

NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 1994

Forth coming Meets

- Saturday 19th March Society General Meeting and Dinner, 1994.
The Miners Arms, Greenhow, North Yorkshire. NGR SE114642
AGM at 5.00pm. Dinner 7.30 for 8.00pm.
- Sunday 20th March Greenhow. Leader M. Street. Tel (0422) 839749.
Meet in the Miners Arms car park at 10.30 am.
- Saturday 9th. April Cornwall: Tywarnhale Mine. Meet at Tywarnhale Power House
NGR SW697473 at 9.45am. Anyone wishing to attend **must**
contact the meet leader in advance. Leader: R. Bade. Tel 081
540 6229.
- Sunday 10th. April Cornwall: Cligga Head. Meet near the clubhouse/hangars at
Perranporth Airfield. NGR SW745535 at 10.00am.
Leader: R. Bade. Tel 081 540 6229.
- Saturday 21st May Northern Pennines: Garrigill and Tynehead. Meet both days
Sunday 22nd May at NGR NY740417 (on roadside, half a mile out of Garrigill on
the Leadgate road, near Tynebottom Mine) at 10.00am.
Leader: R. Bade. 081 540 6229.
- Saturday 18th June Swaledale: Old Gang and Surrender Mines. Meet both days at
Sunday 19th June Surrender Bridge: NGR SD988999 at 10.30 am. Leaders T.
Whitaker (Tel 05242 62269) and L.O. Tyson. Camping and other
accommodation available at the Punch Bowl Inn. Contact meet
leader for details.
- Saturday 11th September Swaledale: Summer Lodge and Whitaside Mines. Meet at
Summer Lodge Smelt Mill (site of, on side of the Askigg/Grinton
road) NGR SD965948 at 10.30 am. Leader L.O. Tyson. For
details contact M. Street. Tel (0422) 839749.
- Saturday 12th November General Meeting, Pies and Peas, Slides etc.
Village Hall, Sicklinghall, Near Wetherby.
Start at 2.00pm.

Meet Reports

Ingleton Coalfield - October 24th. 1993

Eight years have passed since the last Northern Mines meet at Ingleton and visiting the coalfield. Twenty seven eager beavers and two dogs arrived quite promptly at Beech Terrace (Brick Row) Ingleton. Mike Goth, now to be deputy leader, had took off to sunny (?) France leaving his tackle to exhibit; sorry, his mining exhibits in our garage for all to admire.

The combination of our surface and underground maps and true Ingleton Colliery artefacts decorated the garage. Information handouts and surface maps of the coalfield were given out, to spice the 'gathering'. Weather, walking pace and information on hand led firstly to the Wilson Wood Colliery. I wish to thank Dick Chalmers for his efforts in copying these sheets, following my doctored 'Little Chef' road maps, now marked showing 'Bell Pits'. Our next visit led us to the Burton-in-Lonsdale area and pre-1800 handpits and the Four Foot Coal Seam crossing the River Greta and river banking. Sadly most of this now being covered over with alteration to the river bed with a mechanical digger.

Clintsfield Colliery, NGR SD629698, and its wonderfully preserved engine house location took us all by surprise. What a picture taking place this is, several bell pits, roadways and streamways are still to be seen, Autumn's colours to field and moorland and then a backcloth of Ingleborough; this, unanimously was a 'grand spot'. Thanks to Phil Hudson of Lancaster for generously discussing the little known history of the pit and also its important connections with the Ingleton Coalfield. Abruptly we had to retreat in time for the waiting landlord at the Bridge Inn, Tatham, who provided food. *Permission to visit Clintsfield can only be given by the owners in Lancaster and not from the farmer, Mr. Hartley. Do not approach.*

Delay to the return and the visit to the last meeting place occurred. MUTINY ? No; smiling faces wrapped around ice creams arrived back at our garage. New Ingleton Colliery was only a short stretch of the legs. Photographs. Steel sections from the 60 foot chimney lay about our viewing position. John Bentley of Burnley gave a precise history of the pit including mining family movements. Injuries to the miners whilst working there kept our group concentrated. Richard, Nellie and Grove Pits stand quite close to each other. On site stand engine mounts, roadway and Barker's Brickworks; scattered amongst broken and uneven ground. Standing on a high point nearing 4.30pm the group gathered to view the places visited during the day, now easily seen, and the sun dropping in the direction of Morecambe Bay.

