



BURSLEDON BRICKWORKS MUSEUM TRUST

# BRICKBATS

The Official Magazine of  
the Brickworks Museum  
– Bursledon

Free to volunteers and members, £1 when sold

[www.bursledonbrickworks.org.uk](http://www.bursledonbrickworks.org.uk)

## Introduction

The new year started with some fantastic news, as Hampshire County Council pledged £100,000 towards the New Foundations Project. This project aims to restore two of the original listed drying sheds to form a small business centre with a range of serviced offices and co-working spaces, and the income should ensure the future viability of the Museum. Preliminary support has already been received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and it is hoped that further support will be forthcoming towards the total construction cost of about £1.8m. Reacting to the news, Garry Moore, Chair of the Bursledon Brickworks Museum Trust, said, "I am extremely grateful to Hampshire County Council for recognising the importance, both locally and nationally, of the Brickworks and our contribution towards the local area. The trustees look forward to developing a close working relationship with Hampshire County Council moving forward."



*Pictured above from left to right: Cllr Mans (HCC Council Leader), Paul West (BBMT Treasurer), Andy Fry (BBMT Trustee), Jacqui Watson (Fundraising Consultant for BBMT) and Carlyne Haynes (Project Manager for BBMT)*

As always, this edition of Brickbats covers a diverse range of topics including café and railway developments, news from the workshop, historical research on aspects of the site, and a book review. Also look out for the supplement with this edition which is a detailed report of a visit to the London Brick Company.

Sadly, just as final preparations were being made for the new visitor season, the Museum had to close due to Coronavirus. We hope all our volunteers and supporters stay safe during this time and we look forward to seeing you again later in the year.

*Sue Boswell, Editor*

## Brickworks Museum Events

It was an extremely busy end to the 2019 season with the two remaining events generating lots of visitors.

The Autumn Steam Up & Halloween in October 2019 attracted 676 visitors, who enjoyed traction engines, miniature steam, stationary engines, woodcutting machine, tractors, military vehicles and the popular trailer rides all organised by the Steam Group. The blacksmith demonstrated, the Brickworks machinery was working as usual and the Train Group gave lots of train rides. Inside were various stalls and activities and two large scenery type railway layouts.

The Christmas Market in November 2019 was the best event of the year with 1050 visitors enjoying over 60 craft and gift stalls inside and a host of activities outside including the Train Group with a decorated tunnel, blacksmith, buses, traction engines and the car club. The car parking and entrance volunteers did a fabulous job in managing the queues.

Overall, the main events did better in 2019 and it would not have been possible without all the volunteers involved working so hard across the season. Well done also to the Train Group for keeping the trains running during the transition period.

## 2020 Events

This year promised to be equally busy but sadly a number of events in March, April and May have already been cancelled due to Coronavirus.

The following schedule may be subject to further cancellations, so please continue to check the website at <https://www.bursledonbrickworks.org.uk/index.php> for the latest information:

28<sup>th</sup> June - Summer Fair & Fun Dog Show

19<sup>th</sup> July - Trains Day

23<sup>rd</sup> August - Classic & Vintage Vehicles

27<sup>th</sup> September - Harvest Home & Teddy Bear's Picnic

25<sup>th</sup> October - Autumn Steam Up and Halloween

29<sup>th</sup> November - Christmas Market



In addition to the above main events, the following events are also in the calendar:

13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> September - Heritage Open Days, with free entry to the Brickworks Museum

11<sup>th</sup> October - School of Magic

*Pam Formby, Events Organiser*



## Wonderberrys at the Brickworks

It's all change for the Museum café as the space has been transformed into "Wonderberrys at the Brickworks" with a new soft seating area and extended opening hours. In addition, a refreshed menu will feature Soup of the Day, a Cake of the Week and an updated sandwich selection including a vegan option. Charlotte Cooper, the café manager, is excited about the new venture, especially about creating a new range of cakes.



To experience these delights, drop into Wonderberrys at the Brickworks between 9.30am and 4.00pm on any Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday from March 2020. These treats will be available throughout the year, except on the big event days each month, when the more traditional museum café offer will be available.

