

# A LONG ROAD AHEAD MP PLAYS FOR TIME IN BYPASS BATTLE

**IT'S NOT  
THE PAPER  
PEOPLE BUY,  
IT'S THE  
PAPER BY  
THE PEOPLE**

## PARK PLANS

Historic Landscape Consultants HTLA have unveiled the designs which will support the bid for Heritage Lottery funding of an extensive restoration of Roberts Park.

## BANDSTAND

Plans include repairs to the building and infrastructure, a park manager providing a visible presence, public conveniences and spectacular, if controversial ideas for a brightly lit new bandstand.

## PLANTING

The basic layout of planting in the park has survived since the 1870s and the intention now is to restore the vista of beds, shrubs and trees to its original colourful splendour.

## Saltaire Village Website

[www.saltairevillage.info](http://www.saltairevillage.info)

has many more details on this item (as well as others), allowing you to examine and comment on the actual designs.

There will be no bypass around – or under – Saltaire for "many, many years" Phillip Davies, Conservative MP for Shipley, told a public meeting organised by Saltaire Village Society on September 24th.

It would be up to the Regional Transport Board to allocate funding (the projected cost of a bypass is presently between £120M and £130M) and funding is spoken for until 2012.

Mr Davies assured the meeting that he would not support any proposals which posed a threat to the World Heritage Site or Hirst Wood. **Dave Shaw** pointed out that as the designation of Saltaire as a World Heritage Site was taken at a national level, "It is an issue for the government not for the Regional Transport Board". Rather than take issue with this point, Mr Davies emphasised that any proposed scheme would need to be endorsed by UNESCO.

**Saltaire Village Society** believes that the public money which will fund the feasibility study would be better spent on solutions including improved public transport and car sharing. Mr. Davies appears to think otherwise. His emphasis was on "individual freedom" as a philosophy, with cars bound to increase in number as people prospered.

More, not less, roads were needed, he stated. When local resident **Joan Barton** asked if a park and ride scheme, following the successful example of York, might be a possibility, the MP's prompt reply was "Buses get held up in congestion". That was my cue to leave. **Pamela Reynolds**

## In this issue

### **FESTIVAL PHOTO**

*Plus*

### **TEAROOM TALK**

*Plus*

### **WILDLIFE WALKS**

*Plus*

### **ALL OUR USUAL**

### **UNUSUALS**

## EXCITING FUTURE FOR HISTORY CLUB

One of the great local success stories of the year has been the establishment and rapid growth of the Saltaire History Club, brainchild of Dave Shaw. Denys Salt, who was accompanied by his wife Eva, addressed a very mixed audience of forty people on the 204th anniversary of his great grandfather's birth.

Alan Petford gave an informative and entertaining lecture on the development of model villages nationwide.

## TRIP

This turned out to be an enticing backdrop to the announcement that the Club is organising a trip this month to Copley, Ackroydon and other historical sites near Halifax... (See page 4)

Dave Shaw introduced his latest initiative, *The Saltaire Journal*, and Julie Woodward recruited volunteers for *Friends of Shipley College*.

Roger Clarke spoke about the *Conversazione*—(or which he writes on page 2) - the annual get-

together which was the 'talk of the town' in more ways than one from 1878 until

1964. Victoria Hall Manager Stacey Clarkin is so keen to see this reinstated that she has already set dates for the three day event – February 14th-16th 2008 - and is asking Sentinel readers who would like to be involved to contact her:

[sclarkin@shipley.ac.uk](mailto:sclarkin@shipley.ac.uk)

## *Watch this space*

for further news of the *Saltaire Journal*, and *Friends of Shipley College*.

**The next meeting of the History Club will be on December 6th at 7pm in the Shipley College building on Exhibition Road.**

**WHATEVER IT IS – SAY IT IN THE *Sentinel***

**E-mail: [saltairesentinel@btinternet.com](mailto:saltairesentinel@btinternet.com)**

OR use the form to be found on the website: [www.saltairevillage.info](http://www.saltairevillage.info)

**Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup>**

# The Saltaire Sentinel

## THE GLITTERING EVENT THAT WAS THE CONVERSAZIONE

January, 1878, was the date of the first **Conversazione**. This was a 3 day, glittering social occasion, with much eating and dancing. It began on a Thursday evening with the grand opening, which all the top Society figures from the West Riding, and especially the Bradford area, attended. This was an expensive and sumptuous meal, and dancing to the best bands. Friday was a special dance which more Villagers attended. Saturday afternoon was a Children's Party. But the most popular was Saturday night, with cheaper prices which more Villagers could afford. It was so popular that it was held every year (apart from the War Years, and other times of national emergency) until 1964, spanning almost a century. Victoria Hall was always the venue. The front doors were blocked off to provide more space inside, and access was via the Lockwood Street entrance. The interior was decorated in the most expensive and sumptuous manner, with exotic plants from the Salts family conservatories, and all manner of expensive fabrics and curtains. There were ribbons and bunting, flags and flowers, mirrors, Chinese lanterns, and a scent fountain to freshen the air. The best dance bands were hired, and other entertainment included ventriloquists, solo singers, actors performing a farce, memento readers, choirs, a conjuror, and all manner of the latest scientific inventions including the telephone and microscopes.

