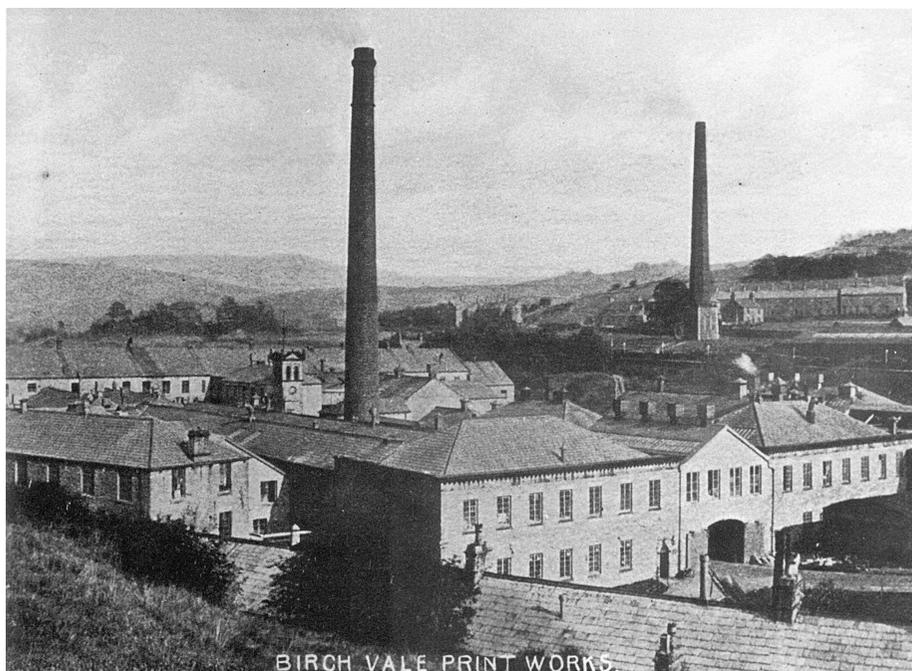


New Mills Local History Society

NEWSLETTER 39



Autumn 2007

Meetings - Autumn 2007

Friday September 14	Dorothy Smith	Charles Roe of Macclesfield: an eighteenth century industrialist
Friday October 12	David Templeman	The History of Sheffield Manor Lodge: past and present
Friday November 9	John Hill-Watson	A Walk through Styal Country Park
Friday December 14	Ian and Christine Hamilton	Church Furnishings and Fittings

Committee 2007-2008 (elected at the A.G.M.)

Chairperson	Gaynor Andrew
Vice-chairperson	Barbara Matthews
Hon. Secretary	John Humphreys
Hon. Treasurer	Joan Powell
Hon. Archivist	Roger Bryant
Hon. Editor	Ron Weston
Ordinary members	Olive Bowyer
	Derek Brumhead
	Barry Dent
	Barbara Done
	Pat Evans
	Richard Wood

From the Editor

I apologise to those of you who contributed articles to this current Newsletter, only to find that they have not appeared, I received so much excellent material on this occasion I cannot find space for it all. Please rest assured that all outstanding items will appear in our next issue. In the meantime, for this embarrassment of riches, much thanks.

Roman Roads

12th January 2007 - David Frith

The title of David Frith's talk, as he was quick to explain, was merely an avenue to allow the exploration of a wide swathe of the Dark Peak and its history. David began by giving an account of the later prehistory of the Dark Peak prior to the coming of the Romans. He reminded us of the recent discoveries at the Iron Age hill-fort in Mellor and mentioned also the evidence of local place-names, notably Kinder, Mam Tor and Mellor, derived from the Celtic tongue.

David outlined the occupation of the Peak by the legionaires, who built forts and constructed a system of patrol roads to maintain their control of the region. He mentioned specifically the road through Longdendale and the highways linking Buxton (*Aquae Arnemetiae*) with Melandra and Mancunium.

Using these routes, David expanded on his theme, introducing us to snapshot views of later periods in our history: the Dark Ages and the later medieval period following the Norman Conquest, when the Dark Peak was part of the royal forest. David emphasised what could be seen in the landscape that has survived from the distant past. His accompanying slides were excellent and our audience, swollen to capacity by the arrival of many visitors attracted by David's reputation as an interesting speaker, was well satisfied with this splendid presentation.

