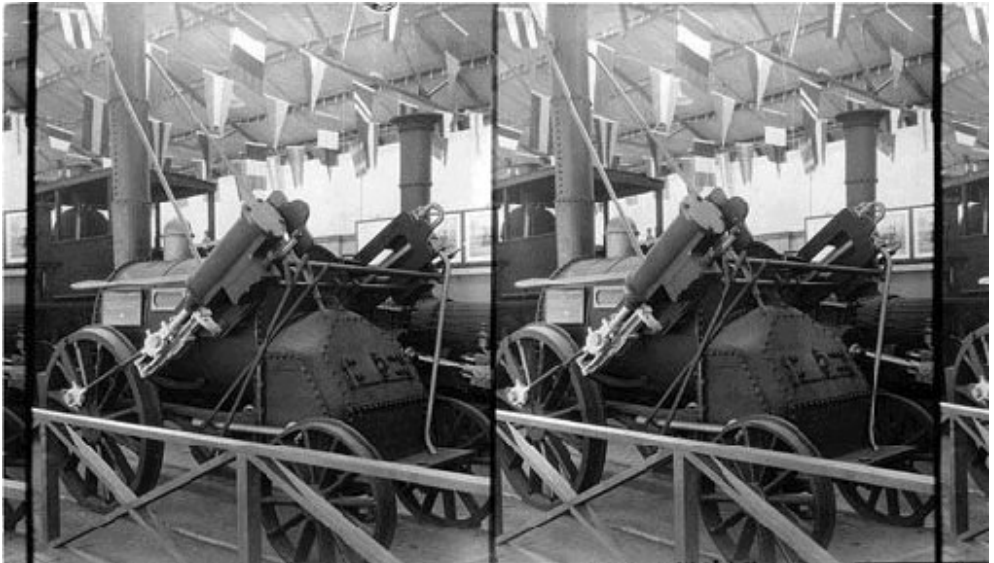
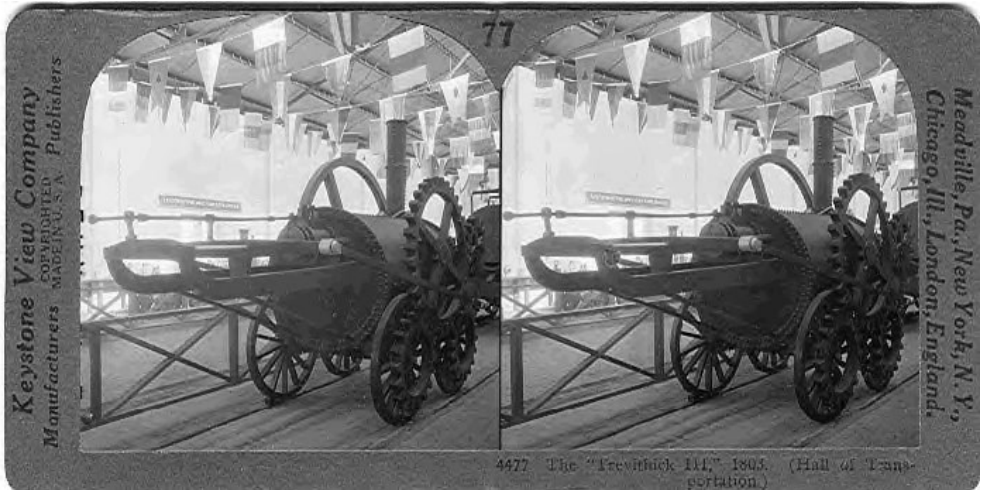
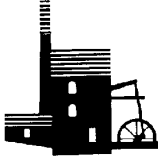


THE TREVITHICK SOCIETY



Mystery photographs of replica locomotives appear on the internet (see page 11).

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

As my first twelve months as Chairman draw to a close, I believe the Society can look back on a year in which it has taken a more public stake in Cornwall's industrial archaeology. A great deal of what has been achieved must be attributed to the accumulating effect of the bicentenary celebrations of Richard Trevithick's various inventions.

The progress that has been made by the Society during the year could not have been achieved without a great deal of work by its officers. For those who may not realise it, the present pivot around which this Society spins is its Vice Chairman, Kingsley Rickard. His 'chat-line' telephone is always available except when he is out on the Society's business.

Pete Joseph, our curator and web-master has greatly extended the international face of the Society and brought its ever-increasing inventory of artefacts up to an excellent standard. He regularly updates both the website and inventory for all to see.

I like to think that our members now feel much closer to the IA activities that are undertaken in Cornwall. While a great deal of this must be attributed to the ever-widening range of information contained on the web site, there is also the direct contact that our membership secretary, Sue Maunder, has made with individual members. This has taken a great deal of time but has brought some very interesting and rewarding links that I am sure will build a stronger Society in the future.

As one Trevithick celebration after another rolls by we become increasingly aware that Capt'n Dick is at last receiving the recognition that had so long eluded him. Official recognition has come in the form of the Royal Mint's £2.00 coin for this year. Beautifully executed, it is selling well and will provide Cornwall and Trevithick with the industrial identification that they so richly deserve.

Camborne's Trevithick Day has always been a successful event. It has been run in an orderly manner over many years for the good of Cornwall and the enjoyment of thousands. This year's show was not the disaster predicted by some because of the lack of a steam parade. Credit must go to the Trevithick Day Committee who worked so hard to produce an attractive event. However, it was clear from the comments we heard, that people really wanted to see the steam parade, and we cannot expect them to support the event unless that issue is resolved in future years.

The Society welcomed two Japanese gentlemen to Trevithick Day. They are making us a very generous gift. The Trevithick link to Japan is explained elsewhere in this newsletter but their gift does highlight the international nature of the work we do.

Although the details are complicated at present, there are high hopes that the coming year will see substantial moves towards procuring a permanent home for the Society where it may have an opportunity to share more of its considerable Cornish IA collection with the public. Whatever happens, the coming year is going to be a busy one.

P.M. Hosken

EDITORIAL

I must apologise for the considerable delay in sending out the last newsletter. To save on the cost of a second posting, it was decided that the 2004-5 Programme and the particulars of the AGM should accompany that newsletter. Finalising the programme took longer than expected, hence the delay.

Due to a lack of space in this issue, a book review of Bob Acton's *Around Land's End* and a second review of *The Ball Clays of Devon and Dorset* will appear in the next Newsletter.

Copy date for next issue is August 12th, 2004

Colin French

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I wish to comment on the debate about Lynn Willies' review of Bridget Howard's *Mr. Lean and the Engine Reporters*. I feel that neither Bridget Howard in her reply (Journal of the Trevithick Society (30) 2003, pp. 103-4), nor Bryan Earl in his letter (Newsletter of the Trevithick Society (123) January 2004, pp. 3-4) has adequately answered the point raised by Lynn Willies, which is essentially one of the use of historical evidence. Like Lynn Willies, when I read the book I was concerned that the argument was too heavily based on circumstantial evidence. This is particularly true of the contention that Joel Lean could not have originated the Engine Reporters at the age of 62. But no evidence as to the state of Joel Lean's health is presented and it is defended solely on the basis of generalities about the life expectancy of Cornish mine workers in the 18th century. This is, I feel, inadequate. Statistical averages do not enable you to make statements about a particular member of the population. To take an example, if the average speed of all vehicles on the roads in Britain at this instant is 35mph, this does not justify me saying that the speed of the bus I am currently travelling in, is 35mph! Indeed, the fact that Joel Lean started the Engine Reporters at the age of 62 could be used as evidence to say he was still active and in good health. There are well known examples of 18th century persons who did live active lives well beyond this age, John Wesley for example, not a miner of course but he hardly lived a pampered and sedentary life. Bridget Howard would have been justified in raising this as a speculation, but in the absence of further evidence should have been left at that, not used as the basis for an extended argument.

I am also concerned about the parochialism evident in both Bridget Howard's reply and Bryan Earl's letter. They seem to be suggesting that Cornish people should stick to Cornwall, Peak District people to the Peak District, etc. This

hardly seems the correct way to advance historical understanding. Rather the opposite in fact. For the record, I do not live in Cornwall, I have no Cornish ancestry and my major topic as an industrial historian is the cotton industry (I have never worked in a cotton mill). However, I think that the correct use of historical evidence is a universal, not something which changes when you start studying mining or move west of the River Tamar.

Roger N. Holden.

35 Victoria Road,
Stockport,
Cheshire.
SK1 4AT.

Dear Editor,

I would not normally bother you with a rejoinder - an author is entitled to her reply. But Bridget Howard, in the recent issue of the Journal (2003, Vol. 20 pp.103-4) is giving a misleading impression that I thought her work worthless. It is, in fact, a most useful contribution to our knowledge and I implied as much - after several readings of it.

