INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLGICAL SECTION of the DEVONSHIRE ASSOCIATION

Issue 3 July 2018

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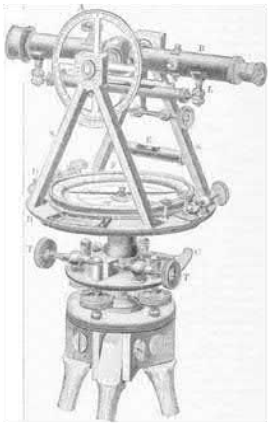

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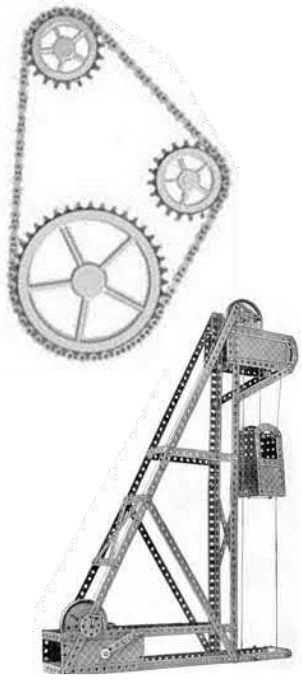


South Wales & West of England

Regional Industrial Archaeological Conference 2018

The 49th annual SWWERIAC was held in West Coker Commemoration Hall on Saturday 14th April and was attended by 100 participants from all over the region, who enjoyed a most interesting programme of talks and visits. This year's conference had been arranged by SIAS in conjunction with the Coker Rope and Sail Trust. As part of the conference events, the Trust had arranged tours of the award-winning and newly restored Dawe's Twine Works, situated just a few yards from the venue, and these took place after Ross Aitken's talk on the history of the works and its restoration.

Coker Canvas: Hemp and Flax in South Somerset - Richard Sims

In the first lecture of the day, Richard Sims provided an overview of the industry that dominated the area surrounding West Coker, and which would be the focus of the morning's proceedings.

The limestone geology between Bridport, Crewkerne and the Coker villages produced soils that were ideal for growing flax and hemp. The demand for twine, rope and cloth produced from these crops led to flourishing industries from medieval times. Richard described in detail the harvesting, preparation and spinning of the fibres to form yarn, the raw material for twine, rope and cloth. For centuries production was on a domestic scale, but the building of mills began in the 1790s.

Huge quantities of rope and sailcloth were required to equip sailing ships of the C18 and C19. The superiority of Coker Sailcloth was widely recognised, and was the cloth of choice for the Navy by the C17. Such was the demand that the flax and hemp based industries predominated in South Somerset and West Dorset, and has left a rich legacy of mill buildings, housing and associated structures in the area. Through the growth of leisure sailing, the manufacture of sail-cloth continues today.

Dawe's Twine Works – Ross Aitken

Ross Aitken, Chair of the Coker Rope and Sail Trust, continued the story of this local industry by recounting the remarkable survival of Dawe's Twine Works and the challenges that were met during its restoration.

The site, within West Coker and only a short walk from the conference venue, has a long history of twine and rope making. John Dawe rebuilt the works here at the end of the C19. On John's death his son took over and ran it until 1968, when the works were closed and left to decay. In the 1990s research by the local community, assisted by SIAS, confirmed the uniqueness of this site, and that almost the whole history of this nationally important industry within this local area had been lost.

With the backing of the Parish Council, the Coker Rope and Sail Trust was set up to maximize community involvement. In 2005 South Somerset District Council compulsorily purchased the site. Appearance in the BBC series "Restoration" in 2006 brought welcome publicity, and although the project did not win nationally, significant funding from other bodies enabled consolidation of the main walk to begin. After restoration of the buildings in 2012-13, attention moved to machinery, line shafting, and obtaining a replacement engine.

News of a successful application to HLF for funds to finish the project arrived in 2016, and work is now almost complete. This year it is intended to build a new “vernacular” style visitor centre, and soon twine-making will once again be seen in South Somerset, in the last surviving Victorian twine works in England with its original machinery.

