



BRICKBATS

The Official
Magazine of the
Brickworks
Museum

Free to volunteers and members, £2.50 when sold

www.thebrickworksmuseum.org

Introduction

The Brickworks has certainly got its 'buzz' back this Summer, welcoming a host of visitors over the last few months as things begin to return to normal. It's undoubtedly been a great feeling to see people enjoying the Museum again.

As well as the fantastic monthly Steam Up events, mid-week opening has returned and there have been a number of special events, including the WW1 celebration day in June – this exhibition will be up for the rest of the year so there's still plenty of time to find out what happened here during the Great War.

During the Summer holidays, wonderful Wednesdays proved very popular, as did the Family Fun Day involving the Brick People with their fabulous LEGO® creations.



The amazing team of volunteers do so much behind the scenes to make the site ready for opening and to ensure visitors have the best experience possible. To name a few, in recent months work has taken place on reception, in the shop, and in the toilets; the steam engineering team have finished constructing the Pycroft building; and the boiler house is looking much better too. The railway team have completed the new road crossing for the railway development and work has now started on the loops. A new refreshed logo for the Brickworks has been unveiled and the Brickworks even features in a virtual escape room, opening the Museum to a worldwide audience!

All in all, after a difficult 18 months, there is much to celebrate and much to be positive about. As always, this edition of Brickbats features a range of articles - a mix of history, current activities and other snippets of interest. Once one edition is complete, we start thinking about the next one, so if you have a relevant article or story to share, then please do get in touch!

Sue Boswell, Editor

Events at the Brickworks Museum 2021

It has been so good to see people again around the Brickworks Museum, although limited in numbers because of the Covid restrictions and I have really enjoyed organising the following events held so far, which could not happen without the help of all the volunteers on the day.

May Spring Special - this was the first event of the year and some Covid restrictions were still in place but just under 200 people booked to see buses, traction engines, vintage cars, the blacksmith, the Mini Car Club, craft gazebos and a large fairground organ all suitably spaced around the yard. The miniature train gave rides, while inside were a local history display, craft & gift stalls and the Brickworks machinery was in steam. Lots of good remarks from exhibitors and stallholders some saying it was lovely to have a day out after more than a year.

June Summer Steam Up - still some restrictions although the steam group had a variety of traction engines, a living wagon, road roller, tractors, army lorry, a large fairground organ and the blacksmith spaced outside. The train group gave rides (with social distancing). Inside seven craft stalls spread out and a small Meccano display. 220 people came with booked timed entry and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

July Trains & Buses - the hottest day of the year so far, not nice wearing a face mask, but 280 people had booked! Outside were five buses, MG Car Club and a very large model railway layout was in the marquee, also craft stalls, a fairground organ and a band. Inside were six model railway layouts and a display of very small layouts built into old tool chests, also a train Meccano display and model bus table. The Brickworks machinery was steamed up and in spite of the heat the miniature train was busy giving rides. Two emails received from stallholders thanking everyone and the model railway layout owners say they will come back next year.

August Vehicles at the Brickworks - dry and pleasant weather and about 300 people came (still booked tickets) plus all the exhibitors and stallholders. There were 48 vehicles including buses, Mini Car Club, MG Car Club, TR Ford Club, vintage Fords, American cars, military vehicles and display, motorcycles and others. Also outside were the blacksmith, Paul's model tanks, the Shanty Buys singing and the train group were busy giving rides. Inside the Meccano Club, Model Auto Club, South Coast Modellers (warships & tanks) also craft and gift stalls and the Brickworks machinery was steamed up. Five emails from car clubs and model vehicle clubs said how much they enjoyed it.

