
The Northern Mine Research Society Newsletter

August 2004

Society Events — 2004

Please remember to contact the meet leader before attending an event

- **Saturday 18th September Hill Top/Sharneyford colliery area** Leader Clive Seal (01434 382803) Surface predominantly 10.30 am Hill Top entrance (off the Todmorden/Bacup Rd) NGR SD 889246.
- **Saturday October 16th Northern Mine Research Society Autumn General Meeting** to be held at the Cross Keys Hotel, Otley Road, Skipton. Please see below for further details.

Society News

Autumn Meeting

This will be held on Saturday, October 16th 2004 at the Cross Keys Hotel, Otley Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire (opposite the Police Station), where there is plenty of free parking. This informal event kicks off with a short business meeting at 2.00 pm and is followed by a pot-pourri of members' slides and a buffet at £6.00 per head. Remember, your talk does not have to be of earth-shattering importance. For instance, it might be about something that

you've seen and want other people's opinions on. It might be a few pictures of mines that you've seen on holiday (at home or abroad). It might even be about a project that you are planning to start. There will be both slide and multi-media projectors available. Please contact Mike Gill (01535 635388) if you wish to use PowerPoint, but do not leave it until the last minute.

Please use the booking form provided (please see back page for form).

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Obituary

The society is sorry to announce the death, at the end of July, of Eric Holland whom many members will know from NAMHO Conferences or his books on mining in the Lake District.

In his youth, in the 1950s, Eric's caving activities with the Red Rose Pothole Club were interrupted when military service sent him to Malaya during the Emergency. Even in such unpromising circumstances, he found himself stationed near the Batu cave complex and was able to pioneer cave exploration in that country and write a guide to the caves.

His principal interest was in the Lake District, however, and he wrote the series "Underground in Furness" and was a founder member of the Cumbria Amenity Trust. Eric was also involved with the establishment of NAMHO from 1979, which is when I got to know him. In 1981 he published a guide to the *Coniston Copper Mines*, followed by *Coniston Copper*, a history of the mines, in 1986. In recent years he was active with the Earby Mines Research Group.

Mike Gill

Tan Hill collieries, Field meeting on Saturday July 10th 2004

Thirteen of us met at 10.30 am outside the Tan Hill Inn. Luckily, for such a high and exposed region, the weather was very kind to us. Before we set off our leader, Les Tyson, told us a bit about the geology and past ownership of the area. Kings Pit Colliery was the first place we visited with not much to see apart from a few shaft tops. We then followed the mine path up the hill to reach Kings Pit High Gin. At this stage Martin Roe was getting very excited because there was evidence at the pit of a cog and rung gin, and it was quickly surveyed by the group. There aren't many examples of Cog and rung winding gins about. We then walked across the moorland to Tanhill High Gin where there was another example of a cog and Rung pit together with

the remains of two stone pillars. Lunch was taken at the shaft top of a large winding pit, which had nearby a splendid example of a nearly complete cinder oven.

Back to the cars, we drove down Stonesdale to Moulds Gill Coal Level. Here there are there still are a few mine buildings left including the yard where the horse and carts took on the coal for customer delivery. At the back of the site the blocked adit was issuing a fair amount of water.

For the last site, we drove a bit further down the valley to Stonesdale Moor Lead Mine which had plenty to see. For example, the substantial engine house, which still has a fair amount of dressed stone blocks, is in a good condition. There are remains of a dressing floor and buildings below it, and just across the beck there is a superb example of a small limekiln looking very much like an 'igloo' with part of its top cut off.

Finally, I would like to thank our leader Les, and not forgetting the enormous input from Martin in making this field trip a very interesting and informative day out.

Richard Platt

The following comes from Mrs Ruffell, whose late husband was a long-term member of the Society.

For Sale

A collection of NMRS publications and books on mines, mining and miners. List available. Tel. 01548 843328.

Other News...

Routes to your Roots: mapping your mining past

"My grandfather was a miner", but how do you find out about him and about what it was like to be a miner? The National Coal Mining Museum for England, at Caphouse Colliery near Wakefield, has a new exhibition which aims to show you how to solve such questions.

