



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
INDUSTRIAL, ARCHAEOLOGY  
GROUP

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NEWSLETTER



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# CONTENTS

<b>Editorial</b>		1
<b>Summer Walks and Visits of 2013</b>		
EMAC 86 - Oils well that ends well	Terry Waterfield	2
<b>Winter Talks 2013/14</b>		
History of the GEC Works, Rugby	Terry Waterfield	6
Bradwell Windmill	Matthew Nayler	9
Appreciating Street Furniture	Mick Dix	11
Members Night:		
Garratts in South Africa	Mick Dix	12
Silk Weaving	Ron Hanson	13
Rail over-bridge replacement in Rushton	Peter Perkins	14
<b>Updates</b>		
Then & Now: Factory on corner of Bailiff St and Lorne Rd		16
Northampton's new station		16
Abington Street, Northampton		16
Phipps brewery back in Northampton Town		17
<b>Miscellany of Items of Interests</b>		
Street to be reopened to vehicles next April		17
Hunsbury Hill fire damage		18
Archaeology team digs in for museum		18
Fire Musuem bid scrapped		18
Country's footwear history on line		19
Rail group expects new line to be installed		20
Classic gasometers to go?		20
Do not alight here!		20
Snibston Colliery in danger		21
Monuments needing watching		21
<b>Of this and that: including</b>		
Number Crunching		22
10 things you didn't know about: Balls and Numbers		22
Church's Shoes and Wicksteed Lake		24
<b>Plus:</b>		
Dates for the Diary / Summer Programme		22
Finally		24

Photograph front cover: Oil Driller's hat, Dukes Wood Museum  
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## **From the Editor**

We went to the 'open morning' at the 'new' bus station in Northampton on St. David's Day and we can only say that we were not impressed with the size or, indeed the facilities. The debate will carry on for some time yet as no doubt there will be a lot of teething problems. There didn't seem to be much room when all 12 buses are in the bays with lots of passengers struggling to either get off, or get on the buses. Squashed sardines spring to mind! More in the next issue.

It's certainly been a bad winter for many – at least, at the time of writing, we have not had the dreadful snow and ice that we had last year, but the floods, storms and high winds which have been nationwide have been quite terrible. The news stories coming from the West Country have been very distressing, especially for those on the Somerset Plains. As I write the sun is streaming into my study window and it's good to feel its warmth.

The two gas holders in Northampton, much talked of and reported on, have now gone from the skyline of Northampton. There is quite a big 'hole' where once these structures stood. I note in the December issue of the TfLISHG that a vast number of these structures are fast disappearing from our skylines, you will find the short report about this and the Colindale newspaper archive on page 20.

I was certainly wrong about our reports!! Terry Waterfield has come up trumps and produced one on the last EMIAC held at Winthorpe near Newark in October 2013 and follows my usual jottings.

The summer walks begin on the 2nd May and once again the Committee have put together an interesting and varied programme. For those of you who like the trains another Rail Tour has been planned and you will no doubt be pleased to note that Peter will be taking us on another Boot & Shoe walk, this time in Rushden. The full and detailed programme is enclosed with this newsletter.

It is also interesting to note that a new web-site has been made about the Boot & Shoe industry of the county – details are on page 19 if you have five minutes to spare to look at this. Already a few mistakes have been noted by members of the committee, so it could be that more will be found by you. It was also interesting to note that NIAG was not one of the consultees.

The summer will also see us taking the publicity stand to two events in Northampton. One being at Delapre Abbey and the other the annual Heritage weekend event at St. Seps as part of the National Heritage Weekend. The stand will also be travelling to both EMIAC events, Chesterfield in May and our own in October.

As always we look forward to seeing you during the summer, and if you do anything remotely industrial on your travels this year, please let us know and send in a short report for the newsletter, photographs also welcomed. It's always good to hear from members. Hope to see some of you in May.

*Jane W*

## THE FINAL SUMMER REPORT

### EMAC 86 – Oils well that ends well - October 2013

Another very early start to get us to the venue at Winthorpe for the Autumn EMAC, which was hosted by Lincolnshire History & Archaeology Group. On arrival there was a tense moment when the keys provided to the Society for Lincoln group did not seem to want to unlock the Centre's doors. However this was accomplished and we were able to get in and, as is our want, assist with the setting up. Twelve members from NIAG were present and soon we were able to enjoy a welcome cup of coffee before the business of the day began at 9.30.

The talks centred around the Oil production in the Midlands and our first speaker gave an interesting talk about the Derbyshire Oil strike of 1919. Following on from this we learned of the Secret of Sherwood Forest before the final speaker spoke about the East Midlands Oil Fields, past, present and future.

After a buffet lunch the conference was split into two, most going on the coach to Dukes Wood, the site of the only Oil Museum in the country. Those remaining listened to an enjoyable talk about the Development of Oil traffic on the River Trent, with a really good slide show of the huge barges which carried the stuff on the river. Then it was all change, those returning from the Dukes Wood were able to listen to the talk whilst we left in our cars for Dukes Wood before wending our way home. Another excellent day by the Lincoln group

Reports of the lectures follow:

#### **The Derbyshire Oil Strike of 1919 – Cliff Lea**

Oil, more correctly an outcropping bituminous substance, had been discovered near Eyam as early as 1734. Seepage of a natural petroleum substance was found in the Riddings colliery at Alfreton in 1847. Initially considered a nuisance it was dumped into the Cromford Canal; drifting downstream sufficient collected near Pickstone wharf whereupon it ignited. James Young, a Scottish chemist, was called to investigate the substance, from which he distilled a light oil suitable for lamps and a thicker oil suitable for use as a lubricant. He set up a small business at Bathgate to refine the crude oil; possibly the world's first [fractionating] refinery. This supply of oil had become exhausted by 1851.

In an effort to reduce the country's dependence on oil imports, the Government set aside a budget of £1m for a systematic survey; the work being undertaken by Lord Cowdray's firm of Pearson & Sons. Three areas were identified as having the greatest potential for oil: the Lothians of Scotland (two sites), the North Derbyshire coalfield area (seven sites) and the Potteries in North Staffordshire (two sites).

Although Brimington was the first well to strike oil in 1919, it was beset by many problems. In May 1919 the Hardstoft well found oil at 3,070 ft producing 50 barrels per week; later tests showed this rate could be doubled. Work started at Heath in 1919, but a number of problems were encountered: an unrecorded coal mine; a large

gas field (450,000 cu ft per day) was found between 1,875 and 2,615 ft; a well collapse occurred at 3,000 ft. By 1921 the well had reached a depth of 4,000 ft but still no oil. In an attempt to release oil from the rocks a 1200 lb charge of nitroglycerine was detonated but still no oil. Was this the first example of ‘fracking’? The Ridgeway well produced only saltbrine; at Renishaw gas was found at 1,600 ft and 3,000 ft (200,000 cu ft per day) and the Ironville well was abandoned.

