Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

Focus

on Industrial Archaeology

No. 98 December 2022

Great Musgrave bridge: Concrete must be removed by October 2023

(BBC Cumbria, 6 October 2022)

Hundreds of tonnes of concrete poured under a Victorian railway bridge will have to be removed by next October, councillors have ruled. The government's National Highways (NH) department carried out the work at Great Musgrave, Cumbria, last year as it said the structure was unstable. Eden District Council refused retrospective planning permission in June and has now served an enforcement notice. NH said it would abide by the order.

The bridge, built in 1862, was infilled in July 2021 with NH arguing it could collapse if used by heavy vehicles. The concrete was then grassed over, but more than 800 people lodged objections with critics warning it was "cultural vandalism". The council issued the enforcement notice following the end of a period during which NH could appeal against the rejection of its retrospective application. A spokesman said it would be effective from Tuesday 11 October, adding: "This means remedial works must be completed within 12 months of this date – to remove all infilling and to restore the bridge and surrounding landscape to their condition prior to the unauthorised works being carried out."

Graeme Bickerdale, of the Historical Railways Estate group, described the move as "good news" for people opposed to the infill, which he said had cost NH £124,000 with a further amount of up to £431,000 allocated for the removal work. Once completed, he believes the bridge can be linked to heritage railways at nearby Warcop and Stainmore. Hélène Rossiter, head of NH's Historical Railways Estate programme, said the organisation's removal of the infill would be "fully compliant with the enforcement notice". She added: "This will return the bridge, and adjacent slopes, to the condition they were in before the infill was carried out."

[In a BBC Cumbria interview in June, Hélène Rossiter had commented: "We have listened to the feedback on this issue and earlier this year amended our processes to ensure full planning permission is sought before carrying out work like this in the future." She said future works would be judged on "heritage or ecological value" and NH would "no longer consider the infilling of any structures unless there is absolutely no alternative".]

Heritage at Risk Register 2022

Historic England has released its Heritage at Risk Register for 2022 with 175 historic buildings and sites added. Among the landmarks at risk are the Tank House in Merseyside – the best surviving example of a late 19th century glass-making tank furnace, Papplewick Pumping Station in Nottingham – England's only pumping station to still have all its original features, and experimental concrete homes in Essex.

Over the past year, 233 sites have been saved and their futures secured. The buildings that have been rescued are often done so through the hard work and dedication of local communities. In 2021/22, Historic England awarded £8.66 million in repair grants to 185 sites on the Heritage at Risk Register. In addition to this, 15 sites have benefitted from £3.25 million in grants from the heritage at risk strand of the Culture Recovery Fund during 2021/22. These grants help with emergency repairs to historic buildings and help protect the livelihoods of dedicated people who run and maintain the historically rich places.

Duncan Wilson, chief executive of Historic England said: "As the threat of climate change grows, the re-use and sensitive upgrading of historic buildings and places becomes ever more important. Finding new uses for buildings and sites rescued from the Register avoids the high carbon emissions associated with demolishing structures and building new."

Those listed in Hampshire are existing entries, including Bursledon Brickworks (Listed Building Grade II*, Brick Kiln, Chimney, Drying Sheds, Boiler and Engine House, Condition "Poor"), Priddy's Hard (Conservation Area, Condition "Very bad and deteriorating significantly") and the Hammerhead Crane at Cowes (Listed Building Grade II*, Condition "Poor"). But by far the worst is Haslar Gunboat Yard – Gunboat Sheds and Workshops (Listed Building Grade I and CA, Condition: Very bad); Gunboat Yard Boundary Walls, Watchtowers and Gates (Listed Building Grade II*, part in CA, Condition: Poor); Former Guard House (Listed Building Grade II*, CA, Condition: Very bad); Gunboat Traverser System (Scheduled Monument, part in CA, Condition: Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems, Trend: Declining).

HAMPSHIRE INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY
(formerly Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group)

Meetings – January to July 2023

January 9	**History of the river at Bursledon** – *Jeff Martin*
February 6	**King George V Graving Dock, Southampton** – *Nick Braddock*
March 6	**Railways around Romsey from the 1950s** – *Neil Kearns*
April 3	**Flying Boats: to the ends of the Empire and back** – *Stephen Hoadley*
April 24	**Members' Evening**
June 5	**The Man with the Pointy Stick: Ordnance Survey Revision Points** – *Barry Kitchen*
July 3	**Floating Bridges of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight** – *Jim Beckett*

Meetings are held monthly on Mondays in the Underhill Centre, St John the Evangelist Church, St John's Road, Hedge End, Southampton, SO30 4AF, commencing at 7.45pm

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

Subscriptions for the membership year commencing November 2022 are now due. The rates – unchanged – are as follows:

- **Ordinary £20 –** *single member*
- **Joint £30** – *two members at the same address, sharing notices and publications*
- **Reduced £15** – *one or more members at the same address, but not normally attending meetings because of infirmity or distance from Hampshire*

Either:

- Pay by bank transfer if you are able to do so. Our account details are:
  - *Name:* **Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society**
  - *Bank name:* **Lloyds** *Sort code*: **30-90-34** *Account*: **01482051**
  - *Reference:* **SUBS *surname*** (or as much of it as you can fit in the field)
- Send a cheque payable to **HIAS** to me at ***13 Ashley Close, Winchester SO22 6LR*** (enclose an SAE if you require a receipt).
- Or pay them to me at the next meeting.

To those of you who have already paid your subscriptions, many thanks.

GIFT AID

If you have signed a Gift Aid Declaration, HIAS can reclaim the tax you have paid on your subscription, providing you pay enough tax. You must be paying UK income tax or capital gains tax each tax year (6 April to 5 April) at least equal to the tax that all the Charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs to which you donate will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year. Note that other taxes such as VAT and council tax cannot be counted for Gift Aid purposes. If you no longer pay (enough) tax, please advise me and I will update our records.

CHANGE of ADDRESS

If you change your address or email, it is important that you let me know as soon as possible. Otherwise you run the risk of missing out on communications.

Keith Andrews, Membership Secretary, hpdn.ka@ntlworld.com

Heritage of Industry tours in 2023

2023 tours are being planned, please visit the website to register interest. There will be an **Industrial Explorer** based in Swansea *(April 20- 23)* concentrating on metal refining, also visiting Aberdulais Aqueduct and the site of the Mumbles Railway. The **AIA Spring Tour** *(May 8-14)* is to Portugal (Lisbon and Porto) including a tramway museum and a funicular ride in Lisbon, a 15th century tide mill museum in Corroios, a steam pumping station, hydroelectric power station (not confirmed), a rebuilt travelling steam crane in Porto, a railway museum and a textile industry museum. The autumn **City Safari** *(September 14-17)* is based in Amsterdam mostly covering 19th and 20th century development of port and transport links, using trams to get around.
Further information on Heritage of Industry tours for 2023, see website at https://www.heritageofindustry.co.uk

Reports on Meetings, January to June 2022

Carol Burdekin

Our **July** meeting started with the Chairman reading out the usual notices, and then asking for volunteers for the teas and coffee. We were grateful to Angie and Jim Beckett for putting their hands up once again to do the honours. Howard then introduced our speaker for the evening, who really did not need any introduction, as **Dr Carolyn Haynes** has spoken to us in the past on *Buriton Chalk Pits*, and the lottery funding obtained for the brickworks, plus was one of our speakers at the SERIAC Conference which HIAS hosted in 2015. This evening her talk was titled ***Bursledon Brickworks***, being just down the road from us, so to speak.