She also seems to consider specialist knowledge of another area (Derbyshire is cited) is not sufficient to permit valid comment on Cornish concerns. For a worthy precedent I refer her to William Pryce's view (1778 p143) on the value of what denizens of Derbyshire can offer!

Finally I will refer her to the same issue of the Trevithick Journal (2003, 20 pp. 48-53) as her reply is made, to Peter Stokes' article on Trevithick and his continuing ingenuity at around age sixty. Of course he was exceptional, but was he really the only Cornishman of his time and age who retained a little of his vigour. Could we locate just one other Cornishman, perhaps one aware of the usefulness of comparing engine performances and capable, for instance, of visiting a few mines and stringing a few figures together and issuing them? I do believe it to have been possible and, on the available evidence, Lean may well have been such a man. Bridget believes (or at least writes) this to be impossible.

Lynn Willies,
174 Dale Road,
Matlock Bath,
Derbyshire.
DE4 3PS

In 1832 Richard Trevithick was invited to Dartford by John Hall, the founder of Messrs J. & E. Hall Ltd, to carry out some

**GRAVE CONCERN – WHERE
EXACTLY IS THE LAST RESTING
PLACE OF RICHARD
TREVITHICK?**

experiments associated with ‘... the engine of a vessel lately built.’ It is generally supposed that Trevithick was engaged with the development of a reaction turbine. The experimental work he conducted in Dartford cost John Hall £1,200. Trevithick was probably based at Dartford for about a year, during which time he lived at the Bull Hotel (now the Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel) in the High Street. He died in his room on the morning of 22 April 1833 following an illness which had confined him to his bed for the previous week.

It is known that Richard Trevithick was buried in the Upper Burial Ground, now known as St Edmund’s Pleasance, on 26 April 1833. The exact location of his grave, however, is not known since no head stone was set up due to the fact that he was penniless at the time of his death. Since that time there has been much speculation as to his last resting place. Much of the debate surrounding the matter was carried out through letters to the editor of one of the local newspapers. The Local Studies section of Dartford Library has a file of these press cuttings and much of the following discussion has been the result of a comparison of these.

The earliest press cutting relating to the matter is 11 October 1890 (anonymous newspaper) consisting of a letter to the editor from W.A. Chandler:

‘There are probably but few persons residing in Dartford at the present time who are aware that in the old burial-ground are

interred the remains of Richard Trevithick [sic], the inventor of the railway locomotive. This is not surprising, for on the writer visiting the ground during the past summer, in company with an old Dartfordian who pointed the spot out to him, he was astonished to find there was no stone erected to the memory of the great inventor, nor even a mound to indicate the place of interment, the graves having been levelled many years since.’

On 6 December 1901, the Director of J. & E. Hall’s, Everard Hesketh, wrote a letter to a Mr Armstrong which was subsequently published in the *West Kent Advertiser*:

‘Dear Sir, in view of your letter to the *West Kent Advertiser*, you will be interested to see the enclosed. It is a photo of a memorial brass I am having made to erect, with the Vicar’s sanction, in Dartford parish church. Some time ago I took steps to ascertain if possible which was Trevithick’s grave, and two old inhabitants undertook to show me. I went with them to the old church-yard, and one took me to the south-west corner, and showed me the actual grave he said, and the other to within, he said, a few feet of the exact spot where a memorial stone used to be. The only available evidence being so conflicting, there remained nothing to do but to put a commemoration in the parish church...’

On 2 January 1902, local flour mill owner, Sidney Keyes, wrote a letter to the editor of the *West Kent Advertiser* which included the following paragraph:

‘Dunkin in his “History of Dartford” says [Trevithick] was buried in the upper church-yard on 26th April 1833, on the south side of the grave of Henry Pilcher, and, as this history was published in 1844, this location would probably be correct, as more people would then be living who knew.’

In fact, John Dunkin also mentioned that:

‘a subscription was commenced to erect a cast iron monument over his remains, sufficiently elevated to be seen by passers by, but the funds raised were inadequate.’

At about the same time in 1902, someone signing themselves as ‘TRE POL PEN’ wrote to the editor of the *West Kent Advertiser* to complain that Trevithick had

been described as dying a 'pauper' when he had actually left 'a gold watch (worth about 30 guineas) and other articles to pay for the debts he incurred whilst in illness. At the foot of the letter, the writer added:

'P.S. There appears to have been of late a great deal of mystery about the spot where Mr Trevithick was interred. I know one inhabitant in this town who was at Mr Trevithick's funeral.'

It is possible that the writer of this letter was a Dartford printer named T.C. Read who, the following year, is found using another Cornish *nom-de-plume* and citing evidence from an acquaintance who was at Trevithick's funeral (see below).

On 7 January 1902, Thomas Aldous, living in Faversham, wrote to the editor of the *West Kent Advertiser*:

'...Mr Keyes in his letter quotes Dunkin's "History of Dartford", saying that Trevithick was buried on the south side of H. Pilcher. Now, he never said anything about the stone that marked Trevithick's grave. I spoke to Mr T. Buckland, the shoe-maker that died last week. We used to go to school together. Speaking about Trevithick's grave, he said it was near the north gate, which was correct; and there was a small head-stone about 2ft high. I expect, being so small, it was overlooked. I used to be taken through the old burial ground by my parents in the latter end of the 30ties, and I can swear to the situation. Also one of my fellow-tradesmen, who died about four years since, in his 88th year, remembered him at the factory, and told me he was taken from that room next Mr Lamden's to his grave. Now that the place is known, let someone start a fund to raise a monument to the greatest engineer of the 19th century. I shall be pleased to point out the spot to anyone when I come to Dartford.'

At some point in 1903, a letter was published in an anonymous newspaper (presumably the *West Kent Advertiser*) quoting from the *Cornish Telegraph* of 19 August where Peter Penn had in turn quoted from a letter from

'Tregothnan' (revealed to be Mr T.C. Read, a printer, of Dartford):

'...Mr J. Snowden, late chief draughtsman of machinery at Messrs Hall's engineering works, Dartford, was much interested in the paragraph which appeared in your paper, as he was present when Trevithick was borne to his grave, and had good reason to be grateful to the inventor, as it was through his influence that he secured a situation at the Dartford Iron Works...'

Also published with this letter was T.C. Read's plan showing the location of Trevithick's grave which had been given by James Snowden. This located the grave at 14 feet from the south wall and 81 feet 6 inches from the east wall.

However, Read's claims led to an acrimonious exchange of letters in the *West Kent Advertiser*:

From Thomas Aldous, 3 September 1903: 'Sir, I was very much surprised to see where someone has placed Trevithick's grave. I, as an old Dartfordian, say it is not there at all; but not far from the north gate. I have seen the head-stone recording the fact many times as a boy, and those facts are more certain in aged folks' memory than what happened six months ago. I asked an old Dartfordian who has lately passed away, Mr T.W. Buckland, shoe-maker, if he knew where Trevithick was buried. He said not far from the north gate. I told Mr Hesketh. One of his employees said it was next Pilcher's grave, as he wished to be buried there. I at once drew Mr Hesketh's attention to the fact. Pilcher did not die till 1838, that was five years after Trevithick's death. I then took Mr Hesketh to the spot where Trevithick's remains lie. I have no doubt the head-stone would be found for the ground was depressed just there, and most likely just thrown down, and covered with earth, to bring the ground up level. It would not cost a great deal to trench about the spot to find it. What makes me so certain, I remember always looking over the right shoulder as I passed through the gate to take a last look at it.'

From T.C. Read, 14 September 1903: 'In your last issue there appeared a letter from

Mr Aldous pointing out his spot where Trevithick was buried. All due respect to him for taking an interest in the matter, but, for my own part, I cannot accept his position as correct. It is quite right that Mr Pilcher died five years after the inventor, but Pilcher was buried by the side of Trevithick, not vice versa. Dunkin, in his "History of Dartford" says Trevithick was buried in the upper church-yard on the 26th April, 1833, on the south side of the grave of Henry Pilcher, and, as this history was published in 1844, this location would probably be correct, as more people would then be living who knew. By saying Trevithick was buried on the south side of Henry Pilcher, I take it for granted that it was printed in that form so as to enable anyone to find the spot without too much trouble. What is the use of history if not followed up?