Ron Weston

The Use of Water-power on the River Dane and its Tributaries February 9, 2007 - Tony Bonson

The river Dane, rising on the Pennine slope a few miles from Buxton and flowing in a westerly direction to join the river Weaver at Northwich, has attracted water-powered mills from the earliest times. With a detailed knowledge and some excellent slides, Congleton-based Tony Bonson entertained us with a clear and articulate exposition of the subject.

Brereton mill, near Holmes Chapel, was a corn mill listed in the Domesday Book, one of several medieval sites known along the Dane. In the late seventeenth century, new uses for water-powered sites were being introduced. It was the availability of local woodland suitable for the production of charcoal that led to the establishment of iron smelting at Lorton. Water-power was needed to work the bellows for the blast furnace. The iron was used in local forges, which also relied on water-power. One forge was engaged in making rod iron for nail-making, another specialised in saw-making.

The charcoal iron industry ceased after 1750 in face of competition from coke smelting. Fortunately this coincided with the rise of a new water-powered industry, silk throwing. This had been introduced by John Lombe who, as a result of industrial espionage in Italy, built his silk mill at Derby. Soon several silk mills were established in the Dane valley, especially at Congleton and Macclesfield

The coming of cotton spinning, following Arkwright's pioneering invention, brought dramatic changes to the Dane valley water-power sites. This in turn attracted a novel industry, the working of copper and brass to provide gearing and wire for the new cotton spinning machinery. The expansion of the royal and merchant fleets at this time also created a demand for brass artefacts of many kinds.

With the coming of steam power in the early 19th century the demand for water-power declined considerably and along the Dane, as elsewhere, mill-owners had to search for new ways of making a living. Many of these ventures were short-lived and bankruptcies were common. Amongst the many new developments to be introduced were calico printing, carpet printing, flint grinding for the potteries, woodworking and sawdust production. A revival of corn-milling came to an abrupt end in the last decades of the 19th century when much of our grain was imported and it was logical to grind it at the ports of entry.

Tony ended his talk with an amusing tale of water-powered bell ringing at Swettenham chapel.

The Dane, typical of many rivers in this country, has been an invaluable power resource for generations of people living along its banks. In view of the current needs of our power-hungry generation, is it not time for a new initiative to harness such rivers?

Ron Weston

Lead Mining Remains Of The Peak District And Their Conservation

March 9, 2007 - Dr. John Barnatt

In the White Peak, lead ore can be found in near vertical veins known as 'Rakes' in the carboniferous limestone, often running across the countryside for miles. Where there is a fault in the limestone water can enter by rising up from below and carry with it minerals in solution. The common ore is lead sulphide (galena). The presence of such minerals has been known since Roman times or before (Bronze Age people mined copper at Ecton) and the rakes are now identified by rows of spoil heaps on the surface. With modern methods of extraction it is worth reworking the spoil heaps to extract other minerals which were present with the lead such as fluorspar and barytes. Lead ore was also a major source of silver, a fact known to the Romans, but the ore in the Peak District is not very rich in silver.

The early miners dug shafts and used ladders to convey themselves and their lead to the surface. To go deeper 'horse gins' were used. A rope is attached to the load, goes over a pulley and round a drum which is turned by the horse walking round and round. With the help of the horse, miners could work down to 800 feet, provided the mine had been 'dewatered'. When the shaft reached the water table, it was often possible, in hilly country, to dig a 'sough' i.e. a tunnel to emerge in the side of a valley at a level below the water table and so drain the mine. Gunpowder was used from the 1660's. The horses were replaced in their turn by steam engines, first Newcomen and then, in the early 19th century, Boulton and Watt engines like the one at Ecton. At Magpie Mine near Monyash there are the remains of a fine Cornish engine house and chimney.

The ore was rarely processed where it was mined. In the 19th century mechanical processing was introduced using powered crushers. The lead ore can be separated from other material by its weight by being riddled in flowing water. It was then taken away to be smelted.