In addition, the First World War Project Celebration Day organised by the Collections Manager in June was really interesting and much enjoyed by visitors. Also, the Education Officer arranged Wonderful Wednesdays for children in the summer holidays that were very popular and a Lego Day for children sold out of the booked tickets. Please visit our website for details of forthcoming events at www.thebrickworksmuseum.org

Pam Formby, Events Organiser



News from the Trust

The AGM of BBMT was held on 29 June. Fortunately, there are some well-ventilated, large spaces at the Museum where socially distanced meetings can be held. Owing to the ongoing pandemic restrictions, it could not be an open meeting for the second year running. Keith Aldis of the Brick Development Association was the guest once again, as the Trust seeks to re-establish contacts with modern brickmakers in the UK.

Andy Fry had resigned from the board in March and Patricia Worby resigned at the AGM. Sadly, Garry Moore had decided to stand down as Chair and also leave the Trust at the AGM. The board has benefited greatly from his leadership while he has been Chair of the Trust.

George Roberts and Paul West stood down and were reappointed unanimously to the board for a further term of three years.

Eleanor Bell was appointed interim Chair while a new Trust leader is sought. Paul West was reappointed as Treasurer and Judy Bevis was reappointed as Secretary.

I am delighted to report that Neil Atkinson and Andy Elford were elected to the board at the AGM. Both new Trustees are also Museum volunteers. Neil takes on the role of Lead Trustee for Health and Safety while Andy has joined the Trust as Lead Trustee for Marketing and Publicity.

There are now 11 trustees on the BBMT board, although there are still several areas of expertise that are desirable but not represented. Five trustees also volunteer at the Museum across a range of roles, including front of house, engineering, trains and collections care.

Judy Bevis, Trust Secretary

Railway Update

The July Trains Event Day was a mixture of success and misfortune. The hot weather played havoc with the locomotives, which have thermal safety cut outs, and expanding track gauge plus a loose wheel joint. Our exhibitors saved the day with display boards and train models from 2mm to 5" (127mm) gauge, even a boat.

Whilst maintaining the current railway, work has been moving apace on the new railway. A number of track panels have been completed ready to install, the trackbed cleared and the new station buildings, benches and fences painted. The major project recently has been the construction of the level crossing (pictured as we tested it with one of our cars!) for the Traction Engine tour route. This has required the purchase of heavier duty rail bent to radius, a lot of concrete and a specially designed system for ensuring the rail remained level whilst the concrete was poured and set. Thanks must go to the Pycroft Team who helped considerably with this particular project.



Projects underway, and making good progress, are the earthworks for the top (car park end) and bottom (Reception end) loops, the trackbed leading up from the new station to the top loop and the sidings into the new carriage shed. A sector plate and three way lead off has been constructed and installed saving the cost of two points (known as switches in American and lately Network Rail!), here the track is being built from scratch (bar with welded sleepers).

It's been great to welcome two new volunteers (thanks to Mary's efforts) to join our existing small but dedicated team. At the moment our work is hard graft and I think we're all looking forward to the day when we can just play trains!

Phil Boswell, Railway Group

Conservation Projects Update

One of the important issues facing the Museum is that of deterioration of large metal exhibits which are stored and displayed outside. Corrosion is a significant problem and we have been trialing ways to arrest this.

We learned that the National Museum of the Royal Navy waxes the artillery at its site in Gosport and this led to us using microcrystalline wax as a protection on the Northern Plant Engine and a number of other exhibits. This is an attractive strategy as it can be removed using degreaser and so is completely reversible. On the other hand it needs to be done at least twice a year. We found that we achieved good protection on well painted surfaces and that corrosion spots seem not to be growing on exhibits which already had some rust.

Some simple corrosion tests were also carried out over the winter of 2020-21. Samples of rusty threaded steel rod were wire brushed and painted with a rust inhibiting paint. Some received no further treatment, some were waxed and some received an anti-corrosion spray. They were left outside out of the rain but subject to condensation. The untreated samples showed appreciable rusting after 6 months, the waxed samples did not and those treated with the anti-corrosion spray showed slight rusting. The experiment is still in place and we monitor it regularly.