From Thomas Aldous, 22 September 1903: 'In answer to Mr Read, I will give a few facts for him to think over, and explain away if he can. First, my father followed Trevithick to his grave. How comes it he went so near the north gate to find it? How comes it that the late T. Buckland when I asked him if he knew where Trevithick was buried, said "What the old schemer, as he was called? – don't you?" I said I was too young for that. He said, "Near the north gate." I said "Right, for I heard father say to my mother, 'the man that lies there will be thought something of yet.'" When a man knows it is useless to persuade him he is wrong. He must be wanting in common sense to try to do so. I know the man that helped to compile Dunkin's "History of Dartford." He told me there was no stone to Trevithick's memory; but I told him there was. I had seen it often, towards the north gate. ... It appears to me that there is being some hopes of a monument to Trevithick's memory being raised – to put it near Pilcher's grave, as it would be seen from the main road. They forget that to put it near the north gate, where he lies, it can be seen from the railway carriages on the line at the station. If it is put there I will be pleased to give towards it – not else.'

From Thomas Aldous, 6 October 1903: 'There was one portion of Mr Read's letter I forgot to answer. That was Mr Pilcher

wishing to be buried next Trevithick. I, being a good-sized lad then, remember the deed he committed, which by the majority of people is called temporary insanity. I, as one of that majority, believe it to be so, for he died by his own hand at Mr Martin's, the basket-maker's, where he was lodging. ... I think that proves he was utterly regardless about his grave. I think I have now proved conclusively that he lies near the north gate. If spared to visit my native place again, I will measure from the north wall distance, and from the north gate the other way, and give true position of it...'

From T.C. Read, 12 October 1903: 'I am sorry to say that I disagree with Mr Aldous as regards Trevithick's grave. Now, I will say a few words in refutation of Mr Aldous. I am taking my position from a living and well-known inhabitant, who was present when Trevithick was borne to the grave, and also Pilcher. Not only am I taking it from this old resident, but from Dunkin's "History of Dartford." Now, in my opinion, this is more acceptable than what Mr Aldous has given me. How can I accept his position when it was ignored by people who were then living? This old resident said to me, "There never was a stone placed in the old burial ground to mark the spot." That coincides with Dunkin's history. Mr Aldous said he knew the man who helped to compile "Dunkin's History of Dartford" and that he also told this gentleman there was a stone marking the spot, which this man refuted. Now, Mr Aldous, how comes it that your evidence was not taken when this history was compiled? If men would not accept it then, how do you think people are going to believe in it now? By your own words, in one of your former letters when you visited the burial ground, in company with another old man, you said he pointed out the south wall? That is quite correct with my position. I think you will find that the man who helped to compile Dunkin's history is still living, and that his place of abode is Lowfield Street. If Mr Aldous read my letter correctly, he would find that I said Pilcher "was buried by the side of Trevithick" (not "wishing to be buried beside him"), which I still maintain is right. Here are a few names of the mechanics who acted as bearers at the interment of the inventor: - James Osborne,

John Ashworth, Underwood, Lawrence, and Paull. Surely, Mr Aldous, some of these men must have been living when this history was got up, and their evidence taken thereon. I do not propose to write any more letters after this, but Mr Aldous is quite at liberty to reply – nor shall I have the slightest ill-feeling against him. ...'

From Thomas Aldous, 21 October 1903: 'In answer to Mr Read, he has not explained away the fact of my father, who followed Trevithick to his grave, going to near the north gate to find it, if, as your old resident says, he was buried by the side of Pilcher; also T. Buckland saying it was near the north gate, also my seeing head-stone there. I have not forgotten what I have written. I wrote to Mr Hesketh, telling him I would point out the spot in the burial ground if he would meet me there, which he did; but he brought one of his employees who had been hoaxed by another old resident. I let him speak first. He told Mr Hesketh that Trevithick wished to be buried next Pilcher. I pointed out to Mr Hesketh it could not be, for Pilcher did not die till five years after Trevithick. Mr Read, in one of your letters, you refer to that statement, by saying it was vice versa. Of course, that meant Pilcher wished to be buried next Trevithick. I remembered that Pilcher was temporarily insane, so that theory does not do. If I think of it next time at Dartford I will measure from the north wall and gate, the real place of Trevithick's grave ...'

With this letter the correspondence wisely ended.

On 10 November 1914, Everard Hesketh gave a lecture on 'The Life of Richard Trevithick' to the Dartford District Antiquarian Society. The text of this lecture was published in volume one of the Society's 'Transactions' (which actually appeared in 1931).

In his lecture, Hesketh said the following:

'The grave is in the old churchyard on East Hill, and according to Dunkin's "History of Dartford," is the one on the south side of Henry Pilcher's grave. Many years ago an effort was made to get conclusive evidence on this point. Two old men, Aldous and Ashworth, who were

present at the funeral, undertook to show me the grave. They took me to different spots, however. As Dunkin's "History of Dartford" was written only eleven years after the funeral, there is every reason to believe it to be correct.'

This raises several points. First of all, this meeting at the burial ground is presumably the occasion to which Aldous refers in his letter of 21 October 1903 (and also that of 3 September 1903). Aldous never claimed to have been present at the burial so Hesketh was wrong on that point. It is likely that the Ashworth referred to here is the 'John Ashworth' mentioned by Read, in his letter of 12 October 1903, as being a bearer at the funeral. However, if Ashworth was present at the funeral then Aldous seems ignorant of this fact, since he only refers to him as one of Hesketh's employees 'who had been hoaxed by an old resident'.

Another important point is that when Hesketh says that the two men pointed out two different spots, we should note that he does not say that Ashworth pointed out the area to the south of Henry Pilcher's grave. This is particularly surprising since Aldous claimed (in his letter of 21 October 1903) that the other man had indeed referred to Pilcher when pointing out Trevithick's grave. This omission is very strange since Hesketh obviously favours Dunkin's suggestion and could easily have used Ashworth's suggested location as corroborative evidence. Perhaps, since he believed both men to have been present at the funeral (incorrectly in Aldous' case), he did not like to openly favour one 'eyewitness' over the other or, more to the point, actively denounce one of them in public.

As if matters were not complicated enough already, a letter from William Armstrong to the editor of the *West Kent Advertiser*, published on 10 July 1925 said:

'Mr Everard Hesketh offered a sum of money to any survivor at his funeral, who could point out his grave in the old burial ground, East Hill, in order that a monument could be erected. Two survivors – one Mr James Snowden, I believe – differed as to the spot.'

Armstrong is getting confused here when he tentatively suggests James Snowden. He is obviously aware of Snowden, who was first mentioned by T.C. Read in the letter quoted in the *Cornish Telegraph*, but is confusing him with Aldous and Ashworth. More important is the revelation that Hesketh was offering money to potential witnesses, perhaps bringing into doubt the testimonies which he received.

In January 1933 an anonymous local paper published a letter to the editor from C.W. Morecroft in which he referred to the reference to Henry Pilcher in Dunkin's *History of Dartford* and said:

'In view of this information it should not be difficult to ascertain the position of Trevithick's grave providing, of course, that the name on Pilcher's gravestone is still legible. I would add that the spot was pointed out to me more than 40 years ago by the late Mr William Chandler, who worked in Dunkin and Son's printing office for very many years. I did not make a sufficiently strong mental note of the exact place at the time, so could not point it out now. I have only just noticed the references in Dunkin's History and have not yet been able to visit the old burying ground to test their usefulness.'

Unfortunately we do not know if this was ever done. The gravestones were all lifted and placed around the walls of the burial ground in the 1960s or 1970s and some appear to have been broken up to make 'crazy paving'. They are all very worn and so are of no use now. It should be noted that the William Chandler mentioned here is the author of the 1890 newspaper piece which is mentioned at the beginning.

In 1935 Everard Hesketh wrote a history of his company entitled *J. & E. Hall Ltd 1785-1935*. On page 14 he talks about the precautions which were taken at the time of Trevithick's burial:

'It is interesting to learn of the special steps which were taken in those days to defeat the body-snatchers. Thomas Aldous, who was at the works from 1843 to 1879, told the author that his father who was one of Hall's workmen at the funeral, described

the coffin as being fitted with two long stout pieces of timber placed at right angles to the coffin above and two pieces below: these were strongly bolted together so as to clamp the coffin between them, and as a further precaution the nuts of the bolts were under the bottom timbers so could not be disturbed from above. It is obvious that to get the body out the whole structure must be removed necessitating the excavation of an enormous hole.'

This story may be true but it has come from the same Thomas Aldous, quoting his father, who also said that the grave was near the north gate, again quoting his father, despite published evidence from just 11 years after the burial.

In 1931, Thomas C. Read drew together much of his research and produced a booklet entitled *Memoir of Richard Trevithick and his inventions*. On page 11, under the heading 'Trevithick's Grave', he gives the following:

'Some 30 years ago the printer of this little book [i.e. Read himself] visited the old burial ground of St Edmund, in company with Mr J. Snowden, late chief draughtsman of machinery at Messrs Hall's Engineering Works, Dartford. Mr Snowden claimed to being present at the funeral, and, without any hesitation, proceeded to the spot and placed two sticks cross-ways, and exclaimed: "Here is his body!" The measurements are as follows: - South Wall, 14ft; East Wall, 8ft 6in.'

