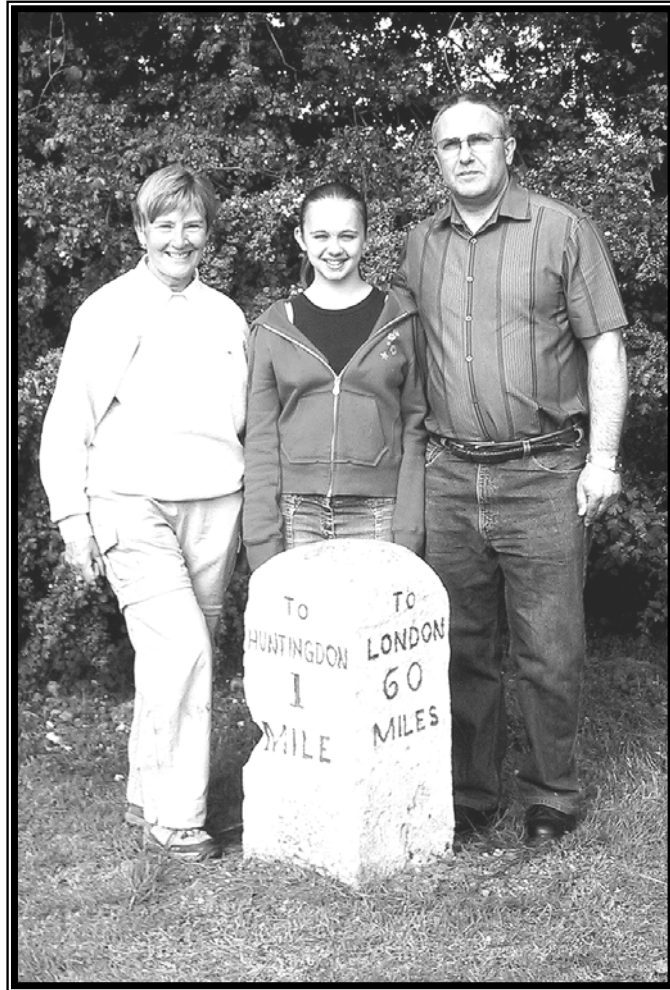


*The Milestone Society*

# *On the Ground*



Grainne Farrington (left), Cambridgeshire coordinator, with Steve Rhodes and his daughter by the restored 'LONDON 60' milestone.

*No. 3 September 2006*

*Single Edition Editor. John V Nicholls*



# *The Milestone Society* *On the Ground*

## THE ANNUAL REVIEW

No.3 September 2006  
Single Edition Compiler and Editor: John V Nicholls

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'On the Ground' is produced annually for members of the Milestone Society. Opinions and statements expressed in this publication are those of the editor and contributing individuals and are not necessarily those of the Milestone Society, its executive committee or general membership.

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## INTRODUCTION

I would like to open this short introduction by extending my thanks to all the county coordinators (and their Society members too) for all the contributions submitted for this publication. Many left me in a state of near panic when the deadline had been reached and I was well short of material.

When I volunteered (or should that be persuaded?) to edit the third edition of **ON THE GROUND** at the Autumn Meeting 2005, I knew I would have to cast around for different content in order not to avoid repetition. I decided it was time to move on up a stage and introduce our other objectives. Although milestones are the primary reason for the existence of the Milestone Society the **Objects** of the Society in the Constitution open up a vast range of study to explore.

### OBJECTS

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.**

The emphasis is mine and not without good reason. During the first five years of the Milestone Society fingerposts and boundary markers have only received cursory attention. Many members of the Society already take a great interest in these alternatives to milestones and in this issue of **ON THE GROUND** it is my intention to get fingerposts and boundary markers into the mainstream. In the longer term it can also encourage new membership from those who seek an organisation with an interest in alternate markers. Not currently included in the Objects are toll houses although

Alan Rosevear, our database wizard, is now putting them in the national record.

During the past year the Society has continued to build on its initial successes and is now being increasingly recognised as *the* learned authority on milestones and milemarkers in general. This recognition can only work to the advantage of the Society because the message will eventually get taken on board by more county and local authorities many of whom still appear to ignore the efforts to preserve and conserve roadside heritage. Excuses abound; lack of manpower or lack of money seems to prevail. Another argument is that milestones are not 'prescribed signs' so no budget is committed for their maintenance. Nevertheless, reading the reports from the county coordinators it does appear that, albeit slowly, more highways authorities are taking notice with more painting and restoration taking place. They are becoming increasingly more aware of the Milestone Society even if they only try to pass on certain responsibilities to the Society coordinators and members as noted by Carol Haines (Norfolk).

In the matter of Statute Law Revision, the Repeal of Turnpike Laws is currently undergoing consultation by the Law Commission. The counties of Essex (15 Acts), Suffolk (16 Acts) and Norfolk (19 Acts) are under consideration. It begs the question; will this have an effect on milestones? In general they became the property of county councils in the 1880s but if the laws pertaining to turnpikes are deleted from the statute books will some county councils consider that milestones are no longer their responsibility? If you want to download copies of the consultation go online to [www.lawcom.gov.uk/turnpikes.htm](http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/turnpikes.htm) and scroll down to the 'consultation paper' link. There is also an email link where you can air your views and comments. Just a word of warning should you are consider printing off the document in, for example your library, it runs to 39 pages.

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## INTRODUCING FINGERPOSTS

John V Nicholls

I use fingerpost in the title of this item in a cautionary manner. I have used the term guide post or guidepost for some considerable period but when updating the heritage conservation records for Essex County Council I was told that guide post was not acceptable. It seems a strange attitude to take when the map makers of the late 18C and early 19C, along with Ordnance Survey had used the term. Other alternatives deemed more acceptable include direction post and signpost. Even the Department for Transport cannot decide on the correct terminology as they switch between direction sign and fingerposts throughout their 2005 Traffic Advisory Leaflet 6/05. So pay your money and take your

choice! For the sake of clarity I will use fingerpost as a generic term in this article but also because this seems to have become accepted by the Milestone Society.

The date of the earliest fingerpost is not known but Izod's post near Chipping Campden is dated 1669. A replica of the original post stands alongside the A44. The first Act relating to posts was 8 & 9 William IV. Cap 16 of 1697. The Act was for enlarging common highways. The relevant part can be found in the final clause which ordered parish surveyors to erect a post or stone at cross highways with an inscription of large letters, containing the name of the next market town.



*The replica of Izod's post, Chipping Campden*

As far as finding and recording fingerposts is concerned they fall somewhere between milestones and boundary posts. Usually, but certainly not always, milestones will be found along fairly well defined routes. Boundary markers by their very nature can be found practically anywhere. Fingerposts (footpath signs aside, which can be as elusive as boundary markers at times) can be at any crossroads or road junction, whether on major or minor roads. Local knowledge is all important if you are to save time and money because it is all too easy to travel hundreds of miles and find nothing of interest.

What should be recorded for the Milestone Society database? This is a hard question to which there is no simple answer. Should posts be recorded by age and if so what should be the cut off period? Although not an accurate guide, most posts surviving with a cast iron pillar will date between 1921 and 1940. Determining age can be difficult especially since many posts will have had new parts added. For example, a pre-1921 cast iron post might have had new arms fitted to conform to the 1921 Ministry of Transport recommendations.



*A 'gridded' annulus finial at Wentworth, Yorks. (Christine Minto)*

Then later still new finials might have been fitted such as the annulus (halo) versions in Dorset and Yorkshire with six-digit grid references on them. As the metric grid system was not fully available on O.S. maps until the one-inch New Popular series (earlier grids were based on an alpha-numeric system unique to each individual sheet) after the Second World War it stands to reason that those finials are only around sixty years old. Some recent replacements in Yorkshire are not even metal as reported by Christine Minto in the Yorkshire Newsletter – they are fibreglass replicas.

Dating of other replacement parts, notably arms, can also present a problem where exact replicas have been made. The old style octagonal section posts in Cheshire made by W H Smith of Whitchurch look fine from a distance but place a magnet on some of the arms and it will be found they are made of aluminium or an aluminium alloy. The same type posts exist in Staffordshire and John Higgins has verified that they date from 1906. The difference is that the Staffs examples have wooden arms.

Wooden fingerposts are even less likely to have any great age. By their organic nature they are prone to rot even when maintained. By studying old photos and postcards quite often a familiar post might still be in a particular location but highly unlikely that all or any of the parts would be original. An analogy would be the broom of Trigger in "Only Fools and Horses". He had only owned the one broom although it had had  $x$  number of new heads and  $x$  number of new handles.



*Essex wood. Wooden posts are very common in rural parts of the county. [left] One of four new wooden posts with cast metal finials erected by Little Burstead PC. [right] An example of indifference at Toppesfield.*

The terminology used for finials is varied but not confusing as most terms are descriptive. Hence the annulus finial is also called the halo, ring or polo. The roundel is sometimes called the disc. Easy too are the finials of Devon and Somerset which comprise a pyramid shape with D.C.C or S.C.C lettering. Cornwall also has some pyramid finials but in a more exaggerated form – almost like a spearhead. Essex has many of the unique semicircular (sometimes referred to as half moon and possible targets for souvenir hunters) parish plate finials that follow the practice of fitting wood semicircular parish plates to posts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Milestone Society member Chris Marcus of Oldham is jointly surveying the numerous fingerposts of Cheshire with your editor and has identified at least five different versions of ring and ball type finials in that county.

1964 onwards saw the end of many old cast iron fingerposts with the introduction of the modern mixed case "Worboys" signs. Many counties took the advice to take down the old signs too seriously and their demise was rapid. Suffolk, Hertfordshire and Worcestershire are practically devoid of old posts. Fortunately many counties must have thought that cost outweighed change and soldiered on with the old posts, which is fortunate for us today. The West Country counties of Devon, Somerset and Dorset have plenty to offer as do Cheshire, Yorkshire, Norfolk and Essex. A

survey found 143 examples surviving in Essex including two in museums.

A saviour for old fingerposts arrived in the form of the Department for Transport Traffic Advisory Leaflet 6/05 in June 2005. It recommended the retention and a five-year maintenance plan for surviving posts. 2005 might seem an important year but the recording and restoration of posts on a grand scale had already been carried out in at least two areas.



