

# Yorkshire Dales Review

No.72 Autumn 2000



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Yorkshire Dales  
Society



£1.50

## ***Sustainable Travel - Now an Imperative for the Dales***

The recent fuel blockade and subsequent transport crisis has made us understand, as perhaps never before, how totally dependent the Yorkshire Dales is on the easy availability of petroleum. Farmers, small businesses, local residents, local government, service providers, commuters, visitors, all of us are all heavily reliant on abundant petrol and diesel at the pumps.

Whatever the politics and ethics of high fuel taxes and refinery blockades (and as a strictly non-political organisation the Yorkshire Dales Society cannot enter that debate), what is certain that September fuel shortages were a catastrophe for the very many small business of the Dales who depend on tourists for their very survival. If visitors don't come, or come in smaller numbers, bills can't be paid, staff have to be laid off, other suppliers such as bakers, butchers and dairymen lose orders, and the whole economy suffers. Road hauliers can at least pass on the diesel increases to their customers. A cancelled guest house booking is money gone for ever.

Trivial as it might appear in comparison, even the Yorkshire Dales Society would find it difficult to survive for long as the overwhelming majority of our own members depend on their cars to travel to events or attend meetings.

Naturally, everyone who cares about the Dales must share a concern that a permanent solution is found, and we don't get a repetition of the events of September in late autumn. At very least, most people would support preferential treatment for rural areas, for key professions and for people on low incomes who have no choice but to use their cars where there is little or no public transport.

But it would be wrong for this to be seen as more than part of a solution. Like it or not high petrol prices are here to stay. Even if the Government does cut taxes, both the oil companies and OPEC having seen the panic in the supermarkets even a

hint of oil shortage brings, will recognise that as world demands begins to outstrip supply, it is in their interest to keep prices high. Given the Government's international commitments to reduce global warming (recent storms, floods and melting polar ice have a direct link to our insatiable desire to travel), reducing the burning of fossil fuels is an environmental as well as a economic imperative.

The solutions, even in the short term, must be for everyone to help reduce car and petrol dependency. There must be urgent research and investigation into alternative fuels. One immediate product available is LPG which reduces pollution and is about half the price of petrol. How about an LPG network (sponsored by the National Park Authority and North Yorkshire County Council who could use it for their own vehicles) being developed in the Dales? Smaller cars rather than gas-guzzling four-wheel drive vehicles, less necessary now that winters are warmer, can reduce costs significantly, as can a greater willingness to share cars.

Public transport in the Dales including the Dalesbus network, has also improved immeasurably over the last two years, and whilst perhaps only a minority of journeys in the Dales can be replaced by the bus or train, very many more can than most drivers are prepared to admit. Yorkshire Dales Society members can give a lead by using bus and train services whenever they can. Almost all events in the current 2000/1 programme are fully public transport accessible. Each and every journey by a visitor helps secure more income for the network. Naturally, we need even better and more comprehensive (and affordable) bus and train services, to give people a real choice, particularly services designed to meet the needs of local people, and the YDS will do all it can to support such developments. Cycling and walking, whether for pleasure or for utilitarian reasons, has both major health and environmental benefits. It is worth reflecting that the minority of us who do use



public transport in the Dales suffered relatively few disruptions to our lifestyles in recent weeks as the pumps ran dry.

In the longer term all our planning and transport policies both within and outside the Dales need to be revisited. The closure of local shops, banks, schools and other services in recent years happened because of in-built assumptions that there would be ever-continuing cheap energy. Imaginative thinking is required to bring services back to Dales communities to reduce the need for travel. Cheap petrol has, in the recent past also encouraged long distance commuting, and everyone in the Dales knows of people choosing to live in the upper Dales and travel huge distances every day by car to work - to Leeds, Lancaster, Darlington, Manchester and beyond. Clearly there is no case for cutting taxes to allow affluent people to commute such distances in large cars. A trend to

home or distance working, using the immense potential of modern electronic communications to reduce the need to travel, will only be encouraged as travel costs rise. Internet shopping, supported by a taxi-bus network to home deliver groceries as well as passengers in the Dales, could be another piece of lateral thinking to reduce car miles.

Sustainable tourism - that is tourism which is based on reducing environmental impact by, whenever possible, using local goods and services,

travelling by more sustainable means such as walking, cycling and local public transport, and respecting local cultural and ecological diversity - also makes economic sense, as people stay longer in an area and spend more money within a local economy. Less day visitors but more staying visitors is not a threat but an opportunity for the Yorkshire Dales.

What is clear, however, that the problems of high fuel prices will not go away. They will be solved not by the kind of confrontations we have seen in recent weeks, but by people being willing to listen to each other, to understand each others' arguments, as well as the environmental issues, and to seek solutions in the long term interest of the Dales and its communities.

*Colin Speakman*



5972 'Olton Hall' with a Hellifield to Carlisle special on the Settle - Carlisle Railway. (Photo: Pete Shaw, from the 2001 Settle - Carlisle Railway Calendar, reviewed on page 14)

# John Stanley Bell

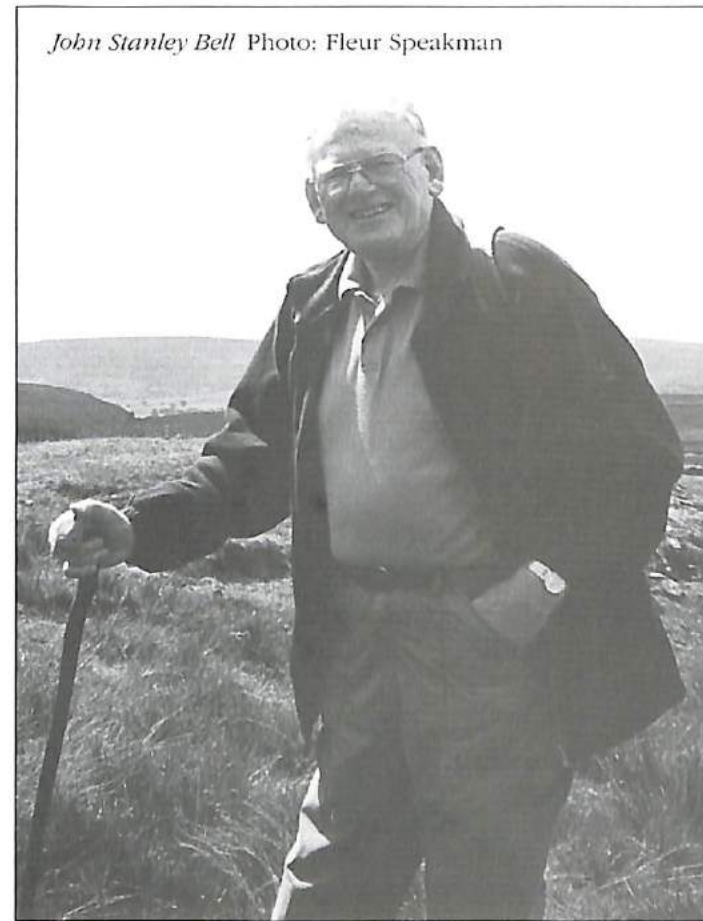
It is with enormous sadness that we record the death, in August, at the age of 74, of YDS Council Member John Stanley Bell, who suffered a fatal heart attack while walking in the Dales with friends from the Society.

