



The Northern Mine Research Society Newsletter

Society News

November 2008

Autumn General Meeting

A day of wind, rain and floods! (It was the weekend that the Lake District fell race was cancelled and the Borrowdale roads and car parks flooded - but it wasn't quite that bad in Gayle.) Gayle Mill did us proud: we had a fascinating free tour of the mill and an excellent buffet meal.

The business part of the afternoon was good humoured, but seemed rather lengthy. However, this reflects a society that is active and has plenty of plans for the future. It is right that members be kept informed of what is happening, given an opportunity to ask questions and to guide the committee on actions and activities. Thank you to all who contributed, and especially those who have volunteered to help in various ways.

After a chance for another cup of coffee and a slice of delicious chocolate cake, there were presentations. Ron Callender showed us wonderful photographs of

Finland and told us of gold prospecting successes there. Mason Scarr expanded on his Newsletter article about Brandy Bottle level and showed how the work progressed in sunshine and in snow. I was particularly interested in his throw-away remarks about consolidating the arching. Once he had said its just like stone walling one on two and two on one; it all seemed obvious. But I am not sure I would have worked it out: Mason and his colleagues made it seem so logical and easy.

Malcolm Street is also doing good work making sure that our mining heritage is not lost. He has been working on Gillfield level at Greenhow. He had historical slides as well as recent ones showing work on consolidating. Ray Fairbairn was unable to attend because of ill-health, but he had sent his slides of the Cow Green area and these were used as a taster for next years meet there.

Sallie Bassham

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Library News

Thank you to Alan Williams for a box of journals, and to Martin Roe for a copy of Coal Mining in Middleton Park and for an offprint of Lead Mining Archaeology in the Yorkshire Dales from Landscapes 2003.

Thanks to members generosity, the library now has two copies of most NMRS publications; and I have a box of spare NMRS publications from BM 19 onwards, with several copies of some and none of others. One donor specified that if I did not need his publications for the library I should give them to members. Are other recent donors of British Mining copies agreeable that I do this with their gifts? I intend to bring these to the AGM on March 7: if you are interested, but are not coming to the AGM, please get in touch.

Sallie Bassham (Honorary Librarian)

Events in 2009

Thank you to everyone who has offered to lead meets next year. If you have never been before do come! Meet guides are welcoming and friendly, as well as knowledgeable and enthusiastic. There is a wide variety of interesting meets on offer and we hope to see you there.

Details are provisional and will be confirmed on the Membership Card and in future Newsletters. If you have never been underground before and do not have a hard hat and lamp, contact the meet leader to see if a loan can be arranged.

11 April. Underground meet at Hudeshope Valley. Both easy and moderate options will be available depending on the experience and preference of those attending. Meet at the pump in Middleton-in-Teesdale at 10am. Leader is David Young, 018 336 31165.

2 May. Walk at Cow Green. Meet at the reservoir car park at 10.30am. Leaders are Ray Fairbairn and Sallie Bassham, 015 2424 1851.

16 May. Underground meet at Smallcleugh, Nenthead. Meet in the Heritage Centre car park at 10.30am. Leader is Ian Eeles.

6 June. Walk in Littondale to see the clowder sites which aroused great interest when they were the subject of Yvonne Lukes talk at the 2008 Autumn meeting and her article in British Mining 78.

4 July. Poynton Collieries. 10.30am start. Meet at Nelson Pit Visitor Centre, Lyme Road, Higher Poynton. NGR SJ944833. Plenty of car parking and bus service (191) hourly from Stockport. Walk looking at features and remains of collieries that last operated in 1935. Surfaced and unsurfaced footpaths, approx 5 hours including lunch break at Visitor Centre picnic area/pub/cafe. Maximum number 16 people. Leader David Kitching, 01625 423249 or email davidk@broccross.co.uk

25 July. Underground meet at Greenside Mine, Helvellyn. Leader is David Young, 018 336 31165.

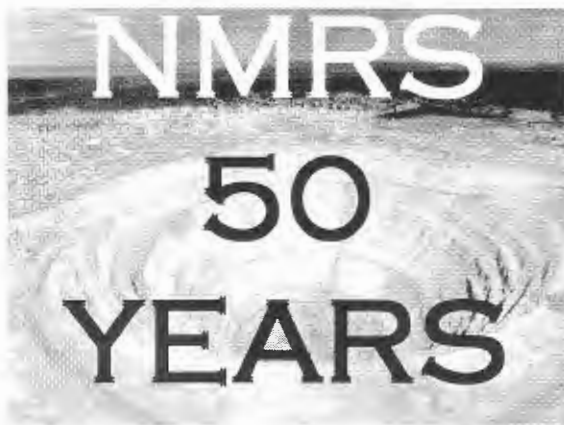
22 August. Sleil Gill Booze Moor, Arkengarthdale. 10.30am at Langthwaite car park, NZ005023. A surface walk and discussion of grouse moor management and mining remains. Maximum of 12 people. A strenuous walk on rough terrain. Leader Miles Johnson 01969 652361 or miles.johnson@yorkshiredales.org.uk

Joint meet with PDMHS on 5th September 2009

Next year it is our turn to be host for this biennial event. We are going to welcome PDMHS to Grassington Moor and offer a variety of walks (long and short, strenuous and easy) to see some of its great variety of mining landscape features.

At the Autumn Meeting several people volunteered to help; but the more we have, the easier it will be and the more enjoyable the day. In particular, we need people to co-lead walks (much easier with three people together, rather than one person alone), and to be available as gofers. There will be notes available to help you interpret the sites, so you do not have to be an expert on Grassington Moor in order to volunteer. Present plans are for one long walk and three or four shorter ones.

