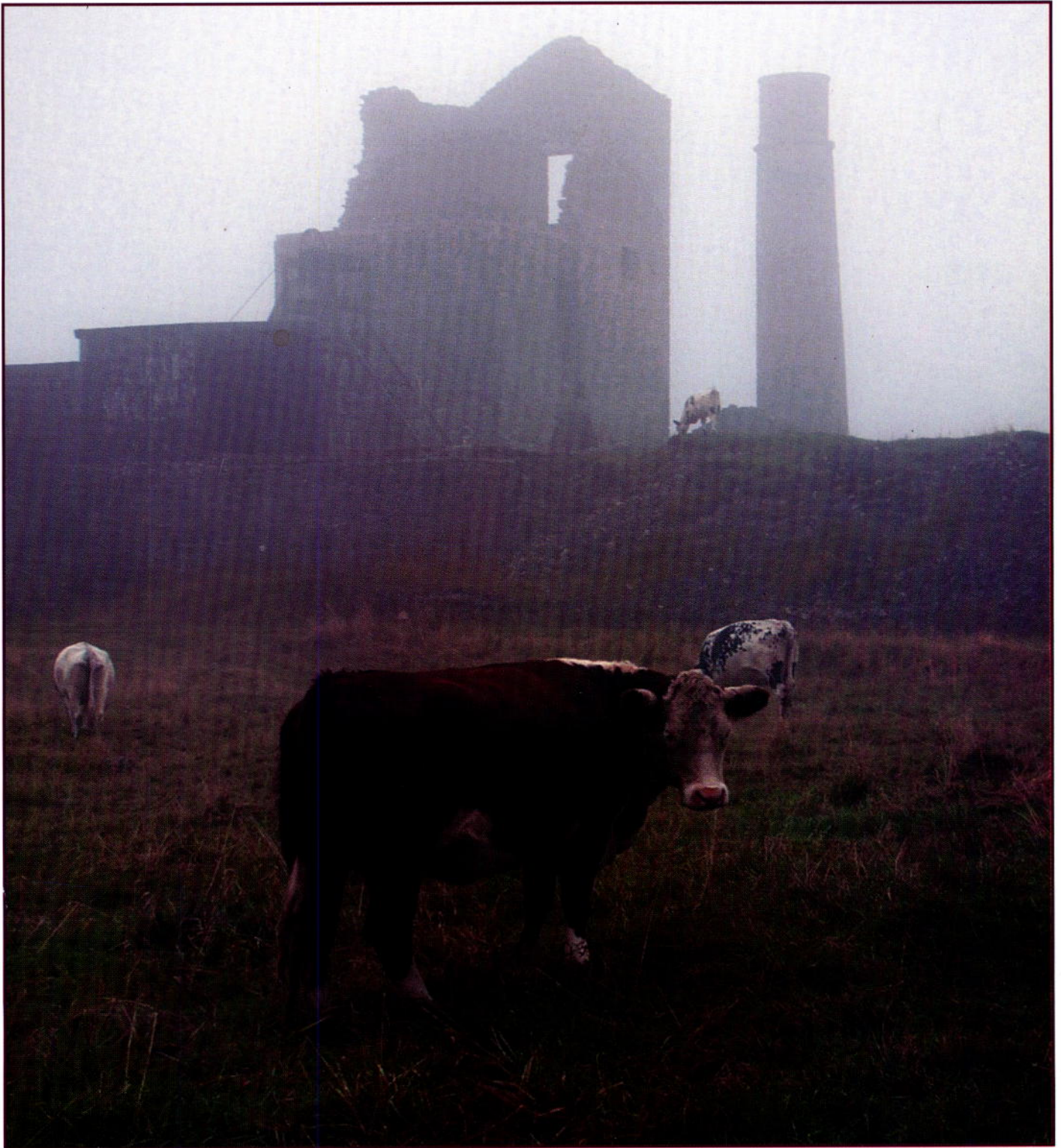


INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS

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THE BULLETIN OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

FREE TO MEMBERS OF AIA



AIA Annual Conference report • IA in South Georgia • battle of Saxby
limekiln excavations • Japanese mills • Farnham pottery • regional news



INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS 135 Winter 2005

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AIA Derbyshire Conference 2005

Although this was a Derbyshire conference, accommodation and proceedings were held over the border at Nottingham University on 2-8 September. Mark Sissons, Ian Mitchell and fellow members of the Derbyshire IA Society deserve our deepest thanks, and not forgetting Tony Parkes and Michael Messenger for their organisational skills. Thanks also to John Brown for contributions to this report. We look forward to the Isle of Man in 2006.

Roger Ford

The pre-conference seminar which concerned IA in the National Parks took place during the day of Friday 2 September. The seminar revealed the very positive work now being undertaken by archaeologists from the National Parks, National Trust, English Heritage and other bodies, and a report will be included in the next issue of *IA News*. The main conference started in the evening when delegates were welcomed by Marilyn Palmer, Professor of Industrial Archaeology at Leicester University and Chairman of AIA, before Ian Mitchell gave an overview of the IA of Derbyshire, mentioning the main sites to be visited during the week. Two members' contributions followed: Derek Brumhead on the New Mills site which features the millennium walkway through the gorge, and Barry Hood on the Otago gold field in New Zealand, with particular attention to sites along the Karawarau Gorge.

