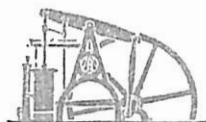
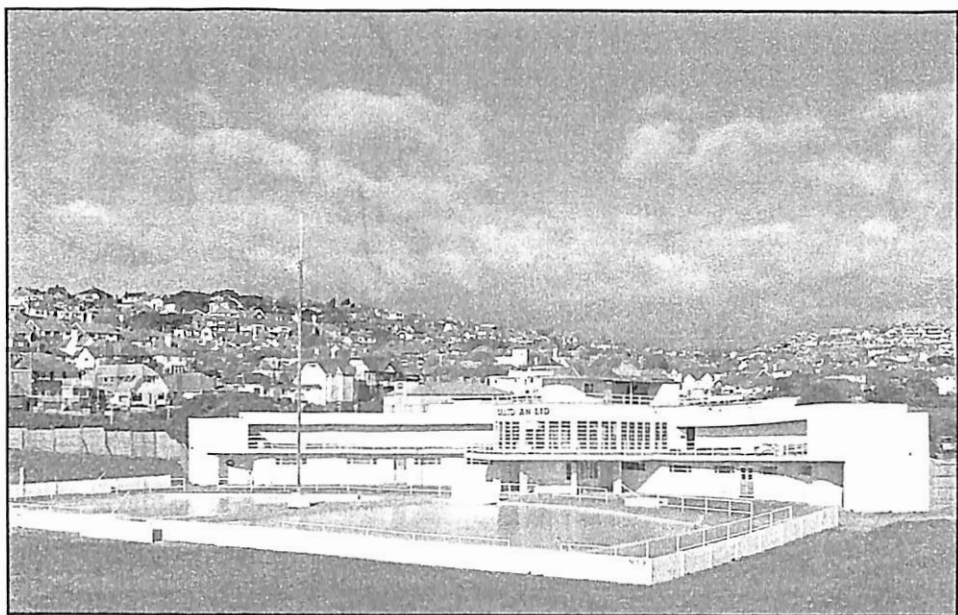


# Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter



Number 130

April 2006



Saltdean Lido perhaps one of the best known Lido's in Sussex. It was featured in the talk about Lido's and Swimming Pools by Diana Durden, which followed the SIAS AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

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**EDITORIAL****Robin Jones**

As you aware I am already the Editor of the Sussex Mills Group (SMG) Newsletter, and as reported in the last Newsletter I have taken over as Editor from Bob Allen, this being my first Newsletter. I would like to thank Bob for all the hard work he has put into the Newsletter over his 10 years as Editor. I have decided to adopt a similar layout to the SMG Newsletter and hope to expand on the variety of subjects covered. Articles and news of industrial archaeological interest will be welcome for consideration for future newsletters. Photographs to support the articles would also be welcomed. Contributors are requested to submit articles either by post or E mail.

It was good to see Ron Martin at the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2006 following his operation after being admitted to hospital on 5<sup>th</sup> January.

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**Pat Bracher**

**Saturday and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2006.** National Mills Weekend.

**Saturday and Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2006. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.** In the Nuclear Bunker at Brede Valley Water Works and Heritage Site at TQ 814178. Brede Amateur Steam Radio Society Open Day and Bazaar. Contact Bob Allen 01323 896724.

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at 2.30 p.m.** Visit to Cobbs Mill, Sayers Common, TQ 274189, a largely complete Victorian water mill. Contact Peter Hill 01273 776017.

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006 at 7.00 p.m.** By special request. Another final walk around Lewes with Graham Mayhew. Meet in the East Sussex County Council car park behind St. Anne's Church, TQ 409099 as last year. Contact Pat Bracher 01273 813902.

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 at 6.00 p.m.** Coultershaw Beam Pump. An open evening for SIAS members and friends. Contact Robin Wilson 01798 865774.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006 at 10.30 a.m.** Joint meeting with Sussex Mills Group. Meet at Chillenden Windmill, Kent, TR 268543. Tour of several Kent mills. Contact Brian Pike 01435 873367.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2005**

**Ron Martin**

The 38<sup>th</sup> AGM of the Society was held on Saturday, 26th November at West Blatchington Mill Barn. The Chairman, John Blackwell, reported that one of our long standing members, Michael Palmer had died recently. He then told the meeting of the activities of the Society during the past year which as usual had been a full programme of events. The publication of Alan Green's book *The History of Chichester's Canal* had been a great success and the initial print run of 500 was now sold out. A small team of volunteers had spent four months re-vamping the brick display at the Amberley Working Museum and this is now complete apart for the external display of brick bonds. A full

programme of events included visits to Newhaven, Lewes, Chichester and Firlie Place with three winter lectures and a joint meeting with the Chichester Museum Society as well as two mills tours organised by the SMG.

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Peter Holtham gave his report on the financial state of the Society which showed a healthy balance. There are currently 388 members, showing an increase of two over the previous year.

The Editor, Brian Austen reported that *SIH 35* had been published in October with an enhanced format and a coloured cover. Bob Allen who has been the Newsletter Editor for the past ten years has now given up and our thanks are given for his sterling work. The Newsletters have also been improved with a better quality cover with photographs. The editorship is being taken over by Robin Jones.

