



The Northern Mine Research Society Newsletter

Society News

February 2008

Appreciation for the work of Alan Mills and Richard Platt

Thank you to Alan Mills for all his work as Treasurer. Alan has combined this with the role of membership secretary and organised finances and records efficiently for us over several years.

Thank you also to Richard Platt for his work on the Newsletter over the last couple of years. First he collaborated with Alison Hunter and this last year has had sole responsibility for collating material. Our Newsletter is important as the primary source of news about the Society, and Richard's were readable and informative. For news of those continuing the work, see below.

Who's Who

Members attending the AGM will have the opportunity to vote for committee members for 2008/9. At the time of writing, there have been the following nominations for committee posts;

President	Sallie Bassham
Vice President	Martin Roe
Junior Vice President	Les Tyson
Treasurer	Tim Cook
Secretary	Ron Callendar
Editor	Richard Smith
Newsletter Editor	Lynne Johnson
Recorder	Mike Gill

In addition, David Neal has volunteered to be Membership Secretary. Alan Mills suggested that the work he has done should be split into two parts and we are grateful to him for sorting out the different roles and to David and Tim for being willing to undertake them. Ron Callendar has already been taking minutes for committee meetings and we are glad to have him stand for election as a new committee member. (Queries are usually targetted at particular committee members and are dealt with mostly by the Recorder, or the Editor, or the Librarian.). Lynne Johnson is another new volunteer and we are very grateful to her for editing this February Newsletter. Welcome to you all!

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There is one job for which we need a volunteer - book sales. John Hunter has continued to do this since his resignation from the committee - thank you John. We now need someone to respond to requests for books and issue invoices: this could be combined with a pro-active role in contacting book-shops, pubs and anywhere else you want to visit in the areas covered by our publications. The other job that John has done is to send out copies of British Mining to all members - usually twice a year with the May and December Newsletters - and we need someone to do this in future. We have volunteers to send out the February and August Newsletters - thank you to them. If you could help with any of this work with publications; please contact one of the present committee.

Annual Meeting

Details of the annual meeting were given in the last Newsletter. It will be on 8 December at the Swaledale Museum, Reeth. There will be a free buffet at 1pm, for which pre-booking is essential. The business meeting will be followed by a presentation about the Swaledale Museum by its curator, Helen Bainbridge. There will also be time for members presentations. Please use the enclosed form to contact Alan Mills if you wish to come; or phone him on 01748 884 938.

Meets in 2008

My grateful thanks to all who have agreed to lead meets next year and particularly for their willingness to try to agree dates so far in advance. For all meets, you should contact the leader a few days beforehand to confirm and check details.

19 April Claughton Manor Brick Works, led by Bernard Bond. Meet at 10.30am at SD 563 664 and bring outdoor gear and a packed lunch. Maximum 25; but a second list will be taken. Visit the 1925 quarry and see the wire ropeway with buckets. Telephone booking essential 015242 41857 (AnswerPhone). For more on the

brick works and the possibility of another meet, see the article below.

3 May Hilton mines, Appleby. 10.30am start. Names have to be given to MoD in advance. Maximum of 10 people. Bookings to Sallie Bassham (sbassham@nildram.co.uk or 015242 41851). Rough fell walking and some scrambling. Underground not yet confirmed. See below for more details.

14 June Wharfedale kilns, led by Janis Heward. 10.30am start. Parking for 6 cars on west side of B6160 at NGR 978 646. (Please arrange to share cars if possible.) Maximum number 12 people. Rough walking on uneven terrain and an initial steep climb. Walking boots, waterproofs and lunch needed. Contact Sallie Bassham (sbassham@nildram.co.uk or 015242 1851).

11/12 July NAMHO Conference in Scotland.

9 August Nenthead. Leader Martin Roe. Meet at 10.30am in the Nenthead Heritage Centre car park. Strenuous and wet underground trip. See May Newsletter for more details.

