

THE NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

MAY 1993

FUTURE MEETS

Sat. 8th & Sun. 9th May - Arkengarthdale Leader L.O.Tyson. For information contact M.Street. Tel (0422)839749. Meet at CB Inn, NGR NY999031 at 10.30am.

Sat. 26th June - Halifax Leader Malcolm Street. Tel (0422)839749. Meet at Shibden Hall, Halifax. NGR SE107258 at 10.30am.

PLEASE NOTE:- this meet has been changed from the date shown on the meets card.

Sat. 11th Sept - Alderley Edge Leader L.O.Tyson. For information contact M. Street. Tel (0422)839749. Meet at Wizard car park, NGR SJ859772 at 10.30am.

SOCIETY BUSINESS

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting and Annual Dinner were held at the Miners Arms, Greenhow, on Saturday, 27th. March, 1993. It was attended by 27 members and guests. This was an increase over the average attendance for the past few years; maybe the change of venue had something to do with it.

The day started at 4.30pm with the Annual General Meeting. This was due to start at 4pm, but at that time half of the Committee was missing.

At 8.00pm we sat down to an excellent meal, after which Caleb Wade, one of our remaining founder members, talked to us about the origins of the Society.

On the Sunday morning 8 members and a dog met at the Miners Arms and proceeded to Stump Cross Caverns to park up. We walked up Craven Moor to Jamie Mine looking at the various holes and veins on the way.

We then walked up the track bed of the old Bradford Corporation Water Works tramway, which was still in use about the turn of the century. This ran from the No.2 Shaft at Craven Cross to the No.3 Shaft at the side of Pockstones Moor Road. Harald Bruff tells an interesting tale relating to the tramway and the occasional violent winds on the moor that cause a lot of destruction; "Two men tried to crawl on all fours from No.3 to No.2 (shafts). One got through by hanging onto the tramway rails, but the other turned back. Busfield told me that he had to hold the windows in place for 2 hours....."

It WAS quite windy as we walked up the track bed towards No.3

Shaft. Arriving at the stile someone pointed out two figures (specks in the distance) back down at Jamie Mine. AAAAAARRGH! I'd forgotten that Sallie and David said they were going to be late. After lots of shouting and doing windmill impressions from the top of the stile the two figures started moving towards us. All together at last we set off to Whim Shaft on Old Vein via a long detour to find the gap in a never ending wall. This shaft still has the remains of the horse whim at the top. We estimated the shaft to be about 250 ft. deep.

Following Wright Vein down the hillside we finally came to the No.3 Incline, driven by the Clay Cross Co. in the 1960's. Numerous bodies ventured down this (it only takes 3 minutes even if you go slowly).

On the way back to the cars we stopped at Blackhill Level where one intrepid member braved the water and went for a quick look. Arriving back at the cars, David said that he would like to look at the workings on Craven Moor that he had missed that morning, so a much reduced party of 3 started the meet again walking up to Jamie Mine and back.

I would like to thank all who came to the AGM, Dinner and Sunday meet, making it an enjoyable weekend.

Malcolm Street.

Officers' Reports

Treasurer's Report

The apparent downward movement in the total of Society funds is entirely due to the transition between the old method of presentation and the new, as I described last year. Previous end of year totals have included subscriptions for the following year to hand at the end of the current (accounting) year. Therefore totals have been unrealistically inflated in previous years' cash accounts. Next year's statement will fully reflect the new method, thus ending the need to explain the apparent discrepancy each year.

The appearance of a "Cash" column is due to the fact that a transfer of monies from the Investment Account to the Current Account had not been completed by the end of the year. Next year's accounts will show a movement of £1500 from the Cash Account to the Current Account.

The total membership at the end of 1992 stood at 458, three down on 1991. Subscriptions for this year continue to roll in. Membership so far stands at 399 (about the same as at this time last year).

As you may be aware, I have been reluctantly forced by pressure of work to tender my resignation from the post of Treasurer as from this year's AGM. In order to reduce the workload of my successor, the Committee has decided to split off the dealings with the Charities Commission and the Inland Revenue and give this task to another committee officer.