Routes to your Roots: mapping your mining past, gives the route to discovering your family roots. The exhibition guides you through family history sources, then widens in scope to show how to use primary and secondary sources to research what it was like to work in the coal industry. The exhibition concludes with an appeal to visitors to record their own memories and lives for future generations.

Routes to your Routes is designed to be fun for families and for those unfamiliar with research. It helps visitors discover the answers themselves through activities, games and a detective trail to discover the identity of a mystery miner.

Who knows what you'll learn about your family history? There's only one way to find out – discover the Routes to your Roots. The exhibition runs until December 19th.

Mike Gill

An Introduction from the new NAMHO Chairman

At the last annual general meeting, held at Donisthorpe on 13 March, there were some changes in the officers of NAMHO. Mike Moore retired as chairman and I was elected to replace him, with Steve Holding as deputy. After ten years as treasurer, Roger Gosling has retired and is replaced by George Price. Sallie Basham was re-elected as secretary, Martin Roe as conservation officer, and Steve Holding will continue to represent NAMHO in-

terests on the NCA, soon to be part of the British Caving Association (BCA). I will introduce myself and provide you with something of a 'mission statement' -where I'm coming from and where I feel NAMHO should be heading.

I'm Peter Claughton; I represent the Exmoor Mines Research Group on the NAMHO council and am a member of a number of its constituent groups. Like many of you, I came into mining history through caving / mine exploration. In the late 1960s I explored the mines of the southern Yorkshire Dales relating the surviving features to what had been written by Raistrick and others. But it wasn't until 1970, whilst serving with the RAF in north Devon, that a lack of published information drew me into primary research. A move to live in Pembrokeshire opened up new fields of interest but the product of my early research stayed with me, expanded to include areas as physically diverse as south Devon and the Northern Pennines, providing an overview of silver mining which led to the award of a PhD. in Economic and Social History with the University of Exeter. My interests embrace both the history and archaeology of mining, I'm a member of the mining and quarrying section committee for the international industrial heritage group TICCIIH, and include non-ferrous metal smelting, where I'm an active member of the Historical Metallurgy Society. I should also add that I run the 'mining-history' discussion list for JISC, the UK higher education communications provider. So I'm aware that mining history is a subject area of great diversity.

From whichever direction you approach *mining history*, and I use the term here in the broadest sense, you need at least a basic understanding of the many contributing factors. Any study of mining really starts with the geology / mineralisation, Understanding their origins, and the way that the miners perceived them, informs the historian on the way that minerals were worked. At the other end of the spectrum, if we don't consider how minerals

were treated and used (the end product) we cannot start to understand the economic factors influencing mining. Similarly, the physical evidence, both above and below ground, can have a bearing on how we interpret the documentary evidence, and vice versa. Social and environmental factors, like the movement of miners, their housing, or the current condition of mine sites, can be influenced by many aspects mining and we are frequently asked to interpret these for particular interest groups, agencies or the public at large.

Thus we have a subject area involving elements of geology, history, archaeology, political geography, environmental science and education, all requiring the benefit of continued access to the mines. To my mind it is the role of NAMHO, through its constituent groups, to bring these diverse elements together to work effectively towards an understanding of *mining history*; stimulating effective research and its dissemination through publication and presentations. The annual conference provides an excellent forum for the latter and I hope to see many of you at Coniston in July.

In the meantime, should you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by post. using the address below, by telephone (+44 (0) 1437532578), or by e-mail <p.f.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk> .

Research Seminars

To stimulate research, and place a greater emphasis on a research based agenda, I am keen to see a regular programme of seminars organised by NAMHO. The seminars would be run during the winter months, some regional, some topic based. Provisionally, I'm looking to the south-west of England as the venue for a regional seminar during the winter of 2004/5. The Coal Authority can provide a venue for a seminar on coal and its archives at their Mansfield HQ, but a refurbishment of the offices means we cannot hold that until the winter of 2005/6. Any ideas on other potential venues and topics for discussion would

be appreciated.

Peter Claughton (contact details as above)

The NAMHO Newsletter

We still do not have an editor and we are looking for volunteers -the opportunity to be the best informed mining historian in Britain and Ireland!! Please contact Peter Claughton for further details if you are interested in the position.

