

The Northern Mine Research Society Newsletter

February 2005

Society Events — 2005

Please remember to contact the meet leader before attending an event

- Saturday March 19th - **Spring Meeting/Annual Dinner** Ascot House Hotel, Kings Road, Harrogate. NGR SE303561. Meet at 1.00pm and eat at 1.30pm. Followed by the AGM at 3.00 pm.
- Saturday April 23rd - **White Coppice/Anglezarke** Leader: Iain Williamson (01539 432702) Surface walk (6 miles). Meet at 10.30 am at car park NGR SD618191
- Saturday May 7th - **Buckden Gavel, Wharfedale** Leader: Martin Roe (01422 251237) Underground (strenuous). Meet at 10.30 am at car park NGR SD942775
- Saturday May 21st - **Joint Seminar with PDMHS** The National Coal Mining Museum, Caphouse Colliery, Wakefield. Contact: Mike Gill (01535 635388). Details via Newsletter and website (www.nmrs.co.uk).
- Saturday June 25th - **Grassington Moor** Leader: Martin Roe (01422 251237) Surface. Meet at 10.30am at Yarnbury NGR SE015659
- Friday 8th to Sunday 10th - **NAMHO Conference** Juniper Hall Field Study Centre, Dorking, Surrey. Details via Newsletter or online @ <http://www.namho.org>.
- Saturday July 24th - **Facit Stone Mines** Leader: Richard Platt (01204 362892) Underground. Meet at 10.30 am at layby on A671, NGR SD888194
- Saturday August 13th - **Swinnergill, Swaledale** Leader: Wayne Martin (01642 875498) Underground. Meet at 10.30 am in Keld Village NGR SD896011
- Saturday September 17th - **Nenthead** Leader: Steve Mitchell (01535 657090) Underground. Meet at 10.30 am at the Visitor Centre car park. NGR NY781437
- Saturday October 15th - **Autumn Meeting** Details via Newsletter.

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Society News

President's Report

This report is something of a valediction because, in my 40th year as a member, I've decided to stand down as President at the AGM. I've done the job since 1997, as well as in 1976, and it's time for a change. Nevertheless, I will continue as Recorder and my interest in mining history remains undiminished.

The Society exists to encourage the study of all historical and technical aspects of mining and associated subjects. We accomplish this through the hard work of the Committee and the support of members, especially those who are able to lead meets, attend meetings and contribute to the Newsletter or *British Mining*. Last year, as well as offering a varied programme of field meets, both surface and underground, we issued four Newsletters, a Monograph and a Memoirs. Even if you have not been able to do any of these things, be assured that all our members are valued.

I'm proud to say that officers work hard to keep costs down and to give good value for money. As a result, the Society's subscription rates were last increased in 1993. We do as much work as is possible 'in house'. For example, our *British Mining* publications, which have long been the flagship of the mining history world, were once subject to all manner of costs and delays. We now produce them in printer-ready electronic form, which gives us total control over quality and content. The success of this policy is reflected in the strength of sales of mining books to the public. It is a credit to our editors, and to the members who write for them, that in the 12 years since we adopted this system, we have produced 30 issues.

I am also pleased to say that the Society's funds have never been so healthy. This has allowed us to make grants towards a number of members' projects, some of which are already bearing fruit. One of these, reflecting the growing interest in coal mining, has given the Society an unequalled database of post

1854 collieries in Yorkshire, and another covering Britain's post 1947 collieries. The results of other projects will appear in *British Mining*. The Society has also given £2000 towards the conservation and display of artefacts at the Museum of Yorkshire Dales Lead Mining, which is due to reopen later this year.

For both my successor and the Society in general, the future looks bright. Members are busy researching and writing up their work for publication in *British Mining*, we have a full meets programme, and the Society is to host the second joint seminar with the Peak District Mining History Society Ltd on May 21st.

As well as thanking all those who have served as officers since 1997 for their support and hard work, I would like to offer my best wishes and support for my successor.

