

**BRIGHOUSE & DISTRICT**

# **Heritage Newseum**

**Issue 10 Autumn 2020**

*Edited and Published by Chris Helme*







Superintendents come and go in the police service; they make an impact on the policing of the town for a few years and then someone else would come and it would start all over again. In 1992, Brighouse was in for a surprise the new Superintendent was from Hong Kong, Superintendent Henrique Koo. It is now 28 years since he walked into the police station at Brighouse, completed his six month secondment and then left.

In 2014, I managed to catch-up with him in Leeds. We managed to chat for an hour about his visit to Brighouse all those years ago. He thoroughly enjoyed his stay in the town and he tried to meet as many of the local people as possible. He was encouraged by the dedication and conscientiousness of the Brighouse personnel. Whilst the law was very similar to that of Hong Kong, the lifestyle was completely different.

He retired from the police service in 2010 and now spends most of his time travelling and spending a couple of months during the summer visiting his family. He is also a part-time university lecturer, which, he pointed out, is voluntary. This allows him the choice of whether he is available, or will be travelling the world a passion he has now that he has more time.

The situation in Hong Kong has now changed significantly since our meeting in 2014.

© Christopher D. Helme (2020), Tower House, Holme Mews, Wakefield Road, Lightcliffe, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 8TY. This publication is copyright and apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of study, research, criticism, review or as otherwise permitted under the Copyright Act, no part including text and/or photographs and/or other images may be reproduced by any process without written permission. All enquiries and payments should be directed to the author and publisher.

*Frontispiece:* Walking along the canal towpath these days, it is difficult to remember how bad it was underfoot before the canal-side walk was completed 29 years ago. It was HRH Prince Charles who unveiled the plaque, which was set in a large piece of local stone, on June 12, 1991. Standing in front of the stone next to Prince Charles is Roy Feather, who joined the Calderdale Inheritance Project and the Build a Better Brighouse (3Bs) and was instrumental in bringing almost £250,000 funding into the canal-side walk scheme.

# BRIGHOUSE & DISTRICT HERITAGE NEWSEUM

## From the Editor



Welcome to the 10th issue of the magazine. This is a milestone, the magazine has now reached double figures. It may only

be 10, but when, in 2018, I decided to 'have a go' at producing and publishing the magazine, it was more in hope that we get to this milestone.

I must thank so many people for helping: Inprint+Design the printers, who do so much more than just print it, my proof-readers John Brooke, John O'Grady, and not forgetting my wife Barbara, who all help to keep it as accurate as we can.

The shop outlets, who have very kindly supported the magazine. Of course, thank you the readers for supporting the magazine by continuing to buy it every quarter or subscribe to it each year.

We have a really interesting issue for you this quarter. 'The Letter from...' series is featured again, this time from Palm Springs. Whatever happened to the old-time characters, we have a story about some of them as well.

We have a lot more local history and nostalgia for you to enjoy. If you have a story or photograph you would like to share with the readers, please contact the editor 07854755756.

*Chris Helme*

## Issue 10 Autumn 2020

- 1 Notes from the Editor.
- 2 Memories of Saturday's riding the 570.
3. The Painful story of Fiery Jack.
- 4 The Wireless Licence.
- 5 Brighouse Follies and the show goes on.
- 6 Who can remember Hangram Street?
- 7 Halcyon Day with Bands in the Park.
- 8 Crimean War Peace Celebrations.
- 10 Brighouse Wheelers / Cyclists.
- 11 All Change at the Ritz.
- 12 Notes from the Council Chamber 1905.
- 13 Looking back at Banking in Brighouse.
- 15 What we did before the Lottery.
- 16 Where have all the Characters Gone?
- 17 The Missing Poetry Book.
- 18 Champion Boxer George 'Kid' Eastwood.
- 19 Decades
- 20 *In the Public Eye* - Richard Kershaw.
- 22 Local author's childhood memories.
- 23 A Letter from Palm Springs, USA.

Remember to look at our website where you can also contact the editor and you are able to purchase various local books, including some that are no longer in print, through the online shop, where PayPal is available:

[www.chrishelme-brighouse.org.uk](http://www.chrishelme-brighouse.org.uk)

## Memories from the weekly journey on the 570

Saturday morning as a child meant after I had watched *Going Live* for a bit and Dad was home from work, we would all go to Brighthouse in Dad's white Ford Granada. We always parked in the car park at Hillard's and took a trip to the outdoor market for some fruit and veg and maybe some sweets, if I was lucky.



We would walk to the other end of town via Webster's interiors and various stores to allow Mum to peruse the fashions of the day in Sunwin House, no matter how floral and dubious they were. After a further mooch around we would often end up at either the Dolphin or

Stoney Lane fish and chip shop, before going to my Grandma Turner's on East Street to share the fried delights. What a treat I thought fish and chips were back then.

When I was a little older, I was allowed to go on my own with my pocket money which I think was about £6 a week. Down to Brighthouse on the 570/71 bus from the end of Bramley Lane at Hipperholme with my Saver-Strip ready to pay the driver - kerching -. For months I had no idea what time the bus came so I would just go and wait, sometimes I had just missed one as I would be stood there 30 minutes or so.

I really enjoyed the journey down Wakefield Road, around Stoney Lane Estate and Whinney Hill before dropping down through Waring Green and to the bus station.

Even now I can remember some of the passengers who would get on and off, week in, week out. I even see some of these people now when I am in town or having a drink in the *Black Bull*. I have a smile to myself as, in some way, they are indirectly part of my growing up years and memories.

I felt so grown-up even though this was the early 90s. I was only 12 or 13 walking around on my own, having a look at the huge magazine selection in Martin's newsagents, usually buying *Match* or *Big* magazines for the posters they had. Or purchasing my favourite song that week on cassette tape from

either *Woolworth's* or *Rotate* records — whichever was the cheapest. Of course, no trip to *Woolies* was complete without a £1 worth of pick-n-mix sweets for the bus journey home.



There was time for a browse at the football shirts in *Sportsworld* on Bethel Street and to call for a Cornish pasty at Thurston's before heading to the old drafty and dirty but somehow quite pleasant bus station to wait for my ride home.

To some, a short bus ride to a small town on a Saturday morning may not be very interesting, but to me, it is something I cherish and look back on fondly... I may have to do it again just for nostalgia even though I still do not know what time the bus comes!

**Dom Turner (Hipperholme)**



*Rotate record shop 3 Market Street, closed in April 2000.*



*Woolworth's, Commercial Street opened in 1933 and closed in January 2009 — Here it is in August 1993.*



# *The Painful Story of Fiery Jack*

More than 50 years ago I recall being asked at school if I wanted to go to Marsden, in Huddersfield. Why would I want to go there you may ask? It was to take part in some open swimming in the Sparth Reservoir. Well, I am sure the very mention of that huge expanse of open water will bring back memories to some readers.

Back in those days once you had attained a certain standard at the Millroyd Street swimming baths, you could undertake a more adventurous type of swimming. If my memory serves me correct I think you had to be able to surface dive down to the bottom of the six-foot end and pick up a rubber brick. Oh yes, and you had to wear your pyjamas as well. It took little persuasion, that if my mates were going to this opening swimming I was not going to be left out.

We were given strict instructions that the open water was very cold irrespective of how hot the sun was that day. We were told not be fooled into a false sense of security and that tragic consequences could follow if we did not or have not taken the appropriate precautions.

Well, off we went. I suppose there was a couple of dozen or so of us. Once we arrived there were two tents, one of the girls and one for the lads. The appropriate precaution we were told was that we had to cover ourselves head to foot in Vaseline or some other similar type of grease to help insulate us from the cold.

This photograph, taken in 1947, was kindly sent to me more than 20 years ago by Greta Imeson, who in her school days was Greta Smith. It shows the day she went open swimming. Mind you back in those days the open-air swimming event was held down in one of the lakes at Sunny Vale and not at Marsden.

Greta is standing with her swimming cap in her

hand to the left of the man in the middle and is stood next to her teammate of those days, Jean Megson. Greta recalled the event as though it were but a few days ago and pointed out that the swimming coach back then was Esther Sandford

who is standing at the back of the group of onlookers.

The other youngsters in the photograph came from various Swimming Clubs in the Yorkshire No. 3 District, as it was then known. This occasion was probably the No. 3 District Open Water Long Distance Swimming Trials.



*Swimmers at Sunny Vale preparing for their long distance open water swimming trials in 1947.*

This was a first-time effort for Greta and her friends who

were members of the Lockwood Ladies from the Ramsden Street Baths in Huddersfield.

The following year the event was transferred to Sparth Reservoir at Marsden. On that occasion Greta swam four miles. Once having completed the distance she could remember proudly showing off her well-earned certificate.

Returning to my visit to Sparth in the early 1960s, I too swam four miles caked in Vaseline and yes, somewhere I do still have my certificate. I am sure to this day at least one other lad will remember his visit to Sparth. Whilst I and most of the others taking part used Vaseline to insulate ourselves against the cold there was one young lad whose grandparents had strongly recommended that he use something that his granddad swore by and was guaranteed to keep the cold out – ‘Fiery Jack..’ Well, I am sure little is left to the imagination just how insulating and hot it was.

I am sure to this day for every mile everyone else swam he swam twice as many, twice as fast.



*Whether it was in this form or the familiar old round tin, most households would have had this on hand for the aches and pains.*

In 1992, the 1980s Punk band 'Toy Dolls' brought out a new album called 'Dig that Groovy Baby'. One of the featured tracks was written about this medical marvel, which they simply called 'Fiery Jack' – and it goes something like this. For those not familiar with this style of music to get into the swing of this number you have shout it out both raucously and very quickly to imitate the style of a Punk band. I am sure these are the only lyrics ever written in honour of Fiery Jack. The recording is on YouTube on the internet.

Oh! I woke up with a backache  
Backache! Backache!  
I thought I ought to go to the first aid tin  
where I found something for my backache  
Backache! Backache!  
I rubbed in some cream and started to scream!  
Oh no!!!

*[Chorus:]*  
Fiery Jack Fiery Jack- It's red hot on your back  
Fiery Jack Fiery Jack- Believe me, it does knock  
Fiery Jack Fiery Jack- It's red hot on your back  
Fiery Jack

Now I had a backache on me backache  
Backache Backache!  
I jumped into the bath full of cold water  
The Fiery Jack had made me backache  
Backache Backache!  
I'm worse than before I can't take anymore  
Oh no!!!