Saturday commenced with a lecture by Mike Kaye on the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, which was designated in 2001 and extends from Derby to Matlock Bath. He first defined the conditions attached to this designation, and all

the criteria required to obtain listing – not only for IA sites but also for such places as the Taj Mahal. There are now 812 in total, and the UK has five of the 33 industrial sites. Peter Billson spoke on Derby's textile mills, with particular reference to Rykneild Mills, now being adaptively re-used for accommodation. Finally, Ian Thomas of the National Stone Centre talked on Derbyshire's extractive industries. These include Limestone and annual limestone output is now 25 million tons. Also mentioned were gritstones, sandstone quarries, stone slate quarries (for roofing), sand and gravel extraction, fluorspar, blue john and lead. Derbyshire had huge coal measures, most of which have been removed by open-casting, along with ironstone and pottery clay.

After lunch, in brilliant sunshine, delegates had the choice of three visits: Swadlincote potteries, Belper mills and Strutt housing, or Heage windmill and Morley Park ironworks. The main attraction on the Swadlincote trip was Sharpe's Pottery, which closed in 1967 after manufacturing on various sites since 1821. Their main market from the 1860s was water closets and sewerage systems (they supplied Thomas Crapper & Co.). The source of the clay was from the coal seams. Listed bottle kilns were also seen at Gresley Common.

The Belper trip featured Jedediah Strutt's fireproof North Mill of 1804, part of the World Heritage site, and listed Grade 1. The great weir complex of 1796/7 originally powered the mills here. In striking contrast alongside is the East Mill of 1912. Synthetic yarn production (with electricity) only finished at the beginning of this year at Belper, in a 1960s mill. The party was guided around Strutt's workers' housing which dates from the 1790s.



Long Row in Strutt's village at Belper, with terrace of stone houses dating from 1792-3

Photo: Peter Stanier

COVER PICTURE

A non-AIA member admires a misty Magpie Mine during the conference visit to Derbyshire (see page 4)
Photo: Michael Messenger



On the guided tour around Jedediah Strutt's mill village at Belper

Photo: Peter Stanier



Trent lock at the end of the Erewash Canal

Photo: Michael Messenger



Exploring the jungle at Summerley, where most of the 48 coke ovens are intact

Photo: Steve Dewhirst

Heage windmill, erected in 1792, has been superbly restored from an empty shell. In 1995 the county council hatched a plan to restore the mill to working order, at a cost of around £400,000 with grants from HLF, WREN and EH, and in 2004 grain was again milled after an 80-year lapse. Morley Park ironworks features two fairly complete blast furnaces, well vitrified, now standing on a prominent hillock because the entire area around has been open-casted.

After the conference dinner the AIA Awards were presented including publication awards for the Staffordshire IA Society's journal and the Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology's gazetteer of sites. Unfortunately, the main fieldwork and recording winners were unable to be at the conference to receive their award, but the initiative award was presented to the Norfolk IA Society for their work on the production of Thermos flasks in Thetford, and the student award to a Birkbeck College adult education class for their work on an Easton & Amos steam engine and its associated equipment on a model farm at Wrotham Park near Potter's Bar in Hertfordshire.

On the Sunday morning the initiative and student fieldwork award winners gave short talks on their recording work on the 1964 Thermos factory and the Wrotham Park engine. These were followed by Keith Falconer who summarised current developments by English Heritage, whose recent acquisitions include Ditherington flax mill at Shrewsbury, the block mills at Portsmouth dockyard, and Chatterley Whitfield colliery. English Heritage is also involved with diluting the barmy mass demolition policies of the government, and the creation of a conservation area in Birmingham's jewellery quarter to encourage regeneration.

There followed the AGM of the Association, with the election of Council officers, a presentation of the future strategy from Barry Hood, Secretary, and a report on finances by Treasurer Richard Hartree. Dates for next year include the Ironbridge weekend, on 8-9 April; AIA Alsace trip, April 24-29; AIA-sponsored Brunel 2006 celebrations in Bristol 3-9 July; and the annual conference on the Isle of Man, 9-10 September, with the next AGM set for 10 September 2006.

Dr Mike Nevell concluded the morning by delivering the Rolt Memorial Lecture entitled 'Industrial Archaeology or the Archaeology of the Industrial Period? Recent Trends in Industrial Archaeology Research'. The essential theme was the need for many industrial archaeologists to move away from the study of processes to the wider awareness of the place of any particular industry within its social and landscape environment. Mike gave us many illustrations of the new approach to industrial archaeology, and recommended a number of books that incorporate the new research. There ended the official conference.

That afternoon one trip visited Derby's 1839 roundhouse (so small by later standards), then a walk over the station (rebuilt to 'supermarket style' in 1985), followed by a coach tour of various railway sites around the city, including the