

North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society



NEDIAS Newsletter No. 73 – February 2019
Price: £2.00 (Free to Members)



NEDIAS Visit to Barrow Hill Roundhouse – Wednesday 31 October 2018



What a great day we had at Barrow Hill last year, organised for us by Clive Jarrad. Photos of our visit have been kindly supplied by many members for our records including Dave Hart, David Hays, Derek Grindell, and Pat Pick, and Ian Thomasson has placed a host of his photos in a link that he is happy to share with you – see:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/gc82kTD1UVd6pxuw7>

He is also happy to share with us albums of the re-opening of Barrow Hill last year, a visit later that year and the visit of Tornado and the A4s in 2009. Feel free to explore these links as well:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/5QMWJwL9ZCDPLiXt7>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/R1tCbN3SFFci6MuW6>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/bazX4CbsJhLEQxmr8>

Hearty Congratulations from NEDIAS to Mervyn Allcock at Barrow Hill. A greatly deserved MBE !

See also the comments in 'Chairman's Chat' on Page 7 and a selection of Ian Thomasson's photographs on Page 9.



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<https://www.facebook.com/nediaschesterfield/?fref=ts>

WHAT'S ON?

NEDIAS Lecture Programme

Meetings are held at: St Thomas' Centre, Chatsworth Road, Brampton (opposite Vauxhall/Bristol St Motors) S40 3AW. There's plenty of parking in their own car park, including disabled spaces, as well as on-road parking in front of the Church. All meetings commence at 7:30pm.

Monday, 11 February 2019	Prof. John Parker: " The History of the local Glass Industries "; Glass has been made in the north Derbyshire and south Yorkshire region for centuries, and particularly around Chesterfield area we have incredible glass heritage. What were the companies, why here, how did they do it and what did they produce?
Monday, 11 March 2019	AGM – followed by talk from Glynn Wilton on aspects of the Barrow Hill HLF bid.
Monday, 8 April 2019	Philip Riden: " The Timber Industry and the Railways "; Railways needed timber, particularly for sleepers, and our local coal products industries produced that very effective toxic timber preservative creosote
Monday, 13 May 2019	DAVID WILMOT Memorial lecture Glynn Waite: " The History of the Railways around Chesterfield "; North Midland Railway, Grand Central Railway/Manchester Sheffield and South Lincolnshire Railway, Lancashire Derbyshire and East Coast Railway, and a host of branches serving local industries and pits. Glynn will be teasing out the fascinating history of our local lines.

Other Diary Dates

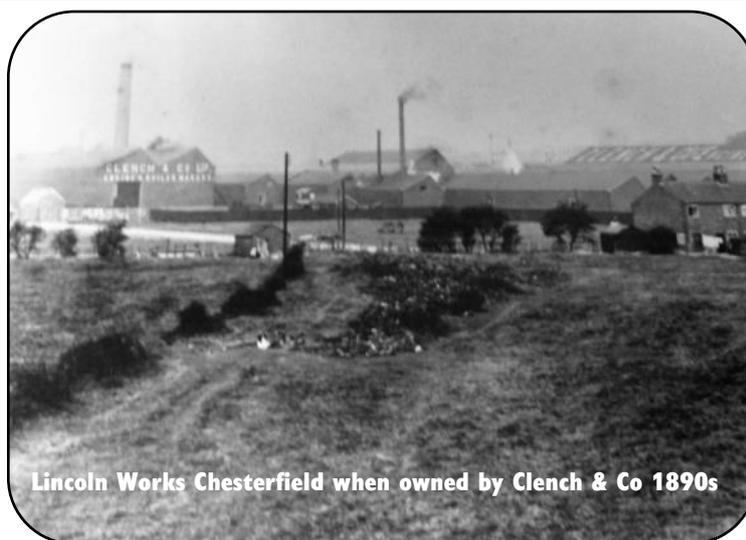
Monday, 26 February 2019	Gillian Cookson: " The Age of Machinery-Engineering in the Industrial Revolution ". Newcomen Society Meeting, Kelham Island Museum. 6:30pm. FOC. More info from John Suter, meetings.syorks@newcomen.com
Tuesday, 19 March 2019	Andy Firth: " Hulley's Buses ". C&DLHS meeting, United Reformed Church, Rose Hill, C'field. Info at www.cadlhs.org.uk

