



The Northern Mine Research Society Newsletter

Society News

February 2007

Dear members,
Enclosed with the Society's first newsletter in 2007 is your membership / meets card (for those who have renewed their membership) and a booking form for the first event of the year - the Annual General Meeting. This year's AGM is being held on Saturday March 17 at Earby Mining Museum, located a few miles west of Skipton on the A56. An informal buffet will be provided and the occasion will offer an opportunity to browse around the exhibits and inspect the recent improvements made to the museum, some of which were assisted by NMRS grants. Please come along and show your support for the Society. Booking forms should be returned (or attendance advised by email, to save postage) no later than 10th March. An election for officers will be held as part of the AGM and, as always, any offers from members to help the committee in any way, including volunteers to lead field meets, will be very much appreciated. I look

forward to seeing you there. Our first field meet of the year will be at Gunnerside Gill on April 14 (see meets card for details). Finally, may I remind you that there are still places available on the coaches for the joint NMRS / PDMHS field meet in the Peak District on Saturday May 12. If anyone has mislaid their booking form, details of the meeting can be obtained from the PDMHS website (www.pdmhs.com). The closing date for bookings is the end of February.

John Hunter, president

Membership matters

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your membership. At the time of writing (8th February) 300 members have done so, and should find a new membership card enclosed with this Newsletter. If you renewed after this date you will receive your card either with the May Newsletter or by a separate mailing.

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This leaves just under 100 of last year's members yet to renew. This is normal for this time of the year. Please note that if you have misplaced the renewal form then just send a cheque made out to NMRS (Full member £15; Overseas £18; each family member plus £0.50) to me at the address below.

It would be very helpful though if those of you yet to renew did so as soon as possible. Firstly, membership lapses on 1st April and so, if you don't renew, you will receive no further publications after that date. Secondly, from a personal point of view, it saves me the trouble of sending out a final reminder in April! Finally, those who renew before the end of the tax year (5th April) and who have signed a Gift Aid declaration, can be included in this year's claim for payment from the Inland Revenue.

Gift Aid is an important source of income for a small charity like this. Last year we were able to claim back over £1500, more than 10% of our total income. In fact, this was part of the reason for re-designing the membership renewal form so as to make it easier for members to complete the Gift Aid declaration, without having to repeat information. This has been very successful with the vast majority of members now completing the declaration. Do please remember though to let us know if you stop paying UK income tax as we can only claim for payments made to us from income taxed here.

I will be presenting the accounts for 2006 to the AGM on Saturday 17th March, by which time they will have been audited. The headline figures (to the nearest £100) are:

Opening balance: £35,800
Income: £14,500
Expenditure: £10,500
Closing balance: £39,800

As you can see, the Society is in a strong financial position. I will provide more detail both at the AGM and in the next Newsletter.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of you who made a donation to the Society,

more than £300 in total so far; I will write thanking you personally later in the year once renewals and accounts are out of the way. If you have any queries regarding membership then please email me on alanfmills@lineone.net or write to Alan Mills, Hon Treasurer NMRS, Sorrel Sykes, Reeth, DL11 6TJ

Alan

New members

The Society welcomes

Mr D W Addis

Mr J Danby and

Mr D Kitching

Librarian's Report

People continue to be generous with their donations to the library.

My grateful thanks to you all. Tony Oldham has sent an armful of material, including interesting reports of mines in Wales and two partial indexes to The Mining Journal. Brigid Irwin of The Book Shop (now in Brough) has kindly donated some books which she was given by a customer.

Issue 52 of "Archive: The Quarterly Journal for British Industrial and Transport History" has arrived. The quality of Archive's photographs is always good, but this issue includes a superb one of Bentley Colliery and several of coal barges illustrate an article on Claude Campling. The main mining article in this issue is by Guy Wilson on alabaster/gypsum in the Eden Valley, which features Ian Tyler's excellent maps of Long Meg Mine.

Sallie Bassham (Librarian)

sbassham@nildram.co.uk

Reported Deaths

We regret to announce the death of two of our members

Gordon Couch, 56 Park Rd, Low Moor, Bradford.