John's background with its mixture of industry and countryside helped both to shape so many of his insights and to awaken that deep love, even veneration for the Yorkshire Dales. He was a man with many interests who contributed so much in so many spheres to his fellow citizens in the fields of education, politics and public service.

John was born at Rawcliffe Bridge near Goole, his family moving later to Dobby Hall Farm, Sutton in Craven, when he was seven, where the family had a small-holding for a time. Educated at Keighley Grammar School, John left to become an apprentice engineer. A serious rugby injury forced him into office work and during World War Two, after a period at an emergency teacher training college, he qualified in 1949 as a primary school teacher, later becoming headmaster of Cullingworth Primary school in 1958; other headships of local schools following till he took early retirement in 1982. An Honorary Degree from Bradford University for his work in education was the start of an even closer connection with the University. He served on the University Council and became its Pro-Chancellor from 1977-2000; a position he retired from in July.

Elected to Keighley Borough Council in 1950, John became an Alderman in 1958, and the youngest mayor of the Keighley area in 1960/61. As Leader of the Labour Group, he represented Keighley Council for many years and also held the post of Chairman of West Yorkshire County Council, and also the Airedale and District Health Authorities and became Chairman of Bradford Health Authority. In addition, he initiated the organisation of the Friends of Cliffe Castle Museum and remained its chairman for 31 years.

John was a keen walker and the Yorkshire Dales and the Yorkshire Dales Society were especially dear to his heart. He generously shared that enthusiasm by giving so unstintingly of his time not only to the Yorkshire Dales Society, serving four years as a highly respected member of Council, but to numerous local groups whom he supported in various ways, having already given a remarkable 70 talks in the last year.



John Stanley Bell Photo: Fleur Speakman

Shortly before his death, John told me about his strong belief in public service. Equally important for him was his reading of books about the Dales and the Lakes, and above all how deeply he loved those hidden quiet places.

The Yorkshire Dales Society in consultation with John's family, would like to have some form of tribute to a very remarkable person who fired everyone with his enthusiasm at YDS Council of Management meetings, and whose sound common sense effortlessly would cut a swathe through any pretensions and verbage on any committee. Our heart-felt sympathy and condolences go out to John's wife Audrey, his son Christopher and two daughters Hilary and Rachael, and six grandchildren. A packed Keighley Parish Church came together to celebrate John's life. Particularly moving for YDS members was the emblem chosen to decorate the programme - the logo of the Yorkshire Dales Society, the bird's eye primrose *primula farinosa* - the Society could have no finer honour.

Fleur Speakman

# A Vision of Wild Country

Thirty years ago, Lady Sylvia Sayer, at that time Chairman of what is now our sister organisation the Dartmoor Preservation Society, gave an eloquent address to the delegates of a Conference on the Future of the Uplands organised by the Country Landowners Association and the now long-defunct Northern Pennines Rural Development Board. It was given at the time of controversial proposals to flood the beautiful Swincombe Valley, in the heart of Dartmoor, to make a huge reservoir; a proposal which Sylvia, more than anyone else, helped to defeat.

Sylvia Sayer, after a lifetime of campaigning for her beloved Dartmoor, died earlier this year at the great age of 95. To commemorate her lifetime's work, the Dartmoor Preservation Society have re-issued that address in the form of a pamphlet, which the editor, DPA Secretary John Bainbridge, correctly describes as a "blueprint for a national park vision".

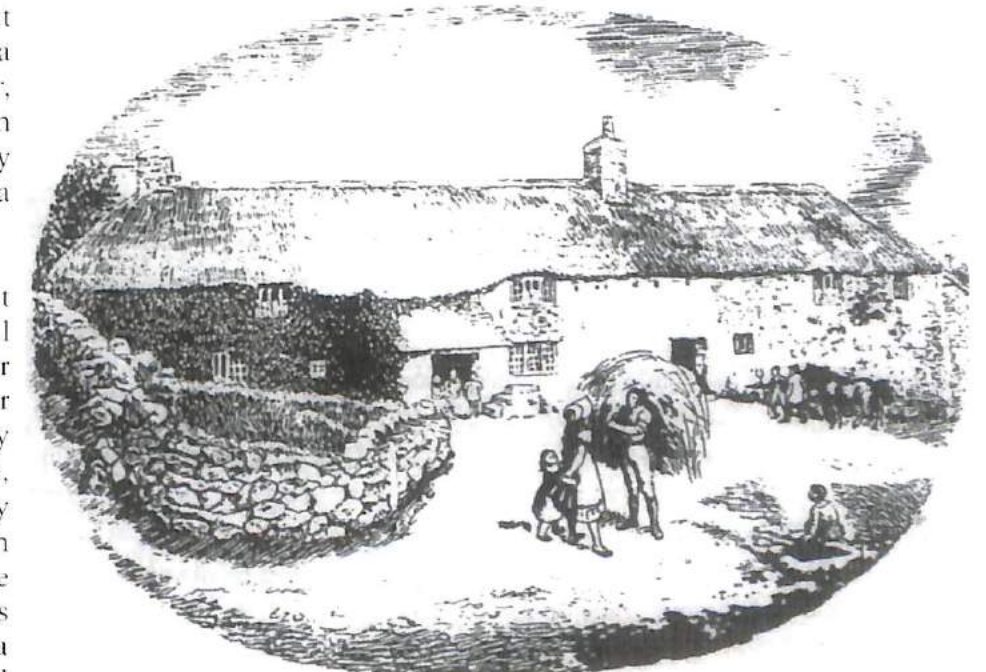
What she writes about Dartmoor is not only still supremely relevant for Dartmoor, but for other National Parks, particularly the Yorkshire Dales which, with Dartmoor, shares many wild places. As she argues in the pamphlet, when people talk about "our last wilderness areas" which have such a potent and enduring spiritual value for our population:

*they mean the mountains, the spacious hill country where you can see the shape of the land for miles, where nature is still manifestly dominant over man; they mean the rocks and the heather, the bracken, the gorse and bogs. That is wild country, and in Britain it is all that we have left of a truly virgin land; and it is slowly vanishing, not only in Britain but in every part of our man-polluted planet.*

