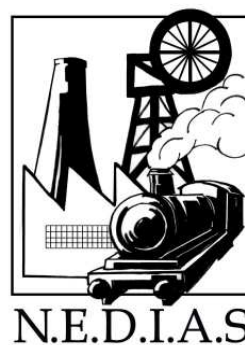


North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society



NEDIAS Newsletter No. 24 – November 2006

Price: 50p (Free to Members)

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Chairman's Comments:

I make no apology for providing more transport items than usual for this Newsletter because, as members will doubtless realise, our editor has not had as much time to whip up articles as he has been exceptionally busy in getting the first NEDIAS Journal edited, printed and distributed to you all. It has been a mammoth task, completed thanks to the dogged determination of our editor, Cliff Lea, and to you, our members whose subscriptions enabled us to fund its production. After the success of Journal 2006 we have high hopes of another issue in 2007, so friends, perhaps I might mention that it is subscription renewal time again!



Another success, thanks again to Cliff Lea, with displays by Jacqui Currell and Patricia Pick, and with a strong support team, was the NEDIAS display at the Scarsdale Local History Fair in the Winding Wheel at the end of October. The mayoral party spent longer than expected at our stand and many favourable comments were received.

The Mayor of Chesterfield, Cllr. Trudi Mulcaster, receives specially inscribed copy of the new NEDIAS Journal from Cliff Lea at the Scarsdale Local History Fair. Note the quiz on our stand.

Our lecture programme for the autumn has gone well, particularly November's talk by David Jenkins on the history of the Sheepbridge Company. The talk was attended by some fifty-five people, many clearly having been employees of the company. Sadly, and by sheer coincidence, David's talk came at a time when the closure of the works is in full swing and yet another stalwart of Chesterfield's claim to be the industrial heart of England falls by the wayside. Hopefully our 2007 talks programme will avoid a similar juxtaposition.

And this brings me to the final point to be made. **From January 2007, we will be moving back to the Friends Meeting House, 27 Ashgate Road, Chesterfield.** The Social Room on the lower floor of the Meeting House is again available and your committee has decided we should return. We have appreciated the facilities made available to us by the Post Office at Rowland Hill House but feel the time has come to make a change. The better acoustics of the Social Room have weighed in its favour, not to mention its facilities for coffee and tea after each meeting – and maybe the occasional biscuit!

David Wilmot

David, our congratulations and thanks to you for the return to Ashgate Road. – Ed.

WHAT'S ON?

SPECIAL NOTICE SPECIAL NOTICE SPECIAL NOTICE SPECIAL NOTICE

All 2007 Meetings will be held at Friends' Meeting House, Ashgate Road, Ch'field

Last meeting at Rowland Hill House will be on Mon 11 December

NEDIAS Lecture Programme, 2006 and 2007

When: Meetings are usually held the second Monday of each month, starting at 7.30 pm.

Where: **Friends' Meeting House, Ashgate Road, Chesterfield** (except 11 December)

- 11 Dec 2006:** **Mike Bennett:** *"The Channel Tunnel"* (NOTE: This is the last meeting at Rowland Hill House)
- 8 Jan 2007:** **Peter Kennet:** *"History and restoration of the Vulcan Bomber"*
- 12 Feb 2007:** **Clive Hart:** *"Man Maketh the Landscape of Derbyshire – archaeology and history by aerial photography over Derbyshire"*.
- 12 March 2007:** **Annual General Meeting.** *Malcolm Calow's Video footage of NEDIAS events.*
- 16 April 2007:** **Colin Briggs:** *"Mill Lane Dronfield"*

Other diary dates

- 17 Jan 2007: **Martin Sanderson: “The History of Bryan Donkin from 1803-2003”.** Arkwright Society, Cromford Mill. 7.00 pm. Booking at 01629 823256.
- 14 Feb 2007: **Mike Evans: “Rolls Royce- Through to the end of the piston engine era.”** Arkwright Society, Cromford Mill. 7.00 pm. Booking at 01629 823256
- 14-15 April 2007 **AIA Ironbridge Weekend at Coalbrookdale, on the subject of “Roads: Characteristics and Forms of Transport”.** Bookings via AIA Liaison Office on 0116 252 5005. Open to members of affiliated societies such as NEDIAS.

