



Saddleworth White Rose Society in the County of York

Newsletter 51

Summer 2011

Yorkshire Day 2011

The event will begin at 11 a.m. on 31st July at the Saddleworth Museum, Uppermill with an introduction by the SWRS Chairman Mr Geoff Bayley. This will be followed by words of welcome from the Saddleworth Council Chairman Cllr Bill Cullen and Saddleworth MP Mrs Debbie Abrahams. A Saddleworth Band will play in the gardens until the Yorkshire Declaration of Integrity is read by Mr Gilbert Symes at 11.36 a.m. The reading moves forward one minute each year in recognition of the first recorded mention of the County of York in 775 AD. The procession led by the Band, Saddleworth Branch Royal British Legion, plus the local dignitaries, will proceed towards the village square and then on into the field and disperse.

As a country fair there will be much of rural interest to everyone, particularly the local community. A demonstration of sheep shearing for example, once vitally important to the local woollen industry of this part of Yorkshire and of course dry stone walling which properly done, not only contained the stock but provided a great deal of shelter and protection from our severe winters and unpredictable weather. A skill which the joint boro council would do well to get to understand properly. Whilst the appearance of their wall repairs is much improved and to be commended in many respects, they apparently still need to understand the purpose and benefits of stone foundations as opposed to concrete ones and that no new materials should ever be needed to repair a dry stone wall. However, evidence of the improvement in the walls was acknowledged when Cllr Mike Buckley, boro "Heritage Officer" Saddleworth councillor and SWRS committee member, travelled down to Westminster to receive the "Green Apple" award on behalf of the boro council. A very deserving representative, Mike has gone to great lengths to try to ensure these walls are being rebuilt in the traditional style. The award was in the gold category, the highest category and recognises heritage and environmental achievement.

Staying with agriculture there are Highland cattle from a fold based in Diggle, and poultry, the latter being

laying hens brought into free range by Mrs Cockayne after spending most of their lives so far, in battery cages. What a way to keep animals with similar intelligence levels to that of dogs. In their new environment they continue to lay well. Llamas, used for trekking not riding will also be on view. Mrs McNeeney will have a honey stall, selling pure Greenfield Honey from the chemical free wild flowers of Warlow in the Chew Valley, she will also be a source of information regarding bee keeping and honey production.

At the Owl Trust stand, advice will be available regarding encouraging owls to nest in your garden if this seems a suitable location. In which case assistance will be given in obtaining and siting nest boxes. An RSPB stand will give information on their plans for wildlife at Dovestone and encouraging many native species to return to suitable nesting area sites.

Stands for both pet rescue and specifically ferret rescue should be of interest to many. Mrs Edna Bottomley of Dobcross will man the stand on behalf of Windyways Trust Animal Sanctuary, Macclesfield. Cocoanut, Judith Longden's now retired Donkey, will be on view on the stand representing "The Brooke". This worthy organisation supplies veterinary care to third world Equines and teaches their owners how to treat them and harness them correctly, about weight distribution, rest periods and particularly avoiding stress through over working them.

For those with an interest in horticulture, the Marsden Moor National Trust will have a plant stall as will J & J Cockayne Nurseries of Rainford, Lancashire.

John Stevenson, Manns Wharf Catering, will have a food stall and there will be a Hog Roast. Cups of coffee soft drinks and Yorkshire Tea, the latter kindly donated by Taylors of Harrogate will be available from the Canal Boat and the White Rose stall, the latter also selling Saddleworth/Yorkshire sweatshirts, ties, badges, cuff link, tie pins, ear rings etc.

For those with a sweet tooth there will be a chocolate stall by Coco Moyo from Backridge Farm who also host "chocolate tasting parties". Grandpa Green's ice cream and Jennie Lancashire's strawberry and cream stall, both of whom use only Saddleworth milk, will also have stalls.

Near to the White Rose stall Angela Sykes will again have a stall featuring the Yorkshire Queen of Song, Mrs Sunderland. The Mrs Sunderland Music Festival

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Saddleworth, A Yorkshire Cricketing District

By Michael Pulford

It was worth it! The long, cold sojourn over the moors was worth it, simply to come across the green and splendid valley of Yorkshire stone villages, brass bands and cricket grounds, yet on the Western slopes of the Pennines! Yes I came down as if into Lancashire but found a Yorkshire community.

Yet curiously some of the settlements names remind me of Trumpton fire brigade members, Denshaw, Delph, Diggle and Dobcross. Uppermill is the best known of the villages whilst Greenfield has a railway station on the Leeds to Manchester railway line. Austerlands and Springhead border Oldham and I fancy I can see the Borough Civic Centre in Oldham from the county boundary! It is after all just over two miles away! Saddleworth is the name of the district and is not a town or a village.