These words have as much relevance in 2000 as when she first wrote them in 1970. But elsewhere in the address she also reveals a clear

understanding of the real, interlinked issues of hill farming support, public access and conservation that are still sadly muddled in much official thinking and political lobbying. In urging subsidies and tax concessions not to be directed at the kind of hugely damaging fencing, moorland ploughing and monoculture afforestation which was still continuing in our National Parks in the 1970s but towards the support for the non-destructive "traditional husbandry" on Dartmoor, she argues that:

*taxpayers' contribution ought to be directed, and would be far more willingly and generously directed, not towards subsidising developments destructive of their national park*



*interests, but to subsidising the kind of traditional hill farming that conserves the landscape and the freedom of the open moor; and allows the non-controversial age-old dual use of hill-grazing and access that has gone hand in hand on Dartmoor from earliest times.*

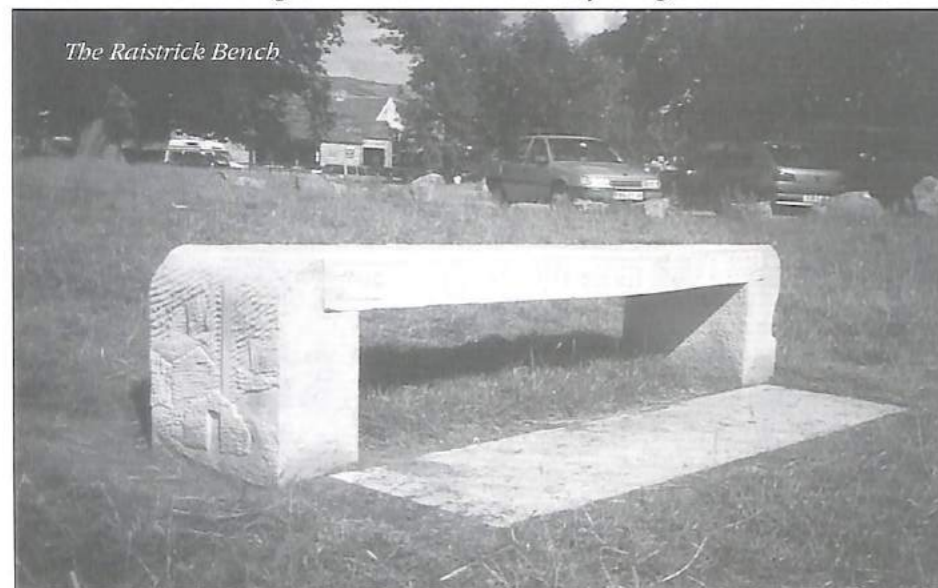
Substitute the words "Yorkshire Dales" for "Dartmoor" and the paragraph has an immediate resonance for everyone who knows and loves the Dales. Copies of Sylvia Sayers' *Wild Country*, illustrated by her line drawings and by photographs by Hugh Robinson are available price £5 post free from the Dartmoor Preservation Society, Old Duchy Hotel, Princetown, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 6QE.

# The Dalesman of the Millennium's Commemoration on Yorkshire Day

Two dozen people including Yorkshire Dales Society members and some of Arthur Raistrick's former leadmining enthusiasts from the Earby Mine Gang, were among those who listened to some of the fascinating leadmining information given by Les Bloom on Grassington Moor on Tuesday August

Raistrick's on the National Park Committee, David Butterworth, acting Chief Executive of the YDNPA, Ken Willson, the Yorkshire Dales Society President and President of the West Riding Ramblers, Colin Speakman, President of the Northern Area of the YHA and Secretary of the Yorkshire Dales Society, Cory Jones, the Director of Malham Tarn Fields Studies Centre, the President of the Craven Naturalists, members of Dr Raistrick's Earby Mine Gang (leadmining), the Field Society chairman, relatives of Dr Raistrick and several YDS Council members. Colin Speakman gave an address on why the Society felt that the Raistrick bench was such an appropriate symbol for this great Dales scholar and historian.

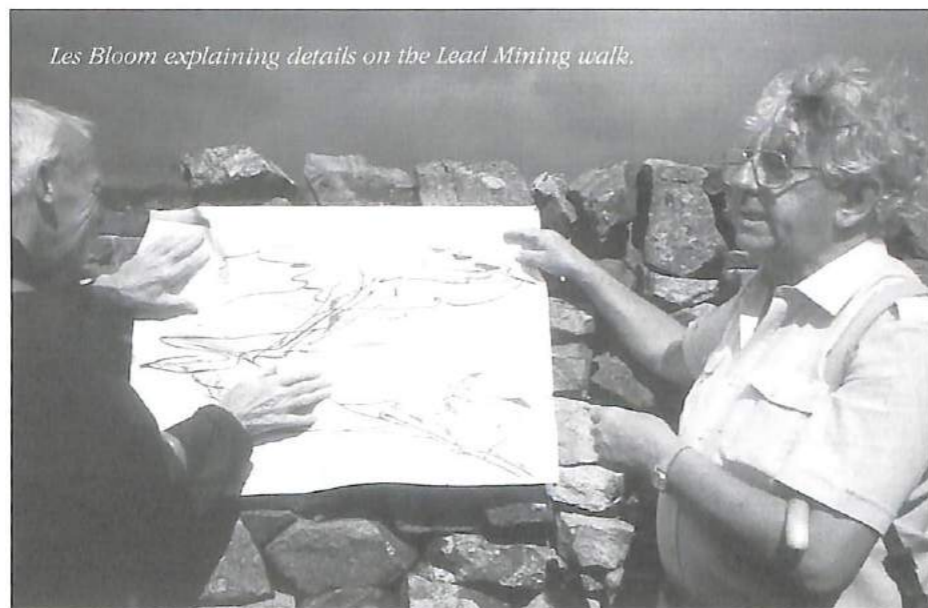
The ceremony was followed by a splendid afternoon tea at Church House, Grassington, masterminded by Hilary Baker, with the assistance of Shirley McCauley which was much enjoyed and there was an opportunity to look at an excellent display of material associated with Dr Raistrick. The Yorkshire Dales Society would like to pay



The Raistrick Bench

1st. Yorkshire Day, as he pointed out some of the industrial features still to be seen.

