



SUSSEX INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

incorporating SUSSEX MILLS GROUP

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Summer Programme 1998

Saturday 18th July. Members' Meeting at Amberley Museum. Joint meeting with the Friends of Amberley Museum. Members and families may tour the museum from 3-00 p.m.

The main members meeting will be at 7-00 p.m. Details inside on page 2. Contact Bob Allen (01323 896724) **before July 10th**. Please note the 'phone no. on the visits card is incorrect !

Saturday 1st August. Mills Tour. Starts at Burlesden Windmill (SU 196 108) at 10-30 am. Contact Don Cox (01403 711137)

Sunday 20th September at 2-00 p.m. Saddlescombe Farm and the remains of the railways at Devil's Dyke. Joint meeting with the Society of Sussex Downsmen. Meet at Saddlescombe (TQ 270 114). There is limited parking space on the road, but the nearest car park is about 10 minutes walk away up the road

towards the Devil's Dyke (TQ 270 111) so will able bodied members please park here ?

Contact Ron Martin (01273 271330)

Saturday 17th October. Mills Meeting. 2-30 p.m. ~~start at Gatwick Zoo, adjacent to Lowfield Heath Windmill.~~ See p. 11

Contact Don Cox (01403 711137)

Saturday 28th November. Annual General Meeting. 2-30 p.m. at Haywards Heath Town Hall, Boltro Road, Haywards Heath. The after meeting speaker will be announced in the next Newsletter.

Contact Ron Martin (01273 271330)

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Members' Evening. Saturday 18th July.

The SIAS members' evening will take place at Amberley Museum this year. It is a joint meeting with the Friends of Amberley Museum. This is an opportunity for members of the society to share their interests and knowledge with others or just interest in Industrial Archaeology.

Don't worry if you have never spoken to a group before. The meeting is informal and talks can be anything from 5 to 20 minutes; with or without slides. We hope to encourage new speakers. The subject can be anything of historic industrial interest, not just in the counties of Sussex, but anywhere in the world! Perhaps it was something you saw on holiday and would like to share with others. Perhaps it is something you see regularly, but would like to know more about. Please let Bob Allen (01323 896724) know **before July 10th** if you have a contribution to make so that the necessary slide projector, overhead projector or video can be made available for you.

As an added incentive members are invited to visit Amberley Museum **FREE** with their families. You will be admitted free on production of a SIAS membership card after 3-00 p.m. Families arriving before 3-00 PM will have to pay the normal admission. Please note that the café is staying open until 6-30 PM to enable members and their families to have a snack or a more substantial meal before the main meeting, which will start at 7-00 p.m. Please make use of this facility, if only to have a warm drink, as the staff will be staying on late especially for us.

The SIAS has always had strong links with Amberley since we helped to set it up in 1979. It is hoped that eventually our archive will be housed in the museum. The exhibition of light railways is acknowledged to be one of the best in the country, and a ride round in one of the vintage Southdown or Worthing buses is an experience not to be missed. There are many interactive exhibits for younger visitors to try in the Milne Electrical Hall, not to mention water pumps and the like waiting for young (and older) hands to grasp them. Many craftsmen work on the site using their hand tools and there is a working blacksmith's forge and printing shop. If you have never been to this major industrial exhibition now is your chance!

Amberley Museum is north of Arundel at Houghton Bridge. The car park is in the station yard, or better still take the train to Amberley Station from Littlehampton.

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Northern Area Report

The Members' visit of the 16th May to the Vallance Aircraft Collection and Lowfield Heath Windmill was not well attended, possibly due to the fact that the full details emphasising that it was intended as a family day were not entered into the last newsletter and we were also in competition with the Cup Final match! However the dozen or so that did attend had a very interesting time with individual attention from the guides. We were able to investigate the 17 aircraft of the collection and sit in some of the cockpits too. The highlight was entry into the Avro Shackleton MR.3/3 with its impressive size and somewhat 'dated' instruments and radar. Fitted with bunk beds and a galley one could appreciate the long flights undertaken and the noise from the 4 piston engines !

