

Focus

on Industrial Archaeology

No. 100

December 2023

The Saga of the 'Crooked House' pub

Angela Smith

It all started on the morning of Saturday 5th August while I was having breakfast watching BBC's *Breakfast* programme, at the same time using the Red (or Text) button to scour through the News pages. On the UK News was an item about the 18th century *Crooked House* pub in the Black Country having burnt down during the night. Maybe not something that was out of the ordinary, but this one drew my immediate attention. It was the first lunch stop I had on my first SUIAG 'week', in 1968, *Study Tour from Birmingham to Gloucester by Boat and Coach*.

We had travelled by coach from Southampton to a hotel in Birmingham on Saturday June 1st and, on Sunday, we were touring around Birmingham looking at a variety of IA subjects. A sandwich lunch was enjoyed at the *Crooked House P.H.*, near Dudley, in the company of Birmingham University post-graduate student Mick Aston and his colleague Eric Grant, who were our guides. It was especially remembered as Mick said he always took his own beetroot sandwiches. Bill White was also on this Study Tour. The *Crooked House* was aptly named, having subsided at one end from underground mines in the early 19th century; the floor was sloped as were the doors as well as the building. It was originally a farmhouse and was converted into a pub in the 1940s by Dudley Breweries.

By Monday the pub had been demolished and there was so great a fuss that it was national news by Wednesday. Arson was suspected and police sniffer dogs were on site. On Thursday it was revealed that the female owner, who had bought the building from Marston's two months earlier for "an alternative use", had a brother who owned the adjacent landfill site, and the access road to the pub had been blocked by a large pile of earth and a barrier so that the fire brigade couldn't get close to the pub. They had to roll out 40 lengths of hose from the nearest hydrant. It transpired that a digger had been ordered 1½ weeks previously.

From then I was checking daily for any more information. It was reported that, once the barriers had been removed, bricks and other items said to be 'original' material from the pub were being sold online. The gold metal C from the sign was advertised for over £1m. A campaign was set up to try to prevent looting in case the pub could be rebuilt. Protesters angry at the demolition camped out at the site to make sure the bricks were not removed. The West Midlands Mayor released a statement urging people to 'steer clear' of the site to allow authorities to carry out their work. On August 16th was a report that the owners had experienced another huge fire in 2018 on land they owned at a landfill site in Buckinghamshire.

South Staffordshire Council said it was conducting an investigation into the "demolition of the entire building, without appropriate permissions", saying its investigation would be robust. Fences were put up at the site and two adjacent footpaths closed to the public. On 22nd August the Council said the foundations and bricks would stay on site, while work to remove hazardous waste was carried out. By 2nd September about 25,000 bricks had been stacked on pallets and locked in containers in the hope that the pub could be rebuilt.

Several people were arrested on suspicion of arson with intent to endanger life over the fire and were released under conditional bail. A 5th September report said that "a company linked to the owner of the destroyed Crooked House pub was taken to court over a failure to comply with Environment Agency orders". It was not connected to the fire at the pub, but to the landfill site adjacent to it. Since then there have been no further reports that I know of.

Heritage at Risk Register 2023

Over the past year, 159 historic buildings and sites have been added to the Register because they are at risk of neglect, decay or inappropriate development and 203 sites have been rescued and their futures secured. In total, there are 4,871 entries on the Heritage at Risk Register in 2023 – 48 fewer than in 2022.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the publication of the first Heritage at Risk Register (previously known as the Buildings at Risk Register). Over the past 25 years around 6,800 entries have been removed. Many of the remaining entries from the 1998 Register have seen good progress despite often being the hardest cases to solve.

The Hampshire list includes:- Bursledon Brickworks; Fort Fareham; various buildings at Haslar Gunboat Yard (Gosport); No. 2 Battery in Stokes Bay Road, Gosport; Priddy's Hard; Wind tunnels at former Royal Aircraft Establishment site, Farnborough; Andover-Redbridge Canal – Chalk Hill Lock, Horsebridge, Kings Somborne (on private property – scrub/tree growth); Hammerhead Crane, Cowes.

HAMPSHIRE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

(formerly Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group)

Meetings – January to July 2024

January 8	Woolston Ferry – <i>Stephen Hoadley</i>
February 5	The development of the medieval timber framed house in Hampshire – <i>Bill Fergie</i>
March 4	History of Royal Victoria Hospital – <i>Ursula Pearce</i>
April 8	From Bilbao to Britain – <i>Robert Fish</i>
May 13	Hampshire Brickworks Gazetteer Revision, 50 years on – <i>Bob Marshall and others</i>
June 3	Boscombe Down Aviation Collection – <i>Graham Horner</i>
July 1	Gosport's Unknown Engineer: Vic Hutfield – <i>Brenda Gilbert</i>

Meetings are held monthly on Mondays in the Underhill Centre, St John the Evangelist Church, St John's Road, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 4AF, commencing at 7.45pm

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Subscriptions for the membership year commencing November 2023 are now due.

The rates – unchanged – are as follows:

- **Ordinary £20** – *single member*
- **Joint £30** – *two members at the same address, sharing notices and publications*
- **Reduced £15** – *one or more members at the same address, but not normally attending meetings because of infirmity or distance from Hampshire*

Either:

- Pay by bank transfer if you are able to do so. Our account details are:
 - **Name:** Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society
 - **Bank name:** Lloyds **Sort code:** 30-90-34 **Account:** 01482051
 - **Reference:** **SUBS surname** (or as much of it as you can fit in the field)
- Send a cheque payable to **HIAS** to me at **13 Ashley Close, Winchester SO22 6LR** (enclose an SAE if you require a receipt).
- Or pay them to me at the next meeting.

To those of you who have already paid your subscriptions, many thanks.

GIFT AID

If you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration, HIAS can reclaim the tax you have paid on your subscription, providing you pay enough tax. You must be paying UK income tax or capital gains tax each tax year (6 April to 5 April) at least equal to the tax that all the Charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs to which you donate will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year. If you no longer pay (enough) tax, please advise me and I will update our records.

CHANGE of ADDRESS

If you change your address or email, it is important that you let me know as soon as possible. Otherwise you run the risk of missing out on communications.

Keith Andrews, Membership Secretary, hpdn.ka@ntlworld.com

Heritage of Industry tours in 2024

2024 tours are in the planning stage, please visit the website to register interest.

11 – 14 April: City Safari – Amsterdam. Mainly 19th & 20th century development of the city including port and transport links.

13 – 19 May: AIA Spring Tour – Flanders in collaboration with the Flemish Industrial Archaeology Society (VVIA). SUIAG members from the past may remember that the group's 'Week' in 1980 was to Flanders, hosted by VVIA and staying at Gent's University hostel. VVIA came to the UK in July the following year and SUIAG arranged local visits including the tram project workshop and possibly Twyford Waterworks.

4 – 7 July: AIA Summer Tour – the North East. Visiting recipients of AIA restoration grants, plus other sites.

19 – 22 September: City Safari - Manchester

Further information on Heritage of Industry tours for 2024, see website at <https://www.heritageofindustry.co.uk>

Our speaker for **June** was **Barry Kitchen**, and the title of his talk was *The 1948 Show – The Man with the Pointy Stick*. Having worked for the Ordnance Survey for over forty years, first as a cartographer and then moving onto IT, he is now retired, and is a member of the Eastleigh & District Local History Society.

The OS has a fascinating history, but basically it is the National Mapping Agency for the British Isles. Originally for military purposes to map Scotland in the wake of the Jacobite rising of 1745, “*there was also a more general and nationwide need in light of the potential threat of invasion during the Napoleonic Wars*”, hence the word “Ordnance” in its name. Using a Theodolite to measure horizontally, and sometimes vertically, angles between points on a landscape, it is used for a surveying practice known as triangulation. If you know the length of one side of a triangle, and its internal angles, you can calculate the other two lengths mathematically using trigonometry. Thus by creating a network of triangles across a landscape, and measuring angles, surveyors can calculate distances over the ground without having to measure them directly. “*A theodolite was used to make the measurements that underpinned the first accurate maps of the nation, a project known as the Principal Triangulation of Great Britain. Precision was the key, particularly as its users needed to account for the curvature of the Earth in their calculations*”.

Barry said he constructed his talk with the intention of showing us a photographic “snapshot” of Eastleigh in 1948, using the OS revision point books as a convenient source of material, rather than a technical explanation of the term revision points. He did expand on revision points as he felt an audience interested in industrial archaeology would be more interested in them than other history society groups, but he did say he was no expert. He did admit that he did not know what the criteria was for choosing the particular points and, judging by the questions from the floor at the end of Barry’s talk, there was some debate about why precisely some of them were chosen, which was a bit of a puzzle. Barry thinks that they were carefully chosen to conform to an instruction manual, which has been lost in the mists of time. Suffice to say, they were all located so as to be visible by as many other survey points as possible, so that angles and distances could be measured between them in many ways so as to eliminate survey errors.

