NEWSLETTER 145 OCTOBER 2009

THE TREVITHICK SOCIETY

Established 1935

Reg. Charity No. 246586

The BBC films the Puffing Devil with Kingsley acting as a mobile billboard for the Trevithick Society.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Elsewhere in this issue we welcome Martin Carr to the Council of the Society. He is a man who combines an excellent administrative background with an enthusiasm for the sort of thing we do in Cornwall. We are also delighted to have Keith Letchford as our link to Dartford, an important town that maintains very personal associations with Richard Trevithick to this day.

Readers are probably right when they think that I use this space to do little more than appeal for more help. It's heart-warming when we get a response and all our thanks are due to these two gentlemen. This doesn't mean that I will let up as you will also read that our excellent curator, for many years, has had to step down. Pete Joseph has endowed the curatorial position with his many talents and has done so much for the Society that it would be difficult to list all the facets of his input. I'm delighted to say that we won't be losing Pete but we will have to find ways of dividing his role so that the good work he started and developed can be continued; we are at a stage where we need to capitalise on that work. There are many ways in which significant parts of Pete's work can be absorbed by a group of people; for instance, Brian Jones has taken on the duty of proof reading and his baptism has been the re-print of *The Harveys of Hayle*. If you can read, write and tell the time (and use a computer!) I'm sure there's some way, no matter where you are or how insignificant you may think it to be, where you can help us maintain the contribution to this Society that Pete has made over the years. Thanking you in anticipation,

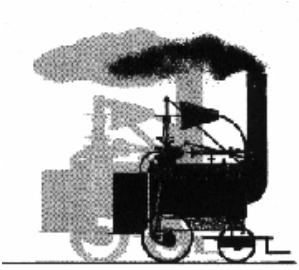
Philip M. Hosken

EDITORIAL

Congratulations to Tony Brooks who was made a Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd in September, in honour of his many years of dedicated service to the field of Cornish Industrial Archaeology. I had hoped to include a photograph of him receiving his bardship and commissioned a photograph for that purpose. However, in the excitement of fulfilling a commission, the photographer was not steady of hand and the resultant photographs were all blurred.

The Society has received a substantial bequest from the estate of Raymond Smith of West Drayton, Middlesex, who was a member for fifty years.

Colin French



Copy date for next newsletter: December 29th

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Below is a snippet from the booklet: *The Wolseley Album*, by Rod Ward, published by Auto Review.

A good number of our "Trevithick Society" readership, will well remember Wolseley cars, with illuminated car badge set in the radiator block, if only chased or stopped by one such Police car!

Fredrick York Wolseley, born in Dublin, emigrated to Australia, in 1854, had an English-born apprentice, Herbert Austin, (1866), join him, and jointly they developed the Wolseley Sheep Shearing Machine Company in Sydney, prior to bringing their patented expertise back to the UK. Later developing the Wolseley motor car.

Members may find the snippet below, on a much later takeover of Wolseley Cars by Vickers, interesting in that they were once engaged in so many different enterprises, including the casting of church bells.

Duncan Paul Matthews,
27 Trecarne View,
St Cleer.
PL14 5BS

Why would Vickers want Wolseley?

Edward Vickers, a miller, set up a steel foundry in Sheffield in 1828 with his father-in-law George Naylor, who was involved in another foundry, and Edward's brother William, who owned a steel rolling company. Naylor, Vickers and Co. made heavy castings including church bells. In 1854 Edward's sons Thomas and Albert joined the family firm. In 1863 a new larger factory was opened, in Brightside on the river Don, and in 1867 the firm became a public company, Vickers, Sons & Co. Expanding fast, they began to make ships' prop shafts, then propellors. In 1897 Vickers bought the Barrow Shipbuilding Co., renaming its Barrow-in-Furness yard the Naval Construction Yard. Vickers also took control of the Maxim Nordenfelt Guns and Ammunitions Co. The group was then renamed Vickers, Sons & Maxim: capable of producing every kind of heavy engineering and ordnance. Vickers had built a forge in 1882, in 1888 they branched into armour plate steel and in 1890 they built their first artillery piece. In 1901 the first Royal Navy submarine, Holland 1, was launched in the Naval Construction Yard. The profits from this continuous expansion allowed Vickers to invest in other promising areas of engineering, and they saw in Wolseley a way to get into the new motor car market, as well as other forms of light engineering. Wolseley was not the end of Vickers expansion. However, in 1902 Vickers took a half share in John Brown and Co., the Glasgow shipbuilders. In 1911 they took control of Whitehead and Co. to make torpedoes, and the same year the name changed to Vickers Ltd.

