



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
INDUSTRIAL, ARCHAEOLOGY  
GROUP

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NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 131 - SUMMER 2014

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Photograph front cover: Detail inside the old Tram/Bus Depot, Northampton  
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## From the Editor

Terry & I went across to Germany last month for a summer's visit to look at various sites and museums that are always under snow or closed when we go just before Christmas. The visit to the Blockhaus near St Omer was somewhat curtailed as we suddenly realised the time and had to get back to catch the train (Channel tunnel) home. The Tour de France, which goes through Ypres on the 9th July, was much in evidence by the many decorations being put up around the town – life size plastic cyclists on the roundabouts and on the town's ramparts and having just had the opening three days here in the UK the sheer size of our crowds everywhere was fantastic.

With regards to NIAG once again we are almost at the end of the 2014 season of summer walks and visits, all of which have been enjoyable and thanks must be given to those who have organised them and taken time out to research and hopefully enlighten members of our fascinating industrial heritage. Ron Hanson's report on our visit to Rothwell kick starts the reports.

The EMIAC at Chesterfield was attended by 14 members – it was an excellent day, spoilt in part by a heavy burst of rain just as we were about to go on the afternoon walk. The talks were interesting but with all the information that the speakers had at their disposal and wanting to impart this to the audience there were moments of 'overrun' in a couple of places, in spite of being given a '*five minutes to go*' signal!

On the subject of EMIAC's, the next to be held here in the county, has been somewhat of a struggle to get speakers on our particular subject of the Motorsport Engineering industry. Fingers crossed we are almost there. A mailshot next month will, hopefully send you the flyer for this important event.

The display stand went to a history weekend held at Delapre Park on May Bank Holiday weekend and whilst the footfall was relatively low, nonetheless we let the general public know about NIAG. The next event is the Heritage Fair at St Septs in September and another 'first' will be short walks, led by Peter, based on the shoe walks he has taken members on the past three years. These will take place in the immediate area starting at St. Septs. Check the web-site and any publicity material which is pushed out by the Council for details.

Northgate bus station saga rumbles on and on and looks set to take an award for the most grumbles about a Council led initiative to change what works well. Northampton Station (Rail) is coming along nicely and, I think, will look quite impressive when it is finally finished – time will tell and no doubt there will be grumbles apiece about that scheme. Ah well....!

The Winter programme of talks is enclosed – we hope to see you there. The programme is another excellent range of interesting topics that have been arranged. Again it's thanks to the members of the committee who come up with suggestions for these talks.

*Jane W*

## **WINTER TALKS 2013/14 - FINAL REPORTS**

### **Powering the Nation from your Rubbish bin - 14th February**

There was once the ubiquitous rag and bone man collecting recyclable waste from households and small businesses – now the horse and cart has been replaced by small trucks. From the 1960s the focus had moved to recycling waste paper and rags/clothes to raise money for one's favourite cause. During the last decade of the millennium councils took up the challenge of recycling our domestic waste as an income stream. More recently dedicated facilities have been set up within the county for the specific purpose of generating electrical power from our waste. And of course there is always land-fill – or is there?

Dr Adam Read has 18 years of operational expertise in waste technologies design, procurement and evaluation and was for seven years the visiting Professor of Waste Management and Communications at Northampton University. His introduction set the scene: 270 million tonnes (Mt) of waste were generated in 2012/13; of this 185 Mt was generated by the mining/construction/demolition industries, 50 Mt from industrial and commercial activities, 26 Mt from municipal sources, including 23 Mt from household waste, and 3 Mt from agriculture. Although household waste only accounts for ~10% of the total it can have a significant impact on the environment as organic material accounts for 40% of it. Since 2004 EU directives prohibit using landfill sites for the disposal of organic material; the UK Landfill Tax Escalator has been increasing exponentially since 1996 from £7/t to £80/t in 2014. Hence the interest in recycling!

It would seem that each local authority has its own practices for dealing with household recyclable waste from a multitude of different coloured boxes and bins to a single vessel. Where a single box is used for co-mingled collection, it can be collected 'as is' for later sorting or sorted at the kerbside. At the other end of the spectrum every different type of recyclable material has its own designated container for separate collection. Although there have been many advances in machine sorting of materials, there is still a lot of manual labour involved. Across the county, ENC and Corby BC have adopted a comingled stream strategy, Wellingborough BC collects comingled plus textiles whilst DDC, SNC, Kettering BC, and NBC have adopted a multi stream model. For 2012/13 Daventry had the best recycling rate of 50% with Wellingborough BC the lowest at 42%.

Where does it all go? In 2012/13 some 340 Mt of waste was collected across the county, of which 42% was recycled/composted, 47% went to landfill and 7% was recovered. The relevant figures for the UK are 44%, 47% and 9% respectively and for England are 43%, 34% and 22% respectively. Having given us the raw data, Adam then addressed the potential of using waste as a source of energy either for generating electrical power or for use in combined heat and power (CHP) generation. With suitable post processing, such as drying and compressing into pellets, the

calorific value of the material can be doubled. The UK's Renewable Energy Strategy requires more than 30% of the country's energy demand and more than 12% of heat usage to be derived from renewable sources (currently 6% and 1% respectively). Yet despite this much of our refuse-derived-fuel is being exported to Europe where they have much spare capacity. And currently the UK only has a small number of energy-from-waste (EfW) facilities, though more are on the drawing board.

Anaerobic digester plants were originally to be found on farms with their plentiful supply of raw material to power CHP plants with excess electrical energy being supplied to the grid. There is increasing commercial interest in such plants, indeed we have a couple in county. Traditionally waste materials have been incinerated, the heat output being used drive turbines for the generation of electricity. Such plants have in the past been large and 'dirty' but with increasing demands for a cleaner environment, modern facilities are taking on aesthetic charm. Adam showed a number of images of modern plants from around the country. CHP systems can increase the overall efficiency of an EfW plant from 20-25% up to 60-70%. The down side is that such plants need to be located near to a large and regular 'heat user' such as another industrial complex. Tesco at DIRFT utilises a CHP plant. Ideally they could be sited in urban locations with a district heating network but currently suffer an image problem and whilst the public may desire their benefits it is often a case of 'Not here'.