On the basis of this experiment we concluded that waxing is a good treatment and to be preferred for painted objects but we had also had a good practical result on two machines using a second anti-corrosion spray. This proved fortunate because we found that the two Woods steam engines showed signs of corrosion on bright metal parts during the winter of 2020 -21 during the assorted lock downs, this was despite their having been well waxed. As an emergency measure these were treated with the second anti-corrosion spray and this succeeded in preventing the progress of the corrosion, fortunately it could be removed with degreaser and a little scrubbing!

We had appealed for advice to the local Museum Development Officer. She suggested covers made from breathable tent material for use during the closed season. One of these was trialed during last winter and was sufficiently successful to encourage the preparation of some more. The MDO also told us about a drying oil with corrosion inhibitors which had been used on some cannons at a museum in the USA. This material penetrates surface rust, bringing corrosion inhibitors to the underlying metal and then it dries to form a hard composite material which is reported to be protective.

We tried this on a brick moulding machine from the now closed Beacon Hill Brickworks in Dorset. The exhibit was wire brushed to remove loose rust and scale, washed to remove clay and then degreased. When dry the oil was applied by painting. This machine showed signs of severe corrosion and we found that two coats of the drying oil were required to give a sufficiently thick coating. It has since been waxed as an additional precaution, some photographs before and after treatment are shown below:



Before conservation



After conservation

We have observed that the machine now sheds water very well and will monitor it during the coming winter. This strategy is not reversible but can be considered as preventive conservation – it would act as an undercoat if a restoration with painting were required at some future time and once again is at least delaying further deterioration. The Bennett and Sayer winch next to the main machine room has also received a treatment of this sort and will be monitored over the winter.



Before conservation



After conservation

There is a great deal more to do and the materials for this work have largely been funded by a grant from the South East Museums Development Programme, obtained by our Collections Manager, Mary Flinn, and facilitated by the local Museum Development Officer, Katrina Burton.

It is hoped that further outside exhibits will be treated similarly in 2022 if the current work proves successful.

John Bevis, Conservation Volunteer

WW1 Clay Creations Exhibition

A new temporary exhibition has just been installed at the Museum, consisting of clay creations made by children during the First World War One themed Bricks, Bombs and Belles event held in June. Inspired by the Museum, the exhibition and the costumed interpreters, the children taking part made models and then interpreted their work in their own words.

The work displayed captures so many elements of the brickworks in WW1. Brickmaking continued with clay coming in on wagons and bricks leaving on the railway line, as can be seen in some of the models. Women are also well represented which is key to the 'works in the war as one of the brickmakers noted, on his return from the front, that the place was 'Full of women!' They were potentially filling shells – the shells and the cordite used to fill them arrived via the railway, which also brought the women to work. Several children made bombs, shells or weapons to tell this story.

Other elements of the conflict are represented – from rats to rations, lamps to candle holders, tankards to tanks and a rather nice hippo reminding us of the international nature of the conflict. The children will take their creations home at the end of November, so be sure to come and visit the display soon!

Gemma Ingason, Education Officer



Bursledon Brickworks during World War 2

In the Hampshire Records Office, in Winchester, there are several documents relating to the repairs made to the Brickworks claiming to be following bomb damage in WW2.

The first document relates to an incident on 17 October 1940. It refers to "Repairing and refixing as required" 4 skylights, 53 panes to 5 windows to machine shop. 20 broken panes to 3 windows and 23 panes to 5 skylights of the boiler house. 18 panes to 11 windows of 'F' Drying chambers. 18 panes to 3 windows of 'C' kiln. The last item seems strange as it refers to windows in kilns!

A similar document refers to an incident in 'approx June 1941'. This time 55 windows of a drying shed were broken. The damage necessitated the boarding up of the windows resulting in the drying sheds being too dark for the workers, and considerable wastage of heat.