Peter Hill, the Mills Group Chairman reported that Don Cox had given up as Secretary of the Group and been replaced by Brian Pike with Maureen Hicks as Minutes Secretary. Many of the mills in Sussex had well attended open days throughout the year and the two visits had been most successful. Restoration work has been carried out to mills at Polegate, Oldland, Park Mill Batemans and Michelham Priory and also Windmill Hill, where the sweeps have now been fitted. There are still unresolved problems with Argos Hill and Cross-in-Hand Mills. Stone Cross Mill had received a prestigious SPAB award.

Robin Wilson reported that at the Coultershaw Beam Pump there had been a successful year with visitor numbers and receipts at about the same level as the previous year. Work is being carried out to repair the wheel and some clearance work is being carried out in the area of the lock (*right.*) The Project Proposal for the Heritage Site has been drafted and an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Planning Grant is being assessed.



Tony Baxter reported that at the Swanbourne Pump House in Arundel there have been poor visitor numbers this year due to the ongoing work by Southern Water and the current water shortage.

Ted Henbery reported that at Ifield Mill the wheel is being rebuilt at a cost of £25,000 and the leat is being cleared. De-infestation of the

interior has been carried out by Crawley District Council.

Chris Bryan reported that work on investigation and the restoration of various bridges on the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal has been proceeding, with many interesting discoveries being made. Several guided walks along the line of the canal have taken place.

Ron Martin reported that he has carried out surveys of the former printing works in St. John's Street, Chichester and of No. 4 Winding Street, Hastings. A separate report on these is included in this Newsletter. The former Shippams works in Chichester has now been demolished.

The election the Officers and Committee took place and these are listed on the inside back cover of this Newsletter.

After the AGM Diana Durden gave an illustrated talk on *Lidos*. A separate report on this is included in this Newsletter.

## EVENTS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

**Malcolm Dawes**

Detailed below are events organised by other societies, which may be of interest to our 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](mailto:malcolm.dawes@btinternet.com).

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May.** *Vintage Motorcycle Show.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May.** *The Historic Commercial Vehicles Run,* between London and Brighton.

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 p.m.** *Lives of the people commemorated in Chichester Cathedral.* A Chichester Local History Society talk by Ronnie Brown, Cathedral Guide. £2. New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 787592.

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May.** *Southern at War.* Bluebell Railway weekend of events. 01825 720825.

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May.** *Stationary Engine Working Day.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 8.00 p.m.** *West Sussex on Film.* Unique and recently discovered film covering the period from the 1890s to the 1950s, presented by Alan Redman, Assistant County Archivist.

Wivelsfield Historical Society, Wivelsfield Village Hall. £1 visitors.  
01444 233937.

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 p.m.** *Amberley Working Museum.* A Polegate and Willingdon Local History Society talk by Brinley Thomas. St. Johns Church Hall, High Street, Polegate. 01323 485971.

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May.** *Military Vehicle Show.* Amberley Working Museum.  
01798 831370.

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May.** *Hastings Vintage Bus and Transport Rally.*  
0845 274 1001.

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> to Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May.** *Home front celebrations, three day event on wartime Britain.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May.** Tramfest 2006. *Various Tram layouts.* The Haven Centre, Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down. SIAS members are welcome to come along as visitors.

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June. 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.** *Burgess Hill Local History Society Heritage Display.* Heritage Centre, Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill. 01444 236193.

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30 p.m.** *Railways of Lewes.* A Kent & East Sussex Railway, Sussex Area Group talk by John Hollands. Westham Village Hall, Near Pevensey. 01323 845108.

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June. 7.30 p.m.** *Selsey Past and Present.* A Chichester Local History Society talk by Peter Ogden, Selsey Society. £2. New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 787592.

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June.** *Steam Show, traction engines and rollers.* Amberley Museum. 01798 831370.

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June.** *All-electric Show, displays and demonstrations on an electric theme.* Amberley Working Museum.  
01798 831370.

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> and Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July.** *Fire Show, fire engines and fire-fighting.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Wednesdays 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July at 7.00 p.m.** *The little lost churches of Chichester.* A Chichester Local History Society walk led by Philip McDougal. Spaces are limited and booking will be essential. Contact Michael Taylor, 01243 787592.

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July.** *Railway Gala Weekend, many railway engines in action, plus model railways and displays.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30 p.m.** *The closed stations of London's Underground.* A Southern Electric Group, Southern Branch talk by Jim Connor. £2. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre.

01273 504791.

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30 p.m.** *Steam on the Screen.* A Kent & East Sussex Railway, Sussex Area Group DVD presentation by Alan Allbury. Westham Village Hall, near Pevensey. 01323 845108.

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July.** *The Real Museum Show, a look behind the scenes of the museum at work.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July.** *Toy and Collectors' Fair.* Bluebell Railway. 01825 720800.

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July.** *Printing Weekend, displays and demonstrations.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July.** *Stationary Steam Engine Event.* Brede Steam Pumping Engines.

