

The Selsey Railcar

Ringing Rock, built 1883



Locomotives on the Hundred of Manhood to Selsey
Railway (see page 14).

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Copy for the April *Newsletter* should be sent by March 14th to :
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SIAS PROGRAMME TO 22nd APRIL Pat Bracher

Saturday 21st January in West Blatchington Mill Barn

2.00 pm SIAS members are invited to the Brighton Circle meeting when Laurie Marshall will speak on *London Brighton and South Coast Railway Stations*.

7.30 pm *A London, Brighton and South Coast Miscellany* a talk by John Minnis, Architectural Steward of the Brighton Circle.

Tuesday 14th February at 7.30 pm in East Pallant House, Chichester the annual joint meeting with the Chichester Museum Society. *Fort Nelson*. Nicholas Hall will tell the story of this historic building from 'Palmerston's Fo;;y' to Royal Armouries Museum.

Saturday 18th March at 7.30 pm in West Blatchington Mill Barn, a talk by Nick Kelly entitled *Concrete ships: when stone goes to sea*.

Sunday 26th March from 11.00 am. Working Party at Coultershaw Pump. Wear old clothes and bring a picnic lunch. Contact Robin Wilson 01798 865774.

Saturday 22nd April at 10.00 am SERIAC at the Medical Education Centre, St Richards Hospital, Chichester. Contact Bob Allen 01323 896724 for details and booking form.

EVENTS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

Malcolm Dawes

Events organised by other societies which may be of interest to SIAS members. If you have details for future events please send these to Malcolm Dawes, 52 Rugby Road, Brighton, BN1 6EB or e-mail to malcolm.dawes@btinternet.com.

Thursday 26th January 2006 at 8 pm. *Narrow Gauge Railways* by Dave Vaughan at the Red Lion, Stone Cross. Organised by the Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club. 01323 843202.

Thursday 26th January 7.30 pm. *History of the Royal Pavilion*, by Jackie Marsh-Hobbs. Volk's Electric Railway Association, Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Brighton. £1 visitors. 01273 306838.

Saturday 28th January 2.30 pm. *The Story of Brighton Marina* by Tricia Leonard. Local History Forum, United Church Hall, Blatchington Road, Hove. 01273 307335.

28th-29th January. Victorian Weekend, Bluebell Railway. Note that trains will only be running between Horsted Keynes and Kingscote. 01825 720825.

Wednesday 8th February 7.30 pm. *Restoration, Conservation and Archaeology of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal* by Chris Bryan. Note that these talks are often full, early attendance is recommended. Chichester Local History Society, New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 785408

Wednesday 8th February at 7.30pm. *The Origins and Development of Horse Tramways* by Nick Kelly. Tramway and Light Railway Society, Sussex Group, Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. £1 visitors. 01273 512839.

Tuesday 14th February at 7.30 pm. *Memories of the Southern* by Graham Briggs. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Sussex Group, Westham Village Hall. 01323 845108.

Wednesday 15th February after the AGM at 7.45 pm. *Tales from the Tube* presented by John Butler. Sussex Transport Interest Group, Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Brighton. £2 visitors. 01273 512839.

Friday 17th February at 7.00 pm. *Wannock Gardens* a talk by Jenny Wootton. Polegate and Willingdon Local History Society, St.Johns Church Hall, High Street, Polegate. 01323 485971.

Thursday 23rd February at 7.45 pm. *The Glory Days of Austin* presented by Reg Brook and Alan Hodges. Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club, Red Lion Public House, Stone Cross, Pevensey. 01323 843202.

25th-26th February. Branch Line Weekend. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720825.

Wednesday 8th March at 7.30 pm. *Trolley Buses of Portsmouth* by Simon Cole. Tramway and Light Railway Society, Sussex Group, Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. £1 visitors. 01273 512839.

Wednesday 15th March at 8.00 pm. *Ocean Liners and Cruise Ships* presented by Robin Jones. Sussex Transport Interest Group, Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Brighton. £2 visitors. 01273 512839.

Tuesday 14th March at 7.30 pm. *Brighton Atlantic Project* by David Jones. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Sussex Group, Westham Village Hall. 01323 845108.

Friday 17th March at 7.00pm. *Railways in Sussex* presented by Bruce Cakebread. Polegate and Willingdon Local History Society, St.Johns Church Hall, High Street, Polegate. 01323 485971.

