

GSIA: THE FIRST 35 YEARS

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Each year the industrial archaeology societies from the West of England and South Wales meet for their Annual Regional Conference. The theme for the 'Millennium Conference' held at Bridgwater on 8 April 2000 was a historical review of industrial archaeology in the region. The hosts, the Somerset Industrial Archaeology Society invited each of the societies to provide a talk on the activities of that organisation over the years. The groups were also urged to describe both the successes and the failures that they had experienced.

The declared aims of all the groups are probably very similar but in practice the societies are very different in character. There is no such thing as a 'standard' industrial archaeology society and this was certainly confirmed by the presentations at the Bridgwater Conference. Some run large practical projects, others do a lot of recording and fieldwork and some are more involved in research projects and publications.

The contribution from the Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology (GSIA) was made by its Honorary Secretary, the present author. Part of the research for this talk entailed reading all the minute books back to 1964 and the many files in the GSIA records. It then seemed appropriate in year 2000 to use the same material for this account of the Society from its beginnings in 1964. It must be stressed that this is simply a record of some main activities of the Society over the past 35 years.

Happily, most of the Society's activities can be said to have flourished for most of the time. However, on the external front it is perhaps inevitable that there have been significant disappointments with the loss of important industrial buildings and sites, and the demise of long established firms in the County. Nevertheless the Society can claim some successes, often achieved in conjunction with other groups, as is evident in this account. It might therefore be argued that the situation would have been considerably worse had it not been for the existence of the Society. Certainly GSIA has always responded vigorously to planning matters and tried to keep the subject in the eye of the public and the various Authorities. Undoubtedly more might have been done given hindsight and additional resources. However, it is likely that this will always be the case for any organisation, not just the voluntary ones.

In a sense the persistence of the local societies that were formed in the 1960s and 1970s has paid off as the importance of industrial archaeology in the United Kingdom is now much more widely accepted. However, it has been a long time coming and it is only recently that bodies like English Heritage and the National Trust have issued policy statements on the subject. At the same time the pressures from developers continue unabated.

For convenience, this account has been divided up into a number of sections dealing with different aspects of the Society and its history. It starts with a brief look at how GSIA came into being and the early years of the Society. This is followed by sections on research and publications, projects and fieldwork. The next topics are the lecture series, visits, social events and film shows. GSIA's involvement with other organisations, conferences, commemorative plaques and an industrial museum for the County are then discussed. Finally there are a few other matters which do not fit into one of the earlier sections.

In many instances the relevant minutes, News sheets and Journals contain much more detail about each activity discussed below. This is particularly true for a record of who was involved in each activity. In many cases a number of Members were involved but for brevity only the main co-ordinators can be mentioned here. However, it must be stressed that an important aspect of the success of these activities has been the contributions made by many other Members and that includes turning up to support the events. It is therefore appropriate to record here the Society's appreciation for the valuable contributions made by all the Members over the past 35 years.

The origins of GSIA

An account of the formation of the Society written by its founder-chairman Mr. Geoffrey Andrew appeared in the 10th Anniversary Journal of 1974. Mr Andrew referred to a one day conference on industrial archaeology advertised by the Extra-Mural Department of Bristol University in the Spring of 1963. In the event, the conference was cancelled because there were only half-a-dozen takers all of whom were academics except himself. Frustrated by this he contacted the local organiser from the University (Mr W. R. Taylor) and subsequently struck a bargain with Mr Taylor that the conference would be set up again if Mr Andrew could produce an audience.

This was achieved by several months of talking to people and sending out circulars. But the great widening of interest came from a series of articles in the press on local mills and other remains. This generated a lot of interest and by late Summer plans could be made for a revived conference to be held at Stroud Technical College on 21 September 1963. Why Stroud? Mr Andrew recalls it was a natural centre with its wide range of industrial archaeology and not far from his home in Woodchester. Furthermore, Stroud had been one of the places featured at a one day meeting on industrial archaeology held in London a few months earlier.

The contributors to the meeting included Kenneth Hudson, Michael Rix and L. T. C. Rolt. Michael Rix was the person who first used in print the term 'industrial archaeology'. Among the 68 participants was Neil (now Sir Neil) Cossons, the former Director of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum but then a Museum Assistant at Leicester University. The event was a great success and it was agreed that an organisation was needed to keep the subject alive and active in the district. There then followed six months of intense activity with lectures and field work and planning for the new organisation. An appeal was made for money to purchase books on industrial archaeology as it was a time when a large number of books on the subject were being published.

During this time it was expected that the proposed society would be called the Gloucestershire Council for Industrial Archaeology. However, only four days before the inaugural meeting on Friday 6th March 1964 this was changed at a committee meeting to be the Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology (GSIA). There were 40 present at the inaugural meeting which was held at the Stroud Technical Institute and Kenneth Hudson gave a lecture on The Severn Navigation after the formal business.

The first President was Noel P Newman, the chairman of Newman Hender at Woodchester. He was elected in 1964 and remained President until his death in 1970. Mr W. G. H. Robbins was elected Chairman with Mr Howard Pullan as Treasurer and Mr Warren Marsh as Honorary Secretary. Details of GSIA Presidents, Chairmen, Treasurers, Honorary Secretaries over the years are given in the Appendix. The Activity Organisers and the Editors of the various GSIA publications are also shown in the Appendix.

The early years

It is interesting to note that many of our regular activities have been followed right from the very beginning. These include visits, lectures, fieldwork, research and publications. It is also interesting to note that the same themes keep cropping up over the years. These include not doing enough fieldwork in which we get our hands dirty, the need for more Members, particularly younger Members and bemoaning the lack of support for coach trips.

By mid 1964 membership had reached 50 and this number had doubled nine months later. A total of 30 Members attended the first AGM in September 1965. The membership had reached 150 by October 1966 and the numbers stayed relatively constant for the next five years. The 1970s saw a further increase and over the last twenty years the membership has remained fairly constant at between 180 and 225. Subscribers include the County Record Office, the County Library Service as well as Bristol Library and the Deutsches Museum in Munich. There has always been a small number of individual Members living overseas. The annual subscription was first set at 10/6 (52.5p) and this was raised in 1975 to 1 per individual or family at one address. The following year it was raised to 1.50 and then to 3 in 1979. There have been just three more increases in the last 20 years to the present level of 9. Senior citizens and students may pay a slightly reduced rate. The membership in 1999 was 215.

Although GSIA is a countywide organisation its membership has always tended to be concentrated in the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Stroud areas. The number of Members from places like the Forest of Dean, Tewkesbury and Cirencester have always been proportionately much smaller than the main centres. This is an issue that successive committees have not been able to resolve.

Four of the five entrants in a Local Industrial History Competition organised by Gloucestershire Community Council Local History Committee in 1965 were members of GSIA. The winning essay by Humphrey Household was on the subject of the Stroudwater Canal. The Society participated in the *Tidying up the Stroud Valleys* exhibition organised by Gloucestershire County Council in November 1965.

GSIA was joined in the area by the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society (BIAS) when it was formed in 1967 three years after GSIA.

Publications

One of the most important functions of any IA society is to publish the research and recording work carried out by its Members. Unfortunately, it is only too easy to carry out a piece of work and then fail to write it up. The regular GSIA publications have been one of the strengths of the Society. Since 1971 there has been an Annual Journal which publishes reports on the Society's activities and Members' research and the News sheet which carries details of all the forthcoming events and news of industrial archaeology matters in the County. Before 1971 the Newsletter fulfilled the job of both the present publications. In 1973 the Society was one of the first to produce a gazetteer of industrial archaeology sites for their area. GSIA Members have turned out to be prolific authors on their own account over and above what they have produced for the GSIA Journal. The most celebrated of these is no doubt the Rev Wilbert Awdry famous for his Thomas the Tank Engine stories. However, it is far less well known that he contributed numerous articles to railway magazines and was the co-author of several railway histories

The first GSIA Newsletter appeared in May 1964. Originally the Newsletter was to appear bi-monthly but inevitably that proved difficult to sustain. A total of fourteen issues were published up to 1970 and they were all edited by Neville Crawford. The contents form a fascinating miscellany of news items, visit and lecture reports and book reviews interspersed with substantial articles such as the Industrial History of Dudbridge.

In 1971 the first Annual Journal was edited by M. J. Savory. It was free to Members but non-Members were charged 10s 0d (50p) for the 55 page issue in A4 format. The major article that year was an account of the Northgate Turnpike by Nigel Spry. After 1971 there have only been three editors up to the present time. It is through their efforts that the publication has always received the justifiable respect that it does. Amina Chatwin was the editor for the issues from 1971 through to 1980, followed by Christopher Cox from 1981 to 1987 and Amber Patrick from 1988 to the present day. Only once has it been necessary to cover two years with a single issue (1977 / 78). Each issue contains between 50 and 80 (A4) pages and collectively, the 27 Journals; produced so far; form an invaluable record of the industrial archaeology and industrial history of the area.

The 1975 issue was largely devoted to a detailed history of papermaking in or near Winchcombe. It was part financed by a contribution from Evans, Adlard and Co. Ltd., the owners of Postlip Mill, which was featured in the article. This seems to have been the Society's one and only venture into sponsorship! The important task of indexing the previous ten years' issues was undertaken by Ronald Kershaw in 1980 and Norman Ferry in 1990.

The GSIA News sheet first appeared in 1971 and had reached issue number 115 by the end of 1999. David Bick saw it through its first four years to be followed by Michael Pountney, Graham Curzon, Andrew Thynne, Graham Harvey and currently Janet Crompton. The relevant periods are given in the Appendix. Looking through the back numbers it is noticeable how various technologies had have been used to produce the News sheet. In the early days stencils were cut and the copies ran off using a duplicator. Graham Harvey's involvement in the printing industry enabled the master copy to be properly typeset ready for xeroxing long before other similar publications. Today, of course, the master is produced using a standard word processing computer package.

A high priority has always been to get each issue distributed in time to give sufficient notice for all the forthcoming events. On more than one occasion this involved a late night rendezvous at a convenient motorway junction where the News sheet editor would hand over the master copy to the Secretary so it could be xeroxed the next day. A great step forward in 1999 means that the News sheet editor can now e-mail the complete issue to the Secretary ready for printing.

Work on a gazetteer listing the main industrial archaeology sites in Gloucestershire started in 1967 following the publication of the Devon gazetteer. The title was to be *Industrial Archaeology in Gloucestershire*. The same format of a 32 page booklet and grouping the sites by topic rather than by locality was adopted. It was edited by the Rev Wilbert Awdry and the maps were drawn by Ian Parsons. Most of the Committee Members contributed to the entries. As with most self-publishing ventures a major problem was finance. A loan from the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society was a possibility but was ultimately not forthcoming. The gazetteer was eventually published in late 1973 in conjunction with Gloucestershire Rural Community Council on the basis of equally sharing any profit or loss. It was well received by the reviewers, partly because it broke totally new ground with its

subject matter. The print run was 2000 and copies were sent out to all educational establishments in the County. Fortunately, the remaining copies were all sold in a reasonable time and a small surplus resulted from the venture. Further editions with minor revisions were brought out in 1975 and 1983 and these were financed entirely by the Society.

GSIA were the hosts of the 1992 Association for Industrial Archaeology Annual Conference. It had become a tradition by this time that the host Society produced a gazetteer of sites for its area. The old gazetteer was now almost out of print and so it was decided to produce a completely new edition. Unlike the earlier one this was arranged on a geographical basis rather than by topic. It was co-edited by Stephen Mills, Pierce Riemer, Ian Standing and Ray Wilson. It was ready a couple of weeks before the meeting and apparently this was the first time the local society had actually published it in time for the Conference!

One area where the Society has been somewhat lacking is in the production of 'trail' leaflets for areas of high industrial archaeology interest. An exception to this is the attractive leaflet on the Nailsworth Mills produced in 1997 by Tony Youles with illustrations by Jane Ford.

