



Saddleworth White Rose Society

In the County of York

Newsletter No 6 April 2000

Why not use your TRUE address

Although Saddleworth is a part of Oldham Metropolitan Borough and in fact makes up 53% of the borough, It is NOT a part of Oldham and it is NOT in Lancashire. With the introduction of the Postcode System, it became unnecessary to include 'near Oldham, Lancashire' in Saddleworth addresses, since then many of us have reverted to our true address and proudly proclaim Saddleworth's Yorkshire identity. So why not join us? All you need to do is use your true address:-

**House Name,
House Number and Street,
Village,
SADDLEWORTH,
YORKSHIRE, POSTCODE.**

The postcode must of course be used on all mail. We have also found that the utility companies, banks, credit card companies, building societies, insurance companies and many others are quite happy to alter their computer software to the true address, particularly if a hint is given that custom may be withdrawn if this request wasn't complied with.

This is only a small gesture, but it is a big step in helping to preserve the separate identity of Saddleworth and its historic place in the County of Yorkshire .

What is needed in the long term to remove this confusion, is for Saddleworth to be designated a Post Town in its own right with its own unique postcode. That way, Saddleworth and Yorkshire would automatically be included in our addresses. The Saddleworth White Rose Society is currently working on this. We hope to gain the support of other Saddleworth organisations so that, together, we can put some pressure on Royal Mail to make this change.

You could also help promote the White Rose Society by passing this newsletter onto a non member and by asking them to join us in the crusade. They can easily do this by filling in the attached form and sending it to the address shown at the top of this page.

Saddleworth Boundary Walk

Beating of the Bounds was an ancient custom carried out in the past to mark the boundaries of a town or parish, a group of parish officials and townspeople would walk along the boundaries noting marker stones, climbing over walls, setting down new markers where old ones had disappeared and sometimes even scaling roofs and wading through ponds. Children were central to the proceedings and some of the more extreme activities were intended no doubt to leave a permanent imprint in the memories of the younger members of the community as to where the boundaries lay. In larger parishes Beating of the Bounds would take place over several days and the custom was that the ceremony took place in Rogation week; that is the two or three days before Ascension Day.

The boundaries of Saddleworth are extensive, pass through some difficult moorland terrain, and are in places quite complicated. Historical records exist which show that they were sometimes in doubt and in need of definition; occasionally they were the subject of disputes. In the past, when a dispute arose, juries comprised of elderly local people were formed to adjudicate on the line of the actual boundary, particularly where it passed over moorland. There is no record of a Beating of the Bounds ceremony ever having been performed in Saddleworth but individual parts of the boundary were walked and marked out from time to time. In the 1970's Saddleworth Historical Society under the leadership of David Chadderton undertook to walk the whole boundary in one day.

The walk started at 4.30am on one of the longest days in June and a weary handful of walkers finished victoriously at 10.00pm. Not surprisingly this did not become an annual event but the feat was repeated on two or three subsequent occasions under David's leadership.

To revive this ancient ceremony, and to remind everyone that Saddleworth lies entirely within Yorkshire the Saddleworth White Rose Society plan to hold a boundary walk on the Bank Holiday weekend at the end of May. Unlike earlier marathons, the walk will be split over two days, with rather more modest goals for each day. Also the plan is to walk the County boundary not the whole of the Saddleworth boundary. Even so this is about two thirds of the total. The walk will take place on Saturday and Rogation Sunday the 27th and 28th May. The first day will be along the Lancashire/Yorkshire boundary from above Readycon Dean near Denshaw, past Cherry Clough, Crompton Moor, Grains Bar and Strinesdale to Waterhead, then Austerlands, Hey Church, County End, Thornley, then Under Lane to Mossley and the River Tame near Wood End.

Here the Lancashire/Yorkshire boundary gives way to the Yorkshire/Cheshire boundary and we will finish the first day by walking along the Yorkshire/Cheshire boundary past Roaches Lock to the point where Shadworth Lane (sometimes called Shadows Lane) meets the River Tame near Royal George at Greenfield. The first day will be about 12 miles in all, and for the most part is an easy walk, over well defined footpaths.

The second day will be entirely along the Yorkshire/Cheshire Boundary, mostly over rough moorland. The route will start at the River Tame where the previous day's walk finished. We will proceed up Shadworth Lane to Noon Sun, then up the moor to Alphin and along the moor top, past Chew Reservoir to Black Chew Head, then to Howells Head and Cloudberry Knoll then leaving the County boundary and following the parish boundary, through the top of Holme Clough, to the finish on the A635 Holmfirth Road. The second day is for more experienced walkers and proper walking attire is essential.

