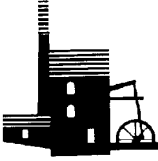


THE TREVITHICK SOCIETY



A

Macsalvors crane lifts out one of the giant storage tanks from Redruth Brewery.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Over the past couple of years these newsletters have contained impassioned appeals to members or friends to assist with the running of this Society.

Our problem is a universal one amongst voluntary organisations. The increased number of retired folk is failing to provide sufficient volunteers to administer the growing organisations that now surround us. These numerous single interest groups are often local branches of national organisations and their countrywide names tend to attract people who are not acquainted with Trevithick and Cornwall.

This Society is well aware of its standing in Cornwall and its responsibilities to the cataloguing, preservation and dissemination of Cornwall's industrial archaeology and to its members.

The present incumbents in the Society's administrative posts have all been in place for a number of years. We are particularly grateful to the treasurer for carrying out his duties for over nineteen years. All members of the council find that changes in their other commitments to business, family, other organisations and simply old age often impinge on their Society responsibilities.

Change is happening at an increasing rate all the time. This Society has demonstrated it is not stuck in the past by the range of subjects that attract good audiences at its lectures. Cornwall's industrial past includes much more than mining and a recent lecture by Mr Peter Tutthill on its motor manufacturing industry opened many eyes. This Society's unique involvement in the understanding of Cornwall's varied industrial heritage must provide unlimited opportunities for some new talent to join its administration.

This is a serious time for the Society. There was talk of change at a recent council meeting and the decision was made to hold an additional meeting to continue this and other discussions. There is so much that this Society has to do in connection with Cornwall's remarkable industrial history but it needs the people to carry this through.

Phillip M. Hosken



Copy date for next issue is June 12th, 2006

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I was very pleased indeed to see the report of the Council meeting in December's Newsletter, and I do hope that this will become a permanent feature. One of the minor irritations, particularly for out of touch up-country members, has been to get vague hints (in editorials, for example) about things which are happening in Cornwall, but about which fuller information would be welcome.

I also very much agree with L.J. Bullen, in reacting to an apparent under-valuation of the work of the C.E.P.S. It is to the pioneers—Tregonning Hooper, Jack Trounson, Treve Holman, Greville Bathe (donor of the Taylor's 90 inch) and others—that we owe the survival of most of the remaining Cornish engines. I do hope that the present Society is giving sufficient attention to the future of one of the most important of them—the Robinson's engine.

Colin Bowden,

White Lodge,
Great Hallingbury,
Bishop's Stortford,
Herts.
CM22 7PE

Dear Editor,

It was with great interest and enjoyment that I read the late John Corin's article "Newlyn Deep Down" as anything John had to say about Newlyn was always worth reading. This is no exception, being both informative and liberally sprinkled with anecdotes typical of John's droll humour. However, I would like to add a couple of facts that may be of interest.

The stack of West Tolvadden Mine (formerly Wheal Henry), having long been a prominent landmark for the fishing crews of Newlyn and Mousehole, was eventually demolished at the beginning of 1935 as the Cornishman, dated April 3rd, states, "about two months ago". This indicates that the stack was taken down in February of that year.

Of the Trereife Smelting works at Stable Hobba, I well remember the two big stacks standing when I was a small child. They were finally toppled in 1950. The procedure being described in the following extract from the Cornishman, dated May 25th: "Mr Francis Oates, a Marazion builder, last week performed a noteworthy feat when he felled a 70 foot chimney at Newlyn in a 20 foot gap without damaging adjacent property. A well known landmark, the stack is believed to be about 150 years old, and was part of the old smelting works, now occupied by Cornish Fish Products (sic.). The works are being re-built and the demolition of this stack presented a poser—another has yet to be felled. At the back of the stack was a £2000 engine, whilst there were buildings to the left and the right of it. With his assistant, Mr Oates cut a hole in the brickwork about a third of the way up the stack; this he propped with timber. Later the sides of the gap were widened and the wooden props set alight. After nearly ten minutes the stack began to fall. The chimney landed in the gap only three feet from where Mr Oates wanted it".

At this time, as notes, the premises were occupied by Cornish Fish Fertilizers Ltd., where also hides, hoofs, etc. were boiled up in large vats. At 4 pm each day vents in the building were opened and extractor fans dispersed the most foul stench over the surrounding area. It was always more pungent when the wind was blowing from the south-west. I can almost smell it now as I write.

Gerald Williams,
2 Mount's Bay Road,
Alverton Estate,
Penzance.
TR18 4QP.

Dear Editor

Can anyone please shed any light on the history of "Bill's Pool" in St Erth? I have

Dear Editor,

Since the article, *Cornish Mine Site Location—a fresh approach*, in the August 2005 newsletter (number 129), I have been in correspondence with Gerald Williams from Penzance regarding the mine sites with no Ordnance Survey grid references.

