



The Northern Mine Research Society

Newsletter — December 2001

Society Meetings - 2002

Saturday 23 March **NMRS AGM and Annual Dinner** (Haworth) Three Sisters Hotel, noon. Booking form will be enclosed with February newsletter.

Provisional Field Meet Programme **(Dates & details to be confirmed)**

Saturday 11 May **Grinton area mines and smelt mills** (Swaledale) - surface and underground visit.

Saturday 22 June **Swinnergill level** (Keld area) - mainly underground.

Friday - Monday, 5 - 8, July **NAMHO 2002** - (Aberystwyth, Wales). "The application of water power in mining".

Saturday 20 July **Whiteaside / Summerlodge / Moulds** (Swaledale - Arkengarthdale) - underground.

September **Boulby Potash Mine** — underground, limited numbers and subject to approval.

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2002 Subscriptions Due January 1st & Nomination of Society Officers

An increase in Subscriptions, as stated in the December 2000 newsletter, has not been found to be necessary and the rates are being held at 1996 levels for one more year! Subscriptions are due, however, on January 1st. Remember, you can help the Society by completing a Gift Aid Declaration (see the report from Sallie Bassham on page 4 and the additional notes on page 12)

A nomination form for Society officers is also enclosed. Election of officers will take place at the Annual General Meeting on 23rd March, 2002.

Visit our website: <http://www.ex.ac.uk/~RBurt/MinHistNet/NMRS.html>

Continued from page 1...

October **Autumn General Meeting** - slides/social.

Sat / Sun 26, 27 **Teesdale**
October

Meet Leaders

The secretary will always welcome offers from members to organise and lead a field meeting.

If you have a suggestion for a meet, please contact::

Steve Mitchell (c/o 38 Main Street, Sutton in Craven, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 7HD).

Suggestions or offers to organise a field meeting in both April and August 2002 are needed.

Election of NMRS Officers

Nominations are requested from members for candidates to be elected to the NMRS committee at the annual general meeting on March 23, 2002. Suitably experienced nominees are particularly sought for the positions of...

Society President and Publications Editor

Having undertaken these respective roles for almost 10 years, Mike Gill and Hazel Martell have made an outstanding contribution to the Society. They now wish to devote more of their time and energy to other activities and would like to give an opportunity to other members to participate in Society affairs. Nominations for several alternative positions of sub-editors, each of whom could assume responsibility for the production of a single publication, possibly on a rotating basis, will also be considered.

Society News

From the President...

PSST HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE MERGER?

Members who use the Mining History Internet List will have read of rumoured talks between officers of this society and those of the Peak District Mines Historical Society Ltd about a possible merger. As anyone who attended our Autumn Meeting will know, this action, and the reasons for it, were discussed there. There is no great secret. We have never issued agendas in advance of meetings and this Newsletter is the first opportunity that we have had to publicise the matter. I believe that the next PDMHS Newsletter is not due until January.

Ch The two organisations are Britain's principal mining history societies, and their respective officers are keenly aware of the importance of their work and the problems of running them. Both societies were formed in the late 1950s and developed on broadly similar lines, especially in their high quality publications and professional approach to mining history. Not surprisingly, over the last 30 years or so, there have been a number of suggestions that we co-operate more closely – usually in respect to publications. Some of this co-operation led to the formation of the National Association, but, for various reasons, never animosity, these proposals came to naught. Nevertheless, committee members of both societies often meet informally and recognise that we have much in common – be it aims or problems.

dhi With that in mind, therefore, it is proposed to hold informal talks which may, or may not, lead to detailed discussions about a range of possibilities. Members should remember that neither society can act on any proposals without their being told, and without their agreement. The Charity Commission would also have to be involved.

SOCIETY EDITOR NEEDED – WHEN? – NOW

The monograph and memoirs issued with this Newsletter will be the last unless a new editor is found. Hazel has done a sterling job for the last nine years, but will be retiring at the AGM. The Society owes her its sincere thanks for the hard work that she has done. The high degree of professionalism that she brought to the job will make

her a hard act to follow, but what's life without a challenge. Every effort will be made to help anyone who volunteers.

