

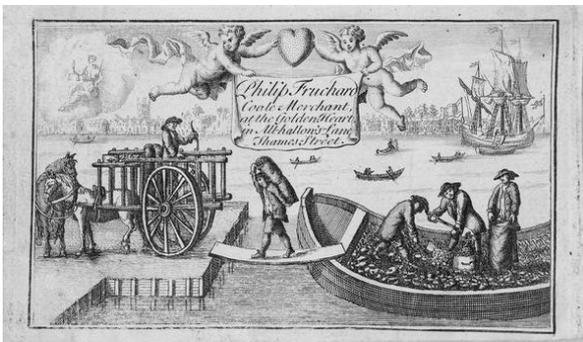
# FULCRUM

NUMBER 28

August 2015

FULCRUM is the newsletter of ISASC(E), the International Society of Antique Scale Collectors (Europe). It is published in February, May, August and November. Contributions should be sent to the Editor, John Knights.

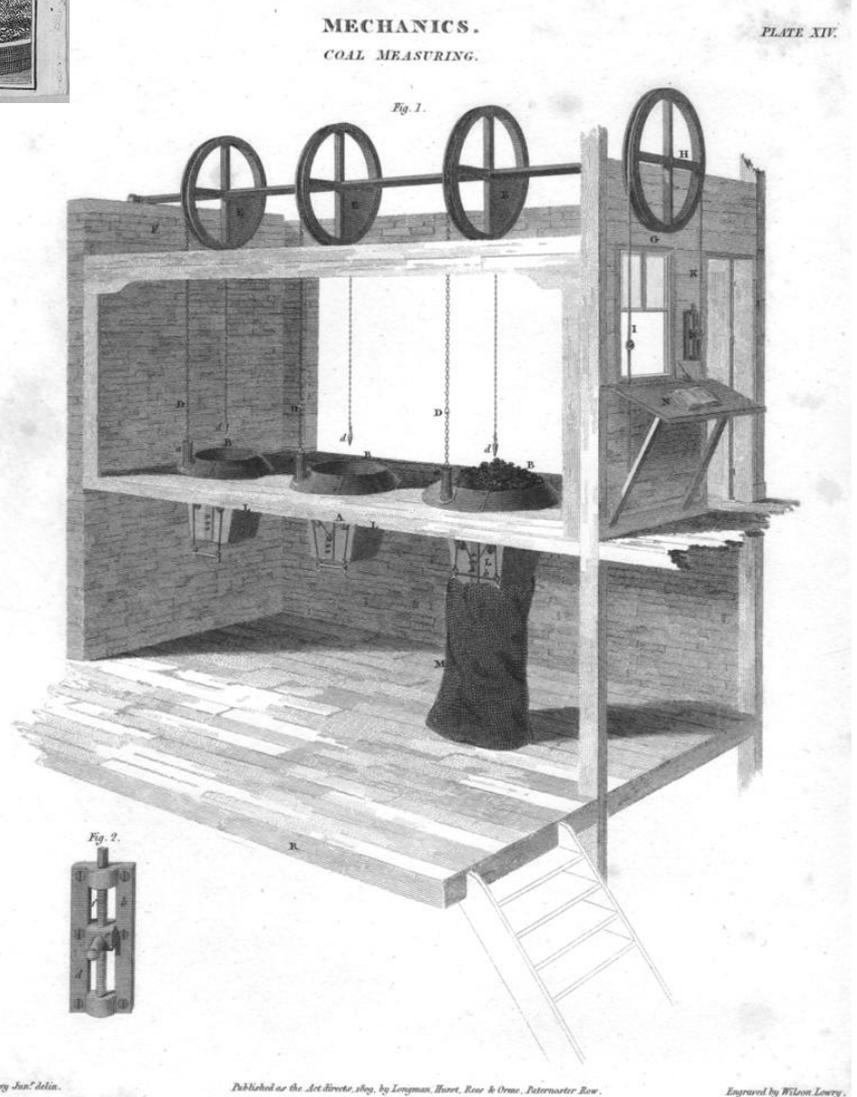
## Georgian Coal

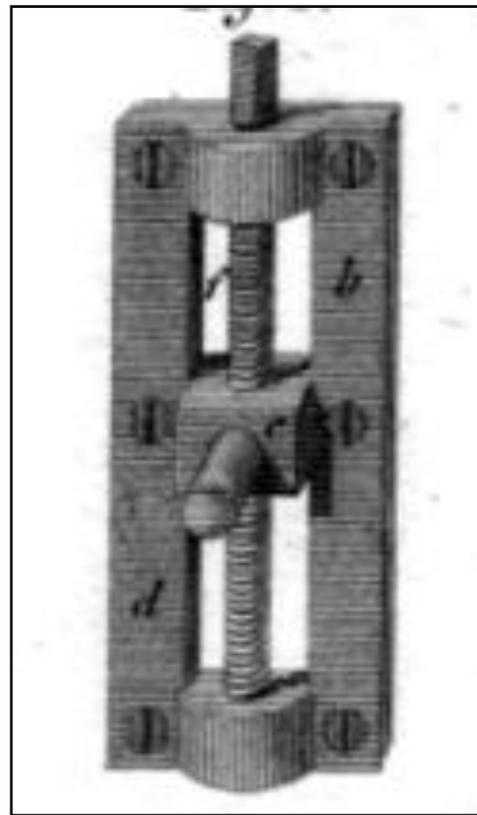
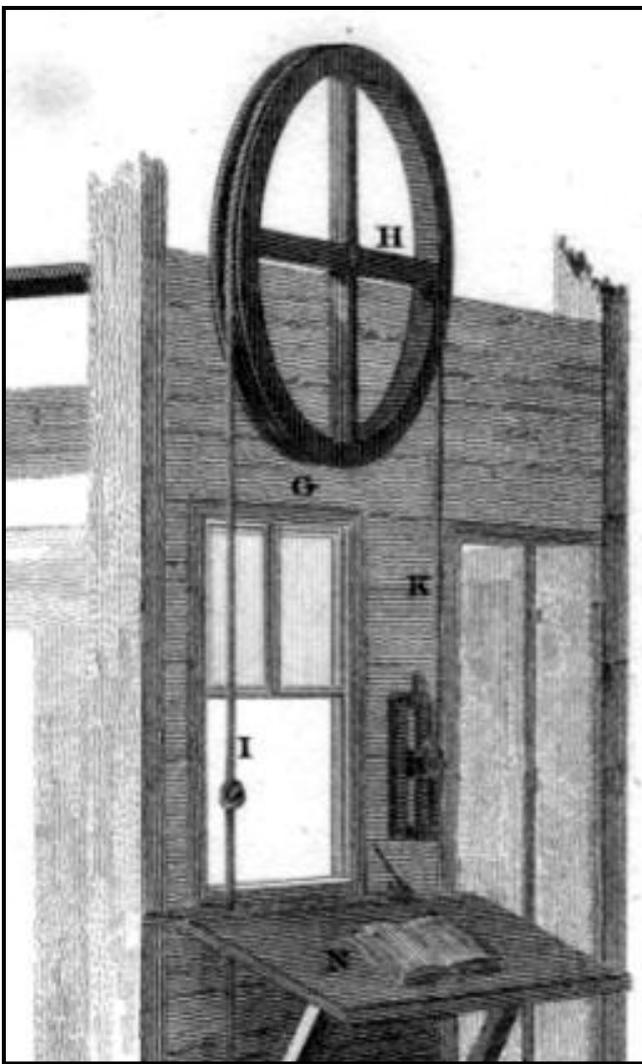


In Edition 7 we featured a piece about the coal trade in 18<sup>th</sup> century London. It was an arcane business featuring Undertakers, ‘Whippers’ and ‘Coal Meters’ who unloaded the cargoes and measured out the fuel for delivery to the

customers. Until 1836 coal was consigned in heaped coal bushels (above), after which date it was weighed instead. Whilst fiddling about on ebay, I came across an illustration of a device, from 1806, captioned as ‘Coal Measuring’. It appears to be an instrument designed to partially automate the process of placing a measured quantity into customers’ sacks.

