

# **New Mills Local History Society**

## **Newsletter 35**



Providence Congregational Church, New Mills

Autumn 2005

## AUTUMN PROGRAMME 2005

All meetings are held in Sett Valley House,  
on the second Friday of the month, starting at 7.45 p.m.

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Friday  
September 9

**“The Duke of Bridgewater’s underground  
canals at Worsley”**

Glen Atkinson

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**Monday**  
**September 19**  
**7.30 pm**

**New Mills Festival Lecture in  
New Mills Town Hall**  
**“The Bridges of New Mills”**

Dr. Derek Brumhead

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Friday  
October 14

**“Oldknow, Ratcliffe and the spinners”**

Dr. John H. Smith

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Friday  
November 11

**“Manchester’s early airfields, 1910-1960”**

Alan Scholefield

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Friday  
December 9

**“Christmas Day in the Workhouse”**

Chris Makepeace

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### **NEW MILLS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2005-2006** (elected at the A.G.M.)

Chairman	GAYNOR ANDREW (743117)
Vice-Chairman	BARBARA MATTHEWS (743935)
Hon. Secretary	JOHN HUMPHREYS (743581)
Hon. Treasurer	JOAN POWELL (742814)
Hon. Archivist	ROGER BRYANT (744227)
Hon. Editor	RON WESTON (744838)
Ordinary members	OLIVE BOWYER, DEREK BRUMHEAD, BARRY DENT, PAT EVANS, JOHN SYMONDS, RICHARD WOOD.

*[www.newmillshistory.org.uk](http://www.newmillshistory.org.uk)*

## MARCHING TO ZION - Non-conformist Chapel Architecture 14th January 2005 - Roger Holden

When, in 1823, they began to build Providence Congregational Church in Mellor Road, the women went down to the river to gather stones in their aprons, while the men carted stone from the river in wheelbarrows. Five years later, building work on St. George's Church, a new Anglican foundation, was put in hand. Land in Beard had been donated by Lord George Cavendish, Squire Newton of Ollersett gave £200 and several other local landowners, men of means, also gave generously. The two contemporary buildings that resulted, "the box-like chapel" and the neo-Gothic cruciform church, represent two extremes in church architecture that reflect the diverse attitudes towards religion prevailing from the seventeenth century onwards. But, as Roger Holden in his informative and beautifully illustrated talk explained, these were but two extremes of a spectrum of architectural responses to accommodate a range of opinions on how God should be worshipped.

The old dissenters of the seventeenth century, Presbyterians, Baptists and Quakers, built the first meeting houses. For them, the lavish symbolism found in the statues and stained glass of Anglican and Roman Catholic churches was so much idolatry. The Book of Common Prayer was simply state-sponsored religion, and they would have none of it. God, according to the old dissenters, was approachable and could be worshipped directly, privately or in public, by anyone and in any place - hence the plain simplicity of the early meeting houses.

In the early eighteenth century, the Methodist Movement, founded by the Wesleys and George Whitfield, at first favoured outdoor mass-meetings. Only after they broke away from the Anglican church did the Methodists build their own chapels and meeting houses. Roger showed us a variety of these, including the arrangements of the interiors in accordance with the Methodists' way of holding services. Welsh Methodism, coloured by Calvinism, has its own distinctive chapel architecture. We were shown several examples.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many non-conformist chapels were rebuilt and refitted in a lavish style by the patronage of wealthy people, which perhaps betrayed the principles on which non-conformist religions were founded. Conversely, there was a movement in the Anglican

church towards plainer architecture in new churches and chapels, and so there was some coming together between the churches, in this matter at least. Turning finally to the problematic future of chapels and meeting houses now redundant, Roger showed us examples of what he regards as good and bad practice in the conversion of buildings to new functions. Some buildings have been altered with sensitivity, care being taken to retain their original religious character; others have been treated without such regard. Roger Holden's talk offered much more than a description of non-conformist architecture, excellent as that was; he also gave us an insight into the meaning of these buildings and why they should be preserved as part of the fabric of the nation's history.

*Ron Weston*

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## LOST RAILWAYS OF NEW MILLS

### 11th February 2005 - Derek Brumhead

**E**ighty-six people in the hall! - Sett Valley House was full to overflowing. The combination of Derek's popularity as a speaker and a compelling title that galvanised railway buffs from far and near had done the trick.