In the 1931 booklet, Read provides a plan almost identical to the one published with the *Cornish Telegraph* letter in 1903. In the accompanying caption he says:

'These measurements were taken by Mr J. Snowden, in company with Mr T.C. Read and Mr G. Funge, between the years 1900-1.'

If we look more closely at James Snowden, we find that Read says in the acknowledgements to his booklet that:

'The late Mr James Snowden informed me that it was through the influence of the inventor that he obtained a situation at

Hall's Engineering Works, Dartford.'

However, Everard Hesketh refers in the preface to his 1935 book on Hall's to:

'The late Mr James Snowden who served his time here in 1837 and was Chief Designer for many years till he left in 1880.'

The obituary for James Snowden in the *West Kent Advertiser* reveals that he died in April 1906 aged 84. Assuming that this is not a misprint for 94, this means that he must have been born c.1822 and was therefore c.11 years old in 1833 when Trevithick died. Would an 11 year old boy have been taken on at Hall's in 1833 (even with the encouragement of Trevithick)? Also, when Hesketh says that Snowden 'served his time here in 1837' does this mean that he completed his apprenticeship in 1837? If so, we have a boy being taken on at about the age of 11 and completing his apprenticeship by the time he was about 15.

Further confusion is added by Sidney Keyes on page 385 of his *Dartford Further Historical Notes* where, in the list of churchwardens for 1832, he includes:

'James Snowden, Engineer: engaged in John Hall's drawing office, and was intimate with Richard Trevithick. He was a member of the first Dartford Board of Health, set up to combat the cholera outbreak of 1831.'

Unless Keyes is hopelessly muddled, there must have been a James Snowden Senior and a James Snowden Junior who both worked in Hall's drawing office at various times. We can be almost certain that Read received his measurements from Snowden Junior (rather than Senior) in 1900-01 since he refers to him as having been Chief Draughtsman, a position mentioned in the 1906 obituary.

After all of this research we are still none the wiser as to the position of Trevithick's last resting place. Unfortunately, it would appear that if nobody could be sure less than 70 years after the burial then we, after 170 years, will find it an impossibility.

Dr M.C.W. Still

Assistant Museum Manager
Dartford Borough Museum

Sources:

J. Dunkin, *The History and Antiquities of Dartford*, 1844 (reprinted 1904).

E. Hesketh, 'The Life of Richard Trevithick' in *Transactions of the Dartford District Antiquarian Society* number 1, 1931.

E. Hesketh, *J. & E. Hall Ltd 1785-1935*, 1935.

S. K. Keyes, *Dartford: Further Historical Notes*, 1938.

T. C. Read, *Memoir of Richard Trevithick and his inventions*, 1931.

File of press cuttings etc. on Richard Trevithick, held in Local Studies collection of Dartford Library.

**WHAT MEMORIALS ARE THERE
IN DARTFORD TO RICHARD
TREVITHICK?**

The memorials which currently exist in Dartford are as follows:

1. A bronze plaque in Holy Trinity Church. This was set up in 1902 by Everard Hesketh, the Director and Chairman of Messrs J. & E. Hall Ltd.
2. A Cornish slate tablet inside the Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel. Several members of the Trevithick Society were present at its unveiling in 1977.
3. A stone tablet set in the wall of St Edmund's Pleasance referring to the location of the nearby grave.
4. A cast iron plaque on the railings of Dartford Railway Station. This just shows an image of the 1808 Catch-me-who-can. It is one of several plaques showing various railway locomotives.

Dr M.C.W. Still

Assistant Museum Manager
Dartford Borough Museum

Dear Editor,

I enclose a copy of a letter published in the Motor Cycle magazine of February 28th 1946 by a J.H. Trounson of Redruth and wonder if this is the same person who photographed much of the Cornish mining industry? I have seen one photograph of Levant with apparently his bicycle in the foreground. Perhaps he later acquired an easier means of mobility!

On the subject of motorcycles, the Quaife company now in the former CompAir Holman factory, first came to my notice in the 1960s. As a local company, they designed and manufactured 5-speed gearboxes to fit British racing motorcycles, when 4-speeds were the norm - except for Japanese machines.

Bryan Collins,
31 Surrenden Road,

Staplehurst,
Tonbridge,
Kent.
TN12 0LY

I have read with a great deal of sympathy the letter from "Ex-Engineering Draughtsman" on the subject of needless inaccessibility. My own mount, which is a well-known and highly satisfactory multi-cylinder design, is, on the whole, very good in this respect, but even this model exhibits at least one example of the folly mentioned by your correspondent.

In the case of my machine, the cylinder block is secured to the crankcase by means of eight studs and nuts, the joint being made by a composition washer supplied by the makers. After using a new washer it is always necessary to tighten down the nuts on three or four subsequent occasions, no matter how tightly they are screwed down the first time. Of these eight nuts, four are properly accessible, three can only be reached with difficulty after the engine has been completely assembled, and then only by means of "faking" the manufacturer's standard spanners, and the eighth nut cannot be touched at all. The only means of reaching this nut is to completely strip down the whole of the magneto and camshaft drives, which consist of two Weller spring-tensioned chains in their cases. This entails breaking four large joints, the removal of a large number of small screws, the withdrawal of two sprockets from their shafts, and then reassembly of the whole, including retiming the magneto - all in order to tighten one nut! The only alternative is to continue to run the engine with the uncomfortable knowledge that the cylinder block is tightened down very unevenly (in fact, at the most, only seven out of the eight nuts are operative), and an extensive oil leak inevitably results. cont...

J.H. Trounson (Redruth)

[ed. We now know what Jack Trounson got up to in his spare time!]

TREVITHICK STATESIDE

When a stereograph card produced by the Keystone View company came up on E-Bay it caused a flurry of excitement in some quarters.

The Keystone View Company was founded in 1872 in Meadville, Pennsylvania and closed 91 years later. Its stock of millions of photographs lay in a warehouse for some years and were donated to the University of California-Riverside as the Keystone Mast Collection where they are kept in air-conditioned surroundings. See www.cmp.ucr.edu

The card on E-Bay depicted a 3-D image of a replica Trevithick rail locomotive (see front cover). On the reverse of the card held by the university is handwritten the following.

'KV 86613 – 4477 ? 195-15

Trevithick Newcastle Locomotive 1803 Fair of the Iron Horse'

It appears to be a fine replica and, possibly because it was built so long ago, has the appearance of authenticity that is difficult to replicate today.

The card is included with about 50 others connected to the 'Fair of the Iron Horse' held between 27th September and 26th October 1927 at Halethorpe, Maryland.

However, a closer examination of the other photographs in this section shows that the very well attended fair consisted mainly of a canvas covered grandstand 1,000 feet in length to seat up to 12,000 people at one time. There appeared to be only one other building, a two storey framed structure that did not closely resemble the structure where the replica was exhibited.

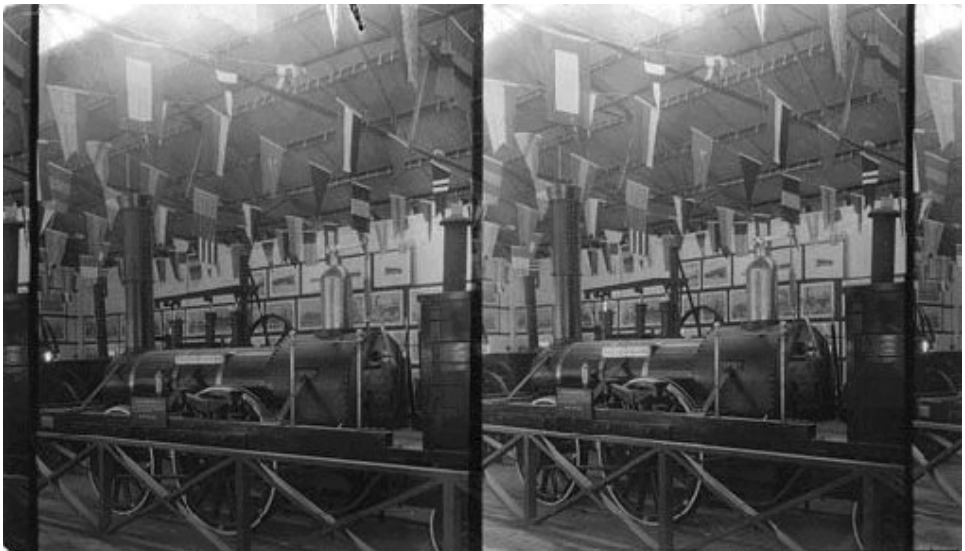
Further confusion arose when it was discovered that there were two Fairs of the Iron Horse in 1927. The other was held between 24th September and 15th October by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

Although the Keystone Mast records include the Trevithick replica card with the Halethorpe collection the photograph may well have been taken at the B&O fair.

