



NEWSLETTER

Nov 1973

NORTHERN CAVERN AND MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY.

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING HELD SKIPTON, 25th NOV, 1973.

The meeting opened soon after 2-30 with the following members present, Peter and Mavis Jackson, Edmund Green, D, Platt, J.M. Dickinson, David Griffin, Jennifer Griffin, Hazel Martell, Mike Gill.

K, Walls, with R, Walls as Chairman.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr MacPherson and Mr Guthrie. Mr Guthrie.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and passed as a true record of that meeting. Prop Mr Dickinson sec Mr Griffin. There were no matters arising.

The minutes of the October and November Working committee were read and included the following; Joe Lowther, had been unable to continue as Librarian, Miss Hazel Martell had kindly taken over this office. The participation by the Soc in the Yorkshire Dales Railway Exhibition at Bradford, had been a considerable success. Publications were sold and new members gained. Mr Dickinson reported that after visiting Mr & Mrs Dixon he thought that due to other commitments and change of interests it was unlikely that their membership would be renewed in the coming year. Mr Jackson was undertaking the onerous task of compiling and arranging the 1974 Meets List.

Following on the success of the Society Exhibition at Bradford Bradford it was decided that a new stand was required, made with stronger materials Prop K. Walls, sec P, Jackson.

D, Platt had attempted to purchase a Pitney-Bowes addressing system, to replace the Addressograph system we now have, this is very difficult to keep up to date, due to having to buy out new plates as members addresses changed, the Bowes System could be replaced on a standard typewriter, as required, however the cost is well beyond our means at the moment, attempts to find a used machine had so far failed.

Officer Reports, Mr Jackson reported that the Memoirs were now in the hands of the Craven Herald. Articles were still requested for the next issue, and Dr A, Raistrick had contributed an article for publication.

NOVEMBER MEETING. cont.

We were however faced with alarming increases in the cost of publications.

Mrs Jean Dixon, Biological Recorder; a successful year with a good number of finds including many collections for the first time from some areas, which have so far been neglected.

Mrs Jennifer Griffin, Hon Treasurer, Reported a quite year, but at the moment £74-35p was in the account.

D. Platt P.R.O. said he hoped to be able to get out a Newsletter soon. Mr Chalmers had sent in an address change, now at Bentham Grammar School.

A.O.B. As a result of declining interest it was proposed "That we cease our subscription to the Pengelly Trust, prop R. Wa R. WALLS. sec M. GILL. carried. The merger of CRG and BSA, should help us to keep down our subscriptions to one fee for the new joint body of B.C.R.A.

It was proposed "that we discontinue our Annual Subscription to the Industrial Archaeology magazine, and to PURCHASE copies if we did not receive as a result of our advertisements. prop J. Dickinson sec M. Gill. carried.

Mr Smith of Sheffield and Mr S.W. Blenard were elected to membership prop P.J. Sec K.W.J. Lawson was now at Castle Douglas.

Mr Dickinson and Mr Gill had kindly donated £2 plus a publication resulting from the lecture given at Hebden.

The rest of the meeting continued with a lengthy discussion on the merits of the field meets for 1974. It was felt that in view of the oil crisis and expected fuel rationing that many meets may have to be curtailed but we should provide a meets list in the hope that some meets could be held.

A.O.B. Meeting closed 4-45. It was proposed that we cease our subscription. K. Walls, Hon Secretary, carried. Page 2.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 14th Feb, 1974.

1. Apologies for absence were received from; Miss Pat James, Messrs, Barnes, Muckalt, Chalmers, Cumsty, McChesney.

2. Minutes of last meeting were read and approved. Matters arising; Mr Platt had cancelled the Wm Pengelly subs. Asked if B.C.R.A. subs had been paid? Mrs Griffin replied that no subs had yet been paid to other bodies.

Miss Martell had stopped the subscription to Industrial Archaeology and would obtain any missing issues in the future.

The Chairman, President Mr R. Walls, signed the minutes.

3. The minutes of the December, January, and February Working Committee Meetings were then read by Mr Platt.

4. Officers Reports. Peter Jackson, Hon Editor.

The society Memoirs was continued during 1973, with the publication of Vol 2 no 3. Minor difficulties caused delays in publication, so much that the issue did not appear until the very end of the year. It had originally been intended to have the illustrations in this issue produced by an outside printer, but this idea was abandoned when the quotation showed nearly 100% increase from early in the year. The illustrations were produced by ourselves. It is difficult to gauge the response to the Memoirs at this early stage but it seems to have been well received by our subscribers. A total of 300 were produced, and at the time of writing this report, 127 remain to sell.