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July.** *Classic Car Summer Picnic, cars of the 50s, 60s, 70s with period picnic equipment.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.

**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July.** *Worthing Bus Rally.* Marine Parade all day. Contact Chris Pearce 01903 520286.

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August.** *Classic Microcar and Scooter Rally, bubble cars, three-wheelers and scooters.* Amberley Working Museum. 01798 831370.



## REPORTS ON SIAS MEETINGS AT WEST BLATCHINGTON MILL

**Robin Jones**

Following the SIAS AGM on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005, the minutes of which are given on Page 3, Diana Durden gave an interesting illustrated talk on **Lidos and Swimming Pools** in Sussex. Covering each one in alphabetical order, Diana described and provided historical information on a variety of existing swimming pools, most of which were open air, including Arundel, Glynde and the Pells at Lewes. Swimming pools now closed or demolished ranging from Devonshire

Baths, Eastbourne to the swimming pool at St. Leonards, were also featured. Of the Lidos mentioned, the ones that immediately comes to mind are Saltdean, built in the Art Deco style and shown on the front cover, and the one at Worthing. Also at the meeting Diana mounted a display of photographs and newspaper cuttings, which she has collected over many years helping in her research. The talk was well presented, and with the display, added to the enjoyment of the evening.

On the afternoon of Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2006, a packed audience assembled for an illustrated lecture by Laurie Marshall on the **London, Brighton and South Coast Railway** between Portsmouth and Hastings, organised by the Brighton Circle. At the meeting early photographs were shown of various locations, with additional comments by John Minnis who described the finer points of each photograph. Many SIAS members were in attendance with experts from the Brighton Circle interjecting with additional details. The meeting concluded with refreshments of sandwiches, sausage rolls and cakes.

After the meeting, some members stayed on for the evening SIAS meeting when John Minnis gave an illustrated lecture on **London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Miscellany**. About 50 members and visitors attended and the first part was on the architecture of the stations, where an example of Midhurst Station designed by Myers was shown. Early timber stations were featured, Bexhill being a good example which predated the present station. Trains on lines around Brighton were shown including the Dyke and Kemp Town Branches. Various signal boxes, which have mostly disappeared such as Shoreham and Fishbourne, were discussed. A good view of Tunbridge Wells West in the 1980s, together with an internal view of the booking office showed how things change, although in this case the main building still exists as a restaurant. On showing Uckfield Signal Box, it was pointed out that the top wooden structure is now a hide at Lewes Nature Reserve located adjacent to the railway line. A series of waiting shelters were shown which, although vulnerable, have railway character. Then followed an intriguing photograph dated 1881 of Polegate West Box. Locomotives featured included *Boxhill* a Terrier class. Gladstone class and 'D' tank locomotives were also shown. Railway carriages of the early 1850s were featured including a Stroudley coach made into a thatched building at Slindon.





An early LB&SCR Stroudley coach in the grounds of a house at Slindon. It is painted maroon and covered with a thatched roof. Note the ducket on the extreme right protruding from the side of the coach to allow the guard to look ahead. There are the words 'Smoking Carriage' etched on one of the windows.

This very interesting lecture concluded with a series of photographs showing inside Brighton Locomotive Works where a steam hammer, patterns for castings and the boiler shop were seen. I felt the quality of the photographs were very good, bearing in mind that some were taken in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Finally a vote of thanks was given by John Blackwell for a fascinating evening.

## **JOINT MEETING WITH THE CHICHESTER MUSEUM SOCIETY**

**Chris Bryan**

### **FORT NELSON, 'PALMERSTON'S FOLLY TO ROYAL ARMOURIES' MUSEUM**

On 14<sup>th</sup> February 2006, Nicholas Hall, the curator of the Fort Nelson Museum, started the evening with an extensive and thorough insight into the political situation in France and Britain in the period leading up to the building of the forts. It centred on how Palmerston feared a possible invasion by Napoleon III and showed some excellent research

into the politics and character of Palmerston. A detailed description was included of the day in 1864 when Palmerston arrived at Fareham Station, his horse and carriage also arriving by train, so that he could inspect the building of the forts.

Then followed the illustrated part starting with slides of contemporary paintings of the people involved including the young Queen Victoria and Albert, as well as a French cartoon lampooning a British soldier.

Slides then illustrated the modern development of Fort Nelson into the museum of today. The site fell into disuse after World War II and was abandoned in the 1960s. It was rescued by the MOD in 1988 after extensive fire damage by local vandals. Hampshire County Council then purchased it for £50,000 and spent in excess of £3 million to put it back to its former state and opened it to the public in 1994. Fort Nelson is now one of the three Royal Armouries Museums, the other two being Leeds and the Tower of London.

Exhibits include the 20 ton Dardanelles cannon of 1464, which fired 2 foot diameter cannon balls, pieces of the confiscated Iraqi supergun as well as the largest post-war 14 inch naval gun. The illustrations showed the arrival of some large pieces requiring specialised transport.

The evening finished with slides of the firing of historic weapons by volunteer gun crews in period costume following the rules and procedures of the period.