Many of the workers were both farmers and miners according to the season. The mines were sufficiently close to the villages to avoid the need for separate mining 'settlements' although the villages did tend to spread towards the mines. Some areas had a few deep mines and others, such as Bonsall, had many smaller ones.

Dr. Barnatt was asked about ownership of minerals. He said that if you find lead you can own it without owning the land from which it came. Mining is governed by traditional laws administered by the Barmote courts which still exist: one meeting at Chatsworth and one at Wirksworth. The courts ensure that the owner of the land receives a proportion of the proceeds. Lead mining in Derbyshire declined when larger deposits were discovered overseas, e.g. Australia.

Dr. Barnatt finished by describing the "Lead Rakes Project" which was started 10 years ago to report on what is left of the industry. A major Report on lead mining sites was published in 2004 and Dr. Barnatt presented the Society with a copy.

Dr. Barnatt who is the Senior Archaeologist for the Peak Park is to be congratulated on a first class talk presented lucidly in spite of being deprived of all his illustration by equipment failure - the nightmare all lecturers dread.

Rosemary Taylor

Cromford Mill

13 April 2007 - Angus Watson

Richard Arkwright's invention of the water frame, which put cotton spinning on an industrial basis for the first time, was not this great pioneer's only innovation. The construction of the great mill at Cromford, with the stages in the cotton spinning process laid out in a logical fashion, came to be known as "the Cromford system" and was emulated by many other early cotton mill owners in the Midlands and North-West of England, as well as on the Continent

The Arkwright Society was formed in 1962 to promote a greater understanding and appreciation of Richard Arkwright's contribution to the textile revolution in the second half of the eighteenth century and to preserve the remains of all his works at Cromford. The Society's crowning achievement, as Angus Watson explained in a well-presented talk with slides, was the purchase of the Cromford Mill in 1979. Cotton spinning had ceased in the 1860s and the premises had

been utilised for a variety of manufacturing processes since that time. Several buildings that had nothing to do with the Arkwright period had to be demolished before the restoration of the original buildings could begin. A major problem was the removal of a great deal of toxic waste.

Apart from the restoration of the mill itself, several ancillary buildings in use in Arkwright's time were renovated or rebuilt, including the "counting house" and the former stables, now a restaurant

Apart from fulfilling its stated aims to an excellent degree, the Arkwright Society has also justified its charitable funding by employing a number of skilled tradesmen in the restoration process, providing work and training for countless young people and promoting a knowledge of the social and economic history of the Cromford site to the public at large.

With the Derwent valley and its mills now designated a World Heritage Site, the mill at Cromford is fast becoming its gateway. With this in mind, an ongoing programme of events and exhibitions is being organised by the Arkwright Society.

The Society is surely to be congratulated on all these splendid achievements over the years.

The Historic Landscapes of Mellor **11th May 2007 Ron Weston**

Although it was never one of the forest hamlets of Bowden Middlecale, the historical evolution of Mellor followed that of its neighbouring hamlets very closely. Along with all the hamlets of the parish of Glossop, Mellor lay in the Royal Forest of Peak and first appears by name in the rolls of the forest courts held in the thirteenth century. Evidently, it was well-wooded at that time, for several of the entries refer to the illicit felling of oak trees and the enclosure of land for fanning to the detriment of the king's deer. The lords of the manor in this early period were the de Mellsors, who were Foresters of Fee (hereditary royal officials). Thus, the earliest farms, including Tarden, Shaw and Birchenhough, came into existence in the thirteenth century.

By the early seventeenth century, the frontier of farming in Mellor had reached approximately to the 800' contour. We have precise knowledge of this because of the map evidence bequeathed to us by the

surveyors Hibbert and Barton. In 1640, the whole of the Forest of Peak was surveyed, hamlet by hamlet with a view to dividing all the remaining commons and wastes equally between the king (Charles I) and the freeholders and tenants. This land division was to be a stage in the disafforestation process. The subdivision of the commons and wastes became a protracted affair, firstly because of the outbreak of civil war followed by the interregnum; then, after the restoration of the monarchy (under Charles II), the freeholders and tenants opposed the toss of half the commons and there was much hard-fought litigation. Thus, it was not until the first decades of the eighteenth century that what had formerly been the king's part of the commons was finally parcelled out and sold off to create new farms. In Mellor the high ground known as Bradshaw Edge was the land in question, with farms such as High and Far Bradshaw, Shiloh, Gun and Pistol Farms being created at that time. Shiloh Road was constructed across the moor to provide access to these new properties.