He has certainly “burnt the midnight oil” in locating some of the missing information and I am very grateful for his efforts. On receipt of the information from Gerald I started to log it into the spreadsheet and it was at this point I realised that there were errors in my original effort. I have now updated the spreadsheet with Gerald’s information plus amended the built in errors, and lodged a copy with the Society.

I have been an active member of the National Trust for many years and have a vast collection of photographs and slides taken over the past 25 years. Early last year my wife, who is secretary of the local W.I., had a speaker cancel at the last minute. I assembled about a hundred slides and gave a talk and slide show on the National Trust. It was well received and I was asked to put on a presentation for our local church later in the year.

The slides that I used showed the Trust’s houses, gardens, estates and coastline. For the second talk, I wanted to show a different side to the Trust, namely the Cornish mining industrial heritage. I contacted the National Trust at Lanhydrock and was put in touch with Liz Luck, whom I found out later was a Trevithick Society member. I explained what I wanted to show and she sent me two dozen slides of several of the Trust’s Cornish mining sites.

I left the mining site slides until the end of the presentation and I must say, they were very well received by all; in fact several people remarked that they did not know that the Trust was so involved in industrial heritage.

Norman Tarry,
86 Northorpe,
Thurlby,
Bourne,
Lincolnshire
PE10 0HJ.
Dear Editor,

tarry@waitrose.com

I have just been reading the Trevithick Society Newsletter and Journal. Always fascinating reads, both of them. Thank you for all the work you put in; it is especially appreciated by those of us who live far from Cornwall. It is some years since I visited Cornwall and while there I purchased Ken Isham’s book on Limekilns, and found it very interesting. I wish to thank Mr Isham for his limekiln updates in the Journal. It is not often that an author takes the trouble to publish updates in this way, and it is much appreciated. I hope it will not be too long before I can come to Cornwall again and look at some of these limekiln sites—as well as mining and other places described in your Newsletters and Journals.

Sallie Bassham

Following a visit to the Linares district of Spain in 1999, I was asked if I would co-operate in the production of a booklet

INTERPRETING ENGINE HOUSES

describing the methods of determining engine size and stroke from ruins of the empty house. The result is a superbly illustrated publication by Europamines (European Mining Heritage Network). Dr. John Morris of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland has “road tested” the methods and many of the colour photographs are his work. The text is in English and Spanish.

The joint authors include Antonio Angel Perez Sanchez of the Colectivo Pjyecto Arrayanes, Linares, and Dr. Martin Critchley of MHTI. There is no cover price but copies for reference purposes have been deposited at the Cornwall Centre, Redruth, and the Cornwall Record Office, Truro. Anyone wishing to have their own copy should contact Europamines at Killhope, the North of England Lead Mining Museum, Cowshill, Weardale, Co. Durham. DL13 1AR.

Kenneth Brown

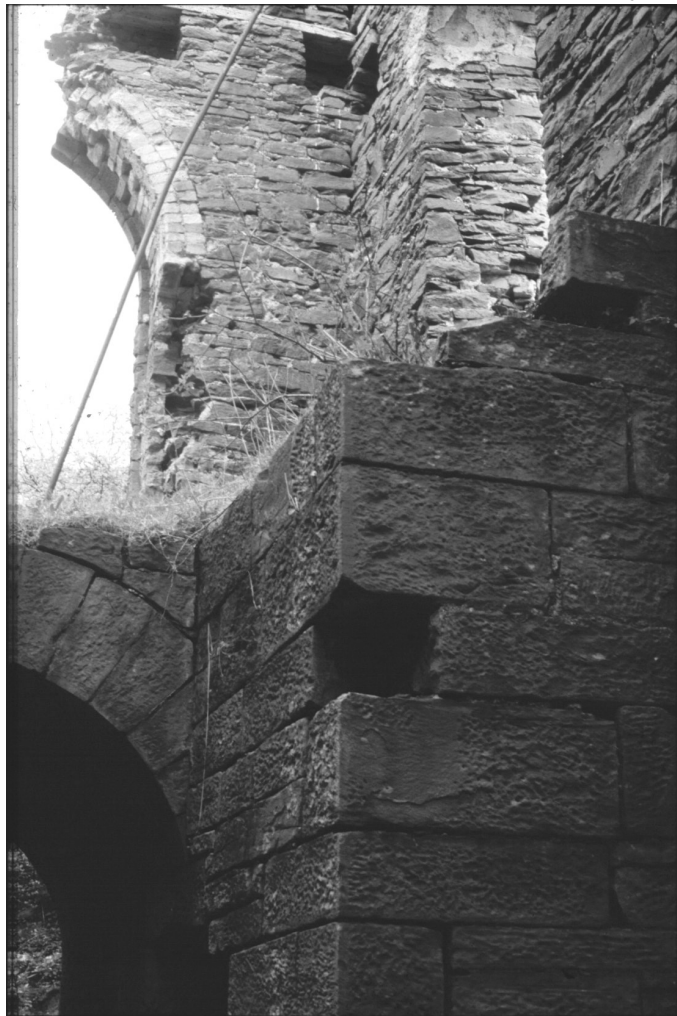
heard that during the war POW's worked on the site which was used as a "settling tank" for the recovery of various ores.

