

Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society

Newsletter

Number 164

October 2014



Members on the September IA walk in Worthing, stand at the north entrance to the 1845 Quashetts tunnel, built by the Shoreham to Chichester Railway to enable the ancient footpath to pass under it.

The route is still used by many people today, it having been extended to the south when the goods yard was extended over the path.

The original arch of the 1845 tunnel (bridge on some maps) some 30 feet long is clear.

Members then inspected the varying materials used for the later extension, including (recycled?) girders that would have supported the tracks in the yard, no longer visible from above.

(Linda Wilkinson)

Newsletter 164

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Editorial

Welcome to *Newsletter 164*, the summer has gone out with a bang - well quite a bit of thunder, there have been several successful day events. For example the meeting in Arundel had 19 attendees, the highest number for some time, despite the torrential rain forecast, we missed the worst of it, unlike Littlehampton a few years ago where everyone would have been better off in their swimmers! There is a full programme of winter lectures for you, please do come along and support your committee.

In this centenary year, Peter Tyrrell has put together some notes on sights and remains from WWI. This will be in two parts, if there is interest maybe a tour of some sites might be possible next year.

The highlight of 2015, for many, will be the AIA (Association of Industrial Archaeology) conference that is meeting in Sussex in September, based in Brighton, tours are being arranged for the delegates to a number of sites around the county. It promises to be a full programme.

Please do come to our AGM on 15th November, some changes to positions on the committee are required to be voted on, and then followed by a (marvellous?) talk on an IA WWI topic resolved from the archives. Do please note the earlier start time of 2.00 pm.

As ever please offer your committee your suggestions of speakers and sites you would like to see us visit.

Forthcoming SIAS Events

Malcolm Dawes

All SIAS meetings are held at
West Blatchington Mill Barn, Holmes Avenue, Hove

Saturday 25th October at 7.30pm

Sussex Industrial Archaeology: a different perspective

Geoffrey Mead, well known Local Historian and Geographer looks at the industrial life of the county from a range of perspectives, noting the changes brought about by historical, geographical, geological and social factors. Change over time and space has allowed for a number of approaches to be made to a better understanding of Sussex trades and industries, their relationships and location.

From Chichester Harbour to Rye Bay, Gatwick airport to the West Pier, flint tools to Silicon Beach, this talk will explore our county's industrial life.

Saturday 15th November, 2.00pm

Please Note the corrected start time for the AGM of the Sussex Industrial Archaeology Society.

Followed by **Devils Dyke - Pleasure Ground to Bombing Gound**

This illustrated talk by Martin Snow is based on his research in the National Archives and ground proofing and links in with the earlier uses of the estate.

2015

Saturday 31st January at 7.30pm

From Magnificence through Dereliction to Renaissance

Talk by Gwilym Roberts a past President of the Institution of Civil Engineers. He has family connections with the Butterley Engineering Company who constructed the vast train shed of St Pancras Station and has written a book on the history of the company.

(Note: At 2.00pm, at the same venue there is a Brighton Circle talk, **Excerpts from the Maurice Joly LBSCR photographic collection** presented by Laurie Marshall. SIAS members are welcome to attend)

Saturday 21st February 7.30pm An evening of archive films and photos of Sussex Industrial Archaeology - Part 2

Following our successful archive evening last winter we have decided to delve into the archives again. More details in the January *Newsletter*. An evening of nostalgia

Advance notice of further SIAS talks and events.

Saturday 21st March at 7.30pm

The Industrial landscape between Brighton and Worthing

Illustrated talk by Trevor Povey

SERIAC - 25th April at City College, Southampton

Events from Other Societies

Malcolm Dawes

Detailed below are events organised by other societies, which may be of interest to our members. If you have details for future events please send these to:

Malcolm Dawes, 52 Rugby Road, Brighton, BN1 6EB

or e-mail to malcolm.dawes@btinternet.com

Saturday 1st November, 10.00am to 4.00pm Opening day at the Brede Steam Engines
Steam and working industrial engines. Situated 6 miles from Hastings on A28 to Ashford.
01323 897310

Sunday 2nd November Final Amberley Museum event of the season with visiting exhibits and stalls. Amberley Museum. 01798 831370. www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

Sunday 2nd November. London to Brighton veteran car run

Monday 10th November, 7.30pm Railways in the round. Southern Electric Group, Sussex Branch presentation by Andrew Marshall showing a further selection of slides from the past 33 years. £2 visitors. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. www.southernelectric.org.uk

Wednesday 12th November, 7.30pm. New build, remodellings and demolitions: the varied fortunes of the country house in West Sussex 1750-1914

Chichester Local History Society talk by Dr Sue Berry, consultant editor *Sussex Victoria County History*. £3. New Park Centre, New Park Road, Chichester. 01243 784915

Tuesday 18th November, 6.30pm. Railways and Warfare. Newcomen Society lecture by Bob Otter. Portland Building of the University of Portsmouth, Lecture Room PO 1-11, St James Street off Queen Street, Portsea. There is a charge for parking in adjacent University car parks. Visitors welcome and admission to lecture is free. newcomen.com. To book places and confirm details contact robert_otter@btinternet.com