MODEL OF TREVITHICK'S 1804 LOCOMOTIVE

We frequently receive enquiries from engineers related to the building of model Trevithick locomotives, usually the 1804 Penydarren engine. Before we get into a deep discussion as to which engine pulled the first railway train take a moment to look at the enquiry from the Czech Republic. It is from Jiri Sajbrt who has an interesting website at http://www.steamer.cz. The models include a live steam version of the 'African Queen' that co-starred with Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn.

P.M.H.

CURATOR VACANCY

We are sorry to report that Pete Joseph, the Society Curator, is having to give up the position due to optical problems. Pete has done sterling work over the past few years in recording the ever increasing acquisitions of the Society, an article on which will appear in the 2009 Journal. He instigated the current system of numbering and recording the artefacts which are scattered across a number of sites, but largely concentrated at King Edward and Cornish Engines at Pool. This includes not only the obvious hardware but also a library of books, thousands of photographs and slides, both 35mm and glass.

A vacancy now exists for a curatorial role and would suit someone with good computer skills but technical knowledge of engineering, mining etc., although useful, is not obligatory as that expertise is available through members. Pete will be pleased to help the new incumbent in all aspects of this interesting position. It is hoped to transfer our records to the national system (Modes) shortly, which is being achieved through liaison with the Royal Cornwall Museum.

It is a matter of urgency that we fill this vacancy and any member who feels they would like to help can ring the Society Chatline 01209 716811 or Pete Joseph on 01736 364619.

2009 AGM POSTSCRIPT

In the July Newsletter I invited members who did not attend the 2009 AGM, particularly, those who live locally, to let us know the reason for not attending. This resulted in only six replies; two who were on holiday at the time of the AGM, one was overseas on business, one 'up-country' member who finds the travelling too difficult, one attended the AGM but not the dinner because the menu was not appealing. The sixth reply, the most interesting and constructive, was from a member who has attended AGMs for many years. He says the AGMs are boring and disorganised. My personal feeling is that nearly all AGMs, by their nature, tend to be boring since they are mainly structured to satisfy legal requirements and the contents reflect this. This correspondent also finds the switch from September to May was difficult but I'm afraid that was forced on us by the Charities Commission rules. However, having said that, there is no excuse for being disorganised and I'm not sure that the 2009 AGM was very bad in that respect so perhaps we have made some progress on that front. The Council will, I am sure, try to ensure that we are both well organised and interesting at the 2010 meeting.

There is still time for comments from anyone who wants to come forth. Meanwhile, you may be interested to know that we have already started to plan for next year.

George B Wilson

FIELD TRIP WITH A DIFFERENCE

It has been mooted that perhaps the Society could run a members visit to Allihies and the West Cork mining area of Ireland in early July 2010. Until we have some idea of numbers and the level of interest we cannot take the planning or costings any further. To help us in this please register your interest with the Secretary, George Wilson, as soon as possible. George's details are on the back cover of the newsletter.

CAPE CORNWALL STACK

The iconic stack at Cape Cornwall has been damaged by lightening and the National Trust are faced with a £25,000 bill for its repair.

CROFTY TO RE-OPEN

In the eleven years since the closure of South Crofty Mine there have been plans and rumours to the accompaniment of animosity and dogged determination by the mine owners on one side to stay in business and the regeneration authorities on the other to close them down. Matters cumulated earlier this year in a threatened Compulsory Purchase Order of the mine and its surrounding lands.

Now, in a complete about face, comes an announcement that Western Union Mines, the owners of the mine, the SW Regional Development Agency, Cornwall Council and the Camborne Pool & Redruth Urban Regeneration Company are to put a jointly agreed plan forward for Planning Approval that will see the re-opening of the mine within the next eighteen months to two years.

WUM say that in recent years there has been an investment of over £12 million and a great deal more is to follow. They are confident that their drillings alongside the previous workings have revealed 'astonishing' and workable quantities of tin, copper, silver, zinc and indium, a valuable metal for modern industries that is a close relative of tin and zinc and emits a cry similar to tin when bent. It is believed that this will be Europe's only 'polymetallic' mine.

It is intended that the present headgear will remain and become a part of a heritage centre with the mining operations on another part of the site.

This is an exciting step forward for mining in Cornwall and it is seen by the regeneration authorities as an opportunity that will create jobs and opportunities.

