

Y The Yorkshire Dales Review

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**A FUTURE FOR THE UPLANDS
SPOTLIGHT ON SETTLE
DALES PATHS FOR THE DISABLED?
A VIEW FROM THE HOT SEAT**

20p

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A Future for the Uplands

What may yet prove to be the most important event arranged by the Yorkshire Dales Society took place in the Black Horse, Skipton in May. The meeting, organised jointly with the Craven Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, was in direct response to the Countryside Commission and the Development Commission's series of debates on The Future of the Uplands.

Our speaker was John Dunning, himself a Cumbrian hillfarmer, landowner, member of the Countryside Commission and Chairman of the Cumbrian Branch of Rural Voice.

Mr. Dunning's theme was one which is close to the heart of the Yorkshire Dales Society - how to stop the steady decline of hillfarming communities, with an average of 25% of farmers per decade leaving the uplands, taking with them knowledge, skills and traditions, including those essential skills necessary to maintain the walls, buildings, small woodlands of the landscape we all love.

Mr. Dunning reminded his audience - which included many Dales farmers - that the system of agricultural support was not only proving inadequate to the task of keeping small farmers in the hills, but inevitable changes in the Common Agricultural Policy as the poorer Mediterranean members made demands on EEC resources, would mean, inevitably, less public money for the hill areas of Britain.

He also reminded his audience that for many millions of people from throughout Britain, areas like the Yorkshire Dales were supremely precious, containing as they do cherished landscapes, areas for spiritual renewal and recreation. These people are the majority, and their political will to see the landscape and the natural beauty conserved would surely prevail. But without a prosperous and viable hillfarming community, dereliction would take over.

How could more wealth, more resources be put back into the hills at a time when many other areas of Britain, including the great cities, faced far more severe problems? Grants and subsidies however necessary in the short term wouldn't provide long term solutions, however welcome "positive management agreements" might be to conserve precious habitats.

If, however, through enterprise, large or small, energy can be released to create the resources needed, the story could be a very different one. The Austrian Alpine farmers, after World War II faced bankruptcy. But government policies have helped the Tyrolean farmers diversify into many supporting activities - tourism, manufacturing, service industries - to create one of the most successful mountain economies of the Western world. Could the same revival occur in the Dales; Mr. Dunning saw evidence in his own neighbourhood of initiative and enterprise.

And yet, too often, government agencies, national and local, seemed to stifle initiative or be mutually contradictory. The mass of planning controls and regulations seemed designed to frustrate, not support. What Dales people need was that essential support to give them confidence to start and develop rural enterprises - Britain, of all the developed nations has the lowest level of owner-managed enterprises of major economies in the free world - and the ability to master appropriate skills and technologies. To release the potential that exists, within the Dales communities, needs professional support - expert help through the myriad layers of bureaucracy - and financial support.

The objective should be integration - integration of farming and small business, farming and forestry, farming and tourism, conservation and recreation. These activities will create the wealth to enable farmers to carry out their "moral duty" to conserve and protect the landscape their forefathers created, not through the negative and divisive measures of punitive "controls" but as positive inducement if for no other reason than a lovely landscape means good business.

How can such changes come about?

John Dunning advocates fundamental changes in National Park administration, making economic and social objectives prime National Park purposes, giving a major new role for the Development Commission, and qualified staff able to deal with such matters. Outside National Parks local authorities need a similar degree of support to trigger change and economic growth. But the real need is for a climate of opinion to create economic growth necessary compatible with conservation of the hills and their enjoyment by the urban majority.

Wise words. So important does the Yorkshire Dales Society believe John Dunning's paper to be, we hope, with his permission, to publish it, to make it available to the widest possible audience.