Ganister, fireclay and the forgotten mines of Sheffield Derek Grindell

It was whilst completing my article on Alfred Searle and refractories, published in NEDIAS Journal, that I experienced what can best be described as a serendipitous moment. During a recent first tour of the attractive open countryside around Stocksbridge and Bradfield, in the company of a professional conservationist, the conversation turned to the former importance of the area to Sheffield’s industrial growth and the speed at which nature had reclaimed many of the former clay workings. On expressing an interest in learning more, my companion recommended a recent publication by a local amateur historian. Unfortunately he could remember neither the author’s name nor the name of the book. Within days, however, and quite by chance, I was in Sheffield’s city centre with time to browse in the city’s largest bookstore and it was there I discovered a remaindered copy of ‘The Forgotten Mines of Sheffield’ by Ray Battye.

The book focuses mainly on extraction sites in the upper Don, Loxley and Sheaf Valley areas and the author has rendered a signal service to the region’s industrial history by ensuring that a number of personal testimonies have been included in his account. Ray Battye readily acknowledges his indebtedness to Joe Castle, a former Wadsley resident and amateur historian, who, during the 1960s and 1970s, had the presence of mind to record information on ganister mining and have it printed in the form of a booklet entitled ‘Candles, Corves and Clogs’. It was never published but his collection of research documents was made available to the author, who acknowledges their value when he mentions that a number of his interviewees have already died. The author, citing Wadsley Common as an example, bears witness to the pace at which nature has reclaimed many of the former mine workings that in the 1940s were visually obtrusive. So effectively have some of the ugly scars been buried by vegetation that, to many walkers negotiating the woodland paths, they will now go unremarked.

Quoting numerous manufacturers of ganister crushers, including Hadfields, Broadbent and Blake-Morrison, the author mentions the common adoption of the Mansfield Rotary Crusher in the early 20thC and, interestingly, credits Smedleys of Belper as being producers of grinding pans well after the end of WW2. One of their 1945 models, an electric driven ‘Edge Mill Runner’, is displayed at Kelham Island Museum.

Readers more accustomed to approaching Sheffield from the south and using Abbey Lane to join Ecclesall Road will be familiar with the sawmill in Ecclesall Woods. During the interwar period there were three ganister quarries in this locality, which were served by small tramways

called 'slants'. Virtually nothing remains to be seen, although one site is occupied by the sawmill. On the A621 leading to Owler Bar, ganister was quarried and processed at Moor Edge Brick Works. There were originally five beehive kilns and three chimneys on the site, which is still occupied by Dyson Refractories, although local materials are no longer used. The village of Dore, formerly in Derbyshire, had several small mines as well as a large brickworks. Numerous old coalmines existed in both Dore and Totley but were defunct before the end of the 19thC.

One feature of ganister extraction was the low number of employees involved. There were rarely more than thirty at any one site and, in the Wadsley and Worrall areas, the workforce was frequently in single figures. The Ughill area even had one man operations producing Pot Clay. One notable exception, however, was the firm of Grayson, Lowood & Company of Deepcar where 242 employees worked underground.

Fireclay is not normally viewed as a topic to set the pulse racing and yet its contribution to Sheffield's development as a world leader in steel production was immense. Ray Battye's timely account places its exploitation within its social and geographic context and his assiduous research will surely earn the gratitude of all those with an interest in recording our industrial heritage.

Bibliography

"The Forgotten Mines of Sheffield" by Ray Battye, published & printed by ALD Design & Print in September 2004.

"Alfred B. Searle's Contribution to the Science and Application of Refractory Materials" by Derek Grindell, NEDIAS Journal Vol.1, p3, Sept 2006.

