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# INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

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April 1999

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## *Diary Dates*

### **May**

5-6 Mill Regeneration Conference, Coalisland, Co Tyrone

7 Irish Mills and Milling, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh

**15-16 IHAI Spring Tour, Dublin**

### **August**

**TBA IHAI fieldsurvey weekend**

### **September**

5-11 National Heritage Week

### **Oct**

**16 IHAI Conference, Tullamore, Co Offaly**

**Keep up to date by visiting the IHAI home page on  
<http://indigo.ie/~rguinn/ihai.html>**

## **Annual General Meeting**

Our 1999 AGM was held at the Pigeon House on Sat 6th March. Before the meeting, Helen Perry led a tour of the power station. It has the distinction, when opened in 1903, of being the first *in the world* to distribute three-phase electricity. Various additions between 1933 and 1940 brought its capacity up to 95MW. The station, which was coal burning, closed in 1976, being superseded by the adjoining Poolbeg Station.

As many of you will know, the Pigeon House Trust, formed in 1997, has ambitious plans to turn this station into a multi-use venue, including an Irish Museum of Science and Technology. The Trust would welcome your support to secure the site and advance its ideas. Contact Helen Perry to express your interest.

After an excellent lunch kindly supplied by Helen and her colleagues, the AGM commenced. A copy of the secretary's report and audited accounts for 1998 are in this mailshot. William Dick, Michael Coulter and Paul Duffy stepped down from the committee due to pressure of work. Our thanks to them for their contribution to the Association since its foundation. We welcome Colm Donnelly, co-ordinator of the Mullycovet Mill project and organiser of the forthcoming Milling Conference, and also Robert Guinness who operates the Straffan Steam Museum and hosts the IHAI web page. Details of the committee's membership are given over.

After the formal business, we were treated to a guided tour of the Poolbeg power station by Henry Hudson of the ESB. Dubliners will be familiar with its twin 680ft (207m) chimneys which carry off the boiler exhaust. It opened in 1971 and initially had two 120MW steam-powered turbines by Brown Boveri (Switzerland). A 271MW unit by Alsthom (France) was added in 1978,

bringing its capacity to 511MW - over five times that of the original Pigeon House. At first, the boilers were fired with oil, but since 1984 dual burning with natural gas has also been possible. A 460MW combined cycle gas turbine is now being installed which will raise its output to 971MW, making it Ireland's biggest power generator. Our thanks to Henry for an excellent tour.

## **Power to the People**

This conference took place on 27-28 March under the auspices of Clare Historical and Archaeological Society. Organised by IHAI member Paul Duffy, it included talks on water power (Colin Rynne), wind power (Fred Hamond), steam power (William Dick) and electricity generation (Paul Duffy). On Saturday afternoon, there was a coach tour of local sites, notably the Ardnacrusha hydro-electric power station on the River Shannon near Limerick. This was the first major public works project undertaken by the fledgling State. Conceived by Dr Thomas McLoughlin in 1923, its construction by Siemens Schuckert (Germany) began in 1925. It came on stream in 1929, initially with three Francis turbines; a Kaplan turbine was added in 1934, bringing its output to 85MW (almost the same as Pigeon House).

The station had a profound effect on the nation and its people, enabling a comprehensive programme of rural electrification over the next 25 years. Its impact can be gauged by reading *The Quiet Revolution* by Michael Shiel (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 1984). Still going strong, Ardnacrusha celebrates 70 years of operation this year.

## **Redundant Mills Regeneration Conference**

This annual conference, organised by the GB-based NGCS, comes to Ireland for the first time. The venue is Stewart's Mill, Coalisland, Co Tyrone, recently restored as a visitors' centre by Coalisland & District Development Association Ltd.

The programme starts on Wed 5 May and entails a tour of refurbished mills in the Dungannon area on that afternoon and talks/ workshops on the adaptive reuse of defunct mills on Thursday. All for a mere STG£199.75! Still, Colin Rynne should be able to report back as he gets in free as a speaker!! Further details from NGCS, 9 Elmete Ave, Leeds LS8 2QN (tel 08-0113-2736703).

## **Irish Mills and Milling**

A reminder that this seminar will take place on Friday 7 May at Enniskillen College of Agriculture, County Fermanagh. You will have received details with the last mailshot, but just to remind you, the programme is as follows: Colin Rynne (*Early mills in Ireland*), Nick

Brannon (*Mills of the Ulster Plantation*), Bill Crawford (*Mills and millers on the Abercorn estate in the 18th century*), Gavin Bowie (*Windmills in the British Isles*), Michael Coulter (*Irish windmills*), Megan McManus (*Mills of the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum*), Mark McCluskey (*Restoration of Lifeforce Mill, Cavan*), Fred Hamond (*Mullycovet Mill, Belcoo*). This is followed by a visit to the recently restored Mullycovet Mill where you will receive your bag of freshly ground flour!