6 September Sleil Gill/Booze Moor. Leader Miles Johnson. Meet at the Langthwaite car Park (NZ005023) at 10.30am. Maximum of 12 people. A surface walk and discussion of grouse moor management and mining remains. This will be a strenuous walk on rough terrain, please bring packed lunch, suitable footwear and clothing. Contact, miles.johnson@yorkshiredales.org.uk or 01969 652361.

11 October Hude valley, Teesdale.
Leader Tony Fretwell. Surface
walk. Meet at 10am at the
commemorative pump in
Middleton in Teesdale for details of
the start point for the walk.
Contact Tony Fretwell 01388
605965.

25 October Autumn Meeting with
members presentations.

Additional Meets Information

19 April Ingleton Coalfield - same day
as Claughton Brick Works visit. Given
time and good weather after the visit to
Claughton, a return visit will be made to
the previously visited Wilson Wood
Colliery site (SD 682 721). Beginning
from Brick Row miners cottages built in
1874.

3 May 2008 Meet at Hilton, near
Appleby - the MoD has very kindly given
permission for an accompanied meet at
Hilton in Westmorland. This is a rare
opportunity to visit within the live firing
range area. The group is limited to ten
people who need to be fit enough to
undertake rough fell walking. No dogs
are allowed. Names must be submitted
to the MoD in advance. If you wish to
come, please contact Sallie
(sbassham@nildram.co.uk or 015 2424
1851); she will pass on names to the
MoD and also keep a reserve list in case
any of the first ten applicants drops out.
Even if you have previously expressed
an interest in principle; if you want to
come, it is essential that you now reserve
a place. The walk will start at 10.30am.
The starting point has not yet been
confirmed and is likely to be on the
Warcop Training Area.

Sallie Bassham

Claughton Manor Brick and Tile Works Demolition of West End Brick Works, 16 June 2007

In May last year, advance road signs were
placed north of Hornby along the A683.
This is the very busy Hornby/Lancaster
highway, leading also to M6 Junction 34.
The road signs indicated From 6.00am
on 16th June, a 12 hour closure will take
place for the dismantling of the West End
overbridge. This included the buildings
holding the aerial ropeway and terminus.
From observations, I took the
opportunity to go to this road point one
week before the chaos of demolition.
The 9th June came up with clear blue skies
giving good views of the terminus
machinery, 80 years old and to be seen
on both sides of the road overbridge. In
preparation for the Scrap Man Cometh,
most of the buildings enclosing the
machinery had, by 9th June, been
removed. This made the taking of a
collection of photographs easy. With
time available in 2008, this mass of
machinery on photo will be listed.

Bernard Bond

Society Research Grants

The Committee has dealt with two
applications for funding since the autumn
meeting:-

A grant of £100 to the North Yorkshire
Record Office towards the purchase of a
map of Grinton township c1706. This
map was made as part of a court case
against the Wharton family initiated by
Reginald Marriott and others in 1705. It
shows areas of mining and hushing.

A grant to David Johnson of £672 for
the archaeomagnetic dating of a clamp
(lime) kiln at Kilnsey in Wharfedale. David
has developed a model of technological
development for clamp kilns in the dales,
and dating this kiln will enable the model
to be finalised. Without it, any model
would be only provisional.

Mike Gill

Library Report

E-mails to the library usually ask for information, or for the loan of books or journals, however, a pleasingly large number offer additional material for the library shelves. This year I had a very special offer from Mr Les Jowsey asking if the library would like a book that was presented as a prize to his father-in-law, Mr John Walton, when he was studying at Burnley Municipal College. A copy of G M Harveys *Colliery Electrical Engineering* has duly arrived, with the presentation plate in the front. Mr Walton was awarded the book by the County Borough of Burnley in 1937, For Success in Mining Course, Advanced, 2nd Year. Mr Walton went on to work as a mining engineer with the Coal Board in London and Doncaster, and also in Chile. Thank you to Mr Jowsey and Mr Walton.

