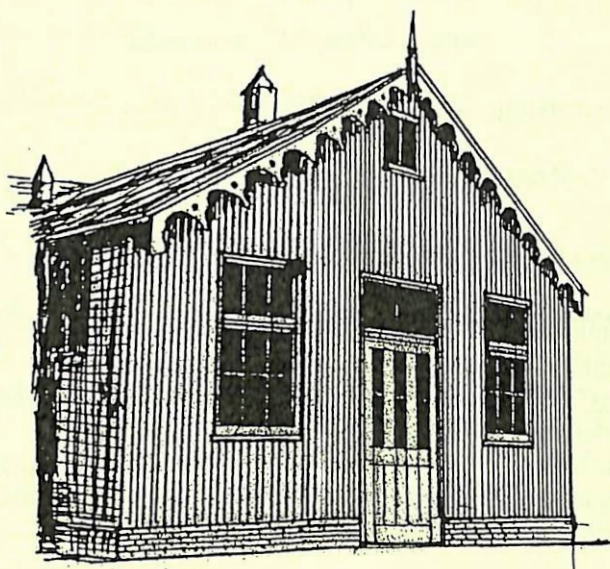




SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Newsletter No 116

October 2002



FORMER G.P.O. SORTING OFFICE
ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA

R.C. Martin 2002

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CONTENTS

Future programme	2
From other organisations	4
New look for the Newsletter	4
Hollinsworth Bridge unearthed	4
Sussex Main Lines - 3. Ford to Bosham	5
Book review - An Anthology of Worthing Tramocars	8
Recording in Progress-	
Cocking Lime Works	9
Shoreham Cement Works	9
Sorting Office, St Leonards	10
AIA Conference in Edinburgh	10
Recording Award - Eolienne Bollée	11
List of Officers	12

FUTURE PROGRAMME

Saturday 9th November at 10.30 am. An additional visit has been arranged to the former Shoreham Cement Works at TQ 198 083. This will be limited to 20 members. The site is dirty, hazardous, but not dangerous and it is **NOT** suitable for anyone with physical difficulties. It is essential to contact Ron Martin for further details - 01273 271330

AGM

Saturday 16th November at 2.30 pm at West Blatchington Mill Barn. Annual General Meeting followed by a talk .

Contact Ron Martin 01273 271330

2003

Winter Lectures at West Blatchington Mill Barn will take place on Saturdays at 7.30 pm. Contact Peter Hill 01273 776017

Saturday 25th January, Mike Slamo on Brighton to Shoreham west coast railway line.

Saturday 29th March, Chris Horlock on Industry in Brighton using his extensive postcard collection.

Saturday 26th April, Peter Bailey on The Port of Newhaven.

Tuesday 11th February at 7.30pm at East Pallant House , Chichester, a joint meeting with Chichester Museum Society *Fortress City - The Defences of Portsmouth 1665-1900* by John Stedman, Local History Officer, Portsmouth City Museums and Record Office. Joint meeting with Chichester Museum .

Note: all attendees pay a meeting fee of 50p.

Contact: C.Bryan 01243 773158

Sunday 16th March Working Party at Coultershaw Pump

Saturday 5th April at 10.00 am at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich (Greenwich University) South East Region Industrial Archaeology Conference (SERIAC). Booking forms and details will be in the January Newsletter.

FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

THE RAILWAY RAMBLERS

Jeff Vinter

Saturday 16th November. Wey and Arun canal walk from Billingshurst to Pulborough (8 miles) . The Wey and Arun Canal is slowly being restored as 'London's Lost Route to the Sea'. Meet at Billingshurst Railway Station at 10.15 am for a shared taxi to Rowner (2 miles away), where we will join the towpath by the first restored lock. We will then have about 5 miles of delightful towpath walking as far as Pallingham, where we will use the Wey-South path to circumnavigate those sections where the public right of way has been extinguished. The walk will finish at Pulborough railway station, where there are return trains to Billingshurst (2 per hour). Please bring a packed lunch as there are no pubs *en route*. (This is a remote area where the only rights of way are footpaths.)