(A fuller description by Ross Aitken of the restoration of Dawe’s Twine Works is contained in SIAS Bulletin 136; December 2017)

Conference then split into groups for the visit to the twine works, and tours were ably led by trust members. The imposing 100 yard-long covered “walk”, the oil engine, working machinery, and preserved artifacts all demonstrated a high level of restoration and commitment by all involved, whilst retaining the atmosphere of a small workaday Victorian factory.

Pictures of Dawes Twine Works above courtesy of A. Wills

‘What a Load of Rubbish’. The history and industrial archaeology of solid wastes management - Peter Daniel

Having spent most of his career dealing with aspects of waste management, SIAS Field Officer Peter Daniel is well placed to describe the industry’s history and archaeology. He described his post-lunch talk as an attempt to address the shortfall in literature on the archaeology of waste, landfill and recycling.

The beginnings of the industrial age, and the rapid urbanization that followed, presented a waste problem on a scale never previously seen. Waste of all kinds was piled in huge heaps, from which anything saleable was removed. Most of what remained consisted of ash, dust and partly

burnt coal, which was mixed with clay and burnt to make bricks. By the late C19 “scavenging” had become an organized industry.

The Public Health Act of 1875 placed a duty to dispose of waste on Local Authorities. This marked the end of uncontrolled tipping and the commencement of managed dumping grounds, and improving standards in the industry. Refuse destructors were operating as early as c1876, and by the 1890s electricity was being generated. The original building at Woolwich (listed Grade II) is one of four survivors.

The systematic separation of wastes began in the 1930s and was accelerated by wartime salvage drives. With the decline of coal as a fuel the proportion of ash dropped sharply, but that of organic waste consequently grew, forcing the industry to address the problems of pollution, leachate and landfill gas. Using examples from Somerset, Peter showed that the history of the industry is one of adapting to the changing nature of wastes, higher environmental standards, and stricter legislation. The unacceptability of landfill has led to pressure for better separation of material, recycling and treatment. Government and European legislation has finally dragged the industry towards higher standards.

Ham Hill: England’s Most Seductive Stone – Peter Stanier

Dr Peter Stanier would lead a visit to Ham Hill after the close of conference, so his talk provided a prior understanding of the significance of this golden Somerset building stone.

Hamstone is a sedimentary rock laid down 170 million years ago. A freestone, it can be carved when quarried from the better beds, and the stone has a distinctive texture where the clay partings have been weathered out. Ham Hill has been quarried since Roman times and whole villages west of Yeovil were built of Hamstone. Further afield the cost of transport restricted its use to prestige buildings, door and window frames, and decorative carving. This is the case in the lias areas to the north, the lias stone being unsuitable for such fine detail. The use of Hamstone in industrial buildings can be seen at Dawe’s Twine Works. With the coming of the railways the stone could be transported greater distances, and its use in detailing significant buildings began to be seen in major cities in the South West and South Wales.

The extensive quarries on Ham Hill lie within and iron age hillfort, and are all on the west side of the hill. Limited quarrying continues today to serve newbuild and restoration projects, and except for this one area, the dramatic disused workings are now part of a country park.

Gloving in Yeovil – Joseph Lewis

The physical impact of this Yeovil industry, and the stories of those who worked in it, were told using tools that were unique to glove making, by Joseph Lewis; Heritage Coordinator at South Somerset District Council’s Community Heritage Access Centre.

Gloving here dates back to the C14, and by the C18 it was the town’s main industry, with manufacturers importing and dressing lamb skins in preference to those from locally reared animals which tended to have a higher fat content. In spite of the repeal of import bans in the early C19, the trade improved throughout the rest of the century, and by 1890s 75% of the town’s workforce was engaged in leather, gloving and associated industries, in both factories and homes. By the 1950s Yeovil was producing half of Britain’s gloves, but this boom was halted, again by the lifting of import bans, but also this time the aircraft and engineering industries who could offer better wages. Terminal decline in this labour intensive industry set in and the last

factory closed in 1989. A link to the industry continues today in the nickname given to Yeovil Town Football Club; “The Glovers”.

Post-Conference visits

After the conference ended, and following the usual SWWERIAC format, delegates split into groups for visits to sites of industrial archaeological interest in South Somerset.