In May 1942 an invoice was issued by the builders referring to the period April to September 1941 for "War damage to River View Terrace, Glenholm and Ferndale. The terrace is across Coal Park Lane from the rear gate by the bungalow. Glenholm and Ferndale are the semi-detached houses on the corner before the motorway bridge. All the properties were owned by the Brickworks, the houses being for the managers.

On 28 January 1946 G. H. Hackett Limited builders wrote to the War Damage Commission (WDC) stating that they had 'recently carried out certain war damage repairs'. The damage was said to have been caused by a bomb which fell on 17 October 1940. There is a handwritten note, on the letter, that indicates the bomb fell on Sunday 17 November 1940.

The WDC replied on 20 February 1946 stating that the damage was not covered by the present regulations and that Hacketts 'should make their own arrangements with the firm'. There was also reference to the damage caused by the use of explosives in the clay pit by the Air Ministry in April/May 1943 and it would not be war damage within the provisions of Section 2 of the War Damage Act 1943.

Hacketts replied on 26 February 1946 that the work carried out was definitely war damage, part of which was caused by a bomb that fell on 17 November 1940. They go on to describe the damage in the same terms as the 17 October 1940 q.v. The rest of the damage having occurred in June 1941 and was as described above.

The WDC replied on 16 March 1946 to the effect that the BBC were not covered under the War Damage Act unless a certificate from the Director of Bricks of the Ministry of Works was provided certifying that the "work was urgently required to meet the circumstances created by the war damage, and that the undertakings (BBC) is in need of funds to meet the cost of the works. The payments made to the Company (BBC) in 1942 and 1943 were made irregularly". There is further correspondence relating to this in May and June 1954 where BBC are still trying to get paid for the war damage. The WDC were adamant that they would not pay for it.

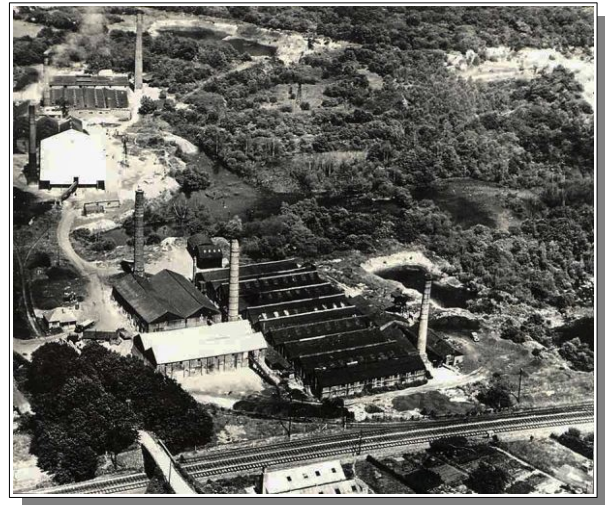
The Hampshire "Day Book" records all bombs which were dropped but there is no record of bombs falling on the brickworks on either 17 October or 17 November 1940. Further research has produced the following information:

"The German Luftwaffe mounted four raids against southern England, United Kingdom during the day. Meanwhile, at 1530 hours, at the Air Council room at the Air Ministry in London, British fighter commanders including Portal, Douglas, Dowding, Park, Bader, and others gathered to discuss strategy; specifically, Park's approach was attacked by some of the others. Overnight, London, Liverpool, and Birmingham were heavily bombed."

From Ww2dbase <https://ww2db.com/event/today/10/17/1940>

If anyone has local knowledge of when the bombs fell on the Brickworks, please do let me know.

Richard Newman



London Brick Company

In the 1970s The London Brick company was the largest brick company in the world and its largest brick works at Stewartby, Bedfordshire was the largest brickworks in the world and secured a place in the Guinness Book of Records. Its output of 'Fletton' bricks was huge - over 2 billion per annum. In fact, in a memorable aside in 1979 the MD of London Brick (James Bristow) had to remind the MD of Lego, who claimed they made the most bricks every year, who actually produced the most bricks every year and it wasn't Lego!