When Barry joined the Eastleigh & District Local History Society as their archivist, he found a box of revision point books in the archive and, because of his time as a cartographer, he had some idea of what revision points were used for. These books were obtained by the society after the OS disposed of them. Barry’s talk used examples taken from the kilometre square SU 4418, although these particular documents labelled the square as 41/4418, an older notation, although both are synonymous. Barry covered the meaning of the codes on the blackboards in the photographs as follows:-

- [a] The top line [e.g. FEB 48] is the month and year of the photograph.
- [b] The third line [e.g. 41/4519] is the kilometre square containing the revision point [note that in other photographs taken elsewhere in the country, the newer letter notation might have been used here, so this line could have been shown as SU 4519].
- [c] The second line serves two purposes, one is as a reference number, e.g. 32A, but 32 also refers to the 100 metre square containing the revision point.
- [d] By combining these, it is easy to get the 6-figure OS grid reference of the location of the points, e.g. in this example the 6-figure grid reference would be SU 453192.

Barry said that, sadly, he has not been able to find out with any certainty what the bottom line is, but believes it is something to do with a reference number given to the roll of film used.

The bulk of Barry’s presentation was a slideshow depicting some of the photographs his society holds, and all were of the surveying of revision points during the year 1948 around the Eastleigh and Chandlers Ford areas. All of the photographs were taken at different angles and show a man with a “pointy stick” with a caption. An example of one of the photographs which followed this pattern was dated April ’48 and was of Bishopstoke Post Office with a reference of – March ’48, 41/4519, 23/1219. A lot of the buildings in Eastleigh and Chandlers Ford illustrated in Barry’s talk have now been demolished but some are still recognisable, although in a different guise today.

I am sure the group enjoyed Barry’s talk and photographs especially, as being so localised, they were recognisable. I am also very grateful to Barry for providing a lot of the information which has gone into compiling this write-up.

HIAS member **Jim Beckett** was the speaker for the **July** meeting. The title of Jim’s talk was *Floating Bridges of Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight*. Jim introduced his talk by saying that floating bridge, chain ferry, cable ferry, are different words for the same thing. “They are ferries propelled and guided between two chains or wire ropes and are used to cross short stretches of water. They have two major advantages over conventional ferries in that they don’t require steering, and they don’t require mooring, as the chain holds them in place when they reach the shore”.

“Over the years there have been 26 different vessels used in four locations marked with a cross” on the map Jim showed us. “The owners had many choices to make. Steam or diesel power, how to transfer the power to the driving wheels, using direct drive through gears, or hydraulic pumps and motors, or electricity generator and electric motors, or whether to use chain or steel cables. To get the boat across the river the person pulls on the rope and when he wants to go back he pulls in the opposite direction. The important point is that the rope remains stationary and power is provided on board the boat only. The principle is an example of Newton’s third law of motion”.

Jim then went on to talk about James Rendel who invented the floating bridge. He was born in Devon in 1799 and, in 1831, introduced a new system of crossing rivers by means of chain ferries worked by steam. In 1832 he constructed a floating bridge on this principle crossing the River Dart at Dartmouth. Between 1832 and 1834 similar floating bridges were built at Tor point and Saltash across the Tamar. The Tor point Ferry is still in operation and, in 1836, a similar floating bridge, the Woolston ferry, was started between Woolston and Southampton. Initially only one ferry was built, which was a chain ferry, and owned by The Itchen Bridge Company, and was then increased to two in 1881. In 1934 they were sold to Southampton Corporation, and ran until 1977 when it was taken out of service when the new Itchen Bridge was opened. In the 1970s there were two diesel ferries operating side by side during the day, with a single ferry late in the evening. There was a bus terminal on both sides of the crossing connecting foot passengers with the centre of Southampton, and the road to Portsmouth.

Accompanied by slides, Jim gave us a detailed account of each of the Woolston floating bridges explaining their mechanisms, and pointing out the difference in styles over the years, and where they were built.

As well as a detailed account and history of the Woolston floating bridges, Jim also told us about the floating bridge at Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, which crosses the tidal river from East Cowes to Cowes. This floating bridge was established in 1859, and has not been replaced by a bridge. The service is owned and operated by the Isle of Wight Council, which has run it since 1901. Previously it was owned by the Steam Packet Company [Red Funnel] and now on its ninth floating bridge. Since No 6 it has been owned by the Isle of Wight Council. No 9 was built in 2017 and can carry up to twenty cars. After several months of service, it was suspended due to technical faults: full service resumed in 2018.

Jim also mentioned the Floating Bridge [the Sandbanks Ferry] near Poole. Originally a foot ferry, it was superseded in 1926 by a steam-powered chain ferry, saving fifteen miles off the road journey round the harbour. It was built in Cowes and cost about £12,000 and remained in service until 1958. Jim also showed us a slide of the chain ferry across the Avon at Stratford-upon-Avon, which is a classic chain ferry, of the winding manual type, built in 1937, and was the last of its kind to be made and used in Britain. It takes you from the “Dirty Duck” pub side of the river to the waterside walk on the other side at a minimal charge.

Jim’s account of the history and workings of floating bridges was extremely comprehensive, and at the end pointed us to an article in “Focus” No 99 which Angela Smith wrote about the two engines from Southampton floating bridges 8 and 10, and how they were saved and stored in the Southampton City Council’s Collections Centre where Jim was able to go along and photograph them for his talk. Also in Focus 99 there is an article by Rob Fish on “Union Chain Bridge” which is about to re-open. Dating from 1820, this suspension bridge crosses the River Tweed four miles upstream of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Originally built for £7,700, it has now benefitted from finance from the HLF which has donated £3.14million. It is well worth going back and re-reading these articles in Focus 99 now we have heard Jim’s talk on floating bridges.

To end his talk, Jim showed us a slide of floating bridge No 8 which is now situated in the Elephant Boatyard at Bursledon. It was used as a restaurant until Covid shut it down, but is now used as an office for the boat yard. Thanks to Jim for his comprehensive talk on the evolution of floating bridges, and for his input for this write-up.

The title of our talk for **August 2023** was ***Brassey, Locke, Tite: Railway Pioneers in Hampshire and their lasting legacy***. Our speaker was **Dave Allen** and, before retiring, was Keeper of Archaeology for Hampshire County Council. He also told us that he was born in Buckinghamshire, and has always had an interest in the history of the railways, and in the people who were instrumental in their evolution.

Thomas Brassey [1805-1870] was an English Civil Engineering contractor and manufacturer of building materials. He was born in Chester and died in St Leonards. He was the son of a prosperous farmer. **Joseph Locke [1805-1860]** was a Civil Engineer and born in Sheffield, and was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery in London. **William Tite [1798-1873]** was an English Architect and was born in London and died in Torquay, although buried at West Norwood Cemetery in London.

Dave began with a photograph of the opening of the London & Southampton Railway on the 11th May 1840 taken from Micheldever Station which, for some reason, was called Andover Road. Francis Giles was appointed as engineer. The line opened in stages from 1838 after a difficult construction, but was commercially successful and, in June 1839, changed its name to the London & South Western Railway. Joseph Locke worked on this railway line designing among other structures the Nine Elms to Waterloo Viaduct, Richmond Railway Bridge, and Barnes Railway Bridge, and the tunnels at Micheldever. Joseph Locke was responsible for the locomotives. Thomas Brassey, as a civil engineering contractor, was contracted to maintain the track for ten years from 1840 at

a cost of £24,000 per year. The Nine Elms passenger station was designed by William Tite, and Dave showed us an early photograph of it.

Thomas Brassey was also a manufacturer of building materials, and was instrumental in building much of the world's railways in the 19th century, and by 1847 had built about one third of the railways in Britain. By the time he died he had built "one in every twenty miles of the railways in the world". Thomas Brassey was also active in the development of steam ships, mines, locomotive factories, marine telegraphy, as well as water supply and sewage systems, and part of the of the London Sewage system he built is still in existence today.

Unlike William Tite and Joseph Locke, Thomas Brassey did not become an MP, and did not seem to be interested in public honours. He did accept honours from France and Austria, but ended up mislaying his medals, and it is said he requested duplicates just to please his wife. He also seems to have been a very likeable man, who always kept his word and his promises.