Silting up caused production to fall in 1923 and 1924 so the well was converted from a natural flow system to a pumped system. Although this improved production, there was insufficient oil for a commercially viable operation so the Duke of Devonshire, on whose land the well was situated and who owned the mineral rights, used the oil to power the sawmill at Hardwick Hall. By 1938 Hardstoft No 1 was nearing exhaustion so it was deepened to increase production until it closed in July 1945. It was capped in 1957.

Two other wells were sunk at Hardstoft in the 1920s: both No 2 and No 3 wells were abandoned after failing to strike oil.

### **The Secret of Sherwood Forest - Kevin Topham**

Britain’s first major on-shore oil discovery occurred at the Eakring and Duke’s Wood oil fields. The D’Arcy Exploration Company, a subsidiary of the Anglo-Iranian Oil, now BP, discovered oil near Eakring in 1939 as part of a general survey.

At the outbreak of war Britain was dependant on imports for all of its oil. With an increase in demand for its war machine and the loss of convoys due to enemy action,



‘Nodding Donkey’ in Dukes Wood

attention turned to on-shore sources and attention was turned to Eakring and its surrounding areas. Churchill despatched Sir Philip Southwell to America to source equipment and, more importantly, skilled workers as Britain didn’t have either in plentiful supply necessary for the large scale extraction of oil.

Two teams comprising 42 men, complete with their own equipment, travelled to Britain in February 1943: one went to Eakring and the other to Duke’s

Wood. Living quarters were provided in the Anglican Monastery at Kelham. Unlike the British drill derrick, which was assembled piecemeal from the ground up, the American design was assembled on the ground from a number of sections and then winched into the vertical position. The Americans were able to re-site a derrick in a

single 12-hour shift compared to several days for the British design.

By the end of their year's contract 215 wells in the Duke's Wood and Eakring fields had produced 2.3 million US barrels of high grade oil. By the end of the war 4 million barrels had been extracted. Of the 1 million gallons of fuel per day pumped through PLUTO, 80% came from this area.

By 1964 47 million barrels of oil had been extracted. Although Duke's Wood ceased operation in 1965, there are still two production wells at Eakring.

Many modern drilling techniques were first developed at Eakring, including in 1952 the technique of hydraulic fracking to increase an oil well's output.

### **The East Midlands Oil Fields Past, Present and Future - Julie Barlow**

IGas is the largest independent supplier of on-shore oil and gas with 117 wells across 30 fields delivering 3,000 barrels oil equivalent per day from the East Midlands and the Weald Basin. To date the East Midlands area has produced 31 million barrels of oil from 17 oil fields. Production is primarily at Welton (six fields) and Gainsborough (11 fields). After separation the oil is transported to the Humber refinery in road tankers from both sites; the gas is used for power generation. For operational reasons, refineries found it too expensive to operate railheads and so discontinued their use in 2008.

With North Sea gas supplies declining, alternative sources are needed. IGas's initial interest was in the extraction of coal-based methane (CBM). Water is first extracted from the coal seam allowing the absorbed gas to be collected. If dewatering stops, the coal seam and well fill with water which prevents the gas from being released.

A survey by the BGS suggests that England has a huge reserve of natural gas trapped in layers of shale several hundred or even thousands of feet thick. However the producers need to assess the practicalities of extraction from this resource; first they have to drill to find it and to then to estimate its potential.

### **The Development of Oil Traffic on the River Trent - Les Reid**

Prior to the new lock being built at Newark in 1952 the size of vessels using the River Trent was limited to the 'Trent size' - 82 ft long and 14 ft wide. During the inter-war years it was common practice to carry the cargo in unpowered barges, containing typically 100 tons, pulled by steam-powered tugs. With the availability of suitable diesel engines in later years some operators opted for powered barges. Although their capacity was limited to typically 80 tons, they required a smaller crew - probably three or four compared to the six for the towed barges. There were several oil depots along the Trent supplied initially from Saltend near Hull and later on from Immingham refinery.

With plans in place for an enlarged lock at Newark, Yorkshire-based John Harker started building a fleet of 142 ft long tanker barges capable of carrying 200 tons in readiness for when the new lock opened. However Newark town bridge remained

an obstacle for even bigger barges.

In times of heavy flood water, there was insufficient headroom for the barges to pass under the town bridge. At the other extreme low water levels meant that the barges could not be fully loaded - with consequential loss of revenue. By now the barges were equipped with a number of individual tanks; the early oil barges were single-skin single-tank vessels with the inherent dangers associated with partially full tanks. Another hazard experienced was 'washday foam' in the locks, usually on a Tuesday. This could be as high as 6 ft and almost totally enveloped a barge in the lock chamber.

The last working oil wharf in Newark finished in the 1980s and the final delivery to Nottingham's Colwick depots was made at the end of 1986.

The following websites provide additional background to the papers presented:

- Hardstoft oil well - [www.derbyshireheritage.co.uk/Menu/Industries/hardstoft\\_oilwell.php](http://www.derbyshireheritage.co.uk/Menu/Industries/hardstoft_oilwell.php)
- Oil in England - [archive.spectator.co.uk/article/28th-september-1918/6/oil-in-england-f-or-nearly-half-a-century-a-small-](http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/28th-september-1918/6/oil-in-england-f-or-nearly-half-a-century-a-small-)
- Dukes Wood Oil Museum - [www.dukeswoodoilmuseum.co.uk](http://www.dukeswoodoilmuseum.co.uk)
- British Geological Survey - [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)
- IGas Energy - [www.igasplc.com](http://www.igasplc.com)
- Trent Barge Leicester Trader - [www.newarkheritagebarge.com](http://www.newarkheritagebarge.com)

## Duke's Wood

Duke's Wood lies to the west of Newark near the village of Eakring. There is only a small car park at its entrance and it was here that we left the car to walk to the museum. Duke's Wood is a nature reserve with this excellent little museum devoted to the



story of the oil production in the Midlands. There are a couple of 'nodding donkeys' along the walks which give the walker a taste of what the machinery looked like. The museum itself has a collection of drill bits and rods as well as many photographs depicting the drilling activity of the area. One is also able to browse many books on the subject, not least the book entitled 'The Secret of Sherwood Forest' written by our

speaker who gave the talk earlier in the day.

The paths are well laid out for a good walk through the woods, but on this occasion, due to being rather wet and muddy underfoot, we did not venture far. Having said that, our little group of eight or nine managed to walk right past the museum (no

signage visible!) and ventured a decent distance before a fork in the pathways made us realise that we had gone past it!

