



# Spring Newsletter 1989

Number 14

This is the first Newsletter of 1989 and there has been little sign of a typical Yorkshire winter. No doubt the more mature of us are happy to have seen it so mild but the lack of snow will have been a disappointment to the youngsters.

## **Green Belt Enquiry**

There is still no news on the outcome of the Public Enquiry last June. It is not now anticipated that we will hear the results until at least June or July in which case we will be reporting in the Summer Newsletter.

Although we have had the odd donation to the fighting fund since this was mentioned in the last news letter, the response has been rather disappointing, so if you haven't donated and feel that you want to help preserve the village contact a committee member who will be only too happy to receive your contribution.

## **Sunnydale**

Much has been said on television and the papers lately about the effects of privatisation on the land owned by the Water Boards. All our previous dealings have of course been with the existing Yorkshire Water Authority and started before there was any suggestion by the government of privatising the Water Boards. There is therefore an extra dimension to our problems. To help put you in the picture we print the following press release:-

## **Water Privatisation**

"The Council for the Protection of Rural England and the RSPB jointly commissioned a study on the effects the Privatisation of the Water Authority would have on the environment.

They are concerned that very

substantial areas of unspoilt land will be vulnerable to new pressures.

Many of the water authorities have non-operational assets grossly undervalued because they were acquired perhaps 100 years ago. Developers are land-hungry and there would be rich pickings in realizing the value of these assets. Following privatisation pressure for residential, commercial and recreational development is likely to increase very sharply. Such areas have been protected from adverse and intrusive development in the past, because they were owned by public-sector companies.

New research show that the Government's decision to privatise the water industry could have far reaching implications for the environment and important findings demonstrate that amendments to the Water Bill are essential if serious environmental damage is to be prevented.

Protection requires either vesting ownership of these assets with conservation bodies in the public or private sector or leaseback possibly at peppercorn rents or rents set at levels to encourage the continuation or existing uses. The COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION has launched an appeal to protect key landscapes from the adverse effects of water privatisation. Land which is surplus to requirements by the Water Authority should be transferred to public ownership under National Trust, NRA or National Parks or Charity ownership. Measures to protect the public's interests on access by converting concessionary use to statutory rights are also urged by the Commission. These measures could be introduced into the Water Bill before the new companies are floated later this year."

SUNNYDALE is not one of these key landscapes, but locally this area is

just as important. The Village Society has been mounting its own campaign for a long time and has in the past written to various conservation bodies and the Recreation Division of Bradford Council asking for their help to try and protect Sunnydale for future generations. The Council's Recreation Division did express an interest in entering into a joint Management Agreement with the YWA, but this required further discussion. The society also advised YWA of our interest in the purchase of Sunnydale in our letter of 1st September 1987. We also wrote to our MP Gary Waller expressing our concern about the future of Sunnydale. He expressed the hope that its eventual use would be to provide an amenity to local residents (6/8/1987).

Yorkshire Water have since stated that they have had offers for Sunnydale from two local people and have acknowledged that the Village Society is also an interested party. The value put on Sunnydale by the Yorkshire Water Authority is £10,000.

Your committee have decided to take the following actions. Firstly, to check that the public footpaths through Sunnydale are registered to maintain future access. Secondly, to write to the YWA to remind them that the Society is still interested in the purchase of the land. Thirdly to remind Bradford Council of their suggestion of a joint management agreement.

Members views on the possible raising of funds and subsequent purchase would be welcome.

## **Alma's Mystical Building**

Residents may have been somewhat surprised by the sudden growth of telegraph poles in the top field above Alma Terrace. These gradually became roofed and clad in breeze



block and earned the nickname of "The Giraffe House". Our secretary, Marian Doyle, received numerous queries from people concerned by the size of the building and its intended use. Shipley planning department were therefore contacted and despatched one of their officers to view the building. He reported that although it was a bit of a monstrosity, because it is an agricultural building it does not have to abide by the same planning regulations as industrial buildings and it was entirely within the law. It must be admitted that there are much worse farm buildings to be seen.

In the Countryside Wardens column, Ernest Davies gives a complete description of the building and its uses. We have printed this purely for your information and does not reflect the views of the Village Society.

