

The

Saltaire Sentinel



Your Lion of **VIGILANCE** *Published monthly*

DIVISION OF OPINION SVS SEEKS TO SPEAK FOR MOST

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

LOCAL PRODUCE

The Saltaire Local Produce Market is held on the second Saturday of every month, from 10am to 3pm in the car park on Exhibition Road. The Market which, was re-launched this year on May 10th, already has up to fifteen traders (and the list is still growing) selling meat, plants, pies, cheese, fish, bread, street food and much more.

Watch this space.

There are some major issues at the moment which are causing a division of opinion in the local community, writes the Chair of Saltaire Village Society (SVS), Vanessa Pilny:

The new building proposed by Shipley College, the Council's plans for the trees and pavements on Victoria Road and, of course, *that* weir have all featured on the front page of the *Sentinel*, if nowhere else.

I believe that the more people involved, the more likely it is that Council decisions will reflect the view of the majority.

The small fraction of the population from which the Council hears may not represent the whole.

secretarysvs@googlemail.com

The Village Society continues to look for ways to keep residents aware of important issues so that people can be part of the process, rather than simply reacting against a decision with which they are not happy.

I would like the SVS Facebook site to become one place where SVS can post items that we think will be of interest and everyone can share their own concerns and questions. **We also have a page on the Village Website [see p.4]** where we are hoping to post the minutes of each meeting and other news.

Our next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday, July 1st at the Caroline Street Club.

**In this issue
ROGER CLARKE
MEETS
RICHARD
COOMBER
Plus
ALL OUR USUAL
UNUSUALS**

WAR STORIES

As mentioned last month, plans are in hand for a four page supplement to our next issue, to commemorate the outbreak, a hundred years ago, of the Great War and the sacrifices made especially by Saltaire residents of the time. Any stories, or simple notices to remember lost relatives, which readers would like to be included will be welcomed.

Contact details below.

WHATEVER IT IS - SAY IT IN THE *Sentinel* !

**sentinel@saltairevillage.info OR c/o The Saltaire Bookshop, 1 Myrtle Place
The Deadline is always 20th of the month prior to publication.**

EARLIEST ACCOUNT OF “MODEL TOWN”

Roger Clarke writes:

Local historian, **Richard Coomber**, shared his discovery of this account of Saltaire in **1858**, and would like it to be read by a broad audience. He found it in a collection of documents which he purchased from **David Ford’s Saltaire Bookshop**. Entitled *The Model Town of Saltaire*,

it is a quotation from “*A Month in Yorkshire*” by Walter White (selected by John Ward). This is the earliest account I have read – Holroyd wrote his in 1871 and Balgarnie wrote his biography of Sir Titus in 1877.

“A little apart, extending up the gentle slope, the young town of Saltaire is built, and in such a way as to realise the aspirations of a sanitary reformer. The houses are ranged in parallelograms, of which I counted sixteen, the fronts looking into a spacious street; the backs into a lane about seven feet in width, which facilitates ventilation, admits the scavenger’s cart, and serves as a drying ground. Streets and lanes are completely paved. The footways are excellent; there is a pillar post-office, and no lack of gas-lamps. The number of shopkeepers is regulated by Messrs Salt, the owners of the property; and while one baker and grocer suffices to supply the wants of the place others will not be allowed to come in. The congregational chapel affords place for the religious worship, and a concert hall for musical recreation or lectures. The men who wish to tipple must go down to Shipley, for Saltaire, as yet, has no public house.[*] If I mistake not, the owners are unwilling that there shall be one. My request to look indoors was readily granted. The ordinary class of houses have a kitchen with oven and boiler, a sink and a copper (*boiler*), a parlour, or ‘house’ in the vernacular, two bedrooms, a small back-yard, with out-offices. The floors, mantel piece, and stairs are of stone. The rent is 3s 1d a week. Gas is laid on at an extra charge, and the tenant finds burners. The supply of water is ample, but the water is hard, and has a smack of peat bog in its flavour. A woman whom I saw washing, told me the water lost much of its hardness if left to stand for a while. Each house has a back-door opening into a lane; and every stercorarium (*toilet*) voids into an ash-pit, which is cleared out once a week at the landlord’s cost. The pits are all accessible by a small trap-door from the lane; hence there is no intrusion on the premises in the work of cleansing. The drainage in other respects is well cared for; and the whole place is so clean and substantial, with handsome fronts to the principal rows, that you feel pleasure in observing it.