The new café opening times are a significant development as the café will be open throughout the year and no longer restricted to the Museum opening hours. Bookings for afternoon teas, enquiries for party bookings and reservations should be made to [info@wonderberrys.co.uk](mailto:info@wonderberrys.co.uk)

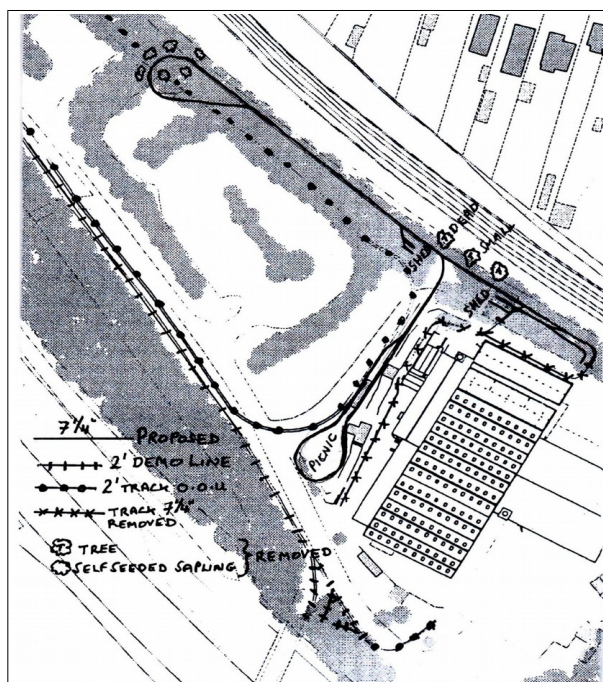


## Developing the Brickworks Miniature Railway

Members of the Train Group are now officially Brickworks Volunteers! They will oversee the two railways on the Museum site; the two foot (2') gauge industrial demonstration railway and the seven and one quarter inch (7.25") miniature passenger carrying railway.

Plans to develop the Museum will impact on the present miniature railway, so this provides a great opportunity to build a new and improved railway throughout 2020, whilst maintaining the present railway as a visitor attraction during the construction. The new 7.25" railway will have balloon loops at each end on a new route utilising unused land. It will be longer and will have a new station, picnic area and capacity for a number of trains to run simultaneously. The line will also be more scenic starting from close to the reception but on a higher level and through natural vegetation. It is proposed to maintain the present 2' demonstration railway in its current form.

For the 2020 season, the miniature railway will operate on the Museum special event days and some education days. This will enable sufficient resources and working days to be available in order to achieve the proposed new construction prior to the 2021 season. In 2021, the aim will be to offer public rides in line with the Museum normal opening times providing enough volunteers can be recruited. Work has already started on clearing the area for the new railway and we are looking forward to working alongside other Brickworks volunteers and to welcoming some new members to the Train Group.



*Phil Boswell*

## News from the Trust

The Bursledon Brickworks Museum Trust felt very positive at the start of 2020. Two new trustees had joined the board in late 2019 and a further application had been received in early 2020. Trustees, staff and volunteers had worked very hard over several years to improve the financial position of the Museum and this was having positive results by the end of 2019. Although new income streams have been created using both the Museum buildings and the wider site, most income still comes from visitor entry fees.

In 2019 the Museum welcomed more visitors than ever before. Alongside the monthly events, there were increased numbers of groups visiting and the Wonderful Wednesdays in school holidays were well attended. The problem with relying totally on visitors for income is that visitor numbers are significantly influenced by weather conditions, so it is important to have another reliable source of income. To provide financial security for The Brickworks in the longer term, plans have been developed to turn the two remaining derelict drying sheds into business units for rent. Late in 2019 planning permission and listed building consent was received from Fareham Borough Council. Having completed phase one of the project, we now needed to raise approximately £1.8million to turn the vision into reality and ensure the financial security of this significant part of our industrial heritage. A huge undertaking, but everyone at the Brickworks Museum was up for the challenge and we were all preparing for a very busy open season.

**Then in March everything changed. The Museum is closed, many of its volunteers are maintaining strict social isolation and the Trust is now focused on trying to ensure that the Museum can survive.**

Please consider making a donation to the Brickworks Museum Survival Fund. If you can Gift Aid a donation that increases the value of your donation. Donations can be made on line via the following web page <https://www.bursledonbrickworks.org.uk/donations.php> or sent via post to the Brickworks (address at the end of this newsletter).

*Judy Bevis*

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## Trustee Profile: Jim Gray

Jim was born in Northumberland but has lived in Hampshire since 1975. He has spent a lifetime in education, starting as a Teacher of History and ending up in senior management. Now living in Hill Head, he has two children: one a teacher and the other an engineer, and also three demanding grandchildren!