*Terry Waterfield for the reports and Jane Waterfield for the introduction and Duke's Wood.*



## WINTER TALKS 2013/14

### **History of the GEC Works, Rugby - 11th October**

Until the 1990s there were many skilled workers commuting daily to and from Rugby; there may still be, but certainly not as many. To understand “Why Rugby?” it is necessary to turn the clock back to 1880 when Peter Willans and Mark Robinson were making steam engines for powering boats. Fourteen years later their engines were powering [electrical power] generators and they had outgrown their Thames Ditton site. The Willans Central Valve Engine dominated the electricity generation market; they were used in the original Bankside Power Station. Their new site in Rugby, the Victoria Works, was chosen for closeness to the railways. Elaine Foote is currently working on the Willans archive in the Warwickshire Record Office and showed a number of photographs of the new works during its construction and its working life. In 1900 the works hosted a visit by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; by then the Willans works were world famous for their work on ‘limits and fits’ to improve manufacturing productivity.

However, by this time CA Parsons had developed the steam turbine, which was to replace the reciprocating Willans engine. Not to be outdone, a certain H. Fullager was enticed to join the company from Parsons and Willans & Robinson started making steam turbines under licence.

Like many companies the Willans Works were involved in the [Great] war effort making the Salmson aero engine together with a range of electrical equipment. As an aside it was mentioned that Geoffrey de Havilland was an apprentice at the works until he left in 1905.

The English Electric Company (EE) was formed in 1918 from Dick, Kerr & Co, which had earlier acquired the Preston tram manufacturer United Electric Car Company, Willans & Robinson, the Coventry Ordnance Works, the Phoenix Dynamo Manufacturing Company of Bradford and the Siemens Brothers Dynamo Works Ltd of Stafford. It initially specialised in industrial electric motors and transformers and would later expand to include railway locomotives and traction equipment, steam turbines, consumer electronics, guided missiles, aircraft and computers. With this merger there was the inevitable rationalisation of work between the different sites; some skills, e.g. foundry, left the Willans Works, which in turn took on more electrical engineering work.

The Works did not escape the [Second World] war unscathed suffering bomb damage in 1941. However, the work continued. To meet the increased demand for power generation equipment after the war, the site was considerably expanded. With the site continuing to specialise in this field, we leave this part of the story for the time being. Suffice it to say EE took over the Marconi Company after the war, a foray into the consumer electronic market. In 1963 EE and J Lyons & Co formed a joint company – English Electric LEO Company - to manufacture the LEO computer designed by Lyons. EE took over Lyon's half stake in 1964 and merged it with Marconi's interest to form English Electric Leo Marconi. The latter was merged with Elliott Automation and International Computers and Tabulators (ICT) to form International Computers Ltd (ICL) in 1967.

The Thomson-Houston Electric Company was formed in 1883 in America when a group of investors, many of whom were shoe manufacturers, bought the American Electric Company, founded by Thomson and Houston. By the mid-1880s the company expanded into the international market and established a selling agency in London in 1886. Thomson-Houston merged with the Edison General Electric Company in 1892 to form the General Electric Company (GE). From the London-based operation British Thomson Houston (BTH) was created in 1896 as a subsidiary of GE to provide manufacturing facilities in the UK and in 1899 chose Rugby for their new factory. The Mill Road site was purchased in 1900 and work on a 200,000 sqft manufacturing facility was started; by 1902 it was making electric motors and generators. This was a completely self-contained facility that included its own foundry.

In agreement with Rugby Urban Council BTH brought electric lighting and power to the town in 1902. The only source of electrical power in the town at that time was a small generator at Rugby School. In addition to motors and generators, BTH's work expanded to include turbines, turbo-alternators, a joint venture with Wolseley Motors to make petrol-electric buses, supply of coal-fired steam generators to power an electric trolley-bus system for London, electric light bulbs, manufactured under licence from GE, under the Mazda trademark.

During the Great War BTH expanded into naval electrical equipment supplying the navy with various lighting, radio and signalling equipment in addition to turbines and generators. It was a major manufacturer of [thermionic] valves [for radio receivers and transmitters, etc] for the Admiralty and later for the BBC. After the war there was an upsurge in transformer manufacturing. It also diversified into consumer white goods (cookers and fridges) when Hotpoint was formed in 1920.

In 1926 it was suggested by [America] GE's president that BTH, Westinghouse, [British] GEC and EE should amalgamate. Although GEC's Lord Hirst was not interested, a new holding company was formed – Associated Electrical Industries (AEI). In 1928 AEI bought BTH and Metropolitan-Vickers and in the following year acquired Edison Swan (Ediswan) and Ferguson, Pailin & Co, which BTH had

been in the process of buying in 1928. Through its international arm, GE owned 28% of the new company.

By this time BTH was supplying, and continued to supply, turbo-generators and motors for a number of ocean liners and merchant ships. Frank Whittle's first prototype jet engine was built at BTH's Rugby works in 1937; however by 1940 BTH had lost interest in the project due to its commitment to electrical equipment. As its contribution to the war effort BTH expanded its site north of the Avon into the Boughton Road site to make magnetos for aircraft engines for, amongst others, Hurricane, Spitfire, Wellington, Halifax, Stirling and Lancaster. It also contributed to the production of torpedoes.

A purpose-built research facility, building 52, had been erected in 1924. In the post-war years efforts were directed at holography, as part of its work developing the electron microscope, and transistors. However work was soon discontinued as not being relevant to their core activities.

In an attempt to cure internal political and efficiency problems, AEI stopped using the BTH and Metrovick names in 1960; a move that led to financial disaster as no one had heard of AEI. A new research building was built (BR57 on the Boughton Road site) and the size of BTH site reached its peak employing some 22,000. In 1967 GEC bought AEI outright to become the UK's largest electrical group. The following year it merged with EE and since GEC was the dominant partner the EE name was lost. The 1970s was a period of restructuring with a consequential reduction in the workforce.

GEC and Alstom of France set up a joint venture, known as GEC-Alstom, incorporating GEC's Power Systems Group. GEC's other interests in Rugby went into Cegelec Projects. However by 1998 both companies were reunited as Alstom (by now the 'h' had been dropped). Alstom Gears (Rugby) was sold to David Brown. The following year ABB and Alstom Power created a joint company but by March 2000 Alstom had acquired ABB's stake. During the next few years Alstom experienced financial difficulties due its customers going into liquidation and problems with ex-ABB turbines. In July 2006 the last turbine left the works. By 2011 the BTH Rugby site included Rugby College, Quartzelec and Convertteam, the latter two continued to work in some of the early BTH buildings, whilst many of the others have since been demolished. Convertteam was bought by GE in March 2011. So the circle had been completed!

Alaine's final slide was a family tree showing all of the companies that went into GEC. It was so crammed with detail that it was illegible – but it did illustrate the point!