Crewkerne - Richard Sims led a fossick around the town, which began with a visit to Crewkerne Museum, and followed with a tour of the locations and buildings which were significant in the history of flax industry and shirt making in the town.

Ham Hill - Peter Stanier showed his group several old quarries and elaborated on the methods of working and the tools used. Current quarrying activity with excavators could be seen, as well as the magnificent view of the surrounding countryside.

Stoke-sub-Hamdon – a village fossick, this time led by Peter Daniel, which looked at glove factories, the National Trust ‘Priory’, and ended at the Fives Wall in a pub car park.

Clapton Mill – one of the most complete grain mills in Britain, driven by two streams and a turbine.

SIAS will be hosting next year’s Association for Industrial Archaeology’s Conference, at Cannington near Bridgwater between 9th and 14th August 2019, the first time it has been held in Somerset in its 40 year history. It is planned to include a visit to Dawe’s Twine Works as part of the programme.

Pictured right—some of the SWWERIAC attendants viewing part of the redundant quarrying on Ham Hill.

A.Wills

Birch Tor / Vitifer field trip

led by Mick Atkinson

on 14th June, 2018

In brilliant sunshine, Mick Atkinson led a party of a dozen about the highly disturbed ground that remains from the workings of the Birch Tor / Vitifer tin mine workings just below the Warren House Inn on the B 3212. Mick showed the party a large wheel pit that once accommodated one of the largest water wheels on Dartmoor. We also saw the remains of several leats, the flooded entrance to a mine shaft and a massive V-shaped cutting (or 'beam') in the hill adjacent to Birch Tor. Struggling with much concealment by bracken, we were shown the outlines of one of the richest mines on the moor. We ended the walk by following the valley south to see 'Dinah's House' . the well-preserved round buddle at the site of the Golden Dagger mine.

Mick Atkinson explains the working of the circular buddle at the adjacent Golden Dagger tin mine site — Picture courtesy of Mike Stannard

Visit to Kelly Mine near Lustleigh

Numbers limited to 16 – pre-enrolment essential

Thursday 19 July 10am to 1pm

Fee: £3.00 for DA members; £5.00 for non-members (paid on the day)

(The fees collected will be donated to The Kelly Mine Preservation Society)

Kelly mined micaceous haematite, an unusual form of iron ore (called locally “shiny ore”) which was used mainly for rust-resistant paints. There were a number of mines located north of Bovey Tracey between Hennock, Lustleigh and Moretonhampstead which were worked mainly in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the last mine, Great Rock, closing in 1969.

After the mine and dressing floors at Kelly finally closed in the early 1950s, the machinery lay dormant virtually untouched by scrap merchants and due to the enormous efforts of the preservation society now stand as an almost unique example of mine dressing floors preserved in their original location.

Meet at **10am** at Bovey Tracey car park (the one at the bottom of town by the river Bovey with the loos). Because parking is limited at the site, we will share cars to Kelly.

The site is fairly easy to walk around but you will need stout footwear and, as micaceous haematite tends to cling to most garments, it is better not to wear something you want to wear to the Ritz afterwards - unless you want to ‘sparkle’!

There are no toilets on the site.

There are a number of interesting industrial archaeology sites nearby for those wanting to visit a site afterward eg. Porters Shaft engine house, count house and tips at Wheal Exmouth, Canonteign Barton; a particularly fine stretch of the Haytor Granite Tramway in Yarner Wood nature reserve; or the Haytor Granite quarry and tramway near Haytor itself.

For anyone who cannot make the day but still wants to see the site, there is an open day organised by the society on 2 September.

