



The ASSOCIATION for INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Conservation and MSC schemes: A cautionary tale!

When the current recession began to bite and government sponsored MSC schemes seemed a convincing palliative to rising unemployment figures, local authority plans for using unwaged labour on conservation projects caused mild excitement in many preservation groups. On the face of it, if one could present a good case to the local planning office, backed by evidence of enthusiastic and regular site work, maybe an appropriate scheme could be devised and one's meagre workforce supplemented with an injection from Job Creation/YOP/Community Service/YTS or whatever the current MSC initiative was called.

But anyone attending national or regional IA conferences recently cannot fail to be aware of an increasing disquiet at the way some of these schemes have developed for, whilst there are museums, societies and preservation projects which have genuinely benefitted from MSC aid, an increasing number of industrial historians are becoming alarmed at the end products of many others.

At Saltford, mid-way between Bath and Bristol, the developing Bristol brass industry established a battery mill in the early 1720s. Battering brass involved subjecting it to constant hammering to form hollow-ware vessels. The metal work-hardened under this treatment and needed annealing or heating, at regular intervals to normalise the grain structure. An improved design of annealing furnace was developed by the Bristol Brass Company and four of these were erected at Saltford. One is still there, structurally quite sound having now been repaired, and with sufficient interior remains to make interpretation of working practices possible. Since 1964 one or two individuals have become aware of its importance and since then over £18,500 has been raised by this small group to ensure that a structure which metallurgically is quite important in a European non-ferrous metal context, remained intact for future generations of industrial historians. Firms such as **Rio-Tinto Zinc** and **McKechnie Brothers** in England, and **Stolberg Metallwerke** in West Germany have shown a financial interest whilst visitors to the site in the last twelve months have included, for example, representatives from the **Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, Bochum** (the German National

Mining Museum), the **Hindustan Zinc Company from Udupur, India** and the **Musée de Louvain-La-Neuve** in Belgium, where there is an impressive collection of medieval brass artifacts. In 1979 members of the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society, including those with a special interest in the Saltford furnace, were approached by the Avon County Planning Department who suggested a joint venture, the setting up of the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust, ostensibly to carry out conservation work on industrial sites in the county but to concentrate in the first instance on the Saltford Brass Mill. It seemed a good idea and BIAS agreed to help, and raised money to pay legal fees involved in creating a trust able to receive public monies from the Department of the Environment and charitable organisations.

For the first few years, although the AIBT did nothing to help with the finances at Saltford but in fact depleted them to an extent with administrative costs, the BIAS labour force met regularly on the site, cleared vegetation, pointed walls and generally prepared for the time when the much vaunted MSC presence would assist in their long-term plan, to turn the site into a museum of the Bristol brass and copper industry.

They began to have doubts, particularly when an Avon Industrial Buildings Trust committee (by then infiltrated in a seemingly militant tendency manner by a majority of Avon Planning/MSc people) decided that '... *as the Trust now wishes to pursue a more wide ranging restoration and conversion programme ... scheduling by the Department of the Environment might, in the short term, prove to be an unnecessary encumbrance*'. Soon afterwards, the AIBT produced plans to build holiday-flats within the site reducing the space available for a metallurgical museum to a minute proportion of the whole area and proposing architectural features completely out of sympathy with a Grade 2 listed building.

In January of this year the AIBT submitted their proposals to the Wansdyke District Council Planning Department who published the statutory notice required for Listed Building Consent and invited comments and/or objections. So far objections have been received from several individuals and:

- The Association for Industrial Archaeology.*
- The Banwell Society for Archaeology.*
- The Centre for the History of Technology, Science and Society at the University of Bath.*

The Saltford furnace is viewed by delegates to the 1985 Brass and Zinc conference. Second left: Dr Paul Craddock (British Museum), extreme right: Dr H W N Sommerlatte (Switzerland) and 2nd right: Lalit Gurjar (Hindustani Zinc Company).



Council for British Archaeology Group 13.
Historical Metallurgy Society.
The Mendip Society.
Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (Wind and Watermills Section).
Saltford Residents Association.
Keynsham and Saltford Local History Society
The Bristol Industrial Archaeology Society.

The Wansdyke Planning Committee meeting was arranged for March 12th but on Thursday February 27th English Heritage scheduled Saltford Mill as an Ancient Monument thus putting an entirely different complexion on any planning proposals.