Frederick Clench 1838—1923 - A Chesterfield Industrialist

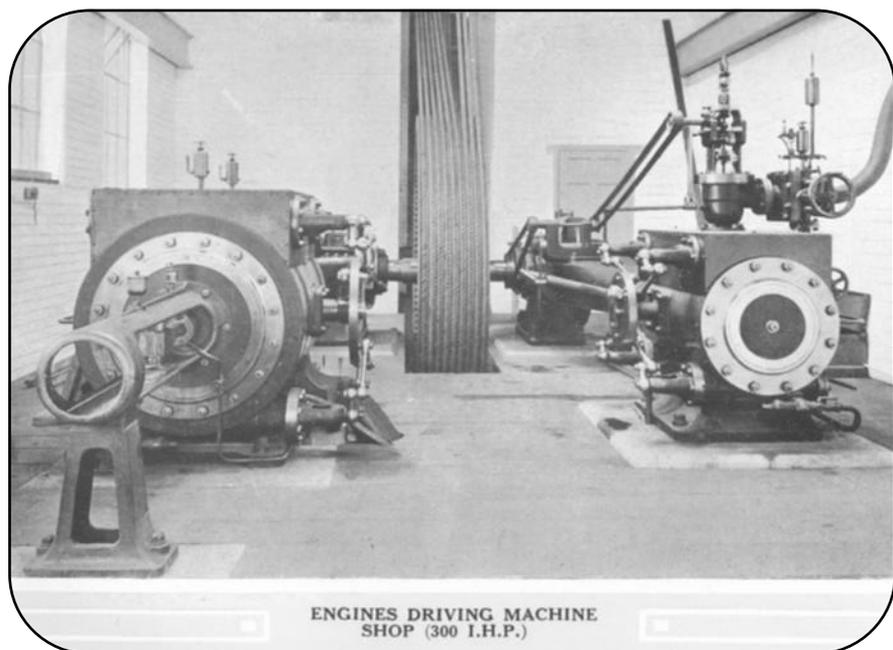
Peter Hawkins

Frederick Clench was the builder and first owner of what would later become the Bryan Donkin Company at the Lincoln works in Chesterfield. I have had in my possession for many years a rather poor photograph showing the works with the name of Clench painted on the roof.

About 30 years ago I asked around those of my friends who might have been able to answer the question 'who was he?' but no-one knew of Frederick Clench. I looked at the trade directories in Chesterfield Library but could find no information. Time passed and I acquired a Peckett Locomotive catalogue, a fantastic little book with a



lot of illustrations of the works inside and out. One caught my eye. This was of the main steam engine which drove the works and which I discovered was made in Chesterfield by Clench & Co so I now knew what kind work they did. But still who was he and where did he come from?



The Corless engine at the Peckett Locomotive works in Bristol made by Clench & Co

This is where my wife was able to help. She is a family historian and of course now there are a lot of resources online and Hey presto! up came the 1841 census entry. This told us he was the son of William Clench a tailor and his wife Sara living in Poole in Dorset. Poole was the home of the engineering works of William Pearce which would later become the well-known Lewin's of Poole Foundry. This firm was a good all round maker of agriculture implements, steam engines and locomotives etc. Frederick may have had family working there or maybe he just saw some of the products being tested making a big impression on him. After all this was the age of steam engineering and many lads at that time wanted to be an engineer.

In the 1851 census the Clench family was listed living in the High St in Poole.

Frederick was a scholar aged 13 and his father employed five tailors. By 1861 Frederick had moved to Lambeth in south London. He was a lodger and his occupation was a surveyor of taxes. Also in the house was John Cole of Poole a surveyor of taxes and George Brown an engineer from Edinburgh. Was this right? Had the enumerator got them a bit mixed up! Not unknown. In Lambeth there were two well-known engineering firms Maudslay and Napier, two of the top companies in the country and ideal companies for a young man to be a premium apprentice and set out in the engineering business. Later though it was a great surprise to find advertisements in the Stamford Mercury in 1863 and 1864 confirming Frederick was indeed a surveyor of taxes and he was also the agent in Lincoln for the Standard Life Assurance Company.

Frederick was living in Lincoln by 1862 when he married Henrietta McDakin at St Botolph's Church on the 8th October that year. The 1871 census lists the family in Bentham Road, Lincoln. Frederick and Henrietta by then had four children, the eldest a son of 7 years. Frederick was a manufacturing engineer employing 500 men (it was the company he worked for which employed 500 men rather than he as an individual). In 1881 he was still in Lincoln and now the company was employing 700 men and 150 boys. During this time newspaper reports confirmed he was a director of the engineering company of Messrs Robey. He was the commercial manager and would have had responsibility for the finances of the company, bidding for new work and agreeing contracts.

Although he was in Lincoln at the time of the 1891 census his years with Messrs. Robey were soon to end. The London Gazette of 1st May 1893 announced the partnership of Robey & Co had been dissolved with Frederick Clench and his son Gordon McDakin Clench retiring from the company.

Frederick appears to have moved to Chesterfield soon after his departure from Robey's and started Clench & Co at the new Lincoln Works. They were modern works for the time with continuous bays nearly 400ft long and 40ft wide. The company became known for manufacturing high speed steam engines.

