



GREATER LONDON INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 339 • ISSN 0264-2395 • AUGUST 2025

GLIAS was founded in 1969 to record relics of London's industrial history, to deposit records with museums and archives, and to advise on the restoration and preservation of historic industrial buildings and machinery

Membership of GLIAS is open to all. The membership year runs from April and subscriptions are due before the AGM in May

Subscription rates

Individual £14
Family £17
Associated Group £20

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DIARY DATES

GLIAS WALKS

A series of free Saturday afternoon guided walks looking at industrial and social heritage in and around London. The walks start at 2.30pm and non-members are welcome. There are a limited number of places available and pre-booking is required. To book places on any of the walks and receive further details, please email walks@glias.org.uk. Anyone without email can text or call 07835 260176 and leave a message.

2 Aug Sat KING'S CROSS CENTRAL: REPURPOSING 67 ACRES OF LONDON, led by Caroline Dale

6 Sep Sat LIMEHOUSE CUT, led by Geoff Cosson

4 Oct Sat CHARLTON/WOOLWICH RIVERSIDE, led by Andrew Turner

OTHER EVENTS

AUGUST

- 3 Sun CROYDON AIRPORT OPEN DAY. Croydon Airport Visitor Centre, Airport House, Purley Way, Croydon, CR0 0XZ. Open on the first Sunday of the month, every month, throughout the year. Web: www.historiccroydonairport.org.uk
- 3 Sun KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Premium tour with machine run at 1:30pm, bookable via Eventbrite.
- 9 Sat JOSEPH LOCKE AND OTHERS – A TOUR OF KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY. Web: www.kensalgreen.co.uk
- 9-10 UPMINSTER WINDMILL OPEN DAY. 10am - 4pm. Adults £6; children £2 (minimum 100cm tall). Web: www.upminsterwindmill.org
- 10 Sun MARKFIELD BEAM ENGINE AND MUSEUM OPEN DAY. Open second Sunday each month, 11am to 4pm. Markfield Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4RB. Tel: 01707 873628. Email: info@mbeam.org Web: www.mbeam.org
- 16 Sat KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Standard tour at 2:00pm, bookable via Eventbrite.
- 16-17 KEMPTON GREAT ENGINES STEAMING WEEKEND. 10.30am-4pm. Adults £12, Children (to 18) free. Feltham Hill Road, Hanworth, Middlesex TW13 6XH. Web: www.kemptonsteam.org
- 16-17 VINTAGE TRACTOR AND TRACTION ENGINE WEEKEND. Epping Ongar Railway. Web: www.eorailway.co.uk
- 23 Sat KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Premium tour with machine run at 1:30pm, bookable via Eventbrite.
- 23 Sat ST PANCRAS WATERPOINT OPEN DAY. Web: www.stpancrascc.co.uk

SEPTEMBER

- 5-7 METROPOLITAN LINE HERITAGE TRAIN JOURNEYS. Multiple dates. See www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/heritage-vehicle-outings
- 6-10 AIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE. Bradford, West Yorkshire. Association for Industrial Archaeology. Web: <https://industrial-archaeology.org/>
- 7 Sun CROYDON AIRPORT OPEN DAY. Croydon Airport Visitor Centre, Airport House, Purley Way, Croydon, CR0 0XZ. Open on the first Sunday of the month, every month, throughout the year. Web: www.historiccroydonairport.org.uk
- 7 Sun AUTUMN BUS RUNNING DAY. Epping Ongar Railway. Web: www.eorailway.co.uk
- 7 Sun KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Premium tour with machine run at 1:30pm, bookable via Eventbrite.
- 8 Tue NORTH KENT RAIL LINE, INCLUDING WORK ON THE BLACKHEATH-CHARLTON TUNNEL. Greenwich Industrial History Society talk by Richard Allen. Email: greenwichindustrial@gmail.com
- 13 Sat ROUTE 54 HERITAGE DAY. Web: www.londonbusmuseum.com/museum-events/
- 13-14 UPMINSTER WINDMILL OPEN DAY. 10am - 4pm. Adults £6; children £2 (minimum 100cm tall). Web: www.upminsterwindmill.org
- 13-21 OPEN CITY FESTIVAL. Web: <https://open-city.org.uk/open-house-festival>
- 14 Sun MARKFIELD BEAM ENGINE AND MUSEUM OPEN DAY. Open second Sunday each month, 11am to 4pm. Markfield Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4RB. Tel: 01707 873628. Email: info@mbeam.org Web: www.mbeam.org
- 19-21 SOUTHERN GIANTS STEAM GALA. Epping Ongar Railway. Web: www.eorailway.co.uk
- 20 Sat ST PANCRAS WATERPOINT OPEN DAY. Web: www.stpancrascc.co.uk
- 20 Sat KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. London Open House. Free entry but no guided tours.
- 20-21 KEMPTON GREAT ENGINES STEAMING WEEKEND. 10.30am-4pm. Adults £12, Children (to 18) free. Feltham Hill Road, Hanworth, Middlesex TW13 6XH. Web: www.kemptonsteam.org
- 25-28 INDUSTRIAL EXPLORER – LEICESTER & LOUGHBOROUGH. Details from Bill Barksfield, Managing Director, Heritage of Industry Ltd, The Gables, 20 Main Road, East Hagbourne, Oxon OX11 9LN UK. Tel: 01235 352275 (9am - 5.30pm GMT) Email: bill@heritageofindustry.co.uk Web: www.heritageofindustry.co.uk
- 25 Sept - 12 Oct PS WAVERLEY IN THE THAMES. London & Thames Estuary. Web: <https://waverleyexcursions.co.uk>
- 27 Sat ST PANCRAS WATERPOINT OPEN DAY. Web: www.stpancrascc.co.uk
- 27 Sat KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Premium tour with machine run at 1:30pm, bookable via Eventbrite.

