

Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter

Number 199

July 2023



The new-build LBSCR Atlantic 32424 *Beachy Head* nearing completion in Atlantic House on the Bluebell Railway. SIAS members were given a privileged visit to both Atlantic House and the Bluebell's Carriage and Wagon Works on

17th June 2023. (Alan Green)

David Jones explaining the cab end of *Beachy Head* in Atlantic House to the assembled SIAS company.

(Malcolm Dawes)



Newsletter 199

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Editorial

Welcome to *Newsletter 199*.

E-Mail Addresses

Members who are not currently receiving e-mails, giving details of our upcoming talks and visits etc. and who wish to receive such, please forward your e-mail details to the Membership Secretary (ron.gordon@myphone.coop)

Visit our website - www.sussexias.co.uk

Forthcoming SIAS Events

All the autumn and winter SIAS meetings are held
at West Blatching Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove, BN3 7LF

Sunday August 20th at 2pm there will be a SIAS guided walk in the London Road area of Brighton led by Geoffrey Mead

We meet at the magnificent Brighton Railway Station (in true tradition) ‘under the clock’ then work our way north along the of the Lower Goods line which is now *The Greenway*. At the New England Road bridge, we descend through the former chalk pit to view the London line bridge, then down to Preston Circus and the fire station of 1938 and the oldest cinema in the UK, *The Duke of Yorks*, the malthouse of a former brewery site. South along London Road looking at the few remaining 1930s department store buildings then up through the North Laine former industrial area to the Station.

Saturday 30th September. Visit to Tinkers Park and Hellingly Station

We had an enjoyable private visit to Tinkers Park several years ago, but times have changed and such visits are now only economical if you have a large party. However I have been advised that at their Open Day on Saturday 30th September everything that can be steamed will be, and rides on vintage vehicles will also be on offer, along with food outlets. As such it is proposed that we make our visit that day.

I am trying to arrange a visit in the morning to Hellingly Station which is the only Cuckoo Line station still intact, even retaining its canopy, and has been restored in its Brighton colours as a private house.

The Hellingly visit has not been confirmed but it is anticipated that the day will begin at Hellingly Station at 11am and after that we will make our way to Tinkers Park at Hadlow Down.

Admission to the event is only £6 and we will pay individually at the gate.

If you would like to attend this event please register with

Alan Green (01243 784915, or agreenzone@aol.com)

and joining instructions will be sent to you once arrangements are finalised.

Saturday 21st October. 2.00pm. Palmer and Green’s Regent Foundry. Brighton

David Green, a descendent of one of the original partners has researched and written a book about the history of the foundry and the fascinating life stories of the many company partners. The foundry in North Road was the town’s largest manufactory and biggest employer during most of the nineteenth century producing much of the domestic and construction iron goods and fittings for the rapidly expanding town and also some major items that graced the townscape. They also had an extensive ironmongery shop in North Street. The business was later sold but continued under new owners until the early years of the twentieth century.

It is hoped to Zoom this meeting, details will be sent out by email in early October.

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

Sunday 30th July. *Worthing seafront bus rally* www.worthingbusrally.co.uk

Sunday 30th July. *Toy and Collectors Fair* Horsted Keynes Station, Bluebell Railway. www.bluebell-railway.com

Tuesday 1st August, 7.00pm. *Department Stores of Eastbourne.* Eastbourne Local History talk by Paul Jordan.. Visitors £2. St Andrews Parish Hall, 425 Seaside, Eastbourne. www.eastbournehistory.org.uk

Saturday 5th August, 10am to 4pm. *Open day at the Brede Steam Engines* Steam and working industrial engines. Situated 6 miles from Hastings on A28 to Ashford. <https://bredesteamgiants.co.uk>

Weekend 5th - 6th August. *Retro Wheels.* Vintage bicycles of all shapes and sizes. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.ambereleymuseum.co.uk

Weekend 5th- 6th August. *Tinkers Park Model Railways* Model Railway Show and Southdown Bus Event on the 7th at Hadlow Down. www.tinkerspark.com

Saturday 12th 1200 – 1600 and Sunday 13th August 1000- 1400. *Cuckfield Royal Observer Corps Nuclear open for visits.* Newbury Lane, Cuckfield. www.facebook.com/Cuckfieldnuclearbunker

Sunday 13th August. *Bus Rally at Tenterden Town Station*

More than a dozen vintage buses running through the day. Kent and East Sussex Railway event. <http://kesr.org.uk>

Sunday 13th August. *Open Afternoon at Chichester Model Engineers*

Trains running during afternoon. Blackberry Lane, Chichester. www.cdsme.co.uk

Monday 14th August 7.30 pm. *Not so much a hobby – more a way of life* Southern Electric Group presentation by Jim Connor. £3 non-members. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. www.southernelectric.org.uk

Wednesday 16th August, 7.45pm. *Steam around the world*

Sussex Transport Interest Group talk by Tony Sulliivan. Visitors £2,50. Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Brighton. 07769 294408.

