

HOW THE HIPPIES CHANGED HEBDEN BRIDGE

From the Exhibition organised by
Hebden Bridge Local History Society,
March – April 2017



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From the exhibition of March-April 2017 organised by the Hebden Bridge Local History Society.

The Exhibitions and these writings demonstrate how the people who came and settled in the town and surrounding areas in the 1970s kick-started a cultural revolution, which is now so *Hebden Bridge*.

This collection will be updated as we receive further contributions.

Tuesday, 14 March 2017

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Introduction

Following the decline of local industry, people were leaving Hebden Bridge to find work in the cities and houses were being knocked down because no-one wanted to live in them.

So Hebden Bridge, with its beautiful hills, woods and countryside was the ideal for urban refugees from the cities. Young people who had burnt themselves through intense work or community politics, environmentalists who were looking for alternative ways of living and those who just wanted to be where it was at.

With them, these hippies, as the locals called them, came different lifestyles, a radical edge, a wish to live in harmony with the Earth, feminism, shared childcare, folk and rock music, squatting, crafts, a fresh enthusiasm for the countryside and a zest for literature and the arts.

So began the renaissance of Hebden Bridge.

1 The early women's groups

Jenny Wickham



My memory of the women's group in Hebden Bridge is that we functioned in the mid-70s, I would say 73 to 76 or 77. I left Hebden in 1977 (40 years ago this year!!) so I do not know what happened after that. I remember that we met at various people's houses, and that probably included my house at Club Houses, but I really cannot say when that would have been.

I remember a lot of talk about consciousness raising and that book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* - I think that we were partly focused on understanding our own bodies and sexuality (we were a generation that had relatively little in the way of health and sex education), but our other focus, as I recall, was on redefining women's roles.

I vividly remember a meeting at someone's house down in the town where we got hold of speculums and examined each others' vaginas and cervixes. I also remember that we set up some sort of free clinic in Todmorden (in a church hall maybe) - I don't think it ran for very long, as some authoritarian got wind of it and put a stop to it, but it was aimed at educating women about their bodies.

I remember a very smart lady coming in there, she must have been around 50, and saying that her periods had stopped and she was worried she might be pregnant - we explained about the menopause, which she had never heard of. It all sounds a bit presumptuous now, but at the time I think a lot of it was quite valid.

Recently I have been involved a bit with a local women's equality group (women young enough to be my daughters or even granddaughters!) and they have a vastly different agenda, very much based around the workplace and the online harassment of women - the physical stuff is obviously no longer regarded as necessary. I hope I have remembered all this correctly, after all memory does play tricks over time, and am sorry that I cannot go into any greater detail. I do remember, though, a really good, supportive feeling among the women involved in the group, which I have rarely encountered since in other things I have been involved with.



Annie Fatet

I lived at The Bull which was previously a pub and it had a large upstairs space used for meetings. It housed workshops for several artists including my own pottery workshop and Ali Shipton's, who was a silver smith.

I moved to Hebden Bridge in 1975 from London and had attended consciousness raising groups there. The women's groups at The Bull concentrated on Women's Health. *Our Bodies Ourselves* was the bible. Everyone remembers the speculum sessions!! The group had to purchase a gross (144) and I had a bit of explaining to do about them to the police when I was questioned after the tragic fire.

The Saturday morning pregnancy testing sessions in Tod were very important as they brought in local women. The volunteers found themselves out of their depth with problems of unwanted pregnancies and some went for counselling training at the Well Women's Centre in Halifax.



Elaine Connell

From an interview collected by Wild Rose Arts

When I moved to Cragg Vale I put an advert in the *Spare Rib* asking if there was a women's group or anybody who wanted to start one, and then I got a phone call from several people including yourself and Annie Fateh and people whose names now I can't remember. We arranged to meet in Hebden Bridge, I think it was in people's houses, I'm not quite sure where we all held the same meeting but that became like the focus of my socialising, and also I could always get down into Hebden by one of the buses, and usually some of the women at the group, nearly always someone would usually have a car and run me back, because again the buses stopped at half nine to Cragg.

And what sort of things did you do in the women's group?

Do you know I can't remember now! [laughing]

Do you remember meeting in...Annie Fateh's house?

Oh yeh, yeh - that was The Bull wasn't it? I think that's where we had the first meeting and it seemed like an absolutely vast house over lots of levels; it was a work in progress. I think all the houses I used to go into, they were always semi-building sites because loads of people were doing them up themselves or getting people in to do them up very

cheaply; no-one could afford to live somewhere else and have you know the house done up and ready to go into, so as I say there was always a bit of a building site and what people would now think of as a quite rough and ready quality to them, but no-one seemed to notice really, I think we all saw beyond the sacks of plaster and concrete and whatever to the actual potential of the houses.

Ness Parfitt



Dance brought me to Hebden Bridge (Rosie Manton's dance class Pitt Street Adult Education 1977)

In the changing rooms of Rosie' s class I heard of the early meeting of a possible Women's Movement Group. As a lonely feminist who had only met like minds at conferences and courses in Bradford or Leeds this was music to my ears and I attended - the second? - open meeting in Suzanne's house in Palace House Rd (-hey, what about a plaque!!).

Meetings were dynamic and led to a flurry of activity. The impact was great on all of us, our relationships and the community.

It was followed by the Women's Studies course at Adult Education Centre, Pitt Street (that we campaigned for); the Women's Exhibition we displayed in the (then) empty building on a corner of Pitt Street; the weekend Women's Conference we held at the Bichcliffe Centre; full coaches going down to Circle the Base at Greenham Common and the many Women's Groups that formed. A monthly Open Women's Group Meeting and a

Calder Valley Women's Newsletter was instituted to try to keep up with the many groups and activities. Many existing friendships were formed here almost forty years ago.

The background to some of my early journeys from Halifax to women's group meetings was the police hunt for the murderer of 13 women from 1975 to 1981 (The Yorkshire Ripper). Josephine Whitaker had been killed on Savile Park moor,

Halifax in 1979. Apart from the fear and revulsion and the fever of media attention, there were regular police checks on cars locally. I was frequently stopped at night, asked what was in the boot (despite being unable to get out to see!). I was asked if I was a woman as there were rumours that the killer dressed as a woman to reassure his victims. The police also warned women to keep off the streets at night prompting the many Reclaim the Night Marches throughout the country and especially in Leeds and Bradford. I spent so much time in Hebden that by 1981 I'd moved to live in Unity Street.

2. The Foster Clough Bust

Graham Saville from Foster Clough.

(Extracts from a taped interview 1998), *The Bust*.

Interviewer: There was a big bust up here, what about that?

Graham: A friend of mine .. who wasn't from round here had done a couple of small runs from Afghanistan I went out with him because I was going to go on through into India, and Nepal .. got to Afghanistan and it had changed so much in 4 years, it was like bloody Blackpool ... 4 years before it had been almost empty of tourists, and it was full of these student hippy types, who were lovely to look at in England, but mini skirts and see through tops aren't really the best things in a country like Afghanistan, .. It was causing enormous offence to the locals, quite rightly, and it was just an unpleasant atmosphere, so I came back with my friend It was being shipped to North America, and he'd hidden it in a Beetle. Unfortunately, the Beetle had one or two slight bumps, it looked awful, so to ship it would've been slightly suspicious, so I was posting it to him and he got picked up ... and because of that in the early hours of the morning, there was vast numbers of police stormed the building and I was hauled off I got two years, so did a year got parole of course..... I was a dippy hippy before I went in, and my attitudes towards the police and authority changed quite a bit, but I think prison does that to you it was 1971 I think when I came out, it'd become decimal coinage, it took me about 5 and a half years to work it out.

Getting on with the locals - Jimmy Wick.

Graham: I got on well with him from the beginning, when I was busted there was no great problems with people, I got out, "oh good to see you again, how are you?" so it was fairly relaxed which was very nice, but I've always found it a very friendly area ... I mean they were just friendly people.

The farm is called High Rough, it's just up there, and his kids - Steven would be the eldest, be about 8, and the two younger girls they used to come in and play, one of my nice memories - Geoff and Jean had asked me to look out for, via Wick, for a cow for them So Steven comes running up the stairs shouting Jesus which they still call me "Jesus we've got a cow for you" which was lovely, .. that was Blossom.

Talking about David Fletcher: I met him very early on, and his line then was - the valley is dying. It needs new people in, young people. I'm really pleased if people like yourself come along and live here. He was a Councillor, at the time there was some retired military character ... Environmental Officer who wanted, if he could pull these down (Foster Clough houses) he'd get rid of us, which was quite true, and I think without Fletcher they would have been pulled down. As it was, we got grants and all to do them up. It must have been 3 or 4 years after I moved in, when the terrace had filled up with people... and we were getting a little bit of a reputation.

3. Jenny's Story

How I came to Hebden Bridge and stayed for 45 years!



On the 7th day God rested and on the 8th day he created something even better.

At least, that was the idea of the moment at 11 am on the 5th September 1970 when a group of 5 friends opened the co-operatively run 'head shop' / "freak store" that was and still is On the Eighth Day. The shop / arts and crafts gallery / alternative hangout centre was located in the now demolished New Brown Street in Manchester's city centre. It became THE place to tune in, turn on and drop out. Young people gravitated there in droves and it is probably true to say that no-one who went into the place ever forgot it.

The 8th Day was the brain child, or should I say the love child, of drop outs Mike Slaughter and I, together with solicitor Brian Livingstone and businessmen Phil Aaronson and Ray Kay. I can say with certainty, it would not have happened without the contribution of any one of us, such was the powerful chemistry of this bizarre mix of talents. I remember a heated conversation with Ray along the lines that it "wasn't all about the money". He challenged us by saying that if the money didn't matter we should throw Saturday's takings on the fire. Needless to say, the money didn't burn.

Our ethos was to create an alternative way of living based on community collaboration and creativity and to develop a self sufficiency of lifestyle that was 'outside the system'. To this end, we needed to leave the city and search for an affordable rural idyll. We found it in Hebden Bridge.

Marion (veteran of the Haight Ashbury Summer of love) and Reg (sculptor and artist), the archetypal original hippies, were already living at Nabby Nook in Eastwood. They were earning a scant but sufficient- for-their needs living by making embroidered kaftans which they brought to the 8th Day on the train with their kids in tow. Their creative designs were hot sellers for the city's would be hippies (then strangely called 'heads'). Mike and I visited Marion and Reg for a 'food for free' meal of wild sorrel and fern tops and we were immediately sold on the potential of the rugged landscape within such easy reach of Manchester.

