

The production of gunpowder during the 18th century was for two markets, one being the use of blasting powder in mines and quarries. The London Lead Company were using this in their northern mines by 1740 and as slate quarrying expanded in the Lake District in the 18th century, the powder making industry became established on the rivers Kent, Leven and Brathay: these lasted until 1937. The southern industry was for military purposes, the main branch being at Faversham in Kent which served Woolwich Arsenal and Chatham, closing in 1937. Outliers of this industry were at Chilworth near Guildford from 1625-1920 and in Sussex around Battle, Sedlescombe and Maresfield. Most gunpowder firms merged into Nobel Industries, after World War One and became part of ICI in 1926 when the gunpowder manufacture was concentrated on the Ayrshire coast.

References:-

- A. Raistrick 1972 Industrial Archaeology
B. Austen, D. Cox, J. Upton 1985 Sussex Industrial Archaeology: A field guide
Glens Crocker 1985 A guide to the Chilworth Gunpowder mills
P. Pagnamenta 1985 All our working lives

GEOFFREY MEAD

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Copy of the Newsletter should be sent to:

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PLEASE NOTE Latest acceptance date for copy for the October Newsletter

is 10th SEPTEMBER 1988



CHIEF CONTENTS

- Area Secretaries' Reports
Read all about it - Brighton 1821
The Royal Pavilion - Brighton
Restoration of Hangleton Manor Dovecote
Amberley Chalk Pits Museum
Brighton & Hove Herald Photo Archive Index (cont.)

DIARY DATES

- Saturday, 16th July, 10.30 p.m. All day visit to Steyning led by J. Sleight. Talk on history of the area. Walk around the town and visit to the water mill. Bring packed lunch or sample the local pubs which do good food. Contact D. Cox 0403 711137. Send SAE for Factsheet.
Saturday, 24th September, 10.00 a.m. Visit to I.A. sites in the Surrey area (mainly in the Guildford vicinity). See separate item.
Saturday, 19th November, 2.30 p.m. Annual General Meeting. Held at the Friends Centre, Friars Walk, Lewes.

Please note that Don Cox has assumed the role of co-ordinator of visits and no longer arranges them (bar one). Please contact the person named against each visit for further details, and let him know beforehand if you will be attending.

CHATHAM HISTORIC DOCKYARD

Several of our members were among the 200 or so who attended a day at Chatham Historic Dockyard organised by the Council for Kentish Archaeology on Saturday 9th April.

We were welcomed by the Mayor of the City of Rochester-upon-Medway followed by an introductory talk by Lt. Gen. Sir Steuart Pringle formerly Commandant General of the Royal Marines and now Chairman of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust.

Sir Steuart spoke of four phases which it was hoped would make the place alive again. Phase I was the refurbishment of older properties such as the officers' terrace and the erection of new ones to be sold or leased as dwellings so that families would be living within the dockyard area; this would of course provide some income for the Trust.

Phase II was the development of the museum both under cover and outdoors as there were many facets of the history of the establishment which should be shown.

Phase III was to encourage small firms to set up businesses in various trades, preferably of a maritime nature.

Phase IV was to set up a water related leisure centre and an educational centre to assist schools with projects concerned with the history of the Royal Navy.

Our day was to be apportioned to the dockyard buildings in the morning with shipbuilding and associated trades after lunch, each with an appropriate lecture followed by a walkabout.

The talk on the buildings was given by the surveyor of the Trust, Richard Such whose opening remarks referred to the state of the properties when taken over by the

Trust. There was no list of buildings, date of building or reconstruction, "weatherproof" state etc. Their first priority was therefore a limited survey to determine the priorities.

The first priority was the dockyard church in which our lectures took place. The places where water had poured into the building as a result of blocked gutters and downpipes were still clearly visible, although the general appearance of the interior was a credit to those who had tackled it. A steady programme exists for the weatherproofing and restoration of the other buildings.

It was a cold, blustery April day with the odd snow flurry. We were split into parties of about 30 each with a guide to see the buildings referred to in the lecture. One of the most impressive buildings was the Commissioners House built in 1803 and now almost completely restored. This was used as the residence for the Admiral commanding the dockyard. It has a very fine staircase with painted ceiling, a garden to the rear, and a good view of the berths to the front.

We were also taken to see the Ropery Building, a quarter of a mile long and built in 1786, the Smithery Shops (1806), the Mast House and Mould Loft, a timber framed building built in 1753 believed to be from timber of ships broken up at Chatham. We were taken inside these buildings in the afternoon.