Thursday 17th August 7.30pm. *The Reverend Nathaniel Woodard and his Sussex Schools.* Wivelsfield Historical Society talk by Janet Pennington. Visitors £4. Wivelsfield Village Hall. www.wivelsfield-historical-society.co.uk

Saturday 19th August. *Steampunk Saturday* Traders and displays at Tenterden and Bodiam Stations.. Kent and East Sussex Railway event. <http://kesr.org.uk>

Saturday 19th August, 12 noon to 4pm. *Open Day at Crawley Signal Box.*

Brighton Road, Crawley. www.facebook.com/CrawleySignalB

Weekend 19th- 20th August. *The story of steam*

Many activities with working steam engines around the site.

Weald and Downland Museum event. www.wealddown.co.uk

Sunday 20st August. *Communications and Commercials*

Post office and commercial vans. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370.

www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

23rd August - 3rd September. *Visit of Flying Scotsman to Bluebell Railway*

Booking essential. www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

Weekend 26th- 28th August. *Hellingly Festival of Transport.* <http://www.ehvc.biz>

Weekend 26th- 28th August. *Bank Holiday Ales and Crafts*

Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Monday 28th August, 10am to 4 pm. *Open day at the Brede Steam Engines*

Steam and working industrial engines. Situated 6 miles from Hastings on A28 to Ashford. <https://bredesteamgiants.co.uk>

Saturday 2nd September, 10am to 4pm. *Open day at the Brede Steam Engines*

Steam and working industrial engines. Situated 6 miles from Hastings on A28 to Ashford. <https://bredesteamgiants.co.uk>

Weekend 9th- 10th September. *Laughton Autumn Show*

Laughton, East Sussex. www.heritagefield.co.uk

Weekend 9th- 10th September. *Miniature Steam Engine Weekend*

Visiting exhibitors with their working miniature steam engines. Steam engines running on railway around the museum. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370.

www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Sunday 10th September. *Open Afternoon at Chichester Model Engineers*

Trains running during afternoon. Blackberry Lane, Chichester. www.cdsme.co.uk

Sunday 10th September. *Steam Excursion to Chichester and Goodwood*

Photographic opportunities in Sussex. www.steamdreams.co.uk

Sunday 10th September. *Steam Excursion along the Sussex Coast between Chichester and Brighton.* Photographic opportunities in Sussex.

www.steamdreams.co.uk

Monday 11th September 7.30 pm. *A nostalgic evening of EMUs*

Southern Electric Group presentation by Allan Harvey. £3 non-members. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. www.southernelectric.org.uk

Wednesday 13th September. *Waverley Paddle Steamer's first ever sailing from Shoreham.* Day trip to the Isle of Wight. Book at waverleyexcursions.co.uk

Saturday 16th September, 12 noon to 4pm. *Open Day at Crawley Signal Box*
Brighton Road, Crawley. www.facebook.com/CrawleySignalBox

Wednesday 20th September 7.45pm. *A retrospective view over the past 40 years of Transport.* Sussex Transport Interest Group event presented by Keith Carter and Paul Snelling. London Road Station, Brighton. 07769 294408.

Weekend 22nd- 24th September. *Bluebell Railway Beer Festival* Priority to be given to Sussex Breweries. Further information later in year including details of booking. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800. www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

Weekend 23rd- 24th September. *Model Railway weekend at Spa Valley Railway*
At various locations. www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk

Sunday 24th September. *Autumn Bus Show and Running day*

View and ride on a variety of historic buses. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370.
www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Monday 25th September, 7.30pm. *Bill and Brian: A dip into The Jackson Photographic Collection.* The Locomotive Club of Great Britain, Brighton Branch talk by Brian Jackson. £2.50 donation. Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Shaftesbury Place, Brighton. www.lcgb.org.uk/branches/brighton/

Tuesday 26th September, 7.3.30pm. *Turbulent Foresters*

Danehill Parish Historical Society talk by Professor Short. Visitors £4.50.
Danehill Memorial Hall. www.danehillhistory.org/programme

Tuesday 26th September, 7.00pm. *The Victorian and Edwardian leisure estate in the Sussex Weald, 1850 -1914.* West Sussex Record Office talk by Dr Sue Berry. Record Office, Orchard Street, Chichester. Phone WSRO 01243 753602 for in person tickets.

Wednesday 27th September, 7. 15pm. *An American Rail Rover.* RCTS Chichester Branch Meeting. Bassil Shippam Centre, Tozer Way, St Pancras, Chichester.
<https://rcts.org.uk/branches/branch-chr-chichester>

Saturday 30th September. *Tinkers Park Open Day at Hadlow Down.*
www.tinkerspark.com

Sunday 1st October. *Autumn Historic Transport Gathering* End of season gathering of vintage cars, motorcycles, commercial vehicles, steam engines, diesel and steam locomotives. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Tuesday 3rd October, 7.30pm. *The Tidemills Project*

Newhaven Historical Society and Museum talk by Luke Barber. Hillcrest Centre, Bay Vue Road, Newhaven. Free parking next to the Hillcrest Centre. Non members £5. www.newhavenhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Saturday 7th October, 10am to 4pm. *Open day at the Brede Steam Engines.*
Steam and working industrial engines. Situated 6 miles from Hastings on A28 to

