

tensive scheme is under way in the vicinity of Bathurst Basin which is incorporating new building with the best of the old. The old Robinson oil mill has had to go but the Byzantine-style warehouse frontages are being retained, for what is hoped will be sympathetic treatment, in conjunction with the overall plan.

Even at Bath there has been some progress in what the local newspaper called 'that most enduring of Bath's planning sagas — Green Park station'. At the beginning of June work started on the cleaning and restoration of the Victorian train shed and entrance hall to form part of the Sainsbury development as a supermarket and car park.

The Bristol-built *Mayflower* returns

Andy King, newly-appointed Assistant Curator at Bristol's Industrial Museum reports as follows:-

The steam-tug *Mayflower* built in 1861 by Stothert and Marten, at Hotwells, Bristol, came into prominence when she was scheduled to come up for auction earlier this year. As a consequence she was purchased by Bristol Industrial Museum with the aid of a 50% grant from the Fund for the Preservation of Scientific and Technological Material administered by the Science Museum, London. After undergoing some preliminary work to her hull by a team from the Museum, whilst in dry dock at Gloucester, she was towed down and returned to Bristol docks in November.

Built less than 20 years after the ss *Great Britain*, *Mayflower* is believed to be the oldest vessel of her kind and the second oldest Bristol-built iron vessel still afloat, predated only by the Brunel type scraper-dredger constructed in 1843 by Bush and Beddoes of Bristol for use in Bridgwater Docks and now preserved in Exeter Maritime Museum. *Mayflower* survives, therefore, as a unique example of the small iron tugs that were an important product of Bristol shipyards from the 1840s until the early 1900s.

Less than 64 feet in length and with a gross tonnage of 32 tons, *Mayflower* was nevertheless a sea-going tug capable of working virtually anywhere in the Bristol Channel and its tributaries that could accommodate her draught below the waterline of seven feet. *Mayflower's* first owner, Timothy Hadley of Paulton would have used the vessel for towing barges, lighters, and sailing ships with the coal traffic forming a major part of the business. However, towards the end of the last century *Mayflower* was acquired by the Sharpness New Docks and Gloucester and Birmingham Navigation Company, and a new twin-cylinder compound expansion steam engine installed by the Gloucester engineering firm Sissons, in place of her original engine in 1889. From then until the early 1950s, *Mayflower* spent most of her time working on the upper reaches of the River Severn and in particular pulling barges along the Gloucester and Berkeley Ship Canal which, following improvements to the entrance locks at Sharpness in 1874 was importing up to a million tons of cargo by 1905. It is largely thanks to the British Waterways Board into whose ownership *Mayflower* passed and her more sheltered existence working mainly in inland freshwater rather than at sea, that the wrought-iron hull remains in such a good state of preservation.

The shipyard that built *Mayflower* was located alongside

the Hotwells Dock and from 1852 was owned by Stothert and Slaughter the forerunner of the famous locomotive engineering firm Avonside Engine Company Ltd. By 1866 the shipbuilding company was known as G K Stothert & Co and as such remained active as shipbuilders until 1904, finally closing down in 1933 after continuing for some years as ship repairers. *Mayflower's* boiler has a cast iron plate over each fire hole with G K Stothert, Bristol and another with the number 1909 indicating that a new boiler was probably fitted then. It will take a substantial amount of money and work to rebuild *Mayflower* to be capable of steaming once again but this is the long term aim of the Bristol Industrial Museum staff. Even as a static exhibit undergoing restoration she demonstrates all the characteristic features of the classic work-a-day iron steamship for which 19th century Bristol shipbuilders are well-known, and would make a splendid sight steaming around the Floating Harbour once again. The Museum is looking for volunteers to help with restoration, beginning in earnest in the Spring. Anyone interested should telephone Andy King or Paul Elkin at the Industrial Museum, Bristol 299771.

