoration work has been carried out on the late 18th century Brampton waymarker, paid for jointly by the Parish and the District Council. I anticipate that a number of other rescues and renovations will be completed this summer.

Michael Knight has given five talks in Huntingdonshire, and already has a number booked further afield. This has proved to be a useful and interesting way to promote the Society, especially as Michael presents his talks in an accessible and entertaining manner.

Michael Hallett has continued to track down, photograph and complete Field Record Sheets whenever possible. His CD Roms, and the information provided are a valuable contribution to the County, and the Milestone Society. South Cambs Conservation Department has already used them as a 'search' facility, and 'Images of England' photographers have also had contact with me.

Cambridgeshire, including Peterborough Unitary Authority, has 174 Waymarkers of one sort or another. These are situated in 88 Parishes, and 97 are Listed Grade 2. This is of relevance as only these seem eligible for grant contributions. One of the Districts has provided me with funding to purchase Limewash, which enables me to give support to a Parish, by renovating one of their stones as an example. We have still not tackled any cast iron posts yet.

A chance remark led me to Peterborough Museum, where I found a Roman milestone in a display on Roman Britain. Enquiries in Cambridge finally unearthed four more Roman Stones. All have SMRs but are sadly hidden away in a storeroom of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, out of site and out of mind. Once their identification has been confirmed, I hope to be in contact with the Cambridge Folk Museum which is currently being refurbished, to see if they could be permanently displayed there.

Regrettably, though there are a few Society members in Cambridgeshire, none are able to contribute much time or practical help. Michael Knight and Mike Hallett continue to support me, and I appreciate the correspondence from, and financial contribution to postage and printing made by the Society.

Ceredigion - Chris Woodard has discovered that Ceredigion County Council repaint their milestones every two or three years, and in July 2004 they did just that, although a few stones between Cardigan and Newcastle Emlyn on the A484 were missed. Chris has noted that three mileposts set up by the Newcastle Emlyn Town Council were recorded in the Diamond Collection, but today only two still seem to be in situ. He is trying to find out where the third has gone.

Derbyshire - Although the county is still without a coordinator, John Higgins has been receiving useful and detailed information from members and is arranging some meetings with his Staffordshire group close to the border so that Derbys.

members can attend. The Peak and Northern Footpath Society are still producing their cast iron signs and hope to increase the number from 220 to 400 in the next few years (more information from their website: www.peakandnorthern.org.uk). Devon - In June 2004 coordinator Tim Jenkinson received an assurance from developers, a local Parish Council and Devon County Council (DCC) that a recently renovated milestone in the car park of Courtenay Arms Hotel, Starcross would be protected during redevelopment of the site into luxury apartments. An article on the stone appeared in the *Express and Echo* (10.6.04). At Rixy Park Corner on the Chudleigh-Newton Abbot road a milestone, dating from the 1830s, was uprooted by an HGV last January. It has now been reinstated by DCC onto a sturdy concrete base. A mile plate in Kingswear showing mileage to Exeter, Torquay and Teignmouth, among others, has recently been restored by DCC. The parishes of Ugborough and Strete in the South Hams region have responded positively to requests for them to care for their mile and boundary stones. There have been offers to cut back vegetation, resurrect a fallen stone, and repaint a rusting cast iron milepost. On a less optimistic note a milestone showing 9/Miles/to/Exeter disappeared from the verge near Chudleigh in September. The police and the local press were alerted, but so far to no avail. The county's database continues to grow with plans to complete the Exeter to Plymouth and Exeter to Launceston (old A30) roads in the near future.

Tim had an article on old roadside guide stones of East Dartmoor published in *Devon Life* in July 2004, and another (the first of three) on Dartmoor Turnpikes and their mile markers in the winter edition of the *Dartmoor Magazine*. He has also given a talk at the Princetown History Club on roadside milestones of Dartmoor and South Devon and followed the talk with some slides to illustrate a recently reinstated mileplate and a resurrected milestone.

Dorset - John Tybjerg writes in his October 2004 newsletter that the last two months have brought good news for the county group. A new member William Allard, a mature student at Bournemouth University, is using Dorset milestones as one of his projects, an interest furthered through his contact with the Society via the website. John has recently given presentations to Stinsford Parish Council and the Dorset Industrial Archaeology Society, both of which were well received and the group funds are now in a quite reasonable condition again.

It appears that the restoration of two mileposts in Shaftesbury is now complete. The milepost in the town has been repainted and the one on the Sherborne road has been moved 30 metres to a safer site and repainted. The Eastern Area Highways Department at DCC has been very busy re-erecting and repainting milestones. All but 3 of the 34 milestones and mileposts in their area have now been repainted. Quite a few fingerposts that have been repainted and fitted with new circular finials bearing the Grid Reference of the position and sometimes the site name across the middle of the circle. Unfortunately there are still a couple of milestones in a ditch and flat on their back but John intends to keep up the pressure on these.

At the end of August John was telephoned by Dave Luther, from near Wimborne, who said that he had a milestone lying in his field, discovered a few

years ago when repairing a fence that a car had damaged, and recent articles and some contact with the Highways Department on other matters prompted his memory about it. The milestone is from the A31 opposite the Little Chef and Esso filling station near the roundabout to Wimborne and Corfe Mullen. The stone is in good condition and reads 'Dorchester 21 Wimborne 1'. Dave Luther is working with the Highways Department to get approval to re-erect it in a safe position after which John will paint it.

In his newsletter, John Tybjerg encourages his county colleagues to start getting out and about again to start checking up on milestones and perhaps doing a bit of cleaning up and removing the more prolific growth around them.

A further communication from John in November says that Dorset County Council have re-erected 2 milestones that were flat on their back and painted 22, all in the eastern part of the county. The western area have now moved the Milepost at Longcross near Shaftesbury and Shaftesbury Town Council have painted this and another similar one in the town. He hopes that Christchurch Borough Council will paint 5 more! There has also been a lot of activity along the Dorset-Hants border where 10 V-posts have been re-erected where required and are in the process of being painted.

Norfolk - Carol Haines writes: It has been frustrating for some time to write to various local authorities about milestones that need attention and to receive no reply or to have letters passed on to other departments. Recently, however, a member of the Heritage & Landscape Department at County Hall has been appointed as a contact person for all milestone matters, which will hopefully make it easier to get repairs and restoration on to the highway engineers' lists. Unanswered letters have not always meant no action, however. Heckingham Parish Council were contacted in 2003 about a post on the B1136 which had been lying half buried under a hedge for some years. A year later a note from the parish clerk informed me that the post had been restored and 'looked splendid'. It turned out to be in excellent condition and has been beautifully cleaned and painted by the Highways Department and moved a few yards to a safer site. There are plans by the WI and parish council to make a new metal plate for a stone in Horsham St Faith. The original (from the 1820s) was probably removed in 1940 and there are no others to act as a model.