Newspaper reports showed he soon became involved with local societies and institutions. The Lincolnshire Echo reported on 7 Mar 1894 the initiation of Frederick Clench as an honorary member of the Derby Midland Independent Order of Oddfellows. The Derbyshire Times of 3rd Aug 1895 reported his winning the 1st prize with a beautiful brown gelding at the Annual Show of the Chesterfield & East Derbyshire Agricultural Society. There were further reports over the years of such wins. The Sheffield Daily Telegraph of 31 Aug 1896 reported the Annual Meeting of the Chesterfield and Midland Counties Institution of Engineers was attended by new member Frederick Clench. In 1898 he was a supporter with other industrialists including Charles Paxton Markham for a private power distribution scheme to be developed with a station in Warsop.

By 1900 the Bryan Donkin Company of Bermondsey in London had outgrown its original site and needed a better location with convenient access to the raw materials available in a coalfield area and with good transport connections. An agreement was signed in 1900 between Bryan Donkin & Co, the Donkin Land Co and Frederick Clench & Co for the amalgamation of the companies. From 1900 to 1905 the company was known as Bryan Donkin & Clench Ltd. It was not until 1902 the move from London into the modern shops at the Lincoln works in Chesterfield took place. There were around 220 employees in Bermondsey and many of them decided to move to Chesterfield.

In 1903 a new venture began at the works. The Derbyshire Times carried a report in its edition of the 14th March of a vacuum cleaning machine being manufactured at Bryan Donkin & Clench. The machine was being used in many great houses including Chatsworth and a new company, the Lancashire & Midland Counties Vacuum Cleaner Company, was set up to build the machines at Lincoln works. The Directors were Mr. Frederick Clench, Mr. C F Hitchings of the parent company, Mr. Gordon McDakin Clench assistant managing director of Bryan Donkin & Clench, and Mr. John I Eyre of Messrs Eyre & Sons.

The first years in Chesterfield proved difficult for Bryan Donkin & Clench and on the 18th March 1905 the Sheffield Daily Telegraph reported the voluntary winding up of the company. It was re-organized and reformed as Bryan Donkin & Co in 1906. Gordon McDakin Clench was no longer to be a director of the new company and almost certainly neither was Frederick Clench.

They did continue for many years as directors of the Vacuum Cleaner Company. Major Gordon McDakin Clench died in 1918 while in Scotland on wartime service. His obituary described him as the Managing Director of the Lancashire & Central Counties Vacuum Company Ltd Sheffield.

In the Yorkshire Post of the 27 December 1923 there was a report of the General Meeting of the British Vacuum Cleaner & Engineering Company held in London. This commenced with recording the deep regret at the death of Mr. Frederick Clench in March who had been an active member of the Board for the past 20 years.

During his years in Chesterfield Frederick Clench lived first at Duckmanton Lodge and in 1901 he was living at Walton Cottage with his wife Henrietta, son Gordon and daughter Jessie. Also present was a visitor, George H. Simpson a solicitor, whom Jessie was shortly to marry. Frederick and Henrietta appear to have left Chesterfield soon after the winding up of Bryan Donkin & Clench. In September 1909 Henrietta died in Brighton with probate being given to Gordon and Jessie. In 1911 Frederick aged 72 was in High Wycombe. He was a boarder living on private means in the household of Jane Ann Craven a single lady also of private means aged 35. He died on the 19th March 1923 in High Wycombe aged 85yrs.

And so I discovered who Frederick Clench was and where he came from and how he was the involved in the Bryan Donkin works moving to Chesterfield.

A Thought

As mentioned earlier The Donkin Land Co was one of the three companies amalgamating to form Bryan Donkin & Clench in 1900. This has caused me to wonder whether the Land Co already owned the Lincoln works site when Clench & Co was established c1894. Did the Bryan Donkin board encourage Clench to start the Lincoln works with a long term view of moving to Chesterfield in the future due to the increasing unsuitability of the Bermondsey site. Perhaps the answer to this will turn up sometime and prove such a hypothesis.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to my wife Maeve for help with the research for this article and for editing it.

Sources

Census, Birth, Marriage, Death and Probate Records - Ancestry.co.uk

The British Library Collection of Newspapers – findmypast.co.uk

London Gazette Online

Catalogue of Peckett & Sons Ltd and article in the Locomotive Magazine Feb 7 1903

This article is based on an earlier article which first appeared in the Journal of the Chesterfield & District Local History Society

Robert Bakewell of Melbourne – a Georgian Blacksmith extraordinaire

Cliff Lea

Robert Bakewell was born in Uttoxeter in 1682 and was the son of blacksmith Sampson Bakewell of Uttoxeter whose wife Mary was herself the daughter of a Derby blacksmith. Robert was to be apprenticed in the London workshop of a well known London blacksmith, Jean Tijou.

