



Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society

Newsletter

Number 161

January 2014



All gas – but no gaiters! SIAS members assembled by Emsworth's working gasholder.

See the report on the Society visit to Emsworth inside. (*Alan Green*)

These relics, of the once major industry, which have been retained in use since the nationwide introduction of North Sea Gas (natural gas) in the 1970s, to replace the need for the local plant previously used to produce Town Gas from coal with by-products, coke, coal tar and various other chemicals that were used as feed stuff for many products.

Apparently recent experience has been used to justify the decision that they are no longer required to store gas reserves for the peak winter demand. See page 17

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Editorial

Welcome to *Newsletter* 161. Where did the last year go? - sign of advancing years I guess! Recently while researching to support Alex Vincent's newest book, *Tide Mills in Sussex*, I realised that I had most of the references on my shelves (resulting in a large pile beside my desk), there is nothing worse than looking at a footnote or bibliography for more information than to find it is in an obscure document. In some ways it is becoming more difficult to find such references as our libraries dispose of 'less used' items. Of course if I am able, I do snap these up, but it is just not possible to always be in the right place at the right time, nor is my wallet or space unlimited. So, may I encourage members to use their local libraries, take out books where possible and if in the reference section, return them to the counter so that their use may be logged. It is their proof that services are being used and supports the argument against yet more cut backs / disposals.

A fairly recent development is the ability to join other libraries, other than the one for your own council area. I am a member of West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton, this is worthwhile as differing operating policies make some items available to borrow for home study, or just simply available, numerous visits to Lewes (over the border into deepest darkest East Sussex) where the staff (and policies) are most helpful. The online catalogues make finding the right volume much easier.

On the other hand the internet often makes it possible to find a reference. Older volumes are often to be found in electronic PDF format at www.archive.org, as well as providing snapshots of websites that have disappeared or updated and removed the relevant pages. I have to resist the temptation to actually buy the book online - too easy to click on!

There are some bodies that make their earlier journals or articles available, but at a not insubstantial cost, of course our own *Sussex Industrial History* and *Newsletters* are available for free on our website as well as indexes to content and other research material. I often use the guide there to Sussex Directories by John Farrant - www.sussexias.co.uk/directories.htm Don't forget the library of the Sussex Archaeological Society (SAS) at Barbican House, Lewes, which is freely open to non-members when there are volunteers there (appointment suggested) and at other times only to SAS members. They hold material that is not available in the local public libraries, see www.sussexpast.co.uk/research/library including, for example, the Eric Holden papers that support his articles on salterns, a unique resource.

If members have problems getting to see copies of certain material, where I have copies, I would be prepared to copy/scan articles. I have complete runs of *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, *Sussex Notes and Queries*, *Sussex County Magazine*, *Sussex History* and early volumes of *Sussex Life* with an index for 1965 to 1979. I also have full or incomplete runs of various other Sussex journals and magazines; please ask me.

The Committee of the Society has agreed to host the September 2015 annual conference of the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA), to be based at the University of Sussex. Each year the AIA visits a different area with both talks and several full days of visits to sites of IA interest in the host county.

As part of the package for delegates a gazetteer guide to IA for the county is produced, this is similar in format to the *Field Guide* that was produced by SIAS in 1985 and long in need of updating for the changes over that time. Much of the updated and new material has been assembled in recent years, but some topics remain incomplete (if it is ever possible to 'complete' such a task). A group (John Blackwell, Peter Holtham and myself) are working on this task, but as ever we can't know it all - we do try! - nor visit every corner of the county for updates. So do let one of us know of any changes (errors!) and omissions to the 1985 guide. A by-product of this effort is planned to be a searchable online database to sites, both those included in the gazetteer and ones it is not possible to include, as well as further information that there is not room for in the pocketable A5 format, and will include the invaluable work on rural areas covered by Don Cox over 20 years ago.

Surrey were hosts in 1990 and went on to produce very detailed guides to each of that county's eleven administrative areas, many now being out of print. By using an online format it will be possible to include much more and make updates more readily.

Annual Subscriptions are now due

Please ensure that you are paying the correct amount
and that you have amended any standing order

If in doubt please contact the Treasurer

Forthcoming SIAS Events

Malcolm Dawes

All meetings are held at West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove

Saturday 25th January at 7.30pm. *Thomas Brassey – Railway Builder*

Presentation by David Jones on Thomas Brassey who was responsible for building one third of the railways in the UK and about one twelfth of the world's mileage, working on behalf of many famous engineers of the 19th century, from Joseph Locke to Isambard Brunel.

His legacy can still be seen in many parts of the country and overseas in the form of bridges, stations, viaducts and tunnels, which will be covered in the talk. He was born near Chester in 1805 and died in St. Leonards-on-Sea in 1870.

Please note this talk has been advertised as 22nd February in other places.

