

## A NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Material for both the *Newsletter* and *Sussex Industrial History* is always welcome. It would however make life easier if

- i. contributions were typed or hand written with plenty of space between the lines. This enables editorial changes, often necessary to ensure a common style between articles, e.g. the way dates are written, to be clearly seen at the word processing stage.
- ii. Members composing articles on their own wordprocessor are invited to submit with the text the disc from which it is derived to avoid the need to enter the whole article again via the keyboard. This can save the Society cost.

The editors would much appreciate co-operation in these matters.

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## SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

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## CHIEF CONTENTS

Wealden Sandstone Quarry  
Military/Defence Sites in Sussex:-  
The Ringmer Buffer Depot  
Underground Rotor Stations in Sussex  
'Black' Transmitter near Crowborough  
News from Amberley Museum  
Sussex Mills Group News

## PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR 1993

- Saturday 23 October 7.30 p.m. Members' evening with several short talks in Drama Room, Brighton and Hove Sixth Form College, Dyke Road, Brighton, TQ302055.  
Contact G.E.F. Mead (0273-501590)
- Saturday 20 November 2.30 p.m. Annual General Meeting in Committee Rooms, Town Hall, Boltro Road, Haywards Heath.  
Contact R.G. Martin (0273-303805)

For all visits it is IMPORTANT that the contact person knows how many people are coming, so please let him know at least 7 days before the event of your intention to attend.

## RECORDING OF INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE URBAN AREAS OF SUSSEX

As you will know, during the past two years the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society has had the services of a full time recorder who has now completed the recording of all the industrial archaeology sites in the 235 rural parishes. It was never intended that his brief was to include the urban areas and it is to these which the Society is now addressing itself. Ultimately all the records are to be incorporated with the Sites and Monuments Records of East and West Sussex respectively, but the initial task is to get the site recording and the record sheets compiled.

The scope of industrial archaeology which we are recording covers comprehensively all aspects of industrial, economic and commercial life from the industrial revolution up to the present day. It is debatable what the end date should be but if one considers that the records may be referred to in, say, 50 years time, then any other end date but the latest is pointless. A lot of the interest in this sort of survey is akin to local history and involves the recording of virtually every building in the centre of the urban areas as almost everywhere has been used at some time for some relevant activity. The recording entails making a site visit, with a photograph and notes. The record sheet is A4 and incorporates limited information together with a brief description and some indication of the history of the site.

The other aspect of recording is the large sites which contain several different buildings often erected over a long period, for example schools, colleges, hospitals and sites occupied by public utilities. Many of these are now being demolished or finding other uses and it is essential to record them before they disappear.

The Society would welcome members to participate in this survey as this is one of the best ways of really learning about your own district. If you would like Don Cox or me to talk to any individual or group of members to explain exactly what is required we would be only too pleased to do so.

If you think that you might be able to help please get in touch with me.

RON MARTIN

#### THE GAS INDUSTRY IN SUSSEX

One of the members of GLIAS, Brian Sturt, has been carrying out extensive research into the gas industry in Sussex and has uncovered some quite extraordinary goings on and some very shady companies which were set up in the early years of this century.

Brian has got a lot of information about various gas undertakings in the two counties but he would like some help from this Society to trace some of the old records, many of which are lodged in the two record offices. There may also be some remains on the ground for Members which wish to do this type of research.

He is also interested in any private gas plants of which Members may have knowledge. At one time these were relatively common and you will note that there are two articles in *Sussex Industrial History* No.23 about two acetylene gas plants, one at Brook House, Ardingly, and one from Horam Church Hall. The latter plant was removed by members of the Society many years ago and has been residing in Wilfrid Beswick's garage since then. As a result of this recent interest the plant has now been sent to the Gas Museum on permanent loan and it is hoped that it will be available for Members to visit in due course.

If any Member would like to assist in any of this work would they please get in touch with me and I will then be able to let them know what is required.

RON MARTIN

#### MR. R. GUNTER'S WEALDEN SANDSTONE QUARRY AT SELSFIELD COMMON IN 1901

A six page article with three large photographs of the works devoted to Gunter's quarry at Selsfield (TQ 347341) was published in *The Quarry* 6, pp. 289-294 in 1901. Whilst the content is largely geological, with some architectural information, the following abstracted details with the actual quarrying operations:

"Selsfield quarry is situated about three miles south of Grange Road Station, on the railway line connecting Three Bridges with Tunbridge Wells. It adjoins a good highway, and transport to the railway is easily effected either by horse or steam traction. The present quarry adjoins the site of an older opening, used for many centuries, from which material was taken for the fine Elizabethan structure standing close by. This building ... is a fine example of the weather-resisting capabilities of the stone . . .

On approaching the quarry the first sight which met our view was a large block of stone, weighing about three tons, in process of being lifted from the quarry on to a trolley (see Fig. 3). These blocks are sawn from the solid rock, and are detached from their bed by means of wedges. The blocks themselves show no sign of bedding, beyond perhaps an occasional band of harder texture only discoverable in the process of sawing. The saw cuts shown on the side of the quarry, in Fig. 4, tell their own tale, and give admirable proof of the free working nature of the stone.

The working of the stone is greatly facilitated by a well-marked system of joints, which run nearly vertically in an E. and W. direction, at intervals of a few feet. The freestone bed is of

great thickness, and has been proved to a depth of about 30 feet. It lies almost horizontally, close to the surface, under a cover of insignificant thickness, consisting of a binding gravel, which is used for surfacing roads and pathways. The quarry debris, when screened, yields a good building sand, and there is, therefore, practically no waste. In the foreground, Fig. 5 a heap of this sand is seen, already sold, and awaiting removal. ...

The smaller blocks, suitable for ashlar, are so true and clean that the mason's touch is scarcely needed, and an excellent appearance is possessed by the quarry facing but, if preferred, the blocks can be axed or scabbled with the greatest ease. The tint is pleasing grey or pale yellowish brown, and is sometimes prettily mottled, while in one part of the quarry it is almost white . . .

