



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY
GROUP

NEWSLETTER



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CONTENTS

Editorial		1
Summer Walks and Visits of 2012		
Wicksteed Park	Mick Dix	2
Chasewater Railway Museum	Terry Waterfield	4
Glendon Railway walk	Peter Perkins	6
Kettering Town walk	Ron Hanson	9
News Items and Updates		
Plaque unveiled at Aquaduct		11
Steam hopes for restored Allchin roller		12
Miscellany of Items of Interests		
Work starts to reveal history of St. John's		12
Jelly revival creates jobs		13
Roman dig near Daventry draws to a close		13
Bedford Line plan		14
Wolverton Station		14
Northampton's 'New' Bus station		15
Pots on building site date back 2000 years		16
Wicksteed Park Lottery bid		16
Northampton Castle - remains could be revealed		17
Moat Lane, Towcester		18
Lady Godiva visits Northampton		18
The Westmorland of Apethorpe archive		18
Of this and that: including		
Subscriptions		20
Number crunching		20
Plus:		
Dates for the Diary / Winter Programme reminder		19
Finally - two obituaries		inside back cover

From the Editor

Quietly working in the garden at the end of June we were pleasantly surprised to see the Red Arrows fly overhead. What a sight – all 9 in formation, 5 in the first group and 4 in the second. No time to get the camera – blink and they were gone – magnificent. On the subject of aircraft I was extremely pleased to see that after 66 years Bomber Command has its own memorial to all the men who tragically lost their lives while basically ‘doing their job’, in the efforts to win the last War. It is a fitting end to all those who have campaigned so tirelessly for such a memorial, in particular the late Robin Gibb who died before the dedication ceremony at the end of June.

The last few walks and visits were extremely good – the trip to Marston’s was exceptional in that we had an excellent and enthusiastic guide, she knew her subject and no questions fazed her so well done to Matthew for organising this trip. Cogenhoe was also blessed with a good evening for strolling across the fields and we finished with the visit to Harrington. Reports of these will come in a later issue. Sadly I have to report that two members, David Goodey and Eric Godwin, have passed away. David in the Spring and Eric only recently. Terry & I attended both funerals and there was a small group from NIAG for Eric’s funeral.

Once again the up and coming winter talks look set to be a season of excellent subjects, ranging from trains to aqueducts, maps, shoes and fencing. A varied programme of topics all of which, no doubt, will be of immense interest. Look forward to seeing you on those Fridays.

Reports of the summer visits continue in this edition. We also had a very good day at the Heritage Fair held at St. Seps church rooms in Northampton. Good to see some of our members at the event. Peter was also busy conducting short walks which centred on our Boot & Shoe summer walk earlier this year. Reports from the day will appear in the Winter issue. At this point I would like to thank all those members who have given me items to sell on these occasions to make some extra monies for NIAG. Another year has swiftly passed and with this newsletter are the AGM papers which are self explanatory. Terry will be happy to accept renewals up to and including the November meeting.

As always time waits for no man and I wish you all a happy end to 2012 and look forward to seeing you all in 2013.

Jane W

PS: I have just had a fantastic flight over the Olympic Park, London. All about it next time.

SUMMER PROGRAMME WALKS AND VISITS CONTINUED

Wicksteed Park Trains – 18th May

On a dull overcast evening 17 people gathered to visit the railway in Wicksteed Park at Kettering, the weather did however remain fine for the duration of the visit.

The railway which is two foot gauge and approximately 1¼ miles in length was opened to the public on Good Friday, 3rd April 1931; unfortunately Charles Wicksteed did not see the opening as he had died on the 19th March of that year. The route of the railway takes it past the small boating lake and then past the water chute, one of the original attractions in the park, before going through the tunnel and around the large lake after which it passes the old cycle track and the model boating lake on its way back to the station. The tunnel was constructed in 1933 at the side of the running line which was then diverted through the old main line at this location becoming a siding which remained in use until the late 1980s. Trains have always run in a clockwise direction around the lake upon leaving the station, and when the locomotive King Arthur was turned to face the other way in 2011, it was believed to be the first time that one of the locomotives had been chimney leading in the anti clockwise direction.

Other than the building of the tunnel the route of the railway has undergone little change since it opened. Shortly after leaving the station the line passes through a cutting which was excavated in the 1982/3 winter and replaced the original undulating route, and at some points around the lake the line is now a little farther from the shore than originally. A track replacement programme was completed two years ago and the

whole of the running line is now laid with 30lb per yard rail fastened with Pandrol clips to wooden sleepers laid on a ballasted formation, prior to this the railway was laid with 20lb per yard rail.

At the time of opening the railway had two locomotives, King Arthur and Lady of the Lake, both supplied by



Inspecting Lady of the Lake.

(c) Jane Waterfield 2012

Messrs Baguley of Burton of Trent at a cost of £410 each and said to be based on a locomotive that the company had supplied to the Lilleshall Abbey Railway in Shropshire. Both locos were originally fitted with petrol engines but were re-engined with diesel engines by the manufacturers in 1952/3 and again re-engined with Perkins P3 diesel engines in 1961. King Arthur was again re-engined in 1996 with the same model of engine; this locomotive was converted to hydraulic drive by G Lewis Limited of Kettering in 1971, Lady of the Lake still retains the original drive system. Air braking of the stock was introduced to the railway in 1982; this necessitated an extension to the side tanks on this pair of locomotives and the addition of a cowcatcher to give protection to the air tank which was located at low level.

