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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.

Editor's note: This article is condensed from one published by the Exeter Industrial Archaeology Group and was suggested for inclusion in the NEWSLETTER by Brian George.

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EDINBURGH RAILWAY STATION "TIME CAPSULE" ... Roland Paxton

During the recent demolition of the former Caledonian Railway Station in Edinburgh to accommodate the new Sheraton Hotel, a "time capsule" was found embedded in the original station foundation stone laid in 1847. Roland Paxton was approached for a historical engineering comment on the capsule and was subsequently interviewed on BBC and ITV.

The time capsule consisted of a sealed glass jar and its contents which have survived in good condition, albeit smelling strongly of embalming fluid, are:-

15 coins (2 gold, 11 silver, 2 copper) embedded in preservative between two plates of glass, dated 1847 or earlier and now valued at £1,000.

Edinburgh Evening Courant for 8th April 1847

Unopened packet addressed to D Rankine Esq. (crossed out) and James Hope Esq. inserted - opened at the press conference and proved to be an Edinburgh Advertiser for 9th April 1847

Caledonian Railway map 1847 designed by J Butler Williams. Folding, cloth backed boards, gilt

The Scotsman for Wednesday 7th April 1847

Scottish Railway Gazette for 3rd April 1847

Roll of Members of the Grand Lodge of Scotland, corrected to 8th February 1847 2 pp folio

Grand Lodge of Scotland. Grand Election, Free Mason's Hall, December 1st 1845 (includes an account of the inauguration of the Scott Monument) Edinburgh 1846, 4 pp, Folio

Caledonian Mercury for 8th April 1847 (with foundation stone ceremony notice)

An Act for making a Railway from Carlisle to Edinburgh and Glasgow Edinburgh 1845, 20 pp, Octavo

Oliver & Boyd's New Edinburgh Almanack, 1847

Red wax seal of the Caledonian Railway Company

All the items have been donated to the Edinburgh District Council's Huntly House Museum.

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PROJECTED CANALS ACROSS THE SOUTH-WEST PENINSULA OF ENGLAND ... W J Sivewright

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries there were a number of schemes to join the Bristol and English Channels by canal, with the object of shortening the distances by sea between London and Bristol and South Wales and of