



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE'S
INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

NEWSLETTER



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Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group

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Photograph front cover: The underside of the railway bridge at Blisworth showing the original cast iron structure.
© Jane Waterfield 2016

From the Editor

'Tis the season for yet more consultations, as yet another one is about to take place on the Canal Arm in Daventry. Meanwhile the on-going saga of Northampton's Bus Station still rages on with recent news that, surprise, surprise, pollution is somewhat high around the new Northgate bus station. More on these two stories can be found in the Update section.

Relaxing after yet another long day of clearing Father's flat in late September we switched on the TV to catch up with the latest programme in a series called '*Brushing Up On.....*' hosted by Danny Baker. From the archives of the BBC old films, documentaries and news items were all to be found in this series and this particular programme's little gem '*British Woodlands*' was one which showed a bunch of naked men and women using various tools - saws, hammers, soldering irons etc. with a commentator asking whether it was dangerous bearing in mind that the user was naked! The response was something along the lines that sparks could be a 'bit of a problem'. Hilarious. Keep an eye out for this series in the future.

On to NIAG matters. I am delighted to include in this issue a submission by one of our newest members about his hobby of making model shoe factories – fascinating, painstaking stuff and enjoy the read. Reports are now in from our summer's programme; Mick Dix's report from the Woodford walk follows my introduction and those few that could not be fitted in this time will be in the Spring edition. As ever I seem to run out of space but never fear reports will be found in later editions.

The AGM was well attended and Mary Matts gave an excellent presentation on the Foxton Locks – more about the AGM itself can be found on page 25.

Take care during the winter months and if anything catches your eye please let me know.

Ed

SUMMER VISITS OF 2016 - CONTINUE

Woodford Ironstone walk – 27th May

Iron ore was smelted in Northamptonshire in Roman times but the industry died out and was eventually forgotten. Samples of ironstone found on the estate of General Charles George Arbuthnot of Woodford House were exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and were partly responsible for the rebirth of the local iron industry. Arbuthnot began quarrying on his own property trading under the name Woodford Iron Ore Co, the output probably being taken by road to Ringstead Station on the Northampton to Peterborough railway until the Kettering to Huntingdon line opened in 1866.

Charles Henry Plevins, a Derbyshire coal owner, put furnaces into blast at Harrington in Cumberland in 1857 in partnership with Edwin Lewis, and later had charge of blast furnaces at Newbold in Derbyshire and Heyford in Northants. He then had his own blast furnaces erected at Islip trading under the name of the Islip Iron Company; the first furnace was put into blast on the 20th April 1873. There was a shortage of experienced men in the area so Plevins recruited men from Seend in Wiltshire where the furnaces had recently closed after some years of intermittent operation. The first men arrived about 1875 and the 1881 census shows 15 families and nine single men from that district living in Woodford. Many ironworkers lived in the village, as at Islip much of the land as well as the housing was owned by the Drayton Estate. (Islip population fluctuated only slightly between 1831 and 1911). The population of Woodford increased rapidly after ironstone quarrying began in the early 1850s and accelerated even more between 1871 and 1881 with the opening of the iron works; around 1880 Woodford had a larger population than Thrapston. A similar increase in population during the ten years between 1871 and 1881 took place in Twywell.

Our meeting point for the evening was opposite the house that Thomas Short built at the junction of High Street and Mill Road many years after arriving in Woodford. He named the house Cleeve Villa after Seend Cleeve where he had worked as an ironstone labourer, the name around the door and TS 1905 on the date stone being clearly visible. We then made our way along Mill Road to the 12 houses, Windmill Terrace, that Plevins had built in 1874/5 for his 'superior workmen'. He recorded in his journal that each house cost £150 and was let for a rent of 3s 3d per week; the houses were owned by him and leased to the Iron Company. They were built as a terrace of eight with a pair of semi-detached houses at the outer ends of the block, probably for foremen. At the time of the 1881 census the 12 houses were occupied by 93 people and were some of the most overcrowded in Woodford. New back rooms were added in 1885. We were able to look at the houses from the road and although one of the pairs of semi-detached houses had been made into one house and some in the terrace have



The road leading to the old station with a former quarry field on the right.

been altered by the addition of front porches they are still recognisable. Other workmen lived in Newtown in Woodford which was developed over a period of about 40 years from the 1850s. After walking past Windmill Terrace we came to the entrance into Windmill House which we were able to

glimpse at the end of the drive. Plevins had this house repaired and altered for the manager of the quarries – Thomas Short from Seend who later had Cleve Villa built.

We carried on walking and made our way to the old A604 road and to the bridge that formerly carried the road over the Kettering to Huntingdon railway. Here we were able to look at the much altered and extended building that used to be Twywell station. The line, which was operated by the Midland Railway, opened to goods traffic on 21st February 1866 and to passenger traffic on 1st March of the same year. It was the opening of this railway that prompted the extraction of ironstone on a large scale between Kettering and Thrapston and the erection of blast furnaces at Islip. Twywell station closed to passengers and goods traffic on 30th July 1951 and the line closed to passengers from 15th June 1959 (the last train ran on 13th June). Closure to goods traffic was piecemeal, the final traffic being from Twywell sidings. The last goods train ran from Twywell to Kettering on 20th January 1978 with official closure of the line coming on 20th March of the same year.

From the same vantage point we were able to view the remains of the southern Newbridge quarries. Newbridge quarries first appear in Mineral Statistics in 1867 and were worked both north and south of the railway, the northern operation being the smaller. Kelly's Directory for 1869 refers to them as *Thomas Walters Iron Ore Works Proprietor and Brickworks, Newbridge Works*. The owners from 1873 were Newbridge Iron Ore Co, a subsidiary of Appleby & Co of Renishaw Ironworks in Derbyshire. The name seems to derive from the new bridge carrying the Kettering to Thrapston road over the Alledge Brook near Twywell station; the area being known as Newbridge before the coming of the railway.

The tramway from the southern quarries, which may have been 4ft gauge, crossed the stream to a tipping dock on a siding east of Twywell Station and was probably horse worked. The tramway from the northern quarries went under the road and over the railway to a separate tipping dock on the south side of the railway; there was no connection between the two systems. It is uncertain which quarry opened first but both are shown on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map. The southern quarries were the more extensive and with the siding being on that side of the main line may have been the first.