Finally, we made our way back through what had been the Newfield Colliery, the tarmac road and to our starting point. For those who stayed on, tea and cakes were provided. Many thanks to those attending, some having travelled great road distances. I hope you enjoyed a quite fast-moving day in the Dales.

Bernard R. Bond

Meet Report Halifax 26th June 1993

After meeting at Shibden Hall we drove a short distance down the road to the old Shibden Hall Colliery. The whole site is heavily overgrown with young trees and brambles which hides the remains. These would probably have been knocked down long ago but for this. A two story building still stands, presumably a later build judging by the use of various different colours and patterns of glazed and unglazed bricks used in its walls. The site of the shaft can be found and walking from the shaft in a south-westerly direction, the course of the tramway can be followed. This tramway was carried on brick towers, which still remain, each about 15-20ft high, to the waste heap some quarter of a mile away. This mine had formerly been a coal mine but was later included in the empire of the Leeds Fireclay Company, producing clay for glazed bricks amongst other things. The shaft head at this mine is at about 400ft AOD and 147ft deep. The coal; 7-9ins and fireclay; 3ft 9in - 4ft 9in forming the 36 Yard Band, dip to the east and due to water problems this is the most easterly working.

We then drove back up to the Beacon Hill Fireclay works, overlooking Halifax. These mines also work the 36 Yard Band. Their entrances, now well blocked are at about 650ft AOD and presumably follow the beds from the outcrop down to the Shibden Hall Colliery. The gradient of the Day Holes, as they are called, is 1 in 24. The site is a large waste ground, having seen much re-use since the closure of the mines. Various buildings still stand and the site of one of the Day Hole entrances can be seen.

Lunch was taken on the hill top at Southowram looking down over the Beacon Hill and Shibden Hall sites. In this area about half a mile from the Beacon Hill works stand two structures, marked on the 25inch map as "air shafts". One is a round tower with a castellated top, the other a small square structure. Are these two shafts sunk at different times, or just on with a building at the side?

The afternoon started at Cinder Hills FC Works. The buildings are all still standing, though in a very dilapidated state. Entry is prevented by a high fence and signs warning of Guard Dogs.

The next side visited was back in the Shibden Valley at Simm Carr. Here is the remains of an old waterwheel pit. It is marked on the 1860 6in maps as "old pump". The farmer told me that it was for pumping air up a level as he had crawled a distance up it a number of years ago. It seems more likely that he crawled up the water inlet, especially as a the side of the waterwheel pit is a 4ft square shaft? choked at about 6ft down. Also there is the remains of a small resevoir, but no signs of water feed to the wheel or of the tail race. The farmer has indicated to me that he would like the pit digging out and rebuilding to stop people from pinching the loose stones - anyone interested contact me.

The final visit of the day was to view from a distance, permission not obtainable, the remains of Walterclough Pit. This mine. I assume, worked the same beds as Shibden Hall Colliery which is half a mile up the valley. This mine was unusual as everything was transported from the pit head by an ariel ropeway to the railway sidings on the other side of the valley. The main support tower, built of stone, still stands beside Wood Bottom Lane and it is from here that we viewed the pit. A lot of the buildings are intact although the shaft has been sealed. The mine closed in 1969.

Malcolm Street

SOCIETY NEWS

RECORDER'S REPORT TO THE GENERAL MEETING 05/11/1993

The Records has had a busy year with the following material donated to it by members: notes from the London Lead Company Minutes for the Yorkshire Dales (mid.C18th); photo's of the portal of Level Fawr at Cwmystwyth; photo's and notes on Foss Gill Level, Wensleydale; survey of Storey Level, Nidderdale; minutes of the Company of Mine Adventurers of England; a transcript of the Hurst Day Book: 1827-1853; notes on the Grinton and Fremington mines; production data for Wensleydale mines: 1850-1879; detailed drawings of the Cupola mill and flue system at Grassington. The Recorder thanks members for the foregoing and any items he may have missed.