People still care passionately about railways. For many in the audience the closing of so many lines, beginning with the Beeching cuts and continuing down to the present day, was an unforgivable act of vandalism; while for others, the passing of the steam age and all its effects was filled with nostalgia. Derek's fine collection of slides showing railways, goods depots, footbridges, and much else that had once been a part of the local landscape, combined



with his encyclopaedic knowledge of his subject more than satisfied this audience.

He began with the goods depot at Newtown, demolished long since. Every small urban settlement along a railway used to have one. They consisted of sidings leading into a huge hanger-type building where

rail freight was transferred to road vehicles and vice versa.

Hayfield figured largely in his talk. The closing of the New Mills to Hayfield line in the early 1970s is still resented. When someone in the audience stated that there had been a bureaucratic error and the line that was intended for

closure was at Hadfield, others concurred. Derek showed us the line as it had been in its final years and demonstrated how much of the line had been transformed to create the Sett Valley Trail. Subsequently, it had been intended to connect Hayfield to the Stockport line. The railway company had gone as far as building an embankment alongside what is now the Sett Valley Trail before deciding against the idea. The earthwork is still to be seen there, not far from the High Hill Road entrance on the Hayfield side. When the dam for the Kinder reservoir was being built, a line was constructed from Hayfield station out along the riverside. Trains had to cross the main road through the village centre.

No talk with such a title as this could omit an account of the station at Chinley: once a huge, bustling place; now incongruously deserted. Derek's illustrations of Chinley in its heyday are difficult to reconcile with the scene there today. They are vital historical evidence.

Not all the misfortune that beset our local lines was man-made. At Brierley Green, Bugsworth, the former viaduct was lost to a massive slope failure in poorly consolidated boulder clay. Derek has a dramatic visual record of before and after this event.

This was a memorable evening for members and visitors alike.

*Ron Weston*

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## **EARLY STOCKPORT TEXTILE MILLS 1732 - 1842**

**11th March 2005 - Dr. Peter Arrowsmith**

**1** 732 is the date of the first water-powered textile mill in Stockport. John Lomb had smuggled the secret of silk spinning out of Italy and a silk manufactory had been established in Derby. When the patent on the machinery expired in 1732, the way was open for other entrepreneurs to start up elsewhere. Park Silk Mill was established in Stockport in that year on the site now occupied by Sainsburys. This was the beginning of a hectic industrial and urban expansion that transformed Stockport from a small market town into a burgeoning metropolis whose size rivalled that of Manchester itself. The earliest mills were engaged in silk manufacture. By 1770, four large water-powered silk mills had been built including the one at Hope's Carr, together with several smaller establishments, chiefly along Hillgate.

In 1778 the first of Stockport's cotton mills was opened on the site of what is now known as Castle Yard that opens out onto the market place. It was

known as The Castle Mill and had been built by the Warren family, the lords of the manor. From then onwards, cotton, "the poor man's silk", was the important new textile and several new water-powered mills were established in the town, while most of the silk mills also converted to cotton textile manufacture.

The reason why Stockport emerged so early and so prominently in the history of textile manufacturing was because of its excellent water-power sites along the Goyt and Tame near where they join to form the Mersey. The soft red sandstone on which central Stockport stands was easily tunnelled through to lead water lengthy distances to the mills. When, during the early years of the nineteenth century, steam engines were introduced, there was plenty of coal available locally, at Poynton, for instance.

In the 1830s combined spinning and weaving mills were being built in Stockport, notably Orrells Mill and Daw Bank Mill (near the present bus station) which also incorporated the largest dye works in Europe at that time. By 1842, however, other centres north of Manchester became the favoured locations for new development and expansion and Stockport's major phase of growth had ceased,

Dr. Arrowsmith is an industrial archaeologist who has investigated several of the early silk and cotton mill sites of Stockport. In his excellent talk he showed how archaeological excavations can throw light on the way that water-power was harnessed in early times. At Castle Mill, for example, it is still a mystery how the power derived from the great water wheel built on the river bank was used to drive machinery in a mill standing at a considerably higher level. His account included a graphic account of the rivalry between mill owners to capture water by tunnelling to locations ever higher upstream. Among the men of note in his story were Samuel Oldknow who became famous while in Stockport for the quality of his muslins before building his great industrial enterprise at Marple, and William Radcliffe of Mellor who, having improved hand-loom weaving by his inventions, went on to introduce power-loom weaving to Stockport.