This was something I had not previously encountered and I found it a bit of mystery. The print, unfortunately, has no accompanying text so its principle and method of





operation can only be guessed at from the illustration.

The key component appears to be a bracket with a threaded rod that provides some form of adjustment to the three hoppers

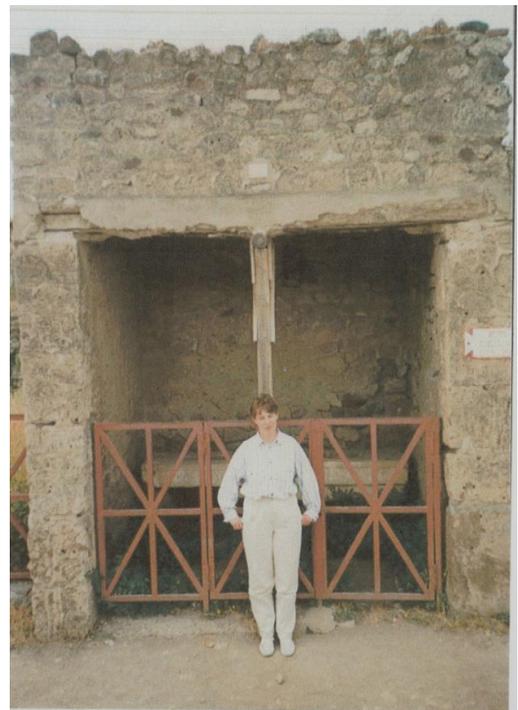
which are used to fill the sacks suspended underneath.

### **Up Pompeii!**

In response to our recent feature on grain measuring pits our friend Julie Davey has provided a picture taken during a trip to Pompeii back in the 1980's. She was photographed, in the fossilised forum, standing in front of the stone measuring block. (below).



**Close up of the device is shown above.**



## **June meeting**

On 14<sup>th</sup> June some 27 members turned up at the Royal Arms Sutton Cheney for an informal gathering. Through the good offices of our friend Janet Scarratt we had the use of a meeting room at the pub where we were able to spend a few pleasant hours talking and viewing some of the goodies that had been brought to the meeting. After an excellent lunch some of the members repaired to Janet's house where we were able, once again, have a look at the excellent Scarratt collection. For many it brought back the days when Noel Scarratt was also there to welcome guests and take great pleasure and pride in showing them his latest acquisitions.

It was really good of Janet to put up with us, once again, and permit access to the collection. We offer our sincere thanks for her taking the trouble to arrange the day.

## **The cost of communication**

We unfortunately live in expensive times and the cost of sending things through the post has been impacting our finances for some time. This is particularly true when we are sending material to those parts of the world remote from the UK. ISASC (Europe) members who live outside Europe are among our most enthusiastic and loyal members and the last thing we want to do is to alienate them by discriminating against them in regard to membership fees etc.