W J D Parkhouse, Coleford, Glos who died last June.

Members Contributions

Emley Moor Colliery Trip

This interesting and witty article taken from the May 1982 NMRS Newsletter was suggested, scanned on computer and sent in by Malcolm Needham. It is reproduced here in its entirety.

On March 10th 1982 a small private party visited Emley Moor Colliery, near Huddersfield. We were taken to the charging room where we were provided with lamps and self-rescuers, half of the members belts would not fit the latter, however after a few adjustments we managed. Harry Houghton brought his 'Troll' miners belt, at the shop he asked for a large one, well really, 10ft is a bit much. It wouldn't fit the batteries anyway so he used his trouser belt, now that released his true shape, talk about letting it all hang out!

The mine has been in operation for about 150 years, it produces 2500 tons of coal per week, the ash content is only 3% and the coal is mainly exported to Sweden. The target for the year is 108,000 tons but 120,000 tons can be achieved. Emley Colliery supplies the timber and men. The coal is dispatched by conveyor underground to Skelmanthorpe where it is washed and graded. The average depth of the Beeston seam from the surface at the point where the mine is now working is approx 360 yards. The mine is in the process of being mechanised on the Whinmoor seam which is now being developed.

We descended 300' to the main roadway where we immediately saw the conveyor system discharging coal onto the internal conveyor to Skelmanthorpe. We followed the roadway till we mounted a staging above a large fast moving conveyor belt. "Now time for a ride," said our guide, "just flop forward and lie down like this." He landed on all fours, then on to his stomach and was whisked off at 20mph into the gloom. Well, I mean to say, what could me do. We all followed. What a sensation! The rollers under my belt fairly rippled us along. My breakfast didn't know where it was going. I did, if I didn't get off that belt. Someone said he felt his loins

stirring! What's that? At the end of the roadway there was a blank wall at the base of which there was a pair of hands and a head.

When we reached the seam, it was 16" deep plus 4" ripped out of the base. The miners were working by the age old method of picking and shovelling just behind them was a small conveyor belt which ran 110 yds from the top gate to the bottom gate. The coal was shovelled straight onto the belt. When they advanced a yard down the seam they had to erect a pair of props and roof support piece before moving on. They could remove a 17yd long by 1yd wide section of coal per man per shift, then, the men moved onto to advance the heading, reset the belt, blast the coal ready for the next shift of fillers. We all crawled down a section of the face and watched the men working in such tight and confined places. We could see the rows of props left after the coal had been removed, like soldiers on parade.

It was decided not to crawl all the way down the face, but to have a ride on the conveyor. We crawled out of the seam section and stepped over the belt, all managed it though short legs were a disadvantage, as Harry proved. Straddling a 24" wide pelt was not his forte. Thank goodness no cobs of coal came along! Or, would it have mattered, now? But the agility for diving onto the moving belt was fantastic. Spider man excelled. The belt ran along the floor and returned near the roof of the seam, so that between the floor and the underside of the return belt was only a height of 15". Into this gap I dived, what I didn't know was that the fillers were still working totally unaware of the human load on the conveyor. A shovel full of coal landed in front of my face, a second on my legs. The third filler saw me and said "Hello", the fourth said something else! The traveller behind me lost his self-rescuer on the trip and also a prop! We emerged one at a time into the top gate, where a short walk lead us back to the man-riding conveyor belt. Harry was not to be out done (why does his name keep cropping up?). "Just flop on,"

said the guide. So Harry did. and he bounced so hard that for a moment it was touch and go whether he would stay on the belt. The belt was immediately stopped. "Are you alright, sir?" "Of course I am, thank you very much" replied Harry courteously!!! "Next". All went well. "Next". A taller member had a slight centre of gravity problem, finally he managed to take off along the belt.