As part of an English Heritage study of industrial landscapes, the Yorkshire Dales National Park asked the Recorder to prepare a set of maps outlining the extent of Mining Related Landscapes in the Dales. These are areas in which features relating to lead mining, dressing and smelting are found. The work has been done and the payment for it will shortly be in the Publications Account.

It is hoped that a second study, aimed at identifying Mining Affected Landscapes, will follow. The latter are field and settlement patterns in areas where mining has supported larger populations than farming alone would have done.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park is currently doing Phase 1 of a survey of Gunnerside Gill in advance of consolidation proposals for the lead working remains in the area. The Recorder has also submitted a proposal for preparing a report on the history of mining in the Gill. An answer is expected soon.

Finally, may I thank everyone for their concern and good wishes during my recent stay in hospital.

Mike Gill

SOCIETY EDITOR SHORT-LISTED FOR AWARD

Congratulations to the Society's Editor, Hazel Martell, for being short-listed for the Times Educational Supplement's "Junior Information Book Award" in November. Her book *"What Do We Know About The Celts ?"* published by Simon and Schuster, was the runner up. The judges described it as bursting with information and very attractively packaged. As well as praise for being original and informative, the book scored high marks for its clarity and design.

Hazel has had three novels, a novello, around 400 short stories and thirteen childrens' non-fiction history books published. The latter include works on the Vikings, Celts, Stone Age, Asterix, the Age of Discovery and the History of the World (500-1100, 1460-1500 and 1914-1949). She has also been commissioned to write books on the Ancient Chinese, Normans, Celts and Foods and Feasts: The Vikings.

While we're on the subject of plugs, your retiring Newsletter Editor might just slip one in for his recently published *On High Yorkshire Hills - Exploring the "Two Thousand Footers"*. Dalesman. £12.99.

All of which leads us nicely onto :-

BOOK REVIEWS

Members may be interested to know that the books on Cornish mining reviewed in the last issue by Roy Fellows, together with many other titles, are available from Cornwall Archaeological Unit, The Basement, Old County Hall, Station Road, Truro, Cornwall. Tel (0872) 74282, ext. 3603.

Cheques made out to Cornwall County Council. Fine address for an archaeological unit !

The Milwr Tunnel, Bagillt to Loggerheads. Chris Ebbs. 1993.

66pp. 47 photos. 8 figs/maps etc.

The Milwr Tunnel, begun at sea level at Bagillt on the Dee estuary in 1897, was driven initially to unwater the Milwr mine, south east of Holywell. It was later extended southwards and eventually, in 1957, reached the Cathole Mine, near Mold, over ten miles from the portal.

This well-researched and illustrated book provides, for the first time, an account of the tunnel and the mines associated with it. In the 1930's Halkyn District United Mines had 650 men at work, and the veins mined from the tunnel produced 200,000 tons of lead ore and 80,000 of zinc. 23 million gallons flowed from the tunnel mouth daily, making it an important water supply.

The book is illustrated by a good selection of old and modern photographs. It can be obtained from the author, Tan-y-glyn, Llanarmon Road, Llanferres, Mold, Clwyd. CH7 5TA. Price £4.95 post free.

C.J. Williams.

A further selection

THE CAVES AND MINES OF ANGLESEY by Tony Oldham ii + 16 pp illus surveys. Tony has been working on this since 1989 and now claims that this is the most important and comprehensive monograph on the area [it is also the only one!] SB £2.00

THE CWMYSTWYTH MINES by Simon S J Hughes 1993 78 pp 22 photos 10 figs / maps etc. After being out of print for 12 years, this third edition, published in order to raise funds for Eglwys Newydd church, will be highly sought after. An important monograph for both the mine historian and the explorer. [buy from us and receive a free copy of a Cavers Guide with a survey of Level Fawr & Kingside Adit] SB £7.50

A LIST OF MINES IN NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET by Peter F Claughton 1993 27 pp 180 described and located. SB £3.00

PIGS & INGOTS / The Lead/Silver Mines of Cardiganshire by Tina Carr and Annemarie Schöne 1993 105 pp 32 photos, many in colour 18 figs 6 line drawings. SB £9.95

all are available from Tony Oldham, Rhychdywr, Crymych, Dyfed SA41 3 RB, add £1.00 per book for postage

Mines of the Gwydyr Forest

Mines of the Gwydyr Forest. Part 5. Coed Mawr Pool, Cyffty and Other Mines. By John Bennett and Robert W. Vernon. A5.144pp. ISBN 0 9514798 4 9. Price £6.50 Post free from Gwydyr Publications c/o John Bennett, 7 St. Johns Way, Cuddington, Cheshire. CW8 2LX.

