

North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society

NEDIAS Newsletter No. 22 – May 2006

Price: 50p (Free to Members)



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Chairman's Comments:

Chairman's Comments

Annual general meetings are famed for being one of the least well-attended gatherings of any society but that nostrum was demolished at our AGM in March this year. Thanks to Nick Wheat and the Chesterfield Film Makers, we enjoyed a look at some of Britain's industrial and transport heritage from some thirty years back; an era now also teetering on the brink of 'heritage', painful as that thought may be for some of us to contemplate. Due, as they say, to popular demand Nick has kindly provided details of the films we saw and these can be found within this issue.

Apart from a concern over how we follow that for next year's AGM, there is one point which comes up on a regular basis and that is the question of our meeting place. We moved from the Friends Meeting House as our attendance figures were often in excess of the room's capacity. For reasons which are not entirely clear, the numbers at recent meetings have settled at a level that, rather ironically, could have been accommodated within the Meeting House. While our overall membership levels have been maintained, it is obvious from standing at the front of our meetings that the faces of some long-standing and valued members are being seen less often these days.

To address that issue, the committee is looking at two areas. In the short term, we are looking at the possibility of countering the acoustic problems experienced in the canteen at Rowland Hill House by the use of microphones. For the longer term, there is a bigger issue. We have, ever since the need for the move from the Meeting House became apparent, been looking around the Chesterfield area for suitable alternative premises. From our findings so far, there is a dire shortage of premises for use by local societies who enjoy attendances of more than about forty people.

To give some idea of our needs; a site near the centre of Chesterfield, with good car parking is important, as is a room in which up to seventy people can be seated with a good view of the speaker and any screened images. There should also be facilities for disabled access, refreshments and their flexible use until about nine-thirty on the evenings of our meetings. All this, of course, at minimal cost!

This is where our members come in! We need your local knowledge and expertise to see if a solution can be found. So, can we have your ideas please? If you know of a property which might fit the above criteria, please contact me or any other committee member so we can explore the possibilities. I can be contacted by email on david.wilmot@lycos.co.uk or by calling 01246 854180 (most evenings).

In the meantime, enjoy the summer and don't forget to bring back a bit of industrial archaeology for our editor to digest in our next Newsletter

David Wilmot

WHAT'S ON?

NEDIAS Lecture Programme, 2006

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).

11 September 2006	<i>Mike Taylor:</i>	“The Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation”
9 October 2006	<i>Paul Chander:</i>	“Peak District Extractive Industries”
13 November 2006	<i>David Jenkins:</i>	“A History of Sheepbridge Works”
11 December 2006	<i>Mike Bennett:</i>	“History of Markhams”

NEDIAS VISITS

Co-ordinator: Brian Dick ☎ 01246 205720

A number of visits are proposed and in planning for this summer:

Crich Tramway Museum on Monday 12 June (see full details below)

Good Luck Mine, Via Gellia, and National Stone Centre on Saturday 8 July.

Chert Mine, Bakewell on the evening of 4 September 2006.

.... And possibly also **Darlington Loco Works** and the **Tornado Project**. (Date TBA).

Mid Summer Visit, 2006 – Crich Tramway Village: **Mon 12 June 2006, at 6.00pm**

We meet at Crich at 6pm after the normal opening hours of the Museum with a ride along the tramway in a vintage electric tram, followed by a tour of the museum and tram-sheds where the collection is housed, maintained and restored. Afterwards, at 8pm we will adjourn for a **buffet supper** in the upstairs rooms of the Red Lion Hotel, a recently re-erected public house that once served as the pay point for workers of the Potteries Electric Traction Company in Stoke-on-Trent.

The buffet is included in the cost of the visit and the bar will be open for those wishing to purchase drinks with their supper.

All bookings and final payments should have been received by 30 April.

Further information from: Brian Dick ☎ 01246 205720

British Transport Films at the AGM

From Nick Wheat

Following the AGM which took place in March, two short documentary films were screened which contained plenty of industrial archaeology from days gone by. Such was the interest that they generated, that it was decided it would be beneficial to explore the two films in detail in this newsletter.