Food included boars head, lobster, pates and potted meats, exotic desserts, and both temperance and alcoholic drinks. For most of the Villagers, Saturday was the best day. The children's party had masks, balloons, prizes and presents. The evening dance had all the latest popular tunes and dances, as well as pies and beer to suit the working man and woman's taste.

This was the social event of the year, and all proceeds went to local charities. Its demise seems to have been linked with the increase in TV ownership, and the increase in popular entertainment at home. The wind down of the Mill had also begun, and perhaps there was less community spirit with fewer workers on site. Whatever the reason, the 1965 event was cancelled at the last minute because of lack of support, and it has never been held again.

**It was Frank and Ilma Senior who first encouraged my interest in the Conversazione.**

This page: **ROGER CLARKE REPORTS**

## SALTAIRE FOLK

In June, 2005, **Frank and Ilma Senior** celebrated their Diamond Wedding anniversary. Frank is now 87 years, and Ilma (whose name is Finnish), is 84 years old. They have both spent most of their lives in Shipley and Saltaire, and both worked in Salts Mill.

Ilma's family on her mother's side were Sykes, a large family who all lived in Saltaire and worked in the Mill. On her father's side were the Watmoughs. She was born in Windsor Road in a fish and chip shop, owned by her parents. This housing was demolished in 1967, and Asda supermarket was built on the site in 1984. At 14, like most young people in the area, she went into Salts Mill – first in the burling and mending, and then into the Office. She attended Business School in the evenings to gain her RSA qualifications.

Conscription into the ATS came in 1942, in the Accounts section. Returning home in 1945, she and Frank married, and a year later their only son, Geoffrey was born. Ilma remained at home until 1962, when a favour to a relative led her back to Salts for a "temporary" job to do some stocktaking – which lasted until she retired in 1975!

Frank was born at 3, Katherine Street, Saltaire. His father was a loom tuner and his mother a weaver at Salts Mill. When he left school at 14 years he started work there himself. He was first a bobbin tube piler for 3 months, then on the gatehouse as errand boy, then in the Enquiry Office and finally in the Design Dept and the Sales Costing Office before entering the RAF where he trained as ground crew, maintaining the aircraft. After being stationed in this country, the inevitable posting overseas came with a long haul by sea to Port Said (the Mediterranean was effectively closed to shipping, and a trip around the Cape was necessary). He returned home in 1945 and demobbed in March, 1946, to return to Salts Mill – as a Sales Costing Clerk once again. By 1957 he had become Costing Manager for finished fabric, where he remained until his retirement in 1983.

Frank had lived with his parents in Edward Street, Saltaire (which they were offered for £250 as sitting tenants by Gresswells estate agents), but after the War he and Ilma moved to Earl Street (which ran off St Pauls Road) and lived there between 1946 and 1960. They still remember, with nostalgia, the community spirit there. These back to back houses are now demolished. Since 1960 they have lived in Marlborough Road. They recall that before the War Marlborough Road had huge ornate metal gates at the bottom, which were dismantled in the 1930's. **(Do any other Sentinel readers remember them, or have photographs?)**

## SALTS MILL

### THE SILVER YEARS

It is twenty years since Jonathan Silver bought Salts Mill.

Anne Davies, now the Gallery Bookshop Manager, recalls the early days:

Under Jonathan's leadership, Anne tells us, everyone did whatever was necessary. He was a workaholic and expected everyone else to give the same commitment. He could be conducting a critical negotiation one minute and sweeping the floor the next. Similarly, staff could be busy with a job and then called away to park his car or walk Freda, the dog [Both the Silvers and David Hockney owned dachshunds, as did their great hero, Picasso.- Roger]

When Jonathan opened the Diner in 1993, Anne worked 27 consecutive days without a break, and was then allowed 2 days off. If you lasted a month, she says, you did well. The work pressure on everyone from Jonathan was intense. He quite simply wore people out. He lived and breathed work, and found it difficult to take holidays. He would phone into work when on holiday or when ill for whispered conversations about work without Maggie hearing him. On one occasion he persuaded Anne to miss her holidays because she wasn't going away and he argued that she might as well be at work! The only hierarchy was that Jonathan was in charge and was the star of the show. Everyone else was a supporting cast. He made all the decisions, with his brilliantly agile mind and his attention to detail. The advantage to this was that you always got an immediate answer to any query, provided you could pin him down and were prepared to share his attention with several other people. Jonathan had an endearing quality of showing an unexpected touch of humour, kindness or thoughtfulness, which meant that any disagreements were quickly forgotten.

