



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 103 - 'SUMMER' 2007

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Well it's been quite an odd summer one way and another - rain, floods, sun, yet more rain and yet more floods. So far Northampton seems to have escaped the worst of the weather which has devastated many parts of the country. At the time of writing the sun has finally got through after a day that can only be described as extremely dismal, and which being Friday had a walk programmed for it. Well done to the three intrepid men who set out across Harrington Airfield and came back looking rather damp - where was I you ask - sitting in the car reading a magazine!

After many years hard wear the committee decided to purchase a new display board which members will have seen at the March meeting and I have now volunteered to take on the job of publicity for NIAG. We will use this to advertise the Group and as a posting board of what we have been up to on the summer walks when we all get together again for the winter programme. This got a very good reception at both the NALH Annual Meeting in March and then again at EMIAC's Heritage Day at Boston in May.

The summer walks and visits got off to a good start with a visit to St Matthews Church when we were 'entertained' for a better word by both Jonathan Starmer and then by member Tony Johns who tripped the light fantastic on the organ's keys.

Our walk around Flore with member John Smith coincided with the news that John was off to London the next day to pick up a special award given by the British Association of Local History for outstanding work in history. Our congratulations to John for this outstanding achievement. At the same time we learned that member Mike Rumbold's wife Pauline had passed away quietly that week. Our deepest sympathy to Mike and to his family.

Much has been happening outside of Northamptonshire and it was with a great sense of loss that we learned of the dreadful fire on the Cutty Sark - it is with some relief that all the important parts, such as the masts, capstan wheel etc. were off site. So much for CCTV and security monitoring.

The hive of industry outside our windows carried momentum during May and June and it was a joy to witness Robins, Magpies (2), Blackbirds, the inevitable Starlings - they say they are in decline - not in our garden they're not - Jackdaws, more than 10 at one sitting and many others. Oh and Squirrel is still doing his best to get in the box of nuts etc!

It certainly has been a wash out June this year - was it only last year that we were sweltering in heat of over 70°F. Hopefully the sun will get its hat on and we can all enjoy the rest of the summer programme in the dry and warmth.

The winter programme is set and looks to be an excellent mix of talks.

Jane Waterfield



WINTER PROGRAMME 2006/7

A corner through 100 years - 9th March 2007

On 11th June 1901 a dwelling house and bakery with a large garden, orchard and premises was sold at auction for £250. A century later, when the premises were again sold, the buildings were demolished to make way for a courtyard estate of town houses/flats. What happened in between has been the subject of detailed research by Joy Holmes, a member of Thrapston and District Historical Society, and was the subject our last talk of the season. The new owners opened a shop to sell dresses and silks, gloves and hosiery, and millinery. Over the years the structure of the property under went many changes, not least because it was the scene of many an accident as vehicles failed to negotiate the junction from the Oundle Road into the High Street; on this occasion (*see photograph*) the lorry, carrying fresh produce, couldn't be moved for several days until the building could be made safe. Joy's talk was as much about every day life in Thrapston gleaned from old photographs; the hunt out, a young girl riding a bicycle, the cost of which varied from £16 to £34 depending on the model, men and women going about their business or shopping. A very interesting and well presented evening.



A fruit lorry that missed the turn! (*by permission of Joy Holmes*)

Terry Waterfield



SUMMER WALKS AND VISITS

St. Matthew's Church's Organ - Friday, 4th May

This spectacular organ has only recently been restored at a cost of £280,000 and since NIAG holds its winter meetings in the church's parish rooms it seemed appropriate to inspect this combination of old (The organ was built in 1895) and modern (the restoration was completed in 2006) pipe organ technology. Over thirty members and friends gathered to hear Jonathan Starmer, the parish organist, talk about and demonstrate the power of this monumental instrument.

The organ was built by J. W. Walker and restored by Harrison & Harrison of Durham, with assistance from Ken Tickell & Michael Latham, organ builders of Northampton. It has over 3000 pipes, 4 manuals, and 48 stops and features a computerised capture system (memorises different organists' registrations). Jonathan explained the purpose of the various features and had set up a projector to continuously show a DVD of the interior of the organ (made prior to the organ being dismantled for restoration). To demonstrate the power and range of the organ, he played music by Bach, Couperin and Dupré - and "The Entertainer" rag, to the great amusement of those present. Amongst the requests from our Group was "The Lord of the dance".



