

# The early days of GLIAS

A personal memoir by Michael Bussell

W C Sellar and R J Yeatman, authors of the largely-forgotten parody of history textbooks *1066 and All That*, offered the perceptive if subversive view in its Preface that 'History is not what you thought. *It is what you can remember*'. True, up to a point, but I was in the early days of GLIAS a fairly conscientious diarist, and I have to hand the Newsletters that I produced then, which will I hope ensure that my recollections are founded on the facts as they were, not merely on what memory alone can trawl up. Nevertheless, this is a personal memoir, not to be regarded as an 'official' or 'authorised' account of the beginnings of GLIAS half a century ago.

What first interested you in industrial archaeology (hereafter IA)? In my case I think it was the discovery, while at school in South Croydon in the late 1950s, that the Merstham extension of the pioneering but long-abandoned Surrey Iron Railway had run through what were now the school grounds close to the Brighton Road. The local history collection in Croydon Central Library yielded a map of the route, so during the school holidays I took a bus to Merstham and then walked back along the route, spotting vestiges of the line such as occasional road bridge parapets projecting above infilled cuttings.

The seed of enthusiastic interest in such remains of early industry was duly sown, and a family move to North Somerset in 1962 created fertile ground for its nurture, as the Bristol region had much IA of interest; more importantly, it was home to a number of the key figures who stimulated its rapid growth in the 1960s. Kenneth Hudson was the BBC's West Region Industrial Correspondent based in Bristol: his book *Industrial Archaeology – An Introduction* (John Baker, 1963) was the first general study of the subject, and he was the founding Editor of *The Journal of Industrial Archaeology* when it was launched a year later. Dr R A Buchanan, then a lecturer at the Bristol College of Science and Technology (later the University of Bath) began arranging IA lecture courses and field visits, in collaboration with Neil Cossons, then an Assistant Curator at Bristol City Museum. They were involved in the establishment in 1964 of the Centre for the Study of the History of Technology, as were Sir Arthur Elton, a noted collector of documents, illustrations and artefacts of the industrial revolution and early documentary film-maker; L T C (Tom) Rolt, author of numerous historical engineering studies including biographies of I K Brunel and the two Stephensons, George and Robert, and a key figure in the restoration of redundant canals and railways; and George Watkins, who had devoted years of free time to visiting and recording stationary steam engines around the country when they were still in wide use.

Through attendance from 1965 at annual gatherings in Bristol, later Bath, organised by Angus Buchanan (which in due course evolved into the annual AIA conferences), I had the good fortune to get to know all these folk, and the other participants. And numerous local field visits, during these conferences and individually, made me aware of the rich and diverse evidence of past and obsolescent industry that still survived, both urban and rural.

So it was that, when I moved to London to start work as a callow structural engineer in autumn 1966, I came with an enthusiastic interest in IA but little knowledge of what there was to be found across Greater London. I soon learned of and joined the Thames Basin Archaeological Observers' Group (TBAOG) which had been founded under the aegis of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) in 1957 at a time when active, rather than antiquarian, interest in local history and archaeology in London was limited. Following publication of a draft list of London IA sites in the TBAOG Newsletter in December 1965, an IA Section was established in February 1966 led by one Paul Carter, a British Rail driver whose energy and enthusiasm for practical IA was infectious. I have to rely on memory alone to recall a day-long 'whistle-stop' tour of IA sites around London one weekend in 1967, starting from and ending at Kensington Palace, then the home of the London Museum (which combined with the Guildhall Museum and relocated to a new building in the City as the Museum of London in the mid-1970s). That we could all fit into a Land-Rover along with the Museum's guide-driver (perhaps Francis Celoria, an early supporter of IA studies) suggests that the active membership of the IA Section at that time was modest. We were

also led on a tour of St Katharine Docks next to the Tower, then still open for shipping although accommodating only the occasional lighter. In those days, once initial permission for a visit had been secured, we were able to wander around freely, taking photos and making notes. Times change ...

Another active TBAOG figure was John Ashdown, a conservation officer working in the Greater London Council's Historic Buildings Division in County Hall. His 'beat' covered much of South London, while Paul and I both lived north of the river. John had assisted Paul Carter in setting up the IA Section, and they had in mind to produce a gazetteer of IA sites in Greater London, as was being encouraged by the CBA nationwide, and was already being undertaken in various parts of the country during what Kenneth Hudson had perceptively defined as this 'honeymoon period' of IA, when there was eagerness to locate and explore what was to be found, and to appreciate it. (I will not take the honeymoon analogy too far!)