... To be continued

# The Saltaire Sentinel

## SALTS MILL

Opened 1853 and  
still

Open Every Day

Attractions include

**SALT'S DINER**

*Cafe in to the Opera*

**SALTAIRE HISTORY  
EXHIBITION**

1853 Gallery

**AND MUCH MORE**

**ADMISSION FREE**

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## **VICTORIA TEAROOMS**

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Open Daily

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## **SALTAIRE NEWSAGENTS**

9 VICTORIA ROAD

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RANDALL**  
*Gentleman's  
Hairdresser*

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01274 - 597140

## **The SPA**

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Savouries, Frozen  
Food, Groceries,  
Sweets, Etc.

Mon-Sat 8.30am - 10pm

Sunday 10am - 10pm

01274- 826534

All the above are outlets for  
the Sentinel. Advertising space  
in these pages is not for sale.



Hattie Townsend (on the right, in bonnet) looks on disapprovingly, in character as the Salts' housekeeper, as Maria Glot (centre) brings her experience of enthraling a crowd outside to her role as millgirl Ellen Danby.

## *The Saltaire Sentinel*

### **JOHN NICHOLSON POETRY PRIZE**

This month we are pleased to publish the **fifth** winner of this year's John Nicholson Poetry Prize, for which there was simply insufficient space in September's issue. Since the initiative was launched in 2003, the number of entries has steadily increased. Of course, it's not about winning; the fact that readers see publication in these pages as a prize worth having and respond so positively to the invitation to participate is very encouraging. So Thank You as well as Congratulations to all this year's entrants. Poems are usually published in September but may be submitted throughout the year. Details of the Who and Why John Nicholson appear regularly in these pages.

### **SALTAIRE**

#### **A unique monument to one man's vision**

**By Geoff Tynan**

A unique monument to one mans vision,  
Water the key to his decision.  
To power looms and convey the goods,  
The Leeds and Liverpool ascends the landscape like  
no river could.

Clean air for once instead of smog,  
But no place to sell the grog.  
To keep the highway free and neat,  
No washing please across the street.

Mind and body catered for,  
Rich in Art, Sport and knowledge for the poor.  
Gateways to a better life,  
No smoke clad city strife.

Relax in the mystical east for a while,  
Shed the days toil Turkish style.  
Wander home through streets related,  
The Salt family tree on Prussian blue stated.

The Masons Art lifts the tone,  
Street corners fanned in Yorkshire stone.  
From flagstones worn by workers all,  
To the Classical of, Victoria Hall.

## **NEW DRAMA, SAME SUCCESS**

It's becoming an annual treat! Hattie Townsend has written, directed, and frequently performed in, a series of dramatic productions for the Saltaire Festival every year for the past four years. They never seem to lose their freshness and appeal. This year's offering was a drama walk, "Challenging Utopia", featuring Kate and Dan Breeze from the village, plus Nathan and Tom Barker from Bingley Little Theatre. The brothers provided horseplay, touching ambition, and a healthy irreverence towards the more staid Village characters. Kate and Dan were tragic figures in a domestic conflict which spilled over onto Saltaire's streets. They joined Hattie, Maria Glot and Roger Clarke, performing as housekeeper, millworker and Minister, to link the drama with stories from different levels of Saltaire society in 1878. Repeat attenders and newcomers alike enjoyed the skilful crafting of Hattie's characters within their well researched historical setting.

### **SALTS WALKS**

Slightly less dramatic guided tours of the Village set out regularly and by arrangement from 'Magic Number Three' in Victoria Road.

**For more information,  
call**

Maria Glot: 599887 or  
(mobile) 07952745471

### **ECO ACTION DAY**

**Saturday November 3rd**

is ECO Action Day for the Shipley Area. Kirkgate Community Centre will host a "fun and informative event with lots to do for residents of all ages", organised by the Shipley

Area Committee and Partners, between 10am and 3pm. Over twenty stalls, as well as free workshops and discussion sessions, will offer practical advice and information and there will be chance to meet local councillors and senior officials and have your say on environmental issues.