BCA & Insurance Provision

The Inaugural Special General Meeting of the British Caving Association (BCA) was held on 20 March 2004. It is intended that the BCA will progressively take responsibility from the National Caving Association (NCA), which in turn should wind itself up at the end of 2004/early 2005. It had always been planned that BCA would take over the provision of insurance, previously organised by the British Cave Research Association (BCRA) but problems developed late last year with the whole question of insurance provision. As most will know, a rather different insurance package was eventually agreed and has been implemented from the start of the year. The cover provided by the new BCA scheme is very similar to that previously provided by BCRA.

Although some member clubs/groups have been slow to take up the insurance, the latest reports are that the take up is now reasonably good and unless there is a substantial increase in the premiums, the scheme appears to be sustainable and should run in 2005. If the premiums in 2004 give a surplus that establishes a fund to cover any excess payments, operation and possibly fees in 2005 will be more favourable -there is the intention to have dialogue with users to refine operation of the scheme. Under the BCA scheme, there are two main levels of subscription for individuals. A fee of £18.00 gives full caver insurance and individual 'credit card' type membership cards should be provided shortly. In order for the activities of a club to be covered by the insurance, all individual members will need to have taken out either the full caver insurance or the non-caver insurance at £6.00 per head.

This means that individuals who are members of a number of clubs continue to make multiple payments but they only need to take out the full caver insurance via one club. There are different payments for individuals who go cave diving or use explosives. Also clubs pay additional premiums if they own huts or if they control access to sites. The scheme can still be used to provide land owner liability certificates for any land owner with cave/mine access on their land that needs reassurance (they have cover regardless of previous of the certificates).

The BCA insurance was intended to replace both the insurance provided by BCRA and the insurance provided by the Derbyshire Caving Association (DCA). With the problems that developed with the BCRA cover in late 2003, it was decided to continue the DCA scheme for 2003/4 but it seems probable that the DCA scheme will close at the end of September 2004 and individuals who depend on this insurance may need to switch to the BCA insurance for the last quarter of 2004.

Steve Holding -NAMHO Rep to NCA/BCA

Conservation - Bats Underground

The Bat Conservation Trust are currently drafting a conservation code for users of underground spaces (caves, mines, etc) and have set up an underground sites working group consisting of representatives from interested groups including NAMHO. I would like to gather information about any problems or issues that NAMHO may have experienced in relation to bats. For example does the presence of bats help protect sites or does it cause problems with access?

Contributions by email to roe-martin@hotmail.com or via normal mail to 1 Ashleigh Street, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 6QZ.

Martin Roe -NAMHO Conservation Officer

Forthcoming NAMHO events

Industry. Ingenuity & Endeavour:

The story of The Lady Isabella and the Great Laxly Mine -an exhibition prepared by Manx National Heritage, with the assistance of the Laxly Mines Research Group, at the Manx Museum, Douglas, Isle of Man, April until 27 September . 25/26th September, Laxly, Isle of Man -a celebration to mark the 150th anniversary of the Lady Isabella, Great Laxly, wheel. More details when available -or check the Manx National Heritage website at <http://www.mhn.gov.im>

NAMHO 2005- Mines, quarries, tunnels - south-east and beyond 8-10th July 2005,

Juniper Hall Field Centre, near Dorking - organised by the Wealden Cave and Mine Society with the assistance of the Chelsea Speleological Society, Kent Underground Research Group, and Subterranea Britannica.

European Mining History.

As part of the NAMHO 2005 conference is intended to hold a seminar on European Mining History. The venue, close to cross channel links and major regional airports, provides an ideal opportunity to bring together mining historians from across Europe.

The seminar on 'The Common Aspects of European Mining History' would include perhaps six papers on aspects of mining history which are not confined by national borders and reflect a common interest in mining be it for metals, coal or stone. There will be the opportunity to network and establish working relationships with other mining historians from across the continent.

Please circulate details to your contacts outside Britain and Ireland -details will shortly be available in major European languages on www.exeter.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/mhinf/europe.htm If you are interested in attending please contact me, Peter Claughton, Blaenpant Morfil, Clynderwen, Pembrokeshire, Wales UK, SA66 7RE, <P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk> ,

at the earliest opportunity. The language for the conference will be English but we hope to provide facilities for presentations in other languages within the seminar.

