



# BRICKBATS

**The Official  
Magazine of the  
Brickworks  
Museum**

Free to volunteers and members, £2.50 when sold

[www.thebrickworksmuseum.org](http://www.thebrickworksmuseum.org)

## Introduction

The five months of winter activities have flown by! Museum volunteers have been very busy maintaining and enhancing the exhibition areas of the museum for the 2024 open season.

Here are reports on some of the projects of a particularly busy winter program and provides information about the events planned for 2024, including some new ones. There are articles about research, a new grant-funded project and more about the kiln roof project. A new trustee and volunteer tell why they have chosen to volunteer at The Brickworks Museum. There is a new cafe operator for the coming season.

The Brick Development Association is sponsoring Brickbats once again. Sadly, Sue Boswell resigned as co-editor of Brickbats, after seven years. Many thanks to Sue, who created the attractive version of Brickbats we have today. Brickbats has gone from strength to strength under our joint editorship, so I am determined to build on this success.

Finally, we are hoping that 2024 will bring lots of new visitors to the museum, as well as the many people that regularly visit. It would be amazing to finally return to pre-pandemic levels of visitors, so tell all your friends about what is happening at The Brickworks Museum in 2024!

*Judy Bevis, Editor*

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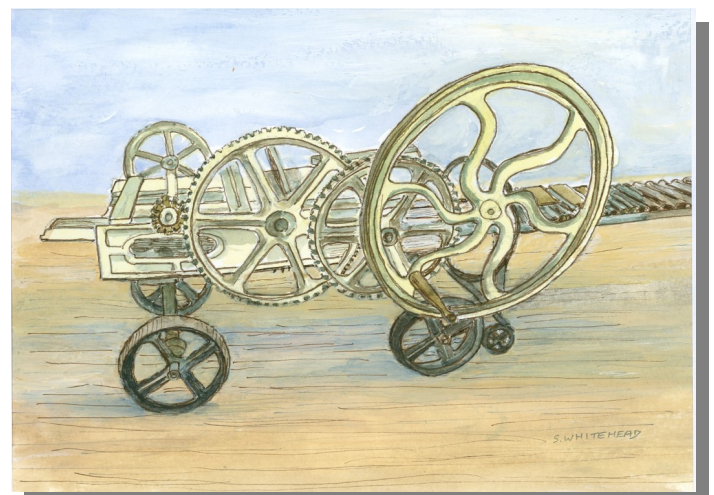
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## Around the Brickworks

- The derelict railway platform on the narrow gauge railway line was finally removed by members of South Hampshire Steam and Engineering Society and the museum's trains volunteers, assisted by members of Southampton and District Transport Heritage Trust.



- SHHSES also used their heavy lifting equipment to remove the trolleys and sleepers from under the Berry brickmaking machine from the Downton Brickworks. After conservation work, this will be part of a new Downton Brickworks exhibit.
- The museum looked splendid, once again, at Halloween and Christmas. The 'Charmers' mastermind the highly organised operations of decorating the museum.
- The installation of winter covers to protect outside exhibits was delayed until early January

by the very wet autumn weather. However, all were in place before frosts came.

- The last phase of the kiln project started in mid-January. The new access ramp and display area above the kiln will provide an exciting new exhibition of kilns.
- In 2023, the museum had visitors on every day it was open. A significant milestone for the museum.
- Minstead Trust notified BBMT that they would depart from the cafe in December 2023.



- The Collections Manager got a grant from SEMD for conservation materials and storage for the large collection of slides, negatives and photographs in the archives.
- In December, work started on remodelling the former offices. This space, behind the Batley Room, will be suitable for meetings when added to the spaces available for hire at the museum.
- Gemma Ingason left the role of Education, Engagement and Marketing Officer in January 2024 to become Commercial Manager at RLCM, Worthy Down.
- The art work, **Coralent**, departed from The Brickworks on 1st February. A new art project, funded by IWM, is underway.
- The construction of a new brick path to improve access to outside exhibition spaces was completed by Ed and Bob.

- **Stop press:** The **Brickyard Cafe** will be under new management from March 2024. Open for one day for the March event on **24<sup>th</sup> March**, then from **3<sup>rd</sup> April on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays**. The menu will be baguettes/sandwiches, coffee, snacks and some baked/home-made produce sourced locally. In the longer term, the new cafe management plan to extend the opening hours. We wish Jodie every success in her new venture.