The equipment was offered for sale on 17th October 1892 following the closure of the quarries but the actual date of closure is unknown. The 6in Ordnance Survey map for 1901 indicates that the final working faces were taken up to the field boundaries suggesting that the company may have worked out all the land they had leased. At the time of their abandonment the quarries had 40ft of overburden which was being removed by hand labour, an incredible feat. Some restoration was carried out in the 1970s but as we made our back to Woodford

along a public footpath we were able to appreciate the depth of the quarry as the final working face was on the other side of the hedge.

Mick Dix

Source: original research; The Ironstone Quarries of the Midlands, Part V, Eric Tonks, Runpast Publishing, 1991; Woodford Juxta Thrapston, Eric & Mary Humphries, Buscott Publications, 1985.

---oooOooo---

Rail Tour – 11th June

It seems a long time ago now that just a handful of pioneers assembled at Stamford station for the first ever NIAG Railtour, with a destination of East Anglia. However, on 11th June 2016 a much larger party of fifteen returned to the same starting point for a similar trip, albeit with a slightly different itinerary.

The first leg of our journey was again to Peterborough and then across the Fenlands to Ely, where as before there was enough time to cross to the other platform for a welcome coffee break before our next train.

The Fens quickly gave way to Thetford Forest and the Norfolk breckland on our way across country to Norwich, and after a rumble over Trowse swingbridge a prompt arrival allowed another short break and an opportunity to view the impressive architecture of Norwich Thorpe station.

The journey continued north-eastwards towards the coast on the single line branch to Cromer and Sheringham, where members had the option of around an hours stay at either location; with perfect timing the sun had now broken through and a short spell by the sea was appreciated by all.

However, all too soon it was time to return to Norwich, where our next train was an impressive inter-city express towards London. A very quick change at Ipswich then took our party onto a through service to Peterborough, initially travelling back up the main line as far as Haughley Junction before veering westwards towards Bury St. Edmunds and the outskirts of Newmarket. A change of direction then took us through Ely for a second time, and we regained our outward route to March, Whittlesey, and Peterborough. Another change of trains and Stamford was reached, right on time, just after 6pm.

For once the trains behaved themselves perfectly, and apart from an initial ten minute late start from Stamford, no trials or tribulations affected the day; the generally good weather, a wide variety of interesting scenery, and the usual convivial company all contributed to a very



enjoyable trip.

On the return journey someone was heard to mention Scotland as a possibility for next years tour – now that would be a long day out, but.....?

Barry Taylor

The photograph shows Sherringham Station © Ron Whittaker 2016

---oooOooo---

Coppicing and Charcoal Burning at Rawhaw Wood, Pipewell - 17th June

Rawhaw Wood just to the north of Pipewell village is one of the largest areas of semi-natural ancient woodland remaining in what was Rockingham Forest. It was once part of the estate of the Cistercian monks at nearby Pipewell Abbey. Designated an SSSI and subject to a preservation order, the 30 acre site has been managed for the past 20 years by Hugh Ross and Carolyn Church who undertake coppicing in a manner similar to that done in medieval times but with the additional aim of preserving the habitat and wildlife. Essentially it is a coppiced hazel wood with tall standard trees such as oak, ash and field maple interspersed among the hazel. To ensure the light can get down to the hazel, the tall tree canopy is limited to about 25% of the total area of the coppiced woodland.

NIAG first visited Rawhaw Wood in July 1997, a year after Hugh and Carolyn moved in to manage the woodland which had not then been coppiced for many years. Those of us who remember that visit could see the changes in the management of the wood and the facilities introduced since then, including a wooden framed and clad house. The present visit took place at the end of what had been a week of torrential thunderstorms and showers. Earlier in the evening the sun had come out and we thought we would enjoy a pleasant evening, close to the longest day. However the weather had other ideas. We had just started a perambulation of the wood, when the heavens opened for some half an hour forcing us to retreat to the shelter of the house veranda. Once it was over we resumed our walk around the wood; unfortunately it was extremely wet and muddy underfoot by this time!

Coppicing takes place on a ten year cycle; so every autumn they cut 2 acres of the hazel down to the ground, which means that the whole area has now been coppiced twice since Hugh and Carolyn's arrival. We visited an area that had been recently coppiced and already the shoots of new growth were showing. In some areas, lengths of hazel are left uncut and bent over into the soil to propagated new plants by layering. Newly cut areas have to be fenced to prevent deer from browsing on the new growth and this is done by building a perimeter fence of hazel sticks and brushwood.

We then walked through areas that had been growing for different periods and it was easy to see how the undergrowth rapidly shoots up in newly cut areas



but then decreases year by year as the hazel bushes grow, so that by the 10th year, there is very little undergrowth, making it easier to coppice the hazel and so start the cycle again. We also walked through part of the wood that had been left unmanaged (i.e. no coppicing had been done in the last 20 years). Here the hazel has gradually lost its dominance of the woodland and the other trees have taken over.

Growth of the coppiced hazel produces long, straight poles which are sold locally for pea sticks, bean poles and binders used in hedge laying. Other wood is used for rustic furniture, and timber which cannot be used in its raw state is burnt to produce charcoal. Of course in medieval times, charcoal produced by coppicing was used extensively in Rockingham Forest for smelting iron. Today it is sold locally for barbeques, under the Rockingham Forest label.

Hugh and Carolyn had hoped to be able to show us charcoal burning in operation. However, the recent bad weather had delayed the emptying of their large charcoal kiln so they had hurriedly loaded up a much smaller kiln which had been burning for some 24 hours when we arrived. They judged from the thin blue hazy smoke issuing from the chimneys that the process was now complete and so they proceeded to demonstrate how they seal the inlets and chimneys with empty tin cans and sand to cut off the air flow to the kiln, thus causing the burning to stop and allowing the kiln to cool down before unloading.

With the aid of a photographic display Hugh and Carolyn explained the process of charcoal burning. The large kiln is a two metre diameter steel cylinder just over one metre high, with a saucepan-like lid. There are three inlet holes at ground level to take air into the centre of the kiln and three tall chimneys to allow exhaust gases to escape. They start by preparing the timber: hazel, oak, ash and field maple from trees they have coppiced, trimmed or felled. It is cut into pieces 30-50cm long and, if more than about 10cm in diameter, it is split. Basically the kiln is loaded with the smallest diameter timber at the bottom of the kiln, building up a tightly packed lattice until full. The kiln is lit by means of an oily rag placed in the centre at the bottom of the kiln though an inlet hole. Initially the lid is held



off the rim of the kiln until the fire is going well, then lowered into place and sealed, forcing the smoke to come out of the chimneys. The temperature inside the kiln gets up to over 400 degrees Celsius and the process takes 24-36 hours to turn the timber into charcoal. One ton of wood produces about 200 kilograms of charcoal.