They were produced by British Transport Films which was formed in 1949 with Edgar Anstey (protégé of John Grierson the principal documentary film maker in the 1930s and the founder of the British Documentary Movement) as its first Producer in Charge. The unit's production arm functioned from 1949 until 1982. The most memorable period of the unit was from 1949 until the mid 1960s. The argument could be made that the unit's fortunes mirror that of the decline in short cinema documentary films and the cinema newsreel. Another avenue of exhibition that still existed in the late 70s was the private showing of films to local societies and it was good to see this method of presentation survive into the 21st Century even though film projection has given way to video - itself now largely superseded by DVD!

The first film (shown courtesy of Chesterfield Film Makers who provided, and worked, the projection equipment.) was '**Forward to First Principles**' which was released in 1966. Presented by the late Jack Simmons, Professor of History at Leicester University, it considered the earliest forms of railways and their use purely as an instrument to carry raw materials to wherever they were required.

Beginning with man-propelled tubs from a slate quarry in Snowdonia - and featuring working practices that would make a modern Health and Safety official shudder - the film continued to the next stage of development with horse-drawn colliery wagons before steam locomotives and finally the most modern (in the 1960s) system of freight train operation, including merry-go-round coal trains and freightliners. Several Derbyshire locations featured in this film with a good portion of it focussing on the Cromford and High Peak Railway, filmed before the last section from Middleton Top to Hurdlow closed. Other brief glimpses include the railway and a colliery at Clay Cross, Ambergate and its strategic importance to the Midland Railway including Stephenson's famous lime works.

The second film was '**Age of Invention**' from 1975. Whilst the first film showed industry at work in a contemporary setting, this film focussed purely on industrial archaeology and its conservation. A film made to promote the British Tourist Authority's sites of Industrial Heritage.

The catalogue notes described it as follows: "*Britain was the cradle of the Industrial Revolution, which transformed the lives of millions and ushered in the modern world. Throughout Britain are the tangible remains of that period when British inventors were unequalled in the fertility of their ideas and the significance of their discoveries. A film reflecting the continuing interest in our industrial heritage.*" From the earliest water mills to Cornish tin mines with their steam engines, and from Ironbridge to early mechanised wrought iron working, this film is typical in style and pace of 1970s travel films, in which the world is now in colour, schoolchildren wear rainbow-coloured woolly hats, and parents can be seen in flared denim trousers. As pleasing and as relevant to view today as it was in the '70s, only the fashions have changed!

At the end of the showing, several people enquired where copies of the films could be obtained. Sadly, *'Age of Invention'* has been out of circulation for around 20 years since its one and only video appearance. Fortunately, *'Forward to First Principles'* is available on video but a DVD release is still awaited. The film appears on *"The British Transport Film Collection - Volume 1, The Classics"* which is produced by the British Film Institute who are custodians of most of the BTF archive. The compilation also includes Elizabethan Express 1954), Snowdrift at Bleath Gill (1955) and Train Time (1952) (which also features plenty of Derbyshire railway operations).

The video catalogue number is BFIV058 and may be ordered from any high street video retailer. The cheapest price online is from Movie Mail - www.moviemail-online.co.uk/films/8639. VHS is increasingly scarce and I expect that this title may become deleted before too long.

Further information about British Transport films and its output of over 700 films - plus over 200 awards including an Oscar - please visit the website www.britishtransportfilms.co.uk

Nick Wheat - Webmaster
www.britishtransportfilms.co.uk

The New Mills Millennium Walkway, Heritage Centre, and the Torrs Industrial Trail
Dr. Derek Brumhead

Ed: Following his excellent presentation to NEDIAS on 10 April, Derek Brumhead has very kindly sent to me the following article for publication

The town of New Mills in the 'dark peak' of north west Derbyshire is in area of spectacular natural beauty standing astride the river Goyt at its confluence with the river Sett, both rivers being deeply incised into an impressive sandstone gorge 30m deep, known as the Torrs. Mills and the ruined foundations of mills lie in the bottom of the gorge attracted to the site at the end of the eighteenth century by the waterpower potential, while impressive Victorian road and railway viaducts cross it.



The gorge, geologically, is of quite recent formation. It was formed about 15,000 - 20,000 years ago by torrential melt water from a glacier which occupied the Goyt valley. When the ice melted, the river Goyt, blocked off by a moraine, was diverted from its original course into this newly formed gorge.