The weather did us proud and the afternoon visit to the nearby windmill was a joy. Peter James who has been responsible for the engineering aspects of the restoration gave us a detailed tour and the excellence of the work being carried out is a great credit to both him and all those involved. The final stages are in hand and the next few months should see the full set of sweeps raised and cogs meshing once again.

At Ifield Watermill we have been liaising with the Weald and Downland Museum in the movement of some items of milling interest from Haxted Watermill (near Edenbridge). The owner has permission to convert part of the mill into domestic accommodation and was disposing of items not directly relevant to Haxted mill. We have been fortunate in acquiring an Armfield corn cutter, grinder and aspirator, and a self-contained flour/seed grinder complete with 30" approx. diameter stones, tentering gear, stone box and drive pulley etc. We were also able to acquire a metal 'proof' and wooden staff for checking/dressing millstones.

The bulk of the items recovered have been transported to Singleton, to be stored for possible future use. Any enquiries should be made directly to the Museum.

Ted Henbury

oooOooo

LESLIE MARTIN

Many will remember Leslie for his inimitable style and friendly demeanour and the work he put in on behalf of the Society. Members may like to know that a memorial plaque and clock is to be placed at Coultershaw Pump on Sunday, 20th. September at 1.00 p.m. and members of Leslie's family have been invited to attend.

Anyone who would like to make a contribution towards the cost of this should send it to Hon. Treasurer, Michael Bevan, 12, Charmandean Road, Worthing, BN14 9LB, marked for Leslie Martin Memorial Fund.

Michael Bevan

WILFRID RETZIMA BESWICK - 1906 - 1998

When one sets out to write the obituary of some people it is sometimes difficult to find enough to say. This is not the case with Wilfrid Beswick who died last month. Many of us have known him over the past years as a dedicated founder member of the Society and Chairman for a number of years, an authority on lime kilns and prehistoric ironworking and a practical man involved amongst other things with the restoration of Bateman's watermill. Whenever Wilfrid was at a meeting he was always the first one to come forward with some comment, often critical but always helpful about the proceedings.

Wilfrid spent most of his working life in industry, initially with various firms designing equipment for blast furnaces and gas holders in the iron industry. He was in the resident engineering staff for the construction work of lime burning plants, blast furnaces and gas making plant on the Isle of Grain. During the war Wilfrid was concerned with gas production and emergency gas supplies including number of gas plants for non-ferrous metals. At the end of the war he was requested by the Ministry of Supply to investigate metal industries in Germany and the UK. He was an executive director of several companies and chairman of Dry Gasholders Ltd.

In 1959 Wilfrid became senior partner in a professional firm of consulting engineers and industrial consultants with projects including work for electro-smelting of iron ore and steel manufacturing in Zambia and steel rolling mills and synthetic ammonia plant for Saudi Arabia, natural gas plants in Papua New Guinea and reports on industrial development in Kuwait and Rhodesia and Nyasaland and oil drilling and industrial plants in Libya.

Amongst his other activities Wilfrid was a fellow of the Institute of Energy. He served on Trade Missions to the Middle East and Canada, and as Member of various advisory committees and panels for the

Ministry of Education, the British Standards Institution for Chemical Engineering and the Engineering Divisional Council.

There is so much to say about Wilfrid that it is impossible to mention everything he did and with which he was involved. He was a delightful gentleman and always willing to listen to advise and help lesser mortals. He will be sadly missed by the Society.

RON MARTIN

SIR FRANCIS AVERY JONES (1910 - 1998)

One of the Society's eminent Members who died recently is Sir Francis Avery Jones. He was the doyen of gastro-enterologists worldwide. He was born in 1910 and qualified in medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in 1934. He developed a rapport with surgeons in the field of inflammatory bowel disease and became an authority on nutrition. He worked on many committees concerned with medical records, efficiency in the health service and gave many lectures to many important associations. Sir Francis has been a member of the Society for only the past five years and one of his recent interests has been the influence of steel roller military on the social and medical state of the country particularly in relation to the health of soldiers in the Boer War.

