

North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society

NEDIAS Newsletter No. 18 – May 2005
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Chairman's Comments:

Since February 2001 we have enjoyed the facilities of the Quaker Friends Meeting House for our lecture meetings but the popularity of those meetings, coupled with the growth in our membership, means that the time has come to move on. We have for some time been aware that many of us have had a rather sideways view of the proceedings, while all present have been seated 'cheek by jowl' on too many occasions.

I hope that NEDIAS will be as well supported in its new venue and the different environment will gain acceptance by our members and our visitors alike. The offer from ROMAC to use their canteen room at Rowland Hill House on Boythorpe Road, with its secure and ample car parking facilities is very generous and no doubt reflects the current standing of NEDIAS as a significant contributor to the local community's activities.

Having said that, a recent item in the Industrial Archaeology News highlights the need for expansion of our external activities. The item criticised business managers and other parties interested in the affairs of industry and commerce for failing to safeguard company archives upon closure of businesses. Regrettably, the example quoted was the Chesterfield based Dema International where, it was claimed, an archaeological site survey had found company archives in an unprotected state. The writer also said the documents were still under threat.

It was not made clear who was conducting the survey but NEDIAS had earlier been in touch with the administrators and, without access to the site being granted, obtained all that was said to be available in the shape of a box of photographs. Hopefully enquiries will reveal that the party organising the archaeological survey has a standard instruction to surveyors covering the need to contact specific County Archivists and that, in the case of Dema, the documents were actually examined but found to be of no archival significance. The IA News item did not describe the documents upon which the case for neglect was made but it is particularly galling to learn about the concern from such an indirect source; all the more when it is right on our doorstep. With the continuing trend of business closures, perhaps we need to be more vigilant and proactive in future?

As is evident from the popularity of our talks and visits, a lot of work is already being done by our committee members and supporters for which I am eternally grateful. Our Field Survey Group got off to a good start with work at Damstead and Mag Clough, our publication side is progressing well, so how can your chairman have the audacity to expect more? Well I don't; it just feels better for sharing it with you all! Have a good summer!

David Wilmot

WHAT'S ON?

NEDIAS Lecture Programme, 2005

IMPORTANT: NOTE THE NEW MEETING VENUE

When: Meetings are usually held the second Monday of each month, starting at 7.30 pm.
Where: Rowland Hill House, Boythorpe Road, Chesterfield (opposite the swimming pool).

- 12 September 2005** *Cliff Lea:* “**Derbyshire’s Oil: a story of national significance**”. The extractive industries have played a large part in the county’s fortunes, but the part played by the oil industry before it moved on is fascinating and almost forgotten.
- 10 October 2005** *Philip Heath:* “**The Industries of Swadlincote**”. South Derbyshire’s clay and coal gave rise to some remarkable industries, with pottery, brick and tile trades well to the fore during much of the last two centuries
- 14 November 2005** *Philip Cousins:* “**John Knowles, a forgotten North Derbyshire railway contractor**”
“**A furnace at Whittington, industry in Woodville, railway tunnels, plus Knowleston at Matlock**”
- 12 December 2005** *Philip Riden:* “**Industry before the Industrial Revolution: Chesterfield and Scarsdale, 1600-1750**”

What else is on?

Wednesday 29 June 2005: DAS visit to Grin Low Lime Kilns, led by John Barnatt. Meet 7pm Grin Low, nr Buxton.

Sat 10 September 2005: Lead Mining at Lathkill Dale. Guided walking tour by English Nature. Starts 10 a.m., 3 hour duration. Booking essential via 01629 816640.

Tuesday 18 October 2005: Talk by David Wilmot: “Emmerson Muschamp Bainbridge – Founder of Bolsover Colliery and Chairman of the Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway”. Chesterfield & District Local History Society meeting, 7.30 at Rose Hill United Reformed Church, Chesterfield.

Mini-bus trip to New Mills and Bugsworth Basin – Saturday, 23rd July.

As a follow-up to the fascinating talk last year on Bugsworth, we have now organised a guided tour around the site. First of all though, we will pay a visit to the New Mills Heritage Centre, which tells the story from the pre-industrial period, the formation of the Torrs, the New Mill which gave its name to the town, and the growth of communications and coal mining. Light refreshments are available.

Our 1-1/2 to 2 hour tour of Bugsworth Basin commences at 2pm. The Basin opened in 1796 and has been under restoration since the early 70's, as the two speakers conveyed to us at their talk, a truly noble task. The blurb recommends the on-site Navigation Inn for those who like to purchase refreshments rather than take their own.

Cost of the trip will be £10 each, this sum taking care of donations to both of the sites we are visiting. There will be two pick-ups, both in Chatsworth Road, first at 9am at the bus stop alongside Morrisons and – providing those getting on at Morrisons are on time!! – five minutes later at the bus stop just beyond Somersall Lane.

