

HMSNEWS

Historical Metallurgy Society
71 Spring 2009

Blast furnace excavations in Ironbridge

Paul Belford



Archaeologists excavating the remains of the 1840s boiler house at the Blists Hill blast furnace

In this 300th anniversary year of the development of coke smelting at Coalbrookdale, Ironbridge Archaeology are investigating aspects of the old furnace. This was built in 1658, was famously converted to coke smelting in 1709 and again enlarged in 1777 for casting the Iron Bridge. Work began late last year in advance of a project to refurbish the cover building that was installed under the Directorship of Sir Neil Cossons. New walkways and interpretation are planned to enable easier access, and this has been preceded by a series of archaeological trial holes. As well as trying to investigate the areas surrounding the furnace stack, this has provided the opportunity to look for the first time at the effect on the archaeology of previous conservation work – some of it quite brutal – in the 1950s and early 1980s. In fact much of the original clearance of the site had impacted quite severely on the archaeology, with drains and footings put through eighteenth century floor levels, and walls being levelled. Despite this some interesting discoveries were made. These included the upper parts of walls associated with the tailrace, as well as an early culvert which may have been part of the drainage system for the casting area. Unfortunately the extent of the surrounding buildings was not easily determined. No securely stratified metallurgical samples were recovered either – hopes of finding Abraham Darby's first cooking pot in situ were sadly not realised!

Meanwhile, in an unrelated project, work has recently begun on uncovering the remains of one of the mid-19th century boiler houses associated with the Blists Hill blast furnaces. This has come about as a result of the large-scale redevelopments on Blists Hill to improve the site with new streets, railway, inclined plane and improvements to the green. This latter project has entailed the re-landscaping of the existing fairground site, and the reduced level has exposed some of the footings of the boiler house. This was built in c.1840 and went out of use in 1912, but is very poorly documented. These excavations are therefore a good opportunity to record the extant remains and to try and understand the original configuration and layout of the site.

On top of this, planning is well advanced for the Fe09 conference, which will take place from June 3rd to June 7th this year. A flyer is enclosed with this newsletter. We have a wide range of interesting papers dealing with all aspects of metallurgy and its impact on society and the environment from the middle ages through to the 20th century. We very much hope you can come along and join other HMS members at this exciting event.

— IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ —

The Membership Secretary respectfully requests that all members please **check** the label on the invoice which gives the **correct amount** required to maintain membership of the Historical Metallurgy Society. If you are living in the UK it would be helpful if you would email or write me prior to changing the category next to your membership number e.g. FAM/OVS/ORD/STU/RET. This will ensure that I send out the correct details. Would overseas members please note that Retired Category does not apply. The current subscription is still £20 per annum. Would overseas members who pay using

It is also very important that those paying by credit card write the address to which your card is registered if you have your work address on the address label to which newsletters, journals and invoices are sent. This will probably be your home address. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

In an effort to avoid unnecessary expenditure the membership secretary is making increasing use of email to resolve membership issues. Unfortunately many members' email addresses appear to be out of date. Would all members please email lesley@mcowell.flyer.co.uk with the SUBJECT: Address, so that our records are up-to date.

Lesley-Ann Cowell — Membership Secretary

Iron Slag and bloomeries in the Chilterns

John Morris

In recent years a number of woods in the Chilterns, a heavily wooded Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north west of London, have been found to contain iron waste from small scale smelting or iron working activities. Most of these finds are just lying on the woodland floor in amongst the leaf litter. Some are thought to date back to the Iron Age and Roman period. The reason they are in woods is that perhaps as much as 60 tonnes of wood was needed to smelt a tonne of iron ore. The wood had to be converted to charcoal first so that it would burn hot enough to produce bloomery iron.



Enclosure bank and ditch near Great Missenden, Bucks

At the time of the Domesday Book in 1086 the Chilterns are thought to have been the second most densely wooded part of England after the Weald. Even today the Chilterns has over 20% woodland cover and a high proportion of the surviving woods are ancient, having been continuously wooded for at least the last 400 years. Most of these woods are on the poorer land on the hilltops on clay with flint soils that overlie the chalk. Beech has been the dominant tree for hundreds of years. Chiltern woods were also a major supplier of firewood to London in medieval times, using the River Thames to transport the fuel down river to the city. Many woods have remained relatively undisturbed so archaeological preservation is good but under recorded.

So why was iron produced in the Chilterns? It was much easier to bring the iron ore to the wood for it to be worked than to carry bulky and friable charcoal to the iron. Clay for the furnaces was also readily available in the Chilterns. The iron slag discovered so far seems to date from the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, although it is probable that some is early medieval.