RON MARTIN

FRANK GREGORY (1917-1998) An Appreciation

With the passing of Frank the country has lost one of its foremost wind and water mill experts. From an early age Frank realised that the rural scene was changing forever and as more mills fell into decay or were demolished, he undertook a labour of love; recording those in his native county of Sussex in distinctive pen and ink sketches, the results of which the Society has recently published. His chosen profession as a wood working teacher encouraged thoughts of restoration and Nutley windmill and Batemans watermill had the early benefit of his skills.

I first met Frank at one of his superbly illustrated talks and was encouraged by his enthusiasm to join the fledgling SIAS of which he was a founder member. Shortly afterwards some "remedial work" on Jill Mill at Clayton, was being contemplated by the then Mid Sussex District Council and it was largely due to Frank's quiet confidence that a dilapidated structure was finally returned to working order using volunteer labour. Nearly every surviving mill in the county has benefited from Frank's ministrations and one of his last achievements was to assist in equipping his local mill West Blatchington with machinery.

The wind and water mills of Sussex have lost a true friend and those who restore, maintain, and operate them a companion with inexhaustible knowledge overlaid with a wry sense of humour. Frank dressed in miller's smock and felt hat at Shipley, explaining the workings of the Mill to my then young children, who were completely entranced, is an abiding memory. The proud sentinels on the Sussex hills are his epitaph.

JSFB

THE LOST MILLS OF SUSSEX - CROWBOROUGH, BEACON MILL

A sale notice of 1782 describes the Beacon Mill as newly built. It was then in the possession of Thomas Hoadley, upon whose bankruptcy in 1785 it was acquired by Charles Hoather of Malling Mill, Lewes. Hoather later sold it to Mr J Moon. During the latter's ownership, on the morning of 3rd March 1793, the mill was struck by lightning and set on fire, but the blaze was extinguished in time to save the greater part of the structure.

In 1839 the mill was owned by Farah Ashby and tenanted by Reuben Ashby, presumably a relative. Samuel Wickens was miller in 1845. The mill remained in the Ashby family until 1861 when Thomas Ashby, who was also connected with Fletching watermill, sold it to Richard Pratt. Pratt shortly afterwards bought Crowborough tower mill, which remained in the family for many years and which survives today

without cap or sails and with the tower reduced in height and converted to a house. The post mill passed from Richard to his brother Samuel, who worked it from at least 1874 until about 1890, when the stocks broke and the sails were subsequently removed. After the mill closed down a square turret was built on the roof, forming a look-out from which a marvellous view of the surrounding countryside could be had. To this were added at some point a brazier and a flagpole. The owner of the mill said he did this because he had grown tired of being asked by visitors to Crowborough where the Beacon was; he could point to the mill, and they would go away satisfied. These features rather spoil the structure's appearance, as did the four white wooden crosses nailed to its sides. Although aesthetically marred, the mill appears structurally to have remained in good condition for many years.