At the short ceremony in the afternoon there were plenty of photo opportunities for the Arthur Raistrick bench sculpted in Yorkshire gritstone from the quarry at Ellingstring by Peter Hibbard and displaying some key motifs associated with Raistrick's life and work: geology, industrial archaeology, and walking. A typical Swaledale lead mining scene is incorporated on one side panel of the bench and the other has a dales fossil, a coral of the dibunophyllum type. In keeping with Dr Raistrick's Quaker beliefs, there is a simple dedication with his dates 1896-1991, his walking boots and crossed mining hammers, while the other edge incorporates the Yorkshire Dales Society, complete with bird's eye primrose logo. The bench was dedicated by Yorkshire Dales National Park Chairman, Stephen Macaré who was joined by a number of specially invited guests including Graham Watson, a former colleague of Dr



Les Bloom explaining details on the Lead Mining walk.

tribute once again to everyone once again who supported the project so warmly and helped to bring it to such a successful conclusion.

**Fleur Speakman**

# Graham Watson MBE

Ken Willson outlines some of the high-lights in the life of our newest honorary member, Graham Watson, his old friend and colleague.

Considerable pleasure and not a little pride was experienced by the Yorkshire Dales Society, when it was learned earlier in the year that the distinguished conservationist and environmentalist Graham Watson, had consented to join the select panel of the Society's Honorary Members: a decision which was in fact confirmed at the Society's Annual General Meeting in May at West Burton Village Hall.



Graham is indeed a very remarkable nonagenarian. Despite his age of 92, he was eager to drive himself recently from his home in Bradford to Grassington, to attend the dedication of the memorial seat to his old friend and colleague Dr Arthur Raistrick. Doubtless this energy was not unconnected with his earlier penchant for fast cars and motorcycles. Indeed to my personal knowledge, he often attended the monthly meetings of the Friends of the Lake District riding a huge BMW motorbike and clad in the appropriate leathers. Similarly dressed and mounted, he would sometimes set off from Bradford at about 5.30am for breakfast at his erstwhile college at Cambridge on a round trip of about 300 miles.

As an environmentalist his activities both locally and nationally have been extraordinary. He is a vice-president of the Friends of the Lake District, but does not claim to be a founder member although he agrees that in the very early days, he and his colleague Roland Wade, were instructed by John Dower ( of National park fame) and the

formidable Rev HH Symonds, to organise meetings in Leeds and Bradford to promote the formation of the organisation. He served, with his colleagues the late Roland Wade and Arthur Raistrick amongst others as a Minister's nominee on the original Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority from its

inception in 1951 to 1973 and in a similar capacity on the Lake District Special Planning Board from 1967 to 1980. During the overlapping period of several years, he served simultaneously on both Authorities: a punishing schedule and one which was certainly unique. He

was a founder member of this Society and his name will long be remembered in the Dales for his magnificent gift to the National Trust, of the Upper Wharfedale Estate of some 7500 acres.

Nationally he was for many years, a member of the standing Committee on National Parks which was set up in 1936 for the prime purpose of promoting National Park legislation (achieved in 1949). He is now a vice-president of its successor body - the Council for National Parks. In 1972 he was an appointed member of Lord Sandford's committee which was set up to carry out a review of National Park policy.

The list is endless. But when we consider such dedication over some 60 years of a long life, we must be aware that here is a true pioneer of the outdoor movement in its widest sense: one worthy to rank with such notabilities as Canon Rawnsley, John Dower and HH Symonds.

**Ken Willson**

# Storms over the Yorkshire Dales

Troubles often come in pairs, but for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to lose both a Chairman and a Chief Executive, in difficult circumstances, during a few tumultuous months, is something without precedent in the 46 years since the Park was first designated.

Robert Heseltine was one of the most remarkable Chairmen the Authority has ever had. From a Dales farming background, Robert's considerable political skills and passion for the Dales took him to the position of Chairman of the Authority at a time of difficult transition from County Council Committee to independent Authority. His total commitment to the economic and social well being of Dales communities, not just his own electorate, but above all belief in the need for a fully sustainable countryside, was responsible for a number of major initiatives, including the establishment of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust. There is little doubt that without Robert's vision, YMT would not exist today, and he did much to raise the profile of the National Park both locally and nationally.

Sadly his often unorthodox style, breaking through the conventions of bureaucracy, and often leading from the front, made enemies as well as friends. But it was serious discrepancies over expenses which led to his undoing, inattention to detail which resulted in a Crown Court conviction, a Community Service penalty and the end of what had been a distinguished career as a District and County Councillor and Chair of the National Park. Whatever his failings, Robert's major contribution to the Yorkshire Dales should never be forgotten and with it the debt of gratitude that everyone who cares for the Dales owes to him.

Heather Hancock's abrupt departure in June was in many ways even more serious. Her appointment as both the youngest and the first woman National Park Officer of any UK National Park heralded a new dawn for the Dales. A brilliantly gifted young officer, she came to the Dales with an already distinguished civil service career behind her, and within weeks she was imposing a new management style on the Park Authority, restructuring and reshaping the organisation from the grass roots upwards, changing the stereotypical local government culture, creating a clear strategic direction, getting both a Local Plan and Management Plan in place, and a Business Plan,

not to mention bringing the Authority into the 21st century with full computerisation.

Inevitably when you change the habits of a lifetime with a new strategic vision, there were always going to be problems of taking both her colleagues and her Authority Members with her, but there was little doubt that Heather faced greater problems than most. In her letter of resignation, regrettably leaked to the press, she wrote of the "intimidation, harassment and undermining by a minority of members" of herself and her colleagues. Clearly these are serious accusations, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that gender politics were an issue here, middle aged men used to getting their own way, resenting the intellectual sharpness of a younger woman not prepared to play the game their way. Equally, it was true that Heather's background did not include much experience in the sordid *realpolitik* of local Government and in ways of handling self-important parish pump politicians. Nor did the Heseltine affair help as her former mentor became her accuser.

Ultimately, Heather didn't see her future in having to put up with such acrimony. Her gifts were in huge demand, and the offer of a very senior post as Director of Environment and Development with the new Regional Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward (a body with potentially much more power and influence than the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority) was not to be refused.

We wish her every success in her new post, and record that though she was only with us a short time (two and a half years), she has made a very significant impact on the nature of the organisation she took over. She has also made many friends in the Dales, including the Yorkshire Dales Society (many members will recall the highly professional presentation she made to the Society last October) and we are delighted to learn she will remain an active Trustee of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, a body which, when she worked for the Millennium Commission, she was so instrumental in bringing into being.

The Yorkshire Dales Society has raised some of the issues resulting from the circumstances of Heather's resignation with the Council for National Parks who in turn has discussed these issues with the Environment Minister, Michael Meacher. In particular CNP has focused on the need to ensure

that not only are the right kind of people appointed to National Park Authorities, but their duties and responsibilities are fully understood. This also applies to elected members who may be elected to serve their local constituents, but are appointed by their local authority to the National Park Authority, and in so doing must accept, fully, the purposes of the National Park Authority as laid down by the 1995 Environment Act. Flagrant anti-National Park posturing has no place on a National Park Authority. Furthermore the recommendations of the Nolan Committee on full disclosure of Members' business and other interests need to be fully implemented - at every level.