The New Mills Millennium Walkway was completed just before Christmas 1999. Since then, it has attracted enormous interest in the national press, won several national awards including the British Construction Industry Awards 2000, and the Civic Trust Awards 2001, and has been featured on the National Lottery. In January 2000, a 44p stamp was issued as part of a series of stamps highlighting projects built using a lottery award. The 175-yard long elevated steel walkway spans what *The Guardian* described somewhat dramatically as 'the last inaccessible place in England', a rocky wall in the gorge, cantilevered out over the fast running river Goyt. Although the walkway is of modern design, this does not detract from its place in history following, as it does, a series of distinguished predecessors which have negotiated the physical problem of passing through, over and under the sandstone gorge. It is no wonder that visitors express surprise and admiration at what the Torrs can offer in the realms of industrial and transport archaeology and geology.

Visitors are now able to inspect close at hand not only the sandstone cliffs and the enormous railway retaining wall above the walkway, but also the historic Torr Vale Mill within a bend on the opposite bank, listed by English Heritage Grade II*, which only ceased production in 2000 after 212 years. It was built for water-powered cotton spinning in 1788-1790 and the water course (headrace) and iron sluice gate which directed water via a tunnel onto the mill's two overshot water wheels are still features to be admired.

The gorge forms parts of the recreational area known as The Torrs Riverside Park. Until the walkway was built, walkers had to retrace their steps and climb back out of the gorge. The walkway now completes the gap in the Goyt Way (Whaley Bridge-Compstall), which is part of the longer Mid-Shires Way (Leicestershire - Stockport), itself part of path E2 the premier walking route in Europe which runs from Nice to Stranraer. It also links with the Trans-Pennine Trail, path E8.

It also provides another route for visitors to reach the town's heritage centre, sited at the top of one of the paths leading down into the gorge. The Centre consists of a shop and sales area selling publications, maps and trails; fixed display areas telling the 'New Mills Story'; a model of the town in 1884 with an accompanying sound and light commentary; and a temporary exhibitions room. It describes the formation of the Torrs, the pre-industrial history including Domesday and the royal forest of Peak, the story of the 'New Mill' a corn mill which gave its name to the town, and the growth of communications, coal mining, and the textile industry. For young visitors there is a reconstruction of a coalmine tunnel to crawl through. A special attraction is the model of the town in 1884 - the year in which the Union Road high-level bridge over the Torrs was built.

The former engraving and calico printing industries in the town and district are also described, with a reconstruction of an engraver's workshop. New Mills was important for the engraving of copper rollers. It was in New Mills about 1821 that John Potts, who was an artist, turned his skills to that of engraving. He became famous for inventing a method of preparing copper rollers for engraving by an adaptation of the 'die and mill' technique which previously had been used for engraving flat metal plates for printing bank notes. Potts' invention spread all over Europe and North America.

