

Manufacturing production along the banks of the River Wye was so successful at the height of the Industrial Revolution that it compared with the Don Valley in Sheffield, Kyrle Probus Club members were told on Thursday, March 5th.

Members were taken on a slide-show tour as they were given details in a talk titled 'Lower Wye Industry between 1566 and 1984.'

Club member Norman Duffield also revealed that many notable also visited Ross, particularly in the 19th Century, to make a picturesque Grand Tour of the then- fully navigable River Wye, among them Wordsworth, Turner, Coleridge and even Admiral Lord Nelson in 1802. Tour guides were in place at that time to highlight the range and variety of the area's products, many of them 'world firsts.'

'I was amazed how industry developed,' Norman said.

The important railway network then running from Ross to Chepstow gave a further welcome boost to the industrial activities. The tour included the then-thriving iron and tin works, wire and paper mills, a 17th Century copper and tin plant and a corrugated case factory, bringing innovation to the industrial landscape of that era.

Employment more than quadrupled in the area to meet demand during the First World War. Former miners were brought in during the 1920s.

The club meets on the first and third Thursday of the month at Ross Conservative Club, when members hear talks, sometimes from fellow members, sometimes from guest speakers.

To find out more about the Club, visit www.kyrleprobus-ross.org.uk or contact secretary Keith Leyshon on 01989-562884.

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