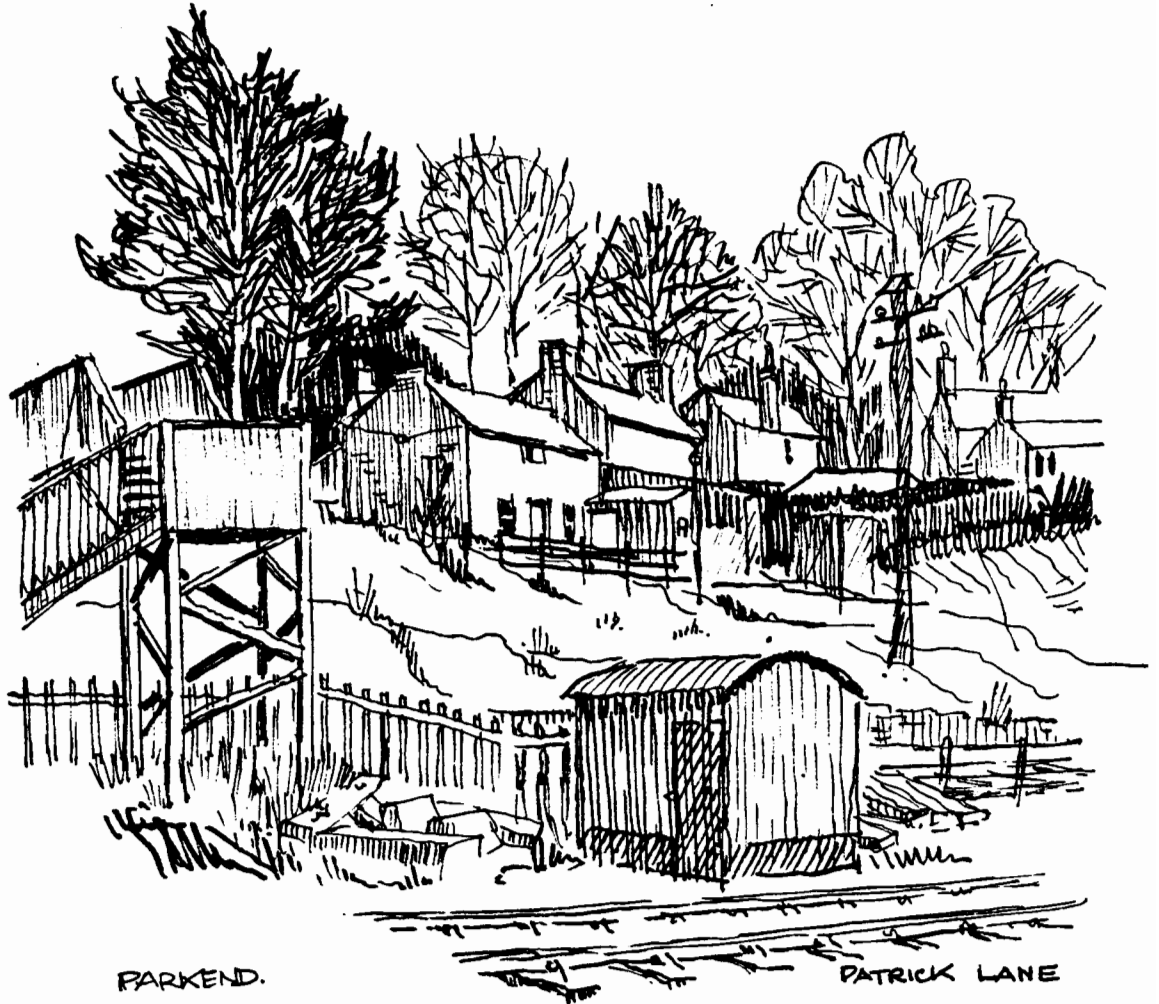


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The Aims of the Society:

To stimulate interest in, to record, to study, and where appropriate to preserve items of industrial archaeology, especially in the County of Gloucester.

EDITORIAL

1990 has been a busy year for GSIA as you will see from the report on the Society's visits. However, not all activities have been just for pleasure. Ray Wilson has been working on various aspects of Dunkirk Mills at Nailsworth. His first paper on Hosiery Manufacture represents a combination of documentary research and oral history, whereas his second paper reports on the progress of the conversion of the buildings themselves.