By coincidence, , Mike Slaughter had previously worked with Mick Piggott and John Pickering (Asbestosis Action Group) at Thompsons Solicitors in Manchester on Industrial Injury Claims and Mick and John both lived in Hebden. Mick had been part of the South Manchester Commune which had moved to Latham Farm on the hillside above Old Town in 1970. Sadly, but maybe predictably, issues arose within the commune that resulted in Mick and Jean becoming the item they are today. Well, that was the free love generation for you! Mike and I were beneficiaries of the fact that the commune was disbanded and they sold us the farm for the price they had paid for it £1750. Mick and Jean had registered Latham with Communes magazine as a crash pad which resulted in a constant stream of interesting newcomers and various waifs and strays descending on us adding to the rich mix of alternative culture.

Significantly, Latham became the rural retreat of choice for all the city dwellers who worked, volunteered or visited 8th Day. In return for a mattress and macrobiotic meal of rice and veg, these creative free spirits helped fix the roof, concrete the floors, install the central heating and seed the lawn. But they also carved the Yorkshire stone into Buddhas, sewed velvet into long dresses and swirling capes and leather into bags and belts. They sold their hand made wares in 8th Day and that is how they lived.

Before long, the visitors and guests found their own cheap house or squats and the stream of immigrants to Hebden Bridge increased exponentially. Another mini community was set up at Chiserley Fieldside with Paul Styles, Rick and Liz Allen, Bernie, Lynda and Janet who together with Paul Goldman, American Dan and his partner Paul formed the core of pioneers who developed the whole food and restaurant side of 8th Day which by now had moved to the Oxford Road student area. They commuted daily from Hebden to Manchester in the works old van returning with yet more city dwellers to the many crash pads becoming available in Hebden Bridge.

The barn at Latham farm became a workshop for home designed hippy dresses, capes and kaftans. Madeleine (fresh from fashion school) and Ian were co-opted to the team. Cutting machines were purchased, a cutting table erected and eventually after an ad in the Hebden Bridge Times, a little army of local homeworkers were recruited for sewing. There was still a skill base In the community from trouser days and as the demand for their funky fashion spread out from Manchester and expanded into other towns, the hippies brought some much needed work back to the indigenous community. The whole

outfit eventually outgrew the barn and with the help of more expertise from Andy and Bebe, by now resident in Cragg Vale, it was established in Bridge Mill renting the top floor from David Fletcher.

Mike drove around the country in our VW camper van to sell our wares and it is on the proceeds of this enterprise and with a little help from our friends that we managed to rebuild the farm from its derelict state. Children followed with accompanying goats, chickens, geese and an organic vegetable garden. Such was the extent of the building upheaval that following the birth of my first child I had to exit and enter the house via a ladder from a first floor window.

The kids remember a pretty idyllic childhood being outdoors come sun, wind, rain or snow and Molly says that the hippy kids were different from their local counterparts because "they were dirtier, scruffier and feral". As a result, come school time, they were pretty much ostracised by local parents as 'offcumdens' – a term of mild abuse to describe their difference. Meanwhile, our barn became the focus of band practices for several incarnations of bands and there was a steady stream of musicians, including the Edgar Broughton band, frequently to be found crashed out on any bit of available floor space. The kids thought it was great fun even though they frequently had to go to bed with cotton wool in their ears due to my anxiety about eardrum damage.

After a long trip to India to seek nirvana, Brian Livingstone returned to England with hepatitis as well as spiritual awareness and soon after he bought Weatherhouse Farm on the same hillside close to Latham. There followed another big building project and massive tree planting exercise attracting a further wave of exiles from the big city. Brian was the most amazing host being universally acclaimed for his hospitality and generosity. In the 80s, Weatherhouse Farm became the venue for Brian's infamous parties, by which time we had all settled down and got proper jobs but I like to think the spirit of the times and the idealism we nurtured lives on in Hebden Bridge today.

4. Ann Lewis - Moving to Hebden Bridge

– a single mother with five children.

I moved to Hebden with my five children in August 1972. I'd been living in Cheltenham and desperately needed to get away. I made contact with Foster Clough via a letter in Communes Magazine and received a letter from a woman living there inviting me to stay there for a few weeks until I found a place of my own to live.

As a Southerner I expected that the school year started in September and was amazed, on arriving in late August, to find that the schools had re-opened, only to close again in September.

We stayed at the Clough for a couple of months and then moved to a Hebden Royd Council house at Fairfield. While being grateful for having been allocated a house so quickly it felt like living in a cardboard box and I hated it. House prices were very low and I wanted the feeling of being settled in a place of my own. I heard that even people living on benefits, as I was, could be considered for a mortgage, and I soon found a house I wanted to buy on the Birchcliffe hillside. It was a three bedoomed back-to-back with a small front garden and the asking price was £1,250. I borrowed a small deposit.

The process for applying for a mortgage was very simple; a brief interview with the Council treasurer resulted in an offer of a 95% Council Mortgage at a fixed mortgage rate of 9.5%. The repayments were £11.33 a month. As Stubbings was designated an Improvement Area I was able to get a 75% grant the next year and had the house rewired, dampproofed and the attic converted to make a fourth bedroom. Those were the days!

Five years later the older children were young teenagers and the house was beginning to feel cramped with only one kitchen-cum-living room. So when the house back-to-back with ours came on the market I decided to try and buy it, even though we were still living on Supplementary Benefit. I wrote to D.H.S.S. and outlined my position; they replied asking what the additional mortgage and rates would cost and agreed to pay the extra.

The asking price for the back house was £2,750 which seemed pretty steep.

I had to raise a loan to buy the second house, and have the two made into one before I could get a mortgage, this time from the Halifax Building Society.

Because of the steepness of the Birchcliffe hillside, the knocking through was complicated: both halves of the house continued to have a staircase, kitchen and bathroom, providing flexible living opportunities as the kids grew to independence. I was sad to leave that home when I returned to Wales twenty years on. (*Written 22.1.1998*)

5. Aurora Foods – the Beginning.

*There was a knock at the door. I answered cautiously. It was Robin and Plum.
"Paul, we need someone to cover the shop on Saturday – can you come down?"
"Sure" I said "I'll be there"
"Great" said Robin "We'll drop off the key tomorrow for you to open up with"*

And that was that; the beginning.



Paul Degnan at Aurora

This was Spring 1974 and the shop at 54, Market Street was called 'Sun Moon and Herbs'; selling local handmade crafts and artwork on a 'sale or return' basis plus hippy paraphernalia like joss sticks and Patchouli oil.

Naz and George, along with an Italian couple, had opened up the shop 6 months previously but for them it was a short lived dream. They lived communally up above Eastwood in a cottage called Nabby Nook , but had decided to move south and sell the 'business' to Pete Reece a local hippy who had been left some inheritance money.

Pete became the silent partner in more ways than one; I don't think I ever heard him speak. He was a quiet guy with enquiring eyes behind his black rimmed spectacles. Pete had somehow got Robin and Plum involved - two hippies from Leyland who had recently moved to Hebden. From then on the shop took a nose dive; nobody knew when it was going to open. It all depended on when Robin and Plum woke up from their stoned

stupor. I think they must have slept in the back of the shop because when I passed in the morning and saw the door open I would walk in and there they were holding white mugs of strong tea looking very bleary eyed.

The shop was an idea I liked and the talk of selling whole foods appealed to me even further.

I was a vegetarian and a wholefood diet was my way of life. "You are what you eat" was a maxim I aspired to and I ate accordingly eating a balanced diet of brown rice pulses and vegetables, fruit muesli and homemade bread.

To obtain the right food proved difficult in the Calder Valley at that time. There was a health food shop in Sowerby Bridge, otherwise it was the 'Eighth Day' wholefood shop in Manchester, essential travelling for the wholefood disciple to purchase miso, soya sauce, barmene and other goodies.

Plum I liked. He had a soft centre and through him I discovered John Martyn the folk musician; the words and music of 'Solid Air' and 'Bless the Weather' echoed my own feelings at that time.

Robin was the opposite, harder and more calculated, yet generous in his own way.

One morning the shop door was ajar and stepping in I made my offer.

"If you ever need any help running the shop let me know"

Robin and Plum's faint hearted attempts to run the shop dissipated and I was left on my own to forge ahead and establish the shop as primarily a wholefood shop. People began to rely on the regular opening times, we started buying bulk food from the 8th Day on tick but many of the 8th Day workers lived in the valley and it felt like I was breaking into their territory, so we decided not to buy from them but to go elsewhere to get our bulk food. I guess we modelled ourselves on other well established wholefood shops like 8th Day and Alligator in York. You buy bulk and bag the food up yourself; that way you have affordable natural food available for all.

Adrian had an old Morris 1000 van and we would head off together to other known wholefood shops in the area. 'Down to Earth Community Supplies' in Sheffield and the Colne Wholefood Co-operative over in Lancashire. Here we would buy the basics – brown rice, pulses, dried fruit and nuts, honey, oats and wheat germ.

Through the wholefood network I discovered other sources of must buy items for the shelves via mail order; organic wholemeal flour from Pimhills in Shropshire and Herbs from London.

If customers requested something we tried to obtain it. With mail order items you had a month to pay the invoice while bulk food you paid up front. This 'turn around' of cash helped us to pay the bills and keep the shop viable.

Slowly but surely the shop became an established wholefood shop. There was a community feel about it. The local hippy community would come in and help 'bag up' the bulk food. We had an old weighing scales with imperial weights and we would 'bag up' pound bags of this or a quarter of that.

Local customers would come in and 'bag up' their own purchases. We were called the 'hippy shop' or 'Paul's shop'. The shop window began filling up with adverts and posters on local events and happenings. The shop became a hot bed of conversation about local

matters, wholefood recipes, herbal treatments, and self sufficiency / grow your own ideas. We started to sell relevant magazines like Undercurrents, Seed , Soil Association literature and the Vegetarian, etc.

But then the crisis struck – the cash float was stolen!

