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## HERITAGE KNOWLEDGE HUB

### EARLY ENGINE DATABASE

I am delighted to be able to announce the launch of the first source of information for the newly set up “Hub” for storing and sharing sources for research relating to cultural heritage. A fully searchable online database of information about 18<sup>th</sup> Century engines in the UK has been produced based on the work carried out over more than forty years by John Kanefsky. It covers Newcomen engines and early Watt engines as well as other types of engine built prior to the end of 1800. This is the first time John’s work has been made this publically available and we are delighted to have been involved in this opportunity for this to now be shared with a wider audience.

The purpose of the Knowledge Hub that the Cultural Heritage Institute (CHI) are establishing, is for data such as this to be accessible through a single point of entry to as wide a circulation as possible. The intention is to make raw data available for people both to add to and enhance as well as to use in their own research. It is also intended to provide a home for so called “grey literature”, i.e. documents and reports that have been produced but not previously published. Kanefsky has previously published a number of papers setting out his conclusions drawn from his collected information but not the full data itself. This therefore fits well with the aims of the CHI and is an excellent first choice for the hub.

Following this link will give access to the database: <http://coalpitheath.org.uk/engines/>

Access is also possible via the website of the **International Early Engine Conference (IEEC)**, one of the partners in the preparation of this resource. It had been hoped to formally launch it at the IEEC this May but that has of course been postponed until May 2021.

Comments and suggestions of amendments and additions to this database are welcomed so that over time the data set can be improved and grow to become an even more useful resource for anyone researching this subject.

The CHI are also in the process of obtaining and making available similar material which will be added to the hub in due course. This includes working with members of the **International Stationary Steam Engine Society (ISSES)** regarding a separate database continuing this data into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It is not only industrial heritage that the Hub is hoping to cover as the intention is for it to grow to include other aspects of cultural heritage with sections covering transport, agriculture and land use, entertainment and sport, food and drink, to name but a few aspects of the tangible and intangible ways man has interacted with his surroundings.

Please feel free to distribute this information to colleagues, group/society members and individuals that you feel may be interested. Specific enquiries about the Cultural Heritage Knowledge Exchange Hub can be addressed to myself (David Hardwick - [David.Hardwick@RAU.ac.uk](mailto:David.Hardwick@RAU.ac.uk)) or CHI director Geraint Coles ([Geraint.Coles@RAU.ac.uk](mailto:Geraint.Coles@RAU.ac.uk))

The CHI is located in the former Carriage works at Swindon. For details of the CHI itself and the courses currently on offer please go to <https://www.rau.ac.uk/cultural-heritage-institute>