P.M.H

LOGISTIC SUPPORT

When it comes to moving heavy Society equipment and artifacts, we have to thank Rod Thompson who has made his lorry available on numerous occasions. For the enthusiasts among you it is a 1972 ERF, model 66GXB LV with a Gardner 180hp. 10.45 diesel engine. Its gross weight is 24t and tare of 9t. The lorry was supplied new to a farmer in Nottingham, then in 1978 it was sold to a fairground proprietor and spent the rest of its working life in Scotland. Rod bought it in 2006 and drove it to Cornwall from Aberdeenshire. We are delighted he did!

KING EDWARD MINE

At the time of writing King Edward has just closed for the winter having had a busy summer with visitor numbers increased over last year by a very pleasing 36% - so thanks to all volunteers for their hard work.

The hard work does not stop just because we have closed as we have routine maintenance and improvements to implement during the winter. Work is due to start shortly on erecting the building over the Holman winder and its adjacent compressor, the original building having been lost by fire in 1957. The compressor has already been dismantled and is undergoing refurbishment. Once the building is finished it is hoped to incorporate an engineering display featuring a number of the Holman Bros./CompAir artefacts to complement the winder. A number of these artefacts need to be brought up to display condition. Have we any volunteers who would like a small project? The work could be done on site or in the comfort of your own shed (or indoors if the kitchen table is strong enough!). Come along now! The Society Chatline is waiting to hear from you, 01209 716811, where you will find a sympathetic ear.

During the summer Eric Rabjohns and Tony Clarke have done an excellent job of making a new classifier to replace the existing one which is life expired and beyond further repair. The replacement will be fitted during the winter between school visits, as, during the exercise, the whole mill will have to be out of operation.

The meeting room in the Survey Office is now in regular use although some electrical work and minor fitting out is still to be completed. This room is now proving very convenient, not just for lectures etc. but for volunteer, management and Society council meetings.

Through our Irish members, Diane and Frank Hodnett, the Society and King Edward has a connection with Allihies, West Cork, where there were a number of Cornish mining copper. In 1845 the Cornish built a non-conformist chapel which eventually became disused and very recently has been converted into a mining museum with an addition built on the side to accommodate an office and tearoom. Back in August, Kevin and Christine Baker along with the writer met up with Diane and Frank at Allihies to forge a friendship link with the Allihies museum. The intention is to offer such help as we can from a distance. Their management group felt the meeting was very useful with suggestions put to them to improve layout, access, lighting and other aspects. I now issue a warning to intending visitors – their tearoom only sells home made delicacies and they are absolutely scrumptious. So, on your own head, or perhaps waist and hips, be it, if you incur excess baggage charges on the flight back!

On September 26th the Mineral Tramways wished to celebrate the end of their project and staged a repeat of Smoking Chimneys but on a smaller scale, so nine chimneys were lit providing a wonderful visual spectacle along the Great Flat Lode. King Edward supported this by providing a mini Open Day with free entry. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the day a success.

One new arrival to the site is a china clay sky tip winder which in recent years has been at Morwellham Quay in the Tamar Valley. In working days it operated at Treskilling Clay Works, just east of Bugle. This works was operated by the paper makers Peter Dixon & Son Ltd. and supplied clay to their plants at Sheffield and Grimsby from 1924 until 1941 when operations ceased due to the constraints of the Second World War.

And finally, as they say in all good news bulletins, congratulations to Tony Brooks, chairman of our company, King Edward Mine Ltd. and enthusiastic volunteer, who has been admitted as a Bard to the Gorsedh Kernow for his work at King Edward and his promotion of Cornwall's industrial heritage. Tony has worked vigorously for some twenty years in organising and promoting K.E.M. and he

now joins a small band of about a dozen or so Society members who have been similarly recognised in appreciation of their work for Cornwall.

K.J.T.R.

MINE ACQUISITION

The Carn Brea Mining Society has bought part of Great Condurrow Mine, which is close to King Edward Mine, and both sites were formerly used by the Camborne School of Mines for student training. CSM used King Edward Mine, both underground and at surface from 1901, but in 1921 the underground section of KEM was flooded by the closure of the nearby Grenville Mines. As a result underground training was moved to the Condurrow site, which had dry levels above adit.