I lived on Queens Terrace in a back to back terrace house and I always left my skylight window open. The shop was open every day except Tuesday and Sunday. One Tuesday I returned from shopping in Hebden and I noticed my living room curtains drawn. I unlocked the front door and went inside and found the living room ransacked and the shop tin that held the cash float was open and empty on the floor. Someone had entered the house via the open skylight and stolen the shop takings - £75 in cash.

I called the cops and several appeared dusting for prints and asking questions. It's probably the family the other side of the terrace one of the coppers said, they live round the back on the balcony. That older boy probably climbed over the roof from their house into your skylight. I recalled being friendly with the younger family members inviting them into my house one day a while back. They probably saw the shop tin on the sideboard. The police were pretty dismissive about what they could do without proof, so I decided to go round myself and confront them. The mother of the family was particularly vehement concerning my accusations, protecting her family like a cat with her litter. I retreated gracefully wondering how the shop would carry on without a cash flow.

Remarkably the local community rallied round and supported the shop through this crisis. Two particular individuals, Colin Price and Graham Saville turned up with £30 each to give me to keep the shop going. Others offered moral support and practical help.

Realising that keeping cash at home was a bit naive. I reluctantly opened up a bank account and registered the shop as a business renaming her Aurora Foods. I struggled with this notion of 'joining the system'; my anti-establishment values were beginning to creak under the responsibility of keeping the shop going. In my eyes it was a necessary evil. While this meant the shop takings were safe in the bank each day, things went from bad to worse!

The main shop window was smashed one night. My immediate reaction was to blame the family round the back. So I set off up to the house and dragged the older son down to the shop to clean up the mess. Surprisingly he meekly followed me down the Cuckoo steps and into the shop and did as he was told. – brushing up the broken glass into a dustpan. Then his mother turned up and I became subjected to a mouthful of abuse some relating to the feminine side of my nature (presumably because I was a single parent father). She left with her son in tow!

My actions did not prevent further incidents. A few days later, the other shop window was smashed by a flying brick in the night. Again the local hippy community rallied round; a rota was set up of willing volunteers to stay overnight at the shop and guard the premises. This vigilante approach worked for after a couple of weeks the situation calmed down and the dust settled....

The great thing about running the shop was the good vibes from the neighbours. Next door was Peter the grocer a loveable Yorkshire man with a heart of gold. He must of thought we were a strange lot but he remained friendly and helpful when needed. Then

there was the old guy living above the shop. He was very suspicious at first but turned out to be a real gem. One day he came up trumps when we discovered we had a rat in the cellar steps at the back of the shop! He came down all guns blazing chasing the rat fearlessly out of the backdoor with a broom handle.

Then there was Pete Gibbon the milkman, the gentleman of Hebden Bridge, one of two brothers who owned a dairy farm up Horsehold. He delivered the green top milk faultlessly daily with never a bad word for anyone.

Yet we were the 'Hippy Shop' steered clear by many locals though for the most part tolerated.

The shop rent was fixed at £1-50p per week and I used to pocket £25 to £30 a week in wages plus all the wholefoods I needed for my household. My son Dorian was under school age then so with some of the Queens Terrace parents we set up a crèche group at Pitt Street Education Centre in Hebden. We had about 4-5 kids to begin with and 2 parents covered each day Monday – Friday on a rota basis. This was a godsend for me as I did my turn on a Tuesday when the shop was closed; this freed me up to work in the shop for the other days in the week. Money wasn't a problem then; we didn't have much and lived on the breadline. The shop was a job for me and got me away from reliance on state benefits I received as a single parent. The important thing was I was doing what I believed in and that's what mattered.

Stock increased and the shop thrived, people were coming from afar to buy good quality affordable wholefood products. We would have tubs full of muesli, bran and wholemeal flour with scoops for customers to weigh and bag up themselves. We would recycle where we could. People would bring in their bags to be reused. There was a sense of community spirit about the place. Aurora Foods became a household name in the hippy culture of the Calder Valley and beyond.

In 1976 with the formation of Suma Wholefoods in Leeds there was an initiative to form a Northern Wholefood cooperative. To this end I attended a weekend conference in Botton village in Danby Dale, North Yorkshire that discussed mutual benefits of a wider network. The idea being that through one supplier buying bulk for the many would be cheaper all round. Most of the major wholefood shops in Yorkshire attended this event and the outcome being that Suma Wholefoods took on the role of the major supplier for the North of England.

Later in 1976 after two years of running the shop I decided to move on. It was hard being tied to a shop full time and I had invitations to move to Gloucestershire. The shop had evolved into being a community shop so in good faith I passed the shop onto a key group of people who had helped in the shop and they in turn formed Aurora into a wholefood cooperative.

Paul Degnan
January 2017.

6 Aurora Whole Foods Workers' Co-op



Aurora Wholefood was established by Paul Deanna and others in the early 1970s. When he left, it was run by a group of volunteers who were keen to turn Aurora into a Workers' Co-operative. We were greatly assisted in the paperwork by an organisation called Industrial Common Ownership Movement or ICOM. Being a co-op involved many meetings - some of us still bear the scars!

Aurora provided unprocessed, often organically grown food. Porridge, brown rice, lentils, etc would be in large dustbin sized containers. Customers would scoop what they wanted into a bag which would then be weighted on the old scales.

Aurora Wholefoods was far more than just a shop. It was a social centre for alternative types in the area. A curtain separated the main shop from the back room area, an area where the fire was often blazing and the kettle boiling. Seated around the fire, would be the workers and visitors - occasionally a familiar smell would leak into the main shop. Going shopping was far more interesting than it often is today. Some great characters frequented Aurora. Pete the Potter, poet Gordon who lived on the very tops with Blossom, musicians, artists, followers of Divine Light or the Bagwhan and more than one or two lost souls.

Other towns were also creating whole food co-ops and soon there was the Federation of Wholefood Co-ops, from which Suma emerged. Suma, based in Elland continues to be a successful workers' co-op and a national wholesaler of whole foods.

Aurora was known as the Hippy Shop by locals, the older ones would come in for their herbs and bran. This was at a time when Holts didn't even sell garlic. Nor did anywhere else in Hebden Bridge. People would travel 30, 40, even 50 miles just so they could buy some brown rice and lentils. Many would be captivated by the beauty of the area, the town and the developing 'alternative scene'. CR

7 The Basingstoke Connection

In the early Seventies, Basingstoke was the fastest growing town in Europe. It was part of a huge London overspill scheme and while at school we watched as the fields and woods that had been part of our hated school cross country run course were eaten up by so many housing estates that they ran out of names for them and started using numbers.

Most of the new houses were owned by London Councils and reserved for Londoners who were meant to move out there. Nevertheless my school friend Mark and his wife Carol managed to get a house on one of these estates soon after leaving school and it became the nucleus of a group of friends. One of these was a Scottish guy with the highly original nick name of Jock. It was his partner Cynthia who was from Yorkshire who knew about an old mill town called Hebden Bridge where there was a haunting landscape and empty houses.

That was the start of the Basingstoke connection. I went to visit Jock who confusingly had reverted to his real name Tom. My motorbike broke down and somehow it seemed easier to change the place I lived rather than fix the bike. But the reality was that there was a sense of an alternative community being built in this place, which Basingstoke was never going to have.

The common idealised desire for something like this was strong enough that Mark and Carol and then others followed in a strange kind of Basingstoke migration which has never gone away.

Stuart Howard

8 Homeless in Hebden Bridge

"We can take the baby into care, and we'll give you the train fare back to London." - Even in my shaky state, I knew I had to find somewhere to live.

I'd rented in Hebden before, £3.20 per month for No 8 Queen's Terrace, but things had changed, the Council was Compulsory Purchasing and closing down the old terraced houses, before pulling them down. I returned from squatting in London with a 4 month old baby, expecting to easily find a place to live. What followed was weeks going into months of unsettled existence, a room here, a corner there, nowhere settled, then we moved into two rooms above Eddie's workshop. No electric, no kitchen, water from the workshop sink downstairs, cooking on a tiny bedroom fire. I realised I had to do something - our survival was down to me.

I braved it to go down to the Council Offices and ask for help. They came and visited us and made their offer - the train fare and 'care' for the baby. She was only a tiny little thing, 9 months old, very bright and sparky, despite everything, and of course totally trusting and unaware of her precarious existence. I had to protect her - I was very scared now, I knew how powerless I was, they would just be following the law for Homeless people as it was then. I had to do something quickly.

There were houses empty on Queen's Terrace, some the Council had started closing already by bricking up the windows. No 12 still stood empty, and untouched I had to act fast.

Friends helped me prize up the lid to the coal hole in the street, it was pitch black below, damp and cobwebby, grimy with coal dust and very narrow. They lowered me down the hole into the warmer darkness below. I landed a bit grazed on a pile of coal, fumbled around and found the cellar door, not locked, I was able to lift the latch and make my way safely to the empty living room, the electric was still on. The key was hanging inside and I remember letting my friends in the front door. It took very little time to install our few things, a mattress, 2 chairs, the pram, and the little pink baby bath, I was home.

I went straight down to the Electric Board Office in Valley Road, and told them I wanted to pay for my Electric, that seemed fine with the, then to tell the lady at the Council Offices I'd moved in. Disaster, next day, two men from the Electric Board, came up saying they wanted to check the supply was safe. Innocent, I left them in, moments later they were back upstairs - gleeful - they had taken the mains fuse out, left us in darkness. The lady from the Council had got them to do it, and next day she sent a Social Worker to see us. She came in a car, young, clean and pink, with neat blonde hair - and from my point of view with her nose in the air. I was terrified, the lady from the Council had sent her to see, in her words, "If we were living like savages."

We had a coal fire to cook on, and keep warm, a paraffin lamp for light - nothing else. She asked as she was leaving if there was anything I needed - I said - "the electric, a cooker, a cot." Her answer, she couldn't do anything about the cooker, they had one in store -"but it's no use without the electric." - she'd see if she could bring me a cot, she thought they'd got one of those too.

She left - I shook, scared and angry, frightened she'd take the baby. We struggled on, it's hard cooking on the fire, trying to wash nappies out in cold water, getting up in the darkness to feed the baby, keeping the bottle warm by having it in the bed. I was skinny before - I shrunk.