Mike Gill

Membership matters

Thanks to the more than 290 members who have renewed their membership for this year. You should have a membership card included with this newsletter although if you renewed after mid-February this will be deferred to the next mailing. Many thanks to those who made a donation to the Society's funds and also to those who completed the Gift Aid form. This enables the Society to claim back income tax equivalent to nearly 30% of your combined membership fee and donation. Of course we can only do this if you are a UK income tax payer, so if you have filled in a Gift Aid form in the past but no longer pay income tax please let me know.

Would those members who have yet to renew for this year please do so as soon as possible. If you do not renew before 1st April, then in accordance with the constitution your membership will cease; also renewal before then enables me to claim any gift aid from the Inland Revenue in this tax year.

Alan Mills

Saturday 19th March – Spring Meeting/Annual Dinner

Ascot House Hotel, 53 Kings Road., Harrogate (SE303561).

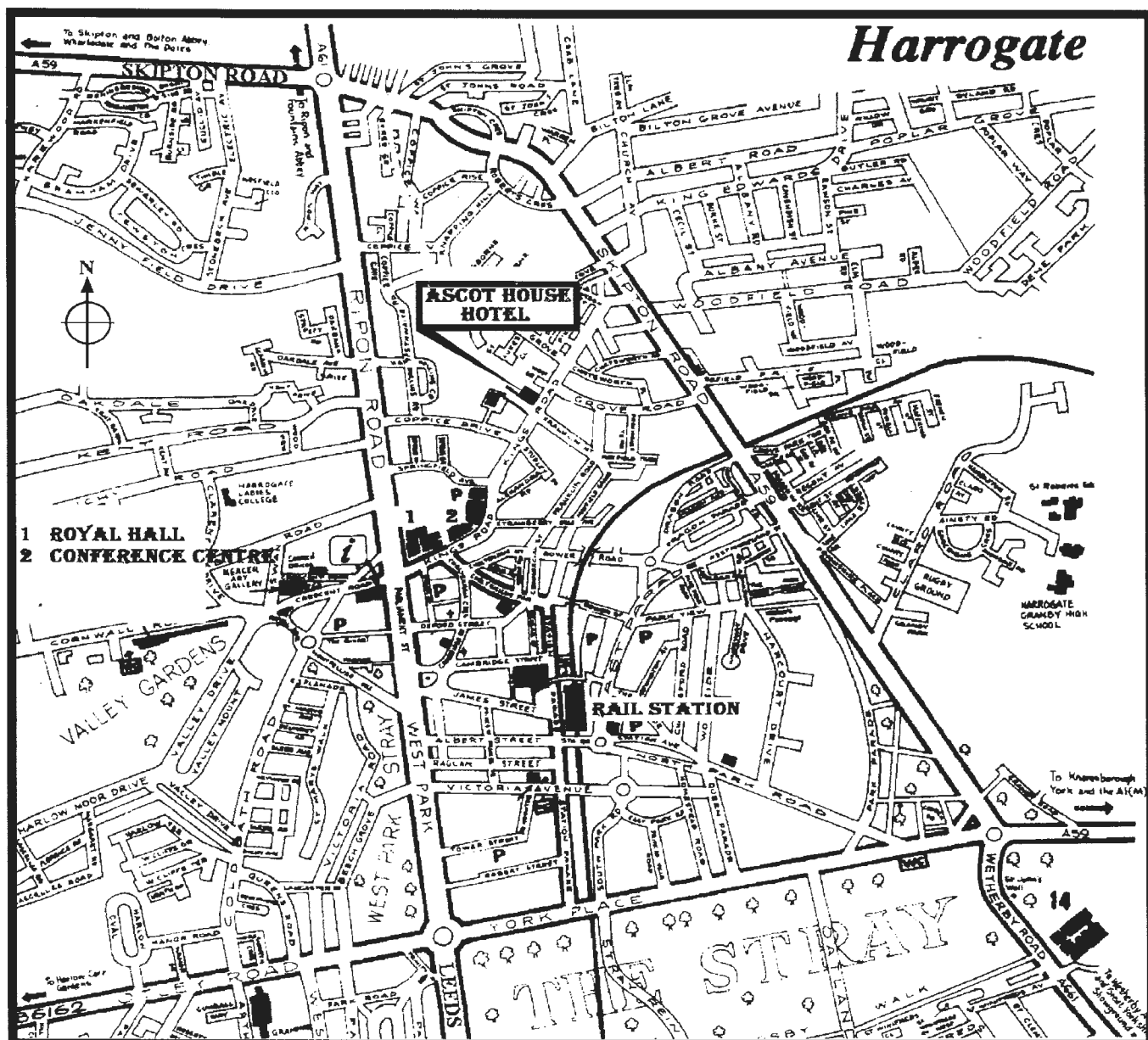
These are both to be held on Saturday, March 19th at the Ascot House Hotel, Kings Road, Harrogate (NGR SE303561). Those who've been to Ascot House before will not need reminding that the food and ambience are magnificent. Nevertheless, we try to keep the proceedings informal so that members can socialise. Unfortunately, numbers attending the dinner have fallen in recent years – do not be shy come along and support us, you will be made most welcome.