*[Chorus]*  
Oh! If you do get a backache  
Backache backache!  
And you feel you have to reach for the first aid tin  
Think! Life is not that bad with a backache  
If you see a tin with fiery Jack in  
Stay awayyyyyy...

*[Chorus] etc etc*

It is hardly a foot-tapping tune. But it does remind us that whilst it undoubtedly has its good points, in that it has excellent uses towards some ailments, it does, however, have its limitations and covering yourself head to foot and using it as an insulator is not one to be recommended.

I understand Fiery Jack was taken off the market to comply with an EU Directive. I think time finally ran out for this remedy and over taken by other similar and some might say safer products.

## *The Wireless Licence*

A regular correspondent to my 'Looking Back' column at the Brighthouse Echo over the years was Leslie Morgan of Morecambe.

In one of his letters, he wanted to put other readers to the test, a test that will go in some way to perhaps prove that some people including myself do keep fairly meaningless pieces of historical memorabilia. I for one have said it more than once: 'Well it might come in, we might need it sometime'. Of course, it never does, but we still put it away somewhere safe.

One particular letter, from Leslie explained that he had the unenviable task of helping to sort out a deceased friend's possessions. To his surprise, one of the things he came across was a letter he had written to his friend back in 1947, whilst overseas serving in the Army.

Along with this letter there were several small items which many other people would have either thrown away years earlier or simply misplaced and, being of little importance, not even bothered to look for.

Amongst these items were some really old wireless licenses, dating as far back as 1926. The licenses were issued to his friend's sister, Miss Nora Thelma Jackson, who at that time lived in Lane Ends Green, Hipperholme.

The licences were all issued by Hipperholme's Sub-Postmaster, Mr J.W.Stott, whose signature appears on at least one of the licences, issued on January 21, 1929. Now here is a test for our readers. Has anyone got a licence tucked away in the dark corners of a cupboard that pre-dates January 2, 1926?

The first wireless licence was issued in November 1923 for 10 shillings (50p), and by the end of the year 200,000 had been issued. The number of active licences continued to rise dramatically and in 1928 there were 2.5 million issued. The first combined radio and TV licence was issued in 1946, for £2. In 1971, radio-only licences were abolished, along with the requirement to have a licence for car radios. The requirement to have a metal detector license was scrapped in 1980. However, it is now required on some beaches that a permit should be obtained.

# The King died but the Show must go on

Looking back to Wednesday, February 6, 1952, some readers will recall that was the day King George VI died. The Empire went into a state of mourning and the nation's Press carried reports of reaction and condolences from the far corners of the world.

George VI died at Sandringham during the night and was interred at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, on February 15, 1952, following a State Funeral.

Princess Elizabeth heard the news of her father's death the same day while staying at Treetops, a Game Lodge, in Kenya.

Although, George VI had been ill, it was thought that his health was improving. He had been a heavy smoker and died of lung cancer not long after seeing off his daughter and son-in-law at London's Heathrow Airport as they embarked on their trip to Kenya.

The Queen read her Accession Declaration and signed two copies of the document.

Proclamations of the Queen's Accession took place in many parts of the UK, but none was more poignant than at Windsor Castle, where the late King had spent so much of his time with his young children, and where local people now gathered to witness the ceremony under the castle walls.

In London the shops were told to close as a mark of respect. All shops that had been granted a royal warrant and displayed the royal coat of arms outside their premises draped mourning crepe over the top of it.

There was some speculation that the Isle of Man government might even change the name of the island to either Queen of Man or Lady of Man.

The reporting of local news had to continue. In Grimsby a Mrs Wood tried to have peanuts banned at her local cinema. This was because she felt they

were a distraction whilst trying to watch the film. The cinema manager would have none of that and insisted that if patrons wanted nuts, they would have them.

Here in Brighouse the King's death was also

reported and as with everywhere else in the country, it affected a number of local events.

One event that felt the impact of the King's death was at the annual pantomime. That year it was 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and was being performed by the children of the Brighouse Follies.



*Brighouse Follies posing for the photographer in February 1952.*

During the week there was much discussion whether the show would carry on in light of the King's death. After much consideration it was decided that the show would go on, no doubt to the delight of the children involved.

The show was held at the Parish Hall (now the Rydings Surgery) in Church Lane.

In this photograph, we are featuring all those young starlets who took part in the pantomime 68 years ago.

Back row, from the left: Pat Brown, Christine Berry, Celia Merrifield, Shirley Whitaker, Betty Castleton, Beverley Holmes, Sheila Holmes, Sheila Stead, Shirley Bottomley and Doreen White.

Front row, from the left: Barbara Booth, Brenda Birch, Maureen Ives, Hazel Birch, Kathryn Booth, Pat King, Carolyn Habergham, Elizabeth Stott, Teresa Parton and Virginia Habergham.

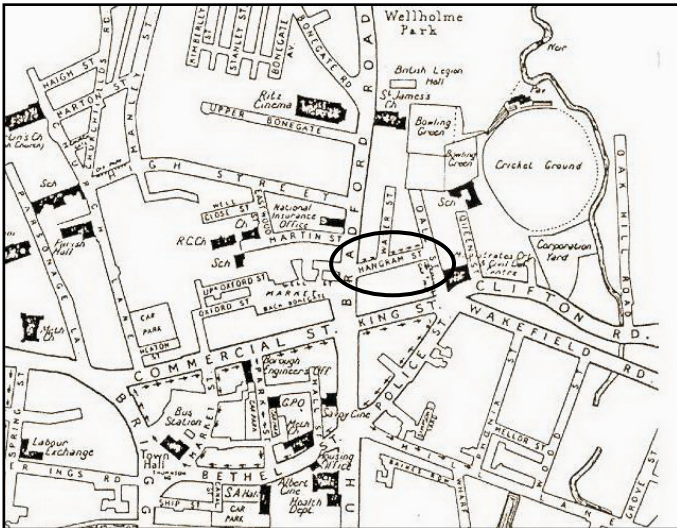
I am sure all these youngsters carried the memories of the performances throughout their lives, not only of this pantomime but all the happy times they had as members of the Brighouse Follies.



## Who can Remember Hangram Street ?

Thanks to Stuart Black, who has been taking photographs at many of Brighouse's community events over the years, we can feature this photograph of Hangram Street, which was taken on Sunday, June 1, 1969.

For those readers who cannot remember this street, let us begin by saying that everything to the right has now gone, the building in the distance is



*Brighouse town centre map 1965.*

The Oddfellows Hall in Bradford Road which has also gone.

The demolition of that property was part of the late 60s early 70s town centre improvement scheme, which included carving a line through the town for the new bypass and meant demolishing everything in its path.

On the left-hand side of this photograph is the back of the Co-op warehouse and although it is no longer the Co-op, the building is still there. So, Hangram Street ran parallel to King Street behind the Co-op, which now forms part of the bypass.

At the opposite end of the street, behind the photographer, the road was at a junction with Dale Street and all that remains of this street is the Salvation Army Citadel car park.

That street was named after Emmanuel Dale, who was the Brighouse Postmaster for many years and was a prominent figure with the Wesleyans in the town. He died in 1899 having retired from the post office after 33 years' service.

At the corner of Bradford Road and Hangram

Street was the Royal Engineers Beerhouse, premises that are now The Print Shop. 'The Engineers', as it was often referred to closed on the April 5, 1965.

The street was a combination of terraced houses and small businesses, even going back a century little had changed.



*Hangram Street June 1, 1969, looking towards the Oddfellows Hall in Bradford Road. The street name is believed to have originated from Hangram Field an area of land owned by the Drake family of Southowram.*

Walking along Hangram Street from the Bradford Road end in 1901 you would have seen a total of 11 houses. Families that included: John Whiteley (number 5); Thomas Clayton (7); John Mitchell (9); Jane Kilburn (11); Thomas Clarke (2), a gas stoker and was summoned to court in July 1894 because his daughter Jane was not attending school; George Sayers (4); Emma Harrison (6); Frank Robinson (8); Frank Cheetham (10); William Parkin (12) and Walter Wilkes and his family at number 14.

These were the days with practically no motor vehicles to be seen and children could play out in the street. They would be playing many of the traditional street games from morning until night. How many of these games can you remember: Hopscotch, Skipping, Kick Can and Hop it, Hide and Seek and many more. Having a Den was something to be expected, perhaps if not a Den it was your Hideout. Whatever it was called it was that secret place.

Walking along Hangram Street the first left as you walked along the street was Water Street where a century ago Albert North had his French polishing and upholstery business alongside Joseph Smith's,



cloth washer maker, along with 12 terraced houses. There was the Gospel Mission Room and the West Riding County Council Weights and Measures office, followed by Thornton's painting and decorating business, and finally, at the junction with Dale Street, a cab business run by Mr W.A.Collinge.



*Hangram Street in 1969. With property swept away as part of the town centre redevelopment scheme the open site was used as a temporary car park until the bypass was constructed.*

Returning to our featured 1965 map illustrating this part of the town centre, you can quickly see how many of those small streets were demolished to make way for the town centre improvements of the early 70s.

Whole communities were moved out and scattered across the borough. Whilst many families would have gone to live in new communities many of their friends would have been moved to the opposite side of the town, and probably rarely if ever saw their old neighbours again.



*The bandstand at Valley Gardens, Harrogate. It was in 1933 and not long after this photograph was taken that it was sold to the Brighouse Borough Council for £15.*

## ***Halcyon Days with Bands in the Park***

I wonder how many readers can recall sitting out in the summer sun watching and listening to a brass band playing in the bandstand in Rydings Park?



*No concert today at the bandstand in Rydings Park, 1950s.*

In 1933, the Borough Council announced that it was to purchase the old bandstand in Harrogate's Valley Gardens for £15. But, additional costs amounting to £85 were necessary to pay for the trip to Harrogate, demolition of the old bandstand and then conveying it back to Brighouse. The Borough Council's 'Bandstand Committee' appointed local businessman Lister Brook with the task of managing the project.

The bandstand was finally up and ready for its first band performance on April 30, 1933.

The bandstand served its purpose until 1944 when concerns were expressed about its condition. But, with war time financial restrictions it was decided that the best that could be done was to paint it.

