

Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter



**Brighton and Hove Motor Manufacturing Industry
Isetta Great Britain**

Number 186



April 2020

Newsletter 186

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Editorial

Welcome to *Newsletter 186*. I am sure that you don't really want yet another reminder of the times we live in, so first the bad news - All events are of course cancelled or postponed until better times.

As you are able to read this, our printers are still functioning and the postal system continues. Please be prepared to not receive the next *Newsletter(s)* in print.

In order to stay in touch please advise our membership secretary of your current email address, *even if you think he may already have it*. If you do not have a personal email then perhaps a friend or neighbour could help. Please send (even if you think he may already have it) to Peter Holtham :- pandjholtham@virginmedia.com

All email addresses will remain strictly confidential and will only be used for society communications.

The website will also be updated with information :- www.sussexias.co.uk

Unable to go out for an image for the front cover, I have staged one of a model Isetta (Bubble Car) made by Oxford Die-cast, with a model waterwheel behind, this is IA (history at least!), a kit I bought and built as a teenager over 50 years ago and is in fact still manufactured.

Do please stay safe.

For updates - Visit our website - www.sussexias.co.uk

Forthcoming SIAS Events

All planned activities have been cancelled

Please see next *Newsletter* for possible visits from August

Events from Other Societies

Malcolm Dawes

All notified events cancelled until further notice

Brighton and Hove Motor Manufacturing Industry

Isetta Great Britain

Report by John Blackwell

January's evening meeting welcomed Duncan Cameron author and 1950s car enthusiast. Following the end of WWII, motoring for the general public was almost non-existent due to cars being mainly manufactured for the export market, petrol rationing, three gallons per month until 1950, and purchase tax for new cars at 66%. However for motorcycles, defined as a vehicle with less than four wheels (motorcycle and sidecar) and weighing less than eight hundredweight purchase tax was only 25%.

An opportunity was seen by those who had factories equipped for war production to venture into the microcar market of three wheeled vehicles, the most well known, among many, (many of which also failed) was the Bond Minicar in 1949 and the Reliant Regal in 1951. Abroad the 'Bubble Car' so called because of its egg shape and bubble like windows, made of plexiglass, appeared as the Messerschmitt Kabinenroller with its obvious aircraft cockpit appearance in 1955. The second element in the Bubble Car concept was the bonnet less front end. Italian Renzo Rivolta inherited the Isothermo Company in the 1940's, a refrigerator manufacturing company but he only wanted to make cars and set his designers to work. They produced a small car with a forward opening door to which was attached a swivelling steering column, the Isetta, (an Italian diminutive meaning little iso) in 1953. Not a success in Italy it sold well in France Belgium Spain Brazil Argentina and Germany but Rivolta wanted to make supercars (which he eventually did) and sold the manufacturing rights to BMW in 1954, who following the end of the war had found little demand for luxury cars. They re-engineered the car with improvements to the suspension and steering and equipped it with a purpose built 247cc, later 297cc, air cooled four stroke engine. The car was very popular in England and as BMW also did not want to make small cars they looked for a British concessionaire. For an unknown reason Dunsfold Tools of Brighton fitted the bill and became Isetta of Great



Isettas at lovers walk awaiting dispatch

Britain in 1956. They took over part of the locomotive works ¹ which had closed in March 1957 and six weeks later, after setting up an assembly line designed by BMW, started production with a workforce of 200 mainly ex loco works employees. The first order was 1,000 vehicles for Canada. All parts had to be brought in and assembled cars sent away by rail as there was no road access to the works. Every week on a Saturday, bodywork pressings, components and engines arrived by train from Bavaria sufficient for 250 cars. Later some British components were used e.g. Lucas headlamps. Twice a day, Monday to Friday eight flat bed wagons each loaded with three cars left for a London goods yard, after returning eight empty wagons. Left and right hand drive versions with 3 or 4 wheel configuration were marketed, the 3 wheel being the most popular in the UK due to purchase tax advantage. The advertised cruising (top) speed was 50mph with petrol consumption of 70mpg. Production of Isetta's had peaked between 1956 and 1959 following the Suez crisis in October 1956, when petrol rationing was reintroduced, but the launch of the Austin Mini in 1959 and the opening of the Preston bypass in 1958, foreshadowing the motorways to come, led to the closure of Isetta GB in 1961. According to a blue plaque near Isetta Square in Brighton a total of some 30,000 were produced at the nearby former loco works site. BMW took over the remaining components and moved to part of the Fryco soft drinks factory on the north side of Victoria Road Portslade until closure in 1964. Coincidentally Fryco was nearly opposite the current BMW dealership. Microcars however soldiered on with Reliant taking over Bond and finishing production in 2001; we all remember 'Del Boys' Robin.



Isettas leaving works

An excellent presentation by the author of *British Microcars 1947-2001 Shire Publications 2018* which was much appreciated by an attentive audience.

¹ *I would be interested to know which part of Brighton works was used by Isetta GB. The Isetta Owners Club from a photographic survey in 2002 seems to assume it was in the lower goods yard but this is incorrect as there was no rail connection between there and the works and old photos show completed cars leaving the works.*

Postscript

Following questions, Nick Kelly former Bond Minicar driver recalled that the first non official cars to use the Preston By-pass, were three Bond Minicars. The following description of the event comes from Wikipedia.