Stone from this quarry has been used in many modern houses, schools, and churches in Sussex, and amongst other examples may be mentioned Wakehurst Place, Gravetye Manor, Rowfant Abbey, "Old Place", Lindfield, Balcombe Place, Fenn Place, &c."

The author also mentioned that the stone had been employed in 'No. 7a, Austin Friars, E.C.'

The bed worked was the Tunbridge Wells Sandstone. Apart from the features noted in the extracts above, the photographs show the vertical quarry walls (about 15 feet), several workmen, at least two cranes, blocks of stone ready for sale, and horses and carts.

PAUL W. SOWAN

#### SOME WORLD WAR II AND LATER MILITARY/DEFENCE SITES IN SUSSEX

##### THE RINGMER BUFFER DEPOT

Some, mainly coastal, defence installations in Sussex are relatively well-known; others less so. Amongst the lesser-known structures are the buffer depots (which, as surface sites, are currently at risk on account of post-Cold War redundancy) and the underground radar/radio stations.

C.M. Kohan's *Works and Buildings* volume of the *History of the Second World War* (HMSO 1952) describes 'buffer depots', constructed between November 1941 and December 1942, in the following terms:

'Storage capacity in widely-scattered areas was wanted for the Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Supply, the Stationery Office and the Controller of Supplies of the Ministry of Works. The standardised type of building evolved was a structure 214 feet in length and 120 feet in width, giving an area of approximately 25,000 square feet of storage space on one floor. Access was achieved along the length or the width of the store by means of large door openings, with enough head-room for lorries ... The buildings were light steel-framed structures in three spans of forty feet, designed to 'war-time economy stresses' with concrete floors, brick panel walls and corrugated asbestos roofs.'

About 160 of these depots were erected throughout the country. A list of them is published in Duncan Campbell's *War Plan UK* (Burnett Books 1982), including one (Number 347) at 'The Broyle, Ringmer, Sussex' (north east of Ringmer.) It is understood from contacts in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food that these warehouses are no longer 'secret' and have been run down during the last few years. Two in Surrey appear to be abandoned and/or for sale. In their declining years, at least, the warehouses were operated, on behalf of the Government, by private enterprise operators. That at Ringmer, according to Campbell, was operated by Butlers Wharf Ltd. If the Surrey depots are a reasonable guide, the warehouses (whilst conspicuous enough) were singularly anonymous, with little more than the operator's telephone number posted at the Gates.

Apart from storing the 'Green Goddess' fire engines which emerged during the Fire Service strike some years ago, these MAFF buffer depots were used during the Cold War for the storage of food supplies, cooking equipment, etc. for use in the event of nuclear attack. Stockpiles were maintained from c.1950 onwards. There were also mobile bakeries (left over

from the Second World War), tarpaulins, tents and hurricane lamps. Government claims (according to Campbell) were that there was sufficient food stored to feed 20,000,000 survivors of a nuclear attack. For each 100,000 people, he estimated, there were 35 Soyer boilers, 50 baking trays, 2,500 plastic bowls, 10 No.4 field cookers, 70 camp kettles (? dixies), 2,575 spoons and 480 food containers. The major food stocks (in 1982) were reportedly flour, sugar, margarine and fats, special hard glucose sweets, sweet biscuits and a little yeast. 'Corned beef' (and also cake mix) was held up to the late 1960s. Very occasionally, some of these stocks (which were 'rotated' i.e. returned to the market / replaced at fixed intervals by the operators) emerged in response to 'emergency shortages' e.g. for sugar. Presumably all stocks have now found their way back on to the open market, and the outdated camping equipment scrapped or sold off via 'Government surplus' stores ... or perhaps they have gone abroad as aid.

#### UNDERGROUND ROTOR STATIONS IN SUSSEX: BEACHY HEAD AND WARTLING

At least two underground radar stations were constructed in Sussex during the Cold War, one at Beachy Head (TV 590957) and one at Wartling (TQ 662087) about 4.5 km inland from Pevensey Bay. Duncan Campbell's *War Plan UK* (Burnett Books 1982) reports that some 75 such stations were constructed nationwide 'during the 1952 - 55 RAF Rotor plan for a new radar system. Three years later, three quarters of the system was obsolete.' A standard design of bungalow (that at Beachy Head is now the coastguard station) was used to conceal the entrances to tunnels leading to the underground bunkers. However, during its operational life the Wartling station could hardly escape notice, as an enormous rectangular rotating radar dish was mounted on surface buildings above the bunker. Another giveaway for such sites was the escape stairhead (with gun slits), and the nearby small sewage works.

#### Beachy Head

A visit to the Beachy Head site on 31 August 1987, access underground having been negotiated, revealed a single-storey underground structure, entered by way of a locked hatchway to the rear of the coastguard station, within a concrete slab. A flight of steps communicates with a wide, gently sloping access tunnel. The main underground structure lies approximately east - west, at right angles to the access tunnel. It is below the elongated grassy hump visible on the surface (looking rather like a standard subterranean cut-and-cover WWII air-raid shelter.) However, the rotor stations had a rather more generous thickness of protective concrete than standard air-raid shelter (Campbell quotes 2.5 to 4.0 metres!) What appears to be an electrical supply room is passed on the left, then the steel blast doors leading into the main structure. The plan is quite simple, with what appears to be the 'domestic' rooms on the right (south side) of the central corridor, and 'operational' rooms on the left. Furniture and fittings had been generally wrecked, and anything worth salvaging for scrap value (or possibly secrecy value!) removed. At the far end of the corridor further blast doors lead through to the heating/ventilating plant area (quantities of air ducting survived in 1987) and stairs up to the now blocked emergency exit. There appears to be no sewage works associated with this station, presumably foul/waste water was simply spilled out on the cliff face. Copies of measur drawings indicate protective concrete 10 feet thick; a store; a transformer room; a gas filtration room; 16 numbered rooms; a 'lower chamber'; and a sewage ejector.