Ashford. <https://bredesteamgiants.co.uk>

Sunday 8th October. *Land Rover Day.* Celebrate the classic Land Rover. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Sunday 8th October. *Open Afternoon at Chichester Model Engineers*

Trains running during afternoon. Blackberry Lane, Chichester. www.cdsme.co.uk

Monday 9th October 7.30 pm. Brian Jackson takes us through a further selection of his father's photos. Southern Electric Group event.. £3 non-members. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. www.southernelectric.org.uk

Wednesday 11th October 7.30pm. *Walter Hussey and Chichester.* Chichester Local Historical Society talk by Dr Peter Webster, author and art historian. Visitors £5. New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 784915

Weekend 13th- 15th October. *Giants of Steam Autumn Gala.*

Visiting locomotives – further information later in year. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800. www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

Sunday 15th October. *Autumn Industrial Trains* Narrow gauge trains in action, plus demonstration runs with the road machines and contractor's monorail. Resident steam trains running around site. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Tuesday 31st October, 7.00pm. *The Women's Land Army – a Sussex Connection* West Sussex Record Office talk by Ian Everest. Record Office, Orchard Street, Chichester. Phone WSRO 01243 753602 for in person tickets.

Sunday 5th November. *London to Brighton veteran car run*

Heritage Open Days in September

Many buildings are opened to the public during September as part of the Heritage Open Days event.

Many of these buildings have an industrial archaeology interest.

Events outside of London run from 8th to 17th September. Details from www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Events in London will take place from 6th - 17th September.

Details from www.openhouselondon.open-city.org.uk

AIA conference The 50th Anniversary Conference for The Association for Industrial Archaeology is taking place in Bath from 1st- 6th September.

Details of conference and information on booking at <https://industrial-archaeology.org/conferences/service001/>

Do please 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.

Behind the Scenes at the Bluebell Railway

Alan Green

The Society's summer visit was to the Bluebell Railway on 17 June where David Jones had arranged for two behind-the-scenes tours, namely the Atlantic Project and the Carriage and Wagon Works, both normally off limits to the general public. We gathered outside T H Myres' impressive station building at Sheffield Park whence David escorted us to Atlantic House where, for the past 23 years, a band of dedicated volunteers have been building replica LBSCR H2-class Marsh Atlantic, no 32424, *Beachy Head*.

Beachy Head was the last of its class of six to be withdrawn in 1958 and none of them was preserved, but the chance discovery in Malden in 1986 of a boiler from a Great Northern Railway Atlantic, which was being used for heating a woodworking factory, gave rise to the idea of using it to build a Brighton Atlantic. Douglas Earl Marsh had worked for Ivatt at the GNR where he gained his ideas, so the similarities between the GNR boiler and those of his Brighton Atlantics are not to be surprised at. It was duly purchased and brought to Sheffield Park, but work did not start until 2000 – the ultimate Millennium Project!

The original drawings were at the National Railway Museum at York where they were sifted through and painstakingly translated into CAD by Fred Bailey. Atlantic House was purpose-built to house the project - both the nascent loco and workshop facilities. Naturally Atlantic House could not provide all the facilities once to be found at Brighton Works, so much of the component production, such as castings and forgings, had to be contracted out. Where possible Sussex firms were used (contrary to popular belief we *do* still make things in Britain!) but modern production techniques were employed in many cases – the connecting rods, instead of being forged, were cut from steel blanks using high-pressure water jets in Crowborough! The handrail knobs were made in Storrington. The timber patterns for the wheel castings, though, were made at Sheffield Park for use by the foundry.

David recounted an amusing story about the firehole door. It

The tender of Beachy Head nearing completion in Atlantic House

(Author)



had been faithfully made to the GNR drawings but when fitted it would not stay open. A conversation during a visit from the Tornado Group revealed the fact that Doncaster Works had realised that the design was faulty and modified it without referring back to the draughtsman, so the drawings were never corrected! The necessary mods were carried out on Beachy Head and now it works!

The tender stands alongside the locomotive on a parallel road, and its underframe came from an LBSCR B4 class 4-4-0, bought for £700 from the Manston Group in 1995. Its centre axle had been removed but three new wheelsets were obtained from a C2X 0-6-0, thus maintaining the Brighton family connection, but everything above had to be built from scratch.



The replica nameplate (an original would be worth a five-figure sum) attached to the splashers. The loco has been given the lined black BR livery which so suited them. The lining has been painted by hand. (Author)

Beachy Head is nearing completion; the boiler has been tested and mounted in the frames, painting and lining is complete and all (?) that remains now is the installation of miles of plumbing. It is estimated that 32424 will take to the rails in 2024.

It was originally proposed that the new loco be treated as an additional member of the class, numbered 32427 and named *Seven Sisters*, but it was decided that as Beachy Head had found so much fame in its final year it should be 'recreated'. David pointed out that the regulator handle had in fact come from the original Beachy Head, so with that feature the project officially became a 'reconstruction'! David ended the tour of Atlantic House by revealing where 32424's Westinghouse pump was located. Normally on a Brighton engine it was exposed to allow for the oft-needed whack with a hammer to get it going, but on a Marsh Atlantic it is nowhere to be seen. So, where is it? It is hidden away between the frames at the sharp end, just below the smokebox door!

