



# Saddleworth White Rose Society

In the County of York

**Newsletter No 9 January 2001**

## **CHAIRMAN'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE**

Dear Members,

First of all, I would like to wish all of you a Happy New Year. This past year has seen our Society actively stating the fact that Saddleworth is in the West Riding of Yorkshire and we are pleased with the positive results that we have had. It is very obvious that there is a growing trend for Saddleworth people and local businesses, to use their "true address", using "Saddleworth, Yorkshire" and not "Oldham, Lancashire!" The more that the true address is used then the message will get across to the waverers and newcomers to Saddleworth. Our current membership stands at just over 160 members, as well as the Saddleworth Parish Council, but I know that there are many more residents of Saddleworth who share our aims and fully support the fact that "Saddleworth is in Yorkshire" and that it has never been anywhere else. During 2001, I would like to see our membership doubled by the time of our AGM in November and so I am going to issue a challenge to all of our current members. "THE 2001 CHALLENGE" is for every member to recruit at least one person as a new member of the SWRS. If we all do this, then "THE 2001 CHALLENGE" will have been achieved. If you are able to recruit more than one person then that will be even better because we will be able to really be a force to be reckoned within and around Saddleworth. We are going to back this membership drive up with posters around the villages but, at the end of the day, the best form of recruitment is by word of mouth. And that is where each of our members can actively play their part. We all know people who are probably just waiting to be asked. We have enclosed a membership application form in with this newsletter for you to use and more copies can be obtained from Roy Bardsley (Tel: 01457-878768) or myself, Chris Dronsfield (Tel:01457-874510) In a year that is probably going to see the various political parties canvassing for votes, in the General Election, I look forward to seeing the results of our SWRS members canvassing for new members and supporters.

Chris Dronsfield - Chairman - SWRS

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Speaking of membership, may we remind those members who have not yet renewed their membership that subscription renewals were due as from Monday 6 November 2000 for all except new members who joined after 30 April 2000. Husbands and wives, partners or groups may join for a joint fee of £5. This form of membership is of course available to any existing members who wish to change from individual membership to joint membership.

## **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The AGM, which was held in November 2000 at Delph Band Club, was a very enjoyable occasion. Commencing with the formal business, which included a speech by our new Chairman, Chris Dronsfield. In which he clearly expressed the views and aims of SWRS and left no one in doubt that Saddleworth is well and truly in the County of York. The young people of Delph Junior Band showed great promise, under the guidance of their Conductor/Trainer Debbie Dewsbury, with much appreciated performance and we wish them well in the future. After enjoying a Sop Supper, served so jovially by Bob Rogers, we were treated to a video of Saddleworth scenes by Dennis Allcock. Mike Buckley followed this with a slide show and competition to name various Saddleworth locations. Congratulations to Mary Rodgers who won the prize of the "Saddleworth and its People" book by Freda Millet. We wish to thank two of our members, Barry Stelfox and Gilbert Symes, for their excellent organisational ability in putting this event together.

## **THE "SADDLEWORTH WHITE ROSE" RAFFLE**

The winner of the first "rose raffle" was Mrs. G Garret, 149 Fir Tree Avenue, Fitton Hill, Oldham, Lancashire. Her winning ticket was no.41. Congratulations to Mrs. Garret. This draw took place at last year's Saddleworth Show. The second "rose raffle" has yet to be drawn.

## **A PROBLEM OF IDENTITY**

It would appear that not only does the Yorkshire part of the Oldham Metropolitan Borough have a problem regarding identity but so too do the smaller Lancashire part! According to a report in the "Friends of Real Lancashire" newsletter, a netball team from Oldham, Lancashire, was informed that they were not eligible to take part in the Lancashire County Netball Competition. Quite mistakenly, the netball authorities had assumed that because Oldham is in the Greater Manchester Administrative County then it cannot be in the County of Lancashire. As we very well know this is not the case, because Oldham is just as much in the County Palatine of Lancaster as Saddleworth is in the County of York. Fortunately, the FORL were on hand to clarify the situation, but it does go to show what a lot of misinformation there is about, regarding the true identity of the historical, geographical and traditional Counties.

