
NORFOLK INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

c/o Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service, Shirehall, Market Avenue, Norwich NR1 3JQ

Newsletter



Est. 1970

May 2011



Among the various branded goods produced to commemorate the marriage of Prince William to Miss Catherine Middleton on 29 April is a whisky from Norfolk. It is made at St George's Distillery, Roudham. This is England's first and only registered whisky distillery.

The single malt is supplied in an engraved decanter bottle and costs £65 a bottle.

There is a long tradition of brewers producing commemorative ales, for Royal Weddings, locally Adnams, Elgoods and many of the Norfolk micro brewers have produced a special bottled beer.

STRETHAM OLD ENGINE - NEW EXHIBITS

The Trust has recently acquired two new major exhibits, entirely due to the efforts of their Engineer, Edward Hinde. He is a member of NIAS, and a senior engineer at Perkins Engines Ltd. The work of removal of these has been only possible by use of his Unimog and its indispensable crane.

1. Easton, Amos & Anderson centrifugal pump

This was kindly donated by Mr. Robin Gowler, of Mount Pleasant Farm, near Chatteris. It is an Appold patent 12 inch vertical spindle pump dating from about 1870. It was belt-driven, originally by a traction engine, and latterly by a Blackstone diesel engine. It was last used in about 1970, and had become buried in the ground. Removal was not easy. It proved impossible to excavate the inlet pipe because it had solidified in the ground, and so it had to be sawn off. Following shot blasting and painting by Peterborough Blasting, it has been installed on a concrete plinth outside the Mirrlees Engine House.

2. Fenland Lighter.

In December 2010, the Engineer purchased at the auction of the contents of Collectors World, Downham Market, the two remaining sections of the fenland lighter Black Prince. It is believed to date from around 1860 or earlier. This had been sunk in Roswell Pits, Ely in the 1920s. In the early 1970s, it was rescued by a team led by John Wilson. They spent many hours over a long period, including building a dam around it before lifting. It was then taken to Cheddars Lane Pumping Station, Cambridge in 1974, but parts became rotten when it



Stretham Engine House, near Ely

was left to dry in the open. It was later scheduled for burning, but Eric St. John - Foti rescued it and moved those parts capable of preservation to his museum at Downham Market. Whilst it is believed that others may be sunk at Roswell Pits and possibly elsewhere, this is the only remaining example traced as existing above water. It has now been moved to a workshop near Cambridge for restoration as far as possible before installation at Stretham. This will probably be a long task.

Email Problems

Our website hosting service had a makeover at the end of last year. When they made changes their email service, for some unexplained reason, the automatic forwarding and deletion of some emails stopped, and in some cases mail was refused. This has meant a few didn't get delivered in January, February and March, whilst most others did? (and in some cases twice!?) My apologies. The first problems I have had in over five years with that company. Thanks to those who contacted me to report problems.

PT

Meetings at the Charing Cross Centre

A Film Night - 3rd February

The speaker who had agreed to come to this meeting was unable to do so as his wife had injured herself. We hope she has recovered fully. He has promised to come later in the year.

Instead we enjoyed a number of films with a transport theme, beginning with the amusing short, London to Brighton in Four Minutes. Back on home ground brought John Betjeman travelling on a diesel multiple unit from Lynn to Hunstanton. He alighted at Wolferton and at Snettisham and took the viewer round each station.

Wolferton was used by the Royal Family when travelling to and from Sandringham, and the scenery at Snettisham was "like Scotland and Surrey mixed." It was then possible to enjoy a driver's eye view of the line ahead, if you sat in the front compartment.

From a Norfolk branch line to the West Coast Main Line, and Night Mail, a film made by the G.P.O. in 1936. Picking up mailbags from the lineside apparatus, sorting letters and packets as the train sped through the night, arriving at Glasgow the next morning. The rhythm of the train was captured in W.H.Auden's poem." This is the Night Mail crossing the border, Bringing the cheque and the postal order"

Air Post, another Post Office film, showed the airmail service from London to the Continent and to Batavia and Cape Town. Shots of Imperial Airways, aircraft at Croydon Airport, well before the days of Heathrow. There were also Air Mail pillar boxes in London. painted blue.

