

Links



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the bulletin of the
Newcomen
Society

Highlights from this issue

SUMMER MEETING AND BRUNEL CONFERENCE

The two events, held in Bristol from Wednesday 5 July until Sunday 9 July, started with a steam train trip down the Brunel main line from Paddington to Temple Meads.

GWR 'King' class locomotive, *King Edward I*, hauled a train of nine historic Pullman carriages carrying some 200 passengers including former Newcomen Society president Sir Neil Cossons and Lord Gladwynn, a direct descendant of I K Brunel. The two-day conference, sponsored by Airbus, included two papers centering on IKB. The first was by Michael Bailey, 'Exploding the myth', and the second by Steven Brindle, 'First among equals.'

The Society had a stand at the conference which displayed a model of Brunel's ill-fated atmospheric railway, a selection of its books and copies of *Transactions* and other literature.

The summer meeting included visits to Blagdon pumping station, with its Woolf compound beam engines, the Bristol blue glass factory



The headboard on King Edward I with Newcomen Society president, Julia Elton.

and Airbus Industries' Filton manufacturing base.

There was also a veteran car rally in Clevedon where Richard Stephens built cars at the end of the 19th century. The parade of 18 cars included two restored Stephens vehicles, in one of which rode Sonia Rolt.

In the evening, members of the Veteran Car Club joined the Newcomen Society annual dinner hosted by Julia Elton and James Sutherland, past president, at Clevedon Court.

CARSHALTON

and its watery history

In May, members of the Society visited Carshalton House with its water tower, mill and park. The house has a fine orangery with a cold bath lined with early 18th century tin glazed tiles.

A medieval mill on the site was replaced by a structure designed by John Smeaton; two Portland stone wheel pits remain. Various modifications followed and the building is now restored.

In the Park, the party visited the grotto, canal, culvert, Hog Pit and Ponds, and learned their fascinating history.



Tower and orangery

Reports from the branches

The Midland Branch heard a lecture on the K-class steam-powered submarines of World War One. The boats soon acquired a fearsome reputation. Of the 17 built, eight sank and not one escaped hazardous mishaps of one kind or another.

Members also heard the chequered history of the River Stour navigation which was continually

plagued with financial problems.

The opinion is that even if it had been completed, it would not have been a viable enterprise.

The North Eastern Branch heard about the career of Sir Vincent Raven, chief mechanical engineer of the North Eastern Railway from 1910. During WW1 he was seconded to the Ministry of Munitions and for his work at the Woolwich Arsenal he was awarded KBE

Other items in Links

This issue of the magazine featured the anniversaries of great engineers which occur in 2007; Sir Frank Whittle was born on 1 June 1907 and Sir Benjamin Baker on 19 May.

The modification of the *Sherman* tank which could knock out the feared German *Tigers* and *Panthers*, was described. Other items included obituaries and books.