This is the fifth book in the series of seven and covers as the title indicates the mines on the high ground west of Betws-y-Coed and on the north bank of the Llugwy river.

The principal mines in this area were Cyffty, Coed Mawr Pool and Ffridd and the main body of the book is taken up with a most interesting description of their histories.

As with the majority of Welsh mines much more money was generated by the promoters than was ever won from the ground and it is quite remarkable how little was in fact brought to "day" in any of these ventures. Cyffty is one of the better known mines of N. Wales and is perhaps so because of the excellent surface remains which were extant until 1966 when they were needlessly demolished. In the last two years an Interpretation trail has been completed and the much reduced remains consolidated after the completion of a limited amount of excavation. This trail is described in the book as are the present day remains at the other sites.

At the back of the book is a 12 page Appendix which is an extract from the Royal Commission Report of 1864, known as the Kinnaird Commission, which was appointed to inquire into the condition of all mines in Great Britain. This extract deals exclusively with Coed Mawr Pool mine and evidence from Lord Willoughby's agent and the mine Captain, Matthew Wasley.

The book is written in the usual easy reading style from these authors and the chapters are arranged in such a way that the individual histories of the mines are easily unscrambled from their often interrelated activities.

There are 33 maps and diagrams including four very good fold out plans and 10 photographs. Again in this volume, as in the others, there are not many old photographs, but I am informed by the authors that this is simply due to their extreme scarcity and not a reluctance to publish. This volume stands well on its own, for those just interested in this particular area and for those who have already acquired volumes 1-4 it must be simply a formality to rush out and get Volume 5!!

Damian J. McCurdy



Opencast Coal Plant and Equipment - Bill Huxley

Published by Roundoak Publishing. Nynhead, Wellington, Somerset. TA21 0BX.

First published 1993, price £12.95 and £1.80 p&p.

This A5 size, 76 page book is full of glossy photos with detailed captions. In all there are about 130 photos, including a few in colour, of the range of plant used in operations from prospecting, through production, transport and restoration over the last 50 years. The earliest large excavators during the 1940's were steampowered but they soon developed into the long jibbed, electrically and diesel powered walking draglines which became common during the 1950's and 60's. Many of the trucks appear to have a war-time ruggedness about them but the contractors' names on the side are still, in many cases, to be seen on coal sites today. Unusual machines such as bucket wheel loaders and spreader conveyor units are included and there is a sprinkling of mishap photos among the larger excavators. The hydraulic excavators came in during the 1970's and the larger draglines started to disappear. Further progress towards the 170 tonne capacity truck meant less dragline useage but even so the occasional large one in commissioned. Big Georgie (No.2), with bucket capacities up to 50 cu m. and a total weight of 4000 tonnes being the latest. But is it the last of these 20th century dinosaurs ?

This is a well produced book and of value to all interested in the development of mineral working.

Dr. I.J. Brown

Prehistoric Flint Mines - by Robin Holgate

Shire Publications, Cromwell House, Church Street, Princes Risborough, Bucks. HP17

9AJ. Published in the Shire Archaeology Series (no.67) soft covers, 56pps, 28

illustrations and plans.

This book covers the mining of flint particularly in the late fourth and third millenia BC, before the use of metal became widespread. It describes the geology and the distribution of sites, almost all in the south east of England although some flints have been quarried in Devon, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Other sections describe the history of research into flint working since the 1850's, the methods and tools used and the uses of flint from the Neolithic Period through the 18th and 19th centuries to the retirement of the last real flint mines in the 1930's. (Some flint is still quarried however, for building purposes.) A short but interesting section discusses the sites themselves and this includes notes on eight sites worth visiting. The book concludes with a list of seven museums containing displays and collections of artefacts relating to the industry and a note on the Brandon Heritage Centre, Suffolk, which has a special display on early flint mining.

The book is a good introduction to its subject, its knowledgeable and lively style makes a subject, often considered rather boring and uninteresting, very presentable.