Tijou was an ironworker of Huguenot extraction, who had arrived in England in 1689. He was patronised by William III and Mary, making the gates and railings for Hampton Court, and he went on to make the screens and grilles for St Paul's Cathedral for Christopher Wren. At Chatsworth, Tijou's surviving works include the grand staircase balustrade and famous Golden Gates. Bakewell could not have had a finer master!

In 1706, Robert Bakewell started working at Melbourne Hall for the owner Thomas Coke while living in the town of Melbourne, south of Derby. Thomas Coke had commissioned George London and Henry Wise the well known royal gardeners who also had worked at Chatsworth to lay out his gardens. Bakewell was commissioned to design and produce an "eye-catcher", a wrought iron domed arbour. It has intricately designed scrollwork patterns with oak and laurel leaves. This is still the great focal point of the gardens and is referred to today as "the birdcage".

Following an affair with local woman Elizabeth Fisher, which resulted in the birth of a son, Bakewell Fisher, he moved from Melbourne to Derby, where he set up a workshop and forge at Oake's Yard in St Peter's Street. A Blue Plaque was erected on a bank close to Bakewell's original forge site some years ago.

Later, he married Mary Cokayne and had a family of three sons and three daughters. He died in 1752 and is buried in St Peters Church, Derby.

Examples of Bakewell's work can be seen at Derby Cathedral, where he made the wrought iron rood screen and the gates at the west door. There are also wrought iron gates by Bakewell at the Derby Silk Mill, part of the original 1721 construction, the gates guarding the entrance across a narrow access bridge. There is ironwork by him in a number of churches including Alvaston, Ashbourne, Borrowash, Duffield, Etwell, Radbourne and Staunton Harold.

I am indebted to John Rowland who tells me that in Robert Bakewell's time blacksmiths would have used iron hammered (wrought) from puddled cast iron, i.e. molten iron heated with any rough iron oxide to reduce its carbon content. This unfortunately raised its melting point and foundries didn't have the means to reach such temperatures. So, the semi-solid bright orange-hot lump was hammered and folded to remove slag and give a fine laminated texture, which included drawn-out glassy slag inclusions with black spots. The laminated pieces can be hammered out very thin without cracking and drawn wire-thin. Crucially, it will 'fire weld'. Get two pieces yellow hot with sparks jumping off, and then hammer them together with incredible skill and speed, and you get a true weld. The laminations in wrought iron seem to hold it together.

John went on to say that wrought iron is completely different to pure iron, owing to the presence within



The Bakewell Gates in Derby Cathedral – They were originally made for the entrance to Osborne House, a property in an adjacent street to the Cathedral. Originally made by Robert Bakewell in 1725 they were not moved to the front of the Cathedral until the 1950s.



LEFT: The original wrought iron gates, a Grade I listed building, made for Derby Silk Mill in 1725 by the renowned Derbyshire craftsman, Robert Bakewell – **RIGHT:** Bakewell's magnificent wrought iron arbour, sometimes called the birdcage, in Melbourne Hall gardens – it is also a Grade I listed building.

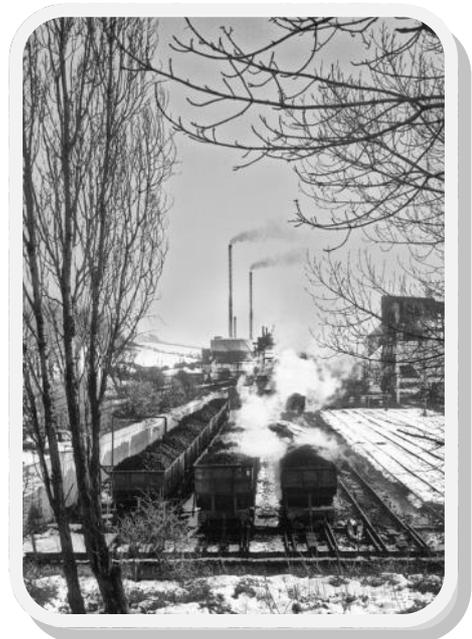
the matrix of the iron, of up to 5% of silicate slags, distributed throughout the section as fibres. It is these slag fibres which give wrought irons their unique properties, including superb weldability (in the fire) and resistance to corrosion. John told me that his Grandfather, who had been a Blacksmith, had done it in the earlier part of the 1900s, but by the 1950s he had to use ordinary mild steel. He did 'fancy work' but it was riveted together, so it wasn't real 'wrought'. **The incredible foliage and flowers in a Robert Bakewell piece such as at the Melbourne arbour/“birdcage” was all connected without a rivet or screw.**

If you come across a piece of rusty iron bar on a dig, it's worth scraping the rust off and giving it a wire-brushing. If it's got that “filo pastry” look, it's wrought iron!