But what of the immediate future? Storms may be unpleasant but they also cleanse, leaving a clearer, calmer atmosphere. For the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority what is now needed is a period of consolidation, with time to work with the new management structures, and to learn the lessons of the last few months. Acrimony and division are no way to run any organisation. Robert Heseltine's successor as Chairman is Steve

Macaré, a Liberal Democrat Councillor from Harrogate, who already has a reputation as a level headed, shrewd and effective Chair of the Authority and who shares a real concern and understanding of the Dales. His Deputy, John Cumberland, also deeply respected, is also a Member of Council of the Yorkshire Dales Society. The Yorkshire Dales Society offers Steve and John, and their colleagues on the Authority, our full and complete support over the difficult months ahead.

At time of writing we do not yet know who will be the next Chief Executive - and there are rumoured to be over 500 applicants. David Butterworth, Heather's Deputy, has in the meantime been doing a first class job as Acting Chief Executive, helping to restore battered morale to a highly able professional team who, over the last few months, have suffered media attention they could all have well done without. Whoever does get the job - and we hope to have his or her profile in the next Yorkshire Dales Review - will get our full support. After such storms the sun usually shines ...



Storm over Ribblesdale (Photo: Howard Beck)

# Millennium Walling Project on Track

When, for more than two decades, the Settle-Carlisle line appeared to be doomed to closure, British Rail's maintenance of the drystone boundary walls bordering the track was neglected. Deterioration had reached a point where a number of sections were in a state of collapse and were no longer stockproof.

Now that the future of the Settle-Carlisle line is no longer in jeopardy, Railtrack Ltd, the Railway Heritage Trust and the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust have jointly funded a project, managed by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, to restore 2.2km of walls between Blea Moor signal box and the south tunnel portal.

It is widely recognised that these walls are an

bleakest locations in northern Britain, even in high summer and the remote location also poses problems.

There is no road access to Blea Moor signal box or tunnel so vehicles have to park half a mile away, necessitating a long, uphill walk to the worksite. A helicopter was brought in by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority to transport 178 tonnes of stone airlifted by 221 bags, to the site, from quarries at Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Swaledale and from near Barnard Castle.

Paul Collins, Barns and Walls conservation officer for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority commented: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, the Railway Heritage Trust and Railtrack on a project that will conserve and enhance the popular Settle to Carlisle conservation area."

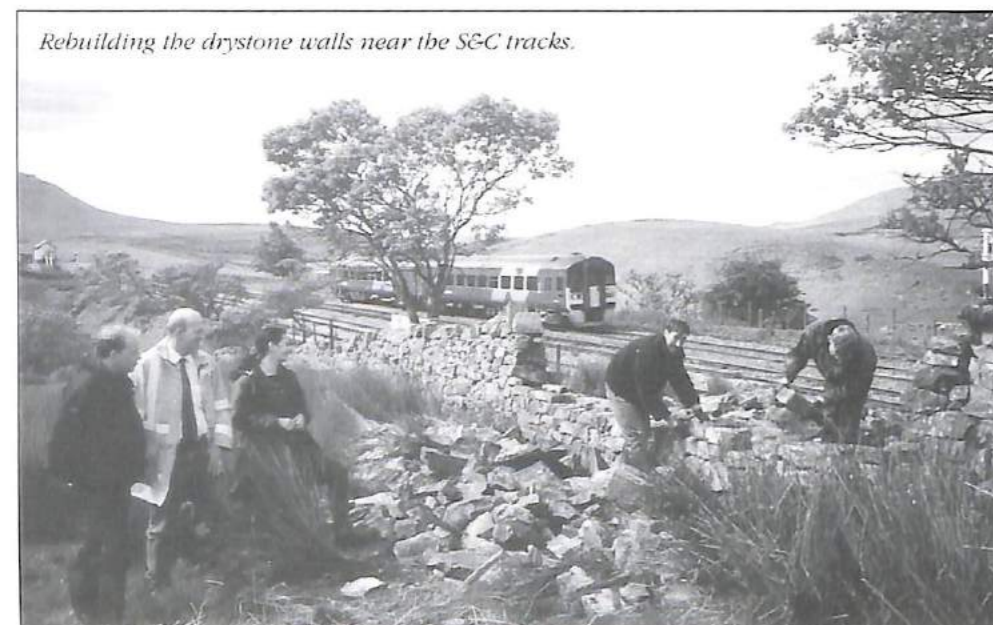
"We are glad that local skills are being employed," added David Sharrod from the Millennium Trust. "Drystone walls are an intrinsic part of the Dales landscape and these restored walls will be seen by thousands of passengers travelling the famous Settle-Carlisle line."

Once the drystone walling is complete and confirmed as stockproof, the inner post and wire fence, which had had to be erected to keep sheep off the lineside, will be dismantled.

Paul Ashton, Railtrack, boundary manager, was delighted to be involved with a project which has helped to turn round the fortunes of the Settle-Carlisle line. He said, "It also makes a nice change to work in such pleasant surroundings, as opposed to spending most of my time dealing with problems of trespass and vandalism."

## Ongoing restoration

As well as the project at Blea Moor, the North Union partnership is recruiting two additional full-time drystone wallers who will be based in



Rebuilding the drystone walls near the S&C tracks.

important feature of the landscape. The areas around Blea Moor is one of the most well known and frequently visited parts of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and a well-used bridleway runs parallel to the railway line and the three Peaks route crosses the line close by.

Local drystone wallers, from Austwick, Swaledale and Skipton, are being used by North Union - a partnership between Railtrack North West and maintenance contractor GTRM to ensure the retention of local skills and that the money for the project is spent within the local community.

The work, which has taken place over the summer months, is nearing completion, despite adverse weather conditions. Blea Moor can be one of the

Appleby and who will work at a variety of locations on the line. Chris Gee, maintenance delivery manager for Cumbria, pointed out that they are spending £1.7m on heavy maintenance of the track this year and some major restoration of the walls will be undertaken. As well as rebuilding collapsed sections of the wall, improvement works will be carried out to prevent further breaches and to avoid the incidents of sheep on the line, reducing delays to the the train en route.

## Ribblehead display

Rail enthusiasts and other visitors to the area will also have the opportunity to visit the interpretation centre at Ribbleshead Southbound station: another Millennium Trust Project, the work has involved the restoration of the Victorian booking hall and ticket office to create a display area. Information included

the history of the Viaduct and the construction of the railway. Features such as the Viaduct remain today as a monument to the Victorian engineers and their navvies who built the 13 tunnels and 21 viaducts by hand, to create a main line railway route through the Dales.