Meanwhile the tenants' part of the commons, the area known as Mellor Moor, which was grazed by flocks from Mellor, Thornsett and Whitle, was not enclosed until later Thornsett in 1774. Mellor in 1778 and Whitle in 1828, With the creation of these new fields and farms, the old shepherding way of life was brought to an end.

But this was not the final chapter in the evolution of Mellor's landscape. In the late eighteenth century, the coming of the cotton textile industry to the hamlet, attracted by the many water-power sites available, brought immense changes. The greatest of these by far were those wrought by Samuel Oldknow, who purchased the Bottoms Hall estate in the 1790s, built a mill there and then proceeded to transform the estate so as to make the industrial community he had created as self-sufficient as possible.

In the twentieth century Mellor became a commuter settlement as a result of its proximity to Stockport and Manchester and rail connections from nearby Strines and Marple. This resulted in a large incoming population and a great deal of house-building, together with the conversion of old properties to new uses. Nevertheless, Mellor has managed to preserve its rural appearance together with some appreciable remains of its former landscapes.

THE PARTY

8th June 2007

On 24th May 1982 a meeting was held at the Youth Centre on Longlands Road chaired by John Symonds and the New Mills Local History Society was formed. Amazingly, five of the original members of that committee are still serving today, showing continuity, but we do have new blood as well! The mathematical members drew attention to the 25th anniversary, (about two years ago!) which must be celebrated. As the date approached we had some startling suggestions, but finally settled on a social conviviality. This involved many committee hours of planning for which I thank the members for their patience.

The mailing list to members was widespread and enormous, finally we had about eighty guests which was comfortable and pleasing. The Town Hall staff were most helpful in many ways,

Roger Bryant put out a display of the Society's publications which reflected much research by members over the years.

John Humphreys gave a short history of the Society mentioning some past contributors which raised good memories. Then we were treated to a talk by Dr. John Smith who used to be Tutor in Local History at Manchester University. He spoke about analysis of historical records, as he said "What can I do in the 20 minutes which I have been given?" and proceeded to give us a enlightening and amusing talk which was much appreciated. He has been a good friend to the Society for many years.

We then moved to the wine and cheese, and a chance to look at the photographic quiz arranged by John Humphreys.

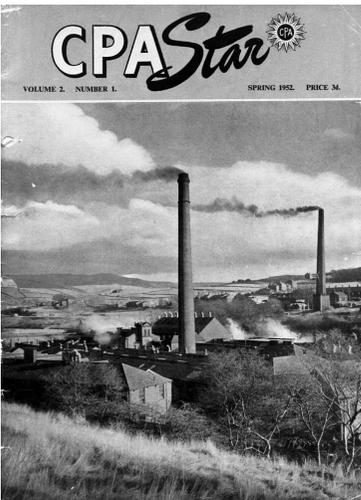
Roger Bryant proposed a toast to the future of the Society, and John Symonds was asked to cut the birthday cake, adorned with pictures of New Mills bridges. Then we surprised him with a framed testimonial recording him as first chairman of the Society and twenty five years of service. He replied very graciously. Mrs Symonds was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

It gave us much pleasure to see social contacts being renewed and there was plenty of relaxed chat.

And then we all went home, the committee members and helpers tired but happy. *Gaynor Andrew*



The CPA Star was the Staff Magazine of the Calico Printers' Association Limited. It started in 1951 as an illustrated quarterly, and circulated among staff of all grades in the works in the Association and throughout the many sections in the Head Office building in Oxford Street, Manchester. It later became bimonthly and continued until at least 1968.



The contents included articles about individual works with an outline of the history of the works as well as a description of the current work done and photographs of various departments. Birch Vale featured in Spring 1952, Strines in Spring 1953, Chadkirk in Spring 1954, and Pin Mill Engraving Works in Winter 1955 etc. Each issue had sections on sporting activities and works outings, promotions and moves and, of course, Marriages and Deaths. Famous visitors included Princess Alexandra at Broad Oak in Spring 1954 and a very young Mary Quant at Strines in 1967.