Thursday 20th November, 7.30pm. The Brighton Main Line in Sussex

John Blackwell looks at the history of the line and its stations past and present. Mid Hants. Railway, Sussex Group Event. Deall Room, Southwick Community Centre, Southwick. £3 charge to cover room hire

Saturday 6th December, 10.00am to 4.00pm Opening day at the Brede Steam Engines
Steam and working industrial engines. Situated 6 miles from Hastings on A28 to Ashford.
01323 897310

Saturday 6th December. Steam train excursion from Three Bridges to Bath via Hove
Photographic opportunities in Sussex. www.railwaytouring.co.uk

Tuesday 9th December Steam train excursion from London, Victoria to Eastbourne and Hastings Photographic opportunities in Sussex. www.railwaytouring.co.uk

Do please always check details before travelling

The details of these meetings and events organised by other groups are only included as a guide and as a service to members: inclusion here is not intended to be seen as an endorsement

September IA Walk Around Worthing

Linda Wilkinson

On a wonderful, sunny, warm Saturday 15 of us met at Worthing Station to begin our tour of the town with our knowledgeable leader Martin Snow.



We began with details of the present station, where there is a three bay gabled section of the original (1868/9) canopy still in place. There remain two LB&SCR property boundary markers in the pavement outside the station.

Adjacent to the station is a level crossing lifting barrier across South Farm Road, which was the first (1960s) such barrier on the Southern Region, as it was then. There was also a signal box until 1988, when overnight it disappeared, probably to avoid having a preservation order put upon it. A second, replacement station for the 1845 one, was built between 1868 and 1869, with a refreshment room being added in 1879. After the second station of 1869, a timber building was erected at the western end, and still there today, as a sub-post office, later a parcel office and now a secure cycle parking area. The present (third) station was designed by A. Cripps, in the Simple Renaissance style, between 1908 and 1911.

To the east of the present station is the 1845 original station building, for the line from Shoreham, opened on 24th November 1845 by the Brighton and Chichester Railway, becoming part of the LB&SCR on 27th July 1846. Now used as offices by the owners, the long established builders, Sandell, who restored the building in 1988. It has a blue plaque, unfortunately with some incorrect information! It was Listed Grade II in 1971.

South-west of the present station was the Cross Street Windmill, built in 1805, which, following development of the area around, lost its windage so was moved to Seamill Farm (the area named for the supposed former tide mill in the area) at East Worthing. Whilst being moved, at a cross roads half the horses of a team of 40, went one way and the other half the other way. All were unhitched and the mill was left in the middle of the road overnight awaiting two steam traction engines to tow it the rest of the way the following day.

We moved away from the station area to the Broadwater Bridge (A24) that was a 17-span brick bridge built by the LB&SCR and opened in 1845. It was replaced by the present 73ft wide steel and concrete dual carriageway bridge in 1968. (our guide told us there was, reportedly, a WWI tank buried somewhere in its embankments, that is another story!). Passing through the supermarket car park, that was once the goods yard until 1968, into Station Road we then examined the Quashetts tunnel which is on the line of an ancient footpath from the hamlet of Worthing to Broadwater.

The tunnel, built with the line, runs under the railway and was originally 30ft long with an arched roof, but was extended when the goods yard was added. The later section is flat roofed, held in place by any scrap railway metal that was to hand, it seems, complete with two skylights. It is still a very busy thoroughfare as we found out as some of our number closely examined the roof structure.

Along this road there was a narrow back alley that had two, one probably original and one more recent, granite glinters (see *Newsletter* 141). These have the same effect as fender stones on bridges, to keep the cartwheels from damaging the house brickwork. Today of course it is to protect the corners of the houses from “white van man”.

Going south into Upper High Street the garden walls of several of the houses in the area are built using broken gas retort linings from the former nearby gas works, this makes a change from the usual flintwork.



We then passed Tower Road, named after the nearby water tower that was built in 1857. It was 110ft tall holding 110,000 gallons of water and was demolished in 1924 having become redundant since the 1893 typhoid epidemic. The well was very close to the sewage system, which led to contamination, so a new water source was developed at Broadwater.

Part of the site of the water and sewage works later became the electricity works, opening in 1901, with the generators closing in March, 1958. The whole area is now domestic housing, with just an electricity substation as evidence of its former use. At the junction with High Street there is a large house, the *Hollies*, built using, in part, yellow bricks which were made from blue clay taken from Worthing Common between 1800 and 1830. This was the green area south of the current beach and now under water. The bricks turned yellow when fired. When this source ran out, other blue clay was used, but the bricks were not so yellow but more orange.

We passed the old forge, which is now an art gallery, which is next to the oldest pub in Worthing, then the *Anchor*. This was also the crossroads where the windmill incident occurred.

Walking east along Lyndhurst Road we passed the site of an iron foundry belonging to A. Kimmins whose drain gratings can be seen throughout the town. The foundry replaced a steam sawmill. This was also the site of a WWII bombing, which was probably aimed at the three gas holders on the other side of the road. One of these still remains although not in use. This is on the original site of the first gas works

whose gas lit the town in 1835 being replaced by electricity in 1901. The Worthing Gas Co. amalgamated in 1931 to become the Brighton, Hove and Worthing Gas Co. When gas manufacture ceased here, it came from the Portslade works. Two older column-guided holders were demolished in 1988 and the spiral-guided holder remains, for the moment at least.