After lunch the Curator of the Dockyard Trust, Richard Holdsworth, spoke of the industries carried on in the dockyard. The first ship to be built at Chatham was in 1586 and the last in 1966, and the most famous, HMS VICTORY launched in 1765. In the mid eighteenth century there were 700 shipwrights, 110 smiths, 190 labourers and 180 ropemakers working from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. There were many others employed in the Mast House and Mould Loft, Lead and Paint Mills and the various storehouses.

We split again into our various parties to visit the buildings where these industries were sited. The Mast House which has the Mould Loft above was fascinating, being one of the oldest buildings in the complex. The size of some of the timbers used is incredible, some 18" x 12" x 40' in length. On the floor of the Mould Loft, the designs of the skilled workers for templates of parts of ships and their rigging were still visible.

The Smithery will be refurbished by 1995, so it is not possible to get to see all of it at present, there being a walkway construction for visitors over only a small part of it.

The Ropery is a going commercial concern and was in action, manned by seven of the former dockyard staff. Ropemaking in Chatham can be traced back to 1618. The complex consists of the Hemp House (1729), extended in 1749 and 1812 to include the Spinning Room on the upper floor. The Yarn Store, Tarring House and Hatchelling House were added in 1786. We were also shown the machine used to test the breaking strain of rope.

The Trust has been fortunate in securing HMS GANNET built at Rochester in 1878 as she is (or will be when restored) a fine example of a vessel which could be propelled by steam or sail, and built partly of wood and partly of iron. We were able to board this vessel in the dry dock where restoration work is taking place.

The Council for Kentish Archaeology are to be congratulated on arranging such an interesting day out.

LESLIE MARTIN

VISIT TO SURREY

The Surrey Industrial History Group have arranged an interesting full-day programme to significant sites in the area between Guildford and Dorking. Members participating in the visit will first view the Godalming water turbine. They should meet outside Kenedy & Donkin's office in Borough Road, Godalming at 10 a.m. This visit will take about an hour. Our next venue will be to either Shalford Mill or Albury Mill and the call will occupy the time to lunch. We are advised that the Percy Arms at Chilworth offers a good choice of food and is near the starting point for the afternoon visits. The

first of them will be to the Chilworth gunpowder mill site. After the visit we will head in the Dorking direction to view the Stationary Engine Museum at Westcott.

It is anticipated that the visit will end at 4.30 p.m.

VISIT TO MIDHURST - SATURDAY 21st MAY 1988

Nineteen members (and friends?) set off from North Street through the oldest parts of Midhurst. One of many notable buildings is the Library, a fine timber-framed structure which may once have been two separate cottages of different dates. Inside, the upper floor has been removed revealing the roof timbers. West Street had an outbuilding said to have stored Baltic ice imported via Shoreham. Near the Post Office, Rice Bros. saddlery, makes hand-crafted leather goods in its workshop for export.

Two railways with separate stations served Midhurst, from Petersfield and Pulborough. Station House, the former LSWR station master's house, still stands - much extended - as offices. The goods yard is now a small industrial estate. Beyond is the derelict site of Midhurst Whites Ltd., manufacturers primarily of pressurised (unfired) white bricks. Much brick-making machinery remains, together with a pressure vessel, and the rails, turntables and wagons of the narrow gauge works railway. Also still standing is a square, iron-bound brick chimney, in poor condition.

Access to the rival LBSCR station was originally under the railway bridge of which the abutments remain, but when the Chichester branch was built a new station was sited $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away. There the sole remains are an LBSCR inscribed stone and the tunnel entrance.

Nothing now remains of the canal basin, close to the old town, or the adjacent gas works but the large pond stored water for the Rother Navigation and drove a fulling mill (now a cottage). A stone bridge (date stone 1794) spans the Navigation between the canal basin site and the nearby River Rother, and the towpath is still evident.

Up river the wrought iron gates to Cowdray House had been moved from the town end of the causeway to make way for the bus station. Nearby, next to a cricket ground where the MCC(1) were playing, the Round House (octagonal!) used to be the lead-lined conduit house storing fresh water for Cowdray House. The source of water is not known - maybe a spring in a nearby meadow occupied by a score of attentive bullocks and heifers.

Further upstream was North Mill, formerly with two breast-shot wheels, later turbine-powered, where millers were named Bartholomew, and Gwillim of Coultershaw Mill.

