



Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter

Number 167

July 2015



Selsey Hall, High Street, Selsey, built as a cinema. Spotted during the SIAS tour on 20th June 2015. Some 20 members viewed homes formed from former railway carriages, a WWI listening post, Selsey Tramway relics and other IA features. For details - see the report in the next *Newsletter*.

(*Martin Snow*)

Newsletter 167

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Editorial

Welcome to *Newsletter 167*.

SERIAC has passed for another year, one of the better ones in recent years.

Two popular visits have already taken place with a third by the time you read this. Two more are detailed on the opposite page and looking forward to the start of the winter season talks. Do put these in your diaries and if you intend joining a visit, contact the leader in good time.

The annual publication of the society will be distributed with the next *Newsletter* to follow the AIA conference taking place this year at the University of Sussex, Falmer, at the beginning of September. Members are welcome to attend the AIA lectures only, free of charge, anyone wishing to attend the dinners should contact the AIA for details.



The SIAS stand at SERIAC (*Martin Snow*)

Forthcoming SIAS Events

Malcolm Dawes

Thursday 13th August 12.00. Visit to Bursledon Brickworks Industrial Museum

Bursledon Brickworks closed as a working brickworks in 1974 shortly after the M27 motorway split the site into two. Listed Grade II* the site became an industrial museum in 2007. A three year Heritage Lottery Grant (ending 2015) has enabled continuing restoration of the buildings. It is well worth a visit, it is only a short way from the western border of Sussex. The entrance fee of £5.00 for group members includes a tour and tea/coffee & a cake. I need numbers by 1st August to take advantage of this offer, Please advise me by then if you will be joining us, Martin Snow (01903 208975)

Wednesday 16th September 10.30am. Visit to the Brede Steam Engines

There are many new exhibits since the Society last visited. Access to the site is off the A28 road down the lane opposite the Red Lion PH in Brede village. Refreshments will be available.

At 2.30pm. we will visit the *Aldershaw Handmade Tiles Ltd's works* which is in Sedlescombe, in Kent Street Post Code TN33 0SD. The access is down a lane opposite Bluemans Lane. *Numbers are limited for this visit.*

Please contact Ron Martin if you wish to go (01273 271330).

Saturday 24th October at 7.30pm. Pottery, Bricks and Tiles in and Around Burgess Hill

Curator of Burgess Hill Museum and SIAS member Fred Avery relates the story from the days of the early nineteenth century potteries and brickfields through to the final days of the Keymer Brick and Tile Works, which in its heyday employed more than 300 people. Millions of bricks have been made there since 1875 and in the past 35 years over 100 million tiles have been sold in the U.K. and exported worldwide. The works closed in 2014 and the 50 acre site will be redeveloped in stages to accommodate 475 houses.



Keymer Works showing two "Beehive Kilns" with domed roofs, c. 1980
(Fred Avery)

Saturday 14th November 2.00pm. AGM and Talk by Robin Wilson on Coultershaw Heritage Site and Beam Pump

Please see the Mills Newsletter for Mills Group visits

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

Weekend 18th - 19th July. *Toy and Rail Collectors Fair*

Horsted Keynes Station, Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800

www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

Sunday 19th July. *Classic Car Summer Show*

Classic motor vehicles and accessories from the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.ambereleymuseum.co.uk

Saturday 25th July. *Sussex Vintage Model Railway Collectors Annual Exhibition*

Knogle Hall, Knogle Road, Brighton

Confirm details at www.sussex-transport.co.uk/svmrc

Sunday 26th July. *Worthing Seafront Bus Rally* www.worthingbusrally.co.uk

Weekend 1st - 2nd August. *Tinkers Park Rail Gala, Model Railway Show and Southdown Bus Event*

at Hadlow Down. www.tinkerspark.com

Weekend 8th - 9th August. *Vintage Transport weekend*

Displays of historic classic and vintage transport including cars, steam road engines, commercial and agricultural vehicles

Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800. www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

Monday 10th August, 7.30 pm. *150 years of the Bognor Regis Railway*

Southern Electric Group talk by Sylvia Endacott. £3 non-members. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. www.southernelectric.org.uk

Weekend 15th - 16th August. *Vintage and Steam*

Steam engines on display and demonstrating the kind of work around the Museum's site for which they were originally designed. Steam rollers, lorries and a carousel. Weald and Downland Open Air Museum. Singleton, Chichester. www.wealddown.co.uk

Wednesday 19th August, 7.45pm. *A look at Trams and Trains on Film*

Sussex Transport Interest Group talk by Mick Funnell. London Road Station, Brighton. 01273 512839.