OCTOBER

- 4 Sat RAILWAY200 SPECIAL TRAIN. Departs King's Cross to Stockton & Darlington Railway. Web: www.railwaytouring.net
- 4 Sat LONDON'S PORT AND DOCKLANDS SINCE 1945. The Thames & Docklands History Group is hosting its inaugural Conference at the London Museum Docklands. Web: www.tdhg.org.uk
- 5 Sun CROYDON AIRPORT OPEN DAY. Croydon Airport Visitor Centre, Airport House, Purley Way, Croydon, CR0 0XZ. Open on the first Sunday of the month, every month, throughout the year. Web: www.historiccroydonairport.org.uk
- 5 Sun KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Premium tour with machine run at 1:30pm, bookable via Eventbrite.
- 11-12 UPMINSTER WINDMILL OPEN DAY. 10am - 4pm. Adults £6; children £2 (minimum 100cm tall). Web: www.upminsterwindmill.org
- 12 Sun MARKFIELD BEAM ENGINE AND MUSEUM OPEN DAY. Open second Sunday each month, 11am to 4pm. Markfield Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4RB. Tel: 01707 873628. Email: info@mbeam.org Web: www.mbeam.org
- 14 Tue THEODOSIA CROWLEY'S WAREHOUSES AT BALLAST QUAY. Greenwich Industrial History Society talk by Jacky Robinson. Email: greenwichindustrial@gmail.com
- 18 Sat KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Standard tour at 2:00pm, bookable via Eventbrite.

- 18-19 KEMPTON GREAT ENGINES STEAMING WEEKEND. 10.30am-4pm. Adults £12, Children (to 18) free. Feltham Hill Road, Hanworth, Middlesex TW13 6XH. Web: www.kemptonsteam.org
- 19 Sun TRANSPORTFEST 2025. Web: www.londonbusmuseum.com/museum-events/
- 25 Sat KIRKALDY TESTING WORKS. Premium tour with machine run at 1:30pm, bookable via Eventbrite.

EXHIBITIONS

- Until 28 Sept 200 YEARS OF BRITISH RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES. Epping Ongar Railway photographic exhibition. Ongar Station, Station Approach, Chipping Ongar, CM5 9BN. Web: www.eorailway.co.uk
- Until May 2026 FORGE: INDUSTRIES OF CROYDON. Exhibition at the Museum of Croydon. Open Wednesday-Saturday 10am - 4:30pm in Museum of Croydon's Special Exhibition Gallery, Croydon Clocktower, Level 1. Web: <https://museumofcroydon.com/forge>
- Until Spring 2026 BUILDING BRITAIN'S CANALS. London Canal Museum. Web: www.canalmuseum.org.uk

GLIAS is happy to publicise events by other societies that may be of interest to our members. If you are a not-for-profit organisation and would like us to list your event, please contact the newsletter editor via email at newsletter@glias.org.uk

NEWS AND NOTES

FROM THE CHAIR

While the next issue of London's Industrial Archaeology is imminent the GLIAS walks have continued in Mayfair and Fulham. Thanks to Martin Adams and Peter Finch for leading them and Andrew Turner for the administration,

There was also an opportunity to visit West Ham Pumping Station which saw 70 people looking round, half of them GLIAS members. Our President, David Perrett is one of the trustees involved in the project.