One result of this burgeoning interest was the publication in 1967 by David & Charles of *London's Industrial Heritage* by Aubrey Wilson. This was an example of what came to be known as a 'coffee table' book, a well-produced hardback priced at 63/- (£3.15), in near-A4 format and printed throughout on art paper, which ensured high-quality reproduction of the excellent photographs by Joseph McKeown accompanying text describing some 58 sites, structures, and machines (many since lost or drastically altered). The author's declared aim was not merely to produce a catalogue, but to introduce 'to a wider audience the excitement and beauty of industrial remains and all they mean'. Sales however apparently did not justify more than the one printing.

Meanwhile, Paul and John had begun to write letters of enquiry to departmental heads (architects, municipal engineers, and the like) in the 31 boroughs and the Cities of London and Westminster that together comprised the GLC area, requesting basic information on IA sites within their respective area. Replies ranged from very helpful to silence. IA Section members also contributed information. Paul and John then transformed all of this into concise draft booklet entries in longhand.

It so happened that I had an elderly but still serviceable IBM Executive electric typewriter from my father's office, and (lacking the extensive knowledge and information on sites that Paul and John had) I volunteered to type the booklet. This was long before the days of electronics, word processors, etc: you inserted a sheet of paper, and what you got on that was exactly what you typed, with no 'edit' or 'save' options. So the 'ABC' team – Ashdown, Bussell and Carter – worked on the booklet as our other commitments allowed, during 1968 and on into the first half of 1969.

Meanwhile ... In April 1968 there was a long weekend visit to look at IA sites in and around Stoke-on-Trent, arranged jointly by and open to members of the TBAOG IA Section and the Southwark & Lambeth Archaeological Society (SLAS). This was then probably the most active local archaeological group in London, undertaking excavations and research on various sites, particularly of the ceramic industry. Many were under the direction of the late Brian Bloice, later to be involved with GLIAS member David Thomas and others in the eleventh-hour listing and subsequent conservation of the silk mill on Streatham High Street, now incorporated in Sainsbury's site. (This was the first building in Britain in which the Jacquard loom was used – one of many under-celebrated industrial 'firsts' for London.) In Stoke, although there were still functioning coal mines and many potteries, we saw depressing if memorable evidence of industrial decline, as was affecting and would affect many areas, including London (not least our extensive docks and associated riverside sites).