(Note: At 2.00pm approx, at the same venue there is a Brighton Circle talk, *The Atlantic rebuild* also by David Jones, who will be providing an update on the project to reconstruct the Brighton Atlantic Class H2 steam locomotive at the Bluebell Railway. (SIAS members are welcome to attend)

Saturday 22nd February 7.30pm. *An evening of archive films and images of Sussex Industrial Archaeology*

Archive and recent films and images on Local IA topics, including a gem from 1989 – Blabers Foundry the last foundry in Brighton – situated in the town centre in Portland Street and still operating into the early 1990s;

canal bridge restoration on the section between the Arun and Chichester;

brewing in a series of old clips, by special arrangement;

IA photos from the Nutley area from around the turn of the 19th Century – kindly provided by the Nutley Historical Society.

Please contact Martin Snow (editor) to discuss details if you have any potential material for inclusion in the programme for the evening.

Saturday 22nd March 7.30pm. *If it's not a brick – what is it?*

The story of buildings and building materials that are not what they seem. SIAS Secretary Ron Martin will be using his collection of photos to illustrate how it is not always obvious what materials have been used in buildings or even how a building has been put together.

Saturday 12th April. *The 2014 South East Regional Industrial Archaeology Conference (SERIAC)*

Organised by Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society (GLIAS)

At Royal Russell School, Coombe Lane, Croydon CR9 5BX

Programme and booking form are included with this newsletter.

Events from Other Societies

Malcolm Dawes

Detailed below are events organised by other societies, which may be of interest to our members. If you have details for future events please send these to:

Malcolm Dawes, 52 Rugby Road, Brighton, BN1 6EB

or e-mail to malcolm.dawes@btinternet.com

Wednesday 12th February, 7.30pm. *Lavant House*

Its occupants and some Chichester connections

Chichester Local History Society talk by Terry Carlyle.

Visitors £3. New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 784915

Thursday 20th February, 8.00pm. *GPO Archive Footage 1933-1940*

These films depict the era leading up to WWII and are of great social and historical interest. Wivelsfield Historical Society presentation by Rod Willerton

Wivelsfield Village Hall. 01444 451568

Tuesday 25th February, 7.30pm. *Going off the rails*

How steam trains helped shape West Sussex in the 19th Century

Worthing Society talk by Bill Gage, West Sussex Record Office County Archivist

Visitors welcome – fee £3. Worthing Library Lecture Theatre, Richmond Road,

Worthing www.worthingsociety.org.uk

Wednesday 12th March, 7.30pm. *Graylingwell War Hospital 1915-19*

Chichester Local History Society talk by Katherine Slay of WSRO. Visitors £3

New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 784915

Wednesday 19th March, 7.45pm. *Filming at the Bluebell Railway*

David Jones recalls the occasions when the railway has featured in many film and television productions

Sussex Transport Interest Group. £2.50. London Road Station, Brighton. 01273 512839

Wednesday 26th March, 7.30pm. *The Tramways and Railways of the Isle of Man*

Volks Electric Railway Association talk by John Zebedee

£2 visitors. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove. Booking advised.

www.volkselectricrailway.co.uk

Saturday 19th April – Monday 21st April. *Traction Engine Rally at Bodiam Station*

Kent and East Sussex Railway Event. www.kesr.org.uk

Advance notice of IA conference

5th - 10th September 2014

Advance notice of the Association for Industrial Archaeology Conference

which is to be held this year in Chester

www.industrial-archaeology.org

Do please always check details before travelling

The details of these meetings and events organised by other groups

are only included as a guide and as a service to members:

inclusion here is not intended to be seen as an endorsement

Crossing Borders – Visit to Emsworth, 5 October 2013

Alan Green

The fascinating town of Emsworth, which bestrides the Sussex/Hampshire border, was the destination for the SIAS autumn visit. Our expert guide was Prof. Philip Robinson, quondam Vice Chancellor of the University of Chichester, historian, both national and local, and maritime expert who resides in that town. The town, although small – its population was only 1433 souls in 1801 - had flourishing industry in the 18th and 19th centuries of which there are many remains to be explored.

The tour started at the railway station which opened in March 1847 under the Portsmouth extension of the Shoreham & Chichester Railway, quickly becoming part of the LB&SCR. Its Bill was petitioned by the parish vestry meeting to ensure that their station would have an appearance not imposing less than that of the station at Fareham and that all passenger trains other than expresses were to stop there. This former requirement does not seem to have been achieved as the stone LSWR station at Fareham is actually quite commodious, whilst Emsworth's stuccoed station buildings are rather humble. However they, and the stationmaster's house, are thankfully still standing, albeit recently defiled by plastic windows.

We then moved on to the site of the gasworks which, although having ceased production in 1927, still hosts a 1.5m cubic-feet working gasholder. This structure, one of the last on the south coast, sits on a concrete base supported by 396 piles, but sadly its days are numbered and in two years time will be gone. Through a small glade beyond the gasworks we encountered the mighty waters of the River Ems which also marks the county boundary. Philip explained that in 1680, when King Charles II listed the harbours which would yield him taxes, he unwisely cited Chichester. Whose own port was actually at Dell Quay, further up Chichester Harbour than Emsworth. As a result of Dell Quay being more difficult to get to, Emsworth had often been used in preference, and as those new taxes were not payable at Emsworth, even more of Chichester's cargo was diverted there assuring the town's future as a thriving port.