OS Landranger map 197. Leader: Jeff Vinter. 01243 783270

NEW LOOK FOR NEWSLETTER

Bob Allen

A working party recently considered the publication and appearance of the Newsletter. This is the first attempt at improving the publication which has been unchanged for many years. Your comments are invited by e-mail or post to the Hon. Editor, Bob Allen or to the Chairman, John Blackwell. Contact addresses are on the back page.

HOLLINSWORTH BRIDGE UNEARTHED

Chris Bryan

Several members of the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society with an interest in Poyntz Bridge spent some time in August conserving a few pieces of metalwork, which were part of Stewart Bridge, a cast iron swing bridge similar to Poyntz Bridge on the line of the Portsmouth and Arundel Navigation at Barnham. The items treated were the 3ft-diameter cast iron circular channel section lower part of the pivot bearing, a packing ring for the bearing and a short length of cast iron side member, which were dug up by the landowner last winter. The brick walls and coping stones have

all been revealed but a lot of work is needed to tidy the brickwork and replace the coping stones in the correct positions.

It was while working at the Stewart Bridge site that the landowner, using a JCB digger, recovered several substantial pieces of cast iron side member with the name 'Hollinsworth Bridge 1820' on each side. These belonged to a swing bridge several hundred yards to the east of Stewart Bridge. Work is currently ongoing with the conservation of the cast iron parts of Hollinsworth Bridge and leaving them on display at the Stewart Bridge site. These can be viewed at SU 956034. The line of the towpath is a public right-of-way.

In the County Record Office, Chichester, are three plans. Two are dated September 1818 by Jas. Hollinsworth of the Portsmouth and Arundel Navigation; the third dated 1820 by James Hollinsworth is of the River Arun Navigation from Burpham to Newbridge.

There is confusion over several different spellings of the name: Hollinsworth, Hollingsworth or Hollingworth and whether father and son were both engineers. The bridge is probably named after the man who was appointed by John Rennie as the resident engineer for the building of the Crinan Canal in Scotland and Waterloo Bridge in London as well as his input to the Portsmouth and Arundel Navigation.

SUSSEX MAIN LINES – A YEAR 2002 SURVEY John Blackwell

3 FORD TO BOSHAM

The branch to Littlehampton opened on 17th August 1863 and before this a station near the present Lyminster crossing served the town (see previous article). The present functional station opened in 1988, the original having been demolished in 1938 when both the main line to Portsmouth and that from Three Bridges to Littlehampton was electrified. For 50 years a temporary wooden terminus and a cut back portion of the original canopy served the town; now there is a cut-price type of station and no canopy. The 1863 station building was similar to those still remaining at Portslade and West Worthing but with the bricks exposed and not rendered and with less ornamentation around the windows, a prototype for the later widely used design.

To the north and forming part of the new station is the original engine shed, that had a locomotive turntable about 100 yards in front of it. Beyond the engine shed and continuing westwards along Gloucester Road one comes to the site of the Town Gas Works. The office building survives as does a modern gas holder, these will disappear within the next few years as gas becomes directly pumped from the North Sea. The goods shed is of the more unusual two-storey version of which several were erected in the period 1860 to 1880, the only other survivor being at Arundel: note the pleasing design executed in stock brick and the attractive semi circular windows. Opposite is the signal box which is still operational. It is of the larger Saxby & Farmer design that appeared all over the LB&SCR from 1876 onwards with a brick base, three pairs of sliding wooden windows above and a slate hipped roof. This box has a distinctive fretted valance around the eaves identical to that often used for platform canopies. To the southeast was once a large wharf with sailings to Dieppe and Honfleur. These had ceased by 1880 but the wharf remained busy with freight, mainly coal until about 1960. All traces of the railway have gone but the Custom House remains as offices.

