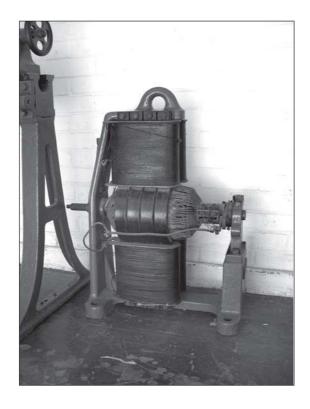
Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter

Number 136 October 2007



Dynamo from Volk's Railway

Newsletter 136

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS Pat Bracher & Malcolm Dawes

Saturday 20th October at 7.30 pm. *Steam in the Air.*A talk by Maurice Kelly. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove.

Saturday 24th **November at 2.30 pm.** Annual General Meeting followed by *Films of CVA Factory* presented by Peter Groves. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove.

Saturday 26th January at 3.00 pm. SIAS members are invited to the Brighton Circle Meeting when the talk will be *William Stroudley and his locomotives* by Laurie Marshall. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove.

Saturday 26th January at 7.30 pm. *The Railways of the Devil's Dyke.* A talk by Trevor Povey. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove.

Saturday 16th **February at 7.30 pm.** *More than just manhole covers - Halsted & Sons of Chichester.* Talk on the history of a long established firm of ironfounders by Alan Green. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove.

Amberley Working Museum

will be opening in November this year 2007

 $\begin{array}{c} \textbf{Sunday 11}^{\text{th}} \ \textbf{November} \ \text{-} \ \text{Auto Jumble only (rest of museum closed)} \\ \text{Buyer}^{\text{th}} s \ \text{admission charge $\pounds 2$, indoor \& outdoor stalls still available.} \end{array}$

Saturday 17th November & Sunday 18th November 2007 - Amberley Working Museum's Moving Picture Show 10am till 5.30 pm. Normal admission charge £6 - *special offer for SIAS members £5*.

Screen 1. Classic film looking back from the Victorian pioneers of film to the 1960s: Southern Steam, Picture Palace Classics. How we lived, worked and played:. Seaside fun at Bognor, Littlehampton, Worthing & Brighton, Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines, Down your way: town and village scenes, Marching with the County Regiment, Penny Farthings and Fire Engines, Farming on the Downs, including steam threshing on the downs in the 1920s, Chichester's Dads' Army.

Screen 2 (enthusiasts). Buses (including trolley buses), steam trains and other transport enthusiasts films.

More details: Amberley Working Museum www.amberleymuseum.co.uk Contact Jim Hawkins 01273 507973 as we should group together for transport.

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@htinternet.com

Sunday 14th October. *Autumn Vintage Vehicle Show.* Vintage cars, motorcycles, buses lorries. Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

19th – 21st October. *Giants of Steam weekend*. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800.

Sunday 21st **October.** *Locomotive shed and yard tours.* 11.30am, 12.30pm, 1.30pm. No booking necessary. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800.

Sunday 21st **October.** *Autumn industrial train day. Locomotives and rolling stock in action.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

Thursday 25th October, 8.00 pm. *Volk's Electric Railway*. Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club talk by Ian Gledhill. Red Lion Public House, Stone Cross near Pevensey. 01323 843202.

Thursday 25th **October, 7.30 pm.** *Members' Slides.* [Change from previously advertised event]. World Ship Society, South Coast Branch. Glebe Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. philip.simon@lrfairplay.com

Saturday 27th October, 2.30 pm. How the Georgians built their Houses - Part 2 - "stone, flint and roofing materials". Brighton and Hove Archaeology Society Local History talk by SIAS Secretary Ron Martin. United Reformed Church Hall, Blatchington Road, Hove. Voluntary contribution. www.brightonarch.org.uk.

Sunday 4th November. London to Brighton veteran car run.

Thursday 8th **November, 8.00 pm.** *Historic buses*. East Sussex Omnibus Society talk by Alan Snatt. Red Lion Public House, Stone Cross near Pevensey. 01323 843202.

Friday 9th November, 8.00 pm. Development of the Martlets Shopping Centre in the 1970s. Video presentation. Burgess Hill Local History Society. £2. Cyprus Hall, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill. www.burgesshillmuseum.co.uk.

Sunday 11th November. Autojumble. Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

Sunday 11th November. *Vintage bus running day.* Buses operating from Brighton, Haywards Heath and Crawley. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800.