## Events at the Brickworks Museum 2024

The final events of 2023 were:

**Trains Take Over at the Brickworks** - 24<sup>th</sup> September 2023. This saw 411 people including lots of children enjoying themselves. The Train Group had 9 engines out – 5 on passenger duty, 2 running around, one on a raised display track and, finally one on the station for children to sit and have their photograph taken. There was a model stationary engine on display, as well as a large model railway layout in the big marquee. Also the Blacksmith, a Road Roller, Living Wagons, 6 Army Vehicles and a double decker bus were on show. Music by The Fogies and the Ukes of Wallington. Inside were 8 model railway layouts and a Thomas the Tank Engine display, Railway Books & Sales, the Brickworks Machinery was running, there was a children's craft activity and Craft & Gift Stalls.

**Autumn Steam Up** - 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023. A really busy event with 577 people visiting. Thanks to the Steam Group the yard was full of Traction Engines, the Large Woodcutting Machine, Miniature Steam and the very popular trailer rides had a queue waiting all day. Also outside were Army Vehicles, Classic Cars and more. Inside were Halloween Decorations, Hampshire Bat Group, Very Small Model Railway Layouts, Paul's Models, and Craft & Gift Stalls. The Brickworks Machinery was steamed up and there were Train Rides all day.

**Christmas Festival** - 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023. It was really cold and drizzled with rain most of the day, but 539 people came to enjoy seeing Santa in his Decorated Grotto and other Christmas Displays. There were Craft & Gift Stalls and the Meccano Group's impressive display. It was warmer by the Brickworks Steam engines! Outside were the large Woodcutting Machine & Traction Engine, a large Stationary Engine, a Fairground Organ, Children's Vintage Roundabout, the Blacksmith and Train Rides all day in spite of the bad weather.

**Children's Christmas Special** - 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Tickets sold out quickly for this small event for children to see Father Christmas and Christmas Displays, Make a Christmas Table Centre Piece and other Christmas Decorations. The Vintage Slot Machines were popular as well.

### Main Events 2024:

**March 24<sup>th</sup>: Spring Market.** Craft & Gift Stalls, Car Club, Ukulele Group, Children's Play areas and Miniature Train Rides. Museum not in steam for this event.

**April 28<sup>th</sup>: Spring Steam Up.** Traction Engines and other Vehicles, Craft & Gift Stalls, Brickworks Machinery Running and Train Rides.

**May 11<sup>th</sup>: Beer Festival.** Please book for this very popular event.

**May 26<sup>th</sup>: Mayfest at the Museum.** Buses, Fun Dog Show, Craft & Gift Stalls, Train Rides, Live Music and the Brickworks Museum with working machinery.

**June 23<sup>th</sup>: Magic, Myths & Mystery at the Brickworks.** Magic Jack, Stalls, Tarot Reader, Children's Activities, Flea Circus and more. Brickworks Museum in steam.

**July 21<sup>th</sup>: Back In Time.** Jive Dance Group, Local History Display - Old Pubs and Inns in the Area. Military Vehicles, Stalls and the Brickworks Museum in steam.



**August 25<sup>th</sup>: Roads & Rails.** Classic Cars and Other Vehicles, Train Rides, Stalls, Music, Brickworks Museum in steam.

**September 29<sup>th</sup>: On Track.** Model Railway Layouts, Ukulele Band, Train Rides, Vehicles, Live Music and the Brickworks Museum in steam.

**October 27<sup>th</sup>: Autumn Steam Up & Halloween.** Traction Engines & Other Large Vehicles. Halloween Displays, Craft & Gift Stall and the Brickworks Museum in steam.

**November 24<sup>th</sup>: Christmas at the Brickworks.** Christmas Displays, Father Christmas, Meccano Club Exhibition, Craft & Gift Stalls, music and the Brickworks Museum in steam.

**December 8<sup>th</sup>: Children's Christmas Special.** Children's Christmas Activities and Father Christmas visit. The museum not in steam for this event.

*Pam Formby, Events Organiser*

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## Volunteer Profile: Ann, Brick Cataloguer



Ann has been working at the museum for nearly a year now and has found it a worthwhile and welcoming experience. She retired from a full-time job a little over two years ago and had always thought of volunteering when Retired. Initially, Ann volunteered for the Covid vaccination programme but as the programme was winding down, she decided to explore different possibilities.

Ann found advertisements posted by Volunteer First on the Get Volunteering website. It was simple to follow the links and find out more about the various roles available, then to register interest in her chosen role.

Emilie (Volunteer Coordinator) lost no time in contacting Anne and arranged a visit to meet Emilie and some volunteers.