R.E. Burns,
Hon. Treasurer

NMRS General Account for 1992

INCOME

	£
Subscriptions	4473.00
Donations	836.43
Investment A/C interest	861.55
Insurance Premiums	65.10
Dinner	187.00
Talk-in	36.00
Misc.	57.50

	6516.58

EXPENDITURE

	£
Publications A/C	2521.50
Insurance	64.35
Donations	246.00
Subs. to societies	48.00
Hall hire	20.00
Stationery	1327.21
Dinner	186.15
Talk-in	28.01
Survey	565.72
Officers' expenses	166.27
Misc.	16.43

	5189.64
Surplus income	1326.94

	6516.58

CASH ACCOUNT

	CURRENT A/C	INVESTMENT A/C	CASH(*)	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
Opening Balance	451.01	9274.31	0.00	9725.32
Closing Balance	271.20	6935.86	1500.00	8707.06
Movement	-179.81	-2338.45	1500.00	-1018.26

N.B. * -Unpresented cheques.

Secretary's Report

31 requests for application forms were received in 1992 of which 18 people took up membership (58%). I have received 6 requests for application forms to date for 1993.

General enquiries continue to arrive as well as orders, from Ireland, for the Monograph we produced in 1991 on the Berehaven Mines.

It is pleasing to note that we have had 4 applications for the post of Newsletter Editor and 2 for the post of Publications Editor following the resignations of the officers in these posts; I would like to thank on behalf of the Committee all those who took the time to apply.

Thanks are also due to those members who led meets last year and to those who are doing the same this year. New meet leaders are always welcome.

Malcolm Street

PRO/Newsletter Editor's Report

Material for the Newsletter has been in very short supply for the last twelve months and that trend seems to be continuing.

The few regular contributors continue as ever and I would like to thank them for their support.

I have now produced the Newsletter for the last three years and during that time I have received encouragement and positive feedback from several members for my attempts to improve both the contents and the appearance of the Newsletter. Feedback from members is however a fairly rare occurrence and it is difficult to know if what they are getting is what they want.

I would like to thank the Committee for their support during my time with them as Librarian for five years and these last three years as Newsletter Editor.

The Committee, this year, will for various reasons see its biggest change in officers, and I wish them every success.

D.J. McCurdy

Editor's Report

The accounts for 1992 make very depressing reading. Although our income was over £7000, our expenditure was over £9000 which totally wiped out the surplus from previous years.

Publications Account for year ending 31st. December, 1992.

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
	£		£
Aftersales	4776.45	Artwork	25.00
General Account	2500.00	Printing	7764.42
Bank Interest	116.63	Miscellaneous	796.22
Bank charge repayment	20.12	Advertising	72.90
		Stationery	130.78 *
		Postage	882.31
		Sales expenses	75.00
Total	7413.20	Total	9746.63

Cash Statement

	Current A/C £	Deposit A/C £	Total £
Opening balance	79.27	2325.85	2405.12
Closing balance	91.69	0000.00	91.69
Income +	7413.20	Expenditure +	9746.63
Opening balance	2405.12	Closing balance	91.69
Total	9818.32	Total	9838.32

On these figures, our income is £20.00 less than our expenditure, BUT there is a £20.00 credit in the Deposit Account paying-in book for 25/8/92 which doesn't seem to appear anywhere else so will presumably put matters right.

* Includes £77.46 for a cheque from 1991 which was not presented for payment until 1992.

Although more money has now come into the account from the General Fund and sales, this is nowhere near enough to finance even one publication this year, let alone our traditional two. The situation is made worse by the fact that there is no profit

whatsoever in publishing a Memoirs as the small print run, necessitated by the lack of demand for these, means they have a very high unit cost. As the publication of Memoirs is a very important function of the Society, however I feel that these are still worth doing.

While good material continues to be submitted for publication by the Society it seems time now to look at options available for the future management of the Society's publishing business. The available material is :-

1. The Grassington Monograph, which is almost ready to go to the printers.
2. The next Memoirs, work on which is well advanced, with seven papers already set and another three on hand.
3. The Alston Moor Monograph, which is available on disk and could be ready for the printers by mid-summer.
4. In the pipeline, work is well advanced on Les Tyson's Grinton Monograph, and there are also two coal-mining Monographs.

The hard choices which need to be made are, therefore :-

1. To publish nothing this year and conserve what funds we have.
2. To publish the next Monograph and no Memoirs, for which about an additional £1500 is needed.
3. To publish the Memoirs only, for which about an additional £1200 is needed and which will raise nothing from sales.
4. To publish one Monograph and a Memoirs, for which about an additional £4500 is needed
5. To publish two Monographs and no Memoirs, for which about an additional £4800 is needed.
6. To publish two Monographs and a Memoirs, for which about an additional £7800 is needed.

