1 OWD GENN

Preceded in 1802, this column commemorated the Peace of Amiens, a brief lull in the Napoleonic War that offered new hope for the retention of the textile trade with France. Alongside the column there used to be a gentleman's urinal known as the Tin Tabernacle. A metal plate displays the lofty height of 2.7m, measured on the day when the famous 1962 Tennyson goods train was passing by. Below, Blaythwaite House boasts 81 people, reported in the 1850s. The story made front-page news in the national press, instigating a relief fund that raised around £70,000. This was known as the Peace Boys, thereafter called the Holmfirth Food Store.

2 HOLMSIDE GARDENS

What was the Parish Church graveyard from 1756 to 1860 was transformed into an attractive memorial garden in the mid-1960s. Look out for pre-1800 headstones and the high incidence of names of local tradesmen. Amongst the prominent families, represented here is the Heasman in Latin belonging to Reverend John Hapton, vicar of the Parish Church for 53 years. Find the Stocks family stone on the far wall. Martha (née Stocks) moved to Leipzig with her husband, the pioneering Baron Speck von Stemberg in 1857. Their son Hermann became German ambassador to the USA in 1903. The gardens are a popular venue for events in Holmfirth's busy calendar.

3 STATION HOUSE

This building used to be the ticket office and waiting rooms of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Holmfirth branch line, opened in 1850. Apart from a 16-month interruption, when the Kirklees textile trade collapsed in 1861, passenger service continued until 1959 and 1963. Although the station was closed, there were days when relying on an inaccurate church clock often missed their train, prompting the ringing of a morning bell eight minutes before each departure. By the end of the 19th century there were up to 16 departures a day, with several excursions being all day.

4 CROWN BOTTOM

Jim McDonald, a keen cricketer and landlord of the nearby Crown pub (known by another name today), helped establish a cricket field here in the 1850s. It was also home to anniversaries and bazaars associated with the annual Holmfirth Fair, as well as the Albert Hill built in 1845. The site was used as a venue for public meetings – famously hosting a suffragette rally led by Selina Cooper in 1913. It has long been used as a market, for cattle in the 1920s, as a general and craft market in the 1970s and more recently housing a large food store. The mill's settlement survives here as a monument to the building that was demolished in 1986.

5 DRILL HALL

Built in 1892 with money raised by public subscription, this was the home to the 2nd Volunteer Battalion West Riding Regiment, renowned for their shooting skills. 34 men volunteered to fight in the Boer War. Two were invalided home and an enthusiastic crowd greeted the remaining 12 on their return in 1901. A plaque celebrating this can be seen in the building. Today the Drill Hall has been combined with the former Town Hall (1840) to form the Civic Hall, a venue for events, exhibitions and meetings.

6 NORRIDGE BOTTOM

Noted as an area of “industrial and disorderly behaviour” in the 19th century, imposing four-storey dwellings, with long rows of windowed windows that had once featured lodging houses, were transformed into an attractive shopping quarter in the 1980s. They are a fine example of under and over etc., with the upper two floors opening onto Huddersfield Road. Several typical buildings in Holmfirth and the steep hillside of the Holme Valley.

7 PICTUREDROME

Opened in 1913 and accommodating over 1,000 the Valley Theatre hosted revivals and silent movies, including those made by Banfield & Co Ltd., an important Holmfirth pioneering movie company, later known for its early sound pictures. The first “talkie” Sunshine Up was shown in 1930 and in the 1940s Kinozap were spooked with electronic effects and diseases at bay! Later used as a bingo hall, today this popular music and event venue bears the name of what was once an cinema and retains valuable period features, including a wonderful plane ceiling.

8 VICTORIA PARK

Purchased by the town council from school teacher John Burton for the occasion of Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in 1887. The park was subsequently landscaped and became a very popular venue for the W.H. Sunday Holmfirth Sing, a popular musical festival first held on the cricket field in 1882. Profits were largely used to support local hospitals. A dramatic end to a period of drought came during a band contest in 1929 as competition performed a test piece called The Winter Carnival. The park offers fine views over Holmfirth.

9 THE LIDO

Whilst there had been attempts to raise money for public baths dating back to 1867, it wasn't until August 1950 that John Butter, a joiner and entrepreneur, turned his backyard into the Holmfirth Lido. The cold spring waters attracted over 400 a day during a heat wave that month. However, it wasn’t always that warm and heating was later installed bringing the water temperature up to 19°C. There were diving boards, slides, changing rooms, with beer and drinks always at hand. The pool fell into disuse in 1949 and was hidden in a private garden, though an instinctive urging led by the spring can be seen on its boundary wall.

10 FENELLA THE TIGER

A real life tiger used to live in Holmfirth throughout the 1940s. Born in a circus in South Africa and directly brought to Holmfirth by a local touring acrobatic family, come and go, Fenella could often be seen being taken for walks round the hills and near here along Cemetery Road when children would come out and stroke her. One occasion Fenella made international news when she held up a funeral procession. The family showed her in circuses around the UK billed as the Domesticoated Tiger.

11 TH’OWD TOWER

The Tower, a gothic housing development and petty criminals, stems from 1937. In most notorious inmate the Lowestoft Edmund Robinson, curator of the neighbouring Town Church. Allegedly spent a night there following arrest for the serious crime of coat clipping in the 1860s. He was found guilty at York Assizes and hanged. Later, the lower floor of the tower was used as a fire station, a garage for a horse-drawn ambulance and a mortuary. A reconstructed goal on the upper floor is open on heritage weekends each September.