The TBAOG had been very successful in raising interest in archaeology in London, resulting in the formation of a number of active local societies. Somewhat paradoxically, it might seem, this had led to the decision to disband the Group. This inevitably prompted discussion of the idea of an IA society for Greater London to take over the role of the IA Section. In these, Paul and I were to meet – in particular – Denis Smith, then a Lecturer in Engineering at West Ham College of Technology. The two of them were, I think, instrumental in arranging the 'Inaugural' meeting of GLIAS, held on Sunday 1 December 1968 at the Science Museum. Encouragingly, 130 people attended, most paying their 2/- (10p) for an advance ticket, sent by post, to cover venue costs.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INAUGURAL MEETING</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OF THE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>on Sunday, December 1st, at 2-30 p.m.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In the Lecture Hall, <b>SCIENCE MUSEUM</b>, South Kensington, S.W.7. (by kind permission of the Director)</p> <p>The programme will include guest speakers, a colour film (West Ham beam engine), appointment of committee, and a discussion on the Society's aims.</p> <p>Interest in Industrial Archaeology is growing nationally, and it is evident that an increasing number of people in the Greater London area are becoming interested and actively engaged in this field.</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to form a Society which will both stimulate and coordinate the work of individuals and groups; produce a regular bulletin keeping members informed of activity in the region; prevent duplication of efforts; direct attention to areas of priority; and present a considered and informed approach to industry and local authorities in matters of preservation.</p> <p>To cover the expenses of arranging this meeting, admission will be by ticket, price 2/-, available in advance <u>only</u>, from:- Paul Carter, 20 Chestnut Grove, Wembley, Middlesex.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>APPLICATION FORM</b></p> <p>Name .....</p> <p>Address .....</p> <p>Number of tickets required..... Amount enclosed.....</p> <p>Please make cheques, P.O.s etc payable to Paul Carter</p> <p>An enclosed s.a.e. for return of tickets would be greatly appreciated</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>G.L.I.A.S.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inaugural meeting Programme</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, December 1st, 1966</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">2.30 p.m.</td> <td>Doors open</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">2.45 p.m.</td> <td>INTRODUCTION by the Chairman of the meeting, Denis Smith, Lecturer in Engineering, West Ham College of Technology</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">2.55 p.m.</td> <td>THE VICTORIAN TECHNOLOGY SURVEY by Dr N.A.F.Smith, Imperial College, London</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">3.05 p.m.</td> <td>"THE LONDON ARCHAEOLOGIST" by Nicholas Farrant, Editor</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">3.10 p.m.</td> <td>USE &amp; BEAUTY by Eric de Maré, well-known author, photographer and architectural journalist</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">3.40 p.m.</td> <td>DISCUSSION Need for, and objects of, proposed society. Resolution to form the Society. Formation of Committee, initial subscription, etc.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">4.35 p.m.</td> <td>CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS followed by</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">4.40 p.m.</td> <td>'WEST HAM PUMPING STATION' colour film by Lower Lea Valley Industrial Archaeology Survey</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">5.00 p.m.</td> <td>MEETING ENDS</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Please note this timetable will be observed as strictly as possible</p>	2.30 p.m.	Doors open	2.45 p.m.	INTRODUCTION by the Chairman of the meeting, Denis Smith, Lecturer in Engineering, West Ham College of Technology	2.55 p.m.	THE VICTORIAN TECHNOLOGY SURVEY by Dr N.A.F.Smith, Imperial College, London	3.05 p.m.	"THE LONDON ARCHAEOLOGIST" by Nicholas Farrant, Editor	3.10 p.m.	USE & BEAUTY by Eric de Maré, well-known author, photographer and architectural journalist	3.40 p.m.	DISCUSSION Need for, and objects of, proposed society. Resolution to form the Society. Formation of Committee, initial subscription, etc.	4.35 p.m.	CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS followed by	4.40 p.m.	'WEST HAM PUMPING STATION' colour film by Lower Lea Valley Industrial Archaeology Survey	5.00 p.m.	MEETING ENDS
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Figure 1. The 'Inaugural' GLIAS meeting notice and programme (kindly provided by David Thomas).

Quite how and where this meeting was publicised I cannot now recall, but certainly there was then no e-mail, no website, and as yet of course no GLIAS Newsletter, so it must have been by word of mouth, and by notices posted to local societies and individuals known or likely to be interested in IA. Figure 1 is the meeting notice and programme.

Denis opened the meeting, stressing the need for an organisation to address IA across the capital. It could maintain contact by periodical publications; co-ordinate efforts to avoid duplication; ensure adequate coverage of all areas and subjects; and, when appropriate, argue the case for preservation. Norman Smith of Imperial College then spoke on a Survey of Victorian Technology, followed by the late Nicholas Farrant, who as first Editor of a new quarterly, *The London Archaeologist*, described its aims, in particular welcoming contributions on London's IA. (It, like GLIAS, is celebrating its first 50 years.) The notable architectural photographer Eric de Maré then spoke, showing examples of his work, including some that had graced the pages of *The Functional Tradition in Early Industrial Buildings* (text by J M Richards, The Architectural Press, 1958) – a book that is recognised as having opened the eyes of many to the qualities of such buildings, at a time when too many were being swept away in the post-war enthusiasm for Modernity, and when 'conservation' was a term commonly used in museums and art galleries, but not yet applied to buildings. The meeting closed with the screening of a film of the still-operating beam engines of West Ham Pumping Station at work.

Preceding this, there had been an open discussion in which it was agreed to establish the Society, and a Steering Committee of eleven was appointed to progress this. In alphabetical order they were: Michael Bussell, Paul Carter, Mike Kensey, John Kenward, Mike Mangan, Godfrey Oxley-Sidey, Michael Robbins, Denis Smith, Alan Thomas, James Thorn, and John Turtle.