In my opinion, option 1. is not acceptable but it is the only one that does not involve raising extra money.

If extra funds could be raised, option 2. has the least risk but, as much material was left over from Dick's last Memoirs, it would mean members waiting a second year to see their work in print. Again, I feel this is unacceptable.

Option 3. would simply make matters worse.

Option 4. will raise some income but not solve the problem.

Option 5. will maximise income but has the failings of option 2.

Option 6. the boldest and of course the riskiest, is probably our best hope if funds can be raised.

In an effort to increase income, I have already raised prices for external sales but this will have only a small effect and I would not like to see prices cross the psychological barrier of £10.

There is plainly a need to increase subscriptions but, if we work on 400 full members, an extra £5 will only raise £2000. It is imperative, therefore, that sales are increased but at the moment the only publication which is selling well is Richardson's "Mining on Dartmoor and the Tamar Valley".

I am sorry that this, my first report, is so depressing but it does not exaggerate the seriousness of the situation and the urgent need for a remedy.

Hazel Mary Martell.

At the AGM it was decided and confirmed by the members present that Option 6 should be the one to go for.

Librarian's Report

Since the Committee Meeting held on January 22nd, there have been 7 loans. Since the last AGM, a year ago almost to the day, there have been 26 loans. There have been no problems, all books being returned on time and in good condition. Several indeed have improved on the padded bag in which the books were sent out. I'm very parsimonious about these. Malcolm has updated the library list which will be sent to all members. M. Jeffery sent 10 photostats of Mike's Publications Index and Bibliography 1960 - 80. These are very useful additions to the two original copies in the library and, of course, can be read without a magnifying glass !

I hasten to say that Mike has done a magnificent job updating the Index to 1991. This must have involved a tremendous amount of work and it is a pity that funds did not allow a larger type face. However, having heard Hazel's report we are obviously lucky to have anything.

Chris Ebbs would like to buy copies of BM No.14 "Manganese Mines of North Wales" and BM No.31 "Talgroch Mine". If anyone knows of unwanted copies, please let me know.

E.V. Greenough (Mrs)

NMRS COMMITTEE 1993

President	J.Hopkinson, 4, Knights Way, NEWENT, Gloucestershire. GL18 1QL. Tel. 0531 820462
Vice President	R.E.Burns, 3, Queen Elizabeth Way, BARTON-UPON-HUMBER. South Humberside. DN18 6AJ. Tel. 0652 635523
Junior Vice President	S.Bassham (Ms), 4, Pen-y-Ghent View, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, SETTLE, North Yorkshire. BD24 0HE. Tel. 0792 860 446
Secretary	M.Street, 7, Salisbury Street, SOWERBY BRIDGE, West Yorkshire. HX6 1EE. Tel 0422 839749.

Treasurer C.J.Hindle, 87, Leeds Road, ILKLEY,
West Yorkshire. LS29 8EG.
Tel. 0943 609707.

Newsletter P.Clayton, 211, Marsh Lane, WOLVERHAMPTON.
Editor WV10 6SA. Tel. 0902 780920.

Recorder M.C.Gill, 38, Main Street, Sutton in Craven,
KEIGHLEY, West Yorkshire. BD20 7HD.
Tel 0535 635388.

Librarian E.V.Greenough (Mrs), 22, Elmhurst Road,
ST. ANNES ON SEA, Lancashire. FY8 3JH.
Tel. 0253 723987.

Editor H.M.Martell (Miss), 88, Springfield Road,
Morley, LEEDS, West Yorkshire. LS27 9PN.
Tel. 0532 536764.

NMRS LIBRARY - Additions to Library List

ASSOCIATION FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY
World Industrial History, Summer 1992. No.8.

GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

Journal, Volume 129, Parts	4, 6.	1973
Journal, Volume 130, Parts	1, 5.	1974
Journal, Volume 135, Parts	2.	1978

JOHN MCNEIL MEMORIAL SEAT APPEAL

Shortly after John's death, after talking with many of his friends, it was suggested that a very fitting memorial would be to place a seat in one of the many areas he had visited.