From letters to telephones, in What's On Today we saw the work of Post Office engineers in 1938 building a telephone exchange at Laisterdyke.

A very varied programme, and we are grateful to Philip for arranging this.

The Great Blowe, by Mark Stimpson 3rd March

Mark Stimpson began by saying that about twenty years ago he was asked to research a particular regiment, and in the course of his research he found a relevant document in the British Library. The Great Blowe was the name given to a riot which took place in Norwich on 24th April 1648, a period described as the Second Civil War, when no side had the upper hand after the Battle of Naseby in 1645. The tide seemed to turn in favour of Charles1; after six years of Cromwell and the Commonwealth people wanted their king back.

In 1647 John Utting was elected Mayor of Norwich. He was a Royalist and upset the Puritans. On 18th June 1648 a petition was sent to the House of Commons complaining that Utting dealt with "malignants", or Royalists. Three days later the Serjeant at Arms evicted Utting from Norwich. Feelings were growing, and by Sunday night an armed guard were at his home. Troops under the command of Colonel Fleetwood were sent from Dereham to Norwich, and converged on the Committee House, in what is now Bethel Street. Three troops of horse entered the city by different gates. (A troop of horse comprises 60-80men, plus officers.)

The troop of horse charged the rioters, and there were many casualties, Heavy rain extinguished the slow match, a type of rope used as a portable fire for igniting gunpowder. The Committee House had 96 barrels of gunpowder in store; the whole place was razed, and windows in neighbouring churches, St Peter Mancroft and St Stephens, were smashed. John Utting was fined £500 and sentenced to six months in the Fleet prison.

The King Street Community Voices Project, by Natasha Harlow. - 7th April.

Natasha is Manager of the King S C. V. Project. Her background is in archaeology and British pre-history.

The project is a two year Heritage Lottery funded scheme based at Dragon Hall, King Street. The timescale is “within living memory”, and the area in question consists of King Street, Bracondale and Carrow, bounded by the river, and as far as Upper King Street and Tombland.

The industries in the area were breweries textiles, and shoes. This part of Norwich has been settled for 1000 years, There is a strong sense of identity; businesses, shops, pubs and music centres, Life in the area is being recorded by audio interviews, video projects, photography, reminiscences, art, archives, and events. It involves a team of volunteers to interview and film participants, with exciting new displays events and tours at Dragon Hall.

Volunteers are trained to interview and record; for guide tours and walks; and a programme of workshops with Project Oral History. All this helps to strengthen local identity, and as an example, volunteers successfully recorded over 40 hours of audio interviews with more than 25 participants.

Natasha turned to photographs: Dragon Hall, Gothic Works nearby and a view along King Street towards Bracondale. Contrasting views of Dragon Hall showed the place derelict and boarded-up, and a current view from the river with its glass gallery built about six years ago. Next came Morgans brewery hall and laboratory in 1961 and the coppers and fermenting vessels when Watney owned the site. In an audio recording Gwen, who started in the laboratory in 1953, recalled “*There were eight people there when I left. The brewery was bombed in World War2, and rebuilt in 1947. We would analyze all the raw materials; barley malt, hops and check the moisture content. We also checked competitors’ beers; there was an unwritten agreement between the breweries to tell each other of the strength of their beers. I also obtained yeast from Youngs Crawshay & Youngs. The instruments we used included saccharometers and an alcoholometer.*” The brewery was demolished by Finchams in 1989. The flats on the site have names such as Maltsters Yard, Fuggles Yard and Polypin Yard; this last is an Adnams trade name.

In the next recording played to us Joe Bates who worked at Boulton & Paul from 1941 to 1981 recalled “*In the 1930s some men went from B & P Norwich to Wolverhampton. My uncle William Drury, a go-ahead experimental engineer eventually went to the U.S.A. and worked for NASA. He was born in Burleigh Street, Norwich.*” Burleigh Street was one of those streets of terraced houses between Ber Street and King Street. The area was redeveloped in the early 1960s, and the name lives on in Burleigh Tower on the Heartsease Estate. The original plan was for several tower blocks in the area but only Normandie Tower was built.

The Novi Sad footbridge, designed by Andy Gibbs, an architect who worked on local projects is the modern face of the area. Natasha's photographs of an earlier era included Mr. Brighton, the butcher at Swatmans, next to Dragon Hall; Plumstead's, with an engineering shop and a welding shop, and Cowles, coachbuilders at St Julian's Works, a reference to St Julian Street, another highway which vanished in the 1960s. King Street is still in process of regeneration today, with media and creative arts and music, leisure and heritage. As for the future of the Community Voices Project, it is planned to publish some of the records and images in a boxed DVD, and to expand the archive project. To get people involved, they are invited to relate their memories of King Street; to become a volunteer, and to enter a photographic competition. N.I.A.S. also contributed to an exhibition of photographs and ephemera from the area. It drew a large number of people and proved to be good publicity.

At the end of the evening Philip Tolley gave a vote of thanks to Natasha for her enlightening talk and display. We wish the project well.

Exhibition at Dragon Hall

An exhibition on just one street, albeit King Street in Norwich.

We were asked to provide a small display on the industries of King Street, as part of a larger exhibition on the street. It seemed to grow until we were asked to fill an area of about 10 sq. metres. Philip set to work, and with material from his collection, and from Derek Manning and James Oxley-Brennan a display was put together with help from Mary and Ferrers covering 15 sq. metres.

The final display covered the changing street, moving pubs, the development of the motor car servicing industries, the breweries and maltings not to mention mills, mustard, iron works and shoes.

About 40 people came to a lunchtime talk given by Philip and Mary. After the talk a useful exchange of information took place.

Putting material together like this once again shows how much we have recorded over the past 40 years.



Plumstead's Acetylene store, a purpose built structure. on King Street.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Suffolk Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter No.112, February 2011

The Easterling; Journal of the East Anglian Waterways Association, Vol.8 no.19, February 2011.

Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service Annual Review 2010

Mystery Vehicle

The local farmer at Church Farm, Hethersett has recently discovered an unusual three wheeled “trailer” in the back of a cart shed. First impressions are a complicated “chicken house” on wheels but this is not the case.

Brief description: Body about 6’ 0” long x 3’ 3” wide 3’ 0” high with low pitched pent roof, both slopes hinged at the ridge, and numerous small doors arranged in the back and sides. Mounted on three wheels, the rears ones about twice the size of the front leaving the superstructure about 2’ 6” off the ground. There is a very plain drawbar not suitable for horses.

There is a tank a the rear off side, inside the structure, about 4’ x 2’ x 1’ 4” high (about 60 gallons) with a draw off tapping, I didn’t find a filler point. There are access doors, floors and compartments filling the rest of the space. The compartments under the roof contain old plough points.

The wheels and axle are Boulton & Paul design so I first attributed it all to them, circa 1880. The large wheels are cast iron with a steel tyre sweated on. The complete lack of paint leads me to change my mind, the wheels etc. having been “bought in” and the rest by the local agricultural engineers Harveys of Hethersett (very able in that period). The brake cannot be operated from on the vehicle.

It was difficult to take photos in the store where it has been placed.



Second thoughts have redated and renamed it as a maintenance trailer for an “oil engined” agricultural tractor about 1920. working possibly at home and away , hence the fuel tank. There is a secret inside latch that allows access to the fuel tank.



So do you know what is it? Any better guesses? If anybody has experience or knowledge of similar vehicles I would be pleased to hear from them. roy@royhowland.Orangehome.co.uk Tel 01603 811139

Coffee after Meetings

We have now started to have coffee and biscuits after our monthly speaker. This provides an opportunity to socialise and catch up on all the business we seem to have, as well as have informal discussion with our speakers. It has been good to see how many members have joined in. A big thank you to Mary for sorting this out each month, and Gloria for helping with the tidy up afterwards.

East of England Regional Industrial Archaeology Conference

Another EERIAC meeting is approaching, this year hosted by NIAS, and to be held in Fakenham. The meeting follows the usual programme of two talks in the morning, followed by a very short AGM. Mike Bridges, the first speaker, is Curator of Fakenham Gas Museum and will also be showing us round the museum in the afternoon. He is followed by Adrian Vaughan who has written very extensively on local history, but whose particular interest is in railways and especially the local M&GN line.

After time out for lunch and for viewing displays, there will be a walk round the town led by Jim Baldwin who worked in the local printing industry and has also written books on Fakenham in the first 30 years of the 20th century. Jim has also been involved with Fakenham Local History Society for many years. The walk will end at the museum, the only surviving example of a town gasworks in England and Wales. The museum also has displays on local history.

EERIAC was started by David Alderton, co-author of the Batsford Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of East Anglia.

The IA societies of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire take it in turns to host the conference. The present organising committee consists of David and Anne Alderton (now living in Essex but having no plans to start an Essex IAS!), Steve Worsley (Suffolk), Ken Alger (Cams.), and myself. For many years Brenda Taylor organised the Norfolk meetings and was also treasurer, but after her death, I took on the NIAS role and Anne is now the treasurer. The committee meets once a year at the Little Chef at the junction of the A14 and A140 for a leisurely discussion over coffee.

I wish now I had been to more of the previous meetings as the few I have attended have been very enjoyable and informative. This is the twenty-first EERIAC meeting and hopefully it will compare favourably with past conferences.

Carol Haines

Quick Notes

The next meeting of the AYLSHAM NAVIGATION PROJECT 2012 will take place at Burgh Reading Room at 7.30pm on 30th June 2011. The website <http://www.eastinvolve.net/aylsham-navigation> is regularly updated with new files, photographs and blogs.

Stu Wilson

The Annual General Meeting of EAST ANGLIAN WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION is to be held on Sunday 8 May. In the morning at The Museum of the Broads, Stalham members will have the opportunity to visit the museum, take a trip on the Victorian steam boat "Falcon" and spend money at a boat jumble sale. Followed by a carvery luncheon at the Sutton Staithe Hotel in Stalham. Then a short formal AGM at the hotel, with a presentation on the North Walsham and Dilham Canal afterwards, setting out achievements and outlining plans and aims for the future.

It is then hoped the North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust will be able to arrange a tour of the main areas where the working parties have been active - Honing Lock and pound, Honing Staithe Cut, Briggate, Ebridge Lock, Bacton Wood Lock and possibly the breach site upstream of the lock, and even as far upstream as the former Wherry Inn.

Ivan Cane

NIAS DIARY 2011

Meetings marked thus * are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. at the Charing Cross Centre, St John Maddermarket, Norwich, NR2 1DN

Please check for changes by looking at our website, especially in bad weather.

Following the meeting coffee and biscuits and a chance to muddle.

*Thursday 5th May

The Newlyn Riots. by Chris Unsworth

The 1896 Riots by local Cornish fishermen to protect their trade from other fishing fleets including that of Lowestoft.

*Thursday 2nd June

Finding and saving Internet Sources of Information, by Philip Tolley.

Where did you get that map? How did you find that photograph?

How did you get a copy of that? Answers to these and other questions the speaker is asked. A evening of sources, tips and techniques. Your contributions of favourite tips welcome.

Saturday 11th June

EERIAC 2011 - Fakenham. Full details and booking form with this newsletter.

Thursday 7th July;

An afternoon in Dereham. Meet 2.30 at the Church porch.

A guided walk around the town. About 3 hours depending on length of tea break. Afterwards those who wish can join us for a meal at the Romany Rye, Church Street (formerly Phoenix Hotel now a J D Wetherspoons).

*Thursday 1st September

Free Beer, Free Fags - a life as a brewery representative by Peter Webb.

Peter has worked for a number of breweries including Bass, Whitbread, Wolf and Buffy's. He has seen the pub trade change over his working life. He visits us to tell some of his tales from the bar.

Gunton Sawmill:

The sawmill will be open to visitors on the following Sundays from 2pm to 5pm.

April 24th May 22nd June 26th July 24th August 28th September 25th.

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Copy for August newsletter to Editor by 31st July

To be added to our e-mail mailing list please send an e-mail to: mailme@norfolkia.org.uk If there are short notice meetings added or changes due to weather &etc. be among the first to find out by e-mail.

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