The main operational area is of the order of 75 feet x 43 feet. An illustrated article in the *Eastbourne Herald* of 11 June 1988 shows the former conspicuous rotating radar scanner, and views of the interior. 'Built in 1950 and operational by 1953, it was closed down in 1957 after only four years' service when new aircraft and nuclear technology made it obsolete.' Reporting a visit by members of Eastbourne Council, the paper raised the possibility of the site being developed as a '£2m showpiece' museum and tourist attraction.

#### RAF Wartling

Visited the same day (31 August 1987), the Wartling radar station was found to be considerably more extensive, with (in addition to the standard guardhouse (now in private occupation) standing surface buildings on which the rotating scanner had been mounted, and the stairhead for the escape route. The small stand-alone sewage works is beyond the escape stairhead. As at Beachy Head, a gently sloping access tunnel leads down to the main structure which lies at right angles to it. There was evidently no staircase linking the surface buildings directly with the bunker below. Concrete blocks around the surface buildings mark the positions of the now

removed steel legs for the scanner. The original main access from the neighbourhead of the guard house is now blocked, and access is now by way of a locked door at the head of the emergency exit staircase.

The underground rooms are on two floors, with a main corridor on each floor aligned approximately north - south. Both floors are partly of concrete slabs, partly steel grill (many sections missing), and partly wooden (generally rotten, with cable ducts etc. below. The lower floor is flooded to a depth of about 0.75 metres. The jagged remains of plate glass partitions emerging from the water make the prospects of falling through the upper floor, or wading through debris on the lower floor, distinctly uninviting! Much exposed insulation material is presumably asbestos! As at Beachy Head, the sewage ejection pipes are at the emergency stairs end of the structure, as are the remains of the heating and ventilating plant. Much of the equipment has been wrecked and/or salvaged, but one electrical fittings label with a maker's name dated 1956 was seen. On the upper level, there are what appear to have been the 'domestic' rooms on the west side, as well as two flights of stairs down to the flooded lower level. On the east side there are further small rooms, and an impressive 'main operations room' extending the full height of both levels. The remains of the plate glass partitions which surrounded this very large room have been mentioned. Batteries of now-defunct powerful lamps are suspended from the ceiling. Some remaining traces of the main cable intake can be seen near the now blocked main entrance. There are blast doors at either end of the main upper level corridor, with an electrical room outside them at one end, and the heating/ventilating and sewage ejector areas outside them at the emergency exit end.

Harry Pearman's *Records of the Chelsea Speleological Society* (volume 8 (1978)) quotes from the *Evening Argus* of 2 September 1975, and briefly mentions a 'top secret underground radar site' at a place 'formerly called RAF Wartling and now Northeye Prison.' The Ministry of Defence had compulsorily purchased the site in 1947, and the structure was abandoned as obsolete by 1960.

#### THE ASPIDISTRA 'BLACK' TRANSMITTER AT KING'S STANDING, NEAR CROWBOROUGH

Two small news items in the national press (*Guardian*, and *Times*) on 15 January 1988 referred to 'The former Foreign Office underground radio station ... in Ashdown Forest ... unused since most of its aeriels were removed three years ago, is to become an emergency bunker for regional government. The station was used for propaganda broadcasts in the second world war, and later by the Diplomatic service (*Guardian*, 15 January 1988.) *The Times*' version adds that the station 'broadcast Allied news to Germany and the occupied countries. After the war, it fell into disuse. The Home Office is redeveloping the network of chambers and tunnels buried eight storeys beneath Camp Hill. The department would not comment last night that the site was being transformed into a nuclear shelter (*The Times*, 15 January 1988.) The site is at approximately TQ 475290, on the east side of the B2188 road.

Further information is published in Ellic Howe's *The Black Game. British subversive operations against the Germans during the Second World War* (Futura 1982.) In the Spring of 1941 'Special Operations 1' (SO1) worked out a scheme for broadcasting on enemy and enemy-controlled wavelengths at great power and with great variety of attack ... [which] involved the purchase of an existing 500 kW transmitter in America and its adaption to broadcasting on a number of frequencies and to changing frequency very quickly ... It was conceived ... as a weapon to destroy the Enemy's own propaganda ... Originally intended to operate from a site in Bedfordshire, 'Aspidistra' ('the biggest in the World') was eventually built at Camp Hill for technical reasons of which the high ground well away from flight paths were particularly important.'

'During the spring and summer of 1942 Harold Robin was supervising the digging of a very big hole in the ground' of which a photograph appears (plate 5) in Howe's book. 'The transmitter, its control panels and its large electric power generator were to be accommodated in a subterranean two-storey building of which the ground floor was to be fifty feet underground with four feet of reinforced concrete on top. ... ' The hole was dug in six weeks, there were three 300 ft. masts, and the station was first used operationally on 8 November 1942.

PAUL W. SOWAN



## A VISIT TO BEXHILL 10 JULY 1993

We met in the Old Town to be led by Brenda Mason curator of Bexhill Museum for an afternoon stroll around Bexhill, old and new, and the Museum. The Manor Gardens are on the site of the manor house of Bexhill Manor. The land was granted by Offa, King of Mercia, to the church in 772 and some Saxon stonework still exists.

In the parish church dedicated to St. Peter, one of the bellringers spoke about the bells, the largest peal in Sussex after St. Swithun, East Grinstead. The earliest records show that the church had four bells in the eighteenth century. Bell number one was cast in Lewes in 1595. All four were taken down in 1769 and probably melted down and used in the recasting of a ring of six. The work was done by Lester, Pack and Chapman, Whitechapel. 'Cast-in' iron staples were used in the crown of the bells to mount the clapper. This resulted in cracks developing in the bells due to corrosion-expansion. By 1891 an inspection by the Whitechapel foundry, now trading as Mears and Stainbank, recommended that no further ringing should take place. In 1892 the bells were re-framed and re-hung with the addition of two new bells. In 1980 the whole ring was re-tuned in the key of F sharp as the eighteenth century was almost half a tone lower than the modern key. In 1991 the key was lowered to E major and two bells added, one at the lower end of the scale, the other at the higher making the ring of ten bells of today's church.

