



## Even this redundant power supply box has an important story to tell

The Waterworks Museum was created in 1974 in Hereford's Lower Pumping Station whose early electricity supplies were brought in via this green connection box (called a Lucy Box). It was situated outside of the water town pump annexe of 1881, next to the main entrance of the Museum.

Replacing the 'Lucy Box' with a modern distribution unit meant the Museum was without electricity for three days in July 2018, but this act of modernisation has created an exhibit for the Museum forecourt - one with an important hidden story to tell.

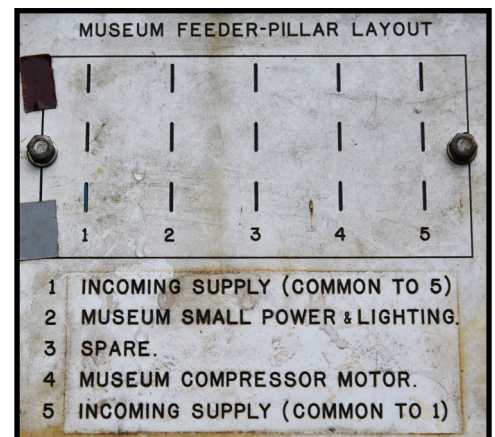
Hereford City Council took a quite unusual step when it moved the Lower Pumping Station to electrical power much earlier than most other pumping stations in the UK. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century most towns had opted for internal combustion engines to power their water pumps but Hereford, far-sightedly, went straight from steam power to electric motors.

Electric pumps had been installed in the base of the Italianate water tower in 1911 to pump water from the pure water tanks of the then new filter beds to the high-pressure storage tank. However, the full electrification of the works took place three years later in the spring of 1914 when two centrifugal pumps made by the firm Mather & Platt were installed in the well area of the lower pumping station.

The now replaced Lucy Box relates back to this important pre WW1 phase in the development of the Lower Pumping Station, which also saw the removal and disposal of a Simpson beam engines, and which marked the end of the day-to-day use of the Museum's Worth Mackenzie Triple Expansion Steam Engine.

The 'Lucy Box' housed the fused porcelain connections which enabled a three phase electricity supply from Hereford's Electricity & Lighting Works, to be safely distributed within the Lower Pumping Station to power the new electric pumps, replace the original gas lighting and eventually power other circuits.

It is now a new exhibit on the Waterworks Museum forecourt.



The 'Lucy Box' was named after the firm that first made them.

The origins of Oxford based W. Lucy & Co. Ltd dates back more than 200 years to when its principal business was manufacturing metal casings, By the early 20th century they were producing electrical distribution boxes for the new electricity and lighting companies, which are still common place in many towns and cities across the UK. The modern equivalent of a Lucy box is still in production today.