The tidal waters of the harbour powered several tide mills to which grain from the surrounding area was brought and from which the resultant flour was exported. The Slipper Millpond of 1780, into which the waters of the River Ems now flow, still fills and empties each tide and its warehouse is still standing, having been converted into waterside apartments. On the main road at the head of Slipper Millpond is the flour mill which was rebuilt in 1897 following one of those devastating fires which so bedevilled buildings housing large quantities of flour.

Leaving milling behind we moved onto another Emsworth industry, namely shipbuilding and went to the impressive house of the most famous shipbuilder



Maritime Emsworth. The path in the centre of the picture is atop the west wall of Slipper Millpond which is seen on the right. The waters to the left are tidal and now provide exclusive private moorings. The buildings in the background mark the old route of the A27 which has been bypassed – twice. Not many towns can boast a bypass to its bypass!



The warehouse of Slipper Mill, now converted into desirable waterside apartments.

The rear elevation and courtyard of the King Street home of J. D. Foster, Emsworth's most famous shipbuilder

from the late 19th century, J. D. Foster. Amongst the myriad craft he built were some smacks specially designed to convey oysters in tanks. Oyster farming was once an important industry in Emsworth with young oysters being imported from Spain and Portugal for fattening in the clean waters of the harbour. We visited the site of the oyster beds at the end of King Street. This industry famously came to



an abrupt end in 1902 when oysters sent to a banquet in Winchester brought about the unfortunate demise, through typhoid, of the Dean of that city's cathedral. The cause was traced to the untreated sewage being pumped into the harbour adjacent to the oyster beds. The waters were no longer clean and, despite a sewage treatment works being constructed in 1914 to remove the cause of the problem, the industry never returned.



Also in King Street is this timber-framed house known as *The Hut*. It was built in 1795 as the home of John King who owned a steam mill, and after whom the street was named. The house was allegedly erected in one day. Note that it is crowned with Fareham chimney pots!

The next port of call was the site, in The Square, of Emsworth's major brewer, William Hipkin. Although no trace of it remains it is heartening to learn that there is now a new micro-brewery in the town. The walk ended on the shoreline at Quay Mill, another tide mill with a considerable millpond, constructed around 1760. After this some members repaired to Emsworth Museum, a splendid (free) institution above the fire station which demonstrates what museums should be like!

Philip's tour had taken us along hidden twittens (as the Sussex residents would term them) uncharted by casual visitors, and his expert knowledge of his hometown was phenomenal. During the walk many Fareham chimney pots were spotted to the delight of one member of the party (!) and to add to the joys of the day we had lunch in the garden of the Lord Raglan pub, sitting there in our shirt sleeves overlooking the sea, oblivious to the fact that it was early October! One member had travelled all the way from Orpington for the visit and he, like the rest of us, was richly rewarded.

(All photos by the author.)

Shoreham Lighthouse for a Penny?

Peter Holtham

The lighthouse was completed in 1846. Strictly speaking it is actually a “High Light”, one of two navigation leading marks. Ships approaching the harbour entrance in order to be in the centre of the channel must position so as to line this light up with a “Low Light” on the middle pier. In its early days the best sperm oil was used to light the beam, but in 1875 it was converted gas. Today it is powered by electricity installed in 1952. The light was restored in 1986 and again in 2009 and two of the earlier lights are preserved in the Marlipins Museum and Southwick Manor Cottage.

Legend has it that the lighthouse was the model for the light house used on the British pennies 1937 to 1967 by H. Payne. However, this image bears no resemblance to our lighthouse. The Royal Mint Museum confirms that: -“It is one of the popular myths of the design of British coinage that the lighthouse which appears on British pennies relates to a specific location, although there is no evidence to suggest that the lighthouse was modelled on any one place in particular. It is instead a generic lighthouse used as a way of representing Britain’s link to the sea and its maritime past.”



Sources:-

Barbara Glaisyer's article in *SIAS Newsletter* No. 53

Shoreham Harbour Insights Shoreham Port 1760-2010 published by Shoreham Port Authority, Southwick, 2010

Information supplied by Chris Barker, Assistant Curator of The Royal Mint, Llantrisant, Pontyclun

Dr. Jonathan Minns 1938-2013

Joe Whicher

There will be few engineering conservationists or industrial archaeologists who have never heard the name Jonathan Minns mentioned and this not only applies locally where his persona will long be remembered for his campaign to set up The British Engineerium at Hove but also for his activities both in Britain and abroad.

Born in London on October 12th 1938 Jonathan Ellis Minns was the second of three brothers whose father,

Anthony Minns, had studied engineering at Cambridge and had a shed in the garden where he taught his sons about wheels, cogs, and rigging. Jonathan's mother Margaret was the daughter of Sir Sydney Cockerell who worked as William Morris's secretary before becoming curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge and her brother, Christopher, was the inventor of the hovercraft.