Coalite Visit in 1991 - a request for information *James King-Holmes*

In the March of 1991 a London-based computer company commissioned me, as a photographer, to visit the Coalite plant at Bolsover to produce one of a series of black & white images showing what we would now call 'desktop computers' in use by their clients in varied industrial and commercial settings. The actual machines were to be found in the clients' offices but the publicity department needed the computers to be seen in locations which represented the different types of company using them, so we had parked computers in, for instance, tomato-growing glasshouses, in the cellars of a Scottish distillery, in fashionable London restaurants and in pottery factories. Now we had to find a way to show them in simulated use at the Coalite works.

The memory that remains of that day is the overpowering chemical odours of gas, tar and sulphur. Whilst we were shown around I was busy taking photographs of the plant whilst the PR person was gathering material for the story. We eventually photographed the computer near the railway lines, on a small table we carried. The computer did not need to



be working, just to be prominently visible near the locomotives, which steamed and smoked as they carried material in and out of the plant, whilst flames and yellow fumes rose from tall chimneys in the background.

Coalite closed completely in 2004 and my client changed ownership some years later so records of this assignment were lost, which is why I am now trying to find information to put captions to the few images still in my files. You can see one of the winter scenes here, but what does it show?

There are about 15 great historical images and you can view them all on the web site below:

www.scitechimage.com/-/galleries/technologies/industrial-technologies/energy/coalite

Can you help to let us know what the caption should be? Please feed your info to Cliff Lea and he will pass them on to James.

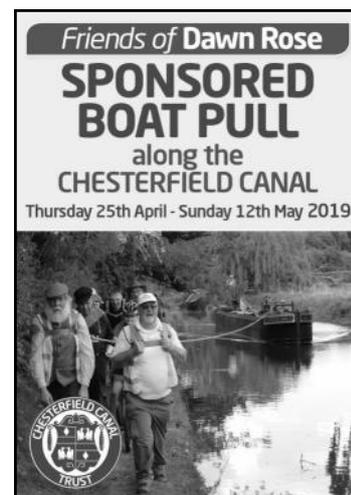
Chairman's Chat

Cliff Lea

I am always saddened to see that the number of honours' awards to people locally is so low, despite our having so many who deserve recognition – I suspect it's another case of this area being out of sight of those in the capital and corridors of power. So imagine my pleasure when I saw that there were two awards for people involved with Derbyshire heritage in the Queen's 2019 New Year Honours. I was particularly pleased to see recognition for the tremendous achievements of Mervyn Allcock. He has been fighting since about 1990 to see a sound future for Barrow Hill Roundhouse, and his MBE is so well deserved. **Brilliant news, Mervyn!** NEDIAS had a great visit to the Roundhouse last year, and I think we should arrange another soon – perhaps to tie in with the 150th anniversary of its opening in 1870 – 2020 could be a big year.

The second award is to Ros Westwood at the Buxton Museum. If you have visited over the last year you will have seen a great rejuvenation, innovative displays, and innovative ways to engage the visiting public. When Ros took over as Museum curator it was in decline and had lost its recognised Museum Association status, but it was turned around under her leadership and not only was its membership status re-established, it also achieved Arts Council accreditation. Now the new displays are a shining example of good practice.

During our January meeting John Lower gave a great account of the building of the Dawn Rose for the Chesterfield Canal Trust; he also mentioned that they were organising a fund raising event involving the new boat - a "Boat Pull" between Shireoaks and the River Trent at West Stockwith. Teams could be sponsored to haul the boat for different sections of a few miles each, so raising much needed cash to aid restoration of the canal. At the end of the meeting it was suggested that we raise a team and see if we can be involved - and I'm delighted to say that we have moved on, and have arranged to haul the boat between Forest Locks and Ranby on Saturday 11 May. You'll hear more about it at the next meetings, and we'll need your help - but more of that later.



The Brampton Branch Line

Darrell Clark

At last December's meeting Darrell talked about the Brampton Branch Line and brought along a diorama he had constructed. The following was his script:

The Brampton Branch of the Midland Railway was built in 1871 to serve the extensive businesses springing up on both sides of the Chatsworth Road. Some 19 (yes nineteen) businesses have been identified. A plan of the whole length of the Branch Line showing not only the businesses but also the land owners is on a survey by P. McAllum in 1911.

The motive power provided by the Midland railway from the date of opening would most likely be the O.F. Class built by Kitson & Co of 0-4-0 design of which numbers 1511, 1519 & 1522 are recorded as on shed at Hasland 18C in July 1926.