Also during the year Occasional Publication No 6 was produced, out of 210 only 24 remain to be sold. An advert in the January issue of the Plmoth Mining and Mineral Club should sell the remainder of this publication.

Earlier in the year a surplus of paper accumulated due to the efficiency of the electric duplicator in cutting down waste during printing. This was used to produce a reprint of occasional publication No 5 on the basis of 24 firm orders.

We now have only 43 left in stock, the relatively high sale being partially due to two adverts in the journal Industrial Archaeology. Two other adverts in the same journal have resulted in sales of Memoirs Vol 2 No 2 bringing our stock figure down to 62, from the original print figure of 300.

On the basis of the last five months sales of 1973, we can sell about 25 copies of each publication per year, apart from sales to subscribers. Advertising has definitely helped to sell more journals, and although not financially successful in that increased sales have not covered advert costs, there will presumably be long term advantage. New members and subscribers have already resulted, notably the Science Museum library and all three offices of the Geological Survey, which will undoubtedly lead to future benefits for the society.

EDITORS REPORT. cont.

It is intended to invest more income in assets during the present year.

The main costs during the year have continued to be paper and postage, both increasing. THE COST OF MEMOIRS HAS BEEN INCREASED BY 30% IN ONE YEAR::: Although costs have increased the balance sheet is in a slightly improved position with the 1972 decline in capital being almost halted; despite our advertising costs, and stock have of course almost doubled.

During the year another edition of the societys publication sales list was produced and went through 400 copies.

A further edition has now been issued, and the the index to 1960-69 publications has been reprinted. In addition a general descriptive handout on the society was reissued for the secretary. Articles are now coming forward for the next Memoirs which will be the first publication of this year.

Immediately before the end of the year 1973 a most interesting manuscript arrived on the editors desk from Dr A. Raistrick, concerning the smelting mills of Swaledale and Wensleydale. A great deal of research has gone into this work and it is intended that the society will publish towards the end of 1974.

P. Jackson.

9th February 1974.

A Later footnote to this report; in a letter to Skipton, on June 1st, Peter has reported that all of the Occasional Publication No 6, "The Teign Valley Lead Mines" by C.J. Schmitz, are now sold.

HON TREASURER: Mrs J. Griffin. reported on the transfer to the publications account of £53.15p. Report is otherwise to the attached financial statement.

HON RECORDER MINES. Mr M. Gill. Thanked the donars of With-
erite etc which was sold at the railway exhibition at Bradford
He also thanked donars of material on Wensleydale, for the record
files. The project at Langlet Mill was in obedience. We could
expect some publicity soon from an internal publication of the
National Coal Board. The proposed trip to East Germany was now

a non starter, due to access refusal.

HON LIBRARIAN. Miss Hazel Martel. The home -extension where the library was to be housed was not yet done but any valuable books were secure and indoors. There was need to prune the library of some material and to sell off unwanted books.

CAVING RECORDER MR R. WALLS. There was nothing drastic to report particularly as we do not now produce surveys for sale, as in the past., we do however provide members with surveys on request.

RECORDER. (Northern Region) Mr R.G. Guthrie. Reported on the build up of his records in the year. It was not advisable to publish on say the Garrigill area after the experience with the Skears level article, access was restricted and to publish area surveys only made our access rights more difficult to preserve.

HON SECRETARY. Mr K. Walls. Reported on a reasonable successful year which had attracted some increase all round in the level of society activity. The annual dinner at which event Mr Feath of the Bradford Industrial Archaeology Museum was the chief Guest, had again been held. Mr Jackson had continued his sterling work with publications, and secretarial aides and had helped to bring up to date the constitution, which in the year had been reprinted and re-issued, via the newsletter to all of our current membership, the secretary also remarked on the number of years we had had the pleasure of Mr and Mrs Dixon as members, two persons who had over the years done much work for the records and illustrations of the society publications. Otherwise the job remained much the same, with high and low peaks of work. The next meeting was for a change to be held at Billingham, Teeside. A change of venue, and it was hoped to see some of our N)E members on parade.

P.R.O. & NEWSLETTER EDITOR. D. PLATT Commented that we had not held our usual yearly lectures in the Skipton area, a feature of our past activities due to the closure of our H.Q. "the Overdale Hotel" a victim of property development, which in the event seems to have mis-fired, due to the falling off of land prices. Mr J.M. Dickinson had with help from M. GILL given a lecture at Hebden, and donated the proceeds to the Society, he thanked the Officers for the attendance at the monthly