We will vary the route depending on weather conditions but the object will be to stick as closely to the actual boundary as practicable. The second day will be about 8 miles. On the first day, we will be joined by the Friends of Real Lancashire. Who will help us mark the boundary between our two counties. Representatives from the Yorkshire Riding Society will also participate. On the Saturday at about 1.30 pm, a ceremony will also be held at Waterhead which will involve two well known pubs. Certificates will be presented to mark the fact that the Gardeners Arms is in Yorkshire and the Bull's Head next door is in Lancashire. Look out for further details of this in the local press. We hope as many people as possible will take part in the event. It is planned to use the walk as an opportunity to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Charity. Sponsorship forms for the walk are available from Roy Bardsley (01457-878768). The walk will start on Saturday at the parking spot on the A672 near Windy Hill at 8.30 am. For further details contact Mike Buckley (01457-820015).

Sad Losses

We were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Trevor Rayner, a member originally from Delph, but living in Oldham at the time of this death. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Lil and all Trevor's many relatives and friends.

We are also very sad to record the death of member Mr Victor Edwards of White Spring Head Farm, Uppermill. Our condolences go to Victor's wife Marjorie and their son Winston.

The White Rose of Yorkshire now welcomes people to the Civic Hall at Uppermill. Having been incorporated into the decoration of the foyer, at the suggestion of the architect Mr John Barnes of Diggle, himself a refugee from the Red Rose County, but under the circumstances we will forgive him that. He took the shape of the rose from Saddleworth Parish Council's Chain of Office and the colouring and shading from the white rose, named Saddleworth to be launched by the Society later this year at the Saddleworth Show.

Dave Holland Clerk to the Parish Council said: "The white rose emblem in the foyer of the newly renovated Civic Hall is only part of the Parish Council's commitment to the use of the white rose which reinforces our ties with Yorkshire. The white rose forms the centre of the Councils logo as well as taking pride of place in the logo produced to celebrate our 25th anniversary (see below). It therefore goes out on all our correspondence, publications and certificates. The Council are fully aware of the depth of feeling that many local people have towards Saddleworth's roots and I know that they will continue to promote our continuing Yorkshire links.

Unofficial Guide To Saddleworth

A poem by the late H. B. Whitehead with thanks to Gilbert Symes

Gather round ye lords of wit,
Who on the District Council sit,
Lift up your heads ye future mayors,
So weighted down by state affairs,
And list' to what I have to tell,
About the folk who round you dwell,
The folk who farm, and weave, and spin,
And help to bring the dollars in.

The Greenfield men are more than good,
They fetch the coal and chop the wood,
And ev'ry morn 'tis good to see,
They make their wives a cup of tea;
Then off to work to earn their bread,
Each with a halo round his head,
They're all house-trained and live to please,
They are the Lord's anointed these.

As Little Russia Delph is known,
With an Iron Curtain of its own,
Behind it there the tribes all meet,
Whilst joss-sticks burn and tom-toms beat,
And by the Camp fire's lurid light,
Strange things are done at dark of night,
What they are, they do not tell,
The curtain keeps its secrets well.

The folk in lonely Denshaw Vale,
No longer gnash their teeth and wail,
For now at last they've got their wish,
A shop that sells them chips and fish;
With lovely fritters golden brown,
And something nice to wash them down,
Such roaring times they never knew,
Since "Donty" made his cur-dog stew.

Dobcrossers think their village grand,
Where all are members of the band,
And ev'ry child aged over three,
Is taught to blow the Double B;
And bandsmen practice for Belle Vue,
By playing up the "Nichor Broo" ,
While Delphers laugh and shout "What-o,
This is the land of Puff and Blow".

In Diggle dark., a place way back,
That lies far off the beaten track,
The passing years do nothing mean,
They think Victoria still is queen,
Where man knows nought but toil and sleep,
And mingles with the mountain sheep,
The only thrill 'twixt earth and sky,
When Hanson bus goes flashing by.

In Uppermill they're quite refined,
Of lofty brow and cultured mind,
With art discussed in Cooling's pub,
By members of the music club,
They prove quite clever in their chats,
By Sometimes talking through their hats;
They cover all from flints to books,
But not as much as St. Chad's rooks.

Grasscroft's the mecca of success,
Where live the folk of good address;
And though they're not of royal line,
Some think they draw it pretty fine,
'Tis there they dwell these lords of all,
The great elect, the Oxford drawl,
And yet sometimes you can detect,
Just a touch of dialect.

Put this away in your archives,
A simple record of their lives,
That those who come in future years,
May know their little hopes and fears,
And as they read it line by line,
Of how they lived in forty nine,
I'll vouch the wondering reader says,
"How I'd have loved those good old days".

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