

THE NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY



Newsletter

FEBRUARY 1996

Annual General Meeting and Dinner - 1996

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 23rd, 1996. Please note that the Annual General Meeting will not be held at the Dog & Gun, but will instead be at the Old White Bear Inn, (Sign of the Ship) Cross Hills. The Old White Bear is on the south side of the A6068 road at the eastern end of Cross Hills (SE009450). There is parking either at the rear of the pub or on the road. We've booked a room at the rear of the main bar and, for the connoisseur, the Landlord brews his own beer called Bear Bitter.

After the AGM, we will move about a mile up the road for the Annual Dinner at the Dog & Gun, Glusburn, Keighley, West Yorkshire (NGR SD 993444). Although there is no accommodation at the Dog & Gun, there is plenty of B&B locally. Taxis are plentiful and reasonably priced. Dinner will be 7.30 for 8.00 pm. The cost of the dinner will be £10.95. A menu and booking form appear in this Newsletter. **NB. Owing to the size of the room, numbers are restricted to 35 people on a first come basis.**

The winter is here, which means that for the greater number of us, outdoor pursuits are put on hold for a little while. I exclude the hardy souls to whom snow, ice, frost and fog are no deterrent. This is a good time of year to go to the bookshelves, browse through your mining books, or perhaps put pen to paper (or fingers to word processor) and let others have the benefit of your thoughts, opinions or the fruits of your research. I am sure many of you have something to say which the rest of us would like to hear. Items for this newsletter have been thin on the ground, so, please, think about what you want to say in **your** Society's newsletter.

You will see from the diary dates that there is a full programme of events this summer. Please support these activities as much as possible. The meet leaders put in a lot of work and deserve support and encouragement.

Subscriptions for 1996

Annual Subscriptions for 1996 were due on January 1st. If the Treasurer has received your subscription, your 1996 membership card is enclosed with this Newsletter. If you have paid and there is no card, then please contact the Treasurer. If you haven't paid yet, then sorry, but you'll get nowt else from us till you do!

IN THIS ISSUE

Diary Dates	2
Officers' Reports	3
Committee Members	4
Mining History Society of Ireland	6
Medieval Copper	7
Books	8
Dinner Menu & Booking Form	9

Diary Dates

Saturday, 30th March, 1996.

Rossendale Coal Mines.

Leaders: J. Davies and C. Seal. Tel: 01434 382429. Meet at 10.30 at small track beside A682 Rawtenstall to Burnley Road, NGR SE 831287. Surface walk.

Sunday, 28th April, 1996.

Florence Iron Ore Mine.

Leader: S. Everett. Tel: 01756 792120. Meet at 10.00 at Florence Mine Heritage Centre, signposted off A595 near Egremont. NGR NY 017103. An admission price of £3 includes an underground tour.

Saturday & Sunday, 8th & 9th June, 1996.

Weardale Tour.

Leader: Roger Bade. Meet at Rookhope Arch, NGR NY 925430. Surface walks and some underground trips. Roger writes "One of the biggest problems will be parking, which is why I have chosen Rookhope Arch as the starting point. Attenders should anticipate some form of car sharing beyond this point. Visits include a RIGS (Regionally Important Geographic Site), hence no mineral collecting, a Methodist Chapel and a Black Grouse lek, hence no guns. It is also hoped to visit a North African Pool, and while *en-route* to a smelter site with three flues, to pass Fangio's last gasp!" Does this intrigue you enough to attend? - it should.

Saturday & Sunday, 27th & 28th July, 1996.

Grinton Mines.

Leader: I. Spensley. Tel: 01969 624110. Meet at 10.00 on both days in lay-by at road junction above Grinton, NGR SE046977. Surface walks and underground trips.

Saturday, 14th September, 1996.

Alston Moor Collieries.

Leader: Clive Seal. Tel: 01434 382429. Meet at 10.30 at Alston Railway Station, NGR NY 716468. Guided walk to principal sites and an underground trip.

Sunday, 15th September, 1996.

Rampgill Mine, Nenthead.

Leader: Damian McCurdy. Tel: 01942 718192. Meet at 10.30 at Nenthead car park, NGR NY 781437. Underground.