By 1950, it was in such a poor state of repair, particularly the floor, that demolition was inevitable, and the Parks and Cemeteries Committee effectively confined it to the history books when declared unsafe and was demolished.

The halcyon days of sitting in the summer sun listening to a brass or military band concert in the Rydings Park were brought to an end. The additional reason for its demolition was that by this time the centre for Sunday band concerts was at Wellholme Park rather than Rydings Park.

In the above photograph we have a 1950s view of the bandstand in Rydings Park and the small image is showing the bandstand as it was in Valley Gardens during the 1920s. This photograph is show courtesy of the Friends of Valley Gardens. For further information please look at [www.friendsofvalleygardens.co.uk](http://www.friendsofvalleygardens.co.uk)

# Crimean War Peace Celebrations

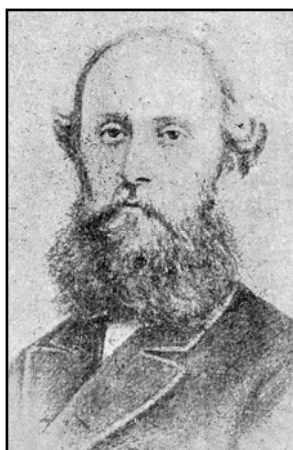
What could possibly be the connection between a sweet shop in Cambridge and a procession through Brighouse 164 years ago?



9, Kings Parade, Cambridge, a shop which had connections with Brighouse 164 years ago.

The connection involves an extremely rare set of original letters and accounts I have which date back to May 29, 1856. These were of little interest until a few years ago, other than their date, and being addressed to Brighouse.

The correspondence is dated May 20, 1856, and is from Isaiah Deck, who is described on the letter-head as a Practical Chemist and Mineralogist. His business premises were at 9, Kings Parade, Cambridge. Today this same shop trades under the name of Mr Simms Olde Sweet Shoppe. So, what special significance does this shop have with Brighouse?



Fairless Barber FSA 1893.

This story starts on May 2, 1856, with Samuel Leppington, a Gentleman of Lane Head and Mr E. T. Monk, who was a partner in the firm of Burrows and Monk. This was a business which had introduced the silk industry to Brighouse some years earlier. Approaching various people, including some of the wealthier members of the local populace they collected subscriptions.

The purpose of this collection was to hold a large public tea to celebrate the end of the Crimean War (1854 - 1856). Having collected the money the event, like any other needed organising and to this end, they held a meeting in the Oak Room at the Royal Hotel.



John Brooke Jnr. 1893.

One of the main organisers of this celebratory event was Mr Fairless Barber, who sent a letter to John Brooke Jnr, who lived at The Rydings), who was described as the Chief Constable, requesting to organise the meeting which should also include an invitation to any member of the public who would like to attend. This meeting was held on May 21, 1856, and with subsequent meetings Brighouse's Peace Festivities were finally arranged for Thursday, May 29.

It was decided that Charles Hanson, a local painter would be responsible for erecting what was described as a triumphal archway which would be decorated with bunting, flags, and evergreens. To give it that important final touch it would also be decorated with gas lights which were supplied by a Mr Cockhill another local tradesman.

On the day there were numerous bands engaged to play in a huge procession through the town. The procession was led by Constables carrying Maces followed by the local gentry and then the Drum and Fife Band, the first of the bands. Next came the scores of Sunday School scholars from the Church Schools, Bethel School and finally the Wesleyan Schools.

The next band was Pratt's Brass Band, followed by representatives from the Ancient Order of Shepherdesses and then the Waterloo Band. Following on was the Independent Order of Oddfellows and then the United Order of Oddfellows and two Highland pipers.

With the Ancient Order of Shepherds, the Ancient Order of Gardeners and then the entire workforce of Sugden's flour mill this was by far one of the largest processions seen in the town for many years.



The route the procession took makes the present-day gala route seem like a Sunday afternoon stroll. Having passed the archway at Lane Head they then went to Brookfoot and then back again but going onto Bridge End. The journey then went on to Rastrick Common down Gooder Lane and back into Brighouse town centre, finally arriving at a triangular field where the procession split up into their various groups.

I believe the field would have been Swan Field, which was located on the present-day site of the old Sugden's grain silos. The procession set off at 1 pm and arrived at the field some 3½ hours later, with everyone no doubt exhausted and ready for the tea that awaited them.

It was estimated that once the procession had reached the field between 700 and 800 wives and widows dashed off to the various hotels in the town to prepare the tea that was being laid on.

F. Barber & Co.		Bought of ISAIAH DECK,	
Chemical and Philosophical Apparatus of every description.		PRACTICAL CHEMIST & MINERALOGIST,	
		9, KING'S PARADE, CAMBRIDGE,	
		FOR ARTICLES CHARGED AT CASH PRICES.	
		Minerals, Fossils, and Geological Specimens Arranged.	
Barometers and Thermometers made and repaired.			
OPTICAL AND MATHEMATICAL INSTRUMENTS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION ON APPROVED PRINCIPLES.			
ANALYSES PERFORMED WITH ACCURACY.			
July 20 <sup>th</sup>	1 doz. 1/2 Rockets	18	-
	1 doz. 1/2 Do in Pairs	1	19
	4 Peacock Rockets	1	8
	6 Coloured Lights Rockets	18	-
	6 Tombstones	9	-
	1 Peacock Holown	9	-
	12 Coloured Roman	1	4
	1 Pyramid Roman	5	6
	1 Bouquet Roman	6	-
	1 Bouquet Rocket	9	-
	1 Cascade Wheel	9	-
	1 Capricious Wheel	8	-
	1 True Love's Knot Wheel	10	6
	Red & Green Fire	3	6
	2 Cases & Booking	1	1
		10	15 6
Halfpenny allowed for returned Boxes			

Even Mr Deck was a shrewd businessman in 1856, he was offering a half-penny allowance if the boxes were returned. The name F. (Fairless) Barber FSA.

To mark this special occasion a special thank you card was produced and given to each of the lady helpers, to date it would seem that none of these cards has stood the test of time.

At 9 pm precisely the careful prepared illuminations were lit. These were at Lane Head, the main archway, Albion Hotel, Wellington Inn, George Hotel, Oddfellows Arms, Royal Hotel, Black Bull Inn, Anchor Inn, and many of the town centre shops and businesses.

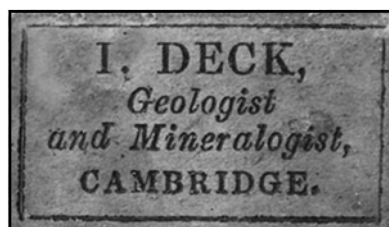
You are probably wondering about the significance of the account from Cambridge. Well, at 9 pm it was time when all the bands got together and began to play, and the massive firework display commenced.

The firework display included what were described as Half Rockets, three coloured Roman Candles, Green Fire, Half Rockets, Two three-quarter rockets, Cascade wheels, three coloured Roman Candles, red light Roman Candles, green light quarter rockets, three Roman Candles, quarter rockets and many more all of which were bought from Mr Deck's business in Cambridge.

The correspondence and invoice which amounted to £10.15s.6p, was what the fireworks cost the organisers: a truly unique set of documents.

It was announced the following day by the local Police there had been no trouble at all, with everyone having been in good spirits without going over the top.

But, even for all the enjoyment the event brought, which was shared by everyone in Brighouse and from many of the outer districts, they all shared one wish and that was 'May we never see peace proclaimed again'.



Courtesy of the Mineralogical Record. From the late Michael P. Cooper collection.

We end this story where we started with Mr Simms Old Sweet Shoppe. Isaiah Deck owned the shop and the tradition of this family setting off rockets dated back to 1815 and the Battle of Waterloo. The Deck family were in business until 1914. After three generations the business had new owners, who had a pharmacy, and then in 2018 with new occupants it became the sweet shop.

# Brighouse Wheelers

With the on going Covid-19 situation the public are being encouraged to use pedal power This is showing a significant rise in the number of cyclists on the roads.

Many will be taking to bicycles which for many years will have been languishing, gathering dust and rust in the shed. I was once given an official police bicycle, and not one of the modern-day lightweight bicycles, It took me two years to get rid of it back to the headquarters bicycle store.

Cycling in Brighouse was a popular pastime long before these modern and sleek 21st century racing bikes.



*All set for the 'off' to a destination unknown and to a man, and a boy they all had their caps on! The chapel has long since gone but I wonder what ever happened to those impressive lamps?*

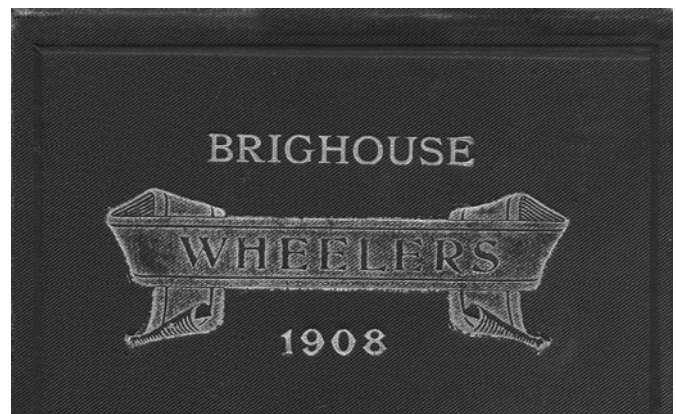
Cycling became even more popular in the 1890s with many clubs being formed. Brighouse Wheelers (aka Brighouse Cycling Club) was founded c1884.



*An 1881 programme for the Brighouse, Rastrick Horticultural & Floral Society 8th annual exhibition. A 2-mile bicycle handicap race, which was open only to amateurs. First prize £7 and Second prize £3 - the entrance fee was 2/6.*

Cycling in those days meant more than just riding hour after hour; it meant comradeship, discussion and learning about the locations you cycled through.

The group of cyclists in our featured photograph, dated c1908, posed outside the former St Paul's Church at the junction of King Street and Lawson Road. This is now the site of the car park at the rear of M&Co.



*Brighouse Wheelers membership card 1908.*

In the 1908 membership card the club had Tuesday evening runs every week from April to September. These included Bradford, Huddersfield and as far as Bridlington. On Saturday's these runs went much further and included Leeds, Manchester, Malham and Barnsley. Sunday runs would have been the highlight of the week with these rides taking the cyclists as far as Blackpool, Harrogate, Wentworth Castle, Sheffield and on tour to Bridlington.