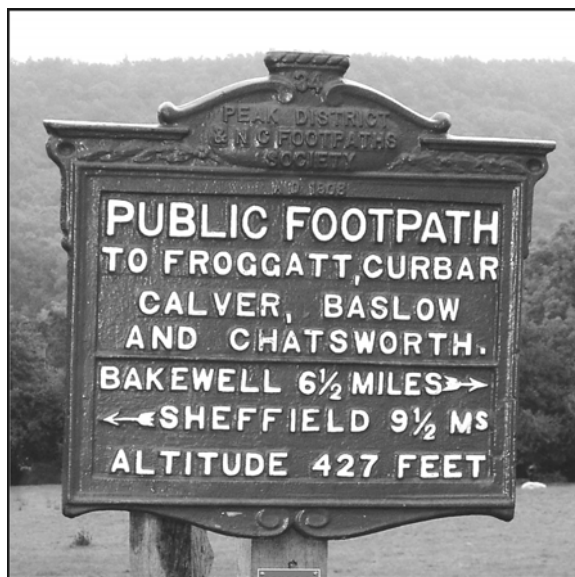
South Petherton, Somerset. An example of mixed arm types that the Dept for Transport aims to eliminate. [Janet Dowding]

The **Quantock Hills AONB** (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) surveyed 150 posts and selected 30 at significant locations for complete overhaul. The project, Highway Heritage, was completed in 2004. Download their leaflet at [www.lhi.org.uk/Cast\\_Iron\\_Sig.pdf](http://www.lhi.org.uk/Cast_Iron_Sig.pdf)

Lincolnshire County Council carried out a survey of its fingerposts in 2002 (except North and North-east Lincolnshire) and the database contained 327 records. Concrete is the most common material followed by cast iron. Three examples of steel and 10 wooden were also recorded. Further finds have brought the total number up to around 360 of which half had been refurbished by the summer of 2006. The Lincolnshire CC Highways, LWCS, Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire and the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB also cooperate in the Traditional Roadsigns in Lincolnshire (TRiL) project carrying further restorative works.

Christine Minto, Yorkshire coordinator, records that the West Riding of Yorkshire was one of only three authorities to erect fingerposts with a Grid Reference on a 'halo' finial at the top of the post. Prior to the 1960s there must have been thousands [sic] of these stretching from Bawtry in the southeast to Sedburgh in the northwest. Today only about 55 survive. She says 'about' because original ones are occasionally stolen. One in the middle of Holmfirth and another on the A628 Barnsley to Manchester road near Saltersbrook Bridge – the boundary with Cheshire and now Derbyshire – have been taken in the last year. However new ones do appear such as the one that sprouted in January in Wentworth near Rotherham, a village well used by Christine.

One of the fingers points to the Garden Centre! Also, in the Settle area which is now in North Yorkshire several of the villages obviously cherish their historic links with the West Riding and have had their fingerposts refurbished with new fingers and halos recast where necessary.



Not exactly a fingerpost but it does the same job. This Peak District and N.C. Footpaths Society 'direction plate' can be found at Grindleford, Derbyshire. [John Franey]

The irrepressible John Higgins of Staffs has been recording fingerposts in his county and is now carrying out a survey in Cheshire. He did not know that the latter task was already in hand but at least now cooperation can be the key word with exchanges of information. John has expressed some concern over fingerpost restorations in Staffs where new cast iron arms replace wooden ones on W. H. Smith (of Whitchurch) posts. The posts date from 1906 and are of similar design to the CCC octagonal section posts in Cheshire.

Keith Lawrence reports that he has made no attempt to start a database of direction posts, of which Hampshire has a good collection, and with increased pressure of work from foreign travel it is not on his radar screen and would need a volunteer(s) to take over this element of Hampshire survey.

Bad news from Essex as this journal was nearing completion. The listed post at Little Bentley, near Clacton had its single arm broken early in 2006. It has been repaired but badly; a pity because advice could have been given. The Loughton Town Council had their two posts fully restored in March 2006 but one has been totally demolished when struck by a vehicle. The cast iron pillar as been severed a foot above ground level. An email to a town councillor confirmed that the accident occurred just four weeks after the restoration!

Beyond painting, fingerpost restoration will probably be beyond the capabilities of most members but as the Society gains more knowledge valuable information can be gathered for use in an advisory capacity.

## DORSET FINGERPOSTS

By John Tybjerg

Dorset Fingerposts are generally in a very good state of health due to the excellent work of the Fingerpost Restoration Team, run by Dorset County Council, in restoring fingerposts

back to their original style and condition. As you travel around the county there is evidence of this work from one end of the county to the other and it is obvious that a positive effort is being made.

Restored fingerposts not only have bright new fingers but in several cases finials have been replaced as well. Most

fingerposts are of course found along B-roads and unclassified roads but it is not just on the larger of these that work is being done. Even the more rural (and let me assure you that in deepest Dorset rural can mean pretty isolated!) roads have new signs on them.



Dorset 'gridded' posts. [left] Damson Cross at SY 9107 9664 and [right] Woodlands Cross at SY 0475 0917.

One interesting feature of Dorset fingerposts is the existence of at least three red ones. Various stories exist for them being red. The best of course are the most unlikely and these revolve around gibbets, hangings and smugglers! I'm sorry to have to spoil a good story with the truth but the most feasible explanation is that they were a marker or reference point for guards escorting prisoners to and from prison, and possibly indicated the site of a night stop or a resting place.

The Red Post on the A31 is about 2 1/2 miles east of Bere Regis, at SY 883970, and near a resting place for prisoners being taken from Dorchester jail to Portsmouth for deportation to Australia. The appropriately named Botany Bay Barn is 1/3 mile down the road from the A31. This may well have influenced the naming of the Botany Bay Inn 1 mile along the A31 as well.

The other red posts are near Evershot at ST 553039 and north of Sherborne at ST 640198. I have a picture sent to me of a red post with a single arm on it pointing to Hewood, but know nothing more about this one at the moment, or exactly where it is. The other three are all marked on OS Explorer Maps, and those near Sherborne and Bere Regis are also on the Landranger Maps.



The Sherborne Red Post at SY 6402 1989, alas with missing finial that was probably the 'gridded' type.

## AROUND THE COUNTIES

A round-up of finds, restoration, conservation and recording from around the counties

### BUCKINGHAMSHIRE. (John V Nicholls)

There are two mileposts surviving alongside the A404 in Little Chalfont on the Reading to Hatfield route. Both were in a sorry state but the 'HATFIELD 20' was painted (not known by whom) in 2006.



The post had been broken at some time in the past but repaired effectively, almost invisible mending, by the use of a plate bent to fit inside the back of the post. Holes were then drilled from the back and through the front of the post. The holes in the post were then threaded and securing bolts

fitted from the back. The extruding ends of the bolts were then cut flush with the front of the post. After painting the cut ends of the bolts can barely be seen. The 'HATFIELD 21' remains unpainted.

### CAMBRIDGESHIRE. (Grainne Farington)

**Hide and Seek.** In the winter newsletter 2005, I told of the disappearance of two local stones. The first was on the B645, west of Kimbolton. The top of the stone was loose, and the day the Conservation Department came to assess it for renovation it had gone. Enquiries yielded nothing. Then in January 2006, there was information that the top of the stone had been rescued by a local man whilst out jogging. He had seen some suspicious people looking at the piece, and they had driven off as he appeared. It is now safe in his garden waiting to be re united with its base.

The second stone was on the Ermine Street near the Caxton Gibbett. It had lain in the ditch for years, but had disappeared as soon as plans for renovation were discussed. Newspaper pleas produced nothing. Then one day 10 yards from where it had last been seen, it had reappeared. South Cambridgeshire Road Engineers reset it speedily this time and it has now been renovated. (2 PICS)

Ermine Street, north of Huntingdon. In 2005, whilst painting a milestone in Brampton village, I was told of another, previously unknown stone. Investigations proved

positive, but the stone did not belong in Brampton! It was 60 miles from London. Steve Rhodes had rescued it 15 years ago when road widening was taking place near his home in Stukeley Meadows, 4 miles away. Rather than see it buried in the ditch, he had it delivered to his home for safe-keeping.



*Two views of the restored Caxton Gibbett milestone.*

Three house moves later the undamaged stone, 5 feet long and about a one third of a ton weight, was a feature in his front garden. Steve was delighted when I introduced myself and told him of the Society. 18 months later, Huntingdon District Council Road Maintenance Engineer agreed a new position and re set the stone. (See picture on front cover)



*The Ermine Street milestone saved by Steve Rhodes before its restoration and re-erection.*

**CORNWALL.** (from Ian Thompson's Cornish newsletter)  
There is more to report this year thanks to the efforts of many people interested in Cornish milestones.

In February, my wife, Marilyn, and I gave a talk on "Milestones in Cornwall" to the Cornwall Association of Local Historians Annual Conference in Newquay. Marilyn did the history and I did the milestones. After the talk, the postcards sold like hot cakes. We have been booked for another talk by the Trevithick Society in November.

Mr and Mrs Jolliff approached us at the end of the local history talk to tell us about two "lost" milestones, one in Pelynt and one in Lanreath, which had been moved during the War so Hitler's invading army could not find their way. One is in the middle of a field, upside down, and the other is currently a gatepost. We are working with the parish councils and the county council to have these re-instated by the roadside.

George Vaughan Ellis of Liskeard worked with me to support the relocation of the cast iron "½ MILE TO THE CHURCH GATES" milepost which was in Liskeard until the bypass persuaded Cornwall CC to take it into "safe keeping". After years languishing in the council depot, it now stands

beside the re-erected parish boundary stone, on the Torpoint side of the roundabout near Morrisons supermarket in Liskeard.

The stolen, grade II listed milestone found in Stafford has been recovered, thanks to the splendid efforts of John Higgins in Staffordshire and his colleagues Andrew and Helen Hinsull. Its re-erection on the 27th June on the A3058 near Summercourt (SW874570), 6 miles from Newquay, was organised superbly by Veryan Heal of Cornwall County Council's Historic Environment Department and presided over by Councillor Adam Paynter for the Executive Committee. It gave us press coverage on ITV news, BBC on-line, Radio Cornwall, the Western Morning News and Newquay Voice, thanks to the efforts of the County Council's new press officer, Trisha Hewitt.

Roger James from Luxulyan reported a fallen milestone in his parish. We were able to get the Cormac men to re-erect it. Roger has been supplied with paint by the parish council to maintain the milestones in the parish.

English Heritage published their draft. Heritage Protection Agreement at the start of the year, following their study in North Cornwall of Bridges, Crosses and Milestones. I responded on behalf of the Milestone Society. I think the agreement would make it much easier for the various bodies - English Heritage, the County Council and the District Council - to work together to maintain our magnificent collection of milestones. We need to get ALL our milestones listed, to make the maintenance task easier for everyone.

I was invited to address the County Council's "Heritage Assets Single Issue Panel" in April, in the Council Chamber in County Hall. They resolved to give serious consideration to the maintenance of milestones, based on the draft. Heritage Protection Agreement from English Heritage. The Panel is due to report its findings in October.

Diana Cousins with Carn Brea Parish Council has applied for Grade II listed status from English Heritage for the pre-turnpike milestone at 672416. Other milestones in the parish are listed, and she is working on the parish boundary stones.

Andrew Langdon located a Haleworthy Turnpike Trust milestone near Wadebridge at SW999730 on the town side of the A39 bypass roundabout north of Wadebridge. This stone was in danger of being lost since it lies on the now defunct old road, but Andrew has sent me a photograph and a completed Milestone Record Sheet to help safeguard its future. Almost all the other stones in this run to Camelford have survived.