Enquiries and the essential pre-enrolment to: Mick Atkinson mickatkinson@live.co.uk
Tel. 01460 75266 or 07798 501580 mobile

If you do not wish to receive further mailings from IASDA, please contact Mike Stannard at iasda@devonassoc.org.uk

Forth-coming Field trip

Fremington Quay and the Torridge Estuary

Names of speakers or leaders: *John Bradbeer - speaker/guide*

Dave Gage - skipper of 'Cheeky Monkey'

Location of event, date and time: ***Monday 13th August 2018***

2.00pm: Fremington Quay

4.00-5.30pm: Discretionary visits, Appledore/Bideford

6.30pm: Boat Trip-Appledore Ferry Pick-up point

Fees:

guided talk-£3 for DA members, £5 for non-DA members

boat trip-£12 per person for both DA-members and non-members

Talk at Fremington Quay - unlimited number, no booking necessary

*Boat trip at Appledore - **maximum 10**, **booking needed asap***

*A. **Guided walk around Fremington Quay**, looking at lime kilns, old railway sidings, Fremington dock, visit to the interpretative centre (old signal box). John comes from Barnstaple and is recommended by Museums Development of North Devon Council.*

*B. **Discretionary visits**. In the time between the talk and the boat trip, Members attending both may wish to explore Appledore (N. Devon Maritime Museum closes at 5pm), or Bideford (Burton Art Gallery closes at 5pm).*

*C. B**oat trip from Appledore to Fremington Quay and back**, takes in the Old fuel-loading jetty on the River Taw and looking at Babcock's International shipyard on the River Torridge. Dave Gage has run 'Cheeky Monkey' trips for many years, and was the subject of a 'Boat Stories' film by Jo Stewart Smith.*

Health and safety issues:

A. *Fremington Quay is a level site, mostly tarmacked or concrete surface but good shoes are recommended.*

B. 'Cheeky Monkey' carries all the required safety equipment. It is a small, open vessel with no protection from rain, however, and it can be quite cool on the river; warm, waterproof clothing is recommended.

Fremington Quay is approximately 3 miles from Barnstaple, turning off the B3233 on the Bideford side. Post code:EX31 2NH.

The pick-up point for the 'Cheeky Monkey' is the Appledore Ferry slipway opposite the Post Office. Post code:EX39 1QS.

There are public toilets at Appledore at the main carpark in the main riverside carpark adjacent to the Parish Church, and at Fremington Quay adjacent to the Interpretative Centre.
Refreshments are available at both Fremington Quay and Appledore.

Parking and public transport:

At Appledore there is a large, paying carpark, often very busy during the holiday season.
Car sharing is recommended.

The Fremington Quay carpark is free, but is heavily used. Car sharing is again recommended.

There is no bus service to Fremington Quay, but there is a bus stop on the B3233 at the turnoff from the main Bideford/ Barnstaple Road to the quay and from there it is a half-mile walk on the level.

Fremington Quay Café can be recommended for lunch. It is small and very popular so booking is advisable. Tel; 01271 268720, or

www.fremington quay.co.uk *thefremingtonquaycafe@yahoo.co.uk*

I will inform the café that a group of possibly 10 people from IASDA will be coming for lunch on August 13th and try to reserve table space for 12.30. ***It would be very helpful if those wishing to eat here let me know asap.***

Appledore has many cafes and pubs in which to eat.

No repeat trip has been planned, as yet, as it depends on the times of high tides.

Enquiries contact, *Adrian Wills, Tel: 01237 477705, adrian@therollecanal.co.uk*

Thanks to John Bradbeer for supplying the information and images on pages 10 to 15 about the railway at Fremington Quay.

Source: derive from Southern Railway Working Timetable July 1932

(Oxford Publishing Company reprint)

FREMINGTON TRAINS IN 1932

Down trains (weekdays)

Time	Train
05-20 A	02-10 Freight and mail from Exeter to Torrington
05-28 D	
06-53 A	06-48 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
06- 55 D	
08-18 A	08-13 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
08-19 D	
09-21 A	22-10 Freight from Nine Elms to Torrington; shunting engine pilots the train from Barnstaple to Fremington
09-42 D	
10-10 A	06-25 Passenger Yeovil to Torrington
10-11 D	
11-05 D	Shunting engine light to Bideford Goods
11-13 A	09-42 Passenger from Exeter to Torrington
11-14 D	
12-30 A	Light engine from Barnstaple (as required)
13-38 A	13-33 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
13-41 D	
14-29 A	14-24 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
14-30 D	
14-55 A	14-50 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
14-56 D	
15-48 Pass	10-35 Passenger from Waterloo to Torrington (The Atlantic Coast Express)
16-48 A	16-43 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
16-49 D	
17-50 A	17-45 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
17-51 D	
18-47 A	18-42 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
18-48 D	
19-56 A	15-00 Passenger from Waterloo to Torrington
19-57 D	
21-36 A	21-31 Passenger from Barnstaple to Torrington
21-37	