Visitors will be encouraged to walk on public rights of way to features such as Force Gill Aqueduct, Blea Moor Tunnel and Dent Head Viaduct as well as Ribbleshead Viaduct itself. Access to the station by train for visitors will be encouraged by regular Northern Spirit trains from West Yorkshire, Settle and Carlisle and the Lancashire Dalesrail services, to help keep traffic off local roads.

*(There will be a YDS guided walk terminating at Ribbleshead Station Interpretive Centre on December 23rd - see Events on page 15)*

# Gift Aid: A Tremendous Response

We have had about 750 signatures responding to our appeal to let us reclaim tax on subscriptions and donations, around 65% and are delighted at the way the YDS membership has supported this appeal. Our warm thanks also to those who sent us small donations, occasionally stamps and other messages of goodwill. Quite a number of others wrote to us explaining that they were below the tax threshold or paid their subscription by CAF or NCVO and so could not claim twice. To clarify, those in receipt of a pension will normally pay tax on it as well and are therefore tax payers. Please let

us have your forms back if you are still considering whether to return them, the YDS will be indebted to you.

Finally many people took the opportunity to notify us of change of address, name, status or to correct any errors of detail; we are very grateful for this information which helps to keep us up to date.

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## Those small Christmas Gifts

Why not give a friend or relative Yorkshire Dales Society membership for Christmas?

If you notify us not later than early December, we will send out the current issue with either an elegant YDS leather badge or bookmark as a free gift and will actually start the membership to run from January 2001 for a year if you wish. Please mark your envelope **Christmas Offer** and send your request to the Yorkshire Dales Society, Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, LS21 1HD. Please make out your cheques to the Yorkshire Dales Society.

Membership rates: Single Adult £11, Family/Couple £15, Single Retired £9, Retired Couple £12 and Student/Unwaged £6.

### BADGES AND BOOKMARKS

Our elegant leather badges and bookmarks make ideal small Christmas gifts. Badges are £2 each post free and bookmarks £1.50 each or £4 for 3 bookmarks. Address as above.

# Daleswatch

## A ROUNDUP OF SOME KEY HAPPENINGS AND FUTURE PLANS FOR THE YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK

### Limestone Country and Cattle Farming

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority together with English Nature are developing an exciting project which plans to encourage a return to more sustainable mixed cattle farming in the limestone country of the National Park. Two special Conservation Areas have been designated in the Park, for their internationally important limestone grassland, limestone pavement and basic flush habitats. The drastic decline in cattle farming in recent years means that many important limestone habitats have only been grazed with sheep, but the mosaic of habitats present on a typical limestone upland farm need both sheep and cattle grazing the vegetation.

The Limestone Country Project will aim to redress this decline in mixed farming in several ways, within ten year 'whole farm' conservation plans. For example, farmers would be encouraged back into cattle farming through capital grants for purchasing herds, and converting existing farm buildings to cattle sheds; or the project might help farmers find markets for high value products such as hardy traditional breeds. The project is expected to cost up to a £1 million over three years, with between 40-50% funding likely to be sought from the EU's LIFE fund.

### Dales Barns

A distinctive feature of the Dales National Park, contributing to its special quality, are the pattern of field barns. Three schemes targeting grant aid on barns most at risk in particularly important landscapes are close to completion, and the Authority is examining how best to secure field barns in the future.

Barns are valued for different reasons by farmers, building experts, historians and visitors, so the YDNPA are now looking at offering a sliding scale

of grants, depending on those values. This would be a radical funding approach, since most funders are interested in one aspect: economic regeneration, or landscape, or cultural heritage. But previous schemes have proved that the NPA can juggle complicated funding arrangements whilst making the process simple and straightforward for the landowner or applicant. The final plank of the plans now under development would be to move from the piece-meal approach of targeting individual field barns to a 'whole farm' approach.

### Ten New Conservation Areas

An ambitious target of ten new Conservation Area designations over the next year has been set by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. In the last year the Authority has been preparing the ground to reinvigorate the scheme which had lost some momentum, and is an important and statutory role.

The settlements likely to be considered for Conservation Area designation are mostly in the northern part of the Park, to complete a good record of designations in the southern areas. Possible settlements include such classic Dales villages as Thwaite, Hawes and Muker. In designating three new conservation areas over the



past 12 months, the NPA has trialled a new approach that fully involves the local community in preparing character appraisals, investigating preservation and enhancement opportunities, and which assesses local support for a designation. Designation statements are developed in

workshops involving local people to decide what makes a settlement special. We hope Conservation Area status will help attract funds for locally-led village enhancement schemes.

### Bainbridge Village Green Playground

What happens when there are proposals to put a modern children's playground on a Village Green which is also the centrepiece of a priceless conservation area? Controversy raged in recent months over proposals to place brightly coloured playground furniture on Bainbridge village green, with opinion divided in the village and the usual

political point-scoring very much in evidence. With heavy traffic along the A684, and inevitable extra parking problems (modern children in the Dales travelling more than 400 metres are generally taken to a playground in a parent's car), and no other suitable site in the village, the compromise decision supported by the Yorkshire Dales Society was for a smaller scheme, in toned down colours, close to the toilet block and parking area in the northern part of the Green, giving local children somewhere to let off steam, but not infringing too much on that famous view of Bainbridge around its Village Green.

## It really was a Glorious Day!

Those of you who braved the elements in June of last year when we visited New House farm at Malham will recall that because of the appalling weather conditions at the outset of the day in question, some rapid reorganising of the original plans had to be undertaken. Added to which, the variety of flowers was not at its best.

Not so this year when, on the 24th June, nineteen members visited New House once again. Thanks to

sunshine, whilst the flowers were much more advanced than on the previous occasion. Yes, there were still many buttercups in the meadow but also the brilliant magenta of the wood cranesbill, bistort, yellow rattle, pig-nut, meadow saxifrage, plaintains and many others. The delicate melancholy thistle was just considering whether the time was ripe to burst into flower. Along the small limestone crag, Martin pointed out numerous other plants, flowers and ferns as well as one of the rarer orchids which thrive on this exposed strata and are safe from cropping by sheep and cattle.



the Carrs at Lee Gate Farm who gave permission to park vehicles by their farm, only a short walk had to be made to New House where we were met by Martin Davies, the manager of the National Trust properties in this area of the Dales. Martin, you may recall, had only just taken up his appointment twelve months ago and now was thoroughly familiar with his domain. The weather was perfect for what was required, warm with bursts of

Following the tour, lunch was taken in a relaxing manner by Heber Beck before commencing the short walk I had planned towards Bordley Town, as some signposts indicate. Perhaps in ages past, Bordley really was looked upon as a town. Certainly, the proliferation of footpaths and bridleways that converge on this settlement are indicative of a greater importance than is evident today by the few dwellings that still exist. Other meadows also were obviously farmed in the same manner as that at New House if the flora was anything to go by, whilst on the return leg of the walk to the north of the National Trust property we were able to observe the more intensive dairy farming operated from Lee Gate Farm. It was a good day and I hope that those who accompanied me enjoyed it as much as I did.