## **COULTERSHAW BEAM PUMP UPDATE**

**Robin Wilson**

Members of SIAS as well as family and friends are once again invited to a special evening opening of the Coultershaw Beam Pump on **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 6pm - 8pm** with wine and small eats. Admittance free but donations welcome! Apologies to all members for the wrong date given to the last Newsletter for the annual working party, which was held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March.

Coultershaw had a satisfactory season in 2005. Visitors and takings were about the same as the previous year and the operating out-turn about break-even. Donations were up, mainly due to people's generosity at the Anniversary Party in July. In addition the Trust received an anonymous donation of £500, which has been put into the restoration fund.

2005 was marred by the sad loss of Michael Palmer in September at the age of 87. Michael was one of the original group of SIAS members who carried out the restoration of the Pump in 1976-80. He took over as leader and Hon. Curator on the death of Alan Allnutt in 1989, a role he held until 2001. Michael will be remembered for his friendship, calm approach to problems and his ingenuity in solving them. Robert Taylor has taken Michael's place as a Trustee of the Coultershaw Trust.

The Heritage Lottery Fund Senior Grants Officer has advised that the assessment of Coultershaw's application for a Planning Grant has been successful, which is good news for the Trust.

The pump continues to perform well with minimum summer maintenance, apart from emergency hammering back into place the metal key holding the wheel onto the shaft! The annual autumn survey of the wheel revealed that, in addition to the usual need to replace several paddles and boards, the wooden starts were beginning to rot where they pass through the ring of the iron wheel. Sufficient hardwood has been found for current needs but in due course all 60 may have to be replaced. Lawrence Stevens has been very helpful in obtaining leather for two new pump washers.

The Trustees have initiated several actions to improve safety and to comply with the Health & Safety regulations including a handrail for the outside steps and the fencing off of moving parts of the pump. A path has been laid to improve wheelchair access to the visitor centre.

Following a visit from the Horsham Probus Group, Bob Baveystock, John Bowker and Roger Rowe have joined the Coultershaw Group as stewards. Tim Harrod is another new steward; his father was the last stationmaster at Petworth. We also had a visit from Peter Spooner who worked as a driver and later shift foreman at the mill from 1957-63 when Brian Oxford was the manager. He told stories of a hard working group humping sacks of corn on their backs; he was complimentary about Gordon Gwillim as a caring owner. He said the Leyland engine was on the stone mounting in the engine house. The stand by engine was an inefficient Atlantic engine from a First World War submarine.



## EXHIBITION AND SALE

of

Ephemera and Manuscript Material and Books relating to Wind and Water Mills, Papermaking and Industrial Archaeology at

**Polegate Windmill, Park Croft, Polegate, East Sussex** on

Sunday and Monday 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2006, 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Catalogue available from Alan Ticehurst, 49 Gore Park Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex. BN21 1TG

Telephone 01323 736474 E mail [alan@ticehurst.screaming.net](mailto:alan@ticehurst.screaming.net).

## NEWS FROM AMBERLEY WORKING MUSEUM

Compiled by Robin Jones

In the most recent issues of *Wheelbarrow*, the magazine of Amberley Working Museum, a number of reports have been published about activities and progress at this interesting site. A recent event within the Bus Group has been the preparation of the red Thames Valley 1927 Tilling-Stevens B9 Express single deck bus for its MOT and its visit to the Guildhall in London to take part in the traditional cartmaking ceremony organised by the Worshipful Company of Carmen. There was also a report, with photographs of familiar SIAS members, about the official opening of the refurbished brick drying shed display, which took place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2005. A report on the Railway Gala Weekend, also in July, covered the event when the two steam engines *Polar Bear*, seen top left on leaflet, (right) and *Sea Lion* came together to celebrate *Polar Bear's* 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. 90 years of Southdown was celebrated at the Bus Show in September and many photographs of Southdown buses and coaches in their familiar green livery were seen



lined up outside the Limeburners Restaurant and in the White Pit. News on the De Witt Kilns was another feature where it was stated that a feasibility study had been carried out in 2004 to determine the extent of the deterioration of the structure since the chalk pits were closed in 1968, and what major repairs were needed to stabilise the building. If sufficient funding becomes available, work on the project could start in the autumn of 2006 with completion sometime during 2007. Plans for a different layout to the entrance to the site have been put forward, which could include a new railway station being built beside the new entrance building. Improvements to the Museum of Roads and Roadmaking, established by the Worshipful Company of Paviers in 1995 are envisaged and Robin Wilson, a SIAS committee member and Chairman of the Coultershaw Trust, is involved with this project. By the nature of the subject there are many large objects in the Paviers building and the plan is to relocate these large exhibits in another building to provide more space for the key exhibits and introduce modern interactive displays and hands on activities to give visitors more opportunity to learn about highway construction. Work is also taking place on one of the two Tram Shelters moved from Brighton in the early 1980s. Restoration of the shelter that originally stood outside St. Peter's Church is now being restored at its temporary position outside the EDF Energy building. There is also an interesting variety of special events at the Working Museum, and details are provided in the free leaflet shown at the beginning of this compilation. Colourful posters have been produced to publicise these events.