Thanks to Hugh and Carolyn for a very informative, if wet, evening. One member remarked that he had been passing Rawhaw Wood for many years and had not realised what went on in that 'deep dark wood'. Even for those who had been before, it was remarkable to see how a medieval industry has been revived and was providing a valuable service and products while maintaining a living landscape.

Peter Perkins

The photographs show a stack of wood waiting for drying and Hugh and Carolyn at the smaller of the two kilns.

---oooOooo---

Blisworth Tunnel Boat Trip - 24th June

The sixteen intrepid tunnel explorers were lucky with the weather. It rained before we embarked and the sun came out. Well at least it was once we were through the tunnel. Actually we were fairly lucky to all be there as a multi vehicle accident at J16 on the M1 had caused chaos. I took over 45 mins to do what should have been a 15 min journey. Probably at about the same speed of a canal barge.

Apart from having a very pleasant canal cruise, in good company, the main focus of the evening was the 3,076-yard-long tunnel. It's the third longest in the UK and the longest self-navigable.

Originally opened in March 1805 having taken some 12 years to complete. [*webpage Engineering-Timelines.com is very good for technical info*]. There is a bit of variation, depending which info you read, on what actually happened. Initially having dug for 3 years the tunnellers struck quick sand and 14 of them died. A new course was started in May 1793. William Jessop was in charge and his Chief Engineer was James Barnes. Whilst the tunnel was being dug there was a tramway between Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne which is said to have been laid by the pioneer of tramways James Outram. By 1800 it was dual track to handle the volume of goods.

The aquafer comes down to the top of the tunnel bore. The tunnel lining was designed to allow surface water



Blisworth tunnel at Stoke Bruerne end

to drain in to the tunnel relieving pressure and topping up the water level. It is 'broad' throughout so two narrow barges can pass. No tow path was provided so legging was the order of the day. From 1871 steam tugs were available at extra cost. Today wider boats have to book passage and a locks man is required to control the tunnel access during the transit.

The bricks were made from clay dug just below the locks at Stoke Bruerne which today provides a 15-acre nature reserve and storage reservoirs for the canal. Eventually without being maintained the canal fell into disuse. Following the resurgence of canals for pleasure an extensive refurbishment saw it re-open in 1984. The central third of the tunnel was completely relined using completely circular segments. Examples can be seen on the bankside at both ends of the tunnel. It still allows for surface water drainage. Apparently it is wired up, data is still collected and helped with the calculations of the Euro and Crossrail tunnels.

There was much speculation, during our trip, over the original sections of the brick work with different sizes of brick and styles of bond. Each side look quite different and perhaps could have been worked by different teams. It was also noted that there were many ancient repairs.

As we emerged into the sun at Blisworth the Red Arrows, low, in close formation of two groups of five went past at considerable speed. We reflected on the rather slower pace of the canal. Even so the canals reduced the price of the goods they carried and opened up many new markets.

The old flour mill (1879) at Blisworth became a bonded spice and pepper warehouse and having fallen into disuse it was eventually converted into 21 luxury flats around 1990. A couple of the buildings on the opposite bank have been restored or extended with period brick and in period style which is rather nice.

An original bridge still has the metal work, now blue, protruding from recently concrete reinforcements. I believe it is an original Stephenson bridge.

Further along there are the old bridge abutments which originally carried the branch line to Peterborough c1845 from Blisworth station which opened in 1839 and closed in 1960. The engineer was Robert Stephenson.

Back to the canal. Today Inland Waterways has become the River Trust and has lots of volunteers doing very good work. Interestingly the Northampton Branch of the canal falls under the jurisdiction of the River Authority and pleasure craft require their specific licence to get to the new marina at Northampton. Holiday cruise boats are not allowed.

Fortunately, nobody fell in and apart from a few big drips, which always seem to find their way right down the back of your neck, we all made it back to Stoke Bruerne.

Mike Ringwood

Kettering walk - 1st July

It was a chill, showery Autumn evening that saw eleven hardy souls set out on the first July evening walk around the industrial north end of Kettering. The objective was to consider:-

1. Who developed the area?
2. What enabled it at that time?
3. Where did the inhabitants come from?
4. What did they produce?
5. Where and for whom did they produce it?

There was an entrepreneur named John Bryan (and his business partner John Meadows) who had started out working for the Gotch's. He and his partner had made a lot of money supplying boots for the French army during the Franco-Prussian war (1870/1). It was becoming easier to enfranchise land and with a view to exploiting the growing demand for footwear, they decided to invest this finance in land development. This they proceeded to do by purchasing most of the area between Wood Street/Princes Street and Bath Road/Rockingham Road (just short of). Agriculture was in depression so there was cheap labour aplenty in the surrounding villages. Kettering produced boots – military boots and working boots. The early factories were of a three (or four) storey construction and fairly small whilst the later ones became larger and mainly single story.

We started our walk at the Rockingham Road end of Havelock Street. At the end of a small alleyway (running alongside a smallish end gabled building originally built to house buses of the early United Bus Company) stands a small listed building that has recently been converted into three dwellings. This building is one of only two shown on the OS Map of 1884 (surveyed in 1883) and could possibly have been the premises of William Hanger who became the second largest employer in Kettering at that time. We moved on down the street to Wood Street Passage, to the corner building of the Kettering Co-op Boot & Shoe Manufacturing Society, with its splendid oriel window above the corner entrance. (photo right). Moving on around the corner into Wood Street, to the premises of Loake Bros – still producing on this site since 1901. Comparing the previous 1890s Co-op building with the 1900s building of Loakes illustrated the change from the earlier three storey format which operated as a hub from which out-workers would take materials away, make them up and return the semi finished items for payment, and the later, mainly



single storey, larger site which had machinery where the operators would work in-house.