The 'Clean One' came back with a cot, progress. A friend off the Terrace, got the Electric back on for me, armed with a pile of coins, Ian rang the Electric Board and the Social Security from the phone box at Bankfoot, he negotiated they'd take the electric money off my Benefit each week before I got it. Amazing, once the electric was on, the social worker even brought me the cooker. Only 2 rings worked, but I could cook again, boil nappies, heat water for the tin bath in front of the fire - luxury - progress - we had re-entered the 20th Century, I had a home and I'd kept my baby.

Julie

9 Blossom's baby

Blossom had a stillborn calf in spring 1974. Jerry Whitehouse had moved into Burlees Cottages and we drove in his imitation BMW over the moor to Bingley market to buy Blossom, a 3 day old calf to adopt, but it was really a Russian Red Star motorbike. The Red Star is the important bit to remember. We drove on a beautiful spring day with Jerry driving in his flying cap and goggles.

We bought a beautiful calf we then called Anna. Anna was only the size of a big dog, so we tied me into the sidecar and Anna on to me. We set off over the moor, with Jerry wearing the flying cap with the earflaps blowing in the wind. That is also to remember.

We got back to Burlees and put Anna on to Blossom's teats and it all went well - at first. Anna got an illness called white scour from Blossom's milk, but the vet said she may survive, but only just. Well, Anna did live, and she grew up with Blossom, and Blossom seemed completely fulfilled, as she had been very badly neglected before she came to live with the Hebden Hippies.

So years later, I am watching a Wallace and Gromit film, the one where there is a motorbike and the sheep do an acrobatic performance with about 10 riding on the bike, with Wallace wearing goggles, and a flying cap with the earflaps blowing in the wind. Now, look closely at the petrol tank on the motorbike. It has a flat twin, red Red Star, but a flat twin engine is of the kind BMW make, so it should be quartered blue and white like the BMW logo. But it is a Red Star. It's Jerry!!!

The Wallace and Gromit films were made in Bristol where Jerry had lived up to 1974, and first had his Red Star imitation BMW bike and sidecar.

So that bit of the film was inspired by Jerry's bike and sidecar, with sheep replacing Anna balancing on the sidecar.

And if you think that is just another stoned Geoff story, check out the film. You will see the Red Star on the petrol tank and the earflaps blowing in the wind. So it must be true.

After having her for 2 years at Burlees, Blossom and Anna went to live with some other Hebden Hippies, Nick and Katya Makepeace at City Farm on Raw Lane, when Anna was a few months old, because Blossom was giving 32 pints of milk a day, and they had 6 children.

One day in 1975, I went to visit Nick and Katya, and asked if they would mind if I went to see Blossom. Nick said of course, she is in the top field. I went to the top field but no Blossom and Anna. So I went back to Nick and said she is not there. Nick said Oh, they will be in the hollow at the bottom of the field. so I went back up to the top of the field and yelled out "Blossom". Blossom came running as fast as she could on her too long toe nails up the field, after about a year of not seeing her. She had recognised my voice even after all that time. Anna came trotting up behind her kind of going, what's all this about then Mum. And Anna was bigger than Blossom by then. I last saw Blossom from a distance when she was fostering about 20 calves on a farm further along Raw Lane. Again I yelled out "Blossom" and I swear she turned her head to listen in recognition.

And then again, there is the story about Blossom and the AI man. But I'll leave that one for someone else to retell as I have to go and laugh my head off about it, again! *Geoff*

10 Wild children: the creche

We wanted to change the world. If we were going to make a revolution, it had to start in our everyday lives. In the 70s, we questioned everything. Including, perhaps especially, how men and women related to each other. And how we looked after children. We grew up in a world where child care was the province of women and often prevented them from pursuing careers. So not only was childcare sometimes a burden for women, but men suffered because they lost out in being involved with their own children.

Before moving to Hebden Bridge, one or two of us had experimented with alternative methods for organising childcare. One system, we simply called the creche. We recreated it in Hebden Bridge. Each day, there were up to 20 children and three or four adults. We had a rota of adults who might only do one day a week and it included some who weren't the parents of any of the children - community involvement in childcare.

Many of us look back on organising and participating in the creche as a very special time. It helped bond the friendships between the adults and other adults, the children and the children with the adults. Some of the children, now grown-up, I still regard with great affection and one or two are even close friends.

We would meet in one of the parent's houses, but we were out whenever we could, paddling and playing in Salem Fields, walking in the Crags and one thing I especially remember is packing a very large number of children into the back of my van. This was at a time before seat belts and other regulations came in, so I also look back in disbelief. I remember one trip going over the hills to Colne, the Slack Bottom way, probably to see Pete that Potter. My van was old and couldn't quite get up the hills with all the people it had as passengers. So at the bottom of every hill, everybody had to get out while I drove to the top, then they would get back in again.

What's in a name? At a time when women were almost exclusively involved in childcare, the children almost always took their father's name. This has so many consequences. When someone talks about being descended from someone famous, it is almost always following the male side only. Yet go back just three generations, we each have 8 great grandparents, each of whom has eight great grandparents. Something is missing if we only look on the father's side. A pattern which is reinforced by giving children their father's name. Even if you give the child the mother's name, that is probably the mother's father's name.

So what family name should you give a child? Clearly, many parents wrestle with this question. An answer that some feminist women came up with in the early 1970s was the name Wild. This captured the imagination of many parents in the Hebden Bridge. Wild children have all gone their own unique ways. Many of them, and their parents, feel connected in some way as part of a large extended family.



11 Foster Clough

The London Connection

I went from Bolton, Lancs. to Cambridge University in 1965. There I met, among others, Nick Makepeace, from Great Ayton, Cleveland, and Dave Laing, from London. Nick and Dave both left the University prematurely, for different reasons. They moved to Notting Hill, West London (then a poor, West Indian and 'bohemian' area). I'd often visit them and lived in their flat in the 'long vacation', 1967.

Among their acquaintances I was to meet John Whitbread, Reg Beach, and Marian O'Dwyer (then with the poet Lee Harwood). In 1969 (by which time I'd also moved to the Notting Hill area) Reg (ex Corsham Art College) and his collaborator, Nick Riddihough, were invited to the Durham Surrealist Festival. A bunch of us went up to Durham to support them, and make a scene to prove that Surrealism was a living practice, not simply an historical phenomenon. In Durham at the time was a post-graduate student from Bradford University, Graham Saville, who also had a line in black Afghani resin.

Reg and Marian (by then with him) were keen to get out of London, and Graham offered to lodge them in his cottage at Foster Clough (a semi-derelict terrace). It was there I went to find them, but, as Graham informed me, by then they'd moved to Nabby Nook, in Charlestown. At that time I was happily homeless, hitchhiking around the country, visiting friends. One of them was Michael Hitchens, in Cornwall, where I became fatefully entangled with his wife, Margaret. Soon I heard that both Nick Makepeace and John Whitbread had moved into cottages at Foster Clough (Nos. 12 & 14) so I went to visit them there.

They were squatting by permission of the owner, Frank Scholefield, with a view to purchase. John wanted to swap his No.14 for No.6. Frank told him he could if he could find someone to take No.14. The answer to that was me. I moved in in September 1970. By then No. 8 was occupied by Bob Francis and Meryl Lloyd. But this was the Bradford Connection. Meanwhile Margaret Hitchens had come up to Foster Clough, with her children, and Michael Hitchens had followed, as far as Hebden Bridge.

The Bradford Connection

Graham Saville was instrumental in bringing others to the Wadsworth hillside as well as Bob and Meryl. There was Paul Chase, a Bradford student who, after renting Northwell Cottage in Heptonstall (for 7/6 pw.) moved into No.10 Foster Clough; and Jeff and Jean Lindsay (now Jean McAllister) who took to one of the Burlees cottages, on Burlees Lane. And there was Bryan Green who joined Paul at No'10 before moving elsewhere in the Upper Calder Valley.

The Manchester Connection

I'd not been long at Foster Clough, and was playing dominos at the Mount Skip Inn when old Alf Windle said, "There are some more of you up at Latham Farm" (above Old Town). This turned out to be 'The Manchester Commune', consisting of Mick and Sandy

Piggott and Jem and Jean Williams. Their occupancy of Latham didn't last long. A reshuffle took place, and soon Mick and Jean were at Club Houses, Old Town, Sandy at Co-op Buildings, Peckett Well, and Jem at Foster Clough, and then elsewhere in the Upper Valley. Latham Farm was taken by Mike and Jenny Slaughter, whose connection seems to have been Marian O'Dwyer as a supplier to 'On The Eighth Day', a 'head-shop' in Manchester.

There seem to have been two sources to this and subsequent immigration; the Eighth Day connection, and one with what I think was the Crewe and Alsager Teachers' Training College. Three of the 'Manchester 4' were teachers, possibly all at this college, and from there came Carol Holden, who passed through Foster Clough, and her friend Chris Peel, then a student at Bolton Tech who was based at Foster Clough for most of the next decade. Another from the C & A TT college was Jenny Kirwood, who passed through Foster Clough.

Communal Attraction

Graham Saville entered Foster Clough, as 'The Fluff Community' in 'Communes Magazine'. Really, we weren't so much a commune as a building co-operative, all working on each other's houses, but each engaged in buying their own with the help of a private mortgage with Mr Scholefield. This entry brought many commune-seekers, some quite strange, some quite critical of our set-up, a few of them helpful, through the doors of Foster Clough.

Some however, came to stay, either here or in the area. Ann Lewis brought her family to stay with Graham at 16, before finding a place of her own in Hebden Bridge. In her wake came Ian Rogers, first to Foster Clough and then to Queens Terrace with other squatters. I don't know where the Queens Terrace squatters all came from, though one or two towns in the South seem to have figured in their back-stories.

It may have been the commune-attraction that brought the Taylor brothers, Brian and Adrian to Foster Clough. Adrian moved to Todmorden with Carol Holden; Brian occupied John Whitbread's house when John returned to the South-West to look after his mother. With Latham Farm as an attraction I associate Max Howarth and Eddie Edwards. And Gerry Whitehouse?

It all gets complicated. There was Mike Shillabeer whose connection went back to Southampton with Geoff Lindsay. And there was a quasi-communal set-up at The Moorlands on Raw Lane. I can't remember those names. Some other names to spring to mind, but I can't place their connections. But as groups from different connections coalesced there occurred what one local resident, Peter Inch, called "The Hebden Bridge Shuffle" which produced more fabulous complications. Just outside my 69-72 frame, Dave Laing bought a house in Hebden Bridge, and his connections brought in Rick and Liz Allen. New settlers brought in more new settlers. What can be claimed is that it was this maelstrom that set a certain tone to Hebden Bridge and environs, that distinguished it from other decaying textile towns.