Planning matters

An essential role of the Society is active participation in the planning process. Indeed, this was actively encouraged in 1965 by the then County Planning Officer, Norman Collins. It is probably true that there is today a much wider appreciation of our industrial heritage. However, some extremely disappointing results have come from the planning process and no doubt these disappointments will continue. This makes the successes all the more welcome when they come.

One thing that the Society is clear about is that every building must have a use which provides revenue for vital maintenance otherwise it will deteriorate in the long run. Total preservation of a building is therefore usually not a viable option. In some cases the preferred option may be adaptive reuse where the essential character of the former industrial building is retained as much as possible but the building takes on an entirely different use. There can be no hard and fast rules about this and each case needs to be considered separately. The combined expertise of the Members has been invaluable over the years when the Society has dealt with planning matters. Up until about 1990 the Society was fortunate to have architects Neville Crawford and Ian Parsons to co-ordinate planning matters, particularly in respect of Gloucester Docks. More recently most of this work has been carried out by Ray Wilson assisted by the Members who are most familiar with a particular site.

An obvious part of this work is commenting on planning applications for sites that have an industrial archaeological content. Sometimes these comments merely make suggestions but frequently it is considered necessary to raise an objection to the proposed development. However, if the industrial archaeology is to stand the best chance of being considered in a development then it is essential to take a pro-active approach before the planning application comes in.

The best way of doing this is to research the most significant sites and particularly the most vulnerable ones and ensure that the results are published in the Annual Journal or elsewhere. Another very important way of highlighting relevant sites together with the reasons for their significance is to get the sites entered into the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). This is a computerised database of all types of archaeological sites administered by the County

Archaeology team at Shire Hall. Each week the six District Councils circulate a list of all planning applications they have received. These applications are compared with the contents of the SMR at Shire Hall and relevant comments on the archaeology are passed back to the District Council. It should serve to strengthen the case in favour of the archaeology if it is already identified in the SMR rather than only raised in the context of an objection to the development.

When the first County Archaeologist for Gloucestershire, Alison Allden, was appointed in 1982 she was co-opted onto GSIA Committee to ensure close liaison while the SMR was being set up.

Members do fill in SMR cards but the process does require quite a bit of expertise. It is certainly true to say that much more needs to be done. Three of the District Councils, Stroud, Gloucester and Tewkesbury have agreed to GSIA being sent copies of the weekly list of planning applications. These are checked by the Secretary each week and are a valuable way of getting early warning of developments which have an industrial archaeological content.

The Society has equipped itself with the relevant Planning Policy Guidelines (PPGs) published by the Government. The two relevant ones here relate to Archaeology (PPG 16) and Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. (PPG 15). This enables the representations to be made according to the same rules to which the planners are working and it improves the quality of the representations that are made to the planning departments.

Considerable effort has been spent since the late 1980s attempting to get as much recognition of industrial archaeology as possible in the statutory District Local Plan that is prepared for each area. It is important to develop contacts with the Planning Officers, (especially the Conservation Officers) and the Councillors. However, District Council politics are such that just as you get to know a Councillor, they stand down or are defeated at the next election! The Monument Protection Programme (MPP) run by English Heritage aims to select nationally important sites for scheduling for a range of industries. The Society and individuals have been commenting and furnishing information at the different stages of the process.

Research including access to old photographs is invaluable. There has been instances where plans have been revised to take account of information supplied by the Society.

The following is an attempt to indicate some of the planning issues that the Society has been involved in. It serves to illustrate the diversity of the schemes that require attention. It is convenient to treat them by District and then consider separately three major issues, Longfords Mill, Sharpness Docks and Dunkirk Mills.

Gloucester District

The major item of interest in Gloucester for industrial archaeologists is of course the Docks. In 1980 there was an application to demolish the North Warehouse. The building was in bad condition but it was seen as vital that it should be retained. GSIA joined forces with other organisations and was delighted when the refusal to demolish was upheld at appeal in 1981. Gloucester City Council then purchased the building for £1 and converted it into their headquarters. There had been earlier threats to buildings in the docks in the early 1970s including an application in 1972 to demolish the Llanthony warehouse which became the home of the National Waterways Museum in 1988.

The Society recognises the importance of the small buildings around the dock such as the old Weighbridge House and the cottages at the Southgate Street entrance and the Coffee House doorway and the drinking fountain near the Commercial Road entrance. It has always argued for their retention in the various schemes that have been put forward. The introduction of the railings all around the dock was seen as being out of keeping but had to be accepted because of Health and Safety considerations. Overall, the conversion of the dock warehouses into offices and the creation of a leisure and shopping area while retaining some of the character of the Docks has been successful.

David Bick proposed an imaginative scheme in 1992 to lay down replica rails and place a waggon where the Cheltenham and Gloucester Tramroad entered the Docks. Unfortunately this scheme was not carried through. However, it is hoped that the tramroad will be commemorated in this area in the near future by a more modest scheme in which the blocks and rails are depicted by different coloured paving blocks. This will supplement the plaque that was erected here in 1991.

After more than 150 years of service, the demolition of Telford's bridge at Over was proposed in 1969 when the new A40 river crossing was constructed. GSIA was prominent in a three year campaign to save the bridge and happily it survives today, clearly visible to those who use the replacement crossing alongside.

A major scheme for the redevelopment of the Blackfriars area was put forward in the mid 1990s. Unhappily this involved the realignment of the line of the ancient Longsmith Street where much of the iron working was carried on in the city. The society was pleased to support the Gloucester Civic Society in its successful attempt to get the plan altered and the original line retained.

Forest of Dean

While some of the richest industrial archaeology in the County exists in the Forest of Dean area it is also among the most vulnerable. These threats include forestry working and open cast mining. A major concern in 1987 was a proposal to tip domestic rubbish at Bixhead Quarry. The Society's objections were successfully co-ordinated by Ian Standing and an account of the campaign appeared in the Journal for that year.

1987 was also the year in which the Forestry Commission started its Archaeological Advisory Committee. It includes a large number of organisations including GSIA, who was represented by David Bick until 1998. The Committee originally met twice a year but has met annually for many years which tends to limit its usefulness. It produced in 1992 a strategy for conserving archaeological sites on Forestry Commission land. However there were very few resources available to implement the strategy and so it has only been possible to achieve a fairly limited amount. Most recently the Committee has been concerned with conservation of the tramroads in the Forest. GSIA Members have been assisting with surveys of the less well known branches. The Society's own strategy was produced by Ian Standing and Stan Coates and published in the 1979 Journal.

At different times the Society was active in seeking statutory protection for important structures such as the Whitecliff Furnace, Guns Mill Furnace and the Lightmoor Engine House. The Society then supported the Whitecliff Furnace Trust which was set up in 1978 to carry out the necessary structural repairs to ensure the survival of this very important structure. In 1984 the Society shared the concerns of others about activities at Whitecliff

Quarry which might threaten the furnace. Concerns were also expressed about a different sort of threat in 1992 when there was a proposal to erect Scandinavian style holiday chalets in the Whitecliff Valley.

Lydney Docks was sold in 1988 to, James Hampden, a London based company who had plans for residential and leisure developments there. The scheme was never carried out, no doubt due in part to the recession in the 1990s, and by 1999 the Docks had come into the possession of the Environment Agency. It is to be hoped that in due course the Agency will bring forward suitable plans for conservation of the site coupled with interpretation for the public. The Society assisted in 1988 in an unsuccessful campaign to prevent the closure of the maternity unit at the Dilke Memorial Hospital in the Forest. Its closure greatly reduced the chances of future generations fulfilling one of the necessary conditions to become a freeminer, that is to be born in the Hundred of St. Briavals. In the mid 1990s many of the former railway lines were adapted for use as cycleways in the Forest. This was cautiously welcomed by the Society as it should introduce more people to our industrial heritage without significant risk to the remains.

Stroud District

It seems that during the life of Society almost all of the mills have been the subject of planning applications. Sometimes there have been complete changes of use such as at Ebley Mill, now the headquarters of the District Council, Dunkirk Mills and Longfords Mill for housing. Egypt Mill Nailsworth became a popular pub/restaurant in 1986 and Fromebridge Mill at Frampton-on-Severn followed suit in 1999. In the latter case GSIA was particularly keen that as much as possible of the milling machinery and ancillary equipment should be retained. A detailed photographic survey was carried out together with a record of the machinery and power systems. Much of the research at Fromebridge has been carried out by Stephen Mills and a video record of the site was made by Alan Garnett. Happily the stone floor in the main building remains virtually untouched and now forms a small museum which is open most of the time on request to a member of staff.

The former railway goods shed at Stroud reputedly designed by Brunel was listed in 1985 following representations by the Society and others. The level crossing gates and cabin at St Mary's Chalford were similarly listed two years later. The canal bridge and causeway across the Frome valley at Daneway near Sapperton seemed likely to be levelled in 1979 because of instability problems. The Society joined the Canal Trust and local residents in opposing these proposals. This led to the bridge and causeway being reprieved and subsequently repaired. The bridge is now listed. The small circular building at Woodchester known as the Teazle Tower was converted into a dwelling in the early 1980s. There were several proposals to extend the building as part of the conversion and the GSIA Committee made detailed comments on all of them as it considered it to be a very important building. Finally an extension consisting of a small intersecting round tower was finally approved by the Council and subsequently built.

In 1986 Stroud District Council commissioned a detailed study into the future use of the mills. The document produced became known as the Urbed Report. There was much debate over the way forward and eventually in 1987 the Stroud Valleys Project was formed to try to implement some of the proposals. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, this organisation never achieved its original objectives. Perhaps the most important outcome of the Urbed Report was the designation of much of the valley bottoms as a linear conservation area on account of all the mills and former industrial activity they contain.

In 1985 Hardwicke Bridge keepers cottage was without its bridge over the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal when the bridge was declared redundant and demolished. Isolated by lack of vehicular access the cottage had become almost derelict by 1988. All the Society could do was to lobby the District Council to get the minimum work done on the building so that it was not lost altogether. Happily, the building eventually went to a private buyer who managed to overcome considerable legal difficulties regarding access and finally restore it into a very fine dwelling.

The Hill Paul building, a former clothing factory standing by Stroud Station, has been the subject of a number of planning applications since production stopped in about 1992. At one time the striking red brick building was a possible contender for the home of Stroud's new museum. Permission was granted to convert it into dwellings but it now seems likely that it will be demolished to pave the way for some more lucrative development. A full photographic record of the building was made in 1997.

Next door to the Hill Paul factory was the purpose built bus garage erected by the Great Western Railway in about 1908. The Society was able to get its significance noted in the Planning Brief for the Stroud Station area prepared by the District Council in 1992. However this was of little help in 1997 when South West and Wales Trains wrote to the Council about the possibility of demolishing the garage. After six weeks the train company had not heard from the Council and went ahead and demolished it. A very sad and unnecessary end to an interesting building.

At Toadsmoor Mill, the owner in 1995 was considering demolishing a flat roofed extension that was in poor repair. An elderly former worker at the former flock mill was traced who told the Society that the extension had housed an auxiliary steam engine. Happily, once the significance of the extension was understood all thoughts of demolition were dropped.

Cotswold District

It is perhaps not surprising that there are generally far less planning applications in Cotswold District relating to industrial archaeology compared to the other Districts. Two major issues in the 1980s were the proposed demolition of both the Maltings, Cricklade Street, Cirencester, and the old Cirencester Town station building. In the case of the former only the facade remains but the latter has survived and now stands rather incongruously in the centre of a public car park.

Tewkesbury District

The closure of the old Over Hospital on the outskirts of Gloucester (but in Tewkesbury District) has led to a number of plans for redevelopment. The junction of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal with the River Severn is the important feature of this site as far as GSIA is concerned. Proposals in 1993 were for a supermarket on the hospital site but by 1997 this had changed to housing. The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust who are working very effectively to try to eventually reopen the canal have been successful in securing the line of the canal through the site. They have also acquired the canal basin, lock and lock cottage plus a certain amount of funding. GSIA were pleased to support the various planning applications that the Canal Trust have had to make.