Near the church is Pocock's butcher's shop. It was a butcher's shop from 1801, becoming Pocock's a few years later. The slaughterhouse is still standing although today it is full of cold cabinets.

The Bell had an extra storey added 1878 and when in 1968 the Manor House was demolished and de la Warr Road widened, the view at the junction of Church Street and Upper Sea Road became what we see today.

The de la Warr Pavilion, still undergoing restoration, was our next stop. This building represents Bexhill's drive for tourism in the 1930s. A competition was advertised and 230 entrants sent in models. The winners were Mendelsohn and Chermayeff and their model can be seen in Bexhill Museum. The building is too well known to need description except to say that it is built in the style known as International Modernist and is one of the first buildings with a welded steel frame. It was opened in 1935.

After a short tour of the town, we finished the afternoon in Bexhill Museum. Beside the static display area, there is an exhibition filled at the time of our visit with "Bexhill in the Thirties". It chronicled the electrification of the railways in 1935, the trolley buses which took over from trams in 1928/29 and the growth of the private schools.

Our grateful thanks to Brenda Mason, curator of Bexhill Museum and guide for our visit, and the kind lady who provided welcome cups of tea.

JILL ALLEN

## NEWS FROM AMBERLEY MUSEUM

We are now nearing the end of a busy summer season and I am pleased to report that, at this stage in the year, visitor numbers have shown their first increase for two years. As the Museum does not receive any regular direct funding, its long term success depends on attracting an increasing number of satisfied visitors. This year we have had the benefit of the completion of three new exhibition areas - the rural telephone exchange, the Spooner and Gordon Wheelwright's Shop and the Seeboard Electricity Hall - and we have used these to spearhead a new marketing campaign. This has resulted in articles about the Museum in a wide range of publications as well as the Museum being featured twice on Meridian television. We now hope for 'good Museum visiting weather' this autumn so that our increased visitor numbers can be sustained.

The Museum narrow gauge railway has had an exciting summer with two steam locomotives in operation again. 'Polar Bear', a 2-4-0 T locomotive built by W.G. Bagnall, ran under own steam for the first time in five years on 22nd June. This locomotive used to run on the Groudle

Glen railway on the Isle of Man which was developed to provide pleasure trips to a zoo. When the line fell into disuse, the locomotive was rescued and ran at Amberley for a few years. Now, with a new boiler and a great deal of effort by a team led by John Stanton and Peter Thomas, 'Polar Bear' will be seen regularly at Amberley again. It is a particularly appropriate year for 'Polar Bear' to return to service as the Isle of Man is celebrating its 'Year of Railways' and 'Polar Bear' and her coaches went to the Isle of Man to join her sister 'Sea Lion' on the restored Groudle Glen Railway for the celebrations.

The second locomotive 'Peter', a Bagnall 0-4-0T steamed again on 1st September. This locomotive was built in 1918 and came from the Cliffe Hill Granite Company in Leicestershire and has not been in operation for a number of years. It came to Amberley as 'a kit of some parts' and has been restored to its former glory by the expert workmanship of Doug Bentley and Bill Johnston. It will join the rest of our narrow gauge locomotive fleet and be regularly demonstrated to visitors.

ROBERT S. TAYLOR  
Director.

## NEWS FROM COULTERSHAW

With one more Open Day at the time of writing, it looks as though visitor numbers will be slightly up on last year; it is gratifying that we can report a small but steady increase each year. Besides the twelve regular open days there have been four special openings.

The hydraulic ram (see *Newsletter* 78) was commissioned in August, and it is surprising how many visitors say "As a kid I often used to stay on a farm and always wondered what that noise was"! We are very grateful to Mr. Peter Langelaan and his firm Paine Manwaring of Broadwater (established in 1725!) for helping us to recondition the ram and for generously providing and installing all the pipework.

We have been glad to welcome two more regular helpers - Alan Brown from Shoreham and Harold Browne from Goring. Apart from both stewarding on Open Days, Alan has been preparing the Dando borehole pump barrel (*Newsletter* 76) for display, while Harold has made some new display boards and a cover for the ram. With the winter maintenance programme immediately ahead, more helpers are always welcome; the more we have, the better the show we can put on. Offers please to

MICHAEL PALMER  
on 0903 505626

## MECHANICS MADE EASY

"Mechanics Made Easy". I wonder how many readers know that this was the original name used for Meccano, over 90 years ago. We all had a set as boys or our fathers had one. Perhaps we saw some bits at a jumble sale a few years back, and wondered if they were still about?

Yes Meccano is still around and is still quite popular. Why write about a toy in an industrial archaeology newsletter? Model mills, water pumps, engines, buildings etc. can all be built with Meccano. Some enthusiasts take several years to design and complete a model, researching the plans and drawings of the original machine, the scale the model should be, obtaining the more unusual parts and so on. A steam engine can be two inches long or eight feet long, depending on the knowledge, patience and skill of the builder.

Meccano was invented by a Mr. Frank Hornby, originally as construction toys for his sons. He obtained his first patent on 30 November 1901, entitling it "Improvements in toy or educational devices for children and young people". It was first sold in 1901 in small boxes under the title of *Mechanics Made Easy*, at 7/6 (37.5p) each. In 1901 this was half the weekly wage of a labourer so it was very expensive for the number of parts it contained. This high cost has remained a problem all through the years. In 1907 the trade name Meccano was first introduced and "*Mechanics Made Easy*" was soon dropped. By 1908 six sets were available from 5/- (25p) to 63/- (£13.15).

Meccano continued to flourish increasing its range from 0 to 10 sets, with conversion sets to enlarge one set to the next size and other specialist sets until the Second World War. Dinky toys and Hornby trains among other toys were produced by Meccano in this period. Factories were opened in the USA, France and Argentina.