## **AN APOLOGY FROM THE MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS**

An immediate apology was received from the news desk of the "MEN" when one of our members pointed out to them that, contrary to their article (Friday 17 June 2000), Uppermill Square is a Saddleworth beauty spot and not an Oldham beauty spot! It was made clear to the "MEN" that, although Saddleworth shares a Metropolitan Borough Council with Oldham and several other districts, Saddleworth is in fact a separate place with its own identity. They acknowledged their mistake and promised to make sure that this sort of thing does not happen again. So, members keep a look out and tell them, and any other newspapers/magazines, who make this sort of error. We have already lost too much of our independence - we must not lose our distinctive identity.

It would be really good if individual members complained to the newspapers and magazines (especially "Lancashire Life" who regularly refer to Saddleworth as being in Lancashire!) when errors are made regarding Saddleworth. The more complaints that editors receive, then the more likely that they will take steps to get it right in the future. Keep us posted on your efforts.

## **THE "WHITE ROSE OF YORK" COLLECTION**

The following items are now available through SWRS: -

- Yorkshire logo Polo Shirt £14.00
- Yorkshire logo Sweatshirt £16.00
- Yorkshire logo Round-neck T Shirt £10.00
- Yorkshire logo V-neck T Shirt £10.00
- Yorkshire logo Baseball Shirt £17.00
- Yorkshire logo Ties £9.50
- Silver Tie Pins £9.25
- Silver Cuff Links £22.95 (per.pair)

All of these items are in blue with the Yorkshire motif and white rose. There are also many other items of Yorkshire merchandise in the range. NB Sweatshirts and Polo Shirts may be ordered with a Saddleworth logo. However, to be viable, we need to have a minimum of 10 orders for individual sweatshirts/polo shirts bearing this Saddleworth logobefore sending the order off. Obviously, these orders may take some time to fulfill. This possible delay only applies to items bearing the Saddleworth logo.

## **LANCASHIRE DAY 2000**

On Saturday 25th November 2000, we joined with the "Friends of Real Lancashire" to celebrate their County Day. The event took place at the "King's Arms" at Grains Bar, on the Yorkshire/Lancashire boundary, and we were pleased to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Oldham Metropolitan Borough, Cllrs John and Philomena Dillon, along with the Chairman and Consort of Saddleworth Parish Council, Cllr Mrs. Betty Boon and Mrs. Mal Saxon. We received a very warm welcome from the owner of the "King's Arms" and an exchange of gifts between our two societies took place. We presented some Saddleworth lamb to the FORL and they presented us with some eccles cakes and black pudding. These gifts were then given to two Residential Homes on either side of the County border. The Mayor, in his speech, referred to the fact that he had not been aware that 53% of the Oldham Metropolitan Borough is actually in Yorkshire; and our own Saddleworth Parish Council Chairman spoke very clearly about Saddleworth's place within Yorkshire. After the Loyal Toast to HM The Queen, the Duke of Lancaster, the assembled company enjoyed a traditional Lancashire Hotpot lunch, which was enjoyed by all of us.

The event was a wonderful occasion and the owner and staff at the "King's Arms" really did us proud.

## WHO'S WHO IN THE SWRS

At the December 2000 SWRS Committee Meeting, the following were elected to hold office: -  
Chairman - Chris Dronsfield - "Pennine Croft", 1 Kent Close, Diggles, SADDLEWORTH, Yorkshire. OL3 5PN (Tel: 01457-874510) e-mail: chrisgracedronsfield@lineone.net  
Treasurer - Roy Bardsley - 52 Church Road, Uppermill, SADDLEWORTH, Yorkshire.OL3 6EJ (Tel: 01457-878768)

Joint Secretaries - Joan Bradbury & Liz Bardsley - c/o 52 Church Road, Uppermill.  
(The position of VICE-CHAIRMAN is currently vacant and will be filled during the course of the year.)