Cheltenham District

The Borough Council contacted GSIA in 1991 about their proposed flood prevention scheme involving the River Chelt. The Society was able to support the Council in their stipulation to

the engineers responsible that the works should avoid unacceptable changes to the surviving head and tail races of the former Cheltenham mills. This prompted Amina Chatwin to research the history of the mill sites which was then published in the 1993 Journal.

The planning application in 1990 for a Tesco supermarket at the old gas works site included the demolition of significant lengths of the orate boundary wall to accommodate car access. The Society joined with other groups to get this reduced to a minimum.

In 1998 production ceased at the Cheltenham (now Whitbread) Brewery and plans announced for the complete clearance of the site prior to redevelopment. GSIA objected to complete clearance and along with others sought the retention of at least the old malthouse fronting St Margaret's Road and the main brewery building with the cupola. At the end of 1999 this outcome seemed to be a distinct possibility. At the same time the Society was keeping abreast of a possible refurbishment programme for Cheltenham (Lansdown) Station. Hopefully the fine portico that was removed from the station building in the 1960s will be restored one day.

Longfords Mill Minchinhampton

At Longfords Mill the story of woollen cloth production over the last 200 years is apparent on a single site. Here are 18th century buildings that were water powered, substantial 19th century buildings built for steam power and finally single storey 20th century buildings that were powered by electricity. In March 1990 the mill closed and the problem of what to do with the site has been wrestled with ever since. In December 1990 the 19.5 acre Longfords Mill was on the market for 2.5 million pounds.

The site was the subject of an extensive record made by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England. A very fruitful visit was made to the Birmingham City Archives which holds the Boulton and Watt Collection. Plans and information were found in the collection for Boulton and Watt steam engines that had been installed at Longfords and Dunkirk Mills in the early part of the 19th century. The power house containing a Bellis and Morcom steam engine, Gordon turbine and large diesel engines made by Petter and W D Allen was researched by Ray Wilson. The Society considered it very important to keep the power house and its equipment intact. This view was shared by the International Stationery Engine Research Group who paid a visit to the site. Clarks the Somerset footwear firm investigated using the buildings as a 'shopping village'. Access and parking problems ruled this out and, left empty, the site became the target of vandals and thieves intent on stealing the valuable stone slates off the buildings. Members of GSIA carried out a survey from the road when it was estimated that over 30 square metres of stone slates had been robbed. This information was included in a strongly worded request to the District Council from GSIA that the owners should protect the listed buildings as they would deteriorate rapidly if left open to the elements

An application to convert the stone buildings to dwellings and demolish most of the rest of the site in favour of new housing was made in 1995. This brought more than 40 objections from organisations which of course included GSIA. The application was turned down and was set to go to appeal until Stroud District Council effectively reversed its earlier decision and approved the plans in principle. In 1999 the situation was still not finally resolved but it was widely believed that the scheme would get permission subject to certain legal agreements being made. In 1996 the Society became aware of a small water turbine in the former wheel pit at Iron Mills which forms part of the Longfords site. The Society made strong representations that the wheel pit and turbine should be retained. The approved plans show

the turbine in the centre of a kitchen to be built over the wheel pit. It will be interesting to see what happens when the developers come to carry out these plans.

Sharpness Docks

Wilf Rowles's book about Sharpness Docks bears the very appropriate sub-title "The Country Dock" and it comes as some surprise to people that the port is in fact capable of handling 8000 ton ships. However a century after the New Docks opened in 1874 the facilities were becoming inadequate for the newest vessels and it has only survived by dealing with specialist imports not popular elsewhere like fertilizer, cement and animal feeds and exports like scrap metal. Today there is only one survivor of the original four large grain warehouses which were similar to those at Gloucester Docks. In 1984 there were two warehouses at Sharpness and one of these, the Albert Warehouse, was demolished without notice by British Waterways Board. This led the remaining one, the North Warehouse, becoming a listed building. Just recently there has been an application to demolish the North Warehouse but there have been strenuous objections from the local Councils, GSIA and the Victorian Society.

In 1989 GSIA successfully pressed for the Old Dock area of 1827, comprising the tidal basin, gates, locks and canal arm to be declared a Conservation Area. This was to be a key factor two years later when British Waterways introduced proposals for large-scale housing and leisure development at the Old Dock. There was much opposition to this heavily flawed scheme which would have totally destroyed the character of the Old Dock. Conservation Area status imposed a number of constraints which together with other problems resulted in the scheme being eventually dropped. During this period Stroud District Council set up the 'Sharpness Docks Working Party' to consider the future of the area and the group included a co-opted representative from GSIA. The Society also submitted detailed representations when a Planning Brief for Sharpness was prepared by the District Council in 1991.

The state of the Old Dock House was giving concern in 1984 when the Society woke up to the fact that due to an agreement between British Waterways and the Government, many waterways buildings had not been listed. GSIA immediately set about getting the Old Dock House and several of the Bridge keepers cottages along the Gloucester and Sharpness canal listed. Over the next nine years the Old Dock House continued to deteriorate. It proved to be very difficult to get British Waterways to carry out even the most essential maintenance to the building despite its listed status. The Society persevered and got the vital gutters reinstated even if they were grey and plastic! The turning point came when the Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA) decided to take on the Old Dock House as their Sharpness base. The building now also houses their two rescue boats and landrover that had previously fallen prey to vandals. It was opened in September 1997 by the late Johnny Morris, the television presenter. GSIA mounted an exhibition on Sharpness for the large crowd there that day and have put on similar displays on subsequent Open Days.

Dunkirk Mills Nailsworth

Dunkirk Mills, one of the largest and finest of the cloth mills in the Stroud area was put on the market in 1986. The Society has taken a great interest in this site as recorded in the Annual Journals. The conversion of a mill to residential use is really only acceptable when, as in this case, it is the only viable use for it taking into account the vast cost of essential repairs. Considerable research has been carried out into the history of the site and particular attention

has been paid to the uses Dunkirk has been put to after woollen cloth production stopped in about 1890. The three large waterwheels have been restored as part of the project to convert the building to dwellings.

The Society paid a large role during the planning process to secure future public access to the spaces around the waterwheels. Here the public will see displays on the history of Dunkirk and the industries carried on there. The original developer went into liquidation in 1991 and although the site was wind and weatherproof at that time only the southern range of buildings had been converted. Work on the northern end resumed in 1998. Once the building works are fully complete the displays can be constructed. Dunkirk still has three large, now derelict, mill ponds between it and Egypt Mill. It is hoped that one day the necessary repairs can be done and the ponds put back into water.

Postscript

At the time of writing the Tate Modern Art Gallery has opened to high acclaim in the former Bankside Power Station. It is to be hoped that this notable re-use of an old industrial building will serve to remind architects and developers of the possibilities that exist for redundant industrial buildings including those on a much smaller scale than Bankside Power Station.

Projects

An early research project in 1966 involved Members meeting up at the British Waterways Board offices at Gloucester Docks on Saturday mornings. Here they were kindly permitted to study early documents on the Docks and the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal.

In 1967 the Society was given for preservation of a Gwynne stationary steam engine at Gloucester Docks. It was dismantled and put into storage at different locations including Newman Henders at Woodchester. Unfortunately it proved impossible to find a suitable location where the engine could be re-erected and it was ultimately disposed of for scrap. However, when the engine was being dismantled a large quantity of records of the Sharpness Dock Company and the Severn Navigation Commission were discovered. This important collection covered the period 1837-1948 and the papers were sorted and subsequently transferred to the Gloucestershire Record Office.

Stroud Museum acquired a large waterwheel from Quenington Mill in 1969 and the Society contributed £20 towards transport. The wheel remained in storage for almost 30 years until it was returned to Quenington in 1998 as reported in the article by David Viner in the GSIA Journal for that year.

Several weekends in March 1973 were spent excavating stone sleeper blocks from tramroads on Leckhampton Hill. This resulted in some photographic coverage in the local papers. A tramroad siding at Gloucester Docks was excavated in 1983 and again this provided some good publicity for the Society.

A branch of the Monmouth-Coleford tramway descended by an incline and inclined overbridge at Redbrook. The bridge suffered severe damage in 1977 when hit by a lorry. There were difficulties in finding the money to carry out the repairs and it looked as though there might be moves to demolish it instead. The Society pressed for the structure to be

scheduled as an Ancient Monument but this was initially turned down. The structure was eventually scheduled and subsequently repaired by Gloucestershire County Council.

From 1977 until 1990 a small but enthusiastic group led by Graham Curzon which included at different times, Howard Ellis, Mary Lewis and Gerry Bannister carried out an excavation at Flaxley Abbey near Mitcheldean. They were investigating what was believed to be the site of a charcoal blast furnace that went out of use in the early 19th century. Various masonry structures were found but they could not be fully explained and it is likely that the site would repay a much more extensive excavation one day.

Whitecliff Furnace is one of the most important industrial monuments in the County. This coke fuelled blast furnace for smelting iron ore was built 1798-1810. It was in a very bad state of repair by 1974 and this prompted the Society to write to the Forestry Commission to enquire about restoration possibilities. By 1976 it had been pronounced dangerous but later that year it was scheduled as an ancient monument. It was estimated that 20,000 was required although some of the work could be done by volunteers. The Whitecliff Furnace Trust was formed in 1978 to carry out the essential repair work and care for the structure in the future. GSIA supported the new organisation and one of the first trustees was nominated by the Society. Various fund raising events were held by GSIA including the Annual Dinner in 1978. Amina Chatwin organised the making of a hand-sewn quilt by GSIA Members to be raffled and the proceeds given to the Whitecliff fund. More than 720 was raised by the draw which was made on the Society trip in June 1979 down the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal. The Trust had raised 20,000 by November 1980 and the furnace was duly consolidated.

The Rev. Awdry led an unsuccessful attempt in 1976 to commemorate the former Gloucester Eastgate Station by preserving one of the large terra cotta plaques bearing the Midland Railway logo. It was planned to incorporate the plaque in the new Gloucester Station buildings but it proved too fragile to relocate successfully.

The three arched stone bridge built in the parish of Awre in c.1830 for the proposed Purton Steam Carriage Railway was suffering badly in the 1970s. There were even young trees growing out of the masonry. Clearance work was carried out over a few weekends by a small group of Members. However by 1999 the trees had returned and there was little indication of the work done twenty years previously.

Tally Ho Quarry near Guiting Power was the scene of a remarkable enterprise in 1808. Blocks of limestone were cut from the quarry and pipes manufactured by boring out a core from the centre. At least one steam engine had been supplied by Boulton and Watt and in 1984-5 David Bick organised fieldwork aimed at uncovering the foundations of an engine.

One site that had been firmly out of bounds to the Society for many years was the Old Tannery at Leonard Stanley. It was only when the buildings were being cleared for new houses in 1991 that Stephen Mills was finally able to get access, and he identified among other very interesting objects, two cast iron bark mills. These were used to grind up the oak bark so that more tannin would be extracted when it was soaked in water. One mill had been powered by a horse engine and the other by the waterwheel that was also extant. Surviving bark mills are now extremely rare and these have now been put into the care of Stroud Museum.

In 1992, Heber Ltd. the company occupying Belvedere Mill at the western end of Chalford contacted GSIA asking for assistance. They were keen to find a suitable home for a large cast

iron air bottle on their premises at the site of Stroud Water Company's second main pumping station. Initially this proved to be a fruitless task but in 1995 it was suggested to one of our Members, Robin Townsend, that his nearby premises would be a very appropriate home. These premises are in fact the site of Stroud Water Company's first main pumping station. Furthermore, the site lies just across the canal at the eastern end of Chalford and so the air bottle would be visible to people walking along the towpath. It was actually moved to its new location in 1997 and this was no mean achievement as it was found to weigh 2.5 tons.

A photograph in the *Gloucester Citizen* in 1994 showed the gable end of a small private gas works that provided gas for lighting at the now demolished Owlpen House near Uley. This led to the Society making contact with the owner Mr Nicholas Mander. A small group of volunteers led by Frank Colls cleared the site of brambles and nettles and recorded the remains which included two chambers for retorts and the base of the gasholder. The site created considerable interest which extended outside the County. John Horne of the Institution of Gas Engineers' Historic Gas Panel travelled up from Southampton to assess the site.