EARLY LEAD SMELTING RESEARCH PROJECT

No fieldwork has been done yet, owing to the Foot and Mouth restrictions. Some desk work has been done on forming a bibliography, and Sam Murphy has published a relevant paper in the latest journal of the Historical Metallurgy Society.

Mike Gill

NMRS Publications

After much thought, I have decided that Memoirs 2001 will be my last publication and I will not be standing for election as Editor at the next AGM. With a great deal of help from Mike, I will have done the job for nine years come September and I think that's quite long enough. We've both got plenty of projects of our own and we feel that it's now time we concentrated our efforts on those instead, but, as our customers are used to our address and we only live three doors from the Post Office, we are prepared to continue with the sale of publications.

So, if anyone out there's interested in taking over, please get in touch with either me or Mike and we can discuss what's involved.

Hazel Martell

Library News

There have been a number of donations to the library this year. New items include: two issues of Stone Chat, the journal of the Norfolk Mineral and Lapidary Society; the Spring 2001 issue of the Journal of the Great Orme Exploration Society; the 2001 issue (number 17) of Earthwise, published by the British Geological Survey; "A Miner's Diary of 1907" edited by Alastair Robertson; "Caradon and Looe - the Canals, Railways and Mines" by Michael Messenger; "The Kalmeter Journal of a visit to Cornwall, Devon and Somerset in 1724-25" edited and translated by Justin Brooke; "Swaledale: its Mines and Smelt Mills" by Mike Gill. We have had two donations to the library this month - thank you to the kind donors. The new items are Robert Sopwith's book

it St

"Thomas Sopwith: the Allenheads Years, 1845-71" and "Joseph Williamson 1769-1840", an information pack produced by the Friends of Williamson's Tunnels.

Many thanks to all who have kindly donated material. The book titles are, more or less, self explanatory and so those with a particular interest in an area or topic can see their relevance. Having skimmed through these latest acquisitions, I would recommend all of them as interesting and useful. Michael Messenger's book has a lot of excellent photographs of mines and he also features limekilns.

We are particularly grateful to receive newsletters and journals from other societies; these contain invaluable research information which may not be available elsewhere. If you belong to another mining, or mining related, society, do let us know if you have publications which might interest other NMRS members.

Since the AGM in March 2001, there have been 16 loans of 65 items. NMRS publications have been most popular, but several items have been borrowed for the first time since I became librarian—for example, Leeds University's Mining Society Journal, Taggart's comprehensive tome on Mineral Dressing and the 1892 copies of "Science and Art of Mining". Because of foot & mouth restrictions, it has not been possible for people to visit the library in person this year.

North Ribblesdale is now a "high risk area" for foot-and-mouth disease (rather than an "infected area"); so some of the access restrictions have been lifted. Members are welcome to visit the library to browse through journals and look for research information. However, there is no photo-

copier, so if you think you will want to borrow items please bring your NMRS membership card with you.

Following a suggestion from a member, I am going through the library books making a note of the number of pages. This information is being added to the Library List as a number in brackets after a book title, with the abbreviation pp. The most frequently borrowed books are being done first. I hope members will find this useful when deciding whether they want to pay the postage costs of borrowing books - remember there is no borrowing charge apart from the postage. If you want a paper copy of the Library List, please contact Mike Gill. If you want to visit the library, or receive a copy of the Library List by e-mail please contact sbassham@nildram.co.uk. If you don't have e-mail access, you can arrange to visit the library by telephoning 015 2424 1851.

Sallie Bassham

Gift Aid

Many thanks to all who signed Gift Aid forms so we can claim back money for the Society from Inland Revenue. Recently we received a cheque for more than £800. If you are not sure whether or not you signed a Gift Aid form for 2001, there is no harm in signing again with your 2002 subscription. It is not necessary to complete the form more than once; but some people omitted the date, some omitted their post code and some omitted their signature - so, if in doubt, sign again. If you have not paid any income tax this year, or will not pay any next year; please will you let me know, because I must not claim back tax which you have not paid in the first place.

Sallie Bassham

Meet Reports

MINING HISTORY AND BEYOND (NAMHO Conference, 16-16th Sept, 2001)

Although it was arranged at the last minute, the Society's conference at Bradford was a great success. Around 50 delegates and speakers met at the Novotel in somewhat more luxurious circumstances than is usual for a NAMHO conference. The food was so good that many did not need to eat again until the middle of the following week.