To be given a talk by someone in complete command of his subject is always a pleasure. We are grateful to Dr. Arrowsmith for sharing his scholarship and practical experience with us.

*Ron Weston.*

## INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITIES

8 April 2005 - David George

The society once again welcomed David George, who spoke on yet another of his specialised and interesting interests, illustrated with a variety of slides. He has kindly provided this synopsis of his talk.

The growth of industrial communities associated with the textile trades went through three phases between the early eighteenth century and the building of the model communities of the 1840s onwards. Small industrial communities could be found in one of the nurseries of the textile industry namely Saddleworth, formerly in west Yorkshire, now in Greater Manchester. The men and women and children were employed by the merchant-clothiers, on the premises of their large houses or halls, in workrooms for carding, spinning and weaving and at the fulling or finishing mills which they often controlled.

These fine stone houses such as Dobcross Hall had rows of stone mullioned windows on more than one floor - a pattern carried over in the smaller weavers' houses or cottages. As capital accumulated, some of the clothiers invested in prototype factories - tall buildings with workrooms on each floor for handloom weavers, who journeyed to work but were under the control of one master. The next phase of building came with the establishment of water powered cotton spinning mills in remote locations such as Cromford where Arkwright employed mainly children, but also had a handloom weaving factory and built two rows of framework knitters cottages in North Street, with top floor workshops. His erstwhile partners, the Strutts of Belper, built a long row of three storey houses for their workers to attract labour, and the Greggs at Styal firstly converted a farmhouse for family accommodation, then built rows of 'model' dwellings for more workers close to the mill. Other examples may be found at the Ferguson's mills near Carlisle, at New Lanark on the Clyde, at this period, where Arkwright also had an interest. The Greggs, and later Robert Owen at New Lanark, were also pioneers of the provision of social and welfare facilities for their workers. In the Lancashire cotton towns and villages the handloom weavers were proud of their independence. Here they would often club together, subscribe their savings, draw lots and then build identical weavers cottages in small rows, with living accommodation on the ground floor and workrooms in the loft or cellars, according to the type of fabric to be produced. Moreover, many mill owners who could have installed power loom sheds

after 1820, actually preferred the putting out system as giving more flexibility in placing orders, involving less capital outlay (the handlooms and jennies might be rented to the weavers) and built weavers houses adjacent to the mill as seen at such places as Milnrow near Rochdale, and in Macclesfield and Manchester for silk working. From the 1830s or 1840s, however, there developed a movement which to some extent coincided with the decline of hand loom weaving and was influenced by political considerations and urged on by literary campaigns (Gaskell, Disraeli, Charlotte Bronte etc.) The Peelite wing of the Tory party urged manufacturers to adopt a caring attitude towards their employees as a bastion against radical movements, such as Chartism, with its undertones of violence. The plea was taken up in particular by a group of mill owners around Bolton - the Ashworths, Gardner and Bazley, the Chadwicks. And so at Eagley, Egerton and Barrow Bridge were created new model communities. The houses were graded in size so as to reflect the hierarchy of the mill, and for rental purposes. The operatives might enjoy two rooms up and one down on the average, in stone built cottage rows, but there was often running water and a gas supply as well as meeting rooms, chapels, schools and recreation grounds. The massive expansion of the industry and the towns in the second half of the nineteenth century resulted in row upon row of workers terraces, many very small and back to back before the improved byelaw housing after 1870 when a front parlour, lobby and third bedroom might appear. In towns like Nelson and Blackburn, the power loom weaving centres of the world, fifty per cent of these pre-1919 houses have been demolished. What is to become of the remainder ? Can they be modernised, improved and landscaped in the interest of first time buyers ? The battle is on between the local authorities, developers and the conservation bodies.

*David George*



## STRINES PRINT WORKS

13 May 2005 - Rosemary Taylor

Rosemary has kindly provided this text of her talk.

The industrial Revolution increased the production of cloth so much that it created a growing demand for bleaching, dyeing and printing of fabrics. These processes require plenty of clean water which was available in the Goyt and Sett valleys. Many print works were started in this area. Of these, Strines was in production longest-over 200 years.