In a publicity stunt for Sharp's, (manufacturer of the Minicar) three Bond Minicar Mark Es, two Saloon Coupes and a Tourer, were the first cars to drive along Britain's first motorway, the Preston By-pass, when it opened on the morning of 5th December 1958. The Sales Department thought it would be a good idea for Bonds to be the first in the line-up when the T.V. cameras recorded the opening. (The Bonds were actually not the first to arrive as an Austin Healey Sprite had already beaten them to it. However, after a bit of negotiating and no doubt some financial recompense, the Sprite owner obligingly moved over and the Bonds lined up as planned!) The idea was for the first and third cars fitted with only 197cc engine to hold up the traffic by blocking both lanes (the Preston By-pass was only a dual carriageway when it was first opened) whilst the second car, a Tourer fitted with one of the new 247cc engines would pull out, overtake the first car and speed off into the lead, ready to be photographed by the BBC. But the plan back-fired, because the Bond beat the camera crew to the bridge where the shot was to take place! Consequently, the evening news only showed the second and third Bonds amongst the traffic on the opening day.

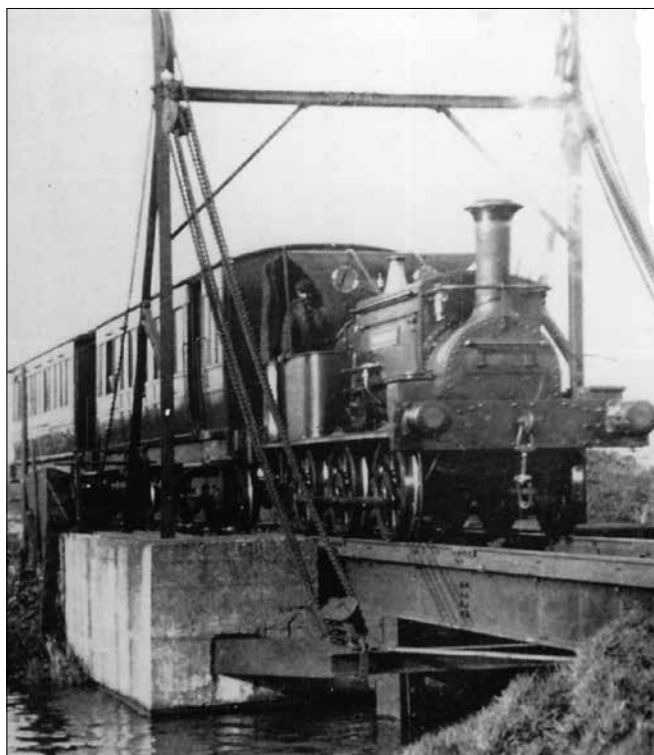
The Selsey Tramway – with Joe Whicher

March Evening Meeting – Report by Alan Green

The final talk in our winter series was a highly informative talk by Joe Whicher on the most eccentric railway in Sussex; the Selsey Tramway, brainchild of that most eccentric railway engineer, Lt Col H F Stephens, and just one of the 16 light railways forming his empire.

Authorised under the Light Railway Act of 1896, this seven mile line joined the small fishing town of Selsey to Chichester in the hope of opening up the town to expansion and establishing it as a resort to rival Bognor. There was a physical connection with the LBSCR at Chichester but this was for exchange of wagons only – the LBSCR Appendix to the Working Timetable expressly prohibited its locomotives from crossing the boundary for fear of getting derailed and damaged.

A Light Railway order enabled the niceties of signalling and level-crossing gates to be dispensed with, and trains were driven on sight at a maximum speed of 25 mph. As such it was formally titled *The Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway* rather than as a railway, even though its first trains were formed of coaches hailed



0-6-0T *Sidlesham* crosses the canal bridge with a train for Selsey, (Alan Green collection)

by locomotives rather than being trams per se. The line was very lightly laid and had only two engineering features; an overbridge carrying the Chichester Road at Selsey¹ and a half-basculer bridge carrying the line across the Chichester Canal at Hunston². This bridge was raised by hand-operated windlasses and required the operators to wind at exactly the same speed to avoid the bridge wracking and jamming. There was no deck so to get to the other side the bridge-men had to tightrope walk along the head of the rail.

The line opened in 1897 to Selsey Town and the following year was extended half a mile to Selsey Beach, but this last was not a success and the station closed on the outbreak of WWI and never reopened. In 1913 The Colonel proposed to extend the line with branches to Itchenor and the Witterings, but the war rather put paid to that too.

A member of the Colonel Stephens Society, Joe is well versed in The Colonel and his ways and pointed out that he had managed to achieve the rank of Lieutenant Colonel simply by leading a desk rather than a regiment, and the secret of his success was cunning and cost saving. His house at Tonbridge still exists, but for some unaccountable reason the current owners refused to allow the blue plaque to The Colonel to be attached thereto, so it had to be installed at Tonbridge Station instead. Right from the start the line got a reputation for unpredictability and became something of a comic turn as the post card demonstrates. Any resemblance between the advertised service and what happened on the day was purely coincidental. One reason for the unpredictability was the frequent collisions with horseless carriages on the ungated level crossings, and another was regular derailments owing to the poorly maintained, lightly laid track. In 1910 The Colonel even pioneered the concept of a replacement bus service when the sea wall at Sidlesham got washed away in a storm and the line was inundated. The bus was horse-drawn. There was some freight traffic, including coal inwards to Selsey Gasworks and exports of Mr Pullinger's famous mouse-traps, of which some two million were made in the town. Some of the trains were mixed, and passengers on such trains had to sign an indemnity form absolving the company of any claims in the case of an incident in return for the 'privilege' of being allowed to travel - even though they had paid the full fare. Who but The Colonel could have got away with that?