In *Beach House Park*, which was part of the Beach House Estate acquired by the council in 1927, containing, but not visible, a memorial to the pigeons of WWII. Making a stop at the toilets, a beady-eyed member noticed that the toilet block was built with oversized red bricks, for which no one could come up with an explanation! Exiting the park onto Brighton Road we were facing *Beach House* a Listed Grade II* building saved after a long battle to demolish it together with a lot of Worthing's heritage,

Passing a building by J.B. Rebecca, once *Marino Mansions*, where the dramatist Edward Knoblock once lived, it led us past the *Royal Oak* with its glazed green pantiles, past unusual upturned boat shaped porches, on the houses in Warwick Place.

Crossing the road into Warwick Road past the *Egremont* public house on the corner dating from 1835 we reach the Tower Brewery, now apartments, but with its water tank still on the roof. Of course it is not the real thing, it is apparently a 'genuine plastic' tank encased in concrete forming a roof-top garden. At least it looks like



the real thing from the pavement, which is better than nothing I suppose.

The terrace on the east side of this road is one of only five Regency terraces in Worthing. On reaching the promenade and Splash Point, with its retaining wall and large rocks as a sea defence, because it projects into the sea, was once a natural "speakers corner".

Walking along the promenade we passed beach shelters, one being used for commercial use to combat vandalism (of a similar design to one in Margate), together with gargoyles at the bottom of the down pipes, ornate lamp posts by J. Every of Lewes and two capstans once used to haul the fishing boats up the beach and now utilised as public art. The beach shelters, in two designs, are styled like the originals, replacing the Victorian ones in 1950s that were removed after WWII.

Almost opposite the pier there are two buildings, one is a replica Victorian which, if not told you would not have known, the other is of modern steel and concrete almost an art deco design. The latter, *Warnes*, replaces an early “motor hotel”, destroyed by fire, with an adjacent motor garage. In its time it was host to several VIPs including Emperor Haile Silasie. It has two blue plaques. Even our Georgian expert was complimentary about both buildings, so they must have been well designed! Next we saw what was built as the Kursaal skating rink then renamed the Dome due to its tall dome shape and the dislike of all things German during WWI, later it became a cinema. Next to this was the Southdown Motor Services bus travel office, which continued until the 21st century, it is now the *Beach Café*.

Opposite this on the promenade is a substantial public convenience placed here as this was the charabancs stopped for the beach, and the locals objected to the gentlemen all rushing to the waters edge to relieve themselves after the long journey from London.

On reaching the 960ft pier which was first opened in 1862 as just a promenade with the Southern Pavilion being added between 1887 and 1889. It had a somewhat chequered history, first a large proportion was blown down in 1913 leaving just the Southern Pavilion. It was repaired and reopened, then in 1933 the southern pavilion was destroyed by fire, but rose again by 1935 in the art deco style as it is today. Along came WWII and the middle was blown out to prevent it being used to land German troops. The whole pier is well kept and is owned, since 1921, by Worthing Council.

We were given a very thorough, and enthusiastic, talk by the present lessee Phil Duckett who has brought back to life the Southern Pavilion, which had stood empty for three years, since the council, who own it, decided to curtail the previous 20 year lease to a night club after too many complaints. The interior has been restored to its art deco style, complete with shell wall lights and chandeliers and I must say he has done very well in the three months he had allowed himself to complete the work, opening in time for Good Friday this year. The floor is of timber grown and prepared in Sussex. The balustrading to the upper floor was manufactured in Lancing, plus many of the other fittings and fixtures were also made or purchased locally. They serve hot and cold simple meals, the usual teas, coffee and cakes. Plus they cater for events and weddings, to which he has already secured several bookings. Whilst we were there trying the fare it was quite busy and to be recommended as it will not put a strain on the purse!



Beach Capstan

Returning north after lunch, in Liverpool Terrace we saw a terrace of bow fronted houses, several still with their coal-hole covers in the pavement, built between 1803 and 1806 in the Regency style. These shallow bowed windows admitted more light and in the 1820s became a design adopted in Brighton.

Now finding ourselves in Chapel Road we passed the *The Three Fishes*, a Wetherspoon pub. It has a plaque on one of its pillars which reads “above the first floor central window, on the front of this building, is a blue emblem with three fishes - part of Worthing Corporation’s coat of arms. It was placed there when these premises were built in 1937 and opened as the Worthing Electricity Board Showrooms. From 1947, the showrooms were owned by the South Eastern Electricity, trading at this address until 1998. These premises were refurbished by J.D. Wetherspoon in 2010”. It is nice to see the recognition.

Then we came to the old library, now part of the museum. In 1906, after much pressure from the then curator of the museum, Marion Frost, the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie agreed to fund the much-needed library. The Mayor, Alfred Cortis, ‘anonymously’! donated £12,000 to build a purpose built museum, both to be built at the same time on gifted land. The whole was presented to the citizens of Worthing as an educational and cultural hub for the town.

The present Town Hall, Listed Grade II, in a Neo-Georgian style, next door, and opened by King George in 1933. Charles Cowles-Voysey designed it in an open architecture competition. He was never paid for his design, but at least he gets a plaque outside the building!

Further along Chapel Road is a row of small, old shops some still showing the printed advertising on the walls.

Opposite what is now Bunces, a large hardware shop, was the tollgate for the road going north via Broadwater Green and on to London. After pressure by the people of Worthing, a later Act of 1823 moved the tollgate to Findon valley.

This was a very interesting walk with a lot of other incidental information I have omitted, otherwise I could have filled the whole magazine. Thank you Martin.

Endangered sites

Ron Martin

In the April Newsletter I reported that there was a Planning Application for demolishing several of the buildings at the University of Sussex. This application was turned down but I suspect that another one will be made shortly. One of the areas under threat was the East Bank – a multiple group of students residences, which came up on Eggheads on BBC 2 recently, when a team, of students, who had been there took part.

The other area is the Circus Street development for which there has just been submitted a revised application following some quite fierce local opposition.

IA on I O M....not forgetting Merseyside and Cheshire!

Diana and Alan Durden

We had not consciously set out to have an IA – filled holiday (perhaps we should have done!), though there were places that had long been on our list which we had only heard or read about.

Our first port of call – literally! – was the city of Liverpool which has so much to offer to the IA enthusiast. On arriving we headed for the Albert Docks; these pink-bricked waterside warehouses arranged around a large square of water which was formerly the chief dock area for Liverpool, have long been tastefully converted to shops and restaurants; a good example of preserved industrial buildings. Alongside these was the Piermaster's House, fitted out as it would have been when in use.

Driving around Liverpool we continually passed great bonded warehouses, now all boarded up – signs of a past industry.

A drive across to the Wirral brought us to Port Sunlight Garden Village; exemplary in the realm of workers' housing; it was built in 1888 by William Hesketh Lever to house the workers in his soap factory adjacent to the village. To be an employee in Lever's business was almost enviable – they were looked after so well and given comfortable homes in which to live.

A few days later we crossed the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man and first on our list was the Laxey Wheel. "Lady Isabella" as it is also known, handsome, red and white and gigantic in proportions, is still the largest working waterwheel in the world, measuring over 72 ft (22 m) in diameter. It was designed by the Manx engineer Robert Casement in 1854 to pump water from the Glen Mooar part of the Great Laxey Mines industrial complex. We climbed to the top of the viewing platform to look over the village and to see the wheel

spinning steadily round below us. The wheel is connected to the pumping mechanism further up the valley by a 450 yd (410 m) long horizontal shaft, supported by and running along an imposing masonry viaduct.

Back at ground level, we walked over to the mine shaft entrance where we donned hard hats – just for walking a short distance into the adit – but we looked the part!



Our final visit in this area was the narrow-gauge mine railway; the surface section of the tramway was restored in 1999. Bending double we climbed into the tiny carriage and rode along the line where loaded wagons of ore were hauled from the mine.

Later the same day we took the mountain railway up to the summit of Snaefell. This is a unique Victorian enterprise begun in 1895 and famously completed in seven months. The original carriages are still used, electrically powered from overhead cables. We clanked our way up on the half hour journey, which gave stunning views from all around.



After leaving the Isle of Man, we decided to visit the Anderton Boat Lift, at Northwich, Cheshire, on our way home. We had last visited this in 1996 and saw it standing derelict. We were therefore delighted to find that it had been fully restored with a Heritage Lottery grant and re-opened in 2002. This masterpiece of high Victorian engineering lifts boats 50 ft (15 m) between the Weaver Navigation and the Trent and Mersey Canal. The original hydraulic rams and operating machinery have been restored, but now using hydraulic oil rather than water (which had been the cause of early failures). After looking around the visitor centre to learn of the lift's history, we boarded a trip boat; here we were given further information by the enthusiastic pilot and then we sailed into the lift and were taken slowly upwards. Altogether an uplifting experience! We can thoroughly recommend these northern areas and the Isle of Man for not only an enjoyable holiday generally but for the opportunity to visit places so generously packed with our industrial heritage.

Eastbourne Pier Pavilion Fire

Robin Jones

At 3 p.m. on Wednesday 30th July 2014, a fire, thought to have been caused by an electrical fault, started in the corner of the Pavilion at the shore end of Eastbourne Pier and quickly spread to the rest of the building. 80 firefighters spent hours tackling the blaze and managed to prevent it spreading to the rest of the pier, although one of the retail outlets adjacent to the Pavilion was also destroyed in the fire.

Eastbourne Pier was opened on 13th June 1870, although it was not actually completed until two years later. However on 1st January 1877, the landward end of the pier was swept away in a storm and when rebuilt was constructed at a higher level. The building which caught fire was constructed in 1925 on this higher level after the decking was made wider. It was known as a Music Pavilion and Ballroom, although in recent years it has been an amusement arcade housing a wide range of slot machines.

With the Pavilion now a metal skeleton, work is proceeding to repair the structure and reinstate the decking round the Pavilion to allow access to the remainder of the pier, which fortunately was not affected by the fire. It is hoped that Eastbourne Pier will be partially reopened later this year and fully reopened by September 2015.

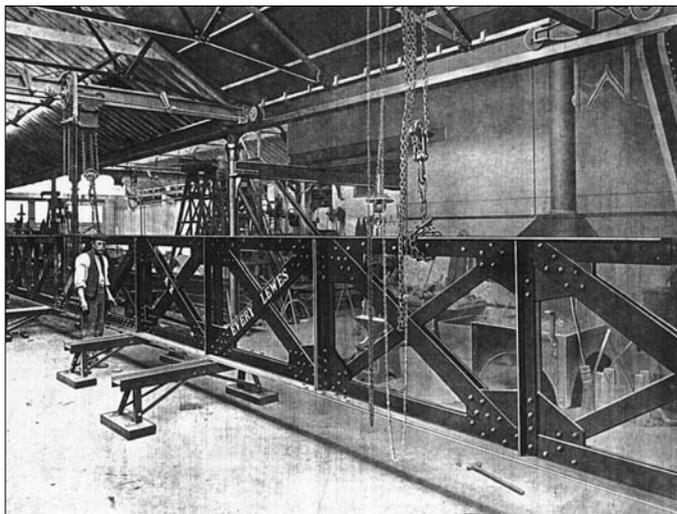
Eastbourne Pier was no stranger to disaster as John Blackwell records

Tragedy struck another Sussex pier when flames stripped the amusement arcade to its steel skeleton on Wednesday 30th July. Fortunately the wind was light otherwise considerable further destruction would have occurred. This was not the first time the pier had faced the elements of fire and water. Designed by Eugenius Birch the 1,000 feet long pier was supported on cast iron columns 25 feet long and 12 inches in diameter fixed into eight feet long screw piles driven into the sea bed. Opened in 1870, although not fully completed until 1872, the pier had seating incorporated into both side railings running the full length of the structure. The pier was used for the Victorian pastime of promenading with only a bandstand at the pier head for entertainment.

During severe weather rough seas washed over the decking, Birch had designed it 'too low'. Strengthening works had to be undertaken, which proved to be of no avail as on January 1st 1877 during a severe storm the landward end of the pier was swept away. This section was rebuilt to a higher level and connected to the original sea end by a slope, still noticeable today. In 1888, the pier acquired its first pavilion a plain shed-like structure accommodating 400 people. In 1901 this was removed

(one report states for use at Lewes cattle market, another for use by a Lewes farmer) and the existing pier head structure opened as a theatre, tea room, licensed bar and, in the dome, a camera obscura. The pavilions in matching style at the centre of the pier, the cast iron and glass windscreens with dolphin decorations and a birdcage bandstand (now removed) were also added about this time.

The bandstand and iron work for the windscreen were cast at John Every's Phoenix Iron works at Lewes. An illustration in a contemporary Every's catalogue is captioned "Girder shop showing one of the main girders for Eastbourne pier"; this was presumably used to strengthen the original sub structure to support the theatre.



New larger entrance kiosks replaced the originals in 1912 (the central pay kiosk survives in the Redoubt Music Gardens) and in 1925 a 900 seat music and ballroom was opened which in 1968 became the amusement arcade now destroyed by the fire. During the Second World War only the decking was removed rather than destroying the centre section. Following the cessation of hostilities the decking was mostly re-laid in concrete blocks, the pier re-opening in August 1946. In 1951 the pier entrance was remodelled in the kidney shape popular at the time only to be revamped in 1991 to its present 'Victorian' style. Tragedy struck again in January 1970 when the interior of the theatre was damaged by fire started by a pier employee. It was refurbished as a Dixieland Showbar and used for cabaret and discos and later as a nightclub. The external stairs to the camera obscura (believed the only one on a pier in the world) were also destroyed by the theatre fire and not replaced until 2003 when this attraction re-opened. Reports suggest that the owners and town are in favour of an early re-opening and it is to be hoped that the replacement pavilion reflects the style and heritage of the listed Grade II* pier.

Stop Press

Eastbourne Pier re-opened on Saturday 27th September.
A walkway takes visitors around the damaged pavilion.

Some Sussex links with activities in WWI

Peter Tyrrell

Chattri, Patcham Down

In August 1915 after final cremations at the ghat site, a lieutenant in the Indian Medical Service and the Mayor of Brighton, Sir John Otter, envisaged a memorial to Indian soldiers who died in Brighton hospitals. Sikh and Hindus were cremated in accordance with their religion. The main building material is white Sicilian marble. A young Indian architect, E.C. Henriques, designed The Chattri, that translates as umbrella. Construction started in August 1920. Brighton Corporation own the memorial, with responsibility for maintenance. The Chattri was unveiled on 1st February 1921 by Edward, Prince of Wales.

From 1951 to 1999 the Royal British Legion undertook annual pilgrimages and contributed to its upkeep. More recently in the current climate of commemoration, The Chattri has become a focal point for public remembrance. The Chattri was listed Grade II by English Heritage in August 1971.

Chichester garrison town

Historically the city has been a garrison town, right up to the time when the Royal Military Police were based at Roussillon Barracks in Broyle Road. Most of that acreage has now been released for residential development over recent years as Roussillon Park 252 home estate. This leaves just the castellated brick Roussillon Barrack building extant as an army artefact dating back to 1802.

Chichester was the original Depot of the Royal Sussex Regiment from 1873 to 1960. The Roussillon Regiment of France was defeated by the Royal Sussex at the battle of Quebec in 1759, so the Regiment started wearing the French Roussillon plume in their cap badge. This plume is still worn by the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, the eventual successor regiment to the Royal Sussex, on their collar badges. The Royal Military Police had Roussillon Barracks as their HQ from 1964 to 2007, when they moved to Southwick Park near Portsmouth. The long association with the Royal Sussex Regiment terminated amid amalgamations as it is an inevitable aspect of modern warfare that less manpower is required.

Cuckmere Cable Station

Extant above West Beach at Cuckmere Haven is a Western Union Cable House that is recorded in use from 1900. In 1917 and 1918 a pair of GPO cables were laid out across the English Channel. These vital links would have been extensively utilised in WWI. The repeater station was heavily damaged by Allied friendly fire during WWII and a more conveniently situated cable hut was built in the *Golden Galleon* car park. The repeater station is owned by Michael Ann OBE who uses the rendered property as a family fishing shack. Despite ESCC maintenance of a pebble sea defence at the beach there is no funding to maintain the approaches to the beach. Michael has become increasingly concerned about tidal erosion of the coast there, that also threatens to



undermine the nearby Coastguard Cottages that were de-commissioned in the early 1920s. He has privately instigated the installation of a rock revetment.

Danny House, Hurstpierpoint

Of all the prominent Sussex properties linked to WWI it must be Danny House, tucked under Wolstonbury Hill, in the South Downs National Park, that rates the highest acknowledgement. The red brick Grade I listed Elizabethan mansion was family home of the Campions for six generations to 1977. In July to October 1918 Danny was rented by Lord Riddle who owned the *News of the World* (then a respected broadsheet), for Prime Minister David Lloyd George, to escape London.

Col. Campion, CO of the *Fine Fourths* Royal Sussex Regiment, declared Sussex men were the 'right stuff' and Lady Campion hosted Danny as a collection centre for goods to send to troops. Lloyd George stayed there in a *menage a trois* with his wife Margaret and his secretary and mistress Frances Stevenson. Meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet were held in the Great Hall, where on 13th October 1918 terms of the Armistice with Germany were decided, and authority despatched to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson to negotiate the Armistice.

After WWII, Danny became Montpelier College, which had transferred from Brighton, but this closed in 1950. In 2007 Danny House celebrated 50 years as a retirement home. The grounds seem open to local walkers, but the house is not open to visitors.

Devil's Dyke bomb house

For nearly 100 years an aura of uncertainty surrounded this near derelict brick building in Poynings Parish, north of Brighton. Passed down by generations of farmers as the 'bomb house', recent research by Martin Snow uncovered military activity at the Devil's Dyke.

What Martin discovered was



intriguing documentation at The National Archives of a Bomb Testing Ground being established at the Dyke ravine during 1918. A bizarre network of cables, trollies, track and carriages comprised this arrangement that terminated with the Armistice. Little else is known about this acreage other than Canadian troops stationed across the South Downs during WWII and any residue of the Bomb Testing Ground may have been bull-dozed or blasted to oblivion. (Martin will speak at the AGM.)

Eastbourne

During WWI the seaside town became known as a Red Cross town due to its volume of hospitals and convalescent homes. Countless neighbourhood large houses and colleges were transformed into hospitals for the war wounded. A hutted colony named Summerdown Camp spawned to the west of the town and a Cavalry Command Depot rehabilitated the men back to service units. 150,000 men are said to have passed through these camps. These establishments were hurriedly closed and dismantled due to the 1919 flu pandemic that claimed more lives than the Great War itself.

To the east of the community, Frederick Fowler's Eastbourne Aviation Co. at St. Anthony's Langney had a flying school for embryo airmen and his business was engaged in RNAS aircraft supply contracts like BE2cs and Avro 504. Many local engineering companies were committed to war contract schedules and there was fierce competition between Caffyns and Lovells Garages towards output levels.

Newhaven port and fort

The port was the principal supply depot for the Western Front and was heavily militarised; sailings and railway carriages arriving and departing throughout the day. Newhaven harbour has been radically re-developed in recent years - transforming its previous dependency on fishing and ferry cargo. Possibly the only artefact surviving from World War I is the little lighthouse on the west harbour wall.

Staff at the Fort will be only too ready to talk on periods of activity on the site since the fort's 1870s origins. Newhaven Maritime & Local History Society at Tates Garden Centre have a collection of WWI material.

The Palmerston Fort was much-maligned in the post WWII period, developers tried to make the site viable in several schemes until Lewes District Council got to grips to develop the fort into a major tourist facility – although interest there has waned in recent years.

Polegate

During WWI this slumbering community was dominated by military activity due to its railway links and sheltered location close to the South Downs. The Royal Naval Air Service airship station, *Polegate*, operated across meadows nearby at Willingdon, between 1915-1918. Pioneering airship patrols over the English Channel countered enemy submarine patrols. Little remains from this time, but metal ring securing posts can be found at Donkey Hollow. Rows of neat Army bell tents lined the hills with troops camped on manoeuvres. Local suppliers and services benefitted by this influx of men



with their need for victuals and services. The *Polegate Inn*, in the High Street, was frequented by ANZAC troops convalescing a mile south at Wish Farm, Willingdon. They rated the *Polegate Inn* 'fair dinkum', and residents adopted the sobriquet. In 1979 Harveys Brewery refurbished their hostelry as *The Dinkum*. In August 2014 it emerged with exterior redecoration, with a vivid mustard colouring and signing that acknowledged its ANZAC origins.

Rye station and harbour

In 1914 plans were in place to block the Rother river at the harbour mouth and there were detailed plans to evacuate a 12-mile coastal strip. Overall the port had been in decline, but a form of prosperity arose, centred from the railway yard, as ambulance trains began to arrive from Dover, generating local employment. Overall, 233 LB&SCR ambulance trains carried 42,337 patients in 445 trains onwards to War Hospitals in Brighton, Eastbourne and other locations.

Today, typical off-peak service is one train per hour to Hastings and Brighton and one hourly to Ashford International.

Seaford Camps

During WWI vast camps were created at Seaford for Commonwealth troops. South Camp occupied fields since absorbed as residential suburbia. North Camp again comprised of almost relentless rows and rows of hutting. The men had allotments for healthy recreation and YMCA halls for leisure times.

At the end of hostilities the camps were dismantled and auctioned off. Much of the woodwork, roofing and fittings were acquired by Charles Neville for his dream of a 'Garden-City-By-The-Sea' that in the 1920s emerged as the blot on the landscape that became known as Peacehaven.

Many of these redundant Army buildings found their way into civilian applications, re-erected, extended, re-skinned and generally made good use of as workshops etc. Just one example is known to survive from this WWI army hutting. Farrier Hall beside The Green at East Dean, along the coast from Seaford, has been identified as being from the World War I period.

St Dunstan's, Ovingdean

St Dunstan's Institute for people blinded on war service was founded in 1915 by (Sir) Arthur Pearson. By 1918 nearly 2,000 men blinded by the war were rehabilitated. The first convalescent home in Brighton opened in 1918 at *West House*, 12-14 Portland Place. On his death in 1922 the Chairmanship fell to Ian Fraser from Eastbourne who

was blinded in the Battle of the Somme in 1916, who held the post for 52 years. The most notable recent resident was WWI veteran Henry Allingham, born 1896, who was briefly the oldest man in the world until his death in 2009.

The imposing Ian Fraser House opened in 1937 as the art deco complex at Ovingdean Gap. The striking property has had several names, although to many it is universally known as *St. Dunstan's*. More recently the title *Blind Veterans UK* has been applied to the organisation, although this branding is perhaps unpopular with some people.

RAF Newhaven

The amalgamation into 242 Squadron RAF was on 15th August 1918 from numbers 408, 409 and 514 Flights at Newhaven Seaplane Station. Operating from there and the nearby Telscombe Cliffs aerodrome. They were equipped with Short type 184 floatplanes, then six Dover 184s and carried out anti-submarine English Channel patrols. Officers were housed in the Tide Mills cottages and men occupied redundant railway carriages that were also used as workshops.

Bishopstone Tide Mills had a fascinating industrial life cycle. At its peak almost a hundred people lived there. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the 1847 repeal of the Corn Laws, cheap rail transport and estuary infilling led to decline. A few of the homes were occupied until being demolished with the outbreak of WWII. Today all that remains of this lost village are foundations and flint/pebble walls, the disused railway platform, sleepers and rails around the Mill Creek. Outlines of the concrete bases of the WWI hangars remain on the shingle for posterity.

Shoreham Army Camps

From 1916 a bell-tented camp for soldiers spawned around Buckingham Park, eventually The Southern Command Supply Depot reportedly accommodated some 45,000 men. They occupied a huddled encampment across the lower slopes of the Downs towards Mill Hill. The community became a self-contained entity with recreation facilities, retail stores, chapel, cinema etc. A network of trenches developed across the Downs centering on Buckingham Barn. In a grassed valley, adjacent to the Holmbush shopping complex, between Kingston Barn and an equestrian centre, are variations in grass texture. Long grass prevailed where huts had stood and where phosphor remains, also a causeway road can be detected.

A remarkable 1946 aerial photo shows the outlines of the huts and other properties extant. The *Evening Argus* 6th January 1919 reported. 'The most remarkable military demonstration ever witnessed in Sussex took place this morning when 7,000 men from the London Command Depot at Shoreham and the Royal Marine Engineering Works at Southwick marched to Brighton Town Hall to protest at the delay in demobilisation of troops'.

Shoreham 'Mystery Towers'

An Admiralty file at The National Archives is titled M.N. Scheme: Towers at Spithead and Shoreham 1920-1921. Designed by civilian Mr. G. Menzies the towers were to be linked by steel nets and armed with two 4-inch guns, closing the English Channel to enemy vessels. Due to secrecy the structures were soon christened The *Mystery Towers* locally. By the end of WWI only one had been completed at Shoreham Harbour, awaiting deployment. While another part-built tower was eventually dismantled in 1924, there remained the completed 92-foot high (28 m) metal cylinder sitting on a raft of concrete. It was eventually decided to utilise this as a replacement for the Nab Rock Sands lightship off the Isle of Wight, and since 1983 it has been fully automatic. Reportedly over 3,000 civilians and/or 5,000 army personnel were working on the towers at times. Two of the towers were almost complete plus three half constructed when the November 1918 Armistice was declared.



The combined pump house for the cooling water for the electricity power station and to maintain the water level in the harbour arm at Shoreham Harbour.

There are two pumps for the power station and four for the harbour, that operate daily.

The annual electricity consumption at the harbour end of the pump house is 475,000kWh. Photographed during a guided tour of the harbour during Heritage Open Days in September.

A visit well worth making. (*Martin Snow*)

Heritage Lottery Award for Volk's Railway

John Blackwell

It was announced in June that Brighton & Hove City Council had been successful in their bid to secure funding from the HLF.

Volk's railway opened in 1883 and has run continuously since then, except during the Second World War, and is the oldest operating electric railway in the world.

The funding would be used to :-

- Provide a purpose built heritage visitor centre at the Aquarium station to tell the story of Magnus Volk and his pioneering railway.

- Create a conservation workshop for the historic carriages, enable restoration work to be viewed, and provide training for volunteers to develop their skills.

- Restore and bring back into use three of the original carriages (Nos. 4 of 1892, 6 of 1925, 10 of 1926) which will increase capacity on the railway.

- Develop new learning materials and schools sessions.

The HLF award is for £96,000 to develop the scheme further with a total of around £1.5 million should the second construction stage be confirmed with completion planned for 2017.

For the 2014 operating season only carriages 7 (1901), 8 (1901) and 9 (1910) were available, and with the 130 year old carriage shed at the 'Banjo' groyne held up by scaffolding for over 10 years, lottery funding is vital for the railway to survive. The attitude of Brighton City Council and its predecessors can best be described as "less than dynamic" in protecting and developing what should be a major tourist attraction; it has just been left to decay.

To my mind a new station much nearer the Palace Pier and an extension into the Marina are vital. Until this happens (and there is enough proposed development at the Marina for Section 106 monies to be used for this) I cannot envisage the railway making a profit. Also why are the annual operating dates so rigid, (from Good Friday to the end of September) wake up Volk's management! - the sun does shine in early spring and late autumn.

Volk's Railway is supported by a very active group, Volk's Electric Railway Association (VERA), which undertakes volunteer maintenance work, winter meetings, and the opportunity to take part in late running evenings including, with suitable training, driving duties.

For details see www.volkselectricrailway.co.uk

SIH 44 Barcombe Mills. Feedback

Riverswood and Ryelands Locks

Several readers queried whether the names of *Ryelands* and *Riverswood* Locks shown in the table of locks in Nick Kelly's article on The Upper Ouse Navigation had been transposed; specifically as the first edition OS map names *Riverswood* Lock at the site of the later (1883) Ardingly branch railway embankment. Nick comments that an addendum was published in SIH 2 by John Farrant, to his previous article on the Navigation which appeared in SIH 1. He referred to a document which had come to light since his article which listed the names of the locks and that there were nineteen in total; not the eighteen as he had shown. The document (now stored at The Keep, Ref SAS/CO/227/41) is a report on the state of works by a surveyor, John Cowper, in 1821. He names the final lock as *Riverswood* and the lock at the later railway branch as *Ryelands*. Both locks are indicated on the 1841 tithe map for Ardingly but not named. The *Riverswood* Lock was completely removed ca 1859 and it is possible that the 1875 OS survey assumed that the lock we now know to be *Ryelands* was the final lock on the navigation and hence used the name *Riverswood*.

Barcombe Windmills

The NGRs for the windmills at Barcombe are:-

Hawcock's Mill TQ 415141, Barcombe Mill TQ 417149

Barcombe Button Factory

Thanks to our friends at the Mills Archive Trust (www.millsarchivetrust.org.uk) for providing the copy of an H.E.S. Simmons photograph taken after the button factory fire at Barcombe Mills in March 1939. It shows the fire ravaged button making machinery which our mill experts may be able to identify further.



Mystery Photo

Do you know your IA?



(John
Blackwell)

We see the plates on the left everywhere,
but what is the older one on the right all about?
M.C ? - Something is 12 feet away from it, but what?
Has anyone walked past it and noted it's location?

Update

The mystery photo in *Newsletter* 163 was spotted and identified by committee member Diana Durden in the churchyard of Steyning Church. It is from the gravestone of wheelwright Charles Ambrose Woolgar who died 9th April 1944 age 76.

A dip into Kelly's *Sussex Directory* for 1915 has him as a wheelwright at Fletchers Croft Villa, Steyning. He was also in the 1938 edition, so appears that he was still at work at 70. Why a pictorial indication of his profession?

Please keep you eyes open for unusual features on your travels, or it may be something you see every day, but the rest of us are unfamiliar with. I am always looking for examples of our IA heritage. If possible, let me have a picture, either for this feature or to provide inspiration for a future article(s).

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The Sussex Mills Group also produces a *Newsletter* that is sent to members with this *Newsletter*

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The restored Worthing Pier Southern Pavilion showing the restored interior.

(Linda Wilkinson)



Eastbourne Pier pavilion, the burnt out shell after the fire on Wednesday 30th July.

(John Blackwell)