## ROAD SIGNS

As a Society, we are very concerned about the road signs on the roads that enter Saddleworth from the rest of Yorkshire. As a result of the erection of the Oldham Metropolitan Borough boundary signs being erected at the Stanedge cutting, on the "Isle of Skye" road and the "Nont Sarah's" road, and other roads leading into Saddleworth; this gives a false impression to travelers that Saddleworth is in Oldham. We are campaigning for the reinstatement of "Saddleworth" signs (including the white rose emblem) on all roads leading into Saddleworth. We would also like to see "Yorkshire" (or "West Riding of Yorkshire") signs erected on the roads leading into Saddleworth from Lancashire and Cheshire. Our local efforts are part of a larger nationwide campaign that is being carried out by societies similar to the SWRS.

We long to see these ridiculous local authority administrative area signs pulled down and replaced by the True County signs. Local Authority boundaries frequently change but the constant unchanging boundaries are the ancient, historic and geographical Counties that have been in existence for over 1000 years and have never been Abolished.

## A SADDLEWORTH TALE The Great White Hunter By Phil Clay

Some thirty odd years ago, I moved into No 1 Merlewood Avenue, Uppermill, with my wife and baby son. We had a reasonably large garden and it wasn't long before, with gusto, I took up a new hobby...vegetable gardening - digging up the rear lawn and planting a crop of peas and cabbage. I then sat back and waited for the time when I would relish the taste of homegrown organic food. As the crop developed, it was obvious that it wasn't going to be the "Garden of Eden" but at least it was there because of my hard labours. It was on a beautiful Sunday afternoon, after partaking of a delightful dinner, that I stretched contentedly and looked through the window and admired my "estate". After having dined on Yorkshire pudding, roast beef and two veg, I saw an unwelcome intruder...a very large, shifty-looking red-eyed white rabbit sitting in the middle of my peas devouring them one by one at an alarming rate. Being of a sporting nature, I was the proud owner of a twelve-bore double-barrel shotgun, which I kept on top of the wardrobe. After the initial shock of seeing the felon purloining my property, I leapt up the stairs two at a time, jumping over my wife and child halfway up. I grasped the gun, loaded it and, in what seemed about five seconds, I was stalking the prey. The rabbit, which was owned by the daughter of Harry Dunn, the local detective constable, was still munching away and was oblivious to the dangerous threat of the "Great White Hunter". There was a bang, a flash of flame, and "Lop Ears" departed from his mortal coil to find sweeter pastures in the sky. As all the doors in the avenue opened, spilling out the occupants all asking each other the reason for the loud bang, I quickly dropped my weapon among the peas and innocently joined in the debate. I suggested that the explosion was probably caused by a warning detonator that had been placed on the railway line because, in those days, the line ran along the back of the houses. The consensus of opinion was that the explanation was acceptable and they all returned to their armchairs, to continue their siesta, whilst I was able to retrieve my gun and scoop up the remains of the villain. As I furtively headed for the door, and safety from prying eyes, the voice said, "Did you get the little bugger then?" It was my next door neighbour who I had seen hiding behind the garden shed. There was no point in denying it, so I replied, "Yes, I did." My neighbour said, "Well, you should get a medal - it scooped all my wallflowers." The resultant rabbit stew, which was consumed the following day, was delicious; probably because the rabbit had fed on the neighbour's prize flowers and my vegetables.

On the Monday evening, after the feast, my wife attended a Coffee Evening, which was also attended by Mrs. Dunn. "You haven't seen our rabbit, Mary, it's gone missing?" she asked my wife. My wife replied, tongue in cheek, "No, I haven't", with an innocent look which would have melted butter whilst knowing that Lop Ears was even then being digested. The following day, I saw DC Dunn and told him to fly the flag at half-mast as a token of respect to Lop Ears as he had been duly tried, convicted and executed for stealing my prize crop. "Great," said Harry, "I was fed up with the over-sexed little sod. Can you do the same with the dog? It keeps sh—ing on everyone's doorstep." I, of course, declined to take this offer up and the dog enjoyed leaving its' trademark on yellow-stoned doorsteps for a few more years. As for my crop, the pea pods remained empty and the cabbage was infested with cabbage-root fly. I reverted to grass growing the following year!