William Tite was an architect and the son of a merchant in Russian goods. He was articled to David Laing and assisted Laing in rebuilding St Dunstan's Church, and it is said that "Tite entirely designed the new building as Laing himself having no knowledge of Gothic Architecture". Tite was the architect for the Eastern Counties, London and Blackwell, Gravesend and South Western Railways, as well as many on the Continent. He built the Carlisle Station in a neo-Tudor style with a 400 foot frontage, having an open timber roof in the refreshment rooms.

In later life he stood for Parliament and, after an unsuccessful contest, was finally elected as an MP for Bath. He was knighted in 1869, and was made a Companion of the Bath the following year, and died in 1873.

As mentioned, Joseph Locke was born in 1805, the same year as Thomas Brassey, but his father was not prosperous, being a manager at the Walbottle Colliery on Tyneside when George Stephenson was a fireman there. When Joseph was 17, Stephenson was involved with planning the Stockton & Darlington Railway, and it was arranged that Joseph would go and work for the Stephensons. Despite his youth, Joseph soon established a position of authority, and became close friends with Robert Stephenson. In 1829 Joseph Locke was George Stephenson's assistant and was given the job of surveying the route for the Grand Junction Railway. The new railway was to join Newton-le-Willows on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway with Warrington, and then onto Birmingham via Crewe, Stafford and Wolverhampton totalling about 80 miles. Joseph Locke and Robert Stephenson had been good friends at the beginning of their careers, but when Joseph fell out with Robert's father, George, it marred their relationship, but after George's death the friendship was re-kindled. Joseph was a pallbearer at Robert's funeral. Joseph died in 1860 and had served as President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, as well as being an MP for Honiton in Devon until he died.

It has been difficult to do all three men's lives and list of achievements justice, and I have barely covered their successes in other countries including France and Canada, as well as the UK. These men were so influential in the early days of the railways, which changed peoples' lives immeasurably by creating a more interconnected society from the beginning with the use of the steam engine.

Many thanks to Dave for coming along and reminding us of the trials, tribulations and successes of these early railway pioneers.

After the usual notices, we were pleased to welcome along to the **September** meeting our speaker for the evening, **Ashok Vaidya** speaking about *The Mills Archive Trust: what is it, what it does and why it is valuable*. Ashok is the Vice Chairman of the Trustees of the Mills Archive, and the Chairman of the Hampshire Mills Group. Ashok's interest in mills began when he purchased a mill house in Donnington where the wheel needed attention, so he contacted HMG and first met John Silman and John Christmas. At about this time, he became a Trustee of the Mills Archive, where he was able to put his business skills to good use.

Ashok told us that the Mills Archive is an educational charity started in 2002, and a Lottery grant of £50,000 enabled the Archive to launch its internet catalogue in 2003. Other early supporters included SPAB [Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings] and the HMG. It was originally set up to care for four historically important Foundation Collections, which were those belonging to SPAB, Mildred Cookson, the late Kenneth Major, and Alan Stoyel. Since then, it has been given more than 250 further collections both large and small. It is now a permanent repository for the documentary and photographic records of traditional and contemporary mills and milling. This includes similar structures dependent on traditional power sources. It makes its material freely available for public inspection and for the use in research and learning. It protects, preserves, and promotes milling.

The Mills Archive is one of the world's great mill collections, and has rescued over three million documents and images that might have ended up in a landfill site. It is an Aladdin's cave filled with memories, and free to users. The Archive collection also shows the rich and diverse crafts, buildings, machinery, equipment and people involved with the mills in the UK, and around the world. The Archive is based in Reading at Watlington House.

Between 1920 – 1970 people such as Stanley Fleese, Arthur Lowe, Rex Wailes and others who photographed and recorded mill information from all over the country and, to save this valuable information being lost, the Mills Archive offered a safe home. In 2012 the Chairman, Dr Ron Cookson, was awarded an MBE in the Queen's

Birthday Honours List for heritage services. In November 2016 the Archive was awarded the status of a Nationally Accredited Archive Service.

The Archive aims to focus, but not totally restricted, on traditional mills and milling, and seeks to acquire relevant historical and contemporary documentary, and illustrative material, plus small artefacts. The main priority is keeping records relating to UK mills, millers and millwrights mainly during the 18th to the 21st century, but they are planning to extend its coverage worldwide. They also aim to protect records appertaining to milling heritage, and to make them freely available to the public, and to become a national centre of excellence for learning, understanding and research. It has 6,000 books and journals, a website giving access to 94,000 images and documents, plus a weekly newsletter, and research publications. It also has exhibitions including one on "Sugar & Slavery". It has about 7,000 visitors a month, employs a full time archivist, and has secured a long term storage facility at Upper Heyford.

The Mills Archive also likes to encourage students and supports internships for young researchers, providing practical help, and supports training workshops, plus there is a team of five graduates who are involved in advocating the relevance of their milling heritage by developing an information-rich website, and other forms of communication. Advice is given to those who wish to care for their collections, or record their heritage. The Archive also collaborates with university departments and other research units offering scholarships on relevant topics to suitable candidates.

All this, of course, needs money, as serious research requires a huge investment. Ashok said it would be very nice to receive a huge endowment to enable them to keep goings for a few years, without worrying about money, and on that hopeful note ended his very interesting and informative talk on the Mills Archive Trust based in Reading.

October 2023

"Costing at the time £1.8 million to complete, the Severn Tunnel was a Victorian engineering triumph, and for over a century it remained the longest rail tunnel in Britain. Construction had begun in 1872/3, but came to a standstill after the workings were inundated by water in 1879".

The above was a taster of what was to come from our **October's** speaker, **Roger Davies**, a retired civil engineer and a member of HIAS, who came along to talk to us about *Constructing the Severn Tunnel 1872-1886*. Unfortunately, I was a bit late in arriving, but joined the talk when Roger was telling us in some detail about the following three men, who were instrumental in the design, and construction of the Severn Tunnel – Thomas A Walker [1828-1889] a civil engineering contractor, Sir Daniel Gooch [1816-1889] the GWR engineer, and Sir John Hawkshaw [1811-1891] consulting engineer, who was also President of the Institution of Civil Engineers at the time.

The Severn Tunnel is a railway tunnel linking England and Wales under the estuary of the River Severn. Running from Gloucestershire to Monmouthshire in South Wales, and constructed by Great Western Railway [GWR] between 1872-1886, its purpose was to dramatically shorten the journey times between the two countries. It has often been regarded as the "crowning achievement of GWR's chief engineer, Sir John Hawkshaw". Before the tunnel was constructed, lengthy detours were undertaken between England and Wales either by ship, or upriver via Gloucester. Roger explained the ups and downs of the construction of the Tunnel in great detail accompanied by photographs and drawings. This was a huge undertaking with none of the advanced mechanical aids we have today.

One of the main problems was the "Great Spring" which caused significant flooding in the Tunnel. To hold the "Great Spring" in check required greatly increased pumping facilities, while a diver also had to be sent down a 300 metre shaft along the Tunnel heading to close a watertight door in the workings, to seal off the waters, which was fresh water rather than sea. Eventually, through strenuous and innovative efforts, this was contained and the work was able to continue, with the emphasis on drainage. A number of fixed Cornish engines were used to pump out the "Great Spring" and these were still in use until the 1960s, at which time they were replaced by electrically powered pumps. The first passenger train ran through the Tunnel on the 1st December 1886, nearly fourteen years after the start of construction. On board was Sir Daniel Gooch and his family.

During 1924, the GWR started a car shuttle service using the Tunnel, and this continued to the end of WW2 and was ultimately made redundant by the opening of the Severn Bridge in 1966. Work commenced in 2016 to electrify the line and the Severn Tunnel was closed for six weeks.

Roger gave us a comprehensive talk on the history of the construction of the Severn Tunnel, which runs for four miles under the River Seven from England to Wales together with the trials and tribulations suffered during the fourteen years it took to build, also pointing out that 76.4 million bricks were used in its construction. Today the Tunnel has modern express trains running through but the maintenance work is continuous, which means the Tunnel is closed every Sunday for engineers to carry out vital work to ensure the safety of the passengers who use it.

Roger's talk illustrated that, as it was for the Victorians, the Severn Tunnel is still an important route for us today, and to the incredible legacy that has been left to us by those amazing Victorian engineers, the Severn Tunnel itself. Built by the GWR to provide a link between England and South Wales, so passengers could travel

rather more comfortably under a river, that is known for its treacherous tides and bad weather. So many thanks to Roger for his detailed account of the early history of the construction of the Severn Tunnel.