Jonathan 'entertaining'
© Jane Waterfield 2007

During the playing everyone present had the opportunity to go up the few steps to see at close quarters the organist's hands on the keyboard and operation of the stops - and, from ground level his footwork on the pedals for the base notes. At the end, an invitation was extended to anyone present to play the organ but it was only taken up by one member, Tony Johns who played in grand style, part of Vidor's Toccata & Fugue - from memory!

Our thanks go to the Vicar of St. Matthews for agreeing to this very interesting demonstration of the organ. Also, thanks to the generosity of the NIAG members present, a small but useful contribution was made to the organ restoration fund.

Geoffrey Starmer



Timsons Foundry, Kettering - Wednesday 9th May 2007

Timsons Ltd have been in existence for over 100 years and over the past 70 years have concentrated on production of large rotary printing presses. Their foundry in Water Street Kettering, is on the site of a foundry built about 1900 and taken over by Timsons in 1927. It was completely rebuilt in 1999 to provide a modern production facility and is the only 'grey iron jobbing centre using sand casting' still in existence in the county.

About 80% of their casting work is for Timsons' own production, the other 20% being done on a sub-contract basis for other companies. Because they are doing sand casting, it is economical to mould small quantities - prototypes etc. The main work for Timsons is the casting of bases and side frames for the presses

The foundry uses a traditional sand casting technique with an alcohol-based resin to bind the sand together. This is hardened by adding acids to chemically react with the resin, different blends of acid being used to control the rate at which the resin hardens, according to the size and complexity of the pattern and mould.



Feeling the heat!

© Jane Waterfield 2007

There are two furnaces heated by electrical induction, 150KW for the smaller furnace capable of holding 0.5 ton and 750KW for the larger furnace which holds 2.5 tons of metal. Casting takes place every day and between 0.5 and 6 tons of metal is melted per day. This is not the amount of finished cast metal as up to 30% is wasted in

the entry hole to allow for contraction of the iron as it sets.

The cupola is moved on a larger overhead transporter crane (one of three covering the whole area of the foundry). After pouring the melt and cooling, the casting is removed and the mould is vibrated to break up the sand which is then returned to the bins for recycling. About ninety percent of the sand is reclaimed but frequent tests are carried out to ensure there is not too much build up of resin in the sand.

The castings are finally ground to clean them up and remove burrs and waste material, before dispatch to the machining shop or the sub-contractor.

In common with all industry today, health & safety forms a key part of the foundry's activity. Great care in the whole process is taken to ensure both protection of the personnel and to prevent emitting dust or other harmful materials into the atmosphere. We were kept well away from the casting area while casting was taken place!



Two of the casts seen at Timsons

© Jane Waterfield 2007

On our visit we were able to see casting of prototype tractor lift arms intended for a factory in Turkey. These were being cast in ductile iron which contained 4.5-5% magnesium, causing it to flare when being poured.

Many thanks to the foundry manager Martin Hayes who showed us round and answered all our questions and to the Management of Timsons Ltd who permitted the visit.

Peter Perkins



Hunsbury Hill Centre, Northampton - Friday 18th May 2007

A balmy May evening found NIAG members exploring the buildings and history of Hunsbury Hill Farm. This concentration of buildings forms a unique example of an 18th century farm development in Northamptonshire.

An illustrated introduction to the site and its historical importance was given by Dr Rod Conlan to whom I am indebted for much of the information that follows.

The farm buildings were constructed by Edward Bouverie in the 1770's on newly enclosed land. Previously the land had been part of common fields of Hardingstone. Having bought Delepre Abbey and the manor of Hardingstone Bouverie pushed through an act to enclose manor fields and consolidate land holdings. This accomplished he proceeded to build a new farm employing the latest thinking in agricultural management. Older farms, often sighted in villages, tend to have developed in a haphazard manner as circumstances dictated. In contrast, Hunsbury Hill was a carefully planned layout built out in the fields.