Working Committee Meetings, held at Skipton, and pointed out to the meeting the considerable mileage and the expense of that journey to the officers who resided out of Skipton. The society was very fortunate to have members willing to accept a financial sacrifice as well as willing to give up freetime to further the work of the society. A balance sheet for the office of P.R.O./Newsletter was presented, (enclosed) which included expenses authorised by the working Committee- a total of £30-80p. An amount of cheap paper, purchased for future newsletter use, was included in the total amount spent. Postage was about £3-60 per Newsletter. We still had a good stock of this paper to use, which would be reflected in next years expense account. Articles for the Newsletter were required, together with any other commentaries as this publication was becoming too much of a one man show. As we do not claim rights of reproduction, on N/L articles it was rather pleasant to see other clubs, reproducing some of the feature articles from the N/Letter, and thereby reaching out beyond our membership horizons, justifying the original work of the author of the article.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

Mr Guthrie first proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Eric Dixon, and Mrs Jean Dixon, and suggested a letter of thanks should be sent to them recording this. Mr J, McPherson seconded this proposal.

Mr Michael Gill was proposed as Junior Vice President. Proposed Peter Jackson, sec Ken Walls. Carried with a large vote.

As there was no offer to take on the task of Officers, those who served last year remained unopposed and an 'en-bloc' vote was taken, all were re-elected.

The retiring President, Mr R, Walls, in a closing vote of thanks to all and sundry vacated the chair and Mr J, McPherson president elect for 1974/5, presented Mr Walls with an as yet uninscribed plaque, but complete with society badge. The new President agreed with the retiring one, that we may find 1974 a rather difficult year but hoped we should get to meets and we should consider carefully if we can still afford our Annual Dinner. The meeting then discussed ideas for the next dinner, and Presidents 'Talk In', the meeting felt that the price for a meal would inevitably be now about £2-50

Mr Barker and Mr J. Bennett were elected to membership.

In correspondence notice of a course at Exeter was made, a lecture at Middlesborough 24th of March on the Alum Industry was to be given, Dr J. K. Almond, a member of this society would be one of the speakers.

Mr J. Downs-Rose was holding a course at the Lead Hills, Scotland in the week 13-22 July, a follow up to last years course which members who attended found so enjoyable.

In the Mendips there was to be a weekend meeting on the Limestone Caves on the 9th March.

The Billingham Community Centre was already booked for the 21st April.

Thanks were given for David and Jennifer for the provision of refreshments.

The Meeting closed at 4-55pm.

K. Walls, Hon Secretary.

MEMBERSHIP

Two subscription reminders have so far this year been sent out, the new petrol prices seem to have left some members with cramp financial cramp, if you have not yet received a printed Meets list then you should be in no doubt ? you have not so far paid your subscription for this year. This is not intended for the Associated Members, who do not attend meets, but have in any case paid up.

So please if you wish to remain on the books, send in your unpaid subscription to the Membership Secretary, Mrs, J. Griffin, 19 Westfield Terr, Baildon, nr Shipley, Yorkshire, BD17, 9JF. When you decide to send in these missing subs, we can put out an up to date members list, which is now out of date. Thank you in advance.

NEW MEMBERS

MRS J. M. ASHWORTH. 16 High Cote, Riddlesden, Keighley, Yks. Tel 5816

ANDREW M. G. ASHWORTH. as above, Family Member.

M. BARKER. 4 Willow Bank, Todmorden, Lancs.

I. D. FRANCIS. 36, Green Terr Square, Savile Park, Halifax, W, Yorks.

W. MALLETT. Netherstone, Madeira Rd, Intt Astons, New Romney, Kent.

1977-1978.

H.R.SHARNBROOK. 20,Neville St, South Kensington, London, 7.
G.M.SPRINGELL. 'Beckstones' Askham. Penrith, Cumberland, CA10-2PG.
M.R.SMITH. 114, Dixon Rd, Sheffield. S6-4GA.
B.YOUNG. 63A, Warrington Rd, Harrow, Middlesex. HA 1-1 S2.

OVERSEAS MEMBERS.

R.HORSNAIL. c/o Amax Exploration Inc, 4704 Harlan St, Denver,
Colorado. 80212, U.S.A.

MEMBERS ADDRESS CHANGES.

G.GOSS. 2, Lower Scholes, Pickles Hill, Keighley, W, Yorks.
J.C.WADE. 'Tara' Aikton, nr Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 OHY. Tel Wigton 2797.
H.BARNES. 'Kinian' High Bentham, via Lancaster.
J.Holmes, 108, Burnside Ave, Skipton, W, Yorks.
J.Hussey. 203 Shap House. Linnaeus St. Hanlanby Rd, Hull E, Yorks.
R.Harker, 92, Town Green St. Rothley, Leicestershire.

NCMRS list of Paid-up Associate members, at 8th May 74.