On the return journey we will do our best to drop passengers off nearer their homes if they so wish – no promises though. There is a 16-seat limit, so far 14 have been filled, so ring Brian Dick on 01246 205720 if you're interested in travelling. For those who have booked, please pay by 23rd June with a cheque, payable to NEDIAS, and sent to Brian Dick at 14 Boythorpe Road S40 2ND.

Mini-bus trip to two windmills in Lincolnshire, Saturday 3rd September.

A journey into the wilds of Lincolnshire, to be looked after by Dr Catherine Wilson, who gave us that excellent talk back in February. First of all we will visit Ellis Mill, on the outskirts of Lincoln with, depending on time, a visit to the nearby Museum of Lincolnshire Life. For the afternoon we travel north to Kirton-in-Lindsey for a look at the Mount Pleasant Mill, which also has a tearoom. Both of these are working mills. Cost of the bus will be £10 each which does not include any donations. Pick-ups are not decided yet but will be notified when bookings have been received.

Start time will probably be 9am. As for the July trip, book through 01246 205720 and payment will be required by 3rd August, details as before.

Cromford (Mark II), Saturday 20th August

A follow-up to last year's visit with, hopefully, drier weather! Meet at 1pm at Cromford Mill for the second part of Darrell Clark's guided tour, to see the changes made to No. 1 Mill since our last visit then to Cromford Church for a look at the interior wall paintings and onward to Willesley Castle and its gatehouse, stopping at the bridge chapel en route. Also to look at restoration work at Cromford Canal wharf where original surfaces have been rediscovered and the second warehouse restored to use – as a tearoom!

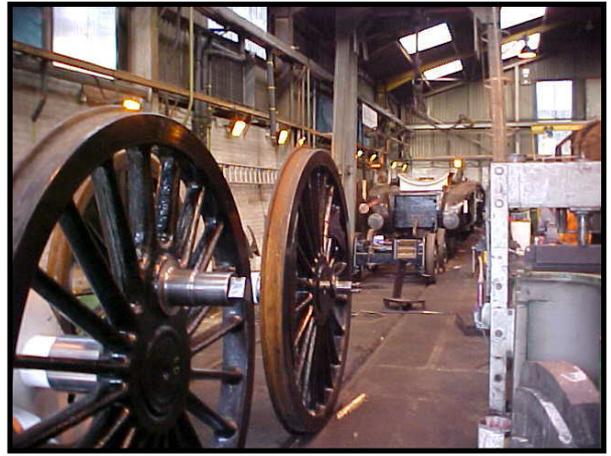
For the benefit of an afternoon of Darrell's inimitable account of the area's history, a modest donation of £3 each is suggested. Refreshments available at Willesley Castle, in the mill yard or at the newly restored wharf warehouse – spoilt for choice! Bookings not required, just turn up on the day.

The Sir Nigel Gresley

from Derek Grindell

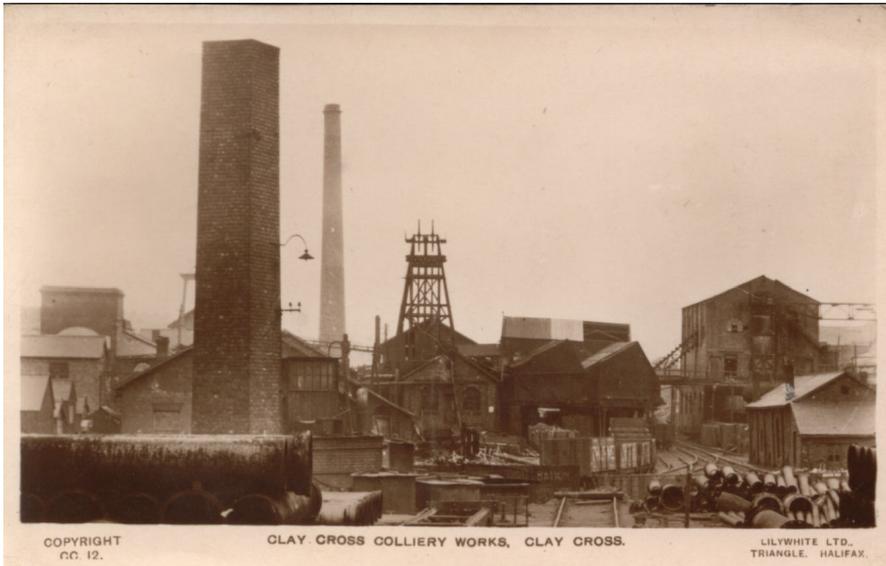
Ed: Derek Grindell has sent to me some photographs, taken by Ron Pett, of the Sir Nigel Gresley, the famous A4 Pacific Class loco which is currently undergoing a well-earned £0.75 million overhaul. He wonders whether these photos will cause the odd lump in the throat!