BRYNGWYN UNDER THREAT

Kevin Tull

email: kevin@ktull.fsnet.co.uk

One of the cylinder blocks inside the Bryngwyn engine house. On the left is the tunnel for the balance bob; above it are remains of the cylinder doorway. The pump rod ran down to the right on a 1 in 4 slope.



The late David Bick and the writer were primarily responsible for having this unusual Cornish engine house in South Wales scheduled in 1989. Since then a housing estate has sprung up around the site and an application to de-schedule the structure and cut it down to first floor level has been submitted to the Welsh authority CADW. Objections have been lodged by

a wide range of interested bodies, including this Society.

Documentary evidence of the engine is scant, but from inspection of the house it had a cylinder of approximately 70-inches by 9 ft stroke and the beam underneath. However, the beam was unusual in being angled so that the pump rods ran down a shallow incline, following a coal seam. The balance bob was at the rear, connected to the main beam by rods running through a tunnel in the base of the house.

The house bears the date 1868 but the engine builder has not been discovered. There is, however, record of a man from Harvey & Co., being appointed to take care of the engine at a later date. Bryngwyn Colliery was operated by Mr. W.S. Cartwright. It is situated east of Caerphilly and the engine house stands at Grid 162893. Although the outcome of the application is not yet known, the apparent ease with which a scheduled ancient monument can lose its statutory protection must be a cause of concern

to all historians.

Kenneth Brown.

CAMBORNE ROAD LOCOMOTIVE

The complete demolition of the Holman factories has created a large, rubble strewn open space at what was once the industrial heart of Cornwall. The land is now earmarked for housing and scant jobs. Apparently grants are available for inner city deprivation, but first you must create a deprived inner city.

The demolition did provide the Society with some additional artefacts and useful bits and bobs, but meant that we no longer have a home for the Camborne Road Locomotive. Teagles of Blackwater, the farm machinery manufacturer, very kindly came to the rescue and provided temporary storage space within their factory complex. Just as we are indebted to Quaife for housing the engine at Holmans, we must thank Teagles for their continued support, remembering the considerable assistance they gave to its manufacture.

John Sawle, our 'esteamed' Project Engineer, and John Woodward, who steered the engine Up Camborne Hill, are taking over the custodianship of the engine for 2006, and they will organise and man the appearances of the engine this year, including Trevithick Day and the West of England Steam Engine Society rally at St Agnes.

CNF

The new programme card for 2006/2007 is in preparation and will be sent out under

2006 PROGRAMME

separate cover. There will, however, be one change from the norm. Members have become accustomed to "Members Evening" being in July but for this year it will be June 16th. Those members wishing to contribute please contact Kingsley Rickard, 01209 716811. I am prepared to put up with the excitement of answering the 'phone!

K.J.T.R.

In the recent article in Journal No. 32, "Newlyn Deep Down", the late John Corin

DEEP DOWN

quotes from "Deep Down" by R.M. Ballantyne, first published in 1868. Members may be interested to know that in August 2005 a new printing, based on the 1912 edition, has been published by Diggory Press, an imprint of Meadow Books, 35 Stonefield Way, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 8DW, www.diggorypress.com.

R.M. Ballantyne's best work was "Coral Island". "Deep Down" is a good yarn, in similar vein, but based on Ballantyne's experiences living amongst mine-workers in St. Just.

W. Newby



CORNISH TIN AWARD

Arthur Fairhurst kindly brought the following snippet to light.

The Environmental Chemistry Group of The Royal Society of Chemistry has established a commemorative medal, for the Annual Distinguished Lecturer, made from Cornish tin. The inaugural presentation of this award was made in March 2006, to Professor Mike Pilling of the University of Leeds, who researches in the field of climate change and air quality.

In the year when Cornwall's mining

LINKS WITH PACHUCA

heritage is likely to receive World Heritage status, the mining towns of Camborne and Redruth turned down the opportunity of twinning with Pachuca, the capital of the central Mexican state of Hidalgo.

Pachuca and the nearby Real del Monte, became Cornish mining towns in 1826, when Cornish miners began to arrive in their droves to apply their technological prowess to rejuvenate the failed gold and silver mines. In this they were very successful despite the considerable difficulties of operating at over 10,000 feet in the Sierra Madre mountains, where existing infrastructure was poor to say the least.