# The Saltaire Sentinel

## EDDIE IN ILKLEY

Eddie Lawler will be at the Ilkley Literature Festival next month talking about, performing from and hoping to sell his excellent new book *Saltairy Tales*. Ever loyal to his many supporters this side of the Moor, the Saltaire Songster officially launched the book as part of our Festival on September 10th in a packed Half Moon Café. "I've never worked so hard in my life" said James Duncan, who was selling tickets on the door, "I enjoyed taking people's money, but handing it over to Eddie was very difficult for me." Eddie can be seen (for free) at the Ilkley Playhouse (Wildman Studio) at 9pm on Oct 5th.

## GOODBYE DAVID

In the August edition of the *Sentinel*, I reported that David Johnson had opened the Victoria Gallery at Number 3, Victoria Road. Sadly, he is now leaving Saltaire to pursue his painting career elsewhere. His painting is his passion, and the number of commissions which he has are testimony to his skill as an artist. He will be missed. Good luck for the future, David.

Roger Clarke

DAVID FORD'S  
SALTAIRE BOOKSHOP

217 Bingley Road

10am – 4pm

Open Tues. - Sat.

Late opening Thurs. till 8  
New and second hand books

on two floors.

594377

davidford14@btinternet.com

## SALTAIRE HISTORY CLUB

### TRIP TO HALIFAX MODEL VILLAGES

Saturday, October 20th

Everyone is welcome to join our guided trip to visit: the model village at Copley; the Crossley Almshouses and People's Park; the village of Ackroydon and buildings not normally open to the public. The coach will leave at 9am from Exhibition Road and return at 5.30pm (or before). Bring a packed lunch.

Tickets £10 from Roger Clarke 592944 (after 5pm)

or e-mail rogerclarke@saltairvillage.info

or webmaster@saltairvillage.info

## OVERWHELMING SUPPORT KEEPS TEAROOMS GOING

A Message to readers from Tracey Bennett,

who runs the Victoria Tearooms at 8 Victoria Road:

I would very much like to express my heartfelt thanks to all our customers who have supported us during the renovation works at Don't Tell Titus. At times we experienced major disruption with noise, builders, etc. Whilst it was completely unavoidable, trading in those conditions became extremely difficult and put the business under a lot of pressure. The support from our regular customers has been overwhelming and has kept us going, and I would like to let them know that things are back to normal again and we look forward to welcoming them back.

In addition to the ever popular iced teas we have on sale, our new menu includes an extended range from Taylors of Harrogate, the name behind Betty's, featuring all the traditional classic blends such as darjeeling and assam, as well as a Fair-trade breakfast tea. The whole Taylors range is also on sale in boxes to take home and try later. The classic black tea infusions add a twist to the traditional teas, with natural flavourings (the mango tea in particular is proving very popular) and we would encourage customers to come and try something new today.

## SALTAIRE VILLAGE SOCIETY TRAVEL

BLACKPOOL ILLUMINATIONS

Oct 21st/22nd staying in 3 star hotel

PROGRAMME OF DAY AND SHORT  
BREAKS THROUGH THE YEAR

01943 870228

## POLICE & COMMUNITY POINT

CONTACT SALTAIRE are based at the entrance to Salts Mill. People who live round and about are welcome to come and talk about any community issues, whether they are for the attention of the Police or the Council, on Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm.

## SHIPLEY

### RETIRED MEN'S FORUM

Shipley Library at 10.15am

Speakers this month:

3rd Geoff Budd

Fares Please

17th Maurice Kitson

Photography and Music

31st Peter Watson

North Country Folklore

New members welcome

591745

### SHIPLEY ROTARY CLUB

Every Tuesday 12.30 – 2pm

Lower Hall, Otley Road

call Arthur Smith:

01535270615

### BRACKEN HALL

#### COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE

Glen Road, Baildon, Shipley

Friday 19th

Guided walk to Cliffe Castle

(9 miles)

Return from Keighley.

Train fare and lunch required.

Meet at Bracken Hall 10.30am.

Friday 26th

Family walk to Hirst Wood

(3 miles)

Bring along a drink and a snack.

Meet at Bracken Hall 10.30am.

Sunday 28th

Fungi Foray in Shipley Glen.

(2 hours)

Meet at Bracken Hall at 2pm

584140

## WORLD HERITAGE

### WHEELIE

Does NOT talk rubbish



"Environmentally,  
I'm green."

The Saltaire Sentinel is written by the people of Saltaire and photocopied by Shipley College in the heart of Saltaire EVERY MONTH. It is not affiliated to, nor in any way controlled or influenced by any group, society or organisation.

Sadly, sooner or later you will dispose of this copy of the Sentinel. Please do so with care for our World Heritage Site environment.