Hazel Perham keeps a watching brief on her local milestones near Penryn. You may have seen responses of some of her past discoveries in the national Newsletter.

I was delighted to make contact with Audrey Hosier, who lives in Tavistock, but explored the milestones in East Cornwall from 1955 until the 1980s. She published her findings in the Federation of Old Cornwall Societies journal "Old Cornwall" as a series of articles called "The Measured Mile" in 1984 and 1985. This remains the defining work on milestones in the area. I am pleased to say that almost all Miss Hosier's milestones are still in place today.

A non-member from Bissoe contacted me about a fallen milestone on the A393 at SW769364. This is just before the very busy mini roundabouts near Penryn. She has reported the damage to Cornwall County Council who will, I am sure, respond positively. They will need to close the road to re-erect the milestone, which will cause quite a traffic problem here. The key thing to do when you see a milestone problem is to report it promptly to the county highways team and to



me if you can. I am still chasing work on the damaged milestone at Keason, but have a replacement date for the Cold Northcott stones taken into the depot for refurbishment.

**DEVON.** (Tim Jenkinson) Devon County Council continues to respond to requests to reinstate fallen milestones at the roadside. Tim was on hand to witness the resetting of a tall Teignmouth and Dawlish marker at Ashcombe on the Torquay bound A380 in March 2006. The stone, which features on the cover of Mervyn Benford's book on milestones, was knocked out of the ground by a car. It took a crane and three council men to reposition the stone which shows miles, furlongs and poles. Other notable salvations have included a large stone on the A377 between Exeter and Barnstaple at Bugford Bridge and an old granite guidepost at Woodman's Cornner near Yelverton, West Devon. Both received attention within days.



*Lifting the Ashcombe stone back into position. Devon coordinator Tim Jenkinson looking happy with a job well done.*

In April 2006 English Heritage confirmed Grade II status for a rare cast iron milepost in Plympton on the old A38 between Devon's two cities. Dating from the c.1820s, the post stands at the 5-mile point from Plymouth and was originally erected by the Plymouth Eastern Turnpike Trust. It is one of three survivors on the route; others lost during dual carriageway works in the 1970s. Plymton Civic Society has been alerted to the post's status and the hope of a repaint in the near future.

In May 2006 Tim contacted Dartmoor National Park (DNPA) concerning their project to microchip stone monuments in order to deter theft. A recent spate of disappearing artifacts had been a cause for concern. Tim was able to supply DNPA with a detailed inventory of their various wayside milestones, guideposts, boundary stones and bridge markers. In return DNPA agreed to join the Milestone Society in order to forge stronger links between the two groups. This is an exciting development and Tim hopes to view the micro-chipping process first hand when the next stage of the project is implemented in the autumn.

Fellow Devon member Geoffrey Harding has been busy publicizing the work of the Milestone Society at a series of local history fairs in Exeter, whilst Richard Oliver continues his sterling work recording the various Parish Bounds and War Department stones within the City of Exeter.

#### **Babbacombe Mileplate.**

Tim Jenkinson is glad to report the return of a cast iron mileplate to the roadside in Babbacombe, near Torquay. The plate went missing nearly three years ago from a small pillar

outside an old hotel that was being redeveloped into apartments. A brief account of its disappearance appeared in the first issue of 'On the Ground'. At the time there was much confusion concerning the fate of the plate with some speculation that it may have been stolen. The artifact, showing distances to seven locations in Devon including Exeter, probably dates from the 1830s and was uniquely sited adjacent to an older granite milestone.

Several articles appeared in the local press at the time of its disappearance, questioning its whereabouts, along with that of similar markers that had gone missing in the area. In February 2004 it transpired that the developers of the site had taken the plate in for 'safe keeping' to prevent damage during building work. There was a promise to reinstate in 'six months time' when the work was completed.

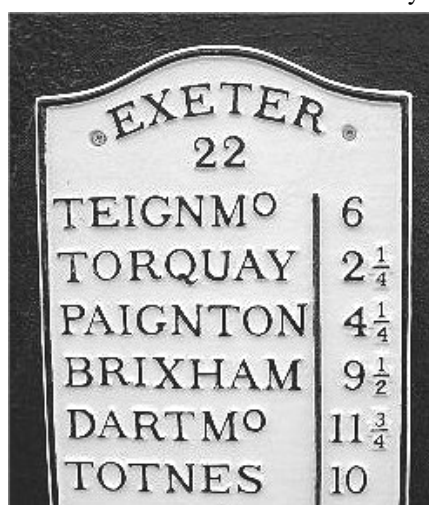
As is the case with building projects, they sometimes fall behind schedule. It was not until January 2005 that the work on the now Kestrel Court apartments appeared to be finished but several weeks later there was no sign of the plate. Growing concerns as to the plate's location initiated a series of enquiries by Tim that in July led to its discovery in the Police Property Store in Torquay. Torbay Council was coaxed into retrieving the plate but there ensued considerable confusion as to where it should be reinstated, who should do it, who should pay for it (at one point the Milestone Society were asked if they could fund the project) and whether anyone had sought permission from the new owners to reinstate.



After several months of negotiation with various Council officials and enlisting the help of Mervyn Benford who had dealings with the case in 2003, as well as getting support from Babbacombe and St Marychurch Local History Group, the Council finally agreed to return the marker to its rightful place. On 10 July 2006 the mileplate was securely reinstated at the roadside bolted onto the pillar and an article about the event appeared in the local press, albeit somewhat singing the praises of Torbay Council. The Milestone Society, including a photograph of Tim at the site and the local history group duly got a mention.

From Tim's perspective 'it is a great relief to get the plate back in place as it has been quite a struggle over the past couple of years knowing firstly where the plate was at any given time, as it has had a good number of custodians, and secondly actually finding someone who was willing to replace the marker. In the end it was an officer from the Highways Agency in Torquay that provided the most cooperation and I am sure that without his timely intervention the mileplate would not have been reinstated. He has been most helpful and could be a very useful contact for when we get around to reinstating another mileplate in nearby Teignmouth Road.

Another mileplate has recently gone back on to the wall of Park House in Teignmouth Road, St Marychurch, Torquay. Following the successful reinstatement of the plate in Babbacombe less than a mile away Tim thought it might be a good time to pursue this one that was stolen in 2003 and later returned but in a broken and irreparable state. A local historian Mr Vowden had a replica plate made at his own expense but was unable to get it reinstated at the site until interest in these markers was renewed in July 2006.



After Tim contacted him with the good news about the Babbacombe plate Mr Vowden approached the owner of Park House, explained the situation, advised about re-fixing, and amazingly he agreed to put it back. So now there are four such markers surviving in the Torbay and Kingswear area.

#### **DORSET.** (John Tybjerg)



Dorchester-Blandford: [above left] Outside the Crown Inn, Blandford on the A354 and repainted by Dorset CC in

September 2005. [right] On the edge of the town of Gillingham. Repainted by DCC October 2005.

[below] On the A31 at Wimborne. Reset from a field and painted by the Highways Agency in October 2005.



[below] Charmouth: This stone was reset and painted by Dorset CC September 2005.



A stone on the A350 southwest of Blandford, was repainted by Dorset CC in September 2005. Located outside a house named 'Milestones'. John Tybjerg met the owner of the house at a milestones presentation that he gave and she has promised to keep it clean. A milestone at St Ives was repainted by John in June 2005. No excuse as it is close to his home.

**ESSEX.** (John V Nicholls) Due to unforeseen circumstances the Essex survey is still incomplete. All known milestones have been located but final details (mostly dimensions and complete legends) are still being gathered so the full data can be added to the national database. 138 milestones have been found (including four in museums) since 2002. While updating data in the Tendring District (north east of Colchester) it was noted that the 'LONDON 66' milepost at Ramsey (last recorded in 2002) was missing, either lost or stolen. An archived news item found on the Internet showed that it went walkabout as far back as March 2003. The milepost was made by O. Bendall of Lawford and dated 1893.

Further bad news along the same road was the discovery that the Grade II listed 'LONDON 63' milestone, previously recorded in 2002 as part hidden in a hedge, has now been built into a wall with only the front face remaining visible. Its accompanying milepost has been painted to a high standard. The fact that a listed building had been effectively altered (by the fact that it is now firmly cemented into the new wall) it was reported to the Essex CC heritage conservation people who were putting the concern into the



hands of the Tendring District listed buildings officer. Nothing further heard since.



[left] Lost or stolen – the LONDON 66 milepost. [right] The listed Bradfield stone firmly cemented in the wall.

**HAMPSHIRE.** (from Keith Lawrence) The list of the existing milestones in Hampshire is effectively complete. This does not imply that there are none hiding away still to be found. Having just purchased the 'Memory Map' computer based Ordnance Survey mapping system I can now get the 10 figure map references of the missing stones and download in to my GPS. I am still on the hunt but not spending as much time as in the past. I have had three successes using the increased accuracy now possible with GPS, I have found three stones that I have tried on four plus occasions to find - two had been reduced to stumps by flail grass cutters and one I was just looking in the wrong place.

We are seeing some re-painting, resiting and replacing of milestones and mileposts. However having only spoken to the Hampshire County Conservation Officer, just the once, two years ago and having had the Milestone Society meeting at 'Milestones' in Basingstoke last year, to claim any influence on this work is possibly an exaggeration. This follow up with the County Council in Winchester, the City Councils of Portsmouth and Southampton and the other unitary authorities has been neglected and again we would need a volunteer(s) who can put the time in during the week.

What has happened recently:-

HA164. (SU 6544 5479). Chineham. This stone is repainted every year by the householder. This series of stones from Basingstoke to Reading on the A33 has recently been listed so perhaps the re-paintings should now be only with written permission, after a lot of form filling.

HA264. (SU 1507 1399) Horseport, Fordingbridge. The contractor looking after this section of the A338 has repainted this milepost. I am unaware as to why the work was undertaken. Other stones receiving the contractor's attention on the A338 include HA266 (SU 1538 1092) Garage; HA275 (SZ 1502 9787) Court Farm and HA276 (SZ 1585 9652) Sopley Park where the contractor looking after this section of the A338 has replaced this broken milepost.

HA380. SU 0635 1599. Stone Hill Gate. This stone was originally just dug out from the bank and then at a later date re-painted. I am unaware of who undertook the work.

Local talks about milestones in Hampshire are starting to be booked for this coming winter; I have already given one to the Fawley Local History Society.

So to summarise the milestones are recorded but the contact with the local authorities is poor. Work on stones has been undertaken but for the most part we cannot claim it is because of the Milestone Society, but it could be! An excellent article by Laurence Dopson in Hampshire County Magazine on the Milestone Society Meeting at the

'Milestone' Museum in Basingstoke could have also had an energising effect on the interest in our local milestones and mileposts. While we have a full list of stones we do not have an active group of local members. With the recording phase over the next steps really do need more hands to the wheel but I am not in a position to pull the group together – another volunteer? I am also planning to move away from Hampshire during 2007 so this need could become urgent.