The speakers were chosen to fulfil the aim of the conference, which was to demonstrate the wide range of approaches which are relevant to studying and understanding mining and smelting sites. These included detailed archaeological studies of whole landscapes or sites, museum and conservation work, mining personnel, environmental effects, the provision of timber for mining and smelting, and archive-based studies of the late mediæval and early modern periods.

Because of the Foot and Mouth restrictions, the whole weekend was devoted to mining history, with none of the field meet distractions that have become such a dominant feature of other NAMHO Conferences. Perhaps more importantly, however, it showed that mining history events do not have to look like paupers' conventions.

Mike Gill

Hude Valley / Coldberry (27th Oct, 2001)

The lifting of the FMD footpath restrictions in Teesdale came just in time for the scheduled meet to take place. In cool but sunny weather, twelve members and guests met at Bainbridge Memorial Fountain in Middleton in Teesdale market place and began their tour by inspecting the original portal stone of Skears Low Level, now resting in the front garden of a cottage in the market place.

The party then traveled by car along Kings Walk and parked by Parker's Lime Kilns. The portals of Old Low Snaisgill and Old High Snaisgill were inspected and, after a short walk up the Hude Beck, the two portals of Skears Low Level were examined and compared with photographs taken in the 1800's. On the way up to Coldberry mine, a stop was made to examine the Fir Tree exploratory level before parking up on the low Coldberry dressing floors. At Coldberry the levels visited were Hunt's, Richardson's, North (or Dog) and the remains of the Low level. The 1827 mine shop (later powder house) and the later (NPHT preserved) mine shop were also examined before lunch was taken back at the cars.

The afternoon was taken up by the underground visit to Low Skears Firestone level. Half of the party had not previously been underground, so it was expedient to divide the party. The meet leader was enthusiastically assisted by his colleagues, John Harrison and Pete Riley of DDMS. By reason of its relative dryness and the provision of fixed ladders, the level is ideally suited as an introduction to mine research. The farthest reaches of Raine's vein above the level, and of the Blue Pools below the level were attained before the party returned to day after some three hours or so underground, with the happy thought that the clocks were to go back that night and an extra hour in bed was in prospect.

Tony Fretwell

Contrasts in Liverpool (27 October 2001)

Above ground, Liverpool has changed since I visited in the 1980s. Driving, from the M62, through bright autumn sunshine, there are wide streets, many trees and an interesting mix of modern and traditional architecture. Walking along the streets of Edge Hill the contrasts were even clearer – brick terraces, new school; old church, modern blocks of student residences. We were directed round to Mason Street and a lone front wall, supported by girders. In the cleared area behind the wall, the presence of people in hard hats and fluorescent jackets indicated that there was more to this place than initially met the eye. Steel plates were unlocked and lifted, ladders were put in place and down we went.

Under his own property, that of others and the streets of Edge Hill, Joseph Williamson (1769-1840) paid unemployed Napoleonic War soldiers to carve tunnels and rooms from the native sandstone and to build stone walls and brick arches. It is known from documentary sources that the tunnels went for miles; only the tiniest fraction is visible at the moment. However, the Friends of Williamson's Tunnels are working with local and statutory authorities to find ways to remove tons of rubbish and make more of this enormous subterranean 'folly' known and accessible. Perhaps more frustrating than the knowledge of miles of tunnels stretching away horizontally, is the realisation that, when standing admiring the arches and passageways, there are several feet of rubbish underneath your feet concealing the lower sections of a banqueting hall, other rooms and two complete subterranean houses. The parts currently visible may just have been air ducts and ceiling supports high above the rooms which Williamson used and in which he entertained his friends.

In addition to the accessible tunnels under Joseph Williamson's Mason Street house, we also went to Liverpool University's residence called "The Williamson Student Village" – allegedly the only place in Liverpool to recognise the former 'King of Edge Hill'. Again steel plates were unlocked and we walked down a modern set of steel steps to former cellars. Since the Duke of Westminster had visited recently, much stone had been stacked neatly and a route dug through ash and lime to make walking possible. It was thought that his Grace might not wish to crawl round the site caver-style! The Friends of Williamson's Tunnels have dug a shaft in one corner

and prodded even deeper down, through the ash from a former bakery – after 40 feet, they still haven't reached the floor.