As an example Adam outlined one of his projects in Copenhagen; here 400,000 tonnes of waste were produced annually which justified setting up a local facility.



The waste facility at Colnbrook

© Adam Read

Initially residents were against such plans but by demonstrating the cleanliness of modern plant together with its benefits to the local community, the design is going ahead to provide electrical power for 550,000 citizens and heating for 140,000 households. Local waste providing energy for local residents. Compare with a typical waste life-cycle in the UK where waste from one area is transported across/up and down the country for processing. Images of EfW facilities in France, Italy, Esbjerg in Denmark and Japan were shown.

The UK has 42 facilities in various stages of construction that will handle 6.6 Mt of waste per year, but that is still 14 Mt per year short of required capacity to meet our 2020 target!

To conclude, Adam summarised the facilities available in the county: of the seven operational sites handling a total of 940,000 tonnes per year three utilise anaerobic digestion, two are composters, one is a combustion plant and one is a material recycling plant. An anaerobic plant currently under construction will have a throughput of 43,000 tonnes per year; a second such plant capable of handling 48,000 tonnes per year has received planning permission; a gasification plant capable of handling 96,000 tonnes per year has also received planning permission. To put these figures into context our neighbouring counties currently have an annual capacity of 2.57 Mt with a further 3 Mt in the pipeline.

Adam delivered a very interesting, lively and entertaining presentation on how the country's waste bins could be a very large source of our renewable energy. As the selection of images of modern facilities demonstrated such plants could be sited close to urban areas thereby minimising transport costs for both the collection of waste from and the provision of energy to the local community.

*Terry Waterfield*

*Considering that a plant dealing with waste was operational in Nottingham by the end of the nineteenth century, this subject does not seem to have made any of the EMIAC programmes yet. Ed.*

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## **The Lloyds of Corby - 14th March**

Steve Purcell gave us an interesting talk on the Lloyds of Corby, filled with anecdotes about the extended family. Samuel Lloyd II, who was responsible for Corby's association with iron and steel, came from a Birmingham Quaker family who had been involved with the iron and engineering industries since early in the 19th century.

It was due to the failure of a previous business venture - Lloyds Fosters and Co.- in 1867 that Samuel had to look for new business opportunities and subsequently purchased the mineral rights to a quarry near Banbury and later in 1872 one at Towcester. He then immediately started planning an ironworks, in partnership with no other than Dr. W C Siemens, to produce steel by a direct reduction process. Three

furnaces were built but the venture was not a success possibly due to their small capacity. In 1879 Samuel visited Corby for the first time and was impressed by the quality of the local ore. He formed the Cardigan Iron Co. in 1880 which in 1884 became the Lloyds Ironstone Co. It was subsequently reformed in 1893 to include Samuel's eldest son Samuel Janson Lloyd as partner. In 1901 Samuel and his son broached the subject of building a blast furnace at Corby. It was during this time that Samuel was in negotiations with Stewarts & Menzies of Glasgow that concluded with the creation of Stewarts & Lloyds in 1903. After this merger Samuel had nothing more to do with the tube making concern but concentrated on planning and building two blast furnaces at Corby. Samuel Janson had begun mechanisation in the quarries since his early days with the Lloyds Ironstone Co. and continued to do so by buying their first loco in 1910 – a Manning Wardle loco No.1762 which he named “Dolobran”. The first blast furnace was blown in May 1910 while the second was ready in 1911. Before it became operational, a dispute over pay and conditions arose and was to become very ugly before it was forcibly resolved. The conditions and hours of work that the furnace men endured were reported by the Evening Telegraph as:-

- One day shift of 11 hours /day including Sunday.
- One night shift of 13 hours/night including Sunday
- Each shift was allowed 2 x 40 min. and 1 x 10 min. meal breaks
- At the shift change, which occurred each fortnight, there was a 24 hour day and night shift.
- The rate of pay was 4s-9d (23p) for the average shift of 12 hours, so allowing for meal breaks this averages out at 4-3/4d (2p) per hour. In other parts of the country the hourly rate was 9d (3.5p).

Both of Samuel II's sons were directors of Lloyds Ironstone but Janson ran the business from 1912 onward, and by 1921 had acquired mineral rights around Corby of approximately 3,000,000 tons of usable ironstone.

Samuel Lloyd II died in 1918 aged 90.

After showing little interest in the Corby operation since the original merger, Stewarts & Lloyds in 1928 contracted H.E. Brassert of Chicago to investigate the feasibility of building a new iron and steel manufacturing works in Corby. The initial estimates were for just over £5m, but after some rethinking, a proposal in 1932 of £3.2m was agreed. Three of Janson's sons were involved with Stewarts & Lloyds during this period. Construction began in January 1933 but Samuel Janson “retired” after a disagreement with the way the Americans were taking over control. He continued to have some involvement during the planning of the Eye Brook reservoir which was completed in 1939, just in time for its use for training by 617 squadron of the RAF for their Dambuster Raid.

Samuel Janson died in 1943 while living at Pipewell Hall. His son David and

his wife Evadne continued to live at the Hall until their deaths in 1996 and 2003 respectively. In 2005 the Hall was sold and the only links now left are the memorials to the family at the small church in Pipewell where many are buried.

*Ron Hanson*



## SUMMER WALKS AND VISITS 2014

### **Rothwell Church Bell Tower - 2nd May**

The first visit of the summer programme brought 18 members out to Rothwell Parish Church in the North of the county. “Rowell” church is famed for two things; its peel of 10 bells and its crypt full of ancient bones.