Production continued until 1942 when all toy production was stopped due to the war. It was not before the early 1950s that Meccano was allowed back on the home market in any great quantity. By that time a whole generation of boys had missed the opportunity to build in this system, and we believe this was a major reason for its decline. As with a lot of British toys the market reduced and many well known names disappeared. In 1979 the British factory closed but production continued in France and Argentina. Because, during the war, the machinery was worn out making armaments, the British factory could not compete with the newer French factory. The USA factory had closed before the war, in the depression. The Argentina production continues but under the name of Exacto. The French factory continued but with a much smaller range. The last 50 sets of the Number 10 were produced last year, at £999 each. The secondhand price has now risen to £1700.

One of the good things about Meccano was that once a person had a stock of parts, he could continue making models for years, repainting as necessary. This was not good for the manufacturer or retailer, as the builder might only require a few more parts to complete a model.

There are two types of user; children who are given sets and are happy to make simple models and perhaps do not even know the other groups exist. The second group are the enthusiasts who make very advanced models. There are perhaps a dozen clubs throughout Britain who meet regularly, showing their models and entering competitions. These clubs have the same problem as many others: i.e. how to interest young members.

I belong to one such group, the Holy Trinity Meccano Club, which holds meetings at Hildenborough in Kent. Our next meeting is on 16 October.

**BRIAN PIKE**

#### **EAST GRINSTEAD I.A. EXHIBITION**

East Grinstead Town Museum is grateful to the Sussex Industrial Archaeological Society and more particularly to Messrs. Mead and Martin for mounting an exhibition on the I.A. of Sussex throughout April, May and June.

In connection with the exhibition the Museum produced an information leaflet on I.A. in East Grinstead, including a trail and a bibliography of material that has appeared since 1974 (2p; by post 40p). A bibliography up to 1974 will be found in the programme of the East Grinstead Society's exhibition for that year, 'Old Trades and Crafts', as well as an essay on the town's occupations in the past (20p; by post 40p). The Museum also sells a postcard of the topping out of the tall chimney at Stenning's timberyard (12p; by post 32p). All these publications may be obtained from me.

**M.J. LEPPARD**  
Hon. Curator,  
20 St. George's Court,  
East Grinstead  
RH19 1QP.

#### **STAPLETON'S OF BRIGHTON**

A brief account of Stapleton's carrier's business at Brighton from 1790 to 1989 appeared in the *Sussex Family Historian*, Vol.10, No.6 (June 1993).

**M.J. LEPPARD**

#### **BRICKMAKING IN SUSSEX: published at last!**

As most of you will know, we met our publication deadline of 6 August. Sales have gone really well. The first run of 250 copies was sold out within four weeks and the second run will soon be exhausted. At the time of writing, consideration is being given to a third run but, for various reasons, bookshop prices may have to be increased. It will still be possible to fulfill members' orders at the original price of £11.95 but we would ask for an extra £1 per copy, as a contribution towards the cost of postage and packing.

Orders please, to Mrs. M. Beswick, Turners House, Turners Green, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 9RB

Cheques made out to: Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society

#### **BRICKMAKING IN SUSSEX - A PERSONAL VIEW**

I would like to take this chance to illustrate one aspect of the creation of Molly Beswick's definitive work on this major aspect of Sussex industry. Its preparation for publication has brought to an end an aspect of my life which seems to have occupied the best part of seven years.

Molly's system of correspondents must have rivalled the team of Reuters or BBC World Service. Letters came thick and fast from "Nerve Centre Turners Green"

"What? where? when? is Copperas Gap?"

"Why are there two streets in Brighton called Cavendish Place?"

"Why does the brickmaker John Clayton have two burial dates?"

"If the British Geological Survey says there was a brickyard in St. Annes Well playground, why do you say a tennis court?"

Barely a week went by without a reference which was gleaned from Brighton Library's newspaper collection or a map reference noted from Record Office map sets. Local guides from all eras were scoured for passing references to bricks, tithe apportionments laboriously unrolled and anchored as field names were combed for their appropriateness to the brickmaking trade.

23 November 1986 saw the first request pass the Mead threshold and days before the 1993 deadline correspondence was still being exchanged, with an unknown Newhaven yard revealed by a Lewes trader's family reminiscence. All the letters from Molly inspired more research more delving into shelves, cuttings boxes and dusty volumes. They gave me a new insight into a whole range of local history topics, themes and methodologies. Often research is frustrating, dead-ended and sometimes fruitless, but for every brickyard not located accurately a vast array of facts, figures and information in general was gleaned on other related topics. The work was interesting, Molly encouraging, and the results as published first-class.

Well done Molly - and thanks!

**GEOFFREY MEAD**

#### **BOOK REVIEW**

Robert J. Harley, *Hastings Tramways*, Middleton Press (1993) pp.96, £9.95 from booksellers or post free from the publishers at Eastbourne Lane, Midhurst GU29 9AZ.

This book is essentially an album of photographs of the Hastings Tramways system during its period of operation from 1905 to 1929 accompanied by extracts from the 1909 edition of the 25" O.S. map featuring important locations on the tramways system. Like the other volumes of the Middleton Press it succeeds admirably in its purpose. The photographs are of good quality and feature vehicles in a wide variety of locations along the tramway routes. Even the reader who is not a tramway enthusiast will find much of interest. The pictures of Hastings, St. Leonards and Bexhill feature many street scenes with shops and other businesses that have long since closed,

buildings that have been demolished or substantially altered. Even the windmill enthusiast will find two of the photographs of great interest. Text is confined to illustration captions and a short introductory section of two pages in length which sets the picture by providing background information on the geography and general history of Hastings as well as its tramways. The author faces an impossible task in covering this in the space provided and of necessity the information given is slight. At times, because of necessary omission, it is potentially misleading. Because of the absence of dates a reader unfamiliar with the history of Hastings might well gain the impression that the town did not develop as a sea bathing resort until the arrival of the railway and that the Burton development at St. Leonards was also post 1846. The purchaser of the book will however be motivated by the desire to acquire the pictorial record contained within its covers and will be well pleased with his purchase.

