

Association for Industrial Archaeology 2016 Conference Telford Tour Programme

Saturday 10th September 11 am to 1 pm

Tour A: Apley Estate Farm

West Midlands ironmaster William Orme Foster acquired Apley Hall estate in 1867 and set about introducing the latest technology in the house and on the estate. His model farm buildings, dating from 1875, have some remains of the original steam power system and some spectacular laminated timber roof structures. These farm buildings are still in use (so please note the site is likely to be muddy) and this is a unique opportunity to see a little-known example of Victorian 'high farming'.



Tour B: Broseley Pipeworks



When museums re-interpret old factories to the public they invariably clean them up and sanitise them. At the clay tobacco Pipeworks this has been resisted and it makes the Broseley site the most rewarding of all the Ironbridge museums. There are still pencil notes on the walls, uneven surfaces in the yard and dangling (though now disused) electrical wiring to the trial kiln. A gem in the museum is 1938 film footage of pipe-making. This was the last surviving clay tobacco pipe factory of what was once a major industry for Broseley which started back in the early 1600s. Production hung on until 1957 when the buildings and their contents were abandoned, ultimately to be opened as a museum in 1996. Steep and narrow stairs.

www.ironbridge.org.uk/our-attractions/broseley-pipeworks

Tour C: Wappenshall Canal Basin

Wappenshall Junction, north of Wellington, is where the Newport branch of the Birmingham & Liverpool Junction Canal (later the Shropshire Union) met the Shrewsbury Canal. From its opening in February 1835, large quantities of goods to and from the East Shropshire coalfield were handled here. Two brick warehouses survive, including one in which boats were loaded or unloaded from above, with an elegant stone bridge alongside. The complex is being restored by the Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust, with the aid of an AIA Restoration Grant, as part of their long-term aim to re-build the entire waterway from Norbury Junction to Ditherington Flaxmill Maltings and beyond to Shrewsbury.

www.cms.snct.co.uk/



Sunday 11th September 1 pm to 6 pm

Tour D: Lilleshall Limestone Mining Landscape



Limestone was quarried and mined at Lilleshall until 1862. As well as being burnt for use as agricultural lime, considerable quantities were used in iron-making. The output from the mines was carried on the privately-owned Donnington Wood Canal, which was completed in 1768, only seven years after the pioneering Bridgewater Canal. The walk will include Pitchcroft mine, where the Shropshire Caving and Mining club have been undertaking archaeological investigations. We will then pass remains of the canal and view the extensive open quarries and lime kilns.

<http://shropshirehistory.com/mining/lilleshall.htm>

Tour E: Ditherington Flaxmill Maltings, Shrewsbury

Leeds flax spinner John Marshall went into partnership with the Benyon Brothers of Shrewsbury to build a flax spinning mill in the town, which opened in 1797. Having seen their Leeds mill destroyed by fire the year before, the partners were keen to make their new mill as fire-resistant as possible and the result was the world's first large fully iron-framed building. The site became a maltings in 1897 but such is the importance of the early buildings on the site that, after the maltings closed, they were listed Grade 1 and then taken into the ownership of English Heritage in 2005. The first phase of restoration, which included the creation of a visitor centre, was completed in 2015. This site is the subject of the Rolt lecture at this conference. Our tour will take us into many of the historic buildings which are not normally open to the public. This will involve a number of steep narrow staircases. On the way back to Telford, we hope to stop at the Kynnersley Arms, Leighton, to view the remains of the charcoal-fuelled blast furnace.



www.flaxmill-maltings.co.uk/

Tour F: RAF Museum, Cosford



There are four hangars with over 70 aircraft but by far the most exciting one is the Cold War Gallery, with planes suspended in dramatic flight attitude from the roof. It is housed in a landmark modern building which opened in 2007 costing £12.5m. The highlight of the tour is a behind-the-scenes visit to the Conservation Centre to see work in progress on exhibits destined to be displayed here at Cosford or at the sister museum in Hendon. Currently the main project is the Dornier 17 bomber that was recovered from the sea bed.

www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/

Monday 12th September 9 am to 6.15 pm

Tour G: Burleigh Pottery, Middleport, Cheddleton Flint Mill and Mill Meece Pumping Station

Burgess & Leigh's model factory at Middleport opened in 1889 by the Trent & Mersey Canal. With its surviving bottle ovens and steam engine much of the current ceramic tableware production still follows the techniques of 100 years ago and uses original moulds and patterns. Lunch at Middleport is included in the tour.

Cheddleton Flint Mill alongside the Caldon Canal, was probably built by James Brindley around 1760 to supply the potteries. Still in working order, two low breast wheels drive the edge runners that grind the flint in water, thus keeping the dust down.

On the way back we visit the wonderful horizontal compound tandem rotary steam pumping engines of 1914 at Mill Meece, a pumping station that supplied Stafford with water. They are regularly steamed, though in late 2015 the boilers were under repair, which in itself was fascinating to see.



www.burleigh.co.uk www.cheddletonflintmill.com/ www.millmeecepumpingstation.co.uk

Tour H: Museum of Carpet, Kidderminster and Drakelow Tunnels

Kidderminster was Britain's foremost centre for carpet manufacture for almost 200 years and the industry survives to this day. Our visit to this museum, which opened in 2012, will include a presentation about the industry, a tour of the galleries and demonstrations of carpet weaving machinery. We will then travel to the



nearby terminus of the Severn Valley Railway, with its very authentic-looking station buildings, built in the 1980s. The station site and surrounding area provide a number of options for lunch (not included in the cost of the tour). There will also be an opportunity to visit the separate Kidderminster Railway Museum.

