

Interweave hosts “A Day at the Museum” - 20 November 2019

The Society Of Hospital Linen Service & Laundry Managers (<http://www.linenmanager.co.uk/>) meeting was hosted by the team at Interweave.

The society met at the Calderdale Industrial Museum in Halifax, a short drive from Interweave’s offices in Elland, West Yorkshire. Delegates travelled to the meeting from as far away as Wiltshire, Cornwall and Wales – there was also a good turnout from local members.

Despite the freezing conditions outside, the Yorkshire warm welcome (and hot drinks) helped to introduce the society members to the best of West Yorkshire.

It was exciting to see that the museum café doors were donated by Interweave’s parent company John Horsfall & Sons. Looking resplendent in their new home, the doors were previously in place at the John Horsfall West Vale mills in Halifax.

Tim Meadows, Interweave Customer Services Manager and Secretary of the Society, is pictured below in front of the doors.



Other furnishings from the John Horsfall mill which had been donated to the museum were spread throughout the building. Sumptuous wood panelling from another era!

To kick off the day, the members of the society were treated to a 60 minute guided tour of the museum by a team of very knowledgeable volunteers.

The museum had been previous open but closed in 2000 and was rescued from ruin in 2016. Since then it has been painstakingly renovated by the volunteers with some help from Lottery grants. They urgently need more volunteers (<https://calderdaleindustrial.co.uk/be-involved/>) so that the museum

can be open to the public for longer hours – currently it's only open for a few hours each Saturday. The museum is also looking for further grants to finish off the textile heritage exhibition.

Highlights of the tour included seeing the world's oldest working loom dating from 1820, one of the few remaining James Hargreaves' Spinning Jennys, plus an early (but still functioning) toffee wrapping machine donated by neighbouring Nestle. The delegates were keen to sample a Quality Street chocolate – also manufactured in Halifax.

The laundry managers were excited to see the washing machine exhibition donated by the Calderdale-based Ajax Domestic Appliance company who manufactured the Ada range - later bought out by Phillips. Early machines and spin driers dating back to 1940s were on display.

Pictured below on the right is Dave Grimshaw, Chairman of the Society – getting his laundry out of the Ada twin tub!



The tour delved down into the basement, which housed a very noisy (and smelly) diesel generator powering the machinery on display. The volunteer, a former steel-worker himself, explained how everything worked.

Pictured below is Steve Moss, Northern Regional Chairman of the Society, looking at a working drill which had been rescued from a closed down local engineering works.



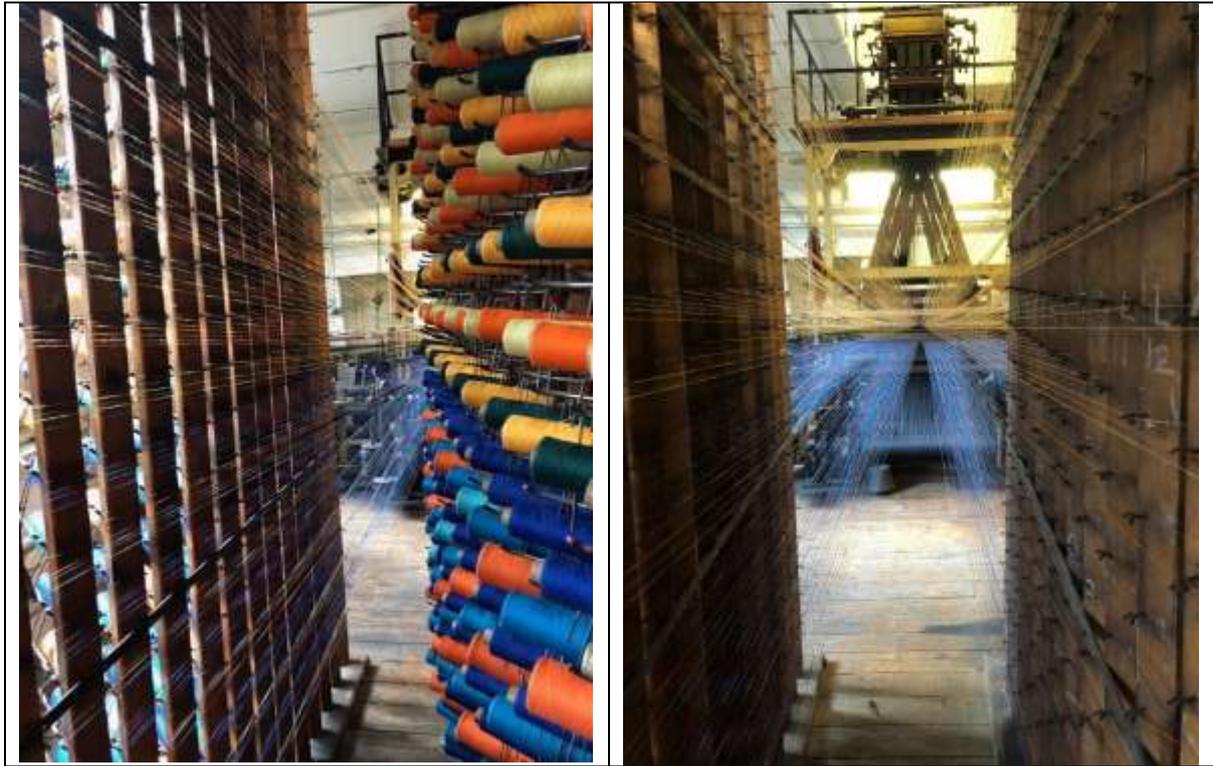
We learnt the original meaning of “*knocking off*” – the generator powered planning machine had a wooden lever that the operator would just knock to one side to turn the machine off. They “knocked off” only to go for a brief break or to go home.

The visitors also learnt that the phrase “*you can hear a pin drop*” came from the mills that housed the massive moquette looms. Even through the noise of the mill machinery, a skilled operator would hear when one of the “pins” or bobbins was empty and had dropped off the rack to the floor. This would be their cue to go and find it (out of the 500+ bobbins) and replace it quickly before a stitch was dropped.

Pictured below is one of five racks of bobbins all feeding into one moquette loom. We admired the beautiful rainbow effect of all the different coloured threads pulled taut into the loom – could have been in an art exhibition!

Interweave would like to pass on a heartfelt thank you to the team of volunteers at the museum for yesterday’s visit. The members of the Society thoroughly enjoyed the day – everyone learnt something new. We recommend a trip to the museum to all West Yorkshire locals and anyone with an interest in industrial & textile heritage.

We look forward to seeing all members at the next Society Annual Forum and AGM which will be held on 14th May 2020 (Further details to be available soon).



Some more pictures of the day at the museum:





