

North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society



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Bovey Tracey Pottery

Cliff Lea

In the Chesterfield area we're all aware of the old stoneware industry, the impressive numbers of potteries there used to be here, and the great regional importance of Brampton ware.

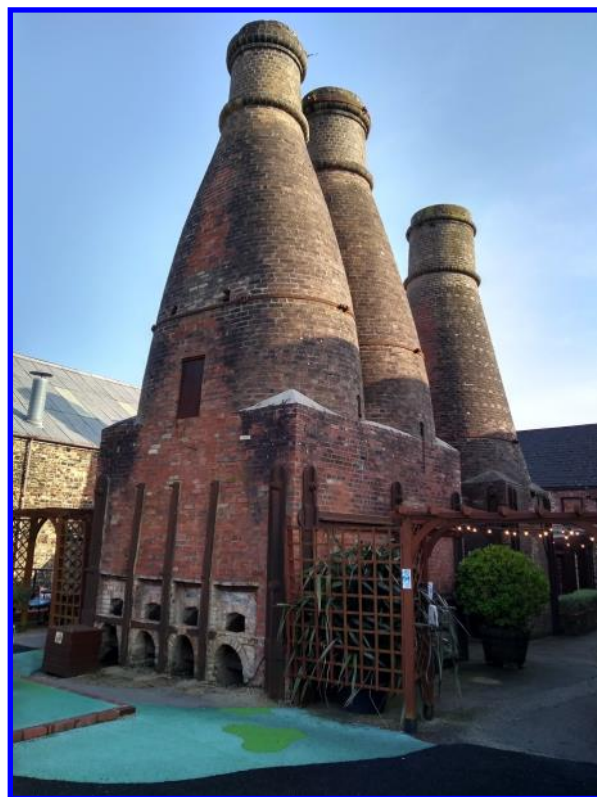
On a recent trip to Devon I called in to see the still very visible listed muffle kilns at the long defunct potteries in Bovey Tracey. There had been a collection of potteries in the Bovey Tracey area, using the local Bovey basin clay, and there the industries grew up from the 1700s, lasting for over 200 years.

There had been at least 16 kilns on the site of the Bovey Pottery itself and at one time they were doing a variety of firing jobs. Although any original very large bottle kilns have been long demolished many years ago, there still remain three quite enormous "muffle" kilns for firing the enamel, and for hardening on the colours before final glazing.

The kilns in my photo would have been fired in rotation, so that when the heat in one is dying down, the next one is being fired up, and the third one would be being unloaded.

Unlike other kilns, the fire doesn't enter the firing chamber of muffle kilns: the flames are led around the chamber by a series of flues. The temperatures would have been around 700-800 C, but low enough to protect delicate colours. These kilns probably date to 1895-1900, and are the only surviving kilns of this type in Britain, bar one remaining at the Gladstone Pottery Museum in Stoke on Trent.

Amazingly, Josiah Wedgwood himself visited the potteries around Bovey in 1775, and he was either down-playing the



RIGHT: Bovey Tracey Muffle Kilns

Cliff Lea



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

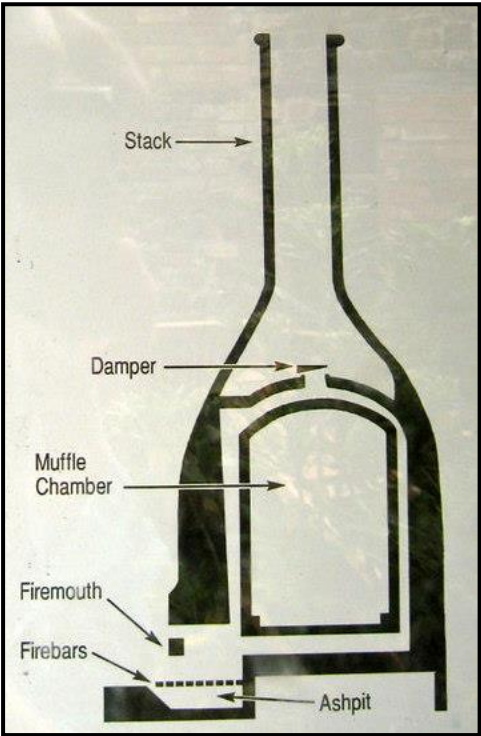
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competition, or more likely telling the truth when he pronounced them ... *“poor trifling concerns, and conducted in a wretched slovenly manner. We (Wedgwoods) transport their clay and flints from Devonshire into Staffordshire, there manufacture them into ware, and send it back to their own doors better and cheaper than they can make it”*.