The farm is built on an elongated octagonal plan with the farmhouse sighted on the highest land at the eastern boundary. The farmyard slopes downwards to the west thus draining away from the house. Large barns, one for corn and one for hay, form parallel arms, each had an adjoining rick yard outside the farm buildings. At the western edge a series of open sided buildings formed cattle sheds facing into the yard and a cart shed entered from outside the farmyard

This layout shows considerable thought to the movement of materials within the farm. Hay could be stacked for drying in the hay rick yard and then moved into the adjacent barn before being fed to the cattle. Corn moved equally simply from the corn rick yard to where it could be threshed and winnowed in the through draft of the barn doors and storage into the barn. Straw is then readily available for cattle bedding or could be taken to the chaff house behind the adjacent stables to be turned into horse fodder. The sheltered courtyard was conducive to the production and collection of manure for fertilising the surrounding fields; surprisingly, a relatively new concept in the 1870's

It is thought that the farm was mainly involved with fatstock. Banbury Lane, which passed near by, was an ancient drovers road. Cattle could have been brought in for fattening before despatch to market in Northampton. Grain grown on the farm would have been mainly for cattle fodder.

The two story farmhouse, though not over large, dominates the site. The house provided above average accommodation for the tenant farmer. At the front, facing away from the yard, the stone faced house overlooks the original elliptical-shaped garden.

In the 19th century additional cattle sheds were added to the farm and the farmhouse itself was enlarged. However despite these changes the basic farm layout was largely unchanged from its original construction to its demise as a farm in the 1970's.

Jan Fajkus



Hunsbury Hill from the 'High Barn' showing the shaped pillars which hold up the roof.

© Jane Waterfield 2007

Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Trust - Thursday 24th May

This morning visit was attended by ten members. The idea of having a morning visit was that this coincided with the regular Thursday working party of INGRT members and there would be some action, such as cleaning and painting locomotives, attention to the track and so on. What we did not expect was to have one of the ex-Wellingborough quarries locomotives, No. 86 in steam. During the week-end previous to our visit, the locomotive had burst a gasket on the left hand clack valve into the boiler and this was attended to in the next few days and was ready for testing at the time of our visit.

Whilst waiting for the steam pressure to rise we had the opportunity to walk freely around the yard and shed. The INGRT came to the Country Park in 1987 from their previous site in the goods shed at the former Irchester station. Some NIAG members remember our visit there, but all of us were impressed with the extent of the developments in Irchester Country Park and the overall tidiness and appearance of the outside yard; interior of the shed and the locomotives inside. The track and locos. Here are mainly metre gauge, since that was the gauge of the Wellingborough ironstone quarries whose locos, were the basis of the present stock of the INGRT. However, there was considerable interest in the sub-metre gauge track with its turnouts, turntables and wagons. The members of the INGRT who were involved with the working party at the time of our visit were extremely helpful and dealt with the numerous questions in an admirable manner. One NIAG member was at first disappointed to find that a loco. He had seen on a previous visit was no longer on site. This was a Ruston Hornsby Class 100 DL 0-6-0 mechanical diesel loco. which used to work in a gypsum quarry near Harbury in Warwickshire. However, he, and the rest of us, were delighted to learn that it was on contract to the Manx Electric Railway in connection with improving of the track between Douglas and Laxey. Not many industrial railways locos. get to the Isle of Man for their holidays!

At last No.86 had sufficient steam to move, and we watched as it proceeded down the track laid on the course of the original narrow gauge line for the Irchester ironstone quarries towards the site of the interchange sidings at Wellingborough (London Road) station. We had all been positioned for a vantage point to photograph the loco. making a run-past up the 1 in 36 incline and the sight was spectacular with the exhaust from the loco. shooting high into the sky. And this was done three times for our pleasure! Our thanks go to the INGRT for giving us such a marvellous insight into their work and especially for this final display. If you missed the NIAG visit you can still see this spectacle because the locomotive is being steamed for operations every Sunday in July and August.

Geoffrey Starmer



No.86 at work in Finedon Quarries in 1966
© Geoffrey Starmer 1966



A Walk around Flore - Friday 1st June 2007

A warm summer evening encouraged about 25 members to walk around the attractive village of Flore, led by our member and local historian John Smith.