Thursday 20th August, 8.00pm. *Jumping the Pond*

Fifty Years of Transatlantic Aviation, from Alcock and Brown to the age of the jets. Wivelsfield Historical Society talk by Tony Turner.

Visitors £2.50. Wivelsfield Village Hall. 01444 451568

Weekend 22nd - 23rd August. *Shoreham Air Show*

Shoreham Airport. www.shorehamairshow.co.uk

Sunday 23rd August. *Petrol Locos Day*

Working petrol locos including World War I Simplex and Wickham sets.

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

Thursday 27th - Monday 31st August. *Woodyard and Charcoal Burning*

For five days the traditional earth clamp will be built, tended and then dismantled on Bank Holiday Monday. Weald and Downland Open Air Museum. Singleton, Chichester. www.wealddown.co.uk

Weekend 29th - 31st August. *Hellingly Festival of Transport* www.ehvc.bi

Friday 4th September - Sunday 6th September. *Ale at Amberley Beer Festival*

Over 70 real ales, ciders and perries, many from Sussex and Kent. This year the beer festival is part of the Ale, Food and Music event so expect plenty of choice of hot foods well as food stalls during daytime sessions. There will be a stage with music at all sessions. Steam rollers, traction engines plus visit the Museum during the day. Booking highly recommended for the Friday and Saturday evenings. It is planned to run a dedicated bus service for the event.

The above details may change so check with Museum. 01798 831370.

www.aleatamberley.co.uk or www.amberleymuseum.co.uk.

Friday 11th September, 8.00pm. *The Great War: Burgess Hill in 1915*

How the war affected the local community. Second Burgess Hill Local History Society talk by Alan Seymour. Cyprus Hall, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill.

www.burgesshillmuseum.co.uk

Weekend 12th - 13th September. *Laughton Country Fair*

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

Sunday 13th September. *Veteran Cycle Clubs 60th Birthday*

All sorts of bicycles from 1800 to the present.

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

Monday 14th September, 7.30 pm. *The last 35 years of British Rail*

Southern Electric Group talk by Colin Burnham. £3 non-members. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. www.southernelectric.org.uk

Thursday September 17th. *Paddle Steamer Waverley Day Trip to Swanage from Worthing*

The only trip from Sussex during this year's Waverley's sailings along the South Coast. www.waverleyexcursions.co.uk

Weekend 19th - 20th September. *Steam Engine Weekend*

Working steam engines, large and small.

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

Saturday 26th September. *Tinkers Park Open Day at Hadlow Down*

www.tinkerspark.com

Sunday 27th September. *Southdown Bus Show*

Celebrating 100 years of Southdown Buses. View and ride on a variety of historic buses. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Weekend of 10th - 11th October. *Autumn Countryside Show*

Heavy horses, vintage tractors, steam powered ploughing and threshing. Weald and Downland Open Air Museum. Singleton, Chichester. www.wealddown.co.uk

Sunday 11th October. *Vintage Vehicles and Industrial Trains*

End of season gathering of vintage cars, motorcycles, commercial vehicles, steam engines, *diesel and steam locomotives*.

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

Wednesday 21st October, 7.45pm. *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*

Sussex Transport Interest Group talk by Roger Brasier. £2.50. London Road Station, Brighton. 01273 512839

Weekend of 31st - 1st November. *Giants of Steam Weekend*

Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800. www.bluebell-railway.co.uk

Sunday 1st November. *London to Brighton Veteran Car Run*

Information for members on Heritage Open Days in September

Many buildings are open 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 10th to 13th September

Details from www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Events in London are for the weekend of 19th - 20th September
www.londonopenhouse.org

4th - 9th September. A reminder that this year the Association for Industrial Archaeology Conference will be held at Sussex University

SIAS members are invited to attend the following evening lectures free of charge.

Sunday 6th September. Dr Geoffrey Mead - **Brighton's Growth as a Resort**, service industry and manufacturing industry centre.

Monday 7th September. **Screen Archive South East** - early films set in Brighton

These lectures are currently scheduled to be at 8pm in the Fulton Building
Lecture Theatre, University of Sussex.

**However the arrangements may well change
so please check the SIAS web site. www.sussexias.co.uk**

Chichester Events : July – November

Chichester Local History Society

15th July. Visit to St Mary's Hospital – ticketed event, numbers limited.

9th September. Sidlesham Land Settlement Association by Bill Martin

14th October. Dancing into battle – the Duchess of Richmond's ball by Hilary Sloan

11th November. Rambling on – Updating John Arrowsmith's Rambles from Chichester by Bob and Terry Carlysle

All meetings at the New Park Centre, New Park Road Chichester at 7.30pm.

Non members admitted at £3. Details 01243 784915

Festival of Chichester 9th June to 12th July

Programme available on www.festivalofchichester.co.uk.

