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Institution of Civil Engineers  
Panel for Historical Engineering Works

Newsletter

February 1984

PANEL SPRING MEETING 1984

Members are reminded that the next meeting of the Panel will be held on Thursday 3rd May 1984 at the Institution, Great George Street. The meeting will be preceded by lunch. Details will be circulated to members in due course.

JOHN GRUNDY - CIVIL ENGINEER

John Grundy was an early civil engineer of Lincolnshire whose works merit more recognition than they normally receive. Brief particulars were given in the NEWSLETTER of May 1983, page 6. One of the features marking the bi-centenary of his death, which fell in June 1983, was the publication of an excellent booklet "John Grundy of Spalding, Engineer, 1719-1783 - his Life and Time" by N R Wright. It is A4 size, 22 pages with illustrations and is, as far as is known, the first full account of Grundy's life. Copies are available from the Curator, Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln LN1 3LY, price £1.50 including postage. Cheques should be made payable to Lincolnshire County Council.

A lecture by the Panel's Chairman, Professor A W Skempton, entitled "The Engineering Works of John Grundy (1719-83)", delivered to an Association of Industrial Archaeology conference at Lincoln in September 1983, is to be published by the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology. Particulars of price, date of publication etc. are not yet fixed but it is hoped to publish details in a future NEWSLETTER.

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RAIL BRIDGE RESTORED

British Rail have recently completed extensive repairs to Belvidere Bridge which carries the railway between Shrewsbury and Wellington over the River Severn. The bridge (HEW 903) has two cast-iron arches each spanning 101ft. 6in. skew and was built in 1848 by Hammond and Murray under the Engineer, William Baker. Recently badly affected by structural problems and vandalism the bridge has been given a new concrete deck and other repairs and has been repainted in chocolate and cream.

THE FIRST R C ARCH BRIDGE IN THE UK ... Alan Allnutt

A strange situation was revealed during the preparation of the B7 for the first reinforced concrete arch bridge built in the UK. The Hampshire County Surveyor designed a new 24ft. square span brick arch bridge to carry what is now the A337 over the Walkford Brook in Chewton Glen. The skew angle was 54 degrees.

Unfortunately the Contractor turned the arch with the brick courses parallel to the abutments, so the County Surveyor ordered him to get out a scheme to strengthen the abutments at the obtuse angles. The contractor sought the advice of L G Mouchel and Partners who proposed two reinforced concrete arches 6ft. wide on top of the brick arch and on either edge. Each arch consisted of two 12in. by 8in. ribs joined by a 5in. slab making the total depth 17in. The reinforced concrete work was carried out by Hennebique.

The bridge was finally completed in 1901 and its grid reference is SU224938. Do not, however, expect to see an R C arch: the whole bridge is brickwork externally.

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TELFORD SESQUICENTENARY COMMEMORATION IN SCOTLAND ... Roland Paxton

The Scottish Group of PHEW together with the Scottish Local Associations are promoting the following events to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the death of Thomas Telford on 2nd. September 1834:-

- 26th May 1984 - Visit to Dunkeld Bridge
- 1st September 1984 - Telford "Trail" at Langholm
- April 1985 - Lecture by Corin Hughes Stanton on "The Gotha Canal" (Edinburgh, Royal Society, George Street)

Any members or others requiring further details or wishing to attend any of these events should contact Roland Paxton.

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CLIFF RAILWAYS IN DEVON ... James Rowe

Devon is unusual among the coastal counties of Britain in having two cliff railways, both remaining much as originally designed and built and fully operational during the summer months.

On the north coast, the railway which runs for 900ft. from the Esplanade at Lynmouth to Lee Road in Lynton (HEW 1109), has the distinction of being the longest cliff railway in Great Britain.