Somerset - The autumn meeting of the group was held on 19 November at a member's home in Yeovil, reports Janet Dowding. An informal talk was given by Ian Gething, Assistant Conservation Officer of Mendip District Council. The Council is surveying all listed buildings in the district as part of the Buildings at Risk 2005 survey, and this includes milestones. The group's records and photographs had been borrowed to cross reference against the listed building database which includes 60 known milestones and 11 boundary markers. Information was also given on how to get buildings listed, and details of various grant schemes. Janet estimates that there are still over 100 possible milestone sites in the old county of Somerset which need to be investigated. Most of these will inevitably turn out to be where milestones went missing many years ago, but just occasionally a milestone is found unexpectedly. Another group meeting will hopefully take place in March 2005.

Staffordshire - John Higgins' garage is becoming a 'home for terminally ill mileposts' as he awaits decisions from local authorities on their future. He has visited the widow of a collector of abandoned items around Cheadle. Two mileposts were rescued after being thrown out during road works in the 1960s, and it is hoped at least one of them can be returned to its original position. John has finished repainting all 47 mileposts in Staffordshire Moorlands. He has also found that many of the 'bobbin' posts have no foundations and can (and have been) dug up easily. The series between Leek and Ashbourne have all previously been set in concrete, and John hopes to give similar treatment to those between Leek and Buxton. Information has also been received about Charles Lathe & Co. who cast about 300 of Staffordshire's surviving mileposts. The foundry was set up in Tipton in 1872 and closed in 1969, although no specific records for the posts have been found.

Warwickshire - A meeting of the Group was held at the Castle Inn Edgehill on 23 March 2004. Coordinator Mike Buxton advised the group about events nationally including the Styal Winter meeting on 28 February 2004, two National Society Committee Meetings in November and March, the packs which had been sent to County Co-ordinators and the forthcoming AGM at Tile Hill, Coventry. With regard to Warwickshire, Mike reported that he had received correspondence from John Higgins in respect of the Arrow valley milestones and expressing a willingness to help record milestones in the County, and Ted Showell who had recorded a milestone at Bradley Green. Robert Caldicott reported on the progress made on the 'Harbury Station' milestone at Gaydon which, he said, had been successfully removed by the contractors for Warks. CC for restoration treatment and eventual reinstatement, close to, but in a less vulnerable position than the one it was in on the B4451. The restored milestone was reinstated on 1 May 2004 and publicised in the *Stratford Herald*. Continued concern was expressed about the decaying state of the milestone set in the house wall in Henley in Arden.

There was discussion about old maps and how routes of roads had changed. Mervyn Benford had given a talk to the Kenilworth Rotary Club and remarked on the poor state of the milestone outside Milestone Cottage in Kenilworth. One of the audience had once worked at Glovers Foundry where many cast iron mileposts were made including that recently restored now at the foot of Sunrising Hill on the A422. Mike Buxton has been asked to give a talk to the Long Compton History Society about milestones.

There was debate about the practice of turning old milestones, often inscribed with roman numerals, around and re-carving them with more information, and there was a discussion about funding replacement plates. It was suggested that once a milestone is restored the Milestone Society should place a plaque by each one which could state *"Restored by the Milestone Society with the aid of lottery funding under the auspices of [local authority] as part of preserving and protecting your local heritage"*.

Another group meeting was held at the Dun Cow, Dunchurch (opposite the obelisk milestone) on 14 September 2004. Three current restoration projects were reported on: Gaydon and Deppers Bridge mileposts on the B4451, and near Goldicote House on the A422. One member is pursuing the issue of restoring the

milestone in the High Street at Henley in Arden, and it is hoped to commence the survey of the 'gaslamp' style mileposts on the Long Compton-Shipston-Stratford stretch of the A3400. Two ironstone milestones have been found on the B4100, one at Temple Herdewyke and the other just north of Warmington. The Temple Herdewyke milestone was discovered in the roadside ditch by highway contractors and reinstated on the other side of the original road. However, during November it was stolen and group member Robert Caldicott has been pursuing the matter with the police, publicising the theft in the local press and alerting reclamation companies about it in case the thieves try to sell it to them. The Warmington stone is badly damaged and only its lower portion remains.

Mike gave a presentation to the Compton District History Society at which there was some debate about the original turnpike road alignment in the district and the history of the 'gaslamp' style mileposts. More information was to be found at the Shipston Museum apparently. The History Society has now decided to become affiliate members of the Milestone Society. Mike has found invaluable information in Arthur Cossons' article 'Warwickshire Turnpikes', and in Turner's chapter on Turnpikes, Canals and Railways in his book *A History of Warwickshire*. Mike has also been invited to do a presentation for the Warwickshire Industrial Archaeological Society in July 2005.

Jan Scrine is hoping to produce a sponsored historical guided walk, similar to the one she initiated at Kirklees, taking in milestones and waymarkers and centred on Gibbet Hill by the A429 between Kenilworth and Coventry. Members have also been researching the history of the county's Turnpike Trusts.

Worcestershire - Terry Keegan reports in his September Newsletter (which we notice is dated 1904, so he has been going a long time!) that the group has its first honorary life member, Alfred Wilkes. Mr Wilkes was given the honour to celebrate his hundredth birthday. He worked all his life for the County Highways department and has given the group a fascinating account of his career, including the information that Worcestershire was the first county in England to use white lines on its roads. A few more milestones have received the attention of the group's paint brushes, and a stone in Worcester on the Great Witley road has now been replated. Following an article on milestones in the *Ludlow & Tenbury Advertiser*, for which Terry supplied photographs, including one of a post at Pipers Brook, the mystery of this post, which reads 'Tenbury Parish' at the top and 'Pipers Brook' on the side, has come to light. It was bought many years ago from a scrap yard in Ross on Wye by someone living in Surrey but with a property in Pipers Brook. He altered the mileage and added the name of the hamlet using paint and small plastic letters. The post originally stood on the B4204 where a Bradley stone now stands. As a result of all this, the Society has another member and also a contact with the Malvern Civic Society which has expressed interest in our work.

Yorkshire (East) - John & Janet Harland report several recently discovered milestones: The 1910 OS map shows a milestone at Mile House on the old Selby-Market Weighton Turnpike road but nothing had been found. Last autumn the farmer cleared out undergrowth from the verge and uncovered the curved top of a

stone. Highway operatives then lifted out the stone with a JCB to reveal an intact cast iron plate. The stone is now re-installed.