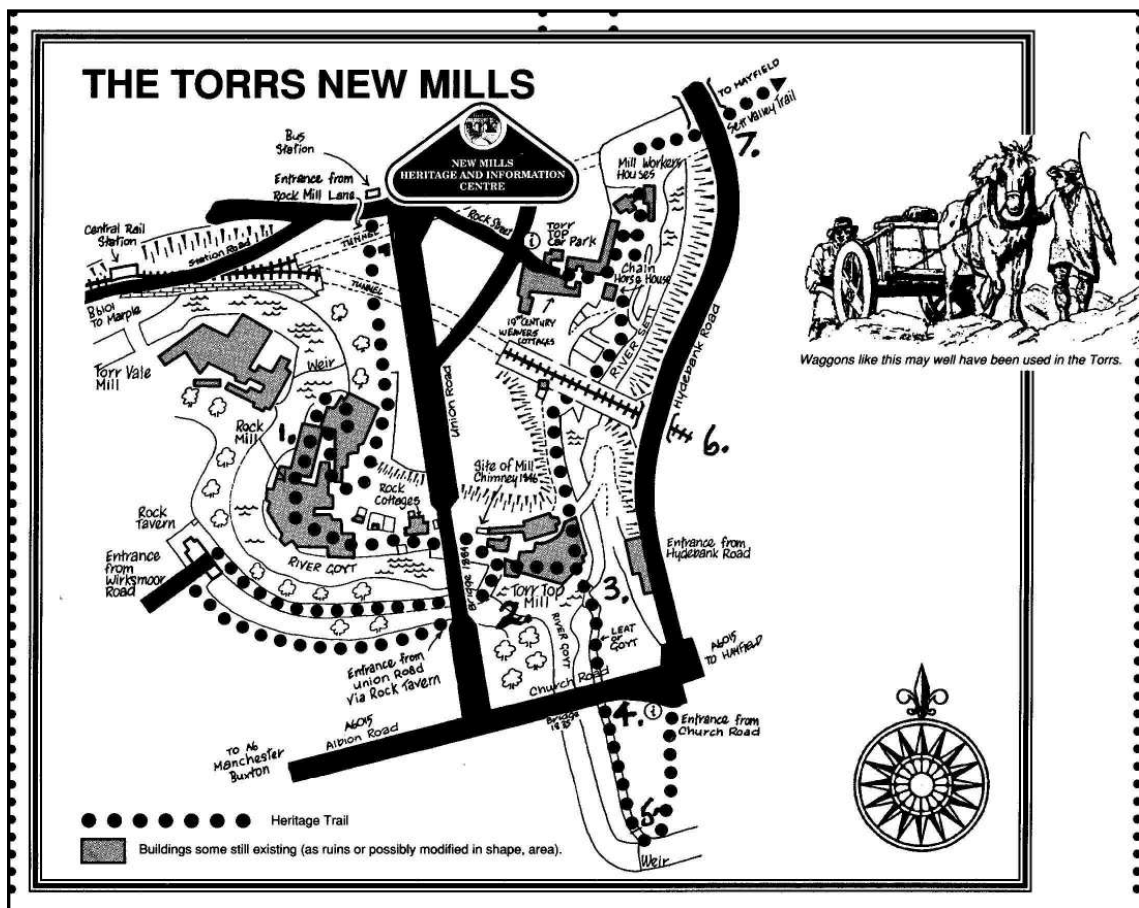
The Heritage Centre stands at the top of one of the paths leading down into the Torrs gorge and the Millennium Walkway. At the foot of the path, opposite Torr Vale Mill, is the site of Rock Mill (1) which covered an extensive position within a bend of the river before being abandoned in the 1880s. It had a varied existence, being a cotton mill, paper mill and calico print works at various times. Little now remains except an engine bed and fragments of walls. There is an ancient weir in the river.

Further into the Torrs the four-arch 1884 Union Road stone viaduct bridge dwarfs an early nineteenth century footbridge over the river Goyt. From the footbridge is a spectacular view of a huge weir and

the remains of Torr Top Mill (2), destroyed by fire in 1912, which stood at the confluence of the river Goyt and river Sett. Originally, it was a small water-powered mill dating from 1794, but in the mid-nineteenth century it was extended and converted into a large steam-powered six-storey mill. The truncated chimney stands almost out of sight against the rock face of the gorge.

Nearby, the wooden footbridge, known as the Millward Memorial bridge (3) over the river Sett was erected in 1984 to commemorate the centenary of the Union Road bridge and the work of Dr Millward who led the campaign to open up the Torrs to the public. The bridge stands on the site of the former aqueduct which carried water to the wheel in Torr Mill. The former headrace or leat is followed by a path under Church Road bridge.

Church Road bridge (4) was originally a two-arched bridge built in 1835 to carry the turnpike road to Thornsett and Hayfield over the river Goyt. A lower tier was inserted in 1888 to strengthen it. There is a datestone above the lower arch. At the end of the path is the sluice gate (5) which controlled the flow of water along the headrace to Torr Mill. From here southwards, there is a view of the thirteen-arch 1902 former Midland railway viaduct striding across the Goyt floodplain, which now carries trains from Manchester to Sheffield via Stockport, and limestone trains from the Buxton area.



From the Millward Memorial Bridge, the path following the Sett River upstream passes under the former Midland Railway viaduct (6) built in 1867 bringing trains from London and Derby to New Mills on their way to Manchester. Further along the path is the beginning of the Sett Valley Trail (7) which follows the line of the former railway to Hayfield, closed in 1970. The bridge over the river Sett remains; so does the portal of the tunnel under the town. Adjacent are the foundations of three mill-workers cottages built in the early 1800s just above the river. They form part of a group of houses demolished in the 1960s. From here, the path climbs up to the site of the chain horse house, the site of former stables for the horses leading carts up and down the steep paths. Adjacent are the newly refurbished 'weavers cottages'. Lying derelict for many years, they now have been restored as examples of fine early nineteenth century terraced stone houses.