Tony Youles concludes his work on H.J.H. King, the local engineering firm now part of Redlers. On transport there is Christopher Cox's paper on Turnpike roads in the Stroudwater Area in the Eighteenth Century. One must not forget how important transport was then and roads which seem to us today as primitive were a great improvement on the earlier tracks. Then there is Stephen Mills' 'note' on Stowell Mill, an interesting piece of history.

There is a useful and interesting paper by a new contributor, Nicholas Kingsley, on Boulton and Watt engines supplied to Gloucestershire. The list will be most useful to researchers. Then another paper by Stephen Mills on Early Water Turbines and Hydro-electric Generating Schemes. Besides the main part on Chatsworth, there are interesting references to a number of local examples. Finally there is John Hopkinson's paper on How Good Was the Steam Locomotive? It is a paper for the technically minded but his last paragraph poses some interesting questions.

This is the first Journal of the new decade. The 1980s brought prosperity but with it came much re-development, some very necessary but it did sweep away old, derelict and decaying buildings. Some have disappeared without record and they may not have been important but we do not know. Therefore it is essential that records are made of sites likely to disappear so that their place in history can be determined at a later date.

Amber Patrick

Our cover illustration is thanks to Pat Lane who always provides us with such fine drawings. Thanks are also due to G.R. Bannister for typing; Dr R. Wilson for help with production and to N.C. Ferry for compiling the index for 1980 to 1989 inclusive, always a tedious task but much appreciated by members.

GSIA SUMMER VISITS 1990.

Visit to Gloucester Cathedral, Monday 19 March 1990.

Our first event attracted over sixty members and friends to the Cathedral for a conducted tour by the architect to the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester Cathedral, Mr Basil Comely.

The evening visit meant that we could appreciate the splendid lighting system that was installed in the nave in 1986. This had been specifically designed to highlight many of the architectural features.

We started in almost complete darkness and Mr Comely slowly brought up the lighting in a carefully controlled sequence to complement his explanation of the main features. We learnt about the problems they had with the ground settlement, aisles needing to be rebuilt and a fire which had permanently reddened the bases of some of the Norman columns.

Until it was pointed out to us, many of us would have missed how much one of the columns in the south aisle leans or the errors made in setting out the arches.

Moving on to the crypt we learnt how they like to see water lying in the pits in the floor which indicates that the clay soil is not drying out and shrinking.

The fan vaulting in the cloisters was particularly impressive. This area is now undergoing an extensive programme of stone cleaning using a very delicate 'Shot-blasting' technique.

We were shown the Chapter House and then braved the cold March air in the cloister garden to see the floodlit tower (under scaffolding) and the nave windows beautifully illuminated.

Mr Comely's informative and witty commentary gave us all plenty to consider on our next visit to the Cathedral. The estimated cost of the present restoration programme is £4 million and those attending had been asked to contribute towards this. In return for a fascinating evening we were able to forward a cheque for £125 for the restoration fund.

Ray Wilson

Visit to Stonesfield Village, Oxon, Saturday 31 March 1990.

GSIA chose a superb spring day for something like forty members and friends to descend on (and in most cases also under) Stonesfield village probably the best known of the Oxfordshire villages which used to produce stone roofing slates.

Our guides for the day were the Laughton brothers, George and Ted along with Ted's son John and the visit started at their Spratts Barn Farm where we were surprised to find the entrance to the mine is in the middle of the farm buildings. On the surface we were able to inspect various photographs and artifacts. The eagerly (?) awaited main event at Spratts Barn was the descent down about thirty feet on an extending ladder into the stone mine. Despite assurances before the meeting that there was just a short bent-double entrance passage followed by walking sized passageways the latter failed to materialise! With helmets, torches and old clothes the intrepid explorers scrambled along a winding passage which was usually about three feet square. The route the passage took seemed to be random under a flat roof - no doubt the 'Old Man' followed the good stone. In most places the walls of the passage were lined with drystone walling of 'deads' and columns had been left to support the roof - more cosmetic than useful? In plan the mine is roughly horseshoe shaped about 450 feet long, it was last worked regularly in about 1910. The return journey

from the end did not seem so far - then there was the climb back up the ladder!

Once out of the mine we went round the village, firstly to the house of Mr George Laughton which has a private museum of rural industrial and agricultural by-gones including many manufacturers' nameplates from machinery, an early one-way plough and an enormous pair of scales. Outside the house next door was a stone block which appeared to have the the fixing holes for a tramway plate.