Precursors

There were some, incomers themselves, with whom we quickly connected, who were here before us: Norman and Di Hurst up Cragg Vale, Mike and Sue Pemsell and Mike and Doris Phillips, over Walsden way. And it was through these people, I believe, that we got to know some actual local lasses: Linda, Lynette, and Vicky who lived in a condemned terrace on Balmoral Street, Hebden Bridge.

Ten Years After

By a decade later, c.1979-c.82, a lot had changed. On Foster Clough, John Whitbread had moved permanently back to his home-ground, the South-West; Bob and Meryl had built a boat in a barn on Raw Lane and sailed it away to Ireland; Paul Chase had returned to his native Merseyside; Nick Makepeace, after supervising the renovations at Foster Clough, and renovating houses for himself first at City Farm. Raw Lane, and then Lower Slater Ing, Heptonstall Slack, moved to Mid-Wales, not far from where Reg and Marian were then living. Still here were myself and Graham. Chris Peel was down in Hebden Bridge, so was Jem, and so was Margaret Hitchens. Mike Hitchens had left for the South Coast. Brian Taylor was at Gauxholme. The Slaughters were still at Latham. Geoff Lindsay had gone southward, and Jean Lindsay had returned to Burlees Lane from the South, with Michael McAllister. Mick Piggott and his Jean were perhaps already in Australia, to return to the valley many years later. Other complications boggle the mind; I can grasp only a fraction of them.

David Fletcher (who had been a great help to us at Foster Clough with our Improvement Grants) tends to claim that it all began with Reg and Marian. There may be some truth in that.

Michael Haslam, Foster Clough, February 1st 2017.

12 Visiting the Queens Terrace Squat

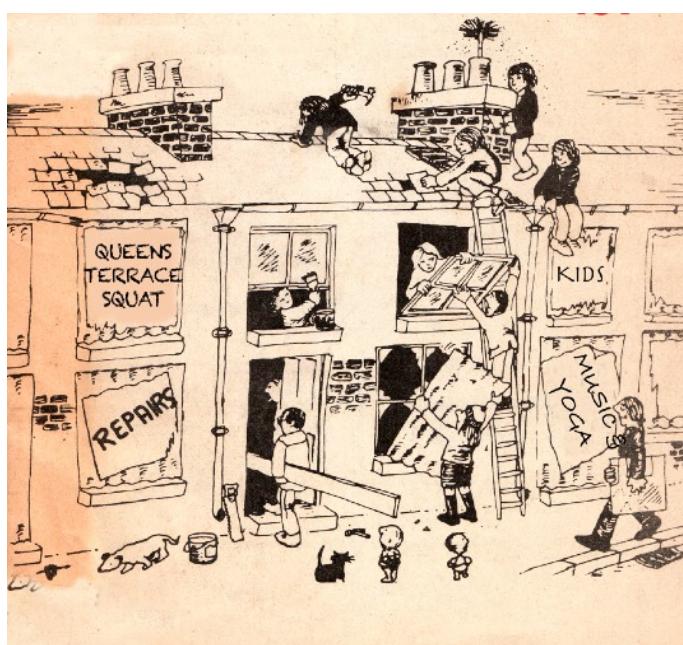
In the early 60s, my Dad once treated himself by sending away for a woollen tweed jacket made by a firm in Hebden Bridge. We lived in the South, but he had been born and brought up in Yorkshire and made a big deal of the high quality of this Hebden Bridge garment, a quality, he claimed, not available anywhere else. There was a small sketch of the pack horse bridge on the packaging and I imagined it to be a jaunty country town filled with tweed wearing well-off folk.

About 10 years' later, on a bitterly cold night, I first came to Hebden, one of a group of us who had been at a Libertarian Conference in Leeds and, at the instigation of Julie (Cockburn), had agreed to call into the little town of Hebden Bridge en route back to London, to visit friends of hers who had just squatted Queens Terrace. I remember meeting a man with very long black hair who was living there and didn't seem so pleased that 6 or 7 people had turned up unannounced for the night. I think someone said he was involved in an Indian religion. I remember feeling that Queens Terrace and environs were bleak and dour. And I remember going out for a walk, having ingested some of the drugs of the day, with a co visitor for whom the drugs were having a scarey effect and trying to look after him as we struggled up a hill, though feeling a bit wobbly myself... not such a happy introduction to Hebden.

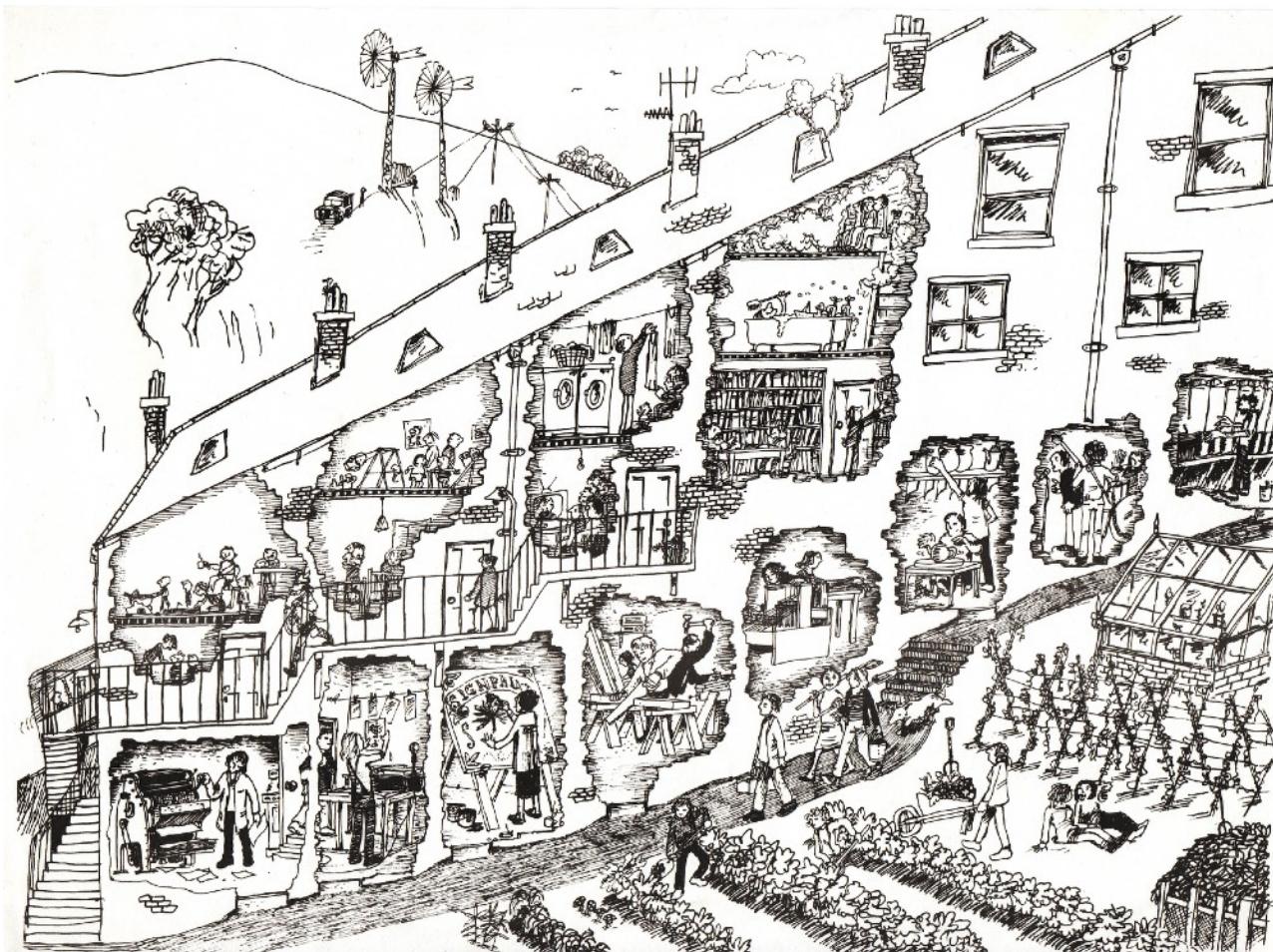
The man with the long black hair and the bad-tripper became my good friends and Hebden became a very special place to me providing many happy memories over the next 40 years. I stayed at Queens Terrace a number of times with Julie or Chris (Ratcliffe), got used to the outdoor toilet everyone shared, enjoyed the community and made new friends. My daughter, Rosie, also Chris's daughter, had many happy times staying with Chris there and in his later houses, notably Victoria Road where Rosie also had the run of Elaine (Connell)'s next-door-but-one house. An important, consistent, formative pa

Rosie's childhood was in Hebden Bridge with her fellow Wilds, Kala, Jennie May and other kids and adults from 'our' community.

We adults felt we were part of 'a movement', not so much 'hippies'- that was what the papers called us - but brothers and sisters, feminists, libertarians.



13 Queens Terrace Squatters put their case



The following report appeared in the *Evening Courier* of 19 March, 1976.

CALDERDALE COUNCIL is to go ahead with plans to evict squatters from Queens Terrace in Hebden Bridge in spite of a plea for the Housing Committee to consider other solutions to the squatting problem.

Four squatters appeared before the committee at its meeting last night on the invitation of the Housing Chairman, Coun Cyril Farrar (Con, Northowram - Shelf). They put forward four possible solutions.

Their proposals were:

THAT they form themselves into a housing association to renovate and improve the terrace without making demands on Council resources. They said some private tenants in Queens Terrace would be keen to take part in such a scheme.

THAT they form a tenants' cooperative. "This could take the form of granting council tenancies to the present occupants.

"This form of scheme is being increasingly adopted by the Greater London Council and many other authorities and encouraged by the Government.

THAT they buy their houses by rental purchase. "This solution would absolve the council of any responsibility for the houses and make private house improvement grants available." The squatters are also keen to repair bricked-up houses to turn them into workshops.

THAT they should be allowed to live in the houses on short life lets or licences. "This is a solution used by many local authorities. Most people would agree," they say, "that to leave houses abandoned for lengthy periods of time is utterly wrong with so many people homeless."