We descended first into the 13th century crypt which contains the remains of some 1500 individuals believed to be the result of a church yard clearance to make way for church extension work. A later second reburial possibly took place around 1580 when the nearby Jesus hospital was built. The remains were mainly skulls and thigh bones so we can safely assume that on judgement day if you see a Rothwellian skeleton, it’ll be (h)armless. Some skulls had a brown staining which, it is believed, came from tannic acid leached from the wooden coffins that the second reburials would have been buried in.



We then made our way up to the ringing chamber where it was explained and shown the number sequenced method the bell ringers memorise to produce their peel. From this point we broke up into three groups to ascend up into the bell tower. There is a ring of 10 bells in a cast iron frame by Taylors of Loughborough. Installed in 1906, this replaced a timber frame originally

installed in 1682. Eight of the current bells were supplied by Taylors in 1906, No.9 bell however is an original by Thomas Eyres of Kettering dated 1726 and No.5 was by Bagley from Chalcombe near Banbury cast in 1682. To demonstrate how the clapper followed the bell in its swing and how it rested in the up position one of the bells was rung while we stood on the framework. After everyone had been up to the bell tower and reassembled in the ringing chamber Cecil Swann joined our guides to close the evening by pulling a short ring of three bells.



*Ron Hanson*

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### **Chester Farm – 9th May**

Chester Farm lies on the north side of the A45 road just north of Irchester. The 34 hectare site, much of which is a scheduled ancient monument, includes the remains of a walled Roman town, ancient field systems, a deserted medieval village, a 17th century farmhouse with later farm ranges and a former kitchen garden. It also has areas subjected to ironstone extraction in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The site was acquired by Northamptonshire County Council in 2007 and funding has just been obtained for a five year project to preserve the historical and archaeological features on the site, to open it up as a learning and education resource and manage it in a way which provides a community asset. The aim is that the site will be self-financing by the end of the project. Sarah Bridges, NCC's Archives and Heritage Services Manager, was our guide for the evening, taking us around some of the key features of the site and explaining what the project hopes to achieve.

The Roman walled town has now been relatively undisturbed for a number of years. However a recent geophysical survey has shown up a number of features including the street layout, which unlike most Roman towns was not on a grid plan. As part of the proposed project, it is hoped that some limited digging on the site will be undertaken and interpretation of the site is planned, some of which will involve the use of 'new technology'.

It is surprising to note that as late as the mid-1920s an ironstone tramway ran straight across the Roman site from east to west. Tonks records that this was Irchester Iron Ore Co's line from its sidings close to Wellingborough London Road station to quarries just to the east of Chester Farm. One could not imagine that happening today on a scheduled ancient monument!

Not much now remains of the former kitchen garden. The greenhouse within it is in a very dilapidated state compared with our visit there in 2006. Most of the wooden frame has collapsed and the iron window control mechanisms are just bits of metal waving in the wind. Most surprisingly however, one or two panes of glass are still intact.



Moving to the farm area, there are the remains of a number of barns dating from the 17th century through to the 20th century. We were told that there are plans to use one of the modern barns as a store for the county's

archaeological artefacts (dug out of the ground from around the county). It is planned that there will be conference/exhibition facilities and the former threshing barn will be turned into an educational space for up to 70 learners. There will be formal and informal learning programmes with a focus on archaeology. It is hoped that other barns will be used by small, like-minded businesses at a commercial rent. The house which was seriously damaged by fire a couple of years ago has now been re-roofed and is watertight but is still only a shell. There are plans to restore it and bring it back into use, part of it as a tea room. There will be site-wide interpretation which will include use of new technology and what is called 'augmented reality'.



There is little doubt that the county council has set itself a very ambitious target in developing the Chester Farm site. It is not obvious at this stage how the facilities could evolve as an attraction which would bring in sufficient people to make it self-sustaining. However, if successful, it would ensure that an important historical site is retained for the future.

*Peter Perkins*

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## Rushden Boot & Shoe – 16th May

On a warm early summer evening, some 15 members gathered for a walk around the area to the south of Rushden town centre looking at the remains of factories used by the boot and shoe industry. Our walk started at the junction of Rectory Road, Newton Road and Park Road, where the first point of note was unrelated to the boot and shoe industry. The former bus garage on the corner of Rectory Road and Newton Road has recently been demolished (site 356 in 2nd Edition of *NIAG's Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Northamptonshire*). The garage was built in 1938 for United Counties and used by them until c1978; in recent years it had been used as a recycling centre.

Walking along Park Road, the first boot and shoe site we come to, strangely, is missing from English Heritage's survey, yet 5 Park Road would appear to have been the factory of boot and shoe manufacturer Charles Bull from about 1893 to c1910. Admittedly, it did later become the print works for the Rushden Argus & Echo, perhaps why English Heritage excluded it. In common with several other

3-storey factories in Rushden, this factory has a hipped roof construction, not the gabled roof we usually associate with 3-storey shoe factories in Northamptonshire.

Just opposite 5 Park Road was the site of John White's large Newton Road factory, built in 1924 but later demolished and replaced by housing. Further along Park Road, on the corner of Crabb Street is the former Cunnington Bros shoe factory. This listed Grade II building has been empty for several years now. The original 5-bay Park Road frontage has at some time been shortened to 4 bays giving it a lopsided look. Cunnington Bros were here by 1883 and stayed until the factory was taken over by Bignells in the late 1930s.

In Manton Road is the former Knight & Laurence factory, once a 3-storey building with hipped roof, but now a sad sight with only two floors and a flat roof. On the Grove Road /Roberts Street corner is another 3-storey factory with hipped roof, this one being used by Robinson Bros until at least the late 1930s. The house next door to this factory in Grove Road has a blue plaque, denoting it was the birthplace of HE Bates in 1905.



Cunnington Bros. detail on Park Rd

In York Road, an attractive 3-storey brick façade (with gable this time) is the result of a rebuild in 1907 following a fire which completely destroyed the original building. This was Joseph Knight's shoe factory. English Heritage noted the unusual forecourt bounded by what seem to be contemporary iron railings. Bignells also took over this factory in the late 1930s.