International Mining History Congress 2006

To be held in Belgium, Aug./Sept. 2006- firm date and details in a future newsletter.

Environmental Issues

As some of you will already know, the Welsh Mines Society and the Welsh Mines Preservation Trust are working with the Environment Agency in Wales as part of the latter's Metal Mine Strategy; assessing the impact on water quality from non-ferrous metal mining and what, if any, remedial action is required. The Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland (MHTI) are similarly engaged with the bodies responsible for environmental issues both in the republic and in the north of Ireland. Such contacts are important if we are to monitor the potential threat to mining sites from environmental clean-up initiatives. At a local level we would encourage societies to engage with the authorities responsible for administering the register of contaminated land. The Northern Mine Research Society has commented on proposal by Richmondshire District Council in respect of contaminated land as a consequence of which the Yorkshire Dales National Park Archaeologist is now a member of the council's working party and in a position to monitor the impact on mining archaeology. If you do get involved at this or any other level, please keep NAMHO informed -see the item below regarding representation on national and regional bodies.

Following on the recent Post-Mining Regeneration Consultative Workshop held at the Eden Project, in Cornwall, on 20 January 2004, <<http://www.edenproject.com/postmin/ing/default.asp>> concern has been expressed regarding the intention to include abandoned, 'legacy', mines in regeneration plans with little or no regard for the historic landscape / heritage value of the mines.

Martin Critchley of MHTI also draws our attention to the European Union proposed directive

011 the management of waste from the extractive industries (COM(2003) 319 final). The directive, as it stood in March, confines itself to active mines but the original version of the draft directive contained articles about inventories and clean-up of abandoned mines (working paper 2002). These have been dropped from the latest version (June 2003). But there are several amendments which might add these back.

The process was that the EU Parliament Environment sub-committee would vote on the draft on the 15th March; followed by discussion and vote in the EU Parliament on 1st April. The Council of Ministers (Environment Ministers and not Mining Ministers) will discuss the draft directive at a meeting in June (to be held in Ireland as Ireland holds the presidency of the EU from 1st Jan to 31st June). So the situation may have changed by the time you receive this newsletter. Any EU directive on cleaning up abandoned mine sites could change the current inclusive approach being adopted by the environment agencies in Wales and Ireland.

Representation on Regional and National Bodies

Is your group / society represented on any regional or national bodies -for example, do you send a representative to the regional industrial archaeology panel ?

NAMHO needs to represent mining history interests in a number of areas, particularly on environmental and conservation issues, and in most cases this is best done by local and regional groups. If you are represented on regional and national bodies, please let us know and provide us with feedback and we can co-ordinate a response to issues affecting mining history.

Coal Authority: Access to Mineral Heritage. Colliery Abandonment Plans and Photograph Library.

The Access to Mineral Heritage website is operational and can be accessed at www.mineral.org.uk At present it focuses on collec-

tions in Scotland and the North West of England, but it will continue to be added to over the coming years. The AMH team is working in partnership with collection owners and only publishes information with owners approval. Further enhancements to the website will also take place. The next phase of work will focus on individual item level descriptions. Your views on the site would be appreciated.

Nearer to home the Authority now has electronically copied some 33,500 abandonment plans which can be viewed at the Authority's Mining Heritage Centre at Mansfield. The Authority has also had the NCB/British Coal photographic collection held by The National Archive at Kew electronically copied. Some 22,000 photographs can now be viewed on six dedicated PC screens at Mansfield. This collection continues to be added to and ultimately up to 60,000 NCB/BCC photographs will be able to be viewed. Photographers from outside British Coal are also expressing an interest in having their collections incorporated into this collection with acknowledgements. The Authority opened its virtual library for viewing the photographs on 1 June 2004. The six screens available are initially being offered to members of the public with 1 1/2 hour slots. The opening times are as follows:

Monday –Friday 9.00 –10.30am 10.45-12.15pm 1.30- 3.00pm 3.15-4.45pm

Screens must be booked in advance by contacting the Mining Heritage Centre on 0 1623 638233 or 0 1623 638235. Booking to view the abandonment plans can also be made on these numbers.