The squatters' case was presented by Julie Cockburn, Gillian Barron, Yvonne Shillabeer and Chris Ratcliffe who told the committee how they came to be homeless and to live in Hebden Bridge.

They said if the council adopted one of their solutions they would be no longer be squatters. But the committee threw out their proposals on the grounds of expense and decided to go ahead with the process of eviction through the courts.

Eviction decision made in secret

The decision, and the discussion, took place behind closed doors after the Press had been excluded.

The decision to take the matter "below the line" was taken in spite of initial advice from the council's Chief Legal Officer, Mr Michael Ellison, that the committee would be out of order to exclude the Press and allow members of the public into the meeting.

This advice was later reversed after the consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer, Mr Michael Scott.

Councillor Farrar objected to taking the matter in this way. "All the time, it has been up to me to make statements about these people, he said.

'FAIR'

He thought it was only fair that the, squatters should be allowed to put their point of view.

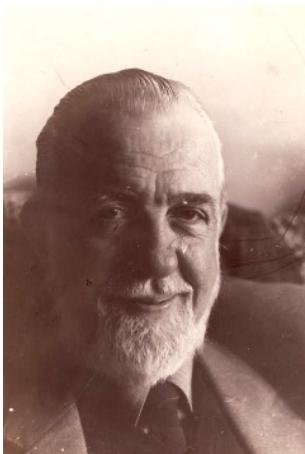
Councillor Raymond Pearson (Con, Mixenden) objected to the delegation.

"These people are illegal occupants of property," he said, "and what have we got to discuss with them?" He left the room when the squatters were brought in.

Outside, with the Press, he said he had left on a point of technicality rather than protest.

"I do not see it as part of my duty as an elected representative to talk to people who are occupying houses, illegally," he said. It was not that he did not sympathise with homelessness.

14 Bob Lynn



The alternative types who began to make Hebden Bridge their home brought with them a spirituality very different to chapel and church. Meditation, herbalism, massage, humanism, vegetarianism and yoga were some of the ways of being which arrived in Hebden Bridge during the 1970s.

One person in particular had a strong impact. This was Bob Lynn. Speak to any of the "hippies" who arrived in the 1970s and the chances are that they will have been to Bob Lynn's yoga classes, and would want to tell you all about him.

Bob's way with yoga was largely verbal with a few exercises and a relaxation at the end of the session. He had a presence, a gift for talking, and an endless supply of anecdotes, each one with a message for living life in a yogic way. He had answers for all questions, even from the most cynical and political of those present.

His reputation was such that his classes were usually full. And it was not just the newly arrived alternative types who attended. But many pensioners who had lived in the town all their lives came every week.

15 Jumbled memories

My memories of Hebden Bridge are a bit jumbled, need you ask why?

We nearly moved to Hebden Bridge in 1964, but ended up in Todmorden. We stayed at the Nutclough Hotel whilst we house hunted – later to be one of those places people used to meet and drink.

Walking in Hardcastle Crags with mum and dad and my sister. Was it at that café that the beans-on-toast was heaven.... or Rochdale swimming pool caff?... hmmmm.

I remember setting off for a New Year's Eve dance at the Carlton in 1977 (well you know, maybe '78) with Al Hall, on the bus from Cornholme, both dressed as women 'cos it was free entry if you were in fancy dress.

Two busses, balloons for breasts, in the days when fancy dress wasn't just as common as today and we fronted it out (sorry...) only to find that of the hundreds of revellers, there were only three in fancy dress – two bearded women and a guy dressed as a giant packet of Rizlas. Happy days.

Making music with Mike Shillabeer and touting tapes round London record companies while staying in the house that (little was I to know) I would later live in for the next 30 years.... and counting....

A New Year's party at Elaine Connell's. Walk in the door. Life starts.

Gigs at the Trades Club.

Playing the heavy with Mike Shillabeer in a dispute between Chris Ratcliffe and his crap landlord (we won).

Working at Community Action Team with a roll-call of Hebden Bridge stalwarts. Drinking in The Albert.

Watching the firework display from my window in Machpelah.

Musical Sundays in Steve's attic studio and the joy that brought me, and the best Sunday dinners courtesy of Lynne.

And who was it who plunged into the canal when trying to walk on the ice?....ah, my memory! – that's why this is so short

John Carpenter

Nov 2012

16 Asbestosis action group

The Hebden Bridge Asbestosis action group was formed in 1974 during an education meeting of the local branch of the Labour party. John Pickering had been informing the group about the implications of the Health and Safety at Work act of that year and was giving an example of the behaviour of Factory Inspectors in the workplace.

He mentioned the 1931 Government regulations about the safe practices to be used in the handling of asbestos, and how these rules had not been observed at Acre Mill in Hebden Bridge. The consequences had been disastrous in terms of the health and well-being of the workers at the mill, and the negligence of the inspection system had not been investigated.

Local people who had worked at the mill were unaware of the dangers they were exposing themselves to, and were now needing advice and support as they initiated legal proceedings against their former employers, who had closed the mill and moved to South Africa.

Also the disposing of asbestos waste at local tips taken place, with the consequent health hazards, and the tips were subject to slippage and erosion in bad weather, and spreading of dust during windy days.

The group of people present at the meeting felt that the time was right to form an action group to call for a public enquiry, communicate with the Local council, Calderdale council, about the hazards of the local tips, and for there to be regular meetings at which people who had been affected by their contact with asbestos could meet and get advice and support to help them in their compensation proceedings. It was also considered to be important to enlist the support of the local MP.

The Chairperson of the support group was the local councillor, Stanley Leach, John Pickering was the legal advisor, Renata Taylor-Byrne was the secretary, the publicity officer was Ron Taylor and the treasurer was Arthur Montgomery. Regular meetings would take place in the 'Hole in the wall' public house, and members of the public would attend and former workers of Acre mill.

The Action group campaigned for over a decade, and during this time committee members who had asbestosis very sadly died. Arthur Montgomery, the treasurer, died and was replaced by Brian Schnake, who also succumbed to the disease, as did people who had attended the group during its existence.

From 1986 onwards, advice sessions would be advertised and took place at the Hebden Bridge Trades Club, the Civic Hall, and then subsequently at the home of Ronnie Slattery who was the second Chairperson of the group.

Increasingly people who needed legal advice would contact John Pickering directly or would be referred by the members of the group to the relevant sources of help. It became apparent that the need for a local group no longer existed and that people could access their solicitors or Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Renata

17 Coming to the valley

As a teenager living on the outskirts of London, I developed a desire to get away from the city, and also to own my own home. The ownership thing wasn't a thing about material improvement – my idea was that I wanted to travel, so I needed somewhere to leave my stuff when I was away, something that's difficult and expensive to arrange when you're dependent on rental accommodation. After university, I came across cheap housing in inner-city areas of Stone and suchlike, but they didn't appeal, and then I got a small boat on a canal, but that didn't work out. It was while I was travelling around in the spring of 1975 that I met people and got involved in one of those strings of coincidence that can change your life completely. I heard of the cheap housing in the upper Calder valley from a very drunk friend of a friend who'd just bought a house in Lobb Mill for £800; when he told me, he was just beginning to slide down the wall and I had to pump him for more information before he passed out completely! Which he did after telling me the towns near Lobb Mill – Hebden Bridge and Todmorden; and I recognised them as towns I'd passed through with a very strange feeling of déjà vu a month or so earlier in the string of coincidence.

Two weeks later three of us came up to the valley, and at the end of that week two of us were going shares in a house in Mytholmroyd that cost £1100. Selling my canal boat accounted for my half of that, and we moved into the village in October 1975 – the 14th, a date I can never forget. The valley was all that I'd hoped – wonderful countryside, a strong sense of history, a resolute and characterful existing community, and good transport communications with elsewhere through Leeds and Manchester. Plus a growing number of like-minded folk exiting the rat-race of their more urban backgrounds.

I think I had the longest hair in Mytholmroyd then, and was I suppose quite distinctive in that way. A friend visiting me, with similar length hair, was stopped as he was walking along the main road and I guess looking lost: an old lady spoke to him out of the blue – "Are you looking for John?" – and sent him to my door!

Another time, some kids on Bankfield Estate started throwing stones at me until a man passing by had a go at them. Generally, people were friendly and accommodating, though at times they'd slip dialect words into their conversation to remind us that we were outsiders. I once asked someone how long it'd take to become a local – they said, 'oh, 30 years'. Exactly thirty years later, I was giving a talk at Mytholmroyd History Society and asked the audience if therefore I was now a local – 'Nah', somebody said, 'Not till tha gets somebody under t'grahnd'!

Another old lady in the village told me 'You're a funny-looking lot o'buggers, but we're glad you're coming to live here and use our shops. We don't want to get full of empty second homes like in the Dales'. In general the incoming residents made efforts to become, and were, accepted; but when the 'hippy travellers' arrived in town, many with a rather disruptive and even anti-social attitude to the local community, things changed, famously summed up by a quote from a lady that appeared in the local newspaper: 'They're not like our hippies'. Two pubs at least put up 'No hippies served

here' signs in the late 1970s – Mytholmroyd's Shoulder of Mutton and, though hard to believe now, Hebden's Fox and Goose.

It was still, though, an alternative society in the sense that lifestyles and values were radically different, and not always to the taste of some local residents. Partnerships weren't always marriages, the drug of choice wasn't always alcohol, the cuisine used funny herbs and spices (bought at Aurora Wholefoods in Hebden Bridge or The Bear in Todmorden) and often eschewed meat and fish, and the younger locals liked our kind of music better than the older ones. Rock and folk gigs, whether in the Carlton in Hebden Bridge, or Todmorden, or 'Top Shoulder' in Blackshaw Head, or wherever, attracted people from all over the valley; at some point, though, probably in the 1980s, such activities became more localised into Todmorden/Hebden as the communities at each end of the valley grew.

But during the 1980s I was putting the house to the purpose I'd intended, and travelling. When I returned, things had moved on. Radical values still existed, but some people had found that Thatcherism worked for them well, especially in buying and selling property – the start of the process that has made local housing so hard to afford for young people now. The 'wealth gap' within the 'alternative community' (if it still was – perhaps better by then to see them as the 'liberal thinkers'!), which I find pretty obvious now, had started to appear. And naturally, with the children of the incomers going to school and parents mingling at school gates, and generally with accustomisation and social interaction, any social divide was lessening. We're still not locals, maybe, but some of those newcomers of the 1970s have 'someone under t'grahnd' now, so I guess we're well on the way.