There are a few issues of the CPA Star in New Mills Library, a few in the Society's archives and a few at the Greater Manchester Museum of Science and Industry, and there must be many more scattered around the district. It would be very useful to both local and family historians if a more comprehensive collection could be made available either in the Library or the Society's archives. If you know of any copies of the CPA Star in the area which you would be willing either to donate to the Society or to lend for photocopying, please contact any of the people below or the Heritage Centre.

Ron Weston, Editor	01663 74 4838
John Humphreys, Secretary	01663 74 3581
Roger Bryant, Archivist	01663 74 4227
Rosemary Taylor	0161 427 4662

NEW MILLS MIDLAND RAILWAY GOODS YARD, KNOWN AS NEW MILLS EAST.

This railway goods yard was situated in an area bounded by Goytside Road, Church Road and the present New Mills Central to Chinley rail line as far as New Mills South signal box. (The site is now occupied by the Pioneer Supermarket). There were also some facilities on Hyde Bank Road. A siding went under Church Road, and the arch for it can still be seen from the supermarket car park. The goods yard comprised two sections: the coal yard where incoming rail coal wagons were unloaded by their consignees and areas where wood-pulp was unloaded and stored by railway staff. The other section was where the warehouse traffic and other commodities were loaded and unloaded.

The shunting engine (pick-up) would arrive about 9.30 am with a long train and would deposit full coal wagons into long sidings for unloading and then place other commodities into the required positions. Then it would proceed to New Mills Central station before going to Strines to deposit coal for the C.P.A., and to collect empty wagons. From there it proceeded to Birch Vale and Hayfield where the procedure was repeated before returning to New Mills goods yard to collect loaded and empty wagons to convey to Gow Hole marshalling yard.

Coal wagons were emptied into road vehicles either in bulk or bagged by the coal merchants. The road vehicles would be two-three ton capacity and several loads would be required to empty a rail wagon which would contain about 10 tons but this would vary. The consignees were allowed two full days to empty a rail wagon after which demurrage was charged at three shillings per wagon per day so wagons were emptied as quickly as possible. The principal consignees were: New Mills Gas works, Grove Mill Paper Co, New Mills Co-op Society. G W Marsden, J.F. Fidler, J. Stafford and other occasional consignees.

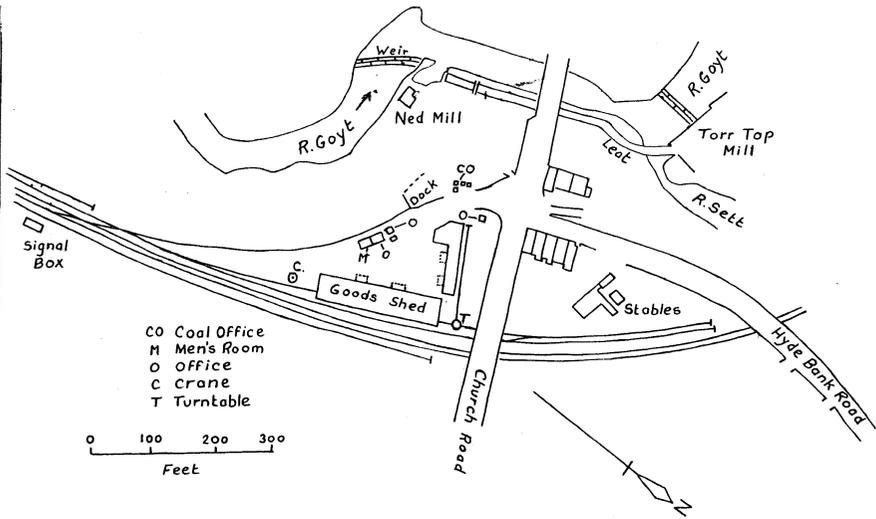
Other commodities traffic included bales of pulp weighing from three to five hundredweights each which were handled by railway staff and stored in stacks several bales high (mostly outside). This was delivered to Grove Mill (paper) as required each day. Cattle feeding corn from Silcocks, Bibbies and Crossfields were stored and delivered in the same way. These bags weighed from 112 to 160 pounds each. Other traffic was handled as required including cattle.