This committee met a number of times over the next few months. For some gatherings the venue was the rather splendid office of Michael Robbins in 55 Broadway, already a senior figure in London Transport and subsequently Managing Director (Railways) from 1971 to 1978, as well as a respected railway historian. We drafted a Constitution, and arranged for the 'Formation' meeting to be held on Saturday 12 April 1969, at Westminster Technical College in Vincent Square.

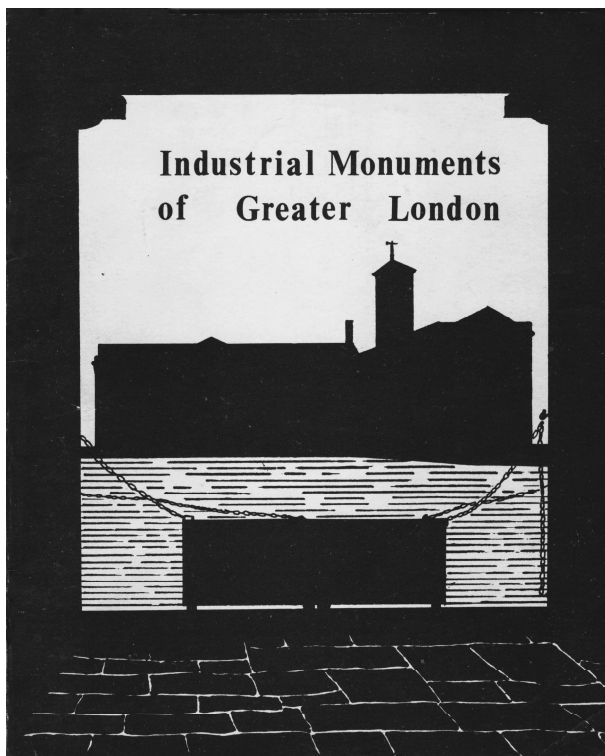


Figure 2. The TBAOG booklet cover, with the Ivory Warehouse at St Katharine Docks (designed and drawn by, and reproduced here by kind permission of, John Ashdown).

To publicise this and start regular periodical communication, I produced the first GLIAS Newsletter – five single-sided A4 pages typed on my ageing IBM electric, with the GLIAS logo and date, and topic headings (COMMENT, DIARY, NEWS, PROJECTS, etc), added in Letrasetted Microgramma – a font proposed by architect John Kenward. The logo remains thus in today's Newsletters, although it appears that the font name has been changed, and of course it is no longer necessary to use rub-down Letraset characters to form it! On my way in to work, I took the typed master to Fermaprint, a print-shop in Fleet Street which produced copies by the photolitho method: cheaply – memory tells me £1 for the first 100 copies, 4/- (20p) for each 100 after that); and quickly – I collected these on my way home the same day. Then it was a long evening's work hand-collating copies from the individual sheets; stapling at top left-hand corner; addressing envelopes; folding and inserting copies; and stamping. Finally a trek early next morning to the local Head Post Office in Blythe House behind Olympia, whose large posting box swallowed the two hundred or so envelopes. Not quite DTP (desk-top publishing) – more DIY!

The 12 April 'Formation' meeting duly took place, at which the Society's Constitution was adopted with some amendments. Subscriptions were set at Individual £1 p.a.; two Individuals of same family and address £1/10/- (£1.50); Junior under 18 10/- (50p); and Affiliated Institutions £2. The first Executive Committee was elected *nem. con.* Four Officers were appointed: Chairman Alan Thomas; Secretary Paul Carter; Treasurer Godfrey Oxley-Sidey; and Publications Officer yours truly. There were only five candidates for seven additional Committee places: Mike Kensey, Mike Mangan, Denis Smith, John Smith, and James Thorn, with the two additional seats to be filled in due course by co-option if so decided. Michael Robbins was proposed to become the first GLIAS President, and was pleased to accept. The meeting closed with a showing of a BBC-TV documentary film 'Bring in the Big Hammer' which from its title (as memory fails me) probably depicted the inevitable fate of many obsolete industrial sites and their plant.

Newsletter 2 of June 1969 reported on this meeting. It also recorded the disbanding of the TBAOG at its last AGM on 15 March. The TBAOG had contributed towards the publicity costs for the inaugural GLIAS meeting in December 1968; but its final, and most generous, action was to fund the printing costs of the forthcoming booklet *Industrial Monuments of Greater London*, the greater part of the proceeds from the sale of which would go to GLIAS.