Thursday 23rd March at 7.30 pm. Bluebell Railway slide show, organised by Volk's Electric Railway Association, Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Brighton. £1 visitors. 01273 306838.

Saturday 25th March at 2.30 pm. *The Bluebell Railway* a talk by Joe Whicher. Local History Forum, United Church Hall, Blatchington Road, Hove. 01273 307335.

8th-9th April. Goods Train Weekend. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720825.

Monday April 10th at 7.30 pm. *Southern Signals* a talk by Ted Goodman. Southern Electric Group, Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. £2 visitors. 01273 504791.

Tuesday 11th April at 7.30 pm. *Railways of Germany* by John Scrase. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Sussex Group, Westham Village Hall. 01323 845108.

Wednesday 12th April at 7.30 pm. *The Halcyon Days of Transport* by Terry Russell. Tramway and Light Railway Society, Sussex Group, Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. £1 visitors. 01273 512839.

Wednesday 19th April at 8.00 pm. *The Story of the Wey and Arun Canal* by Tony Platt. Sussex Transport Interest Group, Brighton Model Railway Clubrooms, London Road Station, Brighton. £2 visitors. 01273 512839.

Sunday 23rd April. Toy and Rail Collectors Fair. Bluebell Railway. 01825 720825.

PORTSMOUTH AND ARUNDEL CANAL Chris Bryan

Monday 17th October saw the final stage of work at the Stewart Bridge site, Barnham for 2005. The use of a large tractor with lifting tackle for the morning enabled six large limestone coping stones weighing between 200 and 300 kg (4 and 6 cwt) to be set in position on the brickwork reinstated during the summer. The walls supported a former cast iron swing bridge.

Saturday 12th November was the first of two sessions putting a protective barrier around the exposed remains of the Lock No.1 at Ford. This is to prevent further damage from ploughing and motor bikes. It also highlights the subject of the nearby interpretation board.

Saturday 3rd December work recommenced at St.Giles Bridge, Merston where the first job was to bury a substantial plastic sheet to protect the extrados of the brick arch from water penetration.

An archaeological dig has started under the arch and two towpath coping stones have so far been exposed. The first to be found at any of the 18 fixed bridge sites. Extensive recording will now be carried out at this site. St.Giles Bridge has no public access and is surrounded by fields and nurseries. Getting to the site is difficult; The owner, Humber VHB, Runcton, kindly allows access through the nursery, the final 300 metre leg being to transport all tools in wheelbarrows.

For a site visit or further information contact Adge Roberts 01903 773575

BRIGHTON 1919 & 2005

Geoff Mead

Brighton History Centre on the first floor of Brighton museum is a great storehouse of local history material whose new layout allows students and researchers easy access to a wide range of materials. There is a dizzying array of volumes and sources to consult, but as with all such archives sometimes a degree of parallel thinking is required to seek out a particular line of enquiry. Currently I am researching housing in interwar Patcham for a PhD and I thought I might gain an insight into some of the health aspects of the town by looking into volumes with the riveting title-

"The Brighton Health Reports, the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health."

I had glanced at these on an earlier visit and noted they had reports on the state of local housing in the Borough. What I had not seen was that Duncan Forbes, the Medical Officer of Health, included a digest of information on the town in his foreword to the 1919 annual report. It

contains an interesting view of the industry of Brighton -

"The staple industry of Brighton is catering for visitors by hotels and boarding houses and apartment letting [lodging house keepers, females 1,487]. In consequence the laundry work done in Brighton is in excess of that done in other towns, also there is a greater number of domestic servants [7,977 females]. Brighton is a shopping centre for Central Sussex [shops males 7,663; females 6,400. It is also a distributing centre.

London Brighton and South Coast railway has erecting and repairing shops at Brighton and Lancing, the employees at Lancing being mostly resident in Brighton. An estimate made during 1919 of the numbers employed at these works is 3,106 as compared with the pre-war figure of 2,705. The census figure for all railway and carriage workers is 5,772.

Electrical accessories - one large firm employs 1,156 persons as compared with 461 prior to the war.