Meet in the bar lounge from 1.00pm to be

ready to eat at 1.30pm. The dinner will be followed by the AGM at 3.00 pm. Please return your booking form (at back of Newsletter), complete with payment, by March 8th.

Library News

Some journals are added to the library on a regular basis and one which always has interesting articles and excellent photographs is "Archive". Issue 44 includes an article on the Hetton and Lambton coal staiths with good maps showing collieries, railways and staiths. There is also a piece on Richard Trevithick with several references to the iron industry amongst the steam engine details. The books reviewed include Andrew Scarffe's "The Great Laxey Mine", M R Connop Price's "Pembrokeshire: The Forgotten Coalfield",



Lynne Mayers' "Balm Maidens" as well as books on coal mine and slate quarry railways.

Sallie Bassham

Constitutional Changes

Members are reminded that the Committee has proposed number of changes to the Constitution, to be made at the AGM on March 19th. These were described in the December Newsletter and have been posted on the Society's website since November.

China Clay outside the South-West

John Tonkin has written asking if anyone knows about the working of china clay at Roughtengill, in the Lakes, or near Brassington in Derbyshire. Kaolinization is not confined to granite; any rock containing feldspars can be kaolinized if the circumstances are right, though they rarely are. In Cornwall, felsite dykes and sometime killas (shale) yield

clay. In Brittany, shale over granite can be well kaolinized. Sometimes, near mineral veins, solutions and gases can kaolinize shales, lavas, greywackes etc, but these occurrences are rarely exploitable.

If you can help John, please reply to him at 11 Meadway, Fairfield Park, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4HT.

Joint Seminar with PDMHS

This one-day event is to be held at the National Coal Mining Museum, Caphouse Colliery, Wakefield, on Saturday May 21st. Members of both societies are cordially invited to join us in this the second of these joint seminars, which give an opportunity to discuss aspects of our current work with fellow mining historians. Apart from the opportunity to look round the museum's surface displays, there will also be two underground trips (see booking form). The programme consists of 15 to 20 minute talks, with time for discussion after each one. Will anyone wishing to give a talk please ring Mike Gill on 01535 635388

Committee nominations 2005

President: Martin Roe
Vice President: Bob Burns
Junior Vice President: Hazel Martell
Treasurer: Alan Mills
Librarian: Sallie Bassham

Publications Editor: John Hunter
Newsletter Editor: Anna Davies
Recorder: Mike Gill
Secretary: Steve Mitchell

If you would like to nominate someone else for any of these positions please contact the Secretary before the AGM supplying details of proposer and seconder.

Other News

World Heritage Nomination for the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscapes

The Department of Culture Media and Sport announced on January 24 that the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape has been chosen as the UK's 2005 nomination for becoming a World Heritage Site.

Devon supplied much of the western world's tin and copper for substantial periods over the last 4,000 years and for a time during the 18th and 19th century the area was the world's greatest producer of tin and copper. As such it contributed substantially to Britain's industrial revolution and influenced mining technology and industrialisation throughout the world.

Tessa Jowell Secretary of State said:

Quoting the press release: Cornwall and West " This unique industrial and cultural landscape

survives as a tribute to one of the most rapid periods of economic, industrial and social development the UK has known. Its contribution to British industrialisation was matched by its influence on the development of mining and engineering culture across the rest of the UK and overseas.

