

Explosive Times - Walking interview around Powder Works with Rueben Wells

Track 1 Duration 38:17

The walk begins at the top of the construction site, location where the chimney is.

[0:42] Rueben [R] describes the beginning of the walk and where he is.

[1:07] Describes the chimney and the setting. Explains the challenges of renovating the chimney and what work they did on it. Describes how hard his team worked. Move on to the stove house, R describes how they had to create track to get to base of the chimney. Remarks that the track may be left for people when the site opens to the public.

[3:37] next location - The stove house. R explains what it was used for, drying the gun powder. Describes the building and the work that they have done on the stove house. Remarks on the enormous amount of work. Describes the stove house and what work his team did on the building. Mentions weeks of packing out the building, hole in the wall and creating an 'honest' repair.

[6:22] next location - Dusting house [DH]. [6:50] R explains that they had to pull out of working on the DH because of nesting birds. Explains that 4 decks of scaffolding used, digging out by hand, explains that they can only replace things if they knew what was there originally. Explains what the DH was used for. [8:53] Remarks that DH is a big building and a great feat of engineering and how solid the building is. Comments that the back wall is untouched because the original mortar was solid.

[9:58] Remarks on the workmanship and explains that some of the work is good and other pieces of work not so, ponders that it may be because they didn't think some of the buildings would last long i.e. they may be blown up.

[10:40] next location - Leat house. Remarks on the building and the challenges that they had on site. Explains how they rebuilt it only to find out that the original building was twice the height. Explains the challenges involved in having to find exact rocks to put in place to achieve the correct height of the building. Comments on the challenges of finding the right stones. Remarks on how important it is to replace like with like and to restore buildings to their original footprint

[13:13] next location - Turbine House. [14:25] Describes the Turbine house, explains the problems with the structure. Talks about brickwork section and the dangers of collapse of the wall. Explains how his team renovated the wall, comments on blue engineering bricks (honest repair). Explains how difficult the building was to work on. Explains new

areas that they found. [16:49] Explains how important it is to be careful working on site because of the river and also trees.

[17:33] next location Magazine house. Explains what work they've done on the building. R walks inside the building and describes what work they did by hand. Remarks that they found a square chamber which wasn't on the plans and how they had to dig it out. Remarks that he thinks it was used as a changing room for workers. [20:00] Talks about how proud he is of his team. Explains that many of his team hadn't worked with material like lime mortar etc before. Comments that he trained them up.

[20:43] next location Water Wheel. Describes what the wheel did. Remarks that its use changed. R describes the area and what work is being done on the wheel. Comments on two of his workers working on the wheel and the work that they're doing (pointing). Explains that the work takes a lot of time because of the nature of the material - lime mortar.

[24:00] Next location New Corning House [CH]. [24:50] Describes the CH, mentions that it's a huge cast concrete building. Explains that they used modern material and it replaced the old CH. Remarks that it would've taken less time to build than the old CH.

[26:20] Next location Old Corning House [OCH], explains that there was a two foot lean on the house when they arrived. Explains that they replaced the wall stone for stone in identical places and that they mapped it out. [27:20] R stands in front of the old OCH and describes the work they he and his team did on the wall. Explains they had to set up a large tracing film and numbered every stone. Remarks the tracing film was six metres by eight metres and it was one sheet. Explains the logistics of the process and how the process of the renovations worked. Explains how detailed the work was. [29:35] Explains how difficult the work was. Remarks that the building looks completely different now.

[30:56] Remarks on how mind blowing the amount of work that has been done on the building. Praises his team's work.

[32:14] Next location. Pump House [PH]. [33:33] Comments on a tree that had recently fallen into the bank/river.

[35:24] R talks about working on the site and how lovely the location is. Explains that his favourite spot on the site is the Magazine Express.

[36:00] Arrives at the PH. Explains the work that been done on the PH. Remarks that past renovations were not in keeping. Explains that a roof still needs to be put on it. Comments on internal and external works. Remarks that it's one of the buildings that the public will be able to explore.

[37:54] Wraps up tour and what he like about working on the site.