He enjoys visiting the theatre and is interested in most sports. Although he supports local football, he is also a lifelong Sunderland supporter (as a boy his first season ticket was £2!). As well as keeping fit with a bit of running, Jim is also kept busy with gardening and family demands. With a keen interest in local history, over the years he has researched the Palmerston forts and the defences around Portsmouth. As a Trustee of the Hovercraft Museum, he was deeply involved in changes 2016 -19.



Another chapter has now opened and Jim feels privileged to have joined the Brickworks Board of Trustees and hopes that he can contribute to its future development. He feels that the Museum is a unique site offering so much and it is important to promote it, develop it and ensure it becomes financially secure for future generations to enjoy. What is clear is that it has already come a long way which is testament to the hard work of volunteers, staff and trustees.

Jim brings commitment, considerable experience and a real desire to help take the Museum forward. He is not only a Trustee but also a volunteer, initially helping out in taking tours and showing visitors around. He would also like to assist in maximising the use of the archives. No doubt he will end up helping where the need is greatest and looks forward to meeting everyone in the months ahead.

## News from Around the Brickworks

### Displays

For the coming season, more bricks than ever will be on display in the first floor gallery with new interpretation. The Museum has recently received another large private brick collection.

In the Summer, there will be a display on the Brickworks during the First World War, located next to the upstairs coffee bar.



### Fareham in Bloom

There were fabulous results from the 2019 Fareham in Bloom competition for the Brickworks Museum. Both of these were an improvement on 2018 thanks to all the volunteers who helped keep everywhere looking good.

- Wildlife Garden – Gold (the addition of the pallet bug hotel and the large grass area with lots of wild flowers obviously had an impact)
- Commercial Landscape – Silver Gilt (the tidy of the overhang area helped with this)



### Guided Tours and Costumed Interpretation

There are plans for guided tours to be offered on a regular basis throughout the season to encourage more people to visit. In addition, there should be some further Costumed Interpretation days but at the time of writing, dates are still to be decided.

### Southampton and District Transport and Heritage Trust

The Brickworks will be the half way point for a number of buses involved in an event in August.

### Weddings at the Brickworks

The Brickworks provided a fabulous, innovative venue for two wedding receptions last year. It is amazing how the fairy lights and fabric transformed the inside space and the courtyard also looked beautiful illuminated at night.



## Visit to The London Brick Company

In his quest to learn as much as possible about brick manufacture, Jim Beckett relishes every opportunity to visit existing brick yards and one such opportunity arose in July 2019, with a trip to Kings Dyke Works, Whittlesea, near Peterborough which makes traditional *London Bricks*.

The *London Brick Company* does not have a long history, beginning later than Hooper and Ashby, but by 1973 it was producing 2.88 billion bricks annually, 43% of the total home market. The success of the enterprise lay in the deep seam of *Lower Oxford Clay*, which is rich in carbonaceous material and combusts of its own accord at high temperatures. This means lower fuel costs and an obvious edge over its competitors. The deep V shaped frog improved the burning process by allowing greater heat penetration to the centre of the brick. These familiar looking bricks were known as *Flettons*, after the village near Peterborough where manufacturing began.



During the visit, Jim and the group learnt about the nearby quarry that provides the clay for the works. They were also given an extensive tour of all aspects of the site including the clay preparation shed, the brick making machines, the brick stacks, kiln control room, the kilns and the final process of packing the bricks. Employing about 250 people, the site produces 145 million bricks annually. Jim's detailed report of the visit with accompanying photos can be found in the separate *Brickbats Supplement* provided with this edition.

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## Tug of War Trophies Display

There is currently a collection of tug-of-war trophies and prizes on display which belonged to Harold Bevis, a Brickworks employee between about 1950 to 1974.

Harold was a member of the Bursledon Sports Club Tug of War Team which drew members from Burrige, Swanwick, Bursledon and other local villages. They enjoyed considerable success in the 1950s and 60s.