In 1923 The Colonel embarked upon a modernisation plan, replacing loco-hauled passenger trains with railcars. These consisted of pairs of petrol-driven buses on flanged wheels, coupled back to back with a luggage trailer in between. The first pair were Model-T Fords and the second were made by Shefflex of Sheffield. My father travelled on these and told me how noisy and rough-riding they were, and how the saloons filled up with exhaust fumes. As part of this modernisation the undertaking was rebranded *The West Sussex Railway* which was a tad ironic as the rolling stock now, to all intents and purposes, consisted of trams. It did not become part of the SR at the Grouping as the latter decided it would cost too much to bring it up to standard, so it remained independent.

Sadly the line was not a great success; Selsey never managed to rival Bognor (which should not have been that hard to achieve!) and the introduction of the rival Southdown bus service, which was more comfortable and reliable, caused the line to close in January 1935. The entire assets were put up for sale by auction by Wyatt and Sons and realised £3,160, being bought as one whole lot. The track was lifted and sold for scrap but the canal bridge remained as the wily Colonel had managed to get it vested in Chichester Corporation who rented it back to him for £2 per annum. As such the girders remained in situ until 1942 when they were recycled as a pipe bridge in Bognor following enemy action.

After detailing the history of the line, Joe took us on a tour of what remains to be seen today and a look at some of the many railway-carriage homes on Selsey front. Numbered among these are several Pullman cars and members will recall an interesting visit we had to Selsey in 2015 when local historian Bill Martin took us on a tour and pointed them out. Most are now encapsulated in later constructions and so not immediately obvious to those not in the know. Joe also recalled a major SIAS contribution to the history of the line, namely the installation of a short stretch of track on the abutment of the said canal bridge and its ceremonial 'reopening' in May 2009.

The presentation ended with a rare short film clip of one of the railcar sets in operation, in which we see the driver attempting to start the beast and having to resort to standing on the starting handle to get the engine to turn over. We then see it lurching out of Chichester on route to the sea.

This was most enjoyable evening, made more pleasurable by Joe's clever mastery of the many effects possible with Powerpoint, but sadly the coronavirus crisis badly affected the attendance.

Please see rear cover for illustrations

¹ See SIH 37, 2007 pp 19-23 ² See SIH 31, 2001, pp24-27

The Trials of Getting Listed : Chichester Bus Garage

Alan H J Green



Fig 1 Chichester Bus Garage seen from Basin Road, the subject of the most recent SIAS listing attempt. (Alan Green)

In *Newsletter* 183 (July 2019) I penned an article under the title *SIAS – and the Importance of Being Listed* in which I outlined the listing process and reported on the Society's recent successes in getting industrial buildings and structures listed. In the same article I also lamented my earlier failure to get the important Chichester bus garage listed.

The roof of this garage is as an early example of thin-shelled pre-stressed concrete design by the legendary Arthur Goldstein of R Travers Morgan & Partners, on which, as it happens, the late Robin Wilson had worked as a young site engineer in 1956. The prototype for it was Bournemouth Bus Garage, designed by Goldstein for Bournemouth Corporation in 1950 and which was the first thin shell in the UK. The Bournemouth garage was already listed and my first application failed since, at the time, English Heritage were loath to list more than one example of anything – seemingly even more so if, as at Chichester, it was owned by a local authority.

After I had submitted my *Newsletter* 183 article, Chichester District Council published the results of the consultation on its so-called *Southern Gateway Master Plan* for an area of the city that includes both the bus station and garage and which indicated that the latter had been earmarked for redevelopment. The building is on the Chichester Local List but this gives no statutory protection, it merely makes its local importance a material consideration in the planning process. In the light of this the SIAS Committee decided that a new attempt at listing should be made and I was allocated the task. There is a welcome change of attitude at Historic England (as they have now become) towards transportation buildings, and as the bus garage was under threat it seemed worthwhile making another attempt.



Fig 2 The interior of the garage on the occasion of the SIAS visit in 2016 which shows the unobstructed operating floor afforded by the clear-span roof. (Malcolm Dawes)

I made the on-line application in April 2019, and included some useful information provided by Robin. I also pointed out that the building was now under threat of demolition. A very prompt acknowledgement was received and I was assured that it was receiving attention, but at the same time politely reminded that a previous assessment had resulted in non-listing. However, they did suggest that my application could be strengthened by further photographs, especially of the interior, along with ‘any further information about the history and architectural significance of the building you may be able to find’. As it happened Malcolm Dawes had taken some interior photographs during the SIAS visit in 2016 so I sent these in, along with another report in which I gave reasons why the Chichester garage was significantly different from - and superior to - Bournemouth, and thus worthy of listing. This included the fact that at Bournemouth the wave-form of the roof cannot be seen as it is hidden away behind a parapet, whereas at Chichester it is flaunted as it overhangs the side walls, ending with a canopy over the entrance.

Nothing more was heard until July when I was asked another question and advised that they were beginning their assessment of the building – all very heartening! An inspector visited the site incognito and in September Historic England sent their report out for consultation. Consultation on listing applications involves not the general public but only interested parties, including in this case the Twentieth

Century Society and, of course, the owner of the building, Chichester District Council. As I reported in my listing article, SIAS is now a consultee for industrial buildings in Sussex so I found myself in the unusual position of being consulted on my own application! I was, needless to say, very fulsome in my support but at the same time corrected a couple of errors they had made. Doubtless Chichester District Council were equally fulsome in their opposition as the listing would seriously hamper their plans.