Charterhouse lead-smelting flues

In recent years increasing concern has been expressed about the hastening deterioration of the lead-smelting flues at Charterhouse, important remains of the Mendip lead industry. The Mendip Society, who were responsible for saving the Smitham chimney from dereliction, mounted a voluntary rescue operation some two years ago at the Charterhouse flues in an attempt to delay irreversible damage, but clearly further measures were needed. Now, happily, a more substantial scheme is being launched, with their co-operation combined with private enterprise and several public bodies. Under the management of Form Structures a Manpower Services Commission scheme is to carry out work with Bruce Induni as project manager, who writes to BIAS Journal:-

A project to conserve the lead smelting flues at Charterhouse-on-Mendip is now underway. Funds for the work are coming from a variety of sources. The major share, wages and some operating costs, is being met by the Manpower Services Commission. The DoE is granting £3,000 to which the Mendip Society itself hopes to raise a further £1,500. Considerable help has also been given by Somerset County Council. Four people, including myself, will be working for about 9 months on what is primarily a building operation. In other words the first aim of the project must be to stabilise the physical condition of the masonry. However, where building work necessitates any excavation, this will be done to strict archaeological standards (ie all finds to be properly conserved and recorded and any excavation to be done 'stratigraphically').

Enquiries, offers of help or financial contributions should be made through Form Structures, 13 King Street, Bristol. Tel Bristol 279182. They are managing agents to the project.

Angel Mill, Westbury, Wilts

We are pleased to report the favourable outcome of the public inquiry at Trowbridge in August which ensures the survival of Angel Mill, Westbury. This building has been described as the earliest purpose-built steam-driven

woollen mill in the area and one of the earliest surviving to be found anywhere. As such it was a listed monument but application for its demolition was supported by West Wilts District Council. Kenneth Rogers, Wilts County Council archivist, opposed the demolition plans on behalf of Trowbridge Civic Society and the Association for Industrial Archaeology, and was supported by the Ancient Monuments Society, the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society and the Save Britain's Heritage campaign, to eventually win the day.

Snuff Mill Excavation

The leader of this project, Geoff Wallis, reports:-

1981 saw more work completed than in any previous year. Members who are acquainted with the site will know that BIAS members are in process of removing many cubic yards of debris from the engine room, exposing the remains of a vertical engine and conserving both these and what survives of the building. Working parties were held on seven occasions during which a 'faithful few' completely exposed the engine remains. As excavation progressed it became apparent that the flywheel's shaft was resting above a doorway whose wooden lintels were completely rotten. These were replaced with timber supplied by Bristol Corporation who also provided and emptied trailers of debris from the building. The engine is of an unusual construction in which a 9in by 12in floor beam forms an integral part, supporting the crankshaft. The original beam had rotted completely and this year was replaced by a section of oak, again supplied by the Parks Department, but shaped and fitted with some considerable effort by BIAS members. Several other timber sections were renewed and all ironwork descaled and primed. Although thought to be over 130 years old, the large bolts securing parts of the engine were undone easily by hand and all re-used; striking evidence of the ability of wrought iron to resist corrosion.

The low point of the year was June when, to our surprise and dismay, a wiremesh fence some 12ft high appeared round the boiler house. Enquiries revealed that the City Engineers had decided that the site was potentially unsafe. It was agreed that the 'Colditz approach' to safety was to be a temporary measure until such time as the excavation was complete, and more sympathetic measures could be taken. The possibility of involving Manpower Services Commission sponsoring young people on the site, is also being investigated. Members' attention is drawn to the 1982 working parties, which will be detailed in BIAS Bulletins. It is hoped that excavation can be completed by September, the fifth anniversary of the start of the project.