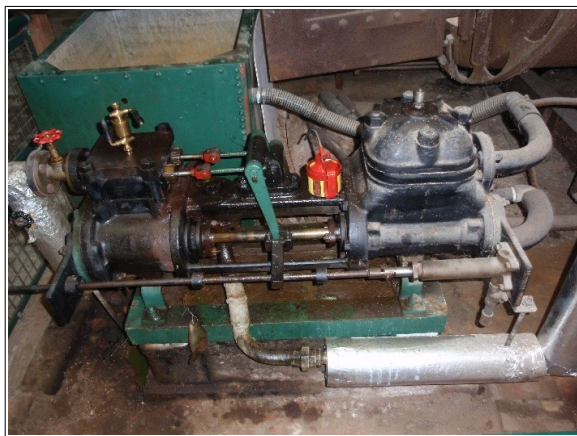
## Engineering News

The workshop facility has been enhanced following the acquisition of replacement lathe and mill. These machines have better capability than the old ones and should allow replacement and repair of larger machine parts when necessary. In addition, the workshop has been rearranged to accommodate these machines and generally tidied to allow more efficient working.

At the time of writing, the Fulton boiler is undergoing its annual maintenance and inspection program which should be complete ready for the first event day.

The Bennett and Sayer brick press was causing concern at the end of the last opening season, generating intermittent noises. On examination some linkages were found to be appreciably out of alignment and not properly secured. These have now been reset to correct operation ready for the new season.

The steam water pump by the old oil fired boiler was leaking badly at the end of the last season. It has been completely dismantled, cleaned and the seals replaced. In addition, the piston rods have been machined back to circular section to remove wear irregularities. Pictured below is the pump in service and then in pieces in the workshop.



The Northern Plant engine continues to have further work. During the winter it has been protected from the worst of the weather by removable shuttering made by the engineering team. The governor for this engine was removed, dismantled and cleaned by shot blasting. The frame was painted by the powder coating technique and the other parts spray painted before reinstallation (pictured).

We are starting a project to evaluate protective treatments to protect our outside exhibits from the ravages of the weather. If these are successful, it will extend the time between machines having to come into the workshop for complete strip down and repaint projects.

The refurbishment of the steam winch continues to proceed. Parts have been removed, cleaned (including removal of the seed stores of small animals) and reassembled but much more work is necessary.

*John Bevis*



## Overhead Ropeway

In the Working Life Gallery there is a wall painting depicting the loading of bricks onto the barge Langstone. The bricks arrived there on the aerial ropeway which started from the main gate and crossed the football field to the Hamble. There is no firm date of construction for the ropeway, but it was in use in 1903 when this picture was taken.

It was dismantled in the Autumn of 1918 and sold to the American Red Cross. A letter held in the National Archives from Bursledon Brick Company Limited, addressed to HFB Ashby referred to as "Fred" at The Sussex & Dorking United Brick Cos Ltd dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 1961, states that "During the First World War the army approached us as to whether we would be prepared to sell the ropeway as they were considering erecting it somewhere else. This was done and the ropeway, and terminal, on the river were removed."



The terminal was rebuilt on a site adjacent to Sarisbury Court. The contents of Sarisbury Court were auctioned in May 1918 prior to the arrival of the American Red Cross and the British Newspaper Archive has this advert from the Hampshire Advertiser in May 1918:

### **SARISBURY COURT, SARISBURY**

**AUCTIONS. RICHARD AUSTIN WYATT, BISHOPS WALTHAM, FAREHAM AND SOUTHAMPTON. "BELLE VUE," 235, WEST STREET, FAREHAM, HAM'S. RICHARD AUSTIN AND WYATT Are favoured with instructions from the Executors of Mr. Henry Dewitt, deceased, to SELL by AUCTION, on the Premises, as above, on TUESDAY NEXT. MAY 18th. 1918. At 11 o'clock, the Whole of the HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE EFFECTS, etc..**

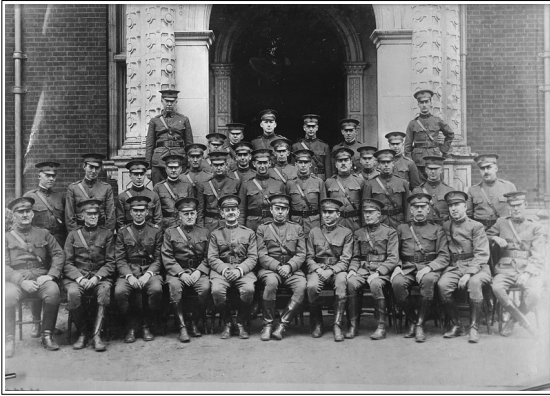
In a further letter held by the National Archives dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 1918, Capt. E. J. Rimmer writes to the Board Of Trade in Southampton in relation to building the American Red Cross Hospital situated on the Sarisbury Court Estate. He asks if he could "erect a loading platform and aerial ropeway terminal at a point on the Hard which belongs to the Estate mid-way between high and low water". He also states that "the matter is very urgent in view of the fact that I have an aerial ropeway offered to me for acceptance immediately."