Admiral Sir George Murray Festival

This is a series of events to mark the 200th anniversary of Admiral Murray's knighthood and his Mayoralty of Chichester. Born in Chichester in 1759 George Murray was Captain of the Fleet to Nelson and his close confidant.

6th - 8th July. Exhibition in the Old Court Room at the Council House in North Street, including artefacts belonging to Admiral Murray. 11.00am - 4.00pm Free

6th July. 12.30pm Free Lunchtime lecture **Murray at Sea** by Prof Philip Robinson

7th July. 12.30pm Free Lunchtime Lecture **Murray at Home** by Alan Green

8th July. 12.30pm Free Lunchtime lecture **Murray in the City** by Anne Scicluna

2nd August. 2.00pm Mock Battle of Trafalgar on Chichester canal basin by Portsmouth Model Boat Club with 11 sailing ships. Free

26th September. 7.30pm An evening of poetry with a Chichester and nautical theme read by John Coldstream, interspersed with harp music.

Tickets £10 in advance or on the door.

Details and ticket reservations from Alan Green 01243 784915

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

SERIAC 2015

John Blackwell

This year's SERIAC conference was hosted by Hampshire IAS at Winchester on 25th April under the banner of IA HOME AND AWAY. After coffee and biscuits and a welcome from the hosts, the first speaker was Howard Sprenger (HIAS Chairman) with *Metalliferous Mining in the Channel Islands*, our first ever SERIAC visit to these islands, which strangely form part of the Diocese of Winchester. One would not expect too many extractable mineral deposits there and one would be right! By the middle of the nineteenth century deposits of copper lead and silver were discovered but also by the middle of the nineteenth century those at Alderney, Guernsey (lead), Herm (silver and copper) and Jersey (silver) were abandoned. It was left to the smallest island Sark to fly the flag. At Brecquot, copper was found between 1835 and 1838 but abandoned with no output due to underground springs. At Portes Sees copper and silver were found between 1835 and 1842 but again no output as no investment for the required pumping engine could be raised. Little Sark's Hope Mine hosted the most industrial activity with silver, copper and lead mining between 1833 and 1847, by Cornish miners. The remains of the pumping house survived until a storm in February, 2014. Fuel for the engine had to be imported and the venture was never commercially viable. A most interesting presentation with excellent maps, plans and photographs of the remains in each of the islands.

Next up was Colin van Geffen's presentation on the *Flying Boats of Southampton*. The age of the flying boat spanned barely 50 years from its birth in 1913 with Sopwith *Bat boat*, constructed in the Isle of Wight, to its demise in the late 1950s with the advent of the jet airliner. Colin's presentation was technically accomplished and hugely entertaining, describing the development of the flying boat for delivery of mail and then passengers (mainly administrators) serving the Empire. In September 1919 a Supermarine *Channel* inaugurated the world's first flying boat service between Woolston (Southampton) and Le Havre. Imperial Airways was formed on 31st March 1924 primarily to inaugurate an Empire mail service using combinations of land based aircraft and flying boats gradually expanding to serve Africa, Asia, India, and Australasia. In March 1937 the first all air route between England (train to Southampton) and the Mediterranean commenced using the legendary Short Bros. S23 C Class (all had names beginning with C) flying boat. Previously passengers flew to Paris and then journeyed on by train to Marseilles and then joined a flying boat to their destination usually Alexandria. By 1939 these luxurious flying boats seating 15 first class only passengers took 10 days to reach Sydney knocking three days off the land based flight with its 31 stops. At the outbreak of War in 1939 the flying boats were all requisitioned. Operations by

BOAC returned to Southampton in 1948 using ex-RAF Sunderlands but ceased in 1950. Aquila Airways carried the flying boat torch also using Sunderlands developing new routes for the holiday trade until 1958.

Next at the lecturn was Dr. Jon Murden, from the Dorset County Museum recounting *The Ford Motor Industry in Southampton*. The Swaythling factory near Southampton airport was built as a 'shadow factory' for Cunliffe-Owen Aircraft Ltd. in 1939. These factories were part of the country's rearmament programme; (Cunliffe-Owen built one aircraft the Clyde Clipper OA1 which became Charles De Gaulle's personal transport) and then made Spitfire parts during the War. In 1949 the factory was purchased by Briggs Motor Bodies an American company which produced the pressed steel bodies that revolutionised car and truck production. Following the reduction of purchase tax from 66% to 50% on new cars in 1953 triggering a surge for ownership of new cars, Ford of Britain bought Briggs to ensure supply of bodies for their vehicles. In 1961 British and German Ford were forced to collaborate on the design of one vehicle, a van, which led to the birth of the Transit. Unusually for the time, they consulted both users and sellers, leading to an innovative design able to carry three standard pallets and 8' x 4' sheets of hardboard both horizontally or vertically. Production commenced in 1965 with body pressings from Southampton and assembly at Langley airfield (near Slough). Demand outgrew production and with investment of £5m production was consolidated at Southampton in 1971. During the 1970s there were 4,500 workers, producing 40,000 p.a. vehicles, with the one millionth figure being reached in 1976. By 1991 the four million total was reached and a market share of 20% (80% of which were painted White!!) and by 2010 75,000 p.a. were being produced. Production at Southampton ceased in July 2013 due to cheaper labour costs in Turkey, thus ending more than 100 years of Ford vehicle production in the UK.