The moral is two-fold. Firstly one should look at suggestions made by any 'official' organisations with a great deal of care and perhaps ponder whether the apparent advantages will be so very obvious in a few years time. Secondly it is worth emphasising yet again that there is absolutely no substitute for enthusiasm. Let your local CBA Group, the AIA, the Historic Buildings Record, English Heritage, the Royal Commission etc know of your work and interest. Apply for 'Listing' or 'Scheduling' where it is appropriate, and above all, measure, photograph and record. All these things were done at Saltford and have proved essential. The Saltford saga is not yet ended and everyone interested in preserving the site free from commercial adulteration is now alert to what could have happened. But the future is now more assured.

Baynards Station Restoration. The Surrey Industrial History Group has presented its 1985 award for restoration work carried out during the past 10 years at Baynards Station south of Cranleigh.

The station, which is on the former London Brighton and South Coast Railway line from Guildford to Horsham, closed in 1965 during its centenary year.

Ten years later it was acquired in a derelict state by Fraser Clayton and Linda Malings, who have devoted themselves to restoring the station-master's house and the associated waiting rooms, goods shed, platforms and gardens.

The photograph shows Linda and Fraser outside the station holding a plaque featuring the group's logo. This was presented to them by the group's chairman, Prof Alan Crocker, at a social evening held at the University of Surrey.

Following the presentation Fraser Clayton gave an illustrated talk on the restoration work.

Reproduced from the Surrey Advertiser.

Birmingham Railway Museum had the most successful operating season of its 15-year existence in 1985, clocking up 35,000 visitors during the year. Visitor Services Manager, Roger Crombleholme, commented 'Much of this 52% increase in public support must be attributed to the success of our GW150 Steam Events and in particular the 'Shakespeare Express' trains to Stratford in June. But the dismal summer weather undoubtedly led to the Museum being 'discovered' by many extra visitors in search of a day's steam entertainment'.

In 1986, the Museum is stepping-up its pattern of steam events and offering steam operation every Sunday and Bank Holiday from Easter until the end of September. Highlight of the operating season will again be the 'Shakespeare Express' package of trains which will run between Birmingham and Stratford on June 7th

and 8th using both the Museum's flagship locomotives *Clun Castle* and *Kolhapur*. Passengers will travel in BR Mk 1 First Class stock and there will also be the option of riding in the GWR 12-wheeled Royal Saloon No 9001.

Mill Green Water Mill Appeal. Around £5000 is still required to finally restore the Mill Green Water Mill, near Hatfield, to working order.

The last stage of restoration involves the construction and installation of a new water wheel and associated machinery which will cost £35000, towards which the Mill Green Water Mill Restoration Trust have received grants from the Historic Buildings Commission and from Welwyn Hatfield District Council. It is the hope of the Trust that visitors to the Mill will see the wheel turn once again this year and a special appeal has been launched to raise the final amount.

The 17th century Mill, which last ground corn in 1911, stands on the River Lea and remained idle and neglected until 1979 when the Mill Green Water Mill Restoration Trust was formed with the aim of restoring and preserving the Mill as a building of architectural and



historical interest to be open to the public.

Since then the Trust has raised in excess of £33000 to enable considerable work to be carried out to the machinery and framework of the Mill — paid for by grants and by donations from visitors to the site and to the adjoining Old Mill House Museum.

The latest phase of the restoration was carried out by Millwrights International, a specialist firm who in March 1985 restored the large oak timbered frame which supports the main machinery.

The Mill is open from Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 5 pm and from 2 to 5 pm at weekends and bank holidays. It is hoped that by the summer visitors will be able to buy a bag of Mill Green flour freshly ground on the premises!

Further information about the Mill and how to make donations can be received from the Curator, Christine Johnstone, at Hatfield 713162. Donations can be sent direct to the Hon Treasurer, Mill Green Restoration Trust,

c/o The Old Mill House Museum, Mill Green, Hatfield, Herts.

Gloucestershire Aero-Tech Collection. During recent months discussions have been held between various individuals interested in the formation of a collection of items associated with the aircraft industry, in particular items developed and produced within Gloucestershire. All concerned have been of the opinion that because of the long involvement of various firms in the County with aerospace and associated matters it would seem appropriate that a collection of items of historic interest should be established and located at a suitable place associated with the subject.

Background to the Proposal for an Aero-Tech Collection.