Carn Brea's purchase covers the surface area used for training by CSM as well as the underground section. This includes the ladderway shaft, hoisting shaft (Vivians) with 1937 steel headframe, winder house, switch room, first aid room, fan shed and compressor house. Underground can be found air and water mains, track and some drills. The mine underground comprises two sections, old nineteenth century workings opened up from 1920 to 1936 and new workings developed since, showing how a Cornish mine was worked in the mid-twentieth century.

The Carn Brea Mining Society jointly manages King Edward Mine with the Trevithick Society.

BRIDGE REPAIRS

The Royal Albert Bridge is due to be subject to restoration and strengthening work in 2010. It is intended that it will be restored to its original colour. I.K. Brunel's bridge celebrated its 150th anniversary earlier in 2009.

THE BUCKLAND TREVITHICK PAPERS

The Society has recently received five full lever arch files of research by the late Stephen Buckland, 1935-2006. Stephen was a consummate historian who was at home in the great libraries and other institutions tracing, examining and carefully documenting information about subjects that interested him. His main interest was probably mills and he is remembered with affection by other molières for his devotion to his chosen task.

One of a series of drawings published in a booklet as a tribute to Stephen Buckland by the Mills Archive Trust, http://www.millsarchive.com

We are fortunate that Stephen's insatiable interests, always apparently with the past and the underdog, included early railways and Richard Trevithick. His pages of pencilled scrawl and some on an ancient, faulty typewriter that long since required a new ribbon, contain valuable information that sometimes slips comfortably into French or Franglais and might have been missed by a lesser ferret.

His molinology was passed to the Mills Archive Trust some time ago and the remaining files lay on the floor of his home until Alan Stoyle took them back to Herefordshire. Tony Yoward of Emsworth suggested that Robert Cox of Bridport might be interested and, fortunately, he contacted us and kindly passed them to the writer recently at Paignton. The files are now being painstakingly examined for the gems they contain. The sections dealing with Trevithick's 1808 'Catch-me-Who-Can' are in the hands of Dr Sanjay Rana, www.steamcircus.info

Stephen's work will clearly go a long way to dispelling much of the myth and Victorian romanticism that surround the history of Trevithick. Contact me for a full obituary of Stephen Buckland.

P.M.H.

A STAR AGAIN

From early morning to dusk the Camborne locomotive and its crew were the centre of attraction near Wheal Busy recently. The BBC's Science and History Department were filming for a prodigious series to be released internationally next summer entitled *The History of Science*. A researcher had previously spent a few days in Cornwall and a number of sites were chosen including the mine at Geevor and the Telegraph Museum at Porthcurno.

Filming consisted of many runs up and down by the loco in the hands of John Woodward, Mark Rivron and Kingsley Rickard. The presenter was Michael Mosley from the BBC One Show who claims not to ask anyone to do anything he has not done himself; this time he rode on the locomotive while talking to camera.

The BBC team, who had already been filming in Europe, then when off to the United States. It's good to know that Cornwall's inventiveness and industrial history feature so well on the international scene.

P.M.H.

STEAM

Advocates of steam power are acquainted with steam bicycles and gramophones, but there is always another application for this adaptable conveyor of energy. Juliet Jenkin, a member on holiday in Vancouver, tells us about the Gastown Steam Clock.

Erected in 1977 it is not as old as it looks. It was built by local subscription to enhance a rundown section of town and has become a great tourist attraction. It contains a Stuart Turner engine operating on the low pressure underground town heating system at 17 lbs/sq". It 'chimes' on every quarter hour and the five whistles at the top announce the hour with Westminster chimes.

While this is not the only steam clock in the world one wonders if the home of high-pressure steam should have one. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steam_clock.

P.M.H.

AEROFILMS

Earlier this year English Heritage invited a number of people in West Cornwall to a showing of a few of the many local aerial pictures taken by the former Aerofilms company. EH is undertaking the massive task of digitizing and cataloguing the stock of pictures. 62,864 glass plate negatives were used between 1919 and 1939; in total the company took or collected over a million images up to 2006. Members who are interested in flying or have a project that might benefit from an aerial view are invited to e-mail aerofilms@english-heritage.org.uk, to make enquiries and receive subsequent newsletters.

P.M.H.