This was an excellent presentation, though perhaps slightly rushed at the end. It would have benefited from the inclusion of one or two plans/maps to help understand the vast real estate once owned by GEC.

To those who had any lingering doubts about what has happened/is happening to our

manufacturing capabilities, this presentation left no doubt.

*Terry Waterfield*



## **Bradwell Windmill - 8th November**

This talk was originally put into our programme last spring, and scheduled for February 2014 at which point I ought to have been able to talk about the restoration programme about to be completed and the army of willing volunteers keen to start work operating a mill newly restored to working order, forty five years after Milton Keynes Development Corporation first mooted the idea. Ah well, the best laid plans...

Quite how it was that the Development Corporation managed to spend about twenty-five years restoring the mill whilst never getting it working again, whilst also in that time managing to construct an almost functional new town around it, has never been satisfactorily explained to me. One view has it that their nerve failed because the daisy-cutter sails were a safety 'no-no', another that the curb is not truly round so the mill cannot be winded. The 1974 restoration included the fitting of a concrete ring to the curb on which the cap sits, so that ought to be round whilst measurements taken by our consultant millwrights suggest all is OK, and they were also able to witness the cap turned at least as far around as volunteers are ever likely to be willing to turn it, courtesy of the exertions of your scribe.

Whilst Milton Keynes Council would probably want us all to believe that their stumping up of about £150k to return the mill to watertight and working order reflects their commitment our heritage, a better interpretation would be that it reflects their desire to get rid of our heritage. If, as part of the Community Asset Transfer programme, they are to rid themselves of the glorious liability of a windmill (a 'hospital pass' that landed, unwanted, in their laps on the winding-up of the Development Corporation in 1996) then it needs to be got into a state of being able to pay for itself, and this means an income of about £10k a year.

Two routes beckon – the visitor attraction and the working mill. As a visitor attraction the mill has the disadvantage of lacking any surrounding buildings (the original mill cottage was sold off separately years ago) to provide 'facilities' whilst as a working mill it has the disadvantages of a doorway through which all grain will need to be trundled (hence requiring grain to be bought in sacks rather than by bulk delivery) and of having a manually-winded cap and a common-and-spring-sails set up rather than the more user-friendly fantail-and-patent-sails found on most working windmills.

A simple solution suggests itself – have one pair of millstones wind-powered and the second set fitted with an electric motor and grain elevator. Milling no longer dependent upon the vagaries of the wind; volunteers can come knowing that they

will do some milling; visitors will know they will see grain being milled and be in a safer environment and, best of all, a reliable supply of flour to sell. All that is needed is a reliable supply of customers – sell a bag of flour to Sunday visitors for £1.70 and you make £1; but find 200 people who bake their own bread and will buy a bag a week and you have made the £10k necessary for the mill's future upkeep.



Windmill and crane (c) Matthew Naylor

The millwrights had originally intended to start work last June, but MKC is unable to grant itself listed buildings consent so this had had to go to some civil servant jobsworth in London. By the time consent was received the millwrights were busy elsewhere so by the time they were able to appear on-site – September – the ground was too soft for a crane to get into position to lift off the sails. There then followed a two-month delay whilst the parties stalled over who should pay the bill for a roll-out track way to support the crane. Hence the sails were finally removed only on 27th November so that work could get underway on their restoration, together

with scaffolding the mill to replace the weatherboarding of the cap and the mill's windows. The project's completion is now not expected until about next May/June time.

Meanwhile, at the meeting on 4th June 2013 at which Milton Keynes Council agreed the contract with the millwrights they also took the opportunity to cull from the plans the elevator which was to have carried the grain up to the millstones, thus requiring anyone willing to volunteer to operate the mill either to endure the palaver of setting the sails to operate the sack hoist or to carry or haul the grain up through the mill themselves. If there are such volunteers they are very well camouflaged, and if there are not then Bradwell Windmill will be a nicely restored white elephant unable to pay its way and lurching from one crisis to another as funders tire of its story.

*Matthew Naylor*



## **Appreciating Street Furniture - 6th December**

Phil Deacon started by telling us of how his interest in street furniture developed and how he had borrowed the book 'Pillar to Post' from the local library and kept renewing its loan until he was told that someone else was waiting to borrow it. He explained that his interest did not extend to modern day street furniture as the huge variety made it a very broad subject. After his introduction he then went on to show us a selection of slides of various types of street furniture making everyone realise how interesting many of the things that we take for granted in the street are.

His first topic was milestones which he illustrated with slides of the ordinary and the unusual. He showed us examples of stone and metal milestones with one of the former serving as a mounting block for horse riders despite the fact that it was not near any habitation, another example had only the first letter of the town shown on it. The metal milepost came in many different forms and sizes, often incorporating the name of the maker somewhere. Phil expanded the subject to cover the familiar finger post type of road sign by showing a number of examples including one incorporating a lantern in Bury St Edmunds. He had a number of illustrations of warning signs, including one of the once familiar diamond shaped weight restriction signs erected alongside many canal and railway bridges.

Then followed a selection of lamps including a taxi lamp situated near Parliament which flashed to attract the attention of taxi drivers when a taxi was required for parliamentary use. Also in London was a very ornate lamp on the Wellcome building in Euston Road. Further examples of ornate lamps were illustrated including one known as the burning bush in Eton.

Moving on to water supply examples of the once common village pump were illustrated with many being of the cast iron variety, one of which was erected in 1897 at Stanton by Dale to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria and incorporated a small trough.

The removal of sewage was not forgotten and we were reminded that as we walk along the street many manhole covers have the name of the maker cast into them. An example of a cast iron public urinal even had 'Please adjust your dress before leaving' cast into the ironwork.

Probably some of the most familiar street furniture to us is the post box, of which closer inspection reveals a great deal of variety. A number of examples were referred to including the earlier fluted type from the 1880s and one in Cambridge with spikes on the top to stop people using it to climb over an adjacent wall. Also included was an example of a Scottish post box from the reign of the present Queen, this had no reference to the monarch but only the crown on the front of it. This is because when the Queen came to the throne she was the first Queen Elizabeth of Scotland but the post boxes had EIIR on the front and some of them were damaged by the locals. A further variation was a pillar box in Toad Lane, Rochdale with a lamp on the top of it.

Whilst on the subject of communications we covered the now disappearing public

telephone box, of which the K2 model weighted in at 1½ tons, and we were reminded that the boxes in Hull were painted cream and not red as they were not run as part of the national network. Also illustrated were examples of the now completely disappeared AA and RAC telephone boxes as well as the once common London police telephone box, none of which remain in use today.