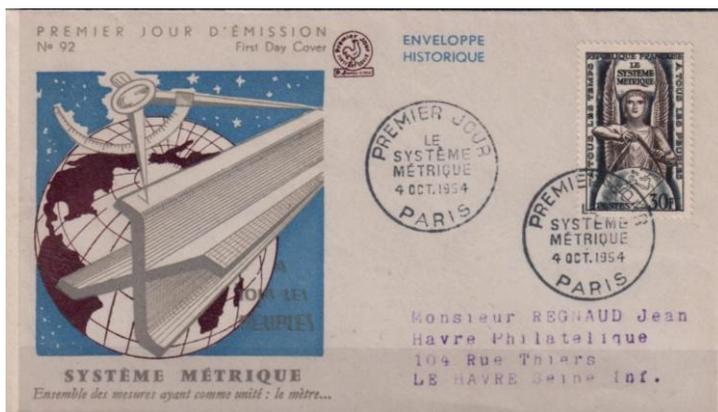
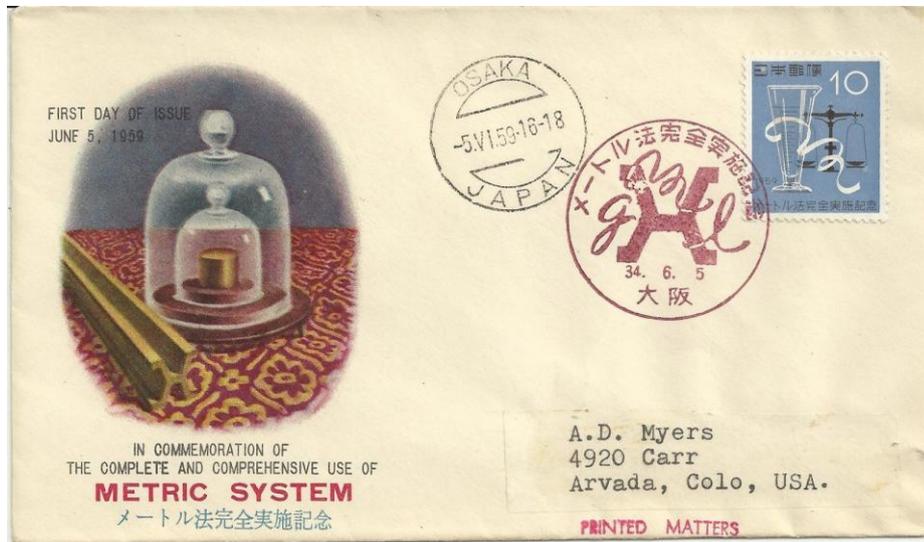
However (you knew there was a however coming) as custodians of the Society assets we are having to recognise that something must be done to stem the haemorrhage. We are, therefore, regrettably, having to consider applying differential charges. Before we impose any increased membership fee, to partially cover the additional costs of overseas postage it seems only right to seek the views of those who will be most affected. I must therefore ask those in far flung lands (I appreciate that you regard us as the far flung land) how you would feel about an increase in your subscription, above that applied to UK members, solely to partially offset the increased postal costs. Views expressed will be considered at the AGM when next year's subscriptions will be set.

## **Sales and Wants**

David Apps reports that he has 28 x 1oz and 29 x 2oz Crane weights. If anyone is looking for these items he can supply them at a modest price rather than consign them to the cupola for their scrap value. He can bring them to the October meeting if required.

A gentleman by the name of Laurence Rudolph has been in touch to see if anybody has a copy of the book '**50 years Berkel 1898 to 1948**'. This book was originally published in Dutch but he wants the English version. This is a rare volume and he is prepared to pay £150 for a copy. If anyone has this volume that they wish to sell please contact the Fulcrum editor and your details will be passed on to Laurence.

We are recruiting the occasional new member and some of these are anxious to acquire back copies of EQM. Society stocks of early original copies are limited or non-existent but we know that some sets of the magazine are held by former members or their families. If anyone has a set of EQMs and no longer wants them we would be pleased to hear from you as we may be able to re-home them. Please contact David Apps our Publications Officer.



## In the Post

In the last edition we featured some stamps from exotic lands which either celebrated their recent adoption of the metric system or an anniversary of its adoption in days gone by. The featured examples were by no means exhaustive so I've found a few more for this edition. On the right there is a stamp from Bangladesh, a nation that only gained its independence, in less than ideal circumstances, in 1971 but which adopted the metric system in 1982.