A tombstone-shaped stone had been recorded in Beverley Lane, South Cave. While stuck behind a slow-moving tractor, Hazel Armstrong spotted a large stone set back in a wood which turned out to be the next in the series with the legend Hull (?) South Cave 1. After studying old OS maps, another stone was found 1½ miles from Walkington. It was in a hedge bottom and covered in moss and ivy. When cleared it revealed a mounting block which had been broken off just below its second step. The stone has now been moved out on to the verge.

Talking to a local in a village on the Sledmere-Bridlington road he commented that as a lad he used to walk the road with the Council lengthman cleaning a number of plates on milestones. During the war they were allegedly buried by digging a trench behind them and pushing them over. Our next project is to try and determine whether they are still there.

Yorkshire (West) - Jan Scrine organised a meeting, subsidised by the Kirklees Community History Service, on 24 October 2004 at Cleckheaton in the Red House Museum with the dual aim of getting people to learn more about their local milestones and more specifically to draw attention to one at Flockton requiring special attention. The response was most encouraging with 20 members and 10 guests attending and three new members were gained - but sadly no 'hands-on' volunteers it seems. A series of talks on local road developments, local examples through slides, a county update, the national database, and case studies of restoration held the attention of the audience. The Kirklees Conservation Officer was signed up as a member and given access to the database. On 12 November Jan and two colleagues met with the Highways department which offered to load the data base into their Streets Planning database, so that engineers planning public works will be aware of the milestones. Guidance notes on the Preservation and Restoration of Milestones were also provided. The Conservation Officer is keen to replace missing mileposts with copies but cooperation with Wakefield and Barnsley will be required as will funding. Jan is pleased to say that the 120 milemarkers in Kirklees are now officially loved!

NOTES AND QUERIES

Go it Charlie! The story behind the cartoon of Charles Darwin riding a beetle past a milestone (NL7, p. 15) has been sent in by Charles Toase (London SW). When Darwin was a student at Cambridge, a fellow undergraduate, Albert Way, introduced him to the joys of insect collecting. The cartoon was drawn by Way, who later became a noted antiquary and achieved an entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. The cartoon is in the Darwin Archive at Cambridge University Library. Jenny Coutts (Kent) thinks that the cartoon appeared in a book entitled *Charles Darwin and his World* which was published about 30 years ago.

Frank Patterson. Lionel Joseph (Surrey) writes that the illustrations in *Passing the Milestones* are not by Frank Patterson (NL7 p.20). The most obvious thing which

rules him out is the sky - Patterson never used horizontal straight lines. It also rules out Reg Gammon, Patterson's nephew, although similar in style to his later work.



The Birmingham 1 mile stone

Yet more on Second City. David Lyle (Swindon) has found more milestones giving the distance to Birmingham (see NL6, p. 10 and NL7, p. 13). Two stand on the A5127 south of Lichfield (Birmingham 14, and 12). On the A422 near Shenington is another (Birmingham 27). He also remembers a series on the A435 Birmingham-Alcester road. This has been greatly changed in recent years and he does not know whether the stones have survived, although one is marked on Landranger map 139 at SP 079751.

Iain Salisbury adds to our knowledge on this subject, which may help those lost within one mile of the midland metropolis - a milestone one mile (see photo) from Birmingham! He says that this is a stone that looks as if it could use some attention. It may be found on the Hagley Road, on the left, a few hundred yards out from Five Ways roundabout. Decimal points.

Mervyn Benford (Oxon) was alerted to a milestone in Devon which seems to have decimal points, reading 4.9 miles to Tavistock. It is, he says, 5 old Devon miles to Tavistock, six being recorded on modern signs. There is some old historical French influence in the district, and Dartmoor is close by where French prisoners were kept in early milestone days. Would this be the only example in the UK of decimal fractions used? Theories are welcome.

Boundary mystery A photograph sent by Michael Knight (Beds.) shows a triangular concrete block with the following lettering on its sloping upper face: W (upward arrowhead) D/BS/18. It stands directly opposite Kempston Barracks (which were built in 1876) on the road south out of Bedford. Can anyone suggest its meaning?

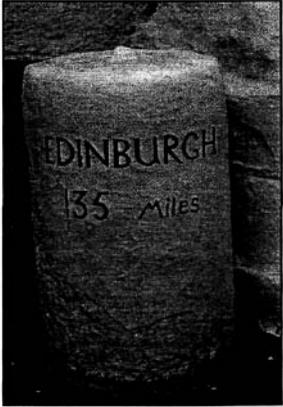
Local design A particular design of milestone has been noticed by David Lyle (Wilts.) which seems to be peculiar to the north of Wiltshire. It is D-shaped with the top falling from the outsides to the middle giving a cleft in the centre. Examples can be found on the A346, A4361 and B4192. The stone outside Milestone Cottage, Aldbourne, has recently been cleared of surrounding bushes and made more visible.

Cat mystery A possible solution to the case of the cat painted on a stone adjacent to a milestone in the Adel area of Leeds (*On the Ground No. 7*) has been sent by Philip Sumner (Yorks.). He thinks it may have been put there by the daughter of the local farmer in High Weardley who ran a cattery. The images seemed to appear soon after the cattery was established 20 to 30 years and the images have been maintained even though the business appears to have closed. The stone pictured is on a sharp corner and can act as a warning.

How high? David Lyle (Wilts.) wonders which is the highest milestone in terms of height above sea level in Britain. He reckons there are two contenders, both in

Cumbria. One near Hartside on the A686 is at about 540 metres, the other is on the A689 near Killhope at about 530 metres.

MAKESHIFT MILESTONES



You can not visit the Lake District without visiting Kendal - 'Gateway to the Lakes'. The main shopping street is Stricklandgate and down into Highgate. When you are tired of shopping and the money is spent look for the Highgate Hotel at 128 Highgate. This was originally the home of an eminent doctor, James Ainslie, built for him in the 1760s. The milestones either side of the doorway giving the mileage to London and Edinburgh come as something of a surprise. The white painted stones with black lettering record the distance to London as 258 miles and to Edinburgh as 135 miles. However, a little research reveals that the makeshift milestones are in fact two parts of a concrete roller, erected by the steps in the 1930s! The hotel is currently owned by Keith and Cath Dawson - just ask

and you can get the story 'straight from the horse's mouth'.

While you are in Highgate you can also see the Leyland Motors clock, relocated from the A6 at Shap. Look out for it at the Arts Centre garden, just before the Highgate Hotel, as you walk away from the town centre.

Keith Lawrence (Hampshire)

IF AT FIRST!



*Restored Poynton
milestone*

In August 2001, a friend sent me a newspaper cutting from the *Poynton Post*. In the planning decisions section were three lines stating 'Removal and relocation of listed milestone - site adjacent to 6 London Road South, Poynton (Approved)'.

