

Society Presentation

Juankoski Heritage Society was founded in 1990 to safeguard the cultural and historical heritage of the area. It is actively involved in documenting and maintaining the industrial history. An important operation is the maintenance and development of the Masuuni Brunou museum.

Increasing awareness of the foundry milieu has over the years resulted in many cultural events, exhibitions, plays and the ongoing development of our tour guide services

The heritage society maintains the Soittokunnantalo (brass band house) which it has renovated. A former shop where there is now a bakery and cafeteria. Ruukinpaja and the Soittokunnantalo are available to rent for celebrations and meetings.

The heritage society has also been actively involved in developing services within Juankoski, most recently as part of the Juanvirta project which is creating a community garden in the centre of town.

Juankoski Heritage Society's operations and fundraising are based on the active participation of volunteers. We welcome as volunteers anybody who is interested in the cultural heritage of Juankoski.

Ironworks history today

Masuuni Brunou situated in the former blast furnace is **a factory and workers museum** which takes its name from the history of the area and is dedicated to preserving and presenting the history of the community.

The power plant and electricity museum tells about the arrival of electricity in 1898 as well as the Savon Voima power company. The museum is situated in the factory's former hydroelectricity plant.

Juutila foundry museum (1881) displaying traditional sand casting methods is unique within Finland and can be found about 15 minutes drive from Juankoski foundry. Notable about Juutila foundry is that it is still in operation. Specializing in casting of church bells, the foundry's founder gained his skills in Juantehdas.

The Ruukiranta in Säyneinen is a restored former peasant's ironworks area where the Gustafsforss foundry used to be situated besides Kissankoski rapids. There is a former flour mill situated in the area which today serves as a mini museum.

History

Juankoski Foundry

”the story began in 1746”

Strömsdalsbruk – Juantehdas – Juankoski Factory

The first industrial complex in Eastern Finland

In the year 1746 commissioner Brynolf Brunou received permission from the authorities in Stockholm to create a foundry on the shore of Juckais river near Kuopio. The foundry specialized in using lake and swamp ore. For the first hundred years the pastoral family Argillander and the noble family Tigerstedt tried to get Strömsdalsbruk to operate profitably. However it wasn't until the Russian Pomerev family took over in the late 1800's that the factory became truly profitable and developed into one of the best maintained industrial centres of Finland. This was a period of building, renewal and product development. Foundry manager Jakob Jernberg built a combination church and school which was inaugurated in 1863. The foundry during this time also began to take care of its employees by building employee housing among other things which showed advanced ideas of social entrepreneurship for the time

In the early 1900's the foundry was purchased by Baron Anton von Alftan. During this period iron smelting was discontinued, with a groundwood plant being built on the opposite side of the river, followed a few years later by the beginning of cardboard production. This production was continued by Kymi concern in 1915. In the 1970's Juantehdas developed as a cardboard factory which was bought by Stromsdal Oy in 1988. Following the bankruptcy of Stromsdal in 2008 the factory has since been purchased by Premium Board Finland in 2011.

The Juankoski foundry milieu is one of the best preserved in Finland. There are many production buildings to be seen, including the blast furnace, puddling and rolling mill, foundry and machine shop. Also preserved are other buildings including the estate house on Patrunamäki hill, workers houses, the factory church (also used as a school) and the charcoal ovens.

The Count of the ironworks

There are many interesting stories relating to Juankoski foundry and its benefactors. One of the most tragic is that of Fredrik Jonaton Ekholm. He quarrelled with local peasants and things got so bad that they ended with his murder in 1810. Will it ever be known who fired that shot?

What kind of man was Count Abaza, the white knight with a diamond creation?

Who knows, maybe the true benefactor was Baron Anton von Alftan whose garden was maintained by a Pole? He brought a new net and ball game to the region as well as a car despite there being no roads.

Come on a guided tour and learn more...