## HEREFORDSHIRE. (Terry Keegan)



A series of markers were painted alongside the A49 by the Highways Agency in April/May 2006 between Hereford and Craven Arms (Shropshire).



The milepost at Dinmore [above left] was purchased by Terry from an antiques stall around 2000. It was bought back by the Highways Agency (its contractors Amey Mouchel) and reinstalled close by its original site.

**LONDON, Clapham Common.** (Robert Caldicott) [A late 2004-2005 item but never too late for a success story! Ed] Early in 2004 Robert's daughter was on a London Marathon training

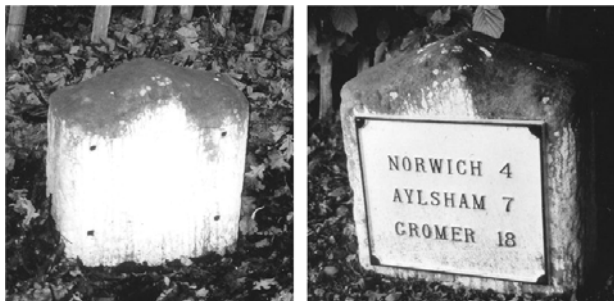
run when she noticed a milestone lying on its side on Clapham Common. In contact with The Clapham Society, Robert learned that the stone had been broken off by a reversing fairground lorry but steps were being taken to have it restored. Robert photo show the resulting repair in March 2005. It had been pinned and cemented back together, the base being given a surround of reclaimed paving stones.



**NORFOLK.** (Carol Haines) Carol reports that contacts with local authorities in the county are still hard going and when anyone contacts them about milestones they tend to put them in touch with her! On the one hand it at least it shows that they are aware of the Society while on the other it appears to be a case of passing the buck. Verge mowing still continues to take its toll.

Probably 80% of Norfolk's milestones have now been recorded for the database and the last few are being added slowly as most are in remote locations. Three new finds confirmed and recorded in gardens.

Horsham St Faith (TG 2191 1561). The stone was erected by the Norwich to Cromer Turnpike Trust, probably in 1827. During the 2002-03 WI Milestone Project it was noted by the local branch that the plate was missing; probably removed during 1940. The WI and Parish Council decided to have a replacement made but as no others of the type survive no pattern could be made. After being contacted by the Parish Council and one of the Buildings Conservation Officers at the County Council Carol gave them all the known history and suggested what the legend could be. Nothing was heard for some time but in the spring of 2006 Carol was surprised to see a new plate in place. The stone was not raised or painted but a least the new plate looks good.



**OXFORDSHIRE.** (from Mervyn Benford) Charles Hughes has been continuing his excellent work restoring plates to the surviving milestones on the former A 43. This was the modern route of the original Weston-on-the-Green to Towcester Turnpike which has been researched thoroughly by another Oxfordshire member, Ted Flaxman, and well-detailed by Alan Rosevear in his comprehensive studies of

Thames Valley region turnpikes which reached as far north as this area.

The first stone survives in Weston-on-the-Green along with that two miles away alongside the boundary wall of Middleton Park. The original Brackley road ran across where the park now is but at the time of the turnpike discussions the local landowner obviously had the route diverted to run where it does today. The intermediate stone has disappeared and probably stood at the crossroads of the Witney-Bicester busy cross-country road and lost to later widening of that road.

The fifth one should have been just past the centre crossroads of Middleton Stoney but again was missing though a clear gap in later vegetation shows exactly where it was and where it will be re-erected. Charles discovered that two local Cherwell District Councillors had it in their garden, having apparently rescued it from possible removal and loss. In discussions with them he and I have agreed to promote a re-erection project.

Our enthusiasm had been lit by the chance discovery of the plate from the original stone in Weston. Apparently it was in the possession of the adjoining landowner. The stone had been listed by the District Council and a listed monument had shown up on the property deeds but he had not supposed it was a milestone. We solved the mystery for him and in return we have made him a replica plate. Charles had negotiated with a firm in Banbury for plates to be cast at the surprisingly low cost of £25 but the problem had been what to put on them. The text was known from early OS maps but not the style and positioning of letters and digits. This original plate is being used now to cast replica plates for all the plate-less stones that survive.

There should have been one a mile further on from Middleton but it seemed to have disappeared because it would have been very close to a 100 yard section of the road that had been straightened and sealed off to prevent traveler encampments. The original line was just a gentle curve but straightening opened up the road from a significant volume of traffic from Oxford and the original M40 to Towcester and the A5 Watling Street, with the M1 a few miles further east at Northampton. Improving the A43 was an important part of traffic management when the M40 itself was extended to Birmingham.

Now the second, mainly Northamptonshire section of the turnpike beyond the M40 junction has been progressively dualled to provide fast trunk road access to the M1, the last section opened a couple of years or so ago. The original milestones that survive are hard to find, for example, one on a closed off section, another on a well set back section almost masked by later vegetation. This stone is a successor to the one referred to in 'Lark Rise to Candleford' when the family walked to see the milestone that said Oxford 19. It would have done so in Roman numerals though and shows that the turnpike stones were not the first along this very old route but designed in their turn to improve journeys for travelers.

Several of us had scoured this land by sector and found nothing but in fact the stone was all the time just twenty yards further along to the east back on the line of the road itself and we found it less than a year ago. Charles and I fixed the replica plate a few months ago. He had earlier affixed the relevant plate to the next one which was in his home parish of Ardley at the time he began this programme and which was his first ambition as he had persuaded the Parish to contribute to the cost.

Thus in addition to the original plate, three replicas have been fixed and Charles has indeed fixed them in a way that makes them almost impossible to remove by any casual white van man with a jemmy. He uses bolts that he sets in one of the most powerful adhesives known and to remove such a plate would require serious planning and preparation and appropriate tools. Clearly they could be removed for proper attention at any time in the future by just such planning.

At Ardley the road crosses the M1 and the original but now dualled A 43 starts its journey to Northampton. There is one further plate, the one in the closed off section of old road, that remains in Oxfordshire but the branch resolved at its last meeting to continue the process at least as far as Brackley as there is no Northamptonshire branch.

At Brackley the turnpike was crossed by the Buckingham to Banbury turnpike and when both fell into economic debt and disrepute they became consolidated. Stones that survive, very few, seem to have been similar to the Towcester road types and the plates therefore may well have been similar. That remains a distant project in branch eyes, not least because the best stone surviving, that nearest to Banbury, had only one place with distance shown, namely Brackley 9, where all those described so far in this report have places forward cited in both directions. In this case the other reference would have been Banbury 0 assuming the tollgate to have been at the east end of the Cherwell Bridge and barely 200 yards away from the stone. Most trusts ignored any 'nil' references. We know what the plate size and lettering looked like but with just one name where was it placed relative to the plate space? It is an example of the kind of conundrum that arises when research and restoration proceed.

The Society should congratulate Charles who has been the driving force behind this while the Branch has noted and encouraged him. The first restoration, that at Weston, involved four of us and we were dismayed to learn that just weeks after re-erecting it and restoring that one original plate it was struck by a speeding Porsche which must have mounted quite a substantial verge to reach the stone. It knocked it flat but left it undamaged, probably as its base spoil was still relatively soft, not the earth of centuries, It did not do the Porsche a lot of good though!

On the publicity front our local author member, Mervyn Benford, has been invited by Ottakar's Bookshop to give a talk on an evening in September at which he will also sign copies of his SHIRE Milestones books. As the previous one was Philip Serrill of the Malvern and Worcester auction house who appears as an expert on various BBC antiques programmes the branch feels very honoured. There are also plans for a display at Banbury Museum. The branch benefits from such local publicity.

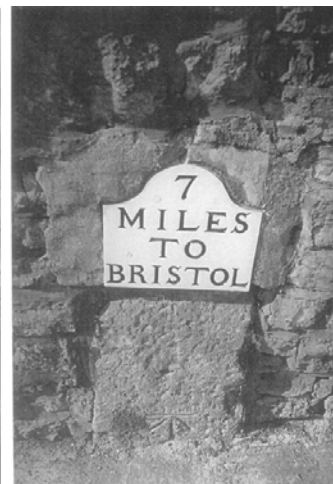
**SOMERSET.** "Before and After" in Somerset from Janet Dowding. Over recent years a large number of mileplates and turnpike boundary markers have been stolen from the Bath and Bristol area. When recently some were recovered in the Bristol area by the police, three belonged to Bath & North East Somerset Council (BNESC) to whom they were returned. The Council decided repaint them before restoring them to their original sites.

[Below] The Bristol Turnpike Trust parish boundary post is located at ST 698657 near Newton Bridge, north of Corston village, near Bath on the A4. It is No.S202 on the

database. The old fractured area was lost during or after the theft.



[No. S290 on the database and located at ST 686669 on the A4 at the top of the hill going into Saltford from Bath. Now refitted to its original milestone, the Bristol Turnpike Trust plate had been stolen prior to 2004.

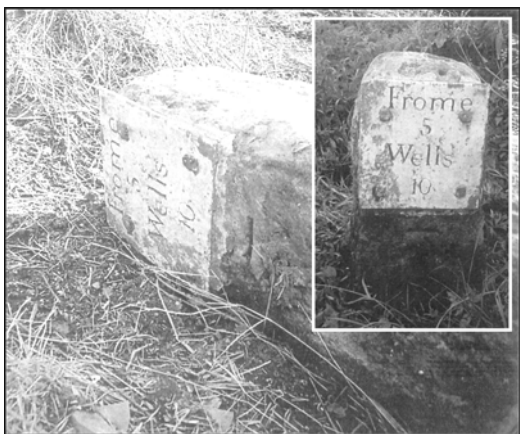


Close to Lansdown Racecourse, Bath at ST 725688 on an unclassified road, is a recently restored plate of the Bath Trust. No. S188 on the database.



This milestone complete with plate had been lying flat for many years in the parish of Leigh-on-Mendip, on the Old Frome Road between Wells and Frome. Janet started writing letters to the Somerset County Council in 2002 but it was not until May 2006 that patience was rewarded. With the help of Mendip District Council it was finally put upright. Unfortunately it was not painted at the same time

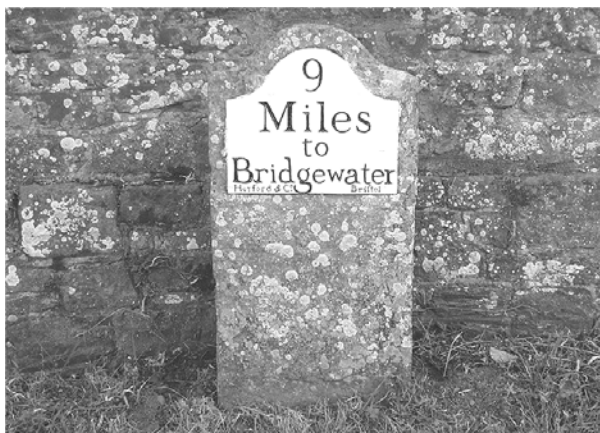
but at least the heavy part of reinstatement has been achieved. It belonged to the Frome Trust and is S22 on the database.