Further investigation threw up a couple more interesting replicas. On the back of the cards, written in apparently the same handwriting as above was the following.

'KV 86609 Old Ironsides, Fair of the Iron Horse 1932' (see below) and 'KV 86608 The Rocket 1929, Fair of the Iron Horse, Railroad Locomotives Building' (see front cover).

All three of these stereographs appear to have been taken at the same time in the same building. The variations in dates are intriguing unless one settles for those being



construction dates. It does set the picture taking after 1932 and after the above-mentioned Fairs of the Iron Horse. This is a challenge for the researchers. Perhaps, instead they were mistakes for 1829 and 1832.

The Rocket appears to be a very authentic replica and bears a greater resemblance to the original in the Kensington Science Museum than does the yellow replica in the National Railway Museum at York.

Further research has revealed that the models are currently in the collection of the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore. However, the museum collection suffered considerable damage on February 17, 2003 when two thirds of their roof collapsed under the weight of 38 inches of snow. The models that survived are currently in secure storage off site of the museum. A photographic history of the collapse is available at www.borail.org.

P.M. Hosken

Mike Moore, the chairman of NAMHO (National Association of Mining History Organisations), has retired and Trevithick Society member, Peter Claughton of the

CHANGES AT NAMHO

Exmoor Mines Research Group has been elected in his place.

Peter Gosling has retired after ten years as treasurer and is replaced by George Price. Sally Bassham remains as secretary, sbassham@nildram.co.uk.

Peter Claughton has circulated a short address to NAMHO members and copies can be obtained from him at P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk.

At the recent Trevithick Society Council Meeting, Paul Smith was confirmed as the Society's representative to NAMHO.

The writer received a call recently from Mr. Reg Beach who ran a workshop at Trewellard near St. Just. He explained that he came from a jewellery-making family in

JEWELLERY MAKING MACHINE

Birmingham but had lived and worked in Cornwall for many years, was soon to retire, and would the Society like one of his machines? The machine in question was designed and then made by Reg and was for making the finger bands for rings. It consists of a series of work stations set in a circle with a central disc in the middle transporting the work from one station to the next as each operation is completed. Briefly it is fed with gold bar, cuts it to length, slots the ends to enable them to be bifurcated to accommodate the setting, and finishes and bends them to the correct circumference. The grinding and sawing is electrically driven but the feeding and transporting function is performed by compressed air using Maxam valves and controls. As Reg was having to clear his workshop totally, the Society purchased his compressor which used to drive the machine along with two flypresses. Thursday March 18th saw Arthur Young and the writer both with trailers in tow, ably assisted by Billy Carter, bringing the machinery back to Camborne for storage.

K.J.T.Rickard



Lorry at Trevithick Day advertising Merthyr Tydfil's ongoing celebrations. Photo. Pete Joseph.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

AGM PROGRAMME UPDATE

Members will have received the programme for the weekend with the last newsletter. Unfortunately due to circumstances beyond our control details of the Friday evening lecture and the Sunday field trip could not be finalised by the despatch date. Those details now appear below.

Friday, 21st May 7pm.

Audio Visual Room, Morwellham.

A talk on hydro-power generation at Morwellham by Steve Cryer

Sunday, 23rd May.

Field trip to Devon Great Consols Mine. (Wheal Anna Maria and Wheal Josiah sections) Led by John Viant.

Meet 10am. at the New Arsenic Works chimney. Grid ref. SX426745. From Gulworthy Cross on A390 Gunnislake to Tavistock road take northbound road signed Chipshop. Before Chipshop take left to Rubbytown and continue until road runs out when you will see chimney.

K.J.T.R.

Due to circumstances beyond our

PROGRAMME ALTERATION

control the date of the forthcoming field trip for Wheal Grey and Tregonning Hill has had to be postponed to Sat. July 10th. All arrangements are as previously advised but please make a note on your programme cards of the change of date.

Our regular meeting place for Friday

NEW MEETING PREMISES

meetings for many years has been the lecture theatre at the Camborne School of Mines, a facility that has been provided free of charge, and for which the Society places on record its grateful thanks.

Our new meeting premises is the Opie Building at Cornwall College, Pool. This is on the same campus as the C.S.M. but we will be using a different entrance. Approaching from the A30, use the Pool turn off. Shortly after leaving the main carriageway, a new building, with a distinctive curved roofline and with a large blue panel on the end wall facing the road, will be seen on the left. This is the Opie Building. The site entrance is adjacent to the building and has ample parking. On entering the building the lecture theatre is on your immediate right. The first evening meeting there will be "Members Evening" on Friday 16th July.

At the time of writing the locomotive will be appearing at :

CAMBORNE ROAD LOCO

- Morwellham as part of Museums Month celebrations May 8th/9th.
- Railfest 2004 at The National Railway Museum, York May 29th-June 6th
- Merthyr Tydfil railway bicentenary celebrations the first week in July.
- Camborne Show 17th July.
- West of England Steam Engine Society rally 20th-22 August.
- Plans are afoot for the G.W.R. locomotive "City of Truro" to be on display at Truro 20th July – 2nd August accompanied by the Puffing Devil but at the time of going to press the details were not known.
- The Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro will be mounting a Trevithick display during the August and September.

TREVITHICK'S MODEST MECHANIC. A MAN IN THE SHADOWS

William West of Hayle (1751/2 – 1831), partner of both Richard Trevithick and John Harvey of Hayle, played a crucial role in converting Trevithick's brilliant and revolutionary ideas into successful reality. Without William's understanding, hands-on expertise and dedication, Richard might have found it much more difficult to demonstrate the practical importance of his ideas to the world at large. Yet, in public events commemorating our great Richard Trevithick today, the supportive and benevolent presence of William West seems always to be missing. Who was William West of Hayle?

I must declare an interest here. William was my 4-great uncle, being brother to my 4-great grandfather, Joseph West. This Joseph, born 1744, and his brother William, born 1752 (by the modern calendar), were the only sons of Joseph and Joan West of Uny Lelant. They were part of a family with long-standing tinning industry connections. My own researches suggest that the West connection with Cornwall may well go back as far as the mid-1330's, when a Baron Thomas West was made Lord Warden of the Devon and Cornwall Stannaries. As West is not a Cornish name, and the family presence in county records over the centuries is confined to very limited areas of Cornwall, this seems all the more likely.

Further, in his article *The West Family* (Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries, 1944-45) Col. Mead, a great-grandson of William West of Hayle, writes that 'the West family of Redruth and Hayle were associated with the tin industry for generations'. William himself was a great-grandson to a certain Udy West, an Assistant Stannator back in 1710, who was known according to Tonkin (1678-1741), as 'The Father of the Tanners', because of 'his knowledge of stannary affairs'. (Quoted in Frank Michell's *Annals of an Ancient Cornish Town – Redruth*. Redruth. 1978).

So what exactly was the Trevithick-West connection? From his smithy in Helston, where he started his working life, William

had carried out work for Richard Trevithick senior. In the event, William soon became a boon companion of the younger Richard, in spite of their difference in age. Edmund Vale describes them as kindred spirits. He calls Trevithick the 'born inventor' and West 'the born mechanic', both of them 'children by adoption of the new age of power'. (Edmund Vale: *The Harveys of Hayle*. Truro. 1966). Richard had the brilliant ideas but William knew just how to carry them out. What a crucial and essential partnership!

John Harvey of Hayle can also be described as an essential catalyst in all these developments, as his was the foundry where Trevithick's ideas, and West's realisation of them, could be carried out. The high quality of William's work in his Helston smithy had attracted John Harvey's attention, as well as that of the senior Trevithick, and William moved to St. Erth so that he was able to work regularly for Harvey's until his retirement to St. Ives in 1828, at the age of 76. It also happened that John Harvey provided both the younger men with wives! In 1784, William West married Joanna Harvey, John's eldest daughter and in 1797, Richard Trevithick married Jane, the youngest.

The result of these inter-connections was that in 1796 and 1797, when Trevithick put forward plans for the first high-pressure, or 'strong steam' model, he knew already that he could turn to his loyal friend and brother-in-law, William West of Hayle, to build it. Given some of the animosities Trevithick already faced, the combination of William's loyalty and skill was essential to the success of the enterprise. William continued to make models for his friend Richard for some time. In 1802, the patent on a high-pressure carriage engine was taken out by Trevithick and Andrew Vivian, William West also being granted a share in it. Why is this third partner so often forgotten? West was given leave to go to London for some months to help to assemble the machine in the coachbuilder's yard. This was the carriage that ran in the streets of London, unnoticed by the London press, but in any case it tends to be Vivian's and Trevithick's exploits in managing to rip down some railings that

receive the attention in the accounts of this we read today! We hear little of William, the man who was 'busy about the engine' according to Francis Trevithick, in his father's biography.