*Maybe you have a previous photograph **in steam** of the loco, maybe at Grosmont or elsewhere, for inclusion in the next Newsletter?*



Professional and amateur historians, school teachers, journalists and others still inform us that the George Stephenson Company, later the Clay Cross Company, was established sometime in 1837, but offer no evidence to support this fact in their various writings and presentations. However, long before the CXC archive was dispersed I had the opportunity of examining and researching some of Stephenson's ephemera, documents, accounts and minute books and would like to dispel this 1837 myth and offer another chronology.

At the end of December 1837, the tunnel contractors during their initial excavations had confirmed the Tupton and Three-Quarter Coal seams along the line of the tunnel together with two excellent ironstone rakes and during the following year the Main or Blackshale seam was reached. At this time Stephenson did not directly employ any workers but his former secretary Fredrick Swanwick now resident engineer for the tunnel excavations would continue to inform his friend and mentor about the quality of the coal and possibilities of exploiting the seams so



close to the North Midland Railway trunk line. Sometime in December 1837, Stephenson was contemplating purchasing some freehold and mineral rights and in January 1838, the Derbyshire Courier reported that 'the celebrated engineer, who had previously purchased an extensive coal bed in the Parish of North Wingfield (but no evidence) has bought an estate off Mr Lucas, in the same parish contiguous thereto. By which means an immediate connection with the North Midland

Railway, for the transit of coal and an extensive market at once opened up for the consumption and sale. The necessary erection of this extensive colliery will be commenced within the present month'.

This particular agreement between George Stephenson and Bernard Lucas of Hasland was not finally signed and agreed until the 28th February 1838, and was George Stephenson's very first property deal and identified as No1 indenture in the Company's property book of 1838 to 1851. It was Stephenson very first property deal that effectually started up his one-man concern previous to the Company being established. This property deal was not extensive but secured him just over 14 acres of freehold for £843, and was situated at Egstow in the Township of Woodthorpe and included a very small part of the River Rother almost opposite North Wingfield Church. The first four pits sunk here were known as the Three-Quarter Pits between 35 and 40 yards deep with a short tramway connecting up with the NMR.

There is no evidence of any other freehold or lease hold being purchased previous to this and it was not until after Stephenson had raised the initial share capital from the 'Liverpool Party' that formally established the Company that any more property was acquired. Indeed, George Stephenson and Company's initial purchase was not made until 2nd April 1839 when they purchased two closes containing just over 19 acres of freehold including the minerals for £1,883 off John Oldham of Morton. This particular property was known as the Upper Smithy Acre (8a 3r 12p) and Lower Smithy Acre (10a 3r 39p) previously used by the NMR for dumping their tunnel spoils.

Ironically the pits sunk here were in Clay Lane and partly in Woodthorpe Townships but called the Tupton Pits and named after the seam rather than the neighbouring Township.

The company accounts recording the interest paid to 'Owners Advances' from the 10th March to 31st December 1838, only refer to George Stephenson. The five other proprietors did not commence with their investments until 1st January 1839 and were not paid any interest on their advances until December 1840.

At a Friendly Society presentation in August 1857, Mckarsie the company doctor calculated the Company's origins to 1839. Charles Binns, general manager, in December 1866, told a Free Labour Society meeting that the company was not set up until 1839. William Howe (jnr), engineer, in his printed testimonial booklet published April 1902, gives a detailed description of the Clay Cross Works and records the promotion of the Company in 1838, obviously referring to Stephenson's early initiatives.

Stephenson did not receive any remuneration for his services until December 1840, and was paid 1^{1/2} years salary from 1st January 1839 to 30th June 1840 at £500 per annum. From 1st July to December 1840 he was paid £1,000 showing a 100% increase in salary.

Charles Binns the company's first agent and general manager received his first half years salary of £150 in June 1839, and further supports the real take off date of the company as 1st Jan 1839. Binns was residing with Stephenson at Tupton House in 1839, but moved to Tupton Hall sometime in 1840 and didn't move to Clay Cross Hall, purposely built for him, until 1845.

In the early days when Stephenson was struggling to get established and attract sufficient capital he employed few workers, if any, had little management structure, and the first pits were sunk and worked by big butties who were initial employed by the tunnel contractors. No permanent offices and company houses were built until 1840, and the NMR's 30 cottages (Tunnel Rows) were not purchased until May 1841. James Cambell, the company's first resident engineer did not arrive until 1840 when he was recruited from Stephenson's Snibston colliery in Leicestershire.

