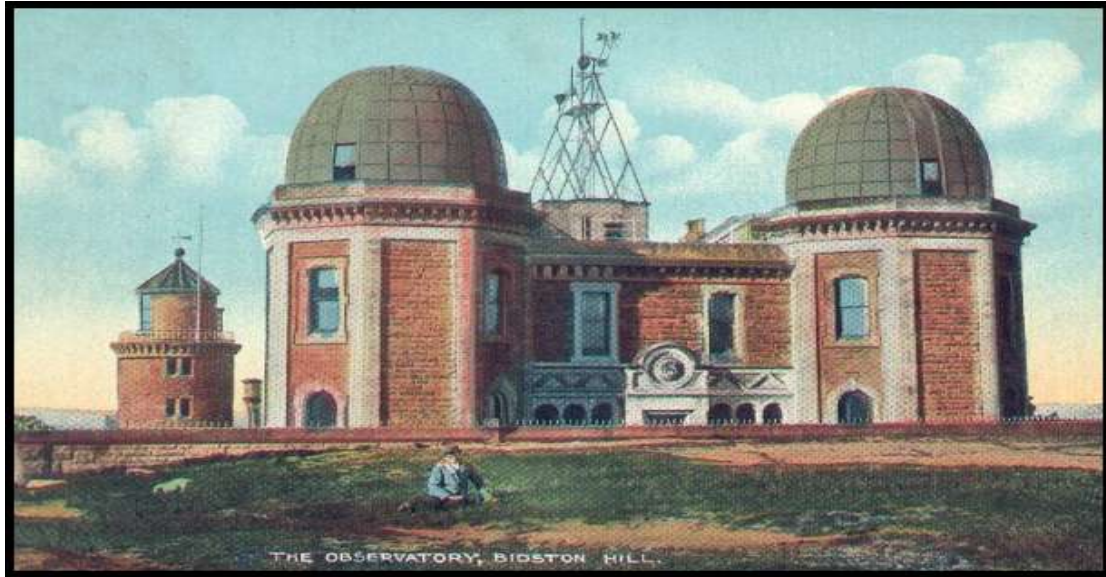


Bidston Observatory and Associated Buildings.



This beautiful collection of buildings sits proudly on the ridge of the hill watching over the Windmill, Park Wood and Bidston and is visible from both Wales and Liverpool. It consists of Bidston Observatory, pictured above, the Lighthouse and keeper's cottages and the Proudman Building.

The Observatory itself was built in 1866 when it was relocated from Waterloo docks due to expansion and is built from the stone mined to create the 36-foot of cellars, the deepest of which maintains a constant cool temperature. Over the years the work carried out in the observatory has changed but still maintained its groundbreaking importance. At the turn of 1929, the observatory and the Tidal Institute were amalgamated and under the direction of Joseph Proudman and Arthur Doodson became the leading authority on tidal predictions, to the extent where Bidston Observatory was deemed of national importance during the Second World War and predicted the tides for the d-day landings amongst other things. In 1969, the telescopes housed in the observatory donated to Liverpool museum and the 10'clock gun was fired for the last time on the 18th of July. This was also the year that Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory became an independent institute under NERC.

The Lighthouse was originally built in 1771 as an aid to entering the Mersey and may well have been built close to the wooden signal station building. The current Lighthouse and cottages were built in 1873 and the light continued until being discontinued in 1913, although thanks to a millennium project, the light shines every night again and will continue to do so well into the future.

Finally, we come to the youngest building onsite; The Proudman Building opened in 1975 and was named in honour of Joseph Proudman (1888-1975) one of the directors, and has been compared to an ocean liner beached on the hill. This magnificent example of modern architecture was created to house the growing staff and the new computer mainframe, which at the time would have been so big, it would have needed a room all to itself.

The current owners, NERC (Natural Environment Research Council) moved out of the Buildings in December 2004 and are currently looking at selling the site, so the future of these wonderful buildings is still undecided but we can only hope they are returned to the people for the future of Bidston Hill.



Overview of the observatory buildings (left to right – the Lighthouse and Keeper's cottages, the Proudman Building and the Observatory.)