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**Institution of Civil Engineers
Panel for Historical
Engineering Works**

Newsletter

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C O N T E N T S

- THE PANEL'S ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 1988
OF TUNNELS OLD AND NEW**
- SEESWOOD RESERVOIR AND THE ARBURY CANALS**
- REINSTATING SCOTTISH HEW'S**
- FAINT PRAISE**
- HEWS IN THE NEWS**
- B7 UPDATE**
- NOTES AND NEWS**
- EDITORIAL**

THE PANEL'S ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, 1988 ... by J K Gardiner

The annual gathering of the Panel took place at Darwin College, University of Kent, Canterbury, from 22nd to 24th September.

At the Business Meeting, the Chairman welcomed Mr J B Powell to the Panel as the member for the Northern Home Counties, and Lieutenant Colonel A P de T Daniell and Mr W A Morris as guests of the Panel. He regretted the absence of Mr M F Barbey, the Vice-Chairman, and Mrs Mary K Murphy, the Secretary, both because of illness, and expressed the Panel's gratitude to Mr Morris for helping with final arrangements and resuming the Secretaryship for the Meeting.

The sales of Volumes I and II of "Civil Engineering Heritage" were reported to be proceeding slowly, and the preparation of future Volumes was progressing.

The next Panel Meeting is to be on 19th April 1989 in London. The 1989 Annual Business Meeting will be in Stirling, as already decided; 1990 in Bristol; 1991 probably in Durham.

It was agreed that all B7 copies that are sent to outside parties should be marked Copyright, and that a fee should be charged, in addition to reproduction charges for photographs.

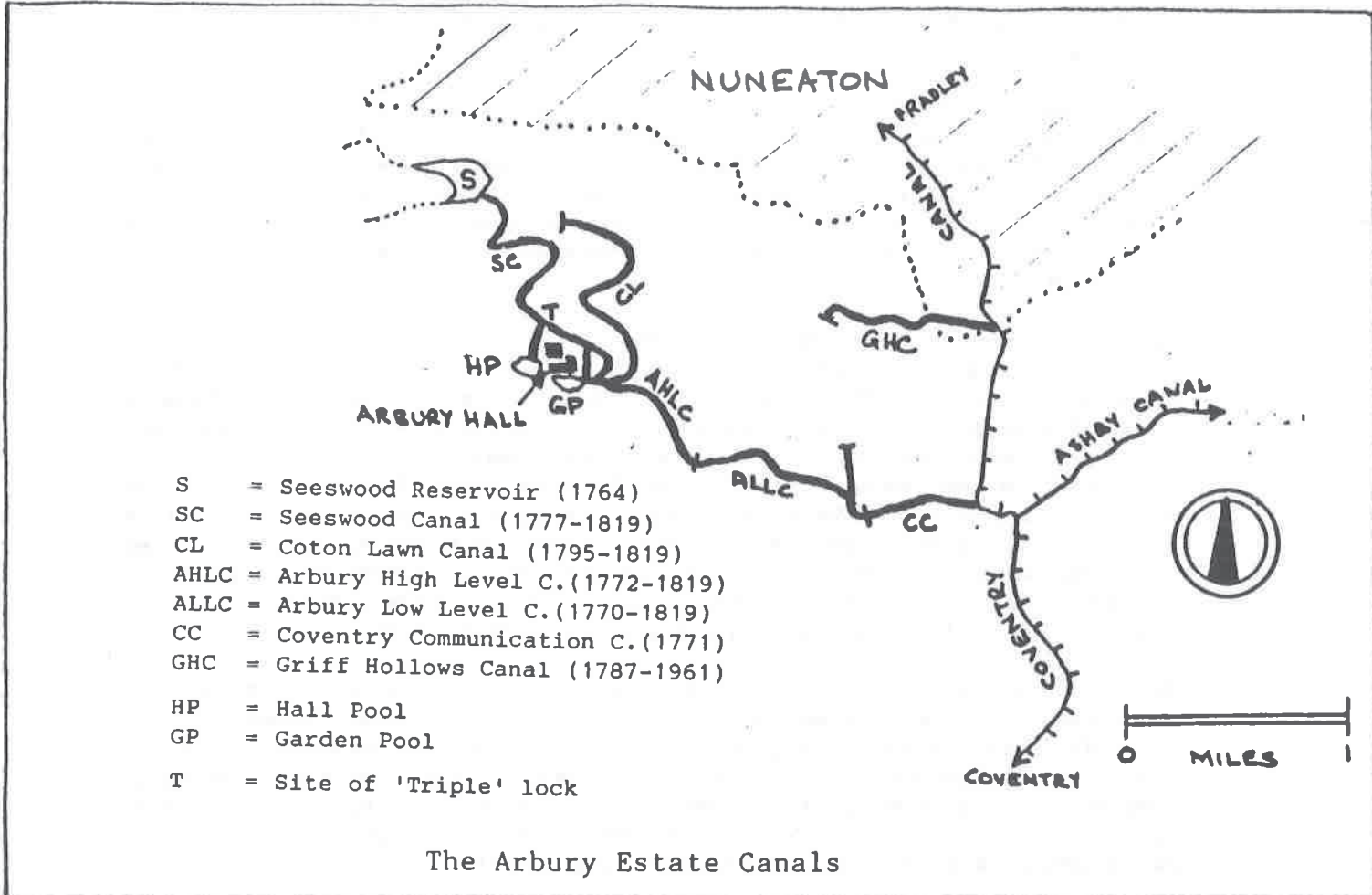
The Panel is now represented on the four following outside bodies:

- Scottish Industrial Archaeology Panel and
ScotRail Viaducts Committee (by Mr R A Paxton)
- English and Welsh Viaducts Committee (by Mr E A Labrum)
- Welsh Industrial Archaeology Panel (by Mr O M Gibbs)

Mr Cragg reported a suggestion that had been made to him for the establishment of a museum of civil engineering. The Panel saw difficulties in this, but agreed that Dr Neil Cossons of the Science Museum should be asked for his views.

4] HADFIELD, C. op. cit. (p.29)

5] Arbury Hall Guide. English Life Publications, 1985. (p.15)



REINSTATING SCOTTISH HEW'S ... by Roland Paxton

In recent years one of the rewarding aspects of being a Panel Member has been in making contacts outside the Institution through advising on the meritworthiness and conservation of historical engineering works. Public interest in heritage associated with leisure activities and environmental improvement is undoubtedly on the increase. It is a pleasant change to find some HEW's actually being reinstated and a welcome contrast to the disastrous treatment of the Dredge bridges at Inverness. These reinstatements range from small span Wade bridges in the Highlands to major canal and former railway structures in the rift valley and Borders.

Arising from one such contact it was pleasing to receive two irresistible invitations for the same day in July. What's more, it turned out fine and sunny! The first event was the opening by Glasgow's

Lord Provost Mrs Susan Baird of a reconditioned early 19th Century cast iron and timber bascule bridge on the Forth & Clyde Ship Canal near Applecross Street, Glasgow. It was dubbed the "Robert Whitworth" bridge in memory of the engineer who built the canal from Glasgow to the Clyde at Bowling between 1785 and 1790. My enthusiasm was only a little muted by the bridge's electrical operation in place of the original hand cranking!

This event, early in the morning, and followed by breakfast in the BWW Boardroom, may seem an occasion difficult to cap, but capped it was! Shortly afterwards the party boarded a vintage bus (with solid tyres?) reaching Falkirk in time for the re-opening of Scotland's only canal tunnel. This near half-mile long tunnel engineered by Hugh Baird on the Edinburgh & Glasgow Union Canal was constructed from 1820 to 1822 and closed in 1965.

The marquee housing an informative exhibition and excellent hospitality was near the Falkirk end of the tunnel, where some 200 well-wishers eagerly awaited a flotilla of small boats. From the first boat passing through the tunnel a tape across its entrance was to be cut. This was duly very well accomplished by a young disabled person from a boat belonging to the Seagull Trust. Canal boats move slowly and there was much waiting before the tape cutting occurred. In order to obtain a suitable photographic memento of this remarkable rebirth, I rushed along the towpath in the dark to the other end of the tunnel with umbrella raised, recalling downwardly mobile fresh springs from a previous visit, and was eventually rewarded with a satisfactory picture.

Returning through the tunnel it was easy to keep pace with the leading incumbent of the waterway and the irregular, angular, shape of the considerable unlined length left a powerful impression of man's underground achievement, in a bright searchlight from the boat. I subsequently enjoyed two trips through the tunnel in a nippy little boat called the "five and a half" belonging to the Linlithgow Canal Society. Being short it could turn within the canal width!

PHEW in Scotland is organising a visit to the Union Canal next May. If any Panel Member would like to come please let the writer know.

The ScotRail Viaducts Committee, on which PHEW is represented, recently visited Laigh Milton Mill viaduct over the River Irvine on the former Kilmarnock and Troon Railway (termed "Railway or Tram Road" on an 1807 drawing). The viaduct, which is in poor state, is built of freestone masonry, has four arch spans and was completed by or just before 1812. It would help towards promoting the viaduct's conservation, which Strathclyde Regional Council is prepared to promote, if it can be said to be the oldest structure of its kind extant. Does any reader know of an earlier multi-span railway or tramroad viaduct still existing?

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FAINT PRAISE ... by John Gardiner

Those who have to criticise an engineering design, but wish to do it gently, might care to note W Westhofen, writing in "Engineering" in 1890, on an earlier design for the Forth Bridge by James Anderson:-