

14. Communicating industrial heritage - networks and individual cases

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1. Introduction

This paper has the same themes as those of the workshop papers on “Urban Communication for a Qualified Cultural Tourism in Historical Cities”, but applies them to industrial heritage. Industrial heritage sites have become major attractions at a time when much industry has left the cities. Appropriate communication at all levels – including signage – is therefore indispensable to attracting visitors; as such sites are often located on the periphery of cities.

The paper presents two facets of attempts to meet this communications challenge: the use of networking to allow sites to benefit from synergy with each other and the use of innovative communication strategies by individual sites.

2. Networks helping communications assisting tourism related to industrial heritage

2.1. Europa Nostra Awards as a communication tool (announcements, PR promoting related events, medals and plaques)

The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards were launched in 2002 by the European Commission and have been organized by Europa Nostra since then. The Prize celebrates and promotes best practice relating to heritage conservation, management, research, education and communication. In this way, it contributes to a stronger public recognition of cultural heritage as a strategic resource for Europe’s society and economy. The awards are given in four categories:

1. *Conservation*: Outstanding achievements in the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage, and its adaptation to new uses.
2. *Research*: Outstanding research projects which have had tangible effects on the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage in Europe.
3. *Dedicated service* by individuals or organizations: Open to individuals or organizations whose contributions over a long period of time demonstrate excellence in the protection, conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage in Europe and far exceed normal expectations in this context.
4. *Education, training and awareness-raising*: Outstanding initiatives related to education, training and awareness-raising in the field of tangible and/or intangible cultural heritage, promoting and/or contributing to the sustainable development of the environment.

Each of these categories offers wide opportunities for communications. The awards are presented to the winners at a major public event, which is held each

year in a different European city. Three examples are presented:

2.1.1. Middleport Pottery

The European Heritage Europa Nostra Awards 2015 included the revived Middleport Pottery in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England.

Middleport Pottery is located in Stoke-on-Trent, the traditional heart of the British ceramics industry. The pottery was built in 1888 as a model factory for the production of what became the world-renowned Burleigh earthenware. In 2010 closure was threatened, jeopardising 50 jobs, traditional skills, historic processes and unique collections of ceramics moulds and archives. So great was the cost of repairing the buildings that the site had no viable operational future.

But the business has been dramatically rescued by a UK heritage charity, the “Prince’s Regeneration Trust” . Its many buildings are still home to Burleigh pottery, using traditional techniques, and also host a growing visitor destination with interpretation facilities, a gallery exhibiting historic examples of its products, educational and teaching space, and a café.

In addition to being a successfully renewed enterprise, it has been a considerable communications success.

Fig. 1. The history of the Pottery and its regeneration.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2ADjiUIwkU&feature=youtu.be>

The historic machinery, artefacts and nationally important collections and archive have been saved for public viewing. The site also now houses three smaller specialist pottery businesses and has workshop space available for

further creative businesses. Its products are sold at the pottery and in the best known London department stores.

As the jury stated *“the pottery now has a secure future as one of the last surviving traditional potteries in the West Midlands of England once characterised by its factory chimneys and distinctive bottle kilns.*

2.1.2 Knockando Woolmill

The European Heritage EU Awards 2016 include Knockando Woolmill, located in a remote part of the Scottish Highlands. It has been actively producing textiles with its original machinery since 1784 and is a living monument to an important Scottish tradition. The restoration project is notable not only for its high quality but also for its success in promoting a rural revival in this distinctive region. As the jury said. *“Though it is a decidedly local endeavour and is linked very much to its regional identity, the Woolmill’s production of high-quality textiles for a growing global market makes it an internationally significant endeavour. Its very survival in today’s globalised world is deserving of European, if not international, recognition”*.

One of the principal priorities was to provide a craft training workshop to train young people in traditional crafts which may otherwise be lost. For this purpose, a new structure was built adjacent to and in harmony with the other buildings. The “byre” which formerly housed farm animals was converted into a visitor centre, which has attracted a wider public and has helped to increase understanding of this special heritage. The jury appreciated this aspect of the project, commenting that *“the community involvement, the generation of new employment opportunities and the attraction of visitors to this relatively remote region is a wonderful example of regeneration.”*¹ This Award illustrates how communications can be built around such industrial and such other tourist attractions in the region as the Knockando Cardhu distillery and the Ballindalloch Castle golf course, by the same token enhancing the rural hotel industry.