On our route round the village we visited the water mill, a three storey brick building dating from about 1780 and now a private house; also the single storey work-shops which were Sharp's whip factory from about 1800 to 1925. Adjacent to the main road is the site of Phillip's wheelwright business which developed from 1836; most of the buildings on the site are derelict but we understand they still contain wagons which are awaiting a permanent storage location

The primary school buildings date from 1852, with Victorian additions in 1872 and 1893. The wide piece of road in front of the school is used for the May Day ceremony and contains what looks like a cast-iron drain cover which conceals a recess to take the maypole.

Amongst the warm ironstone of the houses was the occasional cob wall. Notably, off King's Lane there is a footpath which is bounded by cob walls that have been thatched; incongruously one of these walls is the boundary to a garden containing a modern brick bungalow!

A drive next to the old Bakers Arms leads to 8/10 King's Lane, part of which was the earliest Friends Meeting House in Northamptonshire having been adapted from a barn in 1678. In front of the cottage, now a lawn and car parking area, was a Quaker burial ground used between 1685 and 1789

In Chapel Lane, The Green used to be an open space with the stocks and lock-up



The Leaning House in Kings Lane © Jane Waterfield 2007

until 1834. It is now a large garden surrounded by lanes. Although modern dwellings have replaced most of the cottages, there are still some picturesque thatched properties, including No 11, the Old Bakehouse, No 9, Capell House and No 7, the home of a butcher whose shop and slaughterhouse occupied the frontage. Flore is much larger than you think when driving through it along the A45 and it contains many very

attractive and interesting buildings. Many thanks to John for showing us round.

Peter Perkins



Roade and Rail - Friday 15th June 2007

After several days of heavy rain, thunderstorms and general lack of summer sunshine, it was perhaps not surprising that just six hardy souls gathered in the centre of Roade village on the evening Friday 15th June.

However, their optimism was rewarded as the weather abated to allow the completion of the walk around the village and surrounding area, starting with a footpath through the site of what was once Roade's major employer, Pianoforte Supplies. The company had first arrived in Roade in the guise of Masters and Sons polishing paste factory in 1910, which evolved within a few years into the Simplex Polish Works. This however foundered after ten years and the site was taken over by a Simplex employee, C T Cripps, who had established a company making piano components in London. Growth was rapid and, despite being gutted by fire in 1933, the company still expanded to employ 400 people by 1938. After producing pyrotechnics and other items for the war effort, the company moved on into the growing motor car component industry and by 1969 the workforce had peaked at 1800, with a new chromework plant and even their own branch bank on-site.

However, the oil crisis, a decline in the use of chrome, and a general recession meant that by 1995 only 600 were employed. The very extensive works site now appears disused, and much is derelict, including some of the interesting earliest factory buildings. The walk continued across a footbridge over the West Coast main line railway, adjacent to the site of Roade station, which had been opened by the London & Birmingham railway in 1838. Initially the station enjoyed some importance as a base for road coach services to Northampton, but after the opening of Northampton's own railway branch from Blisworth in 1845, Roade station declined again, and despite a rebuilding in 1880 when the new Northampton loop was opened, it served few passengers until eventual closure in 1964. The only remaining station structure is the road-level booking office, now a workshop, which replaced the fire damaged original in 1942. Further to the south could just be seen some remains of Roade's other railway, the Easton Neston Mineral, Towcester Roade and Olney Junction Railway, later the 'SMJ'. This crossed the main line to the south of the station area, and at one time had a spur into a bay platform for a proposed passenger service to Towcester. However this never came to pass, and the spur was removed in 1917, with the 'SMJ' itself closing in 1960. After a stroll through the 'new' part of Roade village along the A508 road, the walk continued along Bailey Brook Lane to an area where the depths of Roade railway cutting could be viewed from two successive high overbridges. The cutting was constructed between 1834 and 1838, and required the removal of 1 million cubic feet of rock through its length of one and a half miles, and the construction of massive retaining walls joined by inverted brick arches beneath the track bed. The arrival of a thousand navvies also had a dramatic temporary effect on Roade village, including epidemics of Typhus and Smallpox. The water supply of the village was also interrupted, and evidence of this was seen in the form an 1837 aqueduct spanning the cutting which is now a listed structure. In 1880 the cutting was further widened for the new Northampton loop, but after only 10 years the new walls collapsed and were rebuilt with the addition of over 100 supporting steel girders. A continual procession of trains was seen on both main and Northampton routes, a reminder of the very intensive use of the route today. The return to Roade village was by some rather wet field paths, and along a short stretch of the Northampton road, after which a footpath was taken past Roade parish church and into an interesting yard area which showed evidence of some past small industrial activity. After passing the architecturally interesting Roade Board School of 1876, and the Methodist church of 1908, the walkers returned to their starting point having escaped from the anticipated soaking !