In 1917 the Brighouse Wheelers Club was referred to in the Brighouse Echo and occupied the premises at 14, Huddersfield Road, next to the Albert Cinema. The club closed c1990 and became part of Prego Restaurant. We would be interested to hear from anyone that may have some photographs which were taken inside the Brighouse Wheelers Club prior to it closing down.



## All Change at The Ritz

These days it is called Venue 73, but some readers will remember it as The Ritz, the first purpose built cinema in Brighouse, which opened in March 1931. transformation proved to be a great success.

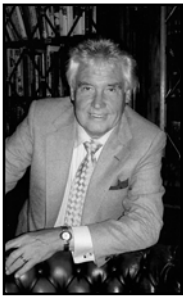


*This was taken in the Stardust Showbar in July 1977, but who are these young ladies?*

But what happened after the cinema closed in 1963?

In 1965, it reopened as a casino and for gaming and theatre club to present stage shows. In this form it closed in 1970 but, the same year it was transformed into the Tropicana Night Club. Some may recall the days when it also traded under the name of the Stardust Showbar.

One person who remembers those days is Stuart Atkins, the musician, bandleader, arranger/composer, author and public speaker. He recalls that: with his band, he was booked for a series of shows at the Stardust Showbar, which in those days was owned by Kenneth Naylor who also owned another club in Oldham. The shows started on Tuesday July 21, 1973. Stuart and the band then went to perform in Palma, Majorca.



Musicians from those days in Stuart's band included trombone player Derek Southcott, who was for many years in the trombone section at Black Dyke Band, James Shepherd Versatile Brass and lead trombone with the Syd Lawrence Orchestra. When Derek turned professional his place with the band was given to Grenville Richmond, who joined the band at Wakefield Theatre Club. Grenville was also a member of Black Dyke for many years.

The building was bought in 1979 by Joe Narey who, in 1981, opened it as The Ritz Ballroom. This



*Star trombone player Grenville Richmond on May 25, 1985.*

People came from miles around to do what was described 'as some proper dancing'. It was noted for its Canadian Maple sprung wooden floor which was ideal for ballroom dancing.



*Joe Narey created a successful venue known throughout the North of England.*

It soon became a Mecca for ballroom dancing with coach parties travelling from as far away as Hull.

In 1996, a 1937 Wurlitzer Organ was installed and it became a popular venue for organ enthusiasts.

The old Ritz was put up for sale in 2005 following the announcement the owners were to retire. The organ is now in the Victoria Hall, Saltaire. December 2014 the building was sold to Glenn Smith and December 2017, brought a name change owing to objections by The Ritz Hotel owners in London.

Today, as Venue 73 it is still very popular and long may it continue.

## Flashes

April 27, 1895, at Bethel Methodist New Connexion a lecture was delivered by Rev. Bramwell Darton of Blackpool. His subject was 'Good Manners'. In the chair was Arthur Holdsworth Leach. There was a fairly large attendance and following a vote of thanks there was a collection taken on behalf of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour. Based on the availability of transport in those days travelling from Blackpool does seem a long way for an evening lecture.

Sunday, February 9, 1941, was a special day for the residents of Well Grove, Hove Edge. At 10.30am, they all met to form a local wartime firewatchers group. It was decided at this first meeting that three groups should be formed. Regular meetings were held until the group's last meeting held on June 12, 1945. Having looked through the minutes of all the meetings they make a fascinating story of how one group of local residents lived through the wartime difficulties.

June 1995 - Crow Nest Golf Club, Hove Edge, was opened. It was constructed on the site of Crow Nest Mansion, which had been the home of Sir Titus Salt.

## Notes from the Council Chamber 1905



Brighouse Council Minutes of the Water Committee February 6, 1905: it was resolved that a ferret be purchased for cleaning out the water mains.



Brighouse Council Finance Committee meeting January 16, 1905: the Town Clerk, James Parkinson reported that he had received the sanction of the Local Government Board for the powers to borrow £7,781 for street improvements and £2,250 for widening the Calder Bridge. On March 21, the Highways Committee accepted a tender from Brookes Ltd, Hipperholme, for the supply of 400 tons of Norwegian Grey Ysterhede Granite Setts which were required for paving Calder Bridge, in accordance with a sample provided to the Highways Committee.



Brighouse Council Finance Committee July 17, 1905. It was resolved that George Stott, the Council's first Mace Bearer be provided with a new uniform. For 25 years he was the Town Hall caretaker and for 17 years served as the Mace Bearer. He retired owing to ill health in 1911 and died on March 2, 1913.

## Flashes

January 18, 1896, the death of Thomas Bottomley Dyson, aged 60, was reported following a long illness. At the time of his death he was the landlord at the Thornhill Arms, Rastrick. He was the son of the late James Dyson. Thomas was brought up to be a building contractor like his father. At the age of 20 he started his own business. In 1875 he took the tenancy at the Thornhill Arms and also carried on as a farmer and contractor. He was the builder of the Victoria Board Schools.

Monday, May 13, 1907, there was a meeting at Lord's Dining Rooms, Bethel Street. The purpose of the meeting was to re-establish the old town centre tradesman's association. The outcome was a unanimous vote in favour. Looking through the minutes of their meetings and all the names that are mentioned both as officials and ordinary members, it is a veritable who's who of the town centre businesses.

1996 — Headteacher Peter Clark at Rastrick High school was drafted in to try and help the Ridings School, Halifax get back on track after it had gone through extensive problems. For his efforts he was awarded the CBE.



## Looking Back at where to save your Money in Brighouse

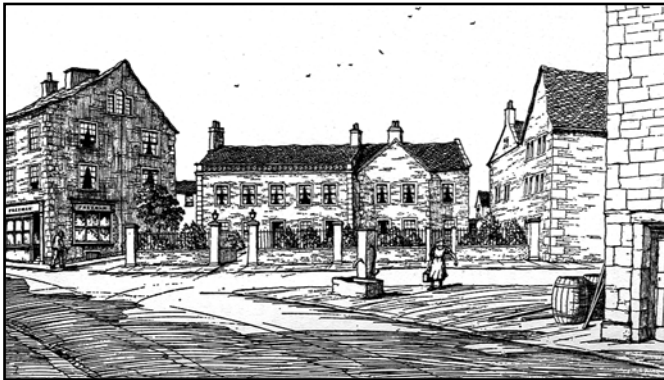
With the news that two banks, Barclays and Yorkshire Bank have closed in Brighouse this summer, let us look back at the early days of banking in the town centre.

Like many readers I was introduced to saving money through the school savings stamps. All grown up by 1962, I ventured into the Yorkshire Bank on Bradford Road to open my first bank account.

In those days there were five counters, all made from wood, which appeared to be polished oak. I stepped forward and explained that I wanted to open a bank account. Within a few minutes having answered all the questions, I was presented with a bank book and my very own account number.

That was 58 years ago. In June, having received a letter that Brighouse branch was closing I decided it was time to move on and bank else where.

But, when did the first bank open in Brighouse? To discover that we have to go back to when Brighouse was going through a period of industrial progress. With no banks in Brighouse and all local businesses having to bank in Halifax, Brighouse was ready for one of its own.



*The first bank was opened by the Halifax Commercial Bank in the old house of John Bottomley, known as the Manor House. This bank was replaced in 1875 and is now the closed branch of Barclays in Thornton Square.*

For a short period, c1868, the bank ran its business from one of the eight new shops that were incorporated into the new town hall, which is now the Civic Hall building.

The new bank soon became a target for burglars. In February, 1865, the local police officer saw a light burning brightly inside the premises at night.

The police watched the intruders ransacking the drawers. However, unknown to the burglars no money was left on the premises over night.



*The new Halifax Commercial Bank Thornton Square was built in 1875.*

As for the police, they managed to catch the intruders in almost Keystone Cops style by grabbing the legs of the intruders as they lowered themselves out of a ground floor window. It was a fair cop.

In 1858, there had been discussion amongst some of the town's prominent residents to create a penny savings bank. No doubt after meetings where it would be a case of shall we, can we, in November the Brighouse and Rastrick Savings Bank was opened. Within three years the accounts showed that it had 456 depositors with total deposits of £2,600. It was linked to the Brighouse Mechanic's Institute membership, but the bank closed in 1892.

In 1860, Hipperholme had its own branch of the Yorkshire Penny Bank and in 1865, the Hipperholme Building Society had opened in 1863. A Brighouse Building Society had been started on May 20, 1846. With its first meeting held at the Wellington Inn, Commercial Street.

With a Yorkshire Penny Bank in Brighouse and Hipperholme, during the Second World War there was also a small branch in the Ebenezer Chapel at Bailiff Bridge. It closed during the war years and did not reopen afterwards.

According to an 1895 publication which describes some aspects of Brighouse industry, retail and administration of the time, there was the London and Yorkshire Bank, on Bradford Road which was jointly used with Thomas Wyatt's drapery shop. In 1895, Union of London and Smith's Bank - was built in Bradford Road, which in 1918 merged.



*Built in 1895, today it is the Nat West Bank  
21, Bradford Road, Brighouse.*

with the National Provincial and was restyled under the title of National Provincial & Union Bank of England Ltd. This bank had a branch network covering many parts of the country and in 1924 its name was changed to the more familiar National Provincial Bank. Trading under that name continued until 1968 when it merged with the Westminster Bank and since 1970 the bank has traded under the present day title of National Westminster Bank, with the high street logo of Nat West.



*London and Yorkshire Bank c1895. This is 16,  
Bradford Road, Brighouse, with Thomas Wyatt's  
drapery shop next door. This is now the frontage of  
the Yorkshire Bank.*

In Huddersfield Road was the Halifax & Huddersfield Union Bank, which had been opened in 1894 in a pair of cottages built in 1889. This bank was taken over by its rival the Halifax Joint Stock Bank in 1910. The following year it was renamed the West Yorkshire Bank. (now the site of the Sainsbury's Supermarket).