Many thanks to John Blackwell, our guide, and Vic Mitchell who devised the tour and lent two of his books, for a varied and most enjoyable walk.

(1) Midhurst Cricket Club

BRUCE AND CHRISTINE SMITH

READ ALL ABOUT IT - BRIGHTON 1821

Recent research in the Brighton Gazette of the 1820s has thrown up various references which members may find of interest. Local news reports at that time reveal much of the economic and industrial life of the town and when linked with the paper's adverts and other primary sources a more rounded view of Brighton outside of the Court circles becomes apparent.

Just one year - 1821 - shows us that North Street was already a road of smart shops - tea dealers, picture framers, Italian foods, a hatter, and that the Old Town still contained the industries associated with the town's main transport interchange - the beach! Mr Best at 19 Ship Street "coal, hay and straw", Mr Ashurst coal yard Middle Street "a sale of plank" and at 63 Middle Street another coal and timber yard valued at £55 rent. Until the 1960s there were timber yards in Middle Street and coal offices in Ship Street.

In the industrial area north of the Old Town we see in an advert Richard Patching's mortar yard in Portland Street - still there - and at the gloriously named Sanguine Hope Row the transport was stored in the "Marlborough Mews - well secured with outer gates which completely enclose the yard". "Mr B. Webster Calenderer (hot cloth presser) scourer and dyer" was at Bread Street in the Home Furlong, North Laine. Some of the dangers of the industrial zone were apparent when on 8 February 1821 was reported "a fire was discovered in a building adjoining Bond Street Row, the lower part of which is appropriated for stables and the upper part used as a joiners shop ... the fire originating from the joiners shop ... workmen melting glue". Bond Street was a dangerous area - "Mr Boxall cabinet-maker was at work in his shop in Bond Street, a trap door 16 ft. from the ground floor not being properly secured, he fell through but providentially escaped injury.

Transport figured in the adverts for the London coach services with the Royal Sussex and the New Dart coaches charging "£1 inside, 10/- outside". A news item a couple of weeks later reported "some coaches from London do the trip in 4hs. 20m." although this was exceptional as The Dart and The Sovereign advertised 6 hours to London with a 6 a.m. start - not Sunday. At a meeting at the Old Ship on 15th February a proposal was made for "a new road to the Port of Shoreham and also for laying down an iron railway" (it was 19 years before the latter was built).

Newspapers of the period thus make a valuable adjunct to the documentation of 'official' sources, Land Tax, rates, census etc. and provide the colour of everyday life; the news items in particular reflecting the concerns of Brighton residents which judging by their successors in the Evening Argus have changed remarkably little. Amongst others were complaints from the Commandant of Preston Barracks of huge numbers of prostitutes 'molesting' the troops at the Barrack gates, and complaints that street sweepers were not doing enough cleaning. A complete article on the absence of nightwatchmen in Grand Parade when gangs of youths rampaged at night could be word for word datelined 1988!

GEOFFREY MEAD

THE ROYAL PAVILION BRIGHTON

Much has been written about the internal decoration, furnishings and architecture of the Royal Pavilion, but little if anything about the structure. This is a brief note on the skeletons of the structures. Anyone wanting further details in the form of freehand dimensioned sketches of any of the structures described should ask Alan Allnutt.

Editor.

The unique group of buildings forming the Royal Pavilion complex was developed by the Prince Regent (later King George IV) as a Royal Palace. To suit his exotic taste, the architecture and internal decoration was in an extravagant oriental style. No concessions were made to simplify the hidden structural frames supporting the minarets, domes and pagodas.

In 1787 George Frederick, Prince of Wales, acquired a farm house as his residence, this was extended and finally converted into a palace by John Nash between 1815 and 1822. Nash was probably the only architect at the time to build with cast iron, already in common use by engineers. He had built several cast iron bridges and patented their design details. At Brighton he also used laminated timber ribs and pre-stressed timber beams.

The Banqueting Room and the Music Room

At each end of the pavilion building there is a room 58 ft. long by 40 ft. wide, stepped in to 32 ft. wide 8 ft. from the ends. Both are surmounted by 36 ft. high pagoda roofs, stucco clad with timber vertical ribs convex downwards, set on a 42 ft. diameter cast iron ring bearing. This is supported on a square timber frame resting on brick walls on the long sides of the room, and on cast iron segmental arch ribs on the shorter sides. The arch ribs are 32 ft. span 8 ft. rise, in section channel shaped, 24 in. wide 6 in. deep. They rest on a timber tie supported on cast iron columns in the walls. At the corners of the timber frame the cast iron ring is supported on 16 ft. span squinch beams of four

12 in. by 12 in. timbers with a longitudinal cast iron insert at the centre intended to act as a flat arch.