Beginning her talk with the Romans – although brick making had been around before then – it was not so popular in Britain as we preferred wood and wattle & daub for construction purposes. Each Roman Legion made their own bricks stamping their own individual motif on each brick, and Carolyn illustrated this with a photograph of some original Roman bricks in the Roman Baths at Bath. As using bricks in the construction of buildings became more popular and widespread, including their use in monasteries and large houses [both illustrated], the process evolved and improved. We looked at the difference between Georgian and Victorian bricks, and Carolyn took us through the process of making bricks by hand.

We then moved on to the Bursledon Brickworks itself, which was built in 1897 by Robert and Edward Ashby. The Ashby family were partners in Hooper & Ashby, a Southampton-based builders' merchants, both families being Quakers. Before acquiring the land to build the Brickworks, they were trading as successful builders' merchants, selling all kinds of building materials including their own bricks. Their express aim with the new site was to produce one million bricks a year, and to make bricks all year round in large quantities. Using a large brick-making machine made by Bennett & Sayer in Derby, this machine was known as a "stiff clay extruder" run by a steam engine built by John Wood & Sons in Wigan. Once the bricks were made they were dried in large drying sheds, which were heated by underfloor pipes, and when dried completely were taken down to the kiln. Each kiln chamber could hold up to 26,000 bricks at one time, hence the kiln was always burning. In 1903 the name of the brickworks was changed to The Bursledon Brick Company Limited: this coincided with the extension of the southern complex, and the addition of another complete works to the north. It was extended again in 1935 with the addition of a third unit. With all this extra capacity, the brickworks was producing over 20 million bricks per year. After WW2, the business was amalgamated with the Sussex & Dorking Brick Company and, in 1959, became Redland Holdings Limited.

Bursledon Brickworks today is now a museum housing the only remaining steam-driven brickworks in the country. Closed in 1974, the men working in the brickworks [and they were mostly men] in the 1970s were working in the same way as their Victorian forefathers. Although all the machinery is still there, they do not make bricks commercially any more, but they do have a large collection on display. It was in the 1980s that it was decided to conserve the site and was saved from demolition by the Hampshire Preservation Trust, and the south section of the brickworks, which houses the brick kiln, chimney, drying sheds, boiler and engine house are Grade II* listed. The north section was demolished, and the land acquired by the National Air Traffic Services [NATS]. They have provided the funds for the Swanwick Lakes Wildlife Reserve project, which is managed by the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

Bursledon Brickworks has had National Lottery funding and is now a Charitable Trust, changing its name to Bursledon Brickworks Museum Trust in 2016. Open three days a week, it does have an excellent café. Many thanks to Carolyn for coming along and telling us all about the Brickworks' fascinating history, and the efforts which have gone in to preserving it. Plus the history of the brick, being one of the oldest forms of building material, having been made for thousands of years, from mud dried left in the open to dry for months, to the fired bricks the Romans produced.

August's meeting was ***Members' Evening***, and we had four speakers from the group who came along to talk to us on quite different topics. The first talk was by **Jim Beckett** on ***The Demolition of Southampton Power Station*****.** Jim's talk began with a short home movie from 1970 of Southampton Power Station when it was still in operation, showing how it dominated the views around that part of the city. It was then explained that this was not the first power station, as an earlier one was built by the Southampton Electric Lighting and Power Company in the old town in 1891. This was purchased by Southampton Corporation in 1897 which then went on to build a new power station on reclaimed land near the Central Station in 1902.

A short description of the operation and plant followed, and then photographs were shown outlining the demolition of the power station in 1977. The talk concluded with brief descriptions of the other power stations in the vicinity of Southampton, Marchwood and Fawley, and a comparison of how the output of electricity had increased from 1897 to the present day. [Above supplied by Jim Beckett].

Next up came **Keith Andrews** on ***Trams in Europe*** which consisted of tram systems from all over Europe in no particular date, or order. Keith said he had visited every country in Europe, and very many of their tram systems over the years, and amongst the thousands of photos taken, he hopes the ones shown this evening will be of interest to HIAS members. Keith's only caveat was that he really couldn't tell us much about the types of trams shown, although most European ones are Tatras, as he is more interested in the street scenes and the tram networks themselves.

Although some of Keith's photos were taken quite a long time ago, some being better quality than others, they were nevertheless extremely interesting. However, notwithstanding the title, Keith started off with photos of some trams in Toronto, where he happened to be on business. These consisted of some old and new trams with trolley poles in downtown Toronto and the Waterfront. Next we saw photos of trams in Sarajevo, Basel, Romania, Amsterdam, Mallorca, Latvia, Poland, Germany, Sweden etc. Keith's last photo was quite poignant, as it was taken in 2016 and depicted a trolleybus in front of the Azovstal Steelworks in Mariupol, Ukraine, where so many people sheltered and held out against the Russians this year. The image was produced by the *Light Rail Transit Association* as part of a tram calendar in support of Ukraine with pictures by Mike Russell. Although Keith's talk only lasted about 15 - 20 minutes, we felt we had travelled a fair way around Europe without leaving the meeting room, so thanks to Keith for an interesting journey by tram.

Our third speaker was our Journal Editor, **Martin Gregory** on ***Eugene Bourdon's Engine***, the inventor of the Bourdon tube pressure gauge, patented in Paris in 1849. Bourdon was born in Paris in 1808, the son of a silk merchant. From an early age he showed an interest in mechanical devices and, after spending two years in Germany to learn German, he went back to Paris to assist his father. When his father died and, after working in an optician's shop, he set up his own workshop specialising in scientific instruments and model steam engines. It was whilst searching for a mechanism to measure gas pressure, he imagined using the bending of a circular tube made of metal with good elastic properties. From this he developed the Bourdon tube pressure gauge. His invention was crowned with the gold medal at the World's Fair in 1849 two years later. Martin ended his talk with a picture of Bourdon's tomb in Paris in the Cemetery of the Pere Lachaise, where he was buried alongside other notable French figures including Chopin, Proust, Wilde, Sarah Bernhardt and Edith Piaf, etc. During Martin's talk, he displayed a model he had brought along of a "Bourdon Engine" which was one of three he had made using a Bourdon tube as a driving element.

Our last speaker of the evening was **John Rothery** on ***The Canal Basins at Stourport-on-Severn***. John told us that the Stourport Canal Basins still remain largely intact from the golden age of canal travel in the late 1700s to the early 1800s, and in 2008 had undergone a major regeneration programme. Stourport Canal Basins are made up of five historic basins, home to over a 100 narrowboats and yachts, plus five canal locks and a dry dock, all located on the banks of the River Severn in the Severn Valley. It is said that James Brindley chose Stourport rather than Bewdley for his canal because the citizens of Bewdley did not want his "stinking ditch" passing through their town. In fact, Stourport made far more sense from a topographical point of view as a canal joining the River Severn at Bewdley would have needed to cross several hills. Joining the Severn at Stourport meant it could follow the Stour valley, which made construction a lot cheaper. Because of the canal, the town rapidly expanded, and the aim of the regeneration was to bring the Stourport Canal Basins and their surroundings back to the vibrant and sustainable use they once were. This was aptly illustrated by John's excellent photographs including not just the canal, but the canal locks, and the regeneration of the whole area including housing and work places.