Diamond works - 500 discharged and disabled soldiers, 350 of whom were not previously resident in Brighton are employed at these works about 50% being married men

Fishermen - 332"

I am able to back up some of these facts with the earliest street directory I have, Pikes Blue Book for 1926, that gives some interesting figures. For example the number of laundries for Brighton and Hove is a staggering 70 plus another 11 in the suburban districts, 8 of those being in Portslade; somewhat of a paradox as at that date there was the gasworks, the electricity works, several brickfields and assorted industries in that district. The electrical firm is probably the Reason Manufacturing Company in the Lewes Road, although by 1926 the later major manufacture Allen West is also listed in Lewes Road. Interestingly they both have the same telephone number. The surge in the use of electrical equipment, principally by the military during WWI, carried over into peacetime as the report notices and was to grow ever larger with the suburban expansion and growth of manufacturing in the Home Counties in the interwar period. This manufacturing firm was by the post WW II period the largest single employer in the town, but now a sad shadow of its former self.

The diamond works was The National Diamond Factories set up by Bernard Oppenheimer as a post war relief measure for wounded servicemen. The high level of unemployment in Brighton and the sensitive issue of wounded ex-servicemen was a topic which concerned central government and after discussion in Cabinet £150,000 was voted to assist the venture, an early attempt at state intervention in industry; to no avail, the whole enterprise had foundered by the end of the year throwing 250 disabled ex-servicemen onto the dole.

SERIAC 2006

South East Region Industrial Archaeology Conference

Saturday 22nd April 2006

The Mickerson Hall
Chichester Medical Education Centre
St Richards Hospital
Spitalfield Lane
CHICHESTER
West Sussex.

The South East Region Industrial Archaeology Conference is an annual one-day conference organised by a group of societies in the southeast of England who have an interest in industrial history and archaeology.

This year the event is hosted by the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society (registered charity no. 267159).

SERIAC Bursary

SERIAC invites applications for a bursary, funded from the surplus accumulated from conferences over the years. These bursaries (up to £350) are intended to support and enhance IA in the SERIAC region. The work may be fieldwork, publication, enhancing public understanding of IA etc. Applicants do not have to live in the SE region but the work proposed must centre on the SERIAC region.

For full details of the scheme send a SAE to:- Ron Martin, 42 Falmer Avenue, Saltdean, Brighton, BN2 8FG 01273 271330

BOOK SALES & DISPLAYS

SERIAC group members include the following societies many of whom will have displays and book stands at the conference.

BIAG Berkshire IA group
GLIAS Greater London IA Society
HIAS Hampshire IA Society
IWIAS Isle of Wight IA Society
SIAS Sussex IA Society
SIHG Surrey Industrial History Group
Sub Brit Subterranea Britannica
ALPHA Association of London Pumping Attractions.

Other groups or individuals who would like display space at the conference should contact Bob Allen on (01323 896724) or e-mail footprints@tesco.net

SERIAC 2006 Booking form (please print)

Please reserve me places @ £8 per person to include coffee and tea.

Please reserve me buffet lunches @ £6.25

Please reserve me.....places in Amberley Working Museum Restaurant after the optional visit to Connected Earth

Name(s).....

Address.....

.....

Post code..... Phone..... E-mail.....

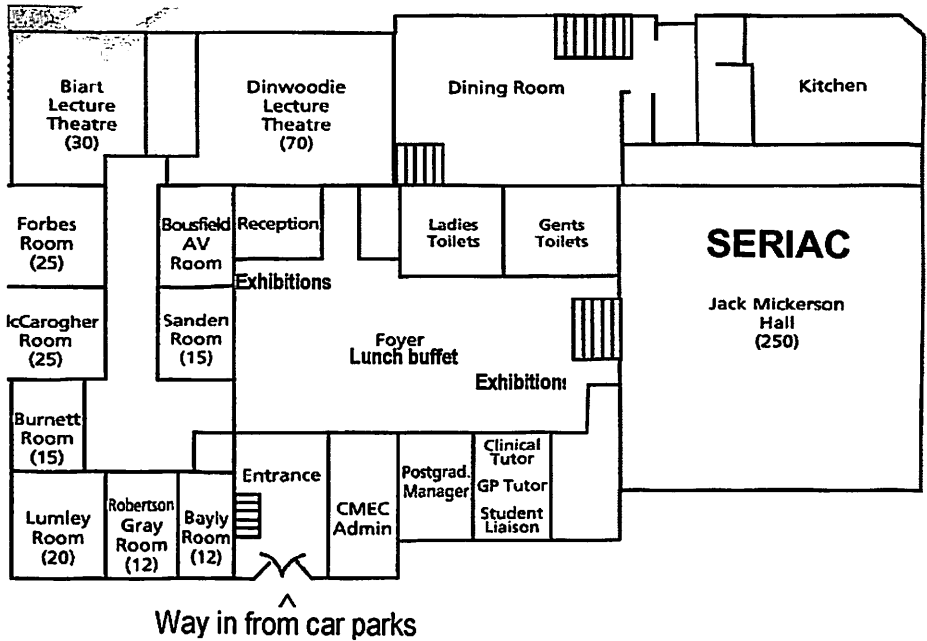
Organisation.....