It was established in or about 1792 by William Wright of Strines Hall and his partners, John Grimshaw, Thomas Stott and John Dodgson. The buildings of the first works were clustered round the Hall and were devoted to block printing. Transport of coal and cloth was originally by the Peak Forest Canal where the works had a wharf. After a few years, a second works was built on the right bank of the Goyt and roller printing machines were installed. A new bridge over the Goyt, weirs and reservoirs were constructed and the machinery powered firstly by water wheels and then by steam.

Throughout the 19th century, the works was controlled by a group of partners, many of whom were related to each other. One of the partners was Joseph Sidebotham who was a pioneer photographer. His protege Joel Wainwright came as Accountant and then became Manager. Their photographs, drawings and "The Strines Journal" give us detailed information about the works in the mid nineteenth century. Later partners Thomas Henry Nevill and his son, Charles, built St. Paul's Church in Strines because there was no existing Church within easy walking distance of the works. There had been a schoolroom at the works for part-timers and this was replaced by Hague Bar Board School.

In 1899, most of the calico printing firms in England and Scotland joined together to form the Calico Printers' Association. The CPA, as it was



known, closed some of their less efficient works, but extended Strines by building a third works on the left bank of the river. Work started in 1901, but was not completed until 1930. These works produced high-quality dress and furnishing fabrics, much of it for export. As new synthetic fabrics were introduced,

printing techniques were developed to deal with them.

The whole of the British textile industry suffered as the British Empire shrank and overseas production grew. In 1968 the CPA merged with

English Sewing Cotton to become English Calico, and a further merger changed the name to Tootal Ltd. They decided to close Strines, and production ceased in August 1982. One month later the works re-opened as "Strines Textiles:-Commission Printers" under the control of a group of former CPA managers. In 1993 the business was bought by "The Leeds Group PLC." and work continued with all the roller printing machines being replaced with screen printing machines. Leeds sold the business to Walker Greenbank PLC. who transferred production to their Standfast factory at Lancaster and closed Strines in September 2001. Leeds sold the land to a property developer.

The talk concluded with of slides of the interior of the works in the 1930s, 1982 and in the last week of production in 2001.

*Rosemary Taylor*

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### **Can anybody help? (if so, please contact a member of the Committee)**

I live in a property which has been known as Thorn Lea since it was built between 1899 and 1901, now 68 Hayfield Road, New Mills. The property is a substantial double fronted stone house on the New Mills/Birch Vale border adjacent to Ellerscroft. I have received from my mortgage company all the documents in relation to the previous ownership of the house which has interested me in researching the original family who built the property. The land was originally leased by a Mrs M E Mackie who I understand was a widow whom resided at Watford House to Mr Thomas Hadfield of Bowden Villas, New Mills who had a bleach works in the area. The freehold is still held by John Mackie Memorial Homes Trust. I have been told by a neighbour that the house was built for his son who was also called Thomas. I have checked the 1901 census and have traced the Hadfield family who were living at that time on High Hill Lane. It appears that the house was sold in 1915 to Joseph Stafford the cashier/bookkeeper of the bleach works by Thos Hadfield who had by then moved to a property called Craigmoor on Robertson Rd in Buxton. Mr Stafford died in 1953 and the property was purchased by a Thomas May a manager and then in 1956 by Alfred Winder a local bank manager who resided in the property until 1980.

I would be very grateful for any information you may be aware of in respect of the people or property, any books or photographs that may be of interest. Do you have any advice on other avenues I could follow up to build up a picture of the history.

Many thanks

Andrew James

## 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE 'NEW' LOWLEIGHTON METHODIST CHURCH, SUNDAY 3 JULY 2005

The introductory speech was made by Mr Michael Doughty and he has kindly provided this copy of it for our newsletter.

We welcome you all this afternoon to our 50th anniversary celebrations. We make a special welcome to the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of the Borough of High Peak, Councillor Derek Udale and his wife Eva.

Also present is the largest gathering of Methodist clergy seen in the district for many years. First of all, a very warm welcome to the Reverend Maurice Handford and his wife. Maurice was actually involved in the bombing of the old church, when the house next to it in which he lived, was destroyed. Next, we have the Rev Robert Barker and Mrs Barker, the Rev Brian Mifflin and his wife Pauline (Brian will be taking the service tonight and was our Sunday School Superintendent in 1964). Also present is our current minister the Rev Geoffrey Farthing. We welcome you all.