Edmund Vale tells us that the 'unobtrusive but hard-working' William was 65 when he was finally elevated to the board of Harvey's in 1816, but at least when he retired in 1827, aged 76, he was paid his full share in the company. This was assessed at £1,349, equal to about £40,000 today. In those days, with a lower cost of living, this was a goodly sum. William returned to clock-making during his retirement in St. Ives and there he died in 1831, aged 80. In this he carried on the family tradition of notable male and female longevity.

So, if William West of Hayle had translated Richard Trevithick's ideas into reality, was his boon companion, business partner, brother-in-law and right-hand man, why is William omitted from every commemoration of Trevithick today? Because he is confused with William West of St. Blazey? (oh, **he** had no direct connection with Trevithick did he?) Or was it because the West name no longer has a presence in Cornwall, the active engineering part of the family having migrated to industrial England, and its Cornish presence now hidden behind descent through female lines? Or does his eclipse arise from William's own character? We are told that he was modest, hard-working and totally reliable. He was always on hand and his skill and co-operation could be taken for granted. He did not make mistakes or make trouble – an infallible recipe for not being remembered! Or is there another reason?

Edmund Vale's description of Richard and William as 'born inventor' and 'born mechanic' respectively, may provide a clue. There is a certain kind of British attitude which attaches more importance to the brain work suggested by the word 'inventor' than to the skilled mental and physical co-ordination suggested by the term 'mechanic'. We have only to look at our present government's obsession with having 50% of young people go to university, rather than building up a really

strong programme of modern apprenticeships in this country. Of course Trevithick's gifts were exceptional and there will always be more than one 'West' to every 'Trevithick', but the one still needs the other, and 'the other' needs to be good. Perhaps we can still learn today from what seems to be the rather unfair neglect of William West of Hayle.

Margaret Handford (nee West)

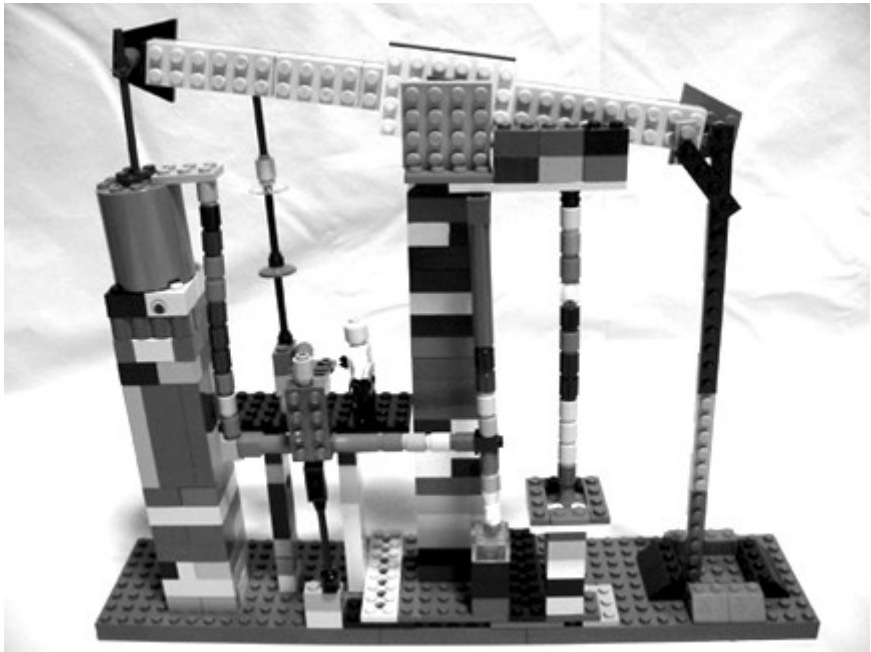
The following information has recently been published in the Tools & Trades History Society newsletter and is felt to be of interest to Society members.

Cleaning items of rust is often a problem and this system uses the principles of

RECIPE FOR RUST REMOVAL

electrolysis and has the benefit of being damage free to the item concerned which is placed in a non-metallic container in a solution of washing soda in warm water at a dilution of one teaspoon to the pint. Using an old battery charger (the newer ones have a thermal cut out and are not so effective) connect the negative terminal to the item to be cleaned and the positive to a piece of sacrificial stainless steel. An old piece of cutlery will be fine, and, to be safe, make sure it is not her Ladyship's favorite! Before switching on take care to ensure that the power clips are above the solution level and not immersed. The time taken will vary from fifteen minutes to a couple of hours, however, if the item is left in for longer no harm is done. Once removed from the solution the article must be oiled or warmed immediately.

The Tools & Trades History Society can be contacted through their Hon. Secretary, Mr. Gerald Cole, The Barn, Holme Lyon, Burneside, Kendal. LA9 6QX. or telephone 01539 727837



It has been many a long year since a beam engine was built in the West Country. But this is not the case in the United States. In fact, the engine in the photograph was built in Athens, Ohio, in December 2003, and given to Damian Nance as a Christmas present by his 11-year old son, Christopher Morton Nance. In keeping with the many technological advances of the past century, the engine is built, not of cast iron, but of Lego! It is a "working" pumping engine in that it moves, and was loosely modeled on one by Williams Perran Foundry. Although *officinados* of the Cornish engine may note some mechanical problems in the engine's design, Damian's son assured him that the flexibility of Lego allows these to be overcome!

Members will be aware that back in 1985

DOLCOATH NEW SUMP SHAFT

(see Newsletter no.47) Society volunteers, led by Clive Carter, cleared the site of New Sump Shaft, Dolcoath revealing the base of the long gone engine house with its engine hold down bolts still in situ. It was felt that

as part of the Society's contribution to the World Heritage Status Bid that we could repeat the exercise and we had hoped to achieve this while the undergrowth was at its lowest in February or March. Close by the site is a bryophytes S.S.S.I. and English Nature were contacted out of courtesy and were happy with us to proceed. Nicholas Johnson, The County Archaeologist, and acting for Cornwall County Council, was also asked for comment and he was very supportive and wished us well. Kerrier District Council were in favour, but due to the onerous responsibilities imposed by their interpretation of current health and safety regulations, the Society felt it impossible to proceed and so, sadly, the New Sump Shaft will remain overgrown and virtually unrecognisable. Many thanks to the volunteers who indicated they were prepared to assist.

K.J.T.R.



'I WAS THERE..!'

THE CHAIRMAN CELEBRATES IN SOUTH WALES

A cold, windy weekend in February was the setting for the celebration of the world's first self-propelled railway journey. The bicentenary became an enthusiastic social event and its warmth pervaded all those who took part.

On the 21st February 1804, Richard Trevithick drove his high-pressure steam locomotive from Penydarren to Abercynon. It pulled a train of five wagons loaded with ten tons of iron and a reported seventy passengers. Two hundred years later, the people of Merthyr and their schoolchildren were determined to celebrate the journey that made one of the most important contributions to the world's transport and industrial developments.

The original journey was intended to show that a steam locomotive could transport iron from the mighty works at Merthyr Tydfil to the Mid Glamorgan Canal, from thence the iron could make its way to the sea at Cardiff.

The weekend's celebrations were just a part of the yearlong festival of Trevithick-mania that has gripped the area. The Trevithick Society, the Grand Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd and many other notables from Cornwall will be attending the celebrations in July, see www.trevithick2004.co.uk.

The day's celebrations started with a rededication of the monument to the Penydarren locomotive at Pontmorlais with a large flag of St Piran. The crowds then followed a steam traction engine through the streets of Merthyr to the new Tesco store. This stands on the site of the former



railway terminus that was designed by I K Brunel and resembled Paddington Station.

The Tesco car park wall now bears a representation of the Penydarren locomotive and its wagons in metal relief. It also has a plate to commemorate the unveiling of the mural by the chairman of this Society.

Actor Philip Madoc, a onetime local boy who is presently playing the part of detective DCI Bain on Channel Five, dedicated a large mural depicting the station in its heyday.

Rhodri Morgan, the First Minister of Wales, joined musical star and railway promoter Pete Waterman to name a Type 37 locomotive, 'Richard Trevithick'. To the music of a local band and cheers from the crowds, the train then left Merthyr station loaded with railway enthusiasts for its



journey back to Cardiff.

While the fortunate ones amongst us adjourned to the Merthyr Tydfil MBC offices for a fine VIP luncheon, a large group of enthusiasts set out to walk the 9½-mile route of Trevithick's journey along the tram track to Abercynon.