Barry Taylor



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

East Anglian "Railway Day out"

The initial plan was to arrange this day out during early to mid July, but I decided to hold off from proposing any firm dates until the weather improved!

However, as you may have seen on Anglia TV news recently, a heavy EWS freight train has managed to derail itself right on a bridge just south of Ely station on the line to Ipswich, thus blocking both river and railway. The fact that this is in such an inaccessible place, and engineers are having to build a temporary road to enable cranes to even reach the site, means that Network Rail have decided to close the route until at least September.

I doubt that this would have happened (or been allowed!) in the 'old days', but it has effectively scuppered our circular tour, as it blocks the vital second leg of the journey from Ely to Ipswich.

I have looked hard at the possibilities of re-routing, but unfortunately this gives us potential problems with some very tight connections at various points as well as spoiling the circular nature of the tour. We would stand a good chance of missing a connection and ending up in limbo somewhere (or worse still Lowestoft!)

So regrettably I have decided to cancel the trip for this year. Thanks to all who expressed interest - and Network Rail permitting, perhaps we can try again next year.

Barry Taylor



Winter Talks 2007/2008

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 12 th October | History of Ironstone Mining at Irthlingborough - Alan Pack. |
| 9 th November | AGM at 7.30pm
The Rise & Fall of Footwear Manufacturing - Ron Whittaker |
| 14 th December | Magical Mechanical Music - Kevin McElhone |

Further details will be found on the Programme enclosed.

Meetings are held in the Garden Room at St. Matthews Church Hall, off Kettering Road, Northampton.

Whilst browsing through various articles I came across this one which might be of interest to members.

John Rigby

Marconi's Work in Tywyn

Many people are surprised to see the Italian name Marconi associated with a group of bungalows on the Cardigan Bay Coast of Wales, few remember now that Tywyn played an important role in the history of transatlantic communication.

Marconi & his discovery of wireless communications

Guigliemo Marconi was born in Italy of Italian and Irish parents. In 1896 he came to Britain, and in 1900 he took out a British patent for his syntonic wireless telegraphy. In 1901 transatlantic experiments began between Poldhu, in Cornwall, and St John, Newfoundland, but following problems with the local telegraphy company Marconi was invited to Canada, and the Government subsidised the building of a Station at Grace Bay, on Cape Bruton Island. A public telegraph service opened between Grace Bay and Clifden on the West Coast of Ireland, in 1907, but ceased in 1915 when Clifden was put out of action during the Irish Rebellion. The service was transferred to Caernarfon. The Caernarfon Station was completed in 1914 and designed for direct communication with the United States of America and for the transmission of pictures (faxing). It was operated by land lines from the Receiving Station at Tywyn.

In 1909 Marconi was a joint recipient of the Nobel Prize for Physics.

Tywyn Receiving Station

The Tywyn Station was ready to start transmitting in the Spring of 1914, and, as the receiving and operating Station, was the nerve centre for the transatlantic telegraph service. The Station was situated behind Marconi Bungalows, and has been converted, comparatively recently, into two dwellings. When built in 1913 it had double glazing and cavity wall construction. The aerial for the Station was the horizontal directional type, supported by five 300 foot high masts, in line directed towards the American Transmitting generator. The last mast of the line was 1400 feet above sea level. The Station had its own generator. The first tests from Tywyn took place with Coltano in Italy, then programmes with Grace Bay commenced in April 1914. In June 1914 Tywyn transmitted to New Brunswick, New Jersey, and in July 1914 New Brunswick transmitted to Tywyn. The outbreak of War halted tests temporarily, but they resumed at the end of September. The Marconi Company operated the Tywyn and Caernarfon Stations throughout the War, at first the Post Office, and then for the Admiralty. The Station was guarded by 'Old Soldiers' from Newtown - a First World War Home Guard. There were regular transmissions to Russian and Egypt. Marconi Bungalows were built after the War for the Station staff and their families.