### **THE SUSSEX RAILWAYS OF COLONEL STEPHENS THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY**

**John Blackwell**

The third and final railway built by Colonel Stephens was the Rother Valley, which ran from an interchange platform at Robertsbridge, on the South Eastern Railway's (SER's) line from Tonbridge to Hastings, to Tenterden. It had been authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1896 but with the passing of the Light Railway Act in that year the directors applied for and obtained consent to construct and operate the line under the provisions of that Act. The Act relieved minor railways of the costly provision of complex signalling, gated level crossings, substantial station buildings and line fencing. The track could also be laid using a lighter weight of rail and little or no ballasting. A restriction

on axle weight and a speed limit, normally 25 mph was stipulated when proposals were submitted to the Light Railway Commissioners.

Stephens had been commissioned to survey the route for The Parliamentary submission in 1895 and was appointed Engineer and Locomotive Superintendent in 1898, becoming Managing Director in 1900. The line opened for goods traffic on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1900 and for passengers on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, the first railway to be completed under the 1896 Light Railway Act. The terminus was some two miles from the town centre and residents must have been delighted when a short extension was opened on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1903, terminating near the High Street, the original terminus being renamed Rolvenden. This was the first part of an extension that connected with the SER's station at Headcorn and opened on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1905. A change of name had taken place in 1904 to the Kent and East Sussex Railway (KESR). Optimistic extensions from Robertsbridge to Pevensey, Rolvenden to Cranbrook, and Headcorn to Maidstone were approved but never constructed.

Like Stephens's other Sussex lines, they prospered until the early twenties when bus services began to serve the local villages rather than inconveniently sited stations. To reduce costs Stephens tried railcars but as a substantial amount of goods were carried more expensive steam traction was also needed. After Stephens's death in 1931 the railways continued to be managed by his lifelong friend and second in command W. H. Austen but by 1933 he had added the post of Receiver and Manager to his other titles. Following wartime usefulness as an alternate route from the coast to the capital the line was nationalised in 1948 (Stephens had successfully opposed grouping in 1923). British Railways (BR) knew that the line beyond Tenterden had never been profitable and it closed completely on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1954 but the southern portion survived for goods and the occasional enthusiasts and hop-pickers special until 12<sup>th</sup> July 1961. Shortly after, a preservation society was formed but this ran into problems particularly with proposals for trains to cross main roads and these were not finally resolved until 1973, when only the trackbed between Tenterden and Bodiam was purchased. Services were gradually extended, reaching Bodiam by the year 2000.

All thirteen and a half miles of the route is easily traceable, much of it being a preserved railway. The journey commences at Robertsbridge Station where the down platform bay, now overgrown, was the departure point for KESR trains. From here the route curves sharply

away to the east for half a mile before crossing Northbridge Street (the former A21 main road); this section has been purchased and cleared by a preservation society with the long-term aim of reaching Bodiam from the east. Immediately to the north of the erstwhile level crossing at TQ 738240 is a channel of the River Rother and to the north of that is Hodson's Mill, a four storey brick building built in 1903, replacing a similar structure which was destroyed by fire the previous year (even though Mr. Hodson was the fire brigade captain and the appliance was kept on site). The new building contained a roller mill supplied by Simons of Manchester, powered by a beam engine (removed 1929); this supplemented three pairs of stones, two of which were powered by a turbine and the third by an overshot waterwheel. From 1903 a siding was laid to the mill which received some 400-500 trucks each year containing wheat and other grain, animal feedstuff and coal (Hodson was also the coal merchant until the thirties). When the line closed in 1961 grain was being delivered by rail in 20 ton bulk wagons (ex Millwall and Avonmouth docks). The then proprietor, Thomas Dadswell purchased a steam loco and after elementary training, mill employees worked the line from Robertsbridge as a siding, under the one engine in steam principle. Readers may recall this loco and the mill's lorries that carried the name of its flour, *Pride of Sussex*. Traffic ceased in 1969 and the KESR Preservation Society acquired the loco; it runs today as 'P' class 753 in South Eastern and Chatham Railway livery. The mill buildings still exist, but the site is now closed and up for sale and, although the two sidings into the mill have long been lifted, their course can still be traced. Immediately prior to the siding out-turn a channel of the River Rother was crossed, and the timber baulks that supported the track can still be seen.

The site of Salehurst Halt at TQ 750240 can be discovered by following the footpath from the church until on the right is a WW II pillbox; the platform was opposite. It was opened in 1903; apparently, and this is hard to believe on all known evidence of Stephens, for the convenience of the lady organist! It was simply constructed of earth topped with gravel and faced with retaining sleepers. At TQ 771244 was Junction Road Halt for Hawkhurst (nearly four miles away) of similar date and construction to that at Salehurst but here it was rebuilt by BR. During the hop picking season, once a year, the halt and Bodiam Station became a hive of activity with specials leaving London Bridge at 1 a.m. and 2.15 a.m. travelling direct (change to a lighter

engine at Robertsbridge) to Junction Road and Bodiam arriving at about 5 a.m. and 6 a.m. respectively. The final hop-pickers specials ran in 1958. Today not only has all trace of the halt vanished but also the adjacent complex of 10 oast houses and 50 kilns owned by the Guinness company.