At Abercynon we were all greeted by a Welsh band and choir in a ceremony to re-dedicate the stone memorial at the turning point of Trevithick's epic journey. A excellent, illustrated banner depicting Capt'n Dick was also dedicated.

The celebrations continued into the evening at Carfarthfa Castle Museum where a room had been specially equipped and dedicated to the development of high-pressure steam as a propulsive force. This outstanding section of the museum was official opened by celebrity, Rolf Harris whose grandfather had been born in Merthyr.

Dinner was served in the castle to the accompaniment of Siwsann George, an international folk singer from Bassett Street in Abercynon. Siwsann had prepared a CD of songs about Trevithick for the occasion, see www.siw.sann.george@getreal.co.uk

Rolf Harris entertained in his inimitable way and even included some much appreciated singing in Welsh. He was accompanied by the local Skyliners dance band (remember them?)

The only disappointment was that Richard Trevithick could not attend to see how the Merthyr Tydfil MBC and the people of Wales had celebrated his time amongst them.

Details of Carfarthfa Castle Museum and Trevithick's international achievements and those related to Wales can be found at <http://www.alangeorge.co.uk/PenydarrenLocomotive.htm> .

P.M.H.



GOLD PLATED JAPANESE CONNECTION

The Society has gratefully received what is possibly the most beautiful model of the Trevithick 1804 Penydarren locomotive.

This remarkable model replica has been built to 1/20th scale by Toshio Okitsu, managing director of the Japanese Koowa Technical Co Ltd in Shizuoka City. He is also the much respected electrical and mechanical engineer and head of its Design and Development Division.

The model is machined from solid brass and gold-plated. Mr Okitsu presented it personally to the Society when he visited Camborne on Trevithick Day this year. Mr Yoshio Katsuyama of the same company accompanied him.

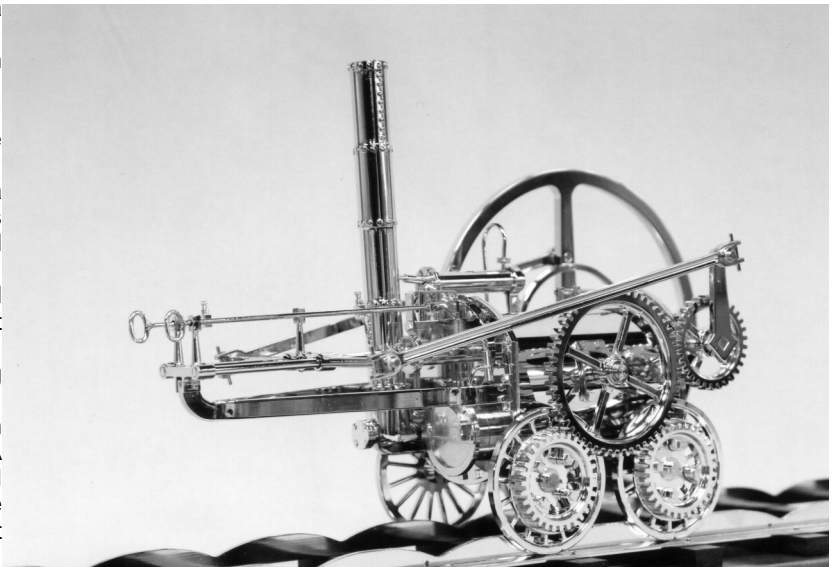
Weighing just one kilogram, the 24 volt DC model is activated to travel automatically on its 600mm of gold plated track when there is movement in front of a sensor built into its illuminated elegant cabinet. It is planned to take the model to the Trevithick celebrations later this year at Merthyr and York. It will also feature in the Trevithick commemoration during August and September at the Royal Cornwall Museum. It has been placed on view in a jeweller's shop window in Camborne for all to see.

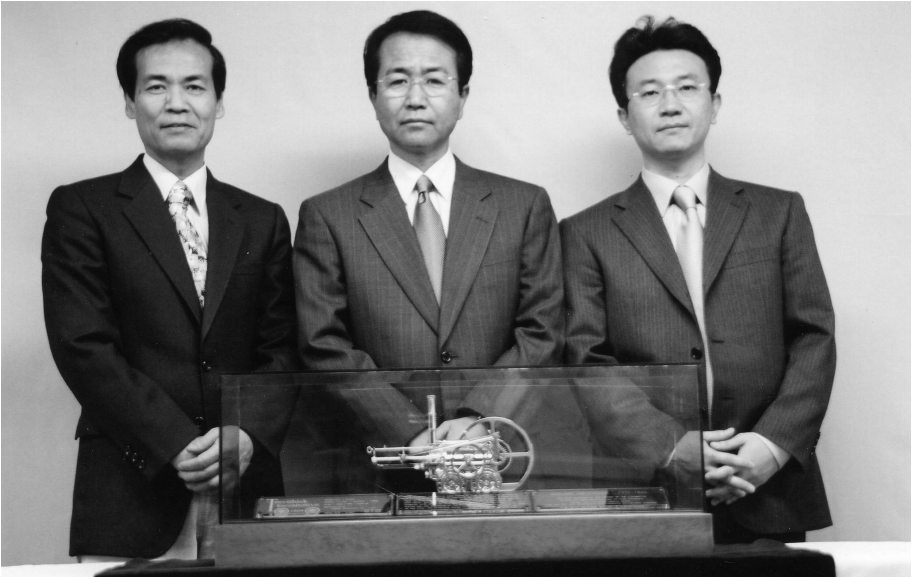
The Koowa company works in precision machined plastic. The Trevithick model is a product of its Design and Development Division and is its first departure into making superb models in metal. A similar model will be featured at

the Shizuoka Festival of Rail on the 15th and 16th May this year. The Koowa company intends to place a limited number of these handcrafted models on the market later this year.

This precision work also acknowledges the Trevithick connection with the establishment of the railway system in Japan. Richard Trevithick's grandsons, Richard Frances Trevithick and Francis Henry Trevithick both worked in Japan. The former was the Locomotive Superintendent at the Kobe Works and designed the first locomotive to be built in Japan. His brother became Chief Engineer at the Shimbashi Works in Tokyo and surveyed many new routes. Richard died in 1913 with no issue but his brother Francis, who died in 1931, had three daughters and one son from whom Frank Trevithick Okuno is descended. Frank's father was born Yoshitaro Richard Trevithick and, on becoming a ship's master with Japan's largest shipping company, had to assume a Japanese name and so took his mother's family name of Okuno.

Mr Frank Trevithick Okuno, patron of the Camborne Trevithick Day committee for many years is a grandson of Francis Henry Trevithick. Unfortunately, Mr Frank Okuno was not able to attend the Trevithick Day this year due to ill health but the Japanese





visitors called upon him in London. They also took part in the extensive Trevithick celebrations in Merthyr Tydfil and visited the National Railway Museum at York.

Shizuoka City has a population of 700,000 and is situated to the south of Mount Fuji. At this time of the year the cherry trees are in blossom, heralding the arrival of Spring. The city is famous for its Japanese green tea, football and furniture. It is the home of many of the world's manufacturers of the finest model vehicles and aircraft such as Tamiya, Hasegawa, Aoshima, Fujimi and

Platz.

While they were in Camborne for Trevithick Day the Japanese visitors were the guests of the Camborne Town Council and The Trevithick Society. Mayor of Camborne, Cllr John Beare, said he was delighted to welcome the worthy Japanese gentlemen to Camborne, Trevithick's birthplace. "We are pleased that they have included Camborne," he said, "the home of high pressure steam locomotion in their busy tour of the UK".



P.M.H.

LEVANT REPORT

The National Trust reports that most of the 2003 figures for Levant were records. There were 15,970 visitors to the site. The engine is now open to the public, and the annual maintenance programme is almost complete. The steam condensate piping has been renewed and the steam traps overhauled. One of the two automatic boiler water chemical dosing pumps has been fitted and a second is awaited. The new key for the inland winding drum has been made and fitted. This fixes the drum on the shaft and seems to have prevented the recurrent noise problem.

An interlock has been designed and fitted to the Skip Shaft hoist drum motor controller to prevent an inexperienced driver changing between the raise and lower operation without stopping the drum and causing damage to the drive. The block wall in the winder house has been demolished to clear the area.

Volunteers have completed making most of the missing parts for the 1:12 scale model of the 80" W. H. Mitchell designed pumping engine, which was started by Society member G. Boulden, and given by him to the Society.