The third locomotive, Cheyenne, was supplied by Motor Rail Limited of Bedford in 1966 at a cost of £2,220. This was a 1940s model that had been modified with a steam outline body, the only such loco ever built by Motor Rail. Cheyenne was to be the mainstay of the railway for the next 44 years and indeed is still available for service today still with its original Dorman diesel engine. When originally delivered this loco was painted black, a livery it carried until the mid 1990s when it was repainted green.

The fourth locomotive, Merlin, arrived in 2010 and is a steam outline diesel that was built for the park by Alan Keef Limited of Ross on Wye. This loco which is fitted with a Perkins diesel engine and has a hydraulic drive is now the regular working loco with Cheyenne being the spare.

Eight carriages were provided by Messrs Baguley for the opening of the railway, they were four wheeled and seated 18 people. Two would appear to have been fitted with seats by the manufacturers the remaining six had their seats provided by Wicksteed Engineering of Kettering. At busy times in the early days two trains comprising of four carriages in each were in use. Two further carriages were supplied by Messrs Baguley in the 1950s to enable five carriage trains to be run. With the arrival of Cheyenne five new carriages were purchased from Motor Rail Limited and again the seats were provided by Wicksteed Engineering. These new vehicles were similar to the originals but instead of being completely open they were provided with awnings. Four new enclosed coaches were supplied by Alan Keef Limited in 2004 seating approximately 20 people in each and having facilities to enable wheelchairs to be carried. These new coaches are mounted on a pair of four wheeled bogies and are air braked using a twin pipe system; this required alteration to the locomotive Cheyenne to enable it to be used with them, the two original locos were not altered. This meant that from 2004 until 2010 Cheyenne was the only locomotive that could be used for passenger services.

The party at first inspected the locomotives King Arthur and Cheyenne which had been positioned outside for photography, Merlin and the train were available for inspection in the station. The workshop was open to visit and contained Lady of the Lake which is in the last stages of a major overhaul which has taken place over the

last two years. It is intended that this loco will become a working museum piece leaving King Arthur and Cheyenne to be available for works trains. Also available for inspection at the station were one each of the Baguley and Motor Rail open coaches. The visit ended with a trip around the railway in a train formed of the Alan Keef coaches hauled by the loco Merlin.

Mick Dix



Chasewater Railway Museum – 27th May

A small group of members met at The Sidings tea room at Brownhills West Station on a warm Sunday morning to find out more about the surrounding area. Within an area of about three miles square, once stood many coal pits: Cannock Chase Colliery had 10 pits, Brownhills Colliery had three; other collieries included Wryley Common, Cannock & Leacroft, and Cannock & Rugeley. All dating back to the middle of the nineteenth century. Consequently an extensive network of rail- and tram-ways was laid to connect to the main lines such as the South Staffordshire and Walsall-to-Stoke Lines.

When the pits closed in the 1960s, there were several groups interested in preserving the industrial heritage. As David Bathurst, Director of the Railway Museum, explained one these was the Chasewater Railway. In common with all heritage groups life was difficult surviving out of portakabins, etc.; but with the building of the Midland Expressway (M6 Toll) on the horizon, there was light at the end of the tunnel. As part of the compulsory purchase of their land they acquired sufficient funds to building the present station complex at Brownhills West. So although the line is authentic, the buildings are modern. The Museum received full accreditation in 2011 by the Museums, Libraries & Archives Council (the MLA). In addition to items of rolling stock and the usual railway ephemera, the museum has collected, and is still collecting, large quantities of documents related to the rail and coal industries of the area. As with all archives, though, there is a backlog of cataloguing! Sadly we were not to see any of these documents other than those which formed part of the museum itself. This was rather a disappointment as we had been led to believe that we would see some when in discussions prior to the visit. It was also unfortunate that there was little time to walk round the interesting museum prior to being shown ‘behind the scenes’ – hopefully time would be available at the end of the afternoon!

John Tisdale, the Museum Registrar, and colleague Godfrey led us out of the ‘back door’ of the museum to look at some of the restoration work in progress on a tank engine and the boiler of the steam crane that stood in the sidings outside. The boilers are always the last item to be restored/repared as the test certificate has a ‘shelf life’ defined by its test date and not when it is first used after test. Outside stood a variety of rolling stock awaiting restoration; interestingly one of the six-wheel coaches (ex Great Eastern built 1894) had wooden wheels – the rim/tyre and hub were of cast

iron and held together by a wooden annulus. Inside the engine shed two of the tank engines were being cleaned by one of the volunteers; the third was out working – we had, after-all, picked a ‘steam day’ for our visit. After much discussion we crossed



In discussion looking down the line. (c) Jane Waterfield 2012

the tracks for an excellent carvery lunch (only available on Sundays!).