The first contingent of Cornish miners arrived with 350 tons of mining and pumping machinery, hauled for 250 miles, by 550 mules, into the mountains. They then set to work to reopen and transform the old mines. They certainly succeeded in overcoming the difficulties, and there followed more than a century of gold and silver production. It was through the application of new technology and Cornish mining prowess, that the formerly abandoned mines, became fabulously wealthy.

The Cornish miners have left a lasting stamp on the towns with derelict engine houses and stacks, Methodist chapels and civic buildings proudly displaying their roots. The culture of region has also been infused with a Cornish tinge, with the pasty

(albeit chilli flavoured) well integrated into the local cuisine, and whilst rugby is the national sport of Cornwall today, it was the Cornish miners who introduced the game of football to Mexico and presumably South America.

Today, the Mexicans are very proud of their Cornish connections and in recognition of the disproportionate contribution made by the Cornish to the development of their region, they are awarding Cornwall with the prestigious 'Aluxe' award. This is due to be received by the British Ambassador on behalf of the Cornish on April 21.

Just as the hard-rock miners showed grit and determination to make a success of the Mexican mines, so the Mexicans today are determined to rekindle their historic links with Cornwall. They are now hoping to twin with Truro. Let us hope that Truro does not suffer with the same 'financial constraints' as Camborne and Redruth!

CNF.

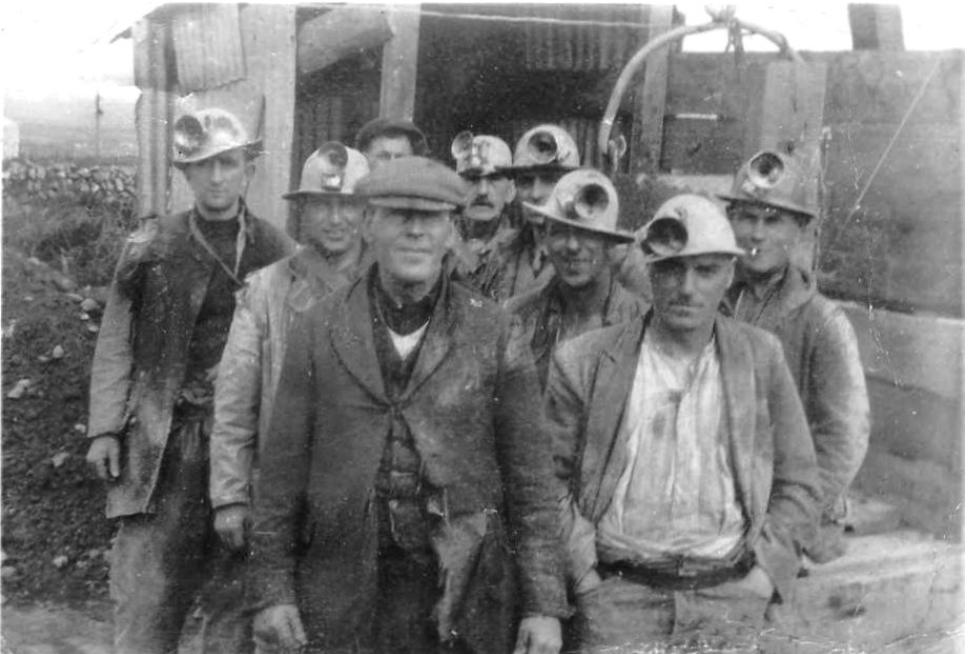
SOCIETY WEBSITE

Various updates have been made to the website (www.trevithick-society.org.uk) including some free downloads (screensavers and wallpapers) for members. For those members who have internet access this should be your first point of contact for the Society; any news will be posted here before it appears in the newsletter. All contact information for Council members is also here. Please use this facility for letting us have your views on what we do, don't or should; please also let us have your feedback on the website.

Pete Joseph

OLD MINING PHOTOGRAPHS

The two photographs below show miners at the Lady Gwendoline Mine in Breage in the 1920s. They were supplied by Denys Bryant whose grandfather is included. If any member has similar old photographs I would be pleased to include them in future newsletters.