Back on Park Road, the modern warehouse of W Smart & Co, who supply components to the shoe repair trade, may contain traces of an earlier building on this site. Rushden Heel Co were probably here from c1900. Further along Park Road, the street sign for Knight's Court is the only evidence of Frederick Knight's large 3-storey + basement factory built in 1889 and demolished in 2005.

Harborough Road at the extreme southern end of Victorian Rushden was the site of no less than 4 shoe and leather factories. No.7 is a jumble of single and 2-storey buildings, now a carpenter's workshop. However, in the early 20th century the larger of the 2-storey buildings was used by shoe manufacturer Charles Hodson. No.21 is a much more conventional 3-storey shoe factory with rear ranges, now converted to apartments, unfortunately with white plastic windows frames! It was at one time used by George Selwood who in 1914 moved to a single-storey factory (now demolished) further up Harborough Road next to the cemetery. It was then used by the Tecnic Shoe Co, before they moved to a large single-storey factory on Bedford Road (also demolished). The final factory in Harborough Road was at No.70 but this was demolished only in the last 5 years or so. For many years from the late 1930s this was the leather works of Clifford Collins. Rushden Heritage website carries information taken from legal papers relating to this location which suggest the site was owned in the 1880s by Thomas Lilley and William Banks Skinner whose company later became the well-known High Street shoe brand of Lilley & Skinner. Around the turn of the 20th century they were also leather merchants and as we would see later, they had a warehouse on The Green in Wellingborough Road.

On High Street South is the 3-storey + basement factory built in 1874 for William Green & Sons (later called Grensons). It had domestic accommodation at the front on the ground and first floors but the lower 1st floor window at the side is now the only evidence of this. There used to be a chimney flue and stack at the side, the reason why the front portion of the side wall is windowless. Grensons moved to a new, larger factory on the Queen Street/Cromwell Road corner in 1895 and remained there until 2013 when they moved to another new factory at Crown Park!

At the bottom of Crabb Street is the large Grade II listed 3-storey + basement factory built in 1891 for Walter Sargent, boot and shoe manufacturer. Later used for slipper manufacture, the factory is now converted to apartments but in this case the metal window frames have been retained, as have the loading doors and wall-mounted crane.

Adjacent to The Green where Skinners Hill meets Wellingborough Road is an attractive 3-storey building with a circular turret at one corner. This was built about

1900 and was occupied by Lilley & Skinner, leather merchants, the same company



The attractive circular turret.

we came across in Harborough Road. Curiously an architect's drawing exists which shows a much larger building was planned to include a swimming baths but in the event only the warehouse was ever built.

On the opposite side of Wellingborough Road was Claridges shoe factory. The present buildings date from 1889 and later but it is possible that William Claridge's original factory founded in 1865 was also on this site. Unusually the façade is built of stone and is full of architectural embellishment. It was noted that at least part of the site is up for sale so let's hope that the buildings will remain.

At the bottom of Church St a blue plaque proclaims that No.30, the left-hand 3-storey house/workshop in a block of three, now part of a restaurant, was the second factory used by boot and shoe manufacturer John White from 1920-1922 (his first was in a garden shed). Here he produced 2000 pairs of shoes per week, before

presumably moving to his new factory on Rectory Road.

Our final stop on the tour was at No.9 Church Street, a 5-bay, 3-storey building, in recent years part of the Peter Crisp department store, which English Heritage suggest was probably built as a shoe factory although no manufacturers have so far been associated with the site. The ground floor has been changed externally in the conversion to a shop but on the first floor there is evidence that one of the windows was a taking-in door and scars in the brickwork suggest a crane was located adjacent to it.

Background information for the walk came principally from two sources: English Heritage's Survey of the Northamptonshire Boot & Shoe Industry (1999-2000) and Rushden & District History Society's website ([www.rushdenheritage.co.uk](http://www.rushdenheritage.co.uk)). The latter is an excellent source of data on Rushden's history; however as some of the information appears to be based on the memories of various individuals, care must be taken with its use. Instances were found where one section contradicts another!

Copies of the notes and map that were prepared for this walk are available in pdf format by emailing [secretary@northants-iag.org.uk](mailto:secretary@northants-iag.org.uk)

*Peter Perkins*

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## UPDATES

### **Northampton's new bus station**

I promised to write a short piece about this new facility. We took advantage of the 'open day' one very sunny Saturday morning and along with many others, notwithstanding the official invitees, we had a good look at the new bus station which has caused so much controversy in recent months.

The building itself, one has to admit, does look quite nice and stands out against the fore-drop of the market square buildings. To us, the interior of the building is cramped and, as been foreseen, comments in the local 'rag' from users are beginning to notice this. The building is shaped on the footprint of the former Fishmarket building and this leads to the comment that the building is cramped once you are inside. There are 12 bus bays with automatic doors leading from the building to the bus. One can only be thankful that the buses now have a front load rather than in the old days loading from the back as no doubt passengers could, and no doubt will, get wet going from the building to the bus.

On this sunny morning we were blessed with the sight of many historic buses of all shapes side by side with the modern mode of transport.

The glass roof has many inscriptions written on stencils located below the roof depicting all aspects of Northampton. You need to be aware of what is what since they have all been written backwards so that when the sun shines the words appear the right way round on the walls. A daft idea really since passengers won't really have time to look up and admire the idea if they are dashing for the bus! We also noticed that the cafe was nowhere near completion (the new station was to start working the next day) also the newsagents wasn't complete, the back wall was still unfinished and it all looked rather 'thrown together'.

Meanwhile the Greyfriars building looked on sadly – the sun catching the brickwork and the iconic style of the whole building. It was difficult to see how all the buses were going to be accommodated in the new station but, as it was to turn out on the Monday, there was a big back log of buses and an almighty 'traffic jam' in the vicinity. Glad we weren't using the facility – in talking to some who did, tempers were somewhat frayed.