After lunch, we will visit Drakelow Tunnels, a former secret underground military complex built 1941-2 as a shadow factory for the Rover car company, and later used as a Government nuclear bunker.

www.museumofcarpet.org/ www.drakelow-tunnels.co.uk/

Tuesday 13th September 9 am to 5.30 pm

Tour I: Birmingham Jewellery Quarter

Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter is Europe's largest concentration of businesses involved in the Jewellery trade and produces around 40% of all of the jewellery made in the UK. Our visit will include a guided walking tour to view the dense concentration of converted houses, factories and specialist buildings associated with the jewellery and metalworking trades. We will visit Newman Brothers Coffin Works, recently restored and opened as a museum by the Birmingham Conservation Trust. This opened in 1894 and made coffin furniture, originally in solid brass, electro-brass, silver plate and nickel plate, and latterly from resins with oxy-silver, copper and bronze finishes; they also produced shrouds. Of particular interest is the drop stamp shop with a battery of four drop stamps and a goods hoist.

Also on the itinerary is the JW Evans Silverworks, one of the most complete surviving historic factories in the Jewellery Quarter, which was recently carefully restored by English Heritage as a time capsule site. This is probably the best preserved manufactory operating from former domestic premises in the Jewellery Quarter. Delegates will be free to explore the area's numerous pubs, cafés and other options for lunch (not included in the price of the tour).



www.coffinworks.org www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/j-w-evans-silver-factory/

Tour J1: Aga Rangemaster Foundry, Coalbrookdale and Snailbeach Lead Mine surface walk

Tour J2: Aga Foundry and Snailbeach Mine underground trip



Gustaf Dalen invented the Aga cooker in 1922 and the Coalbrookdale Company started manufacturing them under licence in 1932. This is a rare opportunity to visit a working foundry and see iron casting on a site where this activity has been carried out without a break for 307 years. Protective clothing and footwear will be provided. Numbers are strictly limited to 30, so book early.

After the foundry tour, we will travel to the Stiperstones Inn, Snailbeach for lunch (included in the price) and then we will tour the remains of

Snailbeach lead mine. This was the largest lead mine in Shropshire and it is reputed to have yielded the greatest volume of lead per acre of any mine in Europe. Later mining concentrated on barytes, with underground working ceasing in 1955. The surface buildings are the most complete in Shropshire and possibly the country. Note that you will need to select one of the two tour options.

Tour J1 will comprise a tour of the surface remains and a short walk in to Day Level to view the shaft. There will also be a visit to the engine shed of the Snailbeach District Railway which is now used to store mining artifacts. Warm clothing and stout shoes are required.

Tour J2 will comprise a shorter surface tour including the engine shed, with a walk into Roberts Level to view the later underground workings. The walk is level with a low roof in a few places; warm clothing is required. However, there is some standing water so delegates will need to bring wellington boots.

<http://shropshiremines.org.uk/snailbeach/sbplan.htm>

Wednesday 14th September 9 am to 5.30 pm

Tour K: Thomas Telford's Roads and Canals

In England and Wales Thomas Telford's greatest legacy is the 'high speed' road from London to Holyhead, built between 1815 and 1830. As well as the two stunning aqueducts at Chirk and Pontcysyllte on the Ellesmere Canal, the visit also takes in the wonderful semi-circular weir of the Horseshoe Falls and some of the standardised milestones, tollhouses and tollgates. From the falls we travel along the Holyhead Road to the Waterloo Bridge at Betws-y-Coed for lunch at the Bridge Hotel (included in the cost) and then continue further westwards to Rhydlydan and finally Glyndyfrdwy. There the tour visits the station and its signal box, as well as a slate quarry tramway and rail transfer.



<http://transportheritage.com/find-heritage-locations.html?sobi2Task=sobi2Details&sobi2Id=499>

Tour L: Cleve Hills Industrial Landscape, Charlcombe Furnace and Wrickton Mill



At 530m Titterstone Cleve, the second highest hill in Shropshire, has been extensively worked for coal but the primary industry has been quarrying. We will visit Titterstone quarry near the summit, where there are extensive remains of road stone production, with substantial standing structures and superb views over the Shropshire countryside. Amongst the remains are early reinforced concrete bins, foundations of a gas producer plant, machine foundations and an incline which ran down to Bitterley exchange sidings. This visit will be followed by a walk of approximately 1 km through The Novers, a small concern located on the southern flank of the hill, which mined and burned

limestone during the 19th century. There are remains of quarries, kilns and a tramway. The trip will also include a short walk into the drift mine.

Lunch (included in the price of the tour) will be at Mahorall Farm, a small-scale producer of cider. After lunch we will explore two water-powered sites on the River Rea which runs along the eastern flank of Brown and Titterstone Cleve hills. Wrickton Mill is a small 18th century corn mill with 19th century additions, which worked until the 1950s. It fell into disrepair but was restored to working condition during the 1980s. At nearby Charlcombe are the substantial remains of a charcoal-fuelled blast furnace, dating from the start of the 18th century. The site is currently quite overgrown, but Historic England plan to carry out some restoration in the near future.

The Titterstone Cleve is very exposed, with steep, uneven paths. Warm clothing and stout shoes or boots are essential.

<http://www.thecleehilltrust.co.uk/overview/>