Owen Arthur Baker, 10 norwich Rd, Exwick, Exeter, EX4 2DN.
James Bennett, 6 Distington Park, Distington, Workington, Cumbria.
Stuart Whitley Blenard, 4, Tenter Hill, Clayton. Bradford, W, Yorks.
Acquisitions Librarian, General Library, British Museum (Natural History) Cromwell Rd, London, SW7-5BD.
Borough Librarian, Burnley Central Library, Burnley, BB11-2BD.
S.H.Jackson, 16 Chapel Street, Calverley, Pudsey, W, Yorks, LS28-5PS.
Leeds Public Libraries, Reference Library. Central Library, Leeds,
LS1-3AB.
Mrs A.Lubbock, 8 Tommy Lane, Linthwaite, Huddersfield, HD7-5SQ.
Manchester Public Libraries, Central Library, St Peters Square.
Manchester, M2-5PD.
T.Morris, 19 Colebrooke, Birtley, Chester-le-Street, Durham. DH3-2LF
North Yorkshire County Library, Grammar School Lane, Northallerton
North Yorkshire.
Accessions Dept, Science Museum Library, South Kensington,
London, SW7 5NH.
Sheffield City Libraries, Book Stocks Dept, Central Library,
Surrey St, Sheffield, 1.
F.W.Smith, Durham University, Geology Dept, Science Labs, South Rd,
Durham.

Horace Ratcliffe, c/o Spring Lees. Ripponden. via Halifax, W, Yorks.
J.B. Taylor, I, The Coppice, Sutton in Craven, Keighley, W, Yorks.
D.G. Tucker, 26 Twatling Road, Barnt Green, Birmingham, B45-8HT.
G.T. Warwick, 47, Weoley Park Rd, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29-6QZ.
K.E. Watkinson, 30, Chestnut Road, Mollington, nr Banbury, Oxon, OXI7 1BG
G.H.E. Workman, Stonebrack, Greenhow Hill, Harrogate, N, Yorks. HG3-5JQ
I.J. Wright, 67, Mount View Road, London, N4 4SR.
Elected 7/6/74. Meeting. Herbert Masters, Silverdale, Aston on-
Clun. Craven Arms, Salop, SY7 8EG. Listed as member of Newcomen Soc
PDMHS; Interests-Application of steam and water power.

RESIGNATION

S.D. Holdsworth, Chipping Camden.

FUTURE EVENTS annual dinner and talk in.

Our Annual Dinner is arranged for the 5th October at the
Marton Hotel and Country Club, situated on the Middlesbrough -
Stokesley Rd in Marton village, the meal is expected to start
at 7-30, the expected price will be £2-50 per head. The guest of
honour will be Mr G. Watson of Middlesbrough Council, recreation
and amenities Officer.

Over-night accommodation will be in the Nunthorpe Scout
Hut, which is by the side of Nunthorpe Church. -N.G.R. 540-I40.

This will be the venue for the following days event
The Presidents 'TALK IN', members are asked to note; That the
floor of the hut tends to generate a red dust, so a good ground
sheet is recommended, to protect your sleeping bag.

THE 'TALK IN'.

Short Lectures, Films, Slides are requested for this
event, time limit is normally 20 mins, offers of material to
enable a full days programme to be worked out, should be sent,
or phoned, to the President, Mr John MacPherson, 63, The Avenue,
Linthorpe, Middlesbrough. TS5-6QU. Tel No, 86528. Just as soon as
you are able.

Full details of the final dinner arrangements and menu, will be
sent with a booking form later in the year.

THE SOCIETY TROPHYS

The Founders Cup awarded by Mr J.M.Dickinson, is presented by the President of the year, to any member, for outstanding wdedication to the aims of the society in the currEnt year.

THE GOLDEN CHICKEN AWARD. PRESENTED by a group of members, for any act of ineptitude committed by a member in the society year. (this can, if carried to the extreme be awarded postumously)

Again presented by the President, both awards are entirely at the discretion of the President, who is assisted in this task, by discreet recommendation from any fellow member. The best way to get off the HOOK is to inform on someone else.....

THE PRESIDENTS PITON. donated by Mr John MacPherson, to be awarded annually to the person who achieves the most meritorious performance during the year; Nominations for this would also be welcome by the President.

SOCIETY GOSSIP

Student member John Hunter, determined to taste frost bite, (his trip to Greenland, did not come off.) is heading for the Canadian Rockies, on a rock tapping mission, paid:

Nick, 'Aldred Nichols, late of Wheal Jane, has departed for Tasmania, and promotion, with Con/Gold.

Roger Harker, assumed to be resting after getting his PHd, has formed a mineral society in the Leicester area, and can be contacted, at his rock shop, Oxford St, Leicester, by local members you are advised however to go armed with plenty of cash, and a bag, for those rocks you must have.