As usual, we had our *Annual General Meeting* at the beginning of **November's** meeting. Firstly the Chairman began the meeting with the usual notices from the floor, and Andy [Fish] said he had some bad news, in that Mick [Edgeworth] had a fall and is now in hospital, and not sure when he will be out. Our Vice-President, Bill [White] is also not very well, and the membership wished them both a speedy recovery.

The AGM took the usual format, and this year there was only one committee member up for re-election, and that was Barry [Duke], who was duly re-elected. We had about 25 members turn up, and the AGM ended about 8.25pm.

After a break for tea and coffee etc., the Chairman showed a DVD titled *The Winchester Chesil Loop 2022/2023*. Opened by the LSWR in 1891 and closed in 1966, it was explored by Chris 'Dumppman' Bedford in 2022 and 2023 on his bicycle, using a hand held camera. He started on the Hockley Viaduct, which is an impressive 33 arch, 2000 foot long viaduct constructed of poured concrete, and offering a variety of views from the track bed [now used as a cycle/pedestrian path]. He travelled northwards in the direction of Winchester Chesil Station. This route partly mirrored the course of the disused A33 Winchester Bypass, and on the course of the defunct track taking in various bridge structures, which run round St Catherine's Hill, pointing out various sites of interest on the way.

On reaching the outskirts of Winchester, he pointed out the site of the Bar End Goods Yard, before travelling further north to see the remaining Goods Shed. Cycling through the multi-storey car park, the site of the once Winchester Chesil Station, he arrived at the south portal of the 441 yard Chesil Tunnel. This tunnel is now closed off and used by Winchester City Council as a storage facility, although is opened occasionally to the public. Rob ended the DVD there, but the second one takes in the Winnall Industrial Estate and A34 etc., and can be borrowed from the DVD Library if anyone wants to see the second half.

A general discussion followed, and a number of inaccuracies were noted in the narration from the floor, and the Chairman said he will report these back to Chris.



HIAS notices from 2023 AGM:

South East Region Industrial Archaeology Conference 2024

Barry Duke

The Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society is planning to stage a SERIAC Conference next year at Chichester on Saturday 20th April 2024. The venue is a short walk from the Railway and Bus Stations, but the exact venue has not been finalised as yet, and full details will follow soon. They plan to have a guided walk around Chichester after the Conference.

Librarian's Report

Andy Fish

I will be bringing the archive magazines plus modern Hampshire IA books like the Chandler's Ford Brickworks, as they are a great resource, to be borrowed as before.

The Secretary proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of the membership to Andy, as he is standing down from the Committee as from the end of this AGM, and added that he will be missed, as always a valued member of the committee.



Solent Sky Museum acquires BAC 1-11 jet

Early on Saturday November 25th a strange sight was seen travelling through downtown Southampton – a 60ft long aircraft on a low loader owned by Cook Transport, which is a specialist heavy haulage firm based in Wimborne – and skilfully backed right alongside Solent Sky Museum in Albert Road South or, as someone put it, “parallel-parked”. This was the front section of a BAC 1-11 which had left Newquay Airport the previous day and routed via motorways and the A34 for an overnight stop (seen by Rob Fish at a lay-by).

The aircraft, bearing its later registration of ZH 763, had come from the Cornwall Aviation Heritage Centre which had sadly been closed down last year by the local council which refused to extend the Centre's tenancy at Newquay Airport (having more lucrative tenants in mind?). Unfortunately it was too large to fit in the already overcrowded museum so the wings and fuselage behind the wing stubs were cut off and scrapped.

What has this jet got to do with a museum focussing on aviation from the Solent area, you may ask. Well, it was built in the British Aircraft Corporation factory at Hurn Airport, Bournemouth. BAC 1-11 Series 500, manufacture number BAC.263, was delivered to British Airways in March 1980, registered G-BGKE and named *County of West Midlands*. It flew from Manchester for 11 years, was with GEC Ferranti in 1991 before being transferred to the MOD's Defence Research Agency in March 1994 as a flying laboratory, registered ZH 763. Then to QinetiQ in February 2006 based at Bedford, Farnborough and Boscombe Down, mainly on radar trials, and was withdrawn from use in 2012. It was the last BAC 1-11 to fly in the British Isles, making its final flight on 26th April 2013 when it was delivered to Newquay Airport and moved to the Cornwall Aviation Heritage Centre. Although stored in the open, volunteers kept it in good condition.

Solent Sky plans to create wheelchair access to the cockpit and add a café at the rear.



This year has been another exceptional year both financially and in terms of visitor numbers. Attendances are regularly over 300 even for traditionally quieter months and the 2023 total attendance was 2800, only slightly less than last year's record. A total of 77 new Friends of the Trust have enrolled, the highest annual number yet.

As usual at this time of year, the Steam Team has begun its period of winter maintenance draining down all water-filled equipment and cleaning out fire boxes etc. which has been aided by a new industrial vacuum cleaner funded from a bequest. More boiler tube end caps are being removed for cleaning and seal checks. The Hathorn Davey air pressure vessel has recently been extracted for its annual certification test.

The Hereford Waterworks Lister will hopefully now be back in service in 2024. Hopes to see it operating this year have been thwarted by the time taken to source some spare parts but, with the closed season now here, this should offer the necessary opportunity to complete the work.

Unless distracted by other projects, next in line for the Industrial Railway group may well be a new acquisition, a Lister Blackstone locomotive dating from 1968. Its working life was spent at Bolton Fell Peat Works in Cumbria where it saw service for thirty years.

One project that is more certain to concentrate volunteers' minds over the winter period is the refurbishment of the toilet block. Enlarged as part of the *Return to Steam* HLF Project, six years of continuous use have led to the essential facilities requiring redecoration and some repairs. Future proposals for a new tea room are being considered now in the area occupied by the grass bank surrounding the water softening tanks. These have been put to the majority of stakeholders and the views of the remainder are awaited. One advantage of this location would be to utilise the space currently occupied by the tanks for volunteer facilities.

An associated project, but one that could run independently, is the water softening tank roof which is beginning to suffer. Dependent on the nature of the weather that comes our way in the short term, this may well find itself promoted up the order of works.



Two Southampton Tram Centenaries celebrated in 2023

Angela Smith

One hundred years ago, on Thursday July 26th 1923, Southampton Corporation Tramways opened an extension from Bitterne Park Triangle and along Bullar Road to terminate near the railway station. The photograph opposite shows the Tramway Committee and members of the Board of Trade inspecting the extension at the terminus on July 24th. Note the almost compulsory headgear of trilby hats in those days, although three members seem to have opted for the more summery panamas. A horse is reviewing the scene from behind – perhaps the cart driver has been held up by the proceedings!

Southampton Tram Project member Martin Petch has suggested that the tram which was pressed into service for the “jolly” was none other than what is now Southampton Car 11, which itself has celebrated its 100th birthday this year having been put into service on April 13th 1923. Eagle-eyed readers who are familiar with Car 11 might note that the well-known “dome roof” is missing from the 1923 photograph. This is because it was built as an open-topped tram with railings and a mesh grill around the top deck, enabling it to pass under the Bargate arch which was too low for the type of roofed trams available at the time. Those which Southampton Tramways owned up to this period, with flat roofs, were unable to use the Above Bar / High Street route and were instead diverted along the St Marys route.

It wasn't until September 1923 that the recently-appointed Works Superintendent Percival J Baker produced his revolutionary “Top Covered Bargate” design for Car 12, with a reduced height, modifications to the truck and the road under the arch being lowered, so that passengers on the top deck of a Southampton tram could at last travel that route without getting wet. A total of fifty trams were built or rebuilt at Portwood works with the distinctive domed roof and P J Baker was appointed to the position of General Manager before the end of 1923, a post he held until 1954. The problem with the Bargate was not fully solved until 1938, by which time both sides had been bypassed with the demolition of sections of the medieval town walls.

The tram in the Bullar Road photograph can easily be identified as this was a new design constructed at Portwood following the lack of new trams being built nationally after the First World War. The first two, numbered 1 and 2, which took on the numbers of scrapped or renumbered trams from 1900, came into service in 1920. They had enclosed vestibules on the platforms which, for the first time, enabled the drivers to be mostly out of the weather. On those two trams the vestibule was flush with the dash.

It may be seen that on this tram the vestibule protrudes from the dash. Car 3 came into service in April 1923 and was built with protruding vestibules, but the following new tram was not until Car 4 in August. So this one must be Car 3, which was renumbered 11 in 1925 at the time it received its domed roof. It was a known fact that the tramway authority liked to have its latest, smart, tram to be available for such occasions.

