

Name 1	BARREL FOR MIXING MERCURY AND SULFUR
Name 2	/
ID number	002.292.Idrija
Manager / Administrator	Idrija Municipal Museum, Prelovčeva 9, SI-5280 Idrija.
Ownership	Public
Owner	Municipality of Idrija, Mestni trg 1, SI-5280 Idrija
Local / Original ID Number	510:IDR;RZ-43
Type of Object	Mine, Smelting

DESCRIPTION

Short description	The barrel served for the dry procedure for obtaining cinnabar. It is made from wood and reinforced with four steel bands. It has a steel axle, which allows the barrel to rotate. The barrel has an opening for mercury and sulfur dosage, which is covered with the cover secured with two screws. Its volume is approximately 13 litres. Colloquially in Idrija, because of its function the little barrel for mixing was called the “black negro”.
Measures	Length 76 cm, width 36 cm, height 36 cm.
Materials	Wood, steel.

Dating	1782
Author / Producer	The Cinnabar Factory of the Idrija Mercury Mine.

Picture attachments

 /home/mcxsd05/domains/heritage-mercury.net/public_html/base/components/com_rsform/uploads/5aa793c9db14b1f





Original use

In certain conditions, the artificial cinnabar was obtained with mercury and sulfur synthesis. The first phase of this process was mixing mercury (25 kg) and powdered sulfur (5 kg) in the barrel. The latter had partitions inside which served for better stirring. With the eccentric drive it was possible for the barrel to rotate around the horizontal axis in both directions and thoroughly stir the contents. After four hours of stirring, the homogeneous black mass ("Mohr") was formed. This was a mixture of black sulfide (HgS) and unreacted, nicely mutually distributed mercury and sulfur. After the stirring process, the black mass was poured from two barrels into a 50-litre cast iron jug. In Idrija, cinnabar was obtained from the beginning of mining until 1922, with an interruption between 1658 and 1782. During that time, 8,800 tons of mercury was obtained, which is 6.6% of the total amount of mercury obtained in Idrija.

Present use

The barrel for mercury is being preserved, secured and presented as important mining heritage of Idrija with exceptional universal values. The barrel is a part of the mining collection of the Idrija Municipal Museum. Visitors can view it within the permanent museum exhibition "Five Centuries of the Mercury Mine and the Town of Idrija". It can also be used for different types of mercury heritage promotions.

Original location

Idrija Mercury Mine (The Cinnabar Factory, on the left side of the Smelting Plant complex)

Present location

Idrija Municipal Museum, Gewerkenegg Castle (showroom 9).

STATE OF CONSERVATION**History of conservation:**

The barrel was properly restored and conserved. Therefore, no additional interventions are necessary. Security of the

premises is taken care of.

Present state good

Necessary activities: Regular seasonal maintenance.

DOCUMENTATION

Addresses / collections / links etc. where further in-depth information is accessible:

- Inventory Book of the Idrija Municipal Museum;
- Janouš, Alois, senior furnace supervisor (k. k. Oberhüttenverwalter). Geschichtliche Entwicklung der Zinnoberfabrikation in Idria, Ad B. D. Z. 4521 de 1897;
- Janouš, Alois, senior furnace supervisor (k. k. Oberhüttenverwalter). Darstellung des Zinnobers in Idria in der Gegenwart, Ad B. D. Z. 4521 de 1897;
- Kavčič, Ivica. Živo srebro: Zgodovina idrijskega žgalništva. Založba Bogataj, Idrija, 2008;
- Kavčič, Ivica. Proizvodnja živossrebrovih spojin pri idrijskem rudniku skozi stoletja. Idrijski razgledi, 61/2, 2016, p. 60–76.

Submitted Mestni muzej Idrija

Submitted by Miha Kosmač

Date Submitted 12. 3. 2018

Date Edited Never