No-one is allowed to live in the town who is not in some way employed by the firm. Most of the tenants to whom I spoke, expressed themselves well satisfied with their quarters, but two or three thought the houses dear; they could get a place down at Shipley, or Shipla, as they pronounced it, for two-and-sixpence a week.”

[* “For a length of time the sale of intoxicating liquors was strictly prohibited in Saltaire. About twelve months ago, however, the Messrs Salt were prevailed upon to allow beer to be sold by grocers; four licenses were then taken out, and since that time such have been the evils attendant thereupon that the holders of such licenses have been noticed that they are not to be renewed this year.” *Bradford Observer, July, 1868.*]

[In 1880, Saltaire had a population of 4,640 and no pubs. Within a 700 yards radius of the village the ratio was one pub for every 446 people. In Shipley it was 1:600 - and in Liverpool, 1:212.]

Stories from World War One

By Colin Coates

Victoria Hall as Cinema

In November 1915 Shipley Urban District Council was approached by Bradford businessmen with regard to using the hall as a cinema. This was an attractive proposition as the hall was losing money and many councillors viewed the hall as a burden. However there was opposition from all quarters including Councillor Thomas Doyle of 30 George Street, Saltaire.

In a letter to a friend Sir James Roberts wrote that the hall should not be “*cheapened and vulgarised by the instalment therein of a permanent cinema.*” Mrs. Titus Salt Jnr. asked the council to “*defer consideration of the matter for one month to give the members of the Salt family an opportunity to consider the proposal and express their views on it.*”

In January 1916 the proposal collapsed as the licensing authority (West Riding County Council) stated that to be used as a cinema the hall needed structural alterations estimated at £800 (over £500,000 in today’s money). This caused the talks to stop with the Imperial Animated Picture Company. The council then asked its critics to suggest ways to lessen the burden on the rates and to make the hall pay for itself.

To help with local commemorations of World War One, please contact either Colin Coates or Dave Shaw:

**historyclub@saltairevillage.info
or mobile 07736408339**

**PETER
RANDALL**

***Gentleman's
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**Roger Clarke's Saltaire Folk
RICHARD COOMBER**

Regular readers will have noticed that articles on history have recently been written by David and Jonathan Starley, Colin Coates and myself. We are pleased to announce that the 'team' has now been joined by Richard Coomber [See page 2, opposite] a local historian living in Hirst Wood. Richard's fascination with local history began with his childhood in a small Sussex village where his home lacked electricity and mains drainage. His father was a farm labourer, and Richard was later interested in discovering the history of his family, privately publishing it as a limited edition book for the family. Other people read it and he was invited to write the history of the village. But the experience of being taught history at school alienated this promising student. Being asked to learn facts about world events failed to capture his imagination and he opted for French and German instead of History and Geography at O-level. His first job was as a bookseller and he became Marketing Manager for Penguin Books. Through contacts here he transferred to a job with Thames Television, and then on to the interest which dominated the remainder of his working life - sports journalism for local newspapers, first in Hartlepool and then in Bradford.

He then became a partner in a freelance agency in Leeds, where his interest in local history re-emerged. He realised that he needed to have a grounding in research methods and did an on-line course run by Oxford University. He was hooked after this, and took a six year part-time degree course in Local and Regional History at Leeds University, where he achieved a First Class degree. He reflects that this was 45 years after he left school - a late developer! His mentor at Leeds was historian Alan Petford, an inspirational teacher, who encouraged his students to focus on their local areas to understand whatever topic of study was being pursued. Richard focused on Shipley, and as a result has a large and varied database of the history of the area. The degree students continued to meet after the course was ended, and they established themselves as the West Riding Historical Research Group, still involving Alan Petford.