Dr. I.J. Brown

CORRESPONDENCE

Logaulas Mines Papers

In purging my files recently I came across some papers from 1969 concerning an attempt by a firm of brokers on the notorious Vancouver Stock Exchange to prospect and work a group of mines in the area of Logaulas in Wales. The mines they were interested in were Glog Fawr, Glog Fach, Cwm Maur and Lisburne. One of their engineers discovered that a road had been built on the back of a lead-zinc lode and as a result the lode had never been worked. The Canadians failed to pay their UK Consultant, Geoffrey Leader, MIMM, who lived in Oxshott in Surrey.

I shall be happy to pass the bunch of papers to anyone interested; first letter secures, but in case more detail is required, please telephone.

Justin Brooke.

Chymorvah Vean, Marazion, Cornwall. TR17 0DQ. (0736) 710468

For Sale Memoirs 34. 35.

British Mining Nos. 29. 31. 33. 38. 42. 46. 47.

All in good condition. Offers please to *K.A. Franey, Hobbit Cottage, Stoke Rivers, Barnstaple, Devon. EX32 7LD.*

Wanted

British Mining Nos. 14. 18.

Also For Sale

British Mining Nos. 42. 47, Mining in Cumbria, a bibliography and Index to Newsletters and Publications of NMRS 1960 - 1991. Any sales monies to be donated to the publications account.

Alan Rhodes, 27, Lombardy Close, Leverstock Green, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Herts. HP2 4NG.

Society Publications

This area has again attracted a fair amount of correspondence with a wide range of views. It seems only fair to include it all to give a balanced view.

From Peter Donovan

The current correspondence re. society publications has raised the question of members joining both the NMRS and PDMHS in order to receive both societies publications. This ignores the cost factor. Many of us have interests outside of mining. I am surely not alone in being able to name quite a few organisations I would like to belong to, but cannot afford to join them all.

The quality of the NMRS publications is excellent but does it need to be quite so good, especially from a financial aspect? They are ideally suited to the bookcase, but not for use in the field. For field trips I have to make notes from the copy that interests me. I am not prepared to have my books ruined by the elements. With modern print methods and preparation on computers, has any thought been given to providing field guides. The memoirs and monographs contain plenty of information, usually as a separate chapter or paragraph on the present day conditions of the relevant site. These can be invaluable on site. They would not need to be on art paper but would be of value to those people who like to look around, but are not deep into the scholarly aspects of our interest.

Lynn Willies suggestion, supported by Hazel Martell towards a National Series/list of publications is just what is needed. Wherever I go in the country I find interesting books on local mining which I have never seen reviewed or mentioned elsewhere.

May I also support Mr. Breakspear in a plea for A.4. Line drawings and maps in particular, cry out for the larger format.

It seems wrong that Mr. Harvey should consider his book unsuitable for our membership. Surely the social history is of great importance, and if a body such as the NMRS is not interested, then who will be.

The note on Gwynfynydd is slightly wrong, unless there has been a very recent change of policy. The mine is open through the winter at rates well below those of the summer. The term courtesy bus is also misleading. The bus is an integral part of the visit to the mine. Visitors on the mine tours are not allowed to use their own transport to reach the mine.

Peter also puts in a request for any information on the opencast tin working at Lanivet, north of Bodmin. NGR SX019669

From J.R.H. Seaman

I agree that co-operation with marketing and publicity for books etc. would benefit both publishers and their members. The small overlap of membership of NMRS and PDMHS could indicate a potential market with people who may not wish to purchase, by membership, all the publications of "the other" organisation. Could publicity be arranged through the NAHMO? Member organisations could send brief details of their publications, including cost and ordering information to other members who could if they wished include it in their newsletter. Mutual assistance at low cost.

From David Bick

Since my mining books have been mentioned in recent correspondence, perhaps I could make a few comments and observations. It seems to me that the society is getting into a very regrettable situation by tailoring its publications towards members only, as if there was some great virtue or inescapable necessity in this.

Lynn Willies has expressed the attitude in his letter in the November Newsletter as follows: 'David Bick's excellent publications were with a general market in mind - both of ours are primarily for our members which is very different...'