September's report was written by Howard Sprenger

On **Monday 5th September** we were treated to a very interesting talk about the history of ***RAF Middle Wallop*** from its beginnings in World War II up to its transfer to the Army Air Corps in 1957. Our speaker was **Paul Beaver**, a renowned military and aviation historian who left a career as a helicopter pilot in the Army as a Colonel and is also an honorary Group Captain in the RAF. Since leaving the Army, he has been a war correspondent for Sky News and the BBC.

The story of RAF Middle Wallop began with the acquisition of land in 1938. The site was chosen after planners examined Ordnance Survey maps to find large areas of flat countryside in the south, and farmers were offered a nominal sum of money for their land on the understanding that they could buy it back at the same price if it ever ceased operations. It was declared operational on 16th April 1940 and is still the largest grass airfield in the world: tarmac runways were never laid, and indeed it has hardly changed since 1940.

During the "Phoney War" it was a training base but, when it became clear that France would fall, it became a fighter station. The first area to be developed was the bomb dump, closely followed by the Officers' Mess, which was designed by Lutyens, and the first squadron to arrive was Paul's own 601 "County of London" Squadron, also known as "The Millionaires' Squadron". They arrived to find that there was no accommodation, and they were not amused.

Originally planned to be part of 11 Group under Keith Park, it actually became part of 10 Group with the job of protecting south-western England and, in particular, the shipping lanes in the Solent. Four squadrons were based there: 234 and 609 (Spitfires), 238 (Hurricanes) and 604 "County of Middlesex" (night fighters). Paul showed a picture of the Ops Room, now buried and capped off with concrete, but still preserved beneath. One day this might be excavated, but not until the airfield is decommissioned. This is not likely to be until 2055 at the earliest.

Paul then described the various roles that Middle Wallop played throughout the War and into the 1950s, after pausing briefly to speak about the men who flew from there during the Battle of Britain. The average age of the pilots was 20 years 8 months, and most of their training (after basic flight training) was done "on the job". The

longer you survived, the more experience you gained – if you were lucky. Paul singled out Ginger Lacey and Bob Doe as particularly heroic pilots from the time.

On 13th August 1940, 609 Squadron gained notoriety when 13 enemy aircraft were shot down by 13 Spitfires, and 13 became their "lucky number" thereafter. The following day, a single German bomber took out two hangars but was then shot down by Polish pilots from 609 Squadron. A feature of Middle Wallop's history was its use for testing and development, particularly in night fighting. "Operation Mutton" utilised Long Aerial Mines (LAMs - hence "Mutton") to ensnare enemy bombers passing below in wires trailing out from a Handley Page Harrow bomber.

Between 1940 and 1942, 604 Squadron became the highest scoring night fighter unit, even though the technology was basic. The story went around that they were successful because they ate a lot of carrots, but in fact technological advances were being made all the time. One of the least successful, however, was a Turbinlite Havoc plane fitted with a ship's searchlight. In theory this would light up targets for the night fighter pilots but, in practice, the batteries only had enough power to keep the light on for five seconds.

1941-2 saw increasing co-operation with the Army using Mustangs and cannon-fitted Hurricanes. The original Allison-engined Mustangs were "useless" but the plane came into its own when fitted with the Rolls Royce Merlin used in the Spitfire, Hurricane and Lancaster bomber. As the end of the War drew near, Middle Wallop became less of a fighter base and more location for testing and Army cooperation.

Commonwealth air forces were represented in 1943 when the Royal Australian Air Force arrived with their Mosquitoes for night-fighting as 456 Squadron and, in 1943/44, Canadian-manned Mosquitoes took on a long-range fighter escort role. 1944 saw the arrival of US F-5 Lightnings for fighter reconnaissance training and in the same year Diver Patrol operations commenced using Griffon-engined Spitfires to "nudge" German V1 "Doodlebugs" off course.

To complete the representation of all three services at Middle Wallop, the Royal Navy moved in to train ground crew at what they knew as HMS Flycatcher. Paul closed his history of the airfield by mentioning the Victory flypast in 1945, which emanated from Middle Wallop, and put forward the assertion that the last Spitfire operations flew from the airfield with 288 Squadron in 1957 (a claim disputed by Hong Kong and Singapore!)

Paul finished by drawing attention to the National Spitfire Project, which is raising money to build a 40m tall monument to the aircraft in Southampton that will reach out over Southampton Water. Further details can be found at https://nationalspitfiremonument.com/

The speaker for our **October's** meeting was one of our own members, **Roger Davies**, who gave us a talk on ***Brunel's Timber Viaducts***. Along with Brunel's contemporaries, and 200 years after his birth, we are still marvelling at this iconic figure and his achievements. Brunel is widely considered to be one of the greatest engineers ever produced in the UK, leaving a legacy of an enormous range of constructions in his relatively short life. Roger's talk and photographs aimed to give us a flavour of these achievements and, in particular, his timber viaducts, which were constructed by a large workforce of cheap labour, and rudimentary block and tackle equipment, which was a very labour intensive exercise, but which produced such iconic structures.

Looking at the West Country, Roger said that Brunel's timber viaducts were to be found from Totnes in Devon to Penzance in Cornwall, plus on the Falmouth branch from Truro. These viaducts had to span deep and wide valleys, and used a lot of timber which was mainly imported. The highest viaduct was St Pinnock standing at 151 feet above the floor of the valley and 633 ft long. Most of Brunel's viaducts had a curve because he thought this made them more stable, especially as they had to carry heavy locomotives. A taste of the many illustrations showed us of viaducts in the West Country were Redruth Viaduct of 1852, replaced in 1888. Liskeard Viaduct of 1888 was replaced in 1923 with girders. Stonehouse Pool of 1858 was replaced in 1908, which had a continuous laminated beam, and Coombe-by-Saltash of 1859 was replaced in 1894. Originally three separate companies were involved, the South Devon Railway [Exeter to Plymouth], the Cornwall Railway [Plymouth to Truro], and the West Cornwall Railway [Truro to Penzance]. As mentioned, these viaducts had to span wide and deep valleys, so there were few cuttings from which material could be utilised for embankments, and so reduce the length of these structures. There were seven viaducts on the South Devon Railway [Totnes to Plymouth], forty-two viaducts on the Cornwall Railway [Plymouth to Falmouth], and five viaducts on the West Cornwall Railway [Truro to Penzance]. We also looked at timber viaducts from other parts of the country including Hoo Brook viaduct at Kidderminister, 1852, replaced in 1884-5, Vale of Neath Dale viaduct, 1854, demolished in the 1940s, and many more. Roger told us that a common complaint amongst the local population of these timber viaducts was that they rattled too much when trains went over them.

Brunel was master of many materials from brick in the viaduct over the Thames at Maidenhead to iron in his great steam ships, as well as the use of timber, as illustrated in Roger's talk. In this he was unusual amongst UK railway engineers, who preferred to use brick, stone or iron for such structures. Many of the timber-built viaducts that Brunel designed lasted for many years, and it was not until 1934 that the last of the old timber structures was dismantled and replaced by a masonry structure, which was the Collegewood viaduct near Penryn

on the Falmouth branch. Roger ended his talk with an open question, which was "Brunel's Timber Viaducts, Masterpieces or Aberrations?"