"I hope we don't have to keep stopping the belt for every one" grumbled the guide. "No sir, not for me", I thought. I was determined to get it right. I waited, balanced forward and reached out and dropped cat like onto the moving belt. Perfect take off. The landing ... not too good ... My feet touched first so that feet and legs set off at 20mph up the belt whilst the rest of me stayed behind. I slammed down on my back and my feet flew into the air. Well there it was, 8 travelling up the belt head first and laid on their stomachs, and, 1 feet first on his back. The belt was once again stopped and much bell signalling ensured. The return to surface was completed without further ado. The trip was completed by teacakes and coffee in the canteen.

Many thanks to all that attended and a special thanks to the NCB and staff at the Colliery.

I saw the undermanager in the evening - "I hear you had some trouble on the belt", he said, "the story has been passed around." "How many men know?" I enquired. "Oh, only 291." He replied. I gulped.

Richard Hewer

ImechE cuts red-tape to send engineering history into 21st Century (taken from the Institution of Waters Officers Journal - Autumn 2006 issue 152).

One of the oldest engineering publishing arms dating back to 1847 has taken over a century of historical documents onto the internet for the first time.

The Revolutionary Move, by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (ImechE) publishing arm, Professional Engineering

Publishing (PEP), means that academics, students, engineers, historians, biographers, can access major documents at the touch of a button.

PEP, based at the ImechE's headquarters at Westminster, London has placed 250,000 items of history online. It publishes 17 Journals covering anything from medical, transport, aerospace and manufacturing.

The online archive, titled, ImechE proceedings Archive 1847 - 1996 can be accessed worldwide at <http://archive.pepublishing.com>. Archives after 1996 were already available online and prior to the new online resource, the journals were available only through library loan.

Peter Williams, Academic Director of PEP, said: "Our collection of academic journals represents the very best in mechanical engineering and build upon the excellent heritage we already had. This new, online version will allow the engineering community to access technical papers, obituaries, meeting reports, technical drawings and editorial comment of significant engineering, historical and social importance".

Jane Insley, Senior Curator of Engineering at the Science Museum, London, which is using the system, said: "The archive covers the extraordinary period of the 19th Century when engineering really came into its own and the Science Museum is delighted to be able to use it."

Sent in by Alastair Lings

NORTHUMBERLAND RECORD OFFICE.

The NRO search room is now operating at Woodhorn Colliery Coal Mining Museum. To get there by car go to the turn off to Woodhorn Church, take the turn off on the opposite side of the road and then first left. You may gather that the Record Office is not well sign posted. Be prepared to pay to park - the money being collected before you enter the car park. [I think it was £2] The procedures at the Search Room are the same as they were at Melton Park.

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It should be noted that the records belonging to the Northern East Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers have been taken back to Neville Hall in Newcastle; these include all the London Lead Company Lead Mine Plans listed as NRO 3410/Plans/1/32 to 1/41, and the L.L.Co minute books as well as all items listed as NRO 3410/ZE. The NRO index numbers have been retained. At present the opening time for the NIMME records are Monday and Thursday 10am-4pm. The daily fee is £2, and requests for access should be made to the Librarian at 0191-2322201 or by e-mail at librarian@mininginstitute.org.uk.

If you go to Woodhorn look out for the fine statue of a coalminer standing on a column facing towards what I assume were colliery offices. From the car park nearest the site you may think that he was making some appropriate comments, it is not until you see him from the front that you realise he was testing for gas.



Ray Fairbairn

Book House - opening days change

As from the beginning of February we will be changing our opening days. We will be open from Tuesday to Saturday from 10-4.30 and closed Sundays and Mondays (so as to allow me two days off together) Obviously we are trying to let as many of our customers know as possible and

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father suggested I contacted you as you are involved with various mining journals and we wondered if you would mind putting a small paragraph in them.

If coming any distance it is of course always advisable to check as we are sometimes away at book fairs.

The Book House, Main Street, Brough, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, CA17 4AY. Tel: 017683-42748. Website - search our books at www.thebookhouse.co.uk

BOOK LAUNCH AND MUSEUM OPEN DAY

The Lakes & Cumbrian Mining Guide by Ian Tyler

The book is now at the printers in preparation for the launch at 12.30pm on Sunday 11th March 2007 at the Keswick Mining Museum Annual Open Day including buffet.