### **Graveyard**

No offers of help with the tidying of the Graveyard in Greenend Road have been received. All that is required is

a little weeding and some ground coverplants putting in to reduce future maintenance. Now that Spring is approaching would someone please help?

### **Recreation Ground**

Our anonymous poet for this issue highlights a problem that the children and their mothers are facing in the play area of the recreation ground. I am sure that all our readers will be aware of the dangers of infection from dog dirt as recent newspaper reports have shown. We would like to call on all you dog owners to be a little more considerate about where your dog does its toilet. In an attempt to protect the children it has been suggested that a small fence should be erected around the play area. The council have agreed to cut the grass inside this area. The committee will be obtaining an estimate to do this and if all goes well a fence will be duly erected.

### **Parking**

Our final little moan for this issue is for a little more thought when parking

in the village. It is appreciated that much of the poor parking is caused by people from outside the village, particularly on the main road. Parking by the school is hazardous for the children even though you won't be there for long. If you park on a corner or a bend are you causing a hazard? We don't want to see the village a mass of double yellow lines so think twice before you park!

### **Beckfoot Bus**

We reported in the last news letter that we had managed to get a bus from Beckfoot School to the village only to have it stopped again because of insurance problems. These have now been overcome and the bus is finally running.

### **Pavement Gardening**

The very mild winter has sent the plants growing earlier than usual and no doubt you are all rushing round the garden hacking at things. Could we remind you all to trim the bushes and ivy that hang over the pavement as well as the bits that are inside!

## **Poets Corner**

### **A Beck Full of Mills**

*Everybody's heard of Ilkley  
With its famous moor  
I'd like to tell of Morton  
And its mills in days of yore*

*From Ilkley moor through Sunnysdale  
Ousel Hole and Upper mill  
Past Providence and Coffin dam  
Morton beck is running still*

*On its way through Morton  
This busy little stream  
Kept all eight mills a working  
As sweet as any dream*

*The mill way up in Sunnysdale  
Closed in eighteen seventy eight  
Made paper used for banknotes  
With a water wheel so great*

*Then the Ousel or Upper mill  
For textiles that were fine  
Died with the nineteenth century  
Burnt in eighteen ninety nine*

*Botany mill quite massive  
Spun wool from Botany Bay  
Became billets during wartime  
Then destroyed the "fire" way*

*Oldside Mill made paper  
No longer to be seen  
Across the way the Silk mill  
Still standing quite serene*

*Freedom mill still on its feet  
Made paper in its prime  
Now manufactures concrete  
Such is the march of time*

*Number seven is Dimples mill  
Manufactured worsted wool  
Burnt in eighteen seventy one  
It seemed to be the rule*

*Last of all the Holroyd mill  
With this I'll have to part  
Weaving was the shape of things  
But now it's works of art*

*Morton Beck and all its mills  
May the memories linger long  
As a villager of Morton  
I still listen to its song*

Bill Hanson

*Footnote:- After Dimples the site was known as Cliff mill, now known as Cliff Mill Fold.*

*Morton is a village,  
of beauty, peace and calm.  
But certain things about it  
make it lose its charm.*

*We love the trees and flower beds,  
The Village Green is great.  
It's just a shame that dogs do things,  
outside our garden gate.*

*There's fields for miles around us,  
with beauty beyond compare,  
So why don't people walk their dogs  
way out over there?*

*It's not that we don't like them  
We love them all you see,  
It's just that we don't want to watch  
them  
have their daily wee!*

*A Poopa Scoopa could be used,  
rather than leave it there,  
and maybe then our children  
won't tread it up the stair.*

*We've heard from higher places,  
In fact it's in the news,  
that makers have decided,  
to put colouring in their food.*

*So if you venture out at night,  
and see a gentle glow,  
the Martians have not landed,  
Its the dogs, have been in tow.*

Anon.



## **Countryside Warden Column**

### **Footpaths**

During last summer (what summer?) I received a number of complaints about overgrown footpaths. The persistent rain soaked the long grass and this in turn has soaked anyone who has tried to walk the paths. This has led to a chicken and egg situation, the grass grows because sufficient people do not walk the paths, the few walkers are put off by the height of the grass, the grass grows on!

This problem is the responsibility of Bradford Metro Council's Highways Department but quite frankly they give priority to maintaining the roads (that's what they will tell you!), the footpaths have a very low priority and this will not change.