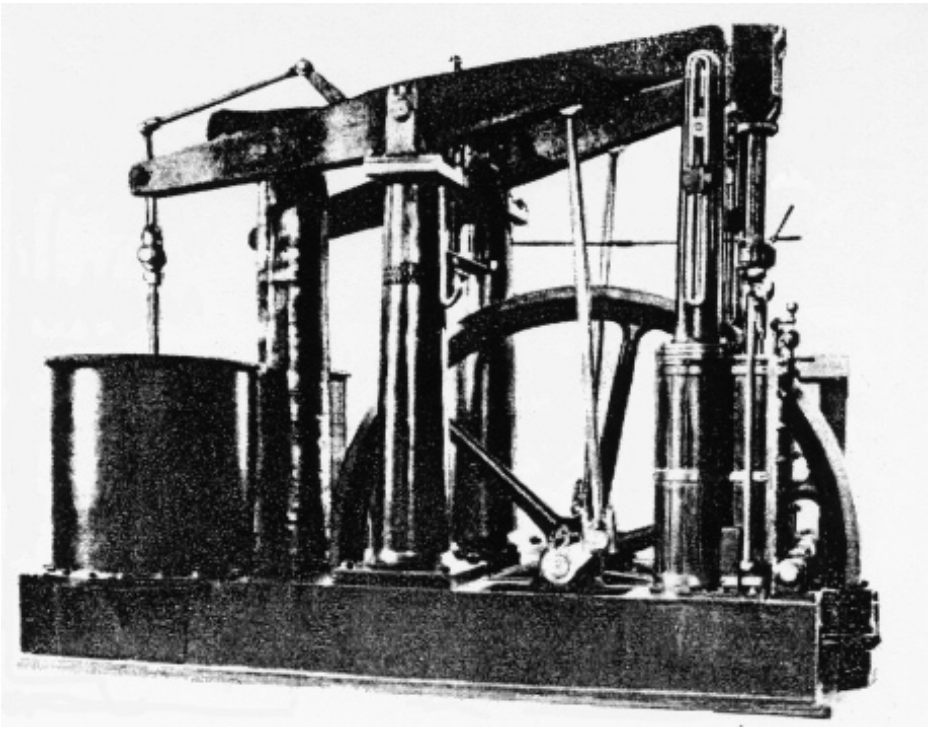
ST KEYNE BELLS

St. Keyne Bells, are hoped to be ringing out over the village again soon, after many years of silence. They are to be operated by a Nicholson Automated Electronic Hammer Chiming System, the tower being no longer strong enough to swing the bells by rope and wheel. The Tenor was cast locally in 1667 by the Penningtons of Stoke Climsland, and chip tuned.

Duncan Paul Matthews

STEAM BLOWING PLANT FOR THE ALEXANDRA PALACE ORGAN

Brian Watkins compiled the following information about the Alexandra Palace organ, following a recital he attended earlier this year. The organ is half-restored following a fire.



Alban Clarke, one of the Friends, has been doing some research on the early installation of the organ and has found this picture. It is of the 5ft. Double Beam engine, air compressor plant, which supplied the "wind" for the Royal Albert Hall organ from 1871. This engine, currently in store, is the property of the Science Museum, London, being acquired in 1921.

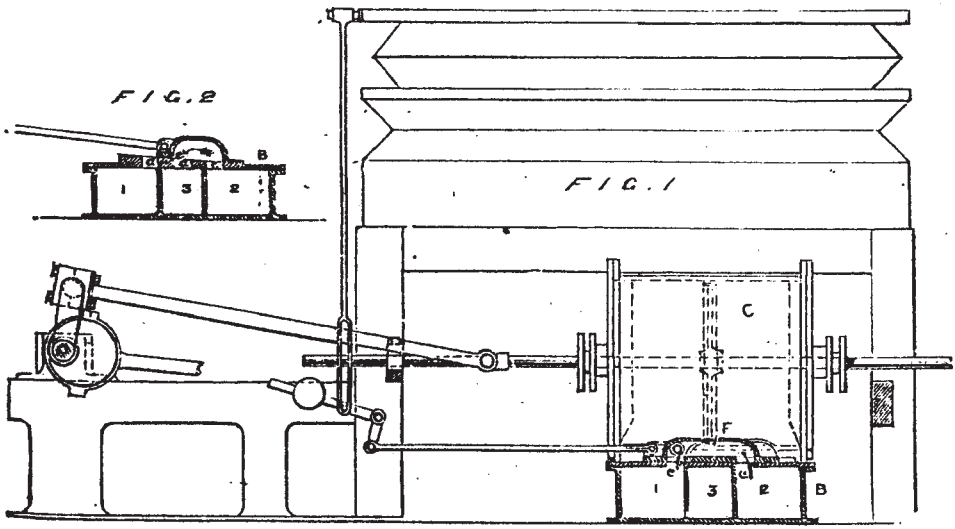
Two steam engines were used, one of 12 horsepower (9kw) the other 8hp. These engines were manufactured by John Penn & Son of Greenwich for the Alexandra Palace which were used until 1915 when concerts ceased. An electric powered blowing plant was fitted by Henry Willis at the 1929 rebuild.