The book is in A5 format with 204 pages, and lists in the region of 1400 different metalliferous mine workings covering the areas of Cumbria, Furness and Westmorland. The guide is for the walker, archaeologist, historian, mine enthusiast, or for someone who wants to know the extent of this incredible history. Each of the 19 chapters lists the individual sites by NGR numbers and also covers many of the sites in the form of individual walks with some historical notes.

Mail order copies are available at £12.99, with plastic outer cover £1.00 extra, postage £2.50. Please make cheques payable to Keswick Mining Museum.

Mine Heritage Walks 2007

March 11 – YEWTHWAITE MINE park at Catbells north (2 hours only) Open Day walk.

March 18 – FORCE CRAG MINE park at Braithwaite 5 miles.

April 15 – ROUGHTEN GILL MINE park at Fellside 6 miles

May 27 – YEWTHWAITE/BRANDLEHOW park at Catbells north road 5 miles.

June 17 – ENNERDALE MINES park at Bleach Green car park 6 miles.

July 15 – EAGLE CRAG (Hard) park at Patterdale Church 7 miles.

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July 29 – HARTSOP HALL/WYERS HEAD park at Cove Bridge 5 miles.

Aug 12 – DUFTON MINES (Hard) park at Dufton village car park 7 miles.

Aug 25 – GREENSIDE MINE park at Glenridding car park 7 miles.

Sept 9 – CONISTON COPPER park at Coppermines Valley road 6 miles.

Sept 23 – SEATHWAITE/HONISTER park at Honister Slate Mine 6 miles.

Oct 7 – GOLDSCOPE MINE park at Limetown Bridge 5 miles.

All the walks start at 10.30am. Boots or strong shoes must be worn! Waterproofs and spare clothing should be carried, also a packed lunch. Most walks will take a minimum of 5 hours. Not suitable for unfit persons or children under 16 years.

All the walks will be guided by Ian Tyler.

CHARGE : £6.00 per person

NAMHO News

RESEARCH IN CUMBRIA

A Guide to Cumbrian Historical Sources

By Michael Winstanley and Rob David
Centre for North-West Regional Studies
ISBN No. 1-86220-177-3

Cumbria is fortunate to have a wide and varied range of archives available to the historian. This book introduces the new (and not so new) researcher to the extensive range of archive sources relating to Cumbria and, for the first time, brings them together in a directory of the main publicly accessible collections held in record offices, libraries, museums and other organisations. It also includes descriptions of those sources to be found in neighbouring counties and an introductory guide to online resources and catalogues.

Cost £8.95 plus £1.00 p+p

Send cheque (made out to Lancaster University) to:

Centre for North-West Regional Studies
Fylde College

Lancaster University

LA1 4YF

Web site: [www.lancs.ac.uk/users/](http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/cnwr/e-mail)

cnwr/e-mail contact:

christine.wilkinson@lancaster.ac.uk

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An omission to the guide is the archives of the Alston Moor Historical Society, see their web site at:
www.alstonhistory.org.uk

SOUTH-WEST ENGLAND

Quite the most significant event of recent months has been the designation of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Area as a UNESCO World Heritage site, as briefly reported in IA News 138 (and in our October newsletter - ed.).

Shortly before this, June 2006 saw the announcement that Geevor tin mine had received £3.8m from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Objective One. The grants are for conservation of the listed buildings on site, a new museum and improved visitor access. A previous application, which included the reopening of modern underground workings, was rejected. The project must be completed by September 2008 and contractors were swiftly appointed. This summer also saw the relocation and restoration of the water-driven Locke's stamps from Nancledra, which were erected at the entrance to Geevor in 1983. Water will be provided so that they can be demonstrated to visitors.

At King Edward Mine, near Camborne, volunteers have completed restoration of a Holman Bros horizontal twin drum steam hoist. Dating from 1907 it came new to King Edward, but in 1942 went to the Castle-an-Dinas wolfram mine in central Cornwall. It remained there when the mine closed in 1957 and was put on show at Poldark Mine near Helston in the 1970s. From there it was bought by the Trevithick Society in 2001 and returned to King Edward Mine where it now sits on its original loadings and runs on compressed air. The 50-inch Harvey's pumping engine of 1863 at Goonvean clay pit near St. Austell, which last worked in 1956, remains threatened by a partially collapsed shaft and future clay workings. Built for a mine at St. Agnes and brought to Goonvean in 1910, there have been a number of proposals to secure the future of this Grade 11* engine and house on a

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new site but so far all have come to naught.

