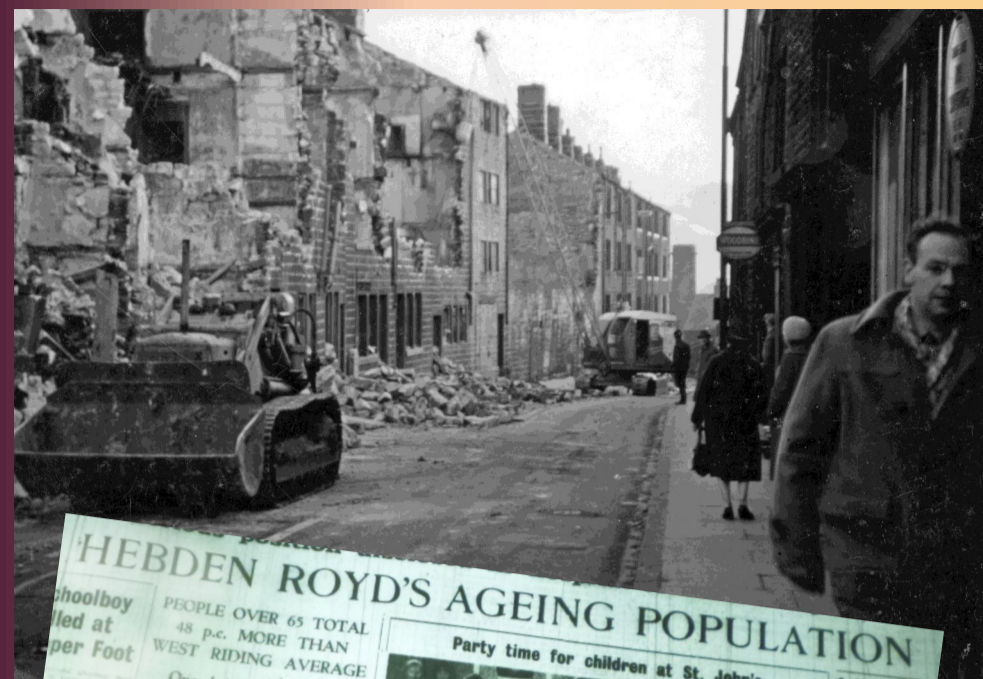


Hebden Bridge about 1970



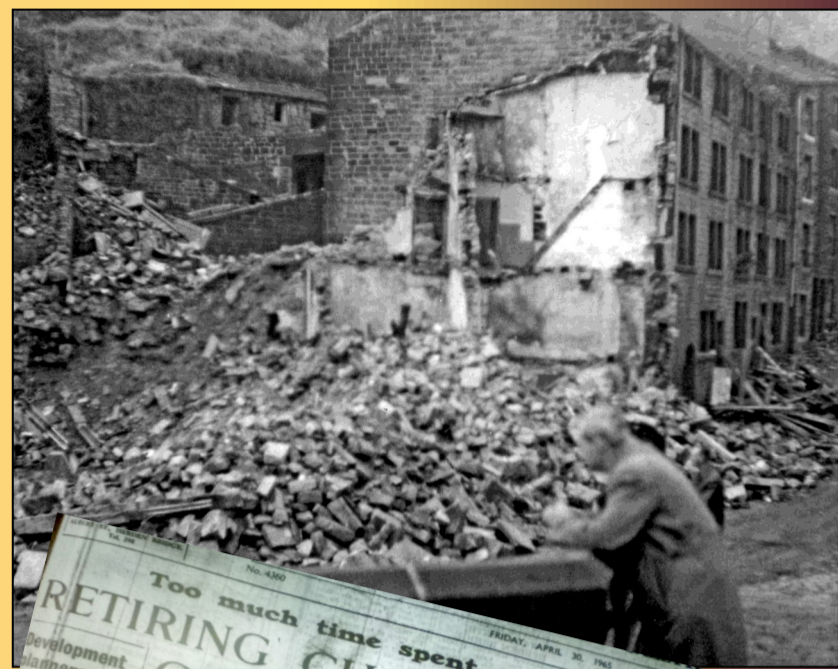
Hebden Bridge Times
FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1970

Where are we going?