- 1 To give a focus for the considerable local interest in the design, manufacture and use of everything associated with aviation.
- 2 To honour the tremendous achievements of the area in this field.
- 3 To retain in the area historic and interesting objects that at present have no long term home.
- 4 To rescue for the future the work of today and



Mill Green Trust Chairman Tom Edmondson and Curator Christine Johnstone with part of the mill machinery.

succeeding years, which otherwise might be discarded because of the pace of development.

- 5 To form the basis of an industrial heritage collection with a potential for tourist and specialist interest.

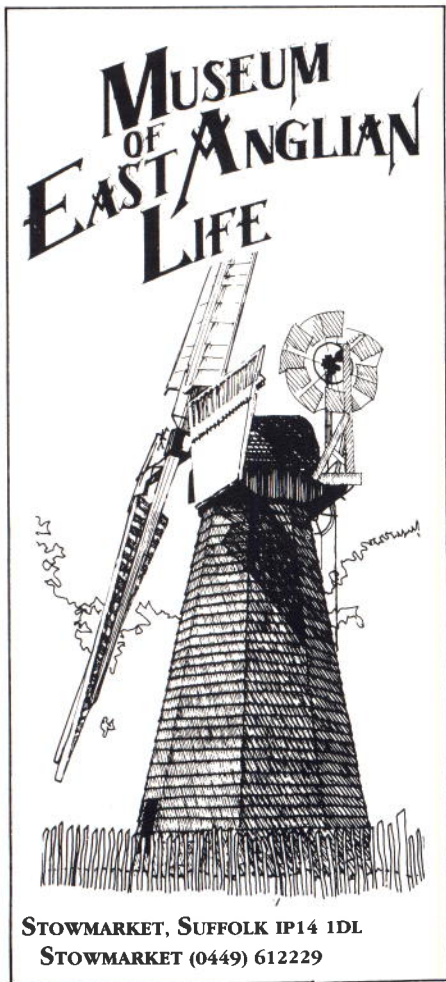
An invitation has been sent to all the companies, clubs and individuals known to be concerned with the chief air stations. The local authorities whose areas have had some special connection have also been notified.

We hope that a small input from many sources will get the idea airborne!

Enquiries to Councillor Aimbury Dodwell c/o the Mayor's Parlour, Municipal Offices, Cheltenham GL50 1PP.

Museum of East Anglian Life: The AIA often objects to loss of industrial buildings, and is sometimes faced with the problem of assisting owners or local IA groups to find satisfactory future use for redundant premises. One solution is to move the building lock stock and

barrel and Museums such as the Museum of East Anglian life will sometimes provide a new home. This Museum is on part of the Abbots Hall Estate at Stowmarket in Suffolk, and re-erected the Alton Watermill which would otherwise have been lost under the waters of the Tattingstone Reservoir in the early 1970s. Now—with the help of a grant from the English Tourist Board — the Nineteenth Century workshop and warehouse from the Bury St Edmunds engineering works of Messrs Robert Boby have been saved and re-erected on the Museum site. The Eastbridge wind pump is another successful rescue story — this time in conjunction with the Suffolk Mills Group. The Museum is open from the beginning of April to the end of October, from 11 am to 5 pm on weekdays and Saturdays, and on Sundays from midday to 5 pm.



Endangered Sites Report:
AIA Council Meeting, February 22nd 1986

New Cases:

Saltford Brass Mills; application for renovation scheme with four flats inserted and small museum: objection lodged to this application, and the policy of Avon Industrial Buildings Trust.

Arc Works, Chelmsford: request from Chelmsford Industrial Museum for support in getting buildings listed.

Huddersfield Canal Lock No 1: restoration through Huddersfield Polytechnic site.

Hunslet Mills, Leeds: part demolition (but which part?) of 1838 Fairbairn mills, considered unsafe.

Hurstoncoaux Windmill: removal of 'top wooden section' due to dangerous conditions.

Hanover Street, Liverpool: demolition of derelict warehouses for car park.

Spirella Building, Letchworth: demolition of timber buildings, addition of first floor extension.

Portabella Dock, London W10: construction of 4-storey office and car parking.

GLC Fire Station, Queens Road, Wimbledon: demolition.