Still with mining, work began in the summer at Wheal Peevor near Redruth to conserve this important site and provide public access. Wheal Peevor is unique in that all three engine houses, for pumping, winding and stamping, survive and thus demonstrate the classic layout of a Cornish mine. Some £800,000 is being spent here.

Not everyone shares such regard for the remains of the mining industry. The government's regeneration agency in Camborne and Redruth has long been ambivalent about attempts to restart South Crofty mine. In March 2006 it was reported that they had capped a shaft at Pool which Crofty's owners claimed was essential to their future plans. In June came news from abroad that arsonists had destroyed a 9 metre high statue of a Cornish miner at Kapunda, South Australia. On a happier note the unpaid custodian of the famous Cornish miners' cemetery at Real del Monte, Mexico, Don Chenche, was awarded an honorary OBE in the last Honours List. He has tended the cemetery for over 50 years.

Kerrier District Council has been awarded £250,000 to develop its 'Heartlands at Pool' project. This £33 million scheme would include a World Heritage Site Gateway Centre based at the old Robinson's Shaft of South Crofty Mine. Robinson's Shaft is no longer an active part of the mine and the buildings, which have suffered vandalism and arson, now belong to the Council. Also on the site is the famous 80-inch pumping engine, owned by the National Trust, preserved in grease and inaccessible for many years. The submission for the project has to be submitted by May 2007. Even allowing for the benefits and interest generated by World Heritage status, the projected centre is less than a mile from the existing Cornish Mines and Engines site at East Pool, developed by the Trevithick Trust and run by the National Trust. One has to ask whether there will be sufficient numbers to support both sites as well as or Geevor and Levant further afield.

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In August work began on the £6 million Tamar Valley Heritage Project designed to open up more of the valley to the public. The first phase based around Morwellham includes a network of paths between Morwellham and its sister port of Newquay, restoration of part of the mineral tramway serving the port and, later on, circular trails through Blanchdown Wood, Gulworthy to open up the site of the Devon Great Consols Mine. G.Thorne, Industrial Archaeology News, November 2006

By kind permission of the AIA

RETURN OF A YORKSHIRE COLLIERY

A huge investment is planned to reopen Hatfield Colliery in South Yorkshire, which was closed in 2004. There are now only seven large deep mines left in Britain, in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, the West Midlands and South Wales.

Note in the AIA Industrial Archaeology News 139 Winter 2006

BBC News 21 Aug 2006 added: Producing 10 million tonnes of coal annually, £37 million of modern machinery, "As a standalone company Hatfield Colliery has a good future; it has good reserves, and is in an area with several coal power stations nearby."

NORTH PENNINE HERITAGE TRUST Photographic Exhibition

The North Pennines Heritage Trust is creating a new exhibition for 2007 which will celebrate and inform visitors of the underground mine workings that exist here, but that very few people get to see and experience for themselves.

The Nenthead Mines Heritage Centre site contains many mine adits leading to many miles of underground workings. These are visited by several thousand people each year – enthusiasts, mine explorers, mineral collectors, educational groups etc. We are asking these individuals and groups to provide photographs of their underground visits. The Trust will print and mount selected photographs in order to

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create this exhibition. Copyright for each photograph will remain the property of the individual photographers, with the Trust agreeing a licence for its use of photographs during 2007.

If you have photographs that you would be willing to submit for this exhibition please contact

Paul Mercer, Education Officer
North Pennines Heritage Trust
Nenthead Mines
Alston

Cumbria CA9 3PD

Tel: 01434 382037 Email:
education@npht.com

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Life as a Lead Smelter

The Life and Times of Thomas Dixon 1805 – 1871 Lead Ore Smelter, Early Railwayman, and much more besides by Stafford M. Linsley

Wagtail Press November 2006

ISBN 0-9538443-6-6 £17.50 P&P £2.50 from the publisher.