In 1994 Nigel Spry launched a survey of the slag blocks that are commonly found in buildings and walls in Severnside villages. It is thought that many of the blocks may have been a by-product of the Bristol copper smelting industry and brought up the Severn by trading vessels in ballast. The survey has been the combined efforts of the Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group, Dean Archaeological Group and GSIA.

The Stroudwater Crane at Dudbridge dates from 1856 is now the only surviving crane on the Stroudwater and Thames & Severn Canals. It was surveyed and its history researched by GSIA Members in 1995. All the metalwork seemed in good condition and so the Society only needed to treat the timber jib with high quality timber preservative. During the 1990's the cast iron plates on four milestones at Cam, Frocester and Eastington were repainted.

The Lister-Petter company put their entire collection of historic Lister engines and agricultural equipment up for sale by auction in September 1988. GSIA soon joined forces with the Dursley and Cam Society and various Lister (or Lister-Petter as it had then become) employees in a successful attempt to stop the sale. This still left the problem of what to do with the collection and it was put into store under the auspices of Stroud Museum. The story took an unexpected turn in 1999 when Lister-Petter declined to sponsor the popular Lister Rally held annually at North Nibley. Instead, in lieu of cash, four of the older and more valuable engines held by the museum were to be auctioned at the show and the proceeds given to the rally organisers.

Protests were mounted just as they were eleven years previously but this time the auction was not stopped. It was not clear who the purchasers were or if indeed the engines had been sold. However, at the end of 1999 it was announced that local businessman Barry Walker had acquired all four engines with a view to displaying them in Dursley. At about the same time Dursley Town Council announced that they had purchased the so-called Weavers House in the town centre for use as a Heritage Centre for the town where Lister exhibits could be shown. There is still a long way to go but it is to be hoped that before long at least some of the material saved in 1988 can at last be on display in its home town.

Right from the start the committee was keen to locate pictures of old industries and contact was made with the main photographic societies in the County. Members were of course quick to start recording sites as they were in the mid 1960s. Some of the 35 mm colour slides taken

during the early years were duplicated so that the Society had a set of slides for use when Members give talks. Some of this collection are still used by the present author for a talk he gives on *Gloucestershire's Industrial Heritage*. The Society does not appear to have built up its own slide collection after this time although individual Members were very prolific in taking colour slides. It is however, sad to relate that some very important collections have come into the possession of the Society through ill-health or the death of these Members.

When the former GSIA President, Rev. W. V. Awdry, passed on his personal collection of industrial archaeology slides to the author in 1996 it was clear that some of the pictures were starting to deteriorate. This was not surprising as some of the colour slides dated back to the 1960s. It was therefore felt that appropriate steps should be taken to preserve these images from up to 35 years ago. It would, of course, have been possible to duplicate the slides as had been done earlier. However by 1996 the personal computer had now become common place and great strides had been made in the field of digital images. It was actually found to be cheaper to transfer the slides, 100 at a time, as digital images on to a special form of compact disk called a Kodak PhotoCD. The results have been found to be very good and encouraged by this the Society went a stage further in 1999 and purchased a Nikon 35mm slide and negative scanner. Members with a suitable computer are now able to create digital images for the Society at very low cost. The images are then stored using a special device that can write the images on a standard CD-ROM. Hugh Morrison has developed procedures to follow when scanning and then storing the images.

A start has now been made on the mammoth task of digitising only a fraction of the vast number of slides and negatives that are available to the Society. Moreover the Society plans to encourage Members to take photographs of Gloucestershire industrial archaeology during the year 2000 as the Society's contribution to the *Gloucestershire 2000 Photographic Archive*. It is hoped that this will produce a lot more slides and negatives to scan.

Recent developments in technology were further exploited to assist the History Department at Rednock School Dursley with their annual course on the local woollen industry. Source material was created for the students in 1997 using some of the GSIA digital images together with suitable extended captions. The images and captions can be displayed on a number of computers accessible to the students and show old and new views of the various mills and the processes that went on in them. This same material is now available on the Internet. It seems to be of particular interest to genealogists from across the world who have an ancestor who worked in the local woollen industry.

Fieldwork

In 1964 a sub-committee was formed to co-ordinate field work. Visits were made to key locations identified by the sub-committee. A site report card was filled out after each visit and copies of the card were sent to Lionel Walrond at Stroud Museum and Angus Buchanan at the Centre for the Study of the History of Technology which was then located at the Bristol College of Science and Technology. The number of cards completed had risen to 300 by September 1966. A number of photocopies of early 6 inch ordnance survey maps were acquired to assist with fieldwork.

The importance of doing field work has been regularly noted at the Annual General Meeting and at Committee Meetings. However, it was observed at an early AGM that "Many

Members had their own research interests and it has proved difficult to get sustained group activity" and this has continued to be the case since then. It is certainly true that many Members do have their particular lines of research as shown by the publications they continue to produce including articles for the Annual Journal.

However, one area where the Society has been particularly active is in respect of planning applications and these often require a considerable amount of fieldwork before a detailed representation can be made. The results of other fieldwork has been regularly used in the compilation of entries for inclusion in the County Sites and Monuments Record. Where possible former workers in local industries have been traced and interviewed to provide a first hand account of working conditions.

According to the Society's records the first fieldwork project was at Monks Mill, Alderley near Wotton-under-Edge. However, this actually took place before the formation of the Society in March 1964. The first project after this date was a survey at Smalls Mill, Painswick. This was followed by a survey along the Thames and Severn Canal in the Stroud area. Brief surveys were made of Damsell's Mill at Painswick, Parkend Furnace and Whitecliff Furnace, Coleford. Some work was also carried out at the site of the Newent Furnace.

Geoffrey Beddows, a surveyor by profession, ran a course on basic surveying techniques in the Summer of 1976. Several Members benefited from this as did the Society when the group produced measured drawings of a dyehouse at Brimscombe Mill near Stroud. A significant step for industrial archaeology as a whole was the setting up of the Industrial Monument Survey by the Council for British Archaeology. Members contributed to the survey by sending reports to Keith Falconer, the Survey Officer.

In the early 1980s a former resident of Kings Stanley furnished the Society with some old Ordnance Survey maps of Kings Stanley. These showed the channels that were formerly part of the water supply system to the village and several evenings were spent tracking the remains on the ground.

A survey was made in 1983 of a small water wheel and pump at Alderley near Wotton-under-Edge which provided the water supply to a nearby house. The equipment was housed in a small stone building at the Alderley Trout Farm.

The demolition of Dudbridge Mill Cottage on the Nailsworth Stream provoked controversy in 1990. The interesting features here were a sluice and a very narrow wheel pit complete with wheel marks. The exact use of the building remains unknown but a plan of 1880 indicates that the building was once a cottage and wash house. This may explain the mystery as this use would have required very little power. An interesting complex consisting of the workshops of a former carpenter, wheelwright and blacksmith at Stonehouse were due to be demolished for housing in 1991. A photographic record was made of the complex at the request of Stroud District Council.

A story that the viaducts on the Swindon to Gloucester railway line still contain the original timber viaducts of 1845 but now encased in masonry led to the British Rail Offices at Swindon in 1992. Here Ray Wilson and Jim Simmons examined engineering drawings relating to some of the viaducts where it was concluded that the story is unlikely to be true. One surprising fact to emerge was that the viaduct at the western end of the Stroud Station was still a timber one in 1890.

A photographic survey was carried out at Cam Mills near Dursley in 1994 before extensive changes were made to the site. These included demolition of the much altered mill building of 1815. One notable feature of this building was its tower with a large clock that was a well-known landmark in the area.

Three weeks before closure of the Lewis and Hole foundry at Dudbridge in July 1996 a GSIA team, led by Tony Youles, made a video, took numerous still photographs and carried out interviews with the owner and several of the staff. This led to two articles for the Annual Journal, and a very successful "Lewis and Hole Open Evening" which was open to the Public was held in Stroud the following March.

Woodchester Park was acquired by the National Trust in 1994 and the Society undertook a survey of the industrial archaeology of the park for the Trust. The main features were the site of the Woodchester glasshouse (a scheduled ancient monument), an icehouse, two eel traps and documentary evidence for two water mills. The icehouse had been partially filled in with soil and rubble but it was cleared out by a GSIA working party in June 1996. At the site of Park Mill, the lower of the two mills, a small culvert was visible and might have been an early tail race. The culvert was too dangerous to venture into and so in another project a radio beacon was pushed into the culvert using drain rods. At the same time the position of the beacon was tracked by a radio receiver on the surface. Unfortunately, the culvert proved to be longer than the length of drain rods available and so it has not yet been possible to confirm or deny whether the culvert ran back to the mill. In 1999 a post graduate student from the Department of Archaeology at Bristol University carried out an investigation at Park Mill by means of an earthwork survey and a resistivity survey. However, the nature of the ground below the Park Mill dam was such that the results were inconclusive.

Even after 35, years new sites and structures are still brought to the attention of the Society. In 1999 the Secretary was invited to inspect a purpose built wheelwright's oven in Bishops Cleeve. The small brick structure was used for many years to heat up and thus expand iron tyres so they could be fitted over the wooden cartwheels.

In anticipation of likely changes a photographic survey was made in 1999 of Monk Meadow Dock and the half mile of canal linking it to Gloucester Docks. The area had become ripe for development since the end of the oil traffic on the canal which made extensive use of Monkmeadow Dock.

A massive stone built retaining wall lies some distance below the western approach to the Sapperton Railway Tunnel. Its exact function, so far from the tracks was not obvious and led Tony Youles to investigate the possibility that the wall was connected with the original lower level approach which Brunel subsequently abandoned. Although the results were inconclusive the matter was set out in the 1998 Journal for someone else to follow up sometime.

Summer visits

The format of a summer programme of local walks and visits interspersed with excursions further afield by coach and car has remained virtually unaltered since the earliest days of the Society. The visits organisers over the years are listed in the Appendix along with a summary of each annual programme. More than 300 visits have been arranged up until the end of

1999. It is therefore truly remarkable that each organiser still manages to find somewhere new to go in the County in addition to return visits to other sites. The following notes on just a few of the visits demonstrate the diversity of the visits that have taken place.

The Society records show that the first visit was to Stanley Mill and Ebley Mill on 11 April 1964. Both of these two very fine mills were in use at that time for the production of top quality woollen cloth. Since then return visits have been made on several occasions. Some manufacturing operations are still carried on today at Stanley Mill which is a Listed Grade I building whereas Ebley Mill has been converted to the offices of Stroud District Council.

The opportunity was taken in 1965 to visit Cheltenham Town Gas Works prior to demolition. Back in the mid 1960s there were weekend trips to South Wales but unfortunately the support dwindled and it became no longer viable to run them after 1967. Other events received much better support such as a visit to the Stroudwater and Thames and Severn Canals in the same year which required two coaches. This excursion was led by Humphrey Household who had written the history of the canal. Also in 1967 a boat trip on the River Severn attracted 150 Members and friends.

The 1973 trip to London was the first of several to the Metropolis. The highlights of these trips included magnificent steam engines (some still at work) and the Docks. Over the years it has been possible to witness the transformation of vast areas of London's Docklands into new commercial, leisure and residential uses. The trip by canal boat through the Dudley Tunnel on the Birmingham Canal Navigations in 1975 gave some Members their first opportunity 'to leg' a boat in a tunnel.

Inett Homes from Herefordshire was a Member of the GSIA Committee during the 1980's and led a number of fascinating trips into that County. Various agricultural sites were visited including several oast houses. On one occasion a visit was made to a private gas works which had supplied gas to light a country house. There was a rare chance for a small party to visit the Donnington Brewery near Stow-on-the-Wold in June 1982 and see beer being brewed in the traditional way. The brewery lies in an idyllic setting and incorporates an old corn mill complete with water wheel and mill pond.