A commercial service would probably have been inaugurated before the end of 1914, but the War delayed this until March 1920. A message for the United States of America would be handed on at one of Marconi's offices in London and punched out in Morse Code on to paper tape. At Tywyn it was reproduced

automatically on punched tape, and passed through the Wheatstone Transmitter, which operated the signalling switches at Caernarfon, 60 miles away, and the message was conveyed across the Atlantic at a rate of 9 or 10 letters a second. Transmission and reception were carried out simultaneously on their respective wavelengths.

In 1916 a school was opened for Lady Telegraphists to do a six months training course, and eight of these were appointed to Tywyn, doing 24 hour duties, unusual for these times.

Marconi visited the Tywyn station, probably in 1918, sailing into Aberdyfi Harbour on his Yacht Elettra.

In 1920 C S Franklin's improved aerial design meant that four 100 foot wooden masts were set up in a field behind the Gwalia, in place of the five at the Station.

Station Closure

On March 26th 1923, the service at Tywyn was discontinued, and transferred to Brentwood, where there were four huge radio towers and six receivers on the road out to Ongar. Messages were relayed to the Telegraph Office at Radio House in London. Radio House took over the development of Continental circuits and some transatlantic traffic.

After the closure of the Tywyn Station the BBC operated the transmitter for many years, and the four sited on Bryn y More now are possibly a consequence of Marconi's work here.

[The above comes from a leaflet which was prepared with the assistance of Gwynedd Archive and Library Service, Bruce Morris, Tywyn and Roy Rodway, GEC Marconi, Chelmsford.]



Miscellany of items of interest

You will no doubt be aware that **The Maltings** in Northampton with a small chapel behind has now been pulled down. Efforts to stop this came to no avail and once again blame could be laid at the door of the unelected quango WNDG in their constant quest to build yet more houses as per Government guidelines!!

Company releases plans for Formula 1 test centre: Brixworth is likely to be the place for a £48 million Formula 1 test centre. Mercedes Benz want to build this high tech testing and manufacturing centre on a 19-acre site next to the A508. If planning permission is granted, the company hope to start building by the end of the year. Mercedes-Benz want extend their operations in the area, they currently employ 439 staff in Brixworth and have invested almost £30m in the area. (*Daventry Express - July 07*)

Cutty Sark

In May Cutty Sark was severely damaged by fire, and police could find ‘*no logical cause for a natural fire*’. Thankfully the artifacts of the ship, mast, captain wheel, the figurehead, had been removed elsewhere for restoration. The structure of the ship was also feared to be damaged, but it is understood that when engineers carried out a close inspection, they found slight buckling in a few places to the wrought iron hull.

Royal Festival Hall, London: The Hall reopened to the public in June following a £91m two year refurbishment. Built as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations in 1951, the hall has been restored to its original modernist glory, but with improved acoustics and better facilities. Almost every surface in the 2,788 seat-auditorium has been removed, adapted, restored and reinstated, to create a ‘warm and generous acoustic space’. The original seating has been refurbished with improved comfort, more legroom and underseat air conditioning. The hall’s electrical installation was also brought up to modern standards. (*Engineering and Technology, July 2007*)

On a recent visit to London Terry & I popped into the Festival Hall to have a look at all the new renovations. We couldn’t look at the auditorium but apart from a couple of new cafes within the Hall and with the pleasure of being able to sit outside looking at the River, the rest of the entrance area didn’t seem to have been looked at - such as the brass rails on the stairs needed a jolly good polish - the disabled loo had a hole in the wall and some of the loos on the lower levels were out of order, oh and the carpet looked the same as it was when I used to visit it way back in the 1960’s and 1970’s! The roadway at the ‘river’ level has been done away with and cafes abound here - actually very nice. The booking hall (vast in the old days) now up a level and relatively small. The vast array of leaflets and brochures no longer, difficult to find what’s on, but that might change. And all in all a bit of a disappointment - however we might just get to a concert one day.

Mikron Theatre Company

The Lacemakers - a story of lacemakers of Loughborough whose struggle to earn a living took some to Devon, some to Calais and after being trapped between the poorhouses of England and the French Revolution of 1848, to a new life in Australia.