The fourth site we were shown was at the former Lord Mayors' stable yard, built in 1867. Wide double arches back onto an old quarry face. Removal of tons of rubbish has revealed underground passageways. For the time being, further digging at this part of the structures (known to be at least three storeys deep) is limited by the water table; and a glass floor is to be fitted so that visitors can look down safely. Plans have been agreed for a Visitors' Centre on this site. Scores of boxes of finds have been recovered, many of them hardly damaged: these include jars and other household objects, ink bottles, beautiful

china and the ingeniously designed Codd's fizzy drink bottles – from which the expression 'Codd's wallop' is derived.

Rather than try to describe the various underground features we saw, I recommend visiting the website at www.williamsontunnels.com. The Friends of Williamson's Tunnels also distribute a newsletter to all members and deserve all the help and support they can get for their project. We had a fascinating afternoon in Liverpool and would like to express our thanks to Les who organised the trip and Jim and the others who showed us round. We look forward to hearing of your excavations and further discoveries. Good luck!

Sallie Bassham

Book Reviews

Thomas Sopwith – The Allenheads Years 1845-71 – by Robert Sopwith. The booklet [ISBN 0 9513535 86] has 5 plates, 4 figures and 32 pp. It is available from Nenthead Mines Heritage Centre, Nenthead, ALSTON, Cumbria, CA9 3PD for £2.95 plus 50p post and packing.

The great-grandson of this important mining surveyor and civil engineer, has written a concise, but welcome, account of his life. Thomas Sopwith began his career in the early 1820s, when he worked for Joseph Dickinson surveying the lead mines on the Greenwich Hospital estates.

When he became chief agent at T.W. Beaumont's lead mines in 1845, however, it must have seemed like a poisoned chalice to him, as at that time John Taylor remarked that "*the generally received opinion that these mines (in Allendale and Weardale) were nearly exhausted*". Nevertheless, Sopwith's developments paid off and lead and silver worth more than £500 per day was produced during his agency. His broad range of interests also ensured that he had a wide circle of influential contacts – being associated with such famous engineers and businessmen as John Taylor, Robert Stephenson and William Armstrong.

Mike Gill

Collieries of Somerset and Bristol — by John Cornwell, 2001. 112 pp, 86 B&W photos, maps etc. HB DW Landmark Publishing Company, Ashbourne Hall, Cokayne Ave, Ashbourne Derbyshire DE6 1EJ at £14.95. Mike Moore can also supply.

When considering coal mining areas there is a tendency only to think of Wales and Yorkshire, so that one fails to appreciate the significance of such outlying areas as those detailed in this book. Smaller than the main areas, nevertheless in their time the mines in Somerset and Bristol provided work for many and were of major importance in the economy of the region.

I lived in Bristol for over thirty years and although I knew a little of the coal mining history I did nothing in the way of making records for posterity. Even on an illicit evening trip down the Harry Stoke Drift Mine at Filton, I omitted to take a camera! Well this book more than compensates for my inactivity.

The volume presents a historical record of 13 pits which are no longer in existence. For each colliery there is a brief historical account, date of sinking, and details of ownership (all collieries before nationalisation 1947 were in private ownership). Depth of shaft, owners, number of men, production figures are all given together with

large scale OS maps and some superb photographs of both men and machinery at work underground and on the surface.

Harry Stoke was one of the last mines to open in 1954 and finally closed in 1963 as uneconomical. It was planned to work the Kingswood Great Vein which was last worked by the Speedwell Pit in 1936. John's photographs are now the only records of this mine as the surface remains were obliterated by landscaping in the 1990s.

The Somerset mines were unusual in that naked flame lamps were permitted. I believe that the Forest of Dean is the only other mining area in the UK where the explosive gas methane is absent. When the mines were nationalised in 1947, the National Coal Board applied its regulations nationally and naked flames were banned in all Somerset mines. This is my excuse for not taking photos in Old Mills Colliery during a visit with the Wessex Cave Club in 1964. My flash gun was not flame proof!