Hazel Martel has declared Morley a disaster area, after her new Mini, was engulfed by fire; (car, not skirt) we understand that the insurance people offered, A a new Mini, or B a used Fire engine.

at the time in Secret. ... to ...
cars ...
and here it is....

To David and Jennifer Griffin, a son, Neil Richard, May 24th, 74.
did I hear the cry of MORE ? well stand by for this.....?

Forthcoming WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT.

J.C.WADE to I.BINGHAM. at Carlisle Registry Office.
July 9th, 1974. 12--00 hrs.

Aisle--Altar--Hymm.

Future Address,

"Tara" Aikton, nr Wigton, Cumbria. CA7-OHY. Tel Wigton 2797.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

At Wanlockhead, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. 13-21st July, 1974.
The 1972/3 course will be continued, to the delight of members
who have attended the past two events.

Bookings to Dept of Extra - Mural and Adult
Education, 57/59 Oakfield Ave, Glasgow, G 12. The course fee
should be paid by May 31st, (still Time) £18 .Camping
and Caravan sites are available.

Lecturers. G.Downs-Rose, B.A.(Soc.).

P.Swinbank, B.Sc.Ph, D. M.Inst.P.

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NOTICE OF AN EXTRA TO THE PRINTED MEETS CARD. MEETING.

As instructed by the last General Meeting of the Committee,
I give notice, that a meeting of the Committee and any
member of this society who wishes to attend, is called for
Sunday, the 8th of September, 1974, the venue to be at the
Scout H.Q. "The Dump", situated to the rear of the Devonshire
Hotel, Skipton, Yorkshire. at 14--00 hrs. (D, Platt).

BCRA. ANNUAL CONFERENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS.

This will replace the Annual BSA Sept Conference, and is to
take place on the W/End, Sept 14/15, further details from the
U.L.S.A. P.O.Box, 157, Leeds, LSI-IUH.

Return Address for Newsletter Material,
D.Platt, 11, Neville St. Skipton, BD23 2NL.

MINING NEWS.

The N.C.B. have bought 50% of the equity share Capital of Powell Duffryn Technical Services Ltd.; the Mining Consultants. This will give a valuable reservoir of knowledge that is hoped will benefit British Mining exports.

The N.C.B. have asked for planning permission for a new Drift Mine costing £2 million, at the site of New Monkton Colliery, Royston.

The Government refused an M.P.'s request to direct the N.C.B. to stop its proposed closure of Glapwell Colliery (700 men) ; a final N.C.B. decision is awaited.

Usworth Colliery (N.Durham) ; the N.U.M. have decided to object to the proposed closure and an appeal will be heard on the 4th, 1974, however if successful it would only be a short reprieve, for the pit was sunk in 1874 and has few workable reserves.

Elmore Colliery (S.Durham) closed on 1st Feb. after 149 years life. Adverse geological conditions, low productivity, high financial loss and dwindling reserves finally brought about closure.

Leeds City Council have granted the N.C.B. Planning Permission for a 60 feet deep Sandstone Quarry, near Rothwell Colliery. The project has to be verified by the West Yorkshire Council.

A new Tin Mine is planned for the Truro Area. The Mine: Mount Wellington, is owned by Cornwall Tin & Mining, which is 51% owned by Tradax Geneva, itself part of the Canadian Commodities firm, Cargill. The remaining 49% is held by the Prado Exploration Co.

The N.C.B. are to sink a £5 Million drift mine in S. Wales, at Ebbw Vale near Ammanford; to work proven reserves of five million tons of Anthracite. The project will commence in spring 1974 and the drift will produce 400,000 tons annually.

Oxcroft Colliery, Derby, is to close due to the exhaustion of reserves ; after 75 years, the mine employed 300 men and in the last two months twice set up a new production record (three times the national average).

Granville Colliery, Shropshire, the proposed closure, due to geological difficulties, has been delayed ; the mine's future will be reviewed every three months.

Quintana Overseas Inc., have been granted planning permission to drill for Oil/Gas in the Burnley Area. A Rig is now at work.

COMMITTEE NEWS

A proposal has been recieved by the Committee ; 'That the Society name be changed by the omission of the words "Cavern and", thus making the title the 'Northern Mine Research Society'.

This was proposed because it was felt that the word Cavern makes the title unnecessarily complicated and detracts from our standing. Obviously a major constitutional change like this can only be made at an A.G.M. and it is in the members interests to discuss all aspects of it fully. The committee would therefore welcome any opinions, propositions etc. from all vote holding members.

PLEASE NOTE.