London Road (A6) was a trunk road at that stage but in April 2002 it became 'detrunked' and so was the responsibility of Macclesfield Council Highways Department. The milestone was removed shortly after the item in the newspaper. All the building work that had necessitated the removal of the milestone was finished during 2003 but the milestone was not replaced. So, at the beginning of February 2004 several phone calls were made to the Highways Department. At first they said they knew nothing about it but would look into it and phone back but they didn't! Another phone call yielded the same result! Another phone call was made and I was told that the Planning Department didn't know the milestone was listed and there was no record of the

decision to remove and relocate the milestone afterwards. The department was given the details of the planning decision from the *Poynton Post* article and so a further investigation was promised. The milestone was traced and the decision taken to restore it. The metal plate was to be cleaned and repainted and the stone sandblasted and it would be back in position shortly. July 2004 saw the milestone back in place and about a foot further out of the ground (see photo on p. 15). But, if it hadn't been for some phone calls, I wonder where that milestone would have been now!

Gillian Oakes (Cheshire)

TRAVELS ON MY BIKE - AND MILESTONES ON THE WAY

In 1995 I retired from work, bought myself a decent bicycle, and rode it from Lands End to John O'Groats. It was something I had wanted to do for years, but had never had the time. My first photograph after leaving Lands End's cliffs was of an ancient stone with 'Lands End 2³/₄ miles' on it. Though I was unaware of it at the time, this was the start of a growing interest in milestones, and an expanding collection of photographs. I have since seen pictures of that same stone with the 2³/₄ miles painted over and replaced by the Cornish flag, more evocative perhaps, but less useful to travellers.

Each year since then I have done a longish ride and in choosing my routes have become increasingly attracted to roads along which milestones are shown on the OS maps. This year's ride was from Bournemouth to Gourock, on the Firth of Clyde, a matter of 585 miles spread over 11 days. A satisfying start took me past all-metal 'stones' on the A350, with 'Poole Trust' on their tops rather than the name of the parish. A short diversion to photo a stone on the A31 showing Dorchester and Wimborne preceded a beautifully restored stone outside a cottage in Spetisbury showing 'To Poole 11 miles, to Blandford 3 miles'. At the town end of the bridge over the Stour in Blandford there is a good stone showing the distances to 6 towns, including Shaston and Sarum, the old names for Shaftesbury, where I spent my first night, and Salisbury.

Milestones were fairly sparse as I crossed into Wiltshire but I passed a fine old one in Longbridge Deverill, which has a metal plate bolted to a chunk of grey limestone, on which the towns of Warminster and Shafton are spelt with the long 'S'. From Warminster north, all roads lead to Bath if the milestones are to be believed, particularly those headed 'The Bath Roads' which have a rather sinister black hand pointing the way, seemingly compelling you to go that way rather than offering advice [*See the front cover - Eds*]. I rebelled, for my route lay via Bradford-on-Avon and Malmesbury. From here, stones with very modern lettering and numerals guided me to Cirencester, where I joined the Fosse Way for a picturesque but strenuous ride through the Cotswolds. Even as far North as Stow-on-the-Wold, Bath continues to get a mention on the milestones despite being 51 miles distant.

On the western fringe of Birmingham there stands one of the least useful stones I have encountered. Leaning at an angle as if nudged by a lorry, it just says

'To Birm 1'. [See photo by Iain Salisbury on p. 14 - Eds.] Even 200 years ago I should have thought that anyone only a mile from Birm would be aware of the fact, while the stone is completely silent about the delights which lie in the opposite direction. Did this marker have another purpose? On into Staffordshire, the all-metal 'stones' were frequent and informative, providing lists of villages some of whose names were unfamiliar to me, and not all of them on the main roads. I was looking forward to reaching Derbyshire as it has a rich variety of posts and stones, and I was not disappointed when at Fenny Bentley, north of Ashbourne, I came across one which had 'London 142' on its top. Having lived much of my life in the London suburbs I was always happy to get well away from the capital, and the bigger the number the better I felt. There were plenty more milestones along the A515 but they were all painted overall white, which made them almost impossible to photograph. Was this a temporary measure I wondered? Had milestones been my only interest I would have felt quite put out at having flogged my way up to 1,200 ft and more just to get a single good picture.

At Chapel-en-le-Frith on what is now the B5470, but was until recently the A6, there is a good example of milestones illustrating how a road has undergone a change of use over the years. An old stone there shows distances to Macclesfield and Chesterfield, not Buxton and Manchester as might be expected. A road atlas printed as recently as 1951 shows this road as the A625, an east-west route across the Pennines, and nothing at all to do with the London to Carlisle road. Further along the A6 are some of the informative metal 'stones' erected by Cheshire County Council in the 1890s, and there is a particularly well kept one at Disley.

At Bury, North of Manchester, I came across an intriguing stone carved on 3 sides and dated 1834. It has no distances on it, just directions, so it is more properly a guidestone like those on the Yorkshire Moors, rather than a milestone. There was a quaint spelling of 'Eadenfield' and I was uncertain whether this really was an older form of Edenfield or whether it merely reflected the fact that the man with the chisel had not been to school. For me, one of the fascinations of these old stones was that many of them posed more questions than they set out to answer.

One-off stones through Lancashire were followed by the familiar all-iron stones of the old West Riding, on the 'Skipton and Clitheroe Road' and then the 'Keighley and Kendal Road'. Some have been beautifully repainted, like the one at Long Preston. Over the border into what was once Westmorland, one has to make do with initials instead of place names, 'S' for Settle and 'K L' for Kirkby Lonsdale. In the latter village is a fine stone recessed into a garden wall which has as its first item 'London 250'. This has all the hallmarks of an estimate, but it cannot be far adrift, for a pre-motorway AA book gives the distance at 247, and there must be a dozen routes to choose from.

Through the Lake District, milestones between Windermere and Grasmere are flat, and built into slate and stone walls, less likely to be damaged by passing traffic, but also less likely to be seen. Then come more orthodox stones, with place names, not parishes, on their tops - names like Nadder and Nest Brow. Between Bothel and Carlisle there is a good set of stones, but I didn't stop to photo all of them or I would never have reached my destination. There is a well restored one in

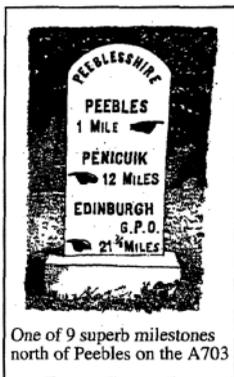
the village of Thursby, which most people bypass. North of Carlisle, on the busy A7, was one of my favourites. It has a small circular iron plate saying 'Carlisle 2' fixed to a sizeable piece of the attractive red sandstone which abounds in these parts.