We should be indebted to those such as John Cornwell who have taken the trouble to collect and reproduce photographs of this recent part of our heritage which, alas, is now no more. This is a superb collection of photos that I will treasure.

Tony Oldham

Underground Wales — by Martyn Farr 2001, 95pp 83 colour photos. HB DW £12.95 - (yes, I can supply).

Martyn has written several books on caving, and is known worldwide for his cave diving exploits. He is also a skilled underground photographer. He has a love of all things subterranean and his enthusiasm shines forth in this volume. I am a fan of Martyn's books as they all are good to read, this one is no exception. Featured are many well-known and lesser-known mines and caves in Wales, each with a grid reference and access details.

The book is broken down into subject headings: Limestone, Coal, Iron, Lead and Zinc, Gold, Copper, Stone Workings and finally Dinorwig Power Station. Martyn cleverly explains how the mines are worked, using historical information to full effect. Producing colour photographs such as those which illustrate this volume is no mean feat in the large slate and silica mine chambers. The photo on the front cover of various levels in Olwyn

Goch Mine at Hendre North Wales is a unique shot and helps to explain the vastness and complexity of these workings.

Martyn has a fine style of writing which makes this book a delight to read and anyone interested in Welsh Mines or Caves will find this book a must.

Tony Oldham

Industrial Heritage - Industry People Transport. Vol 27, No 3, Autumn 2001. 44 pp photos, colour cover. 1 years subscription £11.50 from Yorkshire History, Proctor House, Kirkgate, Settle, N Yorks BD24 9DZ.

Articles include...

Walter Wilson - Inventor, by Rodney Dale, describes a little known aviation pioneer who was the first person to develop a combustion engine capable of powering an aeroplane.

David Yewdall - Entrepreneur, by David Eastwood, is the story of a self-made woollen mill owner.

From Mud Bank to Metropolis, by N Moorsom. The metropolis is Middlesborough and this article describes the trials and tribulations of the early railways there.

Portslade Gas Works / a brief history, part one, by Brian E Sturt. Brighton was a pioneer in the adoption of electric lighting, and it was one of the first towns to establish a public gas supply.

Dinorwic Slate Quarries, by Tony Breare, describes not only the quarries but the Llanberis Country Park which like all public museums in Wales is free!

An Account of the Staffordshire and Shropshire Ironworks in 1815. In August 1815, Thomas Butler and his friend Buckley made a tour of the ironworks in Staffordshire and Shropshire and as usual kept a diary of the trip.

Castlefield, Manchester: The regeneration and sustainable development of an historic industrial site (part one) by Derek Brumhead. The 1765 terminus of the Bridgewater Canal has a new lease of life.

Something to interest everybody.

Tony Oldham

Other News

E. J. J. Dixon

E. J. J. Dixon is an enigmatic figure of the Welsh slate industry circa 1845 onwards. He is best known for his 'Patent' rock drill, of which the Patent Office has no record.

The bore produced by the drill, of which the largest diameter found to date is 4-1/2 ins (112 mm), has an irregular helix scoured on its interior wall and a flat termination. The bore was supposedly flushed by pumped water during operation. The longest bore depth found is in the region of 12 feet (3.65 m) and is horizontal.

I am certain that the drill was NOT powered by compressed air or direct steam. Hand operation for a ≥ 4 ins hole is beyond my comprehension for such a size. Dixon himself states the use of a flat belt drive from a portable steam engine.

I have some information which is rather sketchy, including Dixon's own references in correspondence, a short passage by a journalist writing for the Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald (1873) and a mention in the Mining Journal, mainly as a snide comment and mostly contradictory.

I hope to collect more information on the drill in order to produce a possible description of its construction and working, along with a detailed drawing. My hope is that there is someone out there who can point me in the direction of any other references, mentions, snippets, rumours etc., even possible design parallels or suggestions.

Sorry, I have no fax, email, word processor, disks, website or internet connection, only joined-up writing and a typewriter. I will happily reimburse any requested expenses. Messenger service to: 6 Lingwood Close, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 7NN. Speaking tube via 01 484 685 307.