All then went very quiet until, on 19th February 2020, I received notification of the decision. The decision was that the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture Media and Sport had decided not to add Chichester Bus Garage to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Now I don't suppose for one minute that the said Secretary of State, the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, a lawyer in a past life and previous personal advisor to David Cameron, had proffered any learned opinion on the matter, even if he had understood what thin shell meant. He would merely have gone along with the recommendation made by Historic England and signed the death warrant.

The appended seven-page report, dated 17th February, contains a very detailed description of the building but the conclusions make for disappointing and rather surprising reading. It analyses all the arguments for listing but then goes on to dismiss them, and summarises the reasons for refusal as follows:

Despite being little altered and having a rhythmic curvilinear shell roof, overall it is a typical post-war building that does not meet the very high architectural and structural interest required for a bus garage of this date.

Although designed by the innovative engineer Alfred Goldstein, it is a later and evolutionary example of his concrete shell work and used technology that had already been established in other similar buildings.

The bus garage is representative example of the post-war public transport system in Chichester and West Sussex but this does not constitute historic special interest. All through the analysis, comparisons are made with the Bournemouth garage which was held up as being both the progenitor and exemplar, thereby obviating any need to list another example of Goldstein's work.

The Southern Gateway Master Plan

Just before Christmas 2019, Chichester District Council received tenders from potential developers to take their Southern Gateway scheme forward, and have announced that Henry Boot is their preferred bidder. The contract has not yet been awarded so their proposals are being kept tightly under wraps. Intelligence received though is that all four tenderers had proposed demolition of the bus garage so its fate seems to have been sealed. Other listed and locally-listed buildings are also



Fig 3 An extract from the Southern Gateway Master Plan; an aerial view looking north from the canal basin over the redevelopment area.

The distinctive roofline of the bus garage is seen centre right.

potentially under threat. Demolition of the bus garage roof is going to be ‘interesting’ though for with all that energy stored in its highly-stressed thin shell, lumps of concrete could be flying off in all directions. I am glad that The Grumpium is not in the firing line.

Envoi

Sadly, not only does the Secretary of State’s decision ensure the loss of this fine structure, for SIAS the listing would have been a fitting local tribute to the early work of Robin Wilson, engineer of distinction, who went on to become President of the Institution of Civil Engineers and whose passing we mourned last November. Still, at least we tried; I suppose it is better to have tried and lost than not to have tried at all...

Subscriptions are now due

Unless you are paying by Banker’s Standing Order
your Subscription became due on the 1st of April 2020

The rates remain unchanged at £15 for full membership, plus £5
for a Family membership, Junior and Full Time Student membership.

Cheques payable to S.I.A.S. should be sent to me :-
Peter Holtham, 12, St Helens Crescent, Hove, Sussex BN3 8EP.

Early payment would be appreciated.

Should you wish to pay by bank transfer our bank details are:-

40-47-25 61345680 HSBC Worthing
if a reference is required, quote your post code.

SIAS Annual Film Nite - 22nd February 2020

Report by Mike Slamo

The usual Martin Snow presentation of old films was eagerly awaited by the 45 members and friends who assembled wondering what the evening would bring.

They were not to be disappointed as Martin commenced the evening with a short film of the RAF fly past over the Farnborough Air Show in 1958, led by our late president, Sir Freddie Sowrey, in whose honour this was shown, a fitting tribute. It was from his personal archive and showed the formation of 90 Gloster Javelin fighters, viewed from overhead, providing unusual footage. Unfortunately, there was no sound to this clip, so we did not get to hear Sir Freddie's commands..

This was followed by the start of the show, proper, and a short film of 1896 by the Lumière Brothers of a train arriving at La Ciotat station, in France, hauled by a Crampton 0-6-0 with a consist of varied 4 wheel carriages. The styles of clothing were a fascinating study. Given the age of the film, the clarity was remarkable.

Having started with aircraft and railways, the inclusion of seagoing vessels as the third film showed the eclectic mix of the evening. This film showed the arrival of a super tanker named Paul R Tregurtha arriving at port to take on 64,000 tons of cargo. At 1,000 feet in length the vessel made an impressive entry, with its route in, lined on both sides by onlookers. Having passed those assembled, the ship performed a 90° turn before entering the dock, showing the workings of the self unloading system, and how few people are actually required to carry out the loading/unloading of such a gigantic vessel. The film ended by showing a sister ship, the Walter J McCarthy Jnr leaving the following day. The wake caused by the ship's passing was shown to good effect, especially when the bystanders got drenched by the waves crashing over the side of the harbour walls.

The next two films were of waterways, the first showing the workings of an Anderton Lift, this being an Alan Barton film, whilst the other was a much more unusual way of transferring a vessel from one canal to another by use of ropes and a railway line, this example being on the Elblag Canal, Poland. Whilst a much slower process of transfer, it was a much more ingenious method of moving barges from one canal level to another without the barge becoming airborne.

Not to be left out, the next short clip involved aviation, and an attempted landing at Heathrow by a British Airways Boeing 777 during storm Ciara. The resultant strength of the wind caused the landing to be aborted, giving rise to a "Touch and Go" which, even on a successful lifting off, showed some veering of the aircraft to the right, which, given the weight of a 777 showed the power of the wind.