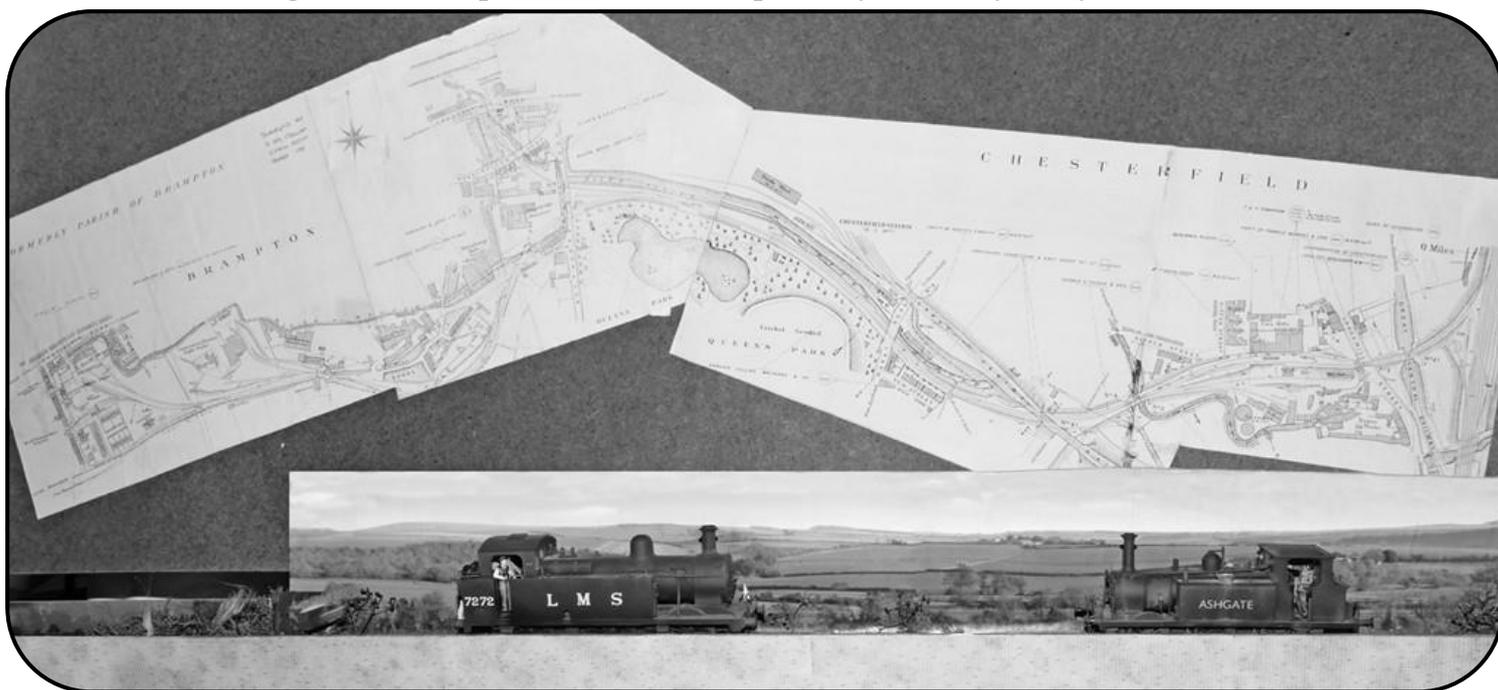
However an 0-6-0 design by Johnson of 1878 may have been used of which numbers 1755, 1758, 1779 & 1799 are recorded on shed at Hasland 18C, again in July 1926. Either of this class of locomotive would be seen on the Brampton Branch in those early years of operation. Incidentally both these classes of locomotive

were included in the 99-year lease between The Midland Railway and The Staveley Works Company to provide motive power at the works, one of which has survived into preservation and can be seen at Barrow Hill Roundhouse.

The introduction in 1899 of Johnson's more powerful Class 3F 0-6-0 would mean they are available for use in the Branch Line. As I explained in my article in last December's NEDIAS Newsletter T111 and T112 were allocated to Hasland and were recorded on shed in July 1926 as 7111 & 7112. Under the numbering of the class in 1934, T112 became T272, the locomotive most associated with the Brampton Branch.

Ten of the class have survived into preservation, unfortunately not T272. The nearest number to survive is 7279 which is alive and well, operated by the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway.

Turning now to our other featured locomotive the Stroudley 0-6-0 Tank of the LBSCR of 1872-1880, numbered 67 and named Brixton was built in 1874 and sadly it was scrapped in 1935 after 61 years of use, having been sold to the Grassmoor Colliery Co. in June 1920. However ten of these small locomotives have survived into preservation, the oldest being No. 72 Fenchurch of 1872. It is still operating in 2018 and owned by the Bluebell Railway in Sussex, One hundred and forty-six years old! Remember when this class of locomotive was designed it was expected have a life expectancy of twenty-five years.



I would like to thank my friend Ken Davies for helping in the preparation of the 7mm models and Kevin Sydenham who created the street scene in 4mm scale.