In the year 1830 there were only about a dozen houses in the neighbourhood of Lowleighton and they were mostly farmhouses. Preaching services were held alternatively at Piece Farm (on Over Hill Road) and Howcroft Farm (on Howcroft Lane). Later, services were held at Pingot (Laneside Road). John Hopwood came to live in Lowleighton in 1848, he commenced class meetings in his house and this lasted for 45 years until 1873, when the class leader Joseph Frith died. After his death a vigorous effort was made by the Oldham family and meetings continued in a farmhouse until 1899. Two cottages were converted into a mission house - the Hudson family featured very prominently in this cause. In early 1911, the Methodists made a large leap forward and a new tin chapel and Sunday School was erected in Lowleighton on the road to Hayfield.

In 1939 war came to our country. The hills around New Mills were lit up with flashes, the red glow of huge fires towards Manchester and enemy aircraft were heard overhead. But the Peak District was regarded as relatively safe place to live. All this changed on 3 July 1942, sixty years to this very day. As the Town Hall clock was chiming 8.00 pm, without any air raid warning, two German aircraft dropped bombs in Woodside Street and Mousley Bottom, machined gunned the streets and the cricket field, before dropping a bomb at Lowleighton demolishing the tin chapel and two nearby houses. Unfortunately, two people were killed in this incident, Joan Handford aged

ten years and Mr Daniel McKellar, who was the church caretaker, and was working on his allotment near the church at the time.

For the next thirteen years the Methodists of Lowleighton held their services and Sunday School at the Quakers Meeting House in Lowleighton, working and praying for the day when once again they would have a church of their own. Money was raised in many ways by sale of works, jumble sales, and many people selling bricks to raise the £11,000 which the new church would cost. On the plaque in the church hall are listed all the people who sold bricks to raise money to build this church, and we have tried to trace as many of those people as possible to be here with us today.

The stone laying ceremony took place on 7 August 1954 after a long procession through Lowleighton, and the opening of the 'new' Lowleighton Church took place on Saturday 16 April 1955 with over 400 people, both inside and outside, attending. Whilst many churches in the area have closed over the years, Lowleighton has stood strong in the community. It is a caring and friendly church, where many friendships have been formed over the years - evident by the many people here today - and many happy remembrances. It is a family church with a strong Sunday School and many activities have been held here, pantomimes, flower festivals, family Christmas parties, and regular table top sales, all of which have offered opportunities for everybody to become involved. Many local activities are held here on a regular basis, yoga, line dancing, community meetings, ladies club, youth club, making the building a community hall as well as a place of worship.

Over the past twelve months, over £23,000 has been spent on refurbishing Lowleighton church ready for this big occasion, into a church the community can feel welcome in and be proud of. Many people have spent an enormous amount of time in this project - we thank you all.

What of the future ? Our aim is to make our church even more accessible, welcoming and caring through fellowship and family worship for everyone, serving as a community building for the various organisations and activities wishing to use it, thus becoming an important part of the local community and New Mills.

Many people have asked 'why are you having the celebrations on 3 July and not on the opening day 16 April ?' When we first made our initial arrangements we took the date from Tony Scott's list of brick contributions on the wall to be correct, (namely the opening of the new church 3 July 1955). Later on investigating we realised the opening day was 16 April 1955. The decision

was made to continue because, by coincidence, 3 July was a very important day for Lowlighton and New Mills. If the old church had not been destroyed on that date by enemy action then probably we would not be here today celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 'new church'.

Finally, when will our next big anniversary be held? You may say 'how do we beat this?' in 2011 it will be the 100th anniversary of our Sunday School. It is only six years away, we will be here and we hope you will be also.

Ladies and gentlemen, we wish you all a warm welcome to this celebration and reunion this afternoon. Enjoy yourselves.

*Michael Doughty*

### **LOCAL HISTORIAN**

The following issue has been placed in New Mills Library

#### **May 2005**

Christopher Taylor, "W G Hoskins and The making of the English Landscape".

PS and DH Brown, "Founding a hospital and convalescent home in a Victorian seaside resort".

Ruth Serjeant, "The Southwold School of Industrial Art".

Annette Marten, "Shattered hopes and unfulfilled dreams: council housing in rural Norfolk".

Tony Fairman, "Schooling the poor in Horsmonden 1797-1816".

Alan Crosby, Review article: the history of road and bridges.

Book reviews include: "The discovery of the Peak District" by Trevor Brighton [on sale in the Heritage Centre]: "Liverpool" by Jonathan Sharpies: "The making of Liverpool" by Mike Fletcher: "Black Country Chapels" by Ned Williams: "Two thousand years of Exeter" by W G Hoskins.