On only one occasion did the engine let off steam! This happened when no engineer was present. Twenty-four hours notice had to be given to get up steam. Nowadays you just sit down, press a button, and there you are!

We can find nothing else about the Alexandra Palace engines. Of course if anyone knows more please contact me. The space where it had been existed until after the 1980 fire, but has now been filled in.

WILLIS'S ORGAN-BLOWING MACHINERY

The well known organ builder, Mr Henry Willis of Camden Town, has recently obtained a patent for a method of



supplying wind to organs by means of a bellows actuated by either steam, gas, or hot air-engines. The special features of the invention is the means taken to prevent an over-supply of air to the bellows without the velocity of the engines being required to be reduced. The object is attained by enabling the bellows, as they are filled, gradually to diminish the efficient action of the pump or its equivalent, and thereby to regulate the supply of air received from the pump. To prevent the overblowing of the bellows, it has hitherto been considered necessary either to retard or stop the action of the engine, or to diminish the indraught of the air as the bellows become inflated, or else to allow it to waste. In the case of single-cylinder steam-engines, hot-air, or gas-engines, it is understood that their speed cannot, at present, be sufficiently governed or cause to fall below a certain velocity.

This being so, Mr Willis provides the pump with ports and channels, which, by the aid of a slide valve or its equivalent, will form a connection between the opposite ends of the cylinder, and thus allow the piston, while still working at its full speed, to do little or no effective work.

Fig.1 is a side elevation, partly in section, of an air-pump connected with the crankshaft of a motive-power engine, and fitted with the apparatus for regulating the supply of air to the bellows of the organ. In this figure C is the cylinder of the air-pump, the piston-rod of which is connected by a rod to the crank-shaft of a motive-power engine. This cylinder is mounted on a hollow base B, and has formed in it three air passages. 1, 2, and 3, extending from end to end thereof, for receiving air from the atmosphere, conveying the same to opposite sides of the piston of the pump cylinder C, and conducting it to an air trunk leading to the bellows, Fig. 1. In the face of the hollow base B, at one end thereof are three ports a1 a2, over which slides a D valve (Fig. 2) for admitting air through the ports alternately to opposite ends of the pump cylinder.

The valve, when in action, opens to the air either the port, or the port a1, which are respectively in connection with the passages 1 and 2, and it thus allows of air being admitted into the pump cylinder on the receding side of the piston. At the same time the air on the advancing side of the piston is forced out of the cylinder, and, passing under the valve, finds its way by the port, a2, through the central channel, 3, to the air-trunk, and so to the bellows. The valve is operated through a connecting rod from the eccentric on the crank-shaft. Its motions, therefore, will always have the

proper relation to the movements of the piston of the pump cylinder. In order that the efficient action of the pump may bear the proper relation to the requirements of the bellows as respects the amount of air to be supplied thereto, the rising and falling motions of the bellows are made to control the action of the pump. For this purpose the passages 1 and 2, which lead respectively from the ports, a and a1, to the ports at the ends of the cylinder connect also with the ports, c and c1 (Fig.1) respectively. Over these ports is placed a D slide-valve, F, as shown in section at Fig. 1, which is connected by means of a couple of link-rods, and a weighted bell-crank lever with the top board of the bellows. A pin on the crank lever plays in a slot in one of the link- rods, and bears on the lower end of that slot. When the bellows is getting low, the weight of the crank-lever, being no longer supported by the link-rod, will thrust the slide-valve into the dotted position of Fig.1, at which time there will be no connection between the ports, c and c1. So soon, however, as the pump has charged the bellows with air sufficient to lift the crank-rod, and thereby rocked the weighted crank-lever, the slide-valve, F, will be caused to a communication between the ports, c and c1, and allow the air compressed on one side of the piston of the pump to flow to the other side of the piston.