Following the lunch break Dr Bill Fawcett of the Railway Heritage Trust presented a biography of *Charles Henry Driver: Railway Architect*. Best known for his involvement with Joseph Bazalgette in the design of Crossness and Abbey Mills Pumping Stations in the 1860s. Driver (1832-1900) was architectural assistant to Chief Engineer Charles Liddell on the first stage of the Midland Railway's London Extension from Leicester to Hitchin in 1855. The best example of his design being Wellingborough Station with elegant ridge and furrow platform roofing. That and the diamond pattern window glazing, would remain Midland Railway characteristics. From 1860-1863 he worked in the LB&SCR drawing office in Brighton and would have known Robert Jacomb Hood previously the Company's Engineer but since 1860 their consultant engineer, and this led to work in our area. He designed the 1866 rebuild of Portsmouth Station with a French

chateau frontage and ornate iron work surmounting the entrance canopy and roof tower. Stations for the Horsham, Dorking and Leatherhead Railway at Boxhill, (later platform canopies), Dorking (North) rebuilt in 1982 and Leatherhead are his design. The station at Leatherhead has polychromatic brickwork, round headed sash windows, an Italianate tower and a fine entrance canopy supported by original design slender iron columns. Unfortunately all the wonderful station canopy valances have been replaced as have the platform columns. Similar stations for the South London Line at Denmark Hill, Peckham Rye and, most notably Battersea Park (recently restored) show his superb ironwork designs. Cast by Walter McFarlane at his Saracen Foundry in Glasgow and who later retained use of the design(s) as evidenced by surviving catalogues. Groombridge, Tunbridge Wells (West), Eastbourne and Lewes stations are apparently Driver's designs. His last and most flamboyant work is Sao Paulo's "station of light" in Brazil (1897-1900). An excellent presentation of an architect I had heard about but not appreciated was so involved with the LB&SCR.

The second of the afternoon's presentations was by Chris Rule (GLIAS) on *IA in Paris*. Industrial Archaeology does not have the same interest and importance in France as in the UK; Paris does not have an IA society but retains much of its nineteenth century infrastructure such as railways, canals, public utilities, with much of IA interest, which Chris set out to show us. A compressed air (rather than hydraulic as in London) network was established in 1879, initially for powering and synchronising clocks and then for driving lifts, lifting equipment and small motors. By 1890 the main power plant, the building of which still exists, had been converted to generate electricity. The canal Saint- Martin instigated by Napoleon in 1802 to bring fresh water to Paris runs through the centre of the city and today is a popular tourist attraction with its iron bridges, hydraulic lifting bridge, locks and tunnel. Factories illustrated included Panhard-Levassor's (cars), Louis Vuitton's 1878 works, and intriguingly Meccano's, there because the tariff barriers, prior to the establishment of the EU, prevented foreign companies from economically competing, unless they manufactured in France. The last major structure in wrought iron (rather than steel) was the Eiffel Tower built by Gustave Eiffel but not designed by him. At No. 1 Rue Danton stands the Hennebique company's head office, a masterpiece built entirely of reinforced concrete by Francois Hennebique who patented his pioneering reinforced-concrete construction system in 1892 (using steel bars). An eye-opener for future visits to Paris.

The last of the days speakers was Dr Carolyn Haynes on *Burseldon Brickworks*. The brickworks were built in 1896/7 on a new site in lower Swanwick which had massive resources of clay and sand and for transport arteries the Portsmouth & Southampton railway and the River Hamble. Owned by the Ashby family of

brickmakers its express aim was to produce millions of bricks per year and be capable of production throughout the year. Most brickworks were seasonal at this time. Clay was initially won by hand as the pits increased in size and was transported to the works by a narrow gauge railway system. In 1935 mechanised extraction started with an overhead cable system to the works. The works was steam powered and at its peak, in the 1930s, produced 20 million bricks p.a. and employed 150 workers. A horizontal steam engine powered a vertical pugmill which extruded clay sliced into bricks by a wire cutting facility. This original equipment made by Bennett and Sayer of Derby was capable of making 40,000 bricks per day. The green bricks were barrowed to a huge drying shed and stacked on a raised slatted floor heated by steam from the work's boiler. A continuous 12 chamber kiln fired the bricks, one chamber always loading and another emptying with fire moving around the 12 chambers. The works closed in 1974 when operated by Redland being unable to meet Health and Safety at Work regulations and by which date the workable clay was mostly worked out. Listed Grade II* in 1980 and it is now an industrial museum. A visit is proposed by SIAS to this fine museum in August.