Newsletter 3 in August 1969 advised that the booklet was now available. We had in fact advertised it ahead of printing, and received a goodly number of orders. Fermaprint were asked to print, collate and

Figure 3. Members of the TBAOG/SLAS Shropshire tour in May 1969, at the top of the Hay Inclined Plane at Coalport. Paul Carter is seated on the left, facing camera; to his right is the distinguished Guildhall Museum archaeologist Ralph Merrifield, and to his right is early GLIAS member Charles Hailstone – always immaculately dressed, even for field trips, and with umbrella. Photograph Michael Bussell.



staple-bind as many copies of the 64-page booklet as available funds would cover. I think the total was around 700 copies which cost about £175, paid in cash (some £2,700 in 2017 prices – source <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator> accessed on 18 September 2018). These were collected on Monday 11 August by Paul, me, and Leslie Matthews, last Treasurer of the now-disbanded TBAOG – and as such the man with the money to pay the printers! He also very conveniently happened to have rooms in Pump Court, only a few minutes' walk from Fleet Street, so we carried all the booklets there for safe storage, before Paul and I departed with boxes of copies already ordered that he would post. The booklet sold out quickly at its price of 7/6 plus 1/- postage (37½p and 5p in the decimal coinage subsequently introduced on 15 February 1971). Figure 2 shows the cover, designed and drawn by John Ashdown.

We sent review copies to selected individuals (as was the practice with the Newsletter in early days at least, regulars among whom included Sir John Betjeman and the Director of the Science Museum), and were rewarded by favourable publicity. Among the coverage that I know of, most notable was by Rex Wailes, another key person in 1960s IA, who reviewed it generously in *The London Archaeologist* Vol 1 No 5; J M Richards, then Editor of *The Architectural Review*, who gave it as well as GLIAS and *The London Archaeologist* the better part of a column in that respected monthly; and, perhaps most remarkably, it received cordial mention in the 'London Day by Day' column conducted by Peterborough in the *Daily Telegraph*. (I am unsure how he came to see a copy!)

Newsletter 3 also reported on a GLIAS visit to St Katharine Docks on Sunday 13 July, for what had been announced in the previous issue as a 'teach-in' (remember that phrase?). Stalwart member Ron Huitson wrote enthusiastically of informative walking tours around the docks (closed in late 1968, with redevelopment proposals threatened), led by John Ashdown, Paul Carter, Mike Mangan, and Alan Thomas. A pub lunch, sunshine, and the opportunity to make new acquaintances among the very pleasing turn-out of 35 folk, complemented what he described as a day 'arranged in a most businesslike way'.

One other item in that issue trailed a joint GLIAS/SLAS meeting in October, an opportunity for those who had taken part in the most recent TBAOG/SLAS annual weekend tour, to Shropshire in May, and those who had not, to get together and see photos and film of the tour. This had visited the Ironbridge area, which was then still in the earliest days of its establishment as the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. It was

on this trip that I took my only photo of Paul Carter – at the top of the Hay Inclined Plane at Coalport, then in process of being re-excavated after years of abandonment (Figure 3).

Newsletter 5 in November 1969 reported on a CBA meeting on ‘The Future of Industrial Archaeology’ held at the Institute of Archaeology in Gordon Square on Saturday 11 October, attended by several GLIAS members. This received a report from a Steering Committee appointed at the annual Bath conference in the previous autumn, to consider the need for and possible form of a national organisation for IA. The report identified the aims of such a body as being very much those for which GLIAS had been founded in London (as listed above), while suggesting that these could best be met by a ‘beefed-up’ engagement in IA by the CBA, which had a long-established IA Research Committee. This provoked contentious debate, with a number of passionate and sometimes acrimonious contributions, indicating a significant gap in attitudes between speakers who saw IA as part of ‘traditional’ archaeology – to be guided under the remit of the CBA – and those who criticised lack of progress on IA by the CBA to date, or saw it as a more multi-disciplinary activity involving economic, technical and social history, and relying principally on standing rather than buried evidence, alongside the much greater body of documentation available in the industrial era. Nevertheless, a vote at the end of the day rejected the immediate formation of a separate national society for IA. (In the event, the national Association for Industrial Archaeology was founded four years later, in 1973.)