BRIAN AUSTEN

#### SUSSEX WEEKLY ADVERTISER – ST. JAMES' STREET BRIGHTON

Feb. 15 1819. "Brass Foundry [sic] St James Street Brighton. R. Palmer begs to inform the trade and the public in general that he has established a brass foundry (the only one in Sussex) where they may be accommodated with engine pumps, portable and fixed water closets and every article belonging to that branch on the wholesale London terms. N.B. workm in the plumbing, glazing and painting lines performed with the utmost dispatch and at reasonable prices."

St. James' Street developed in the late 18th century along the old 'leakway' or field boundary path which separated the Cliff and Upper Furlong of the town's Little Laine, immediately east of Old Steine. This area was Brighton's first residential suburb and the street marked a clear social division between the two furlongs. The Cliff Furlong facing the sea had streets devoted largely to the town's burgeoning tourist trade. Charles St., Manchester St. and Broad St. as instance were created as rows of tall terraced housing suitable for renting and were purely residential in character. The Upper Furlong north of this still developed residential quarters, St. James Place and Dorset Gardens, but had a role in the rapidly growing service trades which gave a plethora of stables, warehouses and small workshops to this area. Being removed from "extensive sea views" its rental value was lower and with the prevailing S.W. wind smoke and smells were wafted away over farmland or an even poorer quarter north around Edward St.

*Pigot's Directory* of 1839 (recently re-issued, see last Newsletter) states – "As regards commerce the advantages of Brighton (exclusive of an extensive retail business) are not important ... there are several iron and brass foundries – one of these (the Regent Foundry) belonging to Messrs. Palmer Green and Co. is upon an extensive scale and well worth inspection."

Samuel Burton Palmer was still operating in St. James St. listed in *Pigot* in three categories iron founder, brass founder, and gas fitter. The Regent Foundry was working in North L. (latter North Road) in the industrial area of North Laine (confusing ...!) and although I am unsure of the relationship between the two operations there must have been a family link.

By comparing various directories it is possible to say that numbering in the street remained constant from 1839 into the twentieth century so the foundry was located on the corner of Wentworth St. This being on the south side of the street was confusingly in the residential Cliff Furlong. The Regent Foundry prospered in North Road not closing until the 1920s, but I have not yet fixed a date for the demise of Samuel Burton Palmer's branch and this requires more directory work. Certainly the domestic work of this establishment would have given scope for growth in the railway era town that was soon to prosper.

GEOFFREY MEAD

References:-  
*Pigot's National Commercial Directory* 1839  
 SWA 15 Feb 1819  
 Tim Carter, *Encyclopaedia of Brighton* (1990)

#### T.I.M.S. CONFERENCE 1993, ABERYSTWYTH WALES

This year saw the 8th international symposium on molinology being held at Aberystwyth, Wales, under the patronage of the Welsh Mills Group, ably arranged by Gerallt Nash. The symposium was well attended with delegates from 12 countries. The U.K. was represented by 2 Welsh, 1 Scottish and 19 English members; total 22. Netherlands supplied 20 delegates, U.S.A. 8, France 6, Denmark 3, Spain 3, Germany 3, Hungary 2, Belgium 2, Switzerland 2, Japan 2 and Sweden 1. Total number 74.

A full programme started from the moment of arrival on Saturday 3 July and continued until dispersal of delegates on 10 July. After registering, we all attended a reception sponsored by the British Council followed by a dinner sponsored by the Welsh Tourist Board. Later we were entertained by a superb show of folk dancing by the Cardiff Folk Dance Company.

Sunday morning was free but then work began in earnest. After lunch, and again after dinner in the evening, papers were presented on various subjects. All day Monday passed in a similar manner. Tuesday and Thursday were taken up by all day excursions, and during the two days eight mills and other places of interest were inspected. Wednesday, back to the lecture hall where the papers presented drew many questions and much discussion. On Thursday evening, the General Meeting of the International Molinological Society was held. Under the chairmanship of Ken Major a full agenda was dealt with and, among other business, it was decided that the next T.I.M.S. Symposium would be held in Hungary. This Symposium completed Ken Major's term of office as chairman and at the end of the meeting the gavel was handed over to the newly elected chairman – Yolt Yzerman from the Netherlands. Friday saw another excursion in the morning, a reception sponsored by the Welsh Folk Museum in the evening followed by a Diner d'Adieu. Saturday saw the dispersal of the delegates.

Transactions of the Symposium will be published in due course.

PETER PEARCE



SUSSEX MILLS GROUP



#### NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

*A Miller's Daughter* by Phylis Cat. Produced by Midhurst & Petworth Printers Ltd. Price £1.50 from Coultershaw Mill.

This 24 page booklet is the reminiscences of the daughter of John Gwillim who owned at various times Coultershaw Mill, Fittleworth Mill and North Mill, Midhurst. He also owned Ebernoe Mill but the mention of this is brief. It is as you would expect childhood memories but there are some interesting snippets about the three mills and their workings.

#### Stone Cross Windmill

Talks are in hand to help save this mill. The owner has put in for planning permission for a bungalow alongside the mill. Wealden District Council have agreed to his application provided that he gives the mill to a trust who will restore the mill. The Sussex Mills Group represented



by B. Pike and myself have had two meetings with Wealden District Council, one with the owner present, and are due for two more meetings next week. While the owner is willing to give away the mill itself and provide a long lease for a small piece of land around the mill, we are attempting to obtain a larger piece of land to allow parking for visitors to the mill. Parking is a problem in the area and if we are not careful we will annoy the local residents. As soon as there is agreement with all parties then we will call a public meeting at Stone Cross to discuss the setting up of a Trust and a Friends of Stone Cross Society.