It is proposed ultimately to make both collections available to view over the internet, but only when the majority of people have access to sufficiently powerful PC's with broadband.

NAMHO Council Meeting to be held at Killhope, Co. Durham, 13 November 2004.

A Council meeting will be held at Coniston, as part of the conference, but there will only be limited time available. We will deal with urgent matters and allow time for an input from conference delegates. The next full business meeting will therefore be at Killhope on Saturday 13 November. The Friends of Killhope have offered to provide sandwiches and tea/coffee, and assist with finding accommodation. To gauge numbers, could representatives please contact the NAMHO Secretary, Sallie Bassham, if they intend to be at the meeting.

Sallie Bassham

Book reviews

There are two official launches of the recently published book 'Balmoidens' by NMRS member Lynne Mayers will take place on the following dates:

September 6, Cornish Studies Centre, Alma Place, Redruth, 6 - 8 pm

September 7, Wheal Martyn Clay Heritage Museum, Carthew, St. Austell, 7 pm

Lynne extends an invitation to any members visiting Cornwall at that time and who might be able attend either of these events. A re-

view of the book will appear in the next newsletter.

John Hunter

Mining & Quarry World

A new quarterly mining magazine, launched in 2004 by Tradelink Publications, with an international circulation and an engineering and technical focus covering the hard-rock, metal mining and quarrying industries.

Mining & Quarry World intends to revive a service that has largely been lost over the past 15 or 20 years: comprehensive reviews of the world's most interesting mines and quarries.

Drawing both on the knowledge of production and equipment-supply companies, and on the expertise of its editors, each edition of Mining & Quarry World will provide a new, detailed look at underground and open-pit hard-rock mining, and at quarrying, with authoritative site reports that provide a more rounded picture of today's industry.

In addition to metal mining and quarrying, the Mining & Quarry World will also focus on the technology behind current trends in mineral processing, materials handling and metallurgy. Other features will address the mining and processing of industrial minerals such as salt, phosphates and potash, while each edition will carry details of current contracts for equipment and services from the world's major suppliers.

Mike Gill

Fluorspar in the North Pennines
Edited by R. A. Fairbain,
ISBN 0951893939
Friends of Killhope
£8.50

In October 2001 the Friends of Killhope held a day school entitled 'The fluorspar industry of the North Pennines- a retrospective view'. This pocket-sized book of 131 pages comprising six chapters sandwiched between short pre- and post-scripts (both written by Forbes) proceeds directly from that day. The six authors are well-known and respected in their fields and they and the contents of the book are comprehensively eclectic. The high standard of authorship expected from these people is achieved.

There are three short chapters, all less than ten pages, on the geology and origin of fluorspar (Young), fluorspar collectors and mineral dealers (Hacker) and the relationship between British Steel and North Pennine fluorspar mining (Graham). Rick Smith has a fifteen page overview of the rise and fall of fluorspar mining in the North Pennines, Paul Younger a longer chapter (approximately 25 pages) on

the mining history of Frazer's Grove Mine but the longest chapter by far, approximately 55 pages and nearly a third of the volume is by Almond and gives in abundant detail the various beneficiation techniques employed in the orefield. It is difficult to fault the contents of these chapters and together they manage to both be highly informative and to humanise the industry, so that it seems the voices of the mineworkers, which of course include some of the authors, are never far away.

There are plenty of photographs, drawings, diagrams, references, quotations, even poems and anecdotal asides to give shading to the main tone of the book.

It is a cheap book (less than ten pounds for a conference volume!) and a very specialised one (although plugging a hole in a niche market) and sadly some production values reflect the price for example many of the photographs have been reproduced darkly making some of the detail difficult to discern. But it is the editing or rather the lack of a proper final proofing that does most damage. In addition to the (few) and expected typographical errors pages 48 and 49 are transposed and the long chapter is riddled with extra hyphens disrupting many polysyllabic words so constantly breaking-up the concentration that is needed to read and absorb this fact-filled chapter. This lack of proofing reflects poorly on the editor and production team, the Friends of Killhope and, of course, unfairly on the authors. It is a great pity.