The 1987 trip to Saundersfoot and Pembroke Dock will be particularly remembered by all that were on it. The coach suffered an electrical fault which meant that the battery became flat during the very rainy lunch time stop. The problem was compounded by the fact that the air cylinder had become exhausted and so the brakes were firmly locked on until another coach could be brought to restore the pressure. During the two hour wait we were entertained in his inimitable way by our guide that day, Ray Bowen. There then remained the problem of starting the engine and it was truly amazing to see the huge coach being push-started by GSIA Members. After that the programme was resumed and a very good day was had after all.

Two trips that were completely different in character were a visit to Berkeley Nuclear Power Station in March 1989 just two weeks before the station ceased generating and a tour round Gloucester Cathedral the following year with Mr Basil Comley the Cathedral architect.

Strictly not for the claustrophobic was a visit to an underground stone slate mine at Stonesfield in Oxfordshire in 1990. This required a 20 foot descent down a vertical ladder

followed by a crawl of up to a quarter of a mile. The tunnel was only about 4 foot high as the valuable strata that produced the celebrated roofing slates were so thin. Other underground visits have included the Balls Green stone mines at Minchinhampton.

One Sunday morning in April 1994 arrangements were made with the Cotswold Canals Trust for trips into the Coates end of the Sapperton Canal Tunnel. The boat could take ten passengers and a total of five trips were laid on so that nearly 50 Members could experience at first hand the interior of the tunnel. When not in the tunnel or exploring the towpath Members enjoyed what was on offer at the Tunnel House Inn.

One of the most interesting visits was that made in 1995 to the Northcot Brickworks near Blockley where a range of machine and handmade bricks are produced, primarily for special applications. The whole process from the clay pit right through to the stockyard was on view..

Excursions to the Forest of Dean with its very rich industrial archaeology have always been enjoyed. These have often been led by Ian Standing in recent years. Tours of Gloucester Docks have always proved popular, with as many as 40 attending. Sometimes the walks develop into a series as with the recent walks following the Little Avon River through Kingswood and another four based on the Painswick Stream and its tributaries. Informal local walks on Sunday mornings in the Winter have been a regular activity in the Stroud area in the late 1990s. These provide an opportunity for Members to meet as well as monitor changes that were taking place.

Initially, there were as many as six coach trips each year but increasing car ownership and more pressure on leisure time meant that by 1980 only four were run each season. This was further reduced to three by 1984. The middle one of the three was run in late June to take advantage of the long hours of daylight to go further afield. However, it seemed to coincide with so many other activities that it was always a struggle to get enough people to come. In 1996 it was therefore necessary to abandon the middle trip. The two remaining trips are now arranged to come right at the beginning and the end of the season, respectively so that there is less competition from other events. At the moment this seems to work fairly well. Many Societies find it impossible to get support for coach trips and it is very much hoped that GSIA will not have to follow suit.

Over the years GSIA has hosted a number of visits from other Societies. In 1967 there was a weekend visit from the South East Wales IA Society which was a return visit for the weekends spent in South Wales. In 1986 the Southampton University IA Group thanked the GSIA guides with bottles of beer brewed in the Southwick Brewery that they had restored to working order. Sadly the bottles were to become collectors items when the Customs and Excise closed down the Brewery with the threat of prosecution if it ever reopened.

Other visitors have included the Surrey IA Group, The Hill Residential College from Abergavenny, the Railway and Canal Historical Society, the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (Wind and Watermill Group) and the Derbyshire IA Society. 1998 was a very busy year with visits from the Berkshire IA Society, Oxford House IA Society and the Greater London IA Society. In 1999 the Birmingham - Midland Branch of the Victorian Society came to look at the mills in the Stroud area. Walks have also been arranged for local groups within the County. For example, these have formed part of Stroud Festival and the Stroud Britain in Bloom activities.

Lectures and film shows

Lectures

The lecture programmes have always been a very familiar part of the Society's activities. They provide an opportunity for Members to meet socially during the winter months as well as learn more about industrial archaeology.

A series of industrial archaeology lectures was held at the Stroud Technical College in the winter preceding the actual formation of GSIA in March 1964. This was arranged by Mr W R Taylor who was the Resident Tutor in Gloucestershire for the University of Bristol Extra Mural Studies Department. Once the Society was underway IA Courses were arranged by the University in conjunction with GSIA at Brockworth and Stroud the following winter. One or two lectures were given by GSIA Members at Cheltenham that year. These were well received and led to the establishment of a lecture series at Parmoor House, Cheltenham in late 1965. This was to be an experiment but, in fact, lectures have been held at Cheltenham ever since. The Stroud lectures were moved to the College of Art in Lansdown in October 1965. The reason for the move is not clear but it was noted in the minutes that it was still not possible to have refreshments! A series of lectures on the Industrial History of Dean held at Coleford in 1976 was very successful. It was not organised by the Society but the tutor was David Bick, a Member.

An extremely wide range of topics has been covered over the years. The speakers might be practitioners, enthusiasts or academics or Members and sometimes could be all four! It was always of particular interest when the speaker was someone who had spent their working life in the industry they had come to talk about. Industrial Archaeology was certainly a popular subject in the mid 1960s and caused the tutor to remark that "courses are springing up all around us". Members Evenings have been held on a regular basis where three or four Members each give a talk on research they have been doing or on somewhere they have visited.

At first the lectures were arranged by the University with suggestions for speakers from the Society. However, a different speaker every week required excessive administration in the view of the University who wanted the Society to have just one speaker for 10 weeks. In fact this was done at Gloucester when Neil Cossons gave a series of 10 lectures in 1967. A compromise was reached whereby the Society, in the person of the Secretary, made the arrangements with the speakers while the University booked the rooms and paid the speakers. However, from 1975 onwards there have always been one or two Committee Members who specifically look after the lectures. Mary Townley was the first of these until 1985 and then Ray Wilson handled the arrangements for 1985-87, followed by Ron Carey between 1987 and 1992. Ted Farr looked after the 1992/93 season and then Amber Patrick and Tony Youles each did a two year stint.

For many years the lectures attracted between 25 and 35 at both the Stroud and Cheltenham venues. However, throughout the late 1980s and 1990s the subsidies paid to University Extra-Mural Departments were progressively reduced. This caused the fees to be increased with a corresponding reduction in the number attending. By 1996 it was felt that some changes had to be made, particularly at Stroud where although "the faithful" could always be relied upon to turn up each year the total audience had become embarrassingly small. It was therefore proposed by the Secretary that the Society should run its own course at Stroud in the Autumn of 1996 focussing on local industries. The series was far more successful than expected with 60 Members of the public signing up at £10 a head. The Speakers were Stephen Mills, Jim Simmons, Harry Townley, Ray Wilson and Tony Youles. The usual type

of programme was then run at Stroud after Christmas but the increase in attendance was only marginal.

It was therefore decided by the Committee to end GSIA's long association with the University and arrange the lectures entirely on its own. Two lectures are now held each winter at Gloucester, Cheltenham and Stroud. There is no fee payable by GSIA Members but non-members pay a nominal admission. The arrangements for the new format have been handled by Matthew Gemmill and Alex Gay.

Film Shows

A film show was suggested as early as July 1964. At that time most large industrial companies and the public utilities maintained extensive film libraries. A lot of these were merely for public relations purposes but some gave very clear accounts of industrial processes and the transport systems of the time. Film shows were held after the first two Annual General Meetings and sometimes a film evening formed part of the Winter lecture series.

By the early 1980's the advent of video meant that sources of suitable films were rapidly drying up. However, John Foley always managed to find very good material for the film evenings he organised on an annual basis between 1982 and the last one in 1994. These very popular events were held at the Barnwood, Gloucester offices of the Central Electricity Generating Board and were a joint venture with the Barnwood Industrial Archaeology and Transport Society (BIATS) which was based there.

There has been just one more film show since 1994 and it was held in the Wheatstone Hall, Gloucester in 1996. Jim Wilkie from near Chipping Sodbury showed some of his large collection of "dustbin" films. He has given his industrial film collection this name because of the way he claims to have obtained most of them!

Social events

Society Annual Dinners

At the first Annual General Meeting in 1965 the Chairman, Mr W G H Robins, asked for approval for a Society Dinner to be held. However, it is recorded in the minutes that "no support at all was forthcoming and the idea was dropped". Three years later the Committee decided to organise an "Informal Society Dinner" in March 1969 at Bistro 42 in Cheltenham High Street. This was repeated at the same venue two years later and from then on these highly enjoyable occasions have been held annually without exception. The number attending reached over eighty at its peak in the mid 1970's. More recently the numbers have been fairly constant in the region of between 30 to 40.

In 1972 the venue was changed to the Moor Court Hotel at Amberley so that the Stroud Members would not have so far to travel. The same hotel was used the following year when the guests were the new GSIA President, Mr David Verey, and Mrs Verey. 1974 saw the start of a long series of Dinners at the Fleece Hotel, Gloucester. That year the speaker was Pat Lane, the Member from Solihull whose fine illustrations appeared on the cover of the Annual Journal for more than 20 years. The 1975 event was used as a fund raising event to support the Reg Morton Memorial Fund in aid of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. The speaker was Michael Darby a descendent of the celebrated Coalbrookdale family. The departure of a past Chairman and Treasurer, Howard Pullan, to become County Surveyor of Gwent was marked by inviting Mr and Mrs Pullan as our guests in 1976.

In 1977 a cruise on board the Conway Castle to mark the 150th anniversary of the opening of Gloucester and Sharpness canal was agreed as a change from the previous annual dinners. Unfortunately, the firm ceased trading before the event and a dinner was again held at the Fleece Hotel. The 1982 Dinner was held at Corkers Wine Bar in Gloucester. Our Honorary Member Ray Bowen and his wife came from Dinas Powis near Cardiff to be our guests.

The Annual Dinners were held at the New County Hotel in Gloucester between 1983 and 1988. The 1983 Dinner marked the retirement of Miss Amina Chatwin as Secretary and more recently as Chairman. After her talk she was presented with an enamelled box and print from Ironbridge. In the succeeding years the speakers were Ian Standing of the Dean Heritage Museum, Fred Rowbotham a great expert on the River Severn and the Rev David Tipper, a noted railway historian. These were followed by Richard Keen of the National Museum of Wales and Tony Conder the curator of the National Waterways Museum which had opened in Gloucester in April 1988.

1989 was a special year for the Society as it marked our Silver Jubilee. A longstanding Member Dr Christopher Cox was the speaker on this occasion which was held at the White House Hotel at Staverton near Cheltenham. The venue was the same in 1990 when Michael Draper of the Severn Valley Railway was the guest. The Carlton Hotel in Parabola Road Cheltenham was used between 1991 and 1995. The speakers were Paul Elkin, Curator of the Bristol Industrial Museum, architect Christopher Bishop, Robin Williams of the Oxford House IA Society, Dr Jim Andrew of the Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry and the welcome return of Ray Bowen.

By 1996 another change in venue was thought desirable and for three years Egypt Mill at Nailsworth provided an appropriate location for an industrial archaeological society dinner. The speakers here were Professor Angus Buchanan, President of the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society, Mr Nicholas Mander, the owner of the private gas works at Owlpen near Uley that GSIA had been investigating that year and Trevor Radway of the Dean Forest Railway Society. In 1999 another Cheltenham venue was used, The Holst Restaurant at GlosCAT. The speaker was Martin Bartram of the Gloucestershire Aircraft Collection.

Social Evenings

The idea of a Social Evening held during the Summer was put forward by John Foley, and the first was held in 1981. The usual intention is to take a gentle walk looking at more than just the industrial archaeology in an interesting area. Quite often these take the form of a walk round a town or village. Family and friends are warmly invited to join in the walk which usually ends at a pub for a drink and a chat. The first of these evenings was a walk along the Combe Hill Canal with refreshments at the Wharf House by courtesy of Mr and Mrs Alan Picken. Other events have included Dursley, Winchcombe Railway Museum, Lower Framilode, Symonds Yat, Alney Island Gloucester and Frampton-on-Severn and a look at Cheltenham Ornamental Ironwork led by Amina Chatwin followed by supper at her home. On another occasion a visit was paid to Minchinhampton which finished at the home of Dr and Mrs Annis for supper. The venues and dates of the Social Evenings are included in the list of visits given in the Appendix.