Bodiam Station at TQ 782250 (photographed by David Jones, left) is the current limit of operation of the KESR preserved railway and here is the original timber framed corrugated iron clad building complete with canopy, so typical of Stephens' railways. Note especially the gents toilet

(Stephens, a life long bachelor, made no provision for the comfort of ladies), with a pipe carrying rainwater to flush the urinal and no W.C.; what a delight on a hot summer's day!

One cannot park at Bodiam station but there is normally sufficient space at Northiam at TQ834266 another original corrugated building though a little extended in matching style. Note the signal cabin from Wadhurst Station, the staff bungalows in the coal yard and the water tower (ex. London Transport Upminster).

This line was always Stephens's favourite and the preserved railway succeeds in trying to recreate the atmosphere of his lines whilst meeting the expectations of today's tourist industry: although there are no signs of hop gardens. Our route now crosses into Kent and a train ride to Tenterden is highly recommended, passing the completely rebuilt Wittersham Road and Rolvenden Stations, as also is a visit to the excellent "Colonel Stephens's Museum" at Tenterden. For those venturing further north St. Michael's tunnel (completely inaccessible) and High Halden Road Stations survive. Biddenden Station is being restored following fire damage, (the station agents corrugated iron accommodation remains, albeit covered in foliage) but Frittenden Road Station was sadly destroyed by arson in 2004.



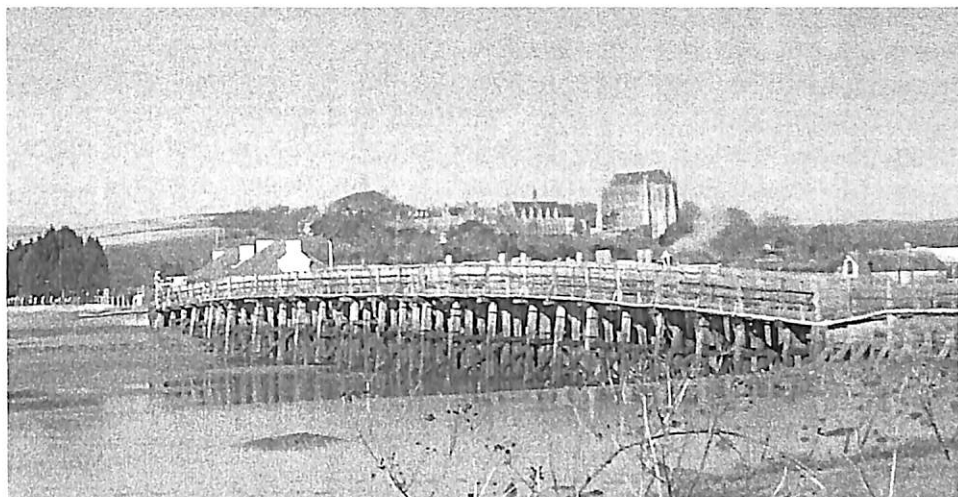
Further reading:

Stephen Garrett. *The Kent & East Sussex Railway* Oakwood Press (1989).

V. Mitchell & K. Smith. *Branch Line to Tenterden* Middleton Press (1985).

## OLD SHOREHAM TOLL BRIDGE

Robin Jones



The Old Toll Bridge at Shoreham photographed on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2006. In this view the Chapel of Lancing College dominates the skyline.

In the January 2006 issue of the free magazine *Worthing Plus*, it was reported that the Old Toll Bridge at Shoreham was to have a facelift. People living in Shoreham before the 1780s who wanted to get across the River Adur to Lancing, could only do so by using the ferry. Then, in 1782, the Shoreham Tollbridge was built: a sturdy wooden structure that carried horses, carts and people across the estuary. It stood undaunted by the rolling tyres of 20<sup>th</sup> century traffic, until it was closed to vehicles in 1970.

Despite its undoubted durability, the bridge's construction remained something of a mystery, as no plans or drawings of it have ever survived. Now thanks to an ambitious restoration project, experts are finding out much more about the bridge and how it was built.

The project aims to make sure the bridge is safe and usable while maintaining as many of its original features as possible. West Sussex County Council has provided a donation of £100,000 and the Heritage Lottery Fund has pledged a grant of £192,000 towards the project.

Divers have already been below the waterline to assess the condition of the bridge supports and they have discovered that a third of the timbers are now completely rotten, a third are gradually rotting away and the remainder are sound. The bridge is an unusual and rare example of an 18<sup>th</sup> century timber structure and it is important to conserve it properly, with the prospect of beginning restoration in the late spring of 2006. The bridge is listed Grade II\*, so design work aims to be as sympathetic as possible, retaining and re-using much of the current bridge. Getting exactly the right sort of timber is vital and plans are afoot to import it from South America. The present handrails and bridge parapet must be upgraded to ensure the bridge meets modern safety standards. Once work begins, it is hoped it will be completed within six months, with the bridge being kept open while the work takes place. So, by the end of 2006, the bridge will have had a 21<sup>st</sup> century facelift, without altering its original design.