The conference was one of best I have attended over many years, with good facilities despite a few niggles with sound reproduction and all the presentations and speakers were excellent – a hard act to follow!!

The 2016 SERIAC will be hosted by Surrey on 23rd April at Holy Cross Preparatory School, Kingston, subject to confirmation.



The delegates assemble for the SERIAC conference (*Martin Snow*)

Visit to Marlow Ropes, Hailsham

John Blackwell



Hailsham has long been a rope making town with historically eight rope walks each about 75 yards long, in the town. In 1807 Thomas Burfield set up his rope works on or near the site we were visiting. In 1830 George Green, an employee, left Burfields and set up a rival works in Summerheath Road, Green Bros (who made the hangman's rope until 1953). In London's docklands at Millwall Hawkins and Tipson established their works in 1881 and bought out both Green Bros. and Burfields in 1941 and 1953 respectively to expand their business.

At that time ropes were made from natural fibres; hemp, manila, and sisal. Traditionally the fibres were roughly plaited into a skein which was wound around the spinners waist and spun into yarns by attaching the end to a hook in the end of a roller which was rotated by a rope attached to a large wheel. A rope boy turned the wheel and the spinner walked backwards down the rope walk feeding the fibres through his hand and pulling them out so they spun together. Six or more yarns were then twisted into strands. The yarns were laid out down the rope-walk and attached to hooks around a wheel, mounted on a moveable sled, which when turned twisted the yarns together. The final stage was to twist, in the opposite direction, the strands together into a rope. The strands were attached to a single fixed hook at one end of the rope walk and at the other end to hooks around the wheel mounted on the sled. Rotating the fixed hook drew the sled back twisting the strands together into a rope.

During the 1950s synthetic fibres such as nylon and polyester started to be used and in 1957 Hawkins & Tipson commenced production in Hailsham under the Marlow brand primarily for yachting usage. Expansion and change of ownership led to the current Marlow Ropes Ltd. and a new purpose built factory. Today some 45% of output supplies the yachting industry particularly the high end racing as well as for more traditional uses in arboriculture, film studios, defence, and the

health and safety industries. Synthetic fibres are bought as yarn on bobbins. The bobbins of yarn, often of different compositions and colours, are placed on banks of spindles and the yarns drawn off through a register plate (a metal plate with a series of holes in concentric rings and into a compression tube which twists the strands in an opposite direction to the yarn twist. The strands are then fed into a closing machine where each strand passes through a rotating die which twists the strands into a rope. Braided rope consists of a core twisted or plaited into a sleeve of multicoloured 'braids' by a machine which has the working appearance of a maypole dance where the individual yarns are plaited around the central core (the pole). There were many more machines to see, but to be honest, they all looked very similar and a noisy environment made explanations difficult to hear but nevertheless exhibited an almost mesmerising panorama of whirling bobbins and extruding multicoloured end products. An interesting visit to a working factory the history and processes which were fully explained by our knowledgeable guides Paul and Alastair.

Following lunch we visited Michelham Priory giving an opportunity to see the house, gardens, watermill (which is still grinding flour) and also the collection of historic rope making equipment, originally from Green Bros. Although the captions were minimal it was easy to see these were the ancestors of the machines we had seen that morning at Marlow Ropes. However the biggest question posed was "Who ate all the sausages!"

Our thanks to Martin Snow for arranging yet another interesting day.



The rope production factory, the test area is at the bottom right (*Martin Snow*)

St. Mark's Church, Brighton

Ron Martin

How can the experts get it so wrong?

St. Mark's Church in Eastern Road, Brighton was built in the 1840s to provide facilities for the lower class of person such as servants of the big houses in Sussex Square. It was a comparatively modest building in Early English Gothic Style with a tower and spire. The walls were of bungaroosh¹ and the whole was plain rendered externally and lined out to imitate ashlar. This is confirmed by reference to the photograph below, dated 1860². In 1877 an extension was built comprising the lengthening of the chancel and adding a south transept. This was carried using coursed and squared rock-faced Kentish ragstone. The architect was W. Gilbee Scott and he presumably realised that the original nave and tower looked plain and dull as compared with the new work and he instructed the plasterers to apply an additional coat to simulate the real stonework of the extension. This was only applied to the south and west elevations, the north being left in its original plain state.