Some of the iron slag found in Pigotts Wood, north of High Wycombe, Bucks, for example, still has the baked red clay lining from the bloomery attached to it; while other pieces are heavy fragments of the once molten

slag. Another site nearby is in the woods owned by the National Trust at Bradenham. Some of this slag seems to be associated with medieval pottery but other finds here may be Romano-British.

A site with iron slag found within an old enclosure in Common Wood near Penn, Bucks, has had the enclosure ditch excavated by the Chess Valley Archaeological Society. They found Roman pottery fragments in the fill of the ditch and a bronze age spear was found nearby. So this is likely to be an early site for iron working.



Woodland enclosure bank and ditch near Little Missenden, Bucks

Recent information from the records of the county archaeologists of Bucks, Herts, Beds and Oxon on the known distribution of iron slag sites in the Chilterns indicates that there are 9 sites in Bulbourne/Ashridge area of Hertfordshire (of 12 sites known in the county), 35 sites in Bucks, mainly north and east of High Wycombe. These sites are often in woodlands and some are linked to enclosures in the Wye and Misbourne valleys. A few sites are known in Bedfordshire near Dunstable (a Roman town), but there are no known sites (yet) in the Oxfordshire Chilterns.

Two Roman roads cut through the Chilterns, Watling Street (now the A5) ran from St Albans to Dunstable and Akeman Street (was the A41) in the Bulbourne Valley from Tring to Berkhamsted.

A possible source for the iron is from the Greensand ridge which is just a few miles north of the Chilterns. Medieval mines are known from the Leighton Buzzard (Beds) area, which is within easy reach of the Bulbourne valley. There may perhaps also have been superficial deposits in the Chilterns overlying the chalk or in the river valleys.

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Trostre Works Cottage and Industrial Museum

Keith E. Morgan

The Trostre Works Cottage and Industrial Museum was born out an idea conceived when the construction of Trostre Works was started by The Steel Company of Wales Ltd following its formation in 1947.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, there was a steady increase in consumer demand for tinsplate throughout the world. The tinsplate industry in the UK had been built up in works of the old pack-mill type where tinsplate was produced from steel slabs and manufactured in cut sheet form and sold in packs. For nearly two centuries, this method of manufacture had established the tinsplate trade as a traditional one for South Wales. For the South Wales tinsplate industry to compete successfully in world markets, modern methods would have to be employed resulting in the creation of The Steel Company of Wales Ltd on 2 May 1947.

The continuous hot strip mill for producing coiled sheet steel, revolutionised the industry when it was developed in the United States. Here, the first continuous 4-high strip mill started operation as early as 1926. It is superior, not only in speed of production but also in uniformity and control of product as well as in operational economy. It was first introduced to Britain at Ebbw Vale Works, South Wales in 1938, but the advent of the Second World War prohibited any further expansion until after the war when The Steel Company of Wales Ltd had two continuous mills built in South Wales at Port Talbot and Llanelli.

Concurrent with the commencement of the building of Trostre Works at Llanelli in August 1947, a great deal of thought was given by the management as to the reception of visitors to the works when it came into operation. Customers and other important visitors had to be catered for in a manner that would be in keeping with one of the world's most up-to-date tinsplate works. Rather than have a modern purpose designed building erected to satisfy this requirement, Mr J F S Gazard, Assistant General Manager of The Steel Company of Wales Ltd, Tinsplate Division, hit upon the idea of using one of the existing farmhouses that were now derelict on what was a green field site. Maes-ar-Ddafen fach (small) farmhouse had fortunately avoided demolition and was close enough to the works and the General Offices to be considered for this purpose. Responsibility for the project was vested in Mr Walter Hodges, Head of the Estates Department. After visiting the Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagan's, Cardiff and carrying out detailed research in a number of libraries, he undertook with great enthusiasm, the task of converting the farmhouse

and its out buildings, into an 18th Century Welsh Cottage.

Restoration

Built before 1787, by 1947 only the 2ft thick walls remained. After first ensuring that the structure was basically sound, Mr Hodges set about restoring the building. This he did using materials that, wherever possible, closely matched the originals. Most of the old timber that was used to replace the joists and roof supports, was recovered appropriately from the former South Wales Tinsplate Works at Llanelli. This works had closed in 1941 after an existence of nearly 70 years. In a like manner, other timber that was used to provide beams for fireplace lintels, came from old tinsplate works in the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. Decoration and finishing touches to the building, both inside and out, were all carefully planned and executed to conform to tradition. The South Wales Electricity Board undertook to wire the building in a special manner to ensure that it did not interfere with the atmosphere which had been created.