Friday, 27th to Sunday, 29th September, 1996.

NAMHO Field Meet, 1996.

This will be hosted by the Plymouth Caving Group and will be based at Princeton on Dartmoor. Camping facilities are available together with other types of accommodation as required. For further information, please contact Pia Benson, 7, Marchants Way, Meavy, Yelverton, Devon, PL20 6PW.

Saturday, 9th November, 1996.

General Meeting - Pies & Peas.

Sicklinghall Village Hall, near Wetherby, NGR SE 364484. Begins at 14.30. Meeting followed by slides and pies and peas.

General Meeting

The General Meeting of the Society was held at Sicklinghall on 11th November, 1995 and was attended by 26 members and guests. The meeting was followed by slides and pies and peas. The reports of the Editor and Recorder are printed below.

Editor's Report

1995 has been a busy year at publications with four monographs and the Memoirs printed and sent out to members.

I've put £6,100.00 in the bank from sales, plus £1079.37 from grants and donations, as well as money from the General Account and should end the year with all our debts cleared and a substantial amount in hand towards the next publication.

BM44 - The Mines of the Tamar Valley went out of print in the middle of the year and, after protracted discussions by phone and by letter with the author and with West Country Books who had distributed the original on his behalf, it was decided that, as West Country Books were once more the only ones who were going to make any profit out of the publication, then they could take full financial responsibility for it. They agreed to pay £150 to the society for the use of the plates and this has now been received.

Looking to 1996, work is well in hand on the Weardale monograph and on a revised re-issue of David Bick's Frongoch Mines. Editorial work is also progressing on a monograph on the Liverton Iron Mines and some material is already in hand for the Memoirs, with further papers promised. There is still room for more, however, so if you have something you would like to write about, do let me know!

Further into the future, Peter Neaverson and Marilyn Palmer are revising their publications on the Bassett Mines and on Esgair Hir and I have in hand the first draft of a monograph on the Coniston Copper Mine. I also have two short coal-mining monographs in hand. A third is promised, as are monographs on the Allendale Mines and the Old Gang Mines.

Hopefully our policy of large print-runs on those monographs which I believe to be commercially viable, will go a long way towards paying for those which are of more limited interest.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to say thanks to Mike [Gill] for doing all the technical bits on the computer, answering the phone and generally being useful - and also thanks to Bob [Burns] for patiently sitting there churning out all the address labels for me. It's much appreciated!

Hazel Martell

Recorder's Report

Apart from the usual crop of letters seeking information on uncle Joe, "who was a collier somewhere near Barnsley in 1845", it has been a busy year.

The Society's links with the Yorkshire Dales National Park continue to bring mutual rewards. I attend meetings of the Yorkshire Dales Archaeology Group, which is a forum for discussing the Park's archaeological policy with those involved in fieldwork etc. It is very encouraging to see the amount of work that other people, from large university studies through to small groups, are doing. In September Park staff and the University of Bradford hosted a Dales Day School, in Grassington Town Hall, at which members of the group, myself included, talked to an audience of around 180 about aspects of our work.

I have just completed a report on the History of Mining in Gunnerside Gill, Swaledale, as part of the National Park's proposed consolidation programme for mining remains in the gill. This has been a useful exercise in looking at the remains in much greater detail than hitherto, and I think it has clarified some points. Of course, it has also raised many questions. I would like to thank Ian Spensley for his extremely helpful comments as the work progressed.

I am also working on a small project which arose from English Heritage's work on the Monuments Protection Programme and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments' Yorkshire Dales Survey. This is a study of Lead Mining Landscapes. Jim Rieuwerts has done similar work in the Peak District National Park. The first phase, done about a year ago, was simply an exercise to define those areas in and around the Yorkshire Dales National Park which were affected by mining. The definition of "affected" was fairly broad - including watercourses etc., and so the areas were vast. I'm now awaiting instructions to prepare a short report enhancing this earlier work, which will probably attempt to categorise the type of mining remains present.

Earlier in the year I worked as a consultant to the Open University which was preparing a new course on Physical Resources and Environment (S268). Owing to hold-ups within the University's system, the part of the course relating to metal mining has been delayed.