After lunch we took our seats in the recently fully-refurbished ex-BR carriage, originally built mid 1950s; the train was hauled by 0-4-0ST No 2 built by WG Bagnall (works number 2842) in 1946, ex The Kent Electric Power Company. The track follows the line of the Midland Railway, opened in 1851, and then

swings round the reservoir along the line of the Cannock Chase and Wolverhampton Railway, opened in 1856, to Chasetown (Church Street) where we alighted. Our guides John and Godfrey commented that had the Rugby Club built its new club house a few further yards to the west, it would have been quite easy to extend the line to the Anglesey tipping docks which we were to visit. With the aid of photographs from the archive, John was able to explain/illustrate the current features of the area. The canal ends in a basin below the dam of the Cannock Chase Reservoir.

A newly appointed council surveyor had deemed the dam ‘unsafe’ so the reservoir had been drained to permit a short length to be strengthened; of course with the drought conditions prevailing and only supplied by a small stream, the reservoir was still very low. However, it did give an opportunity to look at the water management of the area.



The Park in which the museum is located is also a

One of the tipping docks still to be seen along the canal.

(c) Jane Waterfield 2012

nature reserve and at one point on our travel by train we did manage to glimpse a herd of red deer. Swans and other bird life graced the ponds near the Information centre. Whether it was the heat or the many people, we did not see a great deal of the other wildlife which can be found in this park.

We slowly returned to The Sidings for a well-earned cuppa before departing for home. This is a worthwhile place to visit and to explore. A small brewery still operates on site and if you felt inclined cycles could be hired to get you to the furthest corners without having to resort to the train or indeed by foot. Certainly a place to revisit on another day.

Terry & Jane Waterfield



Glendon Railway Walk – 1st June

Twenty members gathered on a dull, cool (again!) evening to explore the railway lines and sites of former ironstone quarrying in the vicinity of Glendon Junction to the north of Kettering.

The Midland Railway opened its line from Leicester to Bedford and on to Hitchin in 1857. Coming from Leicester, the line crossed the Ise valley at Rushton, then ran through a cutting at Glendon before joining the Slade valley to the west of Kettering. In the late 1870s, the MR built their line from Kettering to Manton, passing through Corby and over the Harringworth viaduct, the junction with the line to Leicester being made at Glendon. At the same time the lines south from Glendon to London (the MR had built their direct line from Bedford to St Pancras by 1868) were quadrupled to cope with the increasing freight traffic. So for a period of about 100 years this 75 mile length south from Glendon represented the longest stretch of quadrupled track in the world. Closure of the Kettering to Manton line to passenger services following the 1960s Beeching axe, led to track rationalisation, so now there is only a single line from Glendon up to Corby. However, regular passenger trains are once again using the Manton line as far as Corby, with a few trains venturing further north to join the line from Peterborough to Leicester. As we saw from our visit to Isham at the beginning of May, the quadrupled track has also disappeared between Kettering and Wellingborough, although a third line has recently been reinstated.

It was, of course, the digging of the cutting at Glendon in the 1850s that revealed the presence of ironstone which resulted in extensive quarrying in this area over the following century. From about 1863, the Glendon Iron Company began quarrying here on both sides of the railway. Taken over by James Pain from 1892, then by Stanton Ironworks from 1928 and ultimately by Stewarts & Lloyds, these quarries had a working life of 117 years, the longest-lived in the Midlands. Today, most of the land in the vicinity has been quarried at some time and that which is either side of Glendon Road to the east of the railway is now being developed by Prologis as

the North Kettering Business Park, with massive sheds being used as distribution warehouses. However, an area adjacent to the railway seems to be earmarked for sports and leisure purposes and sports pitches and a car park have recently been laid out, although not yet in general use. Courtesy of Prologis, it was in this car park we gathered for our circular walk.

From the car park, we made our way south to the bridge carrying Glendon Road over the railway and known locally as 'blue bridge' for obvious reasons. Mick Dix informed us that the original bridge used when the railway opened in 1857 was a few yards south of the current one built to span the quadrupled tracks in the 1870s. We then walked north on the dirt-track running alongside the railway, viewing the railway tracks at intervals through the dense vegetation on the side of the railway cutting. Passing the point at which the Manton line diverts from the Leicester line, we noted the exposed iron ore strata still visible at the apex of the junction. Further on, we came to the remains of a girder bridge now filled in but with the steel handrails remaining. This carried the dirt-track over a tramway which ran from the MR to Glendon North Quarries, and operated from the 1880s till 1957, carrying iron ore from the extensive quarries between Glendon and Rothwell. The tramway cutting is still visible and is now used by Kettering scouts as part of their district campsite.

Milepost 75 on the Kettering to Leicester line is where Glendon North signal box stood until the 1980s, marking what used to be the northern limit of the quadrupled track. Just beyond this this is an accommodation bridge passing beneath the tracks which are by now on an embankment. It is thought that this bridge was put in when the Manton line was constructed, to provide access to Barford Lodge between the Leicester and Manton lines and replacing the original over-bridge which was further south where the Manton line deviates from the main line. The new under-bridge, now forming the bridle-way from Rushton to the Kettering - Uppingham road, has wide abutments which suggest that additional lines or sidings were planned on the east side of the tracks but there is no evidence they were ever put in.



Quarry buildings and layout just after activities had ceased. Taken just east of the bridge over the BR line.