The book cannot be described as light-reading (it is too full of facts) but as a specialist resource or read more quickly as a technical-social history it deserves to have a wide audience. Laporte Chemicals paid for my Ph. D (fluorspar in the South Pennines) and I have written on the mineralisation of the North Pennines for decades and so believed that I was well-acquainted with Pennine fluorspar but almost everything in the book was new to me. Only now do I understand the context to the ups and downs of Pennine fluorspar mining something I watched from the side-lines

and assumed to be due to internal problems-not so.

The Friends of Killhope are to be congratulated on publishing the book and will hopefully have the courage to go on to produce similar, but better proofed, volumes.

Rob Ixer

Three books on the South Yorkshire Coalfield, all published in 2001/02. 'The South Yorkshire Coalfield' by Alan Hill; 'South Yorkshire Collieries' by John Goodchild and 'South Yorkshire Pits' by Warwick Taylor.

All have soft covers, are about the same size, ('South Yorkshire Coalfield' is thicker and slightly larger), and all have a sepia coloured picture on the front but the contents are surprisingly quite different. They need to be considered separately.

1. The South Yorkshire Coalfield - a history and development

by Alan Hill is soft covered, 17cm by 25cm and is published by Tempus 2001 (ISBN 07524 17479) at £17.99.

It has 256 pages, with about 15 maps and 55 b&w photos; in all there are 12 chapters (of varying length, No.4 is less than one page while No.6 is nearly 50 pages), in addition there is a glossary, bibliography and index. The first 5 chapters, (54 pages) tend to deal with the history of the industry and the various mining companies while the remainder of the book deals with the individual mines described in the order of their period sinking before 1850, 1851-1875 and so on. In the first part the author has tackled a massive subject and some aspects have a very hit and miss coverage -Technology for example is a one paragraph discussion of the number of Markham steam engines used. The discussion on the individual mining companies is much more complete and very interesting. It is the remainder of the book that makes for the greatest value, about 120 collieries are treated to one or more pages of description with often a photograph or map. But there must have been

thousands of other smaller mines which do not have a mention. This part of the book is a well researched and fascinating coverage of the mines that worked, and are remembered (of the 20th Century). It is useful to all who have an interest in the mines that made many of the villages and that hit the news both through the financial and environmental impact, the disasters and the strikes associated with them. The reviewer, who was first involved in Yorkshire Mining nearly 40 years ago, examined the information on his local mine, Dinnington, closely; there are two pages including a post-closure photo, and the coverage of most of the major phases from 1900 to 1991 was good. This book is well worth having.

2. South Yorkshire Collieries

by John Goodchild is soft covered 16.5 cm by 23.5 cm and is published by Tempus, 2001 (ISBN 0- 7524-2148-4) at £10.99.

it has 128 pages and about 200 illustrations, mainly old photos but also parts of printed matter and charts. it is a companion to an earlier volume in the 'Images of England' series on "The West Yorkshire Coalfield", There are 4 chapters, headed 'introduction'. 'Before the Railway Age', 'The Railway Age' and 'At and around Doncaster'. Unfortunately there is no index but the author explains that he has chosen to illustrate only some of the collieries in South Yorkshire of which he has images and which give an insight into a particular aspect of the coalfield. The 'images' given are almost wholly pre -1920 but are most valuable because they are often unusual views, little known and often previously unpublished. The captions vary in length, some are comprehensive containing detail of great value but many are short. Some collieries are given many pages, for example Elsecar (13), Wharnccliffe (6), Monckton (8), and 't'Yorkshire Main (11) while others have few or none. For example, Dinnington, the first that the reviewer became familiar with is not mentioned. The book's strength is that it does cover a period that other books on the subject ignore and uses illustration either not easily accessible or unknown to others. The topics covered are wide ranging, from open-casting to disasters, canal

traffic to mineral railways, and from owners mansions to workers housing. There is also a good range of technical illustrations including coke-works, coal preparation plants and general colliery views including a few underground.

