

links

the bulletin of the newcomen society

NEWCOMEN ROLT PRIZE INAUGURATED

The first winner of the newly established Newcomen Rolt Prize was Dr Norman Smith (left) for his paper 'Cathedral Studies: Engineering or History', published in 2001. The Prize was presented by the president (right) at the first London meeting of the new season on 13 October 2004. The Society was delighted that LTC Rolt's widow, Sonia Rolt, (centre) could be present.



The Chain Bridge over the River Danube. It was the first permanent bridge to join Buda and Pest and was designed by William Tierney Clark, designer of the original Hammersmith Bridge. The venue of the Spring meeting was changed to Budapest after the bombing of the British Consulate in Istanbul.

Cornwall was in the news with the closure of the Trevithick Trust; this is a totally different body to the Trevithick Society which is flourishing. Next year is the 70th anniversary of the Society and the Newcomen Society plans a visit to Cornwall in May.

For those that like their engineering history in steam, this Tuxford No 1283 was at an East Anglian rally commemorating the year of the birth of Newcomen president (1967-69) Ron Clark (1904-1999). He used it to drive his saw bench.

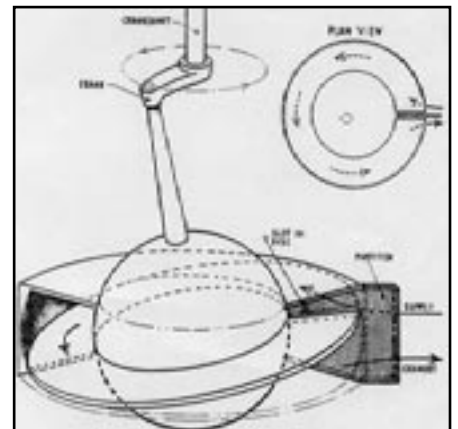


news and views

An inaugural public lecture at Portsmouth University by Sir Neil Cossons, chairman of English Heritage and past president of the Newcomen Society, launched the Southern branch. The catchment area is a 50 mile radius from Portsmouth or an hour's travelling time. For the first season, branch meetings are being held at the University on the third Tuesday of the month.

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The Western branch has started a library which, at present, consists of *Brabazon*, presented by author Sir Robert Wall, and *An Engineering Archive*, presented by retiring chairman John Anning. The latter is a selection of papers from the *Proceedings of the IMechE*, starting with an address by George Stephenson and finishing with a paper by Sir George Cockroft.



The North Eastern Branch heard an address on the Dakeyne Disc Engine. Invented in 1830, the first one supplied 35 hp to drive a flax mill in Derbyshire using the flow of the Sydnoppe Brook. The principle was adapted to utilise steam power and a number of applications evolved. The high speed reciprocating engine killed off the steam disc and the water turbine proved superior to the water disc. The disc did not rotate but executed a swashing motion which was communicated to an arm by a crank providing the output.



THE DEBT TO RICHARD TREVITHICK

In 1804 Trevithick's locomotive accomplished the world's first steam railway journey, thus showing that the high pressure engine was the key to steam locomotion and that smooth wheels



worked on smooth rails. Others such as Blenkinsop and the Stephensons produced a commercial solution to the many problems but they acknowledged their debt to Trevithick.