Another example of a network which could be treated at length is that of the National Trust properties in Britain, which includes a number of industrial sites which benefit in this way from the national and international communication power of a large network.

Finally, the inclusion of industrial heritage sites in wider UNESCO World Heritage regions also offers potential for communications by individual sites located in them (see Chapter 3).

Fig. 2: Global view of the site (canal, warehouses and former rail yard, left vacant after clearance by the national railway).



Source: archive author.

2.1.3. Thurn & Taxis Warehouse

Formerly the headquarters of the Charles V imperial postal system, the Brussels international customs complex (rail, road and canal) became derelict after the introduction of the European common market. It was threatened with destruction and saved by a Europe-wide campaign led among others by Europa Nostra chairman Lord Soames. After having been a wharf closed to the public for many years, it has become a very visible and thriving multi-functional complex of exhibitions, leisure facilities, offices and residences. It will include a new public park in line with the tradition of leisure-for-all parks created by King Leopold II in the early 20th century.

Fig. 3: Main warehouse restored and adapted for use as offices, shops and restaurants, while the other warehouses have become fairgrounds for temporary activities. Adjacent empty space is being developed according to a multiyear plan as offices, housing and a public park.



Source: archive author

3. ERIH: European Routes of Industrial Heritage²

3.1 Origin

North West Europe was the cradle of the industrial revolution. The legacy of the most radical change in economic history is a crucial element in the continent's identity. Yet, as a result of modern structural changes, many parts of Europe have de-industrialized, leaving unemployment and physical dereliction. Dealing with such sites is expensive, calling for innovative solutions; a redundant plant is rarely viewed as a heritage resource. As industrial history is a common European heritage and the protection of such sites is such a difficult task, it was felt that it is an issue that could be appropriately tackled through co-operation between member states. To encourage the appreciation, understanding, protection and promotion of this common history as a means of achieving economic growth, the European Network of Industrial Heritage was formally established under the ERIH Interreg II C EU project. Within this first ERIH a master plan was developed, identifying concrete ideas and activities to promote European industrial heritage.

3.2. Communication aims including specific signage

ERIH seeks to establish itself as a European brand for industrial heritage. To make this brand visible, ERIH developed a corporate design, including a logo, signage and print products. The ERIH network intends to encourage the trans-

national transfer of knowledge and the development of joint marketing strategies and cross-border initiatives. The project's main instrument of communication is the ERIH website (<http://www.erih.net/>) which acts both as a forum for experts to share knowledge and experience and a promotional tool to market industrial heritage to the public. Links to tourist websites and other organizations help in raising public awareness, attracting more visitors and ensuring ERIH's cross-sector integration. The website also acts as a promotional platform for Europe's industrial heritage and a virtual library for the reports and documents produced during the project.

3.3. The route system

A key element of the project is the establishment of a network of Anchor Points, approximately 60 important industrial heritage sites possessing well developed tourist infrastructure. The job of the anchor points, which are distinguished by common external and internal signage, is to show they are part of the network, provide information about industrial heritage and promote the ERIH philosophy. From each of these anchor points 'regional routes' start, linking to smaller industrial heritage sites, so-called Key sites. The creation of the regional routes, piloted in the partner regions, is designed to encourage tourists to visit the regions' industrial heritage sites, thus stimulating local tourism. Alongside these actions, ERIH develops Trans-national Theme Routes showing the historical and industrial links between the different European countries. Unlike the regional routes, the virtual thematic routes are targeted at encouraging the exchange of information between experts and special interest groups. ERIH intended from the start to become a pan-European network, possibly integrating partners from across the world. To this end, it organises seminars and workshops to inform the wider public about the network's benefits³.