I enclose a cheque for £..... Payable to SIAS

Send to: Bob Allen,
7 Heathfield Road, SEAFORD, E.Sussex, BN25 1TH

Signed..... Date.....

Please note that bookings should be made before April 14th bookings after this date or at the door will be charged £15



SERIAC PROGRAMME 2006

- 1000 **Start of registration.** Coffee & biscuits available.
- 1020 Welcome by Air Marshal Sir Freddie Sowrey, SIAS president
- 1030 Amberley Museum – the first 25 years - Brian Johnson
- 1110 The setting up of the Connected Earth Exhibition – Fred Stanford.
- 1150 PLUTO and where it led – Roger Morgan.
- 1230 **Lunch**
- 1400 Among Those Dark Satanic Mills. The rise of industry in the Georgian Period - Alan Green. .
- 1440 Middleton Press & other Midhurst Mysteries - Vic Mitchell.
- 1520 **Afternoon Tea**
- 1550 Pumping Heritage - Martin Wilson
- 1630 Closing remarks and questions..
- 1645 **Close of Conference**

The Conference will be followed by an opportunity to see the Connected Earth exhibition at Amberley museum. The Museum Restaurant will be open for pre-booked meals. (11.5 miles NE of Chichester, map available on the day)

Further details may be obtained by e-mail to footprints@tesco.net

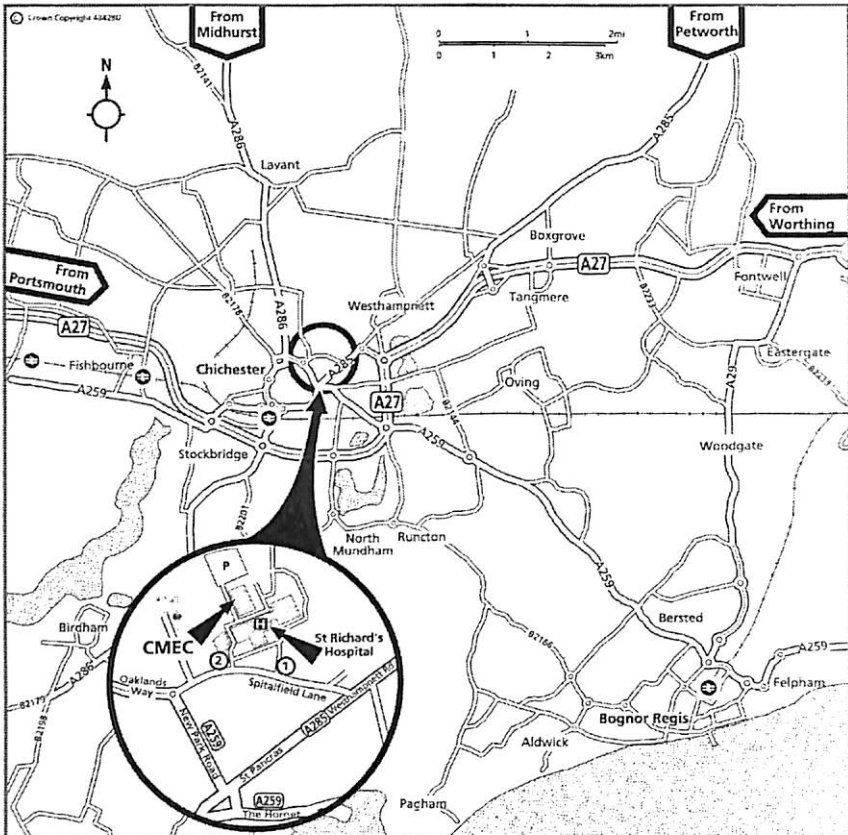
Location.