The Reception Saloon and central Onion dome

Over a central circular reception room 33 ft. diameter, there is an onion dome 36 ft. maximum diameter, of 32 upright laminated timber ribs supported on a circular cast iron frame 9 ft. deep, with a 30 ft. diameter top ring and 35 ft. base ring, in turn supported on 16 cast iron columns built into the walls. Above the frame, 6 cast iron columns 12 ft. 9 in. high support another ring curb on which set 6 cast iron half trusses 18 ft. high, set radially, supporting the top of the onion dome and its surmounting 16 ft. high pinnacle.

The Minarets

Ten large minarets rise 48 ft. above the flat roof of the building. They have a cast iron hollow tapering core 2 ft. 6 in. diameter at base clad with Bath stone rings. Those over corridors are supported on four cast iron trusses 4 ft. deep at 2 ft. centres on cast iron columns in the walls.

Queen Victoria's Bedroom

The room known as Queen Victoria's bedroom has a heavy ornate plaster ceiling until recently supported by one foot square pre-stressed timber beams 26 ft. 7 in. span. The beams were halved vertically and sandwiched three cast iron T members to form a shallow internal truss, the timber being in tension. The iron members were compressed by drawing down wedges between them by screwing up nuts on square threads. Pre-stressed beams of this type, but with hardwood compression members and wedges were known by mid 18th century.(1)

The Dome

The building now called the Dome was a stable block designed in 1803 by William Porden to accommodate 44 horses and grooms. It is surmounted by a 41 ft. 6 in. radius 80 ft. span nearly hemispherical dome topped by a 15 ft. drain lantern, and clad in lead and glass supported on 20 laminated timber half ribs of three thicknesses of 8 in. by 3 in. timber. Unfortunately when the Dome was converted into a concert hall in 1935, it was given a false ceiling.

(1) Two were found in a building called The Dome, Hotham Crescent, Bognor, dating to about 1780. Architect unknown. Now at the Science Museum but not on display yet.

John Nash, Architect 1752-1835
William Porden, Architect 1755- 1822

ALAN ALLNUTT

HANGLETON MANOR DOVECOTE

After having been unoccupied since the late 60s, Hangleton Manor was purchased in 1982 by the present owners, Frank and Jennifer Saunders, as a public house and family home. They plan to restore it to its former glory. In its grounds stood a derelict dovecote without a roof. There was considerable local concern that not only the Manor but the dovecote should also be restored. Consequently the Hangleton Manor Dovecote Restoration Committee was formed in 1983 under the chairmanship of Mr Anthony Dale OBE FSA, Hon. Secretary of the Regency Society of Brighton & Hove and author of a number of books on the history and architecture of Brighton and Hove.

The Project Director appointed by the committee was the late Mr E.W. O'Shea FRICS who was a committee member of SIAS for a number of years. He enlisted the help of several members of this Society, Lewes Archaeology Group and Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society as volunteers to work under his guidance. Unfortunately Ted O'Shea died in August 1986 after being ill for about a year.

A new Project Director (Mr R. Vosper) was then appointed. Ron Vosper had worked

with Ted O'Shea for a number of years and also as a volunteer worker at the dovecote and was therefore a good choice as successor. It was apparent to all concerned that the restoration was taking a lot longer than planned due to the small number of volunteers who were able to work on only two days a week. In order to accelerate the completion, with the co-operation of Hove Borough Council, the volunteers were joined by Community Service workers from the Probation Service, who worked with enthusiasm for the project. Some of them continued to work as volunteers after their community service was completed. Our well-known member, Frank Gregory, made all of the wooden pegs (about 5,000 of them!) for the roof tiles.

The project was completed in April this year and the restored dovecote was officially opened by the Mayor of Hove on 7th May 1988.

A short book has been written of the History and Restoration of the Hangleton Manor Dovecote by two of the volunteers, Colin and Sheila Laker, together with Ron Vosper and compiled by Gordon Somerville of the Hove Borough Council. It is available from Hangleton Manor Hotel and Hove Town Hall at £1 per copy.