We are grateful to Rob Vernon for copies of *Earthwise* (the magazine of the British Geological Society), an off-print of his article in *De Re Metallica* on information in British archives on mining operations in Spain and Portugal, a copy of *Treatment of Disused Lead Mine Shafts: A Guide to Good Practice*, some back copies of *British Mining*, the 2007 Newsletter of CBA Yorkshire and two leaflets on the Porter Valley near Sheffield.

Industrial Archaeology Bulletins arrive regularly and in 2007, AIA also produced *A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Lancashire*. These County Guides always produce details of fascinating places. However, this one is also noteworthy because the word mining does not appear at all in the index - although the word lead gives information about the Anglezarke mines. Surprisingly, there are no direct references to coal; although there is a brief mention in the item on Cheesden Valley textile mills, and Aspen coke ovens are listed. (All those potential mining references missed, but Preston bus station is honoured with a photograph as well as a description!)

Thank you to Tony Oldham for a complete set of *Current Titles in Speleology* Volumes 1 to 25, for 1969 to 1992. Thank you also to Peter Claughton and Richard Smith for delivering these and saving the costs of postage. Thank you to Richard Smith and Mike Moore for PDMHS Bulletin 13(2), *The Mines of Cardiganshire* by Roger Burt et al and Welsh Mines Societys *Bickfest Excursion Guide: The Bryntail and Penclyn Mines*.

Sallie Bassham (Honorary Librarian)

sbassham@nildram.co.uk or 015 2424 1851 for queries about library loans and photocopies of library items.

Jean Tyler RIP

Members who have had anything to do with mining in the Lake District are likely to have known Jean Tyler. And those of us who did know her are definitely the richer for that privilege.

The high esteem in which Jean was held was shown by the attendance at the funeral. The crematorium chapel was full to over-flowing and dozens of people were standing in the aisle and in an over-flow room. There must have been about 200 people present.

Perhaps one reason why so many people wished to pay tribute to an exceptional lady was her wonderful gift with people. Jean made everyone feel special. One day, I observed her working in the Keswick Mining Museum and dealing with a wide variety of customers coming in. She encouraged the children who tried her quiz and asked questions about the exhibits: she dealt with technical queries about mineral specimens: she was welcoming to visitors who wanted to buy pretty souvenirs: she was patient with tourists who came in with general questions about the area: she was patient with people like me who don't understand much about geology and

wanted help with samples and locations. Jean remembered everyone and their interests; she would volunteer information about the places and processes in which you were interested and find exactly the right book or journal article for you. Once when I commented on this, she was typically self-effacing and just said that she was lucky in having been blessed with a good memory for names and people.

Jean died in December 2007. She had been diagnosed with a brain tumour earlier in the year and had had surgery and radiotherapy treatment. In hospital, she longed to return home and be able to look out on her beloved Lakeland fells.

After success in other careers about which Jean was always modest and would say little she and her husband Ian worked on setting up and running mining museums. The latest was in Keswick. Before that they had other museums with books as well, of course - first in Caldbeck and then at Threlkeld. The tremendous amount of work put into these successful ventures was clear to every visitor. As well as Jean's extensive knowledge of mining, she clearly had shrewd business sense.

Jean was also a driving force behind the founding and continuing good work of MOLES (Mines of the Lakeland Exploration Society). Ian Tylers books on mining in the Lake District are deservedly famous: they were joint projects, with Jean doing the illustrations and also much of the work editing the text. When in hospital, she wanted to get home to work on another volume, and had worked out how she could use her then limited physical abilities to best effect.

At the funeral, the local vicar described Jean as a lady of style. Not just her eye for the fashions which suited her; but stylish in a wider sense in her approach to life. It seems she was pleased to have

climbed Great Gable with her lipstick intact. I can envisage her at the summit smart, stylish, good fun, a knowledgeable and generous companion, with time for others ... We shall miss her.