Permission has now been given by Dent Parish Council to place a seat at the junction of Flintergill and Occupation Road, a quarter of a mile from the village centre of Dent. From here there are fine views of Dentdale, the Howgills and the Lake District, an ideal spot to reflect on times spent with John.

The seat will be made in teak hardwood by a local joiner to give, hopefully, 25 years' service, and will indicate that it is a gift from the "Friends of John McNeil". It is intended to notify all contributors of the date and time of the fitting of the seat so that those who wish may attend.

The total cost has been estimated at £600. We realise that this is a large sum to raise, especially in today's difficult times, but if you feel you are able to make a contribution please make cheques etc. payable to the "John McNeil Memorial Seat Appeal" and send to the above address, together with your own address if you wish to be informed of the arrangements.

Please send any contribution to :- Bernard and Janet Bond,
1, Beech Terrace,
Ingleton, Carnforth,
Lancashire. LA6 3HT.

LETTERS

The C.B. smeltmills, Arkengarthdale

In Mike Gill's interesting paper on 'Yorkshire Smelting Mills', (BM45), he gives a digest of the evidence for six ore hearths at the Octagon mill, which seems liable to confuse readers. Firstly his ref.70 to Tyson's work is given as 'Marrick 1989' when it presumably should be 'Arkengarthdale 1986'. The quote from Tyson 'There were seven arched openings in the walls, - etc.' does not refer to the possible flue openings as Mike seems to suggest. This phrase appears to have come originally from Clough's book and it is clear from the latter that it is a reference to the door openings in seven of the walls of the Octagon. In an earlier publication (Cave Science 12, 1950 p.187) Clough also refers specifically to six flues but this reference is omitted from the book, because he realised that he had only enough evidence from the masonry to support the interpretation of four ore hearths.

Tyson introduced two new bits of historical evidence in favour of six ore hearths at the Octagon (BM 29 p.32). The first was a claim by an employee shortly before the construction was completed, that the mill 'will have six ore hearths'. The second claim about a year later was from a clerk who said that the mill 'does occasionally smelt 3 marks of lead per week'. This latter claim seems the most useful bit of evidence available and can be examined from data also in Tyson's monograph. On his p27 we find that a mark was 400 pieces and weighed 24 fothers which were 22 cwt. in Arkengarthdale. This gives 3 marks equal to 79.2 tons. On p25 some weights of a consignment of lead give the average weight of a piece in 1790 as 147.01 lbs.. Taking 147x400 gives 3 marks as 78.75 tons, which is close enough to confirm the order of magnitude involved. If there had been six hearths this would mean approximately 13 tons per week per hearth. If only four hearths, then a figure approaching 20 tons output per hearth would have been required. A most useful paper by Hazel Martell and Mike Gill on 'Ore Hearth Smelting' (BM41), gives data from Nenthead from the mid 1820's which indicates a weekly output from an ore hearth of 'a little over nine to ten foddors of lead'. Using the Newcastle fodder of 21 cwt. gives, say a little over 10.5 tons per week as a possibility. This is still a bit short of the 13 tons required by the Octagon claim, but is at least within credible striking distance. So it could be acceptable evidence that when first built, the Octagon mill must have had six ore hearths.

In his discussion of the 'New or C.B. Mill', Mike Gill devotes much space to interpretation based on an 'unprovenanced' drawing from NMRS Records, seemingly assuming that this is a copy of a possibly 19th. century manuscript. Mike has kindly sent me a copy of this together with a note indicating that he now thinks it more likely to be an attempted reconstruction from the ruins of the mill by someone unaware of Bob Clough's published material. I agree with this interpretation and, without going into detail, there are many evidences for this in the drawing. Perhaps a friend ought to have advised the draughtsman that in our vernacular buildings it is usual for the roof ridge to be parallel to the long axis of the structure. The drawing is signed in the bottom right hand corner 'J.E. Freeman NC&MRS 19/5/62, this date being only shortly after the first copies of Clough's book were received by the subscribers.

In view of this rather unfortunate red herring, which Mike has

introduced into the discussion of the C.B. New Mill, it may be worth mentioning that a short paper on the site is due to appear in 'British Mining 47' in November. The paper by Terry Whitaker and myself is largely based on photographic evidence, supported by a few measurements made on the site. It was submitted last year in time for BM 45 but was held over by our then Editor due to an overabundance of other material.