Ann previously knew little about the museum and was surprised to find how much is needed from volunteers to keep it running, and the range of skills and expertise the volunteers have. It's a large, dynamic place and there were a variety of roles available. Ann chose to work with Nigel on cataloguing and displaying the museum's massive collection of donated bricks! She has already learnt so much about the brickworks history and, believe it or not, she reports that the bricks can be interesting, revealing much about our social and industrial history. Ann says it might seem an unusual choice for someone who had worked with young children and families but it was great to have a change of focus and interests.

Ann reports it is lovely to feel part of such a friendly team of people so quickly and, of course, the volunteering opportunities didn't just stop with bricks! She has since learned about and helped in the archives section, reception, shop, kiosk and made her debut as an elf! So, from the quiet days of describing and photographing bricks to the vibrancy of Steam-up event days volunteering has been an enjoyable and rewarding way for Ann to feel part of the local community and to help keep our history relevant and alive.

## Railway Update

The railway group has had a busy winter season and is looking forward to greeting passengers at events.

### Miniature Railway

Dougal, the Museum loco, has had an overhaul as a critical drive chain and tensioner were badly worn and needed replacing which involved a whole strip down and rebuild of the main drive system.

A new carriage is under construction and it is hoped this will be in service, providing an additional five seats plus guard's compartment, for the new season. The carriage is equipped with a vacuum braking system providing more braking potential on the long gradient by the car park and an emergency braking facility operated by the guard or if the carriages become separated.

Other than routine maintenance, the plastic protection fencing alongside the Pycroft roadway has been replaced with more substantial metal fencing.

### Narrow Gauge Railway (Two Foot)

In preparation for building works at the main entrance to the site, it is necessary to move the overhead bucket tower and conveyor further down the site. To accommodate these the railway team are reducing the length of the railway track by removing rails from the main and lightweight feeder (mineral line) and the heavy duty point, and moving this closer to the road crossing. Due to the length of the rail sections and their weight, this is more difficult than it appears and involves the closure of the main driveway whilst the rails are moved.

Phase two of this project is to bring the horse wagon to the junction of the main and Pycroft Brickworks roadways as an exhibit, which also necessitates the refurbishment of the horse, including giving it a tail. Phase three will be to shorten the Two Foot railway line from the top of the car park back to the Pycroft Brickworks exhibit and refurbishing some wagons for display on the track. The project will enhance display areas of the site, provide some additional parking, facilitate the building works and generate extra income.

*Phil Boswell, Railway Group*



The commitment of members of the railway team is demonstrated by the weather conditions Ken (pictured) and Dave were prepared to work in!



## News from the Trust

The biggest news from the Trust is that, in December, Fareham Borough Council granted planning permission for 12 houses to be built on land between the museum drive and the railway line at the Swanwick lane end of the museum site. This planning application was for 'enabling development' and means that when the land is sold by HBPT, the proceeds from the sale must be used to repair the two remaining derelict drying sheds at the museum. This has been the long-term goal of BBMT and of HBPT, so that the drying sheds can be removed from the At Risk register of listed buildings. Once work on the drying sheds can be started, it should take approximately nine months to complete.

The other news from Andy Elford, Chair of Bursledon Brickworks Museum Trust, is that another new Trustee was appointed late in 2023. Sally Hillyear is Lead Trustee for Fundraising. A new staff member was appointed to undertake the task of Marketing in January, Tracey Clarke takes over this part of Gemma's role, while the roles of Education and Engagement remain vacant.

The cafe will be operated by Jodie Wilde of Event Themes from mid-March 2024.

Andy and Carolyne, the Museum Director, were invited to attend the National Brick Awards by the Brick Development Association, where the Queen's Head sculpture won the 'Most Innovative Use of Bricks' Award. The sculpture has now been donated to The Brickworks Museum, where it has been on display since 2022.

The Trust had the unexpected expense of repairs to the boiler water softener when this failed late in the 2023 open season. Repairs were completed in late January, ready for the boiler testing in February!

The Brickworks Museum is being assessed for the King's Award For Volunteer Service.

*February 2024*

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## Trustee Profile: Penny Cameron Watt



Penny Cameron Watt joined as a trustee in 2023. Her interest in bricks started at a very early age as her Father ran brickworks in Lancashire and Bristol for many years and she fondly remembers visiting the coal fired (and subsequently gas fired) factories on many occasions. Visiting the Brickworks Museum now revives some wonderful memories each time!