Jonathan's school years were passed without any particularly great academic achievement and when he announced he wanted to train as an engineer the family reaction was that "Engineering was for oily rags", not for expensively educated public school pupils. He managed to get his own way and became an apprentice at the Bedford engineering firm of W.H. Allen who manufactured steam engines, pumps, gears and various types of turbines. After his apprenticeship he went to Paris, where he briefly took up acting. He next became a Marine archaeologist on the coast of the Mediterranean. Keen to get experience in the commercial world, he followed this by going to work for the Gulf Oil Company in America. When he returned to London in the early 1960s he started to restore antiques and then in 1965, with his friend Ivan Scott, set up *Steam World* a shop in Cadogan Gardens, Brompton. This was followed by *Jonathan Minns Steam* in Hollywood Road, Fulham where he used a miniature traction engine called *Little Gem* as an advertising feature which he drove around the vicinity. Whilst he had his Fulham, business he did much work for Christie's where he founded the auctioneer's mechanical antiquities and steam model department.

It was his involvement with Christie's that led to him gather up many treasured mechanical items to form a working museum when the magnificent Victorian Goldstone pumping station at Hove became available from 1971 onwards he worked with great energy and commitment to save the building and get it Listed Grade II*.

He was a man who spread happiness around him and was a true ambassador for





all aspects of engineering with a strong belief in apprenticeships and teaching the history that backs up our modern mechanical masterpieces.

When his Engineerium closed down in 2006, it was put up for auction — only to be saved at the last minute with a £3 million offer

from a local businessman. Currently closed for restoration, it is due to reopen in 2016. He marked the closure with some bitterness. “In every other profession, in art, in law, in medicine, in architecture, students are taught the history of the discipline. They understand that the past informs the present,” he said, “but not in engineering, where the past is seen as irrelevant stuff... And yet the world has never had more need of engineers.”

An intuitive engineer, unique among enthusiasts of the old school and an inspiration to all who knew him, Jonathan will be a great loss to engineering heritage and he will be sorely missed.

His funeral took place on October 31st at St George’s Church, Kemp Town, Brighton.

AIA + Sussex = 2015

The Committee of the Society have agreed that SIAS should host the annual conference of the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA) in September 2015. The AIA holds its conference in a different location each year, moving around the country. Some 100 members attend talks and make visits, assisted by a gazetteer of the county’s IA. We have agreed to organise a suitable venue with accommodation, food and a lecture theatre, this will be the University of Sussex at Falmer, where a number of talks will be provided. Several busy days of visits to IA sites are being arranged, including a meal at the Engineerium.

It may seem a long way off but this all needs arranging, speakers booked, tours timed and lunch venues identified and of course the county IA gazetteer must be compiled, checked and printed by the AIA printers.

There have already been a number of meetings and much buzzing around and contacts made for visits.

The gazetteer is planned to link with the long projected Field Guide update and will be combined with additional online information which there is not space to be printed, this also allows updates when sites are changed (lost!).

A Dip into the Newspaper Archives A Turnpike Gate Turns up!

Martin Snow

A recent opportunity to look into The British Newspaper Archive at www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk courtesy of our Chairman John Blackwell allowed me to answer an outstanding query regarding the Ditchling to Offham Turnpike and the existence and siting of one of its gates. There has as yet been no map or plan evidence found that gives the location of the supposed gate at Westmeston.

Using a variety of search terms I was able to locate a notice in *The Sussex Advertiser* of Monday, 12 March 1838 of a meeting 'in order to consult about erecting a Toll Gate on the side of the said Turnpike Road, near to the Westmeston Turnpike-gate, across a certain Lane or Highway there, called Wick Lane, in the parish of Westmeston, and leading towards Ditchelling Lime Kilns, and the Turnpike Road from Ditchelling to Brighton.'

Wick Lane is now named 'Underhill Lane' and a property along there is Wick Place.

This would place the main turnpike gate in the area where the road from Ditchling turns left as it meets the scarp foot lane, close to the church.

Further evidence comes from the same newspaper dated Monday, 18 July 1836 in a notice for a sale by auction of -

'Lot 1. - Comprises the Dwelling House, Garden, &c in the occupation of Mr. Henry Edwards, and others, situate at Westmeston, near the Turnpike Gate.'

From the 1842 tithe map and apportionment I was able to confirm that the property would have been adjacent to the junction of the roads as above and then still occupied by Henry Edwards.

It is most satisfying to be able to resolve long standing questions by use of the modern search facilities provided over the internet. It would have taken many hours spread over numerous visits, to work through the original newspapers at, formerly Colindale, north London - now closed and in future at the British Library at St Pancras, but the original newspapers are now held at Boston Spa, Lincolnshire, requiring pre-ordering a maximum of three at a time and awaiting delivery - not a system designed to help the researcher!