Since all the evidence in Freeman's drawing indicates that he was probably quite young at the time he produced it, there is every possibility that he is still active and can be traced. Perhaps there is someone in our Society who knows him or even helped him with ther measurements. Any information on J.E. Freeman's present whereabouts would be appreciated. It would be interesting to learn how this piece of work came to reside in the Records.

Jack Myers

CWMYSTWYTH LEVEL FAWR PLAQUE

Until the mid 1970's a fine slate plaque adorned the entrance of the Level Fawr at Cwmystwyth. Erected by the Cwmystwyth Mining Co. Ltd. in 1898 when the mine reopened it named Henry Gammon as Managing Director; the names of his two co-directors had been obliterated and infilled with lead when he assumed sole ownership in 1905. A glass fibre replica was later put up by the North Cardiganshire Mining Club. This too disappeared and was briefly returned in 1978 before vanishing completely.

The fate of both plaques was unknown until shortly before Christmas 1992 when the original slate plaque was anonymously donated to the Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum. The plaque had obviously been well looked after; it is pleasing that its future safety is now assured as such plaques are now rare. To my knowledge only two entrance inscriptions survive in situ in mid Wales - the 1785 keystone to Level Fawr at Pontrhydygroes and an 1870 keystone to the Brommwyn Deep Adit. Preserved plaques include one at Treddol Chapel Museum and two or three at Llywernog Mining Museum. The Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum has two other plaques in its collection - the small 1842 tablet from Taylor's Incline at Goginan, and the huge ornate plaque from the Van mine.

The possibility of unauthorised removal led to a replica, rather than the original Goginan tablet being emplaced during restoration work in 1991. With reclamation work being mooted for Cwmystwyth it would be pleasing if money could be found for a similar replica at the Level Fawr as part of the works.

Robert Protheroe-Jones, Research Assistant.

MEET REPORT - WET EARTH COLLIERY, APRIL 17th.

From the leader's point of view, this got away to an un auspicious start. heavy rain overnight and a steady drizzle in the morning meant that the River Irwell would probably be high, roadworks on one of the approaches meant delays and detours and finally, vandalism meant that the signpost to Clifton Marina had gone. As the approach from the A666 is via a suburban street this meant standing there in full mining dress on the road to direct people to the site. However, by 10.30am, the sun broke through, 25 people and a dog had arrived and the meet began. My apologies if anyone did not notice me standing at the roadside and so missed the meet.

Due to the number present it was decided to split the party in three and start at different points, however I understand everybody visited the syphon, leat, canal dock, penstock, wheel chamber and the fan site now being excavated. The access tunnel to the sough was visited by all except the dog and most people went the full way underground to the wheel chamber. Some travelled out by the sough and got wet, the river as expected was high and everybody had to wade to get to the sough - it was well up the wellingtons and in some cases even higher.

Most people said they enjoyed the trip and I understand "The Wet Earth Exploration Society" gained some new helpers. Our thanks are given to the Society and in particular to our three guides, Mike Shardlow, Dennis Sherelan and Mark Wright, also to Alan Davies of Salford Mining Museum for the invitation and arrangements.

This is the first society I have come across working at old collieries and all were impressed with their enthusiasm, professionalism and use of equipment. My personal thanks to all who turned up, I did not expect so many at a coalmine meet as the Society has up till now been mainly involved in old metal mines. Perhaps we should look out for more visits of this nature and in urban areas, certainly this meet brought some new faces out.

Alan Sinar

Transport System Revealed

Last month's "Dalesman" revealed one of the Yorkshire lead mining area's best kept secrets - the use of Peruvian dwarf elephants for haulage both above and below ground. Apparently a few survive high above Swaledale. Have any members met any of the beasts ? Possibly after a night in the Farmers Arms ? Well, it was last month's magazine.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter and apologies to those whose contributions were not included this time through lack of space.

The next Newsletter will be published in August 1993. Please send any material for inclusion to the Newsletter Editor at the address below before 30th. June.

Phil Clayton, 211, Marsh Lane, WOLVERHAMPTON. WV10 6SA.
Tel. 0902 780920.

The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the correspondents and are not necessarily agreed with or shared by NMRS or its officers.

The accuracy of submissions is the responsibility of the authors and will not always be checked for validity by the Editor.