After Oxford University, Penny trained as an investment analyst and was the second woman to train on the London Stock Exchange trading floor before it became computerised. As an Investment manager she worked for several investment houses and spent almost 5 years in Hong Kong as an Investment Director at Indosuez.

After a career break to bring up her family, Penny retrained as a teacher of English as a foreign language and she founded her own Business English School, the Oxford School of Business English.

For the past 14 years, Penny has been a trustee at two well known Independent schools, as Chair of Finance and Safeguarding Trustee. She is also trustee at the Severn Rivers Trust and was a board member of The Story Museum trading company in Oxford.

Penny hopes that her interest in bricks, finance, education and safeguarding will contribute to the Brickworks Museum's future. In particular, she hopes that she can help the Museum reach out to children and help offset the effect of the Pandemic on their education and mental health.

## THE BRICKWORKS MUSEUM KILN



This photograph was taken in the early days of the brickworks. In the foreground is the terminal for the aerial ropeway to the river, but what interests me, is what is in the background. This shows our kiln at the Brickworks Museum, as it would have appeared early in the last century. This is the view you would have seen standing near the bungalow next to the back gate, looking towards our truncated chimney. That is the one you can see on the left behind a second kiln which was demolished long before the brickworks closed. The smoking chimney on the right is from the boilers. Notice there were walls up to the pitched roof, it wasn't open at the sides as it is today.

Looking at the old photo makes you realize just how much the brickworks has changed since it was built in 1897. The owners were constantly trying to improve efficiency, because they were up against fierce competition from the likes of The London Brick Company.

One of the improvements they tried was to use gas, LPG, to assist in firing the bricks. Previously the only fuel use was crushed coal, which was fed into the feed holes on the top of the kiln chamber where the bricks were being burnt. The use of gas happened very late in the life of the works, probably just a few years before closure, in 1974.



I took this photograph before the kiln top was cleared ready for re-roofing. It shows the gas firing equipment unceremoniously dumped in a corner. Had it been there since 1974? Who knows? At that time I had no idea exactly what I was looking at, but after sending this photograph to Mike Chapman, who had worked many years for Redland, I was enlightened.

Apparently, Redland Brick, the parent company of Bursledon Brickworks at the time, introduced gas firing to their kilns. This is the email I received from Mike:

*In the late 1960s Redland Bricks started a programme of replacing coal firing in their continuous chamber kilns with gas, with cost, labour and to improve poor working conditions in the kiln chambers being the main reasons for this.*

*The gas used was LPG Butane and supplied by ESSO from their Fawley refinery. The Butane was delivered in road tankers and stored on site in specially made cylindrical shaped tanks of up to 100 tonnes capacity.*

*Gas firing on the kiln top was achieved by a network of pipes which connected into portable "racks" from which the actual gas lances were inserted into a number of the existing feed holes. As the fire progressed around the kiln so the burner moved the racks to suit.*

*My particular knowledge of all this comes from working at Warnham and Southwater works, near Horsham. Mike Chapman.*

With this knowledge I set about trying to identify the parts, and gathering together those which I thought might be used to create a display, to tell the story of this very brief moment in the life of the Bursledon Brickworks Museum Kiln.



Volunteer, John Bevis, told me where the gas was stored in the Northern Works (marked X) and I have contacted ESSO, now Exxon Mobil, and a kind person is going to look through some documents to see if she can find anything relating to the supply of butane to the brickworks. I also visited a working brickworks, Northcot, in pursuit of more knowledge.

This works uses what is probably the only remaining gas firing system in the UK which was anything like ours. I have also searched the internet and discovered an Italian company, BERNINI IMPIANTI, who manufacture a very high tech variant today. These lines of enquiry have not, at the time of writing, led to any sort of detailed understanding of exactly how the system was operated.



I am hoping a few pictures will help explain what it would have looked like.



The Picture above shows a rack which was a distribution manifold standing on a tubular frame. On the left are some of the lances with another manifold. These lances would have dropped into the feed holes as far as the square plates and these allowed for up and down adjustment.

The lances were like upside-down Bunsen burners. Finally, here is my rather pathetic try at a composite image showing the gas supply from the main pipe in the kiln roof (Red), down to the distribution manifold and then onto the top of the lances (black). So there it is, in a nutshell, what I have found out so far. Any further help or ideas will be much appreciated.

*Jim Beckett 2024*

PICTURE CREDITS.

Pictures 1 and 3 Bursledon Brickworks Museum Trust. Remaining images, Jim Beckett.



## IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SIZE

You may be interested to know that the American War of Independence was the cause of our Brick Tax, the money collected being put towards the expenses of the war. In 1784, the tax was 2/6d per 1000; 1794 4/- per 1000; 1803 5/- per 1000; 1833 5/10d per 1000; and in 1849, the year before the tax was removed, the Government collected taxes on 800 million bricks, which is approx. £525,000. This is about £96,327,000 in today's money.

To try and get his money's worth for the brick tax, as the levy was "per brick", large bricks were created. These were known as "Wilke's Gobs", after Sir Joseph Wilkes who made bricks almost twice the size of a normal brick at his yard at Measham in Leicestershire.

In 1803 tiles were also included in the tax and bricks greater than 10 x 3 x 5 ins were taxed at 10/- per 1000. The tile tax was removed in 1833 and the brick tax in 1850.(1) The start of the second industrial revolution in UK was about 1825. The bulk of it from 1870 to 1914. It may have been a lot slower coming because the brick tax still existed to 1850.

Tudor bricks (1485-1603) were shallow in gauge (height) with rounded arisses (the right-angled edges). Sizes range from 210-250mm x 100-120mm x 40-50mm. In the 18th century, Parliament specified 8½" x 4" x 2½", which is equivalent to the modern metric brick of 215mm x 102.5mm x 65mm.

In 1942 much of the brick making industry was yet to be fully mechanised. The consequence of this was some bricks were made at diverse sizes to others. The Committee recommended an adoption of a standard brick size. This was referred to as **Type II of British Standard Specification No. 657-1941**. The dimensions of a standard common brick were to be 8 ¾ in. long, 4 3/16 wide and 2 5/8 in. deep. Tolerances of + or - 1/8<sup>th</sup> in. on length and = or - 1/16<sup>th</sup> in. on other dimensions. The dimensions of the contemporary standard facing brick (215 x 102.5 x 65mm) in imperial would be 8.46 x 4.04 x 2.56 inches. The Brick industry quite rightly pointed out to the Government that those, who were already mechanised, would not be changing all their tooling.(2)

The largest brick in the Ann Los' collection is 9 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch x 5 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch x 3 inch and is red, and it was found at Kirby Stephen in Westmoreland in October, 1976.(1)



In the Museum collection there is a large brick from Williamson's Tunnels in Edge Hill, Liverpool which measures 23.5 x 11.5 x 7.25cm or 9 ¼ inch x 4 ½ inch x 2 4/5<sup>th</sup> inches.

Richard Newman

### References:

1. The bulk of this text is from the British Brick Society Information COMPILATION VOLUME 1 1973-1981

<https://www.buildingmaterials.co.uk/info-hub/bricks-blocks/uk-brick-dimensions#:~:text=The%20dimensions%20of%20the%20contemporary,%E2%85%9D%20x%20%20%20%C2%BC%20inches.>

## Engineering news



The Brick lift from Downton Brickworks has undergone a long period of conservation and mounting for display. Originally mounted over a pit so that pallets could be moved up and down for loading it is now displayed on a wooden stand. At present next to the kiln, it is planned to move it to be adjacent to the Berry brick making machine, which it served, and which is awaiting cleaning and conservation.

The lift is shown here adjacent to a green pallet moving stand used to transport pallets of bricks to the Downton works drying sheds.

A bunded enclosure has been made for the waste oil tank. This will enable collected oil to be stored without further water contamination and allow us to drain off separated water. This in turn should allow the oil to be collected for recycling rather than having to dispose of it as industrial waste.

During 2023 a fault was discovered in the regeneration process of the water softener which serves our Fulton boiler. Measures were put in place to ensure that we could safely operate for the remainder of the season and then a specialist contractor was engaged to refurbish the water softener, which is critical to the safe working of the boiler. The ion exchange resin, control head and internal filters were all replaced and our own team refurbished the softener drainage system. The work was completed in time for the annual inspection of the boiler.

The boiler itself has undergone necessary maintenance and parts replacement where required. The boiler team have also taken the opportunity to rectify pipework leaks. It has passed its annual inspection.

Conservation work has begun on equipment used to fire the kilns using gas fuel in the last working days of the Brickworks. The metal work has corroded and will be cleaned and then coated with a corrosion inhibiting drying oil to form a transparent protective lacquer. The rubber hoses are mainly in remarkably good condition and will only require gentle cleaning. A few hoses have been fire damaged and these will be stabilised with a consolidant.