From Southampton/Portsmouth join the M27 eastbound and continue onto the A27 beyond the exit for the A3(M) for 10 miles to arrive at the roundabout with the A259. Turn left for Chichester and follow the signposted route for the hospital. Enter the hospital grounds at **entrance 2**.

From Brighton/Worthing. Join the A27 westbound. Continue on the A27 beyond Arundel for 8 miles to arrive at the roundabout with the A285. Take the second exit here to join the A285 towards Chichester. At the next roundabout, take the first exit at the next roundabout to remain on the A285, Westhampnett Road and over a mini-roundabout. At the next mini-roundabout, take the second exit into Spitalfield Lane. Enter the hospital grounds at **entrance 2**.

From the North. Come South on the A286 through Midhurst. On entering the outskirts of Chichester follow the signposted route for the hospital. Enter the hospital grounds at **entrance 2**.

By Train to Chichester Station . Route 55 bus from the bus station (near the railway station) has a 2 per hour service to CMEC



It is interesting to compare this with the resort a hundred years earlier. They indicate how the resort was heavily dependent on service industries through much of its post 18th century history. Certainly the note in paragraph one about shopping was echoed in a guide to Brighton 1828, which noted -

“ Brighton is a town of few manufactures, but the retail trade is considerable”

In this instance the term 'manufactures' is used in its 19th century context and refers to items made for national distribution. Brighton had an extensive range of small and medium sizes manufacturers of metal and wood products but they were mainly for internal Brighton consumption. Almost one hundred years on from the 1919 report there is a similar comment to be made on the 21st century economy, and it is remarkable how similar that is to the 1826 quote! Gone are the railway erecting shops, the electrical accessories and the diamond works but in their place has come a bigger range of services, retailing, financial, leisure, multi-media and above all education; between them the Universities of Sussex and Brighton are the city's largest employers. In a recent paper delivered by Professor Fred Gray at the University of Sussex he made the comparison between the booming Brighton economy with its very large student population and that of other struggling resorts with a far smaller student body such as Hastings.

Bibliography:-

The Brighton Health Reports, the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health. 1919

Dickens P & Gilbert G: *Interwar housing policy: a study of Brighton*
[in Southern History vol 3 1981]

Pikes Blue Book: Brighton & Hove 1926

Strangers Guide to Brighton 1826

THE SUSSEX RAILWAYS OF COLONEL STEPHENS THE HUNDRED OF MANHOOD AND SELSEY TRAMWAY

John Blackwell

The Selsey peninsular lying to the south of Chichester was originally an island and formed part of the Hundred of Manhood (main wood) so it was originally part of a huge forest. It was, and still is, primarily an agricultural sparsely populated area except for the post war development at Selsey.

By the end of the nineteenth century, improvements in communications between Chichester and Selsey were mooted. The Selsey Railway and Pier Act of 1888 would have provided a connection to the LB&SCR at Chichester and terminated with a pier for steamers near the coastguard station at Selsey. Capital required was £75,000 but the scheme was not proceeded with. In 1895 a simpler scheme omitting the pier, estimated at £21,000, was proposed but this also ran into difficulties, probably with local landowners, until it was resuscitated at a meeting attended by City worthies at the Dolphin Hotel, Chichester, on the 11th March 1896. From this meeting, the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramways Company Limited was formed. As this was a tramway running on private land it was not subject to the Light Railway Act. It had to make inconvenient detours by skirting fields and running through farms to get a right of way. To say the line was economically constructed would be an understatement. There were no signalling or crossing gates and the rails were of light weight with little or no ballast around the sleepers to which the rails were directly spiked. The estimated cost of £12,000 was exceeded with construction and land costs of £21,750 and rolling stock £3,268; the deficit was raised by further share issues.

H.F. Stephens was appointed Engineer in January 1897. The contractors, Messrs. Mancktelow Bros. of Horsmonden Kent, previously used by Stephens on the Rye and Camber Tramway, undertook to lay the permanent way within four months, following the delivery of the materials. They were presumably also responsible for the station building, as they were of the same corrugated iron sheeting on wooden frames as used on the Rye and Camber. The line opened for traffic on the 27th August 1897. It was some 7 miles long and built to standard gauge. An inauspicious start to the line's career was made with the first train arriving an hour late to make the inaugural journey from Chichester with three coaches, only two of which could be accommodated at the platform. The lines prospectus had stated "it is not intended or desired to run trains at express speeds"- a statement which proved all too true

in the years to follow. In 1898 a *Railway Magazine* reporter noted, after arriving forty minutes late at Selsey and fifteen minutes after the train was advertised to return; "I am told that originally the Company did not state the arrival times of trains. I am rather surprised that they do so now; it is an overbold stroke of policy".