We then broke for lunch at the *Bessemer Arms* before making our way to Horsted Keynes for the afternoon session. We were met by Tony Clements who took us into the vast building which houses the Bluebell's Carriage and Wagon Department.



The Maunsell BTK in the C&W workshops at Horsted Keynes where its mammoth restoration project is nearing completion. In this view the slab sides necessitated by its being built to Hastings Line gauge can be appreciated. (Joe Whicher)

Here, as well as routine maintenance to vehicles, extensive restorations are carried out. First up was a Stroudley four-wheel third whose grounded body had been a dwelling on Shoreham Beach. It has been mounted on a former SR utility van underframe and is having its interior recreated. When finished it will join the vintage carriage set. Nearing completion is the star of the show, a Maunsell brake third of 1931 built to the narrow Hastings line gauge. It had been purchased many years ago, having ended its days in departmental use and largely stripped internally. Years of outside storage had taken its toll, but it is being lovingly brought back to life. Much of the interior is being recreated using components from other derelict Maunsell coaches, and it has been painted in the elaborate lined olive green of

Third class Pullman brake third No 54 in the paint shop. Its interior is being refitted and the brake compartment fitted with wheelchair hoists to allow disabled access to the Pullman train. (Joe Whicher)



the period and looks a treat. The lining was all hand-painted. Other vehicles seen included Pullman Car 54 which was in the paint shop. It had been built as a third-class kitchen car in 1923, but was later converted to a brake. It has a very cramped interior which is not entirely suitable for today's corpulent bodies, so much re-jigging of the seating and tables is being carried out.

The Bluebell has acquired a number of the ubiquitous BR Mk I coaches of recent years, but of particular interest was an early open second which sports interior trim of wood veneers rather than the bland Formica which lined all subsequent builds. It is being restored to its original condition.



A Stroudley four-wheeler of 1880 which will be fitted with bum-numbing wooden bench seats for that essential early-LBSCR third-class experience! Our guide Tony Clements is seen pointing to the vehicle (Malcolm Dawes)

The last restoration project seen was another Stroudley four-wheeler, this time a brake third whose grounded body had also been a home which has now been fitted onto an SR underframe. Tony told us that it will be fitted with authentic wooden seating with no upholstery, and commented that most passengers will probably only want to travel in it one way and come back in something more comfortable! The tour ended in the Trim Shop where the upholstery for the railway's coaches is made and repaired, and one of the new chairs for Car 54 was being trimmed. Getting moquette of the right pattern is essential, and we were shown the coveted Lancing Works pattern book which provides a roll-call of those well-remembered designs from our youth such as *Sprig*, *Boomerang*, *Trojan*... These can all be woven to order in Eastern Europe, but the minimum order is 400 metres which is a lot. As such several heritage railways have to club together to make the order worthwhile. So concluded our highly informative day at the Bluebell Railway and David and Tony were thanked for making us so welcome. The Society will be making donations to both the Atlantic Project and the fund for restoring Maunsell restaurant car 7864, the last surviving SR catering vehicle currently derelict. When the Hastings line BTK is out-shopped this will be the next major Carriage and Wagon project.

March Talk

By Rail to Chichester 1846-2016 with Alan Green

Report by John Blackwell

It was a pleasure to welcome author and life long Chichester resident for the March presentation. By the beginning of the twentieth century Chichester had railways to the four points of the compass. These were illustrated with maps showing the development in chronological order starting with the London Brighton & South Coast (LB&SCR) line which had extended along the coast from Brighton arriving at a temporary wooden station in June 1846. An interesting engineering feature of the line was the wooden bridge which crossed the River Arun upstream from Littlehampton. The bridge had to be capable of opening to allow for the substantial amount of shipping at the time, accessing the port of Arundel. This was achieved by a portion of the track mounted on wheels moving laterally, allowing the main span, also on wheels, to be withdrawn in its place. Being single track it was replaced by a second opening bridge, constructed of iron, and with double track in 1862. By the 1930s shipping had ceased to Arundel and electrification in 1938 allowed the 1862 structure to be replaced with a fixed span. The station before Chichester, Drayton which closed in 1930 was illustrated with a fine photograph in operational days. This station also served the racecourse at Goodwood, (four miles away!) which then only had the one meeting each year in July. The permanent station at Chichester which opened when the extension of the line to Portsmouth was completed in June 1847. An elegant two storey station house and booking hall graced the up platform with offices on the down side and at some point a fine overall iron roof spanning the tracks (accounts vary some state from 1847, others from the 1860s to 1894).