Archives

Peter Wilson/ Cliff Lea

NEDIAS Archivist Pete Wilson has an ever-growing collection of books, journals and information from a variety of sources open to inspection, research and use by members. Pete can make available to you lists of titles of the various items on CD-ROM.

There is insufficient space to include the many details here, but to whet your appetite, see below a list of articles in a few of the recent editions of "Local Historian", a publication of BALH of which NEDIAS are members.

These are details of contents of just one journal, available for review, and your research. There are many, many other books, periodicals and pamphlets available to you.

You can contact Pete on 01246 235 835

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Please let the editor know if you would like to see further archive details published here.

The Ashover Light Railway lives!

David Wilmot

Having had sight of a recent redevelopment proposal for the Clay Cross Works site, it seemed that the former coach of the Ashover Light Railway was at risk of being divorced from its long-standing role as the pavilion for the Works' bowling club by being moved elsewhere. On the basis that the survival of an original 1920s narrow gauge coach from an English railway was a rarity as well as an important part of this area's industrial heritage, contact was made with the National Railway Museum to see if it could be taken under their care. At the beginning of September the NRM's Head of Knowledge and Collections, Helen Ashby, replied that their Collections Development Group had discussed the carriage and decided that, whilst it was of historical significance, they "did not feel that it tells any unique stories not already represented by the NRM's collections." Ms Ashby went on to say that "There are clearly a number of parties interested in the long term preservation of the vehicle, which means that its survival is not in jeopardy", adding that they could not justify the investment of their limited resources in the carriage and would not, therefore, be pursuing its acquisition.

While it is true that the availability of the Ashover coach will attract a wide interest, one of the reasons for seeking the NRM's support was in the hope that it would be conserved and restored to as close a condition to the original as possible. Any number of railway artefacts, including early wooden bodied coaches such as that of the Ashover, can be seen at preserved railway sites, exposed to the elements with not immediate prospect of being restored. Indeed two other surviving coaches from the ALR have been languishing in south Lincolnshire for about the last thirty years.

Conversely, it could find itself in the hands of a far-distant preserved railway, modified for their own use and finished in their livery, such as happened to coaches from the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway in North Devon which finished up as part of North Wales' Ffestiniog Railway. While the latter does ensure survival, it does not bode well for any attempt at re-opening of the line, as the current L&B preservationists have found.

By a timely coincidence, the October 2006 issue of Heritage Railway featured an item of the newly formed Ashover Light Railway Society and its aims to re-open part of the route. There had been a similar, but smaller scale proposal around three years ago when the Moseley Railway Society proposed redevelopment of the line based on a facility at Ashover Butts. Their plans faltered due to concerns over pedestrian and vehicular access at the original entrance to the Butts, coupled with the high cost of providing an alternative way in to the site. The Moseley people are now working at a site in Apedale, to the north of Newcastle-under-Lyme in north Staffordshire.

The newly formed ALRS has more ambitious plans and their information form reveals their intention to rebuild a 2 ½ mile section of the original 7 ¼ miles, starting from the head of Ogston reservoir. The society appears confident of success, saying that they have received good local support and the backing of several local landowners. Anyone wishing to receive more information, or to join, should write to the Ashover Light Railway Society, 31 Park Road, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire, LE9 7EB. Alternatively, they have a website – www.alrs.org.uk

Perhaps one day we will be able to ride along the Amber valley for a leisurely cup of tea in the "Where the Rainbow Ends" café at its original location?

The Scarsdale Local History Fair, 2007 – The NEDIAS Display of Artefacts

David Wilmot

For this year's fair we displayed four bottles connected with local breweries or mineral water manufactories. The bottles included examples from T P Wood & Co., Chesterfield Brewery and Brampton Brewery. We did not have a Scarsdale Brewery bottle but did have one from the Staveley firm of Kendall Brothers. The history of the Chesterfield firms is generally well known, aided by a very detailed account of their activities in John Hirst's 1991 booklet *Chesterfield Breweries, Brampton, Chesterfield and Scarsdale breweries*. While the brewery sites have all been cleared, there are still some significant buildings relating to their business activities to be seen in this area. They may not, perhaps, meet the conventional criteria for sites of industrial archaeological significance but are too interesting to be ignored.