With the First World War, the West Yorkshire

Bank struggled to compete with other major banks. When Lloyds put in an offer for the company, the West Yorkshire bank's Chairman wrote to its shareholders urging them to accept. The shareholders agreed and the bank was purchased by Lloyds in 1919. As part of the re-development for Sainsbury's the bank relocated from its Huddersfield Road site to the former White Swan public house in Brighouse town centre.

Returning to Barclays Bank in Thornton Square, some readers may remember when it as a branch of Martins Bank.

This bank was taken over c1919 when it became a branch of the Liverpool and Martins Bank. Not only was there the town centre branch that Liverpool and Martins took over but also the one at Hipperholme and a small office at 2, Crowtrees Lane, Rastrick, which was opened in 1909. In 1928 they were all renamed Martins Bank. The Rastrick office closed for the Second World War in 1940 and did not reopen.



*Courtesy of Martins Bank archive: Image © Barclays  
Ref: 0030/1320*

In 1969, Martins was taken over by Barclays and in 1994 the Hipperholme branch was closed and in July 2020 Brighouse was also closed.

There have been others which we are not able to go into detail in this issue. There was the Huddersfield Trustee Savings Bank, which opened in the 1930s, the TSB, which had offices in what is now the Yorkshire Building Society; the Abbey National Building Society, which had its agency in Kershaw's estate agents, which became Mawson and Walton's during the 1970s. It opened a branch in the YEB showrooms. Following its conversion to a bank it became part of the Spanish Santander Bank, it too has closed.

Today, the world of local banking is evolving even more. The greater use of internet banking will inevitably force even more local bank closures.



## What did we do before the Lottery?

Long before Lottery funding, the way to raise money for local causes was through Beetle Drives, Jumble Sales, Whist Drives, fish and chip suppers and the popular Sale of Work and the Bring and Buy Sales.

These were the traditional ways groups made their money in my younger days. I remember only too well being sent usually on a Saturday morning, to buy some of those little square 5d Bring and Buy tickets from one of the organisers.

The Sale of Work I remember going to every year was at the Ebenezer Chapel, in Bailiff Bridge. In those days I was a young member of the Clifton and Lightcliffe Band. The band was for many years booked to perform a concert after the tea.

Gradually the days of the annual Grand Bazaar and similar fund raising efforts began to change.

Sponsorship was and still is very popular, these days it tends to be on the Internet under the banner of 'Just Giving'. The days of having a card and asking a relative or the next door neighbour to sponsor you per mile you run or per length you swim have faded into the mists of time. Technology has taken over.

In the book I was commissioned to write about the lighter side of my policing career. I just had to mentioned the occasion I was asked to attend a local Jumble Sale because trouble was expected. Being a bouncer or door operative at a Jumble Sale was not something in the police training manual.



*Happy Days at the Clifton Church Bring and Buy Sale.*

In our featured photograph there is a large group of ladies and children with barely a man in sight. They had all been to the Clifton Church Bring and Buy Sale. The guest of honour on this occasion is

Lady Armytage, who appears to have just been presented with some flowers.

There is no date on the photograph, but I would guesstimate it is in the early 1960s. If you are in the photograph, can you let us know what year it was. Please contact the editor: [enquiries@chrishelme-brighthouse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@chrishelme-brighthouse.org.uk) or 01422-205763.

### Workshop Cricket Competition 1948



During the Second World War sporting events in and around Brighthouse were suspended, but that turned out to be an unpopular decision. After an absence of two years a local cricket league was started. After the war teams had to rebuild with so many young men who did not return home again or being so badly injured or affected by their experiences.

In this photograph taken in 1948 are the team members of the Old Rastrickians, (the old boys association of the Rastrick Grammar School) who took part in that year's workshop competition at the Brighthouse cricket ground.

Not only was there a cricket workshop team, but the Old Rastrickians A.F.C was also reformed that same year and soon entered the Huddersfield and District League. At the end of their first season they finished a creditable seventh in a league of 10 teams – winning five out of 18 matches.

The workshop team members included, back row: Maurice Wood, Cyril Moss, Brian Stott, Alan Biggs, Peter Biggs and Cyril Wood, the captain.

Front row: Jack Wood, Colin Biggs, Geoffrey Barratt and Herbert Gooder - the missing member of this team is Bruce Moss.

## Where have all the Characters Gone?

What qualifications does a person need to have before they are considered to be a bit of a character or perhaps someone having a colourful personality?

Sadly, these days if you are considered to be either of these, you are different, and some aspects of present-day society does not like people who dare to be different or perhaps do not fit into the square box of sameness.

At one time, you might have been called eccentric but not now. To be eccentric you have to be, let us say, well off. Or, being on the more affluent side of society, and then it is said you can afford to be eccentric. If, however, on the other hand, you are whatever the opposite is to being well off. Then obviously you cannot afford to be eccentric, and so fit into that category of being just plain daft. Perhaps one day you might achieve the distinction of being labelled as a character, possibly something to look forward to?

In Brighouse we have had a few characters over the years, people who dared to be different; let us look back at just a few of them.

'Ab Nutter' was probably the biggest character of them all, and some readers may have read about him before. He came to Brighouse in 1862 and worked at the Atlas Cotton Mill. In the evenings and Saturday afternoons, he went around the town centre streets, cricket, rugby, and football matches selling what became his trademark, sausages. '...Legs of mutton without bones.' was his familiar cry as he went round touchline and boundary.

As the years went by, and age was catching up, this became his full-time occupation and main source of income. In his younger days, he had been a vigorous fundraiser for many local charities, particularly those that were hospital-related. It was on these fundraising efforts that he attracted the attention of everyone, with his strange and often bizarre costumes.

In 1908, David Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Liberal government led by Herbert Asquith introduced the Old Age Pensions Act. This Prime Minister visited Lightcliffe to stay with his relative Sir Algernon Firth, from T.F.Firth's Carpet Company. The new pension provided between one shilling (five pence in modern money) and five shillings per week to people aged over seventy.

Ab Nutter was one of the first in Brighouse to receive this new pension in 1911. Having benefited from his new pension for three years, in October 1914, on the eve of the First World War, he died.

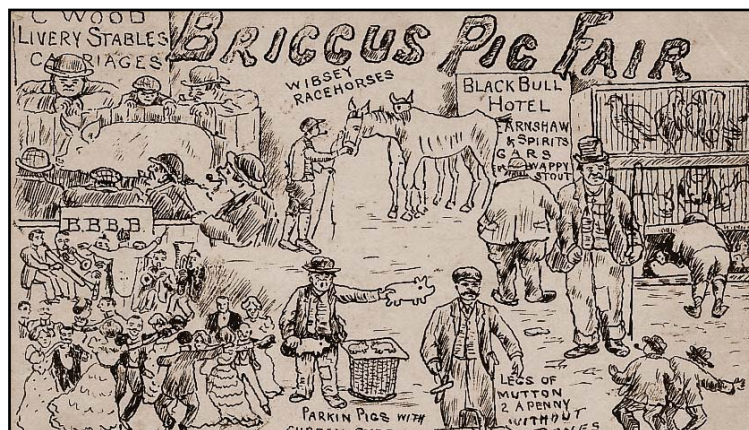
Harry Longbottom, otherwise known as 'Football Harry', was what I suppose some would describe today as an 'Anorak'. Someone who knows everything about a particular subject and perhaps little of anything else.

It has been written, Harry could be carrying out his work with skeps of bobbins on his shoulders when someone passing him in the mill would ask about, say, West Bromwich Albion. Without putting the skep down, he would be able to recite goal for goal and where they were scored, their position in the league. You asked him, and you could guarantee he would know the answer.

An all too regular question in those days, just as it is these days for current fans, was about his team (Huddersfield Town). He may not have been the richest man in monetary terms, but he was rich in knowledge about his number one topic, football.

'America Jim', now there is a name to conjure with. He was very tall, immaculately dressed and looked a real dandy walking down the length and breadth of Commercial Street wearing his beautiful top hat, cravat, morning coat and spats.

Passers-by would rarely fail to take a look back at him as he paraded passed them, and what did



Just one from a series of drawings illustrating some of the town's characters c1905.



they see? An advertisement pinned to his back for Stone's Ginger Ale.

On one occasion he attended the local ex-servicemen's reunion dinner when one of those attending shouted across the crowded room to him,

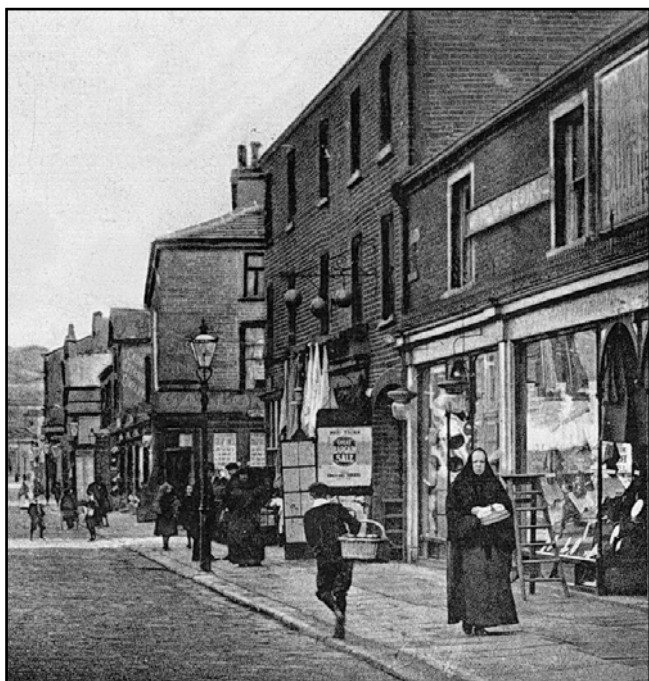
*"... You know Jim this dinner is for those who have done their bit..."*

To which he promptly replied with a smile on his face

*"...That's all reht then, nubdy's done less than thee and me..."*

Then there was 'Tom Tat', who sold newspapers outside the George and 'Mad Rat,' who sold hava-cakes, a true favourite in the old days around the town centre. Another legendary character was '... Ike Danger...' whose party piece was to go into pubs and pick a table up with his teeth and put it down again. He also had a fine stallion, which by the sound of it was as daft as he was. He was the only person who could handle it, and on that basis alone he had the respect from everyone.

'Jim Crow' or Jim Cawthra, was another of those who feared no one. History tells us that he was involved in the 1882 Irish Riots in the town centre, once the news about Lord Cavendish's assassination in Phoenix Park, Dublin reached Brighthouse.