As there was no electricity in the Midland yard or mechanized power, all traffic had to be manhandled and for one man to unload and lift 140 pounds for several hours was normal. During my railway life (1945-1959) I worked as; weigh-boy, clerk, wagon recorder, checker, and motor driver along with shunting.

Handling of heavy items was done by cranes and there were five, all hand operated -one was used for handling heavy items such as containers weighing six tons or more which was situated outside the warehouse and four cranes inside the warehouse used for lifting smaller items of about one ton. The outside fixed crane comprised a housing containing the gears for heavy or light loads, a handle for moving the jib to and from railway wagons and road vehicles. The lifting was by the turning two handles moving an axle around which a lifting chain was wound. A hand brake and a ratchet arm held the load and acted as safety device. The chain hook was positioned to coincide with the center of the railway wagon held by a timber jib inclined slightly more than 45 degrees from the horizontal. The moving of a container was very hard work for four men. Various types of lifting equipment was used according to the item being lifted. Knowing which lifting equipment (known as trees) was required was gained by experience and intuition. [*When the warehouses were demolished in 1990 to make way for the supermarket, this crane was dismantled and taken to the waterway museum at Gloucester Docks. - Ed*].

The four inside fixed cranes were operated by a rope loop which turned a wheel thereby turning the axle and the chain. One ton was about its maximum use as it required much physical effort by two men to pull on the ropes. These cranes comprised of a timber beam pivoting between the stillage and a roof support. It was positioned so as to move loads from the inside railway track and the loading bays onto road vehicles. [*When the warehouses were demolished one crane was dismantled and taken to High Lee Park and has been there ever since. It was hoped to re-erect it on the warehouse site as a feature but this has not yet proved possible - Ed*]

Bryan Smith



NEW MILLS GOODS STATION

Brian Lamb

Brian died at Grimsby, Lincolnshire, on the 8 February 2007, aged 76 years, and his wife Maureen survives him. He was born in the Barton upon Irwell district of Lancashire in 1931 and for a large part of his life he lived in Stretford. Brian was an expert, not just about Bugsworth Basin, but the whole of the Peak Forest Canal and Tramway from Dukinfield, Cheshire, to Dove Holes, Derbyshire, although this canal and tramway formed the core of his interest in industrial archaeology.

Brian was the first person to write a description of Bugsworth Basin and his paper significantly enhanced the outstanding work then being done by Bessie Bunker, the Secretary of the Inland Waterways Protection Society, in saving it from destruction. By the 1960s the basin was totally derelict and overgrown and when he began his study he found that he did not know the names of any of its features or, indeed, if they had ever been given names. He realised that it was impossible to write a description without having the names of features so his first task was to set about providing them. Those that Brian conceived are still used today, such as Entrance Basin, Lower Basin, Middle Basin, Upper Basin and so on. Of the three banks of lime kilns he named these the First Phase, Second Phase and Third Phase kilns, which roughly corresponded to their ages. Today, these are the only

names of Brian's that are no longer used, having been replaced by their vernacular names of Navigation Kilns, Gnat Hole Kilns and New Road (or Top) Kilns, respectively. To accompany his description he drew a detailed diagram of Bugworth Basin showing all the features as well as the layout of the tramway. He even went to the effort of measuring the total length of the tramway sidings around the basin. When this work was complete, he entitled it 'The Bugworth Complex' and today this term is still in use.

The minute books of the Peak Forest Canal Company were fortunate to survive and Brian painstakingly hand copied most, if not all, of these books so that he could refer to them for research purposes whenever he wished. By the 1960s, Brian had amassed a substantial collection of archive photographs and prominent in this were photographs of the Ashton Canal and the Peak Forest Canal and Tramway. In addition to his collection of archive photographs, he also photographically recorded a large number of industrial scenes around the Manchester area, which included both black and white negative film and colour slides. The number of photographs he actually took is unknown but it was certainly several tens of thousands. Today, most of the scenes recorded by Brian have disappeared and this makes his personal collection all the more important as it represents a unique record of Manchester's rich industrial heritage.