The next visit in the village was to a house, "Hillside", under restoration, during the building of an extension an entrance to a mine was found under what was to be the lounge. After considering making it a feature of the lounge it was decided to make a short diversion so that it could be entered from a manhole outside the picture windows. We could only see the diversion and the top of the shaft going down under the house - the sight of the top of the ladder was very tempting. The final site was behind a cottage alongside the Methodist Church with a very fine stone slate roof showing the diminishing size of slates towards the ridge. As his contribution to the building of the church the then owner of the cottage and the mine cut and fixed the stone slates for the roof. By now our numbers (and enthusiasm?) were flagging, after all it was very sunny, so only about fifteen went to the head of the shaft under an innocent looking sloping roofed shed, of these about half a dozen made the descent down a vertical fixed ladder with a guard rail. This was a great pity because this was more complex than the first mine. Two main passages and a third shorter one went off from the bottom of the shaft about 45 feet below the surface. The two main shafts were dry and about two feet high and three feet wide and as at Spratts Barn appeared to follow a random route. There is reputed to be a date (1905) at the end of one of the passages. After giving our thanks to the owner who must have wondered what he had let himself in for we returned to Spratts Barn.

Back at the farm we gave our very grateful thanks to the Laughton family and set off homewards after a very enjoyable and interesting visit.

Gerry Bannister

Visit to Worcestershire, Sunday 22 April 1990.

Our first full day outing was to the neighbouring county of Worcestershire. Nearly forty members and friends enjoyed visiting a very varied selection of sites under the guidance of Roger Tapping and his two colleagues from the Worcestershire Industrial Archaeological Society.

We met our guides at Junction 7 of the M5 and immediately set off on a coach tour of Worcester. The city has some very fine industrial buildings such as the likes of Lea & Perrins and Heenam and Froude. We saw these plus a number of others not so well known. A brief stop was made at Lea & Perrins where we were welcomed by Bryan Keogh the firm's accountant (and a member of Worcestershire Industrial Archaeological Society). We saw a fascinating machine used until recently in the manufacture of the famous sauce and a display of some of the many packages in which the sauce has appeared throughout the world.

Leaving the city we went to the old hydro-electric station at Powick Bridge. The fine building is empty now and will probably be developed for residential accommodation. We walked across the fields to see the weir and watercourse which supplied the station.

Next at Holt Fleet we saw Telford's bridge of 1826, much of the ironwork of which had been clad in concrete in a strengthening scheme of the 1930's. A short walk brought us to the lock and weir of the Severn Navigation. Here the organisers had "arranged" for the Severn Iris to pass through the lock five minutes after we arrived! The vessel has been much altered from her days as a river tug with the Severn and Canal Carrying Company and based at Gloucester.

On this occasion we did not visit Dick Brook but the coach stopped on the bridge and we heard about the furnace and forge operated by Andrew Yarranton in the seventeenth century.

Lunch was taken near the canal basins at Stourport-on-Severn. Here the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal joins the River Severn. Members toured the complex of basins, graving docks and locks at their leisure. Some walked a short distance down river to the vinegar factory and the site of the old Stourport Power Station.

The small village of Wolverley provided us with two remarkable sites. The first was the old Rover/Alvis works built in the hillside. From the public footpath we could see the entrances of the four main tunnels which ran back for about 440 yards and had interconnecting transverse tunnels. The factories were built about 1934-1939 as a secure base for manufacturing engines for use in tanks and planes.

The second site involved tunnelling into the hillside on a much smaller scale. Here we saw a number of rock houses, some of which had been occupied until recent times. It is thought that they may have been constructed by the navvies who dug the nearby Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

Our main stop of the afternoon was at the Churchill Forge. This is a fascinating small nineteenth century spade and shovel

works. It is a rare survival of a number of similar small forges for which the area was famous. There are two large waterwheels, hearths, hammers and other machinery. An interesting display of the tools made there has been arranged.

We rounded off the day at Droitwich, looking firstly at the recently restored Droitwich Canal near the town centre, secondly we went to the High Street to see the spectacular effects of subsidence on the buildings caused by long term brine pumping.

Back in Worcester our guides were warmly thanked and very soon we were back at our starting point after a very enjoyable day.

Ray Wilson

Visit to Shipton Mill, Tetbury, Friday 25 May 1990.

The cars of about 20 members filled the yard at Shipton Mill when we paid a Friday afternoon visit to this working corn mill, courtesy of the owner Mr John Lister.