3.4. Routes on industrial heritage according to specialised themes

Broader themes include "The treasures of the Earth" (about extractive industries), or "Textile manufacturing" (the milestones along the way from fibre to factory), or "Transport and communication" (retracing the tracks of the industrial revolution). Theme Routes take up specific questions relating to European industrial history and reveal potential links between radically different industrial monuments all over Europe. The result is a "circuit diagram" of the common routes of European industrial heritage⁴.

4. Individual examples of communications by industrial heritage sites

4.1. Ildefos Paper Mill, Norway

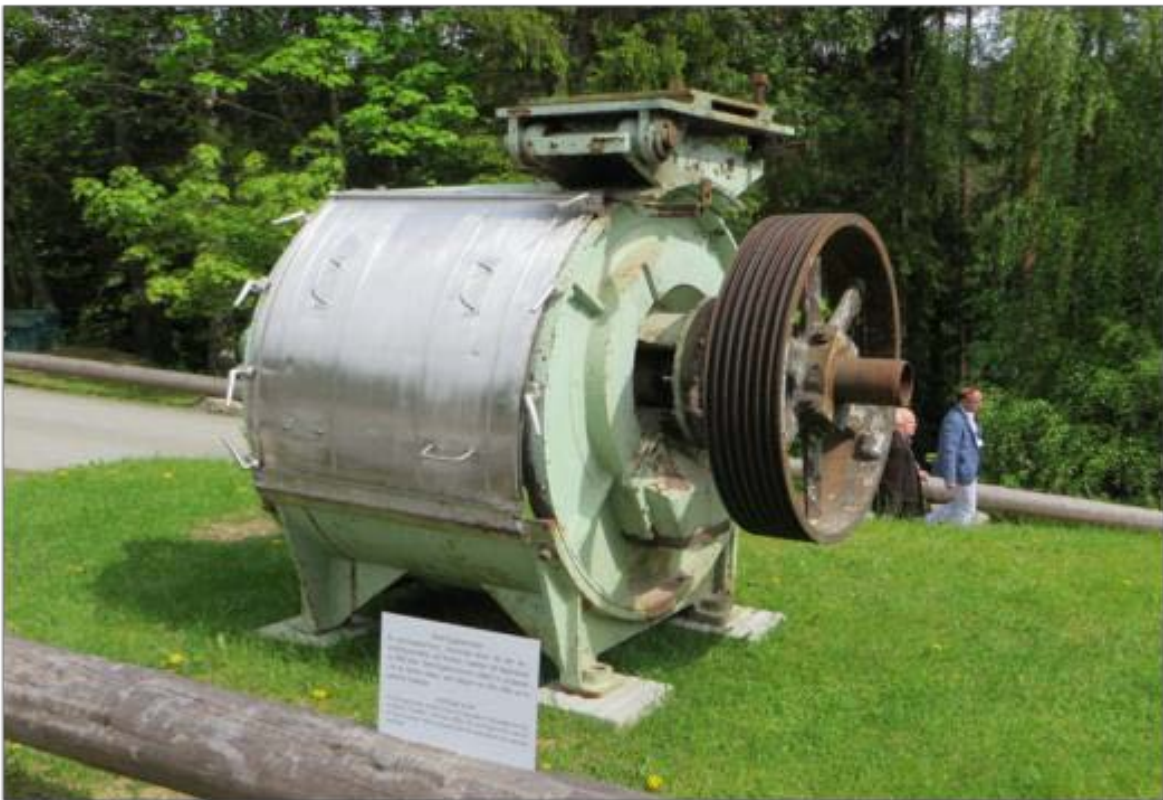
The Ildefos paper mill played a key role in the 19th century rise of literacy in

Norway by putting on the market cheap paper for printing books and news papers. The paper mill could not resist overseas competition and became a museum of the paper industry's history, combined with an open air sculpture park that includes both machinery used as exhibits and works of art by international artists such as Tony Cragg and Anish Kapoor.

4.2. The Santral Electricity Plant in Istanbul (1911)

The Santral plant is another example of heritage conservation combined with a communications strategy. The site was taken over by the Birgi University as an extension of its campus. The plant was restored as a cultural centre, keeping the original machines which have become an attraction in their own right, illustrating the past of the site. Next to it an exhibition hall, devoted to temporary exhibitions, has helped attract visitors both to the monument's past and to present events.