From here we passed down the side of Rockingham Road Pleasure Park in whose conception J Bryan had been instrumental and for which he had provided a drinking fountain (which now stands in the Horsemarket). Then onto Morley Sreet to see Church's Closing Department in the original buildings of Smith, Sheffield & Foster's Premier Works – again still producing. At this stage the heavens opened so we rushed to the corner of Salisbury Street where a little shelter was available. From here we were looking at the other side of the previous building where a new kid on the block resides – Gaziano & Stirling – who have recently started making high quality men's footwear. While waiting for the rain to stop and savouring the smells percolating from the nearby Fish and Chip shop, Jane gave us an evocative recitation by Kettering's poet David Garrett, reproduced here by his kind permission, remembering Timpson's impressive building whose site was in Bath Road just 200 yards away.

Timpson's Shoe Factory

I heard it once described in rhyme
As an ocean liner, with lights that shine,
Timpson's factory with all its glass
That lit the road as by you passed.
Thin liner, landlocked, tired and old
Its epitaph now being told,
No wave to ride or wind caress
Deserted like Marie Celeste,
No power in the engine room,
Stands as silent as a tomb
Unwanted drifting aimlessly
Flotsam of our age you see.
Though people who once walked her deck
Still loved this broken down old wreck,
The glass now smashed, the lights are out,
No time now to turn about,
The rocks of time tear in its side
And demolition's crushing tide
Will break its back, from the skyline sink,
So from the past another link
Has gone, with one big mighty thrust
Another shoe factory's ground to the dust.

Returning up Wood Street via Munn and Felton's building which was later to become GUS (Footwear), the home of the famous Munn & Felton

Championship winning Brass Band. This band still exists today albeit under a different sponsorship and name. As we crossed Park Road corner an electricity sub-station revealed the site reference of “Goodman” who were leather dressers on this corner for most of the 20th century. Turning into Nelson Street we paused at the junction of Havelock Street at the corner site of the second Kettering Boot & Shoe Manufacturing Society premises. J Bryan had had these built for himself but had exchanged with the Co-op after they had outgrown their building in Wood Street Passage (previously viewed). It was pointed out during this pause the contribution that the supply of military footwear had made to the town. The biggest order ever placed in Kettering was in April 1916 from Russia for three million pairs of infantry boots and three million pairs of Cossack boots for the cavalry. In the four to five years up to December 1918 ten million pairs of boots were made in the town’s 34 factories. On the next corner with Regent Street stands Cannell & Date’s old factory which finished in 1981 after 96 years of heel making on this site. Going up Regent Street towards Rockingham Road our last building of the evening was the imposing edifice of Hales & Jowitt’s Regent Works. An interesting mix of architectural features. Tom Hales of the above duo told Tony Ireson in the 1930s about his grandfather who had made boots for the Duke of Wellington at his shop on Bakehouse Hill and displayed for many years above the door the coat of arms the Duke had given him as a sign of his satisfaction. The above partnership broke up in 1900 and Henry Wright & W Nichols operated from here until Wallis & Linnell moved in in 1924. It is now the Kettering Bedding Centre.

Ron Hanson

ARTICLES

J Sears & Co *True-form* Boot & Shoe Factory - Northampton

My hobby is architectural model making, specifically models of 1950s and 1960s Northampton, which will eventually comprise a large townscape on my model railway that is already 18 years in the making! I began building these models back in about 1996 and have completed around a dozen or so to date, each one taking an average of around three months to complete. Though most of them are of buildings from around the town centre area, I was also keen to model an example of a typical suburban shoe factory, the sort that could be found on the corner of many a street in the late 19th century, as the town grew beyond its mediaeval core.

My choice was limited by size due to the amount of space I had available, plus I was keen to model something that was no longer with us, in order to preserve a bit of the town’s history. It didn’t take me too long to decide on the *True-Form* factory in Stimpson Avenue (*site 76 in Peter Perkins’ recent book*) specifically the

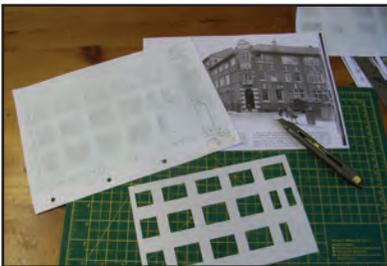
original part of the factory built on the corner of Adnitt Road. As a pupil at Stimpson Avenue School on the opposite side of the road from 1961 to 1968 I must have walked past this factory hundreds of times and probably never gave it a second thought!

The plans for J Sears & Co's factory were approved by the Borough Planners on 10th July 1903, the architect being J Ingman and the builders A P Hawtin. Subsequent expansion of the firm saw the factory develop northwards up Stimpson Avenue and eastwards along Adnitt Road and back as far as the Northampton Corporation Waterworks reservoir. Thankfully the frontages of these later developments have been incorporated into today's apartment blocks but unfortunately the original part was demolished in 1980, following the cessation of production in 1967 and the transfer of output to other British Shoe Corporation factories, most notably Manfield's on the Wellingborough Road.

My chosen modelling material is a plastic known as styrene, which will be familiar to those of us who have ever assembled Airfix kits, and got the polystyrene cement everywhere except the intended surface. Today the favoured adhesive is Liquid Poly which, as a solvent, melts the plastic together to form a bond. Styrene is very popular with modellers who 'scratchbuild' their models as it can be purchased in an assortment of sizes, profiles and surface finishes. It also readily takes both enamel and acrylic paint. With correct bracing, the models are robust and durable.

I start every modelling project with the creation of scale drawings of the building to be modelled. If a model is still in situ then site visits for measurements and the use of aerial photo websites normally provides all the data I need. With

the True-Form factory, however I had only old photos to work from. In photo 1, (left) I have drawn out one of the sides of the building to scale on graph paper and, having transferred the measurements to a sheet of styrene, have begun to cut out the window apertures. Many of the measurements needed can be gleaned from the fact that at 1:76 scale, each brick course is 1mm high,



as well as using other items in the photo (people, street furniture, vehicles etc) to use as size guides. The next stage is to build up the surface detail, as shown in photo 2 (right). Vacuum-formed brickwork sheets in a variety of bonds are available, and styrene strip is used for window framing, cills, lintels and



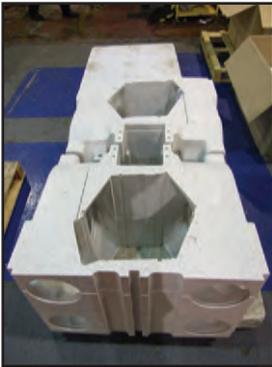
Memories of the 2016 Trips and Visits



Attaching a pre-moulded PVC sole unit to a shoe upper at *NPS Shoes*



At *Braunston* Peter Boyce stands in front of *Clent* which is in the throes of being restored. While we stayed in the dry he got a bit wet!