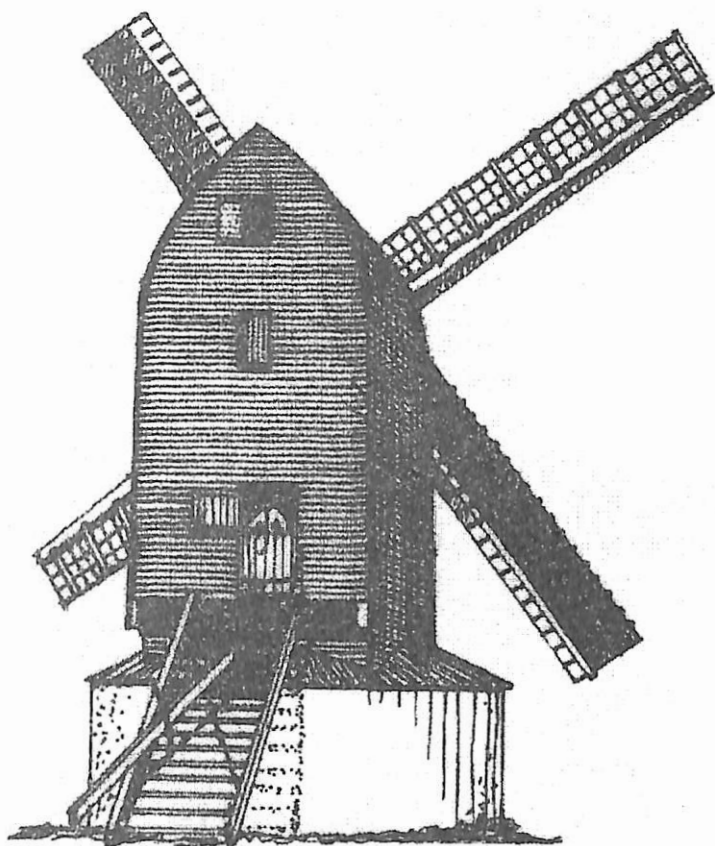
At some point between 1940 and 1944 it was burnt down (one trusts nobody had actually tried to light a fire in the brazier!) The charred main post and trestle still stood in the late 1960s; the lower portion of the former, along with the pintle, was later taken to Argos Hill mill.

Beacon mill had one of the largest post mill bodies in Sussex. It was tarred black with a metalled roof and breast and a single storey vertically-boarded wooden roundhouse. The post stood in an immense cast-iron shoe which rested on brick or stone foundations, and the spout floor was supported by the trestle. The sweeps, said to have been springs, were mounted on a round wooden windshaft. Wooden brake and tail wheels drove two pairs of stones, both 4 feet in diameter and each with its own governor. Auxiliary machinery consisted of a flour machine and a smutter. The sack hoist is said by Mr R Hawksley to have been of an unusual type.

The tar with which the mill was heavily coated would have assisted in prolonging its life, but also aided its eventual destruction by fire.

Guy Blythman

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CROWBOROUGH MILL

R.G. Martin

Subscriptions for 1998/9

A reminder that your annual subscription was due on April 1st usually appears in the Newsletter for that month. Enclosed with this newsletter is either a membership card or a form for renewal. I apologise if you have renewed since I received a copy of the records. REA



**SUSSEX
MILLS GROUP**



Frank Gregory.

Although the news of the loss of Frank Gregory is reported elsewhere in this newsletter I thought that I must put something in the Mills Section.

Frank was a windmillian through and through. His contribution to the mills of Sussex is immense and every mill in Sussex has something that marks the involvement of Frank. His knowledge of Sussex mills was tremendous and his ability to recall facts was evident right up to the last. He will be missed as a source of knowledge and information and it must not be forgotten that if it was not for Frank we would not have the papers of H.E.S.Simons to consult.

Programme of events

Alternative Power 1998 at Jill Windmill on 26th July 1998. Come and see not only the mill open but other activities.
Contact Simon Potter on 01273 842982 for further details.

Mills Tour on Saturday 1st August 1998.

This will start at Burlesden windmill at 10.30 am. The mill is situated just off the M27 junction 8. It is shown on the O.S. maps and is easy to find. From there we shall make our way back into Sussex. Use your own transport and make your own arrangements for food. There should be some pubs near at hand or bring your own sandwiches.

October Meeting on Saturday 17th October 1998.
This will be in the Village Hall at Shipley close to Shipley windmill.
There will be some discussion and we hope to have a speaker.
There will be a chance to look over Shipley windmill.