The British Newspaper Archive has an article published in the Hampshire Advertiser dated Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September 1918 reporting on the proceedings of the Southampton Harbour Board who were the body that Capt. Rimmer had written to. The report says that the aerial ropeway would be used for "the purpose of unloading heavy supplies of gravel and coal for the hospital". There was no objection to the proposal.

Records held by the US Library of Congress state that "The largest American farm in Great Britain is that maintained by the American Red Cross as an appendage of the new Red Cross hospital at Sarisbury, near Southampton. More than three fourths of the 186 acres estate surrounding the hospital site has been laid out for intensive farming, and the Red Cross will raise all the vegetables and dairy products required for the big hospital. The farm (pictured) is in charge of Frank Sherman Peer of Rochester, N.Y. who might well be called an international farmer, for he owns farms in New Jersey, New York, England, and on the Island of Guernsey in the English Channel. This latter farm is his "pet" and has been for many years a show-place and a model. There he makes one acre of ground produce four tons of hay, and makes 25 acres support 75 head of cattle."







The US Library of Congress has a photograph of The Kentucky Unit Medical Staff at the new American Red Cross hospital at Sarisbury, near Southampton, grouped at the beautiful carved stone entrance to the main building of the hospital.

In 1880, Admiral Frederick A Maxse owned the property when a severe fire gutted the house. Nevertheless, Quinton Hogg, who founded London Polytechnic, bought the property and built a Tudor style house on the site of the previous house, renaming it Sarisbury Court.

It was an imposing country house as can be seen from this photograph, courtesy of Alywn Ladell.

Sarisbury Court is reported to have been sold to the US Government in 1917 and, after the First World War, sold back to the British Government. The building suffered from neglect and was eventually demolished in the 1920s.

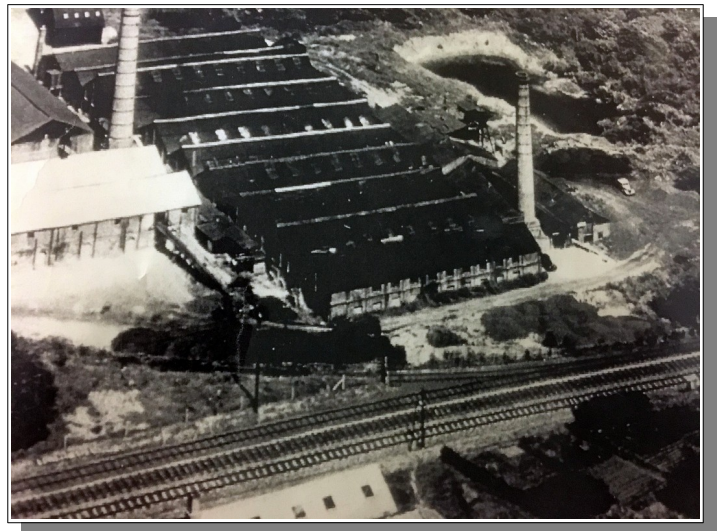
*Richard Newman*



## Brickworks and the Railway

The London and South Western Railway line from Southampton was started in 1866 with a short branch line to Netley Hospital. The hospital was built for the wounded from the Battle of the Crimea which took place from 5<sup>th</sup> Oct 1853 to 30<sup>th</sup> Mar 1856. Construction of the hospital began on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1856 and was completed by 11<sup>th</sup> March 1863. LSWR extended the line from Netley through to Fareham in 1889 and it was then known as the West Coastway Line.

When the Bursledon Brickworks Company directors were looking for a suitable place to build their new works, what better place to choose in 1896 than a site which had road, rail and water access nearby. This picture shows the junction with the mainline towards Swanwick.



There is a picture of a train crossing the yard behind the kiln heading towards the mainline. The history of the fatal accident in 1914 is now on an interpretation board erected by the path at the rear of the HBPT bungalow, and documented in the cuttings book in the working life gallery.