Many thanks to Roger for an interesting and informative talk on I K Brunel's timber viaducts, who unfortunately died far too young [1806-1856], but nevertheless succeeded in being considered "one of the 19th Century's engineering giants".

Our **November** meeting included the annual ***HIAS AGM***, which was well attended considering we didn't have an organised speaker, and it was also a very wet evening. Because two of our members, Clare and Howard Sprenger, have now moved to the West Country, we had to elect a new Chairman and Treasurer. Howard's term as Chairman had come to an end anyway and, as he will not be around to automatically become Vice-Chairman, we had to elect a new Vice-Chair as well. We were fortunate, therefore, to have Angie Beckett take over from Clare as Treasurer, and Jim Beckett to step in as Vice-Chairman. Rob Fish kindly volunteered to take over as Chairman, and Keith Andrews (Membership Secretary), Angela Smith (Focus Editor) and Eleanor Yates (Publications/Displays) agreed to carry on. All were elected unanimously. We ended the AGM with a vote of thanks to Howard, for being a superb Chairman over the last four years [an extra year because of Covid], and to Clare for taking over from Alison as Treasurer when she retired a year ago.

After the AGM we had a short tea/coffee break, and then watched a DVD which Rob brought along titled ***"Showpeople of Hampshire, celebrating the history of Fairs and the Fairground community in Hampshire"***. The majority of fairs held in the UK trace their origins back to charters and privileges granted in the Mediæval period and, although not in Hampshire, Salisbury's Fun Fair does date back to the Middle Ages. During that time, the Crown seemed to make attempts to create new fairs, and bring existing ones under their jurisdiction, so by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the majority of English Fairs had been granted charters. Apparently, the granting of a charter did not necessarily grant the right to hold a fair, but it was an effective way of controlling revenues for the Crown. *"Between 1199 and 1350 over 1500 charters were issued granting the rights to hold markets or fairs".*

As well as the "thrill" rides, other attractions at the early fun fairs were menageries, most people having never seen a wild animal before, and bare knuckle boxing booths together with people with deformities, which we would find unacceptable today, but were very popular back then.

Coming back to Hampshire, we took a look at the Hollycombe Steam Collection, which takes its name from the Hollycombe Estate, where over 100 years ago covered over 4,000 acres with superb gardens and over a million trees. This is where you can experience traditional steam-powered fairground rides, including gallopers, and learn about traditions still carried on today by the fairground "Showpeople" community. Interviewing some of them, we learnt that is was not unusual for the children to only go to school in the winter, as in the summer funfairs run by their families were busy travelling around the country to different locations. Because of this, one of the "Showpeople", a woman, said her brother and sister never learnt to read or write. We also heard from another of the "Showpeople", a man this time, who was a superb artist and, until modern technology, was still painting fairground exhibits by hand.

Thanks to Rob for choosing and bringing along a fascinating DVD, illustrating the colourful history of the travelling funfair, and its "Showpeople" whose roots go back to the traditional fairs of the 1200s where the fair was a place to buy and sell goods. From the early fairground rides which were made of wood, and propelled by gangs of boys, to today's thrilling rides and side attractions, the story of the funfair continues to evolve, and are still as popular as ever.

HIAS notices from 2022 AGM:

From Chairman's Report: *Howard Sprenger*

There will be changes to the Committee next year as Clare and I have now moved away, but I am very grateful to Jim and Angie Beckett for agreeing to join the Committee as Vice-Chairman and Treasurer respectively. It is a worry when we are in the position where we have to find replacements, so their willingness to become involved in this way is very gratifying. We know the Dorset IA Society folded, not so much because of lack of members, but because they were not able to sustain a committee. We are very fortunate in that respect.

On behalf of Clare and myself, we wish you well for the coming years. We shall try to pop in if we are ever here on a speaker's night.

DVD Librarians Report: *Rob Fish*

There are now 451 titles in the DVD library. The videos donated by the late Tony Yoward have to be sorted through and some transferred to DVD, as have a number donated by Howard Sprenger. There are still 123 to transfer. I propose to catalogue those not yet transferred to DVD and transfer them on request from the membership. The remainder may then be done in due course.

We have resumed bringing the DVD library to the meetings following an improvement in the situation around COVID: however this will be monitored on an ongoing basis. We will return to bringing a box a month, but if anyone would like a specific title, please email me in advance of the meeting. There are some hard copies available and, if anyone would like an electronic copy, please let me know.

My email address is robertfish@robertfish.net and, for those not on the internet, my address is on the Committee list on the penultimate page of *Focus.*

Finally, a number of DVDs were taken out before Covid interrupted events – can I therefore ask for those to be returned in due course.

Librarian's Report: *Andy Fish*

The Library is being reduced in size and the ***The Archive*** and ***Railway Archive*** will be retained and the books recently donated by Bill Fawcett and Howard Sprenger.

South East Region Industrial Archaeology Conference 2023 *Barry Duke*

There has been a change to the information about SERIAC which was announced at the AGM. Sussex I.A. Society was planning to stage a Conference next year at Chichester but has now postponed it until April 2024.

Letter from Bob Smith

Looking at the front cover of Journal No. 30 (2022) with the picture of the railway tunnels at Fareham, the caption points out that the speed limit is 25mph or 40kph.This is not so – the 25mph sign is for freight trains and the 40mph limit is for passenger trains: this is confirmed by a retired driver I know.

I know this is nothing to do with 'Focus', but as there will be a 'Focus' before the next Journal, perhaps you can point out the error. There may be other sharp-eyed readers who have picked this up.

Reply from Howard Sprenger

Thanks, Bob, well spotted. I actually knew that – can't think what aberration made me write it! Humble apologies.

Twyford Waterworks Trust

www.twyfordwaterworks.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 291720

Ian Harden

The Trust is taking stock after what is believed to be the most successful open day season to date with almost 2850 visitors attending, even more remarkable as there was one less open day due to the Platinum Jubilee celebrations for the late Queen Elizabeth II in June. August, traditionally the quietest event, saw double the expected attendance to the amazement of your correspondent. Inevitably, considerably higher travel costs have resulted in reduced numbers of exhibitors at times, but this has been compensated for by people looking for places to visit nearer to home. Encouragingly the number of return visitors continues to grow as does the long-standing category best described as 'been past here many times and been meaning to pop in'. Long may this continue.

At the present moment, the winter work programme is proceeding in similar fashion to last year, comprising mainly repairs and maintenance around the site to keep everything in good order. On the steam side, stripping the reheater for inspection has taken place as has deep cleaning the boiler.

For the industrial railway department, the main project over the winter is the comprehensive rebuilding of the Lister locomotive on loan from Hereford Waterworks. This is a full restoration with the loco dismantled back to its constituent parts to ensure its operating future.

The additional bank holiday recently declared for the coronation of King Charles III on the first weekend of May 2023 has meant a rethink for the start of next year's open day season. As things stand, it is more likely that the May rally will be held a week earlier on April 30th to fit in with the Friends of King Alfred Buses running day on the established Bank Holiday Monday, May 1st. Details will be announced in due course once arrangements with FoKAB for the latter are confirmed.