The company employed over 5,000 people, operated works throughout the world including Swaziland, Tehran and Australia. I used to work for London Brick and my family has a history of five generations being involved with the company in senior management and ownership roles. Even today, I am still involved with brick making, having been MD of The York Handmade Brick Company, I still represent that company in the south of England and Ireland. In addition, I also manufacture mini bricks from clay off the beach on the Isle of Wight where I live.

London Brick, literally bricks for London, came into being in the late 19th century in the Peterborough area where a seam of lower Oxford Clay was discovered and quarried in the Fletton area. This clay had many attributes but the most significant was that it carried its own carbon for burning - it was the 'clay that burns' (a book of the same name is reviewed at the end of this newsletter) as such all the bricks, made in a semi-dry press process, could be priced well under its competitors.

A wine merchant Mr James Bristow owned the manor house in the middle of the village of Fletton and in 1881 launched a high court injunction preventing the local brickyard Hempston Brothers from continuing to fire bricks in such a way as to give off 'noxious oily fumes'. The injunction was granted.

However only a year later in 1882, and in a complete about face James Bristow was part of the team who went on and purchased a number of Fletton brickyards hence starting the 100 year involvement of the Bristow family in what became the London Brick Co. As the company grew it bought all competitors and became a natural monopoly. The picture shows an aerial view of the Stewartby works from the 1930s.



As the fifth generation of Bristows, I was the last to work for London Brick and in 1984 the company was taken over by the Hanson Trust and in effect split up. There is now only one works at Kings Dyke, Whittlesey which still produces Fletton bricks but they are as expensive as all their competitors' bricks. All the other works were sold which was a sad end to a great British manufacturing company.

Tim Bristow, Trustee

Photographs:

London Brick - [File:London Brick Company -3 \(5385280183\).jpg - Wikimedia Commons](#)

Stewartby Brickworks - [hansonairbig.jpg \(718x563\) \(open.ac.uk\)](#)

History in a Brick

Part 1 - A Personal Perspective

Around 25 years ago having stopped in a lay-by near Nottingham and wandering around some nearby woodland, I spotted a brick in the undergrowth on which there was embossed some lettering. This appeared to have been applied when the brick was manufactured. I thought it looked interesting, so I took the brick home.

At the time we didn't have any internet and all I was able to discover about the history of this brick was that it was made by "Butterley" not far from where it had been found. Today we have access to the World Wide Web and can look up this brick on the wonderful site created by David Sallery, 'Old Bricks', and can discover some of the history behind the brickworks where it was made.

Personally, I never took up brick collecting as a hobby but many people have. For example, Mark Cranston in Scotland has been collecting for over ten years and has amassed 3,500 different bricks which he keeps in a garden shed. He has found them on demolition sites, in old brick works, and on beaches and from the information impressed in the bricks he has discovered many interesting stories. A number of brick collections have been donated to the Brickworks Museum and although a considerable number are on public display, many are still awaiting sorting and recording. Part Two of this article, which it is hoped will appear in the next issue of Brickbats, will feature these collections, and the work that has been going on behind the scenes to make these bricks more available to visitors.

In almost every case the old bricks that have been collected have been pressed, and the name of the brickworks captured for ever as part of the brick, during this process. There is, however, another group of bricks which may not look as interesting but, in my opinion, have just as much to offer the history researcher. These are hand moulded bricks, especially those with the almost illegible lettering pressed into the frog, when the plastic clay was thrown into the mould.

The two hand moulded bricks below are inscribed JN and SN. They come from two houses in Eastleigh. The initials are those of Jonas Nichols (1836-1891) and his son Sydney. Jonas Nichols was a property developer who built hundreds of tenement houses in Eastleigh and in the St. Marys district of Southampton, which is still today known as Nicholstown.