The production of the famous Wemyss Ware moved to The Bovey Tracey Pottery Company Limited in 1930 following the closure of the original Fife pottery during the Great Depression. The well known pot decorator Nekola trained several apprentices at The Bovey Tracey Potteries during his term, including Esther Weeks who took over as head decorator after his death in 1952. The production of Wemyss Ware ended at this site in 1957 after protracted workforce strikes forced closure.

If you’re in the area, go and see this site, it is now owned by a company – perhaps the only one in Britain, now called the House of Marbles – which still makes and sells marbles. The things I used to call “ollies” when we played in the school playground. Call in, and you can have tea and great cakes sitting beneath the great kilns. And you can see the largest marble run in the world! I think I stood and watched it for maybe 30 minutes!!



ABOVE: Bovey Tracey Muffle Kiln diagram
FAR LEFT: Bovey Tracey Muffle Kiln.
LEFT: Bovey Pottery Museum

Dates for your diary



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 13 February 2023	“Memories of a lost valley – the story of the Ladybower Reservoir” by Frank Parker
Monday 13 March 2023	“The life and times of Warney Mill, Darley Dale” by Tony Bonson of the Midland Mills Group
Monday 8 May 2023	DAVID WILMOT MEMORIAL LECTURE: “The Great Little Trains of Wales” by Alastair Clark
Monday 11 September 2023	“The historic CEGB coal fired power stations on the River Trent” by Ian Mitchell
Monday 9 October 2023	“Riddings oil refinery, Derbyshire, 1848. More than an enigma” by Cliff Lea
Monday 13 October 2023	“The Iron Industry in the Rother Valley in the Canal Age, 1780—1840” by Philip Riden

NEDIAS Outside Visits

Date to be confirmed	After our great lead mining visit to Winster of last month, Tony Wood will be guiding us on an amble around the lead mining remains of that beautiful Peak District village of Alport at the confluence of the Rivers Bradford and Lathkill - probably late March.
Saturday 29 April 2023	<p><u>Dene Quarry Walk</u></p> <p>Since pre Roman times the geology of the Wirksworth and Cromford area has been exploited for its mineral wealth by mining and quarrying. This important heritage will substantially come to an end within the next few years with the closing of Dene Quarry, the largest ever local quarry. Our walk will take us on a circuit around the edge of the quarry and will describe its history in context with other, often much older quarrying and mining activities in the surrounding area. The route will continue onwards past Slinter Quarry to the Via Gellia and return through Slinter Wood passing the Slinter Mill (originally a lead slag mill) and the old corn mill on the edge of Cromford. The four-mile walk involves a long steep climb to the top edge of Dene Quarry and walkers should be aware of tree roots and low hanging branches on the path through Slinter Wood.</p>

Bailey's Tump

Pat Pick

Hidden away off Asker Lane, Matlock is Bailey's Tump.

The Tump (a mound) is made from spoil out of the excavations for the Derwent Valley Aqueduct. This pipeline was installed across the fields to the west in the early 1900s.

It still carries water from the Derwent Dams, 20 miles to the north, as far as Leicester 40 miles to the south. The landowner at the time was Ernest Bailey. Hence the site became 'Baileys' Tump'.

In the 1930s Bailey's Tump was fortified as an air defence site. The circular enclosures are the remains of the ramparts which sheltered the equipment and protected the soldiers. The Tump was in use from 1939 to 1949 as part of the outer defences of Sheffield and its steel industry.

In winter 1940 an attacking Dornier bomber was brought down and crashed near Great Longstone 10 miles to the west.

In 1944 – 1945 the search light was pointed upwards to act as a navigation aid for allied bombers attacking Germany.

In 2006 the Bailey's Tump was restored by Matlock Civic Society.



Bennerley Viaduct – The Iron Giant

Martin Allen

The Act of Parliament for the Derbyshire and Staffordshire extension of the Great Northern Railway was granted in 1872. The objective was chiefly to exploit the potential freight traffic from coal mines, together with iron ore and limestone quarries in the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire areas. The projected route would link Derby and Nottingham with Burton on Trent and Stafford. The GNR were then able to decline the Midland Railways' high track access charges and consequently they could deliver coal direct to London at a far cheaper rate than previously possible. The market price of coal then went down from 30 shillings/ton to 17 shillings/ton. As a result, the GNR soon gained the monopoly in supplying London's demands for domestic coal.