Engines from Southampton Floating Bridges 8 and 10



Above, l & r: The overhead grasshopper engine from No. 8 floating bridge (1896 to 1961)

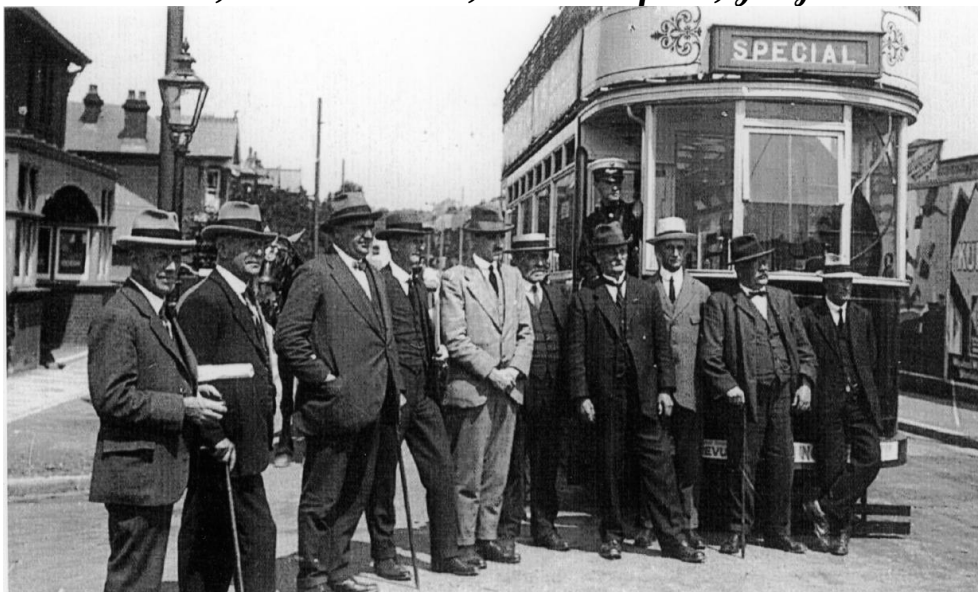
Below, l & r: The compound beam engine from No. 10 floating bridge (1928 to 1966)

(See Meeting Report by Jim Beckett, June 2023, on pages 3/4)

(Photographed by Jim Beckett at Southampton City Council's Heritage Collections Centre, with many thanks to Dr Maria Newbery, Curator of Maritime & Local Collections)



Tramway Committee and Board of Trade inspection of extension to Bullar Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton, July 24th 1923



Mills encountered during a September cruise from Portsmouth to Mallorca

Bonne Terre valley watermill, Alderney



The restored pit wheel and new main shaft



The forge with hearth, anvil and bellows

Windmills at the site of the Battle of Buçaco, Portugal, 1810



Restored Moura mill, Marshal Masséna's command post



Replica of Sula mill, Major-General Craufurd's command post



Windmills on the seafront at Palma, Mallorca



Unexpected mill discoveries whilst on a 'relaxing' cruise

Angela Smith

In September Nigel and I embarked on a 2-week cruise from Portsmouth to Mallorca. This was our first holiday abroad since 2019, though we have had two 'expedition' cruises within British waters since then. Our favoured cruise company since 2006 has been Noble Caledonia which operates small ships – and I mean small. The two which they currently own take 118 passengers, and they also charter even smaller ones in such places as the Galapagos Islands and Mediterranean. Cruises are usually 'themed', often with guest lecturers (our Australian trip in 2019 welcomed BBC's Martin Sixsmith). The only entertainment, as such, is lectures, usually quite light-hearted. And the dress code is casual, even for meals where it is open seating. Heaven!

On this occasion it was one of the 118-passenger vessels, *Hebridean Sky*, on which we have travelled a few times. The theme was *Battles and Bottles* with military historian Major Gordon Corrigan, with whom we had the pleasure of meeting on a Black Sea cruise a few years ago, and wine expert David Hunter covering the *Bottles* in Spain and Portugal. Major Corrigan's subject this time was the *Peninsular War*. However, calls would also be made to Porto, Lisbon and Mallorca where various forms of transport beckoned, with trams in the first two and the Sóller Railway and tramway in the final port of call. Other IA subjects cropped up along the way.

Alderney

Our first landing was by zodiac into Alderney for the morning, breaking up the two-day voyage across the Bay of Biscay (flat calm) to the Spanish port of La Coruña. Having spent a day on Alderney last year visiting the town of St Anne and some wartime fortifications, I checked the local tourist map we'd been given then and found there was a Watermill marked on the west coast near the Victorian Fort Tourgis, which looked as if we could just about reach it in the time allowed with Nigel not so mobile now.

We set off on the coast road, spoke to a dog-walker about the mill and, shortly afterwards, came across the fire and ambulance station with three personnel – a male ambulance driver and two fire-persons, male and female – having a tea break on a bench on the opposite side of the road. We got chatting about their work and mentioned we planned to visit the mill, how far was it, etc. The fireman then offered to drive us in their Landrover, so we were there in about 5 minutes, the last stretch of which was a bit uphill.

A 10-minute amble along a grassy lane brought us to the small watermill in Bonne Terre valley. Leaving Nigel to rest on a swinging double seat in the sunshine, I photographed and took notes as quickly as possible knowing that the return walk to the jetty would take some time, and we had to be back there by 12.30.

The watermill is one of the oldest surviving sites on Alderney. The earliest record of the mill is c.1236 but the present building, under restoration by volunteers from the Alderney Society, is from 1796. The mill and adjoining lands were given to the Society which continues to renovate and preserve this vital part of Alderney's history. It is always open to the public. Bonne Terre valley contains a small freshwater stream, the source of which is near Alderney Airfield to the south of the island, and feeds the pond behind the dam, located about halfway down the site, and also the water mill at the northern end of the valley. The area is looked after by the Alderney Wildlife Trust with woodland, wetland, flowers, birds and insects.

Milling had ceased 1910/1911 and the building was neglected up to 1939, but largely intact. 1940-1945 was the German Occupation and, by the late 1960s, it was alleged to be dangerous, so much of the stonework was removed, leaving the mill in a ruinous state.

Work began in 1996 to clear the site and reconstruction on walls, the waterwheel and buckets started. In 2002 the waterwheel and pit wheel were remounted on to a new main shaft. The walls were rebuilt in 2017 followed by the King Post truss and roof timbers in 2018. In 2020 the forge lean-to was rebuilt with the blacksmith's hearth and bellows installed in 2022. In August 2023, 116 new oak gear teeth were made and fitted to the pit wheel. The 'Vision' includes connecting the hearth to the mill's chimney and restoring the internal stone stairs that led up to the original stone floor.

Outside, the one remaining millstone rests against a stone wall. This was one of four. It is 5ft in diameter and made up of about 50 blocks of 'French Burr' (limestone). The blocks are 12ins thick and bound together with an iron hoop. The blocks are not 'dressed' with furrows, relying instead on the rough edges of the blocks to grind the grain. They would only be suitable for animal feed. Alongside this is a display panel with photographs, a history of the mill, a map, diagrams and a donation box. Out in the middle of nowhere!

It was time to make a start to return to the jetty at Braye Harbour, a slow walk down the road to the coast. Once there, I noticed a gravel track along the shoreline which could be a short cut off the road, so I asked a lady who had been walking her dogs and was just putting her young daughter in her pushchair into the back of her large car, if that was so and she gave me directions. Nigel, by this time, had started walking along the road, so I rejoined him and helped him get across the rough grass to the track and, as we were making our way slowly along, a car pulled up beside us and asked if we would like a lift back to the harbour – the lady with the child and dogs. Fellow passengers donning their lifejackets by the jetty were quite surprised!!

It occurred to me that Alderney is only a short flight from Southampton Airport. In a long weekend, there is so much to see on this small island. There's even a heritage railway. Perhaps HMG members might like to arrange a working trip to Bonne Terre watermill?

Spain and Portugal

Two days later we were in northern Spain visiting La Coruña and, on departing in the evening, we passed very close to the oldest known working lighthouse in the world, the *Tower of Hercules*, built in the first century by the Romans and based on the lighthouse of Alexandria. It originally had an external spiral staircase which was later enclosed and, in 1788, an extra storey was added, protecting the Roman core. Quite impressive in the setting sun.

Skip a day (wine tasting and garden visit at the Pazo de Rubianes) and then we were in Porto where two battle sites from the Peninsular War were visited near the centre of the city. The First Battle of Porto, in March 1809 on the south bank, was won by the French defeating the Portuguese and taking the city. Normally you envisage battles being fought on open ground somewhere but, in the instance of the Second Battle of Porto in May on the north bank, the French army had come down a street lined with houses (still there) to meet the Anglo/Portuguese army (led by General Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington) which was waiting for them by the river. The full story of this battle is unbelievable and would make a good television or film documentary!