GORDON THOMERSON

TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS OF SUSSEX - CONFERENCE

The Sussex Archaeological Society annual history conference was held at Haywards Heath on 19 March. The day was spent in studying some aspects of the houses of Sussex which were mainly built during the 16th and 17th centuries in traditional building materials and styles.

Ken Gravett gave a detailed look at the structure of timber framed Wealden houses paying particular attention to the actual joinery of the construction. David Martin set these buildings in their social context amongst the woodlands and poor soils of his 'home-patch' - Hastings Rape. The size of the houses and barns precluded their being owned by farmers of small poor farms, rather the tanners, clothiers and ironmasters of the Kent-Sussex borders. After lunch Janet Pennington and Joyce Sleight did a 'double-act' steering us through the rooms and apartments of 17th century Steyning by means of wills and inventories. This was a most entertaining and scholarly excursion. Finally, Peter Leach gave an overall view of SAS property - minus the Long Man and Fishbourne!

A large number of people attended and spent large sums on the many tempting bookstalls. As always the most impressive thing about this SAS conference was the sheer scholarly weight of the occasion based on sound and painstaking research into primary sources and presented in an accessible fashion.

GEOFFREY MEAD

SUSSEX-SURREY 1888-1988 - CONFERENCE

On Saturday 12th March the Wealden Postcard Club held a one-day local history event at St. Pauls Church, Northgate, Crawley. As this event was on the same day as SERIAC at Guildford - many possible speakers were unable to appear - (which is why I was asked to speak ...!)

The organiser, Michael Goldsmith, kicked off with "Triumphs, Events & Disasters" illustrating the 100 years with postcards setting the period in its record of local and national events. Charles Kay looked at three Victorian growth towns, Redhill, Crawley and Burgess Hill, and how the railway aided their development. Before lunch we were taken on a shopping tour of Horsham by George Coomber who illustrated his talk with bill-heads from various local traders. After lunch Les Oppitz dealt with transport matters, trams, atmospheric railways, and trolleybuses included. I dealt with Brighton industry over the period linking the movement of industry with the change in transport; beach, railway, roads and the proposed Brighton By-pass.

Although the concluding speaker, Tony Wales, had to miss the day - on doctor's

orders - his slides were shown by Cecil Cramp using Tony's notes on Recreations & Changes in Country Life.

The day went off very successfully with postcard displays and sales, a local history quiz, and some tempting book stalls. From a small society such as this there was a wealth of knowledge and an unique postcard 'history' of the counties.

GEOFFREY MEAD

AMBERLEY CHALK PITS MUSEUM

Since the re-opening for the 1988 season, the Museum has been exceptionally well attended, achieving a 10-20% increase on last year's visitor numbers.

Most volunteers and staff are fully occupied with the day-to-day running of the Museum so progress on many projects has ceased until the winter. Nonetheless a persistent few are involved with on-going tasks.

The Smith Rodley crane engine has been further overhauled during the winter and has since undergone several successful public steamings. We only await replacement tables to become fully operational.

It is hoped to expand further the timberyard this year, by restoring and installing the interesting horizontal reciprocating racksaw from Cowfold.

The reconstruction of the Tangye gas producer plant is advancing well under the care of Phillip Marten.

Before long, it is hoped to expand our machine shop and to instal the massive Archibald radial arm drill and a recently acquired universal milling machine from Alford Wood & Sons of Mitcham.

The current Community Programme scheme is constructing a replica late 1920s motor garage. Work on the building progresses well but we do need assistance to restore petrol pumps, oil cabinets and other artefacts.

A new display for this season has been a reconstruction of Mitchell's printing works in Arundel as it may have appeared in the 1880s. "Mitchell's Monthly Advertiser" later became "The West Sussex Gazette", and the first papers were produced on a Columbian Eagle press, an example of which is featured in the display.

More volunteers are always welcome to join our friendly team in a wide range of tasks and projects.

MIKE WALL - CURATOR

THE PUMPHOUSE LUXFORDS FARM (see Newsletter No.58)

A note in the East Grinstead Bulletin No.43 reports that Miss D. Cheal recalls that this pumphouse was still working during the First World War, operated by Fred Judgen. By Christmas 1923, if not earlier, recalls Mrs A.M. Leppard, its work had been taken over by an hydraulic ram nearby.

THE LATE PROFESSOR E.O. TAYLOR

The death of Professor E.O. Taylor last October is recorded with regret. For some years he was Editor of Sussex Industrial History. It is hoped that a full appreciation of his involvement in SIAS will appear in the next Newsletter.