#### Burton Mill

This is still up for sale leasehold for £45,000. The site owner is WSCC and the lease is for 40 years with possible extension to 75 years. A full technical description and history appeared in S.I.H. 10 (1980). The mill is complete and I believe ready to grind. There is planning permission for part conversion into living accommodation but this would seriously impair the operation and working of the mill. Full details of the sale are with Barrington & Company, Market Square House, Petworth GU28 0AH. Tel 0798 42242.

#### Hoads Mill, Bexhill

Going to this mill recently I saw that the site is up for sale with permission to build on the site. Frank Gregory believes that this has been so for some time. However, if you want to photograph the remains of the roundhouse with the trestle you should get there soon. The agents tell me that there is permission for ten dwellings on the site but the mill remains must be preserved and will be the responsibility of Wealden District Council. We shall see what happens with interest.

I recently came across the following in the *Sussex County Magazine* Vol.1 dated August 1927 which was found affixed to a mill post.

"The Windmill

The windmill is a Couris Thing,  
Compleatly built by art of man,  
To gring the corn for man and beast,  
That all alike may have a feast.

The mill she is built of wood, iron and stone,  
Therefore she cannot go aloane,  
Therefore to make the mill to go,  
The wind from some part she must blow.

The motison of the mill is swift,  
The miller must be very swift,  
To jump about and get things ready,  
Or else the mill will soon run empty."

I also found the following several years ago while studying the Peasants Revolt of 1381 and it was quoted in a book of that name. Because it was illegal to entice people to revolt devious ways were used to call people and Jakke Myler addressed his followers in this way:-

"Jakke Myler asketh help to turne hys mylne [mill] aright,  
He hath grounden smal smal;  
the Kings son of heaven he schal paye alle.  
Loke thy mylne go aright with four sayles,  
and the post stande in stedfastnesse.  
With ryght and with myght,  
with skyl and with wylle  
lat myght helpe ryght  
and skyl go before wille and ryght before myght,  
than goth oure mylne aryght.  
And if myght go before ryght and wylle before skylle;  
than is oure mylne mys adyght."

Difficult to understand in detail but it is interesting to see this use of comparison to a windmill and in the year 1381.

#### INFORMATION ON MILLS

The following is a copy of part of the indexes for *Sussex Life* for the years 1965-1975 and 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979. The complete index was prepared by Bexhill Library and is reproduced by kind permission of the Librarian.

This is part of the subject index. There is a separate author index.

A Illustrations are indicated by the abbreviation **pic**; this on its own means there is a picture only; the abbreviation **+pic** means there is also substantial text, usually an article.

1965-75

- MILLER'S TOMB, Highdown Hill, Worthing. +pics Dec65.p38; letter Feb71.p56  
MILLS. Sussex windmills. +pics Mar67.p54; letter July68.p67  
In search of windmills (drawings) May68.p30  
Wooden windmills of West Sussex. +pics Mar70.p39  
Tower windmills of West Sussex. +pics Nov70.p30  
Sussex papermills. +pics Feb71.p41; letter May71.p71  
Tower windmills of East Sussex. +pics Feb74.p33  
Milling by water-mill. +pics Sep74.p31  
Post mills of East Sussex. +pics Nov72.p27  
Smock mills of East Sussex. +pics May73.p46  
Alfriston Mill. pic Feb74.p34  
Argos Hill Windmill. letter Dec67.p73; pic Jan73.cover  
Baldslow Mill. letter +pic May74.p5  
Battle, Old Mill, Calbec Hill. (restoration) Feb71.p55; pic Nov73.p18  
Bexhill, Hoad's Mill. pic (drawing) May68.p31; letter Aug68.p64;  
letters +pic Oct68.p82  
Bishopstone, Tidal Mill. +pics Jan68.p58  
Bodiam, Water Mill Cottage. +pic Apr73.p43  
Brighton, Mill Road Windmill. pic July67.p40  
Burwash, Bateman's watermill. pic Apr66.p44; +pics May70.p39  
Chailey Heritage Smockmill. pic Mar67.p54; +pic (drawing) Sept74.p92  
Clayton, Jack and Jill. +pic Apr66.p37; pic (Jack) Feb74.p34;  
pic (Jack) May74.p6; pic (Jill) Nov72.p26  
Cobb's Mill (near Hurstpierpoint). pic (water-wheel) Apr67.p49  
Cross-in-Hand Windmill. pic May65.p58; pic Nov69.p42  
Duncton Mill. pics Feb71.p43  
Earnley Mill (Selsey). pic May66.p21; letter July66.p70; letter Aug66.p52;  
letter Sep66.p74; pic (drawing) Mar70.p38;  
pic Apr67.p42  
Halnaker Hill Mill. pic Nov66.p30; pic Nov70.p30  
Hastings, Silverhill Mill. pic (drawing) May68.p31  
"Ingly Water-mill. pic Nov72.p54  
In Salvington post mill. pic Nov67.p38, pic Aug73.p39  
Icklesham, Hog Hill Mill. pic (drawing) May68.p30; pic Mar71.p39;  
pic Nov72.p27  
Keymer, Oldlands Mill. pic Nov72.p28  
Kingston, Six Sweep Mill. pic Oct73.p79; letter Dec73.p71  
Lindfield, Deans Mill. pic Feb71.p41  
Mark Cross Mill. pic Feb74.p34  
Nutley. pic Mar67.p55; pic Nov69.p31; pic (during  
restoration) Nov71.p53; pic Nov72.p28  
Nyetimber Mill (near Pagham). letter July66.p70; letter Aug66.p52  
Polegate Windmill. +pics July66.p30; +pics July68.p63;  
pic June73.p61; pic Nov70.p39; pic Feb74.p33  
Punnett's Town, Cherry Clack Mill. pic (drawing) May68.p31; pic May73.p47  
Rottingdean Mill. pic (restoration work) Jan67.p22; Apr68.p23;  
+pic Dec70.p66; pic May73.p47  
Rye, Gibbet Mill. pic Feb66.p21; +pic Jan69.p58  
Seaford, Mill House, Sutton. letter Jan73.p28  
Selsey Mill. pic Nov70.p31  
Shipley Windmill. pic May67.p45; pic (drawing) Mar70.p39;  
pic Apr72.p86; pic July70.p33