I would like to suggest a partial answer to this problem. I am prepared to hire a petrol strimmer for a weekend, at my own expense, to cut back the undergrowth if I can have a few volunteers to bag the grass so that it can be cleared from the footpath. This could be done this Spring to give walkers an opportunity to explore the path network this coming summer. I can be reached on Bradford 564081 and the name is Ernest Davies, your local Countryside Warden (unpaid).

There will be no necessity to attempt any clearance work on the Berry Lane - Dene Hole Bridleway. A Riddlesden Bridleway Association has been formed recently and one of their first tasks - to test their sincerity - will be to clear this lane and keep it open - for horses. Will all walkers kindly keep their eyes on the state of the paths and report any problems to me.

### **Dry Stone Walls**

I would like to draw your attention to a development which has gone a long way in tidying up one of the approaches to Morton. I refer to the extensive rebuilding of the traditional dry stone walls up Alma, which, due to age, had become very tatty of late. Now that the land has changed hands these walls have been repaired rather than replaced by the cheaper alternative of post and barbed wire where gaps had occurred.

Now that the two cattle shelters at the top of Alma are complete they can be seen to be functional, yet merging into the hill in a way which looked impossible when the telegraph poles appeared to

pressage much taller buildings. They cannot be seen from most points in the village and so avoid catching the eye and reminding us of their presence.

What will eventually become evident will be that the "heart" will come back into the land which the cattle will graze and dung. The fields will green up again and improve the backcloth to the village after a number of years of advanced dereliction. Hopefully the extra capital put into ringing the whole area with a double strand barbed wire stand off fence will prevent the cattle doing future damage to the newly rebuilt walls. It may also discourage the joggers from running across this land and separating the lambs from their mothers which caused last years horrific deaths.

The fold yard itself show that a great deal of thought has gone into its planning and execution. The base is a cambered concrete raft so that the cattle will have a permanent hard and dry standing yet it will be easy to muck out and keep the stock sweet. The telegraph pole supports have been blocked round to give beautiful rubbing edges together with gate hangings on every flat face so that the beasts can be penned in twenty different ways to help with the mucking out and segregation. There are fixed water bowls, and both hay and silage are available fodder. There are loose boxes for calves complete with water bowls, a good sized calving pen which can be split into two or separate ones if there is any flush of calving and an isolation unit for anything requiring special attention. I liked the area laid with setts so that the bull can paw the ground without stamping it up and he can snort and bellow as he likes and the natural lie of the land and buildings won't let it project over Morton. The whole fold yard is built into the hill so that it is below the prevailing westerly wind and there are no draughts to the cattle. The present stock comprise twenty three head half pedigree Limousin, half Black Galloways and, of course, the Bull. The Scotch cattle are the breed that came through Morton in the days of the Drover Trade - hardy animals that should thrive up Alma long after the Limousins have sought shelter in the fold yard. The bull, of course, will have a roving commission, keeping his eye on the main chance.

All told I think that this could qualify for a farming Architect of the Year award and the farmer deserves commendation

for action against the prevailing pessimism in the industry.

### **More Footpaths**

At 3 o'clock one morning in the late lamented Summer, a local farmer who shall be nameless, received a telephone call from the Police. They informed him that all his cows were wandering down Swine Lane. Much alarmed he jumped into the Land Rover and went down Morton Lane, then Bradford Road to try to head them off. By this time they had reached the main road although traffic was light there was a great danger to road users from the frantic antics of the cattle. Of course they were not his dairy cows, they were store cattle raised for beef, but he did not press the point, he simply drove them into the first field up Swine Lane and left them there. When West Morton woke up that morning they found the fields devoid of animals. They had taken the overgrown bridle path known as Bury Lane in order to make their escape. This suggest two things. The cattle had found Bury Lane acceptable from a bridleway point of view and some careless ramblar had thrown down the cattle bar at the top access by Dene Hole. The moral is, please, please act responsibly when you go into the countryside.