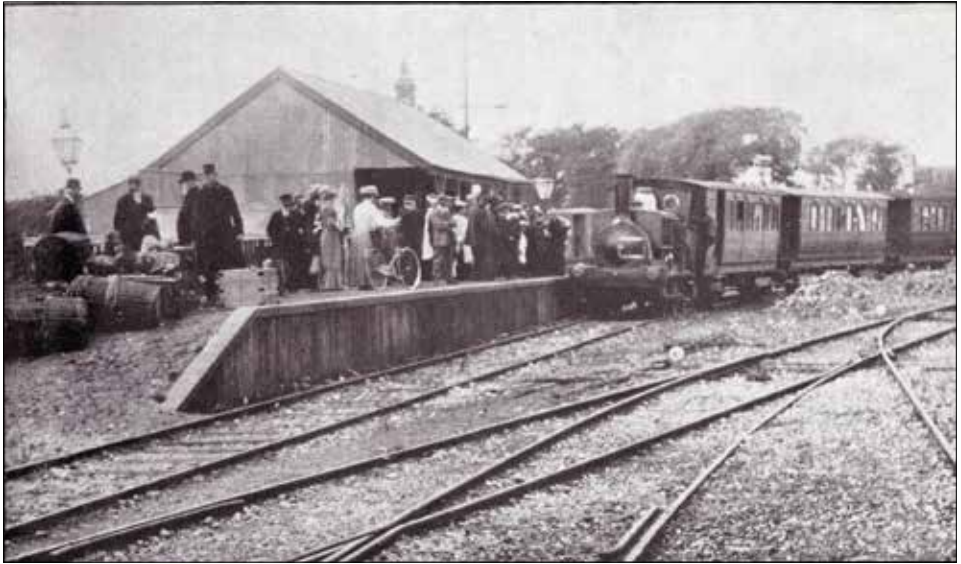
The Horsham branch from Three Bridges was extended to Petworth in 1859 and on to Midhurst in 1866 and a line from Ford to Hardham junction (on the Petworth branch) opened in 1863 providing a choice of routes to London, from Chichester via Brighton or Horsham, both however being (and still are) somewhat circuitous. A branch from Petersfield arrived at Midhurst in 1864 operated by the London and South Western Railway (LSWR) but the 1866 station of the LB&SCR although terminating a short distance away was only connected to its 'rival' for freight transfer by horse (intending passengers having to walk), a weak bridge being unsuitable for locomotives. Chichester's rail link to Midhurst started in 1865 but financial difficulties caused a halt to the works in 1868. The scheme was revived by the LB&SCR in 1876, opening in 1881. It was an expensive line to construct with tunnels and embankments and serving a sparse rural population. The extravagant stations serving the route were constructed in the flamboyant architectural style

of T. H. Myles (operational examples of which can be seen on the Bluebell Railway). Trains for Midhurst left a bay platform at Chichester and branched off the main line to Portsmouth at Fishbourne junction on to the single line branch. The station houses, all of which all survive, except Midhurst, were illustrated in detail by Alan. Lavant, a three storey building, with a half timbered upper storey had stairs from the ground floor booking hall to the platform at basement level. Singleton the most opulent of the four stations had two island platforms with refreshment rooms on each platform. It only saw crowds of passengers on four days in July for the fashionable Goodwood Races. The platforms which survive are on an embankment supported by a mass concrete wall and were accessed from the station house and booking hall at ground level, by a covered way leading to the subway with stairs to the platforms, Cocking station along with Singleton



Cocking 1881 station

and Lavant closed to passengers in 1935 but freight services continued until 1953. The original 1866 Midhurst station was rebuilt a mile to the east of the two existing termini, also in the T H Myres style, this meant an even longer walk for transferring passengers. A proper rail connection was not made until 1925 when the LSWR station closed. Passenger services between Pulborough Petworth and Petersfield ceased in February 1955 and for all traffic west of Midhurst. Goods facilities and the occasional enthusiast's special survived at Midhurst until 1964. The final line, to the south, was the 'Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway' engineered by the redoubtable Holman Fred Stephens and opening in August 1897. Its station was next door to the main line station and the goods yards adjoined each other but LB&SCR locomotives were not allowed to enter the other's



Selsey Town Station c. 1910

facilities. The line was of typical Stephens's construction with timber framed stations clad in corrugated iron, unprotected level crossings and initially one new loco named Selsey (the other being the contractor's loco, dating from 1847 and named Chichester) plus four new carriages and some second hand wagons. The only notable engineering feature was a lifting bridge over the Chichester canal. At first the line was successful and survived a catastrophe when the defences of the reclaimed Pagham Harbour were breached by a fierce storm in 1910 flooding the line in that area. Finances were sufficient to pay for an embankment across what had become Pagham Harbour again. Following the 1914-18 War passenger numbers declined and Stephens introduced petrol railcars for passenger journeys; however motor cars and a 'Southdown' bus route from the centre of Chichester sealed the lines fate closing in 1935, four years after Stephens' death.

The main line was electrified in 1938 but Chichester station remained dilapidated, dingy and lit by gas until being demolished in 1958 and rebuilt in the 'Festival of Britain' style opening in 1961. The glass fronted ticket hall with a canopied entrance was, when opened, impressive with attractive wall and floor tiling, a coffered ceiling, chandeliers and a splendid clock; sadly refurbishment in 2007 covered or removed most of these features but the clock remains. Alan ended his talk covering the last 50 years with personal reminiscences and highlights including the centenary celebrations in 1981 which also saw the launch of the first of Vic Mitchell's Middleton Press books 'Branch Lines to Midhurst' when one could 'ride the line, (to Lavant) walk the line (including Cocking tunnel) or even

fly the line (from Goodwood airfield). I did the first, some of the second and have always regretted not doing the third.