One stand is available to carry a display on top of the kiln and the workshop team are making a second, reproduction so that a representative exhibit of the firing technique can be shown.



## Pastures New for Gemma

Gemma Ingason, until recently the Education, Engagement and Marketing Officer at The Brickworks Museum, took up the role of Commercial Manager at the Royal Logistics Corps Museum at Worthy Down in February 2024.

Gemma was initially responsible for creating a very successful Education programme at The Brickworks, and more recently, became responsible for organising the Tours for Visiting Groups. The 'Wonderful Wednesdays' summer programmes and the 2023 Summer Trail were devised and implemented by Gemma. She also brought The Brick People to the museum for Lego events. A collaboration that has proved to be very successful.

Gemma was also responsible for the social media presence of the museum during the pandemic and in 2022 became responsible for Marketing, especially on social media.

A great many children have enjoyed school visits and the many holiday activities devised by Gemma. Her incredible ability for generating appealing advertising or finding fun bits of information for social media streams has grown the band of museum followers and attracted visitors.

2023 was a very difficult year for visitor attractions in general, but The Brickworks Museum was fortunate to have such a tireless promoter in post.

Gemma will be very much missed by the museum volunteers that have worked with her, but we all wish her every success in her exciting new role.

Judy Bevis.

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## 'The Charmers'

This is a group of museum volunteers at The Brickworks Museum. There are at least 6 members of the team, although as they steadily attract new volunteers it could be a lot more!. Unlike the Archives Team or Engineering Team, their name gives no clue to what they do, so here is mention of a few things they turn their hands to. They keep the grounds in good order, do painting, clean the museum at the start of each open season, mastermind the Easter, Halloween and Christmas decorations. Help with putting up and taking down the marquees, fill skips, move bricks. help with putting on winter covers and a whole lot more.

During 2023, they totally reorganised the museum storage area so everything has a place, including the shop stock.



Lead by Linda, and often supervised by Millie (the sweetest dog ever), this is the most versatile group of volunteers at the museum!





## Victorian and Seventies Rooms

I enjoy all the different brick displays and chimney pots at the Brickworks Museum, but I always walk through the rooms area – three from Victorian Times when the Brickworks started and three from the seventies when it closed. I got a grant nine years ago, from the Headley Trust, to start this project to give an idea of what the brickworkers' cottages would have looked like inside. The grant paid for building and decorating materials to construct four rooms - two living rooms and two kitchens - in part of the old Victorian brickworks buildings. The work was carried out by Brickworks Museum volunteers.

Early in 2020 further grant funding was received from Fareham Borough Council for two additional rooms. This time, Victorian and Seventies style bedrooms. I love walking through and seeing things I remember from the seventies and items my Grandparents had in their house from Victorian times. Lots of adult visitors, looking at these rooms, say how interesting it all is and how much they remember from their past. We also have schoolchildren coming on tours to be shown how times were years ago.

I have enjoyed refreshing the room displays this winter, and hope you will visit the rooms when you next visit The Brickworks Museum.

*Pam Formby, Volunteer*

(From the editor: Pam was very surprised and worried when she found water in the 1970s kitchen while working there in February 2024. She called in John and Gary to investigate as there is no water supply in the room. They concluded that the exceptionally wet weather had caused condensation under the sink and had also been soaked up by the contents of a cupboard display. We now know that it is not a good idea to leave sugar in sugar boxes in displays, because in damp weather it turns to syrup!)

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## Bomb Scars to Building Sites – The Brickworks Inspires another artist

Towards the end of 2022, Carolyne Haynes (Museum Director) and I spotted an opportunity to apply for a grant that would enable us to build on two previous projects. In 2018 we secured a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to research and present Bursledon Brickworks and its staff during the First World War. This was a fascinating history project and added valuable records to our archives, while paying tribute to the men who were lost and the women who had to step into their work boots. In 2022, artist Emma Smith installed her artwork 'Coralent' in our drying shed. This was the culmination of over 18-months work between the museum, Arts&Heritage who led the 'Meeting Point' programme (funded by Arts Council England) and Emma. Carolyne and I learned so much about commissioning art we were excited to have another go!

We spotted the 14-18 NOW Legacy Fund call for submissions a few weeks before the deadline and talked about it. We were struck by the memories of some of our volunteers who played in bomb sites after the Second World War and the obvious link to our bricks. We hastily put together an application around the idea of an artwork based on the theme of rebuilding Southampton after the war. Presenting art at the museum supports our aim to engage with a wide audience, and the project has also given us the opportunity to research the site during World War 2 and add more valuable records to our archive.