Richard's contribution to the *Sentinel* will probably include some of this research, and he says that he will aim to redress the balance and show that the history of Saltaire did not actually begin with the opening of Salt's Mill in 1853.

The SPA
21 Titus Street
**The Authentic
Village corner shop**
Open Mon-Sat
8am-10pm
Sun. 10am-10pm
01274 - 826534

**SALTAIRE
BOOKSHOP**
1 Myrtle Place
Tuesday- Saturday
10am - 5pm
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79 Victoria Road
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ADVERTISING
All the establishments
promoted here serve as
outlets for this paper.
Advertising space is
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The Saltaire Sentinel
can also be found at
VICTORIA HALL
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Shipley and Baildon
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BIRD WATCHING

Our local bird watching club, the Bradford Ornithological Group, meets at Saltaire United Reformed Church on the first Tuesday evening of each month at 7.30, finishing by 10 o'clock. At most meetings, there is a guest speaker and time is also set aside to mention birds reported from the local area. Full details are available on their website – www.bradfordbirding.org or you can ring **Shaun Radcliffe**, who will be pleased to provide further information, on **01274 770960**.

REPORTERS REQUIRED

To fulfill its role as the local Community Newspaper, the *Sentinel* needs to contain reports of recent events, to complement its promotion of forthcoming attractions and articles on local history.

Write-ups by readers are always welcome.

(Copies of the *Sentinel* are held in the Saltaire Archives, where we hope they will be of interest to historians in the future, researching how residents saw and reacted to the happenings of our time.)

Saltaire History Explorers Investigate ARCHITECTURAL EMBELLISHMENTS

Studies of the buildings of Saltaire have been written from various perspectives, focusing on their functional effectiveness, their socially progressive aims and/or their aesthetic charms. Designed largely in the, then fashionable, Italianate style, the village appears to have been universally praised at the time, but subsequent views were often less complimentary. Pevsner, the great architectural commentator, criticised the “monotonous” terraces and, heaping particular scorn on “the hideous, richly baroque portal” of the Institute (Victoria Hall), he only wholeheartedly praised the Church. An alternative approach is proposed by Sheila Binns. In *The Aesthetics of Utopia: Saltaire, Akroydon and Bedford Park* (announced in the *Sentinel* in November 2013 and always available from the Saltaire Bookshop) she argues that the architecture acts as a voice for Salt’s three priorities: industry, religion and education, in a way that his limited verbal skills did not allow. Was this is an act of personal vanity? It would seem that opportunities to remind his workers of his benevolence were rarely missed. Binns, more generously, suggests that it was his way of associating his name with his closely held beliefs in the need to improve the lives of the working population - a true paternalist, perhaps? *What do YOU think?*

David and Jonathan (aged 11) Starley

Saltaire Cricket Club TABLE TOP SALE

Victoria Hall
Sunday, July 6th
Doors open at 10 am.
01274 787908

VILLAGE WEBSITE

The *Saltaire Sentinel* is available online, via the not for profit Saltaire Village Website, thanks to **Pamela Reynolds**, who manages the site at

www.saltairevillage.info

BANDSTAND PROGRAMME

FREE music in Roberts Park every Sunday from 2.30 pm. This month:

6th 251s Jazz
13th Bella Gattney
20th Roger Davies
27th 12 Bars From Mars

Cuppacare

in New Kirkgate, Shipley, is a non-profit enterprise kept open from 10am until 1.30pm on Mondays and Fridays by Shipley Christians Together.

WORLD HERITAGE WHEELIE

Does NOT talk rubbish



"I always watch out for magpies [See above, left] - but the cats keep 'em off!"

The Saltaire Sentinel, written by the people of Saltaire and photocopied by Shipley College in the heart of Saltaire every month, is not affiliated to, nor in any way controlled or influenced by any group, society or organisation. sentinel@saltairevillage.info Sadly, sooner or later you will dispose of this copy of the *Sentinel*. Please do so with care for our World Heritage Site environment.