**Quantock Hills AONB restoration.** (from Tim Russell, Senior Ranger of Quantock Hills AONB Service, Somerset.) The Bridgwater milestone, referred to locally as '7 Mile Stone' is a well known landmark, it is located in woodland on Merridge Common (north side of the road) halfway between Enmore and Bishops Lydeard.

The other milestone, '9 Miles to Bridgwater' is situated under the arched gateway to Cothelstone Manor. It is in excellent condition as it is a few metres off the road and has been spared being hit by vehicles or being flailed! Interestingly this sign spells Bridgwater with an 'e', an older form of spelling. Judge Jefferies hung two servants from the Manor from the same archway.

The person in the photograph painting the signs is Chris Tilley a Voluntary Ranger who has a particular interest in local history.



Both signs lie within the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and it is through one of

the AONB Service's heritage projects, Highway Heritage that the restoration worked was carried out, along with the restoration of 30 or so cast iron fingerposts. The Quantock Hills were the first area to be designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England 50 years ago; currently celebrating 50th Anniversary.

**STAFFORDSHIRE.** (John Higgins) David Wright has spotted a milepost (Staffordshire this time) in a garden again, and we alerted the county council, who read the riot act to them. It is now in the county's care waiting replacement where it belongs. It was listed!

Roadworks on the B5417 between Cheadle and Oakamoor (Staffordshire) are taking place (as at August), which put a broken stone mile marker at risk. Even though the county has a complete listing from John Higgins of all mile markers in the County, the information still had not filtered through to the road workers, who were re-kerbing. The local highways department was alerted, and John was put in touch with the site foreman. John showed him the broken top, and said that the bottom part must still be in the ground; the missing plate might also be around. Negotiations with a local neighbour to have the stone repaired and replaced in a less vulnerable position took place. A site about a hundred yards to the west, set against a stone wall, was deemed suitable. Although it was felt important to replace on site, the sharp bend and close proximity to the road and hedge meant that the repaired stone would still be vulnerable to damage, so the decision to resite was taken. The site foreman has now agreed to carefully extricate the remains of the stone and deliver the bits to the wall's owner, who will repair it and replace it at her expense. She has also agreed to look into the feasibility of paying for a replacement plate. If all this sounds far fetched, the wall's owner is Mavis Oakes, widow of Les Oakes, whose scrap-cum-salvage empire will be the beneficiary of the "Cheadle 1" stone. Were it not for the Milestone Society, the stone, dating from 1822, would have been lost forever. The Les Oakes 'emporium' is always worth a visit for its wonderful collection of by-gones: it is located one mile (exactly!) east of Cheadle towards Oakamoor on the B5417.

**SURREY.** Michael Knight (Beds coordinator) reports;



In pursuit of data for a talk on 'Milestones and Turnpike Roads' for the Send and Ripley Historical Society in March 2006, a buried milestone of the A3 suite was exhumed and limewashed. This particular waymarker has one of the finest designs of any stone marker with FIVE faces giving information between Hyde Park Corner and Portsmouth.

The OCKHAM milestone stands in a narrow, overgrown steep-sided cutting which although now by-passed by a new line of the A3, is nevertheless difficult to work at. On its rear face is a bench mark and with these four incisions the total numbers of characters to be painted with black-tint wash amounts to 65! The task was completed over two days and left to our Surrey members to maintain.

**Horley.** A milestone at Povey Cross that was taken down during the last major Gatwick Airport expansion was rescued from a council yard by Reg Adsett (MSS member) in 1990. It then languished outside the Ditchling Museum for many



years until noticed by Peter Gwynne, a member of the Horley Local History Society. The museum did not need the stone so David Hall, Chairman of the History Society negotiated its return in 2005. Just before Christmas the stone was reset close to its original location.

The History Society (now also members of the Milestone Society) have also persuaded Reigate & Banstead Borough Council to clean and paint four mileposts along the A23.

[2 pics]

## THAMES VALLEY (by Alan Rosevear)

### Making Progress in the Thames Valley.

The Conservation work in the Berks, Oxon and Kennet areas has begun to feel like a plate spinning exercise on the stage. The stones that were renovated since March 2004 need to be kept free of perennial plants and new requests from parish councils have meant more commitments for restoration. The good news is that the stones painted with Keim almost two and a half years ago still have a stable coating of paint. The colour has darkened, maybe as a result of accumulating grime rather than a pigment change. Stones close to main roads get a covering of grime and even a good wash with soapy water in the Spring fails to budge some engrained dirt. There are a few impact marks where grass cutters have still managed to make contact – the Keim paint will flake off, unlike oil paint (that is a good thing for reversibility but is annoying when impacts occur).

### Stopping Erosion.

During the Spring, when it was warm enough to dry the paint but not dangerously hot, proved the best time to work. The protocol with the Divisional Highways Engineer is now established – I provide an individual site risk assessment (work limited to ones that can be accessed safely) and notify them of my schedule. The response saying OK is now rapid since they are happy that the warning signs etc are being used sensibly. Two remaining stones in the series north and west of Wantage could only be accessed safely when the vegetation was low.



Goosey Turn, West Challow

) One of these (at Noah's Ark), was in a very sad state and if it had not been Listed, I might have abandoned it. I had photographs from the early 70s when it was still painted white with a few bare patches. By the mid 80s the slides show the bare patches had grown and the erosion was eating deep bands into the unprotected surface. By 2000 when it eventually fell over the bare bands made it look like a fat caterpillar. It took more work clearing the brambles and rabbit warrens than refacing the stone; but now it is a white marker again with an "aged" cerated edge (consistent with

the English Heritage wish to retain the accumulated wear of time).



Noah's Ark – before and after

### Raising the fallen to read again.

The hardest task on this section was an old 1770 stone on the Great Road to Gloucester; now on a by-road following the construction of Abingdon Airfield in WW2. The Parish had asked me to restore what appeared like a bare stone that had been knocked over by a car. I had only recognised it during the survey because it was exactly a mile away from a stone I had renovated last year. This fallen one had been snapped off years ago and had just been sitting on the surface. First task was to cast a new root from cement and rubble stone. Then how to raise it? I finally bribed my son to help lever it into the new hole; it cost me a large Easter egg but cheap at the price. Painting was then relatively easy. Some text had eroded away so the adjoining milestone was needed as a guide. I was 99% certain that I had it right when a cyclist stopped and claimed the old OS map said something totally different (miles to Faringdon in Arabic numbers not London in Roman numbers). I rechecked what I could see in the angled light and am confident the engraving was as I claimed – but it is disconcerting when contradictory evidence is available (needless to say smart cyclist did not offer to help with restoration!)



At the Black Horse PH Marcham – before and after

### Another Parish, another badly eroded stone.

An enthusiast in Beedon persuaded the Parish to seek the restoration of two stones on the old Ilsley to Newbury road (was A34). The one in the village was dirty but the text was readable. I restored that first before tackling the eroded stone. Thankfully the engraving close to the edges was sufficient to define the line of the text so the rest could be inserted. This stone was a classic example of how excavating around a stone can avoid the need to lift. Road works had so raised the soil level that it was almost half its design height. However,

digging close to it (avoiding risk from buried services) and skimming the soil back over an area to give a better profile, was sufficient to reveal it without the need for a hoist.



*Before and after at Beadon (on A34 slip road)*

### Parish Prides

Another task was further along the old Gloucester Road, was on the old ridgeway road from Faringdon to Highworth. Faringdon Parish had requested this as part of a larger scheme. Sadly I could not paint the metal plate in the town because there was no easy way of avoiding blocking the footpath. Ironically the house owner just went ahead and painted it (blue and white) without asking anyone's permission (it is Grade II – definitely a case of apologise afterwards being easier). However, the old stone was satisfying. Beneath the grime the engraving was just discernable and another 18<sup>th</sup> century stone is re-enlivened. Nevertheless, passing children did have problems with the Roman numerals!



*Faringdon with its Roman numerals.*



*Barley Wood, Kennington*

And finally another Parish Council request from just south of Oxford in Bagley Woods, beside what was the A34. The engraving on this was still as fresh but it looks as though

it had been recut once in its life. Skimming back the soil raised the profile, though two hours of heaving failed to get it totally upright.

I had thought that only cyclists had time to stop and look at milestones but motorists do notice and several stopped to chat, ask questions and express appreciation. No new recruits but it augers well for people keeping an eye on them.

### WARWICKSHIRE. (Mervyn Benford, Mike Buxton and Robert Caldicott)

Warwickshire branch is small but has active members. For ease of action the county is divided between north and south sectors approximately and different members are allocated to the various tasks. Starting with a low known score in the 30s this has now risen to over 60.

Recent good news has been the restoration of the old plated stone in Kenilworth High Street. This had reached a stage where the plate was probably holding the stone together, so large was the crack in the stone. Restoration has involved a new stone as well as a new plate but it all looks very good now. It formed part of the series between Warwick and Coventry and approaching Coventry there is a long straight section on which a member of the Cycling Tourist Club in the early 20<sup>th</sup>. Century reported it was possible to stand at one milestone and see the next. Sadly though a stone or two survive the plates have all gone and the enterprising restoration by the local museum of one of these stones has used an inaccurate and rather unsuitable design for the plate, despite the original Kenilworth one existing for comparison.

Other good news is that by local action in the village of Halford on the A46, line of the Fosse Way, the distinctive small metal mile marker damaged by a passing vehicle has been repaired and re-set a little further back from the risk areas.

We still have not recovered the stone on the former A41 Banbury to Birmingham road which was at Temple Herdewyck just outside the large military base there. It had only just been found, in a ditch as highways staff laid out a new road to former army houses converted into a private estate. Yet three months later it had disappeared and whilst plates seem to disappear from time to time it is rare that whole stones are taken. The police took the theft seriously, and it got wide coverage in the local press. The theft was also listed on the website of SALVO but the stone is still missing. SALVO is at [www.salvo.co.uk/warwickshire/stolen.html](http://www.salvo.co.uk/warwickshire/stolen.html)

One of our members gave a talk to Alcester Historical Society recently at which 11 copies of the SHIRE book were sold and 20 of the Warwickshire postcards. Alcester has a thriving history society and members at the talk were invited to go to the Town Hall the following morning to see the very large original mid 1880s copy of the 25 inch OS map whose various small sections have been commercially pasted together and backed with cloth, making a document some 100 inches square and which is formally rolled up into a box hanging overhead when not in use. The invitation was to note the position and detail of local milestones of the time to then check how many survived.

About a year ago co-coordinator Mike Buxton gave a similar talk in Long Compton. Between Long Compton and Shipston-on-Stour there was a series of very unusual markers in the form of what resembled lampposts but without lamps, just extended left and right metal brackets from which originally hung wooden tablets giving the respective direction distances. [Yet another fingerpost variation? Ed]



The Warwickshire postcard is now on sale in Brailes Post Office and the Kineton second-hand bookshop, where a small display featuring milestones has been created. A steady sale of books is developing from this bookshop. Kineton has possibly the only known mile marker from the entire road between Wellesbourne and Banbury. Warwickshire postcards are still available from either the branch or at the society stand at meetings.