Alan's talk was well researched and superbly illustrated with maps, tickets, photographs and ephemera from his personal collection. An excellent presentation much appreciated by all present.



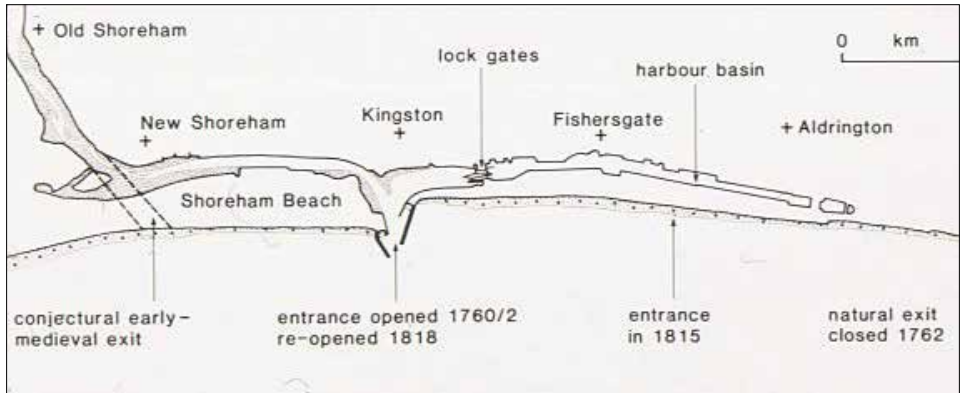
Rebuilt Chichester Booking Hall 2006

“The Harbour is in a ruinous and dangerous state.”

Aspects of Shoreham Harbour entrance

Geoffrey Mead

I was recently doing some research prior to a guided walk in Portslade by Sea; I have a file on the canal area and was leafing through a series of cuttings and abstracts when I resurrected a long ignored article that I had found many years ago at the WSRO in Chichester.



Adur mouth changes



1724 Lower Adur

“I can remember the mouth of the harbour where the gas works now stands at The Wish, that was in 1810-11. I remember the present harbour being made. There were no piers or buildings of any sort at the harbour at The Wish only a hole in the beach and there was a way for the ships to come up at Shoreham. Ships from 150-200 tons were the largest. They went as far as Old Shoreham Bridge, the only bridge then. Ships used to come on shore at Brighton beach at Russell Street Gap and West Street Gaps and unload. Carts went down and unloaded off the ships side. There were no wharfs. Ships only came into harbour in bad weather, coal, corn, groceries and wine were brought to Brighton and Hove. The first vessel that came into the present entrance was called the Bird. She went out of the old entrance and came in at the new. The captain’s name was Bois of Emsworth.”

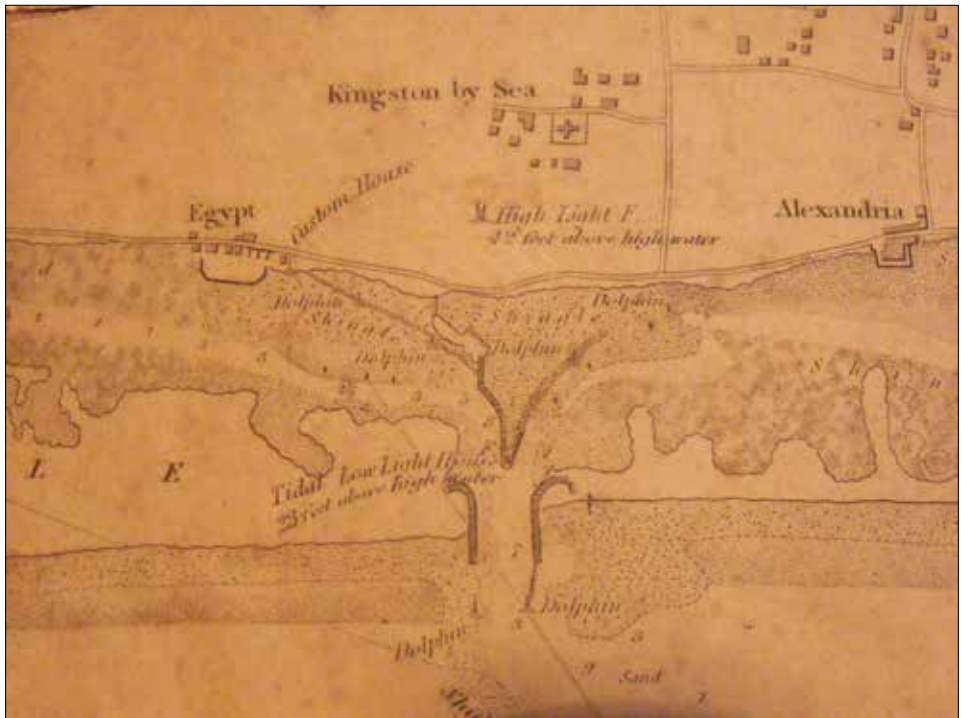


Druids Head, Brighton Place 24.11.06

The tidal creek that was the mouth of the Adur was a constantly evolving coastal landscape, the relentless longshore drift eastwards movement of shingle, mud and sand, material termed ‘slub’ at the time; this constantly overwhelmed and blocked such harbour entrances as had been opened, and the battle to ensure a safe harbour entrance had gone on for decades if not centuries. The preamble to the Shoreham harbour Act 1760 reads as follows- *‘whereas the navigation through*