*Commercial Street c1905. The shop facing the street lamp with the linens hanging out on display is where Fawcett's is today. With Zingo Nick or Taylor's Yard through the passageway just before the shop.*

He went down into Zingo Nick (where Fawcett's in Commercial Street is now) and cleared out all the Irish labourers. This was the start of almost a week of serious civil disorder.

Not even the normal quiet backwater of Clifton was exempt from having the odd character. 'Kippy', an old Cliftoner was known throughout the village for his tall stories. One was about him bragging about the time he stood on the balcony at Buckingham Palace. He even took it a step further, so the story goes - once on the balcony with the old Queen, folks in the crowds were heard to say *"...who's that with Kip..."*

Like thousands of others, he went to London to celebrate Queen Victoria's 1887 Jubilee. Standing on the balcony, she saw Kip and asked how he was, and how the folks up Clifton were!

With others such as 'Skinny Joe Marsden', 'Fresh Egg', Maggie Scott, 'Cockle Jim', 'Old Amos' and 'Itchy Coo', Brighthouse has had its fair share of these colourful characters over the years.

In fear of any possible legal action, I think I will restrain myself of labelling anyone as a modern-day character and leave it to you and your private thoughts just who might fit into that category.

---

## ***The Missing Poetry Book***

Philip Tordoff, a subscriber and contributor to the magazine, is looking for some help from our readers.

During the 1960s, whilst teaching at Hipperholme Grammar School he was given a copy of *'Pictures from a Country Vicarage Garden'*, by the Rev. Hugh Birch, who was the Vicar at Coley at the time.

About the same time another small book of poems was published. One of them began with *'The Ancient Peace of England lies fair on Norwood Green'*. Philip at the time was composing a few songs for the grammar school choir. He was glad of any suitable words, especially if they had a local connection and planned to utilise these words.

Unfortunately, at an untimely moment the book disappeared, probably due to someone's 'tidying up', never to be seen again. It would be interesting to see if any reader might have a copy, or has seen a copy of this book. If ever found, Philip would be pleased to complete the setting the words to music! Please contact the editor if you can help.

## Boxing Champion George 'Kid' Eastwood

It is difficult to imagine the astonishment felt after having been declared as missing in action at Passchendaele during the First World War you suddenly turn up on your parents doorstep alive and physically well!

That is what happened to George 'Kid' Eastwood. He is one of Brighouse's sporting heroes.

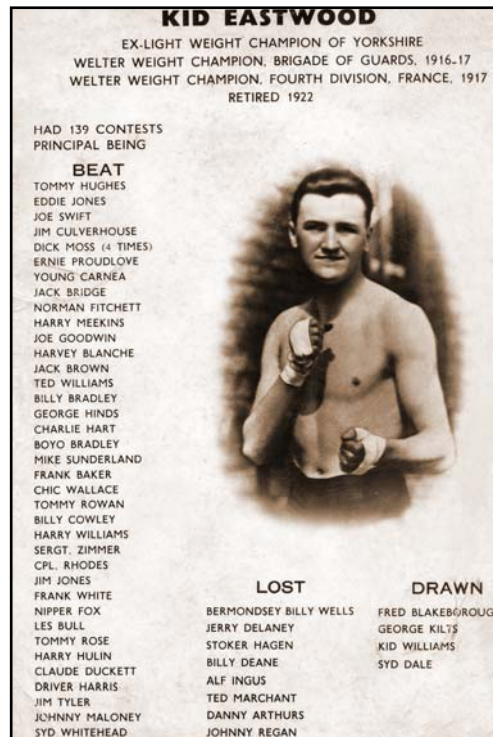
George started his boxing career at Kidman's Boxing Academy, which was in or near to the Black Swan, in Briggate (this is now known as Millers Bar). There were many contests at the academy and it was in these contests that he showed some of his future potential as a boxer.

When a skating rink was opened at the old Empire Theatre on Atlas Mill Road in 1909 this proved to be the ideal location and a n opportunity to hold boxing contests in a larger venue. One of the best attended fights was in 1911 when 350 spectators paid to watch a contest between George 'Kid' Eastwood and fellow Brighouse boxer 'Young' Wilkinson.

George went on to be the lightweight champion of Yorkshire, welterweight champion of the Brigade of Guards in 1916-17 and welterweight champion of the 4th Division in France in 1917.

In 1918, he was shot in action whilst serving in the Grenadier Guards. The bullet passed right through his right arm. With this injury you would have thought it was the end of his boxing career.

Not likely! He went to develop a punishing left jab which helped him to win in 130 contests.



*A very rare postcard highlighting his boxing career.*

A highlight of his career was at the National Sporting Club in London. This fight took place in the presence of the then Prince of Wales, who was to later abdicate and become the Duke of Windsor and the Duke of York, who later became King George VI. Where ever boxing was talked about the name of 'Kid' Eastwood would be known throughout the boxing world as a peerless exponent of the art and a great sportsman and a gentleman in or out of the ring. He was always keen to preserve the good name of boxing.

He was reported missing at Passchendaele, and somehow his incorrect name, rank and number meant that he appeared on the Brighouse Cenotaph at Rydings Park, until it was later erased by a stonemason.



*Known throughout the halls and theatres in the country.*

George retired in 1922 and surprisingly he found a new vocation with his son Fred. Together they formed a song and dance duo and toured the halls and theatres throughout the country.

This meant that George, a former professional champion boxer and Grenadier Guardsman, teamed up with his son Fred, an Irish Guardsman, in the Second World War and a captain in the Indian Army. He went on

to be a timekeeper with the British Boxing Board of Control.

The famous partnership came to an end in October 1971, when George peacefully passed away at his home in Camm Street. Unfortunately, I don't have any further details about his son Fred. If you can add to the story please contact the editor.



## ***Down the Decades***

### **1990 — 2000**

October 1990, Firefighters were praised for their bravery whilst dealing with a fractured gas main, cylinders and a major fire at Hipperholme Camping Centre.

November 1995, at Southowram Withenfields Junior & Infant School pupils down pens for a day as their parents protest about delays in building them a new school.

March 1999, hundreds of job losses announced at T.F.Firth's following a major restructuring.

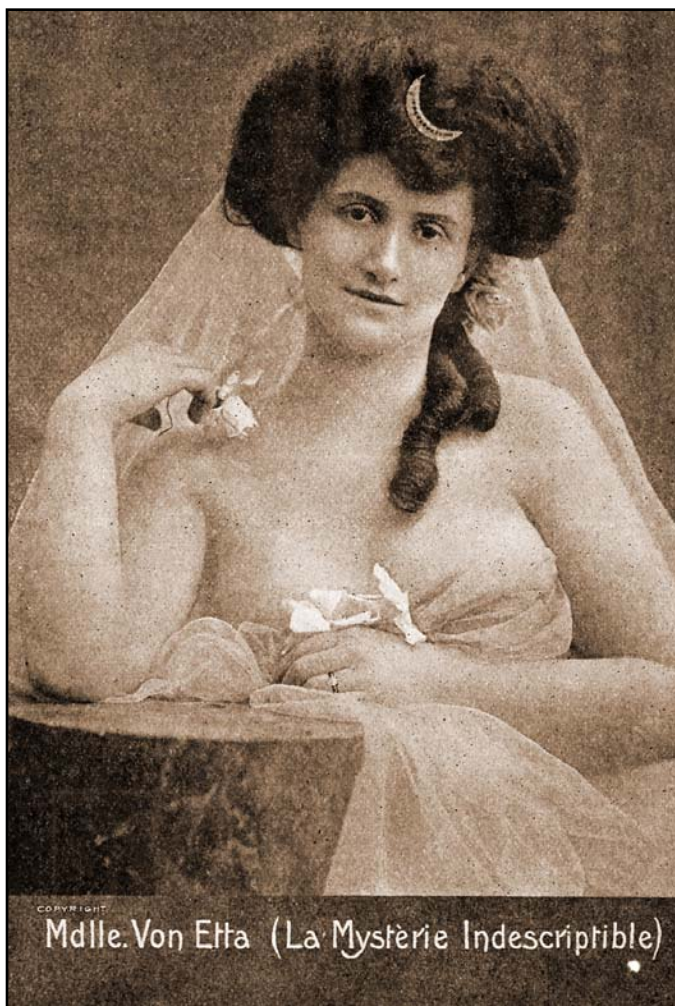
1999 - Primary head brings home an 'Oscar'.

Mrs Jean Heslop, headteacher at Cliffe Hill Junior and Infant School, Lightcliffe, won the 'Contribution to School Leadership (Primary)' category in the 1999 Teaching Awards. She was awarded £23,500 for the school. The judges announced it was the best school in its category they had visited. Readers will be pleased to hear that Mrs Heslop is still around although not in this area.

August 2, 1998, the death was reported of Noel Fitton, the man who put Brighouse on the map with his Ambassador Radio and then his Stereosound businesses.

## ***The Incomparable Vonetta***

She was born Etta Von (1878-1964) but had a number of different names. She first went out on tour in 1906 and was billed as 'Von-Etta, La Mystere Indescriptible'. She was also billed as the 'World's Only Lady Illusionist' and the 'Queen of Mystery'. Her husband Vincent travelled with the show as her assistant. She toured until 1914, when World War I began this meant that touring Europe came to an end. She opened a dance studio instead.



As an illusionist and magician her most famous trick was a floating coffin which was described as macabre. Von Etta's illusions were described as both original and bewildering, and the box trick is as mystifying as it is ingenious.

She did not disappear entirely from magic after the war. She appeared in a 1918 silent movie for the Ace Films Company playing dual roles. There are no records of her performing after the early 1930s though.

This image of her is from an advertising postcard and was distributed locally when she was billed to appear at the Albert Theatre, Brighouse, pre-1914.

## ***Down the Decades***

### **1990 — 2000**

The new Sainsbury's Supermarket was opened in 1990. It was built on the site of the Victoria Mill complex which was where many of the town's older industries of cotton and silk once employed hundred of local people.

June 12, 1991, was a big day in Brighouse when Prince Charles visited the town to unveil a plaque which was set in a large piece of local stone. The was to formally open the new canal-side walk.