Up trains (weekdays)

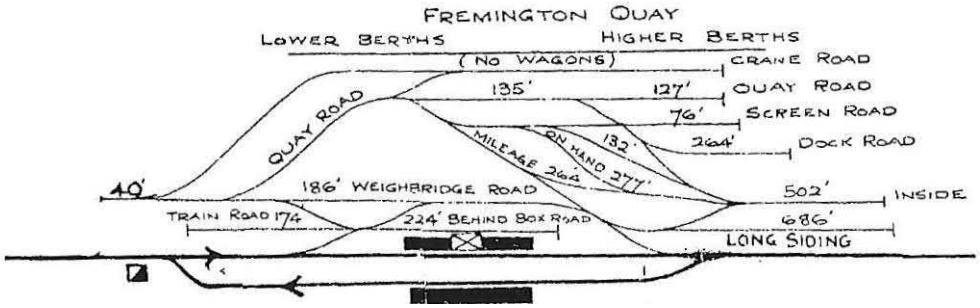
Time	Train
07-34 A	07-10 Passenger from Torrington to Exeter
07-35 D	
08-34 A	08-10 Passenger from Torrington to Waterloo
08-35 D	
09-22 A	08-58 Passenger from Torrington to Barnstaple
09-23 D	
10-54 A	10-28 Passenger from Torrington to Waterloo (Atlantic Coast Express)
10-55 D	
12-37 A	12-20 Passenger from Torrington to Waterloo
12-38 D	
13-39 A	13-15 Passenger from Torrington to Barnstaple
13-40 D	
13-55 D	Light engine to Barnstaple (as required)
14-06 A	12-45 Freight from Torrington to Nine Elms
14-14 A	13-50 Passenger from Torrington to Barnstaple
14-15 D	
14-31 D	12-45 Freight from Torrington to Nine Elms
14-44 Pass	14-20 Passenger from Torrington to Waterloo
15-25 A	14-58 Passenger from Torrington to Barnstaple
15-26 D	
16-05 D	Light engine or freight to Barnstaple (as required)
17-04 A	16-38 Passenger from Torrington to Barnstaple
17-05 D	
17-49 A	16-52 Freight from Torrington to Salisbury
18-10 D	
18-20 A	17-56 Passenger Torrington to Barnstaple
18-21 D	
19-14 A	18-50 Passenger Torrington to Barnstaple
19-15 D	
19-49 A	19-20 Freight from Torrington to Barnstaple (as required)
20-06 A	19-36 Passenger and mail Torrington to Barnstaple (connects with 19-45 passenger and mail from Ilfracombe to Exeter
20-07 D	
20-24 D	19-20 Freight from Torrington to Barnstaple (as required)
21-13 A	20-50 Passenger Torrington to Barnstaple
21-14 D	