*Jane Waterfield*

### **Former Tram/Bus depot - St James, Northampton**

The historic former St James tram and bus depot in Northampton was open to the public for guided tours. The site opened on Saturday May 3rd from 10am. It was the last chance for the public to see the depot in its current state ahead of its redevelopment by Church's shoe company into a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility.

The Secretary of the St James Residents' Association and event organiser said: "*This is an excellent opportunity for those interested in the town's historical buildings to*

*see what lies behind the closed doors. St James tram and bus depot is one of those buildings that has always been there, but few realise what is inside or that it was originally the former home to the towns trams and then the towns red buses. The assembled vehicles will be last ever buses to leave the garage, and as such is the end of a glorious era. This is a once only opportunity to savour a vital piece of the town's history."*

So we booked a tour, as did many other members of NIAG, on what was to prove a glorious hot sunny day. In our group we were lucky to have Simon Hill from Church's to explain what it proposed to do with the building as well as giving us as much history of the depot as he was able.



Above: The Office building

Right: Tramways in the floor

Below: The board of keys to conductors' boxes

Below Right: An old ticket machine



The site now has boards around it and work no doubt will begin shortly.

## MISCELLANY ITEMS OF INTEREST

### **Further to our walk to the Daventry Masts**

Our newsletter is sent in a reciprocal arrangement to TfL (Transport for London Industrial Group) and one of our items about the Daventry Transmitters was mentioned in their November newsletter. As a result further information was received about the masts by one of their members. As a point of interest to our members I reproduce what he has to say.

TfL member Peter Morris offers this intriguing comment:

*“... I have been told about them [the transmitters] since I was a small boy. You see, my great-grandfather’s company built them way back. Then it was quite a small company, Daventry-based. The story goes in the family that the [transmitter] site was once an ancient burial ground; this was known locally so care had to be taken not to do any damage or worse still awake the departed spirits. On putting up the masts they did all they could to remember this fact. In the family it was said that when the project was finished, the spirits now had a better platform to speak to the outside world. I guess all was forgotten until it was time for the masts to be removed.*

*“My great-grandfather’s company had since merged with another company in the 50s or 60s and changed its trading name. However, when those masts needed to be removed, the same company (with the new name) was asked to do the work. There were still family members working there, so the same stories came to a head; to be on the safe side, care again was taken [with the demolition]. Before the work started, mattresses were placed on the ground so each mast fell quietly. We hoped that all the spirits were now at peace. I did go up to Daventry last year in the hope of old photos of [the company’s premises] but was out of luck... Great-grandfather had been the town’s coffin-maker [originally] so maybe that put him right with the spirits!”*

*TfL newsletter – December 2013*

### **Horseman statue on the Chronicle and Echo building**

The horseman statue on the former C&E building in Northampton is to be preserved in the restored Phipps brewery in the town. Aldi, which recently bought the building from Johnston Press, is currently in the process of demolishing the site so it can be converted into a supermarket (*not another supermarket I hear you cry*).

The retail chain has agreed to allow Alaric Neville, owner of Phipps Northampton Brewery Company, to move the horseman statue and Northampton Mercury & Herald commemorative plaque on the front of the Upper Mounts building to the Albion Brewery in Kingswell Street. The horseman is officially named the Mercury Messenger after the sister paper to the Chron, founded in 1720. It has been the logo of both papers because the majority of early provincial newspapers lifted their stores directly from the London newspapers and messengers on horseback were dispatched daily to bring the latest city news back to Northampton.

Mr Neville, of Phipps, said he was delighted to be able to give a new home to the old Northampton horseman statue from the front of building. He said: *“The statue and plaque will become a feature of our new bar in the restored Albion Brewery which will open at the end of the year and will be on display for all to see along with other historical Northampton brewing artefacts.”*

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 17th April 2014*

*The site is now almost cleared and no doubt by the time you receive this newsletter the former building will have finally gone. Ed*

### **Road closure for demolition of bridges**

Greyfriars road was set to close to traffic over the weekend of April 19/20th as the first major demolition work commences at Northampton’s former bus station. On the Sunday, the two vehicle bridges across the road will be removed as engineers continue to take down the building, once labelled ‘the mouth of Hell’. It will be the first external part of the 1976 building to be demolished, though work has been taking place inside the structure throughout the past year.

The Leader of the Borough Council said: *“A month ago we opened North Gate bus station, brining bus users into a modern facility in the heart of our town centre. With Greyfriars closed we have had specialists on-site to complete a detailed survey of the building ahead of demolition work. A key concern for us in this complex demolition project is to keep the town centre moving and avoid any unnecessary disruption, so we are timing this phased of the project over Easter. As the demolition work progresses we will finally see the end of a building that has cost people in Northampton £500,000 a year to keep running as we open up the north of the town centre for investment and redevelopment.”*

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 17th April 2014*

*It was so called ‘the mouth of Hell’ by people who didn’t live here and had never used the bus station – and who, quite frankly, didn’t like the building as it didn’t fit in with their own ideas. Ed.*

### **Concrete Chimneys**

An article appeared in the British Archaeology magazine in 2011, in the form of a letter, regarding concrete chimneys and in particular our own ‘Lighthouse’ in Northampton. Hereunder is what was written.