The line was managed by Stephens and formed part of his 'empire' controlled from Salford Terrace in Tonbridge. It prospered until about 1920. Indeed in 1913 powers were sought for a Light Railway Order for a branch from Hunston to West Itchenor and East Wittering with a 200 ft long pier at West Itchenor. The First World War intervened and the powers lapsed in 1921. The line continued to operate without parliamentary powers until January 1924 when application was made under the little used Railway Construction Facilities Act of 1864 for a change of name to the "West Sussex Railway Co." This did little for the railway other than to give it a legal status and bring its operations under the scrutiny of the Ministry of Transport. Importantly, after Stephen's death in 1931, this empowered the ailing line to enter into negotiation with the Southern Railway with regard to re-construction, working and management of the line, Stephens lines having been left out of the 1923 grouping. The Southern Railway was not interested and with increasing bus competition (services started in July 1920) passenger traffic decreased from 102,292 in 1919 to 13,416 in 1931 when a receiver was appointed. By November 1934 there was only one train per day each way and on the 19th January 1935 the service was "suspended until further notice". Shortly after this the line's assets were disposed of for scrap.

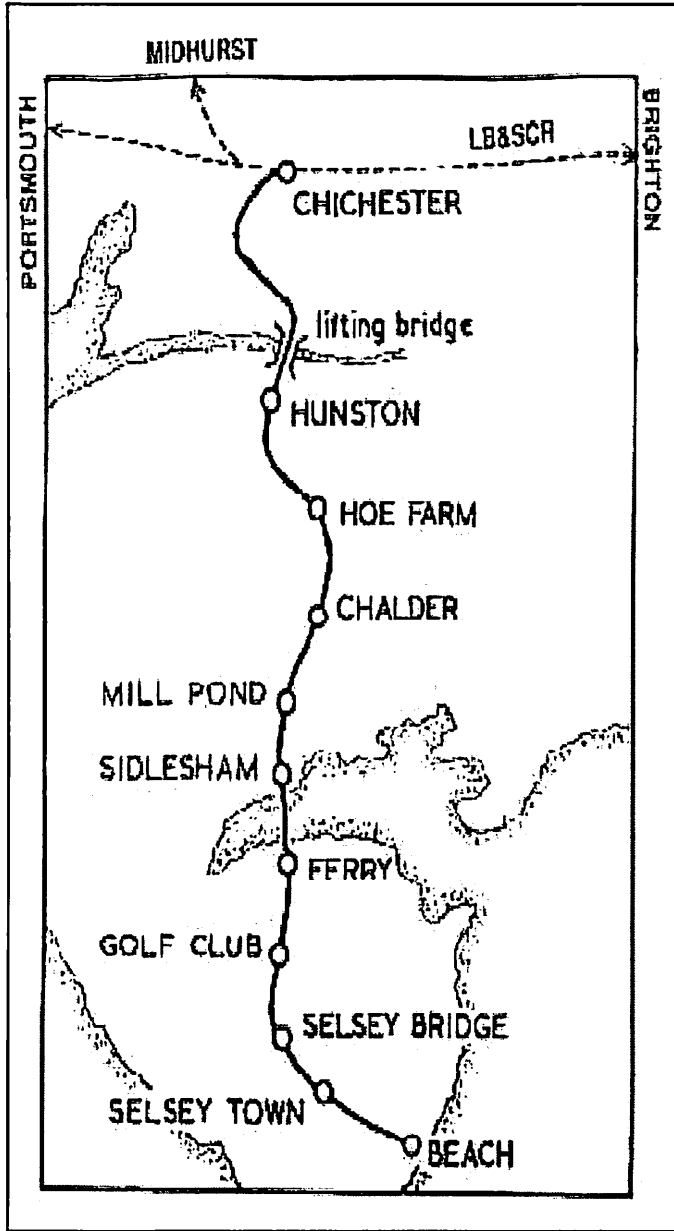
There were eleven stations on the seven mile line and today, 70 years after closure, the course of the line can still be largely followed. The Chichester terminus was situated south of the LB&SCR station and behind Terminus Road opposite the canal basin. There was a single track connection between the two companies but neither company's locomotives were allowed on the others metals. A modern office block is now on the station site. On leaving the terminus westwards a sharp curve was negotiated, now covered by factories, across Terminus Road; then over what is now the bypass before crossing Stockbridge Road. Here the line continued along the present footpath and then along the west bank of the canal, crossing by a bridge at Hunston SU 861022. This lifting bridge was built and owned by Chichester City Council who charged the tramway £2 per annum. This included the removal of fish plates and five men were required to open the bridge for small sea going vessels that were horse drawn from Birdham Lock to Chichester basin. All that remains today are the concrete abutments.