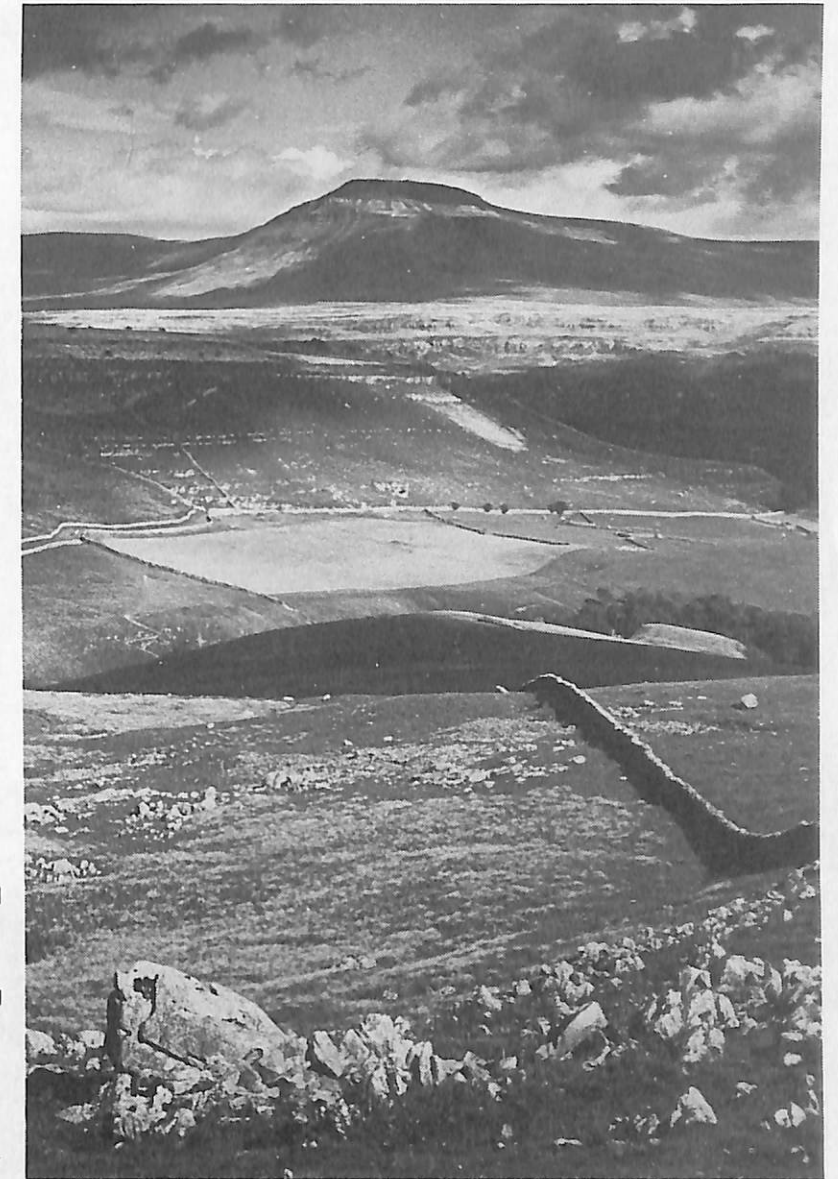
It comes at a time when the upland debate widens to take in many issues. Already, Malcolm MacEwan and Geoffrey Sinclair, in a brilliant and hardhitting pamphlet New Life for the Hills (published by the Council for National Parks, 4 Hobart Place, London SW1 price £3), have questioned the effects of some hillfarming subsidies which, in their view, lead to discrimination against small farmers and degradation of the uplands, and have called for major reforms. The Countryside Commission and the Development Commission will, without doubt be presenting new ideas and suggestions to the Government, ideas which will no doubt find a reflection in policy directives and perhaps eventually in legislation.

Whatever the outcome, it will not be sufficient to wait until Government either suggests or imposes solutions upon Pennine communities. As Dr David Fletcher, Chairman of Pennine Heritage, our kindred organisation in the South Pennines, has argued, the rebirth of Britain will begin, as the Industrial Revolution itself began, in the high Pennine valleys, with the energy and initiative of the people. Self-help is a fashionable term of the eighties; people who have lived and survived, for generations in the harsh climate of the hills, understand what the term means.

The role of a voluntary body like the Yorkshire Dales Society is that of a catalyst. By ourselves we cannot bring about change. But by bringing people together, as John Henderson, a YDS founder member, a Dales farmer and landowner, noted in his summing up, to listen, to discuss and to share ideas, we can help bring such ideas as those expressed by John Dunning at our Skipton meeting into reality.

And that's what it's all about.

COLIN SPEAKMAN



Upland landscape - Geoffrey Wright's classic study of Ingleborough sums up what many people feel about our Yorkshire Dales landscape.

Cover picture: James Alderson of Gayle (David Clough / Enid Pyrah)

A review of the Rev. James Alderson's new book of verse When I Wer a Lad - Yorkshire Dialect Verse from Wensleydale appears on page 11.

The Dales need Community Education

Harry Réé lives at Colt Park, Upper Ribblesdale. He was formerly Professor of Education at the University of York, and is now editor of Network the Community of Education Newspaper. His books include Educator Extraordinary; the life and achievement of Henry Morris and The Three Peaks of Yorkshire about to be published by Wildwood House.

In the years following the First World War, rural Cambridgeshire was dying. The population was decreasing because young men and women were moving into the towns. Schools were closing because of falling rolls. Village shops were disappearing; people were more and more doing their shopping in the big stores in the towns, yet railways were closing down and bus services reduced. Sounds like the Yorkshire Dales in the eighties, doesn't it?