A couple of online items spotted by Rob Fish

Avro Vulcan XH 558 is preparing to leave Doncaster Sheffield Airport (DSA) which closed to passenger traffic after final arrivals on November 3rd, with the site now up for sale. The Vulcan was grounded in 2015. The Vulcan to the Sky Trust is working on two potential sites away from Doncaster, both of which would mean dismantling, moving and rebuilding in a dedicated permanent home. The CAA has said they would not get approval to fly again. *(Carol reminded us that the late Dr Robert Pleming spoke to HIAS in 2001 and the Society made a donation which meant that the Society's name would be shown inside the bomb bay doors).*

The Jubilee Sailing Trust's *Lord Nelson* has been put up for sale so that the Trust can concentrate efforts on its principal sail-training ship, *Tenacious*. *Lord Nelson* was decommissioned in July 2019 while laid up in Bristol Docks, but was moved from there to Barry Harbour in May this year. *(Dr Glen Middleton gave a talk to HIAS about the Trust and the two ships in 2016).*

Junkers Ju 88 propeller - recovered from the Solent

by Ted Gittins (a student volunteer at Solent Sky Museum, Southampton)

Figure 1 opposite shows a Junkers Ju 88, a German medium bomber from the Second World War and *Figure 2* is a propeller blade of a Ju 88 that was recovered from the Solent in 1990s. It is possible that this propeller belonged to Junkers Ju88 A-1, 9K+CL, of Kampfgeschwader 51, which was shot down on 12th August 1940 [Hampshire Aircraft Crashes and Accidents (*www.hampshireairfields.co.uk*)].

This aircraft crashed into the Solent and was part of a large raid, targeting industry and strategic targets around the Solent, such as Portsmouth Harbour and a radar installation in Ventnor, Isle of Wight. However, it is very difficult to tell, and might not be.

The aluminium blades of the propeller are badly damaged and mangled out of shape, suggesting that the engine was still running when the aircraft hit the water. Due to the time that this propeller spent on the seabed, the blades are heavily corroded and oxidised, and the hub is very rusty. One of the propeller blade tips is completely sheared off, but it is uncertain whether this was caused by the crash landing or as a result of corrosion.

There is an interesting story behind the recovery of this propeller. A ship was anchored off the Isle of Wight. As the crew were weighing anchor ready to get underway, they noticed that caught on the anchor was this very propeller! The captain kindly donated it to what was then the Southampton Hall of Aviation, where it was left in the staff car park awaiting a place in the museum.

A covered rifle range was built in part of the car park in the late 1980s for the 424 Southampton Air Training Corps – at that time based in part of the main museum building – and the propeller had been moved against the back fence of the car park before the building was constructed.

It remained there, largely forgotten, for more than 30 years, becoming slowly buried in the ground. In February 2022 I was tasked, along with Martyn Nolan – another volunteer at the Solent Sky Museum – to go behind what was by now a storage shed (the ATC having moved to Blighmont Barracks in Millbrook some years earlier) to retrieve a piece of metal to put on the roof. We didn't find this but instead we rediscovered the propeller and decided to try to move it into the museum.

Over the first two weeks we managed to dig the propeller out and moved it about 3 metres into a corridor between the shed and a storage container. To move it, I had to push the blade that was standing vertical, and Martyn picked up and lifted, then pushed the blade that is closest to the camera in this photo *(Figure 3)*. As we were pushing, the sheared-off splintered end of the vertical propeller blade cut through the plants and wood which were attached to the metal fence.

One of the volunteers from the Hampshire Police and Fire Service Heritage Trust (HP&FSHT) helped us move the propeller which was in the narrow corridor between the storage shed and a shipping container. One blade was still behind the shipping container and this proved difficult to move.

Because the gap between the shed and the shipping container was so narrow, it was very hard to manoeuvre the propeller. After we got it to this point, the next time I would see it was after it had been fully removed by volunteers of the HP&FSHT. Martyn said that he and I alone would likely not have been able to fully remove the propeller. However, we were planning to use some cord to pull it out, but this would likely have been impossible, due to the propeller's mass and its stuck position. Once the propeller was then finally freed it was moved into the Museum's car park *(Figure 4)* with the help of the HP&FSHT volunteers. Unfortunately, I wasn't there to see this, but this photograph shows myself with the propeller later on.

To preserve the propeller, the aluminium blades will have to be coated with a protective substance to stop the corrosion. Before the coating is applied, the propeller must be thoroughly cleaned to remove any dirt. This can be done using a pressure washer and/or by brushing with a wire brush. To stop the propeller from decaying further, it should be housed under cover, away from the elements. Ideally, this would be within Solent Sky, but would be quite difficult at the moment because there isn't a lot of room in the museum.

Another artefact belonging to the museum that is in need of preservation is a Junkers Jumo engine that also came from another crashed Junkers Ju 88 (*Figure 5*). This engine was recovered from Portsmouth Harbour during a dredging operation. The propeller that was attached to this engine is on display in the museum in front of the Short Sandringham *Beachcomber (Figure 6)*. This Jumo engine may have been from Junkers Ju 88, A1, 9K+BS, of Kg 51, that crashed in Portsmouth Harbour on 12th August 1940, after being shot down by anti-aircraft fire [A WITCH'S CAULDRON (www.keymilitary.com/article/witchs-cauldron)]. However, it is very hard to tell, so it might not be.

The Jumo engine is in bad condition, with most of its outer casing having corroded away. All that remains now are the cylinders and crank shaft, all of which are very rusty. To make space in the museum's workshop this engine was unfortunately moved into the car park next to the propeller *(Figure 7)*, exposing it to the elements once more. Hopefully space will be found in the museum for both artefacts, so they can be properly preserved and shown to the public.

(All photos by the author of the article, unless otherwise credited)

Junkers Ju 88 propeller - recovered from the Solent



Figure 1: A Junkers Ju 88 A series (unclear which one) of Kg 51, with needle propellers similar to, if not the same as, the one at Solent Sky (Ju88 of the KG 51 | World War Photos).



Figure 2 (left):
The propeller behind the shed, where it has been for around 30+ years. At this stage, we have partially unearthed it, but much of it is still buried beneath the ground and is largely overgrown.

Figure 3 (right):
The propeller at the corner of the shed.





Figure 4 (left):
Ted with the propeller in the museum car park.

Figure 5 (right):
The badly corroded Junkers Jumo engine that was recovered from Portsmouth Harbour. (Angela Smith)





Figure 6 (left):
Propeller from the Jumo engine which is stored in the Solent Sky staff car park, on display in the museum.
(Angela Smith)

Figure 7 (right):
Recently uncovered propeller with engine from propeller seen in Figure 6.
(Angela Smith)



Editor's search for unusual letter boxes around the British Isles







Letter boxes from a cruise around Britain in summer 2021, just after <u>some</u> Covid restrictions were lifted in Scotland
(left) In the village of Hoswick on Mainland, Shetland. An unidentified box on a post.
(centre) Commercial Street in the centre of Lerwick, a GR box near "Jimmy Perez's house". (Derby Castings Limited, Derby.)
(right) Not in use, this EIIR box is in Church Street in the old part of Whitby – "Dracula's town"! (W T Allen & Co, London)







Three letter boxes from a trip to Suffolk in May 2022
(left) VR pillar by A. Handyside & Co Ltd at the East Anglia Transport Museum, Lowestoft, originally from Euston area.
(centre) George V box, manufactured in London, on a house in Middleton near Stowmarket.
(right) George VI pillar in central Bury St Edmunds, topped by a crocheted Platinum Jubilee tribute to the Queen.