From the south side of the canal a footpath follows the course of the railway to the site of Hunston Station SU859015 which was situated to the east of the main road to Selsey. The remains of the platform, which was substantially built of concrete with brick edging, can still be found on the opposite side of the hedgerow adjoining the road.

Hoe Farm Halt SU862004 was a private "station" for the local farmer/landowner with no building, Chalder Station, SZ860992, a mile further on, was the standard corrugated iron and timber framed structure. The platform remains again can be found just to the south of a concrete staging for milk collection that was originally part of the platform. The next stop Sidlesham Station at SZ860973 was the site of a tide mill erected in 1755 with eight pairs of stones. It lost its source of natural power in 1876 with the reclamation of Pagham Harbour but continued working until 1906 using steam power. The building collapsed around 1920 but the foundations are still visible. On 15th December 1910 there was a catastrophic flood which inundated 2,000 acres of the reclaimed land in one hour, flooding the line to a depth of 12 feet. A shuttle service to Mill Pond Halt at SZ856981, a temporary stopping point some half mile north of Sidlesham was followed by a two-horse omnibus journey, (a portent of things to come!) to Ferry Station to connect with the shuttle to Selsey. At this date the Company was prosperous enough to pay for a mile long embankment across Pagham Harbour, 15 feet high costing £2,500. It was not reclaimed after the flood. The original station building was placed at right angles to the track, facing the road and not on the reconstructed timber platform. The hump where the road was raised, the embankment running south and the remains of a bridge crossing a rife at the southern end are still clearly visible.

Ferry Station at SZ856963, a wooden halt, was situated where the track crossed the main road on a very dangerous (and still dangerous) blind bend. With no gates and increasing motor traffic, it is not surprising there were several accidents here in latter years. From here one can still discern the straight alignment south to Golf Club Halt at SZ855946 a private "station" for members. Here was the site of a major derailment on the 3rd September 1923, when the fireman of the locomotive was killed. Although the inquest verdict was accidental death, the Chief Engineer, Stephens, was held indirectly to blame as there was evidence of neglect in the upkeep of the track. One juryman declared it was possible within 200 yards of the accident to lift out spikes supposedly holding rails to the sleepers.

Selsey Bridge Station at SZ857939 was situated in a cutting near the present Police Station but has been completely obliterated. A siding just north of the station served the Trojan brickworks; another brickworks had sidings south of the canal bridge at Hunston. Selsey Town Station



at SZ862936 has been completely covered by modern housing but was near Allendale Close. Railway Road has reverted to its previous name Church Road and the "Railway Arms" public house has been renamed "The Stargazer" in honour of local resident Patrick Moore. Happily a terrace of housing built for railway employees survives in Church Road. Chichester and Selsey Stations were the only ones with any form of illumination, both being lit by gas supplied from local gas works. There was a small goods shed. Transport of produce, particularly in the early days, and the Pullinger patent mousetrap, provided an important income to the company. Of the total receipts in 1933 of £2,400, £1,800 was for carriage of goods. The loco shed with facilities for six engines was also sited here.

On the 1st August 1898 the line was extended half a mile to Selsey Beach station at SZ866934. This extension only worked during the summer months and had closed by 1912. Remains of the platforms and the alignment could still be found until the early seventies when they disappeared under the new East Beach car park.

The Company only bought one new locomotive, *Selsey*, in 1897. The other locomotive used at the line's opening, *Chichester*, was built in 1847. Various other decrepit locomotives between 20 and 40 years old were used at different periods in the line's existence. Carriages fared slightly better, three being purchased new for the opening and a further one in 1900. Seven second-hand carriages were obtained between 1910 and 1916, the time of the line's greatest prosperity.