This is a not-to-be-repeated opportunity to learn about corn mills - once the commonest type of industrial site in Ireland. All for a mere £15 *including* coffee and lunch! If you'd like to attend, contact Colm immediately on 08-01365-386536 to reserve your place.

### **IHAI Spring Tour 15-16 May**

Unfortunately the AIA didn't receive enough support from its members to justify its extended weekend tour of Dublin as outlined in the last mailshot. However, such has been the interest of IHAI members that it will still go ahead in a shortened form on 15-16 May. See the enclosed leaflet for details (those who have already paid up will note a rejigging of the Saturday programme). As we need to notify our destinations of numbers, please respond by Wed 10 May if you plan to attend.

### **Recording Ireland's Industrial Heritage**

A training course on the recording of industrial heritage will take place in Co Donegal during the summer (probably a weekend in August). This will focus on techniques of 'paper' survey (ie. the locating of sites through OS maps and other documents), and on practical field recording (describing sites, photography, analysing and interpreting the evidence).

This course will benefit anyone with an interest in fieldwork. No special expertise is required other than a tolerance of muddy shoes! Contact Fred Hamond, 75 Locksley Pk, Belfast BT10 0AS (tel 08-01232-616480) to express your interest. Those who have already responded will receive more details in due course.

### **National Heritage Week**

Last year's Heritage Day proved so popular that it has been extended to a full week - from Sun 5th to Sat 11th September. Dúchas is co-ordinating and publicising events in the Republic.

It's only by getting new people interested in industrial heritage that its wider appreciation will grow and people might be less inclined to demolish it. So, do you have an idea that would promote the topic? If you operate a heritage attraction, or could give a talk or guided tour in your area, now's the time to become involved! Register by Friday 30th April with Roberta Reeners, Cronroe, Ashford, Co Wicklow (phone/fax 0404-40517; e-mail reeners@tinet.ie). As notification of this event has only just been received, you've probably a week to 10 days grace after this date to get organised. Go to it!

### **IHAI Conference, Autumn 1999**

This will take place in mid October (probably Sat 16th) at the new Tullamore Dew Visitors' Centre, courtesy of Amanda Pedlow. As a change to previous conferences, members are invited to talk on any aspect of industrial heritage in which they have a special interest. This could involve research, fieldwork or photography. Please contact any committee member if you could give a contribution (anything from 3 to 30 mins). All audio-visual equipment will be supplied.

### **Internet Links**

Dúchas - <http://www.heritageireland.ie>

Environment & Heritage Service (DOENI) -

<http://www.nics.gov.uk/ehs>

Association for Industrial Archaeology -

<http://www.twelveheads.demon.co.uk/aia.htm>

Scottish Industrial Heritage Society -

<http://members.aol.com/sihs/index.htm>

### **IHAI Publications**

Wordwell Ltd have taken over our book distribution. Copies of *Taking Stock of Ireland's Industrial Heritage* (£5.50 incl p+p) and *Power from Steam* (£6.00 incl p+p) can now be obtained from them at PO Box 69, Bray, Co Wicklow (tel 01-2862649).

### **And finally ...**

Congratulations to former IHAI committee member Michael Coulter on his recent promotion to 'top gun' in the Buildings section of DOENI Environment & Heritage Service. We wish him ever success in keeping industrial heritage to the fore in official circles.

If you have any *news*, *views* or *comments* for the next Mailshot (due out in August), please make them known to any committee member.

#### ***IHAI Committee***

- ◆ *President:* Fred Hamond, 75 Locksley Pk, Belfast BT10 0AS (tel 08-01232-616480).
- ◆ *Vice-President:* Norman Campion, Inver, 1 Kilgobbin Rd, Sandyford, Dublin 18 (tel 01-2955632).
- ◆ *Secretary:* Mary McMahon, 77 Brian Rd, Marino, Dublin 3 (tel 01-8334709).
- ◆ *Treasurer:* Dan Hurst, 27 Churchview Drive, Killiney, Co Dublin (tel 01-2854640).
- ◆ *Membership Secretary:* Dermot McNamarra, 95 Bulfin Rd, Dublin 8 (tel 01-4535827).
- ◆ *Web Master:* Cormac Scally, 114 Marlborough Park Central, Belfast 9 (tel 08-01232-667358; e-mail [cscally@dial.pipex.com](mailto:cscally@dial.pipex.com))
- ◆ *Committee:* Vincent Conaghan (01-4514784), Ron Cox (01-6082544), Colm Donnelly (08-01232-620080), Ruth Delany (01-2852258), Robert Guinness (01-6273155), Plunkett Hayes (061-397130), Paul McMahon (01-6761022), Ken Mawhinney (01-2955415), and Helen Perry (01-8351828).