Peter M. Hughes

Greenhow Hill Mines

Further to meetings of the Nidderdale AONB's archaeological advisory panel, Mike Gill recently attended the first meeting of a group of residents from the Pateley Bridge area who are seeking to establish an interpretation scheme for the lead mining area around Cockhill, at Greenhow Hill.

Fortunately, the area is well served by public footpaths and the landowner is already broadly in favour of the scheme, which will be tied in with the consolidation of Toft Gate Limekiln (almost complete) and of Prosperous smelt mill in Ashfoldside Gill. A further meeting is planned for early in the new year, when a more complete proposal is expected.

Mike Gill

News From Nenthead

(Presented by Jake Almond of the North Pennine Heritage Trust at the recent CBA Industrial Archaeology Panel Meeting)

The clearance work at the smelt mill site has been finished during 2001. This work has exposed areas of cobbled and flagged flooring as well as the bases of steam driven compressors installed about 1900. What appears to be part of a furnace has been revealed but it still needs to be investigated further and recorded. The next key stage in the archaeological work at Nenthead is the post excavation analysis of all the artefacts recovered and features recorded during the last 4/5 years. This will result in the preparation of a detailed report. In the more immediate future work on visitor interpretation of the site is well underway and this is expected to be in place by Easter 2002 when the site reopens.

Martin Roe

Museum of Yorkshire Dales Lead Mining at Earby

This museum closed for the winter, as usual, at the end of October, but it will not reopen in the spring. The last few weeks have seen the building almost emptied of exhibits, which are being stored in containers in the grounds. Major work on the shell of the building, beginning early next year, will include stripping the flagstone roof and relaying it with new timbers (where necessary), felt and insulation. The walls are to be repointed and plastered, and the wooden floor replaced with a concrete one. The extent of the work is such that the museum is not likely to reopen until the spring of 2003.

Mike Gill

Denbighshire Engine House

(From Archaeology Cymru, Sept / Oct 2001)

The Clive Engine House was constructed in the 1860's. It was part of a landscape once dominated by lead mining associated structures. Now it stands alone, slowly deteriorating. But there is hope on the horizon, as plans are afoot to restore the site. The local authority is hoping to gain funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund. In addition, the Welsh Development Agency has already pledged funds this financial year for acquisition of the monument and to carry out specialist surveys of the structure and surrounding site before work starts.

Supplied by A. S. Marsdale

Slate Inclined

Notes from a Welsh visit earlier this year:

Llechwedd slate quarry—the tourist operation is vital to the working company as more money is generated from this than slate sales. The Deep Miners tour was closed during part of July after heavy rain knocked out the electrics. There are 20 men employed on slate production.

Maenofferen slate quarry—the old Cooke's level bore, visible from around the old Tuxford workings, has been shortened through blasting. The gate and the first 25 yards (approx) have now gone. There is no working at this quarry at present (source: Llechwedd employee), although there appears to have been some since my last visit to the old two and half quarry.

Rhlwbach Tramway—since my last visit the breached bridge section has been unfilled and skirting around the boggy land (and trench foot) can now be avoided. There still are a number of areas along the tramway that area very wet but it is well worth the visit.

Dinorwic slate quarry—there has been a 'recent' fall at the quarry and a section of track on the Braich side is now suspended in mid-air. I am unsure of the exact level but is thought to be Bonc Doller.

Chwarel Fawr—it appears that part of the retaining wall off the 'new road' has collapsed.

Gilfach Ddu Workshops—admission to this excel-

lent working museum is now free of charge.

Cambria Wynne slate quarry—there has been a large fall underground in recent months and much of the area is unsafe, according to a local source.

Dorothea slate quarry—the asbestos removal has been completed on the beam engine house and work is in progress on waterproofing.

John A. Knight

The Lakeland Mining Heritage Project

The National Park Authority and The National Trust are about to launch a four year project on the Lake District's mining and quarrying heritage. They will work with national and local organisations to get funding for conserving historic sites, to provide training in specialist skills and improving public access to the remains. It could include a training scheme for traditional skills such as small-scale quarrying, dry stone walling, working with lime mortars and slate splitting. Local communities and amenity societies will also be involved.