### **Warp Peg Holes**

Now that we are all aware of the existence and past use of Warp Peg Holes in the village another set has been pointed out in the vicinity. There are sixteen of them visible and a further one may have been built into the other side of the wall following accidental damage and rebuilding by someone unaware of their past importance. These would be used to prepare warps for a web of cloth double the length of the set at the Butts. This may mean that they are a later construction or that the Micklethwaite variety point to a more skilled (professional) operative than worked at Morton. To find them, go to Micklethwaite village and take the road down towards the canal. When you see Greenhill Drive to your left, examine the wall on the right hand side of the road. It really is wonderful to recognize that this wall must be more than two hundred years old, that it is still in good condition and it has only suffered traffic damage or collapse at one point over the whole of that time. Do you know of any more warp peg holes? Lets have them all recorded.



*Written and edited by Don Ward, any help or especially contributions would be very welcome. Advertisements are also accepted for publication. Monies for membership and the "Fighting Fund", which would still be much appreciated, can be sent to the Treasurer at Redwoods, Morton Lane or given to one of the Committee members listed below:-*

*Mrs M. Appleby ... 24 Morton Grove  
Miss D. Beanlands. 10 Main Road  
Mrs D. Dennis .... 6 Dimples Lane  
Mrs J. Duckworth . Otley Mount  
Mr S. Duxbury .... Redwoods, Morton Lane  
Mrs I. Holdsworth Moor Cottage, The Butts  
Mr J. Puddephatt. . Rotherwood, Morton Lane  
Mr J. Stentiford ... 7 Providence Row  
Mr N. Webb ..... 1 Green End Road  
Mr R. Wilson. .... The Barn, Studley Close*

*Mrs F. Bramall ... The Ridge, Morton Lane  
Mrs F. Davy ..... 7 St. Lukes Terrace  
Mrs M. Doyle .... 12 Dimples Lane  
Mrs M. Duxbury . High Point, Street Lane  
Mrs P. Horne .... Cliffe House, Dimples Lane  
Mrs H. Hodgson . 10 Morton Lane  
Mrs J. Robson. ... 29 North View Terrace  
Mr K. Symes ..... Silk Mill Drive  
Mr D. Ward. .... 9 Little Lane*

### **A650 Trunk Road**

The draft proposals for the Crossflatts/Cottingley Bar section of the road have recently been on public exhibition. The committee support the view that the sooner the route is decided the better. Our immediate area would feel the benefit particularly through Bingley. The Secretary of State for Transport wishes to know the local views and representation should be made by 12th May 1989. We have written on behalf of the village society and we have also expressed our concern about the delay in siting the promised pelican crossing near the bottom of Morton Lane.

### **Abandoned Building Site**

Fears of a new landslide in East Morton prompted us to write and object to amended plans put forward for a new house and garage on the foundations of the abandoned building site at the bottom of a 45% slope in Otley Road. A workman was injured there when the hillside collapsed during excavation work in 1980 and building work was stopped by the Health & Safety Executive. However because planning per-

mission exists, the Planning Department of Bradford Council may have no alternative but to agree to a new scheme. We hope that if this does happen they will guarantee that this time the work will be carried out to recognized building safety standards.

### **Other Items**

Some of you may have noticed that the bridge at Sunnysdale Park has been repaired.

The leak down Morton Lane, that has been reported repeatedly, has also been repaired. This was an old land drain which was diverted when the new bungalow was built.

### **The Entertainers**

A new group has recently been formed in the village. It is a drama/revue group and has been called **The Entertainers**. It is open to all ages and at the moment is rather short of men. So if there are any gentlemen who fancy treading the boards, or helping in any other way eg. music, props, etc., please contact Barbara Chaffer of Mellow End, Sun Street. **The Entertainers** first production will be on Friday and Saturday 21st

and 22nd April 1989 in the Memorial Institute. Look out for more details in the local shops and press. It will be great fun to see just what our village can do.

In our next issue we hope to bring news of the forthcoming booklet on Morton soon to be published. Thank you to the people who responded to our request for items and information, sorry if I have not thanked you personally, these and more are most welcome.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The 8th Annual General Meeting of the Morton Village Society will be held in the Memorial Institute at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 21st June 1989. Nominations are invited for Officers and members of the Committee. These should be made in writing with a proposer and a seconder, and sent with the consent of the nominee 14 days prior to the AGM to the Secretary, Mrs M. Doyle, 12 Dimples Lane, East Morton. We hope to see as many of you as possible at the AGM to have your comments, ideas and suggestions.

**Morton Village Society**  
*Aiming to preserve your village*