Finished moulds and a sample box at *DS Smith Plastics*.



Wortley Top Forge

Right: A display of spanners
Left: The toilet block
Below: Operating the valve for the water wheel



Below: Rusting trucks and track



Stoke Bruerne to Blisworth

Right: Through the tunnel
 Below: The boat for the trip
 Below right: The old bridge abutments



Frogmore Paper Mill

Left: Paper making machine circa 1895.
 Below: Making paper by hand



Right: The bed of the former Ashby Canal after grading the infill
 Below: one of the original bricks used on the new bridge



*EMIAAC
 at Moira*



Rawhaw Woods, Pipewell

Left to right: The Woods; A protected Orchid; Regenerated growth



Kettering

Loake Brothers factory and detail on the building



Leighton Buzzard Railway





Rushden walk

The former
Rushden
Windmill Club
with detail below



2016 Rail Tour



1

1. On Stamford station
2. Norwich Thorpe station
3. Members relaxing by the River Wensum, Norwich
4. Sheringham station

Photos: 1 & 2 – Barry Taylor
3 & 4 – Ron Whittaker



2

3

4



Kings Cross walk

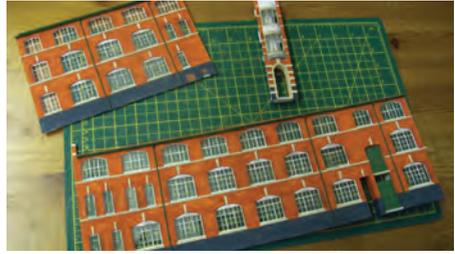


Art deco
detail
on new
building

Detail on Granary Square pavement



other architectural embellishments. Completed walls are shown in photo 3 (right) and demonstrate how advisable it is to do as much work on the walls in their flat state as possible before they are assembled into a 3-D structure. This includes painting the base coat in Humbrol enamels.



Once the walls are joined together the model begins to take shape. Photo 4 (left) shows the internal bracing which keeps the whole structure rigid and square. The roof formers are also in place ready to take the styrene slate sheets to form the roof.

Once everything is in place, it is necessary to 'weather', or tone-down

the bright, even paintwork to make the model more realistic. Today, we are quite used to seeing our old buildings looking clean but back when this factory was in its hey-day there was much more atmospheric pollution which rendered buildings a bit sooty and grimy. Weathering entails dirtying the model and is quite a scary process which has the potential to ruin all your previous hard work! My chosen method is to wipe most of the black paint from an old paintbrush onto some kitchen towel and then scrub a minimal layer of paint across all surfaces. It's a hard process to reverse if it goes wrong! Less is more! The resultant weathered effect is shown in the photo (right) which is the finished building. The completed model is about 7 inches x 16 inches and stands around 8 inches high.



Clive Hardwick

What a lot of dedicated work and how rewarding. Ed.

UPDATES

Leatherworks set to open by the summer of 2018

A bid to convert part of a grade II listed former ironworks in Northampton into a £5m centre for leatherworks will begin before the end of the year, according to council officials. Northampton Borough Council's plan to transform the disused Vulcan Works in Guildhall Road into a 'cultural hub' was originally meant to have come to pass by mid 2016, but the scheme was delayed while plans were redrawn. The refurbishment project, which is to take place in two phases, will first see part of the 19th century building developed into an institute for creative leather technologies and a leather conservation centre. Following that, the authority then wants to create a managed workspace for 60 businesses in the creative industry, which it says will create 200 jobs. The council has confirmed it will be enabling works to the leather centre 'later this year', with a completion placed for summer 2018. No start date has been set for the managed workspace next door, though when completed, both would be run by the university.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 29th September 2016.

The Vulcan works application now submitted

A planning application has now been submitted which, if approved, will move forward the University of Northampton's plans for an international centre of excellence for leather. Northampton Borough Council and the University have worked closely on the application, the first phase of which will see the creation of an Institute for Creative Leather Technologies and a Leather Conservation Centre.

This will be followed by the construction of managed workspaces for small creative industries, which will act as an incubator for around 100 businesses during its first ten years, creating up to 300 jobs. Jane Bunce, director of student and academic services, said: "*This planning application, if approved by the Council's planning committee, will enable the Vulcan Works to become a fantastic focal point to showcase the town's rich heritage of leather trade and industry. The Institute for Creative Leather Technologies and Leather Conservation Centre will reinvigorate the town's cultural quarter through the University's academic activities, industry connections and the support available for those working within the creative industries.*"

Work will commence on the £12,445 million facility in the New Year. The Institute for Creative Leather Technologies would be housed in the Grade II listed Vulcan Works building in Guildhall Road, featuring bespoke laboratories for the University's leather technology courses. It will include innovation, analytical, and research labs, and a microscopy room, alongside teaching spaces, offices and workshops. The managed workspaces are designed to be an incubator for new and existing creative industries, with units between 13sqm and 85sqm available. These will benefit from a managed reception and shared kitchens.

Once complete, the leatherworking elements will be taken by the University on

a long lease with an option to buy. The managed workspaces will be operated by the University on behalf of the council, which will retain ownership.

Taken from www.watersidecampus website – 20th November 2016

Canal Consultation launched - Daventry

A surprise consultation has been launched into revised plans for the controversial Daventry Canal Arm. This was launched on Thursday 22nd September. The DDC is seeking detailed planning permission for the proposed 2.6km stretch of waterway which would connect the nearby Grand Union Canal to Daventry town centre. The planning process has been dormant for some years, but now DDC is moving forward with the scheme once more, it seems. The council has updated the planning application with new information, including changes to bridges and ground levels and a revised environmental statement. The application only deals with the proposed waterway from Northern Way, near the iCon centre, out to the Grand Union Canal. The waterside development proposed by DDC is not included. The canal would leave the Grand Union Canal and head towards Daventry, skirting the eastern edge of Daventry County Park, ending in a mooring basin just before the Northern Way underpass through to Eastern Way. The underpass was originally constructed with carrying the canal under the road in mind. *(at the time all denied by the DDC, but at the same time confirmed by the NCC who said they were doing it on behalf of the DDC! Ed).*

The plans show a canal with a series of locks along it, rather than a boatlift. But *(there's always a but)* the application could be updated or altered to incorporate a lift.

Daventry Express – 29th September 2016.