Appeal for Help

Hugh Torrens of The Department of Geology, University, Keele, Staffs ST5 5BG makes this request for information about an old established Bristol firm:-

McArthur & Co, iron and steel merchants and ironmongers were established in Bristol by John McArthur and Charles Morgan junior in 1839. In 1956 the firm took over the even older firm of Thomas Reynolds & Son Ltd, iron, steel and builders merchants and wholesale ironmongers established

in 1825 and noted in the Transactions of the Newcomen Society in 1939 as then one of the oldest such firms in existence. This firm was founded by Thomas Reynolds (c1799-1867) and continued by his children. In about 1885 it acquired the Bristol warehouse of the Coalbrookdale Company then at 25 Broad Quay which later changed address (but not site) to become 6, 8, 10 Colston Avenue. Yet another firm which merged with the McArthur empire was that founded by Richard Hunt (c1775-1866), at least by 1799 when he was an ironmonger in Wine Street. These three firms extending back to 1799, 1825 and 1939 respectively each have a long history and any information relating to all or any of them would be gratefully received. Of special interest would be photographs of any of the firms' headquarters and particularly that of the Bristol warehouse of the Coalbrookdale Company. Also sought are any printed catalogues or sales literature of any of the firms mentioned above, all of whose records are almost non-existent.

It was hoped to publish Part 2 of Winwoods of Bristol by Hugh Torrens in this issue of the Journal but completion has been delayed owing to pressure of the author's academic responsibilities. It should be available for BIAS Journal 15.

TICCIH Conferences in Belgium

Our Belgium correspondent, BIAS Member Adriaan Linters writes of future conferences:-

In 1982 and 1983 The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage (TICCIH) will organise two interim-working conferences in Belgium, dealing with the history and the heritage of *Strong liquors and distilled beverages* and with the history and the heritage of *Coal-mining*. These conferences are intended to discuss practical and fundamental problems of the study, and the conservation, and the presentation of remains, be it on site or in a museum environment. The purpose is also to confront ideas and methods, to exchange information, and to establish contacts and co-ordination between specialists dealing with these subjects in different countries. It will be a *working conference* during which a high degree of active participation will be demanded from those attending.

The Conference language will be **English** For people who cannot participate but want to present the results of their research and/or preservation projects, the possibility to present *off-conference working papers* is offered: these will be duplicated and presented to the participants, who can discuss these documents. The conference will take place: **Distilling: September 1982, Coal-Mining: February 1983.** If you are interested in these projects, please contact: TICCIH-Belgium, Adriaan Linters, c/o Industrial Heritage Project, Begijnhof 59, B-3800, St-Truiden, Belgium. Telephone: Belgium 011/67 65 79.

Work of the conservation trusts

The Kennet and Avon Canal Trust continues to forge ahead with its well-laid plans. The route from Bath to Limpley Stoke should be fully open by Easter now that electric pumping at Claverton has been installed but we understand that new problems on Dundas Aqueduct may delay further

progress at this juncture. Otherwise, the objective of Bradford-on-Avon is within grasp following work recently completed on Avoncliffe Aqueduct. At Devizes delivery is soon expected of the diesel-driven *Gigi*, to be renamed *Charlotte Dundas II*, capable of seating a coach load of 53 passengers on cruises as far as Crofton Pumping Station some 20 miles away.

The work of the Brunel Engineering Centre Trust, at a much earlier stage of development, is, nevertheless, making sound progress towards its conservation aims. In this project, concerned as it is with the restoration of Brunel's Old Temple Meads, an associated problem involves finding new and appropriate uses for this historic railway terminus, but a start has been made on the practical tasks. During the year, British Rail completed considerable repairs to the fabric before handing over a 99 year lease to the Trust for a peppercorn rent. The Historic Buildings Council has made £100,000 available and other large sums are already forthcoming towards the estimated £1½ million required over the next two years to complete the programme in which Youth Opportunities Programme and Manpower Services Commission have already been heavily involved.

The even greater task of restoring Clevedon's pier was brought one stage nearer to possibility with Woodspring District Council's decision to lease the structure to the Pier Preservation Trust for a period of five years. This was followed by the release to the Trust of £30,000 which had accumulated from a voluntary fund inherited by Woodspring from the old Clevedon UDC.