The National Trust and the St Just Heritage Area Regeneration Project has continued the remedial safety works arising from mining and other activities along the coast at Levant funded by the South West Regional Development Agency and the European Regional Development Fund (Objective 1). The first phase at Levant has been to refurbish the derelict Mine Drawing Office building for use by Levant staff and this has been completed. Doors and windows have been replaced and a ceiling installed. Power and lighting have been completed and volunteers have decorated the interior. Carpets have been laid and visitors will appreciate the building when the weather is inclement. The second part of the project is now well under way to reinstate the Zawn Brinney cliff retaining wall, using traditional construction methods, as the made-up ground was slowly sliding towards the cliff edge. Ground was excavated on each side of the slip and

anchors on the rock were built to hold the new retaining wall in place. A reinforced concrete beam acts as the base for the wall that is almost complete.

The building, previously used to house the diesel generator and the stores, has been cleared and redecorated for use as a video room for visitors to view the Levant Video made by a local miner. Lighting and power supplies have not yet been installed in the Man Engine Tunnel, a trench is to be dug for the cable from the Engine House.

W. E. H. King

On Jan 16th 2004 Bromine production ended in the United Kingdom after 64 years when the plant at Amlwch stopped

END OF AN ERA

producing. The extraction from sea water process was established at Hayle in 1939/40 by British Ethyl Corporation on behalf of the Air Ministry and it operated until the summer of 1973. (Journals 26, 1999; & 29, 2002). The physical and economic limitations of the Hayle site caused Associated Ethyl to build its new plant in 1952/53 at Amlwch in Anglesey, adjacent to Amlwch Port and within sight of Parys Mountain. Progressive expansion took place until, in 1972, it had a nominal capacity six times that of the Hayle facility. Ownership was transferred from Associated Ocel to Great Lakes Chemicals (Europe) in 1996. The plant is at present being decommissioned and dismantled but much interest has been shown in the coastal site. It is probable that the site will have an alternative use in the near future.

The elimination of lead additives from petrol, legislation against brominated fire retardants and regulation of the use of methyl bromide, all for environmental reasons, has significantly reduced the demand for elemental bromine. Demand for drilling muds and completion fluids etc. is insufficient to sustain future production at an economic level. The Amlwch plant has, in recent times, only operated at 30% capacity. Bromine will now be sourced from Jordan, Israel and USA, where extraction from brines with a high bromine content is

much more economic.

Interestingly, the history of the chemical industry allied to the copper mining and smelting activity in Amlwch in the 19th Century is described in detail in *A Curious Place The Industrial History of Amlwch 1550 – 1950* by Bryan D Hope. (ISBN 0.9535268 1 X). The varied activities of James Treweek of Gwennap and his son in mining, smelting and shipbuilding makes interesting reading. The involvement of John H Vivian and Cornish mine captains in the Anglesey copper industry is also dealt with. History does have a habit of repeating itself.

Arthur Fairhurst

The forecasters had promised us “high pressure” and they were right. The day dawned bright, the sun shone in spite of the one cloud hovering, that of no steam parade, cancelled because of safety fears.

TREVITHICK DAY APRIL 24 2004

Colin French, John Sawle, George Wilson, Arthur Young and the writer all turned out early that morning to start operations in getting the Trevithick Road locomotive in position and the display tent erected in Basset Road, Camborne. The early birds were later joined by John Badger, Julia Hitchon, Phil Hosken, Barbara Tripp and Pam Young to man the stall and deal with the many sales and questions. As the steam engines were not parading, the Road Loco was not in its usual place at the head of the procession through the town, but crew members, Colin French, Phil Hosken, John Woodward and the writer, with black arm bands to mourn the loss of steam, paraded the Society model of the locomotive on a flatbed trolley. Arthur Young was left as minder to look after the Puffing Devil, in steam, and working as a static exhibit. At the end of the procession the engine drivers, all wearing black arm bands like the Puffing Devil crew and including our own John Sawle, paraded and were widely applauded by the crowds lining the

streets and were accompanied by a New Orleans style jazz band playing appropriate music for the occasion. The only steam on the move was for the children’s dance during the morning when they were accompanied by a dozen or so miniature steam engines. Let us hope that next year we will see the resumption of the full steam parade. We were pleased to welcome friends from Merthyr Tydfil who had brought their 30ft. wagon with the sides painted with an advertisement for their railway bicentenary celebrations (see page 12). Another highlight of the day was the presentation to the Society of a scale model of the Pen y Darren railway locomotive by the Koowa Technical Co. of Japan. Details of this are covered elsewhere in the newsletter.

In conclusion a great day was had by all but could we please have some volunteers to help man the stall. Someone helping out for an hour allows someone else to view the engines, stalls etc. No special skills are required and you are helping to promote your Society. Come along. I am prepared to be inundated with offers. Ring the chatline 01209 716811.

K.J.T.R.



FILMS ON CORNISH SUBJECTS

Following several inquiries from members regarding the above letter in the last newsletter I thought I would explain the situation to members. Firstly, none of the films mentioned in the previous letter are in the possession of the Society. Of course, if any member does have a copy, film or video, that they don't want, we would be only too pleased to accept it. The Society has in its possession the following films:

These are held at various locations:

Taylor's pumping engine, East Pool and Agar Mine (Shell Film Unit) 1951
Robinson's pumping engine, South Crofty Mine (Shell Film Unit) 1951
Rostowrack pumping engine, Rostowrack China Clay Works (Shell Film Unit) 1949
Greensplat pumping engine, Greensplat China Clay Works (Shell Film Unit) 1949
Harvey's 90-inch engine at East Pool and Agar Mine (Holman Film Unit), 1964
Cornish Engine (Robinson's, Taylor's, Cook's, Parkandillick, Goonvean and Rostowrack)

These are at the Cornwall Centre, Redruth
Erection of the Rostowrack engine (Holman Film Unit?)

Tin streaming and Wheal Martyn (unknown author)
Tin streaming (unknown author)
South Crofty Mine (unknown author)
Wheal Martyn (unknown author)

These are at the TSW Film Archive, Plymouth

The big blast, Swinburn Quarry, Shell Film Unit
The Cornish engine
Dorothea steam engine
Elizabeth is Queen - the Coronation, colour
Fordson newsreel no.24
Holman No.1 Works, drawing office, foundry, etc, 1930
Holman No. 1 Works, 1930
Holman No.1 Works staff
Holman No.1 Works, first reel
Holman No.1 Works, second reel
Holman No.3 Works
Holman No. 3 Works, Pneumatic Tools,

Test Mine
Holman assembly shops
Holman drop forge, general production, rock drills, 1932?
Holman head office, new works, western staff, foundry engineers
Holmans products, master copy
Holman Brothers rushes
Newcomen Society at Chiverton
Silver 3
South Crofty winding engine
Stone quarry

This is a selection; many of the reels have more than one film and we have yet to go through the whole lot. At present we are unable to do anything with the Shell films as we do not hold the copyright, which has not yet expired. The matter of the Holman films is a bit better and we believe that we will be able to produce videos and/or DVDs although we will need funding to do this particular job.

The following Shell International videos are available through the Society

The Cornish Engine: with comments and diagrams of principles, black and white, silent. Shows views from various angles of running Cornish steam engines: £18.00

Cornish Engine: films of six working steam engines, black and white, silent. The engines are Robinson's, Taylor's, Cook's, Parkandillick, Goonvean and Rostowrack: £18.00

Those interested in more recent films may find items of interest on the IA Recordings website (<http://www.iarecordings.org>) while the Nation Online section of the BBC website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nationonfilm/topics/tin-mining>) has various clips from one to over three minutes that can be viewed.

If anyone has any information regarding films that have been made about Cornish subjects I would be interested to hear about them.

Pete Joseph

TREVITHICK SOCIETY EVENTS AND CONTACTS

MAY 21st - AGM weekend

Cornwall. TR15 3DS

JUNE 18th - CSM

The Cornwall Record Office, by Paul Brough.

JULY 10th - Field Trip

Wheal Grey & Tregonning Hill. Led by Ivor Bowditch & Steve Polglase.

JULY 16th - CC

Members Evening

SEPTEMBER 11th - Field Trip

Parc St. Neot & Gazeland China Clay Workings.
Led by Ivor Bowditch.

*Meetings are held in the Lecture Theatre,
Camborne School of Mines at 7pm. From July 16th meetings
relocated to Opie Building, Cornwall College.*

*East Cornwall Branch meetings will be held
at the Public Hall Complex, Liskeard at 7.30pm.*

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The Trevithick Society, a registered charity, is a recognised body of the study of industrial archaeology in Cornwall. Membership is open to all who are interested in the region's great industrial past, whether or not they live in Cornwall. The Society takes its name from one of Britain's foremost inventors and pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, Richard Trevithick, a Cornishman whose name is inseparable from the development of steam power.

This Newsletter is published quarterly and, together with the annual Journal, is distributed free to members. Letters and contributions are always welcome and should be sent direct to the editor. The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Trevithick Society.

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