This is a part of Yorkshire on the other side of the Pennines, over and beyond Marsden and the Colne Valley bordering and yes overlooking Lancashire. It has always been a part of the West Riding and despite being administered by the shared OMB Council, policed by the Greater Manchester constabulary, watered by the North West water authority and it's close proximity to Lancashire, Saddleworth clings stubbornly to it's Yorkshire roots and identity. It's road signs welcoming motorists to the district feature the white rose, the White Rose Society are erecting more signs showing the true county boundary, the Saddleworth Morris men perform Yorkshire longsword dances, the local secondary school Saddleworth School has the white rose as it's emblem –as does the Saddleworth Running Club, both Uppermill and Diggle football clubs play in the Huddersfield League, whilst there is a Saddleworth White Rose Society which has an annual parade on Yorkshire Day! It's staple industry was wool and not cotton as in neighbouring Oldham. The stone buildings too are different to Oldham's predominantly red brick housing.

I think that if I find a telephone directory it will be full of Ackroyds, Beaumonts, Haighs, Hirsts, Illingworths, Rhodeses, Sutcliffes and even Thewlises!

What of cricket you might say. Well there is a thriving Saddleworth Cricket League and it's

secretary gives his address as Saddleworth, Yorkshire whilst the Delph & Dobcross team play in the Huddersfield League. The Saddleworth Cricket League was founded in 1878 and though it's members extend beyond Saddleworth into Lancashire and Cheshire there are still five Saddleworth clubs playing in it, all of whom were founder members, Uppermill, Friarmere, Greenfield, Austerlands and Saddleworth. A sixth founder member is Delph and Dobcross.

Two Saddleworth cricketers have represented Yorkshire, Lees Whitehead an all rounder and excellent fieldsman from Delph played in the eighteen nineties and at the turn of the century. Lord Hawke valued him highly as a team man. He was often twelfth man and occasionally played in the legendary side of 1900 to 1902. Another Whitehead, but no relation, John from Uppermill, trailed with Lancashire but played for Yorkshire as a fast bowler in the forties and early fifties before joining Worcestershire.

The most influential local cricketing man must have been John Byrom a mill owner who formed Friarmere Cricket Club. He played a handful of matches for Yorkshire in 1874 but invested much of his time and money into Friarmere CC, situated near Delph. According to Tony Woodhouse in his Who's Who of Yorkshire Cricketers Byrom built the pavilion and also a row of twelve cottages for his cricketers at West View by the ground. He was treated suspiciously by his rival clubs as he enticed men for his mill and cricket team from neighbouring towns even as far away as Elland. However, his role in the Yorkshire CCC is enormous as both George Hirst and Wilfred Rhodes were quoted in the Rev R S Holmes History of Yorkshire Cricket as saying Byrom brought them to the attention of the Yorkshire CCC committee after seeing them play in the local Lumb Cup.

If you look on the Saddleworth League website and find Friarmere under member clubs there is a photo featuring a ground with a two story pavilion and a row of stone cottages facing it. They are very likely Byrom's buildings still standing today! Unless the snow closes in on me I will venture there and investigate. Byrom incidentally is buried at the local St Thomas' Church, another place to visit. Curiously, a teenage Maurice Leyland played his first league cricket for a Saddleworth League club, Moorside, prior to the Great War whilst his father was groundsman there. However, Moorside are situated just outside Saddleworth boundary in

Oldham. Don't fret Maurice, apparently christened Morris, he was born in Harrogate. Hence the Leyland Gates at Harrogate CC. The league has always featured professionals including notable names, Percy Holmes, Johnny Wardle, Sonny Ramadhin, Gary Sobers and Frank Worrell! This is truly a cricketing centre.

This walk has exhausted me and there is so much to tell. I am so captivated by the place that if I can find room at the inn I will call my family and if they can remember me, I will invite them to join me here for Christmas. Please be patient while I rest and then file a second report from this marvellous piece of Yorkshire overlooking Lancs.



Friarmere Cricket ground, showing pavilion and West View.

The conclusion of this article is as a result of the kind help and advice of two stalwart members of Friarmere Cricket Club, Roderick Ashley and John Morris.

Travelling along the A672 Halifax/Oldham Road, in the direction of Oldham, from a point just before the real Lancs/Yorks boundary at Grains Bar (not the Gtr Man/Calderdale boundary at Windy Hill) and look down the valley towards Delph, amongst the reed infested rough pasture land of the valley you will spot a brilliant green, well manicured field. This is Friarmere Cricket ground, home of one of the Saddleworth League teams, which they joined in 1899 The ground, pavilion and row of houses named West View were all built by John Lewis Byrom, the owner of Slack Cote Mill, once a thriving woollen mill during the heyday of the West Riding's woollen industry until 1952.

John Lewis Byrom a former Yorkshire player of 1874 was a real cricket enthusiast and had the means and determination to establish a successful cricket club and team at Friarmere. The row of

houses at West View being made available to members of the team, the groundsman and their families. He would advertise for example, for a woollen finisher who was a good left hand bowler, or other attributes required of a team member.

Friarmere won the Saddleworth League ten times by 1890 and then joined the Huddersfield League where they won the Sykes Cup and the League title on three occasions each.