We were thrilled to discover early last year that we were awarded the grant. During 2023 we have worked closely with the Imperial War Museum to write an artist's brief, interview artists and most recently appoint our chosen artist, Grzegorz Stevanski. Grzegorz is an artist/filmmaker from Poland. We chose him because we liked his ideas around exploring suppressed shared trauma and themes of masculinity. In 2023, the museum hosted four Focus groups. We used a fantastic freelance oral historian, Padmini Broomfield, to lead the sessions. The groups included our own volunteers, members of a local dementia social group and the descendants of Southampton builders. These generated many hours of fascinating, poignant and funny stories about growing up after the war, the memories of the bomb sites, the gaps, the rebuilding and the legacy that

has had on the city. Grzegorz has listened to all these recorded testimonies and is using them as his main inspiration for creating his artwork.

Grzegorz visited the museum for the first time on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January. Fortunately, he wasn't put off by the cold and was inspired by the brickworks' history and atmospheric spaces. Carlyne and I continue to work very closely with the Imperial War Museum and are very grateful for the opportunity to learn from very experienced individuals who work with art collections, and artists, within a museum context. Grzegorz is now busy putting together a more detailed proposal for how he intends to create and present his artwork. Production will take place across the Spring and Summer, with the official opening in July 2024. Keep an eye out in the museum and on our online platforms for exciting updates.

*Mary Flinn, Collections Manager*



A focus group

Artist at museum



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## Archives News

Once again, the museum was offered some second-hand cupboards, and once again, Ken collected them for the museum. This donation from NATS has made it possible to have dedicated storage for archival tools and resources, as well as the library and archive collections. Small, fragile objects in the museum collection and redundant interpretation materials that provide resources and inspiration are also stored now.

The museum archives and library is spread across nine cupboards that provide enough shelf space for the items received since 2019. The part of the collection that is stored in a filing cabinet can be stored in more suitable storage for archive collections. A grant from SEMD paid for more archival boxes to stack flat in the cupboards. Suitable storage for maps and plans is available, although it will take time to uncurl them first!

On the coldest day in January, I introduced the new archives area to ten very brave museum volunteers and trustees as part of a program of talks on the museum collections. Nigel's talk on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, on part of the brick collection, was greatly appreciated by the 13 volunteers and staff that attended.

*Judy Bevis, Archives Volunteer*

## Book Reviews

This time, I have chosen to look at two books that have nothing in common, but in their ways have great significance for The Brickworks Museum. First is 'Men from the Ministry' by Simon Thurley, Published by Yale University Press in 2013. ISBN:9780300195729.

Books come to The Brickworks Museum library by a variety of routes. A signed copy of this book was presented to the first 50 applications to the English Heritage Angel Awards in 2013.

This is essentially a history of English Heritage, from the Ancient Monuments Department of the Office of Works, through various incarnations within government to the present independent charity.

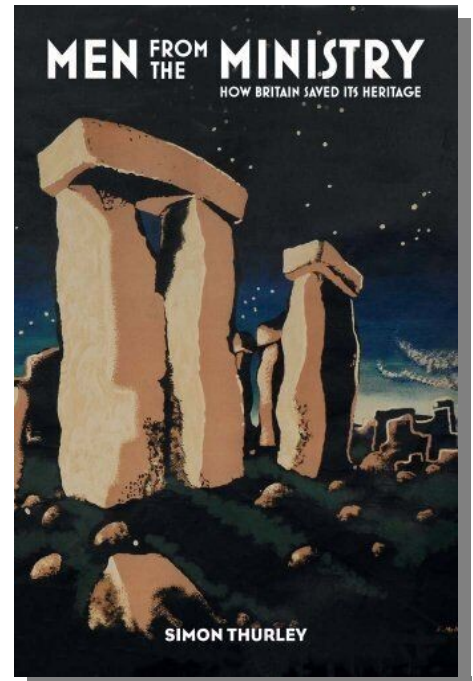
The Department of Works was originally responsible for the care and maintenance of royal, government and military buildings and facilities, then in 1913 became responsible for the preservation of ancient monuments. Many ancient monuments were in private ownership in 1913, but their condition was causing increasing concern at both local and national levels. The Ancient Monuments Department first had to compile a list of all the ancient monuments in England, as no comprehensive list existed.

