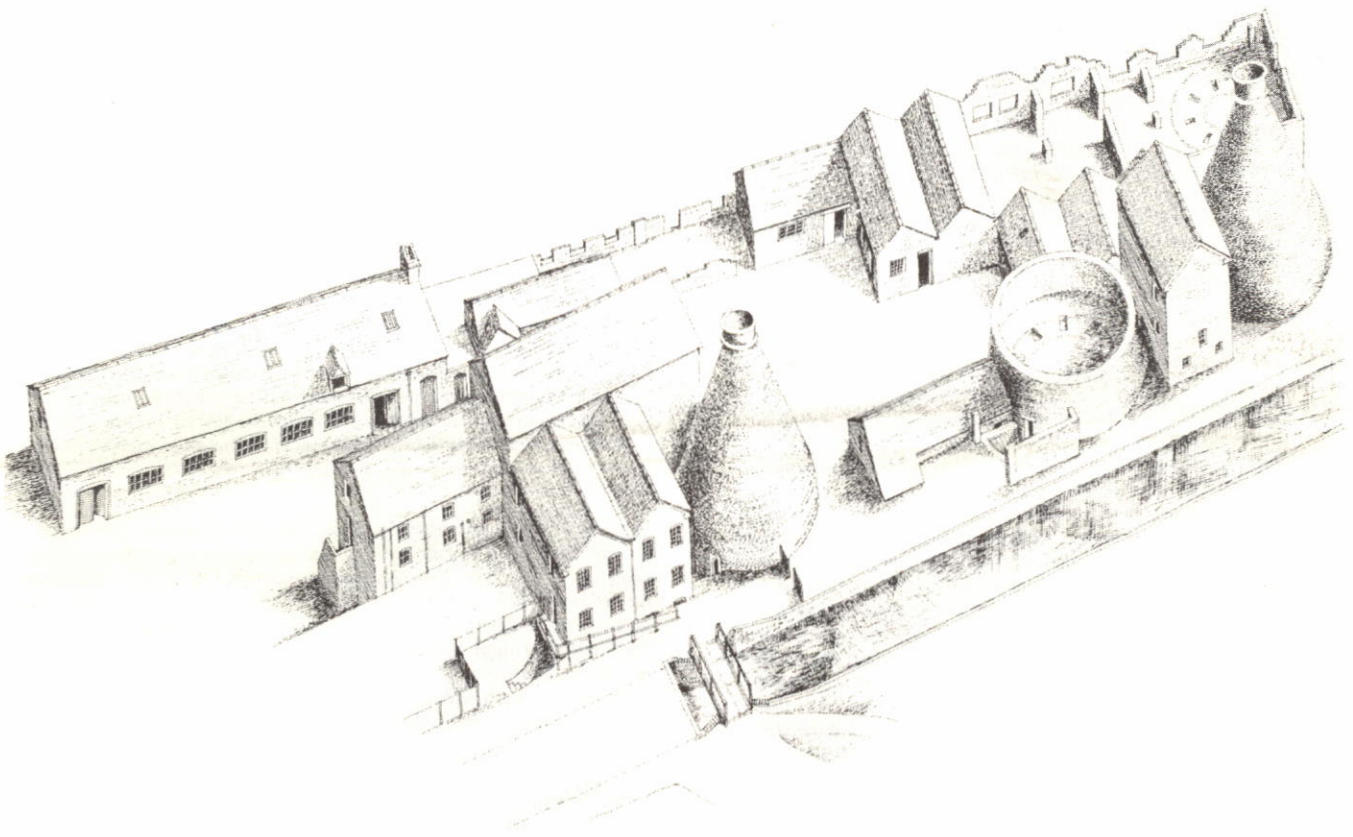


# ATA

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## COALPORT CHINA WORKS MUSEUM

Fifty years ago, in 1926, the Coalport China Company closed their works on the banks of the River Severn in Shropshire and moved to Stoke-on-Trent where they have traded under their original name ever since. But the surviving buildings, despite having been occupied by another manufacturer, are still substantially intact and provide the basis for a new Museum of Coalport China covering the history and technology of the industry and the people involved in it, and presenting a spectacular collection of the products of the Company. The village of Coalport is now part of the New Town of Telford and the China Works Museum is a new important component of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum complex.

Creation of the new Museum has been assisted by numerous people and organisations including Telford Development Corporation who financed restoration of the buildings and are leasing them to the Museum Trust, and the Coalport Company itself. In addition many local people have been involved, including retired employees of the Company and they have provided by gift or loan much of the fine china which is on display. The Friends of the Museum and innumerable volunteer groups have also given invaluable assistance.

Restoration of the buildings and associated canal has been carried out to the Museum Trusts specification by Contractors and Museum craftsmen as have the displays themselves, designed by Robin Wade

Design Associates.

The Museum itself consists of a foyer containing a shop in which a wide range of Coalport china and books on pottery may be purchased, followed by an introductory gallery covering the resources necessary to create a piece of china. Next in sequence is a 'dictionary of terms' designed to acquaint the visitor with the mystical language of the pottery industry with words such as 'blunger', 'frit', 'grog', 'jigger' and 'jolley'. Subsequent sections of the museum include a chronology of ceramics manufacture in the Ironbridge Gorge, an audio-visual devoted to the people who lived and worked in Coalport and in one of the two remaining bottle kilns a display of early products of the Company - a spectacular and glowing presentation of fine bone china; the finest display of Coalport on public display anywhere.

The archaeology section of the Friends of the Museum have been excavating at Coalport for two seasons, and together with historical research being done on the buildings themselves, it is shortly hoped to publish a book on the complicated development of this site and its products.

The museum is open 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. every day of the year, enquiries to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Ironbridge 3522.