Examples of two toll tickets issued by the British Railways Board in 1970, the year the bridge closed to road traffic. To compare the toll charges in 1970 with those imposed in 1782, a 3d toll would be paid for every Horse or other Beast drawing a Waggon, while a 10d toll would be for every Score of Oxen, Cows or Cattle over the bridge and back again, showing these tolls were exorbitant.



Toll tickets from *Old Shoreham Toll Bridge* – A Souvenir by Kim Leslie

## MARITIME MATTERS

Robin Jones

During this year, we have the Steam Ship *Shieldhall*, the Motor Vessel *Balmoral* and the Paddle Steamer *Waverley* visiting Sussex. SS *Shieldhall* is visiting Shoreham on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May from Southampton arriving at about 6 p.m. On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May she is operating a

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Sussex Coast cruise towards Beachy Head departing from Shoreham at 1.30 p.m. and due back in Shoreham at 8 p.m. The fare is £24.50. On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May passengers can enjoy a one way coastal cruise to Southampton departing from Shoreham at 8.30 a.m. arriving in Southampton at 7 p.m. Passengers then disembark and board coaches for the return journey to Shoreham arriving at 8 p.m. Fare £30.50. Bookings for both these cruises can be made through Blue Funnel Cruises on 023 8022 3278.

MV *Balmoral* will be operating cruises from Rye Harbour, the Sovereign Harbour, Eastbourne and Worthing Pier. On Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May she will depart from Eastbourne at 9 a.m., picking up at Worthing at 12 noon before continuing on a cruise to Yarmouth, Isle of Wight arriving at 3.30 p.m. Here passengers can spend 2 hours ashore before boarding at 5.30 p.m. for a cruise back to Portsmouth Harbour, or stay on board for a 2 hour cruise to the Needles. The cruise ends at Portsmouth with special coaches laid on to return passengers back to Worthing arriving at 8.30 p.m. or Eastbourne arriving at 9 p.m. On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June *Balmoral* leaves Rye at 8.30 a.m. for a non-stop cruise to London Tower Pier passing the Kent Coast, into the Thames Estuary, through the Thames Barrier and under Tower Bridge arriving at Tower Pier at 7 p.m. Special coaches will return passengers to Rye arriving at 9 p.m.

Details of the sailings by PS *Waverley* from Worthing Pier in September will be given in the next Newsletter.

Further details and inclusive fares can be obtained by telephoning 0845 130 4647. Bookings can also be made on line through the Waverley Excursions web site [www.waverleyexcursions.co.uk](http://www.waverleyexcursions.co.uk).

## RECORDING UPDATE

Ron Martin

Various sites have been recorded over the past few months and here are some of them.

### **Former Printing Works at St. John's Street, Chichester**

This site, which is in the New Town area of Chichester was first occupied in c.1825 by a builder/timber merchant and over the ensuing 80 or so years was gradually developed with as many as nine different building phases. It was bought by the printing firm of Moore and Tillyer in c.1908 and they remained there until 2002. It is mainly timber

framed and covered externally with weatherboarding, although the rear wall and the wall adjacent to St. John's Chapel are of flint rubble. The former is built on top of the old city wall. An unusual feature is that one of the parts of the building is covered with "triple angle" clay tiles, which were probably made in Bridgwater, Somerset. Their presence in Sussex is odd. The buildings are due for demolition shortly and it is hoped then, to determine whether there is a saw pit located under the floor, as has been suggested.

#### **No. 4 Winding Street, Hastings**

This site is a three storey warehouse with basement, which was built in c.1887 by a grocer E.W.Rubie at the rear of an 18<sup>th</sup> century house in the High Street. At some indeterminate date three smoke rooms were built within the warehouse and at the same time the roof was altered and some external walls were refaced with red brick. It continued to be used as a grocery store until the 1960s and is currently being converted into residential accommodation.

#### **West Hill Cliff Railway, Hastings - engine room**

A survey has been carried out on the above site at the request of Archaeology SouthEast. The railway was built in 1891 and is sited in a brick lined tunnel 500 ft long with a slope of 1 in 3. The railway was powered initially by an Otto gas engine. This was replaced by a Tangye diesel engine in c.1920, which operated until 1970 and is still in situ together with some of the line shafting. It is now electric powered. The engine room which is underground has brick walls with a cavity and the soffit comprises timber joists carried on fitch beams supporting weak concrete on boarding, above which is some 4 ft of earth. Some of the timbers have become rotten and have been reinforced with steel members which are in themselves a rather sorry state.

#### **Future recording**

Surveys are being done of the Pump House and Well at Lavington House, now occupied by Seaford College, and it is hoped later to do the estate buildings at Firlie Place visited by the Society last autumn. King Edward VII Hospital in Midhurst has now closed and a photographic record is being made.

In the Winter 2005/2006 issue of *Piers*, the Journal of the National Piers Society, it was reported that two domes, originally forming part of the theatre on the Palace Pier at Brighton, had been rescued and auctioned on the e-Bay website. The domes are currently stored at an address just outside Worthing. They are well made with timber frames, boarded and covered in zinc, painted silver/grey. One is in good condition, but the other is slightly damaged. These and other items were said to have been 'lost' after the theatre was dismantled in 1986, when maintenance on the decking underneath the theatre had to be carried out. The domes weigh about 700 lb. and are about 6' 6" high. (*Further information about the domes can be obtained from the Editor*).

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Robin Jones**

I visited the London Canal Museum on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2006. This museum is in a former ice warehouse, which was built in 1863 beside Battlebridge Basin on the Regents Canal. There are various exhibits on two floors covering canal life, the role of the horse in the early days and traditional "Arts and Crafts", of canal folk. There is also an ice well and a feature about the ice trade and ice cream. It was interesting to see in the forthcoming lecture programme for the London Branch of the Railway & Canal Historical Society that our Chairman, John Blackwell was giving a talk *The Railways of Colonel Stephens* on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February.

Members who have access to the Internet may like to investigate a series of six images of factory workers which can be seen on the web site [www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk](http://www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk). Just click on latest news, then updates on the right, then 2006, then 29<sup>th</sup> January. These images can be seen by clicking on Working Men and Women. If anyone can provide any information about the factory, what is being manufactured and the name and location of the factory, the Editor and the Chairman would be interested. Incidentally while on the same web site, if you return to the Home page, click Index, then Transport, then Paddle steamers, you can see a photograph of your new Editor!

There will be an Exhibition and Sale of Ephemera and Books at Polegate Windmill on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2006, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (see separate advertisement on Page 12).

 **BOOK REVIEW**

**Robin Jones**

A new book entitled **Steam in the Air** by Maurice Kelly has recently been published. At first this book appears to have an unbelievable title, but when reading this account of the application of steam power in aviation in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, it becomes clear that air machines were designed and built to operate by steam. There are a number of chapters including details of the early pioneers who used this technology and the scientific achievements which were overcome in this method of propulsion. The book also includes many drawings of the machines which operated in the air using steam. Priced at £19.99, this is a fascinating book on a subject, which as far as I know has never been covered before and written by the father of our member Nick Kelly, who also has researched many unusual subjects, a recent example being The 'Creteships', featured in an article in the last *Sussex Industrial History Issue 35*.



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Opinions expressed are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Society unless specifically stated.

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

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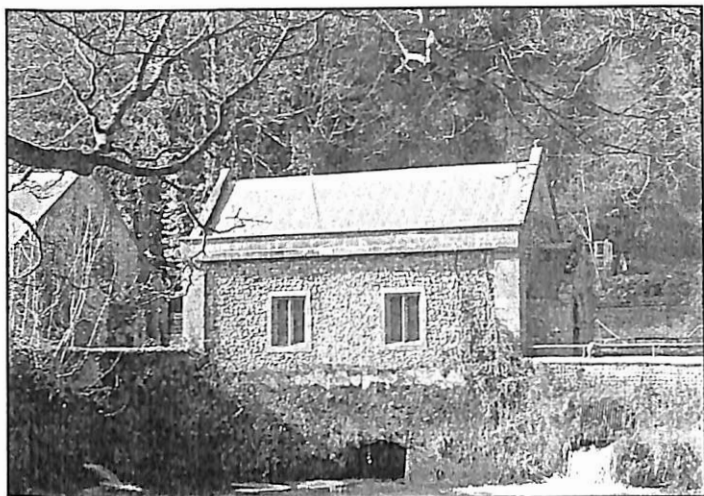
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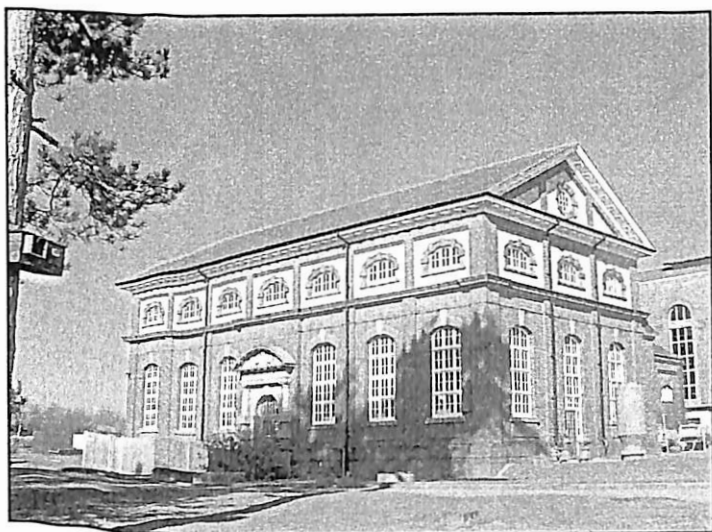
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## PUMP HOUSE PANORAMA



Swanbourne Pump House, near Arundel. An Architectural Appraisal about this building was published in Sussex Industrial History Issue 35.



The Pump House at Brede, which houses the 410 HP Triple Expansion Steam Pumping Engine, was built by Tangyes of Birmingham in 1904. The Worthington Simpson Engine is in the other Pump House seen on the right.