(Thank you to everyone who has helped with this appreciation of Jean.)

Sallie Bassham

Insurance

Investigating, and discussing, insurance options has taken up much of committee members time in the last year. We have investigated what other societies do; but none of the options seem to meet our needs. We have considered dividing the society into two parts; but the Committee does not recommend this. We have looked at focussed insurance; but this does not seem to be appropriate. Alan Mills has found out about becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO): it is not possible to do this in 2008 because full details are not yet available from the Charity Commissioners and it would require changes to our Constitution.

After discussing the risks, the Committee intends to recommend at the AGM that, for one year, the society takes out British Caving Association (BCA) insurance for Meet Leaders and for Trustees (committee members) for those who do not already have such insurance. We understand that it is possible to do this for individuals. In a years time, more should be known about CIOs and options will be reconsidered.

If you have opinions or questions about the above summary or want more details, please contact committee members or ask at the AGM.

General News



New Cooks Kitchen Shaft, South Crofty. (Mike Gill, 1976)

South Crofty reopening

After many rumours that it would, South Crofty Mine looks set to reopen. The mine, which closed in March 1998 and is flooded to Deep Adit level, was bought by Baseresult Holdings Ltd in 2001.

Western United Mines Ltd will own and operate South Crofty from November 2nd 2007. Baseresult is the majority shareholder in Western United alongside Cassiterite LP, which acts for, amongst others, Galena Asset Management Ltd, a subsidiary of global commodity trader Trafigura Beheer.

Over £3.5 million will be spent by June 2008 on continuing the mine development. Tunnelling and exploratory drilling, begun by Baseresult last year, will continue with this injection of fresh capital bringing the total investment to £9 million. The mine will start production around the end of 2009, and the £50 million needed to make it ready has been earmarked. Staffing levels have increased from 17 to 26 and, by July 2008, will have risen to 35 full-time employees.

The company has the benefit of planning permission to extract tin from South Crofty Mine until 2042 and its planning

appeal, to bring forward the significant restoration of part of the surface area, which will assist in the early regeneration of the Pool area.

Hemerdon mine to reopen

With global demand for tin and tungsten, Australian-based Wolf Minerals proposes to start mining the low grade wolframite deposit at Hemerdon, near Plympton in Devon.

It is hoped that the mine, which has had planning permission since 1986, will create 500 new jobs, and over about 20 years lead to the formation of an open pit about 850m long by 540m wide and 200m deep .

Thoresby Colliery

The future of this 82-year-old Derbyshire mine has been secured for at least another decade after UK Coal agreed a deal, believed to be worth £200m, with power generator EDF Energy to supply coal to its power stations at Cottam and West Burton.

UK Coal is to invest £55m to develop a further 12m tonnes of coal in the Deep Soft seam close to the pit bottom. The new seam will need fewer miners and around 100 of the 500-strong workforce

is facing the axe – although there should be no job losses for two years.

Without this contract, the accessible coal would have been exhausted by 2009, but the investment gives 10 or 11 years more production and the opportunity to look for further resources.

Welbeck Colliery

UK Coal has agreed to supply EDF with almost all of the remaining coal at Welbeck over the next two years.

Daw Mill Colliery

In October 2007, UK Coal agreed a five year deal to supply power generator E.ON with almost six million tonnes of coal for its Ratcliffe station, near Nottingham. Around 75% of the coal will come from Daw Mill Colliery in Warwickshire.

Cononish gold mine under way

Scotgold, an Australian company, has announced plans to begin mining for gold at its Cononish mine near Tyndrum, 67 km north-north-west of Glasgow. The company, which bought the mine and other exploration licences from Fynegold Exploration in May last year, has raised millions of Australian dollars to begin operations.