An encouraging sign of growing interest in IA by public bodies at this time was the publication by London Transport of a slim booklet entitled ‘London’s Industrial Archaeology’, a copy of which was included in the mailing of this Newsletter.

The next issue in February 1970 came with ‘Beam Engines in Greater London’, just three pages: a cover sheet; a page of text with brief notes on the 16 known engines to be found at six sites (Addington Well Waterworks, Crossness Sewage Works, Kew Bridge Waterworks, Markfield Road, Ram Brewery, and West Ham Sewage Pumping Station) – and six of which were then still working!; and an attractive line drawing of one of the West Ham engines by Denis Smith (Figure 4).

This was followed in May by a visit to Crossness arranged by GLIAS to which ‘members of the press’ were invited. Alas, I have no record of names of those who responded to this invitation, which offered free coach transport for participants, leaving from and returning to Charing Cross Embankment. The aim was to promote general interest in London’s IA among journalists, and specifically to draw attention to the four splendid 1860s beam engines by James Watt & Son, erected to pump sewage as part of Bazalgette’s visionary main drainage scheme for the capital. Long out of use, these engines had somehow escaped the scrap-dealer but stood rusting in a locked engine house. The GLIAS press visit does not seem to have borne immediate fruit, likewise a GLIAS report on the engines urging restoration that was later submitted to the GLC, then their owners; but awareness of this fine industrial monument subsequently grew until the Crossness Engines Trust was formed in the 1980s. Praise is due to the dedication and efforts of the Trust and its supporters including many volunteers, who are slowly but steadily working towards the complete restoration of this ‘industrial cathedral’ with its remarkable ironwork, both functional and decorative.

A further GLIAS event in May 1970 was a long weekend based at Matlock in Derbyshire, arranged jointly with SLAS. Of particular interest were visits to textile mills (long before they were recognised by the inscription of the Derwent Valley as a World Heritage Site) and a walk up the steep Sheep Pasture incline of the erstwhile Cromford & High Peak Railway, followed by a visit to the surviving winding engine house at Middleton Top.

For Newsletter 8 in June 1970 the Committee agreed that we should enlarge it to accommodate the growing amount of material being generated on forthcoming events, news, projects, and other subjects of interest. I now typed text on A3 sheets, which were then reduced to A4 size by the photolitho process and printed double-sided, with four pages being printed on A3 paper which was then folded by the printers to A4. This reduced the workload in preparing copies for posting, although envelopes still had to be addressed, ‘stuffed’ with copies folded down to A5, and stamped by hand.