Monday 12th **November, 7.30 pm.** *Contractors' Signal Boxes*. Southern Electric Group, Sussex Branch. £2. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. 01273 504791.

Wednesday 14th **November, 7.00 pm.** *Amberley Working Museum.* Chichester Local History Society talk by Brin Thomas. £2. New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 787592.

17th - **18**th **November.** *Weekend Moving Picture Show.* Classic film looking back from the Victorian Pioneers of film to the 1960s: Southern Steam, Picture Palace Classics, transport, farming life. Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

Wednesday 21st **November, 7.45 pm.** *Transport Photographs taken by Jack Turley.* Sussex Transport Interest Group talk presented by Gordon Dinnage. £2. Brighton Model Railway Club Room, London Road Station, Brighton. 01273 512839.

24 - 25th **November.** *Provisional dates for Model Railway Exhibition including Volk's Electric Railway model.* Confirm with Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

Wednesday 28th November, 7.30 pm. Bus fleets of the Brighton area before the National Bus Co. Volk's Electric Railway Association illustrated talk by Howard Butler. £1. West Blatchington Mill Barn, Nevill Road, Hove. www.volkselectricrailway.co.uk

Monday 10th December, 7.30 pm. *Muscle Powered Railways*. Southern Electric Group, Sussex Branch talk by Nick Kelly. £2. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. 01273 504791.

Tuesday 11th December, 7.30 pm. Footplate Apprentice at Stewarts Lane in 1948. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Sussex Area Group talk by Ralph Gilham. Westham Village Hall, Westham near Pevensey. 01323 845108.

Thursday 20th **December, 1.00 pm.** *Brighton Film Archive.* Screening of historic films of Brighton. Introduced by Jackie Marsh-Hobbs. Brighton Museum lunchtime lecture. The Old Courtroom, Brighton. £4.50. Tickets from Museum. 01273 292797.

22nd - **24**th **December.** *Victorian Christmas Special Trains.* Booking essential. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800.

Wednesday 16th January, 7.45 pm. *Cine film presentation* including last day of steam on the Bournemouth line. Sussex Transport Interest Group. Brighton Model Railway Club Room, London Road Station, Brighton. 01273 512839.

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.

AIA Conference, Preston 2007 Ron Martin

The conference was this year based at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston with the usual programme of lectures and visits throughout the week.

The principal industry in Lancashire in the 19th century was, of course, textiles mainly cotton and some wool. The towns of Blackburn, Burnley, Preston and the Ribble Valley, once had the concentration of textile spinning and weaving mills, but with nowadays hardly one still working.

We saw two mills being kept in a museum context, the one at Helmshore being of two parts; the older being a water powered fulling mill of 1789, complete with working stamps and a full range of wool cloth finishing machinery, and the more recent Whittaker's Mill with an entire floor of carding and mule spinning machinery.

The other "working" mill was at Queen Street Textile Museum, in Burnley. This mill built in 1894/5 is the last commercial steam powered mill in Lancashire and the only surviving mill of its type with working machinery in the world, with 300 looms. The mill is driven by a 500 h.p. horizontal compound condensing steam engine, with two Lancashire boilers. The noise in the mill was quite deafening when operating. One of the most impressive mill building is that at Coppull Ring Mill in Chorley with *art nouveau* red and yellow brick and terra cotta decoration with domed towers and pinnacles.

One enduring memory I have is of numerous long brick or stone walls with rainwater heads and pipes at about 2 m centres, these being the outlets from the gutters of the northlight roofs of the mills behind.

For the steam buffs there were several good examples of mill engines, viz; the one noted above at Queen Street Mill, a cross compound engine at Old Mount Mill in Burnley and another similar engine at Bankcroft Mill, Barnoldswick which we saw working.

Canals featured prominently. The Lancaster Canal running from Wigan to Kendal. and was built between 1792 and 1819. Opposite Preston the route crosses the River Ribble and the originally planned stone aqueduct was never built. Instead a section of plateway was constructed with two inclines down to river level where it was crossed by a timber structure, subsequently replaced by an identical concrete one. The inclines were originally horse drawn at one side and with a stationary steam engine at the other side.

A visit to the Leyland Commercial Vehicle Museum was most rewarding with a magnificent display of well preserved commercial vehicles, including a Tilling-Stevens bus as run at Amberley. At the Pilkington World of Glass at St. Helens, we saw the

original gas-fired continuous furnace, the cone house and in a very glossy museum of glassware a demonstration of glass blowing.