Plenty of iron mile markers exist along the old roads, showing Annan and Carlisle along the B721, and Annan and Dumfries along the B724, and then of course I had to get a picture of the well-known plate on the old town hall in Dumfries which lists 8 towns, including 'London 330'. Along the A76 north of Dumfries just figures are shown, not even initials. They represent miles from Dumfries, but you have to work that out for yourself. They are on very small stones, most of which I missed, even on a bicycle. North of New Cumnock though the picture changes completely, for here are large granite stones carved with clear letters and figures, and these continue along the A70 to Ayr.

The last mile marker I saw was unexpected. A little way out of Dunoon, on the Cowal peninsula, is a metal plate, painted all white, on a wall, with 'Dunoon Pier 1 mile' on it, and a finger pointing the way. My cycle computer showed the distance to be rather less than a mile, and I was left wondering whether the man detailed to pace out the distance was short in stature, or whether they could possibly have moved the pier. I was aware of the milestone in Shrewsbury, for which somebody had very carefully measured the distance to County Hall at 6 furlongs 174 yards, only for the county council subsequently to move their County Hall. It was another instance where further investigation was needed, so that when I returned home (on the train!) from Scotland I had not only a goodly collection of milestone pictures but a fair list of conundrums to solve before planning my ride for next year.

Ron Westcott (Surrey)

SOME SCOTTISH NOTES



In Newsletter No.5, page 28, mention is made in the article on *The Contour Road Books* about the road from Edinburgh to Moffat where the milestones from the 20th onwards are measured from the GPO. On a recent foray across the border we hit the A703 at Peebles and came across a series of large mileposts in excellent condition most of which had been recently painted. These mileposts (marked as milestones on the 1" OS map) sported the old county name of Peeblesshire (now part of Scottish Borders Region). There is a continuous run of nine of these fine mileposts running north to the border with Midlothian at Leadburn. The mileage to Edinburgh is given to the GPO (see illus.).

No more milestones were spotted until we crossed the Forth Road Bridge into the Kingdom of Fife. Following the coast road around the East Neuk of Fife we came across a number of newly painted milestones as well as some of the large cast iron direction plaques peculiar to this

part of the British Isles. These wayside markers are sited at a number of road junctions in the St. Andrews area and each one lists up to thirty six farms, villages and towns. As with the milestones, the detailed repainting of these markers presents a mammoth task readily undertaken by the Fife authorities.



A new feature noted in the area west of St. Andrews is the effort being made to solve the problem of how to keep the roadside vegetation from smothering the milestones. A number of the recently painted milestones had an elaborate surround of stone sets fixed in concrete to a depth of about three feet from the milestone. However, even this did not deter seven to eight foot briars reaching out to attempt to hide one of the stones. It will be interesting to see how effective this experiment turns out to be as a solution to the vegetation problem.

Over the Tay bridge and on north to Blairgowrie where we picked up the A93, two very rusty mileposts were noted and two more on the A924 after Bridge of Cally.

Our next concentrated study of the milestones was on the A82 along the northern shore of Loch Ness from Drumnadrochit to Inverness. The road was crowded with tourists all driving along with one eye on the loch and wistfully hoping that 'Nessie' would make an appearance whilst we, on the other hand had one eye on the lookout for milestones. There was a good run of them for about twelve miles. All were of the ubiquitous granite triangular type to be found on most roads in the Highlands of Scotland. Originally these had all been painted with the mileage to both Inverness and Fort William but only the odd one had decipherable information remaining. It would be marvellous if at least some of these stones were to be repainted as the granite takes the paint well and seems to last a very long time.

Another good run of stones which we noted terminated at Cock Bridge on the A939, which climbs over the Cairngorms to Granton-on-Spey. We found a round, granite stone with the number 52 carved into the top. There was no other indication as to where the 52 referred, but by following the road down to its junction with the A944 and then to its junction with the A97 we found more of these stones down to the number 35. The A97 continues north to the town of Banff on the coast and it would appear that it was from this town that the mileages were calculated.

Terry Keegan (Worcs.)



THE 'UDDER' CATTLE CROSSING SIGN

In Newsletter 7 mention was made of the creation of modern road signs in the late 1950s and how Margaret Calvert developed most of the pictorial signs, including the cattle crossing sign. One which she did not create was the strange cattle crossing sign

which appeared in Shropshire and a few of which still exist - including the one illustrated here (p. 19). This beast appears to have been designed by a committee which included cartoonists from all over the world, including Walt Disney who appears to have designed those Mickey Mouse ears. Margaret Calvert's cow may have, as stated in the article, started off as a bullock, but at least she knew the rightful place to attach the udder.

Terry Keegan (Worcs.)

MILESTONES IN GALLOWAY

A holiday in Galloway in August 2004, based near Stranraer, was an opportunity to look out for milestones. Based as I am in Devon, Galloway is a long way off for following up milestone history! However, I hope it will encourage someone else to investigate the subject in the depth which it surely deserves.

Wigtownshire - This county is of considerable cartographic interest, as it was the first Scottish county to be completely mapped by the Ordnance Survey at the six-inch (1:10,560) scale, in 1843-7, and therefore to have a comprehensive cartographic record of its milestones. The six-inch first edition shows comparatively few roads in the county to be either turnpiked or furnished with milestones. Those equipped were: Newtown Stewart - Glenluce - Stranraer - Portpatrick (the later A75); Stranraer northwards towards Ballantrae and Girvan (later A 77); and Newton Stewart NW towards Barrhill and Girvan (later A713). The stones all seem to have recorded two distances only, to the two nearest towns.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

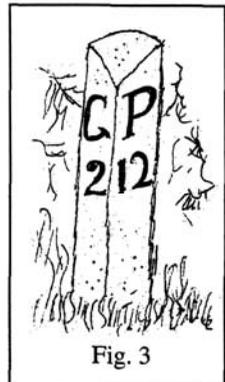


Fig. 3

The stones on the later A75 all seem to have been provided with plates (example in Fig. 1), which to my eyes look as though they could be the same as the Ordnance surveyors saw in the 1840s. Those on the later A77 now have stones with the information cut into the stone (example in Fig. 2).

The current OS 1:50,000 *Landranger* and 1:25,000 *Explorer* maps show many more milestones in Wigtownshire, and the OS mapping of the 1890s suggests that they date from the second half of the nineteenth century. A good many are on roads which have never had a Ministry of Transport road number. They are all of a

basic standard type, of triangular cross-section, usually with two destinations (a few have one or three), invariably indicated by a single letter, and sometimes with an arrow; the stone is usually painted white, with letters and numbers picked out in black. There are however considerable detail variations, with some relatively tall and thin and others relatively short and stumpy (Figs. 3 and 4). The current OS maps seem to be a fairly reliable indicator of what is to be seen: some which we failed to spot as we drove sedately by may be buried in undergrowth. Some show signs of having been repainted in fairly recent years. It would seem that after World War II Wigtownshire County Council was at pains to reinstate its milestones.