Whilst thanking Lynn for his kind remarks, I cannot but feel this is a very short-sighted and parochial policy. Surely one of our chief aims should be to educate the public at large as to the value of our mining history and heritage, not merely preaching to the converted.

Further, such a policy not only underestimates the general demand, but imposes a constant burden on members' pockets in the form of minimal print runs that rarely make a profit, or even pay their way.

If I can sell 3,000 copies of Dylife over the years, there is no reason why for similar titles the NMRS cannot do as well, or better, provided they are readable and well illustrated, and with a good sales distribution. And there is no reason whatsoever why such publications cannot be both popular and academically worthy, even though in ivory towers it has ever been at risk to your reputation to say so.

But in any event, we are not academics. We are a society consisting mainly of enthusiasts who are constantly trying to spread the gospel - and how better than by the printed word.

From Chris Ebb

Although only being a member for the last few years, I do appreciate your excellent publications. Being honest, as I am actively involved with my own local club, the Grosvenor Caving Club, I only renew your membership for the publications.

I disagree with a letter in your July Newsletter, and find the front covers most attractive and the whole publication extremely professional. The text size is ideal (you should see *Archaeology in Wales* if you want to see really small print!).

You must be supported in your good work, please accept the enclosed gift to help keep the ball rolling.

Russell Bayles has also contributed to "keep the ball rolling". It's a popular phrase! Perhaps it'll take over from "back to whatsits"!

From Dave Blundell

With regard to the comments made under the headings "Society Publications 1 & 2" by Lynn Willies and Mike Breakspear, particularly the comments on the size of the publications, the old A4 versus A5 format, as Hazel Martel says we are dependent upon copies of the Monographs selling to the general public, to subsidise the Memoirs. Whilst I would agree that A4 is a superior size for plans, booksellers in general do not like A4 publications. According to a friend with a shop selling Mining Books, A4 is too large for his shelves, and is relegated to the bottom of the display rack, and whilst an enthusiast is prepared to delve into the recesses for a title, the general public, with only a casual interest, will only buy what catches their eye. A5 is nearer to a traditional book size, and

despite my comments over plans, should be retained if we intend to seek our publishing salvation in the "mass market".

NAHMO FIELD MEET - 5th - 8th. August, 1994.

The National Association of Mining History Organisations field meet this year will be in the Royal Forest of Dean.

A wide variety of underground trips is organised for all abilities as well as several surface visits. The Saturday night promises a pig roast and social at the Rising Sun, Moseley Green together with a slide show and videos throughout the evening.

For more information send an A4 SAE to :- J. Hine, The Cottage, 2 Cullis Lane, Mile End, Coleford, Glos. GL16 7QF.

WANTED:-

Member with access to word processor and some time on their hands to fill the post of NMRS Newsletter Editor. Your present Ed is stepping down due to clashes of commitments. If you would like the post please contact Malcolm Street or Phil Clayton.

In the meantime, please continue to send material for the Newsletter to :-

Phil Clayton, 211 Marsh Lane, Wolverhampton. WV10 6SA.
(0902) 780920.

Copy date for the May Newsletter - 20th. April.

The views and opinions expressed in the Newsletter are those of its correspondents and are not necessarily agreed with or shared by N.M.R.S., its officers or the Editor. The accuracy of submissions is the responsibility of the author and will not always be checked by the Editor. The Editor is not a professional journalist.

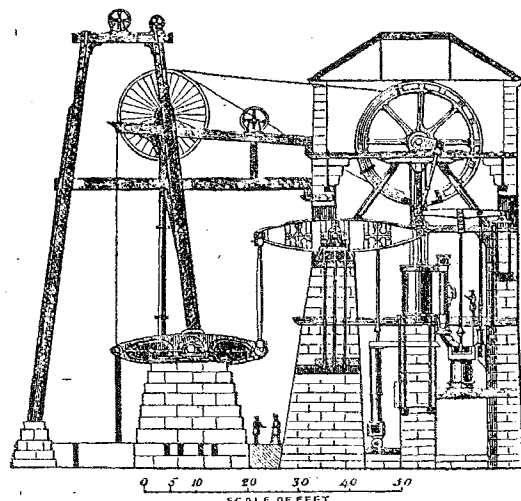


Fig. 37. Engine and apparatus for winding and pumping, Cambois, Northumberland.