In Post-War Cambridgeshire, a remarkable man, a visionary with a strong practical bent, saw the way to stop the rot and reverse the trend. What was needed was a new institution which would make living in the country a rewarding experience for men, women and children as well as young people. In a selected group of larger villages or small market towns a centre would be established, and planted inside or around the already existing secondary school. It would not only house the local school, but the local library, and provide for the needs of the whole community for recreation, social events and study.

That remarkable man was the young Chief Education Officer, Henry Morris. He addressed a memorandum to every member of the County Council; he noted the crises in the countryside and put forward his solution: "A grouping and co-ordination of the various social agencies which now exist in isolation, assembling them in a single new institution, a Village College.... The Village College would change the whole problem of rural education. As the community centre for the neighbourhood

it would provide for the whole man, and abolish the duality of education and ordinary life. It would be a visible demonstration of the continuity and never ceasingness of education. It would have the supreme virtue of being local. Has there ever been an educational institution which provided for the needs of the whole family and consolidated its life?"

In 1933 the first community school in this country was established at Sawston, ten miles from Cambridge. Today there is no secondary school in Cambridgeshire which is not a Village College. In Leicestershire the same thing happened. Other County Councils took up the idea: Nottingham, Devon, Derbyshire, Cheshire (where community schools have become a special feature), Cumberland.

Here and in many other parts of rural England and Wales these new institutions, run by the local authority but governed by the local

community provide a full time library, open for the school and for the public; a reading room containing all those papers we can't afford to buy any more; rooms for meetings of all kinds; sports facilities; places where theatre groups and local orchestras can rehearse and perform; places for weddings and parties, and in the middle of all this, the school. Here old people and not so old can come and join in lessons, or share the dining room and workshops; they organise special courses for themselves and are used by the teachers as a resource - for they are full of resource.

Is this "new" institution not ripe for planting in the Dales? Are we here not in a similar situation to rural Cambridgeshire in the twenties? Take any Dales market town with a Secondary or Middle School still open, but perhaps threatened with closure - or any village with its Primary School shaky because of falling rolls. These buildings close at 3.30 five days a week and are shut up for 12 weeks of the year. Open them up at weekends and holidays; keep them open in the evenings! Employ extra caretakers; keep teachers in post and provide a whole host of new activities for old and young who want to go on living and who will come to live in the Dales. Who is prepared to put pressure on North Yorkshire and Cumbria County Councils to come forward with schemes for Community Education?

HARRY RÉÉ



The old Grammar School, Dent. Can village schools fulfil other community needs?

Discovering the Dales without a Car

Y.D.S. member Alan Sutcliffe lives in West Sussex but is a frequent visitor to the Dales by train and bus. In this article he explains how very easy it still is to come to and travel around the Dales by local bus.

Members will know from the first issue of The Review of the Society's Rural Transport Seminar held at Bolton Abbey last September. It was a very interesting and instructive day and many useful suggestions emerged. Success of any new developments will depend on public response but, meanwhile, it is useful to be aware of and patronise whenever possible services at present available in the Dales.

During the winter months services are of necessity basic, designed to meet needs of schoolchildren, shoppers and workpeople, but a careful study of timetables will show that many opportunities for leisure trips are still available, for example on Service 71 to Grassington, Kettlewell and Buckden (serving Arncliffe on Mondays and Fridays), Service 24 to Pateley Bridge and 76 to Bolton Abbey and Burnsall which offers opportunities for a walking tour combined with a bus trip in the Barden Moor area.

Reductions in evening and Sunday services have been made recently, but it is still possible to return from Skipton to Grassington at 2120 on Mondays to Fridays, and as late as 2255 on Saturdays, whilst the last bus in Nidderdale leaves Harrogate for Pateley at 2245 each evening. A new feature this year is a bus at 1808 from Skipton Railway Station to Grassington which affords a connection with the 1712 from Leeds.

The new experimental bus, 772 offers a shopping trip at low prices from Grassington, Burnsall and Bolton Abbey to Ilkley, Bradford, Keighley or Otley.

West Yorkshire RCC's DalesBus services began at Easter, and give excellent opportunities for exploring the Dales, mainly at weekends. Circular services from Harrogate via Fountains Abbey, Brimham Rocks, Pateley and Fewston, 806, runs on Sundays and Bank Holidays, and also running is the long-established 800 service from Leeds via Bradford for Grassington, Upper Wharfedale, Bishopdale, West Burton, Aysgarth, Bainbridge and Hawes and over Buttertubs Pass to Keld in Swaledale. Drivers usually stop to allow passengers to view the Buttertubs.