And, finally, three more, from the Channel Islands, August 2022
(left) Union Street, St Peter Port, Guernsey – the oldest original letter box in the British Isles (No. 1 of 1853).
(centre) Outside the Museum in Alderney, a Handyside Victorian blue letter box alongside a yellow telephone box.
(right) On Sark, a gold-painted EIIR pillar to celebrate local sportsman Carl Hester for his Olympic gold medal in 2012.

Tracking down letter boxes

Angela Smith

No, I haven't given up tram restoration in favour of scouring the streets for red metal boxes (or other colours such as gold or blue) to post letters. Blame it on Ian Harden, who is a member of the Letter Box Study Group. I have known Ian for, I guess, nearly 40 years as he said he became involved with SUIAG in 1983 when, soon after he says, he recalls attending an interesting talk on *The Roadside Letter Box* by a Mr Hall. Unfortunately in those days there were no reviews of meetings in *Focus*. Ian found his way on to the Committee at the 1985 AGM and has been making valuable contributions to *Focus* ever since.

We both worked at the Ordnance Survey as cartographers and, as luck had it, Ian then joined the section where I was working. I took early retirement in 1996 but we still met up at HIAS meetings, then in 2014 Ian retired and I "invited" him to join the tram group ... or did he volunteer before being voluntered? At some point his interest in street furniture – in particular letter boxes – was mentioned so, over the past maybe four years, when Nigel and I have been visiting somewhere a bit out-of-the-way in the UK, we have photographed boxes for his collection. He explained that one of the primary aims of the Study Group was to ask members to report any changes to boxes, such as removal or replacement, and they have a Directory of about 115,500 boxes with 97% detailed records. Maybe Ian could put something together for the Members' Evening in April?

So, on the opposite page are just some of the boxes we photographed in 2021 (round Britain cruise on a 110-passenger ship taking in points the furthest north [Unst in the Shetlands], south [St Agnes, Isles of Scilly], east [East Anglia] and west [St Kilda] and, in 2022, a few days in Suffolk then, using the same little ship, a week in the Channel Islands. Zodiacs were frequently used for transfer on the cruises – in fact, all the Channel Islands visits were by zodiac, nearly getting swamped by the outbound *Condor Voyager* when entering Jersey harbour.

The brief captions speak for themselves. The first three from the round Britain cruise show a 'lamp box' and a 'wall box' on Shetland's Mainland island, and the black wall box in Whitby which has been blanked off out of use. The next three are in Suffolk and the final three in the Channel Islands.

Anthony Trollope worked as a Post Office surveyor before becoming a famous novelist, and his district included the Channel Islands. During a visit to France he had seen their post boxes and felt the system could work in Britain. A small area would be required to test public opinion and Trollope visited Jersey and Guernsey in November 1851, then reported back to the chief surveyor in Exeter concerning the installation of post boxes in the Channel Islands, which was passed up to the Postmaster General who sanctioned the experiment.

On 23rd November 1852 the first red post boxes in Britain became operational in Jersey and proved so popular that two months later three boxes were placed in Guernsey. No.1 of 1853 (see photo on left side opposite) was in Union Street. All boxes were cast in Jersey, costing £7.00 each. Two years later boxes were introduced in London, followed by the rest of the country.

Over the years all the original boxes in the Channel Islands, except Guernsey No.1, were either replaced or transferred to museums. In October 1980 the Post Office painted all the boxes deep blue. No.1 is in the grounds of an hotel and, when the Post Office workers arrived with paint and brushes, the hotel owner tried to stop them from painting the oldest box in the land. There were numerous debates over the following years and in September 1987 it was restored to the original maroon paint. On the front (adjoining the fence side and not visible in this photo) it is shown as 'Letter Box 1'. Finding this box was not easy, even armed with a street map, as it involved climbing numerous steps from the waterfront and is at the furthest point along this road.

[The historical information has been extracted from an online site published in March 2016]

Southampton Tram Project

Angela Smith

My report for the July newsletter got to the stage where scaffolding had been erected all round Car 11 so that the roof could be re-canvassed, and the first stage had been to remove the old canvas and sand/vacuum the wooden roof.

However, no sooner had that been done when we were approached by Netflix asking to hire Lisbon 715 for a film. I won't give away the title – it is due for release sometime in mid 2023. However, this meant they would have to move 715 to a studio in north London. Easily said than done! 715 had been moved in to the workshop first and was at one side, with Car 11 next to it now surrounded by the scaffolding. The Kent firm which had installed the scaffolding was asked to take some of it down – half across the front and most of the side adjoining 715. This was carried out in early June and the move was on the 9th, when Dorset firm Cook's Transport, experts in moving abnormal loads in the UK and Europe and, incidentally, had moved the trams from the Millbrook workshop to storage in City Industrial Park in 2003 and Cars 11 and 38 to the docks in 2011, winched 715 on to a low loader in the restricted car park area. It was returned on the 25th, but the scaffolding company did not come to replace the missing parts so work on 11s roof could not continue. We erected our own scaffold tower at the beginning of August so that some work could be carried out, and Solent Sky's Chairman, John Clark, arranged for two of his employees in his building firm to re-erect the stored scaffolding on August 30th.

Serious work on the roof could then continue with multiple coats of paint being applied, at first alternate weeks, then weekly. Recently the various items such as vents and trolley plank have been fitted plus small gutters, and beading around edge and across the aluminium dome ends. Now ready for the final gloss coats.....

Demise of "First" Bus in Southampton

Rob Fish

Southampton Citybus was formed in 1898 as *Southampton Corporation Transport* when the town council took over the Southampton Tramways Company. The company initially operated a fleet of horse-drawn trams and buses, replacing them with electric trams in 1900. A motorbus service was launched in 1901, but proved unsuccessful and was withdrawn until 1919, when it was reintroduced. The tram network was expanded during the 1920s, but by 1930 it was decided that no new tram services would be introduced.

Tram services began to be closed in the 1940s, with the last operation abandoned in 1950. The bus network continued largely unchanged until 1986, when the company was reformed as an arm's length operation and renamed *Southampton Citybus*.

Southampton Citybus was owned by the city council until 1993. Following the Transport Act 1985 and the deregulation of the bus market, it faced aggressive competition from *Southern Vectis*, the dominant Isle of Wight bus company, which started *Solent Blue Line* in 1987 as a bid to expand onto the mainland, competing on some of the same major routes as *Citybus*.

The council sold the company to its employees in 1993 and, in 1997, the company was purchased by *FirstGroup*. After a brief period where the name was kept, the service became *First Southampton.*

First announced the withdrawal of their "CityRed" bus services, the direct successors of *CityBus*, from the city in February 2023, bringing to an end a heritage spanning almost 125 years.

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Reader's Letter in the Southern Daily Echo, *November 4th 2022*

History is not just old walls and vaults

The demolition of the gas holders at Northam is a tragedy and a disgrace. They are an iconic landmark, and a proud statement of Southampton's social and industrial heritage. Dominating the skyline for generations they have been part of Southampton's soul, and when they are gone our city will be poorer for it.

Sadly, Southampton seems determined to demolish its history. In the last year or so the fantastic flour mills were demolished, the Spitfire sheds were lost, and now the gas holders are coming down.

Is nothing sacred? You would presume the Bargate is safe, and that it's not going to be bulldozed and replaced by another block of student flats. History is not just old walls and vaults. History is living and breathing, and through the ages, and the gas holders are a link to the stories and events of our past.