Storrington, Gately Mill. pic (drawing) Nov70.p106  
 Trotton (Water-) Mill. pic Nov66.p2  
 Washington, Rock Mill. pic July67.p44; pic Apr68.p26  
 West Ashling Mill. pic Feb71.p42  
 West Blatchington. pic July67.p36; pic May73.p46  
 Winchelsea, St. Leonards Mill. pic (drawing) May68.p30  
 1975  
 Windmills of Lewes. +pics Apr. p50; letter Aug p9  
 Water power on the Ouse. +pics Jun p32  
 Sails Over the Downs. +pics Aug p36; letters Oct p11; letter Nov p13  
 Ashurst Windmill. pic (1925) Aug p37  
 Bishopstone Tide Mill. pic Jun p35  
 Buxted Mill. pic Jun p33  
 Framfield, Uptons Mill. pic Jun p35  
 Halnaker. pic Aug cover  
 Hempstead Mill. pic Jun p32  
 High Hurstwood Mill. pic Jun p35  
 Plumpton, Old Mill. pic Jun p35  
 Salvington Windmill. pics (1924 & 1975) Aug p36  
 Shipley Mill. (1925) Aug p37  
 Shortbridge Mill. pic Jun p32  
 Uckfield Mill. pic Jun p35  
 1976  
 High Salvington windmill. letter +pics Jan p7  
 1977  
 Michelham water mill. +pics July p26  
 Rottingdean windmill. +pics Aug p23  
 Rye windmill. pic July p20  
 1978  
 West Blatchington windmill. letter +pics Jan p3  
 Hammonds water mill (Clayton). letter May p23; letter July p5  
 1979  
 Jack and Jill (Saving Clayton windmills). +pics Jan p18  
 Secrets of the Sussex windmills. +pics Feb p27; letter May p7  
 Shipley windmill. +pics Jan p20  
 Sussex Windmills Exhibition  
 (of paintings by Arthur Foord Hughes). +pics July p48  
 High Salvington post mill. pic Feb p28  
 Earnley windmill. pic Feb p27  
 Halnaker windmill. pic Feb p27

DON COX

#### RATHAM WATERMILL CLEANING PROJECT

On Sunday 8 August, nine volunteers from S.I.A.S. met at Ratham Watermill near Chichester to clean and tidy up before the forthcoming visit by members on this year's Mills Tour. About 50 large paper grain bags of dirt and rubbish were removed, and many pieces of machinery and other artifacts were stacked for further examination at a later date. The buckets of the waterwheel were so full of growing turf etc. that it was impossible to complete the job in one session, and one member of the party returned by arrangement with the owner and spent the best part of the day working on the buckets and the launder.

The owner, Mrs. Heaver, is very sympathetic to the idea of preserving the mill, and it is to be hoped that some arrangements can be made for a further sometime in the near future.

PETER PEARCE

#### S.I.A.S. (MILLS GROUP) TOUR, SUNDAY 22 AUGUST 1993

Just as last year, Mills Tour Day dawned under a blanket of heavy clouds and rain falling. Nothing daunted, an intrepid group of enthusiasts met at Coultershaw Beam Pump to be

welcomed by Mike Palmer and his associates. The waterwheel was turning and the fountain was in full play. We were escorted in small groups so that everyone had a chance to examine the workings and ask questions. The newly acquired ram pump is now fully restored and mounted to work from a four foot drop of water from the outflow of the fountain. For most of us it was the first time it was seen in action, automatically pumping to an impressive height.

At 11.30 the rain had stopped, Mike locked up the mill and joined our party at our next port of call, which was Barnham Windmill. Unfortunately, Vic. May who was to have taken us over the mill was prevented by illness. This was unfortunate as we had hoped to hear something of how the plans for restoration were progressing. However the mill was open for us and we were able to climb up as far as the brakewheel.

After leaving Barnham, lunch was eaten on the way to our next call, and we gathered at Ratham Watermill at 2.00 p.m. This privately owned mill unfortunately no longer has its grindstones in place, but has very many interesting pieces of mechanism and milling artefacts to examine. This mill boasts both a waterwheel and a turbine, and much of the machinery could be operated by the waterwheel or the turbine, or, later by electric power. The tailrace is badly silted up; the wheel partly submerged and the turbine is completely under water. However, I understand from the owner that the Water Board has agreed to clear a section of the stream, which should help matters. We were able to examine the remains of an ancient dynamo which was driven by the turbine and which charged large storage batteries in an adjacent shed. Many hours could have been spent here examining the bins, elevators, flour dressing machine etc., but we were due to travel on to our last call which was Bursledon Windmill near Southampton. Our hosts here, after welcoming us, showed us a video of the history of the mill which set the tone for our visit. Here we saw a fine example of an early type of windmill machinery, all fully restored to working order. Its wooden windshaft and gearing, and its chain drive winding gear caught our attention, and we were sorry that we could not see it turning.

We would like to thank the owners/curators of the mills we visited for making it a very enjoyable day.

PETER PEARCE

#### OLDLAND MILL, KEYMER

The tail bay frame has now been completed with provision for a wider door as in the original. Some braces have been included which were absent in the original. Draw peg drilling has been carried out except for the flour floor, where the studding tenons engage with the tail bay tie mortices.

The frame has now been dismantled and stacked. Stainless steel fixings have been manufactured for the bulk of the main frame requirements, while a sample trestle strap in BMS is being made using an original pattern.

The main frame is now largely complete except for the engagement of the upper breast beam and tail tie with the top rails. Consideration has also to be given to the possible reuse of the tail meal beam.

It is now becoming a matter of some urgency to dismantle the brake wheel, in order that attention can be directed towards the roof, and rebuild of the brake wheel. Work continues on recovering the crown post base features. A substantial quantity of scaffolding will now be required in order that the mill body can be dismantled and rebuilt including the new frames.

A. JOHN ANNETT