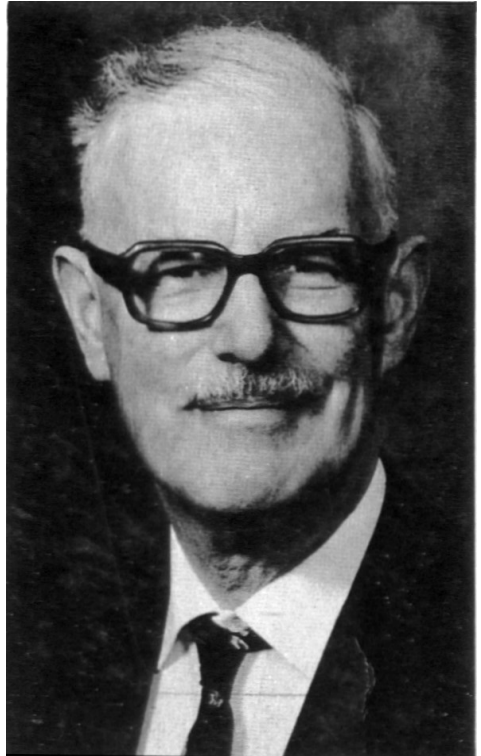
JUSTIN BROOKE

The death of Justin Brooke in November after a long period of ill-health has robbed the Society of one of its elder statesmen, and Cornish mining history of one of its greatest authorities. He was 85. Though not a Cornishman—he was actually born in Somerset—Cornwall became his adopted homeland after he took early retirement in 1972. More recently he was made a Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd in recognition of his extensive researches and writings on the activities of Cornish mining companies.

Justin was the grandson of the founder of Brooke Bond Tea and during his teens travelled the world, spending much of his time visiting tea plantations. His travels included Finland, a country he liked so much that he joined the British volunteers who helped the Finns in their struggle with Russia in 1938-9. He was stranded in Finland when World War II broke out and remained there, learning Finnish and Swedish and teaching English. He even worked as a lumberjack before returning to the UK and joining the Intelligence Corps.

He was sent to the Faroe Isles where he learnt the local language and Danish, and was among the first Allied troops to liberate Denmark. After the war he married a Dane, Kirsten, and they raised two children. Returning to the UK in 1965 he worked for the Inland Revenue for a short period before joining stockbrokers Stoop Vigree. It was while working in London that he began to develop a passion for Cornish mining and culture. His move to Marazion after retirement enabled him to develop this passion for Cornish mining and culture. His move to Marazion after retirement enabled him to develop this passion to the full, helped by becoming friendly with the late Dr. Hamilton Jenkin.

He began writing books and amassed a considerable private library including a complete set of "Mining Journal". Bona fide researchers were always welcome at his house, and who can forget the magnificent view of St. Michael's Mount from the picture window in his living room. Ever anxious to share his knowledge with others he deposited a set of his notes on Cornish



mining companies with the Cornwall Record Office under the title "The Brooke Index", so researchers can still consult his work albeit without the customary friendly chat.

Justin served on the Council of the Trevithick Society for a few years prior to a spell in politics with the Local Council. In the meantime Kirsten had left him and in 1992 he married again, to a Scottish lady Elisabeth, who had been living at Newbridge. Soon after he was diagnosed with cancer but continued to study and write. His translation of the diary of the travelling Swede, Henric Kalmeter, who toured mines in Cornwall in 1724-5, was one of his works of which he was most proud. It was published by Twelveheads Press.

In 1998 he received a degree from Exeter University, but thereafter he became less active. He had been in a nursing home in Hayle for five months before he died. He was remembered at a service in All Saints Church, Marazion, on 12 November. The

Society was well represented. Those of us who were privileged to know him remember him as a very special friend. The Society's condolences are extended to Elisabeth and the two families.

Kenneth Brown

Justin's book collection is to be auctioned by David Lay, Penzance, on 28 February.

The usual round of maintenance has been happening during the Winter. The

KING EDWARD MINE

"gardening gang", headed by Maureen Gilbert and Pauline Geake, and very proud of their new wheelbarrow and tools have certainly been busy. Weeds and general detritus have been cleared from around the buildings at the north end of the site, that is count house, dry and carpenters shop end, and clearing drains, both surface and underground is currently being done. A considerable quantity of gorse and bramble has also been cut back and burnt. It is surprising to look at photographs taken only a few years ago to see how invasive these species can be. One of the shaft cages from South Crofty, until recently stored at Cornish Engines, has been moved to King Edward, and pending completion of a plinth, will be stood vertically against the museum close by Engine Shaft and next to the much older cage already there. The pit looks better as a new pipe has been installed through the bund on the south side so that it now drains, the rubbish has been burned and some scrap disposed of. A new flagpole has been "donated" from the Holman site and plans are in hand to erect it soon. Its original use was to light their yard as it had arc lights mounted on it. Thanks go to member Rod Thompson for the use of his lorry to move both the cage and the standard. Work continues on the Holman winder where Pete Benbow has been busy fathoming out and making the parts for the reversing mechanism which has been missing for years. In the mill Gerald Bodilly, David Blight and Willie Uren

have been busy making parts for the frue vanner. Once restoration is complete it will be a unique artefact, as there are no others left out of the many dozens that worked in Cornwall. The Mine was represented at an Open Day at Troon on March 3rd. and thanks go to Sid Geake for putting together a collage of pictures to publicise the site. Plans are well in hand for the coming season although we are still awaiting the outcome of the problem of obtaining a lease, however we are looking on the positive side. Encouraging use of the site by outside organizations, both for educational use and for meetings is proving successful. Society Council meetings are now held there. The more the site is in use the less likelihood of that curse of the age, vandalism. Some of the Council, having been educated there, were probably responsible for some of the early defacements! Open Day, Sunday April 30th., the day after Trevithick Day, is creeping up on us fast and once again we will have the champion Camborne Youth Band with us plus a feast of other displays and entertainment and the mill in operation, so bring your family and friends for a day out. I am sorry to use a four letter but you might even offer to HELP!!!!