The national scene has been updated by sending round the AIA e-news bulletin.

Martin Adams and Alan Burkitt-Gray have been collecting and preparing the articles for publication of LIA 23 which will be Martin's last as Editor. The regular issues of have encouraged authors to submit articles covering a wide range of subjects. Keep an eye out for the post in the coming weeks.

We have found a volunteer to take over from Martin as Editor - more details next time. *Dan Hayton*

SIDNEY RAY – OBITUARY

Members will have seen some of Sid's photographs printed in GLIAS Newsletters with further ones on the website.

In the 1970s he spent many weekend days walking London streets to photograph buildings and items, sometimes more for their artistic quality than as a 'record'. He participated in several GLIAS visits, again taking photographs of things which 'caught his eye'.

Sid went to live in America and only relatively recently again made contact with GLIAS. We spoke and exchanged emails over the past few years, but never re-met, though my memory remains of a friendly, cheerful and energetic man. Arrangements are being made to deposit many of Sid's photographs in public archives.

David Thomas

- In 2020 Sid was a winner in the photo competition we ran in association with GLIAS's 50th anniversary. This led to nearly five years of his interesting photographic contributions to the newsletter on a number of themed subjects. Although I never met Sid, he was a pleasure to deal with. His last contribution was in the February 2025 edition, on Nourishment and Entertainment. *Editor*

E R F LORRIES

In the Sandbach area, Cheshire, there were two rival companies. There was the old established firm Foden which made the famous steam lorries. Later in the 1930s another firm, E R Foden, was set up to make new-fangled diesel lorries. They produced some excellent examples which soon outsold the steam lorries. E R Foden lorries with the name ERF continued to be made for a considerable time, up to early this century. However, they

are now scarce but you can occasionally see one or two in use at fairgrounds.



The above photographs were taken at Oxted in April 2025. The fair, Benson's M & L pleasure fair, was packing up and moving to re-establish itself on the South Coast near Bexhill. V659 OOF, left, is a type EC11 made about 25 years ago. H371 WWY, right, is an E10 325, a type introduced in 1993. *Bob Carr*

MAN GASHOLDERS

The MAN gasholder at Southall (see GLIAS Newsletter 337 April 2025, p7) was not the only one of its type in West London. There was also one at Harrow, generally referred to as the North Harrow holder. It was the similarity of these two holders that created the confusion which in 1960 caused a Pan American Boeing 707 to land at Northolt by mistake for Heathrow. Northolt is about 6 miles from Heathrow. After this incident distinguishing signs LH and NH were painted on the gasholders, with that on the side of the Harrow gasholder later being changed from NH to NO.

The Harrow holder was demolished in 1987. The Southall gasholder lasted a long time and was finally demolished in 2019. The photograph taken on 7 January 2019 shows the last remaining portion.



Visual identification is still important for aircraft operation and the Southall gasholder would have been a welcome landmark from 1987 until its demolition. *Bob Carr*

PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE

Although many older members of GLIAS probably don't like the idea, planned obsolescence seems to be inevitable. Things made 30 to 40 years ago can be much better than the equivalent you can buy now, if they still exist. In particular cheap Chinese goods are often inferior. Some of their recent electric garden equipment, for example strimmers, will perhaps last only a year or two before you need to buy a new one.

You may remember the joke about the British salesman going to India in the 1970s to sell a pump that his firm was making. He visited a factory and was well received by the manager. The salesman got out the details of the pump he was trying to sell; the manager seemed interested and said yes we have one of your pumps already. Can I take you to see it? So they both went to see the pump that had been made in Britain.

The pump was in good order and working very well. The manager said we are very pleased with this pump and look, here is your maker's plate on the side, can you see, it was made in 1890. However, we really have no need for another one, this one is serving us perfectly well. And the pump you're trying to sell now is similar to this one. *Bob Carr*

OMEGA WORKS

The Omega Works is an industrial complex on the north side of Hermitage Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 1LZ. Over the years the site has been occupied by a variety of manufacturers. A notable firm was British Woodcraft Ltd, piano makers and joiners established here in the 1930s, where until 1959 Challen Pianos* were mass produced on an industrial scale. H K Furniture Ltd were in business at Omega Works until 1970.

The works has since become inhabited by artists and similar creative people who appreciate the relatively low

cost accommodation and the Omega Works has become a thriving creative hub. The photograph taken in June 2025 shows the entrance to the Works.



However, the site is now threatened with redevelopment with the intention of building flats. The people living and working there now have been offered accommodation in the new buildings but at an increased price which they will not be able to afford. This is a familiar story.