Some amusing examples of street name signs were illustrated including Pleasant View in the Rhymney Valley in South Wales with terraces of miners housing in the background. On a more serious note reference was made to the huge variety of street, village and town boundary name signs including painted, stamped metal, and cast examples. Probably some of the best known of the latter are the magnificent City of London boundary signs.

Public clocks were covered next including a cast example in Downham Market and a stone example in the Scottish Borders that incorporates a miniature F1 car and was erected as a memorial to the racing car driver Jim Clark. Nearer to home was a grand cast example in the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham.

Advertising was not forgotten, yet another subject with many different styles including of course the now almost disappeared enamel signs – most of the remaining originals now being in museums or privately owned. Of a more permanent nature are the advertisements and signs painted onto walls some of which still remain although now not in the best state of repair.

Phil rounded the evening off by showing some local examples of street furniture including the well known tram shelter near to the racecourse and some less well known examples such as a paving slab in Kingsthorpe Road with the manufacturers name incorporated into it.

All in all a fascinating evening which made us aware that whilst much has disappeared a lot remains and if we are alert when we are out and about there is still plenty of interest to see.

*Mick Dix*



## **Member's Night - 10th January**

Unfortunately, due to a family bereavement, I was not present at what I understand was another excellent member's night with members presenting 'little gems' to those members present. Once again there was a variety of topics from Mick Dix, Peter Perkins, Geoffrey Starmer, Judith Hodgkinson, and Ron Hanson. A short resume of their topics follows:

### **Garratts in South Africa – Presentation by Mick Dix**

The idea of showing a selection of slides of Beyer Garratts at work in South Africa came to me at the members evening in 2013 when Geoffrey Starmer showed some

slides of the ex-South African examples at work in North Wales. My visit to South Africa was made in 1974 at which time many steam engines including Garratts were still at work.

The Garratt type of articulated steam locomotive was the brainchild of Herbert William Garratt who was born in 1864 and served an apprenticeship at the Bow Works of the North London Railway. Later he worked for Doxfords the shipbuilders in Sunderland and held various posts with railways in South America. He patented his idea for an articulated steam locomotive in 1907 but at first could not interest any manufacturers in it. About the time of his visit to Beyer Peacock at Gorton they received an enquiry for the supply of two locomotives to a railway in Tasmania and the Garratt type seemed to be the ideal solution. The locomotives were built and delivered in 1909 and were reasonably successful, the result being further small orders from other railways. Improvements were made and gradually larger orders were placed including some from South Africa where the type became very popular. The standard 'Cape Gauge' is 3ft 6ins and the first slides shown of Beyer Garratt locomotives were of this gauge from a number of different builders, some British others German. Locomotives of the type were built under licence from Beyer Peacock on a number of occasions as well as being sub contracted to other builders when they were busy. The largest South African Beyer Garratts were the GL class of 1929/30 which weighed 211 tons, one of these is now on display at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. Many slides were of the GMA/GMAM class of which 120 were built in the mid 1950s, these were truly a mixed traffic type working both freight and passenger trains. They weighed 187/191 tons and were designed to work on branch lines as well the main line. In order to achieve this weight the water capacity of the tanks had to be reduced and they ran with an auxiliary water tank that held 6,810 gallons. At the time of their construction Beyer Peacock could not cope with all of their orders and many of the locomotives were subcontracted to other builders, a North British Locomotive Co. built example is on display at the Summerlee Heritage Park in Coatbridge.

As well as the 3ft 6in gauge the South African Railways also had a system of 2ft gauge lines. These lines also used Beyer Garratt type locomotives, some of which are now at work on the Welsh Highland Railway in North Wales. Various examples were shown at work in the sugar growing area of Natal as well as at rest at the locomotive shed in Port Elizabeth. Many of the locomotives were of the NGG16 class weighing 60 tons; this class was built over a period of 30 years and eventually ran to 33 examples. The last of the class were built by Hunslet Taylor in South Africa as late as 1968 – the years that British Railways finished using steam locomotives.

### **Silk Weaving - Ron Hanson gave a brief glimpse of a hidden gem in the jungle of Cambodia:-**

Arriving by boat at what seemed like a sparsely populated island in the Mekong river, we were soon to discover a cottage industry of silk weaving. Individual houses

set on stilts were hidden away behind the trees. Beneath the family living quarters and in shade from the sun were six or seven weaving looms. At one time silk worms would have been farmed on the island; however it is now more economic to buy the finished spun and dyed yarn from neighbouring Vietnam.

The first operation before weaving was to wind the yarn from the hanks as delivered onto reels and shuttle spindles. The motive power for this was a cycle wheel / pedal turned by hand and via a string drive to an axle onto which a spindle or reel could be fitted. Next the warp was prepared on a wooden frame reminiscent of two garden rakes, handle to handle with prongs up. The warp consists of varying quantities of threads and sometimes different colours which are not spun together. These threads are wound back and forth over the prongs of the “rakes” up to the length required for the weave. The warp is then set up on the loom with risers to create the pattern much the same as wool or cotton weaving, the only difference being that everything is so much finer and intricate. A length of cloth would take about 8 hours to produce. Some silk worm cocoons were passed round as well as a part of a loom (the piece that would pack the weave tightly together as the piece progressed). Members were asked if they knew what this item was called in English (any answers please).

After leaving and walking back to the boat we got the feeling of a pantomime scene from sleeping beauty where the forest and brambles close up behind you to hide it all away again (for the next 100 years).

### **Rail over-bridge replacement at Rushton – Peter Perkin’s presentation**

The electrification of the Midland mainline between Bedford and Sheffield is due for completion by 2020 and contractors have already begun preparatory work by replacing some of the over-bridges to facilitate overhead wire installation. At Rushton, two over-bridges to the north of the village were replaced during the last quarter of 2013. Each was treated very differently.

The two bridges are barely one hundred yards apart, built where the railway is in a cutting. One carries the bridle-way from Rushton to Pipewell, the other a footpath which follows broadly in the same direction across the former church glebe lands. Both bridges date from the building of the Midland Railway’s Leicester to Hitchin branch, opened in 1857, and were of the 3-arch style in blue brick. The two running lines passed through the central arch of each bridge, the outer arches taking up the width of the embankment.

Replacing the bridle-way bridge was a complicated affair and seems to be a standard approach for three-arch bridges where only the central arch is in use. Firstly concrete block walls were built up under each side of the outer arches reinforced with wooden shuttering. Then holes were dug in the bridle-way above the apex of each outer arch and concrete poured in to fill the void under the two arches. Next the central arch was demolished overnight at the end of September, leaving the two central piers each side of the tracks. Since much of the remaining brickwork was a bit dodgy (the bridge would have needed replacing even if electrification was not going to take

place) they had to remove more brickwork than they would have liked. Pre-cast reinforced concrete sections to create a central span with greater headroom were craned in overnight a couple of weeks later – these are manufactured in Ireland I understand – the sections forming the parapet already having thin blue brick tiles attached to their outer faces. For several weeks these sections had a slightly drunken appearance until the engineers could get another Saturday night track possession to position them accurately! Blue bricks were used to complete the parapets each side of the central span whilst the inner surfaces of the concrete parapets over the central span were faced with thin blue brick tiles. The filled-in outer arches were also faced with blue brick. Finally large triangular coping stones were placed on top of the parapet and the original rectangular corner capping stones replaced. This whole process took over 3 months and at the time of the talk was still awaiting some coping stones and grouting of some of the blue brick tiles.