The site, a known gold deposit, has never been commercially mined, but it was diamond drilled and a 1.2 km long drift driven along the vein before planning approval for mining was granted in 1996. Unfortunately the price of gold fell and the project became uneconomic and spent 10 years on care and maintenance. Like Welsh gold, Scottish gold attracts a premium from jewellers because of its rarity.

"Tyndrum is no stranger to mining, and the Earls of Breadalbane mined lead there in the 18th and 19th centuries. The mines were reworked for lead and zinc ores in the early 1920s."

Mike Gill

Archaeology and the Historic Environment in the Yorkshire Dales

The eighth annual day school organised by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority in association with the Yorkshire Archaeological Society is to be held on Saturday April 19th, 2008, at Grassington Town Hall, Grassington between 10.00 am - 4.30 pm.

The Yorkshire Dales have some of the best preserved and extensive historic landscapes in the country. Speakers will discuss some of the results of recent archaeological and historical survey and research. The provisional programme includes:

Feeding the Roman Army of Occupation
- Bainbridge Fort
Sue Stallibrass – English Heritage

The Giggleswick Scar Project
Tom Lord

Recent Quern Research In and Around the Dales
John Cruse - Yorkshire Archaeological Society

First and Second World War Sites in the Yorkshire Dales: Some Aspects of Their Archaeology
Shaun Richardson - EDAS

Historic Landscape Management Characterisation - the Swaledale Pilot Project
Yvonne Luke – English Heritage

Sheep Creeps and Henny Piggeries with the aid of a mouse: an innovative approach to survey
Miles Johnson – YDNPA

as well as Poster Displays and Book Stalls.

Fee: £10 (£7.50 - full time students and full YAS members). The fee includes refreshments but not lunch. For further information please telephone 01969 652337 or e-mail;
herinfo@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Peter Geddes MBE

The Society is pleased to inform members that Peter Geddes was awarded the MBE, in the New Years Honours List, for services to industrial heritage in the Isle of Man. As a leading light in the Laxey Mines Research Group, Peter has been involved in many projects, but one of his proudest achievements was overseeing the Snaefell Wheel project which was completed in 2006."

For full details of what was involved visit:-
<http://www.snaefellwheel.com>

In 1865 the Snaefell Mining Company ordered a fifty foot diameter waterwheel from Messrs Leigh and Gilbert Howell of Bagillt, Flintshire. In 1910 the then redundant wheel was dismantled and sent to a china clay pit near Bodmin, in Cornwall, where it was rebuilt and, as the Gawns Wheel, drove a plunger pump. It was later modified to drive a generator which, in turn, powered a submersible pump.

Having been abandoned in the 1950s, the wheel was eventually acquired by the Cornish Wheel Preservation Society in 1971, who dismantled it and put the components into storage. The CWPS later merged with the Trevithick Society, the wheels current owners.

In 1976, the wheel was loaned to the Llywernog mining museum with a view to rebuilding it again. This was not done, however, and in March 2003 the Trevithick Society agreed to let the wheel return to the Isle of Man. In September 2003, therefore, members of the Laxey Mines Research Group and the Trevithick Society met at Llywernog, where the wheels components were loaded onto a large wagon. It arrived on Manx soil on Sunday 21st September 2003, after being away for 93 years.

Mike Gill

Rombalds Moor

Following criticism that it has no coordinated plan for the future use of Rombalds Moor, which includes Ilkley, Baildon, Bingley, Hawksworth and Morton Moors, Bradford Council has held a series of workshops. These have drawn together all the ideas, statutory targets, tensions and opportunities for the long term sustainable future of this unique upland area. The moor has many prehistoric and medieval remains, extensive stone quarries, (glacial) limestone pits, and coal has been mined from Millstone Grit on Rivock Edge and the Lower Coal Measures on Baildon Moor.

The December workshop, which covered Culture, Education & Heritage, was attended on behalf of the Society by Mike Gill and Martin Roe. The importance of mining and quarrying was stressed, and the council was provided with a list of ideas and concerns which are currently being used to prepare a strategy for discussion early in 2008.