Southampton wanted to be City of Culture, but many other cities would have been proud of the art deco lines of the flour mills, or the majestic gas holders. Some cities have made such structures features and celebrated architectural heritage and achievements. The alleged cultural quarter has MAST and John Hansard, but otherwise it's bars, restaurants and coffee. And Old Northam Road, the one place where there is actually some vibrant guerrilla art culture, is neglected and abandoned.

Southampton's councillors need to stop allowing our history to be trashed, and champion art and heritage. Or Southampton doesn't deserve to be a City of Culture.

Reading's Iconic Gas Holder – No Longer Standing

Southampton's gas holders are not the only ones to have "bitten the dust" recently, as this report written by Jo Alexander-Jones, member of Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group, and published in the AIA's ***IA News*** *Summer 2022, shows. (The article has been abridged)*

In the 2021 Summer edition of AIA News I reported on the planned demolition of Reading's last gas holder and how the arrival of a pair of peregrine falcons had caused a delay. Sadly, the gas holder has now gone leaving a blank space beside the Kennet & Avon canal which soon, we are told, will be home to yet more houses and flats. While the gas holder was not of significant heritage value, it was almost the last vestige of Reading's town gas industry which started in 1819 with the Reading Gas Light Company lighting the streets. The town does have a tumbled-down gas governor house that is sorely in need of renovation and a potentially unique gas bridge, both of which are in the sights of our local listing group.

In September 2021 BIAG was lucky enough to have a tour of the already derelict site from the decommissioning project manager. He gave us access to every part of the site that he could and spent over two hours talking to us through the equipment and the operational processes. We got close enough to touch the exterior, but with health and safety so important we couldn't enter the actual structure. In early March 2022 site clearance began. Once the odd buildings and abandoned kit had been removed, the first major casualty was the concrete water tower that has supplied water for the sealing mechanism of the gas holder.

Initially the change to the holder was slow; the odd hole punctured in the metal casing and the removal of the supporting infrastructure. Then the massive crane arrived and sparks began to fly from the metal girders as they were severed ready to be lifted away. Girder by girder and layer by layer the massive structure was lowered.

In BIAG we have written up the history of Reading and the wider Berkshire's gas industry and published it on our website so that everyone can share the heritage of one of our county's great, if utilitarian, heritage industries. (http://biag.org/gas-in-reading).

Maritime Notes

SS Shieldhall – we're open alongside for functions, meetings and events! www.ss-shieldhall.co.uk

Our 110 Berth in the Southampton's Western Docks means that Shieldhall is available to hire when she is not sailing. Breakfast meetings were held early in the year for local businesses to raise awareness and a number of functions resulted – it is rewarding to see that *Shieldhall* is being seen as a 'year round asset'.

The 2023 Sailing Programme is out now! Commencing on Friday 16 June, with a final sailing on Sunday 17 September, there are a variety of 2hr, 3hr, 3½hr, 4hr and all day sailings to choose from, including some returning favourite cruises and some all-new trips. Our number of sailings is comparable with 2022, though we have slightly reduced the number of sailing weekends, to help save with *Shieldhall's* 'steam-up' costs. During 2022 our fuel costs increased by more than 100%. Mindful of this, new for the 2023 programme are three Friday evening sailings, whilst we have introduced a special Early Bird offer on membership. Take out annual membership at 50% off up until the end of January and receive a 10% discount on all excursion tickets booked throughout the 2023 sailing season.

Why not start your weekend with a relaxing trip down Southampton Water to the Solent? *Shieldhall* will set sail on each of Fridays 16 June, 28 July and 11 August ahead of further trips on the Saturday and Sunday. Also new for 2023 is a Jurassic Coast sailing from Poole Quay on Tuesday 29 August. We will also pass very close to Cowes on our Saturday 12 August trip.

Following a sell-out trip to Portsmouth Harbour in 2022, our 2023 programme will see two trips into Portsmouth Harbour staged – on our opening weekend, Saturday 17 June and again on Sunday 13 August. *Shieldhall* will also steam to the Solent to watch the spectacle of the Round the Island Race on Saturday 1 July, the Fastnet Race on Saturday 22 July and the racing at Cowes Week on Saturday 29 July. Then, on Friday 1, Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 September we will be in the very best position to see the impressive sights of the Bournemouth Air Festival.

Wreck of the SS Virago *(BBC Guernsey, 5 November 2022)*

A wreck two miles off Alderney in the Channel Islands has been identified as a ship that disappeared 140 years ago. The *SS Virago* was sailing from Hull to the port of Odessa – then part of the Russian Empire – but never made it out of the English Channel. Divers discovered 1,000 tonnes of metalwork including steam engines, wheels, ironworks and other machinery. The wreck was hard to access due to Alderney's strong tidal range but was identified after a dive this summer.

Dive supervisor Richard Keen said: "I've been diving commercially for 55 years ... this is a once in a lifetime discovery." He said: "The wreck lies in 45 metres of water. It's probably in the most tidal area in the UK, when I say there was seven knots of tide, there's probably more than seven knots of tide. When the divers dive it, they've got a maximum of a 20-minute window on a neap tide and it's a very tricky place to dive."

The *Virago* is still listed as missing on Lloyd's Register of Ships which said the vessel was built in Hull in 1871, with a gross tonnage of 1,809, and belonged to the Wilson family business. Mr Keen said of the tragic sinking in June 1882: "Nobody survived, there were 26 crew, one body was washed ashore near Cherbourg sometime later and four of the lifeboats were found, two off Dieppe and two north of Alderney."

"We know there was fog on that day or night, we have yet to calculate what her speed, course and what time that she probably struck Alderney or a reef off Alderney."

Dr Robb Robinson, from the University of Hull, said: "One of the things that the Wilson Line was particularly famous for was taking people from Eastern Europe, bringing them to England and shipping them across on ports such as Hull and Newcastle to Liverpool and then onwards as chance migrators across to the United States."

The wreck was discovered in 2009 during a seabed survey for a potential tidal technology but was not identified at the time. Richard Keen said he was waiting to dive it: "I'd never believe that a wreck like that would exist in that area and be there 140 years and nobody had really found it or looked at it. We know there's probably two Second World War wrecks in the Alderney Race, which nobody has found, but basically we normally rely on fishermen who snag their gear to tell us where the wrecks are."

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The Association for Industrial Archaeology: e-News Bulletin October 2022

New heritage protection for Edge Hill Engine Station site, Liverpool

AIA is very pleased to hear that the Edge Hill Engine Station site in Liverpool has been granted scheduled monument status, after a long campaign led by the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Trust. This important site was the original Liverpool terminus for steam locomotives on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway (L&MR), the world's first inter-city passenger railway, which opened in 1830. Locomotives were detached from the trains from Manchester, with ropes then hauling passenger carriages up inclines to the Crown Street passenger terminus and lowering goods down to the docks at Wapping. The site is located in a deep cutting and the new status protects rock-cut chambers, the first 20m of three railway tunnels, and the remains of the engine houses and associated features for the Wapping and Crown Street inclines.

Miscellaneous news items from around Hampshire

. . . . . a number of items from the pages of the Southern Daily Echo

Barracks to be restored (July 7 2022)

Former police barracks at a Victorian gunboat yard look set to be restored and given a new lease of life. Planning chiefs have approved an application to convert the Grade-II listed building into offices and classrooms for the Army Sailing Association. The application said that proposals would conserve and enhance the barracks, part of the Haslar Conservation Area.