Most Turnpike Trusts advertised including the names of each gate when farming out the tolls, however as the Offham to Ditchelling trustees only had a small number of gates (four and one side gate) one assumes that they let them as a single group, and did not need to identify them.

(Spellings and punctuation are as occur in the notices)

A Turnpike Tunnel Proposal

Martin Snow

Further newspaper archive searches including the terms 'turnpike' and 'Ditchling' resulted in a 'find' - for me at least. The '*Prospectus of a proposed New Road, by Tunnel through Ditchling Bosthill to London.*' from *The Sussex Advertiser Or, Lewes and Brighthelmstone Journal* of Monday, August 25 1828.

In the usual optimistic language of such proposals:-

'In the present superabundance of wealth, the eligible Investment of Money forms one of the most desirable objects to the Capitalist. An opportunity now occurs, which, from its safety and eligible character, offers the most favourable occasion that has for some time presented itself.

It has long been wished to reduce the distance from London to Brighton, which by the shortest Road at present formed, is 52 miles; and the route now proposed, which will effect the object, is replete with every advantage to the Public at large, as well as to those who may invest their Capital in the undertaking.

The Plan proposed is to form a New Road, by a Tunnel near Ditchling; and through a Country, which is delightfully picturesque, replete with good Inns, and with every other accommodation for Travellers.

The Road is intended to diverge from the present Brighton Road, near the Hare and Hounds Inn, at the entrance to Brighton, leaving Preston on the left, and to proceed by an entirely New Road to Ditchling, leaving Withdean and Patcham on the left, passing through Standean Bottom, to the Hill called Ditchling Bosthill, which it is intended to excavate two hundred feet, in order to allow sufficient bore for a Tunnel which it is proposed to commence at that point, thence to run to an extent of 1500 feet, terminating on the north side of the Bosthill, within about three-quarters of a mile in a direct line, of Ditchling. Thence the Road will proceed through Wivelsfield to Cleaveswater Gate, (leaving the Old Road that goes over Hayward's Heath to the left) by a New Cut, which comes into the Old Road at Lindfield Common, avoiding the Hills, and saving One Mile in the distance of Three. Thence it will proceed through Lindfield, Apstead, Turner's Hill, Copthorn, and thence by a piece of New Road of about Three Miles, (saving One) leaving New Chapel on the right, coming across the Old Road adjoining Woodruff's Farm, and then taking the New Cut, avoiding Tilbaster Hill; thence to Godstone, Croydon, and London.

The advantage's from this proposed alteration, which cannot fail to strike the most casual observer, and shew the positive certainty of its success, are these:- First, a saving of full five miles in the whole distance; next, a like considerable saving in Tolls, since the Kennington Gate, which comes under the Surrey Trust, clears down to Woodruff's Farm, while the New Gate, entering the Lindfield and Ditchling Trust, clears to Cleaveswater Gate,- and this again clears down to the Proposed Tunnel : so that there will be, in the whole, but four gates to pay ; - while, lastly, the New Road will offer every attraction to the traveller that can result from a country highly picturesque in itself, and offering every advantage and accommodation. The tract of country is, in fact, a highly improving one, and the Tolls, within three years, have increased one third.

Application is about to be made to Parliament for the necessary powers to carry the improvement into effect, for which the comparatively small sum of £20,000 will be required to be raised, in Shares of £50 or £100 each; and of which sum the Projectors are prepared to subscribe £5000.'

I think that we can readily imagine how well such a proposal would be received today, the professional tree-huggers would be out there despoiling the area in no time.

Talk after the AGM

Ron Martin

Our President, Air Marshal Sir Freddie Sowrey gave us an interesting talk after the AGM on his and his family's careers in the RAF. His father Fred Sowrey was in the Royal Flying Corps during WWI, when London was being bombed by German Zeppelins. At first we were defenceless against them as ordinary machine gun bullets were ineffective on 23rd. September Fred Sowrey and another pilot shot down two more but they were only awarded DSOs. This effectively was the end of the Zeppelin raids of London.

Sir Freddie joined the RAF in November 1940 and after a few weeks primary training he was sent to Canada as part of the Empire Flying Training School system where he learnt to fly on De Havilland Tiger Moths and later North American Harvards. In just four months he was back home as a fully qualified Pilot Officer and was sent to the School of Army Co-operation flying Westland Lysanders and later Tomahawks and Mustangs. Subsequently he was posted to 26 Squadron at Gatwick, flying offshore patrols to counter enemy "tip and run" raids. Throughout the summer of 1945 he was instructing pilots on Avro Ansons and Airspeed Oxfords followed by an attachment to heavy glider units flying Horsas and Hotspurs being prepared for the invasion of Europe

After the war Sir Freddie was posted to various Auxiliary Air Force squadrons and during this time he flew Spitfires and also a Walrus amphibian biplane. During the 1950s he was with the Central Gunnery School and flew Meteors and Spitfire mark XVI's and later Vampires. After a spell at the War Office, in October 1951 he was posted to be CO to 615 Auxiliary Squadron flying Balliols and Meteors, which won the squadron won a coveted award. After a year as student at RAF Staff College he was promoted to acting wing commander and spent some time in the Ministry of Defence.