On Sundays and Bank Holidays there are two journeys via the same route, with a link to Ingleton, and services to Hawes and Leyburn Markets on Tuesdays and Fridays in the school holidays from Skipton and Grassington. Another new service this year is 802 from Bradford via Ilkley and Fewston to Pateley Bridge on Sundays and Bank Holidays giving welcome access to the lovely Washburn Valley.

Dalesrider bus tickets give unlimited travel on West Yorkshire buses to and from the Dales, and also on United service 26 and 127 between Leyburn and Hawes. Tickets cost £2.95, children half, with a special family ticket (2 adults, 2 children or 1 adult 3 children) at only £5.90. There's also a half day ticket valid Sundays and Bank holidays at £2.10 valid after 12 noon. At time of writing it is expected a Dales Wayfarer ticket covering rail travel from any station in West Yorkshire to Skipton, Settle/Giggleswick Harrogate and Knaresborough and bus travel on West Yorkshire RCC services in Wharfedale, Nidderdale and Wensleydale will be available, as will new Ribblesdale services from East Lancashire towns direct to Settle, Malham and even Hawes. And Dales Rail trains operate on the first weekend each month, Saturday and Sunday, to specially reopened stations on the Settle Carlisle line with connecting bus to the Howgills and northern Dales, and guided walks. Full details from the National Park Office (or if in difficulty from YDS - please enclose SAE - editor). So you don't have to have a car available to discover the Dales. You can see more from a bus window and it's much easier planning walks. Use the bus - no parking fuss!

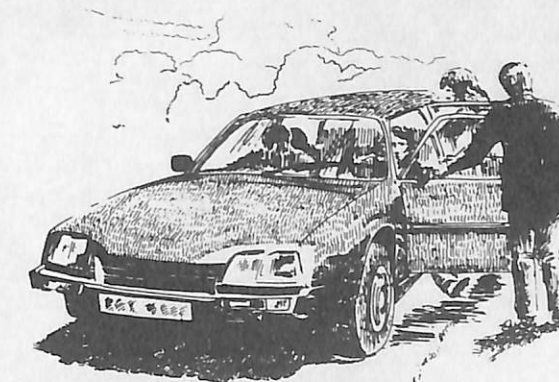
ALAN J. SUTCLIFFE

Share a Car . . .

Congratulations to North Yorkshire County Council in following Cumbria's lead in establishing "shared hire car" experiments in the Ripon-Kirby Malzeard area and in Upper Nidderdale, following the successful Dentdale scheme. This is a "bus-taxi" scheme - book a journey at certain times and save money.

Example: car goes from Pateley Bridge to Middlesmoor at 1215, Mondays to Fridays - 85p single. Book in advance with Mr Burton - Harrogate 711312 not later than the evening before.

See local publicity or write (SAE) to County Surveyor, County Hall, Northallerton or Highways & Transport Dept., Kendal Green, Kendal, Cumbria.



A View from the Hot Seat

Yorkshire Dales National Park Officer Richard Harvey looks at the contradictions and conflicts facing anyone undertaking the role of a National Park Officer, and the need to achieve a careful balance between interest groups.

The casual observer, who enjoys communing with nature in beautiful, unspoiled countryside, remote from the stresses of urban industrial life, might well consider as extremely privileged one appointed to perform the duties of National Park Officer. These duties are certainly challenging, stimulating, and offer a promise of considerable job satisfaction, but the life of an NPO is neither restful nor free from pressures or controversy.

The National Park Committee is required by law to appoint an NPO to advise on "the functions exercisable by them as respects the Park . . ."

His problems stem in part from the conflicting nature of those functions. Opinions diverge on how best to "preserve and enhance the natural beauty" of the National Park and to "...promote its enjoyment by the public" and, in so doing, to have "...due regard to the needs of agriculture and forestry and to the social and economic interests of the area.."

All sections of the local community express strong support for the conservation of the special landscape of the Dales, although views differ on what poses a threat to it.

There is growing recognition locally of the value of recreation and tourism to the local economy although attitudes often depend on the extent of an individual's involvement with visitors or the extent to which he considers that they disrupt his normal pattern of life.

Support for the concept of National Parks is traditionally strong in those urban areas from which many visitors to the Dales are drawn, yet they also have a range of aspirations and attitudes, not all of which are mutually compatible.

The NPO strives to achieve a reasonable balance between the various conflicting interests, safe in the knowledge that whatever is done, even if no action is taken, one or more elements of the disparate clientele may express their dissatisfaction.