National Mills Day 1998

Thanks to Lawrence Stevens work on publicising this for the Sussex Mills Group the number of people visiting mills on that day was a large increase on the previous year. Several local papers carried news and advertised the event with the Sussex Express being the best with a full page article containing pictures of most mills in their area. Peter Hill and I were interviewed on Southern Counties Radio and I did a very short interview for the local station for Bexhill & Eastbourne. However I think the best visitor attendance was at Outwood Mill (yes I know it is in Surrey) where 1500 people came because there was a fete on the common in conjunction with National Mills Day. But how would you cope with 1500 people at your mill ?

Mills For Sale

Outwood Windmill.

Own a working post mill. Mrs Thomas has spent a lot of money ensuring that this mill is in working condition so here is your chance. Just a win on the National Lottery should get you the £750,000 required and there are two dwellings thrown in for good measure. Contact Humberts on 01403 218216 or Email on humberts2@aol.com

Bex Watermill.

Not much machinery here but a fine dwelling in nice surroundings. To the south of Midhurst in the village of Heyshott, it is yours for the asking price of £600,000. Further details from King & Chasemore on 01730 812456.

"Two Mills of West Sussex"

Cliff Gillam sent me a copy of West Sussex History, the journal of West Sussex Archives Society, in which is an article by Cliff concerning his ancestors, the Terrell family who were millers at the two watermills in Mill Lane, Crabtree between Cowfold and Lower Beeding. This covers some of the same ground as George Coomber's book on the Horsham mills. However it is well worth a read. The article covers 10 pages and copies can be had from Tim McCann at West Sussex Record Office at £2.00 including postage.

Lost Mills of Sussex by Guy Blythman - some corrections

Burgess Hill, St John's post mill (Jan 1995)

According to Hugh Matthews, author of "Burgess Hill" (Phillimore 1989), the mill was almost certainly built in 1796 and not 1769 (see pages 62 and 126 of above book)

Ninfield mill (October 1996)

This did not lose one pair of sails in 1930 as a postcard of 1928 shows that they had gone by then.

Selsfield Common mill (October 1997). It has been pointed out the mill could not have had 28 foot long sweeps spanning 54 feet.

Boreham Street post mill, Wartling (July 1997)

I should like to point out that the sketch was copied from a photograph by Donald Muggeridge.

Map references.

The following is a list of map references of the mills covered in the series and has been supplied by Michael Yates. The references are approximate as it is difficult to transfer sites onto the maps with references.

TQ 269231 Bolney

TQ 028015 Arun Mill, Littlehampton

TQ 315196 St John's Mill, Burgess Hill

TQ 878232 Peasmarsh
TQ 185064 Lancing
TQ 652144 Bodle Street Green
TQ 491944 Sutton mill, Seaford
TQ 701128 Ninfield
TQ 867189 Udimore
TQ 918323 Iden
TQ 664114 Selsfield Common, West Hoathly
SU 873058 Portfield mill, Chichester
TQ 513309 Beacon mill, Crowborough
TQ 523163 East Hoathly

Don Cox

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The Railways of the Devil's Dyke

The Steep Grade Railway at the Dyke, which has been erected by the Pyramidal Syndicate Ltd. of London, was formally opened on July 24th 1897, by Sir Henry Howarth, M.P.

The railway was constructed with a view to opening up commu-

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nication between Poynings and the other villages at the foot of the wealden heights and the Dyke Hotel and the railway to Hove and Brighton. The climb from the villages to the Dyke station is of course considerable, and, until the Steep Grade railway was formed, there was no other station on the low lying ground nearer than Hassocks. The new railway has proved another strong attraction to the Dyke.

The permanent way consists of a double line of rails laid on longitudinal sleepers which are notched onto the piles driven into the chalk and secured with bolts to prevent any slipping. The gauge is 3 ft. and the longitudinal sleepers are kept to the gauge by the bolts and distant tubes. The rails are of the flange type (35 lbs. to the yard) and are securely fixed to the longitudinal sleepers; while the ballast is maintained by transverse timber every 15 ft.