The were many other sites too numerous to mention and many which I was not able to visit. All in all this was a very interesting conference with a good variety of site. Next years conference is being held in Chippenham from 22nd to 28th. August, 2008 and as is this is almost on our doorstep, I hope to see many of you there. Details will be available from me early next year.

Visit to Chailey Brickworks and Uckfield Ron Martin

A number of stalwart members went on a very showery day to Chailey Brickworks, part of the Ibstock organisation. This is a small works producing some 11 million bricks yearly; all good quality facings. The bricks are fired in clamps, the initial lighting being done using gas. It is interesting that of the brickworks in Sussex most use this method of clamp buring, whereas in the rest of the country this is virtually unknown.

Clay is dug from a pit at the rear of the site and left to mature over the autumn and winter. The various strata of clay are carefully monitored and blended to achieve the correct proportion of different clays and this is mixed with pulverised fuel ash, the presence of this within the brick is what actually fires the brick. The bricks are machine moulded and dried in gas-fired dryers, the green bricks being packed on "stillages" (See my note in Newsletter 135). The bricks are transferred to the clamps by fork lift trucks but the stacking and subsequent removal is all hand done. Great care is taken to ensure that only good bricks are selected - there is no such thing as Chailey "seconds". Our guides were most helpful and were able to answer all out searching questions.

After a horrendous thunderstorm we were taken around the New Town area of Uckfield by Brian Philips and Peter Ferguson of the Uckfield and District Preservation Society. A look at the outside of Uckfield water mill originally built in 1792, with three stages of building plainly visible, it being restored 1989. The water rushing through the mill was quite impressive. New Town is an area which most of us probably do not know and was developed during the 19th and early 20th century. Through the rain we were able to see the 1930s fire station and two mill cottages, where there was formerly mill, probably steam or oil powered. A welcome cup of tea was provided by the owner of Rose Cottage, formerly a brewery and currently occupied by a firm of undertakers. A return back past the Police Station took us to Bridge Cottage, the headquarters of the Preservation Society. In spite of the weather, a most interesting walk and many thank to our guides.

The following article is reproduced by kind permission of the author and appeared in the Summer 2007 edition of "Volk News", the journal of the Volks Electric Railway Association (VERA). It underlines the need for vigilance for the care of historic artefacts and highlights how they can so easily be lost. This is particularly prevalent in colleges and universities where engineering courses are facing cuts and rationalisation leaving managements that may no longer value traditional engineering or the machinery associated with it.

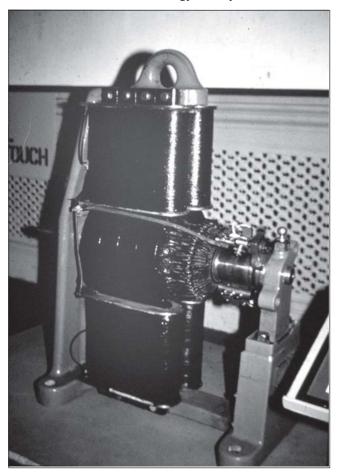
A Moving Tale Ian Gledhill

In 1880 Magnus Volk conceived a plan to illuminate his house with electric light. At that time there was no public electricity supply, so Magnus had no alternative but to make his own. Two years earlier he had assisted his friend William Jago at a public lecture on the possibilities of electric light, and remembered showing a slide of a dynamo manufactured by Siemens and Company, of Woolwich. Enquiries to Woolwich produced a satisfactory reply and a suitable dynamo was purchased and installed in the garden shed of Magnus's house at 40, Preston Road. Driven by an Otto gas engine connected to the domestic gas supply, the dynamo produced 50 volts DC, adequate for the light bulbs then available. Magnus thus became the first person in Brighton to have his house lit by electricity, as a result of which he later won the contract to install the first electric lights in the Royal Pavilion.

Two years later he and his now growing family moved to a larger house in Gloucester Place, just when a public electricity supply became available for the first time, and the new home was soon connected to it. His dynamo and gas engine were rendered, temporarily at least, redundant. However, once the Royal Pavilion installation was completed early in 1883, and casting around for his next project, Magnus's eye fell on these two pieces of idle machinery, together with an electric motor he had built for a customer who had subsequently cancelled the order. He realised he had the basics for his next major project -Britain's first electric railway.