Mike Gill

Treatment of Disused Lead Mine Shafts: A Guide to Good Practice

This fifty page guide, which was launched at the offices of Natural England in Bakewell on November 28th, has been funded by the Peak District National Park Authority, Natural England, English Heritage, Derbyshire County Council and the East Midlands Development Agency. The Society was represented by Mike Gill.

The Guide aims to provide up-to-date guidance on the treatment of old lead mine shafts for those with responsibilities for them. The importance of protecting surviving archaeology, grasses and plants around the shaft and also of maintaining access for bats are stressed. In particular it describes the statutory protection which may already be in force to protect them and advises how work should proceed. The various options for capping shafts are illustrated and discussed.

Although written specifically for the Derbyshire Peak District, the Guide will be very useful in other areas with hazards associated with metalliferous mining.

Mike Gill



Interior of Lion Salt Works, Marston.
Sallie Bassham

Lion Salt Works, Marston, Cheshire

Early in 2007 I received a leaflet about the Lion Salt Works at Marston; but it wasn't until December that I managed to go to Cheshire to visit.

The Lion Salt Works date from 1894 and closed in 1986. Many of the former pan houses and other buildings remain, but most need to be made safe ready for visitors. The Salt Works Trust has managed to obtain substantial funding (but more is still needed) and significant restoration work will start in 2008. The remaining buildings will be renovated to create a working museum, which will show how salt was processed from brine by the open pan process. There are no plans to pump wild brine from the underground brine streams; but the former pump house and the nodding donkey engine will be restored.

Interpretation panels have recently been put in place by Vale Royal Borough Council and much can be seen by walking the tow-path of the adjacent Trent and Mersey canal and by looking at the buildings from Ollershaw Lane. In addition, there are a number of artefacts in the former Lion Inn which has been opened as an exhibition centre. There is an excellent video and the staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

Marston is a couple of miles north-east of Northwich on the B5075. It is tourist signed from A559 and A556; but not as clearly as the Salt Museum in Northwich which is well worth a visit. Unsurprisingly, both sites are close to interesting canals and the Anderton boatlift is a short walk from Marston.

The Lion Salt Works can be contacted on 01606 41823 or via www.lionsaltworkstrust.co.uk. It is open every afternoon: there is no entry charge, but donations are requested.

Sallie Bassham

Threshfield Colliery

Archaeological survey work has started in the last few days on some of the extensive coal mining remains on Threshfield Moor.

During 2005, the Coal Authority erected temporary fencing around a number of shafts and two adits near the core of the colliery, as a response to concerns about health and safety following the commencement of open access in the area.

The archaeological recording includes earthwork survey, recording of the adits and detailed examination of several of the shafts before pre-cast caps are laid.

Miles Johnson

The Watershed Landscape: bid to HLF Landscape Partnerships

Described by Defoe as “the Andes of England”, the South Pennine watershed landscape consists of gently sloping, wild, open plateaux standing high above the surrounding conurbations of Manchester, Leeds, Bradford and many other former mill towns. The area is internationally important for its heather moorlands, acid Millstone Grit rock, a wide variety and rarity of birdlife, steep wooded cloughs and traditional farming methods. There has been coal mining, stone quarrying, peat cutting plus limestone has been dug from glacial moraines. The area's many Victorian reservoirs were built to supply the growing industrial and domestic needs of the surrounding conurbations.

Because the area straddles regional and district boundaries, Pennine Prospects has been formed by its various councils, utilities and major landowners to coordinate their management policies. In July 2007, the Landscape Partnerships scheme awarded Pennine Prospects a £50,000 HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) Planning Grant to fund the preparation of a full application to HLF in March 2008. The latter bid will comprise a landscape character assessment, access and audience development plan, training plan, as well as an overall landscape strategy and action plan. The precise area has not been fixed, but it runs from Baildon Moor in the north, to Blackstone Edge in the south, and will be confined to the upland moorlands and their fringes.