The Committee held its summer meeting at the Coventry Transport Museum where we were made very welcome, including a guided visit to the store room where surviving examples of the city's distinctive boundary posts could be seen along with a remarkable old photograph showing almost all of them when in the Highways yard for possible refurbishing. Apart from the few seen here there are possibly three known still in situ.

**WORCESTERSHIRE.** See article **CASTING A NEW 'BRADLEY' STONE** elsewhere in this issue.

**YORKSHIRE.** (Christine Minto)

#### South Yorkshire

After a year of nagging a leaning stone on the A628 at Scawsby near Doncaster was reset upright in a concrete base. This may be an early stone from the 32 mile long 1740 Doncaster to Saltersbrook turnpike through Barnsley judging by the number 1 in the shape of a J. There is another stone of the same shape in Darfield but the town names are in capitals. There are then seven more stones west of Barnsley (There were nine when I first recorded them in 1992). On those, where the inscription is clear, the names are of a similar style to the Scawsby one. This is one of the few roads in the old West Riding where they didn't replace the old stones with the ubiquitous Brayshaw and Booth or other style metal posts.

One member of the audience at a talk by Jan Scrine in Huddersfield said that his daughter had a milestone in her garden in Oxspring. This proved to be from the route between Sheffield and Penistone and is the same shape as one reused to hold a step in place on a footpath in Wortley three miles away.

#### West Yorkshire

Five telephone calls resulted from a newspaper article in the Holme Valley area (Last of the Summer Wine country). So a long lost milestone was found supporting the end of a newly built stone wall at Netherthong. And between Upperthong and Meltham a leaning stoop has been set upright. Unfortunately it has been placed so near the wall that the face with the date 1761 cannot be photographed. And the top stones on the dry stone wall defied efforts to move them temporarily.

John Webb in Keighley has alerted me to several old stones. One at Cullingworth is at the start of a track, Dolphin Lane (what is the origin of such a name in the middle of the hills?) This joins another track which was probably used by the pack horse trains between Harworth and Bingley. There is another stone, used a gatepost, near West Morton north of Bingley, with the inscription YOHRK.

A few years ago Frank and I cycled, and walked, on the track over Salter Fell from Slaidburn to Hornby. We had a slide of a milestone near the road end at this outpost of Yorkshire. But oh dear, this bit was given away to the red rose county. When in the area earlier this year we went to find it. It was still there and now looking at it properly could see that it directed us not only to Hornby but also to

Slaidburn and somewhere beginning with a W and it was erected in 1816.

Another piece of White Rose territory that was stolen is that around Sedbergh. On the Kirkby Lonsdale road at Four Lane Ends stood an old stone that Ken Diamond photographed that has become known as the Borrow Bridge stone.



[left] Borrow Bridge stone [Ken Diamond Collection] and [right] Covan Bridge stone.

Prior to 2002 Brian Davey took it leaning against the farm wall then Mervyn Benford spotted it propped against a fence. After our visit in February 2005 further contact was made with the Yorkshire Dales NP which covers that area. By the end of the year it was in store at their offices in Bainbridge. And that is where it is still. They have the money to restore it but can't get anyone to do it, yet!

The road from Wakefield to Bradford is one we have cycled on many times and, strangely, for two such important places not a milestone or milepost was to be seen. However since I first knew it over the last forty or so years there have been many changes to the route. On one journey two or three years ago I spotted a sunken cracked stone near Morley. Studying a 1961 OS map showed five milestones one of which was the site of that bit of old stone. Meandering on bits of old cut off sections of road failed to find any trace of the other four until in December last year when all the vegetation had died down. The top six inches of a stone jumped out at me as I cycled by. And that is how it still is, safe from anyone who comes out of the restaurant car park rather too quickly.

#### East Yorkshire

In the Humberside part of East Yorks there are only six metal posts with the rest of the 100 or so being stone with, without or never having had metal plates. The metal parts have been kept looking smart through the efforts of John Harland and the vegetation is cleared round the stones as well.

#### North Yorkshire

York member Jeremy Howat has been extremely busy checking out all milestones we know of on the roads radiating from the city. He has found a rusty milepost on the A19 north of Easingwold that I had missed. Strange that this is not marked on the 1962 OS map but does appear on the 2002 version. He found two more rusty mileposts near Ripon and an old stone at Kirby Hill that probably points to that lane being the original route of the Boroughbridge to Northallerton road. However he has had a hand in the raising of a stone that may date from 1772 on the B6313 York to Helmsley road. There are still a few late 19C metal posts on this route but in 1768 the section from York to Oswaldkirk

Bank had been turnpiked. In August 2003 in Gilling East 18 miles north of York we had recorded a stone mounting block on which the inscription York could just be made out. On another journey in March 2005 two similar stones were spotted at 9 and 21 miles. Then we heard of one sunken in the verge just three miles from the city. Through Jeremy contacting the right people the stone has now been raised and reset within about two months – which must be a record. A slight downside is that it is the wrong way round, but at least it is now visible and should not be damaged by the grass cutters. You may have spotted that the numbers 3, 9, 18 and 21 are in the three times table. Now in September 1772 the Trustees ordered that wooden mile posts 4½ feet in length with every third mile a horsing stone be erected. And if Mr. Duncombe of Duncombe Park agreed they could also be erected north of Oswaldkirk on his land. So that explains the 21 mile stone north of Oswaldkirk near the turn off for Ampleforth.

An article in an Ilkley paper produced results with two stones recorded north of the River Wharfe on the road to Nesfield and one south of Ilkley on Keighley Road just before road ends and becomes a track over Ilkley Moor. Another stone is used as a gatepost at a farm in Weston, north of the Wharfe but nearer to Otley.

However the big disappointment concerns the old milestone at Middleton. In spite of the concerted efforts of several people in Ilkley and Alan Heaton our Lancashire friend, it is still prostrate in the grounds of Myddleton Lodge, which belongs to the Catholic Diocese. It was lifted out of the ground and dumped well over a year ago when a new fence was put around the grounds. Even a letter to the local MP, Austin Mitchell, has failed to get any action. It has been suggested that the next approach should be to the Pope!

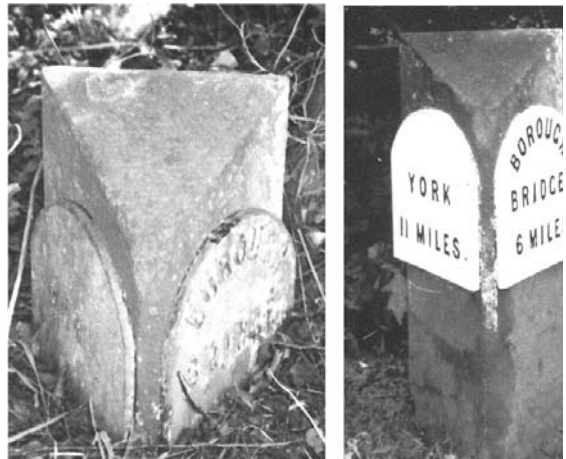


*Middleton. So who will compose a letter to the Pope?*

On Milner Lane at Thorner is an old milestone probably dating from the early 18C and the only one left of several on the Rigton Ridgeway. It was the victim of a vehicle strike but local member Brian Ellis has had it put upright again.

Yorkshire's most prolific milestone restorer has been busy this year in spite of a slow start due to the cold Spring. First of all Brian Bradley-Smith painted the stone on the Pateley Bridge to Grassington road near to our meeting venue at Hebden and then he tackled one near Whixley on

the B6265 that was mostly sunk in the ground. His son helped him to haul it up and reset it so now it is probably at its original height. This was complete with its plates that have been painted but the stone itself bears traces of white paint too. Before and after below



There is another stone of the same series two miles nearer Boroughbridge but that is leaning, sunken and minus the plates. A 'B & B' style milepost 1 mile from Knaresborough on the A59 that Brian restored in 2002 was another victim of a vehicle strike. However this one came off worse than the Thorner stone. The attachment was in three pieces and the backing stone snapped off at ground level. The metal bits have been joined together and, again with his son's help, the whole post reassembled and made secure with concrete and angle iron supporting the back. A similar style post two miles south of Killinghall on the B6161 had been completely submerged in brambles. Perhaps Brian used a machete! But it is now clear of vegetation, repainted and the villagers are delighted. Another major project was a milepost on the A661 near Spofforth. It had almost disappeared into the banking on a narrow part of the road near the brow of a hill. Brian made friends with the farmer and between them they tackled it from the field side so now all the remaining posts on that road have been restored. Brian has also been able to replace an attachment he's had in his safekeeping for some time. This was from the stone on an old cut off section of the A1 north of Wetherby near Kirk Deighton that was affected by the construction of the new motorway.

The original route from Ferrybridge to Tadcaster did not follow its present route. Jeffrey's 1771 map shows it going northwest out of Towton, famous for the battle of 1461 during the War of the Roses. The road entered Tadcaster from Stutton. Now a by-pass runs between the two places but at the northern end of the bridge over it is a stone in just about the marked place on the old map. Although no inscription is obvious it must be an original milestone and possibly listed. Highway engineers are not noted for taking much notice of such realized but it has clearly been deliberately set in place. And nine miles further south is a splendid old stone, again in the marked position on Jeffrey's map, inscribed LON /180/ FER/ 3 on the lhs and YORK/18/ TAD/9 on the right hand side.

In the northeast of the county the North Yorks Moors NP is progressing with its remit to look after 'heritage' items. The fingerposts, milestones and village signs that have already been refurbished certainly uplift the image of the area. David Whitlock is to repair ten more fingerposts with

their distinctive NRYCC haloes whilst, just outside the NP, six around Kirkbymoorside have broken arms replaced. In the past some have had a weld repair which eventually fails and can be dangerous. Also when the original post is corroded near ground level due to salt etc David repairs the posts with the same section tubing. The NYMNP have realized that damage is done when other signs e.g. caravan site directions, are affixed to these old posts. The stainless steel straps and rainwater massively increase the corrosion rates on these posts so other signs have to have their own. One of only two District Council late 19C metal mileposts left on the 21 miles between Scarborough and Whitby is mostly hidden under the hedge at Hawsker but, by the time you read this, it will have been repainted and reset. Four posts on this road are 'listed' but still they have disappeared. The remaining two, the other is in Burniston, are not listed.

Mainly due to members individual efforts a number of our milestones are looking smarter and cared for. But there still remains a big problem in that the vast majority of our local authorities and highways people either does not care or cannot be bothered to source some money.

#### SUNDAY OCTOBER 22nd 2006

"The Yorkshire Group invites you to join them at their Autumn Meeting at Rudston Village Hall near Bridlington in scenic East Yorkshire - plenty of speakers & displays !! Within the village is the largest single standing monolith in England, Rudston House which was the birthplace of the author Winifred Holtby (she is buried in the churchyard), and an art gallery at the pub.