Towards the end of last year, Hugh Potter, the Archivist of the Friends of Cromford Canal offered to let me transcribe a bundle of yellowed, stained and fragile papers as part of an exercise to decipher part of the Canal Company's toll receipts. At around seven hundred entries, compared with the five thousand or so Hugh had already tackled from those donated, loaned or otherwise found in County archives, it seemed a modest task - until I learned that had been a four-year stint!

The batch loaned out to me had been donated to the Friends and could best be described as loose leaf and fragile. Yet although the entries were often faded, the carefully handwritten leaves gave some remarkable insights in to canal's contribution to the economy of the time, both local and national. As can be seen from the copy below, each entry gave a date, boat number, steerer, owner, points of loading and unloading, plus the cargo being carried. The length of the journey along the Cromford, measured from Langley Mill tollhouse, was given along with the weight of the load verified (usually) by measurement of "dry inches" compared with each boat's registered scale of loadings draughts.

Apart from the inevitably large number of coal boat movements from the collieries of the coalfield served by the canal, almost entirely to the east of Butterley Tunnel and along the main line or on the Pinxton Arm, there were a significant amount of other loads in evidence. Traffic to the west of Butterley Tunnel was even more varied, with a constant stream of the boats of G Wheatcroft & Sons with their "sundries" loads virtually monopolising the canal trade in that direction.

The papers were generally dated for the mid-1830s, just after the opening of the Cromford & High Peak Railway and before the main railway system had got in to its stride. Based at the Cromford Canal's end-on junction with the Erewash Canal at Langley and levying tolls solely for the weight and distance applicable to the Cromford Canal, the toll-keepers usually recorded the places of origin and final destinations well beyond the fifteen-mile length of their canal. So we see sundries being carried from London to Manchester, with tolls charged for the fourteen miles from Langley to "Railway", and large amounts of grain and flour going from Nottingham to Manchester by the same route. The Cromford and Peak Forest canals, by their connection via the Cromford & High Peak Railway thus became an important artery of England's national transport network for a few years until the main railway routes were opened.

The first example below shows 37 tons of coal being carried to Leicester by John Eaton in May 1836 on a boat owned by Thomas Eaton. There were almost as many steerers owning their own boats as those, as we see here, probably working a boat owned within the family. Wheatcroft's apart, there were no large fleet owners evident in the batch of permits I examined. Local industrialists and coal owners had a relatively modest proportion of boats in traffic on the Cromford. These included the Butterley Co. Ltd., Jas Oakes & Co. and John Coke Esq.

Rather surprisingly, there were very few loads of coke when compared with the amount of coal being carried. A few loads of limestone and gritstone were to be seen, along with clay and cinders. There was iron ore being brought in from Runcorn, possibly Cumbrian ore being transhipped in the Mersey then routed eastwards along the Trent & Mersey Canal; "iron" and "castings" going out from both Golden Valley and Codnor Park. Crates of pottery were also booked out from Codnor Park, some destined for London.

Inbound, there were several loads of timber, usually to places to the west of Butterley Tunnel, with Buckland Hollow showing up as an important unloading point. Here also Messrs Wheatcroft made frequent loadings and off-loadings of their "goods" and "sundries". At the head of the canal, Cromford also received plenty of the latter as well as one load of "wool" and another of "cotton". On April 29th 1836, Wheatcrofts are shown as carrying four tons of cotton the full fifteen miles of the

Cromford, the original loading place being shown as Manchester. I gather from Hugh that out of over five thousand loads examined so far, this may be the only one of cotton identified as having been brought to Cromford by canal. It seems it was not a mode of transport favoured by the Arkwrights.