The roof was thatched in the traditional manner and the external walls treated and painted pink. In the old days, the building would have been given a traditional coat of lime-wash to act as a pesticide to which pig or ox blood would have been added to give such a distinctive colour.

Finally, a search was made for antique Welsh furniture, china, paintings and other household commodities of bygone days to furnish the cottage. By August 1957, the work was completed. What had once been a derelict farmhouse had been transformed into the Trostre Works Cottage and Industrial Museum as we more or less see it today.



Trostre Works Cottage and Industrial Museum

Museums and Exhibits

While the reconstruction was proceeding, a second idea occurred to Mr Gazard for further improving the interest in the cottage. For many years he had been an ardent collector of old records and equipment of the tinsplate industry and had accumulated a fine collection. Never having had a real opportunity to display these relics, he decided to offer them for exhibition at the Cottage and to extend the hunt for even more. The Museum on the ground floor was arranged to house models and heavy exhibits whilst that on the first floor was designed as a document archive.

Of the models, one of the most impressive is a working model of a cross compound steam engine, which used to drive two mills in the Hot Rolling Department of the Eaglesbush Pack-mill Style Tinsplate Works at Neath. The model depicts this section of the works as it was in 1936 and is complete with flywheel, roughing and finishing furnaces as well as doubling and finishing shears. Constructed from scrap material to a scale of 1:12 by the late Mr Phil R Gillard during the time he was a tin millman at the works, it took seven years of his spare time to complete. There is also a half-inch scale model of a single cylinder 600HP Uniflow steam engine, which used to be at R T Mills, Llanelli. This model was constructed by Mr Walter Hopkins, a doubler who was employed in the mill department of the works. Other items also displayed include prototype models and equipment that was used in the trade in bygone days. The document archive contains many examples of photographs, maps, drawings, deeds and paintings concerning various old-type pack-mill works.

Outside in the garden of the cottage, heavier items of equipment have been erected to preserve them for posterity. These include a complete old-type two-high pack-mill, a 'Millbrook' rotary pickling machine, a small size wrought iron annealing cover and stand, a hand annealing charger and a single sweep 'Abercarn' type tinpot. There are also a number of items on display such as trolleys, tin moulds and boshes.

The exhibits were extensively refurbished in 2000 under the guidance of the present curator.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements are duly paid to Corus Packaging Plus, Trostre Works, Lanelli, for the photographs used and permission to publish this article.

Arrangements for Visits

The Cottage forms an integral and important part of the business function of Corus Packaging Plus at Trostre

Works. It is used both as a Customer/ Visitor Venue and as a Business/Conference Centre. As such, the Cottage facility is strictly private, but visits can be arranged. For requests to visit the Trostre Works Cottage & Industrial Museum, please contact Josie Pennino Administration Officer, Administration Department, Corus Packaging Plus, Trostre Works, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA14 9SD. Tel +44 (0) 1554 712434, email: josie.pennino@corusgroup.com

Keith E Morgan
Curator of the Trostre Works Cottage & Industrial Museum of Corus Packaging Plus, Trostre Works, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire

HMS Spring meeting 2009 **Urban archaeometallurgy: historical metallurgy in towns and cities** 21st February 2009

Carlotta Gardner

The spring meeting, held at The Institute of Archaeology and organised by Marcos Marinón-Torres, provided an opportunity to gain an insight into the current research regarding urban archaeometallurgy. The ten talks of the day showed the great variety of evidence found at urban metal working sites across the world and the large number of different approaches to the analysis and interpretation of the materials and sites. Below are some of my personal highlights of the day.

Christopher Lagen opened the days talks with a summary of his findings from his MSc research on medieval pewter, here he discussed the social role of pewter throughout the period, it's changing composition and it's rarity in the archaeological record.

The puzzling case of the 'modern laboratory' found near-by to the town of Kapfenberg, Austria was presented by Marcos Marinón-Torres. A number of different explanations were given for the unusual site, located in a gallery within a hill, and finally the conclusion that had been reached was explained; somebody (possibly a miner) steeling ores and crudely extracting silver, in a secluded location, to sell on for profit.

An interesting method to approaching a possible metal working site was discussed by Adi Eliyahu-Behar. In this talk Adi explained how a casting pit was identified using a range of techniques and artefact analysis including portable XRF and FTIR analysis of sediments.