The mill buildings had become very dilapidated in the early 1980s when Mr Lister came from London. His aim was to start a business producing wholemeal flour. A lot of his early milling equipment was bought second hand. Much of it bears the name of the famous Gloucester engineering company Simon Barron. It was bought from sales at Avonmouth Mills which was closing down. Shipton Mill also has a pair of mill stones but most of the flour is produced by roller mills.

The mill has now been painstakingly restored and additional warehousing added. The latter is a timber framed barn that has been transplanted from Herefordshire. The watercourses have been restored and a waterwheel is being constructed to replace the one removed during the war.

After the full tour of the mill and grounds we thanked Mr Lister for kindly showing us round. Several members took with them purchases of the wholemeal flour to try their hand at baking with locally grown, locally milled flour.

Ray Wilson.

Visit to Gloucestershire Record Office, Wednesday 13 June 1990.

Our member, Mrs Kate Haslem who is the search room supervisor and Mr Paul Evans were our hosts for this special evening visit. About 20 members attended what was intended to be an introduction to the Record Office for members who had not previously used any of the services on offer. However, there

was plenty to interest the regular users who had come along to see behind the scenes.

Mrs Haslem gave an introductory talk before the party was split into two groups to tour the facilities. The map store created a lot of interest as did the display on conservation. We were able to enter the large strong rooms with their carefully controlled environment which ensures the best storage conditions for the vast number of documents stored there.

Finally we enjoyed looking at a display of documents which had been laid out by our hosts. These covered a wide range of subjects of interest to local industrial archaeologists. This had the result that there was considerable reluctance to leave at the end of our allotted time.

Our thanks are due to Mrs Haslem and Mr Evans for giving up an evening to give us a very interesting insight into the work of a Record Office.

Ray Wilson.

Visit to Beer and Bridport, Sunday 1 July 1990.

It is a pleasure to report that a full coach load of 55 members and friends went on our midsummer outing down to Devon and Dorset. We were pleased to welcome some members from the Stroud Museum Association, the itinerary having been suggested by Lionel Walrond, Curator of Stroud Museum.

Our first stop was at the Beer Quarry Caves. Here we spent over an hour underground with one of the founding members of the group which has recently opened up the workings to the public. Beer stone was much prized by stone masons as newly quarried it is soft and easy to carve but hardens on exposure. Its creamy-white colour and smooth texture made it an excellent medium for many uses.

It is found in several cathedrals, notably Exeter and Winchester. It can also be found in parts of Gloucester Cathedral.

The underground workings were first used in Roman times. Quarrying had continued on a production basis until the beginning of this century. The vast man made complex of lofty caverns cover some 60 acres. Throughout the centuries the stone was hewn by hand. Many of the quarry men had left their mark in the form of signatures, drawings and inscriptions on the walls of the caves. Many examples of the masons' work with the stone are on display underground at the entrance to the caverns.

A picnic lunch was taken at the site and we then made our way east along the coast enjoying the splendid views out to sea. Soon we arrived at the ancient town of Bridport, famous for its

rope and net making industries. Here we met our guides Anthony and Francis Sanctuary. Mr Sanctuary was born into the rope and net making trade and has spent most of his working life in it. Mrs Sanctuary has been associated with the town's museum for many years. They were thus well qualified to show us the main industrial and historic features of the town. These included an old rope walk soon to be demolished, net makers' cottages, an old Friend's Meeting House and much more.

From the town we took the coach along seemingly impossibly narrow lanes to our guide's home in the nearby village of Uploders. Mr Sanctuary showed us his private museum of the industry while his wife prepared tea for us all. This was enjoyed in the tranquil surroundings of their lovely garden. Reluctantly we left Uploders and made our way via Honiton to the M5 motorway. From there it was a straight run home after a splendid day.

Ray Wilson.

Visit to the Lister-Petter Works at Dursley, Tuesday 17 July 1990.

To many people the present Lister-Petter company was better known as R.A. Lister and Co., or just 'Listers'. The amalgamation with the Petter Company occurred about four years ago. The engineering company was established in Dursley over 110 years ago. It now concentrates on the manufacture of small diesel engines for pumps and generators. We learnt that the company was facing fierce competition in this market, particularly from the Japanese.