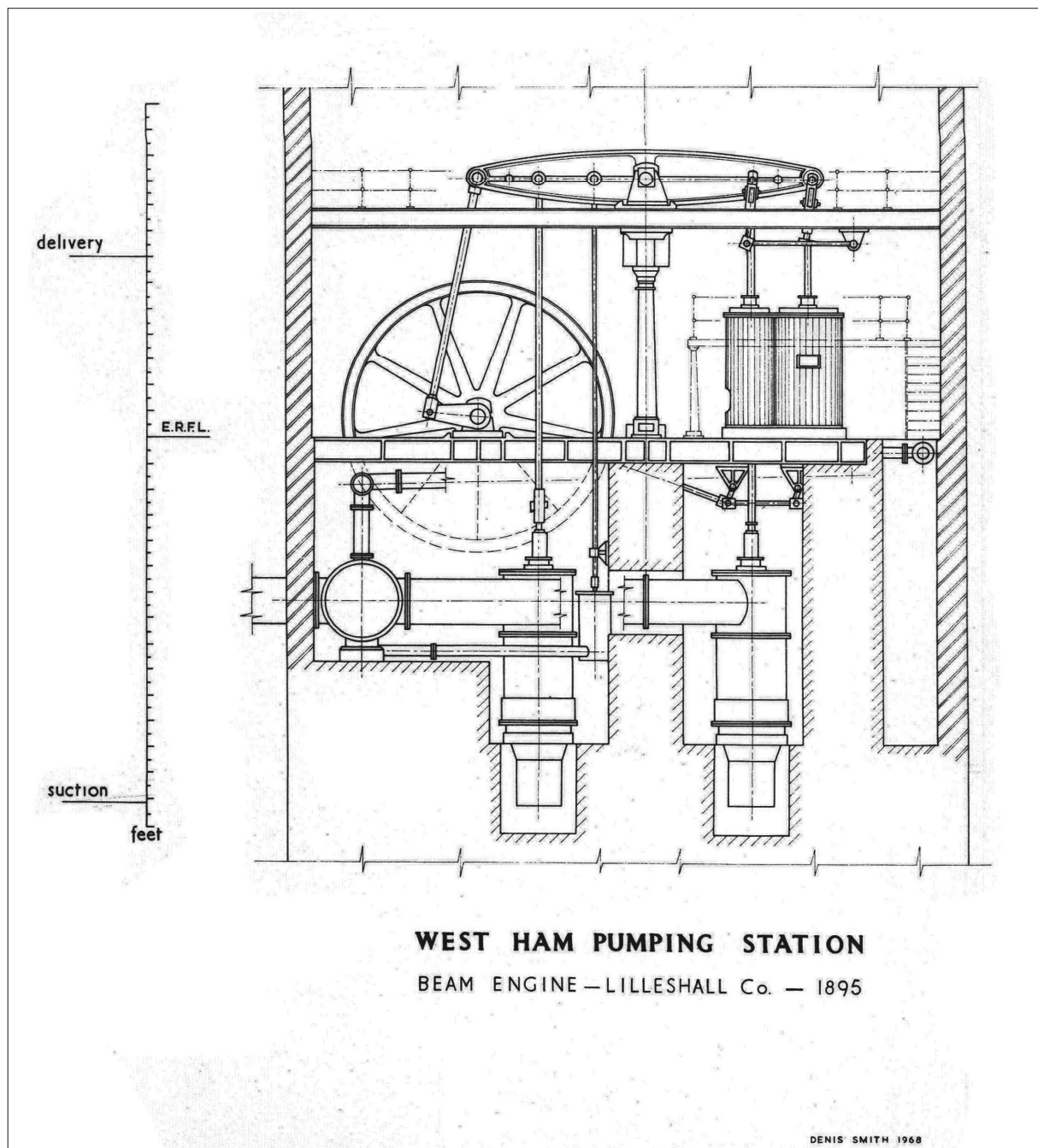


Figure 4. Lillleshall Co. 1895 beam engine at West Ham Pumping Station, drawn by Denis Smith.

The first GLIAS AGM was held at the Institute of Archaeology on Saturday 4 July 1970. Newsletter 9, a 'bumper' issue of eight pages, carried a long report on the meeting, and recorded that membership now stood at 123 individuals and 12 groups. Events had included narrowboat cruises along the Regent's Canal and westwards along the Grand Union Canal; visits to Tower Bridge, Whitefriars Glassworks, Croydon Gasworks and Cornish's Brickworks, Enfield (both long since closed), and several waterworks and pumping stations; and the St Katharine Docks 'teach-in' already mentioned. After the formal business, L T C Rolt spoke on Brunel's 'Great Eastern' steamship to great acclamation, followed by a film on the vessel made by Patrick Beaver (author of a book on this leviathan).

Newsletter 10 in November reported the results of a survey to which about 40 % of the membership had responded. Opinions of how things stood in the society were generally favourable. There was quite strong support for a GLIAS journal, although the Committee felt it was not financially possible at that time, noting too that a number of members were unaware of *The London Archaeologist*, which had already



published articles by GLIAS members on St Katharine Docks, Crossness, London Coal Duties and their Boundary Marks, and a New River Aqueduct. This offered one outlet for publication; another was the journal *Industrial Archaeology*, by then being published by David & Charles, already noted for their regional series of books on IA and on railway and canal history.