The construction contract for the new line was awarded by the GNR to the Derby based civil engineering firm of Benton and Woodiwiss. Richard Johnson was appointed as the chief engineer and Samuel Abbott was placed in charge as the resident engineer. The principal challenge would be the crossing over the broad Erewash Valley between the towns of Ilkeston in Derbyshire and Awsworth in Nottinghamshire, which would necessitate the construction of a substantial viaduct. A further challenge was the existence of underground coal mine workings at Shilo colliery near Awsworth, which could threaten the stability of the viaduct if any ground settlement occurred. In particular, a traditional brick-built viaduct would be highly susceptible to ground subsidence and collapse. The early railways often favoured cast iron as the principal construction material for the structural components of bridges and viaducts, but several serious accidents had occurred in the mid-19th century due to catastrophic failures, caused by the brittle nature of cast iron girders. The chosen solution at Bennerley was therefore to use wrought iron, which is more durable. A further advantage is its good corrosion resistance and painting of the metal parts is not essential, as would have been mandatory in the case of a steel viaduct. Furthermore, the individual components could also be conveniently fabricated off-site. This method would also avoid worksite congestion of the materials, as vast storage areas would otherwise be necessary. A temporary access siding was laid from the existing Midland Railway line directly to the viaduct work site to convey the materials and this would advance the speed of construction. The task of manufacturing the components for the viaduct was given to the firm of Eastwood, Swingler and Company in Derby. On-site construction work started in May 1876 and was completed by November 1877, a remarkable achievement in only eighteen months. Upon the completion of the adjoining earthwork embankments and installing the track, the route was opened in 1878, firstly to freight traffic on 26th January and to passengers on 1st April.

Bennerley Viaduct is a most impressive structure and is now the longest wrought iron viaduct in the UK. Throughout most of its length, the viaduct is supported on fifteen piers. Each pier at ground level has a rectangular plinth comprising of a brickwork surround, infilled with concrete. As the line is built on a 1:100 gradient, all the brick plinths vary in height, the east end of the viaduct being 15 feet (4.5m) higher than the west. Resting upon each plinth, there are ten or twelve wrought iron columns (depending on the location), each column being riveted together in four segments, to form the main vertical supports. These columns are crossed braced diagonally with wrought iron struts. In addition, each group of columns has wrought iron baseplates which rest directly onto the concrete plinth, without any bolted attachments. This method would allow for steel shims to be inserted under the column bases, if any ground settlement adversely affected the vertical alignment of the piers and adjustment was required. Fortunately, this proposed repair method proved to be unnecessary. There are nineteen main spans formed as latticework



Bennerley Viaduct photographed from Nottingham Canal Towpath in 2006 By Tina Cordon at the English-language Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9879375>

girders, each measuring 76 feet 7 inches (24m) long. In addition, there are three steel plate girder spans of 26' (7.9m), 35' (10.7m) and 52' (15.9m) passing over the Midland Railway line at the west end. This latter section of the viaduct is supported on three piers and one abutment, all constructed in brickwork. On the main spans, the supporting deck is fabricated from wrought iron "U" shaped channels riveted together and are able to accommodate two tracks. The channels are laid transversely, with the track sleepers aligned within the recesses of the channels and packed around with ballast. More than half a million rivets together with thousands of bolts and cotter pins were used in the construction. Now, the remnants of the track ballast has all been removed and the channels covered



The Structure of the Viaduct as seen from under the Deck By Tina Cordon at the English-language Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9879384>

over by durable flush-fitting fibreglass sheeting, for the convenience of pedestrians and cyclists. The total length of the viaduct is 1,452 feet (443m), with an average height above ground level of 60 feet (18m). Earthwork embankments once abutted the viaduct at each end, but these were both removed following closure of the line in 1968. Subsequently at the east end, opencast coal mining operations were then established at the former Shilo colliery site. At the west end, a residential housing estate was developed.

The infamous Beeching Report "The Reshaping of British Railways" was published on 27th March 1963 and it proposed the closure of many rural branch lines throughout the UK. Under this scheme, the passenger stations on this portion of the former GNR were closed as from 7th September 1964 and all freight traffic eventually ceased on 6th May 1968. Fortunately, the viaduct was going to be a major challenge to demolish. The traditional method of oxy-acetylene gas flame cutting of steel is not feasible with wrought iron. The only option would be to erect an access scaffold platform throughout and then cut out and remove all the rivets and bolts individually by hand. Altogether, a very expensive and time-consuming task. Furthermore, there would be no monetary compensation in the recovered scrap metal, as wrought iron has no commercial resale value. Consequently, the problematic viaduct remained unharmed, but it was still at risk of destruction. British Rail as owners of the viaduct, continued to be responsible for carrying out safety inspections at six yearly intervals, to ensure that the structure was not decaying or being affected by ground movements. There remained the ever-present risk of subsidence caused by any collapses within the abandoned colliery workings. These risks were also exacerbated when the area was affected by frequent flooding problems from the River Erewash. English Heritage "Listed Building" status was awarded to the viaduct as Grade 2* in 1974. The official citation states that the viaduct is "...an outstanding survival of the mature phase of the development of the railway network in England, demonstrating the confidence of the Victorian railway engineers in seeking solutions to specific engineering challenges, such as that posed by the terrain in the Erewash Valley."