Information can be obtained from www.mikron.org.uk and since the recent floods may have played (no pun) havoc with their performance schedule it might be wise to check with the web-site to see if they will be performing at Tewkesbury, or anywhere in the Severn Valley environs during August.

Other dates and times seem to be a consistent 7.30 pm.

19/20th August - at the Fieldhouse Inn, Wightwick, Wolverhampton

Telephone: 01902 760011.

Shropshire Union Canal:

23rd August - at The Anchor, Peggs Lane, Old Lea, High Offley, nr Woodseaves.

24th August - at Junction Inn, Norbury, nr Stafford

25th August - at Coton Mill, Newport Road, Gnosall.

Trent & Mersey Canal:

26th August - Clock Warehouse, London Wharf, Shardlow - Tel: 01332 792844

27th August - Stone Amphitheatre, Trent Close, Stone - 2.30 pm. - Tel 01785 812210 or www.brindleysofstone.co.uk

News from Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society:

Beaulieu Tide Mill: Following a devastating fire at the tide mill a year ago, Beaulieu Estate has confirmed that work will be starting soon on a massive restoration scheme which is expected to take several years. English Heritage is being consulted about the best way to restore the 16th century building. Repairs will cost about £½m. New oak structures will have to be sourced and will be difficult to install due to their size and weight. According to a local paper the Estate's agent told them that '*Volunteers came down every weekend to sift through the ashes and help salvage anything they could*'.

MP calls for disused railway protection: Apparently the Shadow Transport secretary, Chris Grayling said that disused railway lines, such as Lewes-Uckfield and Oxford- Milton Keynes, should be protected from development in case they have to re-open to relieve overcrowded roads. This was reported in The Times. *Perhaps this should be a strong consideration by that quango WNDG for the disused railway line which runs through Far Cotton.*

Yarmouth Pier under attack: The wooden piles of the Isle of Wight's Yarmouth Pier are being eaten by gribble worms and the pier is in danger of collapsing. The local harbourmaster and local schoolchildren are trying to raise funds to buy new timbers. (*BBC Radio Solent news, 28 May 07*).

New hanger at Cosford air museum: A new hanger was opened in January this year at RAF Cosford air museum. This will house the National Cold War Exhibition. Its skeleton consists of a central braced frame spine supported by steel truss rafters which must support the weight of a 9-ton Dakota and a 13-ton Canberra aircraft. (*New Civil Engineer, 11th Jan.2007*)



Of This and That

Prestigious Award goes to Local Historian

John Smith, member of NIAG, recently received an award from the British Association of Local History (BALH), for his work with the Flore Heritage Society and in recognition of his contribution to local history.

The award was presented at a ceremony in London on the 2nd June.

John was born in Flore but left when he was 17 to work away, returning at the age of 70. He then took an active interest in the village and local organisations including the Heritage Society, eventually becoming its secretary.

John has written many books about the locality and local people. The books cover Flore, Brockhall and Road Weedon and total more than 20.

He has become an authority on Flore and gives great assistance to queries from people looking into their family history.

Congratulations John - a well deserved award.

NIAG gets everywhere!

After the report of so many NIAG members at Dulwich Art Gallery on Saturday 31st March, it is worth noting that NIAG members constituted 20% of the Costume Society's visit to Turkey in April - three out of the fifteen in the party. Guess who? There might be more about this at NIAG's members' evening next January since those on the visit saw production of textiles and clothes as well as the finished products.

Request for further information

There have been suggestions that NIAG might produce an up-dated and expanded version of the late Richard O'Rourke's "Some Northamptonshire Brickworks" which appeared in 1970. A great deal of extra information has been gathered during the past 35 or so years but nationally brick researchers are looking at other aspects, in particular, where bricks from each brickyard were used. If you have any information on buildings in Northamptonshire, or elsewhere, where it is known bricks from a local yard were used, please contact Geoffrey Starmer.