Northgate bus station, Northampton news

1 - Pollution in and around

A controversial series of policies could be seriously damaging the health of people in Northampton, a former MP claims, after pollution figures revealed the area around the town's bus station to be 25% higher than legal limits. It is understood that the Green Party has been carrying out tests, using industry-standard methods. Their latest batch of results show the area around the £7m North Gate bus station to be well above the legal limits. The EU-set upper watermark for nitrogen dioxide is 40 micrograms per cubic metre – but outside the oft clogged-up streets around the bus station, that figure is 53 micrograms. The former MP goes on to cite other schemes that the Borough Council have been responsible for over the past decade or so and it's a case of watch this space for changes of mind to re-site the bus station *(the former Grosvenor site springs to mind)* and for Abington Street to return to being a pedestrianised area once more.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 29th September 2016

2 - Illegal levels of fumes began as the bus station opened

New air pollution figures obtained from NBC show levels have exceeded the

legal limit on most days since the £7m bus station was built, according to the county's Green Party branch. It is now believed that the spike in pollution was not just a one-off. Figures obtained show the borough councils own pollution monitors have registered illegal limits 80% of the time since the station was opened. It would seem that the yearly averages for 2014 and 2015 are both above the legal limits. The figures for 2013 show this issue is directly related to the opening of the new bus station. In 2013 the average levels were between 32 and 37 microgrammes. But there is a marked rise in the figures since the bus station was built in March 2014 – nitrogen levels rose to between 42 and 50 microgrammes in 2014 and between 41 and 53 in 2015.

Northampton Chronicle and Echo – 10th November 2016

Former Gas building to be council house office HQ

Acres of land once home to a large gas holder in the centre of Northampton could be bought up by the borough council for £1.5m as a new headquarters for local authority homes. Northampton Borough Council's cabinet is set to decide whether to agree terms for the purchase of the former power company building at



St Peter's Way roundabout. It would provide a new base for Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH), which is currently based at the council's Westbridge Depot and has around 300 staff. The site is currently owned by National Grid and is part of a former gas works that covered a wider area. It contains a building known as

Horizon House on its northern edge, which the council would effectively extend to accommodate NPH staff.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 20th October 2016

Looking at the site of the actual brick built building I can't see how 300 staff will fit in to it – but an extension is planned! It always beggers belief that councils can find the money to purchase yet more buildings for their staff and to knock down perfectly adequate buildings that suited the purpose because they think it's a good idea, and yet can't find the money to maintain them. Ed.

MISCELLANY ITEMS OF INTEREST

A York Heritage group hits out over tower plan

The Twentieth Century Society group has objected to plans to turn the famous clock tower at York's old Terry's factory into 22 flats. They say the planning application '*falls below the standard required for a Grade II listed building*' and therefore

it cannot comment meaningfully on the impact. However, it said the society did have concerns about the potential loss of interior details and about the addition of rooftop pods, which it said would be overbearing in size, would change the building's profile and would be constructed with '*unsympathetic materials*'. They have found that the conservation statement is in places contradictory and the drawings provided are insufficient to enable them to comment conclusively. It was revealed last week that plans to use the tower for commercial or community purposes use, which would have allowed public access, had been ditched by developers Henry Boot Developments Ltd and PJ Livesey Living Space who said they had proved unviable.

A letter to the council is said to say that the Terry's complex, off Bishopthorpe Road, was an important group of interwar commercial buildings because of its significance in the development of chocolate manufacturing. It is said that the design '*reflects the character of enlightened industrial paternalism of a major employer*'.

York Herald – 12th August 2016

Medieval wreck is saved for the nation

She is trapped between land and sea, a skeletal survivor from Britain's maritime past. The small wooden trading vessel emerged from the River Axe in Devon a decade ago, almost 600 years after she sank into the mud. Now the ship has been given protected status after a survey of wrecks by Historical England. Two 18th century merchant ships, whose remains lie a few hundred yards apart on the shore at Westwood Ho! in north Devon, have joined the Axe boat as scheduled ancient monuments. Of the 37,000 recorded wrecks from the prehistoric era to the present day, only 4 per cent are known to date to before 1840. Joe Flatman of Historic England said: "*The Axe boat deep down there in the mud is really quite a rare survivor. We don't know if it was lost in a storm or abandoned but there are very few vessels from that period.*"

What all three ships have in common is they are accessible to the public at low tide. One is believed to be the *Sally*, a 23m-long cargo vessel carrying port from Portugal to Bristol, which ran aground in a storm in 1769. Her cargo has long since been drunk but the intention is to protect her for archaeologists. The other is a once-common trading boat known as a Severn Trow. Mr Flatman said: "*We don't want to stop holidaymakers visiting the site. This just means they won't be able to dig it up or take bits away.*" The Axe boat's timbers have been dated to 1400. The mid-14th century Axmouth accounted for about 15 per cent of the country's shipping trade.

The Times – August 15th 2016

London Transport Museum

"*The Covent Garden site is secure for at least another seven years*", said Sam Mullins, the Museum's Director at a recent Volunteers Day, adding that the Museum is preparing its first *five year plan*. Awareness is high of the District Line's 150th

anniversary in 2018 and perhaps the Q stock train may be ready in time for that. Sarah Siddons is in for major works and will emerge in 2018 fit for further service.

TfLISHG – Bulletin, September 2016

DNA reveals Crossrail skeletons were victims of London's 1665 plague

Skeletons excavated at Liverpool Street, London, as part of the Crossrail programme have been found to contain DNA of the bacteria responsible for the 1665 Great Plague. A mass grave dating from 1650-1670 was discovered within the New Churchyard in 2015. Samples from 20 individuals were tested for traces of the plague pathogen *Yersinia pestis*, with five found to have been exposed to it before they died. Due to the disease's virulence, it is likely that this exposure was the cause of death.

This is the first identification of plague DNA from 17th century Britain. The bacteria itself perished days after the individuals died 351 years ago and is no longer active. The Great Plague of 1665 was the last major bubonic plague epidemic in Britain. It killed an estimated 100,000 people in London, almost a quarter of the population. Despite the scale, the pathogen responsible has eluded detection as the fast-acting disease left no traces on skeletons and the DNA has a low-survival rate when buried in the ground for hundreds of years. Scientists at the Max Planck Institute in Jena (Germany) were able to isolate this DNA from teeth extracted from the skeletons. The enamel on the teeth acted as protective capsules, preserving the DNA of bacteria that was in the person's bloodstream at the time of death. In total 42 bodies were excavated from the mass grave, but archaeologists estimate that it may have contained as many of 100 people.