In 1975, British Rail submitted an application to the local authorities requesting permission to challenge the Listing by English Heritage and BR subsequently sought to demolish the viaduct, despite all the logistical difficulties involved. Fortunately, the application was denied. A public enquiry was then held in 1980, which ruled that the viaduct should be saved for the nation. The suggestion was that it could be repurposed as part of a long-distance cycle path. Eventually, the Shilo opencast coal extraction became exhausted and was closed down in 1982. In 1998, the liability for the disused railway passed from the BR property board to Railway Paths Limited, who henceforth became responsible for the upkeep of the viaduct. The intention was that the track bed would eventually be incorporated in the proposed National Cycling Network.

In 2015 Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity, secured a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of

£40,000 for a feasibility study to investigate the options and to engage the public with the idea of re-opening the viaduct. In 2017 a revised bid for the restoration and repurposing the viaduct was submitted. However, further match funding would be required and the following year, Sustrans withdrew from the project and Railway Paths Limited regained responsibility. In August 2019, the verdict was given by RPL to approve a project which sought to renovate the viaduct and create public access. Restoration works proceeded in earnest and the first task was to provide easy public access to the deck, by building footpaths and stairways from ground level at each end. Attention was also given to the repairing the decayed brickwork around the pier bases and the abutments. Despite being delayed by COVID-19 restrictions and all supply chain problems were eventually overcome and the restoration was completed. The final cost of the project to date was £1.8m. The World Monuments Fund stepped in and included the viaduct on their “watch list” in 2020, the only UK site to be recognised out of 25 contenders world-wide.

The support group “Friends of Bennerley Viaduct” is now firmly established and they have fought long and hard to save the structure for prosperity. After 55 years of abandonment, the viaduct was once again a valued asset and officially reopened to the public on 13th January 2022, after four years of restoration. More good news followed in March 2022, when the National Lottery Heritage Fund made a grant of £250,000 under the “Bridging the Gap” project. This has allowed for the employment of a team undertaking the roles of Project Manager, Heritage Engagement Officer and a Site Ranger, for a term of two years. In addition, the local Erewash Museum agreed to assist as a visitor hub for the viaduct, by organising support exhibitions and illustrated lectures.

Today, the former Midland Railway main line between Derby and Nottingham still runs under the west end of the viaduct. From here, passengers in passing trains can enjoy an amazing glimpse along the length of the viaduct. For site visitors, the closest railway station is at Ilkeston, with a walk or taxi ride of less than two miles. The best panoramic viewpoint is at the east end of the viaduct on the Nottingham Canal at Newton’s Lane, where there is also an informative notice board. The National Grid map reference is SK 475 438 and there are helpful signposts to guide the way. The viaduct upper deck is accessible on foot from the Awsorth end and by cycling or walking from the Ilkeston end, by means of meandering footpaths.

Future developments and public events can be followed on the Friends of Bennerley Viaduct website, at www.bennerleyviaduct.org.uk

Dustbins ?

Graham Clarke Baldwin

Anyone born after 1960 will use the term “Dustbin” but how many will really know why these modern Plastic Wheelie Bins are generally called Dustbins.

A Dustbin was made of Galvanized steel standing about three feet tall and about 20 to 24 Inches diameter with a handle on opposite sides it also had a Lid, and was used as a receptacle for Dust, sounds obvious but what kind of dust and where did it come from?

Up until about 1970 every house that was built had a fireplace, this was a place in the home where you had a fire in a grate or hearth. This fire usually warmed only one room and after, sometime around, the 1920/30s had a Water Boiler at the back, this was called a Back Boiler, which heated cold water and by convection this now warm water went to a tank which was upstairs and more often than not was in a cupboard where newly washed and ironed clothes and bedding was Aired, this was called the Airing cupboard. This hot water was then piped to the kitchen sink and Bathroom, if you had one.