Returning through Ford the disused station buildings at Yapton SU 981 043 can be found. These opened with the line in 1846 and closed in 1864 when Barnham Junction was opened. The original single storey station with brick quoins and flint infill can be seen with a later two-storey station house with bay windows facing the track. Immediately to the south is a pair of 1850s railway cottages, one in near original condition where the guttering used to run across the dormer window. The branch for Bognor opened on 1st June 1864 together with a new station on the west coast line at Barnham SU 958 043. The line was doubled in 1911 and the attractive large wooden signal box dates from then. It is of the final LB&SCR design with gable ends. The station was extensively rebuilt in 1936 with the booking office and accommodation above resembling a suburban house of the period. A tiled subway and covered walkway leads to the platforms. The only level crossing on the branch was at South Bersted SU 937 000 where the main road to Chichester crossed the line. For electrification in 1938, a replacement signal box in the Southern Region 'Odeon' style was built. This style has a rectangular brick base surmounted centrally by a smaller upper storey with curved ends and a flat concrete roof. Originally these had curved *Crittall* windows on the trackside but the replacements sadly bear no comparison. The road has now been diverted to cross by a bridge but

the footbridge remains. Bognor Station was somewhat unlucky, being destroyed by a storm in 1897 and two years later being burnt down. Rebuilt in 1902, by W Johnson & Co of Wandsworth at a cost of £37,000 and recently restored, the station is now listed and well worth visiting. This opulent station complex expresses the LB&SCR at the height of its prosperity; the building is in the Edwardian 'municipal' style of red brick with the large windows and doors having stone surrounds. A small clock tower crowns the roof. The double height booking hall (now partitioned with one part for retail use) retains many original features, a wood block floor and brown glazed brick dado with a dark and light green capping. The words *Booking Hall* and *Waiting Room* on the glass fanlight also survive. The bow window fronting the concourse was originally the refreshment room. An LB&SCR Saxby and Farmer ground frame can be found behind the buffers between platforms 2 and 3. Outside is a huge 19 bay double height goods shed (this replaced a two storey one identical to the one at Littlehampton that was sited on the opposite side of the tracks). The platforms are covered by extensive glazed and boarded canopies with looping valances now somewhat altered. Rolled steel joists are used to carry the canopies supported by less decorative columns and spandrel brackets than in earlier years. The columns also serve the useful purpose of rainwater down pipes. A porte cochère to the east and contemporary iron railings around the present taxi area complete the ensemble.

Woodgate crossing at SU 939 043 was the site of the original station for Bognor and although the station buildings, which were the same as at Yapton, have been demolished within the last ten years, the crossing keeper's cottage remains. Now extended, it is similar to that at Ferring, with brick quoins and squared and knapped flint panels. Here is also a wooden porch which was a typical feature.

At Drayton SU 890 044 was an 1846 flint and brick station (built to serve Goodwood House), which closed to passengers in 1930. A pair of station houses and an 1876 Saxby & Farmer signal box survived until the mid-eighties when the site was razed as part of the resignalling of the line. From the Chichester bypass bridge at SU 878 043 can be viewed to the east, a siding running into a fuel storage depot, this was built during WWII to supply the RAF airfields on the coastal plain. To the west, a siding, now gone, ran into Bartholomew's seed and fertiliser depot. Three level crossings with nothing of railway interest remaining bring one to Chichester Station. Rebuilt in 1957, it is the only example worth noting in the county of post war design. It looks a little tired from the outside but step

inside the booking hall and note the 'contemporary' style features so popular at the time, hexagonal raised ceiling tiles, cascade lighting fittings, patterned tiling below the ticket issuing counter, and *Formica* and steel tube information boards. The internal footbridge is in the same style with plywood and *Formica* panelling. The platform canopies are light and airy and look well following a recent repaint. A similar goods shed to that at Bognor is now a pub restaurant; note the new stained glass in the semi-circular windows. The interchange with the bus station of the same period that is situated opposite illustrates good town planning. The west signal box survives and is a splendid example of a large LB&SCR box similar to Littlehampton but twice as long. Clay Lane crossing at SU 847 047 is now for cyclists and pedestrians only but was a traffic bottleneck before a recent link road to the bypass was constructed. A few yards west the branch to Midhurst diverged but this is now obscured. Fishbourne Halt at SU 835 050 was provided in 1906 as one of a series between Chichester and Portsmouth in the face of motorbus competition. When built, the platforms were of wood with simple shelters; for electrification in 1938 they were extended and rebuilt in concrete. Bosham Station at SU 812 054 is a 1902 rebuild in an elegant red brick country house style. The canopy to the down platform with looping valances remains but the attractive up platform building has sadly gone as has the signal box and goods shed. The next two halts, before the county boundary is reached, are at Nutbourne and Southbourne and are similar to Fishbourne and not worth visiting.