Thus the energy of the pump, instead of being expended in forcing air into the already expanded bellows, will simply drive it through the passages, 1 and 2, in the hollow base, B, until a fresh supply of air forces the weighted bell-crank lever to slide the valve, F, on its seat, so as to contract the passage for the air from one part to the other, or wholly to cut the connection between the ports. Mr Willis prefers that the piston of the pump should fit loosely in its cylinder, relying upon its speed to draw into the cylinder and give the requisite propulsion to the air required for maintaining the supply to the organ.

To prevent pulsations in the large bellows a couple of pumps are employed. In Fig.1 the eccentric rod operating the supply valve; Fig.2 supplies the other part of the rod and the valve.

Transcribed from the *English Mechanic and World of Science*: No. 706, Oct. 4, 1878.

WELCOME

The continual call to arms within this Society occasionally brings results. We are particularly pleased to welcome two members who have joined us.

Martin Carr is a Penzance boy who left in the 1950s and now lives near Bath. As is often the case, the unique call of Cornwall's engineering past has stimulated his interests in a number of its voluntary industrial and transport organisations. He has had a creative working life as a Theatre Consultant and is currently a Trustee and member of the Management Group of the Bath Philharmonic Orchestra. He was closely associated with the design of the Hall for Cornwall and has often been involved in negotiations with local authorities.

Martin has kindly agreed to join the Council of this Society and celebrated his appointment by attending the Society's display the very next day at Wadebridge.

Keith Letchford comes to us after having been drawn to Cornwall as a lifelong admirer of its industrial history. He is already a volunteer at KEM and is willing to widen his interest which includes the history of Hayle. His background in Kent has been associated with Richard Trevithick's involvement with Dartford and he has developed links there that make him the Society's ideal representative in the town.

Dartford is keeping alive its Trevithick history and there is even talk of erecting a statue. We are grateful to have Keith as our ambassador in a town that has taken the inventor to its heart.

There is still room for more volunteers.

P.M.H.

EAST CORNWALL NEWS

In its early stages yet, but a project is being planned for 2010, based on engineers that were engaged in mines and mining in and around Liskeard/ Caradon area. These may chiefly include William West, The Loams and the Clymo Brothers.

Hopefully exhibits will be created by The Trevithick Society and other groups interested in Cornish heritage. The Trevithick Society particularly hopes to prepare school packs similar to those produced last year for the Phoenix 100 event. The 2010 project is to be based on engineers and engineering in and around Caradon. It is hoped that this project will assist in marking the celebration of the Trevithick Society's 75th year.

Presently we are compiling a list of all of the mines in the Caradon area that William West had involvement in and will be to putting these mines on a map.

If you feel you would like to assist in the project, have knowledge of the above engineers, archive materials, or specific engineering knowledge of their contribution, please feel free to contact John and Cheryl Manley e-mail teammanley@hotmail.com or tel. 01503 230768.

HOT ROCKS AGAIN

Another geothermal energy capture project is planned for Cornwall. The international, Falmouth-based GeoScience Ltd intends to drill 8" wells five kilometres below the former United Downs site at St Day near Redruth where the temperature is estimated to exceed 170 degrees Celsius.

The energy minister Lord Hunt, has agreed to invest £6 million into the scheme which could meet 2% of the UK's annual electricity demand.

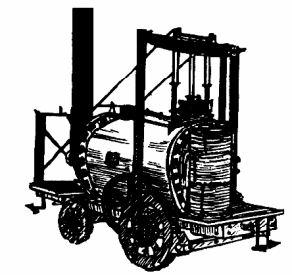
P.M.H.

HOLMAN FILM ARCHIVE

The July Newsletter, sent to local members, included an insert asking for volunteers to help with the work we are now doing on the Holman Film Archive. Members will recall that ever since Holman closed we have been trying to go ahead with a project to transfer over one hundred 16 mm films into a DVD format which would make them accessible to both Society members and the general public. We have now obtained funding to go ahead with this project, albeit in a somewhat different and more ambitious form. The South West Film and Television Archive has now digitised the films and we are co-operating with Azook in arranging a series of public showings of the films with the intention of getting former employees of Holman to come forward and have their comments recorded on the subjects of the films so adding to their interest and usefulness. This combined with other material held by the Society, will form the basis of an on-line archive of the history of Holman during the period covered by the films.

We are currently in the early stages of reviewing the DVDs to get them ready for public showing and it should be possible to give more detail on the project and an update on progress in the next Newsletter. Meanwhile we would still like to hear from any more volunteers willing to join the few we already have on this exciting project.