T P Wood & Co.'s retail premises on Chesterfield Market Place, much photographed in their heyday, are long gone but the mineral water manufactory in Knifsmithgate can still be seen where the Co-op Store currently has its electrical equipment emporium.

The breweries had extensive chains of hotels and public houses, several of which still carry the names of the original owners. One very good example can be seen on Mansfield Road, Hasland, where the façade of the *Shoulder of Mutton* bears the date 1913 along with the Brampton Brewery's name proudly emblazoned in a fine example of glazed faience brickwork. Surely a survey of surviving similar specimens should be seriously sought?

Whether anything remains, or indeed ever existed, of Staveley Spa's natural springs, is another unexplored subject for NEDIAS prompted by the bottle from Kendall Brothers of that town. Kendall, Charles, James & Samuel, appeared in Kelly's Directory of Derbyshire for 1904, trading as Kendall Brothers on Chesterfield Road, Staveley, and having a branch at Shirebrook. Their trade was described as "mineral water and (speciality) hop bitter manufacturers".

From directory entries they were established in Staveley sometime between 1895 and 1900. While still on Chesterfield Road in 1912, they had become Kendall & Elliott Limited by 1922. During the next three years the Kendall & Elliott business moved to Jubilee Works, Pipe Lane, Staveley, being shown in Kelly's 1925 directory at that address as well as in Shirebrook.

Our screw-top bottle was found in a Lincolnshire antiques centre in 2006 and, from what we now know of the history of this firm, it may dated as from 1900 to 1920. We would like to hear from anyone who knows anything more about Kendall Brothers and their mineral water production.

Bricks and their Makers was the title given to our display of four bricks with local connections. The bricks displayed were from "Staveley", "Ellistown", "Clay Cross" and "Saunders". That very many colliery companies produced bricks as a by-product of coal extraction is a well-known fact but we should not ignore the existence of companies whose main, perhaps only, business was the production of bricks.

The common problem is that the names so proudly pressed in to the frog of each brick from around 1850 have been lost from view in the walls of our buildings, only to re-emerge when the buildings are eventually demolished. No surprise then that on demolition of Arkwright Town a collection of "Staveley" bricks came to light.

A regular find at demolitions around Chesterfield is "Ellistown" and our specimen came from demolition of the old fire station in New Beetwell Street to make way for Chesterfield's new coach station. Ellistown bricks actually hail from Leicestershire, close to Coalville, and seem to be made from a finer clay than locally produced colliery bricks which may explain why so many are found in this area.

“Byron”, later “New Byron”, a late 19th/early 20thC brickworks at Carr Vale in Scarcliffe Parish. A local family concern extracting clay from a surface based hole and carrying it by cable-hauled tramway to the brickyard. There are many bricks to be found but no apparent field archaeology? Unless someone knows better!!

The “Saunders” example came from the extensive brickworks dating from around 1900 once based on the north side of Storforth Lane, on the Hasland side of the railway bridge, and clearly marked on Ordnance Survey maps of that time. Earlier on, C J Saunders had coal and brick interests in Newbold, then at Brimington (see Cousins & Wilmot in NEDIAS Journal No.1).

“CXC” – No display would be complete without at least one example of the Clay Cross Company’s brick output. A rough quality brick favoured within colliery yards and for use underground, it was also in common use for company housing and other building purposes. The company’s main brickyard was at Hephthorne Lane beside the railway incline leading to Alma and Lings collieries. Only the manager’s house remains but bricks with at least five different forms of marking, “Clay Cross Co” to variants on “CXC” can often be found.

Private collectors can provide very many more examples of produced bricks from local brickyards and brickworks. Space limitations, not to mention the extra weight of the bigger collection, precluded a larger display but perhaps there is scope for a detailed review of our local brick heritage?

Letters

Dear Cliff

I’ve just been dipping into Vol. 1 of the new NEDIAS Journal.