The following day was a visit to the site of the Battle of Buçaco (Bussaco), about an hour's drive inland from Figueiro da Foz, into a hilly area which is a national park. This was, again, a one-day skirmish which took several days to set up, and based on a steep ridge line. It took place on September 27th 1810 between the Anglo/Portuguese army under the command of Viscount Wellington, who had travelled south towards Lisbon, so the army was led by Scottish Major-General Robert Craufurd, and the French under the command of Marshal André Masséna who was pursuing Wellington, with Marshal Ney in charge. The battlefield featured a walled convent and several windmills – these are the single-storeyed variety which Don Quixote might have ‘tilted’ at and are prolific in Mediterranean countries. Craufurd had taken up a position on the top of the ridge using Sula windmill as his command position, while Ney used Moura windmill lower down with his army at the bottom of the ridge. This battle was set up to use delaying tactics by Wellington so the ‘Lines of Torres Vedras’ could be completed outside Lisbon so, although the Anglo/Portuguese had the upper hand as far as driving off the French, eventually they withdrew south.

We visited the two windmills (see photos on page 10). Sula windmill, Craufurd's command post, is a reconstruction, described as “building on the site of the Sula windmill”. However, Moura windmill appears to have been derelict but has been restored. A plaque on it reads: “Posto de Comando do Marechal Andre Massena comandante em chefe das forças Francesas na Batalha do Buçaco”. A nearby museum houses an excellent, large, diorama of the battle positions with models of the windmills.

Mallorca

Further stops were made at Lisbon (played truant so we could see the trams), Cadiz, then at breakfast the next day we loitered over the site of the Battle of Trafalgar while passing Cape Trafalgar, before visiting Gibraltar – another lighthouse and the Great Siege Tunnels among other sites – a day at sea and finally Mallorca where 12 of us stayed on for a short extension. After disembarking we were on a tour until late afternoon as we had to wait to be able to check in at the hotel overlooking the port. A word of warning for anyone going to Palma, there are massive road works all the way along the dual carriageway fronting the harbour.

Not long after leaving the port I noticed some windmills on a slope not far from the road, so those would be on our personal itinerary the following day. We were taken to a station a little outside of the city on the Sóller Railway where a carriage had been reserved for us and we enjoyed a ride on the historic electric train into the town of Sóller near the north-west coast. From here a street tramway travels to the port of Sóller, but there was no time other than to take some photographs and look around the centre.

So the next day the coach dropped us off about a mile from the windmills which were overlooking the dual carriageway. From down below it appeared there might be five, but only one with sails and the others in varying states of preservation or dilapidation. Not having any information about them, all I could do was take some photographs and carry some research later at home. This revealed that Mallorca is covered in about 3000 windmills. About 2,500 inland ones are for water extraction, some still operational and others derelict. They have a flat topped tower and wooden vanes (later metal) which are opened manually. There are about 600 ‘classic’ mills for grain with wooden vanes and a conical ‘cap’.

This particular line of windmills at El Jonquet, a former fishing village, originally numbered seven, but now there are only five. One of the restored mills, Moli d'en Garletam, is now a museum. Three are still in bad condition.

The Mallorcan government has developed a project dedicated to collating an inventory of all the windmills on the island with the help of the Friends of the Majorcan Windmills, and plan for their restoration. The Historical Industrial Heritage Programme is run by the Department of the Environment. A small team of craftsmen have, to date, restored around forty mills. Apart from the many windmills that the team works on, animal and water powered mills and olive oil mills also form part of this project. The Mallorcan Government is willing to lend the services of the skilled workers for free, and mill owners across the island are encouraged to participate in this project – the owner's only cost is the materials. There are currently over 10,000 items, including windmills, which are eligible for participation in this project.

The earliest is an application letter in 1897 by my grandfather, Alfred G Cheffy, then aged 15, to Nine Elms for employment as an engine cleaner when living in Boscombe. The reply signed by Dugald Drummond, Chief Mechanical Engineer, encloses a form to complete but adds the rider that “you will have to wait some time before your turn for a vacancy will arrive – there being so many lads in front of you”. He returned this with two references, from the headmaster of St Clements School and from a local church minister. The latter, as a PS, confirms that he was teetotal (at his age!).

Moving on to July 1907, and with promotion, there is a copy of the following letter to an unknown addressee:-

We remain, lovers of justice.

I have not been able to trace the incident through delving back in local newspapers of the period (bearing in mind how news was recorded in much more detail then); or the outcome.

My grandfather moved to Eastleigh in 1913 and became a Top Link driver. He retired in 1947 and died in 1956. My father, Charles T Cheffy, followed him in Southern Railway employment, in clerical posts alternating between the Carriage & Wagon and Locomotive offices, except for war service. The family lived close to Swaythling station and he always made the effort to cycle back home for lunch in all weathers, although in later years he did upgrade to "Cyclemaster" assistance and then to a "NSU Quickly". This was in spite of being secretary of a Canteen committee at one stage and needing to record the number of meals served!

I did not follow quite the same transport path in employment, joining the de Havilland Aircraft Company at Christchurch as an apprentice in the years immediately prior to the closure of the factory and airfield in 1962.

♦ ♦

The continuing story of Great Musgrave Bridge (edited from New Civil Engineer)

The removal by the Government's roads agency of its controversial concrete infill of the Victorian Great Musgrave Bridge in Cumbria was making good progress in September. However, images from National Highways' (NH) removal of the infill show that damage had been done to the underside of the historic structure. A series of cores were initially pulled out of the concrete mass.

New images revealed that the concrete beneath the bridge had been removed but there is cracking to the original bricks and some removal of the mortar that had been caused by the procedure. Graham Bickerdike, a member of the Heritage Railway Estate group, said that “Given that National Highways continues to stress that infilling is ‘fully reversible’, the HRE is obviously disappointed that the concrete removal process has resulted in mortar loss and damage to the structure’s stonework”.

The roads operator said that a number of ‘drummy’ blocks – where the surface of the block had laminated – had been identified when it removed the foamed concrete. The National Highways director for the Historical Railways Estate said that the contractor would safely and sensitively remove the infill and the photographs show defects partially through the repair process and were being dressed back so they could be fully repaired. The HRE Group has also stated that National Highways’ imagery from August shows a roughly 10mm gap between the infill and the brickwork of the bridge’s underside, which suggests that the mitigation works were not supporting the bridge. This suggests settlement and a likelihood that the £124K concrete ‘strengthening’ was serving no purpose, with no load being transferred. The bridge was finally reopened in mid-October.

And Congham Bridge in Norfolk to be cleared of infill? (Heritage Railway, November 2023)

Members of the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council's planning committee voted to order National Highways to restore Congham Bridge which had also been infilled by NH in March 2021. The Historical Railways Estate said that it intended to ask the Planning Inspectorate to review it on appeal after it claimed they had identified 'serious structural issues' in the bridge.

Jan Harden's website browsing . . .

Pensford Viaduct: Restoration plan for Somerset site *(BBC News, Bristol, 17 July 2023)*

Work to save a much-loved viaduct visited by hundreds of people a day has begun. Engineers are replacing all the mortar in the Pensford Viaduct in north Somerset, which is crumbling due to water damage. The 149-year-old structure has not carried trains since 1964, but is still a cherished landmark. One local historian said visitors went daily to catch the sunrise or sunset through its arches. All the mortar from the joints is being raked out and replaced with lime-based mortar. The viaduct was completed in 1874 and carried passengers over the Chew Valley for the Bristol and North Somerset Railway. The last passenger train crossed in October 1959 but it continued to be used by freight trains until 1964, when flood damage rendered it unsafe.

The Comet: Wreckage of rare steamship given protected status

(BBC News, Glasgow and West, 9 August 2023)

The wreckage of Europe's first commercial steamship has been given protected status as a scheduled monument by Historic Environment Scotland, pending a decision by the Scottish government to designate it as a Historic Marine Protected Area. The Comet was a wooden paddle steamer built in Port Glasgow by John Wood & Sons. It was owned by 19th Century entrepreneur Henry Bell and was recently discovered in the fast tidal waters of the Dorus Mor, west of Crinan in Argyll and Bute. HES said the ship is extremely rare and of international significance. The Comet was launched in 1812 and operated for eight years on the Clyde, then the Forth, and from September 1819, on a new Glasgow to Fort William service. However it was wrecked off Craignish Point on 19th December 1820, where it is believed to have split in half after running aground due to a navigational error. It was not carrying any passengers and Mr Bell and the crew managed to get safely ashore. A replica of the vessel was situated in Port Glasgow from 1962, but was dismantled in April due to its deteriorating condition.