the present entrance into the harbour of New Shoreham in the County of Sussex is very dangerous, and improving and maintaining the same will be of great utility to the trade and Navigation of this Kingdom...and it shall be lawful to and for said Commissioners, or any 11 or more of them, at any time or times, from and after 1st day of July 1760 to make a new cut through the sea beach, opposite the village called Kingston by Sea, about a mile to the eastward of the said town of New Shoreham and to erect a pier or piers and to do such other works as shall be necessary in order to make and maintain a new and more commodious entrance to the said harbour.'

There was a constant need to upgrade the port facilities in the lower Adur; In the Sussex Weekly Advertiser of April 1800 'a meeting of Gentlemen, Merchants, Landholders, Tradesmen and Inhabitants of the Town and Port of New Shoreham, the Rape of Bramber, and the neighbourhood thereof, in the County of Sussex...it was resolved to take immediate consideration the present state of the Harbour of New Shoreham'.



Kingston harbour mouth 1829

The period that Rooke was describing in such detail was that period early in the 19th century when the 18th century harbour entrance was abandoned. The rapid

growth of Brighton a few miles to the east meant that the increased cargo landings had to be accommodated with the increased use of the beach for leisure purposes; John Constable staying in Brighton in 1824 painted and drew the coal brigs on the beach. With the increased need to use the Adur estuary for the bulk cargoes there was pressure to improve the Adur channel landing grounds along the north bank. A range of small communities with some exotic names were located along that low bank; Egypt, Alexandria, Trinidad, with the more prosaic Rocks, Fishersgate and Copperas Gap. By the mid-19th century there was a consortium of mainly Brighton traders and merchants that came together to create the lock and canal that eventually opened in 1855.

References

‘WSRO 40.441 James Rooke’s story, born 1805’; dictated to Louise Gorringe of Kingston House.

Sussex Weekly Advertiser 7.4.1800

Shoreham Harbour Insights: Shoreham Port 1760-2010 ed Prof.F.Gray



The select gathering for ‘Pubs, Breweries & Malshouses in Steyning’
An alcoholic history ramble with Dr Janet Pennington on 13th May

Old English Mills & Inns
Thurston Hopkins. Published Cecil Palmer 1927
Illustrations by James E Martin
Geoffrey Mead

Usually I do reviews of relatively recently published volumes (albeit sourced from charity shops!) however this review is of a book published nearly a century ago, but one that has a great deal of IA interest and even more interest has much of that IA is Sussex IA. I have a great many books on both Sussex and IA in general (see Mrs Mead for details of my office layout....) and many are as old as this one and many a great deal older. As is often the way with avid collectors, the collecting is often where the interest stops and I am guilty as anyone for not delving deeply or often enough into most of my collection. But what gems are revealed when you do; it was reported in a previous Newsletter that our friend and long serving SIAS member Peter Holtham had died recently; in assisting in clearing some of his archive I came across the above book. Thinking that the word 'Mills' would be of interest I contacted the renowned mill specialist and SIAS member Peter Hill who of course...had the same book. As I was idly browsing the pages, good thick period paper and sensible sized print, I noted many of the chapters were of specific interest to a wide range of IA scholars, the book title of 'Old English Mills and Inns' being a starting point. The 19 chapters have eight with 'mill' in the title three with 'inn' and one on Sussex glass, a much and sadly under-reported industry. There are also references to 'out of county' examples in such exotic locations as Kent and Surrey. Most, if not all the other chapters have reference to a range of trades and industries even if that is not in the chapter title. For example in chapter XV 'Saddlescombe, Truslershill and Albourne' there are mentions of the Dyke railway station, Patcham windmill, Saddlescombe donkey wheel, Poynings Mill Truslershill watermill, Ruckford watermill at Hurst Wickham, Cobbs Mill, and all this in a chapter heading that does not mention a mill at all! Thus Hopkins meets most of the requirements for most of the SIAS membership.

Robert Thurston Hopkins was a great champion of Sussex, although he was not a 'native' but born in Suffolk, he was a prolific author and anyone studying the bibliography of early 20th century Sussex will be familiar with his output, *Sussex Pilgrimages*, *Literary Originals-Sussex*, *Sussex Rendezvous*, and many more. He was not just a publicist for his adopted county, along with his brother-in-law Arthur Beckett, a prominent local newspaper owner, he founded the influential *Sussex County Magazine* (1926-1956) and importantly in 1923 they established the Society of Sussex Downsmen, now The South Downs Society.