A workshop was held on December 4th in order to involve local groups. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the bid and share ideas about possible directions of work, and also to identify priority programmes and areas of activity that will address HLF's priorities. The Society was represented by Mike Gill, who would be pleased to hear from anyone working (or wishing to work) in the area.

Mike Gill

Recent Survey Work in Langstrothdale

English Heritage and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority have recently investigated and surveyed in detail the remains of drystone-walled houses and other structures, believed to be part of a complex multi period settlement and mining complex, lying high on Yockenthwaite Moor in Langstrothdale. The monument has been recognised as being of national importance for a number of years, and is protected by designation as a scheduled ancient monument.

The precise layout of the settlement remains is hard to work out because the walls of the drystone houses and their associated enclosures have collapsed into tumbled spreads of stone. This is further complicated by stone collapsing onto the site from later lead mining activity immediately upslope. It is clear from the survey that there are a number of phases of activity and development on the site.

The final survey plan is in the process of being drawn and phased, and the report written, but provisional interpretation suggests that there was prehistoric and Romano-British occupation of the complex. These remains are in turn overlain by a series of post-Roman, or possibly medieval enclosures and very small circular buildings, perhaps suggesting a seasonally occupied, transhumant settlement. The mining remains (apparent mostly as an open cut, but with evidence suggesting both earlier and later shafts) appear to be amongst the later phases of activity. At the present they are not securely dated, with suggested dating between the late medieval period and the eighteenth century.

Miles Johnson

Book Review

Silica Mine and Factory

Wainwrights Pictorial Guides are esteemed by many (and quite rightly so), however, he was not a lover of industrial archaeology. (In his book on the Coast-to-Coast walk, he recommends rushing past the Old Gang mines at 4 miles an hour!) Never-the-less, a description from his book on the north-western fells of the Lake District sent me looking for a silica brick factory. It is west of Bassenthwaite Lake at NGR NY 205 285, and marked on the OS map as a quarry (dis).

According to Wainwright;

In the 1930s, modern plant was installed here for the manufacture of silica bricks, a mineral railway laid, the road to Wythop Hall improved and re-routed, and scores of workmen engaged. The product was not of sufficiently good quality. The buildings and plant were dismantled and taken away, the men dismissed and the site vacated.

So, one wet Lake District day, when even small fells were cloud-capped I found first the site of a ruined, possibly medieval church and then about a mile further on, substantial concrete remains of the silica brick works. Since visiting the site, Ian Tyler has written about the area and I realise that I missed the silica vein in the nearby woodland. The remains are worth seeing, but I am not sure they are worth going to see; unless you are interested in also walking the Wainwright fells or looking at ruined churches.

Sallie Bassham

Website Review

Nation On Film

This is a website well worth a visit if you are interested in old footage of tin and coal mining. Film clips date from the present back to the Silent Era.

One silent classic has to be 'A tour of the mine - South Crofty', made in the 1930's. It gives an insight into both the working and social life of the Cornish Tin Miner at that time. Marvel as the miners drink exceptionally large bottles of beer and race donkeys with carts! (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nationonfilm/>)



Donkey race with cyclist, Cornwall, 1940's. (Lynne Johnson)

And Finally...

As reported in the 'Independent on Sunday' on the 20th May 2007; Mr Song in Beijing was never short of fuel but mysteriously, was never seen to buy any. All was revealed during a house-to-house police search for illegal immigrants. When they entered his house they could hear the sound of loud machinery and found large piles of coal in his back yard. Evidently Mr Song had tunnelled from his garage into an abandoned coal mine which he had clandestinely restored to full working order. He had deliberately rented the house because of its close proximity to the old coal mine. He is reported to have extracted 1,300 tonnes of coal.

Thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter

Please continue to send material for the newsletter. Contributions can be sent by email to me. 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.

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lynne.johnson99@googlemail.com

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Its number is 326704