As readers will know, Volk's Electric Railway opened on the 4th August 1883. The original car was a lightweight affair, only 12' long with seats for 10 - 12 passengers, powered with that unwanted electric motor. The electricity was generated using that very same Siemens dynamo and Otto gas engine, now installed in one of the arches in the sea wall, with which he had powered domestic electric lighting.

It has to be said the dynamo was only just up to the task, so when the railway was extended and enlarged in the winter of 1883-84, Magnus realised that something more powerful would be needed, and a larger Siemens dynamo producing 160



Dynamo in pre-restoration condition

volts at 40 amps was obtained. The original dynamo was presented to William Jago, who was a science lecturer at Brighton School of Science and Art, to assist in his demonstrations. What became of the gas engine is not recorded.

The Science Department of the school later became part of Brighton College of Technology, later known as the Municipal Technical College, which opened its new building on Richmond Terrace in 1897. In 1909 Doctor Hughes, the head of the Electrical Department at the Technical College, rediscovered the dynamo among some relics. By quoting the serial number to Siemens & Co., he was able to confirm that it was indeed the original dynamo supplied to Magnus Volk in 1880

and as such he put it on display as a historic artefact. In 1970 the Technical College became part of Brighton Polytechnic, which itself became Brighton University in 1992. By this time the Electrical Engineering Department had moved from Richmond Terrace to Moulsecoomb.

In recent times the dynamo was loaned out to the Engineerium where it was displayed for some years, though always looking a little out of place amongst all those steam engines. A couple of years ago the Engineerium was facing closure, and its contents, collected over many years by Jonathan Minns, put up for auction. To make sure the dynamo was not lost I contacted the Engineerium to see if it was one of the items to be sold, so that VERA could, if necessary, put in a bid for it. I was told that it was not amongst the auction items, as it had not been part of Jonathan Minns' collection, but the woman I spoke to did not know of its current whereabouts. Jonathan Minns later told VERA member Nick Kelly that it had been reclaimed by the university, but nobody seemed to know exactly where it was.

It was purely by chance, earlier this year, that Nick happened to be visiting the university for another reason and on walking down a corridor saw the dynamo just standing there against the wall. He recognised it at once, and confirmed its identity by checking the serial number. It seemed that the university was on the point of throwing it out as scrap. He pointed out to them its historic value, and said that if they didn't want it VERA would like it. A few weeks later I got a phone call from David Burton, who is in charge of the engineering laboratories at the university, to say that the current head of the department, obviously not so appreciative of historic artefacts as Doctor Hughes, wanted the dynamo got rid of as soon as possible. There was also a lathe and an electric motor which had also belonged to Magnus Volk. The next morning Jim Hawkins and I set out for Moulsecoomb, where we were greeted by the sight of the dynamo standing in a corridor, just as Nick Kelly had described it, with Magnus's lathe standing next to it. David Burton was anxious to see both items preserved, and told us that if we wanted them we could have them, but we had to move them quickly as the Head of Department was getting agitated at this "junk" continuing to clutter up his corridor. We had to undertake on the spot to remove them within the next two weeks.

The next urgent job was to find a temporary home for them and fortunately a VERA committee member was able to help. Thus it was that on the morning of Monday 16th July I drove to the university in a hired van to collect these valuable items. Considering that it had once powered the railway the dynamo is surprisingly small, standing only about 3 feet high, but it is also remarkably heavy. Fortunately

the corridor in which it was standing was equipped with an overhead crane, and the university staff soon had it aloft and heading vanwards. They had also dismantled the lathe into its principal parts, for that too is very heavy, and with a bit of huffing and puffing the lathe had also been stowed in the back of the van. The store is dry and secure, so the dynamo is safe at last.

For the technically minded; the dynamo is a Siemens D5 self-regulating shuntwound dynamo, generating 50 volts DC at 46 amps, running at 1280 rpm. It was built at the Siemens factory in Woolwich in 1878, serial no 1179A. According to an article written in 1984 (*SIAS Newsletter No. 41* January 1984) by Doug Hill, then lecturer in the electrical department of Brighton Polytechnic, who had the dynamo refurbished in 1978, the dynamo was still in working order at that time. It will be interesting to see if it still is. Mr. Hill commented that being an early machine it was not very efficient compared with modern generators, and would have struggled to achieve a 65% efficiency, so no wonder it would not have been adequate to power the larger cars Magnus used on the extended railway from 1884 onwards.