(c) Roy Sheffield 1980

All the land between the two diverging railway lines has been quarried for ironstone. The earliest quarries were dug before the Manton line was built, but iron ore was extracted on a greater industrial scale between the mid-1950s through until 1976. Barford Lodge was used by James Pain at the end of the 19th century for stabling the horses the company used to haul tubs of ironstone prior to using steam locos, but the buildings were demolished in the 1960s.

Crossing the now-restored land between the two railway lines, we arrived at the over-bridge that carries the bridle-way from Rushton over the Manton line. On the eastern side of the Manton line at this point was the site of Glendon East sidings where iron ore was brought from quarries around Weekley Hall Wood to the east of the A6003, as well as from the north side of Kettering. Little remains of this extensive complex apart from an area of tarmac which once formed a road over the bridge from the quarries near Barford Lodge to a tipping dock.



Quarry buildings and train sheds just after activities had ceased. Taken just east of the bridge over the BR line.

(c) Roy Sheffield 1980

Standing on the railway bridge we could see the now single track running north towards Corby and were rewarded with the sight of one of the passenger trains that now regularly makes the trip from Corby to Kettering and onto London. Walking south now on the eastern side of the railway, we could make out the depression on the line of the tramway cutting from Glendon East sidings south-east towards Kettering but all other features have disappeared under the new business park.

Returning to our starting point we mused on the fact that Prologis have created useful sporting and leisure facilities on this site, with walkways mown in the grass and styles over the fences and including a giant carved wooden red kite with wings outspread presumably for children to crawl all over. However, as yet there is no publicity about it being open to the public or indeed who will use the facilities!

Acknowledgments:

Thanks to Mick Dix for historical input; other quarry details from Eric Tonks: *Ironstone Tramways of the Midlands, Part VI*.

Peter Perkins



Kettering Town – 15th June

The objective of this walk was to see what evidence remains of the town's industrial past and to understand how these activities were influenced by each other and the consequences of local and world events.

We started at the top of Commercial Road car park where, with the aid of Thomas Eyre's 1721 town plan, we established the area where woad was grown for wool dyeing and the lane down to it: Wadcroft. At the south end of Wadcroft is Bell foundry Lane where the same Thomas Eyre had his bell foundry. On to Lower Street past Elworthy's malting to Chesham House where Thomas Gotch began a boot and shoe business in 1778, which went bankrupt in 1856.



Elsworth Maltings now a furniture shop. (c) JWaterfield 2012

From the plan of the site produced for the sale by auction of the business and family assets, we could identify part of a wall with bricked up window and door openings extending from the left hand corner of the house (looking at the front of the house from Lower Street) which could be the only remaining part of his factory.

The worsted industry was killed off by the Napoleonic wars which strangled exports to the continent, and also the increased competition from the more mechanised factories in Yorkshire; meanwhile Gotch's business became established due to military and naval requirements during this same war.

On the other side of Lower Street is the Mission House where John Turner Stockburn lived. In 1856 using mainly female labour, he and his brother-in-law Robert Wallis started a stay-making business in the adjacent Northall Street and installed the first sewing machines in Kettering. The decade between 1850 and 1860 brought major changes to Kettering's fortunes:-

- a) The arrival of the sewing machine in Kettering.
- b) The mainline railway to London and the North opened in 1857.

c) The Gotch business failed.

As a consequence of the failure of Gotch's business there were at least 5 budding entrepreneurial shoemakers out of work. They went off and started businesses of their own.

1. Charles East: Unfortunately there was nothing left to see of his factory in Northall Street.
2. John Bryan (Meadows and Bryan): We walked up to Ebenezer Place to view what remained of the factory, which was formally a chapel. The only brickwork standing was that adjoining a neighbouring building. The base plan of the building could be made out and was being used as a car park.
3. William Hanger: We paused on the corner of School Lane and Silver Street to view the site which started off as a silk mill but was then used by both William Hanger and also Wallis & Linnell before being burnt down in 1864. Wallis & Linnell rebuilt their clothing factory on the site and remained there until they went out of business in 1975. It was pointed out the close proximity of this site to that of Dalkieth Place where Owen Robinson had started up a small clock making and engineering business; and when Fredrick Wallis required maintenance on his early sewing machines, he approached Owen Robinson. This was the start of engineering in Kettering.
4. Thomas Bird: Walking on to Green Lane we viewed the factory built by Thomas Bird & George Abbot in 1873 using the first bricks from the Kettering Brick & Tile Co. After the partnership was dissolved in 1890 Thomas Bird had a new factory built on the corner of Bath Road and Digby Street which was pointed out later in the walk.
5. William Timpson was the fifth ex-Gotch employee, however time did not allow us to investigate his achievements.

It was the start of another war, the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, which started the expansion of Kettering's boot and shoe business, and in turn the expansion of the town itself. This expansion slackened in the slump of 1891-1896. Up until this time there was still a lot of work carried out by individuals in their own homes. To compete in this difficult market, factories had to mechanise and become more efficient, thus forcing many of the out-working processes into the factories.