FREMINGTON QUAY TIME-LINE

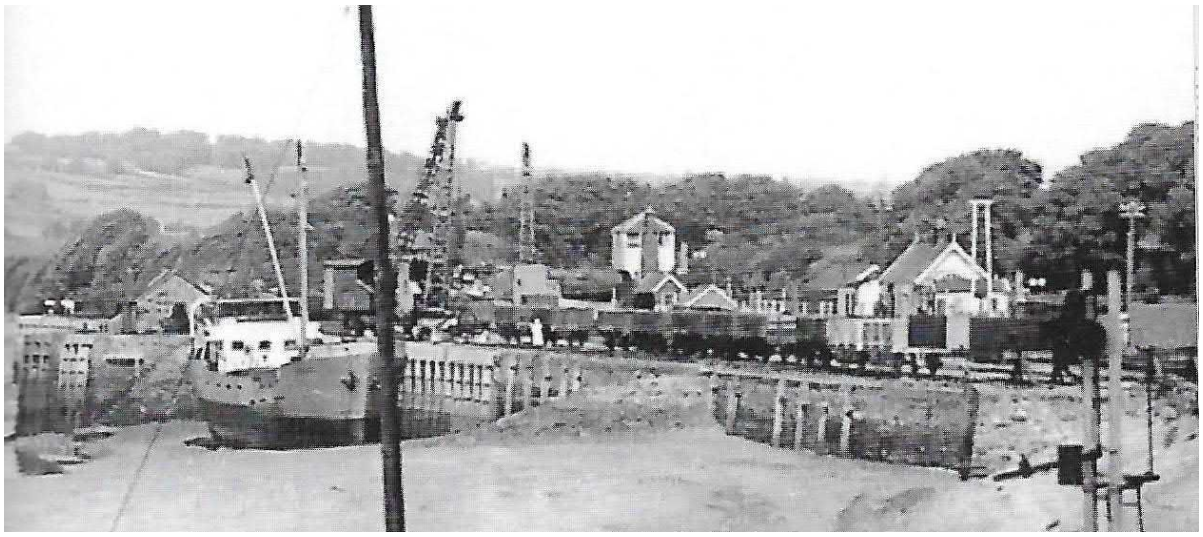
Year	Event
1838	Taw Valley Railway and Dock Company incorporated (dock at Freming-
1845	TVRDC renews powers and tries to sell itself to the North Devon
1847	Conflict between the Taw Vale Railway (broad gauge) and the Taw Vale Extension Railway (narrow gauge/London and South Western Railway) LSWR secretly buys shares in the Exeter and Crediton Rail-way
1848	Fremington –Barnstaple opened as narrow gauge goods only line and
1851	Exeter and Crediton Railway leased by B&ER; work starts on the
1854	Exeter-Crediton-Barnstaple opened
1855	Bideford Extension Railway (broad gauge) opened and locomotives re-
1862/3	LSWR takes over the Exeter & Crediton, North Devon ,and Bideford Extension Railways and narrow gauge lines laid making mixed gauge track
1872	LSWR extended to Torrington (built as standard gauge)
1877	Last broad gauge goods train to Bideford; broad gauge rails removed
1880	Torrington and Marland (3 foot gauge clay line) opened
1925	North Devon and Cornwall Junction Light Railway opened (Torrington to Marland re-gauged Torrington and Marland line); Marland - Halwill
1925	Southern Railway calls Ilfracombe and not Torrington the terminus
1965	Passenger services Torrington-Halwill Junction and Barnstaple – Tor-rington withdrawn; milk traffic from Torrington and clay traffic
1969	Closure of Fremington Quay (trains continue to run) Rail steam
1982	Closure Barnstaple - Meeth to all traffic
1991	Track-bed from Petrockstow to Barnstaple turned into Tarka Trail

FREMINGTON STATION AND QUAY

General setting on the Six Inch OS Map c 1903



Fremington Quay sketch of track plan c 1960



A typical scene in the 1950s and early 1960s (view from W)

Fremington sation in 1950s, view E towards Penhill and Barnstaple

Fremington station from approach road c 1960

Fremington Quay from overbridge at W looking towards Barnstaple

Fremington signal box from the south east

IASDA and SIAS:

JOINT VISIT TO THE HAYLE AREA

Monday 17 - Wednesday 19th September 2018

Aim: to explore World Heritage Sites in West Cornwall, and to learn how local interest in Hayle's industrial legacy is proving to be an important aspect of the town's regeneration.

Monday: Noon at *The Countryman,* near Carnkie, GR 678 397, for lunch and excursion around Carnbrea led by Kingsley Rickard. Site visits include Marriott's South Wheal Frances and Wheal Basset Stamps. Return to *The Countryman* for tea and talk by Ainsley Cocks, World Heritage Officer. Disperse.

Tuesday: 09:30 at Foundry car park, Hayle GR 558 371. Kingsley will lead all-day excursion, around the town - with stops. Numerous food outlets. Evening: Suggestion - 19:30 at Rivere car park, GR 554 385 for gentle coast path stroll along the Hayle estuary at low tide – ideal for viewing extent of former wharves.