Conferences

The South Wales and West of England Regional I.A. Conferences have always been highly successful events starting with the first one which was hosted by the Bristol I.A. Society in

1970. The participating societies take it in turn to host the conference. GSIA were the hosts for the first time in 1972 when the third meeting in the series was held at the College of Art Cheltenham with 79 attending. The Society were hosts for the second time when the 1980 meeting was centred on Gloucester Docks. Lectures were held in the Wheatstone Hall and lunch was served on the barge Semmington moored in the Docks. The day concluded with guided tours round the docks for the 130 delegates.

Maintaining an eight year cycle the conference came to Gloucestershire again in April 1988. This time a meeting based on Stroud was extremely appropriate in view of the resurgence of interest in the former cloth mills at that time and the formation of the Stroud Valleys Project. The programme attracted 130 to Wycliffe College, Stonehouse. Lionel Walrond gave a talk on the Stroud area and at the end of the day there was a choice of guided walks in the locality.

It was nine years rather than eight before the Conference was next held in Gloucestershire in April 1997. The Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester proved to be a very good venue. The meeting was opened by the Vice-Chairman of Cotswold District Council followed by a GSIA contribution on Sharpness Docks given by Ray Wilson. There were 120 participants and at the end of the day more than half joined in the optional excursion to Daneway to see the topmost locks on the Thames and Severn Canal and the western portal of the Sapperton Canal Tunnel. Many of these rounded off the day with a meal at the Daneway Inn.

The meetings have been generally well supported by GSIA Members. Certainly, Members have always been willing to make contributions to the meetings although the number of societies participating means that on average GSIA supplies one talk for every two conferences. These have included Malthouses by Amber Patrick, Cast Iron Fire Backs by David Bick, Gloucester Docks by Hugh Conway-Jones and The Brimscombe Boat Builders by Tony Langford.

In September 1992 the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA) conference was held in Gloucestershire and this was the biggest event of its kind involving GSIA. There were 120 delegates from all over the country. Provisional plans to hold the meeting at the Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education on the Cheltenham campus had to be scrapped due to building works and the venue finally chosen was The Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester. Amber Patrick who was Secretary of the AIA at the time oversaw the event for the Society. A GSIA Member, David Viner, gave an introductory talk on the Industrial Archaeology of Gloucestershire on the Friday evening and several other Members gave talks during the main Conference and the supplemental programme that continued during the following Monday to Thursday. A reception was held at the Countryside Collection at Northleach on the Saturday. Coach visits were made to the Stroud Valleys, Leckhampton Hill, Berkeley Power Station, Forest of Dean, Sharpness and Gloucester Docks.

Other Organisations

GSIA is a member of the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA), the National body for industrial archaeology. The Society actually predates AIA, by nearly ten years as the AIA was only formed in 1973. Contact is maintained with a number of industrial archaeology societies by interchanging publications on an informal basis. The wide ranging nature of industrial archaeology means that there are a number of groups and societies whose interests overlap with GSIA. In many instances Members of these organisations are also Members of

GSIA. The Society has been keen to work with or assist kindred organisations wherever possible. Unfortunately, due to the very limited funds available the help is mainly in the form of writing letters of support or occasionally providing a small grant to help cover the costs of a group starting up.

Over the years the Society has been pleased to have been associated with the Cotswold Canals Trust, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Canal Trust and the Gloucestershire Aviation Collection. The Cotswold Canals Trust held a very significant event in July 1994 with the opening of the "world's first plastic bridge" over the canal at Bonds Mill Stonehouse. There were a large number of visitors to the event and an encouraging amount of interest in the GSIA stand. In the early 1980s GSIA was able to assist the Dean Heritage Museum Trust in its efforts to obtain grants when it was starting up and then in their successful bid to purchase a collection of 14,000 local postcards.

A number of Members have been involved in the Gloucester Civic Trust Docks Group, and been active volunteers at the National Waterways Museum. In 1992 assistance was provided to Stroud Museum cleaning and sorting objects that had lain for some time in store at St Mary's Mill, Chalford but which then had to be moved elsewhere. One object which came to light was a huge carved wooden dog. This had originally been the sign for the Black Dog public house in Gloucester and had been stored at Stroud Brewery until it was rescued from there by Lionel Walrond when the Brewery closed in the mid 1960s.

The Society has maintained close links with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England (RCHME- now part of English Heritage). This has enabled Commission Staff to be alerted about threatened sites which may require specialist recording. RCHME kindly hosted the Society's first presence on the Internet with a page giving contact details and our diary of events for 1998. The Gloucestershire Building Recording Group was formed in 1993 and has worked on a number of different buildings. At Painswick a particularly fine example of a wool drying stove was recorded in conjunction with GSIA Members in 1994.

In 1990 the Council for British Archaeology set up regional 'Panels' for industrial archaeology. The inaugural meeting for the West Midlands Region was held at the Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry. It was attended by Amber Patrick and Ray Wilson for GSIA. A few months later the second meeting was held in Gloucestershire at Ebley Mill, Stroud. The panel should have been a useful forum for professional and amateurs to discuss the many issues that affect industrial archaeology. However, after a promising start the attendance diminished and after only a few meetings the initiative had become defunct.

Members who carry out research are often regular users of the Gloucestershire Record Office and the Gloucestershire Collection which is mainly housed at Gloucester City Library. A proposal in 1985 to charge researchers at the Record Office was met with firm disapproval from the Committee and elsewhere in the County but ultimately a charge of 1 for a day ticket was introduced. The Society was active in a campaign in the early 1990's to keep the Record Office as a single unit if the County was broken into several Unitary Authorities following the Local Government Review. In 1996 the County Library undertook a detailed review of the services it provided in the field of Local Studies. GSIA said it would be pleased to see more computerisation of the catalogue and indexing of local newspapers, and work on the former has begun.

The Society has recently started to attend the Gloucestershire Local History Committee. This includes representatives from many of the local history societies in the County and provides a useful forum to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Society provided two speakers in 1995 for the Annual Local History Afternoon when the theme was the woollen cloth industry.

The Friends of Stroud Museum (Textile Group) held two very successful events in March 1999 focussing on the fulling of cloth. These were held at Ham Mill, Thrupp and a total of more than 800 visitors saw the restored machinery and a number of exhibits. GSIA provided some of the guides and had a display on the industrial archaeology of the area.

In 1987 GSIA was one of the founding groups of the Stroud Valleys Project. One of the main aims of the Project was to promote the industrial heritage of the area. It had some success in the early 1990s with repair work at Wallbridge Upper Lock, Arundel Mill pond and the Georgian Bridge at Lodgemore Mill but is now concerned with the natural environment rather than the built environment.

GSIA has provided a representative on the Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire and on some occasions a speaker for their Annual Symposium. For many years joint visits and film evenings were arranged with the Barnwood Industrial Archaeological and Transport Society (BIATS).

The involvement of schools in GSIA activities has always been seen as desirable. Indeed, there were some occasions when school groups joined in fieldwork in the very early days. However, a number of factors such as crowded timetables and Health and Safety issues make this very difficult now. GSIA has tried to encourage industrial archaeology by sending copies of the various Gazetteers to all the Secondary Schools in the County. In 1997 a successful pilot study was carried out in which information on woollen cloth mills in the Dursley area was made available to students in the form of Internet pages.

The National Heritage Open Days have now become a very popular event each year. They take place over one weekend in mid-September and are co-ordinated nationally by The Civic Trust

The aim is to open buildings, free of charge, that are not normally open to the public. A small pilot scheme was run in 1993 but it was not until the following year that it became a national event. In 1994 most of the activity in Gloucestershire was in the Stroud district and GSIA was one of several participating organisations arranging events. The Society through Ray Wilson were responsible for Dunkirk Mills, Nailsworth, and Kilcott Mill near Wotton-under-Edge which received 260 and 200 visitors, respectively. Stephen Mills was one of just two guides at Fromebridge Mill where they had to deal with 300. The event was judged to be a great success and has been repeated several times since with some variations in the venues.

Industrial Museum

Unlike many areas, Gloucestershire has not yet been able to create a museum devoted to its rich and varied industrial past. However, there have been several attempts at setting up an industrial museum for either the Stroud area or the County as a whole.

One of the first of these was essentially a private one put forward in 1966 by Mr Robin Gordon who had just purchased Millbottom Mill. It lies by the road out of Nailsworth to

Horsley and is now known as Ruskin Mill. Mr Gordon approached GSIA with his plans to use the mill as a museum of industrial archaeology and other things. Surveys were carried out but it was clear that the costs were far in excess of all the available resources and so that particular scheme came to nothing. However, since the 1970's, Mr Gordon's family have been steadily restoring the building. It is now used as an educational centre and craft workshops.

Also in 1966 the idea of a Museum for the Forest of Dean was mooted and this finally came to fruition when the Dean Heritage Centre was opened at Camp Mill Soudley in 1983. In the early days GSIA was able to support various applications for grants and the Society provided one of the first Trustees.

In early 1967 the Society addressed the idea of an Industrial Museum for the County and a working party was set up to consider the issues involved. A report detailing the need for a museum of industry had been presented to the County Education Committee by the September of that year. The report came out very favourably for the creation of such a museum and the recommended location was the Stroud area. The cost was put at 10,000. Meetings were held with the County Council but again the money was not available and so by the end of 1969 the project was very much on hold.

Soon after this Stroud Museum secured a lease on part of the old Stroud Workhouse on Bisley Road for the storage of industrial artefacts and possibly for use as a museum later. GSIA assisted with the installation of lighting and conservation of some of the objects. The latter provided the author with his first encounter with fulling stocks when one Saturday in 1974 he found himself applying wood preservative to the fulling stocks which the Museum had acquired from Cam Mills. Eventually during the 1980's the old workhouse was converted to dwellings and the exhibits moved elsewhere.

A very positive move was the opening in mid 1986 of the Stroud Museum Annexe in the Lansdown Hall situated just across the road from the main museum. This enabled far more of the museum's industrial collection to be displayed than had been possible in the main building. Unfortunately the lease was not renewed by Stroud District Council after 1992 and the items had to be put back into store.

There was considerable interest in the early 1990's regarding the future development of the Stroud Museum. It seemed for a time that a new Industrial Museum was to be the favoured option and a number of possible locations were considered. In the event the outcome has been the creation of a Social History Museum at the Mansion House in Stratford Park on the outskirts of Stroud. This is the second phase of the development plan for Stroud Museum. The first was the assessment and conservation of the entire collection together with the provision of secure storage. GSIA warmly supported Phase One but were naturally disappointed at the nature of Phase Two and the Society made strong representations to that effect. The possible provision of an industrial museum forms Phase Three of the District Council's plan but with an unspecified time scale. Stroud Museum closed to the public in September 1994 and was due to re-open at the Mansion House in December 2000.

Over the past 14 years a small but very active organisation known initially as The Friends of Stroud Museum (Textile Group) and now the Stroudwater Textile Trust have been rescuing

and restoring textile machinery. Some of this has been found locally and some as far away as Mid-Wales. The group currently has a base at Ham Mill near Stroud where they regularly receive school parties and members of the public. It is through their efforts that there should be an extensive collection of textile machinery available if the area ever gets its long awaited Industrial Museum.

Commemorative Plaques

Putting a commemorative plaque on a suitable building both informs the public and provides useful publicity for the Society. Suggestions for suitable sites were being sought in 1965, and the first GSIA plaque was erected at Brimscombe Port the following year. It cost 12 but half of this was paid by Bensons Ltd the occupiers of the site. The next plaque was unveiled by the then GSIA President, Mr Noel P Newman, at the Hop Pole Inn in Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham in 1967. It commemorated the eastern end of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Tramroad. Sadly the plaque was stolen in late 1968 but was replaced following an insurance claim. The same fate befell the plaque that was put on the Redbrook Incline Bridge in 1968. However, in this case the plaque was not replaced. In about 1970 the Newent by-pass was constructed partly following the line of the Gloucester and Hereford Railway which in turn followed some of the line of the canal that previously linked the two cities. This was an opportunity too good to miss and the resulting plaque has been visible from the by-pass for the past 30 years.