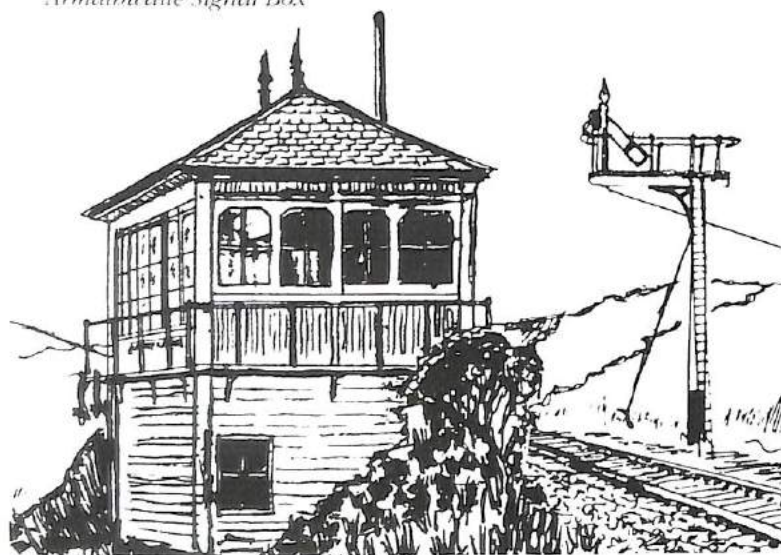
Dennis Cairns

# Book Reviews

**ONE HUNDRED TALES OF THE SETTLE-CARLISLE RAILWAY** by W.R. Mitchell published by Castleberg Press at £6.99 plus £1 p.&packing, and available locally or direct from the author at 18, Yealand Avenue, Giggleswick, Settle, North Yorks BD24 0AY.

Just when you thought there was little more to be said about the Settle-Carlisle Railway, Bill Mitchell proves us wrong with his irresistible and inimitable gift for telling us stories and anecdotes about the line. The stories are selected from the many tape-recordings Bill made over thirty years and capture the essential flavour of that very special line. A Carlisle driver tells him (rather surprisingly) that most Welsh coal was only fit for hurling out of the train at passing rabbits. A hit meant that a man

*Armathwaite Signal Box*



would nip off the train to collect a nutritious meal. However, a shrewd farmer in the Eden valley set up a scarecrow near the tracks as a target for the fireman who threw lumps of coal at it - the farmer was then able to collect free coal!

Signalmen at the various boxes often had another job which they undertook while on duty: cobbling at Hellifield, barbering at Dent, jam-making elsewhere while another spent much of his time tinkering with carburettors. Read on to discover more delights such what exactly "black snow" was, or discover the legend of the toasted tea-cake, or the story of the monkey-muck (a runaway ore train.) or even the potentially tragic story of the man who dropped what he thought was a spent match down the chemical toilet at Blea Moor signal box.

There is much detailed rail knowledge for the aficionado, a wealth of illustration and many more lively tales to come.

FS

## SETTLE-CARLISLE RAILWAY CALENDAR 2001

Pete Shaw, Vice President of the Friends of the Settle Carlisle Railway, has produced another most attractive calendar of this highly photogenic railway line; there are twelve stunning full colour pictures by Pete with an additional cover shot. The calendar costs £6.99 inclusive of postage and packing and can be obtained from Pete Shaw Photography, 33 Temple Rhydding Drive, Baildon, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD17 5PX. Cheques should be made out to Pete Shaw Photography.

## NIDDERDALE WALKS, HISTORY AND HERITAGE - John Burnley (Sigma Press £7.95)

John Burnley's book divides neatly into two halves. The first is a lively and at times chatty introduction to Nidderdale taking the Dale from "the Flat Lands" above York to the "Hidden Dale" of Upper Nidderdale beyond Pateley Bridge. The second part consists of 18 suggested circular walks, 4 to 9 miles in length, visiting the countryside described in the first section, complete with detailed route descriptions and sketch maps. Its major omission is all reference to public transport even though most of the walks are or could be accessible by local bus, including the Sunday Nidderdale Rambler, or even the half hourly service between Leeds and Ripon (e.g. to Ripley). Even before the current fuel crisis, every responsible outdoor writer (and publisher) should be giving his or her readers, not all of whom own cars, a choice of both car parking and public transport information. Even worse, many suggested car parking places are by village greens or in already overcrowded villages such as Ramsgill where an additional walker's car left there all day is at worst a cause of obstruction, at best an unwelcome eyesore. Isn't it time guidebook writers started behaving a little more responsibly towards the environment they allegedly care so much about?

CS

# Autumn Events

*What better way to look forward to the sights, sounds and colour of autumn than by joining in the latest series of Yorkshire Society Walks and enjoying a variety of different issues and topics from some excellent speakers in our latest Lecture Series.*

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11th: WALK IN THE CRACOE AREA.** Meet outside Cracoe Village Hall at 10.30am for a 3-4 mile moderate walk via Thorpe Road, Thorpe, Elbolton Hill, Linton and return to Cracoe for packed or pub or cafe lunch at approx. 12.30pm. Walk Leader Chris Hartley tel: 01943 873197. Bus Pride of the Dales 71 from Skipton Rail Station 1000, Bus Station 1005 to Cracoe.

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11th : TRADITIONAL FOOD IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES** by Peter Brears at Cracoe Village Hall at 2.15pm.

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 9th: WALK IN THE GARGRAVE AREA.** Meet outside Gargrave Village Hall for a 4 mile moderate walk at 10.30am, leader Chris Wright, tel: 01756 749699. Packed or pub or cafe lunch available. Return about 12.30pm. Train : Leeds 0816, Skipton 0855 to Gargrave.

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 9th. A VICTORIAN FAMILY CHRISTMAS** by Bernadette Atkinson who has featured on several television programmes. She will bring examples from her extensive collection of Victorian costume, to Gargrave Village Hall at 2.15pm.

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 23rd. YDS CHRISTMAS WALK** Our traditional pre-Christmas walk, this year 8 miles of rocky and boggy Upper Ribblesdale between Horton and Ribbleshead, via Ling Gill and Thorns Gill, this year to visit the new Ribbleshead Station Interpretive Centre. Moderate, but some steep sections. Bring rainwear, boots, torches and a packed lunch for this full day walk. Train Leeds 0845, Skipton 0925, Settle 0946, Horton 0955. Book Ribbleshead Day Return. Leader Colin Speakman (01943 607868).