Jonas Nichols was an interesting man. Some say his terraces of workers' houses were poorly built and many were demolished during the "slum" clearances of the 1960's. Others that they were a product of the time and probably, with some improvements, could have provided more pleasant living conditions than the flats that replaced them. I think that a man who took the trouble to initial the bricks he was making must have been proud of what he was doing and although Jonas Nichols was not a hands on brick maker, he rented a brickworks at Boyatt and in 1891 we know that bricks from here were used in the Eastleigh Railway Institute. We don't know whether these were machine or handmade bricks, as the Institute was demolished in 1986, but the Jonas Nichols brick in the picture came from a fine Victorian house in Eastleigh and hand moulded bricks were considered superior to machine made bricks by many Victorian architects.

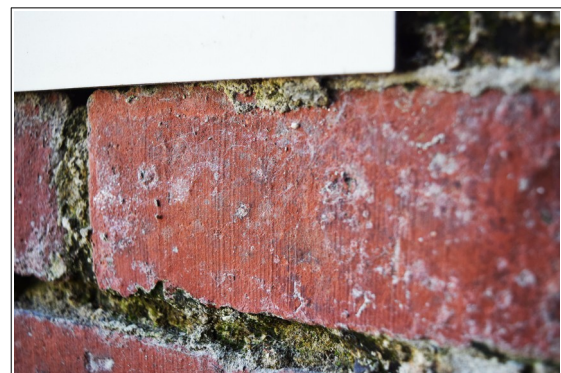


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Historical research inspired by a brick can have interesting results but you may ask how much the actual brick can teach us. This is something I have been researching. While it is easy to distinguish a handmade brick from a pressed brick, it is not as easy to identify an un-pressed machine moulded brick, made by a Berry or Monarch machine, for example, from a brick which has been carefully moulded by hand. Un-pressed wire cuts, such as those made by the Bennett & Sayer machine at Bursledon Brickworks are much easier to identify. These Victorian bricks can be identified by a series of very small parallel grooves along the stretcher and header sides of the brick, at right angles to the top and bottom surfaces.

I believe these have been formed as the clay has been extruded from the mouth piece (pictured below left) attached to the pug-mill and are due to either small pieces of grit stuck to the surface of the die or some other imperfection. I have identified many examples, and as these patterns are on the visible sides of the brick, have found bricks of this type in the walls of numerous Victorian buildings. If you look closely you will see them in the walls around the brickworks including the chimney dating from 1897 (pictured below right).



In this brief description of a few types of common Victorian bricks, I have tried to explain the special interest they have for me. While pressed bricks may offer more clues about where they were made, hand moulded and even wire cuts are well worth looking out for. Part two of this article will focus on our brick collections at the Museum and will describe exciting developments and improvements which are taking place.

Jim Beckett

Volunteering at the Brickworks

Every time a survey of Museum visitors is undertaken the volunteers are praised for being friendly and knowledgeable. This is very gratifying for the volunteers and much appreciated, but what is much less obvious is how much volunteers receive from visitors.

You may have seen “Jim’s Jottings” in previous issues of Brickbats. Jim Knights has been volunteering at the Museum for many years and has also contributed to Brickbats for almost as long. He has spent many happy hours conducting Museum tours and talking to visitors in the machine room on big event days. Two of Jim’s contributions to Brickbats were produced as a direct result of conversations he had with visitors.

One Thursday a gentleman from Kent visited the Museum. He explained to Jim how bricks were made using lime and sand instead of clay. “The materials were mixed, moistened, moulded and pressed then steam cooked under pressure in a chamber called an autoclave. [An autoclave is basically a pressure cooker that uses steam to heat at 200°C.] There was one drawback, when the bricks had finished cooking the steam pressure was released. The resulting shriek/whistle was so ferocious that it disturbed the whole neighbourhood. After negotiation it was agreed that steam would be released at 6.30am. Thus, the workers would be woken and everybody would get to work on time.”