Getting back to the mainstay traffic of coal, the destinations of Nottingham and Leicester not unexpectedly predominate but there many loads destined for places along the Trent, such as Newark and Burton, Lincoln via the Foss Dyke Navigation, Grantham, Loughborough, Market Harborough and Northampton. Traffic for the London market was in evidence with some actually said to be for London but the majority, due to the punitive coal duties applied when crossing the boundaries, was shown to be intended for offloading at Aylesbury, Box Moor, Buckingham, Lady Capel's Wharf, Leighton Buzzard and Wendover.

Clearly, there is a lot we could learn from these Permits. The boat numbers and names of steerers allow estimates to be made of the duration of trips. The collieries named and the tonnages being loaded might possibly allow us to improve our knowledge of the working periods and output of the area's collieries in the first part of the nineteenth century. We should also not forget the family historians' interests. I am assured that anyone interested in taking a deeper academic view of the data available than this rough outline provides will be welcomed by the Friends of the Cromford Canal's archivist, Hugh Potter, and he can be contacted at archivist@cromfordcanal.org.uk. I found the work very stimulating and hope it will be of benefit to those who wish to take it further.

Slack and Company of Chesterfield – Winifred Slack's "History of the Slack Family"

*In the article in NEDIAS Newsletter 21, David Slack referred to an account of the history of the Slack family and their business, which had been written by his great aunt Winifred Slack, and contained in the **History of the Robinson Family**. Eliza Slack, the sister of David Slack's great grandfather had married Charles Portland Robinson in 1874.*

The following is a fascinating extract, which sheds light not only on the company but also on social and administrative aspects.

"The piece of land fronting Lordsmill Street (6 acres in extent) and including the Tan Yard, stables, houses, outbuildings, the field and garden surrounding this house (Ashmore House, recently pulled down) has been held by the Slack family for 600 years, either as landlord or tenant. The first recorded William Slack rented it from Godfrey Heathcote, squire of Chesterfield, generations of whose family are buried in the Parish Churchyard.

"Our ancestor had also to pay a "peppercorn" rent of three Barley Corns a year to the Earl of Burlington, at Hardwick Hall, the Lord of the Manor. The old Title Deed says "The 6 acres of land on ye moors of the Parish of Hasland held by William Slack as tenant of Godfrey Heathcote, and known as "Ye Goose Meadows" shall be liable to a yearly charge of a peppercorn rent payable to My Lord of Burlington of Hardwick Hall. The peppercorn rent shall be three corns of ye Rye Plant to be paid personally by Wm. Slack in the Hall of the Manor of Hardwick before noon on the feast of Our Lady (March 25th)." This William Slack was a brush-maker, but soon turned Tanner.

"The above mentioned Earl of Burlington was father of John Spencer Cavendish, afterwards created 1st Duke of Devonshire. In "The Life of the 8th Duke of Devonshire" by Buckle, Vol. II, it is stated that it was a clerical error on the part of the official in the College of Heralds who wrote out the Letters Patent of the Dukedom, that it was written "Devonshire", it should have been "Derbyshire".

"The Slacks belonged from earliest times to the Church of England. My great-grandfather Samuel Slack was Vicar's Warden in the Parish Church and lighted the first gas chandelier when gas was

installed. Some of the congregation, the Vicar and Wardens decided to erect a carved screen to divide the Chancel and Lady Chapels from the main body of the church. The Vicar, Wardens and two members of the congregation signed the order. When it was completed and the screen erected they were amazed at the bill of £2,000. The Vicar, People's Warden, and the two members of the congregation repudiated the signatures and liability. My great-grandfather was left to pay and did so, but the family left the Church of England. Portions of this screen are still standing, their rich carving beautified with age.

“Tradition says he joined Soresby Street Congregational Church. This throws an interesting light on the ecclesiastical origin of some of our Free Church families. In this case non-conforming churchmen produced a very strong minded and angry dissenter.

“My grandfather married Mary Anne Marriott of Megdale Farm, Matlock. Her father was steward for Arkwright's of Willersley Castle. He himself farmed 700 acres and was locally known as the “squire of Masson”. My grandmother enjoyed some considerable fame as a rider to hounds, and was said to be the most fearless cross-country rider in West Derbyshire. After my father's birth, she suffered from what would now be regarded as nervous depression. The medical men of those days had one cure for everything – bleeding by leeches. This treatment they continued for a long period, with tragic consequences to her physical and mental health. Grandfather took her to Buxton, Harrogate and Margate, but the doctors there carried on the same treatment. She eventually drowned herself one November night in the river surrounding their house. My father (aged 9) found her next day by her long hair floating on the surface of the water. The inquest was held in our present dining room. The Coroner was Mr. Wm. Bingham, a Quaker, and builder of the Almshouses in Saltergate, and founder of the Bingham's Charity, now administered by the Vicar of Chesterfield. My father was the chief witness, but was of course too young to be sworn. The coroner took him by the hand and said “Now, my son, just tell us about it”. She is buried in the family vault in St Paul's Churchyard, Hasland.