This was followed by a much more sombre film showing the power of water. In this case, it was a Tsunami in Japan, and whereas most films will show the water

pouring in, this one showed the aftermath. The devastation was absolute, with nothing escaping total destruction that lay in the path of the oncoming tsunami. Houses upside down, vehicles (including HGVs) piled on top of one another, cars up trees. All streets and roads completely littered with debris, this was a stark reminder of the power of water that one would not normally consider to be a problem. The people looking for anything that might resemble what was there before, together with people being brought out by the emergency services (with no hope of survival) added to the starkness of this clip.

It was then back to the power of wind, with a compilation of wind turbine crash failures, showing just how vulnerable these machines are. They have a propensity to catch fire (from the oil used) with alarming consequences. Not only do they tend to blow apart at the business end (at the top) but they collapse or topple over causing a total loss, to say nothing of causing damage to the surrounding area.

Somewhat more light heartedly, The next clip was a revisit to a bridge which, last year was known as the 11 foot 8 bridge in the USA, which has now been raised by 8 inches to become the 11 foot 8 + 8 bridge. Despite the warnings, accidents are still regular, although not, seemingly, quite as severe. With the railway company unable to raise the bridge further(?), and pipe work preventing its being dug under to provide more headroom, it seems that this may become a regular feature at future SIAS film nights.

There followed a film on the work of the late Bill Axel. For those who don't know him, he latterly had a table inside a shop in Queens Road, Brighton, on which he made small, glass animals, which earned him the name of "The Glass Animal Man". The interest in his work was worldwide, and we were shown children lining up with their faces pressed to the shop window, watching him at work. One young lady used to visit the shop annually with her parents produced diagrams of designs for Bill to produce, but some of them did not work due to the smallness of the animal (problems with ears, noses etc). I know of a Canadian family who visited the UK regularly, the main reason being to visit the glass animal man for which they would travel specially to Brighton to see. Bill's name is perpetuated on the front of a Brighton & Hove bus, having died some years ago.

From close to home to Cambodia where followed footage of a railcar in Phnom Penh described as the fastest and shortest train in the city, running from the centre out to the airport. The driver was very "horn happy" appearing to take great delight in prolonged sounding of the horn at every opportunity.

Still on an eastern theme, two short films followed with a Russian flavour. The first was a medley of shots of ex-soviet diesels which appear to have been converted to burn Polish coal. The thick black smoke being emitted would have done any steam engine proud and gave the distinct impression of somewhat dodgy engine

units. This particular short film was dedicated to Greta Thunberg, but I am not sure she would have appreciated it! The second was of an electric locomotive ascending a steep incline, whose train was so heavy it caused the loco to stall. It appears the stall occurred over a level crossing, for within seconds a stream of people appeared from underneath one of the freight cars and before long, the trickle became a steady file of folk appearing from both underneath and through the sides, crossing the track. As the last of them disappeared, so the locomotive found the strength to restart the train.

Then on to something even more bizarre, some guy had converted a Ford Transit to a rail vehicle and we followed him on a journey from his base to the end of track. Along the way, the horn was sounded frequently emitting tunes appropriate to emergency vehicles. On arrival at the other end, we were all left wondering if it had a reverse gear for the return journey. It soon became clear however, that it did not need a reverse gear, as, having had two sleepers placed underneath, a screw jack was then deployed until the vehicle was clear of the track, and was pushed round through 180 degrees to face the way it had come. The screw jack and sleepers removed, the driver then wended his merry way back to where he had started from..

A rather nice short then followed of a steam bus ascending a steep hill, which it managed to do without seemingly being in too much trouble. The best bit was the sound it made, very reminiscent of a small steam engine working very hard.

Then something more unusual. A film of the last gravity ropeway in the U.K, being the Claughton Aerial Ropeway, located six miles north east of Lancaster. Dating from 1924, little has changed since then. The ropeway is used for carrying crushed shale (clays that have been compressed under pressure during formation until they have nearly hardened into slate) from a quarry, a mile and a quarter distant, and 750 feet above, the Hanson owned Claughton Manor Brickworks. This continuous ropeway carries some 40 buckets, and is powered by gravity,. the extra weight of the descending loaded buckets pulling the empty buckets back up to the loading point. The ropeway is carried over 26 steel trestles, each with four pairs of pulleys mounted on frames at the top, over which the rope passes. The buckets are suspended from a hanger which has two free running wheels, being held fast to the rope by two clips. As a bucket approaches the top or bottom station, the wheels engage with a rising bullhead rail to lift the clips off the rope. The bucket is then free to run along this rail, allowing it to be manually controlled during the loading and unloading, onto a conveyor processor.

A scene reminiscent of a Will Hay silent movie then followed, being shot at Blaenau Ffestiniog on an inclined plane, with slate quarry workers travelling on special contraptions(?) enabling them to travel down the incline in style. It seems one chap stopped a bit more quickly than he intended at the bottom, and, being brakeless,

all those following piled into him with the resultant pile up ensuing. Hopefully, nobody was hurt!

The evening wound up with a series of adverts, the first three being for cigars (that could not happen these days) involving Russ Abbot all being very amusing. The fourth, for woodpecker cider was a stark reminder of the state of our local roads at this time. Some chap, waiting at a bus stop at a dip in the road, said dip being full of water, with a knowing look in his eyes, saw this car driver accelerating down the hill toward the dip and at the appropriate last moment, disappearing down a pothole in the road. At this point, said chap at bus stop produces a pint glass of Woodpecker Cider with a sort of smile on his face that said "another free pint"! The end came far too quickly, and after a vote of thanks to Martin, he was bidden back next year with another selection. Can't wait. Thank you Martin.