VERA supports Volks Electric Railway and operates the railway on certain summer evenings with suitably trained members operating the cars. Membership offers concessionary fares, a quarterly journal and a series of winter lectures (held at West Blatchington Windmill). Membership costs £10 per year and details can be obtained from Membership Secretary, Alan James, 13, Rudyard Road, Woodingdean, Brighton BN2 6UB. The Association Website is www.volkselectricrailway.co.uk

Volunteers wanted to join the Bridge Team

Working on sites on the Portsmouth and Arundel canal between Ford and Hunston. Work can involve anything from archaeology to jungle bashing, brick cleaning, rust removal and painting, brick laying and general conservation works.

We meet on Saturdays usually from 8.30 am to about 3.00 pm or what ever time you can spare during that period.

For further information please ring Adge Roberts on 01903 773575 or on email adgeroberts@yahoo.co.uk

A Basin Full of Industry Adge Roberts

The guided walk around the canal basin on Tuesday 28th August 2007 was enjoyed by some 20 members of SIAS and was led by Alan Green the author of the well received book *The History of Chichester's Canal* and of the booklet *Walking the Chichester Canal* and other books on the history of Chichester, so it can be assumed that he was well qualified to lead this walk as indeed it proved to be so.

We met outside the pub that used to be called *The Richmond Arms*, after the duke who was a proprietor of the canal. Alas the name is no more, having been superceded by some spurious 21st century title.

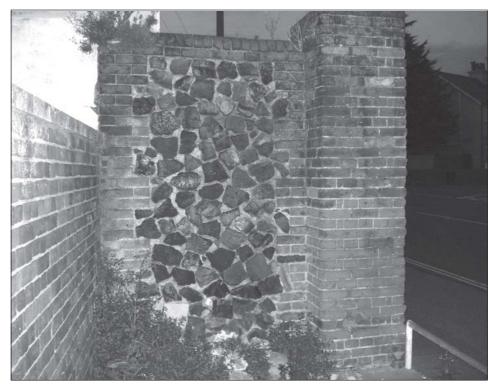
It was pointed out to us that the building to the west of the pub was a stable for canal horses. It is built as two storeys, the upper storey being at street level (Stockbridge Road.) and the ground storey at the rear being at wharf level. The building is used by the Canal Trust (upper storey) for storage. There is a strange arched opening in the rear elevation which is open and runs through and under the pavement in the above road, the purpose of which is unknown. At Padwick Bridge we were given some history about the recovery of this present structure (Poyntz Bridge) and how it came to be on this site. At its original position at Hunston the bridge broke its back due to increasingly heavy farm traffic and was collected by the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society (SIAS) and transported near to the present site in the school playing field, where the rebuilding was under taken by a team led by Alan Allnut who unfortunately died before it was completed. The work of leading the team was taken over by Chris Bryan and after 15 year's work it opened to the public in 1997 and is now in working order opening to the public on various occasions each year. It is probably the only bridge of its type and age in the country. On the way to Poyntz Bridge we passed a limekiln pointed out by Alan: barely visible from the towpath and situated in the back garden of a property in South Bank. We now proceded to this house, where arrangements had been made for us to visit the kiln which after a long walk down the garden we were able to see. We were standing some 15 feet above the towpath looking over the wall that formed the front of the kiln. The loading aperture at the top of the pot has been covered over, but a walk down a tortuous set of steps took us to the arched opening (the draw hole) at the bottom from which the lime would be removed. There was evidence of a lean-to roof having once been in place over this opening, as the mixture of rain and lime would have made life quite exciting for the operatives. We must thank Ron Martin at this stage for his potted info. on limekilns. The apparent reason for the 15 foot difference in levels at this point is that the Canal Company

purchased this piece of land and used it to dump some of the spoil from the basin dig. One local tradesman is recorded as having used this limekiln between 1845 and 1855, but Alan believes that it was probably built by the Canal Company to produce the vast quantity of lime required for the mortar used in the construction of the basin. Apart from the walls of the basin which are probably some 12 ft. high (the water was to be 10 ft. deep) it is also believed that the basin "floor" is brick lined.