The Working Committee is considering printing Dr. Raistricks M.S.S. "The Lead Smelting Mills of Swaledale and Wensleydale" and are requesting subscriptions from Members to achieve this aim. RISK CAPITAL , in shares of £10 each , interest free, repayable on receipt of cost price from sales.

Would Members willing to speculate in this venture please contact the editor :- P.Jackson.

37, Broomhall Place,
Sheffield, Yorkshire , S10 2DG.

SUGGESTS.. ROMAN SOLDIER AND OLD HONES QUARRIES.

Aberllyn, Klondyke, Tan-yr-eglwys, Parc, Hafns, Gyffty, Bryn Eisteddfod Ffrith, Sion, Gorlan, Farchog, Pant-y-carw, Treicastell, Bryn-y-fawnog, Gellilydan, Cae Coch, Ty'ntwll, Glyn, Nant, Cilcenus, Pen-yr-allt; and the ~~xxxx~~ New Pandora also known as the Eagle. How many now remember these once busy mineral mines high above the Conwy Valley which produced lead, zinc and iron pyrites so many years ago ? Workings which provided livelihoods for scores of local families, foundries and blacksmiths. My interest in the mines began many years ago and resulted in a build up of albums of photographs showing the crumbling mill buildings, 'barracks' in which the miners lodged for the week; and historic reminders of the old days. All fit into the backgrounds of quiet and remote countrysides of mountain, river and lake.

Recently I have re-visited one of those old 'haunts' - a description in keeping with a ghostly apparition once seen there. This mine- as did others on change of ownership- had been known as the New Pandora ; and the Eagle , as I first remember it in the 1930s. With me was a Mining Engineer friend, H.C. Herbert, now living in Spain, who had worked as a miner in the New Pandora during the summer of 1921, when a second year student at the Royal School of Mines.

He had happy recollections of that summer because it was at the mine Managers house that he met the girl- the eldest daughter of the Rector of Llanrwst, Canon Gruffydd Williams-who later became his wife. Those were the days when miners were paid a weekly wage of £3 and used tallow candles stuck in lumps of clay for underground lighting. But back to the ghost!

It is associated with the trim, lonely cottage - 'Ty'n-y-groes' which you come across after turning towards Tlyn Gairionydd from the steep winding Nant-bwlch -Yr-haiarn road and then through a gate leading

to the New Pandora. Here live Shon Sheltinga and his wife - Shon, an enthusiastic delver into old mines in the district whom I met for the first time with H.C.Herbert. By strange coincidence way back in 1953 I had called at the cottage having learned that, under the title of Dilys Cadwaladr, Shon's mother had won the Bardic Crown in the National Eisteddfod. She was then a teacher at the little school at the top of Nant-bwlch-yr-haiarn. Herbert had lodged at the cottage during his stay at the mine.

Shon's parents went to live there in 1949. and, early one August morning in 1953, his father was making a cup of tea for his wife, and, looking out from the door on to the hillside sheepwalks, he was amazed to see only a few yards distant on the grassy track leading to the mine, the figure of a Roman Centurian wearing the traditional plumed helmet and dragging something behind him. He had then rushed upstairs to tell his wife - and quickly downstairs again. But the apparition had vanished. And in Shon's opinion, it is of interest that a Roman Road was believed to have run along the track to the mine.

Shortly after my visit to the New Pandora I went to Pont Cyfyng village hidden off the A5 as approaching Capel Curig - taking the narrow road from the bridge near Ty Hyll cottage and adjacent to an old Roman encampment by the riverside. Several years ago Pont Cyfyng was my starting point for calls at the Rhos slate quarry, now closed down, by a steep rough track up Noel Siabod. The quarry was last worked by the Riley family of Caernarven and the machinery was worked by a water-wheel. And I have photographs of it along with others of the mill buildings and Quarry cottages.

By chance I knocked at the door of No 3 Rhos Cottages in the village; and there met to my great pleasure Bob Morrie Davies and Bessie his wife. Over hospitable cups of tea I learned that Bob - now in his