Rail magazine – 28th September-11th October 2016

Platform rediscovered on the Leicester & Swannington Railway

A blue-brick platform believed to be part of the city's original 1832 terminus of the Leicester and Swannington Railway has been rediscovered in undergrowth. Leicester Industrial History Society (LIHS) wants it to be restored as a visitor attraction.

Rail magazine – 28th September-11th October 2016

Storms reveal hidden 2ft gauge railway

I came across this story while having a sort out of papers on my desk, whilst late nonetheless, it is still of interest to one and all. Ed

The full force of North Sea winter and spring storms have revealed the remains of a 2ft gauge railway, dating from the Second World War, at the seaside Tentsmuir Nature Reserve, near St Andrews, Fife. The first signs of the line emerged from the reserve's sand dunes in 2010 when a wagon chassis and a short section of portable track were found by rangers. Now further track has emerged from the

dunes and reserve manager Tom Cunningham, has been able to piece together more information about the line.

He said: “*We were surprised when the first remains appeared, but now we know that it was an RAF-built line, probably just under a mile long. The chassis we have is from a Hudson tipper wagon, dating from the First World War and pressed back into action because of the Second World War. It was used to build and maintain the line and the track was lifted and laid in various formations to allow a powered wagon to be run out along it carrying a target, built of wood to look like a tank, which was shot at by planes on training from RAF Leuchars. The target wagon was either drawn by a cable or was self-powered – we don’t know which. We’ve restored and mounted the wagon-chassis and have made the railway remains a feature of our timeline interpretative project.*”

A local man provided details about the line and how he and his friends played on it in 1945 as 15 year-olds, collecting spent Spitfire ammunition cartridges and selling them for scrap at 9d per pound. There were other similar lines at other RAF target practice areas around Britain in wartime. The Tentsmuir line was simply abandoned after the war and shifting sands engulfed it until parts began to re-emerge 65 years after it last ran.

Old Glory – April 2013

----oooOooo----

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTY

Nameplate ‘Pitsford’ sells for £3,000.

Member Barry Smith sent in an interesting snippet about the above nameplate which was sold at auction in September 2016. He tells me that he attended the auction and that there was considerable interest in the Lot and the hammer price at £3,000 was three times the top of the estimate range! He says that one can only reflect how close that might come to the original supply price of the locomotive in 1923.

The following therefore is taken from the *Sales Catalogue of the Great Central Railwayman Auction on the 3rd September 2016*.

A nameplate, PITSFORD, from a standard gauge 060ST built by Avonside, Works No.1917, and new in December 1923 to Pitsford Ironstone Co at Pitsford Quarries, Northamptonshire. The company became part of Staveley Minerals Ltd in March 1961 and was taken over by Byfield Ironstone Co from September 1962. After the Quarries closed in August 1965 this loco was acquired for preservation by Mr E E Kimbell of Boughton in July 1968 and later went to the Fawley Hill Railway where it remained until 1972. It then went to the Nene Valley Railway and, following renaming as **The Earl Fitzwilliam**, it moved to the Elsecar Heritage Railway near Barnsley where it resides today, awaiting overhaul. Cast brass, 35”x 6¼”, the front repainted. £700-1000.

Canal to get new lock gates

Work to improve lock gates on the Grand Union Canal is being carried out this winter. The Canal & River Trust will replace the gates at lock no.6 (near Milton Malsor) and refit the gates at lock 15 (near Hunsbury Hill) on the Northampton Arm of the canal. It will also replace and refit nine sets of gates at Stoke Bruerne, refit the lock gates at Cosgrove Lock. Each new made-to-measure lock gate weighs several tonnes, and is handcrafted from seasoned oak to fit perfectly in the lock chamber.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 6th October 2016

Former Northampton Castle site - 1

More than 700 people have signed a petition calling on the county council to reignite plans for a park celebrating Northampton Castle, after the authority appeared to change its mind on the scheme last year. Back in 2013, the council agreed to buy the ugly 1980s-built Marefair office block once used by Barclaycard, so the site could be transformed into a new ‘public space and urban parkland.’ The idea was that a park could celebrate the site of the Northampton’s 1084-built castle on which it stood. Two years later, that commitment appeared to have been scrapped when the authority hired an architect to draw up plans for 30 homes there instead.

But today (6th October) the Friends of Northampton Castle group is due to hand in a 711-name petition calling for County Hall to get the park plan back on track. The organiser says: “*it shows that, across the town, there is a strong feeling people would like to see the heritage of the town celebrated more effectively.*”

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 6th October 2016

Former Northampton Castle site - 2

Plans to put a row of townhouses on a site once earmarked for a heritage park will look like some ‘faux Disney’ version of a 17th-century Northampton that never existed, according to a local preservation group. Although NCC promised to create a park on the land once occupied by the Castle House office block in Marefair back in 2013, it finally looks set to abandon the plans completely. The authority has commissioned ‘renowned architects’ Quinlan and Francis Terry to draw up plans for townhouses on the land it owns, which it claims will be in keeping with the historical nature of the site. However the Chairman of the Friends of Northampton Castle, Dr Marie Dickie OBE, feels the new plans look totally out of keeping.

Northampton Chronicle & Echo – 10th November 2016

From the mock-up picture in the paper I couldn't agree more with Dr Dickie and what a complete volte face by the Council. The original plan of a park would have been really lovely and a nice place to pause on the way to or from the Station. Ed

OF THIS AND THAT

AGM: November 2016

This was well attended and Peter conducted the meeting with his usual expertise and beat his record at 6 minutes. Members will be pleased to note that subscriptions will remain as current for the 1917/18 financial year and is due to careful husbandry by Terry. Membership is slowly increasing with another new member joining us at the AGM. The talk which followed by Mary Matts about Foxton Locks was most interesting and the report for this will come to you next year. It may well be that a visit to the Locks will be on the agenda for the 2017 summer walks and visits.