St. Mark's 1860

Various experts have written about this church, viz:

In a book³ published before 1877, it was referred to in a newspaper article as “An ugly stone edifice” but was also described as “stucco”. The latter is correct.

Nicholas Pevsner⁴, who is normally very reliable, described the walls as “Terrible stone facing”. Stone of course, only applies to the extension which is actually quite well built.

Anthony Dale⁵ says “Faced in Roman cement, in imitation of stone and with stone quoins.” This is probably correct as far as the Roman cement but the alleged stone quoins are also rendered and he makes no mention of the real stonework which predated the additional coat of rendering.

Nicholas Antram⁶ describes “The walls surprisingly are concrete cast in blocks to resemble ragstone”. The extension “sits comfortably with the earlier work which uses Kentish ragstone”; his implication is that the ragstone was later than the rendering whereas it is actually the other way round. .

Nicholas Antram⁷ later repeats this but adds “This is probably the church in Brighton constructed from William Ranger’s artificial stone.” Ranger had previously done work in Brighton notably the Pepper Box in Queens Park but St. Mark’s is definitely not concrete blocks and anyway, by 1877 Ranger had given up on use of his concrete due to opposition by the Royal Engineers.

How all these authorities can get it so wrong is beyond belief. One can only conclude that they did not look at the building they were describing, unlike a certain industrial archaeologist and former quantity surveyor has.

The other mystery is that the architect to the 1877 extension, W. **Gilbee** Scott, uses this very strange second Christian name. I do wonder whether he adopted this name to give the impression to clients that he was one of the **Gilbert** Scotts, who were very eminent church builders in the 19th century and who all three – two Georges, father and son and one Giles, grandson, all used the second name of Gilbert.

References

1. This was confirmed to me by the builder who was working there in the 1990s.
2. In the St. Mary’s Hall School archive at the Keep there is a photograph titled St.Marks 1860.
3. *The Churches of Brighton a book, Volume III* deposited at the Keep ref. SB280 SA9, pp. 109-133
4. Nicholas Pevsner and Ian Nairn, *The Buildings of England, Sussex* (1965). p.433
5. Antony Dale Brighton Churches (1989) pp. 97, 98
6. Nicholas Antram and Richard Morrice, *The Buildings of England, Brighton and Hove* (2008), p. 152
7. Nicholas Antram and Richard Morrice, *The Buildings of England, East Sussex* (2012) p. 158

All Gas and Gaiters

A Gasworks in a Cathedral City

Alan H J Green

The first of the *Mystery Photos* in *Newsletter* 166 was of a piece of wall just a few minutes away from my hovel, and a very important piece of wall it is too : it is the sole relic of Chichester's gasworks, and features an unconventional building material. (please also see the illustrations on the back cover)

Let there be light...

Nineteenth century Chichester was a one-horse town whose corporation had some rather antipathetic attitudes to new – and even not so new – technology: for example they did not concede that there was a need for a sewerage system until 1892, despite successive cholera outbreaks. As such, it may seem strange that Chichester was amongst the first towns to be lit by gas, which it was in 1823. The reason for this was undoubtedly because the Corporation were not a party to it as the Guardians of the Poor had been charged (perversely perhaps) by Act of Parliament to light the city's streets way back in 1753¹

At the start of the 19th century this lighting was by means of oil lamps attached to buildings which, according to a contemporary description, gave only as much light as a candle.² The Guardians of the Poor decided to improve the situation and in 1821 promoted a Bill to light the city with gas which, with the support of the MP William Huskisson, was enacted³

...and there was light

In December 1822 the Guardians entered into a 21 year contract with James Ward and Major Ainger to supply this service, they being required to provide 'not more than 100 iron pillars...on or near the kerbstones' to carry the gas lights.⁴

Ward and Ainger bought for £400 a piece of orchard ground on the east side of Stockbridge Road which abutted newly-constructed canal basin to the south and, on its east side, a new road now known as Basin Road and cathedral lands belonging to the Prebend of Bracklesham.⁵ Conveniently the coal for the gasworks could come all the way by sea without the need to transfer the cargo from ship to road at Dell Quay. The canal basin was some distance from the Cathedral, and at that time was also remote from habitation, so the inescapable pong of gas production would not give rise to too much public nuisance. On this land, Ward and Ainger spent '£6,000 and upwards [on building] a gasometer [sic] and works, buildings and erections for lighting and supplying the City of Chichester with gas'⁶

John Marsh, that great recorder of the goings-on in Georgian Chichester, wrote in his journal in April 1823 that erection of the gas holder and pipe laying in the streets commenced about Lady Day. He records having first seen the streets lit by

gas the following October when he returned from his travels, describing the effect as “strikingly brilliant” Then, in November 1824, he records that an intrepid Mr Green*, set off from the gasworks in a balloon filled with gas and managed to reach Steyning. Mr Green was obviously not a smoker.

