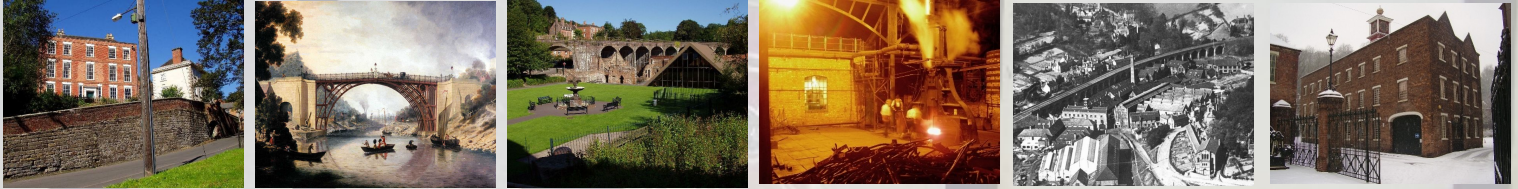


Ironbridge

BIRTHPLACE OF INDUSTRY

FE:09

COALBROOKDALE 300
3 - 7 JUNE 2009



A once-in-a-lifetime conference, showcasing international research, and debating priorities for archaeology, metallurgy, conservation, heritage and globalisation in the twenty-first century.

WHY?

The 300th anniversary of the first successful commercial use of coke to smelt iron is an appropriate moment to consider the impact of the industrial revolution on the modern world. It will be 50 years since the iconic blast furnace at the centre of the 'Birthplace of Industry' was rediscovered. That last half-century has seen a dramatic expansion of research into the processes of industrialisation, coupled with overwhelming public support for the conservation of its material remains. The wide range of disciplines involved – archaeology, history, metallurgy and conservation – have themselves developed in response to the challenges of understanding this often fragile heritage. Big themes and issues arise which have tremendous relevance to the world today: environmental change, social transformation, technological progress, leisure as industry and industry as leisure. This conference provides an exciting opportunity for inter-disciplinary debate, discussion and analysis, through which we can find ways to take forward the study of these important processes and bring our findings to bear on the reality of life today.

WHAT?

An international, inter-disciplinary conference over four days. There will be three main thematic blocks:

- **Abraham Darby's inheritance** : the metallurgy and technology of iron smelting, casting and forging from the sixteenth century to the present day – an alluring mix of historical research and present-day issues... with an emphasis on ground-breaking new research and approaches.
- **Historical archaeology of industry** : the past present and future of industrial archaeology and its place within the broader church of historical archaeology, social and environmental impacts of industrialisation... and the ongoing theoretical and methodological debates in the discipline.
- **Managing the industrial heritage** : heritage-led regeneration and adaptive re-use of buildings are success stories, but the loss of industrial and conservation skills continues... a global review of how we have managed so far and how we might go forward into the future.

There will also be a wide selection of tours and social events, and much opportunity for informal discussion, debate and networking.

WHO?

The conference will be hosted by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, with the close co-operation of the Association for Industrial Archaeology, the Historical Metallurgy Society, the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology, and the Newcomen Society. Key speakers will include Sir Neil Cossons, Professor Marilyn Palmer, Dr. Simon Thurley, Kate Clark, Barrie Trinder and David Crossley. Papers will be invited and encouraged from leading archaeologists, historians, conservation professionals, materials scientists and others.

WHERE?

The conference will take place in the historic Coalbrookdale complex, less than 200 metres from the iconic old furnace. Lectures and social events will be hosted in the former offices and engineering workshops of the Coalbrookdale Company established by Abraham Darby in 1709. Tours will include Coalbrookdale and a wide range of sites in Shropshire and the West Midlands.

Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Coach Road, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire, TF8 7DQ. 01952 435900.