He operates within local government and yet has a responsibility to present and future generations throughout the nation. Our National Parks are expected, also in the national interest, to accommodate military training, water catchment, timber production, power generation and mineral extraction, etc., each of which poses a particular threat to landscape conservation and enjoyment of the area by the public. And yet the National Park Committee must define and safeguard what it sees as the national interest without the benefit of a statement of national policies and priorities for the uplands and in the absence of any formal acceptance by successive governments that its function have precedence within the National Park.

The National Park Officer must try to guide the Committee through this maze and is likely to be judged not so much on the quality of his advice as on the actual decisions of the Committee he serves, which may not always be consistent with that advice.

He is a sitting target for complaints, many of which relate to the constitution of the National Park Committee, which are matters wholly beyond his control. Other criticisms concerning "sins of



"Enjoyment by the public" - ramblers in the northern Dales. (Clough/Pyrah)

ommission" often relate to matters in respect of which the National Park Committee has no powers and would be roundly criticised by others if it sought to "interfere". Decisions on planning applications are frequently regarded as "sins of commission" by those aggrieved.

In conclusion I should perhaps question whether it is possible for an NPO to "please all the people any of the time". I'm pleased to have the opportunity to try. Some might of course counter this by suggesting that "only fools rush in where angels fear to tread".

RICHARD HARVEY

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Dales Paths for the Disabled?

Arthur Gemmell, rambler, countryside campaigner and architect, best known to many readers of the Review for the beautifully drawn series of STILE MAPS of footpaths of the Yorkshire Dales, also finds time to share his love of the countryside with people unable to easily enjoy country footpaths.

At a certain local government meeting some years ago, a member concluded a brief discussion with the view that Dales field paths were no place for disabled persons.

Taking a different view, a few of us, including the present Vice-Chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Society, Ken Willson, got together early in 1981, International Year of the Disabled, to see how we could use our knowledge of Dales paths for the benefit of the disabled. The outcome was a continuing series of outings for countrylovers handicapped by various forms of disability. The first, at Ribbleshead, was a group of mentally handicapped from Castleberg Hospital, Settle. Ken Willson organised a wheelchair visit to the riverside at Bolton Abbey, made possible by the willing assistance of the Agent of the Chatsworth Estate, John Sheard. My contribution was for the blind.

Ann Featherby of Airedale Hospital put me in touch with a group of keen blind walkers in Bradford. Assisted by a panel of helpers I have organised and led a series of walks in the Dales, each including up to twelve blind or partially sighted persons of both sexes, and ages ranging from fifteen to sixty plus. The longest, nine miles, with a shorter alternative for the less energetic, was over Simon's Seat. We had a sandwich lunch on the fell and were provided with afternoon tea by Ann Foster at Howgill Lodge. Richard Harland, Solicitor for Yorkshire Water Authority, accompanied us along the riverside to unlock the aqueduct footbridge gates which had not then been opened to the public.

One blind member wanted to go underground and several others expressed interest. So I enlisted some expert potholing friends and we made a through trip of Browgill - Calf Holes, a descent of Goyden Pot including Gaskell's Passage, and a walk through Dow Cave near Kettlewell to the boulder choke.

Several walks have culminated in a hot meal at a country inn. We have always been well fed and made welcome. We shall never forget David and Joan Jenkinson's hospitality at the King's Head Kettlewell, when we arrived dripping wet after a hailstorm. In April, our huge appetites acquired during a bracing tramp over Malham Moor were efficiently and charmingly dealt with at the Listers Arms by Mrs Maureen Hill, assisted by Anne and Jane.

It would be difficult to judge who gains most from these walks, disabled or helpers. Sufficient to say we all benefit from the presence of the others.

ARTHUR GEMMELL

(For further information about this programme of walks, and offers of help, please write [SAE please] to Mr Gemmell at 32 Rufford Avenue, Yeadon, Near Leeds).

Blind and partially sighted walkers at Barden Aqueduct

(Photo: Arthur Gemmell)



Spotlight on Settle

SETTLE, that most delightful and characteristic of Dales market towns, on the edge of the limestone country, serves a wide area of Upper Ribblesdale, and attracts visitors in equal numbers from Lancashire and Yorkshire towns. It is also an increasingly important centre for cultural activity. We look at two enterprises, one private, one voluntary, which make a significant contribution to this activity

LINTON COURT GALLERY



ANN and HUGH CARR founded the Linton Court Gallery, Duke Street, Settle (entrance off main A65 almost directly opposite Golden Lion Hotel).

It quickly built up a reputation for lively exhibitions and events, and in spite of Hugh's tragic death in 1981, Ann has continued to enhance that reputation.