HLF - new oral record of working history

The HLF have launched a new campaign to encourage people to share their stories of working life in the East Midlands. They say that with the decline of traditional industries over the last century, our working lives have changed dramatically, meaning first-hand memories of once prolific trades are at risk of being lost.

An event in Derbyshire, the 'Working lives' campaign is inviting groups to apply for National Lottery grants to explore the diverse trades and tradespeople of their local area. They want to get people talking about their careers and help groups to record these memories for future generations. At NEDIAS we have been asked to see whether any of our members would like to help to record their own working life.

Jonathan Platt, Head of HLF East Midlands, said: "We believe that the experiences of the people who helped build the country are just as important and should be recorded. Through our Working Lives campaign, we're hoping to celebrate and capture people's recollections of working life for generations to come."

If you'd like to get involved, please pick up a leaflet at our meetings, or contact eastmidlandscontact@hlf.org.uk. See more information at <https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/working-lives-new-heritage-campaign-launches>

A Pictorial Record of the NEDIAS Visit to Barrow Hill Roundhouse – Wednesday 31 October 2018



IA News and Notes

Peak Forest Tramway Wagon at Bugsworth

Bugsworth Canal Basin, the head of navigation of the Peak Forest Canal, was the largest and busiest inland port on Britain's narrow canal system and the only one to survive intact. Benjamin Outram, built the 14-mile long Peak Forest Canal from Dukinfield to Bugsworth in the 1790s, although plans to extend to Chapel Milton via Whitehough were never realised. The major promoter was Samuel Oldknow, the cotton entrepreneur of Mellor/Marple, and much of the finance was provided by Richard Arkwright Junior of Cromford, son of Sir RA.

Construction of the six miles Peak Forest Tramway in 1795 linked Bugsworth Basin to the limestone and gritstone quarries in Derbyshire.

There is only one original tramway wagon still in existence, now in the National Railway Museum at York. Since Bugsworth have full construction drawings and at least four original wheels and stub axles plus many bits and pieces salvaged whilst clearing the canal basin, they have produced their own replica.

The chassis has been produced by members using traditional techniques, utilising timber cut from redundant oak lock gate balance beams, courtesy of the Canal & River Trust. The body steelwork has been produced by modern laser cutting, again from drawings by one of their volunteers. They have assembled this "kit" and mounted it onto the chassis, and it's now on display at Bugsworth. Worth a visit to Bugsworth?



For more info see <https://bugsworthbasin.org/>

Blue Plaque erected in Torbay for Harry Brearley

The Torbay Civic Society has erected a Blue Plaque to the gatepost at Harry Brearley's final home, Walton Cottage, Livermead, Torquay, where he had lived from 1930 until his death in 1948. Our member Darrell Clark, in researching the history of this inventor of Stainless Steel, had advised the Torbay Civic Society of their hitherto unknown famous resident. His achievements had pretty much gone unnoticed in Torquay until this point, but they were not slow to celebrate him in erecting a Blue Plaque.

The Blue Plaque was unveiled on Saturday 29th September 2018 at his home for 20 years by the Deputy Chairman of Torbay Council in the presence of Tony Currie who represented Sheffield United FC, the main sponsor of the Plaque.

Darrell has provided Torbay with much of the pertinent history – and they have used it to print a leaflet celebrating the life of Brearley and to accompany the Plaque, the 84th erected by them.

NEDIAS has a copy of the leaflet which you can see on the welcome table at our meetings.

Many thanks to Darrell for bringing Brearley and his achievements to the attention of the residents of Torquay.



EMIAC 96 – Industrial Heritage Day “The Mansfield and Pinxton Railway (1819)”

The next East Midlands Industrial Heritage Day, EMIAC 96, is to be held on Saturday 11 May in Kirby in Ashfield, and is being organised by the Railway and Canal Historical Society. The theme this May celebrates the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Mansfield and Pinxton Railway.

Kirby in Ashfield was once an important centre of coal mining and railways in west Nottinghamshire, with three active coal mines and several railway junctions. The former Mansfield and Pinxton Railway opened in 1819, connecting the Cromford Canal with Mansfield, passing through Kirby in Ashfield. The Erewash Valley line was joined here by the later Midland Railway line from Nottingham. The Great Central Railway main line passed to the south-west side of the town and had a double junction with the Great Northern Railway Leen Valley Extension line to Langwith Junction and the Mansfield Railway to Clipstone. British Rail rerouted lines in the area in 1972 to eliminate level crossings and the Robin Hood Line opened in 1993, utilising the routes of several earlier railways.