Back to the basin and we are told about the business of Osborne's and of the civil engineering contracts that they undertake and also that they are leaving this site so another basin-side plot will be lost to industry and taken over by housing. Before Osborne's this site was occupied by Covers a well known timber importer (still in business) and in one of the many copies of photos and maps used to illustrate his talk was an aerial photo of the basin circa 1925 during the Cover era, showing stacks of timber around three sides of the basin. A description of industry on the north side of the basin followed, and the largest of these was the gas works which was opened in 1823 Initially there were just two small gas holders as the company only supplied gas for street lighting. Later one holder was rebuilt in a much larger size when the domestic demand came in. The gas works closed in 1958. It is generally believed that the four large coal storage "bins" on the south side of the gas works were for the use of sthe gas company, but not so - they were used by local coal merchants. The Post Office sorting office currently on this site (not a pretty sight) is also soon to be closed, and again the site will be lost to industry. The only remaining part of the gas works to be seen is a piece of wall at the north east corner of the PO some 8ft.in height and 6ft. in length including a gate pier with hinge pin holes still visible and constructed using some old retort fire bricks in panels. Returning to the bottom of Basin Road at junction with Wharf Road. there stands the remaining one of twin houses (either side of road) one of which was the custom house and the other possibly the wharfinger's house. They were small flint built houses with brick quoins and slate roofs. It is not known for certain which building was the Custom House but it has been decided locally that the Custom House sounds more impressive for the remaining building. This has recently been refurbished as a private residence. Also in this corner of the basin was the home of Chichester's first electrical power supply. Opened in 1909 and named The Chichester Electric Light and Power Company which closed in 1932 This company was apparently responsible for opening the ice making factory, well remembered as the occupant of the "Ice Works" which stood on this site until 2003 and was just a sideline of the electricity company. A reproduction of one of their advertising posters was shown. Some scathing remarks in true Green fashion were made about the

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new development of "three storey beach huts" on the east side of the basin. He was not too kind about the following terrace either, which was built in the "waterside warehouse" style. The walk/talk was delivered in Alan's usual well informed and witty style and was much enjoyed by all; most of whom now decamped in their various horseless carriages to the site of the Crosbie Bridge in Donnington where it was demonstrated how the road was "dog-legged" to allow the bridge to cross the canal at right angles. Following this twilight visit, the remaining stalwarts moved on down the road to the Blacksmiths Arms to partake in what pleases you to finish an entertaining and informative evening. It was noted that there were several new faces at this meeting which was most welcome.



Remaining section of the gas works - a piece of wall

Photo Tour of the Remains of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal

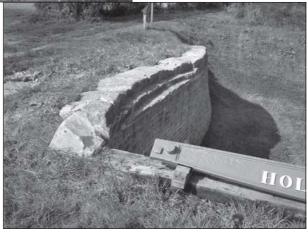
Bridge components at original site Hollinsworth Bridge South of Barnham





Hollinsworth Bridge Showing the infilled canal bed at site of bridge with curved retaining walls

Hollinsworth Bridge Cut-out in south wall to accommodate the swing of the bridge





Block with groove for lower part of ball race of bridge bearing

Cast iron bearing still in situ at Leys Lane



Dry canal bed with Adge Roberts in view

East of Barnham to Yapton a good deal of the dry canal bed remains exhibiting the original profile of the canal



One of the breaches in the south bank

The south bank has a dense hedge on it.
Yapton in distance





Remaining brick bridge in Yapton. The road is at about the former level of the canal bed.

Housing has been built in the former bed of the canal

The top of the bridge showing the steep approach for horsedrawn traffic, now a footpath



Ron Martin

Please note that Ron Martin has a new e-mail address for Society business. sias@ronmartin.org.uk

© 2007 Contributors and Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society
Published quarterly in January, April, July and October.

Contributions for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by the 8th December 2007.

Opinions expressed are those of the respective authors and do not
necessarily reflect the views of the Society unless specifically stated.

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
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Printed by PLANAHEAD, 42a Commercial Road, Eastbourne.

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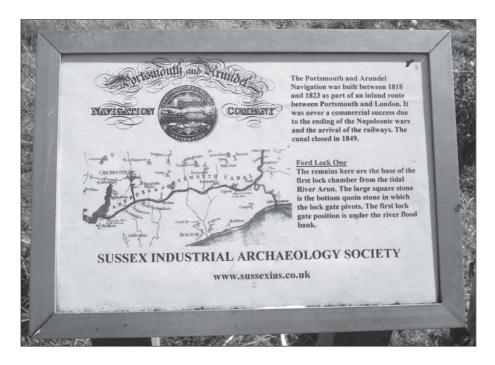
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At Ford there were two locks to raise the canal up from the river. These are the remains of part of one of the lock walls and pivot block for the upper gate.