SIAS PUBLICITY LEAFLETS

We are enclosing two SIAS publicity leaflets with this Newsletter. We would ask members to place them in their local libraries with the librarian's permission or such other places where they are likely to attract new members.

BRIGHTON & HOVE HERALD (BHH) photo archive. Brighton Ref. Library (continued)

vol./page	8)	Southwick Landslide on north side of canal x 3 photos	21.12.57
38	9)	12 Danger to coast road at Kingston. High water near road x 3 photos	11. 1.58
		28 Railway exhibition at Hove 'Boxhill' tank engine	15. 3.58
		32 "Beachy Head" loco last run	19. 4.58
		43 Southwick power station Brighton B from sea	n.d. 1958?
		72 Mile Oak chimney shaft demolition	
vol.39		nil	
vol.40/	18	Last trolleybus in Brighton	8. 1.61
vol.41/	17	Train crash Kemp Town station	12. 1.63
	19	New England House opening, Brighton (flatted factories)	19. 1.63
	28	Hollingbury, New 220 ton machine at CVA factory	23. 2.63
	29	Paris cinema, Brighton	2. 3.63
	86	Oldest steam loco on B.R. named Bodiam going to Kent & E. Sussex Railway	11. 4.64
vol.42/	40	Pullars instrument factory Hollingbury	15. 4.65
	101	Southwick harbour timber wharf	1966
vol.43/	1	Newhaven swing bridge	19. 3.65
	4	Newhaven harbour low tide	14. 5.65
	8	Newhaven harbour west bank	30. 7.65
	8	Shoreham view of Brighton A power station	6. 8.65
	9	Patcham mill	13. 8.65
[There are two volumes numbered 43]			
vol.43/	20	Portslade gas works lit up at night	24.11.65
	30	Shoreham, view East from sea shore - all 3 power stations	11.10.68
	31	Newhaven Lighthouse	22.11.68
vol.44/	26	Shoreham harbour, Brighton A and schooner in harbour	25. 4.69

I.A. Index completed

BOOK REVIEW

A Guide to the Buildings of Brighton published by McMillan Martin, no author (School of Architecture and Interior Design, Brighton Polytechnic) no date (1987) £4.95 152pp.

"Invaluable, irritating, not always accurate". This quote on the final page sums up this volume - unfortunately the authors use it not for that purpose but to describe the standard work on Sussex buildings: Nairn and Pevsner!

This book is best taken in the order of that epithet; invaluable - this is a book that gives more than its title for it deals with the built up area from Shoreham to Rottingdean and throws in Lewes for an incongruous good measure. Splitting the conurbation into 18 sections it comments on, and describes the prominent buildings in the area, but where most architecture volumes on the town stop at the established classics, Pavilion, West Pier, Kemp Town et al. this book includes Ladbrokes Bingo Hall, American Express H.Q., the Corporation Tram Depot and Shoreham's rail carriage homes. Truly invaluable especially as it is heavily laced with excellent social history which bears all the hallmarks of the joint editor Dr Sue Berry (one of our members).

Irritating - it certainly is! An excellent architectural ink and colour wash drawing of an Amon Wild's house in Montpelier Road forms the cover but no artist is named for this. The book as a whole is the creation of a joint body of students and staff and it would help to be able to attribute some of the remarks contained here to a particular name. The buildings are shown in one of three ways, either plan drawings, old prints or photos and modern photographs: it is the latter that let this book down. Whatever the

school teaches in the way of architecture and design it does not seem to do much in the way of photography. Too many buildings are seen in mid-distance with lines of cars and yards of road and pavement in the foreground. Though this may be social realism in the Brighton urban context it makes for poor illustrations in an architecture guide.

Irritating it is, sometimes in its comment; how can the Grand Parade site of the Faculty of Art and Design be called "one of the most successful modern buildings in the town"? Only when compared to the windswept tatters of the Top Rank Suite can that be correct. In describing the Unitarian Church, New Road, 22 lines are devoted to it, but the church itself only merits a mention on line 18!

The bibliography itself is less than satisfactory, leaving aside Nairn and Pevsner which stands by its own merits. Why include books of secondary research such as Musgrave's Life in Brighton and Middleton's History of Hove when the primary material is available in the inimitable form of J.G. Bishop's Brighton in Olden Times of H.C. Porter's History of Hove.