Many thanks and congratulations to you and all responsible. Clearly a lot of hard work and research has gone into the production.

The result can only enhance the status of the Society.

Yours truly,

Roger Cowen, Mill Lane, Old Tupton.

Dear Sir/Madam

I noticed an article in the Derbyshire Post (*sic*) about your recent journal charting the industrial heritage of Chesterfield amongst other places.

I am a trainee journalist from Sheffield University and I have been given Chesterfield as a patch to cover, looking for local interest and unusual stories.

It would be fantastic if I could have a chat with someone about your work, as I’m sure you have uncovered some interesting facts from Chesterfield’s past in your work which could make for an entertaining short article.

If you could point me in the direction of any help, it would be immensely appreciated.

Thanks for your time,

Alex Fletcher

jop06af@shef.ac.uk

07999949989

Ed. – I have suggested that the enquirer look back through our NEDIAS Newsletters at the Chesterfield Library. Many of the editions contain real gems. However, members with other items to share may like to contact Alex Fletcher directly at the e-mail or phone number above.

I.A. News and Notes

NEDIAS Journal No 1 - material for the next edition please!

This Newsletter helps to keep us all in touch with local surveys, news, history and items of interest, and it has proved to be part of the cement which has helped to build and meld our Society.

The very first **NEDIAS Journal** has now been published; this is intended initially to be an “occasional” publication, but with the aim to publish annually. We are delighted that it can be distributed free of charge to current membership, and most will already have received their copy

Members who have not yet received their complementary copy can collect at the next NEDIAS meeting. Additional copies are available for purchase.

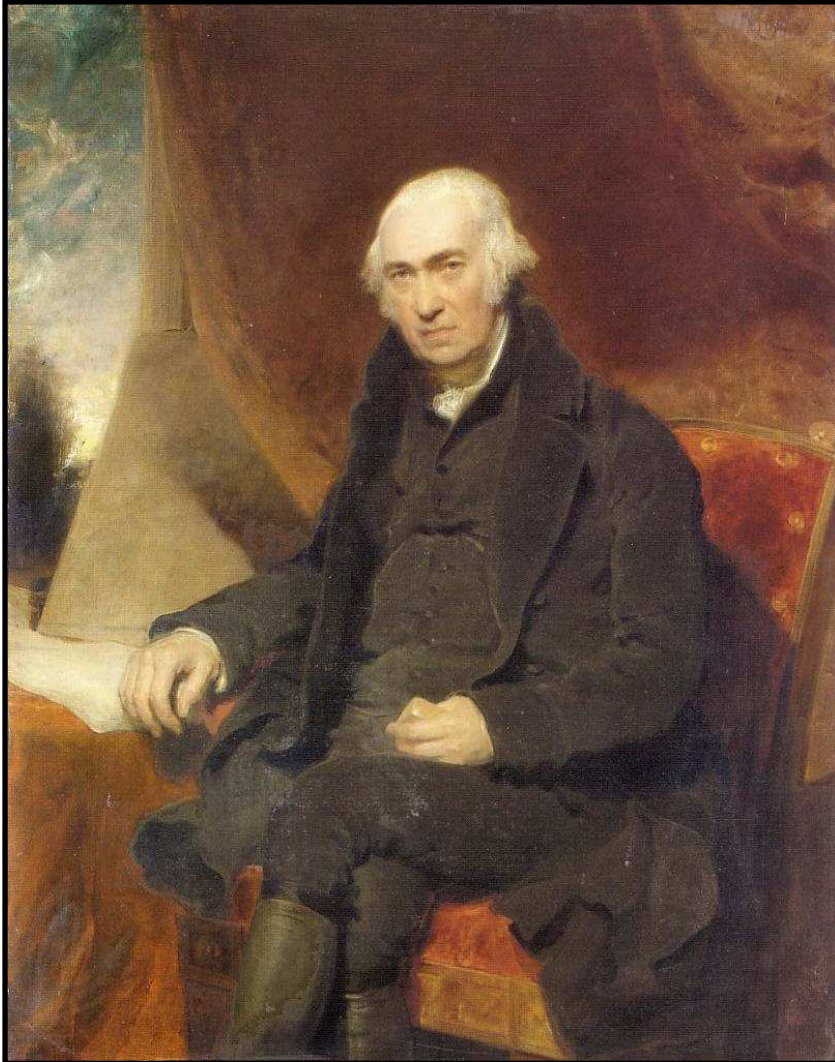
The Editor would welcome suitable articles for the next edition of both the Journal and the Newsletter. What are you researching at the moment? Would you like to see it published? Short or longer items are both welcome.