" World Heritage Sites are usually associated with cultural landmarks like the Great Wall of China or outstanding natural landscapes like the Grand Canyon National Park. But industrial landscapes, such as the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape also have a vital role to play in helping to unlock, for current and future generations, the heritage values, knowledge and history upon which civilisations are based. I am delighted to submit this formal nomination."

Deborah Boden, World Heritage Site co-ordinator said "Achievement of World Heritage Site status will bring international recognition of the heritage value of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, and the wider social and cultural achievements of the people engaged in the industry. The distinctive and technologically advanced method of deep mining developed in the region was transported around the world and still endures, both in Cornwall and West Devon and in places as far away as Australia, South America and South Africa.

" Our submission as the UK's nomination for 2005 brings much appreciated recognition of all the years of hard work supported by groups, organisations and individuals that have gone into developing the World Heritage Site bid. We are delighted the Secretary of State is submitting this nomination and look forward to the process of assessment as an opportunity to demonstrate to the UNESCO advisers the quality of the bid, and the breadth of support for it."

The nomination document for the Cornish Mining Industry, which formally outlines the case for its inscription as a World Heritage Site, was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in Paris on 24 January. This nomina-

tion, together with those from other countries submitted by UNESCO's deadline of 1 February 2005, will be assessed by expert advisers to the World Heritage Committee over the next 12 months. Final decisions will be made by the World Heritage Committee at its annual meeting in the summer of 2006.

The proposed Site includes all those mine sites and mining landscapes where there has been an exceptional survival of the physical remains. These are largely late 18th century, 19th century and in a few instances, pre-1914 mining remains. It does not include those widespread areas of tin streaming that survive in Cornwall and West Devon, associated with a pre-Industrial Revolution technology and therefore not considered representative of the 19th century boom years.

Ten areas have been identified as best representing the many difference facets of Cornish mining: St Just; Hayle; Camborne/Redruth; Caradon; Godolphin/Tregonning; Wendron; St Agnes; St Day/Gwennap; Luxulyan valley and Charlestown; the Tamar Valley and Tavistock

The UK's World Heritage Sites are currently:

- Ironbridge Gorge
- Stonehenge, Avebury & Associated Sites
- Durham Castle & Cathedral
- Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey
- Castles & Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd
- Blenheim Palace
- City of Bath
- Hadrian's Wall
- Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey & St Margaret's Church
- Tower of London
- Canterbury Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey & St Martin's Church
- Old and New Towns of Edinburgh
- Maritime Greenwich
- Heart of Neolithic Orkney
- The Historic Town of St George & Related Fortifications, Bermuda
- Blaenavon Industrial Landscape
- Derwent Valley Mills
- Saltaire

- New Lanark
- Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
- Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City
- Giant's Causeway
- St Kilda
- Henderson Island
- Gough and Inaccessible Islands
- Dorset and East Devon Coast

Considering buying house in Devon? You might want to check out the following stories first.

A couple who claimed they were not told their house was built on a disused iron ore mine have reached a £250,000 out-of-court compensation settlement. Philip and Maria Taylor bought the house at Haytor Vale, Dartmoor, in 1998 for £205,000, but found it was built on the mine and was worth half that total.

Full text on

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/devon/4212579.stm>

And another one:

Twenty Devon homes have been evacuated after the discovery of old copper mines near the buildings. The uncharted workings were found under the Ministry of Defence (MoD) estate at Horrabridge in south-west Dartmoor.

Full text on

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/2498677.stm>

Kellingley Colliery

Plans to develop the Silkstone Seam at this mine near Pontefract were abandoned by UK Coal in January. Hopes that annual output would rise from 1.7m to 2m tonnes were thwarted by 'geological conditions'. Around 150 men who had recently transferred from the closed Selby complex will lose their jobs as a result.

Mike Gill

Closure of Ellington Colliery

UK Coal announced the closure of the last deep mine in North-East England, with the loss of 340 jobs, on January 26th. Ellington Colliery, near Ashington in Northumberland, which was sunk in 1910, had been closed by British Coal in February 1994, but was re-opened by RJB Mining in 1995 and began coaling again in early 2001. The mine, whose principal customer was a nearby aluminium smelter, had been losing money, but closure was the result of flooding on its single coal-face during the preceding 13 days. The workings were reported to be eight miles out under the North Sea.