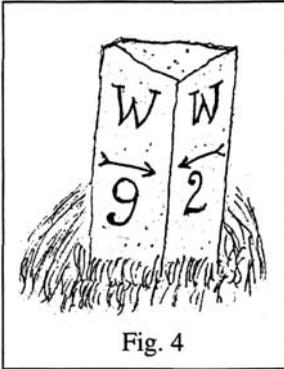


Fig. 4

Kirkcudbrightshire - Our examination of this county was much less thorough than was that of Wigtownshire, but it would seem to be much less productive of milestones: the density shown on current OS mapping is much less than in Wigtownshire, which suggests that, after World War II, Kirkcudbrightshire County Council was much less concerned with reinstating its milestones than was its neighbour to the west. This seems particularly regrettable, as the first OS mapping of the county, surveyed in 1845-50, shows it to have had a much greater density of turnpike roads and milestones than did Wigtownshire. Those along the future A75, from Dumfries through Castle Douglas and Gatehouse of Fleet to Newtown Stewart, were

particularly interesting, because of their variety: some gave two distances, some three, and some four, including that from London. The cumulative distances showed discrepancies, indicating rerouting at some time. The only stone in the county which we managed to photograph was that at Caulkerbush on the A710, which has a plain '16' and nothing else! (It is actually 16 miles from Dumfries.)

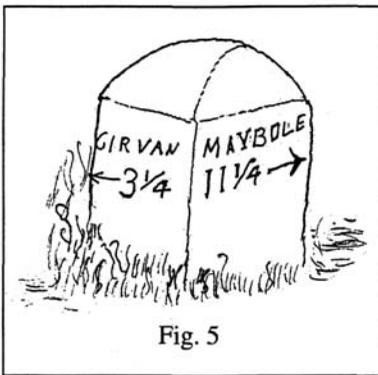


Fig. 5

Ayrshire - We only had a day-trip to Girvan, and only covered about 50 miles in this county, but the variety and interest of milestones seen made up for the short distance. The Stranraer - Ballantrae - Girvan road (A77) is well supplied with stones with the distances cut into them (Fig. 2): a black band underneath is common. East of Girvan a rather similar design is used on the B741 going towards Maybole. To the south-east of Girvan, on the B734 going towards Barr, two milestones are shown on modern OS maps within a third of a mile of each other, both at road junctions (NX 233985, NX 233988), near

Penkill: the more northerly of them is illustrated (Fig. 5). They are perhaps to be regarded rather more as guide-stones than milestones.

Grateful thanks are due to my wife Bridget for stopping the car so often to photograph milestones and other wayside curiosities: 39 times!

Richard Oliver (Devon)

MILESTONE OR GRAVESTONE? - AN INTERESTING TALE !

A few months ago I was browsing through the Card Filing System at County Hall, Hertford, when, under "Milestones", I came across a reference to a milestone being used as a gravestone. Intrigued, I took down the details, which led me to copies of the magazine, *Hertfordshire Countryside*, dated February 1969, July 1969 and August 1975. The first contained a letter from a Mr. W. Jephcote concerning a milestone, from the Brighton-Horsham road (A23), that was being used as a gravestone in the churchyard of St. Paul's, Langleybury, on the A41 north of Watford. He included a small photograph and asked if anyone could explain the reason for such an unusual headstone. The stone commemorated one William Faulconer, who had died in 1928. The July issue contained a letter from the Editor which ran as follows:

"The following letter, which was originally unsigned, was passed to us by Mr. W. Jephcote, 155 Ridge Lane, Watford, whose photograph and inquiry have elicited a reply from Mr. Faulconer's widow herself. Mrs. Faulconer, who was ninety-six on Whit Sunday, told us (over the telephone which she had by her bedside) that she had no objection to our using the letter. She was most interested in the whole thing, she said." - *Editor*. Mrs. Faulconer's letter ran thus:-

"I had the February issue of *Hertfordshire Countryside* given to me because there is mention of my milestone etc. The reason why I conceived the idea of a milestone for my husband's grave was that he was so passionately fond of horses and used to drive a coach whenever there was a chance. His name was William Rudston Faulconer. I wrote to Lord Leconfield, who very kindly sent me one from

Pease Pottage on the Brighton-Horsham road. They used to give pease pottage to prisoners on this road and it is still called by that name. It was through Lord Leconfield's kindness that it was all arranged. It was the church I used to attend." *Lillie Faulconer*. Carlyn House, Gordon Crescent, Camberley, Surrey.

Mr. Jephcote's little photo of the stone accompanied the Editor's letter, and showed it to be a slim rectangle with a domed top. At its foot was a tiny bush. The correspondence apparently ended there, but in the 1975 issue of the magazine, under the heading, *Some Memorials in Hertfordshire*, was a much clearer photo, showing the memorial text (and the bush was a little larger). The photographer had taken the picture from a very low angle, making the stone look quite tall. Obviously, my next step would be to see if the stone were still there!



The milemarker gravestone

I wandered about for some time with no sight of the stone, and I was about to give up, when *there* it was, a *short* stone, half engulfed by a *large* bush! On the front was the memorial text, while on the reverse were some words that I could just about make out on crumbling sandstone, 'Brighton, ~ miles, Horsham, ~ miles'. Back home, I consulted my map and saw that Pease Pottage is about 14 miles from Brighton and 3 miles from Horsham. I took several photos - one is shown on p. 22 - and measured it. The stone is 3" thick, 15" wide and 45" tall. I shall go back to the archives to see if there are any more stories as intriguing as that!

John Donovan (Hertfordshire)

[Well done John! I came across accounts of this stone in two obscure publications and located it but was unable to find out its history. Part of the epitaph is a quotation from Corinthians: 'In journeyings often'. - Carol Haines]

RESTORATION REPORT

Two county coordinators have been involved with restorations in their area. Encouraged by Grainne Farrington (Cambs.) (see also 'News from the County Groups'), Hemingford Abbots Parish Council (Hunts.) had a milestone removed from a precarious position beside the A14 and relocated to a safer place. The stone was then repainted by Michael Knight (Beds.). Both these coordinators, and the Milestone Society, have been warmly thanked for their help.

Michael has also repainted two milestones in Northamptonshire, one of which



Michael Knight gets down to it!