There has been a major campaign to preserve this creative community which in 2023 achieved media coverage; Evening Standard 9 June, BBC News 12 June. At the moment it seems that the jury may still be out but the final outcome will probably be the end of this Omega Works art and creative complex.

Piano factories have been a long-standing GLIAS interest. See for instance GLIAS Newsletter 287 December 2016 p5, and there are other references in the Newsletter Index. Hugh Marks took a particular interest, see eg Help Needed, GLIAS Newsletter 51 August 1977. There was a concentration of piano factories in the Camden Town area.

Bound copies of GLIAS Newsletters 1 to 100 are in the Science Museum Library at Wroughton in Wiltshire. These are complete newsletters and include not just the later pages which you can see online. *Bob Carr*

* **Five London Piano Makers: Brinsmead, Challen, Collard, Danemann, Welmar. By Alastair Laurence. 136 pp. Published by Keyword Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0955559013.**

A POTTERY IN LONDON

There is a working pottery with a kiln still in operation in London; it makes use of the old ticket office at the northeast corner of Maze Hill railway station. Photograph 1 shows the front of the pottery looking west. Photograph 2 shows a partial view of the chimneys of the kiln, at the back of the booking office, looking northeast. In winter you can get a better view of this kiln from the extreme east end of the down platform of Maze Hill railway station. In June 2025 when the photographs were taken it is hard to see anything because there's so much foliage in the way. To the right some of the kiln is obscured and out of sight.



This pottery claims to be able to produce the same kind of salt-glazed stoneware which was manufactured at the well known 17th-century kiln in Woolwich, excavated in the 1970s ¹.

It may sometimes be possible to visit the Maze Hill kiln when the kiln is being fired or when the kiln is being

emptied. The potter² gives lectures on pottery and of course will welcome visitors who buy something. *Bob Carr*

1. In the 1970s, archaeologists uncovered a kiln near the southern approach to the Woolwich Ferry. It would be an exaggeration to claim that this Woolwich kiln is the first and so far the only known place in Britain to have made Bellarmine pottery. What one can say is that the Woolwich Ferry kiln is believed to be the earliest known site where stoneware was produced in England. See also GLIAS Newsletter 191 December 2000, p5. A report of the final excavation by Oxford Archaeology in 2017 was published in the London Archaeologist, Spring 2018 (Vol 15, no.4).

2. Lisa Hammond MBE, see her Wikipedia entry.

LOTS ROAD POWER STATION

Pretty much our last stop on the excellent and informative Fulham Riverside walk on Saturday was the former Lots Road power station.

Back on Saturday 3 August 2002 I was very fortunate to be able to tag along on a mainly LU staff visit when it was still functioning. The attached pics from that day may amuse. *Andy Simpson*



• Peter Finch has kindly allowed us to publish his walk notes for the Fulham Riverside walk. Visit the 'Walks' section of the GLIAS website: www.glias.org.uk/walks/fulham-riverside.html

VINTAGE TUBE TRAIN RIDES

The London Transport Museum is currently advertising 'heritage train journeys' on the Metropolitan line on a restored Art Deco 1938 Tube train.

These are scheduled to take place all day on Friday 5 September to Sunday 7 September as part of the Railway 200 celebrations.

The 1938 Stock was the first kind of Tube train to have all the electrical equipment underneath the floor, combining the latest technology of the era with late 1930s style. These trains served London, on several deep-level Tube lines, for half a century. The beautifully restored electrified train is made up of four cars complete with green and red moquette seating, grab handles and distinctive Art Deco light fittings.

Web: www.ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/heritage-vehicle-outings

TOTALLY THAMES FESTIVAL

The Totally Thames festival is back again for a month of events in September spotlighting the 'stories, struggles and splendour' of the River Thames. Dozens of events are listed on the website:

<https://thamesfestivaltrust.org/>

KEW RESTORATION ANNOUNCED

Kew Gardens' tropical Palm House is set to close in 2027 for approximately five years for a multi-million pound

restoration and upgrade.

Originally heated by coal-fired boilers when it opened in 1848, it switched to oil boilers in 1950, and later to gas heaters. Subject to planning permission, after the revamp it will employ a fully electrified air and water source heat pump system to achieve net-zero status.

In addition 16,000 panes of glass will be removed and replaced, and 100 tonnes of ironwork will be checked and repaired.

MYSTERY OBJECT

In answer to your question about the mystery object (GLIAS Newsletter 338, p10) it is a Funnel Ball. This is a ball game where the ball is thrown into the top of the object and would then pick a pathway out to be caught.