3. South Yorkshire Pits

by Warwick Taylor is soft covered 15.5 cm by 23.5 cm and is published by Wharnccliffe Books, 2001 (ISBN 1-903425-84-3) at £9.99. It has 160 pages and about 80 photos (mostly post-nationalisation), 25 maps and, unusually, about a dozen 'old' penny sized photos of individual colliery tokens, or tallies used by the miners for identification purposes. The first 54 pages (7 chapters) deal with a number of random historical aspects, the 1842 Royal Commission, outlines of three mining companies, a canal, the railways and trade unions. Most of the next 100 pages (4 chapters) deal with more recently worked collieries on an (NCB) area basis. Much of the information is taken from recent papers and NCB publications. There is an interesting 'foreword' by Lord Mason, a glossary (with some odd definitions - see 'Ripping' and 'Warwick' for example), and an oddly titled Chapter II, 'Manpower and seams worked statistics', which gives only the number of men employed underground and surface for 1910, 1927, 1945 and 1972, with a general list of seams known to have been worked in individual pits at those dates (taken presumably from the Annual directories). Chapter 12 is a list of colliery Owners and

their pits in the early 1900's, Chapter 13 is a list of multi-fatality accidents (over 3 persons) their dates and causes in Yorkshire pits generally, and there is also a very short bibliography and an index. The most useful part of this book is the ready access it gives to general information on the mines that have operated within living memory. Over 70 mines are dealt with, each entry usually having at least one photo and most having a full page (with text) or more. Dinnington Colliery, for example tested by the reviewer has 1 Y2 pages including a photo of the mine in 1909 and another, undated but obviously more recent, and half a page of text. There is a mention of the dates of sinking (with depth), mechanisation during the 1940's and the re-organisations of the 1960's and of the 1970's. The final comment (it appears also with most of the other mine descriptions) that no accidents "are recorded" is not correct. Many miners lost their lives or were injured during the 90 year life of this mine -indeed the Mines Inspectorate records show that, for example, over 15 miners died at Dinnington, between 1905 and 1911.

There is neither the overlap nor duplicity of pictures that might be expected with three books on such a closely related topic, each book has its own strengths. The two Tempus books have the greater feel for authenticity for the historian, but the Wharnccliffe book may be of most interest to the general reader.

Ivor J. Brown

BALMAIDENS

by

Lynne Mayers

The story of the women and girls who worked at the mines of South West England

It is estimated that between 1720 and 1920 about 60,000 women and girls worked at the mines, quarries and clay works of Cornwall and Devon. They carried out hard, highly skilful and specialised labour, and were an essential part of the operation.

Lynne Mayers has researched their working lives and their homelife, their characteristics and the occupational hazards they endured. How were they essential to the industry? What were their working conditions? Where did they live? What did they earn? What did they eat? What did they wear? And what did they do with the very little spare time and money they had?

As the mines closed, where did they go and what happened to them? This is the record of a group of remarkable women and the individual stories of the few who are traceable.

The Cornwall and West Devon metal mines and smelters of the 18th and 19th century formed a unique and quite separate part of the mining heritage of these islands. It was here that much of our nations mineral wealth was created, based in no small part on the labour of these girls (from the age of eight or nine years old) and young or widowed women. No other metal mining district was so extensive, nor used women and girls in such abundance.



Hypatia Publications is delighted to announce the publication of this important work, now available direct from the publishers, or on order from the best bookstores near you..

Large format soft cover. 261 pages. 62 illustrations plus tables, diagrams, and poems, references and footnotes.

ISBN 1 872229 48 4 Price £20. Post free.

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Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. Please continue to send material for the newsletter. Contributions can either be sent by email via the website or direct to me. Alternatively, you can post contributions either as text, or on disc, all are welcome. If you require anything returning, it will be returned with the newsletter unless instructed otherwise. In particular, photo's, plans, and pictures are welcome as long as they can be reproduced well in black and white. Contributions for the May newsletter should be with me by the end of March please to:

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BOOKING FORM FOR THE AUTUMN MEETING

Name Tel. No.

I wish to book _____ buffet(s) at £6.00 per head and enclose my cheques for £ _____ (payable to NMRS).

I would like to give a short talk on and will be using Slides/Powerpoint.

Please return to: 38 Main Street, Sutton in Craven, KEIGHLEY, North Yorkshire, BD20 7HD