The seven other talks given by Justine Bayley, Eleanor Blakelock, Geoff Egan, Myrto Georgakopoulou, Wenli Zhou, Ignacio Montero and Ziad el Murr were all very interesting and well received by a warm and friendly audience who asked numerous questions and who also offered possible explanations for questions addressed by the presenters.

World of Iron Conference 2009

Brian Dolan

The term 'international', much like the phrase 'interdisciplinary', is much abused by writers of conference materials. It is often a hollow boast, promising much but, in the end, delivering the usual faces, opinions and discussions. It is for this reason and many more that the 'World of Iron' conference, from the moment it was christened, must have provided an intimidating prospect to those charged with fulfilling the promise of its ambitious title. However, from its small beginnings in a 'simple conversation' over African and Jordanian slag samples between organisers Jane Humphris and Xander Veldhuijzen, the meeting more than met expectations; delivering an outstanding collection of presenters, delegates and topics.

Our venue for the week-long marathon of eight sessions, approximately sixty papers and around thirty-five posters was the Natural History Museum, London. Proceedings began on Sunday with a wine reception and registration for those delegates who had arrived early. A late start Monday morning allowed time for hanging posters, registration and the vagaries of London traffic. The co-incidence of the conference with the school holidays meant large queues at the door and conference delegates could have been forgiven for feeling like VIPs sauntering to the top of the line, flashing their WIC tags, and being ushered straight past museum security.

The conference was opened by Professor Thilo Rehren with help from Jane and Xander. We were reminded of the scope of the conference as well as the staggering diversity of the evidence for ironworking around the world. We were also informed of an alternative discussion format for the conference. Special extra-long discussion periods were held at the end of every thematic session (rather than after each presentation). Discussion was started with comments from the chair and, importantly, all contributions were recorded with a view to integrating them in some way into the discussion chapters of the conference proceedings.

There were some difficulties as the week went on reminding people to repeat their names and to wait for the microphone but the idea certainly has some merit as an attempt to capture the dynamism of the conference in

the publication. How well it will work in practice when the chapters come to be written, particularly considering the time and effort involved in reviewing and making intelligible the recorded material, remains to be seen and will be an un-enviable task. Following the opening words we broke for lunch, during which we were treated to an optional video of a recent ethno-experimental iron smelt in Rwanda.



Delegates to World of Iron Conference enjoying the wine reception at the Natural History Museum

Considering the large numbers of presentations and the space available here it would be impossible, not to mention tedious, to detail each in turn or even to detail all of the highlights. Instead a quick tour through the various sessions and discussions must suffice, with apologies for necessary brevity. Lunch was followed by the first thematic session, on Africa, which was chaired by Professor Bertram Mapunda and covered an interesting range of archaeological and ethnographic material as well as a number of different regions and periods. The dating of the earliest African ironworking and the problems associated with radiocarbon dates were discussed in detail and it would seem that some work needs to be done in this area to clarify the origins of African iron technology.

We were treated to two excellent sessions on Tuesday. The first focused on the Indian subcontinent and was chaired Dr Sharada Srinivasan. Both the presentations and the discussions gave a clear sense of the enormous quantity of material waiting to be studied in India and also of the imminent danger of destruction of a large part of this archaeological and ethnographic resource. Other issues identified include the historic research obsession with wootz steel and, again, the problem of dating very early ironworking.

Following lunch and a slideshow of recent smelting in Sri Lanka the 'Invention, innovation and inspiration' session began, chaired by Dr. Gill Juleff. This was one of the most interesting and diverse sessions and included a very entertaining live musical performance

by Dr. Peter Halkon as part of his presentation on perceptions of smiths in north-western Europe. Dr. Juleff, in her introduction to the discussion noted the 'refreshing lack of phase diagrams' at the conference that was a tribute to the clear style of all the presentations and the vibrant and broad ideas put forward in the session. Tuesday ended with a welcome wine reception provided by the conference sponsor Tata Steel and the buzz of the final session's discussions was continued in more informal and enjoyable surroundings.

Wednesday started off with a session on west and central Asia chaired by Professor Zid Al Saad. Many of the papers had more methodological and scientific slants than previous sessions and discussion focused on some of the more technical aspects of the various papers. The afternoon session was on theoretical approaches to technology and was chaired by the distinguished theoretician Dr. Pierre Lemonnier. This was a fascinating session with presentations proposing a variety of approaches to theorising ironworking and frameworks for engaging with concepts such as knowledge transfer, sociocultural change and ethnographic analogy.