In December 1963 he took over command of the heavy-lift squadrons flying Beverleys and Hastings in support of the army in Africa and later became senior staff officer at HQ Middle East Command. This was a time of much turmoil in this part of the world culminating with our phased withdrawal from Aden, which was largely organised by Sir Freddie in November 1967 and for which he received a CBE. The last few years were spent at the Ministry of Defence doing valuable work in shaping the future role of the RAF.

He finally retired in 1980 after 40 years of continuous service with the RAF.

The talk was illustrated with slides of some of the many aircraft that he flew during his career.

Note:

Some of this material was obtained from Graham Pitchfork's book *The Sowreys* (2012)

Listing - Some Observations and a Discovery

Martin Snow

In recent issues of the *Newsletter* there has been news of various buildings and structures being *Listed* by English Heritage (EH). I suspect that, like me, many people have a high regard for the 'protection' (?) that this confers. However this is illusory and more a sort of 'to be noted' for councils and planners, who it seems can choose to ignore the *Listed* status and permit all kinds of changes including demolition, without any come back, other than (maybe) a slapped wrist in the media.

A recent dip into the EH online *Listing* website showed various errors. I took the trouble to report some of these for the Worthing area and the 'list' is now being updated with 'lost' properties being de-listed. In some cases the listing details were over 25 years out of date. Various buildings have been lost to be replaced by modern eyesores, uses changed and limited descriptions needed correction.

Over the years I have read various comments (complaints!) concerning the 'inaccuracy' of the list of *Listings*, but it appears that no one had actually bothered to actually contact EH. Having done so, they were only too pleased to initiate the corrections, which often need input from other agencies before effecting.

It is important that the *Listings* reflect the true location, condition and supporting data as this should be (and often is!) referred to when planning applications are made to those properties and ones in the surrounding area.

A Discovery

While reviewing one of the *Listing* texts for Worthing, it is suggested that a property, in West Buildings, had been used as a brewery, I followed this up and found that there was indeed a brewery a few doors away and a brew house indicated at the rear of the *Listed* property on the 1852 sanitary survey.

In pursuing this I found a reference to a 'Brewery Place' in Worthing that has been referred to in all the historical works as the location having been 'lost'. As *Newsletter* readers will know I often see 'lost' and 'mystery' as a personal challenge, so I took it on and once again found that the information was there all the time, just waiting to be teased out of the archives. In this case from copies of a pair of rate books for 1818 to 1824, located in Worthing Reference Library. From these it was possible to deduce the changing road names and the development into the present names and compare with the 'lost' ones and identify them.

I did not find any 'new' breweries, but have been reminded that there is still much to be learned from careful analysis and linking of the many and varied archives.

It is most satisfying when one is able to do this, and I would encourage others to do similar research. Often much can be done at home in the warm from digitised records or from online websites, reserving the summer for outdoor research.

Former Tide Mill Site Identified?

Martin Snow

Earlier this year I was assisting Alex Vincent with his latest book, *Tide Mills of Sussex*, seeking to confirm the sites he had identified and hopefully help to avoid missing any.

One of the references that turned up was from *The Chartulary of the Priory of St. Pancras of Lewes*, translated and published by the Sussex Record Society as their volume 38, 1938. This concerns a causeway and mill in Bletchington (East Blatchington, now a part of Seaford). This would have been beside the easterly deflected River Ouse that had its outfall at or near Seaford in the 14th Century.

I was unable to follow this up before publication, but have since identified the site as the low lying valley adjacent to the sea, now behind the modern sea wall and coast road that run south of the 'causeway', much modified over the ensuing 700 years. The area is now referred to as 'The Old Brickfield' albeit on the flimsiest evidence as to it ever having actually had such a use. It is designated a site of Nature Conservation Interest, that is often flooded by the sea, being at or close to sea level.

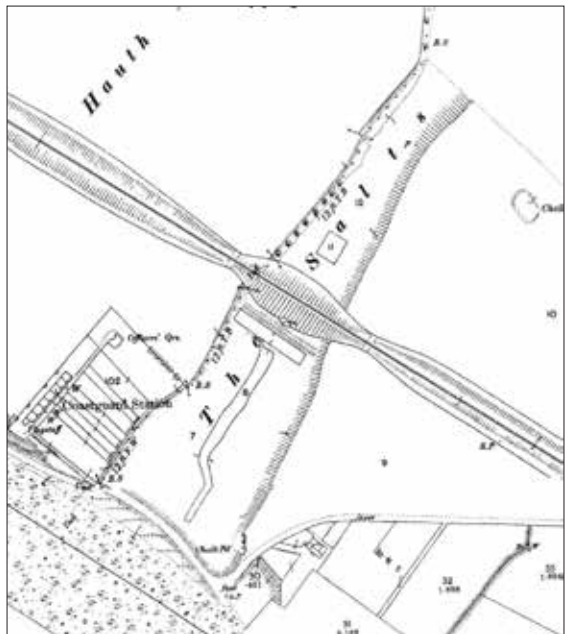
It is more accurately marked 'The Salts' on the 1874 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map (below) was before the coast road was built and access to the coast guard station and coast to the west was over the site of the causeway, now inland of the modern road.