Up Green Lane and along Victoria Street past the site of Owen Robinson's Engineering works. Owen Robinson as discussed earlier had started by repairing sewing machines for the clothing business, but being an inventive and skilled engineer began making machines for the growing boot and shoe industry. With the use of another plan, that of the property belonging to the trustees of the late John Carrington, (1885), we were able to establish the location of Owen Robinson's "Champion works" in Victoria

Street (nearly opposite Alexandra Street). Owen Robinson had a grandson, Charles, who was an inventor like his grandfather, it was at this site that Charles made the components for the Robinson car. He made only three which he assembled at his garage in Montagu Street (the only known remaining car is in the Manor House museum). It was also at this site that Arthur Timson working as a lathe operator met Charles Bullock. The two started off on their own and eventually moved to Montagu Street (1898). We also moved onto Montagu Street to see where Timson & Bullock, now joined by Charles Barber, made pedal cycle and later motor cycles in part of the building currently used by Newmans ironmongers.

Further down Montagu Street: on the corner of Wellington Street is the factory of the next generation of the Hanger family, Henry, built in 1887.

Turning into Bath Road we were confronted with the newer offices of Timson “perfecta” printing works. Timson Bullock & Barber moved here from Montagu Street in 1903. We walked on down Digby Street looking at some of the shoe out-workers’ shops to the rear of some of the houses. Some members expressed surprise that these workshops even had chimneys. It was pointed out that the operators could not work easily with cold hands, and a member with local knowledge informed the group that these fires would often burn the leather trimmings.

Moving up the street we came to Wicksteed Engineering famed for its playground equipment, but also manufacturers in the past of boiler making tools, mechanical hacksaws, screw-fed coal stoking equipment, and even bread slicing and buttering machines. To the left of the main entrance, the square lower part of the brass foundry chimney could be seen and farther up the hill the wood louvered ventilators into the machine shops. During the First World War both Timson & Wicksteed manufactured 4.5” shells. It was asked by a visiting member if anything was being done to preserve any of the old playground equipment that most members of the older generation would have been familiar with. This was very doubtful.

Ron Hanson



NEWS ITEMS AND UPDATES:

Plaque unveiled at Aqueduct

A plaque will be placed on the Iron Trunk Aqueduct, near Wolverton, in a Northamptonshire stretch of the Grand Union Canal on Sunday [22nd July]. The event will celebrate the completion of the year-long restoration of this 200-year-old aqueduct. The Red Wheel plaque also commemorates the site as one of historical interest.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 19th July 2012

Steam hopes for restored Allchin roller

The team behind the restoration of a vintage steamroller which was built in Northampton, hope to have the machine working this weekend. The 113 year old Allchin steam roller, which was built at the Globe works in Southbridge, was restored by a group of steam enthusiasts from the Northampton & Lamport Railway in Pitsford Road, Chapel Brampton. It will be the star of the show at the annual Vintage Gathering at Lamport this weekend, but it is not yet known if the vintage vehicle will be ‘in steam’.

Kingsthorpe resident, Sharron Skinner, who led the restoration with her husband, Julian, said it was hoped the roller would pass its boiler test on Friday, meaning it could be returned to steam in time for the show. She said “*We’ll have to wait and see if it will be in steam, but it will still be on show even if it’s not. We can only try our best.*”

As well as the Allchin roller, more than 130 vintage vehicles will be displayed at the event, including classic cars, motorbikes, model steam engines and traction engines. Mrs Skinner said “*It should be a great show and it will be great if we’ve able to get the roller in steam.*” The Allchin steamroller is now the only one of its kind in the world. It was rescued from Northampton Borough Council’s Westbridge depot in 2009 after being left to rust since the 1990s. Before it was retired by the council, it was used to build miles of roads around Northampton. It was restored with help from a £50,000 Lottery grant.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 26th July 2012

The roller was up and steaming on the Saturday (28th July) – a magnificent piece of historic machinery. Ed.



MISCELLANY ITEMS OF INTEREST

Work starts to reveal history of St. John’s

Archaeologists have begun investigating a piece of land in Northampton close to where both a railway station and a medieval hospital once stood. St. John’s car park, close to Royal & Derngate theatre, closed earlier this month (June) so work could start on the development of new halls of residence for The University of Northampton. Ahead of building work, archaeologists have started excavations on the site. It is not yet known what will be found beneath the site, but research has shown it was once within the grounds of the former Hospital of St. John’s which was founded in 1139. It later became an orchard before St. John’s Railway Station was built on the site in the 1870s. The station closed in 1939 and was demolished in the 1960s, making way for the car park.

Once the archaeological work has been completed, construction of the halls of residence is due to begin in July. David Coleman, from Rushden-based Kier Construction, who will build the student halls, said: *“We’re really looking forward to working with The University of Northampton on this project, as well as local people and businesses, to give the whole community a development that it can benefit from the be proud of.”*

Few facts:

The site was once within the grounds of the Hospital of St. John, which was founded by William St Clare, the Archdeacon of Northampton, in 1139.

In 1871, the site was sold to the Bedford and Northampton Railway Company so St. John’s Station could be built. The car park site was home to the station’s turning circle. The station closed in 1939.