I propose using some of the income from the above jobs to buy a good database program, which will run the Society's Index to Mining Sites, which was compiled on Dbase III.

In April I gave a lecture on Lead Mining in the Dales to the Nelson Naturalists, and in November to the Accrington Naturalists on Lead Mining in Swaledale.

Finally, I would like to thank all those members who have donated material to the Records.

Mike Gill

NMRS Committee

There have been requests from the members for the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the committee. These are given below.

President	John Hopkinson, 4, Knights Way, NEWENT, Gloucestershire, GL18 1QL	01531 820462
Vice President	Robert Burns, 3, Queen Elizabeth Way, BARTON-UPON-HUMBER, South Humberside, DN18 6AJ.	01652 635523

Junior Vice President	Sallie Bassham, 4, Pen-y-ghent View, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, SETTLE, North Yorkshire, BD24 0HE	01729 860446
Secretary	Clive Torrens, Jubilee House, Preston-under-Scar, LEYBURN, North Yorkshire, DL8 4AH	
Treasurer	Colin Hindle, 19, Durham Street, LANGLEY PARK, Co. Durham, DH7 9YJ.	0191 373 3740
Editor	Hazel Mary Martell, 38, Main Street, Sutton-in-Craven, KEIGHLEY, West Yorkshire, BD20 7HD.	01535 635388
Newsletter Editor	Keith Nolan, West End Cottage, Woodhall, South Duffield, SELBY, North Yorkshire, YO8 7TG.	01757 638503

Librarian	Eleanor Greenough, 22, Elmhurst Road, ST ANNES ON SEA, Lancashire, FY8 3JH.	01253 723987
Recorder	Mike Gill, 38, Main Street, Sutton-in-Craven, KEIGHLEY, West Yorkshire, BD20 7HD.	01535 635388

The official address of the Society is 38, Main Street, Sutton-in-Craven, KEIGHLEY, West Yorkshire, BD20 7HD. The Society is a registered charity, No. 326704.

The Mining History Society of Ireland

The Mining History Society of Ireland has recently been formed with the stated mission of seeking to develop informed public awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of all facets of mining heritage throughout Ireland. It will cover all aspects of prehistoric to recent extraction and processing of metalliferous, industrial and other minerals in the island.

The principal objectives are to:

- facilitate surveying and documentation of extant mining remains, both surface and underground
- create and maintain a catalogue of Irish mining heritage
- pursue an active programme of lectures and field visits
- produce publications and a newsletter
- Support development of touristic aspects of mining heritage
- provide representation to relevant statutory authorities.

A steering group has been established and an inaugural meeting will be held on 10th February to adopt a constitution and elect officers. Thereafter, it is anticipated that the Society will rapidly develop an active programme of events, including lecture meetings and field excursions. publications and a newsletter for members. Several manuscripts on various aspects of mining heritage are at an advanced stage of preparation and it is hoped that these will be published by the Society in the near future. Among issues for future consideration is the development of a national inventory of extant mining heritage as an aid for promoting conservation by the appropriate authorities. For further information, contact John Morris, Mining History Society of Ireland, c/o Geological Survey of Ireland, Beggar's Bush, Haddington Road, DUBLIN 4. Tel: (01) 604 1473. Fax (01) 668 1782.

Mining Interest Tours - 1996

Atalaya tours are operating mining interest tours in 1996 to India, the Iberian Peninsula and Britain. For details contact Atalaya Tours Ltd., Ceinionfa, Capel Dewi, Aberystwyth, SY23 3HR. Tel: 01970 828989.

More on Medieval Copper

The mine alluded to by Albyn Austin (Newsletter December 1995 p. 10) is possibly that referred to, in the patent roll for 1475, as 'the mine of Keswyk, co. Cumberland.' Little detail is provided as to the nature or location of the working but the implication is that it was a silver/lead mine.