Ward & Ainger sold the enterprise, and assigned the contacts and agreements with the Guardians of the Poor, to Robert Whitehouse and Archer Thomas Upton in July 1831 who in turn sold it on to Messrs. Irving, Benness, Adams & Co. in November 1844⁷ This ownership was also short lived for in June 1868 Robert Mark Church of Weymouth purchased the undertaking and obtained an Act to set up the City of Chichester Gas Company, as a body corporate, with a capital of £18,000 to be raised in £10 shares. The Act also empowered him to extend the works and area of supply.⁸

As we have seen, coal initially came in by sea and canal, but after the railway arrived in 1846 economics dictated that rail was a cheaper option, and sidings were installed south of the station for this. The coal had to be unloaded from rail wagons and transported across the road in carts, a laborious process which could be eased by a direct rail connection. To this end the LB&SCR included in their 1876 Bill the provision of a connection across Stockbridge Road into the gasworks. Chichester Corporation vigorously opposed this section of the Bill opining that:

“The existing level crossing of the Company [i.e the LB&SCR] is a present production of much inconvenience and delay to traffic entering Chichester by the Selsey road... if the powers sought are granted... the inconvenience and delay will be so seriously augmented to lead at times to an almost total cessation of traffic in the Selsey Road.”

In the light of today’s traffic congestion in Stockbridge Road this seems a piffling objection, but the Corporation succeeded in defeating the Bill and no such connection was ever provided.⁹

An Edwardian postcard view of Chichester from the canal with the enlarged gasworks in the background. The chimney to the retort house and one gasholder can be seen, along with the buildings flanking Basin Road
(Author’s collection)



* Not a relative, as far as I know

At some time after the remodelling, a new high wall was built around the site, composed principally of recycled retort linings. These linings were glazed firebricks, curved to match the inside of the retorts, which had a limited life and thus needing frequent replacement. The intense heat caused many of them to vitrify and thus become very weather-resistant; the ideal - and free – building material! The Gas Company obviously marketed this plentiful brick alternative to local builders for it is to be seen in several houses and garden walls around the city.



A piece of retort lining, once part of the gasworks wall, which somehow found its way into the author's garden. The curvature can clearly be seen. (Author)

The end draws nigh

The City of Chichester Gas Co. suffered the ignominy of being taken over by a Bognor organisation, the Bognor Gas & Electricity Co., in 1939, but gas was still produced in Stockbridge Road.¹¹ Following nationalisation of gas supplies in 1948, gas continued to be made here by the Southern Gas Board (SGB), until 1958, when production ceased, and gas was imported from the Portsmouth Gasworks at Green Lane, Fratton.

All the buildings were demolished but the two gasholders remained in use. The south end of the site was sold to the GPO who built a new sorting office there, which opened in 1964. This caused the demolition of the sections of wall in Basin Road and Canal Wharf, along with half of that in Stockbridge Road. The north end of the site remained in use by SGB as a maintenance depot, even after the arrival

of North Sea Gas in 1970 brought about the demise of the gasholders, but in 1996, the now-privatised British Gas, withdrew and sold the site to McCarthy & Stone for redevelopment as retirement homes. This required much site remediation to remove the nasty by-products of gas making which had leached into the ground, and brought about the destruction of the last section of the wall facing onto Stockbridge Road. However, way back in 1964 one tiny section of the wall in Basin Road had had a reprieve as it still served as a boundary wall to an adjoining private house – and it stands to this day as a souvenir of 135 years of gas production in a cathedral city.

Envoi

A few years back I carried out much research into Chichester's gas and electricity industries and the lighting of its streets, but never got around to writing it up. The *Mystery Photo* challenge has reawakened my interest and I will use best endeavours to produce an article and offer it for the next *Sussex Industrial History*. This will include the rise of the electricity company and the resultant turf wars to which I have alluded. In the meantime this short account can act as what I believe is termed a 'taster'.

On seeing *Newsletter* 166 I quickly phoned the editor to claim my prize for identifying the *Mystery Photo* but, as always, was disqualified. This seems a bit unfair as I suspect that had he not been on one of my walks around the canal basin he would not have known it was there – or what it was! (You got to write about it! Ed.)