Jelly revival creates jobs

A Northampton shoe firm has brought jobs back to the town after deciding not to make its latest product in China. Juju Shoes, which is based in Arthur Street, Kingsthorpe Hollow, had massive success during the 1980s, making highly popular ‘jelly’ shoes. The firm made the distinctive shoes until the 1990s, when it moved its attention to producing Wellington boots in China. It has now decided to revive jelly shoes, with all of them made in Northampton. The firm’s managing director, Colin Thompson, said: *“The price of raw materials and labour in China has gone up so much, by the time they’re made out there and shipped back, it’s better to make them in Britain. So that’s great news for Northampton, because it’s bringing jobs back here.”*

Jelly shoes date back to the 1950s, but they became popular in the 1980s after first being worn by punks then picked up as a mainstream fashion item. During the height of their popularity, Juju made 1.5 million pairs a year and supplied them to firms including Woolworths. Its revived shoes now sell in stores such as Top Shop, River Island and New Look.

Mr Thompson said: *“A lot of mums who remember going on holiday wearing jelly shoes themselves buy them. It’s wonderfully nostalgic for them.”*

The firm now employs about 20 people making jelly shoes, including some who worked on original designs back in the 1980s.

Above two stories from the Chronicle & Echo – June 28th 1912

A Roman dig near Daventry draws to a close after 15 years.

A major archaeology dig into the area’s Roman past is preparing to cover over its discoveries. Volunteers from the Whitehall Roman Villa and Landscape Project have been working on the site for 15 years, unearthing the remains of substantial

buildings, some dating back nearly 2,000 years. But now the volunteers believe they've learnt all they can from large-scale digs, and are preparing to cover over their discoveries with earth once more.

Site director Steve Young said: *“The site was discovered by a metal detectorist, and the landowner really wanted to find out what was under the ground. The dig started the next year. It's going to be sad covering it all up, but it's for the best. We need to cover it over because what remains could be severely damaged by weather and water. For example it's soaking at the moment but if there was a bad frost we could lose the floors. Putting the soil back on will protect it hopefully for another 1,500 years. But we're not finished with the site – we'll continue working here, but with much smaller pits to look at key things”.*

The Whitehall project is part of CLASP, an organisation which is examining the Roman past of the area between Towcester, Whilton and Duston. Mr Young said: *“The crux is what was the experience for Roman people living here, and can we detect that in the archaeology, and I think we can. We've moved on now from being able to describe Roman life at a regional, or provincial level. From what we've found we know how different life was here from the walled town of Lactodurum – Towcester. What we want to do is create a learning centre in the area so that academics, residents and schoolchildren can go and discover all about the history of the area they live in.”*

Daventry Express – July 12th 2012

Bedford line plan

A group is being formed that will seek to have the former Bedford-Olney-Northampton line re-opened. The group's founder says such a service would open links such as Northampton-Luton Airport, and Bedford-Birmingham. The first meeting of the Milton Keynes Rail Link Supporters Forum was due to be held on July 10th.

It will be interesting to see if the recent announcement (16th July) regarding funding for the railways will have any impact on this scheme. We will keep a close watch on this. Ed

Wolverton

The new station building was officially opened on June 21st.

The above three articles from the Rail magazine – July 11/24th 2012

Plus:

The last traces of Second World War camouflage have disappeared from the works buildings.

Rail magazine - 5/18th September 2012

Northampton's 'New' Bus Station

Fewer than 70 people have written to the Borough Council to object to plans to build a new bus station in the town centre. Members of the council's planning committee will decide on the 10th July, whether or not a new bus station should be built on the site of the Fishmarket in Sheep Street. The development would allow the current Greyfriars station to be knocked down so new shops could be built on the site.

When the plans were first revealed they provoked a major public backlash with many bus users arguing Greyfriars should not be demolished. But in a report which will be seen by the council's planning committee, a planning officer revealed only 69 members of the public had written to the authority to object to the new bus station being built. And tackling one of the main criticisms of the new station - that it would be too far out of town – he argued it would actually still be very close to the Grosvenor Centre. However, he also argued that the new bus station would help revive the town centre, even if the Grosvenor Centre was not redeveloped (*pardon?*), saying *“The proposed bus interchange would, in its own right, support economic regeneration and growth by providing a centrally located high quality, modern facility, which would draw a significant level of footfall to an underperforming area of the town centre.”*

Apparently people who did write to object argued the new bus station would be too small and could cause traffic problems in the town centre. They also argued the Greyfriars building should be improved instead. The Town Centre Conservation Area Action Committee also labelled designs for the new building *‘mediocre and not iconic’*.

Station will have a self-cleaning roof:

- The new bus station would have a roof made out of plastic which is designed to clean itself every time it rains. The manufacturers of the plastic have said rain water would even wash away bird droppings from the surface.
- The bus station would feature a total of 12 bus stands on the Fishmarket site. A further two would be in nearby Bradshaw Street and seven more in The Drapery.
- Inside the bus station would be a travel information centre, toilets, a waiting area for passengers, a shop and a cafe.
- The development would require the complete demolition of the current Fishmarket building as well as a nearby toilet block. A subway between the site of the new bus station and the Mayorhold car park would also be permanently blocked up.
- As part of the new development, a mini-roundabout would be built at the junction of Silver Street and Bradshaw Street. Silver Street would also

become accessible to buses only.