Mick Taylor

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Funnel_ball

DATABASE SPOTLIGHT 10

Anyone planning to attend the Association for Industrial Archaeology annual conference at the Midland Hotel, Bradford in September will have a chance to see a demonstration of the GLIAS Database.

John Suter, who has developed the Industrial History Online database – which includes our London records – will be holding a session on the Saturday, after which there will be the chance for delegates to explore the database individually.

There are now over 30,000 records covering most key sites in England, Scotland and Wales with more being added all the time.

Web: <https://industrial-archaeology.org/event/aia-conference-2025/>

BOOKS

• ‘Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics and Materiality’, by T Edensor

208 pp, illustrated. Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005. £30.99 (paperback). ISBN 9781845200763

A BOOK WE MISSED

This book is too old to review; the following note will give some idea of what the book was about. Published 20 years ago, *Industrial Ruins* has been largely ignored by industrial archaeologists, yet there are passages in this volume which could have been written by many of us.

Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics and Materiality deplores the significant fact that in cities, industrial ruins have been swept away and replaced with anonymous uniform blocks of buildings which have sterilised their area. The strong sense of place their locality previously exuded has been thoughtlessly swept away and the local terroir* has been dramatically dimmed. Although originally written with Manchester in mind it applies even more forcibly to London.

You don't need to look far in London to find examples of rebuilding which totally changes the character of a neighbourhood. Rectangular blocks are taking over the area of Aberfeldy Street and Fish Island, now with many standardised blocks, has lost its distinctive character. Major building works are now taking place at Hackney Wick.

The author writes that this book has evolved out of his enthusiasm for visiting industrial ruins, and spans three decades, primarily focusing on the traditional manufacturing areas of north and central England and Central Scotland. The ruins he has explored and which feature belong to Manchester, Stockport, Liverpool, Glossop, Stalybridge, Oldham, Blackburn, Burnley, Bolton, Birmingham, Stoke-on-Trent, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Grangemouth, Falkirk, Leith, Stranraer, Brynmawr, Luton, Southampton, Hull, Sheffield, Huddersfield, Newcastle, Sunderland and Hartlepool.

He has toured ruins which used to be crushing mills, motor factories, garages, goods yards and depots, locomotive works; boatyards and Chandlers, textile mills, tile factories and potbanks, chain manufacturers, foundries and steelworks, engineering workshops, rubber factories, dye producers and glass works, as well as numerous other indeterminate small workshops and warehouses.

One of the major objectives of the book is to contest the notion that ruins are spaces of waste, that contain nothing, or nothing of value, and that they are saturated with negativity as spaces of danger, delinquency, ugliness and disorder.

The following quotations give some idea of the flavour of parts of the book. Members of the recording group will be familiar with this:

Pigeons take advantage of the openings presented by shattered windows to build nests in attics and roost

along shelves and beams, ledges akin to the cliffs they frequent elsewhere.

And regarding botany:

Fast-growing plants with intricate root systems which produce large numbers of seeds are able to germinate quickly. So a familiar sight of derelict spaces is the silken seeds of the rosebay willow herb, breeze-borne parachuting through the wasteland and beyond where the seeds will land and send out runners into any surrounding soil. Other, equally ubiquitous plants include buddleia which becomes especially noticeable when it attracts crowds of butterflies and bees in summer.

Tim Edensor who is a sociologist has published a great deal. He is absolutely prolific, and there are GLIAS members with some interests similar to his. For instance he has published an article about burnt bricks being incorporated into front garden walls in some parts of London. This is a GLIAS subject, see for example News in Brief, GLIAS Newsletter 222 February 2006, p9.

The author who is Professor of Social and Cultural Geography at the Institute of Place Management, Manchester Metropolitan University, has been described as a ruinologist but it is unclear which definition of ruinology the writer had in mind. No review of *Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics and Materiality* seems ever to have appeared in an industrial archaeology periodical.

This book was written by an academic in his prime, aged 48. There may be parts of the book inappropriate for GLIAS readers but with this reservation *Industrial Ruins: Spaces, Aesthetics and Materiality* can be recommended. *Bob Carr*

*** Terroir is a French term referring to the unique characteristics of a place, frequently used when discussing the production of wine or cheese. It is an intangible, which might also be applied to industrial locations.**

NEXT ISSUE

GLIAS welcomes articles for publication in the newsletter. These should be about 500 words or less. Longer articles may be more suitable for the GLIAS Journal.

Please send any contributions for the October newsletter by 15 September.