By comparison, Saltford Brass Mill is at the opposite end of the scale of conservation measures but, there still have been problems in getting started. 1981 has seen the signing of a 99 year lease to Avon Industrial Buildings Trust, again for a peppercorn rent. At the close of the year, contracts were placed for the initial rescue phase of the project which will consist of repairs to the unique structure of the annealing furnace together with restoration to working use of one of the mill's waterwheels. To carry out this scheme, financial support has been received from Avon County to the extent of £1,000 and a similar sum has been donated by Rio Tinto Zinc Services Ltd. These sums augment a 25% grant from the Department of the Environment and 50% of the waterwheel repair costs from the Science Museum Funds for the Preservation of Technological Material. However, the finances of the current programme have been put on a firmer basis by receipt of the news that the Architectural Heritage Fund is to make a low-interest loan of £7,500 available to the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust specifically for this purpose. This gesture has been made possible by the co-operation of Wansdyke District Council, who have agreed to act as guarantors for the loan. As a result, work will be able to start early in 1982, but volunteer help from BIAS members will continue to be very welcome. Equally welcome was the very fine gesture made by members of the Oxford House Industrial Archaeological Society from Risca in offering and actually delivering a large beam of seasoned oak needed to support the roof in the area of the annealing furnace. The South Wales group have been involved in restoration work on the Melingriffith water-powered pump for a number of years and had received a donation of large baulks of timber from a demolished building belonging to the National Coal Board. Nearing the

completion of their own project, and having timber surplus to their requirements they readily made the suggestion on a visit to Saltford at the end of the year. The plans were almost frustrated when floods at Melingriffith swept the timber down river, but fortunately it was retrieved and returned to the site by the water authorities in time for the Saltford delivery.

Co-operation with other societies

In May a display commemorating the centenary of the Society of Chemical Industry was mounted in the foyer of Bristol Central Reference Library by an agreeable collaboration between the SCI Bristol Section and a few stalwart members of BIAS committee. Material collected for this occasion aroused new interest in Bristol's chemical industries which have hitherto been rather neglected. It is hoped to publish results of recent research in a future issue of *BIAS Journal*. September brought the Annual Conference of the Historical Metallurgical Society to the University of Bath for the weekend 18-20, when most of the organisation was provided by BIAS members. A feature of this meeting was the large number from other countries among the 85 conference members. All appeared well satisfied with the weekend and perhaps rather surprised at the metallurgical interest to be found in our area. In addition, of course, were the usual day visits from other societies which have almost become a routine responsibility through the summer season for various members of BIAS committee. 1982 will be the year of the Newcomen Society Conference at the University of Bath 12-16 July. The organiser, Angus Buchanan would welcome assistance from BIAS members in leading field trips to a wide variety of sites from the Monday to Friday. He can be contacted at the University: Bath 61244 or at home: 13 Hensley Road, Bath.

Last year, BIAS became one of the first society members of the Association for Industrial Archaeology, when this national body at last came round to the BIAS way of thinking by making proper provision for member organisations. During the year a small working party for society representatives was held at Ironbridge for an exchange of views and thus a great step forward was made in the overall interest of our study. Now that the AIA has reached this stage of maturity we can urge BIAS members to take a more active part by taking out individual membership. For an annual fee of £5.00 they will receive a bulletin four times a year giving news of events, activities, courses and other relevant information from areas throughout the country and overseas. Write to The Membership Secretary, Association for Industrial Archaeology, The Wharfage, Ironbridge, Telford

Obituary

It was quite recently arranged with the author to include Part 3 of Pumping Bristol's Water in next year's issue of the Journal. We are sad to report that this will no longer be possible. Peter Skinner died at the age of 51 after a brief illness in the few weeks towards the close of the year. He had just sent us the book review, on a subject very much his own, which we include in our final pages. We also regret that we have lost the opportunity of Part 4 to Kingswood Coalmining, on the northernmost part of the area. After being in rather poor health over recent years, but still keeping his interest in our society, Mat Southway died in November.