*“The concrete shell and internal walls were constructed by Tileman & Co Ltd of Putney, London, form whom I worked for 23 years; this was a small private company specialising in the worldwide design and construction of major industrial chimneys. When TCL went into administration in 1987, I believe 70 years of records ended up in a store in the Philippines, and are almost certainly lost.*

*A number of very large concrete chimneys, single and multi-flue, were built for UK power stations in the 60s and 70s. These chimneys are massive and complex*

*structures; besides the brick or steel flues, they also contain floors and staircases and lifts inside. Their heights are generally 200-260m, base diameters exceed 25m, they weigh many thousands of tons and cost hundreds of thousands of pounds (50 years ago).”*

*British Archaeology – March/April 2011*

*It is suggested that a list is compiled with a view to preserving one of them. Well our Tower is still standing and as I understand it is now being used to abseil down from the top- what a come down! Ed*

### **The shoe shop that is made to last**

Chances are that as children most of us wore Clarks' shoes. This iconic shoe company is one of the great survivors of the British high street and somehow has remained a private business now well into its seventh generation. The company sells more than 50 million pairs of shoes a year, turns over almost £1.4billion and employs some 15,000 people around the world. But it is still based in Street, Somerset and remains resolutely committed to its Quaker roots. A new book '*Clarks – Made to Last*' by Mark Palmer has recently been published at the cost of £20. Below are some interesting facts about Clarks taken from his article in the *Daily Express of the 11th April 2013*.

- C & J Clark was founded in 1825 by two brothers, Cyrus and James, who came from a Quaker family in Street, Somerset.
- They were in the woollen rug trade but one day James started making slippers from off-cuts of the rugs. These slippers were called Brown Peters but no one knows why. The public loved them and an iconic brand was born.
- At the age of 18 James travelled all over the country selling his wares, restricting himself to what he called a “modest four glasses of port” after dinner until one day he gave up alcohol altogether and became an early member of the Temperance Society.
- Clarks was producing 60 lines of ready-made (rather than bespoke) footwear in 1835, including children's shoes for the first time.
- Quakers took a dim view of debt but the Clark brothers – who were hopeless accountants – soon found themselves strapped for cash and began borrowing from the bank after taking money out of the company to build houses.
- Such was their financial predicament that in 1842 a cousin suggested that they should emigrate to Australia. Instead Quaker friends and family bailed them out.
- Queen Victoria visited the company's stand at the Great Exhibition of 1851.

- During the Crimean War the government wanted to pay Clarks to provide sheepskin coats for the troops. As pacifists the family refused but then changed their minds, using any profits to build a school in Street.
- By 1863 Clarks was almost bankrupt. The Quaker businesses came to their rescue but on the proviso that Cyrus and James would relinquish day-to-day control to be replaced by James's son William, who was 24 at the time.
- William revolutionised shoemaking, introducing machinery into the process for the first time. Clarks was an early pioneer of rubber soling.
- In 1874 a former Clarks employee set up a rival company in Street but it did not last long.
- The only strike in Clarks' history lasted two weeks in 1880.
- Such was the moral code at Clarks that if a male employee married a woman who was pregnant he was not entitled to time off for a honeymoon. And missing work through venereal disease didn't qualify for sick pay.
- William Clark built a house called Millfield. It is now part of Millfield school, which England's rugby captain Chris Robshaw attended.
- Clarks owned The Bear Inn opposite the factory for more than 100 years but it only gained a licence to sell alcohol in the 1970s.
- The town of Street grew on the back of Clarks. The company opened a library and theatre, built a public swimming pool and public hall and allowed its land to be used for sports fields.
- In the 1880s, Clarks shoes were sold in boxes for the first time and a range of width fittings was introduced.
- Alice Clark, William's daughter and a partner in the firm, was an author and active campaigner for women's suffrage. Towards the end of her life she converted from Quakerism to become a Christian Scientist.
- William's grandson Bancroft married the daughter of Field Marshall Jan Smuts, the South African statesman who occupies a plinth in Parliament Square.
- Clarks did not have any of its own shops until 1935. In the beginning it supplied independent stores and then started the Peter Lord chain. Dedicated Clarks shops as we know them today did not appear on British high streets until 1984.
- Clarks started its own newspaper Clarks Courier in 1957.
- The single word Clarks (with no apostrophe) was registered as a trademark in the Twenties, with strong objections from a firm called Clarks of Kilmarnock.
- Clarks's first national advertising campaign was launched in 1933 when Edward Kauffer, known for his cubism, was commissioned to produce

posters. Three insertions ran first in the Daily Express in 1937 with the strapline “Selling the name of Clarks”.

- During the Second World War Clarks provided footwear for the troops and the American government sent over worn army boots to be taken apart and welted with rubber soles and heels. American servicemen said they were more comfortable than the originals.
- Nathan Clark, grandson of William, came up with the idea of the desert boot while serving in Burma with the Royal Army Service Corps. At the time no one in Street was interested but in 1949 the fashion editor of Esquire in New York took up the cause. Since then more than 10 million pairs have been sold in more than 100 countries. Noel Gallagher of Oasis was so taken by the desert boot that he created his own version as part of his Pretty Green clothing label.
- Clarks provided Honor Blackman with her shiny thigh-high boots for the role of Cathy Gale in ITV's *The Avengers* series.
- Clarks bought Ravel, Mondaine and Pinet.
- Clarks shoe museum opened in the Street in 1974. Among the collection are 20,000 shoes which date back to Roman times.
- In the late Seventies and early Eighties Clarks was again in dire straits. It was no longer viable to make shoes in Britain but the idea of importing from overseas was against everything the company stood for. Even so factories started to be closed down.
- In an attempt to see off the opposition Clarks acquired K Shoes in 1980 for £22million. It meant that Clarks and K had almost 800 shops in the UK.
- By the start of 1988 Clarks was barely making a profit. Various members of the family wanted a change at the top. Factories were closing and sales were down. Matters came to a head when Walter Dickson, who was not a family member, was appointed chairman. Rival factions emerged and it became clear that Dickson and the board were contemplating selling the company. Hugh Pym of the BBC, whose mother is a Clark, led a campaign to keep the company privately owned. On May 7 at the Royal Bath and West Showground in Shepton Mallet, shareholders voted by the slimmest of margins not to sell.
- Clarks Village, the first retail outlet centre in Britain, opened in August 1993 and is now one of Somerset's most popular tourist attractions.
- Tim Parker, who went on to be a short-lived deputy mayor to Boris Johnson, was hired in 1995 as chief executive. Within 10 years of his appointment every single Clarks factory in Britain and elsewhere in the world was closed. Clarks shoes today are made mainly in China and Vietnam but are still designed in Street.