Sheffield: Fargate tram tracks discovery a 'window to the past'

(BBC News, South Yorkshire, 28 September 2023)

Renovation works in Sheffield have uncovered old tram tracks hidden for decades beneath the city's streets. The find, made on Fargate near Sheffield Town Hall during street improvements, has attracted attention from passers-by and on social media. The first electric tram ran in Sheffield in 1899, with the service in place until 1960. Sheffield Civic Trust described the find underneath the modern concrete as a "window to the past". The work in the city centre aims to transform the area with green spaces, seating areas and new lighting. A local councillor said: "We've got to accept that the old tracks in the centre of Sheffield will sadly disappear from view again fairly soon, but I'm sure a lot of people will be taking photographs and videos".

World War Two experimental catapult unearthed by archaeologists *(BBC News, Oxford, 11 October 2023)*

An experimental catapult designed to launch World War Two bomber planes into the sky has been excavated. The prototype Royal Aircraft Establishment Mark III Catapult was unearthed at the site of a development at the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus in Oxfordshire. It was made to enable take-offs using shorter runways and so the planes could be loaded with more fuel. The contraption was built between 1938 and 1940 when the site was RAF Harwell.

However, the project was abandoned without ever launching an aircraft, because the engines would wear out and the design did not properly fit the bomber planes. The mechanism was taken out and a normal runway built over the top. The technology was a precursor to Catapult Armed Merchant (CAM) ships, which launched Hawker Hurricanes at sea via rocket-propelled catapults.

How was the catapult meant to work? A large rotating turntable directed aircraft towards one of two concrete track runways only 82m (269ft) long. The aircraft was attached to an underground pneumatic ram using a towing hook. Underneath the turntable Rolls-Royce Kestrel aero engines compressed air to 2,000 psi to drive the ram. High-pressure air was forced into the pneumatic ram, which rapidly expanded to the length of the guided track. The bomber would then be catapulted into the sky. The catapult has now been dismantled to allow construction works in the area to continue, though the remains are being archived.

Bid for historic steam engine to return to Trewithen Estate *(BBC News, Cornwall, 25 October 2023)*

A piece of Cornish engineering history could be returning to Cornwall as part of a proposed new visitor experience. The Trewithen Estate is hoping to create a new visitor complex, farm shop, café and garden on its land near Truro. Key to its plans is the return of the Trevithick Engine – currently held by the Science Museum – to its original location on the estate. The steam engine was used at Trewithen for threshing until 1879.

It was patented by the Cornish inventor and mining engineer Richard Trevithick and constructed at Hayle Foundry in 1811. It has been in the Science Museum's collection for many years but the Galsworthy family, which owns the Estate, said it would like to see it return home as part of a long-term loan agreement. A Science Museum Group spokesperson said: "We welcome requests to borrow items from the Science Museum Group collection. Representatives of the Trewithen Estate have submitted a loan request, which we will formally review in due course." The engine's return is part of the estate's redevelopment plans submitted to Cornwall Council.

South Crofty: Work begins to remove water from tin mine (from Press Release, 26 October 2023)

Work is under way to pump millions of litres of floodwater out of a former tin mine in Cornwall. Owners of South Crofty, Cornish Metals, said the mine had eight million cubic metres of void space, much of which was flooded. Water pumped from the mine will be cleaned at the company's newly-built £7m treatment plant. It will then be released into the Red River, which meets the sea at Godrevy in St Ives Bay.

The dewatering process, which is expected to take 18 months to complete, is part of work to make the tin and copper mine, which closed in 1998, operational again. Cornish Metals said the work would allow access to deeper levels within the mine, necessary to complete its feasibility study, expected at the end of 2024. The company hopes to get South Crofty back into production as early as 2026.

Sails to be restored to 'last workable' windmill (BBC News, Hull & East Yorkshire, 2 November 2023)

The East Riding of Yorkshire Council has approved restoration plans for an historic windmill, Grade II listed Skidby Mill of 1821, near Cottingham, for its sails to be repaired. The sails had stood still for around a decade and were removed in 2019 after wet rot was found in the oldest sails. No milling would be done at Skidby because the sails would turn at a slower speed than in the past, to shed water and preserve the structure. The mill is one of the East Riding's leading tourist attractions and features a museum and café.

Local Odds and Ends

Hampshire

Trust fears for venues (from Southern Daily Echo, 25 September 2023)

Hampshire Cultural Trust has warned of the "inevitable" closure of multiple museums and arts venues across the county if proposed cuts to funding are approved. Hampshire County Council is the trust's largest funder, contributing £2.5m annually. As part of its recent budget review, it is proposed that this funding will be cut by nearly 50%. The trust operates museums, art galleries and arts centres across Hampshire, including Milestones Museum in Basingstoke. It also manages, conserves and maintains Hampshire's museum collections.

The trust is responsible for 2.5m objects that tell the story of Hampshire's history, including unique items such as Jane Austen's pelisse coat (the only known item of clothing that can be directly traced back to the author), an internationally significant collection of ceramics and a nationally important industrial heritage collection from giants of local manufacturing, Thornycroft and Taskers.

New to 'SAVE's Buildings at Risk Register' in Southampton (City of Southampton Society, 9 Nov 2023)

Northam Railway Bridge: Distinctive, unusual and locally appreciated for its history, this two-carriageway iron road bridge over the mainline railway lines at Northam is under threat due to a road improvement scheme which would see it replaced with a four lane road. Built in 1908, it seems highly likely that this vestige of Southampton's industrial past is destined to be obliterated.

The Old Farmhouse, Mount Pleasant Road: This beautiful 17th century farmhouse lies on the site of a former medieval grange. It retains many historic features. Becoming a pub in 1843, the farmhouse has long played a role within the community until its closure in 2019. It currently sits unused, with its immediate surroundings being used as overflow parking for a nearby garage company.

Dunkirk Little Ship to be restored in Southampton (Southern Evening Echo, October 30 2023)

The *Southern Queen*, built in 1926, which took part in the evacuation of Dunkirk where she saved several hundred men off the beach in a number of runs, has been brought to Southampton for restoration work. Marine company Willett Built at Shamrock Quay in Northam moved the vessel from Solent Services in Empress Road, where it had been stored since April, on October 27th. *Southern Queen* had latterly been a ferry in the Isles of Scilly and was going to be burnt until Andy Willett bought her. Extensive repairs are expected to take two years and the team is trying to raise £250,000. Shipwright Dave White said the boat would be stripped right down and repaired at a base level, going down the restore route rather than rebuild.

Southwick Brewhouse (note from Rob Fish August 8 2023)

I've just had a message to say Southwick Brewhouse is set to close and offers of interest in the use of the building are invited. I have not been able to find any information as yet.

Grade II café conversion (Southern Daily Echo, August 26 2023)

A Grade II listed tank store in Royal Clarence Yard, Gosport, could be converted into a café – but it will not be open to the general public. Plans have been submitted to Gosport Borough Council to convert the structure into a café space complete with a preparatory kitchen. Constructed in 1833, the tank store reflects the area's maritime heritage, having served as a repository for ships' iron water storage tanks. It stands as the sole surviving purpose-built storage unit of its kind. The proposed new café is aimed at the existing users of Victoria Quay, but the longer term ambition is to create access from the wider Royal Clarence Yard site and to open up a connection between the two parts of the site.

Dorset Council is receiving £1/4m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to improve the historic High Angle gun battery on Portland. It was built in the 1890s to support the south coast's defence against the threat of invasion from France. The below-ground complex, with its ghost tunnels and gun emplacements, has become popular with local people. Historic England classed the site as "at risk" in 2022 due to ongoing erosion, which was damaging some of the buildings and tunnels. A consultation on the site's future indicated that locals wanted more activities and events there, and for the ghost tunnels to be fully opened.

The Cobb in Lyme Regis needs to be strengthened but Dorset Council said the £3m budget for repairs was no longer enough due to rising inflation. In recent years the historic Cobb has been subject to erosion, wave impact on the outer harbour wall which has caused movement of stone blocks and the deterioration of the structure on the inner harbour wall. Without the work, the authority said 100 properties would be at risk of flooding. Alternative funding options to find an extra £1.5m are being explored

Historic swing bridge to be upgraded *(Railnews, June 2023 - via Ian Harden)*

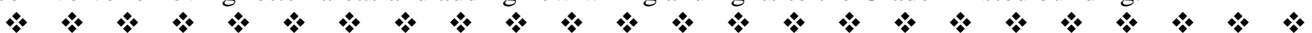
The renovation of an historic railway swing bridge in East Yorkshire began on 3 June. Goole Swing Bridge spans the River Ouse, on the line between Doncaster and Gilberdyke Junction. The bridge is 154 years old, and the works involve renewal of the operating plant, including the hydraulic turning and jacking systems, control system, electricity supply and navigation lights. Goole Swing Bridge is one of the largest and oldest surviving swing bridges in the country and still operates using much of its original hydraulic machinery, because of its Grade II* listed status. The initial work was expected to take a month, with further work to refurbish and recommission the bridge's turning engines later in the year.