The open fire burned Coal or Coke and anything else that wasn’t needed such as the odd cardboard cereal box and other wrapping paper which couldn’t be re-used, newspapers were generally kept for starting said fire. Packaging as we know it to-day hadn’t been invented, meat and provisions were first wrapped in greaseproof and then Brown paper. Nearly every other product from the grocery came in a paper bag. Plastics and cellophane were around but not in common use. Mother would burn any left over food scraps if the dog didn’t want it. Potato peelings and other veggie stuff would all be deposited on the fire, that is, if Father didn’t use it on the compost heap. In most houses in the morning the fireplace would be emptied of ash and cinders. This hot ash or dust would then be put in to the metal “Dust Bin” which was placed handily near to the back door. All of the

contents would be dry and would not emit any odours from decomposing food! Father might use some of the ash in the garden to lighten and drain the soil as most back gardens, if you had one, were used for growing vegetables and in the winter much of the ash and cinders would be used to spread on to snow and ice on paths and pavements. The odd glass jar might be in the bin but soft drink and beer bottles were returned to the shop from whence they came under a deposit system. Three pence being the norm!

On every working day morning in every town there would be teams of “Dustbin Men” leaving the Cleansing Department Yard in “Dustbin Lorries”. These lorries had crew cabs which would hold five people but at this time in the morning there would be only four in the cab! The fifth member of the team had started out much earlier to a point where the “Run” was to begin. There he’d left his trolley the afternoon before and would then start to go to every house, shop, public house or place of work on the street and bring, on his two wheel trolley to the pavement, the full and quite heavy “Dustbins”. The trolley had a swan neck shaped handle and a hook at the same level as the bin handle so it was a quick and easy method of attaching and taking the bin to the pavement.

Some houses had long paths some had none whilst others were up steps or down steps, some had more than one bin but all were treated to the same service, the bin was brought out and placed on the pavement ready for the rest of the team to empty into the dustbin lorry. He had to work quickly to keep in front of the crew. The rest of the team consisted of a driver and three men, two men would, together, lift and empty the quite heavy bins in to the lorry, not a pleasant job if the wind was blowing when there’d be dust flying all over the place. Both sides of the road were serviced at the same time. The fifth member of the team would follow along and take every, now empty bin back to where it came from. An intrepid team who really did brave the elements in winter with no sight of a union man shouting “Health and Safety”. At the end of the “Run” the now full lorry would return to the yard or corporation dump to empty the contents and then start another journey in the afternoon.

At the yard the contents of the lorries would be tipped on to a screen where the dust would fall through and the larger material would be taken on a moving belt to be sorted and metal and glass removed. The big pieces of coke would then be sold to people like market gardeners who had big furnaces and the metal sold as scrap. But now open fires in most new build houses are none existent as gas and electric heating is the norm.

What do we have today? Wheelie bins placed in most streets all of the time, along with a multitude of colour coded plastic baskets to be used for recyclable rubbish. Single use plastic packaging has grown out of all proportion with no way of getting rid of it.

So there you have it, the end of the dustbin as we knew it!

These are my memories of the service given to residents in Chesterfield up to late 1960s.

Graham C Baldwin. France. g.baldwin@orange.fr



The Ecclesbourne Way

Basil Merry

I attended and enjoyed Eric Boulton's talk “The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway - a remarkable story” in November last year. It shows what volunteers can do if they set their mind to it, and don't let others put obstacles in their way.

As a matter of interest I thought your members might be interested to know that Amber Valley Ramblers have created The Ecclesbourne Way. It's an 11 mile walk from Duffield to Wirksworth following the river. It can be done in sections, using the train, either for parts, or just the return journey. Those interested can see more on <https://ew.ambervalleyramblers.org.uk/>



Rev. Chris Jackson was the Rector of Holy Trinity and Christ Church, Chesterfield from 2001 to 2010 and regularly contributed 'Stephenson Snippets' to In Touch, the Parish Magazine. This article was previously published in that magazine in February 2008 and is reproduced with permission.

It was a strange, almost surreal, experience giving a PowerPoint presentation on George in the house where he lived and died. Especially when, after the talk we had a short conducted tour of parts of the house and saw the room where he died. I find it strange there is no plaque in that room, though there is one on the wall near the front door.

I hope the Pleasley and District Young Farmers enjoyed my talk – the thank-you letter was very gracious. One of the questions I could not answer which I should have expected from this particular group was – 'did the cucumbers George was seeking to grow straight grow straight?' I said I needed to check.

On reflection I should have spent more time on George's enjoyment of the grounds of Tapton House, his interest in nature and what the life of a comfortably off country gentleman was like in early Victorian times. However, I did show about 60 slides and tried to cover the whole span of his life.

I drove up to the house in the dark. I don't think I have ever been up there in the dark. The lights of the town were on all over the place and I realised how high the house is. It seems higher looking down than looking up. Strange perspective. It really does occupy a grand position and was, and is, a grand house. No wonder George leased it (as did Robert) and liked it. A far cry from the one room in the cottage at Wylam with which I started the talk.