There are now eight working, deep mines in Britain: Daw Mill, Harworth, Kellingley, Maltby, Rossington, Thoresby, Tower and Welbeck.

Mike Gill

Today's Daily Telegraph reports the closure yesterday, with the loss of 340 jobs, of Ellington Colliery, the last working pit in what was once the world's largest coalfield. The decision was taken after 1,200 gallons of water a minute began flooding the last deep mine in north-east England. This effectively means an end to 'coals from Newcastle' in an area that during the First World War employed 224,000 miners and produced 50 million tons of coal a year.

C J Williams

Welbeck Colliery to Close

On February 10th, UK Coal announced its intention to close this North Nottinghamshire mine in the next 12 months. Welbeck lost £20m last year after faulting and thickening dirt bands in the Deep Soft seam reduced its annual output to 0.8 million tonnes – half of its target of 1.6 million tonnes. Having reviewed its mining plans, the company has concluded that it cannot work the remaining five million tonnes of reserves viably. Closure is intended to follow the extraction of around 1.6 million tonnes of coal by the current, advancing face and its replacement, a retreating face, which is being developed,

Welbeck employs 520 people and some may find work at UK Coal's Harworth and Thoresby collieries in Nottinghamshire, or Daw Mill Colliery in Warwickshire. Men opting for redundancy will receive termination payments of up to £28,000.

Welbeck's two 650-metre-deep shafts were sunk between 1912 and 1915. The Top Hard seam was worked between 1915 and 1992 and the Parkgate seam from 1992 onwards. The Deep Soft seam, where current workings are concentrated, was first accessed in 1985 and abandoned 10 years later. In recent years, the colliery has typically produced around 1.5 to 1.7 million tonnes of coal a year, the bulk of which has been sold for electricity generation.

Mike Gill

The Historic Environment in the Yorkshire Dales—A Day School

Saturday April 16, 2005, Grassington Town Hall. The day school will include papers on:

- Gayle Mill—North of England Civic Trust
 - Rethinking Ingleborough or the case of the Iron Age hillfort that isn't—Yvonne Luke
 - Crucks and cruck buildings in the Yorkshire Dales—Don McLellan
 - Springs, Woodland and Transhumance. Reconstructing a Dales Environment during Later Prehistory—Tim Laurie
 - Mapping the Yorkshire Dales and Cumbria: Historic Landscape Characterisation and its Uses—Miles Johnson
 - Understanding the mines of Arkengarthdale—Martin Roe
 - A multi-period landscape at Chapel House Wood, Kilnsey, N. Yorkshire—Roger Martlew
 - English Heritage Aerial Survey (title to be confirmed) - Dave McLeod
- as well as Poster Displays and Book Stalls

The new Yorkshire Archaeological Society volume *Archaeology and Historic Landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales* will also be on sale.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park has some of the best preserved and extensive historic landscapes in the country. This day school will discuss some of the results of archaeological and historical surveys and research in and around the National Park.

Fee: £10 (£7.50 - full time students and YAS members). The fee includes refreshments but not lunch.

For further information please telephone 01756 752774 or e-mail grassington@ybtbic.co.uk

Help Needed

NMRS will have a bookstall at the above event and if any society members attending would like to volunteer to help sell books during the refreshment breaks and over lunch their help would be much appreciated.

Lead Mining walks with the Yorkshire Dales National Parks Authority

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has arranged another series of walks within the National Park visiting various old lead mining sites. The walks are lead by Dales Volunteers (rather than archaeological/mining experts) and provide an introduction to some of the lead mining sites in the Yorkshire Dales. There is the opportunity for more knowledgeable members of the public (i.e. members of the NMRS) to share their expertise with other people on the walk.

The walks cost £2.00 (children free), unfortunately no dogs are allowed. All the walks start at 2 PM and last for approximately 3 hours. The walks and dates are as follows :-

Old Gang Mines and Mills

Meet at Surrender Bridge, Swaledale (SD988999) on the Langthwaite to Low Row road.