Besides structures like buildings, dams and smelting sites, the project will include woodland management (for fuel and timber), packhorse tracks, old railway lines and workers' housing. Some conservation has already been done, but many locally important sites, especially those not given Scheduled Ancient Monument status under the Monument Protection Programme, need to be assessed. The Lakeland Mining Heritage Project will both provide the necessary overview for the research and implementation of the work.

Mike Gill

Contamination From Flooding

Last year's floods have left a potential "chemical time bomb" on farming land in the north, according to pollution checks by scientists. Lead washed from long-disused mines in the Pennines has contaminated stretches of the plain of York to levels which would prevent development if they were found on urban brownfield sites, the study says.

Samples from more than 75% of 50 testing sites,

along 68 miles of the River Swale, exceeded permitted safety levels for grazing land, in some cases by 10 times. The extent of the pollution was described as a "surprise" by the leader of the team from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Mark Macklin. He warned that the food chain could be affected by hazardous metal deposits reach crops and cattle and sheep. (from *The Guardian*, Sept 12, 2001, p.17. Mark Macklin is Professor and Head of the River Basin Dynamics, Hydrology and Environmental Change Group, Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences at U. of Wales).

Longannet to Close

Up to 170 mining jobs at Longannet, the last deep mine in Scotland, are to be axed by Scottish Coal (Deep Mine) Company. This represents almost one third of the work force. The firm said a recent serious rock fall and a major geological fault were forcing it to close the mine's main coal-face. (from *The Scotsman*, Nov 15, 2001).

Supplied by Alastair Lings

MoU, Coal Authority & SEPA

A memorandum of understanding, between the Coal Authority and SEPA (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency) was signed on November 7, 2001. The aim is to reduce pollution of controlled waters by existing discharges from abandoned coal mines through a programme of remediation. (weekly briefing from SEPA, Nov 19, 2001).

Supplied by Alastair Lings

Distance Learning Course in Archaeology

Beginning in autumn 2001, the University of Leicester is offering a series of modules which can be studied for general interest or towards a Certificate in Archaeology. Included among the modules is Industrial Archaeology. Details available from Dr. Alan McWhirr, School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH, or tel (0)116 252 2729, email: archdl@le.ac.uk

Supplied by Alastair Lings

New Books

The Elmore Mystery, by Peter R. Jenkins. 201 pages, 77 illustrations, card covers with lay-flat comb binding. £24.95 post free (UK). ISBN 1 870177 50 9 from Dragonwheel Books, Sandcott, Rectory Lane, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2AD.

The story of the inventive Elmore family and their role in the development of the flotation process. The book also describes their work in electro-metallurgy, the ownership of the Glasdir copper mine in North Wales, the Elmore's court battles over claims of patent infringement and the development of rival processes which led to the modern flotation process. (Details supplied by author).

Castle-An-Dinas 1916-1957: Cornwall's Premier Wolfram Mine, by Tony Brooks. £11.99 paperback, £15.99 hardcover (+£1.50 postage in UK). Published by Cornish Hillside Publications, distributed by Tor Mark Press, United Downs, St. Day, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 5YX, tel (0)1209 822101, email: sales@tormarkpress.prestel.co.uk

Tony Brooks tells the story of the mine in some detail from its discovery, through the construction, development and subsequent deepening to its final closure in 1957. The book is fully referenced and is well illustrated with maps, diagrams and photographs, most of the latter not having been published before. (from *International Mining and Materials*, Nov 2001, No 47).

United Kingdom Minerals Yearbook 2000, British Geological Survey. A4 paperback, 96pp, price £35. Available from BGS sales office, Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5GG, tel (0)115 936 3100, email: sales@bgs.ac.uk.

Compiled largely from information originally collected by other bodies, although the sources of the data are listed. (from *International Mining and Materials*, Oct 2001, No 46, where it is stated that the book may be downloaded free as a series of pdf files from www.mineralsUK.com after registering).

An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England, by B. K. Roberts & S. Wrathmell. English Heritage, 2000. 77pp, price £25.

This work is based on an analysis of the Ordnance Survey's first edition (1 inch to 1 mile) maps of England. The period of the industrial revolution was well underway by the time map-

ping started and the index contains entries for industry, iron industry, mining, quarrying and roads.