Our evening tour started with the extensive computer facilities. These cater for the more than just production at Dursley and a subsidiary company has been set up to sell computer services to a number of organisations that are linked to Dursley by a modern telecommunications network. From here we entered the large area where the engines are tested before dispatch. Some engines were seen undergoing lengthy endurance tests. Working backwards through the production cycle we next saw the assembly shop and then the machine shop. In the latter we saw three generations of numerically controlled machine tools which produce a wide range of components used in the various engine types.

The highlight of the visit must have been the foundry. The production schedule had been altered for our benefit. We were able to watch a pour from one of the main furnaces. This proved to be a very spectacular and memorable experience.

Our tour complete the 24 members were taken to the Listers Social Club where a buffet supper had been laid on. Here a vote

of thanks was given to David Mayne and his colleagues for giving us all a most interesting and enjoyable evening.

Ray Wilson.

**Social Evening A Walk Around Nailsworth, Thursday 16 August
1990.**

This year we visited Nailsworth for our Social Evening. As in previous years the intention was to take a general look at an area and not just concentrate on the industrial archaeology.

Our guide was our member, Mrs Betty Mills who has published a history of the town entitled a Portrait of Nailsworth. We met in Old Market near the the "new" centre of the town which was only created in the 1960s by the construction of a new road. Here we heard the background to the creation of Nailsworth as a separate parish which happened as recently as 1892. After looking at a number of sites in the town we followed a pleasant field path as far as Lot Mill. This had been the base for the engineering firm H.J.H. King. Nearby we saw the extensive premises of Hilliers the food processors. This long established firm was famous for its bacon but has had to diversify into a number of other food products.

We moved over to Forest Green from which a good view was had of Dunkirk Mills which is undergoing conversion into flats. Dropping down to the Valley floor we then followed the line of the old Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway for about half a mile to its terminus near Egypt Mill. This has been converted into a public House and restaurant and provided members with refreshment after a very varied and interesting walk.

Ray Wilson.

**Millstone Quarry Walk, Forest of Dean, Sunday 23 September
1990.**

About 20 members met in the National Trust car park high up above the Wye at the Kymin. From here the magnificent views over Monmouth to Abergavenny, the Black Mountains and the Brecon Beacons could be enjoyed. However, our walk was to take us south along Offas Dyke path for about a mile before descending the steep slopes in Lord's Grove. Our leader was David Mullin Director of the Dean Heritage Museum Trust. He has been tracking down sites of millstone quarries in the Forest of Dean and he was showing us some of his findings. Field walking has located more than 20 quarry sites identified by abandoned circular stones. In Lord's Grove the material used for the stones was quartz conglomerate. We saw some stones that had received most of the necessary dressing and had their central

hole completed. It must have been exceedingly frustrating for the workmen to have rejected them as scrap at such a late stage. After a hefty scramble back to the top we had just about enough breath to thank David for a most interesting afternoon.

Ray Wilson.

Visit to National Railway Museum on Tour at Swindon, Saturday 13 October 1990.

Compared with the full coaches on earlier trips it was a fairly small party who journeyed to Swindon. After some navigational difficulty, we could see the Swindon Station, but not get to it, we arrived at the Old Swindon works "B" shop. (Will industrial archaeologists want to preserve the Swindon traffic system?)

In this old erecting shop the National Railway Museum from York were exhibiting a goodly selection of steam locomotives from Puffing Billy to Evening Star. Pride of place (after Puffing Billy) perhaps went to Mallard, so highly polished as to be almost impossible to photograph. there were some unusual steamers, a Fairlie, a Beyer-Pearbole, a Sentinel and a fireless and an assortment of electric and diesel locos, a diesel hydraulic bogie and a horse drawn "Dandy-car".

A special feature of the exhibition was a selection of Royal coaches of various vintages, a far cry from the local sprinter.

After feasting our eyes on this collection most of us went to the adjacent "Great Western Museum", newly re-arranged and the Railwayman's cottage. On leaving Swindon we diverged from the direct route to look at some Thames and Severn canal features. First stop was at Marston Meysey, where by kind permission of the occupants we were able to see the lengthman's Round House, which is being restored and the bridge over a very short stretch of canal in water. We then had to go back through Cricklade to get onto the old road to look at the Cricklade Wharf House. Now used for agricultural purposes and isolated from any visible canal remains, this structure is essentially intact, with the house in the centre and warehousing on each side and at the back.

In gathering dusk our last call was to look at the Cerney Wick Round House and the lock alongside, where the chamber has recently been restored.

Jim Simmons.