

Watford & District Industrial History Society

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Dear Member

Our WADIHS residential weekend this year will be 7th to 9th October in the Isle of Wight. This beautiful Island with its varied scenery offers a number of themes for us to explore: industrial, agricultural, and military, all interlinked. We shall be looking at the evidence for all of these. Largely self-sufficient in energy creation through its numerous water, wind and tide mills for milling and industrial power, this encouraged much local processing and power for industry. Expanded by the boom in the late 19th century holiday trade, its railway network was by any standard extensive and beyond the needs of industry and agriculture. Engineering skills in shipbuilding fostered the early aviation industry. Strategically placed at the mouth of the Solent, the island's role as fortress and protector of the fleet is everywhere evident, relying heavily on extractive industries for creation of its many defences. So, please join us for what promises to be an exciting and informative weekend.

We shall be staying at:

Yelfs Hotel, Union Street, Ryde, PO33 2LG ☎ 01983 564062

www.yelfshotel.com e.mail: manager@yelfshotel.com

George & Lesley Crutcher have stayed at this comfortable hotel before and we visited last week to make the arrangements. We have booked the Reading Room to meet together on the Friday evening for an introductory talk and to answer any questions about the programme.

We have provisionally reserved the following at Bed & Breakfast rate, per room:

8 x Doubles @£80 per night

4 x Twins @ £80 per night

5 x Singles @ £60 per night

We have booked an expected **maximum of 28**, our capacity for dinner on the Saturday evening. All rooms will be reserved on a 'first come, first served' basis. These rooms will be held until **20th May**, so you need to make a commitment now please.

We shall dine together on the Saturday evening at the hotel Dutch Room @£15 per head. Please include the £15 as part of your booking.

Please contact the hotel direct to book your room and let me know that you have done so by phone or email. When booking the hotel you **must** say you are part of the WADIHS group otherwise you will be charged at a higher rate. If you wish to stay further nights these will be charged at the above rates.

Payment: 25% deposit to confirm booking, balance to be paid no later than 14 days prior to arrival. Rooms cancelling 14 days prior to the date of arrival will not incur any charges. Rooms cancelling 7 days prior to the date of arrival will incur a 50% charge. Rooms cancelling after the 7 day deadline will be charged in full.

Transport: the hotel has a rear car-park. **I suggest you aim to arrive on the island by mid-day Friday as we hope to arrange some of the programme on Friday pm.** To get to the Island the hotel has a preferential booking arrangement with WightLink on the Portsmouth – Fishbourne route. A typical fare Friday 10 am out Sunday 4pm return would be covered by a 5 day ticket is £51.30, including all passengers. It therefore makes sense, where possible, to share cars. We shall of course share cars while on the island as lanes are narrow and parking limited at some venues. To take advantage of the reduced fare you must book through the hotel, which I suggest you do at the time of booking your room. If you intend coming by train and therefore coming over on foot, the hotel cannot make ferry bookings for you. Please do this direct for the Portsmouth-Ryde Cat service, currently £15.80 rtn. Senior Cit.

An outline of the content of the proposed programme for the weekend, to be confirmed nearer the time, is detailed below. There are, of course, many other attractions including fine walking on the island so you may wish to book for a longer period than just the WADIHS weekend.

Any queries, e.mail or give me a call.

Chris Jordan

Provisional Programme

Some of these are by private arrangement by WADIHS only.

In no particular order and provisional, unless stated otherwise, all subject of course to the working arrangements of each location.

Stout footwear or walking boots are advisable for some as are warm and weatherproof clothing.

Talks/presentations will be given at most locations.

Britten Norman Aircraft, Bembridge – very provisional at this stage: view and discuss current and historic aircraft production.

Isle of Wight Steam Railway, Haven Street. Photogenic station with much to see. We are already booked for Sunday morning. Probably Terrier hauled but subject to confirmation nearer the time.

Bembridge Windmill (NT) Tower mill.

Bembridge Palmerston Fort and Culver Down fortifications.

Yafford Water Mill private working breast-shot flour mill. Pond & leat to be filled and mill run for our benefit.

Culbourne Water Mill & Rural Museum Working overshot and roller mills. Gas engine, malthouse, bakery, War Museum, Fire Station, Daimler Scout car, Black Knight rocket casing, Pottery, 12.5 muzzle loader etc. Extensive grounds.

Yarmouth Tide Mill Photogenic. One of several sites on island.

Cowes Samuel White Yard Giant Cantilever Crane and Chain Car Ferry (Floating bridge) – we will cross.

St. Catherine's Oratory. Said to be medieval lighthouse (1328). Fantastic views.

Harry Ferguson Museum Private collection celebrating life of engineer Harry Ferguson and his agricultural, engineering and racing interests, perhaps best known for the Grey Fergie tractor.

Last surviving IOW Brick Kiln details to follow

High Down Abandoned Rocket Testing Site, The Needles (see Calbourne Mill), and Palmerston Fort.

View Alum Bay. Black Knight guided missile test site – display and site visit, fort defences, Marconi experimental site and Alum Bay sands – formerly quarried for glass and pottery manufacture, still used for ornamental purposes.