1997, after a history of flour production in Brighouse which began in 1829, the announcement was made by the mills owners Allied Mills that Thomas Sugden's would be closing.

August 1994, Barclays Bank at Hipperholme closed its doors for the last time. It opened in 1898 as part of the Halifax Commercial Banking Company. On January 16, 1920, it became a branch of the Liverpool and Martin's Bank and on January 3, 1928, it was under the banner of Martin's Bank Ltd. On December 15, 1969 it became part of Barclay's Bank. Mr T. Thornton who had been the Clerk in Charge at the bank from 1968, would I believe have been the last to leave.

## *In the Public Eye — Richard Kershaw*

Three hundred years ago, John Kershaw was described as a Gentleman, shown on the West Riding Session Rolls as a Juror and serving in public office for the Hipperholme-cum-Brighouse Township, which was the district's old name.

This was before the formal separation of the Township in 1866 when Brighouse became an independent district from Hipperholme and established its own Local Board (forerunner to the modern-day council). Not to be left completely isolated, in 1869 Hipperholme followed suit with it too having its own Local Board, which later became the Hipperholme Urban District Council. Then in 1937, it was amalgamated into the Borough of Brighouse and in 1974 it all became part of Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

John Kershaw lived at Hoyle House, the current home of the Harrison family who have occupied the house and worked the farm which has become the Crow Nest Golf Club - since 1910. In 1893, the noted local historian John Horsfall Turner described Hoyle House as a 'secluded better class house'.

John's only daughter Mary married William Richardson of High Fernley of Wyke, which was where the Brighouse branch of the Kershaws originally came from. Of the Brighouse Kershaws it is Richard, Charles and Lister that are the better known of the five brothers.

Charles and Lister were landscape gardeners whose stories I will publish in a future magazine. Let us now take a look at Richard the 19th-century entrepreneur, public servant and who was known by his many employees simply as 'Dickie Pop' (this name originated out of his pompous nature) though – no doubt never to his face.

He was born in Wyke on December 1, 1832. His father moved the family from Wyke to a small house in Bonegate Road in 1833, near to where The Crescent is today, and started a small business as a market gardener. For several years Richard worked alongside his father in the family business and

at the age of 19 he left to make his own way in the world as a travelling fruit and vegetable seller. This was a business which gave him the start in what was to be a lifetime in commerce.



Having travelled the country for almost 10 years, at the age of 30 he married Sophia Baines. She was the daughter of a leading businessmen in the district and a man described as one of the makers of modern Brighouse, John Baines of Walnut Cottage in Bonegate Road.

Richard and Sophia made their home at Ash Grove at Clifton (which is now the Ash Grove housing development) and stayed there until 1878. Following the death of Sir Titus Salt (December 3, 1876) at Crow Nest, Lightcliffe, Kershaw bought the property. He and his family lived there until he died in 1917 when it was sold to the Joseph Brooke Nonslip Stone Company.

From his fruit and vegetable business, he became involved with the silk industry, an industry originally started in Brighouse by Robert Newton, who had formed his own business in 1846 in the silk industry based in Victoria Mills, which is now the site of Sainsbury's Supermarket.

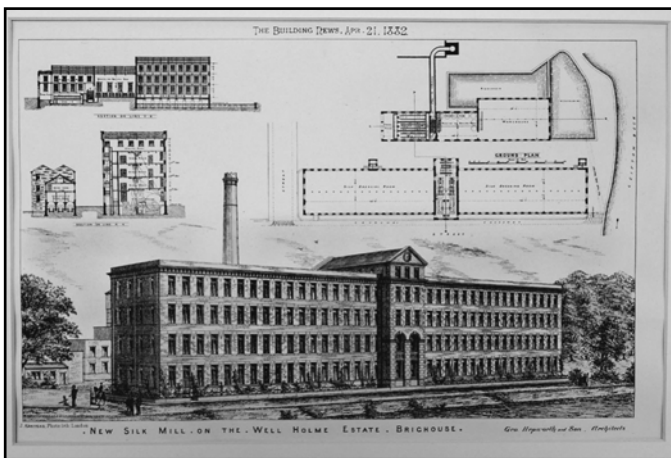
Following on from Robert Newton was the company of Burrows and Monk. Still, in its infancy, this business was not doing too well but in 1864 it stepped Richard Kershaw who bought out the premises and all their plant and machinery. Abandoning all his other business commitments he threw himself into this new venture and was determined to make a success of it.

Gradually the business began to grow, so much so that it was not long before his business Richard Kershaw & Company was on the move from Victoria Mills to new premises at Brooksmouth Mill at Clifton Bridge. It was not long before these premises had to be extended but they too soon became too small.

To take in the extra business he bought the Calder Bridge Mill, which in later years was one of many 19th-century mills that burnt down.



In 1878, he had the opportunity of buying part of the Well Holme estate. Realising this was an opportunity of having all his business under one roof he bought the site. He employed local architect George Hepworth to draw up plans for his new silk mill.



In 1880 the mill was completed. He called it the Woodvale Silk Mills, which was situated as many readers will remember at the back of the Police Station. This was by far the largest mill in the district and employed as many as 700 workers when it was running at full capacity, a workforce that had to ensure the 40,000 spindles were kept working. With the new mill being so big it is said he overstretched himself financially. He sought out help from local businessman Charles Field who loaned Richard £6,000, this was on the understanding that he would be employed at the mill as the bookkeeper where he would be able to keep an eye on the financial side of the business.

Richard Kershaw, although pompous by nature, was considered to be a good employer. He was well thought of in his mill and around the community, as well as being respected throughout the silk industry by other mill owners.

He entered public life in 1872 and was elected to the Brighouse Local Board and was a member of the first Brighouse Borough Council in 1893. He was at the forefront as an ideal first mayor of the new council. However, owing to the death of his wife after 31 years of marriage he withdrew his name from the list. He did, however, after much persuasion from his friends allow his name to go forward to be considered for a position as an Alderman. Such was the respect for him that 19 of the 24 councillors voted in his favour.

At the turn of the century, his daughter Mrs Sarah Young, was in the news in a divorce case at



*Mrs Sophia Kershaw is sat on the front row centre with her daughter Mrs Sarah Young to the right. This was taken in the grounds of Crow Nest when they were entertaining the members of the local branch of Dr Barnardo's Helpers League.*

court that made front-page headlines. She was married to the Reverend Hamilton Young who was the Vicar of Alne near Easingwold and had three children, Marcus Cavendish Bentinck Kershaw



*Here is just one of the many quarries C:1919 opened up by the Joseph Brooke Nonslip Stone Company, on the Crow Nest Estate after they bought the estate in 1917.*

Young (what a fine name that is); Marjorie Sophia, who went on to marry Arthur Bryan Clay; and their third child Richard Hamilton Young. All three children were born between 1892 and 1895.

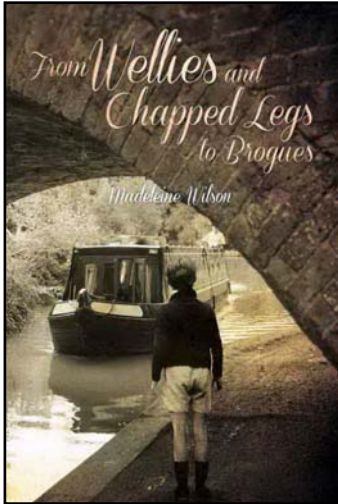
It was Richard Kershaw who discovered the huge stone beds under his estate at Lightcliffe. He died at Crow Nest in 1917 and never had the opportunity of capitalising on this untapped wealth.

Richard Kershaw was interred in the family grave at Brighouse Cemetery. He finally served as the town's mayor from 1895 to 1898.

## Happy Days at Hipperholme

It was quite by chance that I read about Madeleine Wilson of Rastrick. Madeleine, now in her late 70s, decided that she would like to write a book. I am sure that is something many readers would also like to do. It was certainly something I wanted to do back in the mid-1980s.

Madeleine's book is available on the internet from



*This heart-warming story entices you in until the final page. It's full of nostalgia with characters who may be reminiscent of your own family!*

Amazon books, both in paperback and in a Kindle version. It is also available from 'Just Books', Commercial Street, Brighouse.

It was whilst chatting to Madeleine that she mentioned her childhood years were spent in Kirk Lane, Hipperholme.

She attended Hipperholme Infants School and then moved to Lightcliffe C of E School. Leaving school at the end of term was always an exciting time for Madeleine and her friends walking

home from school. Especially before the summer break and at Christmas. Although none of them had any real plans, it was just a few parting words, 'See you tomorrow', as they went their separate ways.

She has many happy childhood memories of playing out with friends at the bottom of Kirk Lane. Games of hop-scotch on the road, using a piece of broken tile so it slid over the road surface, you treasured that tile. We used a length of old washing line for use as a skipping rope, then we played marbles, hide-and-seek, playing cricket in the middle of the road with no fear of any cars needing to drive passed, she recalled.

During the summer break, 'We would go into the nearby wood and spend hours making or repairing our existing dens and play out a story as we went along'.

She remembered, 'Walking all the way to Shibden Park, along the A58 (Leeds Road) to Lower Brear and then turn left and walk down the cat-steps to

the park. We would be carrying a bottle of water and a jam sandwich for later. Having tried the swings, the rant which some readers may remember, and the seesaw. We would have a game of rounders and sometime if we had any money we would all go on the paddle boats on the lake.

'A good alternative to Shibden was always at Sunny Vale or *Sunny Bunces* as we called it. We never went on a Bank Holiday because it was always too busy. At Easter and Whitsuntide, I used to sit on my mum's bed and watch all the people making their way down into the valley. Men would be wearing suits with a collar and tie, with the ladies and children all in their Sunday Best. Ladies would be wearing gloves and girls with ribbons in their hair'.

Those were happy days at Hipperholme for Madeleine and just some the memories she has from her childhood. She will be sharing more of her childhood stories in future issues.

If you have a childhood story to share please contact the editor.

### Note from the Editor

Having written several local history books, a book about brass banding and another about my policing career. I have started researching for a new book and I would like to hear from readers if they would like to be involved and be featured in this book.

It is about people born in and around the Brighouse area or may have been born elsewhere but spent most of the childhood in around Brighouse.

The book will be individual stories of living in Brighouse and your memories of it at the time, the schools you went to, the shops you can remember and what the town centre was like.