John Billingsley

18 Foster Clough and Lumb Falls

We came to Calderdale in 74. We didn't have a car then, but I was a distance runner and on Sundays I ran along the valley from Savile Park in Halifax to Hebden, returning through Heptonstall, Mount Skip, Midgley and Warley. I'd read E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Classes* and recognised places he mentioned along that route. The scenery and the history captivated me and I loved running past the black gritstone terrace that overhung the valley at Foster Clough.

When Kath passed her test we bought a 2CV and one of the Foster Clough cottages. The house had belonged to the poets Paul Buck and Glenda George. Paul had been told not to sell to anyone who seemed too straight, but I had long hair and wore a striped public school blazer that I'd bought at an antiques shop, so I passed the test. Paul had been receiving an arts grant from the council to produce a small poetry magazine. One issue contained photos and poems about what my wife's aunts called 'ladies front bottoms' and the council withdrew their funding. He moved south, perhaps appropriately to Maidenhead.

All this was after this was after the Foster Clough drug bust. Police were still regular visitors. They knocked at our door once to ask if they could use our toilet, no doubt sniffing the air for the scent of noxious substances.

We made friends with Nick Smith and Judith Mylroi, who took us on walks over the tops to the amazing fountains at Castle Carr and, on hot days, to the skinny dipping haven at Lumb Falls. Nick told us some locals had shunned the 'hippies' at the Clough until one snowy day they came to the rescue of a farmer who suffered a heart attack, preparing a flat landing site of compacted snow for the emergency helicopter.

We only stayed for 18 months at the Clough. We needed a place where our infant daughter could play outside in the garden. We hung some new velvet curtains and a house for sale sign in the back windows. A passing walker bought the house on the same day. Last time we looked the curtains were still there, although somewhat frayed. We moved to Soyland and bought a house with a large garden and an acre field from a one armed man, who wore orange, had lots of children and wanted to follow his wife out to Poona.

George Murphy

19 Mick's story

Out of Manchester ...

It was John Pickering, a partner at the Manchester office of Thompsons Solicitors (then W.H. Thompson), who was my boss, who introduced me to Hebden Bridge early in 1970. As a legal executive at the firm, I had an industrial injury case to be heard at Keighley County Court, and John suggested I drive there via Hebden Bridge to take a look at the town, where he lived.

I did, and was immediately enamoured of it; and driving up Keighley Road towards Pecket Well, I was stunned by the beauty of the valley unfolding below me: Hardcastle Crags.

When I got home that night, I enthusiastically told my fellow 'communards' Jean and her husband Jem, and later my then-wife Sandy, that I thought I had found the place where we could follow our dream of migrating to the clean air of the countryside, where we could raise our kids. We had three between us, aged four, three and one. We didn't feel that a semi in Burnage, Manchester, was going to give us the space we needed to give the children the best start in life that we wanted them to have. We also didn't much fancy the look of the local south Manchester primary school that the children would have had to attend. There was no green space around it; the school had a concrete yard enclosed by a 12-foot-high chain link fence. It looked dreadful; to us aspiring free-living hippies, it looked like a prison. We couldn't bear the thought of our little tots having to go there.

... to Old Town.

We looked at other small towns around the Pennines, but it was Hebden Bridge we fell in love with. We found a certain Mr Eddie Donnelly, who owned Latham Farm and was seeking to move on. We sold the semi in Burnage and we bought Latham, and moved everything we owned in a large hired van, arriving at Latham a week before Christmas 1970.

We were soon contacted by Graham Saville (now deceased) at Foster Clough and other folks from around the valley. These included Paul Chase and Mike Haslam, also from 'The Clough', Jeff and Jean Lindsay from Burlees Lane and Norman and Diane Hurst, from Cragg Vale. (Sadly, Norman and Di have both passed away over the last eighteen months.)

There was also a 'floating' population of people interested in communes, who visited us from time to time.

Just before Christmas 1970, we had what would have been the first 'hippy party' at Latham, and our new friends all attended. It was very jolly, and our first Christmas in Hebden Bridge was a white one: we were snowed in.

As Jenny has narrated elsewhere, I had been working with Mike Slaughter at Thompsons, and it wasn't long before Mike and Jenny visited and subsequently decided that they would like to live in Hebden too. On The Eighth Day had been set up by them

and others while we were still living in Manchester; there already existed in that city a wider 'alternative' movement, of which Eighth Day was part, which included a magazine, to which we contributed.

When we moved out to Hebden Bridge, Jean was for some time one of the home-workers Jenny has referred to in her story, using her dressmaking skills to create caftans and cool clothes for kids, which were sold in Eighth Day. I got a job with a Halifax firm of solicitors, which I kept for about seven months. Our oldest child started at Old Town Primary School. (The other two started there later, when they each attained the ages of five.)

As with so many hippy communes in those days, idealism wasn't enough for our attempt at communal living to succeed in the long term. Latham was sold to Mike and Jenny in 1971, Jean and I bought our dwelling at Club Houses in Old Town, where we subsequently lived for ten years until it was bought by the present incumbents George and Chris; and Sandy bought her house in Pecket Well. Jem went travelling for a while, and spent some time in Cornwall before returning to settle in Hebden Bridge. Most of us did meet up at Glastonbury Festival in the summer of 1971. The moves and resettlement of Jenny and Mike, Sandy, Jem, and Jean and I took place from August 1971 onwards; the Latham Farm Commune had lasted just nine months.

In the wider Hebden community, hippy idealism most definitely wasn't dead; the so-called 'hippy movement' of which we were part, and had been part of from its earliest days in the Calder Valley, was very much alive, and was just starting to take off as a significant part of the local renewal and transformation that was getting under way. Both the hippy community and the wider community have undergone many changes since; but the overall community continues to develop and change.

Earning a living

Back in the early '70s, with changing relationships and circumstances, both Sandy and I felt the need to enter new professions and we got grants to go to college and to qualify as primary school teachers. We did so at Mather College, a teachers' training college attached to Manchester University. It was there we came into contact with Jenny Kerwood and Carol Holden (sadly and prematurely deceased), and others, who subsequently joined the migration from Manchester to Hebden. My partner Jean (we got married a week before Christmas 1976) also went back to college in Huddersfield, and she too became a teacher.

It was difficult to break into teaching locally in the 1970s, and after college we did other jobs; in my case this included a year-and-a-half working for Calderdale council as a binman, a stint truck-driving and delivering for a stationery company and bits of casual teaching work with young adults and foreign students. I also went back to working for a firm of solicitors in Huddersfield for two years and worked for another two years as a

sales rep. in law stationery, and at other times did supply teaching in Calderdale and Rochdale.

In the eyes of many Hebden Hippies, we weren't considered hippies at all as we 'owned' property (mortgaged, of course), had 'straight' jobs and ran halfway-decent cars; for a time, when Jean and I worked at opposite ends of the valley, we even ran two cars, so by some measures, we were considered rather middle-class. Maybe so; I never considered us 'middle-class' because our sole incomes came from working for wages or salaries, we worked for our money and accordingly always considered ourselves working-class. Also, my dad had been a factory worker; we kids grew up on a council housing estate down south and we went to State schools: by any logical sociological definition we were and remain solidly working class, and are now dependent on our State retirement pensions for a living. (And yes, we are Labour-voting socialists.)

High Jinks

Life isn't all about work though; that is, the kind of work you do to earn a living; we never lived for our work, we worked to live. We had a lot of fun as well ... For some years, I believe we were (in)famous for our parties; to our neighbours, 'notorious' may have been the more appropriate adjective. Looking back, I can't believe we were never actually raided by the police. Maybe the neighbours were more tolerant than you'd expect after all; it seems we were never complained about. Although we did have the cops round a time or two, when they asked us to 'tone it down a bit'...

20 Jean's Story

We moved to Latham Farm on Wadsworth moor full of enthusiasm for a new way of life, but the locals were initially less enthusiastic about us 'offcumdens'. Our mail had to be collected from the local shop / post office and I used to do this when I picked my daughter up from school (after strict instructions from her almost 5-year old self not to turn up wearing long skirts and to tie my hair back! After only a few weeks at school she was feeling the effects of being from a rather different background to her peers).

The woman at the post office always served me with icy reserve and was not forthcoming in my attempts to be friendly. However, I could see she was extremely curious about this strange group of people on the hilltop and when giving me the mail one day, she remarked that I had a letter with a Sheffield postmark. I told her that was where I was from and all my family lived there. The conversation opened up - it transpired that she was also from Sheffield and, coincidentally, we had attended the same grammar school. From then on relations were much more cordial and over the months the attitudes of the local people became more relaxed and friendly.

When, after the first flush of enthusiasm wore off and the realities of life set in, we realised that our ideals for a commune were not going to work and that we would go our separate ways, my first thought was that I had to find somewhere for myself and two children to live. Although Mick and I had a good relationship at that time I don't think either of us felt we could enter into a commitment given that the break-up with our former partners was still new (in my case) and about two years old (in Mick's).

I discovered Club Houses and although the place needed work, I knew that was where I wanted to live, but the price of £500 was beyond me. The only person I knew at that time with any money was Graham Saville and I will always think of him very fondly for lending me a deposit of £50 to secure the house. My dad very kindly lent me £200 and Mick, with no other plans, asked if he could come and share the house and he would put in £250 - about all he had from the sale of Latham. I agreed thinking the arrangement would probably not last, but something must have been right - we celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary in December 2016.

Around the mid-seventies (dates get a bit hazy) Niven and Mary Charvet and their three children arrived in Hebden. Niven had some money - I think from teaching jobs abroad, and was keen to open a communal restaurant, supplying good, cheap home cooked food to local people. Premises were found, a group of us got stuck into renovations and Strays was born. It was a huge success for around 3-4 years but unfortunately the idealism once again backfired - freeloaders began lurking, ostensibly 'helping out' for a bit of cash or a free meal but free drinks (lots) were not on the menu, neither was dipping a hand into the till! The original group became disillusioned and the place gradually folded. However, for those few years it was a great success and lots of fun too. People still talk about it - one of the first decent restaurants in the town, and I think all those who were involved have very fond memories of it.