The line has been made in three gradients, the first for 240 feet from the top, being at the rate of 1 in 1.8; the second and steepest one is 1 in 1.5; and the lower and last gradient is 1 in 29; while the vertical curves between the different gradients have about 1,000 ft. radius - an arrangement which, besides being the most favourable for carrying out the work with the least cutting, facilitates, according to experts, the stopping and starting of the cars. The whole length of the line is 840 ft. and the hauling machinery consists of an oil engine developing 25 brake horse power, with a speed of 180 r.p.m. This form of motive power was considered the most suitable, owing to the fact that only at a prohibitive cost could enough water for steam raising be obtained at such a high elevation. The speed from the engine is reduced by gearing to 17 r.p.m for the main hauling pulley, which is 5 ft. in diameter, thus giving a car speed of 200 ft. per minute. The engine runs continuously, and the starting and reversing gear is arranged with bevel wheels, having a patent coil clutch for the reversing movement, which is actuated from the platform. This can also be used as an emergency brake, and there is a powerful brake on the shaft of the main hauling pulley, worked by a foot lever, also from the platform. There are two cars, as one descends the other ascends

The cars are connected by two steel wire cables, two inches in circumference, both ropes being equally loaded, while each is strong enough in itself to do all the work. The ropes are lead by guide wheels 3 ft. in diameter, to the main driving pulley. Spring buffers are provided at the other end of the line, and suitable provision is made for warning the man in charge of the machinery when the cars have passed a given point. Each car is designed to seat 14 persons. The principal feature of the cars are the brakes, which consist of four sets of steel jaws, these gripping the rails when the tension of the cable is withdrawn, and these can be actuated by hand wheels at either end of the car. The shape of the grip prevents the cars from jumping the track. The engineer of the railway is Mr Charles, A.M.I.C.E, of Brighton.

There is the WONDERFUL AERIAL RAILWAY, 300 yards in length, by means of which one is enabled, with perfect safety, to cross the Devil's Punch Bowl, in a car suspended from a strong cable. The delight of a trip on this railway can only be experienced, it is too delicious to be described.

But even these are not all the attractions of this popular place. There is a novel BICYCLE RAILWAY, where one can safely cycle, aye, and race too, if one wants to, with absolutely no fear of falling off !

Reproduced from the 'Devil's Dyke Times' a periodical edited by Mr J.H.Hubbard, owner of the Dyke Park estate and the proprietor of the Dyke Park Hotel from 1887.

The faded remains of these attractions may be viewed by members on Ron Martin's walk on Sunday 20th September.

WHERE HAS ALL THE FLEMISH BOND GONE ?

Flemish bond was introduced into England in the 17th century, one of the earliest buildings being Kew Palace in Kew Gardens. It consists of alternate headers and stretchers in each course and became the normal bond for use on domestic dwellings up to the advent of hollow walls at the beginning of the 20th century. It was not used so much on industrial buildings or on engineering works as English bond is much stronger than Flemish bond due to the unavoidable occurrence of straight joints in the latter.

I have recently had a holiday in southern Belgium and was surprised to find that all of the brick buildings I saw were built in English bond and none in Flemish. I was going to write this note asking "why ?". However on looking up R.W.Brunskill's book *Brick Building in England*, I find the answer on page 52. The likely source was Poland where Flemish bond has a very long history. He presumes that the bond spread to the Baltic posts and by way of the trade routes to England. The introduction of Dutch type detailing and gables coincided with this and the association with the Low Countries was spuriously made.

Incidentally my earlier mention of Kew Palace reminds me that on a recent visit there I found this building, which has recently been restored is now covered with red paint. This was apparently quite normal practice in the 17th century, on both brickwork and stonework and is known as a "shelter coat". It has the effect of evening out irregularities in the masonry where the work was not as regular as it might be. Personally I consider the effect to be ghastly and is redolent of people today who paint perfectly good brickwork and subsequently live to regret it.

RON MARTIN

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Mills Group

(Copy for the Mills Group section should be sent to D.H. Cox whose address is below.)

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711137
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LATEST DATE FOR COPY FOR THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER IS 14th SEPTEMBER
1998

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