References

1. 26 Geo II Cap 99, 1753 *An Act for the Better Relief and Employment of the Poor and for enlightening the Streets, Passages and Open Places within the City of Chichester and several Places adjoining thereto and the Close in the Said City*.
2. WSRO MP19 Memoires of William Hoare.
3. The resulting Act is lost – there is not even a copy in the Parliamentary Archive!
4. WSRO Raper Uncatalogued Box 96 Case for Counsel in a 1911 dispute about removal of the lamp posts recites articles of agreement with Ward & Ainger.
5. WSRO Raper Uncatalogued Box 101, Abstract of Title to the gasworks site 1867, which recites earlier leases.
6. *ibid*
7. WSRO Raper Uncatalogued Box 96 *op. cit.*
8. 31&32 Vict Cap lxxvi *An Act for better supplying with gas the City of Chichester and adjoining Places; and for Other Purposes*.
9. WSRO C/13 Chichester City Council minute book 1825-76.
10. The Gas Company produced an illustrated brochure extolling the virtues of their investment. There was a copy at Chichester District Museum.
11. WSRO AddMS 13019 Agreement between the Bognor Gas & Electricity Co. and the City of Chichester Gas Co.

Book Review

Brian Austen

Peter Longstaff-Tyrell, *Turnpike Territory* (2nd edn. 2009)

Eastbourne Local History Society pp 40 £4.25

The author of this publication looks at the development of turnpike roads east of Lewes which were:

The Glyndebridge Turnpike of 1759 which connected Lewes to Alfriston, but from 1780 abandoned the last section and attempted to provide alternative connections to Hailsham and Eastbourne, and its successor the *Lewes to Eastbourne Turnpike* of 1819. The two schemes provide a complete contrast. The first typical of its date was merely a scheme to take over existing parish roads aimed to connect as many villages and hamlets en route as possible. It was suitable for local traffic only and effected few real improvements to the alignment or surface of the road. Its poor financial return made it difficult to raise new funds for its authorised extensions to Hailsham and Eastbourne.

The Lewes to Eastbourne Trust of 1819 was a complete contrast. It employed the renowned John Loudon McAdam to survey a direct line of road, avoiding diversions to serve villages on either side, and levelling and straightening the road alignment. McAdam recommended one of his followers, J.W. Campbell, to carry out and supervise the work. The confidence in McAdam's guidance made the raising of the necessary funds relatively easy, and the holders of turnpike mortgages in the old Glyndebridge Trust were eventually forced to sell their interest to the new Trust at a discount of 60% from the original investment price. The new Trust was able during its lifetime to pay its mortgagees an attractive 5% per annum on their investment with the return of all or most of their funds when the Trust was eventually wound up in 1879.

This publication throws light on the histories of the two Trusts, their routes and toll houses and has copious illustrations including map extracts. It attempts to trace the route of the abandoned Glyndebridge Trust with photographs of buildings and features still surviving. It also deals with a scheme since 2006, supported by EC funding, to develop sections of the turnpike into a route for cyclists and walkers. The book differs quite considerably from its first edition of 2006. The cover boasts "eight pages extra" which are used not only to provide additional photographic illustrations, but the text of the previous edition has been revised and rearranged to quite a considerable extent also. Even if you have the first edition it would be well worth adding the new one to your bookshelf.

Mystery Photos

Do you know your IA?



You may know what this is,
but where is it and
what is its history?

Where might you find other
similar ones?

(Ron Martin)

Update

Newsletter 166 had two mystery photos, the piece of wall is in Chichester and is built from the broken lining of the former nearby gas retort, see the article by Alan Green elsewhere in this issue and a colour image on the back cover.

The other image was of the former Dovecote in Motcombe Gardens, Eastbourne.

Please keep your eyes open for unusual features on your travels, or it may be something you see every day, but the rest of us are unfamiliar with.

I am always looking for examples of our IA heritage. If possible, let me have a picture, either for this feature or to provide inspiration for a future article(s).

Endangered Sites

Saltdean Lido Work has now started on the first phase with the erection of a new plant room and paving to the southern area of the site but it has now been discovered that the main pool is leaking and will require extensive repairs. The original hope of getting the pool open this summer has now faded.

No.15 North Street Brighton The Planning Application for demolishing this building has now been passed by the council, but as it is listed Grade II it will need to be referred for approval.

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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*



The last remaining section of Chichester's gasworks wall in Basin Road.

In full 'technicolour' showing the retort linings.

See the article on the gasworks, in this Newsletter (AHJ Green)

A plan of Chichester Gasworks dated 1871, still more or less as it was built.

The dotted areas to the south are the coal staithees used by coal merchants.

See the article on the gasworks, in this Newsletter (WSRO)