I actually find the social side of George's life and times more interesting than the railway one. I don't understand in great detail the specifications of the various engines – though I meet people who have written books on just those subjects.

I'm more fascinated by the conditions of life of the working class people of the time, what it was like down the pits then, the work and lifestyle of the navvies in the building of the railway routes and so on.

And we need to remember that a good number of George's years were spent very much as so many other people spent theirs at that time. He moved forward by his own indomitable gifts – the learning to read and write giving him a huge push forward. He was born at just the right time, in just the right place, with just the right abilities, gifts, vision to catch the crest of the wave of industrial expansion.

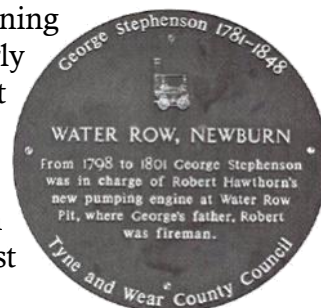
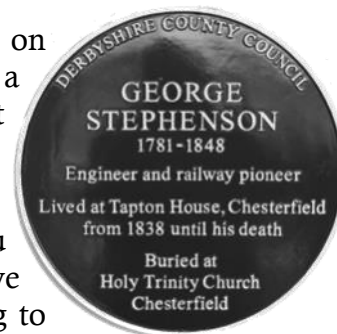
Checking out his life story for the presentation I was reminded again of the link with collieries that is there throughout his life. Railways and collieries are interwoven with much of what he did. It was to a large extent through him and his son that the problem of getting the coal from where it lay in the ground to where it was needed for industry was solved. This led in no small degree to Britain's pre-eminence in the world industrial field.

Wylam had pits. Did you know there were pits near Tapton House? So the beginning and end of his life, and much in between, took place near pits. A number of his early years were spent close by his father who worked at the pits. One of George's earliest jobs was as a 'picker'. This involved extracting debris such as stones from the coal.

He was a horse driver at a pit. He worked as a fireman – his father, Robert, at Wylam had been a fireman, stoking the pumping engine at Wylam Colliery, which must have been amongst George's earliest memories, I would guess. His father lost an eye in an accident at a pit.

A fascinating book is 'How long did the ponies live?' the story of the colliery at Killingworth and West Moor, just north of Newcastle. I have visited Killingworth. There is nothing left of the pit but there is the house where the family lived, which is still there. There's a pub called 'The George Stephenson' but any claim that he drank there is ruled out of court by the age of the pub – as the barman admitted to me!

How about this quote from the book from 1806 – *George Stephenson was present to see the 1806 explosion. By that*



date he was the winding enginemanStephenson had just lowered another man who was to supervise the work when, within three minutes, there was an explosive discharge as though the shaft was a cannon. For a quarter of an hour wood – brattice and stones shot from the shaft, and trusses of hay went up in the air like balloons. ...Stephenson then lowered the rope repeatedly down, pausing each time, to allow anyone alive to grab a hold. Miraculously, several men got outin all, ten men died in the mine including four of the five men he had lowered; their bodies were not found until twenty-three weeks later.

And the story of his safety lamp which many thought to be a better model, and was just earlier, than that of the famous one of Sir Humphrey Davy, I have written about before in these ‘Snippets’.

Has anyone ever made a film of George? Now, there’s an idea! It would not be just railways, engines – it would picture the world of coalmining at the turn of the 18th/19th centuries; and perhaps it might have in it reconstructions of the pits George would look at as he strolled through the gardens of Tapton House.

The Bicentenary of Robert Stephenson & Co., Locomotive Manufacturers, Exhibition, 2023

The 23rd of June 2023 is the bicentenary of the founding of Robert Stephenson & Co, Newcastle upon Tyne, the first company in the world to specialise in building railway locomotives. To celebrate this important anniversary the Trust is planning an exhibition and has published a book about the company.

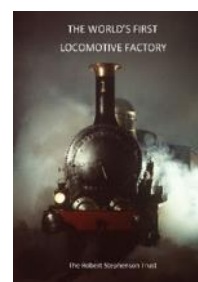


From 28th January to 25th March the exhibition will be in the Map Room at The Common Room, Neville Hall, Newcastle. It will include fixed displays and videos about Robert Stephenson’s life; the formation of Robert Stephenson & Co.; illustrations of the Newcastle factory; the firm’s products, and the Trust’s endeavours to raise awareness of this important chapter in the history of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The exhibition will then be open to the public, free of charge, from 2:00pm on 28th January, until 25th March 2023, between 10:00am and 4:00pm Mondays to Saturdays.