The penultimate day started with the last regional session, focusing on East Asia and chaired by Professor Han Rubin. What was striking from this session was the exceptional nature of early iron technologies in this part of the world and the very different questions being asked of the archaeological material when compared with the other regions represented at the conference. Professor Vincent Serneels chaired the final session of the day on scientific approaches to technology following an unscheduled performance of a traditional Indian dance: 'The singing pillars of Hampi' by Dr. Sharada Srinivasan. The techniques presented including a fascinating paper on geoprospection by Dr. Christopher Carey and work on slag provenance by Dr. Arne JouttiJärvi showed the potential of current and future scientific research on ironworking.

The final day was a short one with only one session, chaired by Professor Don Wagner, on 'Environmental Considerations'. This highlighted the significant role that biological resources played in ironworking as well as the impact or lack thereof of ironworking on local environments. As usual, during the discussion the issue of calculating yields and required wood/charcoal caused some debate and it would appear to be an issue that is far from being resolved.

The meeting was a huge success and very well run. Of particular merit was the diversity of presenters and delegates, drawn from across the globe and facilitated through generous bursaries funded by the conferences generous donors. I look forward with interest to timely

publication of the proceedings, a publication that will inevitably become a significant resource for future iron researchers across the globe.



Finding the Familiar: Dealing with artefacts of the Modern Age

University of Sheffield, Humanities Research Institute
Saturday 9th May 2009

You are invited to attend a workshop hosted by ARCUS and the Finds Research Group at the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield on Saturday 9th May.

- 9.30 Tea/Coffee
- 10.00 *Welcome*
Claire Coulter, ARCUS
- 10.05 *Placing U.K. assemblages in an international context*
Alasdair Brooks, Oxford East
- 10.30 *Sheffield and beyond: A selection of small finds*
Linzi Harvey, ARCUS
- 10.55 *A Bottle Collector's Perspective*
- 11.20 *Plastics last forever*
Colin Williamson, Historical Plastics Society
- 11.45 Lunch & Guided Walks around Sheffield's Industrial Heritage
- 13.00 *Case Studies from London Sites*
Marit Gaimster, PCA London
- 13.25 *The Paper Chase: Artefact or Document?*
Oliver Jessop, ARCUS
- 13.50 *Worked Bone: Remnants of Sheffield's Cutlery Industry*
Joan Unwin, The Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire
- 14.15 *A Museum Case Study*
Pauline Webb, Museum of Industry and Science, Manchester
- 14.30 Afternoon tea and coffee
- 14.45 *Discussion: Setting up a Finds Group for the Modern Period*
Chaired by Sarah May, English Heritage

In recent years, there has been an increase in archaeological work on sites dated to the late 19th and 20th century. As post excavation specialists, we deal with relatively recent classes of material, often in large quantities from an era of mass production. Despite growing interest in this period, there has been little research on finds with few guidelines to follow and a distinct lack of specialists available to look at some of the material. This workshop will offer an opportunity to discuss some of these issues.

There will be a range of speakers from commercial units, societies and museums. Some will draw on the North American and Australian experience while others will look at various material types found across Britain. A speaker from the Historical Plastics Society will address the question of what we can learn from plastics. At the end of the day, there will be an open discussion for those working with material from this period with a view to setting up a research and support group.

How to get there

www.hrionline.ac.uk/location/map.html

Maps are available at

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/visitors/mapsandtravel>

For further information about the meeting, please contact Claire Coulter at ARCUS (c.coulter@sheffield.ac.uk). The Finds Research Group is handling all registration for the meeting. Please contact Quita Mould at quita@onetel.com to register. Register early as places are limited.

Symposium on the Metallurgy of the European Iron Age 2010

The Symposium on the Metallurgy of the European Iron Age will take place at the Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen, in Mannheim, Germany from 20-22 April 2010.

Scope and aim of the conference

Iron Age societies in Europe are strongly associated with the historical Celts who populated Europe from Spain to Asia Minor and from the British Isles to Italy temporarily. This geographical and chronological outline should be the emphasis of this conference to illuminate the use, the production and the significance of various metals within different parts of the Celtic world. Nevertheless, as technological traditions of the beginning of the first millennium BC remained unchanged and as the Roman conquest did cause technological changes; it is obvious that these periods will also be highlighted. Since there is substantial archaeological evidence for the interaction between the Celts and the Mediterranean world and also with its neighbouring regions, regional and chronological

differences in the use of metals should become apparent. Local ore mining and extractive metallurgy are regularly underestimated during this period and the participants will have the opportunity to open new vistas or certifying established views.