Then, to bring the story up to date, about moving overseas to foreign parts, probably never to see your school friends again. This could have been traumatic for some youngsters. How has your life changed in the new country.

You may have moved to a different country because of new work opportunities for your parents or a new life for you and your family. Or you may have decided to retire and start a new life. If you would to know more please contact the editor.



# A Letter from *Palm Springs...*

Leaving third-formers unattended on a double-decker bus heading for cricket practice is never a good idea. We were upstairs, rocking the Leyland, intent on tipping her over. The entire class of third-formers running from side to side together, and we had a good sway going when, to our glee, someone spotted Eric, the 'mad' maths master strutting across the Rastrick Grammar School yard. So, a long cry went up... 'Errrricccc!... Errrricccc!' as we ran side to side. I relish the memory of Mr. Nichols gripping his cape, gritting his teeth as he stormed up the stairs, uttering his delicious invectives - 'Insolent bounders!... Whippersnappers!... Snidey shodhorns!' - as he lashed about with flailing arms.

I know I shouldn't cherish such memories. Rastrick Grammar School was a respected and soberly institution. It gave me a superb education. But, deep gratitude to dedicated staff such as Mr Nichols ('Sir,' and *never* 'Eric') aside, such tantalizing recollections of teasing the teachers for theatrical value fondly fill my mind.



*Happy days. This photograph was taken on a summer holiday at the East Coast, with older brother Martin, Mum and Christopher. Little did Christopher know then that one day he would be travelling far and wide around the world and making a new home in Palm Springs, California.*

My entire future - in fact, my profession and *present* - I owe to my earliest memory at RGS. Eleven years old. My first geography lesson. Ordnance Survey maps are laid out. Soon enough I'm plotting routes and drawing volcanoes and other geomorphological features, unknowingly mapping out my life ahead through my evolving love of an enrapturing world slowly unfolding like that big OS map. (Later in life, mum told me I liked to draw maps - especially of the USA - on those big birthday cards of yore that unfolded like origami before 'save the forests' was popularized).

I was born in Pontefract: coal slag heaps were my playground until my family relocated to Brighouse in 1966 and, if not wider horizons, at least fresher air. Holidays meant visits to our caravan at Bridlington and donkey rides on Scarborough beach: sometimes to Torquay or Bournemouth. I travelled further afield vicariously through my granddad's slide shows following his annual holidays by Dormobile throughout Europe. A seed was unknowingly being sown.

And so, in 1973, to the Great Wen to read Geography at University College. I specialised in geomorphology.

In 1975, I participated in a university field-study program to the Moroccan Sahara, driving through France and Spain by Land-Rover on my first trip abroad. My passion for intellectual discovery had long been present, but the experience of a month in the desert with Berbers sparked a lust for discovery through adventure and travel.

The following year I participated in a field-study program in Poland (it was still Communist back then) that included an indelible visit to Auschwitz: and that summer I spent two witheringly hot and eventful months as a research assistant in the heart of Algeria's Sahara Desert. (The latter became the inspiration for award-winning UK writer Clare Chambers' novel, 'A Dry Spell'.)

After two years studying at the Center for Latin American Studies (Liverpool University) and Institute of Education (London), where I trained as a geography teacher, I floundered, unsure of my direction in life. But friends who'd separately hitchhiked around

the world rekindled my childhood fascination with the USA.

In 1978 I spent the summer hitchhiking around the 'States... and reported on the journey for the



*Brighthouse Echo*. The Berkeley (California) bug bit big and in 1980, after 18 months back in London, I headed to Heathrow airport with a backpack, my sights on California, and no plans on returning. I aimed at becoming a political journalist... until love messed with my mind!

Stupid is as stupid does! I'd worked hard washing dishes, sat my entrance exams to the School of Journalism at the University of California Berkeley, and received a Scripps-Howard Foundation Scholarship... which I flippantly turned down to become a dutiful income-earning husband to the California blonde I'd fallen in love with. Thankfully, serendipity delivered me a job in the adventure travel industry.

In 1982, I led a travel agent's 'familiarisation' trip to New Zealand and wrote a report on the adventure tour for a travel trade magazine. When a cheque for \$200 for the story arrived in the mail, I had my 'Eureka!' moment and launched my career as a travel journalist.

I don't see my profession as a job. It is my vocation and an expression of who I am. To earn a living travelling to far-flung places and writing about my experiences combines two of my keenest passions. Fortunately, I'm motivated more by 'satisfaction' than money, as it's not always been an easy row to hoe. Several were the months when I couldn't pay the rent. Markets for travel journalism have constantly morphed. I've had to morph too to stay relevant.

In the early years, focusing on adventure travel, barely a month went by without partaking of some awesome experience. Not least as trainee crew member aboard the maiden voyage of HMS *Bounty* as it sailed from Vancouver, Canada, for London to

participate in the Bicentennial Fleet of square-rigged ships reenacting the founding of Australia. I wrote and photographed guidebooks for Lonely Planet: ... syndicated my stories to newspapers around the globe:... made annual forays to pitch to my editors in London, New York, and Hong Kong.

Year by year my success grew, sufficient to have won the 2008 Lowell Thomas Award 'Travel Journalist of the Year' and to have been profiled in the Royal Geographic Society's *Geographical Magazine*. 'One of the elements Christopher loves about his profession is the ability it gives him to shape his professional life to his interests and whims,' the editor wrote. How true!

In 1993 I'd discovered bewitchingly surreal Cuba (at the time virgin territory). In 1996, I shipped my BMW motorcycle to Cuba and spent three months riding the island end to end, resulting in the publication of (eventually) five travel guidebooks on Cuba plus my National Geographic travel memoir, *Mi Moto Fidel: Motorcycling Through Castro's Cuba*. Cuba has since become my pre-eminent focus.

Today, at 65, retirement isn't part of my lexicon. I've just been commissioned to write a coffee-table book on Harley-Davidson motorcycles, and a guidebook on California. And an increasing amount of time is given to sharing my passion and expertise in leading tours. My 2021 calendar is full of group motorcycle and photography tours to Cuba and

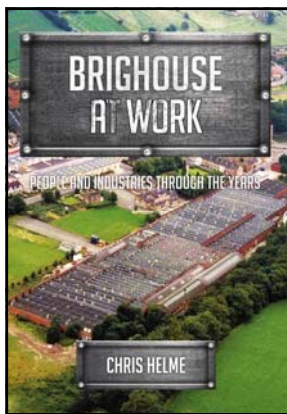


other destinations I love. I'll be eternally thankful for that first geography lesson at Rastrick Grammar School... even if, flummoxed by maths, I can still hear 'Mad' Eric's words in my ear: 'Baker, we'll have none of your Chinese methods here. What are you going to do in an exam? Think of a number and double it?'

**Christopher P. Baker**

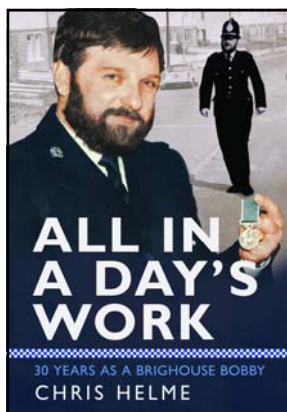
[www.Christopherpbaker.com](http://www.Christopherpbaker.com)





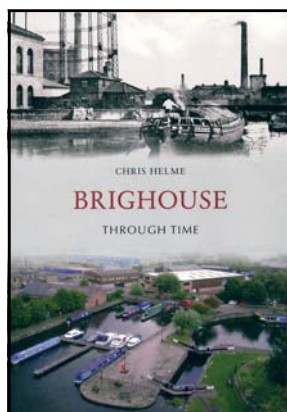
**Brighouse at Work** - From a small hamlet and a bridge, the town of Brighouse in Calderdale grew rapidly with the building of the Calder and Hebble Navigation in the late eighteenth century. This led to the development of the town's successful textile industries. This is a book where almost a few lines will tell the reader something about the industrial heritage of Brighouse and its surrounding communities.

The book is £14.99 + £3 postage packaging, for overseas orders please contact the author. PayPal is available as are cheques.

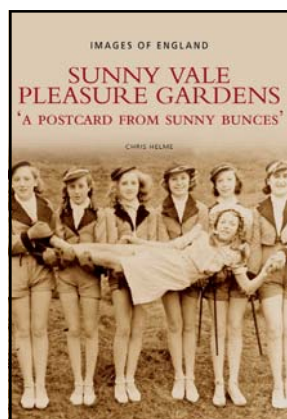


**All in a Day's Work** — During the 1950s, Chris Helme was often asked by relatives: 'What do you want to be when you grow up?' A policeman was always his answer. A child of the Fifties, he was brought up to respect the local police who seemed to know everyone.

All in a Day's Work: 30 Years as Brighouse Bobby is his journey to achieving that ambition culminating with being awarded the British Empire Medal for services to his community in 1990. A local bobby had to deal with everything that happened on his 'patch'. This book takes the reader through a catalogue of sad, humorous, and almost unbelievable incidents in the life of a local policeman. £12.00 + £3 p/p.



**Brighouse Through Time** - 96 pages of both black and white and coloured images of aspects with views of Brighouse and its surrounding communities. Fascinating scenes displayed in a of 'then and now' format. £12.99 + £3.



**Sunny Vale Pleasure Gardens**, near Brighouse, opened as a garden in 1880 but with the inclusion of amusements in 1883 it became a hugely popular venue for Sunday strollers, local Sunday School groups and day trippers from around the north of England for the next seventy-five years. This collection of more than 180 images, complemented by detailed captions and reminiscences of the Gardens throughout their long history, will delight all who remember visiting as a child and provide a fascinating insight into this vanished, but not-forgotten, institution. £12.00 + £3 p/p.

All these books can be purchased through [www.chrishelme-brighouse.org.uk](http://www.chrishelme-brighouse.org.uk) from the on-line shop or by contacting Chris Helme email: [enquiries@chrishelme-brighouse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@chrishelme-brighouse.org.uk) — or by telephone 07854-755756 and Harrison Lords, Bradford Road Brighouse. If you wish to advertise your book on the website or in this magazine please contact the publisher.

**Back page outer cover photograph** — This was photographed in 1956 and shows the bunting decorations in King Street. This was part of the centenary celebrations for the Brighouse Co-op.