Dealing with the footpath bridge was much more straightforward. It was demolished in its entirety on the night of 19th October and a footbridge consisting of a single steel span was craned in on the 20th to sit on pre-cast concrete blocks placed into shallow holes on each side of the cutting just to the east of the site of the demolished bridge. All that can now be seen of the latter is the brick footings forming the base of the piers each side of the inner arch.

Despite the very high parapets which now preclude anyone looking over at trains, at least the bridle-way bridge looks a little in keeping with the original. Unfortunately the green-painted steel footbridge does not but that's progress!



Bridleway bridge - Before and After



(c) Peter Perkins 2013



Footpath bridge - Before and After



(c) Peter Perkins 2013

*I understand that one or two members are already preparing next year's members night presentations. Wow! Ed*

## UPDATES

### Then and Now:

In 2011 Peter took us on our first Boot & Shoe walk in Northampton. Near the end of the walk we stood and looked at a factory on the corner of Bailiff Street and Lorne Road, a four-bay, 3-storey factory dating from the 1870s. Below are two photographs of how it looked then (2011) and how it does now – not a patch on its former glory, albeit rather shabby. New windows have replaced the old, making it look just like any other boring building, the loading bay door has also gone, filled in and hidden behind the concrete rendering. Most importantly the interesting design on the canted corner has also been destroyed. The whole building now looking extremely bland behind its concrete rendering of the walls. Thank you to Peter for sending me the up-to-date photograph.



### Northampton's new station

In December the *Chronicle & Echo* reported that the new station was starting to take shape. The report states that the white metal frame of the new building is now dominating the skyline around the station site and beginning to give commuters a glimpse of what the new building will look like. Work on the frame began in December following completion of the foundations. The new station will be twice the size of the current building with better facilities, including shops, cafes and waiting areas. The new footbridge was to be lifted into place overnight between Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The station will be open by summer 2014 and will be followed by the demolition of the existing building.

*Report dated 12th December 2013.*

### Abington Street, Northampton

The debate rages on about the re-opening of Abington Street to traffic, which is estimated to cost in the region of £3 million. It is proposed that the traffic will be directed one-way only, entering the Street from the junction of St Giles Terrace and Dychurch Lane, north along St. Giles Terrace, west along Abington Street and north along Wellington Street (Wellington Street runs alongside Marks and Spencer). The Francis Crick sculpture will be relocated as there is likely to be public realm improvement works in Lower Mounts, Wellington Street, and St. Giles Terrace. (whatever public realm improvements are. Where do these people get these

expressions?)

*Taken from a report in the Northampton Chron & Echo – 12th December 2013*

### **Phipps brewery back in Northampton Town**

Phipps beer will again be brewed in Northampton from next month (February). In July last year it was revealed that a group of entrepreneurs were planning to re-open the Phipps brewery after the company left the town in 1974. Now, the group's headquarters – a former brewery building in Kingswell Street in the town centre – is well on the way to being kitted out as a brewery again.

Alaric Neville said that brewing equipment would be installed inside the building in the next few days and the first pint should be brewed on-site by the middle of February. He said: *“Once we're up and running, we'll be able to produce quite a lot of beer because this is an old brewery building, so it's perfect for what we want to do.”*

Since taking over the former brewery last year, the group have fixed the roof, sandblasted the walls and begun work to install a bar. They hope to start selling Phipps beer brewed in Northampton from March and are planning a public open day at the brewery on May 26th. By Christmas the bar where people will be able to see their drink being brewed in front of them will be open. *“Getting the brewery up and running and selling a Phipps beer brewed in Northampton is our main priority for now, we'll tackle the bar after that.”* Mr Neville revived Phipps beers back in 2008, but the drinks had to be brewed in Rutland. The restoration of the former Northampton brewery is expected to cost more than £1 million. It will be the second biggest brewery in the county, after Carlsberg.

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 30th January 2014*



## **MISCELLANY ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **Street to be reopened to vehicles next April**

Work to reopen part of Abington Street, Northampton to traffic will start in April it has been announced. The Borough Council revealed the plans last month, which will see the section between St. Giles Terrace and Wellington Street opened to vehicles, to increase visitor numbers to that part of the town centre. The road will re-open for one-way traffic, travelling in the direction of Wellington Street, and the new layout will include some parking and loading and dropping-off bays.

A councillor said: *“Over the last few months we have been talking to people about opening up the middle section of Abington Street, to make sure it provides everything they want to see. It will offer extra parking and the ability for traffic to flow around that area. We are pleased to say work will now start in April, with a view to opening it up by next summer.”*

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 10th October 2013*

### **Hunsbury Hill fire damage**

Last year a fire at Hunsbury Hill Farmhouse, now currently used by ACRE, destroyed what most people will know as 'High Barn', a small brick built barn sited near the car parks. A report in the local paper tells us that the Grade II listed building are to be restored to their original condition.

The blaze caused the roof to collapse and damage to the internal and external walls. A planning application has been submitted to the Borough Council to refurbish the Derrick Dunn Room, which is a detached building within the land around the farmhouse. Papers which will be considered by the planning committee state: "*In November 2013, the building suffered a fire, which has resulted in the complete loss of the roof and severe damage to the doors and windows. It is proposed to bring it back into use which, subject to details, is an action which is supported.*"

The works would reinstate the outside of the building to its appearance prior to the fire. New slates would replace those lost with a completely new roof structure, as the original was also destroyed. There would also be localised repairs to the external walls; internal re-plastering, and repairs to the internal walls, which suffered smoke and water damage. The timber-framed windows and doors will also be replaced. A decision is expected when the planning committee discuss this by early March.

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 23rd January 2013*

### **Archaeology team digs in for museum**

It has been announced that more than 50 jobs have been secured with the transfer of the county's archaeology service to the Museum of London. The team from Northamptonshire Archaeology has transferred from the county council to the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) under plans first announced in 2011. Staff will continue to be based in the county at new headquarters.