George B Wilson



LEVANT REPORT

Record numbers have been coming through the site this year, with some days topping 500 visitors a day. Numbers like this are hard to manage especially if the weather is not good and people are looking to get under cover. Tom Barr has enjoyed his second visit this year and has held three external Levant lectures around local villages during his stay. We also had a visit from one of the original divers that sealed the breach in the sea bed in the 1960s. Bart Bartholomew related many stories to Tom about those happenings, and also gave us a comprehensive list of the other men and divers involved.

The problems that we had with the air-pump rod have finally eased. After the new rod was made we were experiencing a lot of friction between the piston and the hot-well and this was tending to move the hot-well itself and also the cistern surrounding it. It was decided that the new piston rod was slightly shorter than the original, so various packing shims were tried in the socket to make the air-pump rod longer. After several attempts we think we have found the optimum thickness and a made-to-measure distance piece will be made over the winter shut down period and fitted. The movement on the hot-well and cistern is now minimal. Also during the winter shut down period, all engine bearings will be examined as they have now run for nearly 17 years and this will amount to a total of 32 bearings. When the boiler is serviced by Fultons in February, they will replace the blow-down manifold attached to the water gauges. This has been repaired temporarily by volunteers during the running season.

Work is now progressing well with repairs being carried out to the Electric Winder House and the toilet block. Various electrical work is also being done around the site. A vision panel has been fitted to the boiler house door so that we can see into the boiler house before opening the door. This was considered necessary after a fire in the boiler house some years ago.

Other work to be carried out over the winter period will be to the old ceiling plaster in the boiler house and renewing of the electric winder roof.

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the passing of two of our past volunteers:

- Nelson Hosking who amongst other things helped to rebuild the cooling pond, and
- Leonard Hosking who used his traction engine to bring the Cornish boiler down from Geevor.

Ron Flaxman

CORNISH INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERS PROGRAMME

19th November 2009
Stabilisation of Old Workings at Coombe Down, Bath. By Dr. A. Fisher & Dr. R. Narbutt of Hydrock Ltd.

10th December 2009
A Smarter Way to Manage Risk. By Mike Hallewell of SGS Minerals Services Ltd.

14th January 2010
Post Mining Remediation, Wheal Jane Case Study. By Bernard Ballard.

11th February 2010
Mine Feature Remediation in Cornwall. By Steve Dennis of Carnon Contracting.

18th March
The Tudor Tin Industry. By Allen Buckley.

22nd April
A.G.M. at 7-00pm followed by lecture at 7-30pm.
Gold Treatment in Newfoundland.
By Nigel MacDonald, SGS Minerals Services Ltd.

All meetings are held at 7-00pm at the Opie Building, Cornwall College, Pool. Trevithick Society members are most welcome.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

West Cornwall Branch

Meets at King Edward Mine at 7.30pm.

20th November 2009
Holman Films, part 1

15th January 2010
Holman Films, part 2

The above are short films from the Holman Bros. Film Unit. Discussion on the contents will be welcome.

19th February 2010
Trevithick, Man or Myth? Recent Revelations.
By Phil. Hosken.

19th March 2010
Coal and Ore Trade between Cornwall and Wales.
By George Wilson.

16th April 2010
To be announced.

22nd May 2010
Annual General Weekend at Hayle.
(Full details to be announced later)

Council Meetings are scheduled for 21st November 2009, 15th January 2010 and 20th March 2010.

East Cornwall Branch

Meets at various places, please check the programme for details.

1st December - 7.30pm at Liskeard Public Hall - an illustrated talk by John Manley exploring the fascinating interplay between the landscape and mining that has formed the amazing industrial scenery of the Caradon Hill area. The talk includes development of South Caradon Hill area. Guided walks to these sites will be arranged in next years programme. Refreshments will be available and a selection of Trevithick Society publications for those wishing to make any purchases.

26th January - 7.30pm at Liskeard Public Hall.
Extraction from the Landscape - by local historian and author Jill Thomas of St Neot, an illustrated talk about the rich industrial evidence that surrounds St Neot, from tin streaming on Goonzion Downs, to copper and zinc mining, slate quarrying and the industrial evidence of the china clay industry.

Saturday 6th February - 11am – 2pm meet in Car Park, Butchers Arms, St. Ive, near Pensilva - *A visit to the site of North Wrey Mine*. By courtesy of the landowner. There will be an opportunity to walk around this site which offers much in the way of archaeological remains (see photograph below). You will require stout boots and weather proof clothing and will need to be able to manage rough terrain as the site is on a steep wooded valley.

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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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