The conference runs all day for a modest cost of only £20, and you can download a registration form off the NEDIAS website, at http://nedias.co.uk/?page_id=316

Mansfield & Pinxton Railway Timeline:

1819	Completed as 4'4" horse drawn railway to transport coal from the Pinxton branch of the Cromford Canal to Mansfield
1819 13 April	First load of coal arrives at Mansfield
1832	Passenger coach introduced each Thursday, departs Boat Inn Pinxton for market day at Mansfield
1847	Taken over by Midland Railway
1965	Mansfield Station closed.
2001	Station re-opened serving the Robin Hood Line

Request concerning old rights of way

The Editor has received a request from Derbyshire Ramblers with which you may be able to help:

I write from my background as a footpath secretary for the Ramblers in Amber Valley. Evidence sometimes hundreds of years old ('once a right of way, always a right of way' unless legally closed) can and often is adduced. For example thirty years ago a claim by the Kedleston estate more than a century ago during the surveys being used for the Finance Act of 1910 showed that there was an important route across the estate. This evidence proved that there was still a right of way and the path is now well used. From 2026 historic evidence such as this will no longer be valid for this purpose. Through my role in the Ramblers I am involved in helping to promote a systematic search in Derbyshire for such evidence.

Archival researchers such as those interested in railways and canals will come across such evidence more frequently than anyone else. This may often be outside of what they are currently investigating. I believe that, by letting us know about anything such as this that they may come across, they will help us and, I believe, will also enhance the interest to them of their research. I hope that this might appeal to you. I wonder whether you would let your colleagues about this event to which they (and you) are welcome to come. Whether or not they attend, might you ask them to let us know of possible rights of way that they discover?

John Morrissey, 2 The Avenue, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 1WB.

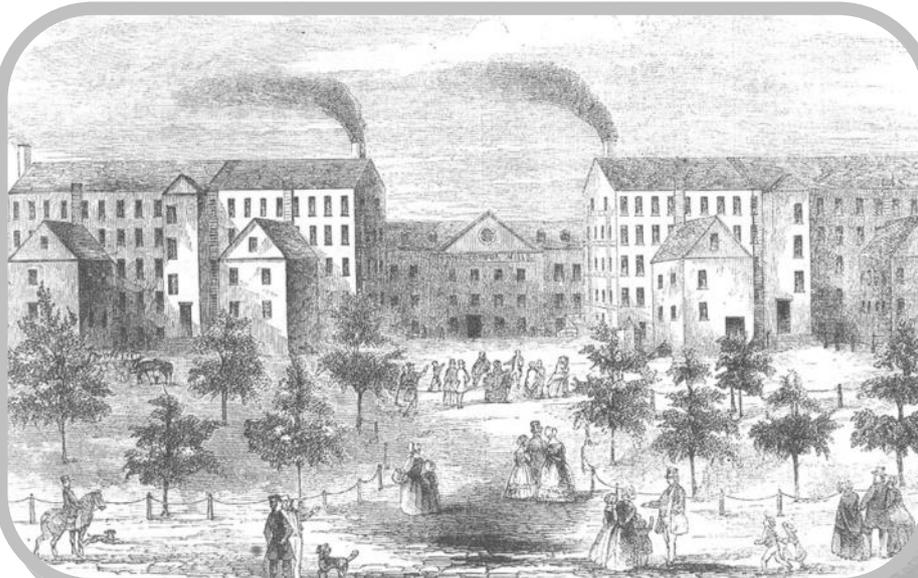
President Derbyshire Area the Ramblers. john.morrissey2@btopenworld.com

And finally

.... what Charles Dickens thought of Manchester!

Have you read Charles Dickens' accounts of his visit to America in 1842? One of the cities on his route was Lowell, Massachusetts, and at the time Lowell was developing rapidly, and was later recognised as the cradle of the US Industrial Revolution.

You will be struck by Dickens' comments – he compared Lowell with Manchester, and wrote that “*the contrast between the cities was a strong one, like the difference between good and evil, the living light and deepest shadow*”. He particularly described Lowell as a fine bustling, busy metropolis of mills, boarding houses and churches with good living conditions, of streets lined with trees and flowers – “*neat, decent, peaceable and sage*”, whilst Manchester of the time he described as **evil, a dark place, and agreeing with others that it was a “canker”** in the mid 1800s. Food for thought and a reminder of the social problems of Britain during the industrial revolution.



LEFT: Exterior view of the Boott Cotton Mills, Lowell, Massachusetts; undated engraving, c1840.

© © Bettmann/Corbis

(<https://kids.britannica.com/students/assembly/view/17156>)

RIGHT: Manchester c1840 – Engraving by Percy William Justyne (1812-1883)

([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manchester,_1840_\(engraving\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manchester,_1840_(engraving).jpg))



Contributions, no matter how short (maybe about a visit you have made), and preferably by email to cliff@nedias.co.uk, for inclusion in future editions of this newsletter are most welcome.

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