During all this time we had been witnessing an influx of young people from all over the country - obviously word had got around on the grapevine that here was a beautiful

place with cheap, plentiful housing - so they began renting cheaply and squatting in run-down properties. Although we inevitably got to know a lot of these people, and many became good friends, we were never completely involved with their growing community in the valley bottom. Living on the hilltop, and working all week, we were rather removed from them on a daily basis. However, it was obvious, from the first wave of people to move to the area (and I count us among them), to the people who followed, that this had a great impact on the revitalisation of Hebden Bridge. This continues to this day with many of the original 'offcumdens' still here with their children and grandchildren growing up in the area. I think that says a lot about the special relationship we have with the valley and how we have come to make it our own.

21 Gingerbread Group.

Gingerbread was a national group, set up in 1970, to bring together single parents for mutual support. The nearest group at the time to Hebden Bridge was in Huddersfield and Ann Lewis was involved in its creation.

Ann Lewis, initially found refuge at Foster Clough when she came to Hebden Bridge in 1972 as a single parent with 5 children. In need of support over custody and access visits for her children, she got involved when June Eastwood, a local health visitor, suggested setting up Gingerbread locally.

The first meeting, at the Doctor's surgery, then in New Road, drew four members, all divorced or separated. Ann Lewis became Group Contact, Yvonne Deegan (now Dumsday) became Secretary. The group grew rapidly with weekly meetings held in members' homes, attracting both local single parents and "offcomers".

In the early months, they focused on sharing information and getting support. Local solicitor Mary Cassidy came to speak about legal problems and Dr McCoubrie to talk about the impact on children of family breakup.

Some of the local clergy were supportive of the group. Ted Matkovich, the Methodist minister recommended the group to single parents. Adam Ford, the Anglican vicar, let the group use the Sunday School room at St John's church (on the Birchcliffe Hillside) for a monthly communal Sunday dinner, enjoying the feeling of an extended family meal on what was often the loneliest day of the week.

Self-help was the central ethos of the group. They took care of other members' children when there were hospital visits, supported each other at Court hearings for custody, and on visits to

**Parents despair
of getting what
their children need**

9, Garden Terrace, Hebden Bridge.

WE ARE WRITING on behalf of the Hebden Bridge Gingerbread Group, the association of one-parent families. Since the beginning of the new school year, we have received numerous complaints about the method which Calderdale Education Department has adopted for the supply of school clothing to children who qualify for grant aid.

DHSS (Department of Health and Social Security) tribunals in Huddersfield.

They raised funds for the group by selling ginger beer at Mytholmroyd Gala, a stall at the Hebden Bridge Bonfire and a Christmas bazaar.

In 1974, the group went by coach to London to support a rally following the publication of the Finer Report on one parent families. (A report which looked into all aspects of life for the families. It was largely ignored).

Locally, the group protested when Calderdale Council replaced uniform vouchers, that could be used in local shops, with clothing bought from Yorkshire Purchasing that could be collected from the Pitt St Education office. Members of the group wrote to the *Hebden Bridge Times* complaining about the failure of the new system. The clothes weren't ready for many children in time for the start of Secondary school.

The group also organised outings: swimming sessions at the Pitt Street pool, camping trips, and they took part in entertainments provided for them as 'needy' families. The most spectacular outing being an invitation from the Sex Pistols to join a Christmas Day party in Huddersfield which had a three foot cake and generous presents to take home, plus a gig which turned out to be the group's last British performance.

Yvonne recalled on booking a train carriage for a day trip to Scarborough, the railway clerk Lloyd Greenwood, counted out tickets for six adults and twenty "Gingersnaps".

The group remained active for about 7 years and involved about 20 families over time, and dozens of children.



In the photo Gus and Tessa Smith (on the right of the group) were guests and provided musical entertainment at a Gingerbread tea party in the crypt in 1974.

From the left the other adults are Rosemary Jones, Sandra McKelvey, Linda Milne, Ann Lewis and Anne Clarke.

Can anyone name all the children? Reply to hebdenbridgehippies@gmail.com

22 Colchester to Hebden Bridge, 1974

A convoluted network of events led us to move to Hebden Bridge in 1974, having visited over a couple of years. Mick and I had met in Colchester where he was taking time out and I was at college and art school. Colchester was a mix of ancient history, docks, army and Essex University - a centre for music and radical activism. Artists, students and bohemian life spread into villages, countryside and houseboats in the muddy creeks. And in town was Head Street and the Headgate pub! Then many and varied circumstances cut college short and led us to move back to Mick's home town of Rotherham with our baby son Sully. The house had an outside toilet, one cold water tap and an old cooking range. We lived simply, on wholefoods, recycling, charity shops, and with friends and family.

Those three years now seem a stepping stone to Hebden. We used to visit Mick's cousin in Thornton, Bradford, and search out affordable housing there among other places. We also visited a crowded Haworth with my parents and came back via Hebden, seeking respite and a café. We mooched around, maybe in the square, found people friendly and recognised some like-minds. We went on to the park, over the footbridge and met someone coming up the steps, dressed as a yellow chicken. The seeds were sown.

One day we drove to Bingley amid sunny green wooded hillsides and fields. Later, visiting Colchester we described it to friends Kevin and Gill. We think it turned out Kevin had a possible place at college near Leeds or Bingley, and Gill knew a lecturer from Essex Uni who had a house on Osbourne Street in Hebden. Later they stayed there while they bought and worked on their own house, and we visited too. There we all met Graham from Foster Clough, working as a builder across the road. We continued to visit them at Bank buildings, walked and drove up to Foster Clough, meeting Anne, Mary, Trevor and others.

In '74 Graham offered Mick a job with Bodge Builders (Calderdale Builders) and we packed up and came. Jerry helped us move our stuff in the works van and we stored things at Graham's antique shop while we rented Bank Buildings from Kevin and Gill, who were then elsewhere. Our Rotherham friend Barry came and lived with us; he became drummer with the band based at Latham so we'd sometimes drive him up there.

Back at the house days were spent with Sully, sharing art, music and walking by the canal together. I used to imagine the severed canal reconnected and the derelict Walkley's Clogs mill full of people and events. Both dreams later transpired though the mill met changing fortunes.

I joined Sandy's Dance-drama group, held upstairs in what became The Trades Club. This was a great combination of dance, yoga, drumming, freedom and experimentation. Some people I associate with the group include Jenny, Mad, Ian, Doug, Val, Jem, Jerry and Julia. The group later morphed into Rosie's contemporary Creative Dance class. It seems that about a dozen of 'those crazy people from Colchester' came by various routes, including John, Farhad and Sarah, Al, and children...One day soon after our move I saw Jerry and his friend Chris up on a roof at West End; hadn't realized they were both here, via Bristol, as Mick and I had each crossed paths with them in Colchester. Many coincidences and interconnections came to light.

We scoured sources for affordable houses; Chiserley Fields fell through, then Foster Lane from Mike and Margaret. Mick was working on Gus and Tessa's smallholding and they told us of a cottage for cheap rent along the track. The views were stunning, Wood Top was a hamlet with potential and we moved in. The house was in a run-down state but that was par for the course, and there was a bathroom and a phone!

Sully went to the playgroup in Carlton Street basement, with its rota of parent sharing. Here we also saw IOU theatre perform The Three Billy goats Gruff? Later we would trawl to nursery then school. Pottery and Yoga classes I'd enjoyed in Rotherham were rekindled here and I joined various Yoga groups, later including Bob Lynn's and Bryan's. A Yoga drop-in centre was another early dream which later materialized in the mushrooming of similar venues.

Aurora wholefoods was set up on Market Street, where you could relax in the back room, weigh, bag and till-up your own food. At Paul's request I designed the handout which was then screen-printed by someone up the hill, maybe at Queen's Terrace.

As Aurora became a cooperative, Kevin was now with Sue and I joined them working there with John, Gussie, Lizzie and George. I inherited Doug's allotment, alongside Julie's and Annie's plots, and continued activities as much as circumstances would allow, meeting Patsy, Barry, Lindsay, Jean, Lynda and others.

The women's groups diversified and natural medicine became more focused in the valleys. Festivals were blossoming, including one near Bell House, with the turf maze to walk around. The Arts Festival was already vibrant in the 70s and I was involved with Art in the Park and dance performance. As my allotment took priority I missed seeing our neighbour Matt model and win the knitted dress competition! I began selling my hand-made and lino-print greetings cards in local outlets including Aurora and Bridgegate Crafts, where briefly I had a workshop.

After Bodge Builders Mick alternated breaks with work then went self-employed as an electrician, working on many of the renovations in the valleys. Later he helped Graham run Mount Pleasant Timber, dealing in reclaimed wood. Our little community grew and formed the Wood Top Road gang: the track had succumbed to wear and tear, the old mill dam had burst and various floodwaters taken their toll. A concrete lane was gradually laid, which apparently still impresses the farming community.

Nick and Judith moved over from Foster Clough and we finally got the chance to buy our rented house while it was still affordable; the day we exchanged contracts the attic skylight fell in and our own renovation work began! People acquired land, trees were planted and gardens grew, along with children and families.

I continued with creative work when able and Sully went on with his own life and family. As situations altered we made time just to be, with friends as much as possible, and keep things flowing. As with others, memories are variable and we try to sketch an outline and capture something of a many-coloured picture.

Rowan Reed, March 2017

Conclusion

The 'hippies' who arrived in the 1970s changed Hebden Bridge and the surrounding area, replacing the young who were drifting away. They stayed beyond a winter and fell in love with the moors, valleys and woods. They stamped their mark on the town.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed memories and images to the exhibition: Graham Saville; Ann Lewis; Chris Ratcliffe; Elaine Connell; Jenny Slaughter; John Carpenter; John Billingsley; Geo Lindsay; Renata Taylor-Byrne; Clare McNamee; Mike Haslam; Martin Parr; Dorothy Sutcliffe; Diane Bush; Jenny Wickham; Annie Fatet; Ness Parfitt; and Pennine Horizons Digital Archive. If your name is missing - it's not been done intentionally.

If you have any memories and/or photos which capture the spirit of 1970s Hebden Bridge, please send them to hebdenbridgehippies@gmail.com

See photos, exhibits, feedback and more at www.hebdenbridge.co.uk/hippies