The time: from 10.15 till 3.45. Bring a packed lunch; tea/coffee etc. is provided for a nominal charge.

Contact Jan, [yorkshiremilestones@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:yorkshiremilestones@hotmail.co.uk)

This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it for info or to let us know you are coming."

**WALES.** (from Chris Woodard) The Principality of Wales is indebted to John Higgins of Staffordshire, for he has now completed recording the milestones in the old Welsh counties of Caernarfonshire, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Montgomeryshire. All data has been sent to Alan Rosevear for inclusion on the national database.

Approval is being sought of the Milestone Society national committee to create a database within Wales, so that whatever is recorded can be translated into Welsh. Chris is currently compiling a list of milestones, boundary stones, fingerposts, toll houses, turnpike trusts and Acts of Parliament. [If it compares with Chris's 'A History of the Devonshire Roads' presented at the 2004 AGM it will be a very comprehensive listing. Ed.]

**WALES** (Chris Woodard)

**Carmarthenshire.** The county council has a policy that local community councils are responsible for the maintaining of milestones within the county. Recent restoration works on milestones along the A4300 – Carmarthen to Llandeilo road have been carried out by the Llanddarog and Llanarthney community councils.

When the County Council was re-widening the A484 in Newcastle Emlyn last year, they were asked by a member of the public to save the milestone. The council workers decided to leave it in the care of the local history society, by dumping it outside their meeting room. Over the

autumn and winter months, the stone in question was removed from the pavement into the middle of the road on a number of occasions on Saturday nights by the over enthusiastic and inebriated Newcastle Emlyn Rugby Club players whenever they won a match – luckily that was not too often. The County Council finally restored the stone to its former place earlier in 2006.



Two examples of restored milestones along the A4300.

**Ceredigion/Cardiganshire.** The milestone along the A484 between Cardigan and Newcastle Emlyn was reported as damaged by Frank and Christine Minto many moons ago to the county coordinator. It has finally been restored and repaired by the Ceredigion County Council highways department. Painted to its former glory it was the only other slate milestone to survive on this stretch of road at Cengarth.



Before and after on the A484 west of Cengarth.

Road improvements along the A487 between Aberaeron and Aberystwyth at Aberarth have included a stone wall to the seaward side of the road. The '14 miles to Aberystwyth' milestone is built into the wall.



The Aberarth milestone set into the wall.

## NORTH WALES.

### Newyddion o Gogledd Cymru ( News from North Wales)

Ian Jolly insisted on a bi-lingual heading. Things are looking up in this mountainous part of the UK as Ian reports.

**GWYNEDD - Llyn Peninsular.** Late last year, the Llyn ANOB Unit of the Gwynedd Council started a pilot project to restore the milestones on the B4415 between Efail Newydd and its junction with the B4413 at Nanhoron to the west of Pwllheli. This is a six mile stretch of road but boasts 12 miles stone! In late 2004 I had investigated this stretch of road as the current OS maps show milestones but at odd intervals. I have a first edition 1:25000 map of the area showing one as 'old milestone'. On investigation of the 'old milestone' – some excavation found the milestone buried in the roadside bank. It was not of the usual slate slab type so prevalent in the old historic county of Caernarfonshire – it was of stone, round topped with just the initial letter and a figure representing the mileage. I found the rest of the milestone of this series along this route plus a number of others further on! The other milestones on this route were of the slate slab type but why two sets half a mile apart? The stone ones date from a much earlier date and were measured along a shorter route, now a narrow lane from



Ian Jolly (left) and Bleddyn Jones with one of the restored stone milestones. Pwllheli 4 S (m) 7

Pwllheli. The slate slab ones were measured from Pwllheli along a road built in the late 1800's which took a longer route. Gwynedd Council recovered all the slate milestones and those with little or no damage were restored with lettering in white. Three of the slate milestones had been damaged by flail type grass cutters – brand new replacements were made. These perfect replicas, manufactured by Hefin monumental masons in Pwllheli, were reinstalled in exactly the original positions with the damaged originals behind! All the stone milestones were dug out to clear the area around them and the lettering repainted by Bleddyn Jones, Head of

the ANOB Unit and myself during June. Work has now started by Gwynedd, restoring more of the slate milestones whilst I have been restoring the other stone milestone on the Llyn Peninsular. We are still finding even more of the old stone milestones on routes that we didn't know had stones!

**CONWY County.** I noticed during late July that an early milestone on the B5427 had been badly damaged by a grass cutter. These milestones are the oldest and longest series of early milestones in North Wales. This was the old London – Holyhead road between Pentrefoelas (on the A5) and Llanrwst prior to the opening of the turnpike road (now the A5) between Pentrefoelas via Betwsycoed to Capel Curig and on to Llandegai (Bangor) in 1804. I sent an email to Conway County Borough Council's Highways Department. I received a swift response from Mr. Elwyn Williams, Divisional Engineer for the south the county whose 'patch' it was in. He arranged a meeting with himself and his three Highways Inspectors. Mr. Williams has agreed to do what he can within his budget and was happy for me to undertake some clearing/restoration (repainting lettering). Then it is hoped that we can get local Community Councils, etc to 'adopt a Milestone'. After the meeting we then went along the route to examine each of the milestones on the route. Those liable to damage by grass cutting are to have the area around them cleared and a sheet put down covered by stone chipping to help reduce undergrowth in the future. One milestone on the steep hill out of Llanrwst is right up against the edge of the tarmac on the uphill side and can't be moved back because of the steep bank. It is to have two black and white posts installed on the downhill side to deter traffic coming to close to it. It had already been knocked towards the uphill direction plus shows sign of being scraped by passing vehicles. Work has already started on the clearing/restoration. Well done to Conwy Council for their fast response and co-operation



Milestone on steep hill to be protected by two bollards downhill. Imagine the London-bound stagecoach struggling up this mile long steep hill! (21 Dec 2004)

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## WHEN THINGS GO WRONG or how not to do it

Not every restoration or renovation is a success...

Fortunately most repair, restoration or renovation projects come to a happy and successful conclusion but things sometimes go wrong. Below are examples covering a milepost, a fingerpost and boundary

stones. All three had Milestone Society member's involvement (before, during or after) but what went wrong was not their doing. Luckily corrective measures are being planned or already activated.

## A Tale of Woe from Robert Caldicott, Warwickshire.

This is a story of how what we thought had been a triumph turned into a disappointment, particularly for me, whose first restoration effort it had been.

The story starts with my then new daily commute along the old A41 Banbury to Warwick road, turning off at Gaydon to join the M40. At Gaydon I had seen a cast-iron milepost just east of the village on what had become a very busy connector to the M40. Ford Motor Co. had just moved Aston Martin and Land Rover to the former airfield site at Gaydon, and the consequent rise in traffic was posing a serious threat to road safety at the junction.

One day, signs went up announcing that a new roundabout was to be built. As the milepost was not very far from the construction site I contacted the road unit at Warwickshire County Council and asked politely if the milepost could be included in the contract, cleaned and restored, and moved to a safe position a little further from the road's edge.

There was a slight sucking of teeth, but they asked me to 'phone back in a week or two. When I did there was good news. They had agreed. There then passed a period of several weeks while the roundabout was constructed, ending in the making good and landscaping, in which the milepost job was to be included. Finally, I had a call from the leader of the construction team, asking if I wanted to see the removal of the post for cleaning and restoration. I duly attended on Saturday 13 March 2004 and took photographs. The post was then taken to a company at Over Whiteacre, east of Birmingham, for the cleaning and restoration process. I visited them on Wednesday 6 April to see the cleaning part of the process and left them with a copy of Alan Rosevear's Care and Maintenance document. Two days later I was told that the restoration was completed, using anti-corrosion grey primer and white paint and black lettering as original. The post was to be replaced a few yards to the west of its original position and further back from the edge of the road.

All this seemed absolutely hunky dory, and the local press reported the unveiling, with Mike Buxton in attendance from the Milestone Society.

My journeys to work were now attended by a proud moment as I passed the restored Gaydon milepost clearly displaying its information for all passers-by.

Unfortunately happy days were soon over. On the June 2, barely a six weeks after its re-instatement I had an email from Mervyn Benford saying he had been to see it to take a photograph and "... I was amazed to see it already rusting quite significantly".

A visit revealed that sure enough, there were rusty marks in places, especially the top edge. I telephoned my contacts at Warwickshire CC, and was referred eventually to the Surveyor. He agreed that the post needed attention and promised to deal with it when funds allowed.

Since then I have followed the story up, and I am pleased to say persistence may be paying off. I hope that Milestone Society travelers stopping off at J13 to check on the Gaydon Post may have a pleasant surprise before too long.

## An Essex Fingerpost Gone Wrong by John V Nicholls.

On the west side of the B1007 in the village of Stock (between Billericay and Chelmsford) stands a cast iron fingerpost made some time between 1921 and 1926 by Maldon Iron Works of Maldon, Essex. The exact date is unknown as no Maldon Iron Works order books remain prior to 1926. Made to the MoT recommendations of 1921 it has four seven-inch arms and a roundel parish plate finial with the legend PARISH OF / BUTTSBURY. Boundary changes now put the post firmly in the parish of Stock.

The post did its job with little change, except to take on the 1933 banded livery to its pillar, until 1940 when its arms and finial were removed in case of invasion. It is not known when the parts were replaced although photographic evidence shows other posts were back in position by early 1944. **[When were the 1940 regulations lifted?]**

In 2000 a vehicle struck the post breaking the 'WICKFORD 6' arm. It was repaired using a pair of plates to refit the broken part back on the stub – a cheap repair often seen on cast iron parts. The cost was £287.88.

Early in 2005 there was another vehicle strike. Once again the 'WICKFORD 6' was broken off along with the 'CHELMSFORD 6 B1007' arm. The broken off parts had gone missing, probably stolen, so two new arm extensions were fabricated from back to back steel plates and fitted to the stubs. The cost this time was £1,169.13. But this is where things went wrong and errors were quickly noticed and reported to the parish council. Instead of using the original style of lettering a form of sans serif was used. The change stuck out like the proverbial sore thumb.

The only thing to do was have yet another pair of arms made and the contract was given to Andy Nichols of Boreham Forge, near Chelmsford. It was here that the Milestone Society became involved. Andy was keen to get every detail of the new arms correct and after finding me via my website he contacted me. And so I became the 'official' advisor on the contract. I was able to supply photos of the post prior to the parts going missing, advise where tracings from other posts could be taken to replicate the missing lettering and generally assist. Wooden patterns were made up and sent to Finch Seaman's foundry in Braintree from which the sand moulds were made. I was able to witness the pouring of the iron on 17 July. The remaining parts of the post were taken down 28 July and mated to the new arms. At the time of writing painting of the parts was taking place prior to reassembly.