When another visitor discussed donating some bricks from the Blanchard Brickworks of Bishops Waltham, Jim decided to undertake research then produced an article on the manufacture of clay products in Bishops Waltham.

Jim has also produced a series of little items on the origins of words and phrases, that he shares with visitors, such as:

“If you had gone to the theatre in Shakespeare’s time you would be met at one of the many doorways to the auditorium by a member of staff holding a terra cotta box with a slot in which you dropped your penny. Before the play started the terra cotta pots were taken to a small office at the side where they were smashed and the coins counted and reported as the box office takings.”

You may also have seen Jim’s most recent article on the Salvation Army Brickworks.

All this illustrates that visitors to the Museum enjoy interacting with the volunteers, but volunteers enjoy these encounters just as much!

And as is often the case, one thing leads to another. Mention of the whistle in Jim’s article on making calcium silicate bricks brought back a memory from my childhood. My grandparents had a market garden in Hedge End. Wherever Granddad was working he would stop at mid-day when he heard the loud whistle from a local factory. When the factory closed, my Grandmother had to blow a referee’s whistle to summon him for his mid-day meal. Many years later I found out that it was the whistle from Bursledon Brickworks just across the Hamble River that provided the signal for mid-day break until the early 1970s.

Judy Bevis, Volunteer Librarian



Changes for the Museum Library and Archive

Over the past decade the library and archives at The Brickworks Museum has gradually expanded as it has received donations. These have ranged from individual books or a few family photographs connected to Bursledon Brickworks to entire brick-related archives from people with a deep interest in the manufacture or history of bricks. By 2019 the library and archive room had become totally inadequate for the collection with yet more donations still arriving.

During the assessment of the Museum to create a Covid-secure environment for volunteers in 2020, the serious problems of the library and archive room were detailed. The whole survey showed that there were several key areas where the Museum had already developed beyond the capacity of the spaces allocated to them. This was causing serious difficulties to both volunteers and staff.

The library and archives have been allocated a much larger area on the first floor where there is adequate room to store all of the present collections and donations as well as providing space for expansion in the future. Adequate space is also available for preparing the correct storage packs for archive items for their long term care. The environmental conditions of the new space are also much more appropriate for the storage of paper archives.

By early September we were approximately half way through the move. All the boxes of archives, plans and framed pictures had been relocated to their new home. As this required multiple journeys carrying box after box of precious paper documents it was quite a workout!

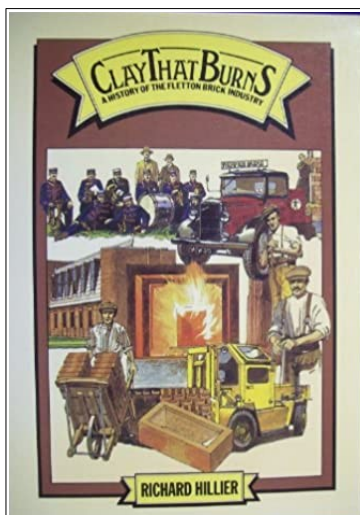
The final layout has been decided and most of the furniture is in place (thanks to Brian and the forklift truck) so it only remains to move the books and four large shelving cupboards. I hope to have completed the move by the end of 2021.

Moving the archive and library has been a very valuable process because it has allowed me to assess the overall condition of items, separate out the uncatalogued items and clean some of the more robust items in the collection before moving them. This is not the first time I have been involved in moving a library nor is it the largest library I have helped to move, but it is the first one I have had to plan and execute myself. It has been hard work but so very worthwhile as the new space ensures that the paper archive is secure for the foreseeable future and a wonderful place for Museum volunteers to work on the archives.

It will also be possible to open the collection to researchers.

Book Reviews

Clay That Burns - a history of the fletton brick industry by Richard Hillier, published in 1981 by London Brick Company Limited then reprinted in 1982. ISBN 0950780200



A slender paperback volume of 100 pages, it provides a wonderful explanation and history of the fletton brick industry. From the discovery of the unique properties of the Lower Oxford Clays in 1870s or 1880s to the vast mechanized brickmaking business of London Brick in 1980s.