In this article she explains the purpose behind the Gallery and events currently being planned.

Open : Tues, Fri, Sat .,
11-1700, Sun 1400 - 1700.

Linton Court Gallery

The Linton Court Gallery is now launched into its fourth season of exhibitions. The idea of running a Gallery started nine years ago when the Carr family moved to Settle. Alongside our house, which is in the middle of Settle, there is a range of buildings containing a huge disused room which had originally been a hay loft. After wondering what they could use it for, the idea of running an Art Gallery gradually emerged.

My late husband Hugh and I had always been interested in contemporary art, and had many artist friends. A great deal of research went into the planning of the Gallery so that the pictures could be shown in the best possible conditions. The charm of the old stone building, with its windows looking over the roof tops of Settle certainly added to the interest for visitors.

The aim of the Gallery is to mount exhibitions of work of artists of the highest standard from those living in the North. The Gallery's opening exhibition showed work of Royal Academician Norman Adams who lives in Horton in Ribblesdale. The policy has been to try to have a variety of styles of painting, so that each month the public can expect something different.

This fourth season started with work by John Busby, with oil paintings of Normandy, Scotland and Yorkshire, and drawing of birds for which he is well known. Margaret Walker from Littondale showed her ceramics, which have been influenced by her life in the Dales. A new venture this year is an exhibition given by final year students at Leeds Polytechnic. Their subject is "Limestone Landscape", and should appeal to many people. The Gallery has a policy of encouraging young artists, and is very pleased to have them in the Gallery - this exhibition lasts until June 19th, followed in July by two young painters and a sculptor. Alan Turnbull from Newcastle and Richard Diggle from Manchester show oil paintings, watercolours and drawings, together with Françoise Lewis who is the first sculptor in the Gallery. In August, Trevor Stubley, who had a Fine Art Fellowship from Yorkshire Television, exhibits with Ronald Walker. Ronald has executed commissions for church sculpture but the present influence prevailing in his work is the life of the Yorkshire Dales. Finally, In September, Eric Taylor, former Principal of the Leeds College of Art, has the whole Gallery to himself. The exhibitions

will be varied, showing paintings, ceramics and sculpture.

The Gallery is also used for poetry readings, lectures, rehearsals for a small orchestra. It is particularly satisfying to have performances in the Gallery. The audience can listen to poetry or music and enjoy the paintings at the same time. I hope both local people and visitors to the Dales will find it an exciting place to visit.

ANN CARR

The Museum of North Craven Life

In Victoria Street, just out of the town centre of Settle, on the Airton road, is the remarkable Museum of North Craven Life (Open: daily to end of Sep, ex. Mons. 2-5pm), which is the mere tip of the iceberg of activity represented by the North Craven Heritage Trust. Ann Read describes the Museum and its activities.

The Museum is housed in a 17th century building, formerly a warehouse and shop, overlooking the old setts of Victoria Street, Upper Settle. The premises, then practically derelict, were acquired in 1976 by the North Craven Heritage Trust's Building Preservation Trust, and restoration was carried out with the aid of MSC sponsorship and additional funds raised by means of an appeal. Work progressed rapidly and the Museum was officially opened in September 1977. It is run by a sub-committee of the Trust, all local people who devote much of their spare time not only to planning and arranging exhibitions and other events, but also to caring for the building and organising fund-raising activities. In common with many of the Great little Museums of the Dales the Museum is almost entirely self-supporting, deriving a vital part of its income from the small entrance fee charged.

From the outset, the aim has been to mount exhibitions with a strong local connection. The first floor of the Museum is devoted to a permanent display which sets out to interpret for local people and visitors alike, the individuality of North Craven as a region, so that they may afterwards look at their surroundings with fresh insight and appreciation. The dominant theme is the spectacular landscape of North Craven which has had a vital influence on all aspects of life in the area. The other themes - settlement, transport, farming, mineral industries - are all closely interrelated and share a common dependence on the landscape. This exhibition was grant aided by the Carnegie U.K. Trust and the Museum and Art Gallery Service for Yorkshire & Humberside, and has been mounted to a high professional standard. It is particular value to school and student groups who are making a study of the area, but also appeals strongly to the general visitor. As well as many original objects and fine photographs, it contains delightful scale models of features such as a typical Craven field barn and a packhorse train.