K.J.T.R.

DAVID BICK

With the death in January of David Bick of Newent, Glos., Industrial Archaeology has lost one of its leading stalwarts. He was 76. Though not a member of this Society he was nonetheless conversant with the moves to conserve engine houses, an activity with which he was deeply involved in Wales and the Forest of Dean.

In his professional life he was a mechanical engineer with Dowty of Ashchurch, a company best known for hydraulic pit props. In 1980, he won a Bramah Medal for his design of a hydraulic wagon retarder for railway marshalling yards. After taking early retirement he ran his own publishing company and produced more than 20 books covering mines and industries in mid-Wales and the Forest.

He founded and chaired the Welsh Mines Society and was particularly active in having engine houses and other historic buildings listed or scheduled. One of his more recent successes was persuading the Welsh authority, CADW, to schedule the unique Cornish under-beam engine at Bryngwyn, near Caerphilly, which is described elsewhere in this newsletter.

He was also a vintage car enthusiast and owned two restored models. Together we enjoyed a number of engine house-hunting excursions—not always successful—in his territory, but recently he became increasingly immobile. He leaves his widow and two sons to whom we extend our sympathy.

Kenneth Brown

Michell's Whim was the last beam winder erected in Cornwall, having been

MICHELL'S WHIM, POOL

manufactured by Holman Brothers in 1887, designed by F.W.Michell and supplied new to East Pool Mine. The shaft, named after George Aunger Michell J.P., a member of the management committee, was a double skip shaft of 1,500 feet in depth. The engine ceased work in 1921 when the shaft closed due to geological problems. Through

the efforts of Treve Holman, the then President of the Society, the mining company gave it to the Society and certainly saved it from the indignity of the government scrap drive of the second world war. The engine, along with the rest of the Society property portfolio was given to the National Trust in 1967 and is still in their care today. In 1975 the boiler house was rebuilt to the original design and an electric motor drive on to the flywheel shaft was installed. The turning of the flywheel, and hence the movement of the beam attracts visitors to this day, although the drive has been changed to a friction drive on the flywheel rim hidden in the pit. Over its long life the engine has suffered some wear, and Society member, the late Gordon Richards, made some adjustments. Eagle eyed members who have visited may well have noticed the tell tale sideways movement of the stuffing box on the top of the cylinder. During the last season ominous thumps have come from the machine indicating the piston was touching the bottom of the cylinder and examination showed that the beam and its supports were sinking. To save further damage the engine ceased operating before the season ended. During the winter the floors have been removed to reveal the problem. The beam and its supports were resting on two timbers laid along the bob wall, and inevitably, the weight on the timber had compressed it, lowering the beam, and upsetting the various dimensions. To make matters worse, the timber on the external side of the bob wall and open to the weather, had also rotted hence the bearing supports were subsiding at a peculiar angle. At the time of writing the old timbers have been removed and the beam jacked up to the correct height pending the insertion of two galvanised rolled steel girders as replacements. The top of the bob wall will then be made up with concrete, the floors replaced, hiding the modern replacement and, hopefully, will not need treatment for many a year.

K.J.T.R.

TREVITHICK DAY SATURDAY APRIL 29TH

As always the Society will have its usual trading facility in Basset Road on this important day for Camborne. This is also an important day for the Society and King Edward Mine as it gives us valuable publicity with something in the order of fifteen thousand people in town for the day. (This is a police estimate. I don't count them!). By being present we also fulfil an instruction in the constitution of the Trevithick Day Committee which states that some part of the day must comprise of education on an industrial aspect, so they are happy to see us. As always we require members to man the stand. Those who have helped before always enjoy their time. It's great! So come along, and let's see some new faces as well. You don't have to be an "expert", just affable!

K.J.T.R.

This is advance warning that we shall need help at the rally to man the Society

W.E.S.E.S. RALLY AUGUST 18-19-20TH

sales and display stand. This is the Westcountry's largest steam rally and is always a pleasure to attend. You are sure to meet many old friends and make many new ones.