Leaflets about Robert Stephenson & Co., Newcastle have been produced and will be available to visitors of the exhibition and at other outlets around the city. They provide a short history of the Company along with a guide to the historic buildings still to be found in Newcastle’s “Stephenson Quarter” between Central station and the River Tyne.

The Trust’s book has the title “The World’s First Locomotive Factory”. It describes the activities and products of the firm from its founding in 1823 to completion of the final locomotive built at their Darlington works in 1964. With almost eighty illustrations it portrays the amazing range of high quality locomotives built by the company for railways across the world, both at the original Newcastle factory and the later factory at Darlington. The book is obtainable from the Trust, priced £6.00, or £8.00 including P and P by post to a UK address.



<http://www.robertstephensontrust.com/>

Holy Trinity Church



Holy Trinity Church, Newbold Road, will once again, be holding its *Crocus Festival* on Saturday 25 February 2023 10:00am – 4:00pm. There will be a George Stephenson display in the Church.

The Church will also be holding a George Stephenson Day on Saturday 17 June 2023 in conjunction with Chesterfield Museum and Art Gallery.



Carpet of crocuses at Holy Trinity Church (photo: Roger Green).

IA News and Notes

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE DAY – EMIAC 99

This year Derbyshire Archaeological Society are reviving the East Midlands Industrial Archaeology Conference which has been in limbo for the last few years due to Covid.

It will be held at Sudbury Gasworks in Derbyshire on Saturday 17 June 2023.

The Old Gasworks, in the Derbyshire village of Sudbury, opened in 1875 and was designed by George Devey, a noted architect of the time. Gas was produced from coal and piped to provide lighting for Sudbury Hall and houses in the village. The gasholder was dismantled in the 1930s and the building stood empty and deteriorated for many years.

With grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other sources, the original retort house has now been restored, and a new circular meeting room constructed on the footprint of the former gasholder.

This Heritage Day is one of the first chances to see the gasworks in its new guise, learn about the development of artificial lighting and its use on country house estates, and the extensive improvements made to Sudbury Hall and the village in the 19th Century.

Full details can be accessed at <https://www.derbyshireas.org.uk/emiac/>

Lead, Lime, Coal: Images of industry from the collections

Buxton Museum

Saturday 18 February to Wednesday 7 June 2023.

From lead smelting to water powered mills, quarrying to rope walks, industry has shaped Derbyshire. This exhibition of paintings, prints and photographs explores how the landscape around us has been mined, quarried, harnessed and changed.

Buxton Museum and Art Gallery, Terrace Road, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 6DA

Pleasley Pit Trust

The 150th anniversary of the start of sinking at Pleasley Colliery and the 40th anniversary of closure happen in 2023. To commemorate these two anniversaries, several events are being planned throughout the year.

'Songs and Rhymes from the Mines' event, Sunday 30th April 2023 (3:00pm – 5:30pm)

Colliery Winding Engines running days 2023 (10:00am – 3:00pm):

12th March 2023, 9th April 2023, 14th May 2023, 11th June 2023, 9th July 2023 (Main event 10am – 4pm), 13th August 2023, 10th September 2023 (Heritage Open Day) and 8th October 2023.

Miner's lamp collectors meeting, Saturday 10th June 2023.



Bestwood Winding Engine House

The winding engine house is normally open on Saturday mornings from 10:00am to 12:00 Noon with the Dynamo House Café open until 1:00pm.

Novel reuse of Catesby tunnel

The AIA has always been a strong supporter of the creative reuse of industrial buildings and structures, but even we never envisaged the new development at Catesby Tunnel. This 2.7km, 8.2m wide, dead-straight tunnel, is on the Great Central Railway line between Banbury and Rugby. It was closed in 1966. In November 2021 the tunnel was re-purposed as a vehicle test track by laying a new, extremely accurate, road-bed over its full length to enable vehicles to be driven at high speed, in repeatable conditions, testing aerodynamics, performance, acoustics, emissions and other parameters. At the entrance there is a large building which provides space for vehicle preparation in complete secrecy and, at the other end, there is a turntable. It is thought to be the only such test facility in the world and will be operated by Aero Research Partners and TotalSim.



Image courtesy of www.catesbytunnel.com

Chairman's Chat

Cliff Lea

As one of the largest “heritage” groups in the north-east Derbyshire and Chesterfield region, I know all our members have much wider interests than our industrial and transport history despite that being the theme that binds us together.

We certainly all have interest in the continuing prosperity, attractions and attractiveness of the area, yet over the last ten years we have all seen the signs of a gradual decline in Chesterfield: where's the market going, what about those empty shops, are you happy with the night time economy, and goodness where does all this litter come from which blights the town.