The site of the Phoenix Iron Works where Edwin Budding developed the cylinder lawn mower was marked in 1971, but then there was a long gap until 1984 before the next plaque was erected. That year GSIA combined with the Cheltenham Civic Society to place a plaque on the old electricity sub-station in Clarence Road. The next partnership was with Gloucester Civic Trust when the tramroad entrance into Gloucester Docks received a most handsome plaque. It was unveiled by our President the Rev. Wilbert Awdry and Mr Brian Rodgers from British Waterways. This plaque was the most problematic because it was still not finished only hours before the ceremony and it was put into position with just minutes to spare! The most recent Society plaque graces the former Cirencester Town Station as part of a scheme run by Cirencester Civic Society in 1999.

Other Matters

The advantages of obtaining charitable status were first discussed in late 1976 and the Rev Awdry later handled the complex business of making an application. A Special General Meeting was held at the Fleece Hotel Gloucester in June 1979, a revised constitution was adopted and soon after the Society became a registered charity. The charitable objects of the Society were laid down as

"The study, recording and preservation for the advancement of public education of information and illustrative and other material relating to industrial archaeology, particularly in the County of Gloucestershire."

After the death of the first President, Mr Noel P. Newman in 1970 he was followed in 1972 by the distinguished architectural historian David Verey. He was in turn succeeded in 1978 by the Rev. Awdry who held the office for the next 15 years. Miss Amina Chatwin has been President since 1993. Thus GSIA has had only four Presidents throughout its first 35 years. The number of Treasurers is even less and stands at three. Howard Pullan had to relinquish

the post when he left the County in 1975 and he was followed by Alan Fielder for the next two years. Peter Wollen has given sterling service to the Society since 1977 as only its third Treasurer. The number of Honorary Secretaries is six. Warren Marsh, the first Secretary was followed by Dr Geoff Annis in 1965 who in turn was followed by Mr M Eastwood in 1966 and Dr T. E. Edwards from 1967 until 1970. Miss Amina Chatwin was Secretary from 1970 to 1980. The present Secretary (the author) was elected for the first time at the 1980 AGM.

At the beginning the Annual General Meeting was held in Stroud but for the last 25 years it has been held alternately at Stroud and Cheltenham. Hopefully the business did not take too long so that there was time for some "entertainment" afterwards. A film show was arranged for the first two meetings but usually a short talk is given by one or two of the Members on topics such as Malt Houses, Longfords Mill and the Cirencester Branch railway. On one occasion Members learnt about underwater industrial archaeology from a contribution by two keen divers.

Initially the committee meetings were held in Members' homes and then ICI Fibres (now Du Pont) made a room available for meetings at Brockworth. Since October 1978 committee meetings have been held in the Murray Hall, Tuffley courtesy of the Gloucester Scout Association. For most of this period the minutes secretary was Jim Simmons who carried out the task in a truly exemplary manner. When the meetings were held at Brockworth some of the secretarial staff there assisted the Society with typing minutes and the newsletters. For many years Mrs Stella Farr kindly typed the minutes of the Murray Hall meetings.

Each year brings a variety of enquiries from individuals, companies and organisations. Some of these can be answered quite simply, particularly if a relevant article had been published in the GSIA Journal or Newsletter or elsewhere. In other cases it is often possible to draw on the tremendous breadth of knowledge that exists within the membership. While the Society always tries to assist where it can, it is necessary to draw the line when a student asks for a complete history of the Gloucestershire woollen industry!

The following are just a few of the topics that some of the more general enquiries have been concerned with:- lime kilns, model farms, horizontal reciprocating saws, extant toll houses and early reinforced concrete structures. More specific enquiries have included:- edge tool manufacturers in Gloucester and Coaley, manufacture of aero engines at Dudbridge Stroud, concrete barges made at Hempsted and Fielding and Platt engines. In the early years of GSIA it was very common to have new owners of mills asking for advice or seeking the history of their site. In one case we were asked how to restore a small corn mill as part of a tourist attraction

John Foley devised a questionnaire in 1984 in which Members could express their opinions about all aspects of the Society and how it was operated. A good response was obtained by offering two books donated by Alan Sutton Publishing as prizes in a draw from the returned questionnaires. The winners were Peter Stokes and Bill Farrell. The analysis of the results yielded some very useful information. It was very clear that nobody was going to turn up for a coach trip before 8 a.m! One or two other industrial archaeology societies asked for copies of the questions which they adapted for their needs. The exercise was repeated in 1995 when it was organised by Janet Crompton. This time the prize was a copy of A New History of the Forest of Dean by Dr Cyril Hart which was won by Les Dalton. The response was very good

with over a third of the membership replying. Their views on what should be done about the lecture series were particularly useful. In 1981 Andrew Thynne took on the long overdue task of producing a new membership leaflet.

A useful contribution to funds during the late 1960's and early 1970's were the GSIA Christmas cards which proved to be very popular with the Members. Subjects included an 1836 print of Brimscombe Port, an early scene at Gloucester Docks and the Royal Train leaving Cheltenham's Lansdown Station in 1849.

An excellent Rank Aldis slide projector had been purchased in 1967 for use at the Stroud lectures. However it did not have a slide magazine and by 1991 replacement bulbs were becoming difficult to find. It was therefore replaced by a modern Zeiss auto-focus projector and an identical one was purchased for use at the Cheltenham lectures. In 1994 a set of free standing display boards were acquired which have proved to be extremely useful. The purchase of a laser printer in 1996 greatly helped to improve the production of the Annual Journal. Over the years a substantial collection of press cuttings has been built up on industrial archaeology in the County. Many of these have been taken from the Gloucester Citizen by Norman Ferry. In addition to writing articles and books Members frequently give talks and lectures. Some have appeared on television and radio.

In 1965 Ray Bowen and Gordon Rattenbury from South Wales were made Honorary Members in recognition of the hard work they had put in during a number of GSIA trips to that area. In 1975 Howard Pullan became the only other Honorary Member when he left the area to become the County Surveyor for Gwent.

Members were delighted to learn at the start of 1996 of the award of the OBE to Rev Awdry in the New Year Honours List. After his death the following year his family arranged for a memorial window to both Mr and Mrs Awdry to be placed in Rodborough Parish Church. The window which must be unique as it contains a picture of Thomas the Tank Engine was dedicated by the Bishop of Gloucester on March 21 1998, the first anniversary of Mr Awdry's death.

Concluding Remarks

The Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology has now been in existence for over 35 years. It has successfully pursued a wide range of activities during this period. These activities, which include visits, lectures, responding to planning applications, fieldwork and research, have flourished each year due to the hard work put in by the Officers, Committee and Members.

Every year the GSIA Committee has had to respond to pressures on industrial sites and buildings from developers and others and this is unlikely to change in the future. There are bound to be disappointments regarding the outcome of some of these issues. However, the more the Society can do to investigate and publish the significance of potentially threatened sites then the better the chance of retaining at least some of the industrial archaeology. In some cases it may only be possible to make a record of the site. Either way, there is plenty to be done and the next 35 years of industrial archaeology in Gloucestershire should be as interesting as the last.

APPENDIX

GSIA OFFICERS (1994-1999)

President

N. P. Newman	1964 - 1970
<i>vacant</i>	1970 - 1972
D. C. W. Verey	1972 - 1978
Rev. W. V. Awdry	1978 - 1993
Miss Amina Chatwin	1993 - present

Chairman

G. H. L. Andrew*	1964
W. G. H. Robins	1964 - 1966
C. H. A. Townley	1966 - 1968
I. M. Parsons	1968 - 1970
R. H. Pullan	1970 - 1972
D. E. Bick	1972 - 1974
G. N. Crawford	1974 - 1976
Rev. W. V. Awdry	1976 - 1978
N. C. Ferry	1978 - 1980
Miss Amina Chatwin	1980 - 1982
J. Foley	1982 - 1984
J. E. Greene	1984 - 1986
I. M. Parsons	1986 - 1988
Miss Amber Patrick	1988 - 1990
Dr. S. J. Mills	1990 - 1993
I. J. Standing	1993 - 1995
C. H. A. Townley	1997 - 1998
F. Colls	1998 - present

*Acting Chairman prior to GSIA inaugural meeting

Treasurer

R. H. Pullan	1964 - 1975
A. E. Fielder	1975 - 1977
P. F. Wollen	1977 - present

Honorary Secretary

W. Marsh	1964 - 1965
Dr. G. S. Annis	1965 - 1966
M. Eastwood	1966 - 1967
Dr. T. E. Edwards	1967 - 1970
Miss Amina Chatwin	1970 - 1980
Dr. R. Wilson	1980 - present

GSIA Annual Journal Editor (From 1971)

Miss Amina Chatwin	1971 - 1980
Dr. C. Cox	1981 - 1987
Miss Amber Patrick	1988 - present

GSIA Newsletter Editor (1964 - 1970)

G. N. Crawford	1964 - 1970
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GSIA News-sheet Editor (from 1971)

D. E. Bick	1971 - 1975
M. Pountney	1975 - 1980
G. H. Curzon	1981
A. B Thynne	1981 - 1983
G. D. Harvey	1983 - 1994
Miss Janet Crompton	1994 - present

Activities / Visits Organisers

Secretary	1964 - 1970
I. M. Parsons	
& G N Crawford	1970 - 1973
J. E. Tyrer	1974 - 1975
N. C. Ferry	1976 - 1978
Dr. R. Wilson	1979 - 1982
J. R. Simmons	1985 - 1986
J. R. Simmons	
& Dr. R. Wilson	1987 - 1998
F. Colls	1998 - present

GSIA VISITS (1964-1999)

This summary gives brief details of the summer visits programmes. In most cases additional sites were visited besides those shown in brackets.

1964

Stanley and Ebley Mills; Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge; Forest of Dean (Free mine); Stroudwater and Thames and Severn Canals; Chepstow and Lydney Docks.

1965

Newnham on Severn and Bullo Pill; Somerset (Nettlebridge Valley, New Rock Colliery, Mells); Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale and Broseley; Kennett and Avon Canal; First South Wales Weekend (Meltingriffith, Cynon Valley, Hirwaun, Taff Valley, Penydarren, Dowlais); Owlpen Manor and watermill.

1966

Stroud area (Turnpikes); Coombe Hill Canal; Second South Wales Weekend (Crumlin, Brynmawr, Blaenavon); Steamer Trip (Tewkesbury - Sharpness- Gloucester); Gloucester Docks; Staffordshire (Penkridge, Shugborough); Stroud (Dudbridge).

1967

Gloucester and Avon Tramroad (Keynsham to Coalpit Heath); Chalford (St. Mary's Mill); Buckingham Town Hall and Stoke Bruerne; Leckhampton Hill; Steamer Trip (Tewkesbury - Stourport - Worcester); Dursley (R. A. Listers Centenary Exhibition); Third South Wales weekend (Swansea area); Bristol (Docks); Stroudwater and Thames and Severn Canals; Painswick (Savory's Pinworks).

1968

Forest of Dean (Biclade stone works); Shropshire (Shrewsbury, Snailbeach); Winchcombe (Postlip Paper Mills); Birmingham Canals Trip; Swindon, Wantage and Pendon Museum; Somerset (Claverton, Dundas Aqueduct, Chapel Allerton Windmill); Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Canal; Birmingham Science Museum (steam weekend).

1969

Forest of Dean (Darkhill Ironworks); West Somerset and North Devon; Birmingham Canal Navigations Trip (Tipton, Wryley & Essington Canal, Wolverhampton); Tewkesbury and Mythe Bridge; Brecon and Abergavenny Canal; North Worcestershire (Stoke Works, Tardebigge, Severn Valley Railway); Bath (Box Hill Stone Mines, and Railways); Bristol (Gasworks).