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Kempshall's Brick and Tile works. Partridge Green Fred Avery

Last year I came across a ledger and handbill relating to this brickworks. Mollie Beswick's *Brickworking in Sussex* gives the following information, (page 197 of the 2010 reprint), strangely under the gazetteer for West Grinstead where I noted all entries for Partridge Green are listed.

Situated south of the high Street at NGR TQ 193 191

Called Westland Brick Yard on the O.S. map of 1874, described as Brick, Tile and Pottery Works from 1887 and closed in c1952.

Charles Kempshall advertised from 1882 to 1903 followed by Edwin Kempshall until 1930. The yard had been sold c1925 to Alfrey's of Pulborough who operated it until its closure.

MARCH 1st, 1911.			
M. D. KEMPSHALL,			
(Late E. KEMPSHALL).			
The Potteries,			
PARTRIDGE GREEN, SUSSEX.			
—♦—			
REDUCED PRICES.			
<u>100</u>			
11/1	Best Kiln Bricks	- - -	£5 10s. per 1,000
10/6	Seconds	" - -	£5 5s. "
11/6	Paving	" - -	£5 15s. "
12/6	Coping	" - -	£6 5s. "
15/-	Bull Nose	" - -	£7 10s. "
<u>100</u>	TILES—		
9/6	Dark Roofing Tiles	- - -	£4 15s. "
9/-	Red	" " - -	£4 10s. "
3/6	Dark Ridge	" " - -	9d. each
3/6	Red	" " - -	8d. "
2/8	Small	" " - -	7d. "
2/8	Dark Valley	" " - -	7d. "
2/10	Red	" " - -	6d. "
2/10	Hip Tiles	" " - -	6d. "
3/5	Angle	" " - -	9d. "
<u>50</u>	LAND DRAIN PIPES—		
3/3	2-in.	- - -	6/6 per 100
6/6	3-in.	- - -	13/- "
10/-	4-in.	- - -	£1 "
	6-in.	- - -	7d. each.

However the handbill dated 1931 shows M.D. Kempshall probably Edwins son so possibly the sale was made later. The ledger for 1930 shows sales over the area of Steyning and Henfield to the south and Horsham to the north.



Southwick Station

(October 2019 Newsletter)

Nigel Divers has provided some additional comments.

The field gun opposite the station (not strictly the forecourt) was a trophy presented by the Government after the Great War. Normally it is said to have been German but I have heard it suggested that it was Austrian.

The hand crane at the Shoreham end reputedly came from the wreck of a ship named Vandalia c1880, but I do not have a firm reference. Given the extended bridge abutment to form a working area at the end of the platform and that the brickwork appears to match what I believe to be an original bridge, I do think that there was indeed a crane here from an early date. Southwick was a major oyster producer and the Grange Road bridge was the nearest to the oyster beds. It would be surprising if there was no way of getting the oysters on the train.

Coultershaw Update

A lot has been happening at Coultershaw so we thought it would be helpful to update you.

The Tuesday gang have been working hard on repairing the water wheel. They have been able to do some investigation into how it was originally put together which has been of interest, whilst also finding a workable solution to fix worn parts together so that they will hold the wheel in place on the axle. This has not been helped by the recent floods.

Others in the gang are building a sound insulated roof to go over the Archimedes screw. This will be pitched and slated to match the engine house.

We are hoping that with the help from the Leconfield Estate the roof of the south warehouse will be restored, Once this is done, the Tuesday gang will be able to refurbish the remainder of the building. We are in the process of seeking funding from a variety of sources to allow us to progress the South Warehouse building and exhibition project.

A working group is being formed to develop the Coultershaw 'offer' - both in terms of more school days and a wider curriculum offer - and how we best develop exhibitions and displays for the extra space that the south warehouse offers. This will then inform grant applications and shape the physical layout of the space in the south warehouse. Tony Sneller is heading up this group with Michelle Clifford leading on the school's days. Barry Flannaghan will be leading on the building project.

We are doing two school days this year and aim to extend our catchment area bringing in more schools. We also aim to develop a curriculum that will attract secondary schools - so if anyone has secondary school teaching and could help develop curriculum ideas based on the resources at Coultershaw we would love to hear from you.

The Estate have been helpful by clearing the area to the south east of the warehouses and tidying up the trees giving a far larger car park and will also clear an area to give more parking space near the Pump House

We are beginning to adopt a revised logo and strap-line to refresh the branding of the Heritage Site. So many people who stop to visit Coultershaw Heritage Site, are amazed at the size of the site and how much there is to see and do, so we have decided to use this as a marketing tool, and have hit on the slogan Big little Coultershaw. This needs a professional tidy-up but we have already used it on our new leaflet.

Since receiving this, all volunteering has had to stop, as has income from visitors.

I am sure the group will appreciate your support now and in the future. (Ed)

Littlehampton Articles from the Sussex Weekly Advertiser and Lewes Record 1761-1800

Littlehampton Local History Society monograph No 8

Compiled by AMJ Chapman 2000

Extracted by Geoffrey Mead

This A4 volume is the result of many arduous hours [I know...as I have done similar] trawling the archive of two 18th century county newspapers. AMJ Chapman has compiled a chronological record of events pertaining to the port and infant resort of that period at the mouth of the Arun; although the reports range far from the town in some cases and must reflect the association of a Littlehampton resident or activity with that particular press notice. What follows is a taster of the rich vein of material within the archive, of items that have SIAS interest; however as my personal interest is in developing a wider spectrum of topics in the industrial history field, I have included some items that have a connection to the larger economy of the district, which in the case of coastal Littlehampton is fishing, cargo-carrying, incipient tourism and...smuggling! A very great deal of the latter and too much to record all of in this article.