Brian was for many years a teacher in Adult Education in Manchester. In today's jargon he would be described as a teacher of Special Needs. His depth of knowledge of the industrial archaeology of the Manchester area was immense, and that from there it followed the route of the former Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway through the Pennine Hills to Grimsby in Lincolnshire.

In the early 1980s, Brian embarked on two new interests. One was the design trails around central Manchester, the purpose of these being to enable visitors to the city to better appreciate the historical importance and architectural merit of buildings of significance and the other was the photographic recording of Post Office pillar and all letter boxes. In the case of the latter, Brian recognised that some of these boxes were part of Britain's rapidly disappearing Victorian and Edwardian street furniture. He was aware that the golden age of ornamental work on these utilitarian boxes was virtually over by the end of the Edwardian period and that surviving examples should be sympathetically recorded before it was too late.

Because of his diabetes, he was sometimes in hospital for treatment and it was during one such occasion that he met Maureen, his wife to be. The couple were married at Grimsby in 1986 and this is where they set up their home. It seems to be no coincidence that they settled at the eastern end of the former Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway.

Over the years, Brian was a regular contributor of articles to Waterways World, NarrowBoat and the Railway & Canal Historical Society. Brian was a member of the Association for Industrial Archaeology and a few years ago they presented him with an award at a ceremony held at the University of Manchester for his outstanding work in the field of industrial archaeology.

Peter Whitehead

[This is an edited version of a much longer obituary by Peter Whitehead in the May 2007 Newsletter of The Inland Waterways Protection Society edited by Don Baines. We are grateful to both Peter and Don for permission print it. DDB]

A VISIT TO A LOCAL ANCIENT SITE

Sometime ago I was watching my grandson play cricket at Dove Holes and during the interval I asked a local couple where the "Bull Ring" was as I had known about it for years but never seen it. 'Just go round the cricket field and it's at the end of the football ground' they said. So off I went.

The Bull Ring is a henge a neolithic structure built in the period 2900-2010 BC. It consists of a circle 75 metres in diameter with a raised piece in the middle surrounded by a partly filled-in ditch, the whole built round with a large earth bank with a north and south entrance. It is not known if it had standing stones like Stonehenge but there is a report in 1759 that a large upright stone stood in the middle, but this has since been removed perhaps by a farmer who was wall building. On the site is a notice board giving information about the site. I suppose that I am like hundreds of local people who pass this site and never look at it or perhaps don't even know it is there. But I am glad I have seen it. It is very easy to get to and if you drive you can go down the side of the cricket field and round to the football ground, where there is room to park - provided there are no matches being played !

Bill Barton

MARY HAMILTON OF TAXAL

John Rylands Library in Manchester reopened on 5 May 2007 after a multi million pound refurbishment and redevelopment lasting four years. In News from the Rylands No 3 it indicates its interest in acquiring the Archive of Mary Hamilton sold by the Anson family but put on a temporary export bar,

Mary Hamilton was the niece of Sir William Hamilton, English Ambassador at Naples whose wife was Nelson's mistress. Sir William brought Emma Hamilton to Taxal near Whaley Bridge in July 1784 to meet Mary, where she lived with her husband John Dickenson. At that time Sir William and Emma were not married (she was still his mistress) and Sir William wrote to Mary saying that 'Sir W and E.H. appearing to be separate must be so in your house' (Quoted by David Constantine in his book 'Fields of Fire; a life of Sir William Hamilton') The title reminds US that Sir William was an expert on Vesuvius and years ahead of his time as a vulcanologist.

Two years ago, 78 love letters sent to Mary and written by the teenage Prince of Wales between April and December 1789 were sold at Sotheby's She was a favourite at the court of George III and the Prince became infatuated with her. He later turned his attentions to Emma Hamilton, much to the annoyance of Nelson who got very uptight about it !

It is interesting that the Archive is being acquired from the Anson family (Mary's daughter Louisa married General Sir William Anson in 1815), for a book on Mary Hamilton was published in 1915 edited by Elizabeth and Florence Anson.

Derek Brumhead