A result of his labour!

notes 5 furlongs to Thrapston Cattle Market (see photo). The second stone, three miles further north on the A605, was dug up by contractors who were building a new road island at Lilford-cum-Wigthorpe. The parish council gave Michael permission to repaint the stone which, interestingly, has mileages to the two prestigious private schools

in the area - Oundle and Kimbolton.

CUTTINGS

Shropshire Canal milestone The *Stafford & Stone Chronicle* [8.4.04 - sent in by Jeremy Milln (Salop)] included an account of a milepost from the Shropshire Union Canal at Knighton which is now back in place after being missing for years. A member of the Shropshire Union Canal Society remembered seeing the post on display at the Ellesmere Port Boat Museum. After negotiations with the museum, the post was released and British Waterways arranged its transport to a Society member for repainting before it was set in a concrete plinth in its original position.

The post is thought to date from when the canal was first cut by Thomas Telford in the 1820s. Its inscription (white lettering on a black background) reads: Atherley Junction 20 miles, Nantwich 19 miles, Norbury 4.5 miles. The project was funded by Stafford Borough Council under the Community Chest Grants scheme, British Waterways West Midlands and the Shropshire Union Canal Society.

Tender loving care in Lancs. In Lancashire, the Croston Carvers, who have group membership of the Milestone Society, have been giving attention to some of their local street furniture, resulting in reports and welcome publicity in the local press. Kath Almond repainted a neglected boundary stone at Croston/Ulnes Walton. An old finger post in Euxton has had a sign hung round it stating: 'In need of TLC. Chorley's last remaining fingerpost'. The parish council has now commissioned Chorley Council to restore the post.

Boundary marker restored A metal boundary marker was spotted by Michael Knight (Beds.) on a service road on the eastern side of the A1(M) recently. The parish councils were contacted and with the help of a local building firm the post was excavated and moved to a safer location west of the motorway. The post was cleaned and painted and unveiled at a special ceremony by the local MP. Michael and Grainne Farrington (Cams coordinator) were also present and a write-up and photo appeared in the local press. The post not only marks the boundary between the parishes of Upton and Alconbury Weston, but also the boundary between two Parliamentary constituencies, two county councils and new district wards.

News from the North An article entitled 'Facelifts for stony guides' appeared in *The Northumbrian* for June/July 2004. Iain Davison, the county coordinator, was interviewed and provided a brief history of the turnpikes in the area and information on milestones in the county. Iain was pictured beside a cast iron post at Blagdon on the old A1 which he has restored and repainted, and he estimates there are about 180 surviving milestones in Northumberland. As a result of the article he has heard from a farmer who has rescued a milestone and now has it in safe keeping. Iain was also interviewed on Radio Newcastle and that resulted in a milestone being located in Gateshead.

Midland milestone The reinstatement of a cast iron milepost at Gaydon (Warwicks.) was pictured in the *Stratford Herald* (6.5.04) along with Mike Buxton and two members of Warwickshire County Council. The post, reading 3¾ miles to Harbury Station, was removed during work to build a traffic island at the turn from the B4100 to the M40. The restoration was funded by Ford, owners of the nearby Aston Martin plant. [*See also the Warwickshire County report - Eds.*]

EXAMINING MUSEUMS

Museums, especially the lesser-known ones, often have items of street furniture lurking on their premises. Michael Worman (E. Sussex) has sent notes of several museums he has recently visited which might give other members ideas for excursions and objects to look out for. He advises those interested to arrange to visit the archives and store rooms as they often contain relevant objects that lie forgotten or out of sight.

Amberley Working Museum near Arundel (W. Sussex) has the village AA sign, and a milestone from the Guildford-Horsham road. AA signs for Walton and Morston Meysey are stored at Bourton on the Water Motor Museum and will be displayed if an extension is approved. Railway distance markers can be found at the Winchcombe Railway Museum near Cheltenham. AA signs which have migrated from their original counties can be found at the Colne Valley Postal History Museum, Halstead (Essex) which has the plate for Wetheringsett (Suffolk), and the East Anglia Transport Museum near Lowestoft (Suffolk) where the plate for Aylsham (Norfolk) is displayed.

At the Beaulieu Motor Museum an historic garage has been created. It is based on the garage of William Tucker & Son of Wedmore, Somerset, and even has the village's AA sign on display. Michael was taken to the store rooms by the curator where seven other AA plates were found.

From further afield, Chris Woodard (Ceredigion) reports that the Berlin Postal Museum has a milestone in its collection.

FOREIGN PARTS

Hungarian datum point Michael Knight (Beds.) has visited the 0 Km stone in Budapest and was surprised by its size. It is a large figure zero standing about 4 m tall on a base of 80 sq cm. The stone is located between the Chain Bridge and the foot of the funicular railway on the north bank of the Danube in Buda, and well worth a detour to see.

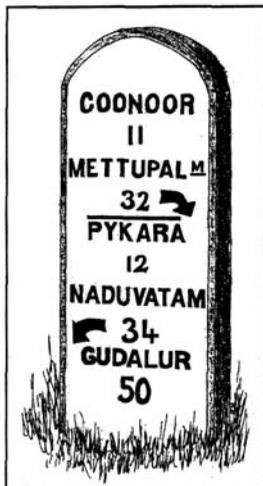


Tunisian Km posts During a holiday in Tunisia, we noticed hundreds of distance markers along the roads, writes Janet Dowding (Somerset). When, eventually, our coach stopped close enough, I was able to photograph one (see illustration left) at the Chott-el-Jerid great salt lake. All the stones were of the same design and shape. The coloured top denoted the status of the road - red for major roads and black, green and yellow for less important ones, with plain white tops for the very minor roads. The stone illustrated had a red top and the N-16 on the narrow side probably denotes the road number, and the 165 the kilometres to the next major town. In quite a few places there were duplicate stones only 4 or 5

yards in from the one on the edge of the road. What the purpose was in having two identical milestones only yards from each other on the same side of the road is anybody's guess. Perhaps the road alignment had been improved and the authorities just put new milestones up and left the old ones in place.

A milestone from Ooty Hazel Armstrong (Yorks.) has sent an illustration (drawn by John Harland - see left illust. on p. 26 - from her photo) of a 'colonial' milestone situated outside the gates of St Stephen's Church in Udthagamandalam in Tamil Nadu, South India. The town name is usually shortened to 'Ooty'. The church was built in 1829 and its huge roof timbers were brought 120 Km by a team of elephants

from Tipu Sultans Fort which had been sacked by Lord Wellesley when he was Governor of Bengal in 1799. The milestone is about a



An Ooty milestone

metre high and the old mileages have been carved away and seemingly replaced with Km distances, but these do not appear to be particularly accurate.