Other notifications:

- Warehouse, St Peters, Ipswich: demolition.
- High Level Bridge, Gateshead (also Newcastle): further renewal of decking and drainage.
- Freeman's Place, Durham: demolition of former carpet factory for redevelopment.
- Legrams Mills, Bradford: part-demolition, nearly all non-listed additions.
- Old Colwyn Bridge, N Wales: retrospective application for replacement of plates and parapet.
- Old Brewery, Ovington, Tyne: part-demolition for housing.
- Churston Mill, Brixham: alterations to 1780 mill.
- Warehouse, Poole Quay: insertion of 3 doors in enlarged window openings.
- Little Sutton Railway Station, Wirral: refurbishment for office use.
- Princes Dock, Hull: removal of footbridge across entrance lock.
- Dobsons Mill House, Sutton-in-Ashfield: alterations to guesthouse.
- Woodvale Mill, Brighouse: demolition of fire-damaged section.

Historic Pumps Return to Pumphouse. The West Midlands County Council in conjunction with Sandwell District Council and British Waterways Board has carried out extensive improvements over the last few years at Galton Valley, Smethwick, creating a Canal Heritage Area.

Major refurbishment work on Smethwick New Pumping Station Brasshouse Lane, Smethwick has been carried out as part of the overall programme of environmental improvements.

Now the County Council has located a pair of locally built Tangye steam engines and pumps in a derelict dock in North Tyneside. Although larger than the original pumps, the equipment is of a similar design and construction. The County Council with Sandwell District Council have installed one of these pumps in Smethwick New Pumping Station and the other is to be displayed at Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry.

The engines are in urgent need of restoration, most of which is to be undertaken by Warley Technical College by a Manpower Services Commission Team under the supervision of the Principal Dr Longdon and Mr Davies, the Head of Mechanical Engineering.

In carrying out this unique operation, the County Council has not only saved these historic artefacts, but has added a vital element to the Galton Valley visitor centre.

New Life for Old Buildings. This is the title given by the Welsh Development Agency to its programme of encouraging the creation of new businesses on a small scale in redundant buildings. The Association has made enquiries from the Agency as to the number of industrial buildings which have been converted.

AIA Swapshop

A Post Windmill on Offer. Bolsover District Council are offering the frame of a post windmill free of charge to anyone who is prepared to re-erect and restore it.

The post windmill, which was first recorded in 1794 but is believed to date back to 1699, is a grade II building on the list of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest. It formerly stood at South Normanton, Derbyshire, but was dismantled by the Council in 1980 as it was becoming a danger to nearby properties. A drawing of the frame was made and the timbers numbered to enable re-erection.

The remains consist of the oak frame of the mill, most of which is intact, although a number of the timbers have deteriorated and would need to be replaced. When erected the top of the frame (the buck) reaches to 30 ft in height, and the legs have a spread in excess of 40 ft.

The District Council would like to see the windmill re-erected and restored, although the costs of renovation are likely to be high (at least £30,000).

If no one can be found to re-erect the windmill then the ancient timbers will be made available for use in the repair of other important buildings of a similar age.

For further details contact Graham Clarke, Deputy Planning Officer, Bolsover District Council, telephone Chesterfield 823861, extension 263.

Twyford Waterworks Trust are trying to obtain a condenser for a Hathorn Davey triple Expansion Engine. They would like a surface condenser with brass tubes arranged horizontally and free standing on its own supports, or capable of having supports fitted, to stand on a level floor.

The estimate of steam rate of 300 lb/hour and the cooling water approximately 50 gal/min. The condenser should be capable of these rates at least. A rough estimate of physical size would be — length between tube plates 4 ft to 6 ft, Shell diameter 2 ft to 3 ft.

The tubes assumed to be brass of about 3/4 in outside diameter with normal spacing.

Please contact Mrs Pam Moore, 51 Porteous Crescent, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire.

Items for sale by the Cromford Canal Society Ltd, Old Wharf, Mill Lane, Cromford, Matlock DE4 3RQ.

1. Locomotive type boiler built by Reeston & Hornsby in 1945. 150 psi and weighs 13½ tons. There are no firebars as it was oil-fired.
2. A typical Victorian gap bed lathe by Lee H Hunt with flat belt drive. Max length of work about 5 feet, overall length about 9 feet. Looks good but not very accurate.
3. Widhowsen cast iron saw bench for flat belt drive.

The Ironbridge Lecture. A new annual lecture series is being inaugurated on Wednesday 14th May to mark the collaboration between the University of Birmingham and the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust. The first will be given by Professor Berrick Saul of the University of York in conjunction with Industry Year 1986 and will deal with an examination of the relevance of industrial history. There will be