BOOK REVIEW

John Blackwell

AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE WORTHING TRAMOCARS

This is an admirable and very readable publication that brings together all the available information on the Tramocars. Clearly and concisely it details the design and operation of the vehicles, the history of the company, with descriptions and timetables of the routes operated. Bill Gates the founder of the company noticed that the poor little old ladies of Worthing had difficulty in getting on and off of the high platformed buses then operating. He built a coach body onto a chassis with small solid wheels, that had been designed for a refuse cart, on to create a vehicle whose floor was 23 inches above the road. (A replica of this first vehicle

was recently constructed at Amberley Working Museum and is operating there). He also obtained permission to operate the lucrative sea front service that was withheld from bus operators on noise grounds. For 14 years during which the design evolved and the routes extended the maroon and white vehicles were a familiar sight on the streets of Worthing until ill health forced a sale to Southdown. The only present-day reminder is the garage in Wordsworth Road, now a Tec Auto Centre, which is surprisingly little changed. Published for a limited market even at £11 to this reviewer it represents excellent value and is highly recommended.

An Anthology of the Worthing Tramocars is published by the Southdown Enthusiasts' Club and is obtainable from SEC Postal Sales, 6 Valebridge Drive, Burgess Hill West Sussex RH15 ORW. 92 pages price £11.00 inc

RECORDING IN PROGRESS

Ron Martin

Cocking Lime Works

In the course of my research into the Cocking Lime Works, I have been looking at the census returns to determine the earliest reference to lime for the parish of Cocking. The first mention was in 1861 when one James Bennett, a tramp "slept in lime kiln". It is not recorded in what state he was or whether he survived the experience. I understand that there have been numerous examples of people dying in limekilns by being overcome by fumes. The first actual lime burner mentioned was in 1871 census, when there was one lime burner named Thomas Hewitt. The absence of lime burners before 1871 is presumably accounted for by the fact that the lime burners had other more relevant employment.

Shoreham Cement Works

I have been recently recording the remains of the Shoreham Cement Works, which are actually located in Upper Beeding, just to be confusing. This large complex, the present buildings mostly built in 1948-50, with the cement production being carried out on the east side of the road and the distribution and offices on the west side; an overhead gantry connecting the two parts. Up to the 1970s coal was delivered by rail to the west side, unloaded by a tippler, and transported up a conveyor belt over the top of the cement bagging silos and then over the gantry to the coal store in the main building. Cement was transported in the opposite

(east - west) direction. Chalk was excavated in the pit at the back of the works and clay was brought in from various sources, but latterly by lorry from Horton. The works operated using the semi-dry process whereby the chalk/clay slurry was compressed to remove some of the water before the cake was introduced into the kilns.

There was a cement works extant in 1898 on the west side of the site which was used until 1965. One interesting feature which still exists is the pedestrian tunnel under the A283 road which was probably built for the original 1910 tramway.

Former GPO Sorting Office, St. Leonards-on-Sea

The drawing on the front cover is of the former GPO Sorting Office in King's Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea. It is a tee-shaped building, the leg being single storey with a cross wing at the rear of two storeys. The ground floor area under upper storey is carried on cast iron columns. The construction is of softwood studding lined inside with matchboarding and externally with boarding and covered corrugated steel sheeting, the space between being filled with sawdust. The corrugated steel roof is supported on composite iron trusses resting directly on the studding. There are casement windows. The most striking feature externally is the elaborate trefoil shaped barge boards with finials.

The date of the building was probably c. 1880 and becoming a GPO Sorting Office in the 1920s. If any members have any further information on this building please let me know.