Wednesday: Westward on the B 3301 through Gwithian to Portreath. On-road parking to right soon after beach. Meet Beach car park at 10:00 for short walk to inclined plane and harbour. Coffee break. On to Cligga Head: turn left off B 3285 at GR 746 534. Various places to park. Kingsley will lead a walk around extensive remains of Explosive Works, with pause for lunch overlooking sea. Finish early afternoon. Not far to A30.

Max of 20 persons each day

Donation per day: £3 DA members, non-members £5.

Easy walking. Suggest stout footwear – avoid open toed sandals (adders).

If interested, please send name and which day/days you intend to participate to

Iain Miles: crowpill@outlook.com **(SIAS)**

or patricia.milton@blueyonder.co.uk (IASDA)

IASDA visit to Mount Dinham Cottages / Almshouses

From Treasurer, Bill Nichols, FCA,

Newcourt Farmhouse, Silverton, Exeter EX5 4HT.

01392 860695 *billn@talktalk.net.*

Bookings to **iasda06@talktalk.net**

We have been able to arrange a further visit to Mount Dinham Cottages / Almshouses in Exeter and to St Michaels Church. It is a Conservation Area, the Cottages are Grade 2 and the Church is Grade 1.

On Thursday 22nd November 2018. Meet there at 11.00, to finish about 3.30.

This area of Exeter is almost unknown, just beyond the end of the Iron Bridge, with St Michaels Church beside it. OS grid reference 905928 (converts to GPS 50-44N 02-08W I think.)

There is only a brief chance to make this visit while the building works on the Cottages are in progress. They are part way through a major programme of work, so if we want to see inside both an original house, one being worked upon, and as finally finished and before it is occupied, we have to make a visit soon.

The programme of works will be completed this winter, and there will not be another opportunity for perhaps 50 years.

The DA Building Section is not able to fit this into their programme, but we felt that many of you would not wish to miss this chance to contrast Victorian and modern building techniques.

Meet at Mount Dinham at 11.00 outside the Church. Try to limit the number of cars please, though it will be possible to park a small number of cars around the cottages and church, beyond the end of Mount Dinham Road. There are Car Parks in Mary Arches Street and Richmond Road, both very close.

As this is an active building site, we are required to wear hard hats and a yellow waistcoat. They have a few to lend, but please try to bring your own.

The Mount Dinham Cottages / Almshouses were built in 1860 and are currently being completely refurbished by Cornerstone Housing, the renamed Exeter Housing Society. There are 44 houses, in units of 4 houses, set in a quiet green.

They are gutting each group of cottages completely, and rebuilding inside to modern standards. They are creating extra drainage around the walls outside, removing the floors, all the lath and plaster on the walls, re-slating and insulating the roofs, fitting insulated walls, damp courses, new floors and windows and making a small extension out the back for a nice light kitchen. New plumbing, heating and electrics of course.

Yet outside they look as original.

I have asked if I can be put down for a place as a resident in ten years time in the hope that there may be a vacancy by then.

The Chief Executive of Cornerstone Housing, Rick Williams, will give us a short talk upon the history of Mount Dinham and the activities of Cornerstone. He requests a party not exceeding 20.

After lunch, there will be a talk and tour inside St Michael's Church led by Richard Parker, the historic building archaeologist.
Meet at 2.00 back outside the Church.

It is a Victorian High Gothic church, financed by William Gibbs of Tyntesfield and Clyst St George, as the main Tractarian Anglo-Catholic church in Exeter with some fine furnishings.

It is said to have the tallest spire west of Salisbury and with peregrine falcons nesting. There is a camera on the St Michaels web site showing the nest. Though rather an intrusion on the privacy of the birds, I think.

For lunch, I suggest we go to the City Gate pub on the Iron Bridge. It helps them if you warn them on 01392 495811, though they are generally very quiet at lunchtime. Or bring your sandwich (even for November) to eat on the green. It is a lovely peaceful place with a view over the western edge of Exeter.

As numbers are limited to 20, registration is required I am afraid, taken in order of receipt. Preferably by email please, to IASDA06@talktalk.net. Or telephone to me 01392 860695.

There will be a charge of £5 to be collected on the day (£7 for non DA). The Church would welcome any additional donations you may care to make.

Please be conscious that if you book and then don't come, it will mean someone else will have missed out and the DA will be out of pocket on the event.

Bill Nichols