1970

Forest of Dean; Burry Port and Gwendraeth Valley; Somerset (Bridgwater, Chard); Bath (Avon Valley); Cardiff Docks, Penarth and Barry Docks; Birmingham Canals (Birmingham - Walsall); Worcester.

1971

Black Country (Dudley & Netherton Tunnels); Herefordshire (Kington and Leominster Canal); Worcestershire (Stourport, Bromsgrove); Merseyside Weekend; Stratford on Avon Canal; Crofton and Museum of Rural Life Reading; Walsall and Burton on Trent area.

1972

Somerset (Mendips, Cheddar, Blagden, Priston Mill); Leckhampton Hill; Oxfordshire (Charterville, Early's Blanket Mill at Witney, Woodstock); Staffordshire (Cheddleton Flint Mills, Harecastle Tunnel); Thames and Severn Canal (Sapperton to Chalford); Monmouthshire (Crumlin, Blaenavon, Pontnewydd); Kennett and Avon Canal (Devises, Boat trip, Bradford-on-Avon, Avoncliff); Forest of Dean (Flaxley Valley, Devil's Chapel, Clearwell Iron Mine)

1973

London (Kew Bridge Pumping Station); Stanley Mill; Lower Wye Valley, Angiddy Valley and Redbrook; Tewkesbury (Mythe bridge and Brickworks); Derbyshire (Belper, Cromford, Arkwright's Mills, Middleton Top, Crich); Sharpness Docks (with visit to Russian timber ship); Worcestershire (Croome Court); Worcestershire (Dudley Tunnel, Redditch Needle Mill, Avoncroft Museum); Newent; Coalbrookdale and Blist's Hill; Gloucester Docks.

1974

Somerset (Brendon Hills); Worcestershire (Porcelain Works, Dick Brook, Holt Heath); Painswick Pin Mill; South Wales (Methyr Tydfil); Leicester; Bibury (Arlington Mill); Sheffield (Elsecar, Abbeydale Hamlet); Gloucester Docks; Gloucester and Sharpness Canal Trip; Somerset (Chew Valley).

1975

Wotton-under-Edge; Exeter (Maritime Museum); Portsmouth (Eastney, Fort Widley, Southsea Castle); Longfords Mill; Forest of Dean (Lydbrook Area); Stroud; Herefordshire (agricultural sites); Coombe Hill Canal; West Midlands (Dudley Canal Tunnel, Redditch); Nottingham (Erewash Valley); Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork.

1976

Winchcombe (Postlip Mill); South Wales (Bridgend area); Lydney (Docks, Canal, Upper Forge, Findall Chimney); Blockley and Hook Norton; The Potteries (Cheddleton Mill, Caldon Canal, Gladstone Museum); West Wiltshire (Bradford-on-Avon, Avoncliff, Edington); Woodchester; Tewkesbury; Wiltshire (Swindon, Avebury, Barbury Castle, North Wiltshire Canal); Herefordshire; Bristol (Downs, Clifton Rocks Railway, Docks, Snuff Mills).

1977

Stroudwater Canal; Forest of Dean (Dark Hill); Devon (Morewellham Quay); Brecknock and Abergavenny (Gilwern, Clydach); Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire (Shuttleworth Collection, Stoke Bruerne); Forest of Dean (Speech House area); Kilcote Mill and Tetbury; Somerset (Mells area).

1978

Brecon Beacons; Gloucester (Priday Metford's Flour Mill); Cirencester; Ironbridge and Severn Valley Railway; Kilcote Mill; Burton on Trent and Derby (Bass Museum, Fradley Junction); Chalford; Forest of Dean (Lydbrook, Whitecliff Furnace); Reading and Crofton Pumps; Kemmett Canal.

1979

Burry Port and Gwendraeth Valley; Newent; London (Kew Bridge, St Katherine's Docks); Uley Mills; Swindon; (Railway Works, Didcot); Birmingham Canal Navigations (Gas Street Basin, Netherton and Dudley Tunnels); Cranham (Sutton's Mill); Thames and Severn Canal (Chalford to Sapperton); Cheltenham Telephone Exchange; Leckhampton Hill; Somerset (Bridgewater, Watchett, Weston Zoyland).

1980

Swansea and District; Stanley and Ebley Mills; Stourport; Staffordshire (Chatterly Whitfield Coal Mine, Mill Meece Pumping Station); Coaley Mill; Gloucester and Sharpness Canal Trip; Stroud Valleys West London (Wimbledon Windmill, Kew Bridge Engines, Hanwell); Minchinhampton (Ball's Green Stone Mine), Minchinhampton; Hereford (Broomy Hill, Canal).

1981

Painswick Mills; Cardiff and Barry; Keynsham (Brass Mills); Dursley; Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork; Severn Ports and Angiddy Valley; Coombe Hill Canal (Social Evening); Black Country Canals and Museum; Forest of Dean; Warwickshire (Chesterton Windmill, Stratford-on-Avon Canal).

1982

Newport and Risca; Shropshire and Montgomeryshire (Canal and Welshpool Light Railway); Donnington Brewery; Nailsworth Turnpikes; Bromsgrove; Lower Framilode (Social Evening); Highnam and Rudford Churches (Tiles); Herefordshire.

1983

Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal; Somerset (Street, Weston Zoyland, Chapel Allerton Windmill); Wotton-under-Edge; Derbyshire (Matlock, Cromford); Tewkesbury (Social Evening); Bisley; Black Country (Nechells B Power Station, Smethwick engine, Mushroom Green); South Wales (Big Pit, Cyfartha Castle, Rhondda and Cynon Valleys)

1984

Painswick Mills; Bristol (Docks, Oakfield Road Pumping Station, Sea Mills); Cirencester and Northleach; Southampton (Southwick Brewery, Bursledon Windmill, Eling Tide Mill); Ironbridge Gorge Museum; Forest of Dean (Camp Mill, Soudley - Social Evening)

1985

Coney Hill Hospital Museum; North Staffordshire (Wedgwood Visitor Centre, Eturia Bone Mill); Cirencester (Steam Toys Exhibition); Nottingham (Lace Market, Ruddington, Moira Furnace); Winchcombe Railway Museum (Social Evening); Stoke Orchard and Tredington.

1986

Stanley Mill; Somerset (Eastwood Manor Farm, Bowler Collection, Bath Stone Quarry Museum); Forest of Dean (Bullo Pill, Lydney, Littledean, Soudley Ironworks); Newent (Social Evening) Gloucester Docks; Black Country Museum.

1987

Forest of Dean (Biclade); Pembrokeshire (Stepaside, Saundersfoot, Pembroke Dock); Woodchester Park Mansion; London (Kirkaldy Works, Surrey Docks, Abbey Mills Pumping Station, Three Mills); Woodchester; Tewkesbury (Healings Mill).

1988

Woodchester (Chalford Stick Company); Portsmouth (Eastney Pumping Station, Royal Naval Dockyard); Stroud (Dudbridge); Wrexham (Bersham Ironworks, Pontcysylte & Chirk aqueducts); Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork; Bristol Docks; Forest of Dean (Whitecliff Furnace); Uskmouth Power Station and Gwent.

1989

Berkeley Nuclear Power Station; Morewellham Quay; Nailsworth (Dunkirk Mills); Forest of Dean (Bream's Meend); Woodchester Park Mansion; Somerset (Charterhouse, Weston Zoyland); Moreton in Marsh and Blockley; Gloucester (Alney Island - Social Evening); Oxfordshire (Pendon Museum, Wheatley Windmill, Coombe Mill).

1990

Gloucester Cathedral; Oxfordshire (Stonesfield); Worcestershire (Powick, Stourport-on-Severn, Wolverley); Tetbury (Shipton Mill); Gloucestershire Record Office; Beer and Bridport; Dursley (Lister-Petter works); Nailsworth (Social Evening); Forest of Dean (Millstone Quarries); Swindon Works (National Railway Museum on Tour).

1991

Leckhampton Quarries; Cardiganshire (Carmarthen, Dre-fach Felindre, Cenarth Falls, Rosebush); Fromebridge Mill; East Bristol and Bitton (Mangotsfield, Warmley, Golden Valley Colliery); Kennett and Avon Canal (Claverton, Devises, Crofton, Wilton Windmill); Kemmett Canal; Dursley Social Evening; Kilcott Mill and Coaley Mill; Worcestershire (Forge Mill Redditch, Whitley Court); Forest of Dean (Aylesford to Soudley).

1992

Cleeve Hill; London (Kew Engines, London's Docklands); Purton and Sharpness Docks; Hampshire (Winchester, Tyford Waterworks); Minchinhampton (Social Evening); Frocester Court; Leicestershire (Swannington Incline, Snibston Museum, Foxton Locks); Forest of Dean (Wimberry Slade).

1993

Gloucester Docks; Merthyr Tydfil (Ynys Fach Pumping House, Abercanaid, Pen-y-Darren, Dowlais); Bath (Combe Down); Stroud(Ham Mills); Somerset (Radstock Museum, Camerton, Trowbridge Town Walk); Tewkesbury (Riverside - Social Evening); Oxfordshire (Filkins Museum, Cotswold Woollen Weavers); West Midlands (Jewellery Quarter, Walsall Leather Centre); Bill Mills and Hope Mansell.

1994

Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork; Sapperton Tunnel Boat Trip; Cardiff and Neighbourhood (Maritime Museum, Melingriffith Pump, Nant Garw Pottery); Cheltenham Mills; Eastington Mills; Weymouth and Portland (Sutton Poyntz Pumping Station, Nothe Fort, Portland Quarries); Second Severn Crossing Works; Stroud (Social Evening); Lower Wye Valley (Redbrook, Penalt, Tintern, Brockweir); Stoke-on-Trent (Caldon Canal, Eturia Bone Mill, Gladstone Pottery Museum); Churcham (D. R. Price Engineering Works, Oakle Street).

1995

Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal; Uley Mills; Swansea and Kidwelly; Burleigh Stone Mine Tunnel and Milk Bottles; Blockley (Northcot Brickworks); Minchinhampton (Lower Balls Green Stone Quarry); Sheffield (Kelham Island Museum Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet); South Wales (Mynydd Llangynidr); Kingswood (Renishaw, New Mills); Gloucester (Social Evening); Stanley Mill; Shropshire (Shrewsbury, Coleham Pumping Station, Ditherington Mill, Atcham Bridge); Fromebridge Mill.

1996

Ozleworth Bottom Mills; Winchcombe (Postlip Mills); Devon (Sticklepath, Okehampton Museum, Meldon); Chalford and St Mary's Mill; Tewkesbury (Healings Mill); Forest of Dean (Wilderness to Wigpool); Madley (British Telecom Communications Centre); Gloucestershire Aviation Collection (Staverton); Symonds Yat (Social Evening); Stroud (Dudbridge); Ironbridge Gorge Museum; Tintern.

1997

Forest of Dean (Ruspidge Valley); Gwent (Newport, Risca, Gelli-Groes Mill, Butetown); Nailsworth (Horsley and Newmarket Valleys); Woodchester Park; Northleach Museum; Cirencester (Social Evening); Tewkesbury (Mythe Waterworks); Painswick and Cranham Mills; Derbyshire (Morley Park Blast furnaces, Cromford Canal, Butterley, Belper); Oldbury Power Station.

1998

Woodchester Piano Company; Wirral (Port Sunlight, Birkenhead); Lydney Dock and Bullo Pill; Little Avon Mills (Kingswood to Huntingford Mill); Newent and the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal; Winchcombe (Social Evening); Royal Mail Sorting Office, Gloucester; Staffordshire (Shugborough, Mill Meece); Painswick Mills (South).

1999

Bath (Limpley Stoke stone mine); West Somerset (Watchett, Washford Station, Brendon Hills); Bristol Coalfield (North); Woodchester (Frogmarsh Mill) & Chalford Hill; Frampton-on-Severn (Social Evening); Staverton (Hayden Water Treatment Works); Black Country (Museum Mushroom Green, Delph Locks); Churcham (D. R. Price Engineering Works, Oakle Street); Painswick Mills (Central); Forest of Dean (Redbrook, Highbury Wood).