One of our sister heritage groups is Chesterfield & District Civic Society. They are very concerned and have organised an “open meeting” to take place in our usual meeting room at St Thomas' Church Centre, Chatsworth Road, at 7:30pm on Monday 27 February. They have invited three speakers from Chesterfield Borough Council, Destination Chesterfield, and Transition Chesterfield, and are tabling a number of important questions:

- Can Chesterfield be sustained as a sub-regional shopping centre for north-east Derbyshire, as it has been for centuries?
- Can independent retailers fill the gap left by the decline of branches of multiple retailers?
- How can the open market be sustained?
- What else should be provided in the town centre to encourage local people to visit?
- How can the ‘night time economy’ be encouraged in a way that attracts rather than repels families and older people?
- Can more be done to encourage tourists to spend more time (and money) in the town?
- Should there be more housing in the town centre and, if so, what sort of housing?
- How can the town centre be made more attractive as a place to live?
- What can the local authority do to support and develop the town centre, and how can more private capital be encouraged to invest in Chesterfield?

If you're not a member of the Civic Society, well maybe you should be, certainly you might like to attend.

Cliff

And finally

.... Galena from the Nile

Cliff Lea

I am constantly amazed at the quality of exhibitions put on by towns local to us. Quite unexpected is one which runs until 18 March at Barnsley Museum on the early life of Tutankhamun. Why now? Well of course last year marked 100th anniversary to Howard Carter's finding of King Tut's tomb, and this year marks the centenary of the actual opening of the tomb.

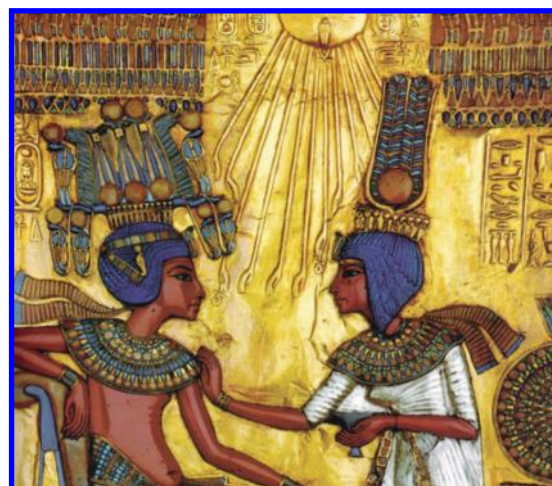
But why Barnsley? Well, members of the Spencer Stanhope family of Cannon Hall had made many visits to Egypt and had sponsored excavations. Their estates back home were looked after by Walter Midgely of Cawthorne. Their son William Midgeley studied the subject (1843-1925) later moved to Bolton where he became the first Curator of Bolton Museum which had already developed close links with Alexandria. His involvement with the Egyptian Exploration Society led to a considerable number of early - apparently over 3000 artefacts, the third largest collection in the UK, particularly from Armana, the birthplace of Tutankhamun. Some of these may have provided later clues to the early life of this largely unknown boy king, and where he may have been entombed and which may have helped Carter in locating and identifying Tut's tomb.

This exhibition showing at Barnsley has been curated between the two museums, and has stunning things to show us from 14th Century BC, and great glimpses of royal life in the time of Tut's boyhood. There are stunning exhibits, jewellery, minerals used for decoration, and linen spun and woven so fine I had no idea linen could produce such delicate fabrics; some items never previously shown.

One surprise was to see their use of the lead ore Galena, yes the same one as found in Derbyshire, and used at the time quite extensively on the Nile in face paints/ cosmetics.

Finally - Although only a small exhibition, don't miss it, it runs only until 18 March, it's a GEM! I caught it quite late and is a great example of what can be done locally.

<https://www.experience-barnsley.com/whats-on/tut-22-the-life-of-tutankhamun>



THE NEDIAS NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE

We now have the NEDIAS Newsletter live on Grace's Guide – [https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society](https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/North_East_Derbyshire_Industrial_Archaeology_Society). Access to the actual newsletters is either through registering and a small payment or free by logging in (top RHS). If you wish to log in for free access [members only] then please request the log in details from Cliff (cliff.lea@btinternet.com) or Doug (editor@nedias.co.uk)

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

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Chairman – Cliff Lea; **Secretary** – Patricia Pick; **Treasurer** – Pamela Alton; **Membership Secretary** – Jean Heathcote; **Committee Members** – Brian Dick, Diana Allen, David Hart, David Palmer, Christine Thomason.

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Editor: Doug Spencer

☎ 01246 466925

or e-mail: editor@nedias.co.uk

Assistant Editor: Cliff Lea

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