One chapter of this book did inspire me to add a footnote to Hopkins detail and that

is his chapter XVII - 'Brighton's first inn'. I have long resisted doing much research into the Old Town (Lanes) of Brighton as it is so much written on, and usually I venture into areas of my home town that get scant regard, thus I have researched for SIAS and other groups such neglected spots as interwar Patcham, 19th century Western Road, and further afield, but within the city confines, Portslade by Sea. However I have recently had to take several guided tours around the centre of Brighton and have become more interested in its economic and industrial history; there was more industry than most people imagine. Hopkins 'First Inn' is in fact The Druid's Head in the centre of the Old Town in Brighton Place. The actual inn features for a short passage in the middle of the chapter-

"But the Druids Head is the ancient inn and its rustic parlour will come as a surprise to the visitor. It is more than an inn as we accept the word. It is a rest-house and a meeting place for carriers for every village in Sussex. It is not mere chance that Brighton Place is a centre for this type of traffic."

This struck a chord with me with a remembrance of a chance meeting nearly 40 years ago. After I finished my first degree at the University of Sussex in 1983 I had a temporary job working with a local firm of painters and decorators; while we were working on the exterior of a substantial house near Plumpton Green, I struck up a conversation with an elderly gentleman, Mr Gazzard, the father of the firm's



Brighton Place 1939

owner; while were wielding our paint brushes he mentioned that he knew I was interested in local history- "*Did you know I was born in the centre of Brighton?*" Now this generally transpires as being not in the centre, but in one of the city's many Victorian suburbs or even in one of the interwar estates; however he went on to say his father was publican of 'The Druids Head'. I did look into the only street directory I had at that time, Kelly's 1927, and sure enough at 9 Brighton Place under The Druids Head public house is listed- Henry Gazzard. Mr Gazzard went on to relate a wonderful tale of it being the 'carriers pub' where the rural carriers stayed for a while having brought vegetables and fruits into the nearby Brighton Market, then in the appositely named Market Street. On going to bed as a small boy it was not unusual for him to share it with a carrier having a doze before the return journey to rural Sussex. On one occasion he awoke to find a different man in bed than had been there earlier! And this one had on his boots and was carrying his carriers whip! To access the toilet involved stepping over another carrier asleep on the floor, with others outside sleeping on the landing... it can only be imagined what B&H Social Services would have to say about that today! The market took place in the nearby Market building and also spilled out on the steps of the adjacent town hall; the scene would have been similar to that in the old Covent Garden. By 1935 the area had been 'tidied up' and the market moved to a new market building at the slum clearance site of Circus Street, a notorious housing area east of the Valley Gardens. The market later moved early in the 21st century to an urban fringe site on Hollingbury industrial/retail estate. With the loss of the carriers trade the area of Brighton Place changed character and now The Druids Head is a 'good' example of a young person's meeting place pub, but thankfully is still there as a part of the city's rich history. Often cited as an example of Brighton vernacular architecture and much photographed by visitors it has actually undergone many changes to the façade and as it features in many past and present guides to Brighton the changes can be readily compared. Interestingly one of the most referenced books used by local historians is '*Brighton in the olden times*' (1892) by JG Bishop, Editor of the Brighton Herald. This is a masterly tome and has a chapter 'Historic inns and taverns of the town', but sadly The Druids Head is not included in what appears to be a comprehensive listing and description.

See rear cover for further images of Brighton Place.

NOTE

Please let me have your images and memories for the next Newsletter (or two!) It may be it something you pass every day, but the rest of us may be unfamiliar with. Social media , Facebook, YouTube, etc are growing with increasingly interesting groups that I find impossible to keep up with, if you spot one please let me know. I am always looking for examples of our IA heritage.

Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society

Chairman : John S. F. Blackwell, e-mail johnblackwell@ntlworld.com
21 Hythe Road, Brighton BN1 6JR (01273 557674)

General Secretary and Newsletter Editor : Martin B. Snow,
e-mail martin@snowing.co.uk
32 Orchard Avenue, Worthing BN14 7PY
(01903 208975 & 07836 675472)

Treasurer: Mike Slamo, e-mail m.slamo171@btinternet.com
112 Poplar Avenue, Hove BN3 8 PS (01273 732956)

Membership Secretary: Ron Gordon, e-mail ron.gordon@myphone.coop
52 Barons Down Road, Lewes BN7 1ET (01273 474305)

Chief Editor : Dr. Geoffrey Mead, e-mail g.mead@sussex.ac.uk
47 Hartfield Avenue, Brighton BN1 8AD (01273 501590)

Programme Co-ordinator : M. H. Dawes, e-mail malcolm.dawes@btinternet.com
52 Rugby Road, Brighton BN1 6EB (01273 561867)

Recording Co-ordinator : Vacancy

Committee : A. H. J. Green P. S. Hicks Miss. J. O'Hara
Mrs J Morris T. P. A. Ralph R. Vernon

Website : www.sussexias.co.uk

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Subscribing to the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society gives automatic membership to the Sussex Mills Group

The Sussex Mills Group also produces a *Newsletter* that is sent to members with this *Newsletter*



Druids Head, Brighton Place 2006
See page 20



Brighton Place c. 1920