- The new warehouse in Street can ship and receive up to a million pairs of shoes a day and has a capacity to stock five million pairs.
- All K shoe shops were phased out in 2000.

*Daily Express of the 11th April 2013.*

*Please note that this has nothing to do with 'Made to Last' the story of Churches Shoes by John Crawshaw. Ed.*

### **Kings Cross**

The Railway Heritage Trust [RHT] has awarded a grant of £34,341 to Network Rail to help restore the listed platform canopy that extends beyond the main station between Platforms 8 and 9.

This short canopy was an unhappy example of Victorian engineering, with a large cantilever on the Platform 9 side, initially supported by wrought iron tension ties, but more recently held up by props. Network Rail agreed with English Heritage that as part of its £770,000 restoration of this canopy it could move the existing columns across towards Platform 9 so that they would hold up the canopy without propping.

Unfortunately, at some stage, two of the original cast-iron columns had been replaced with steel girders, which, whilst functional, did not replicate the appearance of the original structure. The RHT granted £34,341 to cover the additional cost of replacing these steel columns with new cast iron columns and spandrels, and also to fund four additional cast iron spandrels where they can now be installed in the increased space between the two rows of columns.

*AIA News –Issue 168 Spring 2014*

### **Bid to renovate the St. Edmund site**

The long-awaited renovation of the St. Edmund's Hospital site in Northampton town centre could begin in the next year; according to the leader of the borough council.

Since the hospital closed in 1999, the 176-year-old building in Wellingborough Road, which was also a 19th century workhouse, has fallen into a state of disrepair and has been described as an eyesore. Last year (2013) an application was made to English Heritage to remove the historic building's listed status, leading to fears it could one day be demolished. But the leader of the Borough Council has said he had been talking with the building's owners and English Heritage to 'drive forward' the refurbishment of the Grade Two listed building. A motion is to be put before the council asking that the council recognises the importance of the St. Edmund's site as a key gateway to the town. The motion states that a planning application will be submitted later this year and '*all options will be kept open to ensure that the site is properly redeveloped*'. The renovation needs to be in keeping with the historical aspect of the building and be properly useful for the future of the town.

The St. Edmund building was designed by world famous architect Sir George Gilbert Scott, who went on to create the Albert Memorial in London and the Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras Station.

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – March 6th 2014*

### **Massive grain store site plays a leading role in UK food supply**

The boss of a huge grain store between Kettering and Corby says the site will become increasingly important in UK cereal and break production. The 48-acre site, just off the A6003 and adjacent to the new Corby link road, is owned by the farmers' co-operative Camgrain. Most prominent is the giant grain store, which currently holds about 70,000 tonnes of produce, but which is set to expand in the coming years. The Managing Director said "*The Northamptonshire site is largely strategic because of where it sits near all the consumption. About 1.2 million tonnes of consumption is within 25 minutes of this site. You have local farmers, now with big grain infrastructure and the ability to meet the contracts that we have, for example with Sainsbury's for more than 70,000 tonnes of milling wheat. It is milled at Wellingborough and then finishes up on Sainsbury's supermarket shelves.*" Perhaps the most prominent Camgrain customer is Whitworths in Wellingborough, which in turn provides flour for all of the in-store bakeries at supermarket giant Sainsbury's.

*Northants Telegraph – 3rd April 2014*

### **Historic Shoe factory may come back to life**

One of the oldest remnants of Northampton's shoe industry could be brought back to life after plans were revealed to restore a derelict shoe factory in the town centre. The Henry Harday factory in Regent Street, Semilong, has been empty for years and has been targeted by arsonists and vandals in the past. The building is one of the oldest remaining shoe factories in the town and historians had feared it could either be demolished or simply be left to collapse.

Developer Mansha Syed has come forward with plans to restore the building and convert it into flats. He said "*I'm Northampton born and bred so I've known many people who have worked in the shoe industry and I've seen the demise of it. I also know a lot of people who have bought other shoe factories and restored them. Obviously, this building can't be turned back into a shoe factory because that's not viable, but we want to keep the building and we want to be as sympathetic as possible with the restoration. It's a very attractive building and we're going to do our best to bring it back to life.*"

Little is known about the history of the building, other than it was used by the Henry Harday company from at least 1850. If planning permission by NBC is given a plaque commemorating the history of the factory will be included in the development.

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 8th March 2013*

*This little item got buried under a pile of papers on my desk – so apologies for being*

*so late on this news item. Has anyone got any information on this building and company? Ed*

### **Forgotten underworld**

A kaleidoscope of coloured rock scattered with rusting mining machinery has been revealed under the Brecon Beacons. Photographs were taken during days in the former Dinas silica mine, opened in the 18th century and abandoned 49 years ago. Most of the mine was water-filled but the team came upon caverns where they would let their eye adjust to total darkness before turning their lamps back on to appreciate the colours revealed in the stone.

The silica from the mines was turned into furnace linings for the copper, iron and steel industries.

*The Times – 10th September 2013*

*Thank you to member Sue Ransome for sending the cutting from the paper. She asks “Did any of us ever go there on one of the Longtown weekends?” Ed*

### **Desborough Cross – restoration**

A milestone, which has been in Desborough for more than 200 years, is undergoing work to restore it to its former glory. Work has started to renovate the Desborough Cross, which will be carried out in three phases, starting with re-carving and painting the letters. The next two phases will involve steam cleaning of the tone and repairs.

*Northants Telegraph – 8th May 2014*



## **OF THIS AND THAT**

### **Summer Programme**

The last walks and visits for the summer season are:

- 18th July Nene Valley Brewery, Oundle – an earlier start time
- 25th July Jordans Mill, Biggleswade – morning visit - remember to book.
- 2nd August Models of 18th Century Steam engines at Stone in Staffs. Bookable visit as numbers are limited.