83rd year -was born in one of the quarry cottages on Moel siabod
Later he had worked at the quarry- and also as a miner in the Gore
Lode of the Parc Mine. During our chat about those old times I
had mentioned my interest in finding a quarry somewhere on the
slopes of Moel Siabod which was said to have produced slate slate
from which hones were made for sharpening saws and knives long ago.
And one of two such in North Wales-the other near Llyn Melynlllyn,
west of the Conwy Valley. Bob remembered the quarry and suggested that
the best way to it was from Dolwyddelan on the road between Betws-
y-Coed and Blaenau Ffestiniog. So, in company with two likewise
interested friends- one brought up in his boyhood days on a farm
above the Conwy Valley ;and with recollections of a hones quarry
near Llyn Melynlllyn-Dolwyddelan was the next objective. Luck was
with us there in this little village nestling among ancient history
and old slate quarry waste tips .With the guidance of Bill Jones
Head forester of the Lledr Forest, we made our way over boggy ground
while the panoramic beauty of Moel Siabod opened up before us.
under brilliant sunshine- and displayed the site we were seeking.
It had to be seen to be believed - remote and peaceful some three
miles from the village. The quarry workings cover about a 1/2 mile extent
from the adit, with its remnants of rusting 2ft gauge track, in
which the slate was mined, to the crumbling mill buildings-which
were linked to the adit by the rail track along the hillside.
The old slate walled ruins include the mill building and the
'Caban' in which the men ate their meals, and the site of the
water wheel's foundation adjacent. The nearby waste tips were
very small; and consisted mainly of clean cut pieces which were
not up to standard. We left nostalgically-with some first class
photographic records but still without any knowledge of the quarries
history. And this demanded another visit.

Good fortune again, I called at the Dolwyddelan Post Office to enquire whether- still living in the district- there might be someone who remembered the old quarry working. Then followed an introduction to Griffith Price Roberts, 'Bron Derw' , who as a young man was working on a farm close to it. He recalled that the quarry was in operation during the 1914-1918 War and that its Manager was Ebenezer Griffiths , a notable pioneer in the slate world from Talycearn, in the Nantlle Valley ; and who used to spend the week at the quarry, sleeping in the 'Caban'. The quarry men were brought to work by horse and trap from Dolwyddelan; and a local carter with a two horse wagon used to carry sand from Dolwyddelan Station to the quarry mill where it was the medium for putting 'smooth as glass' surface on the hones. The carter also took the hones, neatly packed in wooden boxes, to the station warehouse.

Today you cannot get a vehicle more than a few hundred yards along this old road. And one wonders when it was first open to public use. Of interest too a reference in an 1883 volume of 'Gossiping Guide to Wales' which reads: 'Distance from Capel Curig Post Office to Dolwyddelan (over hill) 5m. To Pont Cyfyng 1½m.'.

And, should you ever visit that tiny community-its church and chapel both closed-you can see alongside the chapel house a rough muddy track that may have been once to Capel Curig.

But- back to Llyn Melynlllyn and its hones quarry previously mentioned. It lies, as your Ordnance map will tell you, peacefully and remote on the west of the Conwy Valley among scenery of incomparable beauty, with its sister lakes Cowlyd, Eigiau and Dulyn all in care of the water board. The wanderer in this territory finds old history, old mineral workings-and some long forgotten slate quarries; one of which is the Melynlllyn hones quarry- that second

'Ghost' out of the past. At how did one get those almost story narrow unsurfaced mountain tracks- so one was told ?

Again good fortune. The water board had kindly put me in contact with one of their staff - Stanley Roberts, Llanber who's Wardenship covers the area's reservoirs and treatment works at Llanbedr. And, in company with friend Ernest Roberts, Denbigh, who was brought up in this area, we were driven for miles on bumpy roads on what I had always thought would be a 'mission impossible' to arrive at Melynlllyn. Here again, as at Moel Siabod was an adit from which the hones were quarried. And, alongside the track a derelict roofless stone building which had been the mill; and 'barracks' for the quarrymen staying there for the week. Outside had been a waterwheel- and a leat which provided water from the mountainside and Llyn Melynlllyn. Inside was a little iron hand-winch -sole relic.

And then, suddenly, 'Ebenezer Griffiths' came into the picture again. I had mentioned him as a 'mystery man' associated with Moel Siabod's hones quarry. Stanley Roberts immediate response was that it was an Ebenezer Griffiths who was the manager at Melynlllyn quarry which was privately financed by A.B. Salmen of Caernarvon. And that Mrs. Megan Clarke, 'Bryn-y-pair', Llanbedr-y-Cennin, near Tal-y-bont, is his grand daughter. This quite unexpected 'Lucky Break' was remarkable in its coincidence with the search for information about Ebenezer. And a few days later I called to see her.

Megan's recollections of her grandfather are many- though fading into the past. And one of her regrets is that she had thrown away a cupboard full of his old documents some years after his death when living with her and her husband at Bryn-y-pair, in 1933.

Ebenezer was then 82 years of age. And was one of a large family from 'Bryn Morfa', Caernarvon, where she believes he had worked in a foundry -possibly owned by Salmen, also from that town.

Ebenezer had entered the Tal-y-bont/Tlanbedr district in 1889 where he had taken a notable part in the religious side, in particular of the community life. He was an ardent worker on behalf of the Sunday school organisation - the 'university' of the old days. And he put much effort into the foundation of the local Memorial Hall, which he had supervised until his death. He was buried in the nearby Salem Chapel cemetery.