**The Historic Landscapes of Mellor by Ron Weston  
(A4, pp.37, 11 maps, New Mills Local History Society. 2005, £3.50).**

We already know of Ron's work in the historical evolution of our local landscapes by his studies of the hamlets of New Mills, analysing and correlating the material derived from careful study of tithe map, census returns, land tax returns, and most particularly field observation to compliment and reinforce the source material. One thinks of "Whitle in 1841", "Thornsett in 1841", "The Enclosure of Thornsett", and "Ollersett in 1841". In addition, he is co-author, with this reviewer, of a study of the seventeenth century enclosures of the commons and wastes of the royal forest of Peak published in the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal (on sale in the Heritage Centre). His great interest in the evolution of historic landscapes is encapsulated in his major study of the parish of Hartington, published by the Derbyshire Library and Heritage Department.

Ron's purpose in this study has been to identify and describe the landscapes of Mellor, which historically was within the royal forest of Peak (it was transferred from Derbyshire to Cheshire in 1936). In so doing, he sheds light on the process by which the settlement pattern has evolved and the land enclosed and improved for fanning. This splendid piece of research combines field observation, documentary sources, and percipient interpretation and analysis.

There are early chapters on the solid and drift geology, relief and drainage. After considering the region's medieval context and its relationship with its neighbours, the study moves to its core, a consideration of the enclosures of the commons in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, describing with the aid of maps the division into the king's part and tenants' pan, aided by a traced manuscript copy of surveyors Hibbart and Barton 1640 map. This is then related to the later tenants' enclosure Acts, Ordnance Survey maps and the field enclosures within the two parts.

An interesting chapter follows on the evolution of Mellor before 1640, going back to the earliest habitations of the late thirteenth century, and here the author shows his strengths in relating the meagre documentary sources with fieldwork and application of revealing evidence found in the neighbouring High Peak hamlets. The field evidence of woods and hedges, and tracks and roads rounds off the study, and there is an important list of references and sources..

*Continued on page 18.*

## MEMORIES OF A DISTRICT NURSE

The National Health Service came into being on 6th July, 1948. Previously, doctors and nurses in domiciliary practice received a fee for their services, which was collected weekly from patients. In New Mills, a committee was formed by Mrs. Mackie of Watford House; funds were raised by the committee to pay the district nurses salary.

After the implementation of the NHS, doctors and nurses were employed by the local authorities, i.e. the Derbyshire County Council in our case. We were paid by them, and a Nursing Supervisor came to oversee our work from time to time - always when we least expected her. Doctors had their own Executive Council, which worked in conjunction with the Local Authority and its Medical Officer of Health. It was thought in 1948 that the demand for hospital services would decrease once the backlog of illness had been dealt with.

I was appointed district nurse for New Mills and started work in November, 1955. My husband Richard and I were married in August 1955, and lived with his parents on their smallholding, situated between Chinley and Hayfield. With the confidence of the young, I bought a second hand bike; Richard fixed a carrier on the back for my nursing bag. This was a tin box with a gaberdine cover, and contained all my equipment; instruments for performing surgical dressings, one glass and metal hypodermic syringe, two sizes of needle, a urinary catheter, a Higginson's syringe for giving enemata, and a tube and funnel for wash outs. I was supplied with a uniform; navy-blue gaberdine mac., peaked cap with storm flaps, 3 blue cotton dresses and 6 linen aprons (had to be starched). When plastic aprons were supplied years later, they were the best invention since the safety-pin. To go back to the bike; it was supposed to be a racing bike, pink and silver with dropped handle bars; it was a heavy bike and the only "racing" quality were the tyres, which had thin walls and often punctured. I had an annual bicycle allowance of £5-00.

Nothing daunted, I set off on my travels; having recently been a pupil midwife in Derby, I had a little experience of home visiting by bike. I also went to school in New Mills, but the only part I knew was from the Swan Hotel to Arden Street. After the first week of traveling on the bike from Chinley to New Mills, a kind man, Tom, who lived in Chapel Street, Newtown, offered me the use of his workshop as a bike shed. I visited his mother every day. Following this, I went with Richard each morning to Chapel-en-le-Frith, where he worked, and caught the 8 am. bus to New-

town. After seeing to Tom's mother, I picked up the bike, and worked my way to Hayfield.