The area, before the building of the railway embankment cut off some half of the available water storage capacity, could have provided good storage potential for the small medieval tide mill, so efficiency might not have been a great issue.

It is possible that there were many more tide mills utilising natural or easily built ponds in the medieval period, but have been lost to erosion, later building or change of land use.

Other sites may be revealed by further research. Any offers?

The south west corner of the area is to be found at TV 471 995.



I uncovered this 2012 news item after preparing the cover of this *Newsletter*

The end is in sight for gas holders

Janet Wood

The endgame is beginning for Britain's gas holders, after the country passed its first winter without bringing any into service.

John Pettigrew, chief operating officer for National Grid's gas distribution networks, told Utility Week that of the several hundred holders still in existence, many were no longer in use. However, until last winter several had been required each year to help manage the system. Now, he said, "the capacity on the network is big enough to manage without them" and that it was more efficient and more reliable to take that approach. He said the gas holders – some up to a century old – were like vintage cars that had to be "nursed" into operation and they needed extensive maintenance.

The last of the distinctive structures will not disappear for nearly two decades, however – and a handful that are listed may stay in perpetuity. The company will be consulting with stakeholders on managing the cost of dismantling the structures and clearing the land. Many are sited on land contaminated by the associated town gas works, used before the system was converted to natural gas. They would require extensive and costly remediation before being reused.

Pettigrew said that on current planning it would take 16 years to dismantle all the holders. The company still has to get confirmation from regulator Ofgem of its removal plans.

Utility Week, 23rd March 2012



Lyndhurst Road, Worthing - How much longer a skyline feature?

The History of Ford Airfield by David Ruffle Ade Roberts

On Saturday 19th October a number of members gathered to hear about the history of this now lost airfield that was created for use in WWI (in 1918) but never fired a shot in anger as the war ended before it became operational. It was equipped with seven Belfast hangars and supporting buildings, and armed with American Navy Air Force bombers.

The official name of the airfield was Ford Junction (after the nearby railway station) but was generally called Yapton Airfield.

Bounded on the north side by the derelict Portsmouth & Arundel Canal and on the south and east by a straight line drawn across the fields. The west side was bounded by the village of Yapton. Following the war the airfield was re-occupied by the RAF in 1919 but apparently soon reverted to farmland. The various buildings were used in a variety of agricultural ways.

In 1930, the aero industry re-emerged when D.W. Aviation took over a pair of hangars and ran a joyriding business using Avro 504Ks till the mid-1930s. In July 1931 the Ford Motor Co. took over two hangars and associated buildings with a view to assembling the Ford Trimotor (an airliner) in the appropriately named Ford Aerodrome. An unfortunate air accident caused the company to cease operations the following year.

The aerodrome was then taken over by Rollason Aviation Ltd., operating the South Downs Aero Club which later became the Yapton Aero Club, and flew there until 1938 when it moved to Portsmouth.

The control of the airfield was taken over (in 1934) by Sir Alan Cobham's company, National Aviation Displays Ltd. and became the base for his "flying circus". By 1936 Sir Alan had formed Flight Refuelling Ltd. to develop the means of extending the range of transport and bomber aircraft, and was also used by Imperial Airways transatlantic flights where the planes were refuelled over Ireland and Newfoundland by Handley-Page Harrow tankers, fitted out by Flight Refuelling Ltd. of Ford.

These businesses all used the original buildings near Yapton till 1937 when the Air Ministry took over to create a new airfield in the Expansion Scheme.

A new collection of hangars (Bellman) and associated buildings with accommodation included, all to standard Air Ministry specification.

All this was built at the east end of the field and in 1939 it was commissioned as HMS Peregrine in the hands of the Royal Navy (Fleet Air Arm). Flight Refuelling continued to operate on the Yapton side of the airfield until 18th August 1940 when the airfield was heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe who thought it was an RAF fighter base. Flight Refuelling were moved to Cheltenham.

The RAF moved back into Ford in September 1940 with Blenheim night fighters

and then De Havilland Mosquitoes.

Tarmac runways were laid out in 1941 and Ford became the home of Fighter Interceptor Unit with Radar equipped fighters. This transferred to Tangmere in February 1945 and soon after, in August, the Fleet Air Arm returned, and HMS Peregrine was reborn when it served as a ground base for squadrons temporarily disembarking from carriers and as a training station.

Flight Refuelling also returned after the war (until 1948) and converted several Lancaster bombers into tankers.

In 1948 most naval squadrons moved out to allow the airfield to be re-constructed and concrete runways to be laid and extended to accommodate jet planes. Three new steel hangers were built along with a new PO's mess.