In the previous year three un-named mines in the north of England were investigated by the Crown after receiving reports that they produced silver at 4 to 21 lbs. in the fodder of lead. These mines were granted to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in March 1475 and in April Walter Barsonhowson was appointed as master finer (refiner.) In the entry appointing Barsonhowson the mines, now increased to four, are named as Blauncheland, co. Northumberland; Fletccheroos, in Alston More; the mine of Keswyk; and the mine of copper by Richemond, co. York. Both Blauncheland and Fletccheroos are silver/lead mines on veins cutting the Firestone Sill, and probably formed part of the Carlisle mines successfully worked in the 11th / 12th century. Richemond is specifically referred to as a copper mine. Which would appear to leave Keswyk as one of the original three silver/lead mines.

Moving on to the 'consumption' of copper. In the medieval period very little of the non-ferrous metal production was consumed. It was used and, when that use was redundant, it was recycled. Admittedly the stock of metals had to be topped up regularly, to compensate for wear and tear and an increased volume in circulation, but the amount required was small in relation to that in circulation. It was not until the latter end, the 15th century, that there were any really permanent losses to that stock. The English lead industry was to expand feeding losses created by the saiger process in continental European silver production¹. Added to which the machines of war used up greater and greater amounts of that metal as the use of firearms spread².

Copper was of increasing military importance in the latter part of the medieval and into the early modern period, being used in the manufacture of cannon, and it would be of strategic advantage to have control of the sources. However there is no evidence for large scale exploitation until the latter half of the 16th century and then with only limited success.

Naval artillery lost at sea were the only permanent drain on stocks and the 200 tons purchased by Henry VIII in 1540-41 probably constituted an atypical major increase to that stock. It does however illustrate the problems faced by the Crown in securing supplies in time of conflict when an embargo was placed on its movement, having been paid for at Antwerp and intended for the campaign in the Low Country.

Unless new evidence comes to light it would appear that medieval copper output was minimal, coming from the periphery of silver-lead production. Largely exploited using continental expertise it remained indirectly linked to silver such that, when the Crown's prerogative was tested in the 16th century, it proved impossible to separate the two.

I trust this is not the last word on the subject.

References.

1. See Blanchard, Ian. *International Lead Production and Trade in the "Age of the Saigerprozess" 1460 - 1560*, Stuttgart, 1995, for a detailed analysis of lead exports for use in the cuperiferous silver production.
2. Roger Burt (The transformation of the non-ferrous metals industries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *Economic History Review*, xlviii, I (1995), pp. 23-45) highlights the importance of increasing metal consumption in economic expansion.

Peter Claughton

Books

The Llyn Peninsula Mines - Wil Williams

A good account of the manganese mines at Benallt and Nant Gadwen. These mines were working as recently as 1945 and the author has collected many interesting anecdotes. The softbound book is of 29 + 35 pages, 20 photographs, 3 maps, tables, etc. Tête-à-bêche English and Welsh. Available for £3.00 post free from Tony Oldham, Rhychydwr, Crymych, Dyfed, SA41 3RB.

Your editor has recently received Simon Taylor's catalogue number eight of books on mineralogy and mining. It is very comprehensive. For information contact Simon Taylor, Greyfriars Books (Mineralogy and Mining), 92B, East Hill, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2QN. Tel: 01206 563138.

Ron Fullagar

Those members of this Society who are also in the Welsh Mines Society will have learnt that Ron Fullagar was killed in a road accident on 30th October, 1995. His wife has also died following the accident. Ron lived in Bristol and never missed a meet in Wales. Although his forays further north were less frequent, he was for many years a valued member of the northern Mines research Society and will be sadly missed.

John Hopkinson

Nominations for the Election of Officers

Please note that any nominations for the election of officers must be sent in writing, with a proposer and seconder, to the Secretary, Clive Torrens, Jubilee House, Preston under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4AH, at least twenty eight clear days before the date of the AGM.

Finally

Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. Please, keep the contributions rolling in - they are very much appreciated. Contributions on 3½" discs are welcomed. ASCII text format only please. Discs will normally be returned with the following newsletter unless otherwise requested.

Contributions for the May newsletter by 6th April, please, to: **Keith Nolan, West End Cottage, Woodhall, South Duffield, Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 7TG. Telephone or Fax: 01757 638503. Email. kjn1@york.ac.uk.**

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of its correspondents and are not necessarily agreed with or shared by the Northern Mine Research Society, its Officers or the Editor. The accuracy of submissions is the responsibility of the authors and will not necessarily be checked by the Editor for validity.