- Tuesday 19th July 2005
- Wednesday 27th July 2005
- Thursday 25th August 2005

Grinton Mines and Mills

Meet outside the Grinton Youth Hostel, Swaledale (SE048976) on the Leyburn to Grinton road.

- Sunday 7th August 2005
- Sunday 14th August 2005

Lead Mining around Langthwaite

Meet outside the Red Lion Inn, Langthwaite, Arkengarthdale.

- Sunday 17th July 2005
- Sunday 21st August 2005
- Sunday 4th September 2005

Lead Mining on Grassington Moor

Meet at Yarnbury near Grassington

- Wednesday 3rd August 2005
- Wednesday 31st August 2005

Jim Cundall

Miners hold protest

A group of redundant miners staged a protest yesterday at their doomed pit in a desperate attempt to save their jobs. Around 60 men occupied offices at Ellington colliery, near Ashington, Northumberland, offering to help the mine overcome its flooding problems. Owners UK Coal said the pit, which is north-east England's last deep coal mine, had to close for safety reasons because water had penetrated the coal face.

From Press and Journal 01/02/05, Thanks to Alistair Lings for sending in this clipping.

Hopes for coal mining revival with new pits 'clean' technology paves way for two mines to exploit rich Canonbie reserves.

Underground mining for coal is poised to make a comeback in Scotland with plans for two drift mines into the vast Canonbie reserves in Dumfries and Galloway.

Scottish coal, the last major coal company in Scotland, is involved in exploratory talks with landowners to exploit what has been described as the "biggest untapped reserve of coal in Scotland". Development is some months away but it is thought the project

could eventually yield up to 2000 jobs.

The company has been at the forefront of developing 'clean coal technology' (CCT), to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired power stations, and the low-sulphur, high quality Canonbie coking coal is regarded as 'green', making it more acceptable to environmentalists.

Coal is becoming increasingly attractive while oil prices remain high and north sea gas reserves are depleted. The governments reluctance to confront public anxiety over the expansion of nuclear options is a further boost to coal.

Scottish coal still employs more than 1000 people across the central belt at its opencast mines in Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and Fife, and supplies 4.3 million tonnes of coal annually to the power industry.

It has lodged planning applications for more opencast mines, including three in Douglas Valley in South Lanarkshire – but these are likely to meet objections from residents concerned about the environmental impact. New Scottish executive guidelines, opposed by Scottish Coal, are slanted against increased opencast activity in former deep mining areas. Professor Ross Harper, chairman of Scottish Coal: coal is proving each year to be more and more important to the economic life of Scotland.

"at the same time, we are actively trying to overcome some of the environmental problems of coal by mixing it with biomass to reduce sulphur emissions. We are seeking to increase production to make Britain less dependant on imported energy" Harper declined to confirm or deny an interest in Canonbie but said: "we are exploring a number of possibilities but I cannot say any more as these are commercially sensitive". Difficulties in obtaining planning permission for opencast pits and growing world wide demand for coal make Canonbie a desirable option. Bill Kennedy, the former head of planning for British Coal's Scottish area, said "there are millions of tonnes in the Canonbie reserves. There is as much coal in Canonbie as there ever was in the Lothians. It is the biggest untapped reserve in Scotland". "I would be delighted if mining at Canonbie went ahead. There are

geological difficulties but the coal is high-quality, low in sulphur and is there in vast quantities”.

Coal is still the UK's single biggest source of electricity, despite the closure of mines in the 1980s and 1990s, which resulted in the number of miners in Scotland falling from 30,000 after the 1984 strike to a mere handful.

Forecasts by the International Energy Agency have indicated that about 38% of the world's electricity will still be generated by coal by 2020. Brian Wilson MP, the former energy minister said: “there is no doubt that coal will and should play a major part in Britain's energy future. If Scotland can become a key player in CCT, then the potential for export and supply is limitless. In principle, I would support Canonbie being opened up for production, of course, as long as it is done along the right lines and in tandem with CCT. Britain is well advanced in clean coal technology and if we could establish the proven technology here in Scotland, the potential for exporting it to the rest of the world is enormous.” Former Scottish National Union of Mineworkers president George Bolton said: “This is tremendous news and is so much common sense”.