Newsletter 11 was dated January 1971, and carried details of events planned for February and March. Notable among these was a 'Chronicle' programme to be shown on BBC-2 on Saturday 20 February. 'Chronicle' was a good example of the serious programmes that BBC-2 had been launched to carry, covering archaeology of all periods. It had for the second year run a competition inviting IA groups and individuals to enter. Those selected for a short-list were then filmed at work, and invited into the studio. After the films had been shown and those in the studio had been interviewed, three prizes of £250, £75, and £50 (a lot in those days!) would be awarded to the most deserving entries as decided by judges Kenneth Hudson, Kenneth Hawley, and Neil Cossons. GLIAS had applied, and we were pleasantly surprised to be short-listed. Our film showed Paul Carter and Denis Smith exploring Crossness engine house, and then discussing the future of Tower Bridge (operation of its lifting bascules still then under steam power) with the bridge's Superintendent. In the studio were GLIAS Secretary Paul, Treasurer Godfrey Oxley-Sidey, Committee member Denis, and members Vere Glass, Brigid Grafton-Green, Muriel Huitson, Martin Salzer, and Alan Spackman. In both the film and the studio discussion much was rightly made of the challenge that GLIAS faced in attempting to cover IA in a city of over 8 million people and covering hundreds of square miles. This was perhaps a key factor in the judges' decision to award GLIAS first prize!

Unfortunately ... on 20 January a postal strike had begun over a rejected pay claim by Royal Mail workers, which did not end until 7 March after a settlement had been reached. In those days Royal Mail was the sole postal operator permitted, and so – frustratingly! – copies of the January Newsletter sat on my desk unposted until two weeks after the programme had been shown. Consequently we were unable to tell the membership at large about the programme, although numerous phone calls were made to spread the word as widely as possible. At least we were able to report this welcome success in Newsletter 12 in April.

However, by this time I was under heavy work pressure, which indeed delayed issue 12. So I decided that I must needs stand down from the role of Publications Officer, which I announced to the Committee at a meeting in March, to take effect formally from the AGM in June. Member Valerie Hunn was 'persuaded' to take over this role, and the last Newsletter under my hand was – appropriately – issue 13 dated June 1971. This was a slim effort of two pages, which at least was able to publicise the first study focused on IA in one London borough: *Industrial Archaeology in Enfield*, compiled and published by Enfield Archaeological Society.

This seems a good point at which to end my personal memoir of the very earliest days of GLIAS. I did resume the role of Publications Officer in 1973, but served for little more than a year before I again succumbed to work pressures. Since then I have continued as a member (contributing rather less to GLIAS than I perhaps should have). I trust that what I have written will be of interest to those who have joined GLIAS after my time, and equally will have jogged memories – pleasantly I hope! – of those of longer standing.

Sadly, if inevitably, the passing of half a century has taken from us a number of those with whom I helped to get GLIAS under way. Paul Carter, first GLIAS Secretary, withdrew from the society in the mid-1970s and we lost contact. It was only in January 2018 that I discovered, via the GWR Preservation Group based at the Southall Railway Centre where he had been a member, that Paul had died in 2003. A family man, a BR driver working long and varied hours (he often rang me on GLIAS matters from a call-box at late hours before going on shift), active in his trade union, and a keen fisherman, Paul was always energetic and enthusiastic, brimming with ideas for advancing London's IA. Our first President, Michael Robbins, offered wise counsel as well as the hospitality of his office for early committee meetings. Denis Smith



succeeded Alan Thomas as GLIAS Chairman; Godfrey Oxley-Sidey, an accountant, was a prudent and businesslike Treasurer.

Denis and Godfrey both contributed their recollections of the earliest GLIAS days, complementing mine here, in the society's 1995 publication *Twenty Five Years of GLIAS* – edited by Tim Smith, happily still with us. (Godfrey wrote there that, when asked after GLIAS had won the 1971 'Chronicle' cash prize what the money would be spent on, he had 'blurted out [sic] "Oh we'll use it to purchase an electric typewriter". And we did'. So the Newsletters after my time were produced on a machine rather newer than mine!) Others no longer with us from earliest days include Charles Hailstone, Muriel and Ron Huitson, and David Wood, always supportive and enthusiastic attenders of events; and early Committee member John Smith, architect and for some time President of the Architectural Association, who hosted Committee meetings in his characterful Mayfair attic office.

To those departed, and those still with us from the early days (including in particular John Ashdown and Mike Kensey with whom I remain in contact), I pay tribute and offer gratitude for friendship, encouragement, and support. I also thank John Ashdown, Tim Smith, David Thomas, and Malcolm Tucker for helpful comments and correction of my occasional memory lapses in drafting this memoir.