It is the aim of the conference to bridge current scientific research on Iron Age metallurgy in different countries, to correct and to update our knowledge of European Iron Age metallurgy.

Language of the Symposium

The official language of the Symposium will be English.

Acceptance of papers

The conference should provide an overview of recent and long-time research in all of Europe.

- We would like to have a balance between countries, metals and periods. Speakers will have enough time to present their results and there should be enough time for discussions. Therefore, the number of lectures will be limited and there will be no parallel sessions, but the poster session will allow maximum participation.
- It is proposed to publish selected papers in a fully refereed volume of "Forschungen zur Archäometrie und Altertumswissenschaft".
- Abstracts of 200-400 words should be submitted to: SMEIA@cez-archaeometrie.de
- The abstracts should contain information about the location, the archaeological period and the materials which were investigated.

Please give the title followed by the author's name and title, affiliation, full postal address and email address.

Registration Fees

We look forward to welcoming you to the conference and hope to keep the registration fee at a moderate level in order to enable students and those without financial support of their institution to participate.

Key Dates

Deadline for submission of abstracts: June 15th, 2009
Notification of acceptance or rejection: July 30th, 2009
Deadline for registration and payment of reduced registration fee: December 15th, 2009

Organisers

Roland Schwab, Ernst Pernicka

Mail us at: SMEIA@cez-archaeometrie.de

Microscopy & Microanalysis 2009 July 26-30 Richmond, Virginia, USA

The annual Microscopy & Microanalysis meeting has proven to be the premier meeting for scientists, technologists, and students who use microscopy or microanalysis in their research. Microscopy & Microanalysis 2009 will be no exception! The 2009 Executive Program Committee, consisting of co-chairs from each of the participating societies, has assembled a diverse and comprehensive program that will address applications in both the biological and physical sciences as well as recent and emerging trends in instrumentation and techniques. Continued special emphasis has been placed on attracting fresh content and new faces. Several symposia have been designed to expand beyond the boundaries of the interdisciplinary nature of the Microscopy & Microanalysis meetings, reflecting the increasing need for collaborations between physical and biological sciences. This year there will be a symposia dedicated to archaeometallurgy.

P07 Archeometallurgy: Analyses and Characterization

George Vander Voort and Robert van Langh

Topics include:

- Optical Metallography, Ceramography and Petrography techniques to reveal structure
- Electron microscopy; X-ray techniques; NDT methods; Image analysis
- Traditional and non-traditional phase analyses
- Studies of materials of historical significance

Website: <http://mm2009.microscopy.org/>

National Association of Mining History Organisations Archaeological Landscapes Anniversary Conference 19-22 June 2009 Matlock, Bath

The National Association of Mining History Organisations will be holding its 2009 conference in Matlock this year when the theme will be Archaeological Landscapes. In addition there will be a day (Sunday 21 June) devoted to the future development of the preservation and interpretation of our mining heritage. This will assess the very considerable progress since we last specifically conferred some thirty years ago.

The full programme for the NAMHO meet is available on the web shortly You can reply by mail, or, if you wish, by e-mail to lynnwillies@hotmail.com.

Website: <http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/#>

Archives and Collections Committee News

The National Slag Collection

The NSC (see HMS News 67) has now been completely re-catalogued and re-boxed, and a catalogue of the collection (including links to photographs) is available from the HMS website.

The Tylecote Archive

The archive of Ronnie Tylecote papers and photographs was moved to Ironbridge last year and the committee is about to submit an application to Awards for All to fund the cataloguing of this important archive.

The Tylecote Slag Collection

The collection of slag and other metallurgical residues collected by Ronnie Tylecote was transferred to Ironbridge last year and the process of cataloguing this material to the same standard as the National Slag Collection is underway.

HMS Articles of Association

At last year's AGM some minor changes were made to the Society's Articles of Association. An electronic copy of the Articles is available on the Society's website (<http://hist-met.org/about.html>). If any member has difficulties accessing the electronic version they can request a printed version from the Secretary: David Cranstone, 267 Kells Lane, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 5HU.

While submissions to the Newsletter are welcome at any time, if you want to have something in a specific issue of the newsletter then it needs to be with me by the following deadlines.

1st March, 1st July 1st November
Contributions can be sent in any format (hand-written, typed, email, floppy disk, CD-ROM, etc).

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