More on Malta In NL7 (p.27)

David Blackburn noted a defaced milestone he saw in Malta and wondered if its disfigurement was the result of wartime measures similar to our own. The Editors can now confirm this to be the case. On a recent visit four more were spotted *in situ*, two on Malta and two on Gozo. The National War Museum in



Italian milestone near Garda

Valletta has three on display,

one of which still has its complete inscription: 8/MILES/FROM/VALLETTA. The museum attendant told us that it was not proposed to re-instate any inscriptions as the defaced stones were part of Malta's wartime history and a reminder of the suffering the island underwent.

Irish names Chris Woodard (Ceredigion) has noticed a place called Milestone on the Limerick to Thurles road (R503) in Ireland and wonders if it has an appropriate item in the parish. A short distance away is a place called Inch.

Italian arrows The attractive Km stone photographed by David Lyle (Wilts.) (see above right) on the way to Garda seems to show that there was not enough space on one face for all the destinations in the left-hand direction.

MILESTONES AND TURNPIKES AROUND ST NEOTS

Michael Knight (Beds.) has researched the turnpike roads in the St Neots area and his resulting article has been published in a local history magazine. He writes that in May 1725 an Act was passed to turnpike twenty-three miles of the Great North Road from Biggleswade to Alconbury Hill together with a branch going west to Great Stoughton Common. Later continuation acts extended the road to connect with the St Neots to Cambridge Turnpike. Few of the milestones, however, have survived from these roads although the Wintringham Tollhouse is still extant, now a private residence.

The keeper of the Great Paxton tollgate was charged, in 1858, by Robert Crow, a Primitive Methodist preacher of St Neots, with unlawfully taking a toll from him when he was on his way to preach. The tollkeeper maintained that

preaching was not worshipping (which would have been exempt), but eventually the Bench found in favour of Mr Crow and the tollkeeper was fined.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, following the demise of the turnpikes, new modes of transport such as bicycles and traction engines started using the road. St Neots Museum has a metal plate erected by the Rural District Council in 1896 warning persons in charge of 'locomotive traction engines and other ponderous carriages' that they would be responsible for damage to bridges and culverts if their vehicles proved too heavy.

Michael's research on this area will be invaluable for those interested in the history of this particular region.

Michael Knight: 'Milestones and Turnpike Roads Around St Neots', *St Neots Local History Magazine*, No.59 (Autumn 2004), 6pp.

Carol Haines

PUBLICATION - BOOK REVIEW

Dave Brewer: *Dartmoor Boundary Markers* (Tavistock: Halsgrove; 2004) Hardback; 310 pp, Illustrated; ISBN 1 84114 172 0. Price £24.95. (Available from Halsgrove Direct, tel: 01884 243242)

On all counts this is a magnificent book. It is handsome in appearance, comprehensive in content, inspirational as a study. Sadly, its author, Dave Brewer, died before it was published: readers are indebted to his widow, Kath Brewer, for completing it for publication. It is a history of the area as well as of the boundary stones, and of boundary stones beyond those of parishes - there are chapters about those of the old industries, China clay and granite workings, rabbit warrens and stannary and tinner's bounds, and new developments, the Army, Dartmoor Prison, railways and water undertakings. And of course there is reference to turnpike trusts' markers. Boundary markers named are illustrated, described, their history detailed and their grid references given. Not least intriguing among the numerous illustrations and maps are reproductions from the early Ordnance Survey notebook sketches. There are also interesting facts about the OS history and an unusual diagram of a triangulation pillar.

Fortunately a tradition lives on in Dartmoor National Park of boundary posts and of beating the bounds, of which latter this book includes lively descriptions. Boundary stones are still being looked after and honoured. The inscriptions of all the stones at Throwleigh were recut in 1991. Peter Tavy parish council celebrated its centenary in 1994 by erecting a new boundary stone. When a 'near-miss' by a car damaged plastic bollards beside a boundary stone on the old Okehampton-Exeter road, the National Park Authority dug a narrow ditch around the stone to reveal its true size and formerly hidden parts of its inscriptions and re-erected it on a firm base. Brewer reports that at Sticklepath a three-sided stone destroyed by the American army in World War II was replaced.

Local turnpike trusts were meticulous in erecting parish boundary posts. A section of the book is also devoted to the 'take off' stones which trusts set up. The

General Turnpike Act, 1722, allowed an extra horse or horses to be attached on certain sections free of extra charge, to save the surface on hilly roads. An unusual marker on Dartmoor roads is the parole stone, indicating the extent to which officer prisoners of war, who had given their parole, could travel. As to industrial markers, Rattlewood Peat Works at Lydford had a boundary stone, so had Belsone Consols Yeoland Mine at Sticklepath. Still to be found (though not for want of looking by Mr Brewer) are those marking the bounds of Whiteworks tin mine. It is interesting to see the story about the sheep thief strangled by the animal, which is told of Dead Man's Stone near Seaton, replicated in another part of Devon, at Gallows Gate, Torbay.

Dartmoor Boundary Markers is packed with fascinating detail, as well as setting the whole historical scene. It has a full bibliography and a very good index.

Laurence Dopson

ANNUAL CONFERENCE WITH AGM - The date and venue for this event has been set as follows: Saturday 11 June 2005 at The Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, Stoke Heath, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 4JR (<http://www.avoncroft.org.uk/>). Avoncroft is 2 miles south of Bromsgrove off the A38 bypass (400 yards north of its junction with the B4091). It is 3 miles north of the M5 Junction 5 and 3 miles south of the M42 Junction 1.

YORKSHIRE GROUP MEETING - The Spring meeting will be held in the Hebden Village Institute, which is near Grassington (it is about 2 kilometres east from Grassington on the B6265), on Sunday 3rd April 2005. Topics will include on 'Packhorse Bridges' as well as an update on our various projects. All are welcome to join us - why not book into a B&B and make a week-end of it, in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales? Christine Minto's jam will also be on sale! Further information is available from Jan Scrine.

MILESTONE TRAILS - John Higgins, (Staffs, coordinator) has devised two milestone trails for N. Staffs., starting at his house. Trail details (history of the milemarkers, where to park, etc.) are free when staying with John, where B&B and self-catering accommodation is available.

COORDINATOR/RECORDER NEEDED - Is there a member who can cover the area of West Northants, North Oxfordshire and North Bucks? Michael Knight has located several half buried milestones along the original route of the B4031/A421, and there may be more. This region lies between Alan Rosevear's and Michael's areas and if someone lives in or travels here, can they help? More information from Michael.

COUNTY COORDINATORS MEETING - Mike Buxton organised this meeting on 21 November 2004 at Banbury Museum Banbury with a wide ranging agenda, including the effects and impact of Charitable Status, funding, outside organisations, group initiatives, surveying and risk assessment, restoration and preservation guidance, publicity, and custodians (householders; parish councils; history societies; schools).

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