Because of the poor condition of the locomotives and in a bid to reduce operating costs, Stephens pioneered the use of rail cars. These were basically lorry/bus chassis with flanged wheels and a body with longitudinal wooden seats. It is almost certain that this was the line Stephens used in 1921 for trials using a 1908 or earlier Wolesley Siddley chassis with a new body by possibly Drake & Fletcher of Maidstone. Presumably the trials were successful as in 1923 a set from Edmunds of Thetford using a Ford Model T chassis arrived, followed in 1928 by a Shefflex set. A set consisted of two identical vehicles back to back with a wagon for light goods and luggage coupled in between. Only the leading vehicle was used as motive power the rear one being towed. It was noted by one traveller "like being transported in an oil drum leaving one with a continual ringing in the ears, the stench of petrol in the nostrils and an extremely sore behind".

Further reading:

Edward Griffith: *The Selsey Tramways* 1974

K Smith & V Mitchell: *Branch Line to Selsey* Middleton Press 2005 reprint

Pullinger patent mousetrap, *SIH 24*, 1994

FURTHER WORK AT BISHOPSTONE TIDEMILLS.

Bob Allen

The Sussex Archaeological Society is anxious to bring together what is known of the Tidemills and its associated village. This is particularly important as constant erosion is gradually destroying the remains.

The project is envisaged as being undertaken in two parts; an historical survey and a two stage archaeological field survey. Some detailed survey work has already been started. The success of the project will be dependent on volunteer help, both for historical research and for the on-site survey and recording/photography. English Heritage, through its outreach programme have already involved the Sussex Probation Service in vegetation clearance which is making it possible to undertake the survey in the first instance. A number of very informative notice boards have been erected at the site.

If any members are interested in being involved in the project, either on the historical or the archaeological side, please contact the SAS Research Officer, Luke Barber. The training for fieldwork is not likely to start until late spring 2006 though historical research can begin earlier. Email research@sussexpast.co.uk or phone Luke on 01273 405733 letting hm know in which aspects of the project you would like to participate.

Further details can be obtained from Luke.

There is an article about the project in *Sussex Past & Present*, no. 107, December 2005

NEW EDITOR REQUIRED

Bob Allen

After 12 years of editing the *Newsletter* I have decided that it is time to make way for a new editor who will bring new design skills and techniques to this publication.

When I took over from Gordon Thomerson we were receiving handwritten contributions and photocopied and pasted like mad to get the draft ready to be typeset and printed. Desktop publishing now makes the task easier and I must give my thanks to Ron Martin for his expert proof reading. Robin Jones is going to take over in the interim. All future contributions should be sent to him until a new editor is appointed..

This year's conference will take place in the Chichester Medical Education Centre. Apart from the usual book displays and exhibitions it is hoped that there will be a working model of an atmospheric railway.

The talks are on a wide variety of topics. As it is the 25th anniversary of the setting up of Amberley Working Museum, one of the founders is to describe the progress from a disused chalk pit to the present dynamic set of displays.

As intended, *Connected Earth* is to be the museum of the future. Created round an internet site, the artefacts are accessible at one of seven museum sites around the UK. The only new building for the collection was at Amberley. One of the original team will tell us about the concept and how the various sites were set up.

PLUTO went across the sea from the southern shores of England and what this led to is the subject of a talk by Roger Morgan.

The Rise of Industry in the Georgian Period is the self explanatory title of a talk by SIAS member Alan Green.

Another 25th anniversary is that of the Middleton Press. Vic Mitchell will let us into the mysteries of this organisation and other Midhurst enterprises (did I hear a whisper of Frazer Nash cars?)

Finally the chairman of the Association of London Pumping Heritage Attractions, Martin Wilson will talk about these and other giants of the water industry.

After the conference there will be an opportunity to visit the Connected Earth exhibition at Amberley Working Museum. This will involve a drive of about 8 miles. If this makes it a long day, you may, if you wish, have an evening meal in the Limeburner's Restaurant at Amberley Working Museum. No details of prices or what might be available can be given at the moment because of staff and management changes, but those who indicate on the booking form that they might wish to take up this offer will receive menus and order forms nearer the event.

I look forward to receiving your booking forms. The first one arrived today as I write this, so I am going to be busy over the next few months. I hope to see you there!