If you have a further interest in the Canonbie coal field read: Pickens, G S 1988 “the concealed coalfield at Canonbie, an interpretation based on boreholes and seismic surveys” (Scottish journal of geology vol 24, pt 1, p61-71).

Thanks go to Alastair Lings who has also let us know that there is potentially workable coal extending over 70 km², and proven reserves of coal exceeding 400 million tonnes.

Information for mine explorers

The following information was sent by John Lawson to help people plan future underground visits.

- Baron's sump, Longcleugh Mine – Smallcleugh random, Nenthead. We visited the underground engine house in late December 2004 and noted the following: An excellent

restoration of the Smallcleugh entrance has been completed. Congratulations to those involved from the Northern Pennine Heritage Trust. (members can see pictures of the original in Raistrick & Robert's book, photo's 184 & 185.) The route, via Smallcleugh Cross Vein, the Flat Cross Cut, Brown's and Hetherington's flats, was as expected. The 1st fall on Middlecleugh 2nd Sun Vein has been widened: however one of the sumps taking water to Capelcleugh has become blocked and consequently the water in this section is nearly waist deep. The 2nd fall on this vein, beyond the Carr's Vein junction has been dug and well timbered. The falls on Carr's vein have become even more restricted and should not be attempted by larger people. The rise above the Longcleugh Flat has been well spiked and is relatively easy to climb, however the return climb from the Longcleugh stope sub-level is more tricky and the use of rope is advised.

- Force Crag Mine – The Lake District. This mine site was visited in late January and the following noted: The National Trust has gated and inserted two 1ft, corrugated pipes into the entrance of number 1 level. They have also backfilled it for a considerable distance with 18 inches of concrete. The road from the mill to number 3 level has been removed and the entrance completely sealed with debris. The only way into this famous mine is now from High Force level, where a further fall has taken place at the junction of the level and the Vein.

John Lawson

Photographs

If you have any photographs of trips you have enjoyed underground, interesting features above ground, or items you cannot identify, why not send them into the Newsletter or Website. Photographs of NMRS meets would be particularly welcome, as would photographs recording your recent research. Don't keep them hidden...share!

Anna Davies

Reviews

Explosives in the Mines of the Alston Block—A Response

In response to Ray Fairbairn's paper on explosives in the Mines of the Alston block in the last Memoirs BM75 there are a number comments and corrections that need to be made.

It is stated that the first use of explosives to split rock at a mine was recorded at Shemnitz in Hungary in 1627. Hollister-Short in his paper "The Introduction of Powder" published in *Mining Before Powder* (1994) suggests that this is not the first use of powder at a mine but the first documented public demonstration of underground blasting. Earlier experiments had been carried out at the mines of Schio 50km from Padua as early as 1574 although these were probably carried out above ground. Barnatt, Riewerts and Haddon Thomas in their paper "Early use of Gunpowder in the Peak District" (*Mining History* 1997), list a number of sites where early use of powder is known. The earliest being Longe Sough, Cromford in 1662. They also mention Balliffe Croft Sough, Wirksworth which is presumably the Baily Croft Sough, Worksworth mentioned by Ray.

Quoting Wallace (1890) the author suggests that clay stemming of shotholes was adopted by Derbyshire Miners in the mid 18th century. Again Hollister-Short presents conflicting evidence stating that the method was described by Robert Boyle in 1671 as being used by quarrymen.

Moving forward to the 19th century it is stated that in 1866 the Diamond Rock Boring Company used dynamite produced by the British Dynamite Company at Hope Level, Stanhope. A quick search on the internet for the British Dynamite Company finds nobelprize.org which naturally charts the history of Alfred Nobel and his various business endeavours. This site states that Nobel obtained his patent for dynamite in 1867 and the British Dynamite Company was formed in 1871 changing its

name to Nobel's Explosives Company in 1877. This therefore suggests that the date of 1866 for the use of dynamite at Hope Level is incorrect.