Dates for the Diary:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 10-16 th
August | AIA Preston Conference: University of Central Lancashire, Preston. The AIA annual conference. |
| 6 th October | Buckinghamshire's Industrial Heritage: Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe: Details available from Dr. D Thorpe, BLHN, County Museum, Church St. Aylesbury, HP20 2QP. |
| 12 th October | Winter Programme commences |
| 13 th October | EMIAC Heritage Day at Foxton Locks. - see leaflet enclosed |
| 20 th October | NALH/Spratton Day of History - Details from Terry & Jane Waterfield (01327 312850) |

Heritage Counts 2007: will look at the trends in key indicators of the state of the historic environment since 2002. It will also explore the theme of learning and skills. Drawing on material from across the historic environment sector, it will explore the sector's contribution as a learning resource for schools. It will assess the policy response to concerns over shortages of some skills that may adversely

affect the sector. It will look at the skills needed within local authorities to enable them to deliver the Heritage Protection Review and specific issues around the skills and training needs of volunteers. (*English Heritage Conservation Bulletin - Summer 07*).

Books: English Heritage have produced 9 books in their series regarding Conservation. We are familiar with 'Built to Last' - Our shoe heritage, but the other 8 are worth noting:

- Bridport and West Bay - the buildings of the flax and hemp industry
- Behind the Veneer - The South Shoreditch furniture trade and its buildings
- The Birmingham Jewellery Quarter - An introduction and guide
- One Great Workshop - The buildings of the Sheffield metal trades
- Manchester - The warehouse legacy, and introduction and guide
- Newcastle's Grainger Town - an urban renaissance
- Gateshead - Architecture in a changing English urban landscape
- Storehouses of Empire - Liverpool's historic warehouses

All are priced at £7.99. If you want any of the ISBN numbers then please contact me and I will let you have them. It is understood that there are another 10 books to come in this series.



Lastly:

Sywell Museum gets two awards

I had the pleasure to be invited to the Renaissance Heritage Awards 2007 which were held at Kelmarsh Hall. After the inevitable rain during the day, the evening turned out to be gloriously warm and pleasant. The Hall for the presentations was packed and I did not get much of a chance to see who was there. Once the proceedings got cracking imagine my surprise to see that Sywell Air Museum had been nominated for a couple of the awards. First up Terry (we saw him sitting behind the desk when we went there in May) went up and collected a certificate of participation in the Best Exhibition category. Then another representative went up to collect the actual award for that category. Two categories later Ian (our guide) was overwhelmed to go up and get the Museum of the Year award - too late I remembered the camera and bent to pick it up off the floor - and missed the actual presentation photo shoot - but I did get to take commemorative photographs of all three of them at the end of all the presentations.

All three men were stunned with getting two awards and were really chuffed with the extremely nice plaques that they could take back to the Museum and hang up. So next time you drop into Sywell go and look at these two awards. Oh and by the way - they thoroughly enjoyed our visit. *Ed.*



With their Award on the steps of Kelmarsh Hall - July 18th 2007



Sywell Museum interior

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NIAG Committee

President: Geoffrey Starmer, 34 The Crescent, Northampton, NN1 4SB
Chairman: Peter Perkins, Eastfields Farmhouse, Manor Road, Rushton,
Kettering, NN14 1RH
Secretary: Peter Perkins, Eastfields Farmhouse, Manor Road, Rushton,
Kettering, NN14 1RH
Treasurer: Jan Fajkus, 101 Holly Road, Northampton, NN1 4QN
Web site: Jan Fajkus as above
Members: Mike Brown, Alice Luikinga, Steve Miles, Barry Taylor and
Terry Waterfield

Newsletter Editor

Mrs Jane S Waterfield, 6 Bakers Lane, Norton Daventry, NN11 2EL
Tel/Fax: 01327 312850 - e-mail: js-sec@tandjassociates.co.uk

Newsletter:

Next Issue: **October 2007**

Deadline for all articles and information 20th September 2007. Anything received after this date will be held over to the next issue.

Article guidelines: No more than 1½ pages long please. Photographs will be inserted if submitted.

Please submit by e-mail, fax or mail. Where possible photographs are encouraged to illustrate all articles. When submitting photographs it would be appreciated that they are not sent via e-mail as this can take a very long time to download and the quality is not always good. Preferably send photographs/ slides by post (first class) and these will be returned to you the same way. Please also include your name and address so that you can be credited with taking those photographs and don't forget to put a caption with them.