Proposed £100 M development along the Chesterfield Canal

The Chesterfield Canal Trust reports that a formal partnership agreement has been signed to move forward a massive regeneration scheme based around the newly created water space linked to the Chesterfield Canal. A design competition is shortly to be launched, with development expected on the A61 approach into Chesterfield, and regenerating the Lavers timber yard and Trebor sites.



The original canal basin in Chesterfield. This was abandoned circa 1890 when the Great Central Railway was built across it. The railway was more recently replaced by the A61 Chesterfield Bypass



When was the last time you visited the West Midlands?

Could be now is the right time: Birmingham Art Gallery announce that they have just acquired a painting of James Watt by Thomas Lawrence, showing the great man with dignity and authority.

They have released the attached photo of the painting.

Artists of the time often showed the sitter to hold articles associated with their occupation, **and I notice that Watt is holding in his left hand something which I can't quite identify from the photograph.**

Clearly I will have to visit to find out, and probably also call in again at Boulton's Soho House to seep up the atmosphere in the Lunar Society's meeting room. Watt would have known it well.

Bringing in new members for 2007 – end of year competition

You will know many like-minded friends and relatives who would love to join NEDIAS, if only they could get around to it.

For the existing member who can bring in the most new recruits for the new year, ***their own membership for 2007 will be refunded!***

Simply ask your contacts to complete a membership form, **which you must also countersign** before sending in to Jean. Persons who lapsed their membership prior to 2006 may be included in the tally

Minimum qualifying number is three. Your first blank form enclosed with this Newsletter.

The competition ends at 31 January 2007, so please act now, and very best of luck.

NEDIAS Exhibition in Chesterfield Library, April 2007

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.

We now need to gather together our material for display and to show the wealth of fascinating industrial history and archaeology in our area. Do you have any ideas? What aspects of our group do you think we should include?

If you have ideas and thoughts to help us to take full advantage of this opportunity, do please let David Wilmot, Jacqui Currell or Cliff Lea know.

.....and Finally

David Wilmot

Late in 1869 and early 1870, the Sheffield Telegraph reported on the opening of the Sheffield – Chesterfield Railway, the long awaited direct route made by the Midland Railway Company through Bradway tunnel.

The edition of 8th February 1870 reported that the Dronfield Silkstone Coal Company had given a dinner to 250 workmen and boys in the Town Hall, to mark the opening of the new railway, the line having opened on 1st February.

Prior to the opening, there was the mandatory official inspection, an event that usually resulted in some last minute work carried out with some haste. The edition of 7th January had reported that Captain Tyler of the Board of Trade's Railway Inspectorate had inspected nine girder bridges and was next to visit Dronfield to examine works on adjacent roads carried out by the Midland for the Dronfield Local Board.

During the inspection it became apparent that remedial work being done at the inspector's instigation had resulted in scaffolding having been erected inside the tunnel at Norfolk Park, Sheffield, as well as some lengths of rail having been removed in Bradway tunnel. Catastrophe was narrowly avoided by the hurried interception of Captain Tyler's train as it headed for Dronfield.

Had the accident happened in Bradway tunnel there would doubtless have been considerable injuries and several lives lost as the train would have been carrying several senior directors and employees of the Midland Railway, as well as the inspector's team!

Thankfully, Bradway tunnel is now only regarded by the travelling public as a long dark hole on the way to the bright lights of Sheffield, *but it could easily have been so very different.*

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

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