The starting date for the Company of 1837, and used ad-nauseam by successive historians, local schools, the local press and proliferates in current heritage and regeneration literature appears to originate from the Company centenary history 'One Hundred Year of Enterprise'.



This particular production with a somewhat superficial and inadequate history was probably written by John Steen who had risen through the ranks from office boy to company secretary and was employed by the company for about 68 years.

Throughout the Company's existence they were intensely loyal and patriotic to the Crown drinking 'three times three' to the Monarch on every conceivable occasion and perhaps with a 'sleight of hand' in 1937, when the centenary production was being written the myth was conceived and 'It is, therefore a source of pride and gratification that the Company which first came into existence in the year that the Queen Victoria came to the throne should celebrate its centenary in the coronation year of Her Majesties great-grandson'.

Cliff Williams.

Letters

Ed: David Rance and David Wilmot gave an excellent account of the Damstead research and recording, at a meeting of the Old Dronfield Society in the spring, prompting the following from an ODS member.

Dear Cliff

It was good to meet you in Dronfield's Peel Centre last Thursday evening. The Damstead Project absorbed me, because the ruins are a significant part of Mill Lane, which has been my study for a couple of years. Please pass my thanks to all who presented the findings, but especially to David Rance and Paul Smith for steadfastly tolerating my intrusion on their surveying work in summer 2003.

An intriguing part of last Thursday evening was the tale of the gunpowder attack on the Damstead Works. Clearly the presenter (David Wilmot) has worked to unearth the details of an obscure event characteristic of the Sheffield Outrages. Rather than lose the fruits of that research, may I request copies of the texts he read out? I'll be happy to send an SAE for the purpose. Failing that, details of the source periodicals would be appreciated.

You broached the idea of me speaking to the NEDIAS on Mill Lane. The ODS has slated me to do just that on 25 May 2006. The presentation has yet to be developed, but when it is I'll happily consider a date. Presently I think Mill Lane is much older and more important than many realise (if nothing else it holds Dronfield's only real Victorian industrial remains).

Now, where the heck can I cadge a digital projector and notebook computer from? Ho hum, problems, problems ...

Regards
COLIN BRIGGS
colin@briggs5578.fsnet.co.uk

Ed: I'm sure we can expect to see the full details from DRHM of "the Dronfield Gunpowder Plot" in a future newsletter ! It could make explosive reading..

IA News and Notes

From the Derbyshire Times

Darrell Clark

The Derbyshire Times of 25 March, 1922 records snippets of a talk given in Chesterfield by Mr J.W.Lee, manager of the Grassmoor Colliery Coke Ovens, and his descriptions of a business visit to the USA, travelling across the continent by railway, mentioning the discomforts of railway carriages which use fine gauge sheet steel mesh to allow ventilation, in place of windows, and the inevitable dust.

Americans were recorded as most hospitable, and the party found themselves being made honorary members of various clubs.

Mr H.E.Lloyd, the President of the Engineers Club in New York enquired whether any of the party knew “ a gentleman named Markham of Chesterfield”.

Evidently Mr. C.P.Markham and his business were exceptionally well known.

Darrell Clark

About John Locke

from Derek Grindell

I am sure that rail enthusiasts will be well aware of the impending bicentenary of John Locke’s birth at Attercliffe but just in case they missed an article in the Yorkshire Post of 10 May, here are a few notes...

Locke moved to Shambles Street, Barnsley when 5 and was later apprenticed to George Stephenson. His memory is perpetuated by Locke Park, Barnsley, which was donated by his widow Phoebe. After success as an engineer he became an MP but died, aged 55, while on a shooting holiday in Scotland.

An exhibition will be held at Cannon Hall, Barnsley. Details of events can be obtained from Tourist Info Tel No: 01226 206757.

Derek Grindell

And Finally

from David Wilmot

A Mine Manager’s Farewell!

The letter book of the Bolsover Colliery Company in the County Record Office, Matlock, has a good few lighter moments.

One such is the letter from General Manager, J P Houfton of 19th January 1898 to Mr. Charles A H...*, The Manners Colliery, Ilkeston:-

“Dear Sir,

I return your letter of the 18th inst and if it is a specimen of your accuracy you would be of no use to us.

It is hard to believe that you started work in the General Office at Manners when you were three years old!

*Yours truly,
Jno. P Houfton”.*

*Full name on file but omitted here.

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NEDIAS Committee: - *Chairman* – David Wilmot; *Secretary* – Patricia Pick; *Treasurer* – Pamela Alton. *Membership Secretary/Assistant Treasurer* – Jean Heathcote; *Publicity & Newsletter* – Cliff Lea; *Lecture Meetings* – David Rance, *Visits Co-ordinator* – Brian Dick; *Archivist* --Pete Wilson; *Committee Members* – Derek Grindell, David Hart, Stuart Kay, Tony Marsh

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