Proceedings of the International NAMHO 2000 Conference, 14-17 July, 2000, Cornwall. Published by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, for NAMHO. 142pp, spiral bound A4. For price & availability contact: Maureen Gilbert, Carn Brea Mining Society, Rivergarth, Bar Meadows, Malpas, Truro, Cornwall TR1 1SS, tel (0)1872 278234, email: lawrenceholmes@freeuk.com

Contains a general account of the conference, written versions of the papers read and notes from the surface and underground trips.

The Map That Changed The World, by Simon Winchester. Published by Viking, 2001, price £12.99 hardback.

A popular and very readable account of the life and importance in the development of geology as a science of William Smith, land surveyor and

drainage engineer. Smith recognised that strata could be identified, correlated and dated (relatively) by the fossils contained within them. He published pioneering, coloured geological maps and sections. This work is more concerned with Smith's place in the development of science than with his work on canals & drainage works. (from Paul Sowan)

Early Limestone Railways: how railways developed to feed the furnaces of the industrial revolution in south east Wales, by John Van Laun. Published by The Newcomen Society, 2001. 252pp hardback, £27.50 + £4.85 p/p from The Newcomen Society, The Science Museum, London SW7 2DD.

This book describes the South Wales iron industry, 1750's to early 19th century. An exceptionally dense network of railways linked opencast limestone pits, coal and ironstone mines with the furnaces and ports.

(from Paul Sowan)

Mining History & Related Articles in Other Journals

Richard Pococke's Tours of Scotland—some extracts, by A. L. Jefferies, in Grampian Speleological Group Bulletin, 4th series, October 2001, pages 12-13 (mentions lead mining at Leadhills, circa 1747-1760)

Mine water rebound in south Nottinghamshire: risk evaluation using 3-D visualization and predictive modelling, by S. Dumbleton et al, in Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology, 34(3), August 2001, pp 307-319 (Geol. Soc. London). Considers the effects of progressive abandonment of the S. Notts coalfield on the Sherwood Sandstone aquifer. Includes a map covering the Sheffield-Chesterfield-Nottingham area showing operational & closed collieries, pumping stations etc.

Final Chapter for the lead miners' bedroom library, by Paul Stokes, in The Daily Telegraph, 21 June 2001, p. 15. Features Britain's oldest subscription library, established by and for lead miners in 1788 and latterly housed at a cottage in Front Street, Westgate, Weardale. The 3000 volumes have

not been consulted for three years. The libraries trustees propose to close the library and sell the cottage.

Surveying Bixhead, by Paul Taylor, in Descent, vol 161, August / September 2001, p. 9. Refers to an underground sandstone quarry near Coleford, Forest of Dean, which operated from 1500's to the 1960's.

Mining in the British Isles, 11—gypsum and anhydrite, in Descent, vol 161, August / September 2001, p. 25. Briefly reviews the underground working of these minerals.

List of scheduled monuments: north west region, English Heritage, 2000. Includes list, as of November 30, 2000, for Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancs, Merseyside, Blackburn, Blackpool, Halton & Warrington.

Lead mining tradition of central Wales goes back 4,000 years to the Bronze Age: earliest evidence of lead mining at Cwmystwyth, by Simon Denison, in British Archaeology, vol 58, April 2001, page 4. Reports excavation of a Bronze Age copper and lead mining site at Copa Hill, Cwmystwyth.

Information supplied by Paul Sowan

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Finally...

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all members!

Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. Material received and not used this time should appear in the next newsletter. Please keep sending articles and other material suitable for publication - it is greatly appreciated. Items relating to mining in the northern Pennines are particularly welcome. Contributions can be in text (*.txt) format by email or diskette, but please don't hesitate to send submissions on paper if necessary. If sending printed text, 12 point Arial scans nicely. Photos, plans and sketches can also be scanned, but please advise us of the copyright ownership. Diskettes will be returned with the following newsletter unless instructed otherwise. Contributions for February newsletter by mid-late January please, to:

John & Alison Hunter, 3 Leebrook Drive, Owlthorpe, Sheffield S20 6QG
Tel: 0114 251 4883. email: johnhunter.2000@btinternet.com

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