Fig. 4. Machine halls and individual artefacts taken out of their industrial context are part of the paper mill garden museum that has become a popular place for excursions near Oslo.



Source: archive author

Fig. 5. Works of art by international artists include several by Tony Cragg



Source: archive author

4.3. The Arenberg Mining Complex

The Arenberg mining complex is part of the UNESCO World Heritage site “Bassin industriel Nord-Pas-de-Calais”. The coal mine is now open to visitors as a museum but most of the site has been converted into a university facility linked to the Valenciennes University. The signage conveys this switch to creative activities (film-making).

Fig. 6. The Arenberg mining complex, located in the “Bassin minier du Nord-Pas-de- Calais” UNESCO world heritage site, has been restored and is open to visitors. Its visibility has been enhanced through the reuse of part of the site as an engineering university campus publicized as “De puits de mine en puits de science”.



Source: archive author

4.4. The Ostrava Dolni Vitkovice Steel Complex, Czech Republic (Volf 2013)

The Ostrava iron and steel complex (one of the oldest and largest in Europe) was the subject of a conference organized in November 2013 by ICOMOS and the Czech Ministry of Finance about the reuse of this complex as a cultural and educational centre. This renewal benefits from local, national and international funding (Norway). The gas holder was preserved and transformed into a cultural centre. The top floor was transformed into a theatre and concert hall. Since its restoration in mid-2012, the new cultural and educational centre has had more than 1 million visitors. Further extensions are planned.

4.5. Cromford Mills, Derwent Valley, England

Cromford Mills is the largest textile mill in the Derwent industrial valley, Derbyshire (UK), the cradle of England's industrial development and part of the UNESCO World Heritage list since 2001 (DERWENT 2015). www.cromfordmills.org. It combines the preservation of its industrial past as a central element of Sir Richard Arkwright's industrial empire with the use of the buildings as offices - developed in phases - and housing, under the name of the Arkwright Society, a registered charity, which produced its master plan (ARKWRIGHT 2012).

5. Conclusion

The paper has addressed the theme of the workshop "Urban Communication for a Qualified Cultural Tourism in Historical Cities" from the angle of industrial and engineering heritage. Industrial heritage sites have become popular tourist attractions at a time when much industry has left the cities. As they are in most cases located on the periphery of cities, appropriate communications at all levels - including signage - are indispensable to their attracting visitors. This is a major challenge for the owners, whether public authorities or private citizens, in charge of maintaining and managing these sites.

Europa Nostra EU Awards have been used as a way to publicize laureate sites, through PR actions around related events such as the on-site presentation of medals or plaques.

The "European Routes of Industrial Heritage" (ERIH) are a network of industrial sites and cities. They are promoting different tourist itineraries via a common design vocabulary.

Individual examples of communications by industrial heritage sites have included:

- The Ildefos paper mill near Oslo, transformed into an industrial museum that includes an open air sculpture collection,
- The Santral electricity plant in Istanbul, transformed into a cultural centre while conserving the original machinery,
- The Arenberg mining complex in northern France, converted into a university centred on using the history of engineering for today's learning,
- The Cromford mill, a textile production complex transformed into a textile museum, offices and housing, and
- The Dolni Vitkovice steel complex restored and partly transformed into education facility.

The common feature of all the cases presented is that when cultural heritage is dispersed over a considerable area, communications need to be taking place at a broader level than signage, through networks resulting from being the beneficiaries of awards (in this case Europa Nostra) or created from scratch by a community of interest, as illustrated by the European Routes of Industrial Heritage.

Footnotes

- 1 <http://www.erih.net/european-theme-routes.html>
- 2 <http://www.erih.net/european-theme-routes.html>
- 3 <http://www.erih.net/latest-news/detailsseite/article/erih-annual-conference-2016/3.html>
- 4 <http://www.routeyou.com/en/group/view/2018/erih-european-route-of-industrial-heritage>

References

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Volf, P. et al. (2012), *The Story of Dolni Vitkovice*, Vitkovice: Prostor 2013.