During the early 19th century Thomas Dixon, of Dukesfield Hall near Hexham, in Northumberland, recorded his family life, working days and leisure time in his diaries. His words give us a fascinating insight into his world; his life as a family man, lead ore smelter early railway enthusiast, church and chapel goer, gardener, singer, musician and later as Station Master at Hexham Railway Station, Stafford Linsley's extensive research gives us an in depth background to Thomas Dixon's life and times.

Publisher Wagtail Press, Gairsheild, Steel, Hexham, Northumberland NE47 0HS www.wagtailpress.co.uk

Mining history from Ireland's Copper Coast

The Making and Breaking of a Mining Community: The Copper Coast, Co. Waterford 1825-1875+

by Des Cowman

(Published 2006 by the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland)

ISBN 0-9534538-3-9 (9 780953 453832) Price is £17 including P&P

Available directly from:

Dr D. Cowman

"Knockane"

Annestown,

Co. Waterford

Ireland

"As the title suggests this is nearly 200 pages of mainly social history, technical details being in appendices and genealogical lists searchable on Copper Coast website. It is lavishly illustrated, with historical contexts in adjoining boxes and, while fully referenced, it is intended for a general readership. For further details check www.coppercoastgeopark.com (click *Heritage* if necessary)".

Railways and Iron Mining in Cumbria

Dalton-in-Furness: Mediaeval Capital to Mining Community by Rock Battye
Published by The Cumbrian Railways Association

Price £8.45 ISBN 0-9540232-4-2

Further information at:

www.cumbrianrailwaysassociation.org.uk

Available from bookshops or direct from:

CRA

19 Windsor Drive

Miskin

Pontyclun

CF72 8SH

P&P is £1.50 and cheques should be made payable to Cumbrian Railways Association

Thanks to the CIHS Newsletter for news of this book.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 31 March 2007 **North Pennine Heritage Trust Forum** - see separate announcement above.

The **2007 NAMHO Conference** is being hosted by Tamar Mining Group in association with Plymouth Caving Group and other local NAMHO member organisations and will take place at Morewellham, on the Tamar north of NMRS - Newsletter February 2007

Plymouth, over the weekend of **15th - 17th June 2007**.

For more information and the booking form you can go to - <http://namhoconference.org.uk/> or contact the organisers by post or e-mail

Patchway Cottage

Calstock

Cornwall

PL18 9QB

(01822) 832 748

E-Mail : rick@tamarmininggroup.co.uk

BOOK REVIEWS

EAST SURREY UNDERGROUND by Peter Burgess 2006 121 pp, many photos, maps, surveys etc. SB no ISBN. Available from the author at 8 Trotton Close, Maidenbower, CRAWLEY, West Sussex, RH10 7JP price £9.00 + £1 post and packing.

East Surrey is about 30 miles south of London and I was surprised to find that it was once a heavily mined area. In the towns of Dorking, Reigate, and Godstone, there are numerous caverns, dug in order to extract the sand. These have been excavated over the centuries and the sand was used both in the glass industries and as a cleaning agent. It can be spread on the floor and then swept up without leaving a stain. Many a Victorian skivvy was probably very familiar with this type of sand!

Undoubtedly, the most famous cave in the area is the Barons' Cave at Reigate. This cave has been a local attraction since the late 18th century. Stories have grown around the cave and legend has it that the English Barons in AD 1215 met in the cave to draw up the terms of the Magna Carta. A more likely explanation is that the cave was an impressive wine cellar for the Earl of Surrey, Earl de Warenne. The wine was transported in large barrels called 'tuns' each containing up to 1000 litres of wine. Both Barons' Cave and the Dorking Caves are open to the public. The latter were also used as a wine cellar.