Not always accurate - This book was published to mark the XVI World Congress of the International Union of Architects held in Brighton in July 1987. Auspicious! Why is there no publication date included anywhere in the book? Equally important - who proof read the final draft? Too many minor and irritating errors have crept in e.g.

- p.18 Royal Newborough (Newburgh) Assembly Rooms
- 49 Marlborough (Marlborough) Place
- 50 Anne (Ann) Street
- 106 Stanford (Stanford) Estate
- 110 Tythe (Tithe) Barn Patcham

- amongst others!

If I have seemed hard on this book it is because it is obviously the result of much hard work, diligent research and love of the subject: the details let the book down not the content.

Members will find a wealth of information here that encompasses a wide range of I.A. material - Shoreham B Power station, Old Needlemakers, Lewes, Rottingdean mill, Shoreham airport, Hove Co-op superstore, Caffyns garage, Portslade, Preston viaduct, Norwich Union Insurance building.

At £4.95 this is a useful and cheap guide to a good cross section of the conurbation's built environment.

GEOFF MEAD

The next three items are extracted from the Newsletter of the Federation of Sussex Local History Societies and published with their kind permission.

GEORGE MEARS, SHIP PORTRAITIST (fl. 1875-90)

Austin Williamson (Chairman of Newhaven Historical Society) is listing and photographing all the identifiable paintings of George Mears, who died in Brighton in 1906 at the age of 80. He may have been the official painter to the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. He painted most of their paddle steamers, as well as other ships, both sail and steam, which used Newhaven Harbour, but he also painted the old Royal Yacht and a beach scene at Rottingdean (now in Hove Museum). He was a good artist and an accurate portrayer of ships. There must be many of his works in the Sussex area, though there is one known to be in Salford, Lancs. and two in Switzerland!

Any sightings of his paintings, either in museums or in private ownership, would be welcomed by Austin Williamson, 7 Fort Rise, Newhaven, BN9 9DW, tel.512407.

ALFRED SIMMONS, UNION LEADER

Mrs Helen Allinson, of 34 Woodstock Road, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4HN, writes:

'My interest in Sussex history is twofold. I am researching the life of Alfred Simmons, who led the Kent and Sussex Agricultural Labourers Union in the 1870s and 1880s. Photographs of him were produced for sale to members, but I have yet to locate

one of these to copy. I am anxious to discover what became of him when he left the union in 1887. ... I also have some Sussex ancestors!

UCKFIELD HISTORY EXHIBITION

A display on the theme of Uckfield since 1800 will be mounted in Bridge Cottage, next to the railway station, on 6-8 October. Members of the Uckfield & District Preservation Society see this as a trial prelude to forming a Local History Group and a permanent museum later. The organizer is Peter Ferguson, 89 Lashbrooks Road, Uckfield, TN22 2AZ (tel. 0825 4039), who welcomes the loan of exhibits and offers of assistance.

THE TRADE OF EARLY VICTORIAN HASTINGS

The rise in popularity of both inland spas and seaside resorts resulted in the publication of guide books by local printers, libraries and booksellers to meet the needs of the visitors. These are particularly prolific in the early nineteenth century as the rising wealth of the nation led to a wider cross-section of the newly affluent middle classes visiting such resorts. Such guides not only listed the libraries, bazaars, assembly rooms, hotels, lodgings, bathing, amusements and places in the vicinity of interest, but also tried, in many cases, to explain to the visitor the trade and occupations of the town. At first sight such resorts may seem unlikely candidates as towns of trade and commerce. In the case of Hastings however it had in the Middle Ages been a port of some importance and a member of the Cinque Ports Confederacy. Its harbour facilities were however to decline and in the mid-sixteenth century its wooden pier was destroyed. This greatly reduced its coasting trade but did not remove it entirely. The usefulness of guide books in describing the residual trade of the town is illustrated below in the extracts from The Stranger's Guide to Hastings and St. Leonards published by I.B. Moor of the Royal Pelham Arcade. The guide is undated but from internal evidence appears to have been published c1837.

Despite the difficulties posed by the failure to maintain harbour facilities shipbuilding continued in the town at this date.

"Hastings is celebrated for the cutters which are built there, and launched with ease. This is effected by means of wooden slides being placed down the beach at low water in such a manner as to receive the keel, when, propelled by its weight, the cutter slides down the descent: but to avoid the too great rapidity which it might acquire, a bolt is passed through the opposite end of the keel, and rope fastenings are attached as a check - having reached the level of the beach it is allowed to remain for the return of the tide, when it is floated off. Some very elegant vessels of American model, called brigantines, have latterly been built here: the rigging is generally supplied elsewhere, as they sail hence frequently under jury rigging. Ship building in all departments is carried on here."