The French commemorative, shown above is interesting as it features the metre bar which was the international standard from 1875 until 1960 when non-material solutions were



adopted. The X section, devised by Henri Tresca, was designed to provide optimum rigidity and stability with the actual standard of length lying at the neutral plane of the bar so as not to be affected by any minor distortion. The Japanese first day cover of 1959 (top), which commemorates their adoption of the SI units features both the 'Tresca' bar and the primary kilogram. The section of the bar also features as the postmark.

The three contiguous East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda all adopted the metric system in 1967, just a few years after they had gained independence from the UK. A joint postage stamp was issued (above right).

The other set of stamps (lower right) is from Hungary who adopted the metric system in the 1870's.

### **October Meeting**

As has been previously publicised the Autumn meeting/AGM will be held at The Warwick Hilton Hotel on Sunday 11th October. An attendance slip is enclosed with the August mailing. The theme for this meeting will be '**Weird and Wonderful**'. This will encompass peculiar items of equipment, scales or weights used for odd weighing purposes or for weighing strange commodities. As usual this theme will be interpreted liberally so if you have any item of equipment that 'weighs' or uses weighing principles for unusual purposes etc please bring it along and do a brief presentation. So dig out those custard weighers and get ready to amaze.

A major attraction is to be the presence of our old friend **Andrew Lound**, formerly curator of the Avery Museum. Andrew is going to give an illustrated talk on history of that, now sadly dissolved, institution from its inception in 1927.

### **Management Committee Bulletin 2015-01**

During the ISASC(E) Management Committee Meeting of 03.05.2015 the following points were discussed:

The Trustee situation has been reviewed as follows: John Knights has taken over the Executive Trustee's position from Norman Biggs, and all other Trustees remain unchanged. The change has been registered with the Charity Commission.

Following the Officers elections at the last AGM the position of Membership Secretary remains vacant. Members are strongly encouraged to volunteer for this post - both in order to relieve the extra burden on our Treasurer and also to help us attract more people into our Society.

Funds are largely unchanged but the long-term decline continues - the annual cost (outgoings) per member exceeds the income of £35 to £40. The bulk of this constitutes production cost and distribution of EQM. It is therefore necessary to look at increasing subscription rates if the drain on the Society's funds is to be stopped or at least slowed.

This may include an extra levy for members living in areas where high postage costs apply. The Committee plans to propose measures in the next AGM.

Several new members have joined, but there is a list of members who have not yet paid their subscriptions. Mike Sharpe will write to these members reminding them of the outstanding payment. Thereafter non-payers will be removed from the membership list.

In addition to the informal meeting at Sutton Cheney on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June there is the possibility to meet - again informally - at John Wintour's Scales and Rural Museum on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August. Members planning to attend are advised to make their own arrangements with John.

The 2015 AGM will take place at the Warwick Hilton Hotel on October 11<sup>th</sup>. As a theme we are currently thinking "Weighing unusual items". People who wish to contribute talks or displays are encouraged to contact **Peter Elliot or John Knights**.

Jan Berning reports a slight increase of material for EQM, but we would still like to encourage members to produce articles on their specific specialist subjects for submission so that our excellent magazine remains "well stocked".

## **Charles Sait**

**Michael Beggs has kindly sent us an obituary for our good friend Charles Sait who died earlier this year.**

It is with great sadness that I have to advise members that Charles Sait passed away on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Charles began his working life as an electrical draughtsman, after which he spent two years performing his National Service in the RAF on radar and detection work.

He then worked as a salesman for a specialist diamond/abrasive company for over 30 years, during which time he became interested in collecting weights and scales. Charles acquired tremendous knowledge of boxed diamond scales which became his speciality.

He was actively involved in his church as a lay preacher and an enthusiastic member of the choir.

Personally he was the friendliest person you could hope to meet and could readily befriend anyone.

He gave many talks, both in the UK and USA. Our US members may recall the talk he gave to their convention at San Antonio some years ago.

Charles leaves his wife Patricia, son Robert and daughter Elizabeth. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.