Megan had no knowledge of his personal home quarries connections other than his management of the Melynlllyn quarry; which had ceased before she was born. And my sole official records - from Scott's - merely state that Melynlllyn, operating from 1900 to 1907, had produced between 4 and 10 tons per year. Are there, one wonders, any of the 'Old Brigade' still living? Megan thinks it is possible that one of them is resident, in his 90s, in Bethesda.

In her possession she had some two or three treasured relics of Ebenezer's. One - a very faded photograph of him, white-bearded, muffled and with walking stick in hand, on a garden seat; with Salem sitting by his side and the latter's right arm around Ebenezer's shoulders. Another is a well preserved copper saucepan in which the men in the 'barracks' used to make their porridge. I left feeling that living in the past can sometimes be very fascinating.

Oct. 1973.

Geraint Madoc-Jones.

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North Area Report. A visit was made to the recently dewatered Diana Flats of B.S.C.'s All Saints Mine.

A guided visit was also made to the workings of Blackdene Mine; where Mrs. MacPherson drilled her first shothole.

Rescue in the Blanchland Area is progressing as is the work at Serrathole Mine.

OBITUARY Many members with contacts on Greenhow Hill will be sorry to hear of the sudden and early death of Eddy Clarke. Eddy was one of the last remaining active lead miners. He started his mining life as a pony boy in the Cockhill Level in 1928, carting out ashes from the boilers in Greenho Rake. He later worked at Cononley, No 2 shaft, and Gillfield Level; after a long spell as foreman at the Skipton Rock he took up mining again with the Clay Cross Co. on Burhill in the 1960's and later cleared Stroop, Goodhamsyke and Wonderful Levels for the Beverley Mines Ltd.

MASSON HILL MEET. Mr. Bird conducted Members on a tour of the caverns and mines in the Masson Hill District. Two shafts were descended and the far reaches of Masson Hill Caverns were explored.

LANCASTER CAVE & MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY.

We have been asked to draw members attention to this Society's new publication 'North West Speliology' Vol2 No1. It was published in Jan. 1974 and contains much detail of the Warton Crag mines, bone caves etc. Copies can be obtained from :-

P. Ashmead,
50, Vale Road,
Skerton,
Lancaster..... 79p (post included)

MEMOIR ALERT!

The H&B Editor has started collecting material for the next Memoirs. would all members intending to offer material please contact him with details. At present the file is empty !

NORTHERN CAVERN AND MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY.

Balance Sheet for Period 31st Jan, 1973, to 31st Dec, 1973.

<u>CREDIT</u>		<u>DEBIT.</u>	
SUBSCRIPTIONS	168.05	Subs to CNCC. Pengelly. BSA.	
METAL BADGES	2.25	CRG. CRO. David & Charles.	18.50
DONATION. (Talk In)	1.15	Skipton Scouts.	10.00
TEAS " "	1.70	Leach & Burgess.	3.10
ANNUAL DINNER	68.00	Polythene Tubes,	3.08
	<u>241.15</u>	Mallinsons Plaque	1.50
		Moldywarps Journal	.75
		Subs Credit	1.00
	241.15	Annual Dinner	666.75
Less Debit	222.43	Bank Charges	1.44
	<u>18.72</u>	Craven Herald Stationary	38.63
Less entered into Gen		Macleans Paper	11.15
A/C Ledger, paid to		Moons Strip System	3.45
Publication Account	3.50	Library Exp(1972)	1.32
	<u>15.22</u>	PRO, Exp (1972)	8.20
Plus Cash at Bank,		Transfers to Publications	
Dec, 31st, 1972	59.13	A/C Teign Valley and	
Cash at Bank,	<u>74.35</u>	Associate Members.	53.50
Dec 31st 1972.	53.15		<u>222.43</u>
	<u>21.20</u>	Less Transfer to Publications a/c,	
		Memoirs and Associate Members, paid	
		in 1974 for 1972.	
		Less Craven Herald, Constitution Forms	
		9.70 Paid in 1974 for 1973.	
	<u>11.50</u>	Credit Balance for Period ,	
		Jan 1st to Dec 31st 1973	

LATE NEWS ITEM. from Mr R.G. Guthrie.

Fluor Spar Report.

According to local papers, Swiss Aluminium have been refused permission to build a processing plant at Stanhope Burn, by the Planning Officers, with the recommendation that a site at North Ditchburn be used.

NOTE WELL TAKE HEED NO DOGS TO BE TAKEN ON THE MONGO GILL CLUB MEET. FARMERS RULE NOT OURS::: NO DOGS, at Mongo: Got It???