It must have been difficult for the doctors to contact me, as we hadn't a telephone at home. I used to call at the doctors' surgeries each day, and the chemist in Hayfield for any new patients; also I was fairly easy to spot on the bike. Dr. Millward was Chairman of the Housing Committee, and I know he must have pulled some strings, because in April 1956, we were allocated a Council house in Beard Crescent. My last call of the day in Hayfield, was to a bedfast lady, Norah, looked after by her sister next door, and sister-in-law from across the road; they were all excited to hear we had a house. On the following Friday, they could hardly wait to show me the Buxton Herald, and the advertisement of a 7-piece suite and six dining chairs for sale at a Hayfield "big house". Richard and I went to view them that night, and bought the lot for £32.00. We still have the dining chairs. Mr. Whitehead, the Hayfield coal merchant delivered the furniture for us.

We now had a house and a telephone. The latter was a mixed blessing as you can imagine, as hardly anyone had a 'phone in those days, Also people came to the house for a pennyworth of liquid paraffin, a few aspirins or plasters. I used to visit a retired headmaster in Furness Vale once a week. He thought he lived in Devon, but never forgot that I came from New Mills. He thought I was wonderful cycling down to Devon each week.

Social Services and Home Helps had not yet been invented. Folks had to look after their own relatives; if this was impossible, it usually meant the workhouse, The Elms at Chapel or Ollersett View in New Mills. There were no incontinence pads, polythene sheets or anything disposable. One could borrow rubber sheets, bedpans and commodes from the Red Cross. Dressings were made by cutting up lint, gauze and cotton wool into dressing size pieces, and baking them in the oven; they were deemed to be sterile when they were a pale biscuit colour.

Many drugs such as diuretics (water pills) had to be given by injection. The syringe and needle had to be boiled at each house; one's heart sank if there wasn't any boiling water, and the only way of boiling water was over a solid electric plate. Quite a few people had electric cookers, but not many had bathrooms, and certainly not central heating.

There were still quite a few houses in Brookside, Meal Street and Dye House Lane when I came to New Mills; Diglands Estate was under construction. The Town Hall was a hive of industry. There was a Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Bates, and a Medical Officer of Health, who came to New Mills from



Glossop, Dr. Mary Sutcliffe. Mr. Bates lived in the white cottage in Mouseley Bottom. He sometimes asked me to visit flea ridden houses, but not until after 5 p.m., when his DDT spray had done its work. It never had - the DDT made them hopping mad!

I started to have driving lessons with George Edwards. Richard and I scanned the Manchester Evening News for second hand cars. His father was a retired motor mechanic, and came with us to view a 1932 Austin 10 for sale in Portwood, Stockport. We paid £40 for it. Richard's dad stripped it down and made sure it was roadworthy. The Suez crisis in 1957 did me a good turn, as learner drivers could drive unaccompanied, I got plenty of practise and managed to pass my driving test. On sending in my first mileage claim, the Supervisor came hot foot to see me, as I couldn't possibly do so many miles in a month; it didn't matter when I was on the bike for my £5-00 p.a.

A district nurse was appointed for Hayfield, so what with that, and the car, life was much easier. We had one day off each week, mine was Wednesday, plus every six weeks we had Sunday off as well.

After 13 years, the Hayfield nurse decided to move to the south of England; she put her house up for sale, and with a loan from the Council, we bought her house in Mellor Road. By now, we had two sons. We missed the neighbours in Beard Crescent, they really would do anything for you - besides, most of them had their own telephones by now.

In 1968, Dr. Millward and Dr. Andrew moved from the surgery in Dr. Millward's house to a new group surgery at the front of the Liberal Club now New Mills Police Station. What a wonderful improvement. If there were more than six patients waiting to see the doctors in the old surgery they had to queue outside. More treatments could be carried out, and blood tests could be done and sent off to Stepping Hill hospital. Each morning I had a clinic at the new surgery, doing dressings, giving injections and syringing ears. There still wasn't a nurse for Hayfield, so life was hectic once more until a nurse was appointed.

In 1974 there was the big reorganisation of both Local Government and the NHS. District nurses were now employed by the NHS, not Derbyshire County Council. One of the new ideas put into practice was that doctors should have their own nurse, depending on how many patients each GP had. This meant more nurses. In addition to the two State Registered nurses, two State Enrolled nurses were employed, then two Bath nurses, but the latter were withdrawn after a couple of years because of the expense. Social

Services came into being with Home Helps and Meals on Wheels. We were provided with disposable syringes, incontinence pads, and disposable enema. We could hire equipment from Chesterfield - commodes, walking frames, wheelchairs, even beds.

There was much more clerical work. When I started in 1955 I only had three books to keep up to date. One showing new patients, their address, date of birth, diagnosis, GP, and the date of my first and last visit. The second, a daily register showing, the category of treatments, and the third, my daily mileage. After 1974, case notes had to be left in patients' houses, and gradually the time spent on writing up case notes took as long as the treatment given. Then came the advent of the computer -but that's another story.

Even though life was hard at the beginning, looking back, it was the most enjoyable - just to go out and visit patients, no surgeries or meetings, just being a District nurse.

*Margaret Wood*

*Continued from page 14.*

This is an important contribution not only to the detail of our local history, but to the methodology of historic landscape interpretation. One admires the elegant writing and the highly professional maps, most of them prepared specially for this publication. The book is on sale at Society meetings and at New Mills Heritage Centre.

*Derek Brumhead*

## HOME GUARD MEMORIES

One night, Strines Section of which I was a member, were on guard at the Town Hall when we received a phone call to say that a German plane had been shot down near Stockport and the crew had bailed out. All local Home Guard posts were warned to be on the look-out and to capture them. Moor Lodge and Gow Hole posts could be alerted by phone but we had to get word up to Castle Edge post by dispatch rider who was a youth called Frank aged seventeen and who had a BSA motorcycle. For added protection Corporal Joe Panglove was sent with him on the pillion and, quite excited, Frank roared off as fast as he could with Joe on the back. Some time later Frank roared back to the Town hall and the sentry cried 'Where's Joe, Frank?' Frank looked round to see that he had no pillion passenger. Ten minutes later Joe came up to the Town Hall shaken up but not hurt. What had happened was that when Frank returned down Mellor Road he slowed at the junction with Spring Bank then opened up the throttle flinging Joe off the bike and onto his back on the road.

As time went on, the Home Guard got more equipment and more organised, so it was decided to hold a weekend exercise in Derbyshire. So, one Saturday teatime about thirty of us were sent to the village of Earl Sterndale off the Ashbourne road south of Buxton. It was a lovely summer weekend and by this time I was sixteen and had a small motor bike, so I became a dispatch rider and my friend Harry took the Co-op's Bedford lorry as transport. We arrived in the village and were billeted in the only pub in the place. 'The Quiet Woman', the inn sign being a woman with her head cut off. The only other building we might have used was the church but it had received a direct hit from a bomb and was burned out so that only left the pub. It was only a small country pub and we filled the one room where we mixed with the locals, and as some of our men liked their beer a good time was had. by all. Harry and I were sent on sentry duty on the road down to Glutton Bridge and when we were relieved we came back to the pub and managed to get some sleep under a table. In the morning our quartermaster made us some bacon sandwiches and we prepared for the manoeuvres. But on leaving the pub some of the locals came up and said that they had enjoyed our company but please not to come again as we had drunk all the pub's allowance of beer and there would be no more for a fortnight.

It is a nice thought that one of our relations is now the owner of the pub and it is still a little country inn, with the same name and sign !

*Bill Barton*

## **THE PEOPLE OF KINDER VIEW 1901-2001**

Kinder View in New Mills is a row of 15 stone houses built at the end of the 19th century. They are situated at the back of Union Road and the fronts of the houses have a view over the Torrs gorge. When they were built, they had outside toilets and coal sheds. Marjorie Jones has spent over three years researching the houses and their occupants in the years 1901-2001. Marjorie has found out that every house devoted its spare time to many local activities such as the Mount Pleasant Chapel, the Parish Church, Salvation Army, New Mills Old Prize Band. Her time was spent consulting microfilms and newspapers in the library, and talking to many people.

Now, it is possible to read the fruits of Marjorie's work, for a folder of her findings has been placed in the Society's archives and in New Mills Library. Everyone who lived in these houses has been listed and there is a great deal of information about their families, where they worked, and their interests. The folder also contains a detailed account of personal memories of Bailey Printers by Margaret De Motte whose father, Jim Webster, owned and ran the firm. Margaret was formerly a librarian in the local studies unit at Central Library, Manchester.

*Derek Brumhead*