John Lewis Byrom erected the present pavilion around 1881 on condition that no alcohol was served on the premises, him being a staunch teetotaler. He bore all the costs of the cricket club and paid the professional. In 1925 he recruited the services of Harry Morris who answered an advertisement for a gardener but had been the professional for Crompton. Byrom's influence on the team was immense until his death around 1931.

In 1933 Friarmere returned to the Saddleworth League finishing runners up and in 1934 and 1937 won the league title. Post war success included league titles in 1949 and 1970.

After the war the Byrom family continued to support the cricket club by allowance of free use of the ground and pavilion and also they still owned and operated Slack Cote Mills.

A bombshell rocked the club in 1980 when the New Tame Estate, which included the cricket ground, was to be put up for sale by auction Following club membership and registration the Byrom family agreed to a sale of the club and land by private treaty providing that completion took place prior to the auction date some 7 weeks hence.

There followed a passionate rally call from the membership to raise the funds. Remarkably there was early support from the local authority in the form of a short term loan and a small grant from the Sports Council. The bulk of the money however, was raised by the local community and much of the credit rested with the villagers of Delph and Denshaw who supported the club beyond the members expectations. The funds were raised in time thus securing the clubs future.

Cricket continues to be enjoyed on this ground under the continuing support of the present members who include a certain John Morris, groundsman and grandson of Harry.

The photograph below was taken on Friday 22nd April 2011 featuring Friarmere's home game against top of the league Bamford Fieldhouse.



Friarmere bowling against Bamford Fieldhouse
No wickets had fallen at this stage. Bamford went on to a huge score of over 300 and one of their openers Gary Hodnett, Bamfords professional and former Gloucester player went on to score over 200 runs.

Final score Bamford Fieldhouse 320 – 7 (G Hodnett 200 and a car windscreen) Friarmere 130 (A Ur-Rehman 53)

Yorkshire Day continued

established in 1889 is now the longest running festival in the UK. The theme for this year will be the family history of Mrs Sunderland. Items of interest to those researching their Yorkshire Ancestors will be featured, and based on the extensive resources of the Meltham based, Huddersfield Family History Society.

From the Church Inn, a Coconut Shy and a Home Made stall.

For the younger ones a climbing wall, a bouncy castle, shove halfpenny, pig race and face painting by Richard Kershaw, a special needs teacher from Marsden. The Towpath Bookshop will be selling second hand books and knitwear consisting of bags, hats etc. and the Jean FitzHugh's stall will feature bottle-top craft and photographs depicting Saddleworth views.

From Pieces of Paradise, Naomi, of High Street, Uppermill will be reading Tarrot and Angel cards. She also holds meditation classes.

For allotment enthusiasts the small and somewhat isolated community of Hey Top, Bradbury Lane, Greenfield, on

the slopes of Alfin, have banded together to reclaim the once highly productive, former allotments, of the Greenfield Mill workers, during past thriving days of

high quality tissue production by that company. They are having a stall on Yorkshire day to promote the idea of community co-operation and Amanda, Garry and Ella, three members of the group are, like the rest of the group working, with the intention of promoting a feeling of community spirit between the residents and to improve the visual impact of and pride in, their area. The allotment area totalling about 200ydsX200yds will be organised as one communal unit. Trails have been carried out to ascertain whether or not some things may prove difficult to grow at such an altitude but so far everything trailed has been successful. Any surplus produce at the moment will be marketed through car boot sales and local school plant sales. However, long term, it is intended that surpluses may be marketed through the Farmers Market and small local shops.

The Samantha James Trust from Delph, for Likieamia sufferers, will have a stall.

Kath and John Angove will exhibit Home Safety advice and information and have a stall selling home grown vegetables to raise funds for this

Saddleworth Branch YCWA meetings at the Methodist Hall, Uppermill 7.30pm

29th June Classique Clothes Party by Barbara Jones.
 27th Jul African Jewelry presented by Bernie Slater. **31st YORKSHIRE DAY** Aug

NO MEETING

28th Sep Co-op Singers.

26th Oct A literary talk by an author

30th Nov Cake Decorating by Marlane.

Dec NO MEETING

Saddleworth Geography

In 1974 when the disastrous LGA 72 was implemented, contrary to what some still seem to believe, Saddleworth was not moved out of the West Riding, nor was the West Riding abolished, or it's boundaries moved or affected in any way. The administration of local government was simply separated from the Traditional Counties, leaving them otherwise intact. Only the West Riding Council was abolished and the local government administration of Saddleworth transferred to the Greater Manchester administrative council (mis-leadingly called an administrative county). After a mere 14 years this additional tier of authority was found to be unnecessary and the council but not the county abolished and was to be known as a ceremonial county. The administration of Saddleworth was then passed onto the OMB Council but Saddleworth still remains a part of the West Riding. Saddleworth can of course also claim it's place as a part of West Yorkshire. The fact that some parts of this area along with some bits of Lancashire are known as the West Yorkshire Ceremonial County, does not affect the geography of Saddleworth.