Other mines include those in the Firestone and Hearthstone Quarries. Firestone has been used extensively from the Norman period to the present day as a building stone. Its excavation in this locality has left a vast network of mined passages with a surveyed length of 17 km. There has been much confusion between hearthstone and firestone. This is not surprising since both materials were dug from the Upper Greensand beds. The hearthstone was used for whitening stone doorsteps, hearths and window sills. When rubbed on to an object, it dries to a chalky white colour.

At the end of the 19th century the firestone mines at Godstone were given a new lease of life. The disused galleries were used as mushroom farms. However, this practice eventually died out in the 1930s as there were difficulties in maintaining the right conditions of temperature, humidity and air flow, plus the risk of infestation from pests.

Other man-made sub-surface voids in the area include Fullers Earth Mines and Dene Holes. Fullers earth was originally used to degrease woollen fleeces. Today it is used extensively in the chemical and petrochemical industries. Dene Holes are simply chalk mines, the chalk being used for agricultural purposes.

Cave explores will no doubt be interested in the River Mole. A fitting name for a river that flows underground for a comparatively short distance between Dorking and Leatherhead. Although there are numerous sink holes in the river bed no cave passages have yet been entered. This is unusual considering the extensive chalk caves both in Beachy Head and Normandy.

To sum up, this is an excellent account of the great variety of underground feature in a small area of south east England. Wartime tunnels, cellars and underground follies add to the variety. It provides a very readable account of these fascinating sites.

Peter Burgess is obviously an expert on this area and I found this book a pleasure to read. Informative, amusing and difficult to put down. Highly recommended.

**Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club
Journal September 2006 Volume 5**

57 pp. Available from J R Johnson 92 Long Valley Road, Gillow Heath, Stoke-on-Trent ST8 6QZ. Price £2.50 including postage. Make cheques out to J R Johnson.

I was surprised to find such a wealth of mining articles in caving a club journal. The journal begins with a trip report to the Box Stone Mines, Wiltshire. The authors advise taking extra lights, a copy of the survey and notes, and visitors should be prepared to get lost!

A shaft capping project was undertaken at Thorswood Mine, Stanton, Staffs. This opened the way to facilitate the descent of a 320 ft deep shaft in the near future. Exploring the Welsh Slate Labyrinths describes trips to Cwmorthin, Rhosydd, Wrysgan, Gaewern, and Minllyn Slate Mines in north Wales. Again, the authors found the problems of route finding to be interesting.

Rhiwbach Slate Quarry appears to quite extensive with rails and a tipper truck still in place. I am not sure that I would have admitted in writing to illegal entry. Cwt-y-Bugail Slate Quarry was explored with some difficulty. This time it was the fog on the surface which caused problems.

Fish Mine and Dwarf Mine, near Prestatyn, North Wales. The two mines are connected and a through trip was undertaken. The former has easy walking sized passages whilst the latter involved some crawling and SRT. Talargoch Mine, Prestatyn. Here it is possible to enter via a lower entrance and come out at the top of the cliff.

Pandora and New Pandora Mines, Betws-y-Coed. The 10 m pitch was SRTd in very wet conditions and Goddard's Lode was reached. A flat out crawl in icy water led to two pitches, the first being very wet. This led to the 33 fathom level and the lower adit entrance, which luckily was still open. Bryn-yr-Orsedd Mine, Mold, Clwyd. The Upper Entrance leads to an extensive series of workings, which eventually returned to daylight at the Lower Entrance. Penarth Mine and Moel Ferna Slate Mine, Corwen are briefly described.

Exploring Mines in the Derwent South (Matlock) Catchment Area. Bonsall Leys Level, Slailey Sough and Dunsley Spring Level are described in some detail. These workings are quite extensive.

Godstone Main Series. This was a four hour trip carried out at a reasonable pace, so the explorers must have covered a few kilometres of passage. Croesor-Rhosydd Through Trip. This is claimed to be the hardest mine trip in the country (unless anyone knows better?). It involves a couple of 80 ft abseils, a Tyrolean traverse and a flooded stope with a dodgy bridge, followed by some more Tyroleans over flooded stopes. Next is a boat trip where you abseil into dinghies and pull them across a lake with a hand line. After 8 hours the huge Rhosydd No 9 adit can be entered and the return to daylight completed.