A spokesman for MOLA said the changes would increase the skills and knowledge base of the organisation "*MOLA brings 40 years of experience and 200 staff, including a large field and in-house specialist team. This is complemented by the Northampton team's expertise in geophysical survey and rural archaeology.*" Furthermore the chief executive said: "*The two organisations have complementary skills, stemming from our different backgrounds, yet have a strong, shared sense of how best to deliver archaeological services to commercial clients in today's market. Together, we can offer a more resilient and flexible range of services over a wider geographical area, and offer stronger prospects for our staff.*"

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 23rd January 2013*

### **Fire museum bid scrapped**

Plans to open a museum in Weedon showcasing the largest collection of fire engines and equipment in the UK have been scrapped.

The Fire Services National Museum Trust (FSNMT) has been located in the former Royal Ordnance Depot in Weedon since 1996 with the aim of opening FireWorld

– the national firefighting and rescue museum. The trust has the largest historical collection of fire engines and equipment in the UK. However, with years of setbacks at the site, trustees have now reluctantly decided to relocate the entire collection from Weedon.

The chairman said: “Trustees have reviewed their future options for FireWorld and have agreed that there is no alternative but to urgently explore a relocation of the entire FireWorld collection to a more suitable site. This work is now in progress.” The trust said it was looking at possibly relocating to Gloucestershire but would ideally like to remain in the East Midlands region. FSNMT, which has fire memorabilia going back more than 200 years, moved to Weedon after being invited by the development company which owned the site in 1996.

A heritage element was required to fulfil part of the planning consent for their visitor attraction centre proposal. Planning problems continued on the site, delaying the opening of the museum to the public and in 2012 the owners sold the depot. The trust was then asked to vacate four of the buildings at the depot, resulting in the closure of on-site restoration work. The vice-chairman of the trust said “It’s a great loss to the whole county. Had it come to fruition then it would have been a visitor attraction for the public. It would have opened up the depot to the public who don’t get to go in and enjoy the historical buildings. We note with interest the article in a previous week’s Daventry Express quoting DDC saying that the depot is a huge site of national historical significance, and ask where has DDC been for the last 30 years? There have been four owners of the depot since it was closed, three of whom submitted genuine plans, but got nowhere. The depot has been there since 1803 and it is every authority’s duty to see the listed buildings are preserved.”

*Daventry Express – 12th December 2013.*

*This is certainly bad news and bodes ill for future museums of this ilk, but then DDC did all it could to destroy the Daventry Museum but failed because of the ‘Friends’ who were determined not to see the Museum go from Daventry. Ed.*

### **County’s footwear history on line**

A website has been launched to give an overview of the county’s boot and shoe heritage, telling the story of decline and renaissance of the county’s internationally renowned footwear industry.

The website presents the story of the industry and its workers from the mid-19th century to the present day. Featured are manufacturers such as Cheaney, Loake, Grenson and Church’s. The website allows you to search for information across many of the county’s towns and villages, learn about designs and techniques and find out about the industry’s connections to royalty, explorers, rock stars and Darth Vader.

The website is at [www.northamptonshirebootandshoe.org.uk](http://www.northamptonshirebootandshoe.org.uk).

*Northants Telegraph– 30th January 2014*

And

A website launched in association with Northamptonshire County Council has made the cobbler heritage of the county accessible to all. The site details the history of the industry, its workers and its impact on the growth of towns and villages across the county. We have also delved into the Northants Telegraph's photographic archive to find images which sum up the history of the shoe and boot industry in the north of the county. Kettering's first factory opened in the 1700s, while Rushden's growth was centred on the industry. Other towns featured on the website include Desborough, Wellingborough and Earls Barton. The website received funding from Arts Council of England, Heritage Lottery Fund and the Legacy Trust UK.

*Northants Telegraph – 6th February 2014*

### **Rail group expects new line to be installed**

A rail passenger group says it expects work on a new line between Corby and Kettering to start this summer. It is understood that work will begin later this year as preparations are made to electrify the Midlands main line. That electrification, which is due to be completed towards the end of the decade, would mean some north-bound services run via Corby, which would require a second line to deal with the added pressures. Network Rail is yet to confirm the timings of the work. The number of passengers using Corby station has increased significantly since its 2009 reopening from about 115,400 passengers to almost 215,400 by 2011-12. That hike of 87% compares to declines in the number of passengers using both Kettering and Wellingborough stations.

*Northants Telegraph – 6th February 2014*

### **Classic gasometers to go?**

'For nearly 200 years they have been a ubiquitous, if not always appreciated feature of our skyline' begins a 26 November *Daily Telegraph* article. Gas storage has improved/changed so much that the classic often Grade II listed structures are redundant. National Grid plans to demolish 76 gas-holders (the correct term for these delightful structures), while Southern Gas Networks will destroy 111 of them. These changes will radically alter the skyline – cricket fans will find something 'missing' for matches at the Oval if plans are implemented. Gasometers (let's call them as we know them) can store up to 21 million cubic feet of gas – 'enough to supply 2400 homes for a day'. Listed structures are safe but 'progress' has already begun with LB Wandsworth granting consent to demolish the holder alongside Battersea Power Station.

*Daily Telegraph - 26th November 2013*

### **Do Not Alight Here!**

Colindale tube is no longer the station for the newspaper archive; the British Library annexe, which holds copies of every newspaper published in Britain for the last 300 years, has closed, relocating to West Yorkshire. The 'Reading Room' opened in 1932, but the site had been in use as such since 1902. Over 15% of the collection is now too fragile or damaged to be accessible by hand, leading to the decision to place

all material in better storage conditions. A dedicated newspaper reading room will be opened at the British Library's St Pancras site in March 2014, allowing access to microfilm and digital representations of those now-safe newspapers. Not everything will be instantly available – some items may have to be 'imaged' from Harrogate which may take 48 hours to reach the Reading Room. See [www.bl.uk/newspaper-moves](http://www.bl.uk/newspaper-moves) for more detail.

*Newsletter of TFLISHG – December 2013*

### **Snibston Colliery in danger**

Leicestershire County Council are considering closing Snibston Discovery Park as part of a measure of cuts to its services. Snibston is in a poor part of NW Leicestershire and the closure will prove disastrous to the local area, as well as depriving everyone of a wonderful museum, with great collections, in costume and transport as well as industrial history, and a great venue for meeting and social events.

If you have ever visited this museum and feel that this is a bad move by the Council, a petition is being circulated by e-mail. 2000 signatures are needed to force a debate by the Council. If you wish to take part in this the link is <http://politics.leics.gov.uk/Snibston>.

*AIA News - Letters – Winter 2013.*

### **Monuments needing watching**

2014's Monuments Watch List comprises 67 sites from 41 countries – from the City of Venice to terraces in Bethlehem, gaslights in Berlin and an ancient Javanese capital at Trowulan. But four of these sites – designated by the World Monuments Fund as being 'in need of timely action' – are found in the UK: London's Battersea Power Station and Deptford Dockyards, along with Sulgrave Manor in Oxfordshire and the Grimsby Ice Factory.