“My grandfather employed about 400 men and quite 90% of these were Irishmen.

“Grandfather's brother, John, was employed at the Works as head of the Chamois Dressing Dept. His health was indifferent, and he was not often at work. He married Kane Turner (of the drapery family) and his children were Henry, Arthur, Walter, Rowland, Edwin, Clara, Annie and Mary. My grandfather virtually educated and maintained these nephews and nieces until they were able to work for themselves.

“Grandfather's eldest son (my Uncle Samuel) was sent out as foreign traveller, but his abilities were not of a commercial variety and he was called home. As soon as he was twenty-one, his brother William (my father) was given this position. In the course of his business duties he visited most of the continental capitals and the great seaports like Marseilles, Amsterdam, Bordeaux, Genoa, etc. It was his duty to visit the big Hide Markets at the monthly auction sales and buy the raw hides, which were tanned into the finished article here at the Hipper Leather Works, and then sold in the English and American markets chiefly. It seems to have been a big undertaking for a youth of twenty-one, who had never been out of England, to be sent alone to these foreign cities. To attend the sales and to bid in competition with buyers from all the great tanning firms of Europe and America.

“Apart from a working knowledge of French and German, he had to be able to judge a good hide from a bad one, and its probable weight by seeing it when held up by the auctioneers' men. Having bought the hides, he had to send them to the nearest port, and arrange for their shipment to England. At the monthly markets at Berlin and Frankfurt he usually purchased about £800 worth. At Marseilles and Genoa, £1,500 - £2,000 was not an unusual figure. I have heard him say that the greatest difficulty he had to meet was the problem of the different currencies.

“Father was in Berlin at the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War, and was one of the vast crowd in the Unter den Linden who saw two French generals surrender the flags of the Citadels of Alsace and

Lorraine to the Chancellor, Prince Bismarck and General von Moitke. He said he was disgusted at the insults and indignities heaped on the representatives of a defeated nation on that occasion. Ever since I can remember, almost, I have heard him say that he hoped to live long enough to see France revenged.

“The Hipper Leather Works at that time must have been one of the largest of its kind in the country, but it was definitely on the down-grade. Financial disasters swept them away along with the North Derbyshire Bank and the business passed into the hands of a group of Sheffield men, who rented it to my father, who carried it on in a small way.”

Ed: The Derbyshire Times of 22 April 1882, recorded a devastating and most destructive fire at Slack's tannery, saying that "... seldom has so much excitement prevailed in Chesterfield...danger to the gasometer...panting multitudes rushing through the town's thoroughfares..." The article is worth reading, but I do wonder if this fire itself may have been an early nail in the company's coffin.

NEDIAS Archives

Peter Wilson, NEDIAS Archivist

We are now starting to accumulate quite an archive of books, records, photographs and documents which I hold on behalf of NEDIAS. This raises a number of questions, and at the last NEDIAS Committee Meeting I raised a number of queries about availability, terms of loan, etc. The Committee has decided as a first step to ask the membership for their views, so that the mechanism for loan can be detailed and finalised.

Our next step, having finalised details of loan, will be to publish details of the Archives and to set up a workable procedure so that all can benefit from this growing resource.