The book details the civil servants, government ministers and experts involved in compiling the lists, developing strategies for saving monuments at risk while working within a very restricted framework. There are several case studies, including Hadrian's Wall, Stonehenge, Netley Abbey and Stott Park Bobbin Mill. Unfortunately, the restrictions imposed by the Acts governing the activities of the Department meant that sometimes it was unable to protect some very important monuments from destruction. Again, there are case studies for some of these failures too. However, some sites outside the remit of the Department were saved by creative thinking as well. Often these involved working with the National Trust, an organisation less hampered by government regulation.

At times the interpretation of the remit was so narrow that the modern concept of preserving the full history of a site was totally absent. This led to wholesale removal of later buildings that were of significant interest too. Ancient monuments, like Portchester Castle, provided work for unemployed men during the depression. The moats were cleared, ditches reinstated, undergrowth cleared and smooth grass areas created to display the monuments to the best advantage. The national heritage monuments we visit today are essentially the version of our heritage created by the Office of Works. Should we view this as shocking from today's perspective of conserving the history, or be thankful that the monuments still exist as part of our national heritage?

This was an interesting and thought-provoking read, although I was shocked by the destruction of so much of important historical interest. Overall, though, I am glad that so many sites of national importance have been preserved. That great houses have been saved, remains of religious buildings still exist, industrial sites are preserved and that conservation areas have been designated within cities. As the author comments in his concluding paragraphs, the phrase 'saved for the nation' is stark reality for the sites and buildings that have been saved from destruction, works of art and museum exhibits are only saved from export or private ownership.

Our national heritage is now valued, but there are still terrible acts of destruction – most recently the felling of the Sycamore tree at Hadrian's Wall and the fire and demolition of the Crooked House.





The second book is 'Dig it, burn it, sell it!': the story of Ibstock Johnsen 1828 – 1990, by Michael Cassell, published by Pencorp Books in 1990. ISBN: 1870092015

This is the story of a family brick manufacturing business that started life as the secondary enterprise at a colliery. As the coal industry in Britain declined in 1920s, the company decided to focus on making bricks, tiles and pipes instead. This was the first of a series of board decisions that saw Ibstock steadily grow under the Chairmanship of Robert Hyde-Thompson and that of his son Paul. Some of the other significant decisions made while he was chairman and joint managing director were to update manufacturing plant, focus on manufacturing high quality products and developing a completely new type of sales and marketing policy.

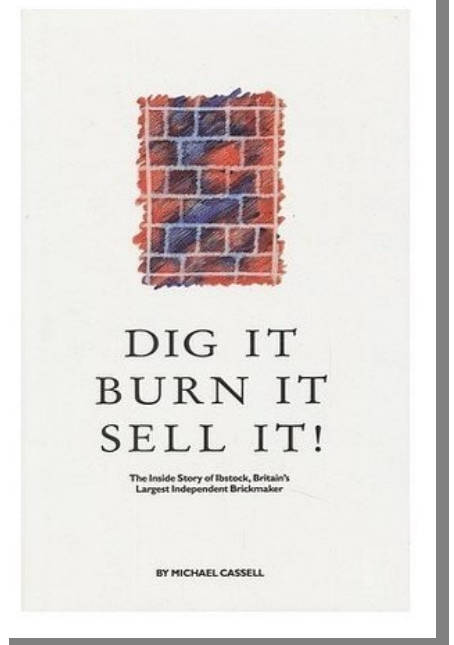
Ibstock installed a Monnier tunnel kiln in 1934/5, one of the first in the country, to increase capacity and improve efficiency. This coincided with a rise in demand for building materials. In a 'boom and bust' industry like brickmaking, quality products provided better profit margins and more room for price reductions during the downturns. Their new style of marketing involved an expert team of sales people working directly with Architects and opening show rooms.

After steady progress, the company chose to expand further by purchasing small brickmakers that were underperforming although they made high quality products and had large reserves of raw materials. Unfortunately, this strategy did not prove successful either in Europe or the US and nearly resulted in Ibstock becoming part of London Brick or Redlands. The Monopolies and Mergers inquiry into a proposed merger provided time for Ibstock to divest itself of overseas businesses so that it was no longer an attractive acquisition.

Ibstock still manufactures bricks today.

My link between these two books is that one shows how the importance of national heritage developed while the other shows why Bursledon Brickworks could not survive as a manufacturing plant. Ibstock plant was described as Dickensian in 1930s so it was modernised, while being Victorian is what makes The Brickworks Museum so important today!

*Judy Bevis, Volunteer Librarian*



**The Brickworks Museum**  
**Swanwick Lane, Swanwick, Southampton, SO31**  
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