HMS Peregrine closed in early 1959, the east end of the airfield was handed over to the Prison Commission, the control tower and the Bellman hangars were demolished but most other buildings were retained.

On the western side, the runway was cut through to allow the restoration of the main (A2024) Littlehampton to Yapton Road.

The barracks, HQ and officers mess were demolished but some buildings were retained and used for industry including two 1951 hangars by Kendellstone Ltd. to manufacture concrete blocks (later to become Tarmac Topblock) The other 1951 hangar was used by Miles Aviation from 1964 to 1971, who also leased the remaining runways.

The last use of the two hangars used by Ford Trimotors was in 1984/5 when they were used to store grain in transit to Ethiopia for famine relief. The hangars were subsequently demolished and the land used for housing.

This interesting talk was supported by many illustrations of the airfield and of the aircraft that flew from there.

Anti Zeppelin armaments

Ron Martin

The talk by Sir Freddie Sowrey after the AGM reminded me of the efforts used during WWI to counter bombing raids on England. There was considerable difficult shooting down Zeppelins during WWI. Ordinary bullets went straight through the gas bags leaving small holes, which did not affect the buoyancy of the craft. Pomery incendiary bullets were used with very little effect by themselves because, although hydrogen is highly inflammable it needs the presence of oxygen to start burning. It was also considered to be in contravention of the Geneva Convention so its use was not made public to start with. The Brock bullet was an explosive one and the combination of the two types became effective, with the Brock damaging the gas bag and the Pomeroy igniting the escaping gas.

Sewer Vent-pipe at Chichester Signal box

Alan Green

In Newsletter 158 the Mystery Photo was of an ornate cast-iron sewer vent pipe in Tower Street, Chichester. Although I was the first to identify it correctly, I was disqualified from the prize by the editor on the grounds of “too much smugness”. Can you believe it?

However, laying aside this unjust treatment, I bring to readers’ attention an even more elaborate specimen of a Chichester sewer vent pipe which is to be found next to the signal box. This stink pipe (as they are generally known in the trade) is topped by a huge finial, at the base of which is a weather vane; could this have been to shew the signalman which way the pong was going?

The railway land behind the box has been sold off and this magnificent specimen has ended up on the wrong side of the new railway boundary in the car park of premises in the Terminus Road Industrial Estate. The signal box has recently been listed and I have asked, via Chichester District Council’s Historic Buildings Advisor, for the vent pipe to be included in the citation in order to give it some measure of protection.



The sewer vent pipe next to Chichester signal box. Behind the cars is the fence which marks the new railway boundary. Sadly the pipe has ended up on the wrong side thereof. (And apparently attached to the roof a car)



A close up of the finial with its weather vane.

Sir Henry Royce in Sussex



A mention in the last *Newsletter* of Henry Royce (of Rolls Royce) living and working in West Wittering prompted member Joe Whicher to send this image from his collection of (mostly blue) plaques. As will be seen in the image, it is located on the wall of the property at the junction of the B2179 and Pound Road, passed by all those on the way to the popular sandy beach at West Wittering.

Far too easy to pass by unnoticed with swimming in mind.



Mystery Photo

Do you know your IA?



(Martin Snow)

A little away from my usual
hunting grounds,
and at a seasonal time!

Please look beyond the
greetings cards and
the 'modern' modifications.

The usual questions :-
what is it? what was it for?
where would it have been found?
when and who made it?

(I had to choose an image that left
the numerous makers labels out)

And for the award of maximum
brownie points - where did I find it?

It is in Sussex!

Update

Response, by email, post and in person at the AGM, to the cast iron GPO cable marker, featured in *Newsletter* 160, located in Chesswood Road, Worthing, near to the junction with Ladydell Road, was most pleasing, proving that more people than just myself actually read the *Newsletter*!

Unfortunately, like my first thoughts, most people suggested that it was a form of Ordnance Survey Bench Mark. This cable route marker is located against the wall on the south side of Chesswood Road and indicates that a chamber exists in the roadway beside the kerb line. The film was *Wish You Were Here* that used numerous locations centred on Worthing.

Thanks to the two people who correctly identified the marker, though one benefited from a recent article in his local society Newsletter, the other knowing far too much about such matters than is healthy (can I have more articles please).

Please continue to look out for examples of IA items and, if possible, let me have a picture, either for this feature or to provide inspiration for a future article(s).

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The Salts, an area of East Blatchington, Seaford that has been identified as the site of a medieval tide mill and its pond. The old causeway on the right is behind the higher modern road and sea defences that have reduced flooding by the sea. The embankment of the railway to Seaford is at the left.

(Martin Snow)



View of the foundations for a new bridge across the Bexhill - Hastings Link Road currently being constructed, partly using the former trackbed of the Crowhurst - Bexhill Railway.

Note the mixed material formation of the original embankment to the demolished bridge, the abutment on this side is to be retained. *(John Blackwell, December 2013)*