It is notable that the list of references at the end of this paper is almost solely composed of works from the 19th century. The exception is Raistrick and Jennings "A History of Lead Mining in the Pennines" which is quoted as being published in 1966 and 1995. Both of these dates are incorrect as the book was originally published in 1965 and was reprinted in 1983, also *Death Blast in Snowdonia* by T. M. Hughes should be dated 1995.

Putting aside the mistakes with referencing, of which there are many more than those mentioned here, including missing references, this paper is flawed because it has relied on old sources and has made no reference to more recent work which contradicts many of the statements made. 19th century sources can contain much useful information but they need to be used cautiously and critically. If information is not tested and challenged then the subject of mining history will not move forward but will just keep churning over the same old ground repeating the mistakes of the past and before long those mistakes become cast in stone as fact much like the current discussion about John Taylor the "Cornish" mining engineer.

The following four New Books were announced on the Mining History discussion list (<http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/mining-history.html>)

Mountains and Orefields: Metal mining landscapes of mid and north-east Wales, CBA Research Report 142, 2004 is now available from the Council for British Archaeology, St. Mary's House, 66 Bootham, York, YO30 7BZ. Price = £19.95 ISBN = 1 902771 47 8
Details are also on the CBA website at

Cwm Gwyrfai, The Quarries of North Wales Narrow Gauge and The Welsh Highland Railways

Gwynfor Pierce Jones and Alun John Richards, Softback A5, 368pp

To mark the revival of the Welsh Highland Railway two of the leading experts of slate working in Wales have come together to present a definitive account of the slate workings along its route and whose products the WHRR's precursor the North Wales narrow Gauge Railway carried. They have included a brief account of these lines and many abortive schemes to bring railways to Gwyrfai and nant Gwynant. Each quarry is described and includes accurate Grid references and details of location includes useful black and white photos.

Aspects of Welsh Slate

Pip Knight- Jones, soft cover, full colour, A5, 71pp

The author has been painting for some 40 years including painting for the marine biologi-

cal research at University of Wales, in the book she has attempted to record a number of slate mine sites with colour paintings using her artistic talents, these are supported with informative text, colour photos, some plans and working sketches. She is also concerned that these monuments are scheduled and provides the criteria the National Assembly of Wales uses to decide on scheduling in addition there are useful contact addresses. It is very well presented and shows a unique enthusiasm for Salt Mining.

The Slate Railways of Wales, Alun John Richards, A5, SB, 212pp

Starting with the Penirhyn Railway of 1801, this book traces the chronology of slate related railways and tramways throughout Wales. Some lines arose out of need, others out of greed until in all about 100 route miles were dedicated to carrying slate with a further 200 miles vying to do so with varying success. Apart from enabling a great industry to prosper they brought benefits of rail connections to the remotest part of Wales many of which would have been ignored by railway entrepreneurs.

And Finally

John Taylor and the Ecton Copper Mines: A rejoinder.

Thank you Lynn for pointing out that it is customary to link a person's name to the place where they won their fame. Good examples of this are Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Scott of the Antarctic and Eric Pode of Croydon. We must part company here, however, because there is a fatal flaw in your argument – John Taylor's fame sprang from his success at Wheal Friendship, near Tavistock, which is in Devon not Cornwall! As was the practice of the day, like Pitt the embryo, Taylor was propelled to high office, in this case mine manager, at the age of 19.

My general point remains that using long outdated sources, even for background, detracts from otherwise undeniably important works, like Lindsay's. It demonstrates an absence of breadth, as opposed to the great depth with which the core subject is treated.

Mike Gill

An Apology

On the same subject, the Newsletter Editor would like to pass on apologies to Lynn Willes for inadvertently changing his sex in the last edition of the Newsletter.

Anna Davies

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:

Anna Davies, 1 Ashleigh Street, Ovenden, Halifax, HX3 6QZ

davies_al@hotmail.com

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Data Protection Act

Members are reminded that the NMRS maintains a list of their names and addresses solely for the purpose of printing labels for membership cards and posting newsletters and publications. Such details are deleted from the database for any member who leaves the Society, either after the committee has been notified or after it has been determined that an overdue subscription has not been paid for several months.