By including them on the List, the Fund is hoping to raise awareness and 'promote collective action' for the sites before the next List in 2015. However, there are plans afoot for each – residential development at the Dockyards, huge regeneration schemes in Battersea and Grimsby and a 'heritage-led' business plan for Sulgrave Manor.

*AIA News – Winter 2013*

*(As we all know Sulgrave is in Northamptonshire but has an Oxford post code! How to confuse everyone but typical of big organisations getting facts wrong in this case the WMF! Ed)*



## OF THIS AND THAT

### Summer Programme

2nd May: The programme begins with a visit to Desborough's Church tower. Full detailed programme enclosed.

### Dates for the Diary:

- 10th May EMIAC 87: Chesterfield and its industries – hosted by Derbyshire IAS. Booking now closed.
- 24/25th May Delapre Abbey, Northampton. Local & Community History weekend. NIAG's stand will be present on both days. 12 noon to 4.00 pm. Refreshments available in the Abbey's cafe.
- 13th September Heritage Weekend – All over the county. NIAG's stand will be at St. Sep's in Northampton. 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. Church open and refreshments will be available.
- October EMIAC 88 – This will be NIAG's 'event'. The date needs to be set and full details should be available in May.

### Request for assistance

It is a long shot, but can any NIAG members possibly assist a fellow 'industrialist' who is seeking BOAC items, mainly between the years 1969 and 1974, but other years would be just as acceptable, booklets, in-house magazines, photographs etc. If you do have, please pause before taking that drastic step to 'de-clutter'. As always please let me know and I will arrange to collect. Many thanks. Jane W.

### Old London A to Zs

I am looking for old A to Zs of London - circa the 1930s, 40s, 50s and 60s. Can anyone assist me please before you take that final step of putting them in the paper box for recycling. I will be happy to come and collect. Many thanks. Jane W.

### Number crunching

11,500 performances of Les Miserables have been staged in London, making it the longest running West End musical ever.

7,000 litres of water were used to make rain and puddles each time the title song of Singing in the Rain was performed at the London's Palace Theatre. The front rows were issued with ponchos!!

600 the number of pasta shapes in existence, from penguins to mobile phones.

51 lbs of pasta is eaten every year by the average Italian.

*Mail Weekend magazine 31st August 2013.*

## **10 things you never knew about .....**

### **..... Balls**

A table-tennis ball, when dropped from 30cm, should, by international rules, bounce 23cm high.

The world record for the number of tennis balls held in a dog's mouth is five.

The world's largest rubber band ball weighs 9.032lb and is made of 700,000 rubber bands.

Under the official rules of snooker, the referee shall, if a player is colour blind, tell him the colour of a ball if requested.

The number of Britons with the surname Balls fell from 2,904 in 1881 to 1,299 in 2008.

In the early 14th century, King Edward I banned football because of the 'great noise in the city caused by hustling over large balls, from which many evils may arise'.

The world's largest ball of string, in Cawker City, Kansas, measures over 38ft in circumference.

If the Sun were the size of a beach ball, Jupiter would be a golf ball and the Earth would be a pea.

Volleyball was invented in 1895 by William G Morgan, who called it Mintonette.

There are two golf balls on the Moon, both hit by Alan Shepard on February 6th 1971.

*Daily Express - 18th July 2013*

### **..... numbers**

2013 is the first year since 1432 that is a rearrangement of four consecutive numbers.

2013 is also the 250th anniversary of 1763, which was the year London adopted house numbers.

The Duke of Wellington's London home at Aspley House had the address Number One, London, as it was the first house one came across after tollgates at the top of Knightsbridge.

The Biblical Book of Numbers takes its name from two censuses numbering the people of Israel.

If you add up all the numbers on a roulette wheel, the answer comes to 666, the Number of the Beast in the Book of Revelations.

A car number plate bearing only the number '1' sold for £7.1million at a charity auction in the United Arab Emirates in February 2008.

Forty is the only number which when spelled out in English has its letters in alphabetical order.

The highest number that can be spelled out without using any letter more than once is five thousand. The next highest is eighty-four.

The word 'hundred' derives from 'hundra' in Old Norse, which originally meant 120.  
 $12 + 3 - 4 + 5 + 67 + 8 + 9 = 100.$

*Daily Express - 3rd December 2013*

### **Church's Shoes**

As this edition is 'put to bed' news is that Church's is expected to submit a planning application for its new factory in May. The company is now in a position to go ahead with the application process for a new facility at its site in St James which will create up to 140 new jobs. Work could commence in August (2014) and the new facility could be in operation by Christmas 2015. The factory will be located next door to its current operation in St James, in the vacated First Bus site

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo - 13th March 2014.*

We also learn that:

**Wicksteed Park's** £2m lake plan is nearing completion. The work on the lake, begun last September, is nearing completion. It includes the installation of new walkways, improved ecology in the lake and features including an amphitheatre and new beaches. About 11 million gallons of lake silt has been moved, with half being dried elsewhere in the park and the remainder used to create reed beds around the edge of the lake and the islands. This removal means that the lake is much deeper, with some parts more than 8ft deep.

*Northants Telegraph - 13th March 2014*



### **Finally**

A little gem from the January newsletter of the TFLISHG

### **Acrobats needed!!**

Architects deliver wonderful but often impractical designs. Heathrow's award-winning Terminal Five has a roof so high that conventional 'cherry pickers' can't reach it to change the lights. BAA have had to employ a team of circus-skilled abseilers to ascend to the ceiling, replace new for old lamps and do a bit of dusting while they're there!

*You couldn't make it up -Ed*



Unless stated all photographs are credited to Jane and Terry Waterfield

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## NIAG Committee

President: Geoffrey Starmer, 34 The Crescent, Northampton,  
NN1 4SB

Chairman & Secretary Peter Perkins, Eastfields Farmhouse, Manor Road,  
Rushton, Kettering, NN14 1RH  
secretary@northants-iag.org.uk

Treasurer Terry Waterfield, 6 Bakers Lane, Norton, Daventry,  
NN11 2EL – 01327 312850  
treasurer@northants-iag.org.uk

Web site: Terry Waterfield

Members: Mick Dix, Ron Hanson, Steve Miles, Matthew Nayler,  
David Waller.

**Web Site:** [northants-iag.org.uk](http://northants-iag.org.uk)

## Newsletter Editor

Mrs Jane S Waterfield, 6 Bakers Lane, Norton, Daventry NN11 2EL  
Tel: 01327 312850 - e.mail: [newsletter@northants-iag.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@northants-iag.org.uk)

Newsletter:

Next Issue: **July 2014**

Deadline for all articles and information **20th June 2014**. 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 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.