The Society lecture on March 17th. possibly came as a surprise to many members. Cornwall was such a big name in

THE CORNISH MOTOR INDUSTRY

steam, mining and general engineering but hardly conjures up a great vision of car plants. Peter Tutthill certainly brought this subject to life in an interesting and amusing way. He used the term "motor industry" in its loosest sense, that is, any engineering outfit that produced a self propelled vehicle powered by whatever means. Peter brought along a wealth of brochures, many rare, and also showed on screen many

pictures of old transport and preserved vehicles. Many years of research by him brings to light that there were over sixty different vehicle manufacturers in Cornwall, from a company that made small size replicas for fairgrounds to the bigger firms like Rowes of Dobwalls who made a few buses and the famous Hillmaster lorry. Travellers through Dobwalls will still see Rowes Garage trading today. Who would have thought that vehicles were made at the Lizard or that there were five firms at Helston. This talk was quite a revelation. The audience were enthralled and the amount of information Peter had to hand was prodigious. He started the presentation at ten past seven and had to be stopped at twenty past nine as we had run out of time and were expecting the security man and his dog to turf us out into the night. Next year Peter hopes to publish a book on the subject so watch this space for an announcement.

The Society called a meeting in Camborne that was attended by Elayne Hoskin of South West Film & TV Archive, representatives of Cornwall Audio Visual Archive, Cornwall's 'Sense of Place'

HOLMAN FILM ARCHIVE



educational unit, local government authorities and interested former Holman employees.

The local West Briton had kindly carried a full-colour centre page spread on the subject.

The meeting concerned the making of an audiovisual record of Holman Bros Ltd and its employees.

The open discussion ranged from an explanation about the stock of old films, the method of processing to master DVDs and how the people of Camborne can be involved in the final product. The final DVDs would be aimed at telling the story of a company that was primarily responsible for the creation of Camborne as one of the



country's earliest and foremost exporters of heavy machinery to all parts of the world.

As well as providing items of general interest the DVDs would have considerable educational value for all ages and be a source of research reference that was unavailable in any other form.

There was discussion about how we should approach the former employees and their families. It was stressed that time could be of the essence here as memories fade and people sadly pass on.

Considerable enthusiasm was shown by all who attended the meeting and we will now seek funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

This Trevithick Society project involves people. It will require a great deal of support from its members and their friends. Those who feel they are willing to help in any way should contact Kingsley Rickard on 01209 716811.

P.M.H.

Readers will no doubt recall the two previous updates on the Brewery situation following its closure in newsletters 129 and 130. The writer has now been contacted by Messrs B.T.B., the company who were

REDRUTH BREWERY THE FINAL BLOW

dismantling the re-distributing the brewery equipment, to say they had virtually finished their job and were vacating the site on Friday March 24th., and so from that date the Society would no longer have free access. The Society wishes to express its gratitude to Owen Etches of B.T.B. for his help over the many months we were allowed access to record the site and to remove historical artefacts and records and also the useful items we were able to salvage for re-use at King Edward Mine. We were, incidentally, the only organization allowed such access. The Chinese owners, we understand, will now just abandon the site to its fate. I trust the older and visually pleasing buildings come to no harm given the reputation of Redruth!

K.J.T.R.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Story of Mining in Cornwall. by Allen Buckley. Cornwall Editions. Hardback. £45.

This book is a valuable addition to Cornwall's mining literature. Allen Buckley has given us a review of the development of mining—china clay and slate quarrying are included—from prehistoric times through to the present day.

In doing this he gives some delightful cameos of the personalities who have contributed over many years to our knowledge. Names such as Thomas Beare, Richard Carew, Jack Trounson: to many are just that—names. But here we can come to understand just who and what they were like. Similarly, many have discussed tin setts, early mine plans and documents; here we can see illustrations of them and gain the “feel” they give by their form.

Mining techniques are well covered, with careful explanations. Also the mineralogy and geology—it is enough said to note that Ken Hosking had been one of Buckley's sources.

Many of the pictures are remarkably atmospheric, helped by the large format of the pages (21½ x 29 cms.). To note just two: the scene from Trevaunance beach, St Agnes, in 1910; the wonderful Terence Cuneo painting of the middle chamber of Robinson's 80-inch engine at South Crofty. One can hardly appreciate today what feats of mining engineering were routine in the past. To those who have never experienced what this meant to be part of, they can be assured that Buckley has brought a touch of magic to give the “feel” of the time—it is almost like opening some amazing book in the library visited by Harry Potter.

As to criticism. Perhaps the publishers have here and there demanded the printers to computer enhance some of the colour illustrations: this reviewer does not recall the underground deep below adit in quite such a riot of colour; the heat, humidity and general darkness was not so redolent in colour display as demanded by a stylish suburban dweller. There is a hint, here and there, that the publishers have edited the

author's text without realising the significance of their efforts.

Overall the book is splendid. It well represents the trend to academically valuable books presented in a pleasingly attractive form. While illustrations seem to be spurned by academic intellectuals, they are excellent complements to a text, frequently adding greatly to the “information transfer”. The printers—Butler and Tanner, UK—have done a first class job in producing this attractive volume: the typeface matches nature and age range of the subject. This is a book that should be in the library of everyone interested in the history of Cornwall's mining.