The ground floor houses temporary exhibitions on other topics of local interest. Those arranged for 1983 include an interesting collection of material relating to the discovery and exploration of local caves loaned by Tom Lord, whose Pig Yard Museum is temporarily closed. The Dales Pharmacy exhibition is based on the reconstruction of the shop belonging to Armistead and Shepherd (later Shepherd and Walker) and old established firm of pharmacists. In addition to a careful array of bottles and jars, early pill-making prescription book and invoices, it contains an interesting section on herbal remedies, including items used in the preparation of medicines from plant materials, eg a tincture press and a collection of stone and iron mortars. The third new exhibition concerns the Craven Bank and the Craven Savings Bank. Three years ago an important collections of Savings Bank archives was presented to the Museum and this is the first occasion on which it has been displayed. The Craven Bank section of the exhibition includes among other interesting items some of the original notes of the Bank, bearing illustrations of the Castleberg rock and the famous Craven heifer, together with a



Settle Market Place (Enid Pyrah/David Clough)

a copper engraving from which early £5 notes were printed. The title of the exhibition: "A note wi' a coo on" recalls the story of the local farmer who, when given the choice between Bank of England and Craven Bank notes, demanded "Gi' me one wi' a coo on".



As well as arranging exhibitions the Museum Committee is much concerned with promoting lectures, demonstrations, and guided walks, and with producing publications to exploit and complement the Museum collections. A series of Guide Cards has been devised to enable visitors to follow up "on the ground" what has interested them in the permanent display.

Current titles deal with Geology, Water in the Landscape, Markets, Sheep Farming, and The Old Coach Road (the Keighley - Kendal turnpike). These cards are supplied in protective plastic wallets designed for outdoor use. The set of five costs 65p from the Museum or 85p including postage from Mrs A. Read, East Kettlebeck, Eldroth, Austwick, Via Lancaster.

ANN READ



Two Dales Festivals



Grassington

THE COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Festivals of all kinds abound throughout the British Isles. Three years ago, Grassington, picturesque village of some 1,500 inhabitants, inspired by a highly successful W.E A. Day School and concert on Delius, decided to offer locals and visitors the chance to sample high artistic standards in the world of music and the arts and at the same time to encourage the best of enthusiastic local amateur talent.

For a fortnight this summer <June 24th - July 9th> you can take your choice from instrumental recitals, opera, an internationally renowned string quartet to lectures by noted personalities, jazz, drama and choral groups.

Artists who often have some link with the North (though by no means exclusively so) have been happy to perform, sampling the hospitality of a friendly Dales village. String quartets such as the Fitzwilliam and Guadagnini have become a feature and links are also being forged with Opera North.

Choirs of local Dales Children and adults, local amateur drama groups, Morris Dancers, a local School brass band and Old Dales evenings featuring songs and sketches with a regional flavour, have amply demonstrated how much the Festival is a local affair which involves the whole community.

The Festival is only in its third year, yet has the accolade of BBC interest when the "Any Question?" team will be visiting Grassington to relay their live broadcast. For full details of all events and further information contact the Festival Secretary, Fleur Speakman, 3 Hardy Grange Grassington, Nr Skipton BD23 5AJ (0756) 752595. SAE with enquiries please.

FLEUR SPEAKMAN



Middleham

RICHARD III CELEBRATIONS

Middleham, in Wensleydale, celebrates the 500th anniversary of the much maligned King Richard III, whose great medieval castle still dominates the old Dales town. In a splendid Celebration Week there's music, drama, mystery plays, dances, exhibitions, fairs, a market, a quoits competition, lectures, recitals, jousting. All in Middleham July 2nd - 10th inclusive. In addition there's a summer-long series of recitals of Fifteenth Century Music by nationally known groups - Landini, Consort of Musicke, Hilliard Ensemble - in Middleham Church. Full details (SAE please) from Peter Hibbard, Chairman, Middleham Festival, Old School Arts Workshop, Middleham, Nr Leyburn, N. Yorkshire DL8 4QG t. 0969 23056.



New Books

When I Wer a Lad James Alderson (published by the author at Beckstones Yard, Gayle, via Hawes, North Yorkshire £1.50; by post £1.80)

The language of the Dales is dialect; a form of English deeply influenced by our Norse ancestors in its vocabulary, in its clipped, precise grammar, in its harsh, strong sounds. People still confuse our northern speech with ignorance, failing to understand its power and beauty. Notwithstanding years of prejudice, and the all-pervasive influence of radio, films, television, schoolmasters and snobs, it has survived, after a fashion, at the auction mart, in the pub, even in the schoolyard.

Sad, perhaps, that our Dales dialect never produced a major creative talent like Robbie Burns to create from it a major literature. But there have been men of talent, mainly in the last century, like farmer Tom Twistelton of Winskill, leadminer Tommy Blackah from Pateley Bridge and grocer John Thwaite of Hawes who turned that speech into something of wit, fire and beauty.