2/2/1761

“We hear that last Thursday se’nnight [seven nights], Captain Clare of Littlehampton, laden with timber, was taken by a French Privateer, just as he got out of the port.”

29/8/1763

“Last Friday se’nnight, as two fishermen were out at sea, off Selsey Island, one of them in that violent storm, was blown overboard and lost, but the other got safe on shore with his boat.”

18/2/1771

“On Tuesday night last was seized by Captain Roberts of Shoreham, 250 half-ankers of Brandy, Gin and Rum and 17 bags of fine tea, on the beach near Rustington, and carried to Arundel Custom-house. The longboat was likewise seized.”

[Anker, a small cask or runlet containing 8 1/3 gallons, which in this country is now obsolete. The anker is still, however, a common liquid measure in many of the Continental states, varying from 7½ to 9¼ gallons.]

30/3/1771

“On Friday last, as some men belonging to a vessel, which lay at Littlehampton, in this county, were loading her with heavy timber, their tackling gave way, by which accident one of the pieces fell on the captain of the said ship, and killed him on the spot.”

14/4/1777

“Littlehampton, Sussex, to be let and entered immediately at Littlehampton aforesaid a neat dwelling house and garden...the house is very convenient for bathing, being near the sea... and fit for a genteel family... nothing need be said in favour of the place, the situation being so well known, for the frequent resort of the Gentry to bathe, lying so contiguous to the sea.”

9/3/1778

“Saturday se’nnight were seized by Messrs. Foster and Broad, Riding Officers, assisted by tree dragoons , near Littlehampton, 150 casks of Geneva and rum, six bags of Tea, five hundredweight of Tobacco, and (to use the Smugglers phrase) a Trifle bag, containing silk handkerchiefs and other articles, valued at fifty pounds, all of which they lodged safe in the Arundel Custom-house.”

19/7/1779

“Last Monday, a sloop belonging to Mr Davis of Brighthelmston, laden with oats, from the Isle of Wight, was taken by a French lugger, close under the shore at Little Hampton. The slop’s crew, having no other means of escaping, took to the boat and got safe ashore.”

11/7/1782

“Speedy and expeditious travelling from Chichester to Little Hampton, Angmering and Brighthelmston...inside passengers to pay 3d per mile and be allowed 14lb weight of luggage; all above to pay one Half-penny per Pound...”

23/6/1783

“To be sold by private contract at Little Hampton about three hundred and thirty quarters of exceedingly good MALT. For particulars enquire of Samuel Henty, Rustington near Little Hampton”

4/8/1783

“NAVIGATION of the River Arun. Whereas the Commissioners of the Harbour of Littlehampton called Arundel Port, in the County of Sussex, have received many applications for calling a Meeting of the Owners of Lands and others, who wish to obtain an Act of Parliament for extending the Navigation of the River Arun from Palingham[sic] to Newbridge; they do therefore give Notice that such Meeting will be held at the George Inn in Arundel on Tuesday the 12th Day of August next at Eleven o’clock in the Forenoon when and where all persons willing to subscribe towards obtaining such Act and carrying the same into Execution are required to attend. John Holmes Clerk

5/1/1784

“NAVIGATION. Whereas at a Meeting of several of the proprietors, Owners

and Occupiers of land adjoining to the River Arun in the County of Sussex held at Petworth the 13th day of December last, it was agreed that the amending and improving the Navigation of the River Arun would be of great public Utility...the next Meeting will be held at the house of ABRAHAM SAKER bearing the sign of the SWAN in Pulborough.

6/2/1786

“Last Monday morning as eight of the persons employed in widening the River Arun were crossing it to their usual labour, their boat [being capable of carrying no more than three in safety] sunk, by means of which two of them were drowned, and a third so nearly shared the same fate, that he was not out of danger on Tuesday; since which we have not heard of him.”

29/1/1787

“Such considerable improvements have of late been made to Arundel River from the liberal contributions of the Duke of Norfolk, that the consequent increase of trade may be considered as a source of wealth to that place.”

5/5/1787

“last Saturday se’nnight as the captain crew of the ‘Millbank’ brig in the coal trade, were returning from shore in a boat to their vessel, lying off Ellmore [Elmer], near Arundel, in this county, the boat overset, when the captain, going down under the boat was, unfortunately, drowned. The crew saved themselves. They had been onshore for the purpose of selling their cargo at Arundel.”

30/7/1787

“HARBOUR OF LITTLEHAMPTON. The Commissioners of the Harbour of Little-Hampton called the Port of Arundel, in the county of Sussex, in Contradiction of many groundless Reports, do hereby inform the Public, that the said Harbour is in better state than it has been in for several years past, and is greatly improving; and also that the said Pier dues of the said Harbour are reduced by one HALF. By order of the Commissioners, John Holmes, Clerk to the Commissioners.”

4/2/1788

“To be sold by auction on Friday next, the 15th instant, at Three o’clock in the Afternoon, at the Dolphin Inn, in the parish of Littlehampton, in the County of Sussex, One Eighth Part of the good Brigantine PETWORTH British built, about 100 tons burthen, and now lying in the Harbour of Littlehampton, where she may be viewed any time till the Day of Sale. For further particulars enquire of Mr JEREMIAH SCARVELL of Littlehampton aforesaid.”