Local industry is starved of recruits and too few school leavers are taking up employment in the district. For them there appears much more scope in jobs in other areas where lucrative posts are available with prospects for advancement.

This drift away from Calder Valley is one that is to be regretted, for it serves to speed the decline which has come to the fore in the last ten years. As firms have closed down or moved elsewhere, and the manufacturing capacity of the district contracts, so do the opportunities for young people decrease. ... One way or the other we need to know where we are going. A decision must be made soon on our future. Businesses which depend on the virility of the district must know whether we are going forward or backward.

If it is the intention to run this district down to being a purely dormitory area it is no use them staying and being dragged down to an uneconomical existence.



In praise of Busy Shops. Writing to The Hebden Bridge Times 2nd May 1980, J.H.Round looked back 10 years to a time when "Market Street was almost a street of empty shops, and Saturday afternoons, Hebden Bridge was almost a ghost town".

Must come to grips
"We must at some time come to grips with our basic problems," said Coun. Crabtree. "These are population and trade. We must find some way to hold our young folk, and we must find some enthusiasm to deal with our tumble-down ruins. We must find some way to clothe these gaunt corrutions with beauty. We must cease to believe that we need new industries when we have so much. We must nurture with pride the advantages we have. For we have so much on the credit side of the balance sheet including lively intelligent organisations, whose members radiate keenness and confidence."

On March 12th 1970, The Hebden Bridge Times reported a speech by Councillor Crabtree in which he spoke of the value of tourism and said "We need to be proud of ourselves and we need to be jealous of Hebden Royd".

From the mid 1960s it was clear that Hebden Bridge was entering a difficult period. While in 1965 the HB Times still had columns of situations vacant for machinists, by May 1970 these have mainly disappeared. Councillors and editors were aware of the problems – young people drifting away, businesses closing, and a drab dirty atmosphere. Some thought the area should be phased out: regeneration was 'not worth the candle'. The population was falling.

Luckily there were others who fought to build on the life of the town. The Civic Trust, councillors and others were not content to sit and watch the buildings be demolished. The A-Wake arts festival of May 1970 was a forerunner of today's festivals – parade followed by a weekend of events in the park.

It was into this arena that the hippies began to arrive at the end of the 1960s. One couple had tried settle at Robin Hood's Bay, but the locals had made them unwelcome. While some in Hebden were unsure of how to react to them, it is to the credit of the town that they felt able to stay.



8.—In six years between June, 1962, and June, 1968, the estimated working population in the Hebden Royd and Hepton Rural District dropped by 934, including a drop of over 400 in the 12 months between June, 1967, and June, 1968.

Formation of a Civic Trust in Hebden Bridge

WITH the aims of encouraging high standards of architecture in Hebden Royd and Hepton, and to stimulate public interest and care in the beauty, history and character of the area, a Civic Trust was born in Hebden Bridge on Wednesday night.

1965: To improve the area in which they live

Population figures in Upper Calder Valley include:					
	1951	1956	1961	1962	1966
Halifax	97,490	96,440	95,980	96,250	94,950
Brighouse M.B.	30,500	30,490	30,980	31,260	32,340
Elland U.D.	19,070	18,890	18,360	18,320	18,520
Hebden Royd U.D.	10,180	9,870	9,440	9,340	8,990
Ripponden U.D.	5,309	5,140	5,920	4,940	4,940
Sowerby Bridge U.D.	18,750	18,260	16,280	17,350	16,690
Tbdmorden M.B.	18,920	18,300	17,420	17,300	16,340
Hepton R.D.	4,076	4,030	3,680	3,710	3,600

Population statistics taken from Hebden Bridge Times 20th March 1970

Cries of "rubbish" as lecturer says Calder Valley should be phased out



'The behaviour of the long-haired section of the community deteriorates year by year ... we are trying to attract visitors to our town, but we do not need this sort of thing.'

Another councillor reminded councillors 'that hair grew outward and did not reflect what was under the scalp'.