Web-site: Please note that the web-site has reverted back to www.niag.org.uk as and from January 2017. This will now reflect on all the NIAG publicity literature and formal correspondence. The former URL will redirect users to the new site; the content of the old site will not be updated. *TW*

Winter Programme 2017

- 10th February The Stratford & Midland Junction Railway 1866 to the present day – Barry Taylor
- 10th March Delapre Abbey – Restoring Northampton's Great Survivor – Margaret Hawkins

Dates for the Diary

- 5th May Summer Programme commences. Programme with next issue.
- 6th May 2017 EMIAC 92 at Cromford Mills, Derbyshire. Flyer for the day is enclosed for full details.
- August B/H AIA Conference to be based in Northampton. No details at present. Note: This is **not** being organised by NIAG 'though we will have some input.
- 21st October EMIAC 93 – NIAG will be hosting the day. Keep this date in your diary and details will be available after May.

Exhibitions

4th November to 1st March 2017:

Maps and the 20th Century; Drawing the Line – British Library, London. Cost £12/£10. Bookable online in advance. www.bl.uk A look at 100 years of mapping technology from the original sketch of today's London Underground to the satellite imagery of the 1990s, depicting and shaping our worlds. The exhibition covers two World Wars, moon landings, digital revolution in mapping plus the role these maps played during the 20th century.

Test your knowledge – a fun quiz

I got this idea from a ‘Pointless’ quiz programme back in January 2016 and managed to get all the questions right – for a change! None of those that were put up on the screen turned out to be a pointless answer which meant that the people asked in the first instance obviously knew their towns and cities.

Good Luck and the answers will be found on the inside back cover.

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | _____bury Wells | _____derton | _____by |
| 2 | _____smouth | _____isdown | _____merion |
| 3 | _____ngollen | _____ndigai | _____ndudno |
| 4 | _____thampton | _____wich | _____ton |
| 5 | _____dee | _____geness | _____mow |
| 6 | _____castle | _____haven | _____port |
| 7 | _____dgewater | _____dgend | _____dgenorth |
| 8 | _____lingborough | _____ton | _____ford |
| 9 | _____ston | _____stwick | _____stain |
| 10 | _____ford | _____sey | _____ney |

Thank you to Ron and Barry for their photographic contributions to this newsletter.

And Finally:

Two completely different end-of-newsletter items this time. The first has been sent in by member Graham Cadman which makes fun reading. The second I spotted when reading the September 2016 issue of *Britain at War* and it behoves us all to think what we are doing when reaching into sacks – read on.

What’s in a name? A dog called Tray

The well-known memorial to Robert Mossendew (died in 1744) on the left above the doorway into St Mary’s Church, Harefield, Middlesex, shows a huntsman/gamekeeper (‘faithful servant’) of William Ashby of Breakspears. With gun in hand he is accompanied by his dog: *Spaniel of true English kind*’ In typical 18th century fashion there is an accompanying verse ending with ‘*This servant in an honest way, In all his actions copy’d Tray*’. The author is not sure if Robert Mossendew’s actions being compared to those of a dog is particularly complimentary, but we must suppose it was meant well.

The author goes on to discuss other mentions of dogs named 'Tray'. He mentions Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) in a poem entitled *The Harper* wrote, '*And wherever I went, was my poor dog Tray*'. Heinrich Hoffman (1809-1874) wrote in a poem for his children entitled *Cruel Fredric* the line, '*The trough was full and faithful Tray, Came out to drink one sultry day*'. And again, '*At this good Tray grew very red, And growled and bit him till he bled*'.

A later reference is from the American composer Stephen Foster (1826-1864), still well known for such songs as *Jeanie with the light brown hair*, and *Swanee River*. His *Old Dog Tray* is a typical sentimental lyric '*The morn of life is past, And ev'ning comes at last. It brings me a dream of a once happy day, Of merry forms I've seen, Upon the village green, Sporting with my old dog Tray*'.

The author after some research found that the name Tray was used by Shakespeare in his play *King Lear* of 1605. Lear, his wits lost, raves, '*The little dogs and all, Tray, Blanch and Sweetheart, see them bark at me*'. This clearly suggests that as a dogs name, Tray was already well known in Elizabethan times.

Colin Bowlt – London & Middlesex Archaeological Society – May 2014

---oooOooo---

Shock horror in a sack of potatoes.

A French chef received a shock in July (2016) after he discovered a grenade while preparing food. According to restaurant owner, Kèvin Bèatrix, the chef was peeling potatoes when he reached into the paper sack and pulled out the rusty grenade. The potatoes had come from Northern France, where the discovery of bombs, shells, and other items is so common that each year an 'iron' harvest of such devices takes place, although it is unusual that unexploded ordnance remains undiscovered for so long.

Staggeringly, when called to the restaurant in La Fièche, 160 miles west of Paris, the Gendarmerie were sceptical and required proof that the surreal event was not a hoax, taking ten days to dispose of the device. However, they rapidly identified the device on the day of discovery as a Second World War variant of the ubiquitous British 'Mills Bomb' and that it had not been fused.

Battle of Britain – September 2016

Has anything caught your eye which you might like to send me for the 'And Finally' section? Always on the look-out for odd little stories for the end of the newsletter. They can be funny or serious, anecdotal or short, but nothing too long please. Ed.

Answers to the Pointless question

- | | | | |
|---|---------|----|--------|
| 1 | Ten___ | 6 | New___ |
| 2 | Port___ | 7 | Bri___ |
| 3 | Lla___ | 8 | Wel___ |
| 4 | Nor___ | 9 | Pre___ |
| 5 | Dun___ | 10 | Rom___ |



Regents Canal at Granary Square, Kings Cross

Coming Up

The remaining 2016 summer reports including

Rushden Boot & Shoe 3, Frogmore Paper Mill, Kings Cross
and Leighton Buzzard

EMIAC at Lincoln

Book reviews

The 2017 EMIAC conference organised by NIAG



Quarry at the Stonehenge end of the Leighton Buzzard Railway

Unless stated all photographs are credited to Jane and Terry Waterfield.

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Newsletter

Next Issue: **April 2017**

Deadline for all articles and information 1st March 2017. Anything received after this date will be held over to the next edition.

Article guidelines: Ideally should be no more than about 1200 words, unless the article is of a special interest and accompanied by photographs or diagrams. Shorter articles are always welcome. Photographs will be inserted if submitted and the Editor is happy to discuss the author's requirements.

Please submit by e-mail, fax or mail. Where possible photographs are encouraged to illustrate all articles. When submitting photographs via e-mail, the picture should be no larger than 250,000 pixels in JPEG format and should be sent as separate attachments. Please give information about the photograph. Photographs/slides sent by post (first class) will be returned to you the same way. Please also include your name and address so that you can be credited with taking those photographs and don't forget to put a caption with them.