

*Received 18 April*

#### NEW ENTERPRISES

Bob Turner, proprietor of 'Brummagem Trip Boats' who runs charter, educational and public trips from Sherborne Street wharf in Birmingham has recently taken over the lease of the Canal Shop and Information Centre at 2 Kingston Row near the centre of Birmingham. While continuing to stock books on canal matters, he proposes to extend his coverage to include natural history, railways and all aspects of industrial archaeology. Himself a member of the Association, Bob is prepared to offer a 10% discount on all purchases of books prints and souvenirs to AIA members. The address of the Centre is 2 Kingston Row, Birmingham BN1 1NU and the telephone number is 021-236-2645.

One compensation for the sinking pound is the fact that more and more overseas visitors are now able to savour at first hand our wealth of tourist attractions. Among ourselves we may take our industrial archaeological treasures for granted; but it is not until one meets people from other European countries and realises how much of what they once had has been swept away by war or neglect, that the realisation emerges that Britain is to industrial archaeology what Italy is to Renaissance art; we have incomparably the best range of sites to offer. **Swan Hellenic Tours**, who have for many years offered lavishly-organised 'special interests' tours all over the world usually accompanied by well-qualified guide-lecturers, are now offering a 10-day tour of England and Wales devoted to industrial archaeology aimed at overseas visitors and priced at £275. The guide-lecturer in this case is Gordon Payne, chartered engineer and fuel technologist and author of 'A Field Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Surrey' to be published shortly by Phillimore.

In Bristol the City Corporation is promoting new interim uses for the City Docks, largely engineered by I K Brunel and Jessop. Among the recreational uses for which tenders are being invited is the provision of two floating restaurants, to be housed in historic ships. One of the sites is in Cumberland Basin, with views of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, and can accommodate a vessel of up to 120 ft long. The other site is at the end of St Augustine's Reach close to where Bush's early 19th century tea warehouse has recently been successfully converted to house an art gallery, restaurants and suites of small offices. In this case a vessel of up to 270 ft long is sought. How sad it is to recall that, less than 10 years ago, but before the present belated surge of civic concern for the historic features of the docks, the White Funnel paddle steamer *Bristol Queen* was offered to the Corporation for a similar use but was towed away and broken up when terms could not be agreed for her use as a restaurant.

Waterworks pumping stations continue to offer themselves for conversions to museums of working steam. At Hove the Goldstone Pumping Station has been undergoing such a metamorphosis during the past two years. The station was built in 1866 to supply the Brighton district with water. The original compound rotative beam engine by Easton and Anderson, installed when the station was built, still survives as does a similar engine by the same maker installed ten years later to meet increased demand. Some years ago Brighton Corporation relinquished responsibility for the station to the Southern Water Authority. Jonathan Minns, a London engineer and consultant to Christie's on engineering relics, set about reversing the decline in the station's condition which inevitably followed the stopping of the steam engines. A Grade II listing was obtained for the building, partly on the merits of the unusual polychrome brick. The 1875 beam engine was restored to steaming order. Having obtained a lease on the building from the Southern Water Authority, Minns moved in a number of

important items from his own collection of engineering treasures, including items by Watt, Trevithick, Maudslay, Hackworth and the Stephensons. A new lavatory block has been built to match the existing brick buildings and the coal store is being converted into a 5,600 sq ft exhibition hall. On October 26 the new enterprise opened its doors as the Brighton and Hove Engineerium. The museum is open every day from 10.00-16.30, and some of the engines are in steam every weekend. The general theme of the display is the development of the reciprocating steam engine; among the items to be seen are the engine which first generated electrical power for the Crystal Palace, and another generating set which won a prize at the 1889 Paris Exhibition. To keep alive the skills associated with making and maintaining such machinery, up to ten apprentices a year will be accepted for a comprehensive engineering course, combining practical skills in metalwork with an appreciation of the historical forces shaping the development of engineering practice. A six-week course is offered, and the first trainees are expected to begin in January 1977. Among their first jobs is the restoration of the 1865 Easton and Anderson beam engine, parts of which were lost during the time the station was disused. Major benefactors to date include the Southern Water Authority, the Historic Buildings Council and Christie's, who will hold their thrice-yearly sales of engineering material at the Engineerium rather than at their London salerooms. Admission: Adults 40p. Children and OAP 15p. Further details from Brighton (0273) 559583.

South Yorkshire County Council has recently opened as a museum the water-powered cornmill at **Worsbrough**, south of Barnsley. The present mill building is thought to date from 1625. A Hornsby oil engine of 1911 has been installed to replace the 19th century steam engine which supplemented the water power when the demand for flour outstripped the existing capacity of the mill. An interpretive centre nearby helps visitors to understand the history and working of the mill. There were more than four hundred applicants (including two from Fiji!) when the post of curator was advertised two years ago, and a high standard has been achieved in restoring the mill from near-dereliction. A well-designed A3 leaflet provides just enough information for the visitor to understand it all as he goes around, with the aid of excellent artwork.

**Waterways Bookshop Ltd.** is the name of a new venture dealing exclusively in canal literature and aiming to co-ordinate through a single channel related service such as painted canal ware, photographs, trips and hire boat services and other facilities at present only available from different sources. An associated enterprise, Canal Bookshop Ltd, will deal in second-hand materials. A long lease on the BWB workshop at Claydon on the Oxford Canal has been negotiated, and eight other shop sites are under consideration. Further information from Michael Hanford, 52 Park Street, Bristol BS1 5JN.

#### AVONCROFT MUSEUM'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Museum's Annual Weekend Conference will be held from 1-3 April 1977 at North Worcestershire College, Bromsgrove. This year's subject, 'English Windmills and Windmilling', is particularly appropriate since the official opening of Avoncroft's own windmill coincides with the first day of the conference.

This post mill was rescued from Danzey Green near Tanworth in Arden in Warwickshire and has been re-erected and restored to full working order at the Museum. Wind and weather permitting, the mill will be sailed to grind corn during the conference for the first time since its restoration at Avoncroft Museum, after standing idle and decaying for