### **Dates for the Diary:**

- 5/10 September AIA Annual Conference at Chester. details at *industrial-archaeology.org*.
- 13th September Heritage Weekend – All over the county. NIAG’s stand will be at St. Seps in Northampton. 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. Church open and refreshments will be available.

18th October EMIAC 88 – This will be NIAG’s ‘event’. Details to be confirmed and will be sent as a separate mailshot. For those with access to the web please keep an eye on our web-site.

### **Winter Programme 2014/15**

10th October Grimsby Ice Factory – speaker Chris Lester

14th November AGM and The Northampton to Peterborough Line remembered – speaker Richard Deacon

### **Exhibitions**

All summer John Lobb exhibition at the Northampton’s Central Museum, Guildhall Road. Display highlights the brand’s history and craftsmanship, as well as ties with the local community. Check with the Museum for times of opening.

Steam 2014 Black Country Living Museum has a replica of the 1712 Newcomen engine which will be in steam during the summer of 2014. Dates are: 26/27th July, 9/10th August, Bank Holiday weekend. 13th September, 11/12th October. It is best to check with the Museum before travelling on 0121 557 9643 to avoid disappointment as the nature of the Newcomen can be unpredictable.

### **100 years ago**

The suggestion to the Northants Agricultural Society to its Committee that the Wool Fair should be removed from the Market Square to the Cattle Market, is meeting with considerable opposition in the town, where there is a consensus of opinion that the change is neither necessary nor desirable. The Wool Fair has been held on the Market Square in Northampton for well over half a century and the agitation for its removal has been caused by the complaint of one buyer that the children playing on the bales damage the wool. Consequently he has threatened not to attend the sales if they are held on the Market Square in future.

Our enquiries tend to prove that the complaint is not justified, at least so far as the children are concerned, for we are informed that the trouble is caused not by the children, but the stackers.

*Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 13th March 2014*

### **Number crunching**

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

##### **..... Twelfth Night**

While the western church celebrated the visit of the Magi to the infant Christ, the eastern church celebrates his baptism by John the Baptist.....

.....but the eastern church mostly still sticks to the Julian calendar, which is 13 days behind the Gregorian, so their Epiphany is our January 19th .

While epiphany is also known as Twelfth Day, and Twelfth Night precedes Twelfth Day and begins on the evening of January 5th.

This is why Twelfth Day is known in Sweden as 'trettondag' (thirteenth day)..

Twelfth Night is the only Shakespeare play that includes neither of the words 'child' nor 'children'.

According to Samuel Pepys, Twelfth Night is 'a silly play not relating at all to the name or day'.

The cook, valet and actor Richard Baddeley left £100 to provide the income for a cake to be eaten on Twelfth Night by Drury Lane actors..

The Monday after Twelfth Day is Plough Monday when agriculture resumes after Christmas.

The British used to celebrate Twelfth Night with a drink called Lambs's Wool made from roasted apples, sugar and nutmeg in beer.

George Washington, George Bush Sr and Henry VII (to Anne of Cleves) all married on January 6th.

*Daily Express – 6th January 2014*

..... **100**

In old Norse the word hundrad, from which our 'hundred' derives, originally meant 120.

Until the 19th century, a 'long-hundred' was still a term used to mean 120, especially in the measurement of numbers of fish sold.

The 100th most populated country in the world is Bulgaria.

The longest car ever made was a 100ft long Cadillac with 26 wheels, a swimming pool, a Jacuzzi, a helipad and a hinged section in the middle to enable it to turn corners.

The sum of the cubes of the first four integers is equal to 100.

One Hundred Men and a Girl (1937) is the only film with the word 'hundred' in its title that has every received an Academy Award.

The 100 Year War between England and France actually lasted for 116 years since it started in 1337 and ended in 1453.

The 100 most common words in English account for 50 per cent of all we speak or write.

Among the 100 most used words in English, only 'person' and 'because' have more than five letters.

Official figures show that in 2012 there were 13,500 people over the age of 100 living in Britain.

*Daily Express - 10th April 2014*



## Finally - a few little gems

Spotted in the *Telegraph of 11th February* was this short letter about the Prince of Wales' tie. Apparently his wearing of the country\* tie of the Royal Thames Yacht Club provoked some correspondence about ties and their military connections.

Sir:

When appearing as an advocate in magistrates' courts many years ago, I often wore a tie with a distinctive stripe. When asked once, by the chairman of the bench, which regiment it represented, I could only reply that it was the 5th Marks & Spencer Light Cavalry.

The correspondent came from Hampsthwaite, North Yorks.

Another piece that caught my eye was written by *Richard Littlejohn of the Daily Mail*.

This week's edition of '*Mind How You Go*' comes from Newark, Notts. Irene Gaskill tells me that police were out in the town centre at the weekend, giving away little clips with bells on. They are designed to be attached to handbags to deter bag-snatchers. Since when did it become the police's job to hand out bells!

As Irene, wife of the brilliant cartoonist Dave Gaskill said: "*It sounded as if the Morris Men had come to town!*"

Apparently RL says the police have already handed out flip-flops to stop drunken young girls falling off their stilettos, so why not bells?

Plus:

### **Proof of Identity madness:**

1. A 35 year old woman was asked for ID in a local Co-op store in Daventry before they would sell her a rum'n'raisin yoghurt.
2. A lady took her 16-year-old daughter to Asda to buy some school supplies. When they got to the check-out, the assistant wouldn't sell them a pair of scissors because the daughter was under 18. The scissors were made of plastic and sold in a packet labelled: '*School scissors, suitable for age 4+*'.

*Daily Mail – 11th March 2014*

\* as written in the paper not a typing error by your editor!



**EMIAC 88**  
**ENGINEERING IN MOTORSPORT**  
**18TH OCTOBER 2014**  
**PLEASE KEEP THE DATE FREE**  
**FINAL DETAILS ARE BEING SORTED**

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, 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: **October 2014**

Deadline for all articles and information **20th September 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.