AIA CONFERENCE IN EDINBURGH

Ron Martin

The annual conference of the Association for Industrial Archaeology was held this year in the Heriot Watt University just outside Edinburgh. It is impossible to detail all the visits and lectures we were occupied with over the week so here are a few brief impressions. The campus where we stayed was vast and sprawling and the logistic of getting the Society's display set up were horrendous. Once established one began to appreciate the rural setting with gardens and lochs with a resident population of swans, ducks, moorhens, rabbits and squirrels. The Rolt Memorial Lecture was given by Professor John Hume on the subject of *Industry as Culture* drawing from many examples and industrial monuments which have merit as brilliant design. A visit to the Forth Bridge is always rewarding but I felt that the railway station at Wemyss Bay, the

terminus of the Bute Ferry. This was built in 1903 by the Caledonian Railway with an 'arts and craft' exterior and a spectacular semicircular glass roofed booking hall with curved canopied platforms at one side and a curved pedestrian walk way to the ferry at the other side. We visited this en route for Bute which is a fascinating island partly in the Highland and partly in the Lowlands. On the quayside at Rothsay, is a beautifully restored Victorian Gentlemen's Toilet with polychromatic glazed brick walls and splendid sanitary ware - truly a temple to hygiene !

My interest in limekilns was encouraged by the visit to the Charlestown, on the north side of the Firth of Forth where there are the remains of 14 kilns, by 1795 the largest limeworks in Scotland. These kilns all had an access passages along the back and there were four draw holes to each kiln. This is the site of the Scottish Lime Centre and we were given a demonstration of lime slaking. A visit to New Lanark, even in the rain, is always rewarding and the amount of restoration carried out since my last visit was impressive. This village was founded in 1785 by David Dale as a completely new industrial settlement with cotton mills powered by water from the River Clyde. Under the enlighten management of David Dales son-in-law Robert Owen, this became famous as a model community. It is now a living community and a World Heritage Site. Probably the most spectacular site which I did not visit is the Falkirk Millennium Wheel. This was built recently to replace of a flight of locks and enables barges to transfer from the Forth and Clyde Canal to the Union Canal by way of the world's first rotating boat lift capable of lifting 600 ton boats a vertical height of 35 m.

The next AIA conference is to take place in Cardiff in September, 2003 and it would be nice to see a few more Sussex members join me there. Full details will be available next Spring.

RECORDING AWARD - EOLIENNE BOLLEE

Ron Martin

The AIA gives awards annually for various categories. This year the students award was given to students of the University of Brighton in conjunction with the British Engineerium for their work on the Eoliènne Bollée at St. Hugh's Monastery, Cowfold. A full report has been produced on this site and it is hoped that this will be available to members in due course. Our congratulation are given to this students for their success on this project.

The Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society

registered Charity No. 267159

Officers

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Treasurer & Membership Secretary	P.J. Holtham, 12 St Helens Crescent, Hove,	BN3 8EP	01273 413790
Chief Editor	B. Austen, 1 Mercedes Cottages, St. Johns Road, Haywards Heath	RH16 4EH	01444 413845
Newsletter Editor	R. E. Allen, 7 Heathfield Road, Seaford,	BN25 1TH	01323 896724
Archivist	P. J. Holtham		
Programme Coordinator:	Mrs P.M. Bracher, 2 Hayes Close, Ringmer, Lewes,	BN8 5HN	01273 813902
Area Secretaries			
Eastern Area	R. F. Jones, 3 Nutley Mill Road, Stone Cross, Hailsham	BN24 5PD	01323 760595
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Central Area	J. S. F. Blackwell, 21 Hythe Road, Brighton,	BN1 6JR	01273 557564
Northern Area	E. W. Henbery, MBE, 10 Mole Close, Langley Green, Crawley,	RH11 7PN	01293 406132

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

C. Bryan, M.H. Dawes, Mrs D. Durden, P.J. Hill, R.M. Palmer, H. Stenning,
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Newsletter should be sent to:

R.E. Allen, 7 Heathfield Road, Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 1TH, 01323 896724
e-mail footprints@tesco.net

(Copy for the Mills Group section should be sent to the editor of the Mills Group Newsletter, R.F. Jones,
whose address is above.)