To be continued....

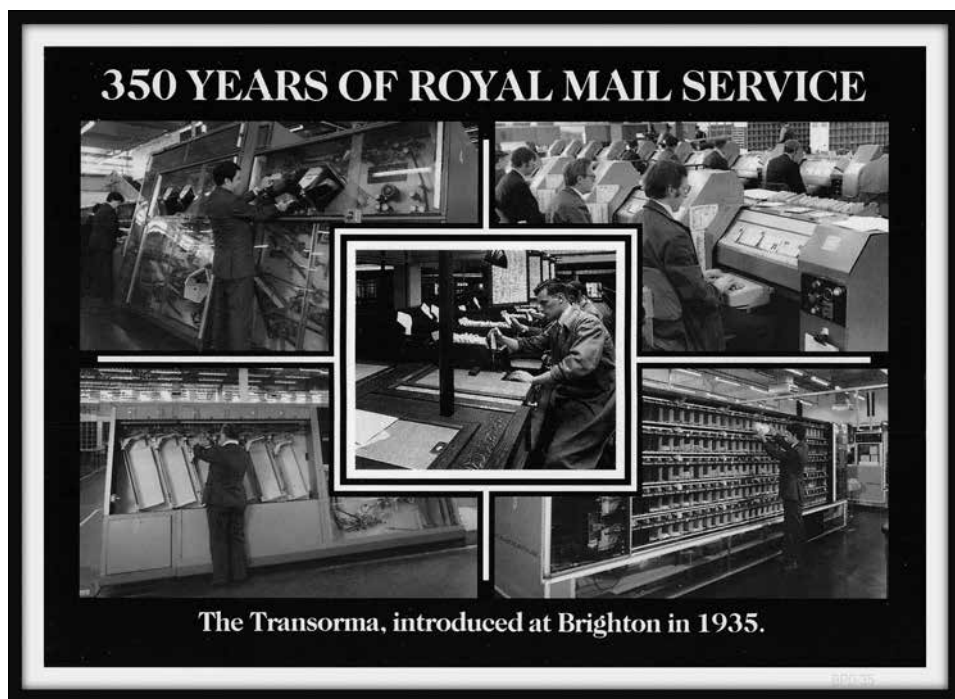
Mystery Photo

Do you know your IA?

The location of the track featured in *Newsletter* No.185 is at Cuckmere Haven, exposed by recent storms. There was a narrowgauge line running along the valley from a depot near to Excett Bridge. This was to collect shingle, that is still carried to the mouth of the Cuckmere by longshore drift.

The railway went out of use in the 1960s. (thanks to Derek Eager for info)

~~~~~  
**85 years ago**



~~~~~  
NOTE

*I fear we will all be in lockdown and not able to go out viewing IA for some time.
However I am sure you all have a stock of images from past trips that
you now have plenty of time to sort through!*

*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.*

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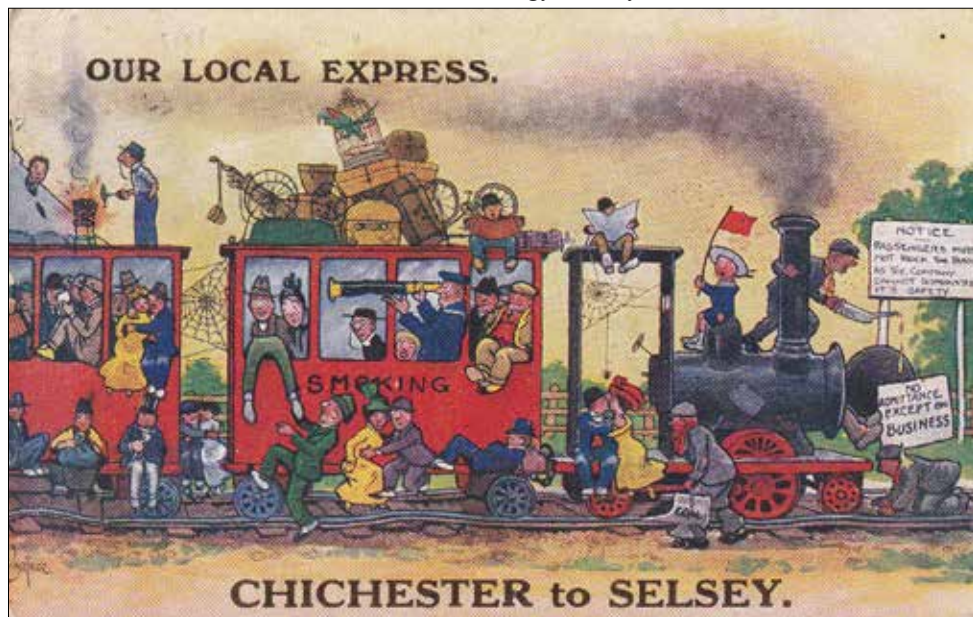
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Subscribing to the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society gives automatic membership to the Sussex Mills Group

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



See page 6. A picture postcard lampooning the line. It is post-marked 1917 (Alan Green collection)



See page 6. The driving-in of the final golden spikes on the re-opened canal bridge with Laurie Cooksey, author of the definitive two-volume work on the Selsey Tramway, John Mills, WSCC Archaeologist, the late Linda Wilkinson and our bowler-hatted Chairman, John Blackwell. (Alan Green)