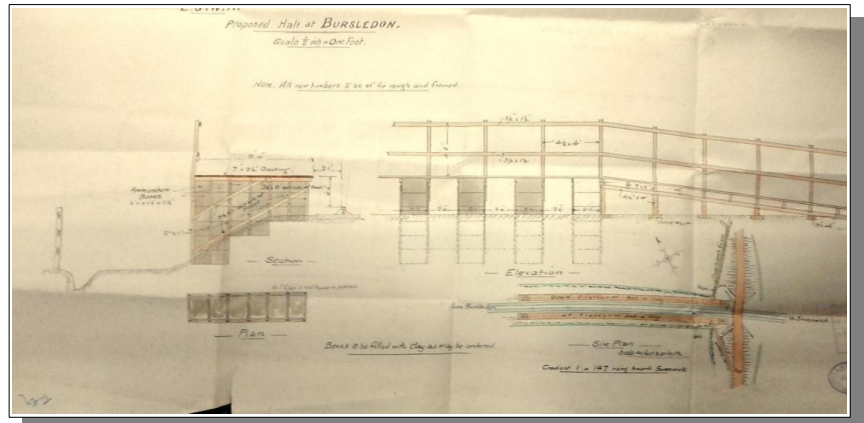
As reported in a previous article, there is reference to the use of the sidings from 1918 to 1920 for the Bursledon Salvage Depot. There is uncorroborated historical information which refers to a halt having been constructed out of ammunition boxes for the use of workers at the Brickworks.

A copy of a rail map issued by the West Coastway Line shows Crow Park Halt between Bursledon and Swanwick and is annotated "1918-1920 workmen only". This would tie in with the time the Brickworks were used by the military in WW1.

A document held by the National Archives (Ministry of Transport and successors, Railway Divisions: Correspondence and Papers. London and South Western Railway: Bursledon to Swanwick. Top File No: R2218) is suspected to be the order to allow Crow Park Halt to exist, as it is the right place and the right date.

A letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> June 1918, from London & South Western Railway to the Board of Trade advises that "we have provided a halt between Bursledon and Swanwick. The down platform (just south of Riverview Cottages) has been completed together with the approach footpath and as the Ministry (of Munitions and War Department) are anxious that the halt should be brought into use immediately without waiting for the work on the upside to be finalised I send you herewith plan No.14508 and shall be glad if you will intimate the usual provisional sanction of the Department to the platforms being brought into use as and when completed."

The letter finishes by informing the Board of Trade that "the drawing indicates the method of constructing the platforms in timber using ammunition boxes filled with clay".



Various evidence of the old railway can still be found on the site. These pictures show the remains of the track and the overgrown platform alongside the bungalow.



Richard Newman

## Book Review

**'Brick: a Social History', by Carolyn Haynes, published by The History Press in November 2019**

**ISBN: 9780750991933**

A copy of this book was donated by the author to The Brickworks Museum library and I could not resist reading it, as not only am I interested in bricks and brick making, but also social history and science. It was a thoroughly enjoyable read, as the style is conversational and draws on personal experience of the author as well as the huge amount of research she undertook for the book.

Across 300 pages, the book follows the gradual development of bricks and mortar as building materials in the context of social history. Starting with an explanation of the chemistry of brick firing and lime making, it is accompanied by information about various types of clay found in Great Britain suitable for making bricks. The development from sun-dried mud blocks produced in ancient Egypt, through other uses of clay in building to the fired tile-like "bricks" produced by the Romans is described.

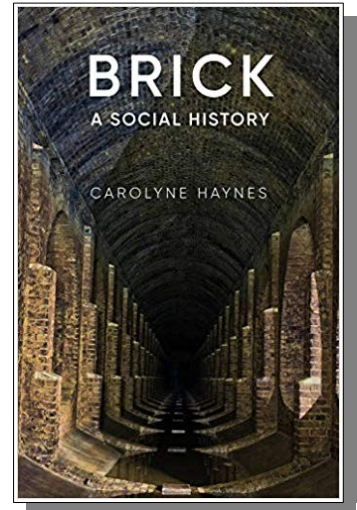
Although the Romans introduced brick making and lime making to Great Britain, only lime making continued after their departure, as it was relatively easy and had several practical uses. Bricks were very expensive to make, although much more durable than traditional wood and mud building materials. For the investment in building for the future to be worthwhile, communities needed to be settled, secure and prosperous. This finally came with the development of religious foundations across the country and then the Norman conquest. Bricks once again appeared in important buildings.