BE.

Cornish Brick Making and Brick Buildings. by John Ferguson and Charles Thurlow. Hillside Publications. Hardback £18.99 and gatefold paperback £15.99.

Unsurprisingly, in a granite and slate region like Cornwall, historical references to brickworks and brick buildings are rare, and indeed a new book on the subject is the first comprehensive treatment of a neglected topic.

In *Cornish Brick Making and Buildings*, authors John Ferguson and Charles Thurlow demonstrate not only the historical significance of the subject but also show how closely it is interwoven with Cornwall's progress since the early days of the industrial revolution.

Illustrated with approaching 300 diagrams, plans, maps, drawings and photographs, many of them coloured, the first section deals with brick making methods through the ages, the second explores and rediscovers more than 70 brickwork sites and the final part identifies around 100 notable brick buildings.

Bricks came late to Cornwall. Relatively few significant brick buildings predated the later 1700s, such as Heligan, Trewithen (now cemented over) and Antony House, as well as town houses including Grove Place in Falmouth, Truro's Old Mansion House and Princes House and Launceston's Castle Hill House and Lawrence House.

Most of the bricks used to build these were probably imported, but from then on the pace of domestic brick manufacture accelerated. Charles Rashleigh installed a brickworks in the port that took his name, Charlestown, and in the 1840s Austen Treffry set up one in the harbour that he built at Par.

By now the demand for bricks from the dominant mining industry was growing and ships taking copper ore from Cornwall to South Wales smelters stopped off on their way back to pick up loads of bricks from Bridgwater in Somerset.

Lighter than stone, bricks were used by miners for the upper stages of their chimney stacks, the arches of engine houses, the floors of stables and as firebricks in furnaces and kilns.

The authors, provide detailed plans, elevations and photographs of brickworks, kilns and brick making machinery, as well as describing the technological changes that took place in the industry.

However, industrial brick making was just beginning to enjoy its heyday in the 1870s and 1880s when many operations came to a halt unable to continue following the crash in copper mining. Luckily the rapidly growing china clay industry came to the rescue and sustained other operations.

The Wheal Grey China Clay and Tin Company, east of Germoe, was acquired by claymaster John Lovering, and Carloggas brickworks in the clay country was managed by another leading clay producer, Edward Stocker.

Other works of the period stretched from the Tamar Firebrick and Clay Company near Callington and the vast works at Bealeswood near Gunnislake, the largest in Cornwall in its day, to St Day Firebrick and Clay Company with a capacity of 1.5 million bricks.

The growth of tourism, too, increased the demand for bricks and Tolcarne Brickworks, near Newquay, was established at a time when Silvanus Trevail, the architect developer, was planning one of his large seaside estates nearby. His project never really took off though, and neither did the brickworks.

The elaborate use of red terracotta and bricks was one of the hallmarks of Trevail's

buildings, evident in the Red Bank at St. Austell and the Headland Hotel at Newquay and reached its zenith in late Victorian and Edwardian times.

As the authors illustrate, rich red, creamy white or polychromatic facades gleam unexpectedly as we walk through Cornish towns, as at Foundry Square in Hayle, North Street, Marazion or Middle Street, Padstow.

Other curious relics pictured include the tiny glazed cream brick tram house at the top of West End, Redruth, and the even smaller former box-shaped gentleman's lavatory at Truro.

During the Inter-war years English China Clays created or acquired works to make building bricks, fire bricks, tiles both for domestic use and for their "dries", and one of the coloured plates illustrates their once popular Cornish Sunburn Fireplaces, sold at £22.50 complete, or £12 in a kit form.

However, the very success of china clay extraction created vast piles of waste materials, which could be made into concrete blocks. And so the last works producing bricks for domestic buildings ceased operations in the 1960s. When Wheal Remfry, which supplied specialist firebricks for china clay kilns, closed down in 1972, the industry came to an end.

Mining chimney stacks and engine houses have been lovingly preserved as reminders of Cornwall's industrial heritage, but most brickworks have disappeared without trace.

Fortunately for us, Ferguson and Thurlow have spent years painstakingly tracking these sites down, and their book is often the sole witness to their existence. An indispensable reference work for historians, architects and planners, the book will also give pleasure to all those interested in Cornwall's built heritage.

RP.

TREVITHICK SOCIETY EVENTS AND CONTACTS

April 21st 2006 - C.C.

The Crofton Engines. By Ian Broom.

May 19th, 20th, 21st - AGM Weekend.

May 19th - C.C.

A lecture by Charles Thurlow.

May 20th . Field Trip

Courtesy of Imerys.

May 20th - AGM at Wheal Martyn

Details separately.

*Meetings are held in the Lecture Theatre,
Opie Building, Cornwall College at 7pm.*

*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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