Your comments, suggestions and answers to some of the following would be appreciated

- 1) **Who should be able to access the archive?**
 - a) Anyone
 - b) Members only
 - c) Invited members of the public
- 2) **Should this person require references or have to be vetted in any way?**
- 3) **Should there be a minimum length of membership before being allowed to use the archive?**
- 4) **Should there be a charge / deposit for items taken away?**
 - a) Free.
 - b) Charge per item.
 - c) Charge to be a member of our archive users club.
 - d) Should some, larger value items have a larger deposit than others.
- 5) **Should there be a maximum length of time an item should be taken away for?**
 - a) If so how long?
 - b) Renew by phone after this period, if no one else requires the item then ok,
 - c) Must not exceed a predetermined time limit.
 - d) What is the time limit?
- 6) **What should happen if this time span is breached?**
 - a) A fine.
 - b) Nothing.
- 7) **Should we try to put a monetary value on archive items?**
 - a) Do we need to think about insurance at sometime?
- 8) **If items are damaged or lost what should happen?**
 - a) Loss of deposit.
 - b) In case of total loss we possibly can't replace these items, so what is its value?
- 9) **Is there a value on some items that renders them unsuitable for being taken away (ref only)?**
 - a) Who and how do we decide this?

- 10) **What about copies of text & pictures (Copyright)?**
 - a) Photographic copies can be done by PW.
- 11) **Should we produce a list of rules to be signed by anyone wanting to use the archive?**
- 12) **In case of fire, flood or pestilence should all the archive be in one place?**
 - a) Should we try to copy smaller items and distribute copies amongst the committee?

I.A. News and Notes

Archaeology at Trebor - Chesterfield Canal basin

During the clearance of the Trebor site, the site of one of the old canal basins for the Chesterfield Canal has been identified. Expect to hear more news following the archaeology on site.

Brunel Bicentenary Conference

A two day conference is to be held on 6 & 7 July 2006 to celebrate the two hundred year anniversary of his birth. It will be held at the British Empire & Commonwealth Museum, Bristol, previously Brunel's historic train shed at Temple Meads. On the 5th, delegates can travel by steam on the GWR from London, and on 8 & 9 July, the Newcomen Society is to host a number of other events in the area. I suspect a number of members might want to be there! For more information, look at www.brunelevents.co.uk

Industry on the Isle of Man?

The next AIA Conference is to be held in the Isle of Man from 8-14 September 2006. A full lecture and visits programme is organised, including a visit to Great Laxey Mine. For more information, contact AIA Conference Secretary Tony Parkes on ☎ 0780 303 909, or by e-mail tonyparkes@care4free.net.

Letter from America – NEDIAS goes global

This is another bumper 12 page edition of our Newsletter. Regrettably one item which I was hoping to include, but need to holdover until the August edition is a fascinating account from member Paul Smith of an archaeological field trip to the US earlier this year, when he joined a team surveying an 1875 silver mine in Arizona. You will have to wait a little longer for this sterling article.

NEDIAS Exhibition in Chesterfield Library

Please note that Chesterfield Library has kindly offered exhibition space for NEDIAS to display current activities and projects in the foyer of the library for the month of April 2007. This gives us some time in which to plan our exhibits, with the aim to gather additional members, and to show the wealth of fascinating industrial history and archaeology in our area. If you have ideas and thoughts to help us to take full advantage of this opportunity, do please let David Wilmot or Cliff Lea know.

Archaeology in the Fens

If you missed the EMIAC Conference at Darley Abbey in May, then maybe you should think of the Eastern Region Industrial Archaeology Conference to be held on 10 June 2006 at the Museum of Fenland Pumping, Prickwillow (yes, Prickwillow), near Ely. Information from Brenda Taylor, Crown House, Horsham St Faiths, Norwich NR10 3JD.

And Finally, more from the Fens....

.....where would industry be without the wheel ?

Cliff Lea

I thought you might be as fascinated as I was to see the remnants of what is thought to be Britain's oldest surviving wheel, recently discovered at Flag Fen in Cambridgeshire. Flag Fen is recognised as one of the UK's most important ceremonial Bronze Age sites.

This ancient part of a cartwheel was discovered during excavation, preserved deep in the wet peat bogs. The wheel has been dated by dendrochronology to approx 1300 BC,

So far, no older wheel fragment has been identified in Britain – unless you know anything different?



*Fig: Photograph of wheel fragments, as discovered within the peat bog. Dated to 1300 BC
(Photo: Flag Fen Bronze Age Centre)*

Also discovered has been a pair of bronze shears, looking rather like sheep shears, but found complete with their wooden protective box, still beautifully preserved, by the peculiar protective quality of the peat bogs.

To look at, you might think the shears had been manufactured in the nineteenth century! rather than 3 millennia before!

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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.

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