- The development of the new bus station is tied up with the extension of the Grosvenor Centre, but councillors have said the new station is needed even if the Grosvenor plan does not go ahead.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – July 5th 2012

Pots on building site date back 2000 years

An unusual collection of pottery which was dumped in a ditch on the edge of Northampton 2,000 years ago has left archaeologists bemused. The pots, some of which come from Europe, were unearthed on the edge of the new Upton village during an archaeological dig this week. Archaeologist, Liz Muldowney, who is leading the dig, said it was not yet clear why the pots, which are well preserved, had been buried on the site. She said: *“We don’t know why the pottery is here, but it suggests there was a house of reasonably high status nearby. It’s certainly very unusual to find a collection of pottery together like this. Sometimes it’s associated with people moving home – they deliberately throw away their pottery when they leave. But they’ve quite deliberately thrown away some very expensive items. For farmers to be able to afford pottery that’s come from France represents a significant part of their limited wealth.”*

The dig across a 10-acre site is being carried out before new houses are built in Upton. Previous excavations on the land have revealed the site, which is close to Weedon Road, was populated during the Iron Age and early Roman period.

“The dig has proved this wasn’t an urban area, it’s agricultural land outside the old Roman town of Duston. We’ve got stock enclosures from the early Roman period, showing they’ve been using this land for farming and living on. It’s hard to tell how many people would have lived here, but it’s likely to be extended families and there could have been 20 to 40 people here in the Iron Age.”

The pottery which was found in the ditch included valuable samian ware which dates from the early Roman period. Buried alongside it were a plate, a storage jar and a small dish. The finds have now been sent off to pottery experts to be examined.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – May 31st 2012

Wicksteed Park wins Lottery bid

Wicksteed Park has been awarded more than £1million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the restoration of its magnificent lake. The restoration will entail dredging and deepening the lake and new sluices will be installed. Reed beds will also be planted alongside areas of grass wetland to improve biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

Other works involved in the project include the conservation of the currently

redundant roundhouse, a 1924 lakeside shelter, which will be repaired bringing it back into use as a focus for lake-side activities. The main lake at the popular Kettering attraction is an important landscape feature and a reminder of park creator Charles Wicksteed's original vision. It was created between 1919-21. The lake was used for regattas, swimming, boating and water polo, with the park advertised as 'The Gateway to Health and Happiness'.

Kettering Extra – 11th July 2012

Remains of castle could be revealed

It is hoped a glimpse of Northampton's lost medieval castle could be unearthed by a team of archaeologists at the weekend [21/22 July]. The Friends of Northampton Castle have organised a dig of the former castle site, next to the town's railway station, which will take place all weekend. Chron columnist, John Dickie, is a member of the Friends Group. He said: *"There's an awful lot of the castle still to be found and if anyone is interested in coming down to see what we're doing, they're more than welcome. It should be a very interesting day. Of course, it could be that we find nothing, but on the other hand, it could be start of something big."*

The team will dig in the playing fields of Spring Lane School in Spring Lane, close to the railway station. It is believed the field may once have been home to the castle's great hall. The digs will take place on both Saturday and Sunday.

Points:

- The castle was once used as a seat of Parliament. It was partially demolished in 1662 under the orders of King Charles II because of the town's support for Parliament during the Civil War.
- The remains of the building were taken by the Victorians for building work and the site was cleared in 1859 to make way for the railway station.
- A recreated gate is now all that remains to show the castle existed.

The two-day archaeological dig near the site of Northampton Castle revealed some china and clay pipes believed to date back to the 19th century. Items found after two 1½ metre deep holes were dug included, pieces of china, clay pipes and garden pots. Marie Dickie of FONC [Friends of Northampton Castle], said: *"We did not get deep enough to find anything of medieval origin, but got a really good picture of what life was like here in the 19th century."* John Dickie, FONC, said: *"We believe this area may have been where the outer walls of the castle may have been. What we wanted to demonstrate is that this area is full of history and we wanted the community to get involved in the dig."* Due to the success of the archaeological dig, FONC is planning similar events in the Spring Boroughs area. For more information go to www.northamptonscastle.com.

Points:

- Northampton Castle was built under the stewardship of Simon de Senlis in 1084. All that remains now are some earth banks beside St Andrew's Road.
- The Friends of Northampton Castle [FONC] aim to promote awareness of its history.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 19th and 26th July 2012

Moat Lane, Towcester

In March 2012 South Northants Council announced that constructor/investor Morgan Sindall Investments Ltd will be its development partner for the Moat Lane regeneration and civic accommodation project that will fulfil the vision of the historic market town of Towcester. The scheme features a civic building with council offices, new library and Registry Office providing a community heart to the town centre. Other elements of the scheme include retail, catering and residential. At the centre of the redevelopment is the historic Bury Mount that will become a focal amenity. A further 28 acres of nearby water meadow has been brought back into public use for the first time in two centuries. Preparatory work on the scheme is already underway and the scheme should be complete within four to five years.

News sheet of the West Northants Join Planning Unit – July 2012

Wonder what will happen to the existing council offices? Most likely will be pulled down – what a waste!! Ed

Lady Godiva visits Northampton!