I persuaded the Stock Parish Council to have the post restored back to its 1933 livery with black and white banded pillar and 'B' class road numbers (white on a black background).

## A 'Renovation' Goes Wrong in Devon by Tim Jenkinson.

Occasionally the restoration of a stone does not go according to plan. A case in point is the repainting of two historic boundary stones at Sungate in Mannamead Road, Plymouth. They had their inscriptions renewed some time in October 2005 by a mystery person. The two markers, which are set low down in a wall either side of a granite cross head form a well known landmark in the area and are inscribed 'Tything of / Weston / Peverell' and 'Tything / of / Compton / Gifford' respectively. A 'tything' once signified ten households within a parish and there are other stones within the Plymouth boundary bearing this legend.

Unfortunately the amateur renovator mistakenly painted over the word 'Tything' on both stones with the completely erroneous 'Plymouth'. As if to add insult to injury the city's name on the left-hand stone is hopelessly incorrect, spelt out with an ugly 'Plythmouth' scrawled across its face. So poor is the 'renovation' that it is tantamount to vandalism.



Plymouth City Council has been contacted with a request to remove the offending 'graffiti' but as at July 2006 there had been no response. **[A familiar story? Ed.]** When the council eventually get around to reviewing the situation it might be easier to paint both of the stones all over white and then pick out the legend in black, possibly in the same way as they appeared in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.



# BOUNDARY MARKERS...

by John V Nicholls

Boundary markers found their way into the Milestone Society newsletter No. 8 with a query from Michael Knight (Bedfordshire) about a triangular concrete marker with WD / BS on it at nearby Kempston Barracks. Answers appeared in No. 9 and some further illustrated notes in issue No. 10. The response to Michael's query shows that there is an interest within the Milestone Society and this was reinforced when Norman Lavendar found the "Old Observatory" stones (see Newsletter 11, p.8). Norman joined the Society once he realised that there was an organisation that cared about this aspect of heritage. Maybe now is the time to expand the interest.

If you thought that locating lost milestones was a difficult and time-consuming task then you will need to be prepared to go that one step further to seek out elusive boundary markers. Access to many boundary markers will probably be the greatest pitfall because frequently they are away from convenient roadsides or other places open to public gaze.

The great and the small: boundaries range from national level down through county, district and parish. Virtually all at some time had markers of some type along their edges to indicate their limits. Property boundary markers are to be found just about anywhere although many will be classed as obsolete. Of those still valid are those indicating the limits of Crown property, notably the War Department (WD, now MOD, Ministry of Defence), HM Prisons, etc as well as private ownership sites. County Highways still erect new boundary posts along roadside verges although these are frequently just precast concrete items with common legends such as "HIGHWAYS BOUNDARY". Some do not have a very long life when arable farmers gradually encroach upon wide verges.

Boundary markers are found in an almost infinite number of forms and materials, both natural and man-made. Likewise the forms of legends, where applicable, can vary from the most basic to highly informative. Deciding what will be recorded and added to the Milestone Society database will be open to some controversy and debate so certain ground rules will need to be applied.

One of the most common natural features in the landscape used as boundary markers, and certainly the oldest, are hill tops or prominent rocks. Hill tops should be disregarded in any survey unless a later man-made marker has been placed at the summit to confirm its identity as a boundary. This will not include Ordnance Survey trig pillars as they certainly fall outside the scope of the Society's objectives and covered by other organisations. Where isolated rocks occur and are used as boundary markers their significance is frequently reinforced by the addition of an engraved legend. Many good examples of this type of marker are to be found on Dartmoor but no doubt also in other locations where naturally occurring stone outcrops abound. Refer to "A Field Guide to the Boundary Markers on and around Dartmoor" by Dave Brewer (Devon Books 1986. ISBN 0 86114-786-3)

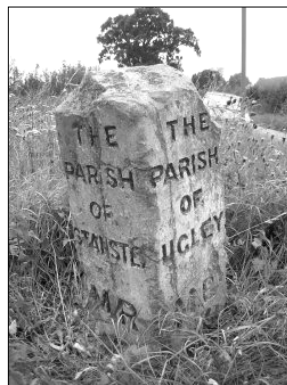
Organic natural features (although in most cases influenced directly by man) used as boundary markers are usually trees. Anyone studying old large scale Ordnance Survey maps (six inches and twenty-five inches to the mile) will be familiar with trees as boundary markers. Where parish boundaries pass through densely wooded areas (as in Epping Forest, Essex) whole lines of trees are used as boundary markers. Even today the odd tree can still appear on the 25,000 scale O.S. Explorer maps. For example, west of the village of Colne Engaine in Essex the word Oak appears in the middle of a field. A visit to the position revealed an oak tree standing alone in the middle of a field which marks a bend on the parish boundary. The depiction of existing boundary markers on O.S. small scale (50,000 Landranger and 25,000 Explorer) maps is rather random and where shown is annotated BS or BP. As with milestones, the non-depiction on a map does not mean that a particular marker does not exist. If you have access to the Internet it is recommended that you check out the OS 1880s six-inch mapping at [www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk) for almost complete coverage of

England. Main libraries and certainly county record offices also have selections of six-inch and 25-inch large scale OS mapping where you can check out those elusive markers.

As in the case of milestones, man-made boundary markers come in an almost overwhelming variety, both in materials and in design. Stone, metal and concrete are commonplace but wooden examples by their organic nature are increasingly rare. Stone would have been the earliest medium, either as a convenient natural rock inscribed and placed in position or later dressed stone suitably inscribed. (Do some guide stoops mark boundaries as well as show the way?) Care must be taken not to confuse worn dressed stone boundary markers with milestones as they can bear an uncanny resemblance to one another. Metal markers usually in cast iron appeared in the 19C but by the early 20C the cheapness and ease of manufacture led to the use of concrete, a medium still used today.

Stone markers frequently have the appearance of milestones and

the similarity might be that the suppliers of the stone blanks also produced milestones. Square and rectangular in section with flat or rounded tops are to be seen but there are other variations. In Essex, alongside the former A11 (now the B1383) between Stansted Mountfitchet and Littlebury, is a series of five parish boundary stones with a triangular section. Four are shown on the Explorer map although one situated very close to the road near Saffron Walden has been decapitated



Old cast iron markers can still be found but many may have been lost to theft or roadside examples swept away during highway improvements. One type found by the author are narrow posts marking the boundaries of Cheshire. An example still in place can be seen on a minor road north-east of Worthenbury with Flintshire down one side and Cheshire on the other. Chris Marcus found another of the same design marking the Stockport and Cheshire boundary.



Three iron boundary posts in Stockport. The first two should read 'MANOR AND BARONY OF STOCKPORT' but the painter probably needed a smaller brush for the small lettering. The Stockport/Cheshire boundary post is of a type seen elsewhere around the Cheshire borders and was cast by Clarke & Co.

All roads leading out of Maldon Borough in Essex at one time had slender round section cast iron boundary posts made by Maldon Iron Works but all had a common E.C.C. BOUNDARY POST legend and the stepped rectangular makers mark.

Familiar to many are the London coal tax posts. In the 1970s some 200 of five different types still survived. The cast iron pillar



types seen alongside roads are the most familiar but stone posts were used by canals and cast iron pillars by railways.

County, town and village signs by the roadside could also be regarded as boundary markers but often these are merely placed at convenient positions rather than on exact boundaries. Nevertheless, many are historically interesting. Norfolk still has a number of cast

iron village entry signs to the 1921 MOT design. Made of cast iron they were manufactured by the Royal Label Factory. In Taversham, the home village of Carol Haines, one of such signs was lately taken down but it is going to be retained by the village, repaired and put on permanent display.

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## CASTING A NEW 'BRADLEY' STONE

Terry Keegan

In the early 1930's Worcestershire Highways decided to place a number of missing and damaged milestones with an entirely new design made out of reinforced concrete. Each was provided with two cast iron plates – one giving the road classification and a much larger one giving the distances between the nearest towns either side of the milestone. The Deputy Surveyor at the time was Harold Brooke-Bradley. It is believed that he designed the new 'stones' and they have become known as Bradley stones.



*Terry Keegan mixing up the concrete under supervision.*

There were in the order of 100 of these erected by the Worcestershire roadsides in the 1930's and although they were returned to the highway depots during the war, most were replaced at the end of hostilities. Many have since been lost through neglect, road widening schemes and traffic accidents.

The Worcestershire Group of the Society discovered a

Bradley stone that had been broken outside the Feckenham depot of National Grid Transco and letter to that company resulted in a grant to the Society of £1,000 towards milestone conservation. A quote for a replacement stone from a local concrete company came in at well over £1,500. The Worcestershire Group were extremely fortunate that the husband of one of their members had worked in the concreting industry and knew how to set about the task of creating a mould in which to make a replacement stone. His ingenious design meant that, if necessary, any number of stones could be cast as the mould could be re-assembled after each casting. The newly cast stone, produced at a



*The first casting with the damaged plates fixed.*

fraction of the cost of the outside quotation and weighing around five hundredweight, was transported from the member's garden by the local highways department and erected near the site of the original stone. As both the plates had suffered damage, there are plans by the group to have new ones cast.

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## Some final musings from the editor

And so we approach the end of **ON THE GROUND 3**. Any errors or omissions are down to me as editor but in my defence I was also going through a steep learning curve like my predecessors. I did get carried away with my enthusiasm but luckily permission was granted to increase the pages from 16 to 20. Even so, a lot has had to await another day. I hope that the content has gone some way in conveying how well the Milestone Society, directly or indirectly, is achieving its objectives in the recording, conservation, preservation and restoration of our roadside heritage. A lot has happened in the first five years but there is still a long way to go and a high priority is the need to get better contact with county highways needs to be sought. Many counties still lack coordinators leading to grey areas for feedback and information. Scotland is an area that needs to be opened up but low membership north of the border means little 'on the ground' work is carried out.

Society members who find they are unable to be active 'in the field' may still have a part to play. They might be carrying out researches into turnpike history or carrying out map

studies from which very valuable information can be gleaned. Contribute those findings to Carol Haines for inclusion in the half-yearly newsletter even if only snippets. It all adds to the overall story. Below are a couple of ideas inviting your participation.

During recent phone calls with Ian Jolly (North Wales) he mentioned a milestone located at SH 7627 4371 along the B4407 and he wondered if it was the highest at 1560 feet above sea level. It might be the highest in Wales but the bobbin mileposts near 'The Cat and Fiddle' pub on the Macclesfield to Buxton road are certainly higher at over 1600 feet. So the question is where are the highest milestones or mileposts in England, Wales and Scotland?

And on the same lines Ian asks where is the most remote (furthest from a metalled road) milestone to be found. He has sent a photo of one 6.75 miles from a road but has kept its location under his hat. The only clue he gives is that it appears on an 1840 OS map. So where is it and is there another more remote?



Ian Jolly, North Wales coordinator, restoring milestone P(wllheli) 2 / S(arn) 9 out on the Llyn Peninsula.

Below: Ian produced the Milestone Society logo in Welsh.