The author had access to the wealth of material gathered by Mr. J.P. Bristow from the 1930s until his retirement from London Brick in 1971. The Secretary's Department also provided access to the vast collection of material relating to the many companies that were taken over by London Brick. The author also found that county and local records offices held records relating to some of the earlier individual companies.

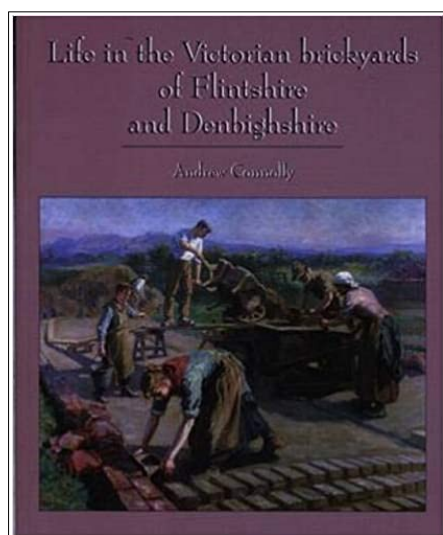
The small village of Fletton near Peterborough provided the name for this special type of brick after the Fletton Lodge estate was sold in lots at auction in 1877, then developed into a number of small brickworks.

The text is illustrated by many photographs of brickworks, documents, people and processes. Interestingly, there are pictures of women working in brickworks from both World Wars. Brickworks Museum researchers have found scant evidence of women working in brickyards during the Great War in public records although there is local oral history stating that women worked at Bursledon Brickworks during the Great War, so this kind of information from official company records is extremely valuable.

The illustrations of Stewartby Works and model village in 1929, Archless Kilns at Woodston in 1920s and the new Peterborough works in particular provide interesting details as well as the size of some fletton brickworks. Towards the end of the book are detailed location maps and more general maps of the fletton brickworks with a gazetteer of brickmaking sites. A select bibliography and basic index complete the work.

There is also a link with The Brickworks Museum: J.P. Bristow was the paternal Grandfather of Tim Bristow, a BBMT trustee. At his retirement he was deputy Chairman of London Brick. Tim's Father became Chief Executive in the mid-1970s and Tim joined London Brick in 1981. He spent three years with the company, including 8 months with Hallet Brick, a Subsidiary of London Brick Company, in South Australia before the Hanson Trust takeover in 1984. Tim then went to business school and Alne Brick that became York Handmade Brick in 1976.

Life in the Victorian brickyards of Flintshire and Denbighshire - by Andrew Connolly, published in 2003 by Gwasgarn Gwalch. ISBN 0863818927



Unlike Richard Hillier, Andrew Connolly had to undertake his own research in records offices, newspaper archives, local museums, local libraries, the National Library of Wales, British Library and British Newspaper Library and then seek permission from landowners to hunt for remnants of brickworks on the ground.

His aim was to tell the stories of the development of brickworks throughout Flintshire and Denbighshire in the Victorian era (the heyday of the industry) and also the stories of the men that worked at the kilns and the clayholes to bring the history to life.

One interesting point was that often brickworks were associated with collieries and sometimes iron works too. Coal and brick clay were often dug from the same shaft, for example, one mine produced 170 tons of fireclay to every ten tons of coal.

The maps and photographs show that round kilns were very common across these brickworks, and that the brickworks were often very large.

Throughout Andrew's account he is forced to acknowledge there are gaps in the records for many of the brickworks he identified. His style is more reminiscent of a Gazetteer than a narrative so is possibly best suited to dipping into rather than reading all 286 pages from start to finish.

Judy Bevis, Volunteer Librarian

The Brickworks Museum
Coal Park Lane, Swanwick, Southampton, SO31 7GW
www.thebrickworksmuseum.org