**SATURDAY JANUARY 13th . PLEASE NOTE CHOICE OF WALKS.**

**EITHER A TOWN TRAIL ROUND HISTORIC RICHMOND,** meet Friary Gardens next to the Tourist Information Centre, Richmond at 11am for a tour lasting one to one and half hours, walking clothes not necessary for this tour. £1 donation per



person welcome, to Richmond Georgian Theatre Royal Museum. Pub, cafe or packed lunch (please mention any wheelchair users in advance to YDS office 01943 461938).

**OR DRUMMER BOY WALK,** meet at Friary Gardens near the TIC at 10.30am for a moderate walk of 3-4 miles, leader Charles Hepworth, tel: 01748 886397. The walk finishes about 12.30pm, packed, pub or cafe lunch. Bus 27 from Darlington Rail Station 0933. (Boots, rucksacks, rainwear etc. as usual).

**SATURDAY JANUARY 13th . FLOWERING MEADOWS OF THE DALES: JEWELS OF THE SWARD** by Robert Hannah, at Richmond Town Hall at 2.15pm.

## GRANDMA TURNER'S YORKSHIRE FRUIT LOAF

(Grace Cairns contributes this traditional, seasonal recipe which was given to her long before ovens had automatic timers. It's just the thing to sustain you on vigorous YDS walks she claims and adds cryptically, that no knowledge of metrication is required.)

Sieve together:-

1/4 lb sugar; 1/2 lb self-raising flour; pinch of salt

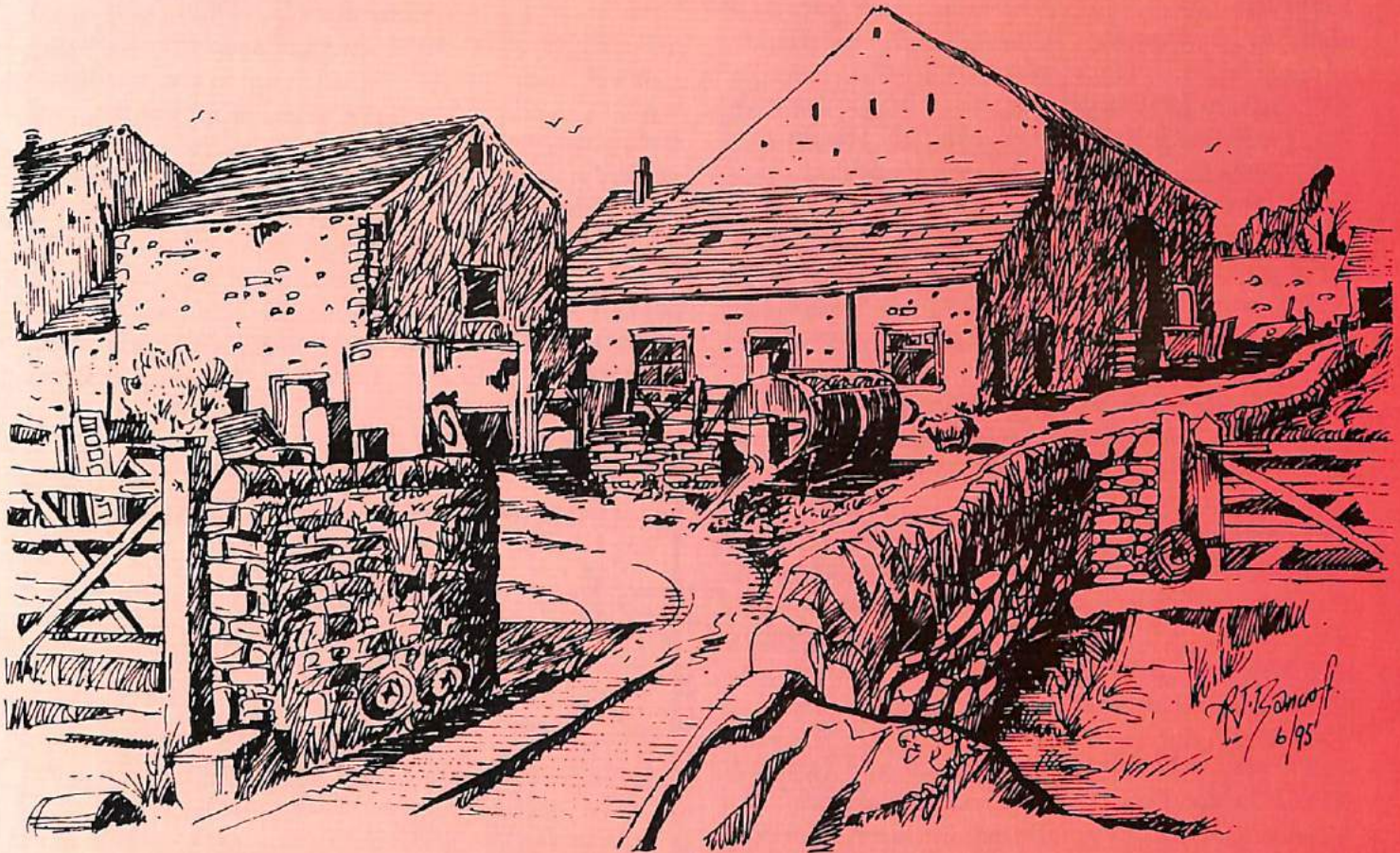
Rub in 1/4 lb margarine, then add 1/4 lb currants; 1/4 lb sultanas; 2 oz mixed peel and 1 egg.

Make a soft dough by adding milk in which 1/4 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda has been added. Bake in a moderate oven for approximately 1 1/4 hours. To be served buttered - with best Yorkshire butter of course!

This recipe provides a trailer for our lecture by Peter Brears on *Traditional Food in the Yorkshire Dales* on Saturday November 11th at 2.15pm at Cracoe Village Hall. Peter will be also be introducing some exciting new material from a recently discovered historic house-keeping book from Kildwick Hall, Wharfedale.

For news and events update see the Yorkshire Dales Society Website - [www.yorkshiredalesociety.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiredalesociety.org.uk)





Front Cover picture: *The Raistrick Bench with Secretary Colin Speakman, Graham Watson, YDS Honorary Member, and Steve Macaré, Chairman YDNPA* (Photo: John Hone).

Back Cover Drawing: *Farm Buildings, Ribble Valley* (Northstar Arts, Richard Bancroft).

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*Views expressed in the YDS Review are not necessarily those of the Yorkshire Dales Society.*

*Any contributions should be sent to the Editors, The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 1HD. Telephone/Answerphone 01943 461938.*

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