The Reverend James Alderson of Gayle, country parson and scholar, as well as maker of fine models displayed in local museums, used Wensleydale dialect as a child, and, through a long and active life fashioned poems in the true Dales tradition, using the language to secure effects of wit, and on occasions pathos, impossible in standard English. Confuse not Alderson's work with that of middle-aged ladies (and gentlemen) of Leeds who work with a dialect dictionary in one hand. This is real. And it's about real experience - his Gayle childhood, children's games, school days, farming, a poacher. Not that the poems don't escape nostalgia, even sentimentality at times - often a weakness of dialect verse. But at best a wit, an irony. Take one of my favourite Gayle Bannock (bannock = oatcake). When a Gayle lad goes to the Front, in France, and runs out of ammunition:

"He tuke oot his bannock, he threw it instead,

Ther wez twenty Germans ligger like deead."

- so tough was Dales bannock. It doesn't matter if you don't know that "ligger" is an Old English word meaning to lie (cf modern German "liegen") - James provides you with a glossary if you grew up outside Yorkshire. The sense is clear. Or Makken a sap whistle with its sharp rhythms and precise description of making a whistle; or An early Lamb, its gentleness, even tenderness that dialect can uniquely convey, ending with a sardonic twist which is true to life in the Dales as it really is - "Lams boorn ower sune land up on a skewer."

Could James Alderson be the last true dialect poet of the Dales? Whether he is or not cherish these poems as a living part of our heritage.

COLIN SPEAKMAN

Kit Calvert's Bookshop



This evocative drawing of Kit Calvert's bookshop in Hawes, by Dales artist Mark Thompson, will soon be seen in a forthcoming book Yesterday's Men. For details contact Mark Thompson, Barden Tower, Barden Skipton, North Yorkshire. Kit Calvert - close friend of James Alderson - published his own autobiography in 1981 Kit Calvert of Wensleydale (Dalesman £1.85)

A Yorkshire Dales Diary

- Saturday June 25th Flowers at the Tarn - a repeat visit , by popular request, to Malham Tarn Field Centre where Dr Disney and his staff explain the summer flora. 1.30pm at Centre.
- Tuesday June 28th Anna Adams of Ribblesdale - well known poet and sculptress, Anna Adams, presents examples of her work, much of it inspired by the Dales landscape. Grassington Town Hall, 8pm. YDS event.
- Saturday July 2nd A Visit to a lead mine Leeds University Department of Mining invite YDS members to see inside a Nidderdale lead mine; old clothes, wellies, torches required. Numbers on party extremely restricted - phone Grassington 752595 to book place and time; first come first served ! YDS event.
- Sunday July 10th }
Thursday July 14th } Leeds Promenade Concert and Great Yorkshire Show Bus services from Wharfedale; details (SAE please) from Secretary
- Sundays July 17th, July 31st, Yorkshire Dales railwayman . Special charter rail service along the scenic Skipton-Rylstone freight-only railway branch line. Details of times, fares, booking from Yorkshire Dales Railway, Embsay Station, Near Skipton, North Yorkshire
August 14th
- Sunday August 28th The George Fox Country A walk with links with the birth of the Quaker movement near Sedbergh and Firbank, lead by Laurie Fallows. Meet Sedbergh Information Centre (Joss Lane Car Park) 2pm. YDS event.
- Tuesday August 30th Kilnsey Show The famous Dales agricultural show at Kilnsey, Upper Wharfedale - from 10 am.
- Saturday September 10th Cotterdale A walk to discover something of the interest and history in this little known Upper Wensleydale valley with YDS members. Meet Hawes Station Car Park 2.pm. YDS event.
- Sunday September 18th The Voluntary Society and Countryside Interpretation YDS/BIHS Day School to look at examples of interpretation by voluntary bodies in the Dales. Details from Secretary.
- Saturday September 23rd Pennine Railways - how voluntary bodies can help with their promotion; a workshop not for rail enthusiasts so much as voluntary groups wanting to help fight for the retention of their local line after Serpell. A joint event with Pennine Heritage - information from Bill Breakell, Pennine Heritage, Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire.

YDS Membership Drive From June onwards there is a special "introductory offer" YDS membership drive - see The Dalesman for June and July; membership only £3 for rest of '83. Help us to recruit more members by bringing friends to YDS events or passing potential members (for free copy of the Review) to the Secretary. We look to increase membership both from within and from our many friends outside the Dales.



Colin Speakman
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 SAE appreciated with enquiries.

Keld Village Band, Swaledale
 (circa 1900)

photo: Arthur Roberts collection.

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