An ingenious method of beaching and launching vessels appears to have been employed at Hastings:

"The method of getting the sloops and cutters up and down the stade is surprising to those who have never seen any thing of the kind; they are wound up by a capstan with three or four horses, and the facility and expedition with which such large heavy bodies (vessels from 50 to 150 tons burthen) are moved is astonishing; pieces of wood well greased, are laid for the vessel's keel and side to run on; a large wooden screw is applied to her bows with which she is then set a-going; when she has run as far as it is thought proper, she is easily stopped by cables round the capstans, the pieces of wood, called troughs, are relaid, and she is put in motion again, and so on, till she is far enough to float when the tide returns."

Much of the shipbuilding and repair at Hastings was associated with the fishing industry of the town. There is evidence to suggest that this was in decline by the early nineteenth century. In 1803 98 fishing vessels were listed as belonging to the port of Hastings, ranging in size from 4 to 19 tons. By 1823 the number had fallen to 64 of which none was above 11 tons. Hastings fish was still in strong demand and served not only the inhabitants and visitors to the town, but was in sufficient supply to seek wider markets.

"Fishing forms the chief occupation and means of support to the lower order: the number of boats employed are from fifty to sixty, and require generally three men or two men and a boy to manage them; they are built with very little keel (as for want of a harbour they are obliged to be dragged up and down the beach, which would be more difficult were the keel deeper) and very round and broad, as better adapted for "lying too", in the open sea; they carry three sails, called lug sails, and sometimes a jib, but they more commonly sail with only two.

The fishermen find their chief harvest in the mackerel season, or from the beginning of April till the middle of July, and in the herring season, or from the beginning of November till Christmas. At other times trawling (1) for flat fish occupies their time; a few boats however are at all times engaged in trawling, as a boat which is too crazy for a mackerel voyage may be sufficiently sound for coasting.

When a boat returns, its cargo is emptied on the beach and sold at once to the highest bidder: those who come home early of course get the highest prices. The greater part is then washed and packed, to be sent off to London: sometimes small sloops or smacks lie off the shore to purchase cargoes on their arrival. French and other boats will also market here. The French boats are much larger, and carry as many as fourteen men sometimes, who do not scruple to plunder an English boat, if opportunity is afforded them: for this reason, the boats keep together as much as possible. In a good season a boat will earn on an average £250, which is divided among the men, according to their claims as shareholders or merely servants. A boat complete, is worth £300. The dress of the men is exceedingly picturesque, and consists, generally, of a tanned frock with petticoat trowsers, and long boots encasing the thigh, with caps of red and striped wool, or a cap called indifferently a "nor" or "sou-wester"; - this dress is only worn when at sea, or immediately before or after the voyage.

Prawns are caught here in fixed nets baited with parts of fish or young crabs; and shrimps are taken in a net strained on a frame, and forced along the surface of the sand.

Women seldom or never go shrimping, or as it is called pandling, here - as at Brighton and other places - but it is calculated that five hundred persons are constantly employed in the fisheries."

- (1) Fishermen called dragging their nets when strained on a pole and sunk on the sands, trawling: the best ground for this is a place called the "Diamond", off Dungeness.

BRIAN AUSTEN

SUSSEX AND THE BIG BANG

Sussex Weekly Advertiser Monday 2 Nov. 1761

"On Tuesday night last [27 October] Mr Harvey's Powder Mill at Sedlescomb blew up there was about 100 weight (sic) of powder on 3 different troughs and the men had shifted their births about a quarter hour so that nobody was hurt thereby it went off in 3 separate explosions which communicated from one trough to the other and appeared at some distance to be the guns from the fort at Hastings. It could have done much more damage had the powder been in one trough."

Sussex Weekly Advertiser January 1762

"The week before last died at Battle, Mr Hammond an eminent gunpowder maker and ironmonger of that place who is said to have died very rich."

Sussex Weekly Advertiser Monday 10 December 1764

"Monday last a most melancholy accident happened between the hours of 12 and 1 o'clock, the sising house belonging to the powder mill at Sedlescomb blew up by which 4 of the workmen lost their lives, two of which were Mr Gillmores brothers. The explosion was heard at a great distance and at the places near, the shock was so great that 'twas taken for an earthquake."