



# SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY

## NEWSLETTER

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### ALBANY IA

**M**ore than 210 SIA members and guests gathered in Albany May 28-31 for the 44th Annual Conference. This year's conference had a somewhat nostalgic flavor since this region of upstate New York can lay strong claim to being the "Cradle of Industrial Archeology" in North America. The Mohawk-Hudson Survey of 1969 was a pilot study for the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), establishing standards for documentation of industrial and engineering sites that remain in use today. The SIA had not previously used Albany as a conference headquarters, having stayed in Troy (eight miles upriver from Albany) for both the 2nd Annual Conference in 1973 and the 16th Annual Conference in 1987. The Albany Hilton offered a more urbane environment than the slightly worn hostleries that some members may recall from the past two visits to Troy.

A major theme of the conference was transportation, exploring the region's strong heritage in canals and railroads. We visited some classic historic sites, like the Troy Gasholder House (the inspiration for SIA's logo), but also took in many process tours illustrating both traditional and new manufacturing technologies. The conference followed SIA's customary

format with Thursday pre-tours, Friday process and historic site tours, Saturday paper sessions and annual business meeting, and Sunday post-tour. Saturday's paper sessions were divided into three topical tracks: New York State IA, On the Land and From the Earth, and the 24th Historic Bridge Symposium. The New York State IA track featured several presentations on archival and cultural resources programs supporting industrial heritage research and preservation in the Empire State.

Many thanks go to the volunteers who sent in the following tour reports:

*Thursday Tour 1 (Sharon Springs)* took 42 participants to a precision investment casting company, a window-sash restoration and manufacturing shop, and a fabric reproduction mill. In each case SIA members outnumbered the workforce but had the equivalent of personal guided tours by owners and skilled workers. Ian Hay ably led the tour and provided relevant commentary on the journey from site to site.

At **AMT castings** ([www.amtcastings.com](http://www.amtcastings.com)), owners Beth and Lanning Brandell and General Manager Scott Stevens gave a brief introduction to the company, its products, and the lost-wax casting process, and then led four breakout groups on tours. Established on Long Island in 1966, the

*(continued on page 2)*



James Bouchard

*At the Mechanicville Hydroelectric Plant.*

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## CALENDAR

### 2015

**Oct. 8-10: SIA FALL TOUR, GREAT FALLS, MONT.**  
Info: [www.sia-web.org](http://www.sia-web.org).

**Oct. 8-11: Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, N.M.** Info: [www.historyoftechnology.org](http://www.historyoftechnology.org).

**Oct. 16-18: The 13th Michigan Railroad History Conference, Lansing, Mich.** See article in this issue. Info: [www.michiganrailroadhistory.org](http://www.michiganrailroadhistory.org).

**Oct. 24: 35th ANNUAL GREAT FALLS SYMPOSIUM ON THE IA OF THE N.Y.-N.J. AREA, PATERSON, N.J.** Sponsored by the Roebling Chapter. Info: <http://roebblingsia.org/symposia.html>.

**Nov. 1-5: Assn. for Preservation Technology International Annual Conference, Kansas City, Mo.** Info: [www.apti.org](http://www.apti.org).

**Nov. 3-6: National Preservation Conference, Washington, D.C.** Sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Info: [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org).

**Nov. 4-8: Society for the Preservation of Old Mills (SPOOM) Annual Conference, Santa Rosa, Calif.** Info: [www.spoom.org](http://www.spoom.org).

**Dec. 3-9: 18th Australian Engineering Heritage Conference, Newcastle, Australia.** Includes four days of pre-conference touring. Info: [www.engineersaustralia.org.au/heritage-2015](http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/heritage-2015). Also available a pre-pre-conference tour of industrial heritage sites in New South Wales, organized by Heritage of Industry Tours, [www.heritageofindustry.co.uk](http://www.heritageofindustry.co.uk).

### 2016

**Jan. 6-9: Society for Historical Archaeology Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.** Info: [www.sha.org](http://www.sha.org).

**Mar. 16-19: National Council on Public History Annual Conference, Baltimore, Md.** Joint meeting with the Society for History in the Federal Government. Info: [www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org).

**Apr. 6-10: Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, Pasadena, Calif.** Info: [www.sah.org](http://www.sah.org).

**May 18-20: Iron & Steel Preservation Conference & Workshop, West Lafayette, Ind.** Repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of metals. See article in this issue. Info: Vern Mesler, [meslerv@gmail.com](mailto:meslerv@gmail.com); (517) 614-9868.

**May 25-29: Railway & Locomotive Historical Society Annual Meeting, Moscow, Idaho.** Info: [www.rlhs.org](http://www.rlhs.org).

**June 2-5: SIA 45th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, KANSAS CITY, MO.** See article in this issue. Info: [www.sia-web.org](http://www.sia-web.org).

**June 11-14: Mining History Assn. Annual Meeting, Virginia City and Gold Hill, Nev.** Info: [www.mininghistoryassociation.org](http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org).

**June 16-19: 6th International Early Railways Conference, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, U.K.** Info: [www.earlyrailways.org.uk](http://www.earlyrailways.org.uk).

**June 22-26: Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) Annual Meeting, Singapore.** Info: [www.historyoftechnology.org](http://www.historyoftechnology.org). ■