Grade II* listed Wingfield station, alongside the Midland Main Line in Alfreton, Derbyshire, which fell into disrepair after being closed in 1967, has been reroofed with Welsh Slate Ltd's Penrhyn Heather Blue slates. The 1840-built structure was compulsory purchased by Amber Valley Borough Council before the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust took over ownership in 2019. A first £470,000 phase of urgent works, requiring specially-designed scaffolding during night-time possessions of the main line, is now complete after nine months. The main station will now be leased to small office users and will open on a set number of days a year for public to appreciate its international significance.

Dundee City Council has given the green light to a planning proposal to repair and convert the 1901-built former Maryfield tramway depot into the city's new transport museum. Following the granting of full planning permission, work to convert the depot – which formerly house trams and buses, and was then used by Scottish Water for several years before being bought by the museum in 2015 – into a dedicated transport museum exhibition space is in full swing. The £5m project will provide vehicle display and workshop space, archive storage, education and community meeting rooms. Exhibits include Dundee's oldest-surviving tram, horse car 24 of 1887, which is being fully restored. The depot has a length of external tramway track, depot fan and traction poles

Historic England has awarded a grant of £31,020 to repair an industrial heritage site. The money was given to the Forest of Dean Building Preservation Trust to help restore Gunns Mill Furnace. The grant will enable the timber frame of the roof of the bridge house to be repaired. The bridge house once protected the charcoal and ore from the weather before loading into the furnaces.

Work has begun to repair the roof at Tolgus Mill near Redruth – the last original tin stream works in Europe. Owners, Cornwall Gold, said the roof covering the mill's frame house was littered with holes and collapsing in places. Repair work will involve removing it and replacing it with a new steel roof, while retaining as many of the original features as possible. The restoration project was chosen by visitors to the attraction in a vote. Work will also involve removing rotten areas and adding new wiring and lights to the Grade II listed building.



DVD Library: Rob Fish says he will disband the Video library next year and will offer back any videos lent by members before disposing of the collection. So please contact him if you wish to have anything returned. Also Martin Gregory is appealing for articles for the 2024 Journal – please contact him (details on next page).

Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

(formerly Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group)

(Registered Charity No. 276898)

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DVD Library: Rob Fish (details above)

HIAS Insurance terms – Please note:

Members are not covered for Personal Accident but are covered for third party liability

CONTACTS FOR ASSOCIATED GROUPS

Hampshire Mills Group: Acting Secretary: Eleanor Yates – see above

www.hampshiremills.org

The Solent Steam Packet Ltd (S.S. Shieldhall): membership@ss-shieldhall.co.uk

Southampton Tram Project (formerly Tram 57 Project):

Nigel Smith, 3 Stag Gates, Blackfield, Southampton, SO45 1SR

Lnigel.smith@btinternet.com

Twyford Waterworks Trust: Contact - Ian Harden, 31 Melville Close, Lordswood, Southampton, SO16 8DE

From the Ordnance Survey retired and ex-staff Facebook site:-

Basic Training Hangovers: Mike Harman

Looking at drain covers. I know I'm not the only one that does this. Revision Points, survey stations etc. Nothing quite as smug as an ex OS surveyor when they spot a punch mark in an old iron drain cover! They will look for someone to wax lyrical about why it's there. Ask my children! Now I know this has the potential to go huge, because when you start talking about survey marks, the sky's the limit. Knock yourself out: wall corners, spires, lamp posts, the old RP booklets with the oldies pointing at street furniture (whatever happened to hats?)...the list goes on. My latest game is trying to work out if an ex OS employee made the mark whilst working for a private firm or if it's an original.

[Members who attended the June HIAS meeting by retired OS cartographer Barry Kitchen on the subject of Ordnance Survey revision points in the Eastleigh area – 'The Man with the Pointy Stick' – will be aware of marks made by surveyors to aid future revision. RPs are not easy to spot, but the Bench Marks, small 'military' arrows usually carved into walls, on metal plates, etc, stand the test of time unless the feature is demolished. See how many you can find!]
(Your editor – also a retired OS cartographer!)]

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang windmill goes up for sale

BBC News, Beds Herts & Bucks, 11 August 2023

A windmill that was used as Caractacus Potts's home in the 1967 film *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* has gone up for sale. Cobstone Windmill in Ibstone, Buckinghamshire, overlooks the village of Turville, which was used in *Vicar of Dibley*, and has a guide price of £9m. The former smock mill was built around 1816 and the exterior was cosmetically restored by film producers. Actress Hayley Mills bought the mill in 1971 with her husband Roy Boulting, who then carried out restoration work. It has also appeared in *Little Britain* and *Midsomer Murders*.

FRIENDS of KING ALFRED BUSES

New Year's Day, Monday 1 January 2024

Several of our *King Alfred* buses will be operating over the former routes
In Winchester from about 9.30am.
Programme and timetable £5 on the day.

May Bank Holiday, Monday 6 May 2024

All our *King Alfred* buses from the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and earlier!
joined by other preserved buses will be operating around the city and beyond
from Winchester Broadway in the

Original King Alfred Buses Running Day.

A souvenir programme and timetable will be available on the day
and to order in advance from the website www.kingalfredbuses.org.uk

All rides are free but please buy a programme
to help us cover the cost of staging these events.

SS Shieldhall

We are delighted to launch our 2024 sailing programme, full of returning favourite excursions, but with a number of new trips, including the marking of significant anniversary events; festivals and special occasions. Plus some early bird special offers! Remember folks, if you are a Shieldhall member, login to your account to SAVE 10% on our sailings. Not a member? You can sign up on our booking checkout page if you wish.

Cunard's Queen Anne Launch Event sailing: Friday 3rd May 2024

Steam to the Solent Cruise with the Selsey Shantymen, and see cruise ships depart: Saturday 4th May 2024

Rogation Sunday Service followed by Port Cruise: Sunday 5th May 2024

D Day 80 Theme Cruise to the Solent: Saturday 8th June 2024

D Day 80 Theme Cruise to Portsmouth Harbour: Sunday 9th June 2024

Round the Island Race: Saturday 15th June 2024

Steam to the Solent Cruise and see cruise ships depart: Sunday 16th June 2024

Sunset Music Cruise: Friday 5th July 2024

Hampshire Food Festival Cruise to the Eastern Solent: Sunday 7th July 2024

Steam to the Solent Cruise and see cruise ships depart: Saturday 13th July 2024

Cruise to see the Solent Forts: Sunday 14th July 2024

Cowes Week Launch Event Cruise: Saturday 27th July 2024

Solent Cruise with the Southampton Salty Sea Dogs Shantyband: Sunday 28th July 2024

Sunset Music Cruise: Friday 16th August 2024

Cruise to the Needles, passing the New Forest Coast and the Isle of Wight: Saturday 17th August 2024

Cruise to Portsmouth Harbour: Sunday 18th August 2024

One way cruise to Poole with the Shieldhall Stompers Jazz Band: Monday 26th August 2024

Jurassic Coast Cruise: Thursday 29th August 2024, sailing from Poole Quay

Bournemouth Air Festival Cruise Day 1: Friday 30th August 2024, sailing from Poole Quay

Bournemouth Air Festival Cruise Day 2: Saturday 31st August 2024, sailing from Poole Quay

Bournemouth Air Festival Cruise Day 3: Sunday 1st September 2024, sailing from Poole Quay

One way trip to Southampton from Poole: Monday 2nd September 2024, sailing from Poole Quay

Heritage Open Day Cruise: Saturday 14th September 2024

Boat Show Cruise to the Solent: Sunday 15th September 2024

(All sailings from Southampton unless otherwise shown. Please visit the website for information on sailing times and fares). <https://ss-shieldhall.co.uk/bookings/category/public-sail/#crumbs>



My thanks to all the contributors for passing on items used in this issue (especially Ian Harden and Rob Fish) and also to Rob Fish for copying the photo pages for members who do not receive their copies emailed. Other articles have been extracted from websites, magazines and regional newspapers. The next *Focus* planned is for June 2024, so the final deadline will be the May 13 meeting, please, if you want to pass items in person. My contact details are on the previous page.

Angela Smith