The rest of the journal is taken up with a caving trip to China.

Tony Oldham
Duncavin
1 Riverside Mews
CARDIGAN
SA43 1DH
United Kingdom

Postscript from Tony Oldham

Recently, NMRS Librarian, Sallie Bassham sent me the NMRS Library Catalogue by email. A painless and economic way of receiving over 30 pages post free. After a quick perusal I was able to sort out some duplicates from my own library and copies of mining books which I had written. It then occurred to me that there should perhaps be a new [unwritten rule] for the Society.

"That all members who publish a book or a paper should donate a copy to the Society's library."

"The History of Lead Mining in the North East of England" by Les Turnbull. £8.99 from Ergo Press, 5 St Mary's Chare, Hexham, NE46 1NQ, www.ergopress.com. ISBN 0-9552758-2-2

Making the NMRS library list more widely known last year has had some interesting consequences - see recent Librarian's Reports. The prize for initiative goes to Julia Grint of Ergo Press in Hexham. She emailed to say that she had learned that our library list had Les Turnbull's book marked as 'not available' and asked if we would like a discounted copy of the new edition.

Anyone who has read Les Turnbull's original volume, published in 1975, already knows that the content is excellent, with well-researched history, clear maps and plans, and fascinating photographs of mines, houses and people.

There are two suggested tours to view mining remains in the Allendales and Derwent/Rookhope/Stanhopeburn. These give driving details and also clear instructions of where to park, where to walk and what is to be seen.

The updated publication looks like a recent-format Northern Mine publication with colour photographs on a quality, colour A5 cover - and a proper spine which makes books easy to find on book-shelves.

The material has been re-formatted so that it is easier to read and with a larger type-face so that it is easier on the eye. Even if you have an earlier edition, this new edition has much to commend it: if you have never read Les Turnbull's book, this is a "must-have".

Sallie Bassham

Press Release 14th February 2007

Over the winter a community archaeology project has been recording the archaeology of Middleton Park in south Leeds. The park was once part of the Middleton estate of the Brandling family well known for their coal mining interests on Tyneside. The survey is revealing the early history of what became known as Middleton Colliery, well known for its railway, which claims to be the world's first railway to use steam

locomotives. Over 200 shafts exist in the park and research is showing that mining was well advanced by the 1630s. Evidence of waggonways predating the Middleton Railway have been discovered as well evidence of early land boundaries and medieval woodland management. The project runs until April and then restarts in October to run until April 2008. An open day and exhibition will be held at the Lakeside Centre in the park on Sunday the 13th of May.

This project is funded by a Your Heritage Lottery grant and has been supported by NMRS who have allowed use of the societies GPS equipment and GIS software, West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service and English Heritage.

Volunteers are always welcome; contact the Friends of Middleton Park for details telephone 07914 729 051 or email jenna.oxley@btinternet.com.

Martin Roe

Rare Book Sale

Opportunity not to be missed. Les Tyson has a large number of Geological Survey Memoirs to go with the sheets dating from the 1930's onwards. They are in mint condition including Pennine Orefield Volume One 1948 and Metalliferous Mining Region of South-West England.

Also wartime mineral resources reports, books on fossils including Geology & Mineralogy by Dean Buckland 1870, Geological Survey's "British Organic Remains" 1849, "The Great Barmote Court" numbered limited edition 1952, rock drills, mining around the world, and many others.

Please send s.a.e. for list. Not available on the Internet, as our village has only just had the wheel introduced!!

Les Tyson,
Eden Cottage,
The Green,
South Otterington,
Northallerton,
North Yorkshire.
DL7 9HG

Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. Please continue to send material for the newsletter. Contributions can be sent by email to me. Please limit these files to not more than 2 Mb because I am not currently on Broadband. Alternatively, you can post contributions either as text, or on disc, all are welcome. If you require anything returning, please ask and it will be returned to you as soon as possible. In particular, photographs, plans and pictures are welcome as long as they can be reproduced well in black and white.

Richard Platt, 40 Solent Drive, Darcy Lever, Bolton. BL3 1RN

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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.

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