Plaque for creator of the hovercraft (July 28, 2022)

Sir Christopher Cockerell , who lived in a house at Prospect Place, Hythe, was the driving force behind the invention of the hovercraft. A blue plaque celebrating his success has been unveiled at a building where much of the research and development work was carried out. The plaque – from Hythe & Dibden Parish Council – will be attached to the front of The Grove in St John's Street, Hythe. The plaque was unveiled at a ceremony where guests included some of the 150 people who worked there more than half a century ago. Much of the early work was carried out in East Anglia but the designs were refined in offices at The Grove. Huts on the opposite side of the road were used as workshops and laboratories. [Editor's note: this is where Lidl stands today].

Victorian fort sold for £1.3m (July 30 2022)

Fort Gilkicker in Gosport was sold on 28 July for £1,386,000 - £114,000 less than the guide price. The sale of the Grade II-listed building will now see the historical site transform into 26 homes. The fort was built between 1863 and 1871. The fort is a semi-circular ark that was designed to protect the deep water anchorage at Spithead. It was built with 22 casemates – large rooms from which guns could be fired – with five bigger guns mounted on the roof. There will be 22 exclusive homes in the former gun emplacements and four really big apartments in the barrack block. Changes would include removing the earth wall put up before the First World War, to open up some stunning views across the Solent.

Working Museum is on track (October 2022)

Volunteer group The Friends of Romsey Signal Box was delighted to see visitor numbers surpass pre-pandemic levels. A total of 224 visitors attended during September's Heritage Open Days, a record number of day visitors, which took visitor numbers to an annual record of 868, with five open days to go. The signal box, in Brick Lane, is normally open on the first Sunday and third Saturday of each month. At an open day event on 15 October, the volunteers welcomed the saviour of the signal box, Mrs Audrey Gebbie. The former headmistress, now aged 93, protested against demolition in 1982 and instead suggested the box be saved as an educational resource. The local hero attended the event in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the signal box closing on 17 October 1982, and the 30th anniversary of its re-opening to visitors on 17 October 1992. [Another editor's note – the Chairman, Dick Hewett, was, like 5 members of the tram group, a former Ordnance Survey employee. What is it about the OS that makes us so interested in heritage, especially transport?]

A green light for roof replacement at Bursledon Brickworks (December 1 2022)

Fareham Borough Council has approved an application from Bursledon Brickworks to replace a deteriorating asbestos roof over the kilns with corrugated cement sheeting and translucent roof lights. The report noted that the existing roof is not the original so the alteration will not impact the special architecture and historic significance of the building.

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Railway notes

Turntable uncovered in Edinburgh (The Railway Magazine, September 2022)

The remains of a brick-lined turntable pit at St Margaret's depot and works to the east of Edinburgh have been uncovered in a car park during the regeneration of Meadowbank Sports Centre. The site is earmarked for new housing, but groundwork includes excavating the former railway lands alongside the East Coast Main Line. The 65ft (20m) diameter turntable is said to be one of the earliest examples of its kind and a rare archaeological survival. It is hoped that some of it will remain on show as part of the housing development. St Margaret's was one of the largest works in Scotland, dating back to 1846 when the North British Railway opened its line from Edinburgh to Berwick. Other steam-era artefacts were also uncovered by archaeologists

Mystery locomotive

Email 17.10.22 from Rob Fish with link to a website – "Ghostly abandoned harry potter train found deep in Suffolk countryside". Reply from Howard Sprenger "Why Harry Potter I wonder – are all steam engines 'Harry Potter' engines now?" Bit of Google Earth research by your editor revealed the steam locomotive deep in vegetation on an industrial site NW of Acton in Suffolk. Another 'post' revealed it is a Finnish 2-8-2 imported in the early 1990s from the Finnish 'Strategic Reserve'. No further information found as yet.

Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

(formerly Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group)
(Registered Charity No. 276898)
Web site: www.hias.org.uk

Honorary President: Bill White, 98 Forest Hills Drive, Townhill Park, Southampton, SO18 2FY

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DVD Library: Rob Fish (details above)

HIAS Insurance terms – Please note:
Members are not covered for Personal Accident but are covered for third party liability

CONTACTS FOR ASSOCIATED GROUPS

Hampshire Mills Group: *Acting Secretary:* Eleanor Yates – see above www.hampshiremills.org

The Solent Steam Packet Ltd (S.S. Shieldhall): membership@ss-shieldhall.co.uk
Membership Secretary: Barry Quest, Feather Tor, 6 Manor Gardens, Horrabridge, Devon, PL20 7UQ

Southampton Tram Project (formerly Tram 57 Project):
Nigel Smith, 3 Stag Gates, Blackfield, Southampton, SO45 1SR *Lnigel.smith@btinternet.com*

Twyford Waterworks Trust: Contact - Ian Harden, 31 Melville Close, Lordswood, Southampton, SO16 8DE

Bargate stones in patio

A visitor to the Southampton Tram Project's workshop in September, John Rawlings, related that his grandmother had been a WWII tram conductress, the kind of story that is often passed on.

But then came the revelation that his great-grandfather had owned a transport firm and, when the west side of the Bargate was being demolished in 1938 to make way for the second bypass (the east side had been bypassed in 1932), he was moving the stonework.

He acquired a number of "large chunks of stone" for his garden patio in Gainsford Road near Peartree Green.

Industrial Archaeology e-News Bulletin October 2022

This year the Association for Industrial Archaeology's Restoration Grants scheme received 13 applications for funding. As in most previous years, transport-related projects predominated. Recipients of major grants were:

Kent and Sussex Railway (1930s GWR railcar); Mountsorrel and Rothley Community Heritage Centre, Leicestershire (1834 Robert Stephenson lifting railway bridge); Canal and River Trust (Butter Brothers derrick crane, Worcester); Black Country Living Museum (steam-powered narrowboat *President*) and Worcester Locomotive Society (Kitson saddle tank locomotive, *Carnarvon*.

In addition, small grants were made for restoration at Wingfield Station, Derbyshire and the lifeboats on the Dundee lightship *North Carr*.

The £116,000 distributed this year brings the total amount of grants made since the scheme started to almost £1.2m. The AIA is incredibly proud to be able to support the preservation and promotion of industrial heritage in this way.

FRIENDS of KING ALFRED BUSES

New Year's Day, Sunday 1 January 2023
About 6 *King Alfred* buses will be operating over the former routes from about 9:30am. Programme and timetable £5 on the day.

May Bank Holiday, Monday 1 May 2023
All of our *King Alfred* buses from the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and earlier! joined by other preserved buses will be operating around the city and beyond from Winchester Broadway in the
Original King Alfred Buses Running Day.
A souvenir programme and timetable will be available on the day and to order in advance from the website *www.kingalfredbuses.org.uk*

All rides are free but please buy a programme to help us cover the cost of staging these events.

My thanks to all the contributors for passing on items used in this issue, to Andy Fish for clarifying some information in the Junkers article, and to Rob Fish for photocopying the photo pages for members not receiving their copies online. Other articles have been extracted from various websites, magazines and regional newspapers. The next *Focus* I am planning is for June 2023, so the deadline will be the April 3rd meeting, please, if you want to pass items in person as I probably won't be attending the extra meeting on April 24th (note there is no meeting in May due to the extra bank holiday on the 8th).
You can email me at Lnigel.smith@btinternet.com , or my address is on the previous page.

Angela Smith