The materials from Roman buildings were efficiently recycled by the Saxons. A few, like Portchester Castle, were re-modeled and reused by successive invaders, including the Normans, so, unusually, much of the original Roman structure remains. It is still possible to see the Roman bricks and lime mortar that tie the walls of the original Roman castle together.

The evidence for pre-Medieval brickmaking is fragmentary so theories and speculation replace certainty. Documents from religious orders and private estates provide information about Medieval brickyards so this is where the real evidence of brickmaking begins. Chapter 6 is devoted to the development of the Medieval brickyard of Hull. Hull was one of the most brick-built towns in Medieval England, closely followed by Beverley. Records show that the city walls, market, prison, substantial houses and monastic buildings were all constructed in brick. Medieval bricks were much thinner than modern bricks. The little information about the people involved with making the bricks is also included, although the lives of workers have not generally been recorded until relatively recently so interpretation of indirect evidence is used.

Chapter 7 covers the huge social changes resulting from the Black Death and repeated wars with France. The reduced population caused a shortage of labour, leading to increased rates of pay and better working conditions, and also meant that landowners had less income. The relative redistribution of wealth created more potential consumers for things like cloth, and the rising demand for textiles across Europe drove the economy for the next 200 years, providing more people with the funds to build in brick. Little Wenham Hall, Suffolk and Tattershall Castle are used as examples with a wealth of information about the brickworks that supplied the bricks.

The need for heat and the problems caused by fire are covered in Chapter 8. Various social changes are traced here that resulted in the development of chimneys, fireplaces and improved cooking arrangements, many of which needed bricks. After the Great Fire of London, the city was rebuilt mainly in brick. Most cities experienced similar problems with fire so were also rebuilt in brick. Chapter 9 describes how bricks were made and how the makers kept pace with growing demand. It also features developments in lime for plasters and mortar. By this time there is more information about the people who made the bricks.



The following chapters outline advances in building from the fifteenth to late eighteenth century in England. From the development of cities like Bristol, where new wealth derived mainly from the slave trade, to changes in individual houses in Farnham, there is a wealth of detail illustrating the social changes, as well as how buildings changed including the rise of decorative brickwork. Social changes required different domestic arrangements and the middle classes were now creating much of the wealth and wanted to spend it on their homes.

By the end of the eighteenth century the Industrial Revolution and rising population were demanding more bricks for mill buildings, houses for the workforce, canals and later the railways. Birmingham is used to explain the industrial and social changes taking place at this time. The development of canals made the transportation of bricks, lime and other heavy loads far easier. However, the railways improved transportation of heavy loads further and also required huge quantities of brick for their infrastructure.

The developments in the Victorian period are featured in Chapter 14. Railways came to dominance in transport and much re-modelling and rebuilding was done to buildings. In architecture, the Arts and Crafts movement influenced the most prominent architects of the time.

The next chapter considers the manufacturing process for bricks and the introduction of standard brick sizes, initially to prevent evasion of the brick tax, one of many taxes affecting buildings or materials. Details of how London was supplied with bricks, the development of new brickmaking machines and kilns is included here, as well as more information about the workers of the brickworks. Various kiln designs for both lime burning and brick firing are described and examples are given of some that still exist. The end of the chapter records the rise of cements that gradually replaced lime in buildings.

Chapter 16 focuses on the poor of both industrial towns and rural areas. Bricks featured in housing for this vast number of people, but this was mass production where cost not quality was most important. The Nichol area of slums in London, was one such development where houses were redeveloped into tenements.

Chapter 17 describes the large nineteenth century brickyards that developed in response to the increased demand for bricks. Women and young children were employed in the heavy, seasonal work for long hours each day. Social problems arising from seasonal work and payment in tokens for use in specific shops are all described. The work of George Smith, the social reformer, is explained too.

The last chapter notes the wave of housebuilding that took place after WW1 and again to replace lost housing stock after WW2, where again quantity was often more important than quality. The manufacture of bricks is also brought up to the present, where bricks compete once again with a vast range of alternative materials. As has been seen recently with devastating results, not all new building materials are as reliable as brick.

Resources from The Brickworks Museum and Buriton Chalk Pits have been used throughout the book and more detailed explanations of both are included at the end of the book.

Finally, there is a useful index and the bibliography will provide me with hours of further reading around interesting aspects of the book.

*Judy Bevis, Volunteer Librarian*

**The Brickworks Museum**  
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