A 33ft high puppet, made in Coventry, was to visit Northampton on Tuesday 31st July in order to collect a pair of size 72 boots which were specially made in town. The massive Lady Godiva puppet will be 'driven' to Northampton by a team of 100 cyclists. Once it arrives in the town, it will be kitted out with a pair of leather boots, which were designed by Northamptonshire riding boot maker, Horace Batten, and Northampton shoe designer, Guy West. Northampton Borough Council's cabinet member for culture, Brendon Eldred, said: "This is a thrilling spectacle and I'm really pleased our town has the honour of welcoming Godiva on her journey. We're one of just a handful of towns chosen to host the celebration as part of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad celebrations and this promises to be a day to remember."

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 26th July 2012

The Westmorland of Apethorpe archive

A £650,000 heritage grant has ensured a nationally important archive remains in Northamptonshire for the future. The National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF)

stepped in to help buy the Westmorland of Apethorpe archive, one of the most important family collections in Northamptonshire, containing thousands of records dating from the medieval period up to the 20th century.

The archive is privately owned and has been looked after by the Record Office since the 1950s. It was recently offered to the county council to buy for about £760,000, with a deadline of August to secure the sum. Local fund-raisers managed to raise £45,400 by holding events in the parishes most affected by the archive, including one at Apethorpe Hall featuring historian David Starkey. The campaign also received support from, among others, the JPaul Getty Jr Charitable Trust and the Finnis Scott Foundation.

Cllr Heather Smith, cabinet member for community services said: *“This is a great achievement and could not have been done without the fantastic work of the local community who have been campaigning tirelessly to raise awareness of the collection and encourage donations.”*

The archive is based around a Northamptonshire family and its main residence in Apethorpe Hall, near Oundle, and includes letters signed by Elizabeth I and Oliver Cromwell. The process to buy the collection can now start and it is expected the council will be able to take legal ownership of the collection in September.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 16th August 2012

This is excellent news for the county’s heritage. Let’s hope other collections receive the same kind of support.



OF THIS AND THAT

Dates for the Diary:

- 13th October: EMIAC 84 – Transport & Trade in the Trent Valley - Booking has now closed.
- 27th October: Day of History. Organised by Northamptonshire Association for Local History in partnership with Sulgrave History Society. Booking has now closed.

Winter Programme of Talks

- 12th October: ‘From Dream to Steam, The Tornado Story’ – John Rawlinson of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust is the speaker.
- 9th November: AGM plus ‘Maps of Cogenhoe’ – Ted Barnes – A look at the history of Cogenhoe in maps.
- 7th December: ‘Restoration of the Iron Trunk Aqueduct’ - James Clifton

2013

- 11th January Member's night - an evening of mixed presentations by members including the annual photographic record of those summer visits and walks.
- 8th February: Abington Park Fencing – David Shrewsbury
- 8th March: Evolution of the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire Shoe Industries – David Holmes.

Full details in the Programme sheet were distributed with the last newsletter.

All talks take place at St Matthews Church Rooms, Abington at 7.30 pm.

Subscriptions

A reminder is enclosed with this mailing to all those who have not yet renewed their subscriptions for the year 2013. If you are intending to attend the AGM, this is a perfectly good night to hand your renewal to Terry who will be happy to accept payment. Don't forget to renew before the end of the year if you still wish to receive the Newsletter.

Number crunching

Tour de France in numbers

500,000 pedal strokes are made by each cyclist on average.

68,900ft is the total height of all the mountain climbs in the race.

10,187ft is the biggest climb the competitors tackle in one day.

2,173 miles is the total length of the tour.

80mph is the cyclists' top speed.

198 competitors in the race. [Many did not finish]

4 competitors have died in the race's history.

£9,999 is the cost of Bradley Wiggin's bike.

19 hotels used by Bradley Wiggins during the three-week race.

4.4lb is the average weight lost by riders during the tour.

15lb 7oz is the weight of Bradley Wiggin's bike.

31mph is the average speed during the time trial stages.

Daily Mail – 23rd July 2012



Finally

Obituaries

Eric G W Godwin.

Eric passed away on the 5th September aged 85. He had suffered for a short time from cancer of the oesophagus. He was a keen member of various societies and was always good for an interesting chat. Over the years of his membership with NIAG he attended many talks and enjoyed the walks that the Group arranged. Eight members attended his funeral on the 21st September at the Counties Crematorium, Milton. He will be sadly missed by many of his friends and associates. I will miss seeing him in Tesco where we had many a chat as we passed up and down aisles.

David Goodey

David died on the 3rd May after developing pneumonia related problems whilst in hospital. He was a member of various history societies, including being a keen member of NIAG. He was so enthusiastic when we organised the joint Day of History and EMIAC at Wellingborough in 2008, proudly showing off the school he had attended as a boy. He will be sorely missed by all his many friends and associates. Terry and I were able to get to his funeral in Kettering.

Ed.



Disclaimer.

The Newsletter Editor and NIAG undertake to reproduce material as supplied. Any factual errors remain the responsibility of the author, who may be faithfully repeating the errors of the original.

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Newsletter:

Next Issue: **January 2013**

Deadline for all articles and information **20th December 2012.** Anything received after this date will be held over to the next edition.

Article guidelines: Should be no more than 1½ pages long, unless article is of a special nature and accompanied by photographs or diagrams. 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 via e-mail, the picture should be no larger than 250,000 pixels in JPEG format and should be sent as separate attachments. Please give information about the photograph. Photographs/slides sent by post (first class) 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.