Please contact Sallie (sbassham@nildram.co.uk and 015 2424 1851) with comments, suggestions and to volunteer.



Can you identify this mine?
Answers to the Editor!

We will soon be 50 years old!

In 2010, NMRS will be 50 years old and we plan to celebrate in style. There were several proposals at the Autumn Meeting and various people are already busy planning. We hope to have a one-day Conference on a Saturday with an Anniversary Dinner, and meets the following day.

The Conference will be held in conjunction with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, who would like to help to host the event in place of their usual Archaeology Day School. The Conference will be in the Town Hall at Grassington; and Gillhead and Cononley have been suggested for visits on the Sunday. (More details to follow.)

In addition to producing standard Conference Proceedings, we would like to publish a special booklet or, if there are enough contributions an Anniversary Edition of British Mining Memoirs. This depends on you!

We would like to have memories of early days. Do you have any photographs of NMRS events you could lend not only of early events, but also more recent ones. Can you write a cameo of why you joined NMRS, or your memories of working on a project, how you unblocked a long-unseen level, your memory of a particularly eventful/interesting/amusing meet? If you don't send in material there will be no publication, and that would be a unique opportunity lost.

Sallie Bassham



MEET REPORTS

Wharfedale Kilns 14 June 2008

With no prior knowledge of the ancillary industries relating to lead smelting, I joined the three other NMRS members who had travelled to upper Wharfedale. We met up with Janis Heward for a look at the remains of the Chop Wood Kilns that prepared wood fuel for smelting in the area during the 16th to 18th centuries. It was soon clear that Janis had undertaken wide research in both archives and the field. The result was a fascinating insight into the construction and use of these kilns, accompanied by a walk to see a number of the surviving structures.

The morning saw us walking in what was once Chapel House Wood, just north of Threshfield. Janis led us to a number of stone-lined kilns that remain in varying states of disrepair after at least 200 years of disuse. They lie in a landscape containing the remains of several millennia of human occupation which makes identification problematic at times. There is also some confusion with potash kilns, even down to the use of the term Elling Hearth. Even though this is technically correct for potash production only, the term is often applied to both types of kiln in some studies and mapping.

After a picnic lunch on the hillside we crossed the Wharfe to the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust owned Grass Wood. Much of the wood is Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland and there is still plenty of evidence of coppicing. Here the kilns were less obvious and it was clear that Janis had spent a considerable time seeking out the locations of kilns hidden amongst the trees. Five structures were seen including one that had, unfortunately, been cut through by the construction of a recent trackway.

This was a fascinating look at a lost industrial process and the structures associated with it. There is little information of the exact process of operating a Chop Wood Kiln and we have to rely on best interpretation of the remains and documentary sources. Thanks Janis for sharing your findings and the excellent handouts. I shall certainly be looking out for similar structures in Derbyshire.

David Kitching

September and October Meets

The day of the September meet to Sleil Gill dawned very wet, after a very wet week. Meet leader, Miles Johnson, found that all the roads out of Hardraw were flooded and impassable, so the meet was post-poned until August 2009. A second chance for all!

A month later, on the day of the Teesdale meet, I felt that the weather had let us down again. However, this time there was no phone call from the meet leader, so I drove through the cloud and the puddles and discovered that Middleton-in-Teesdale was free from rain. The Durham Dales Mining Group obviously have superior influence on the weather gods!

Having looked at a level entrance stone in a Middleton garden, the seven of us drove up to the Skears limekilns on the east side of the Hudeshope Valley to start a walk during which we never needed water-proofs although wellingtons would have been useful on some of the muddy fields and flooded paths.

Our guides were excellent thank you David and Peter for a fascinating day. Our walk was always on public footpaths, but I was introduced to details of the mining landscape that I would never have

noticed on my own. We stopped for lunch at Coldberry the straw bales in the dry, restored building seemed to have been arranged just for our comfort. We were able to see the former mine office and the way that the building had been altered: horses names can still be seen in the old stable.

The geology and mining history of Hudeshope were clearly explained and we saw hushes, mine shops, reservoirs, powder house, water balance, shafts and dressing floors; finishing at the level whose stone is now in Middleton. Without our guides we would not have realised how the tips have been lost under a Council waste dump. We learned about the current state of preservation of many levels from people who have obviously thoroughly explored the area and care about the preservation of its remains and its history.

David and Peter have kindly agreed to lead an underground trip in the Hudeshope valley next year.

Sallie Bassham

Sale of Original Documents

Including Directors' and Engineers' Reports and Accounts for the following mines;

Cumberland

- Caldbeck Consolidated Lead & Copper Mining Company Ltd 1865 - 1874
- Cleator, Glebe Mining Co Ltd
- Lonsdale Mining Co Ltd in liquidation 1923
- Howgill self acting incline specifications
- Whitehaven Colliery Co Ltd
- Ulcoats Mines Egremont 1923
- Crommelin Mining Co 1888

Cornwall

- Carn Brea & Tincroft Mines Ltd 1897
- Chiverton Mine Liskeard 1868
- West Caradon Mine 1868
- Great Onslow Consols 1861
- Wheal Kitty 1897 to 1900
- Mounts Bay 1857

Shropshire

- Roman Gravels Mining Co 1871

Kent

- Share certificates in; Kent Coal Concessions Ltd 1915' Deal & Walmer Coalfield Ltd 1913 and South Eastern Coalfield Extension Ltd 1926

All sensible offers considered. For further details please contact;

Les Tyson,

Flat 1, Woodsprings, Carperby, LEYBURN, North Yorkshire, DL8 4DA

Tel. 07919 907 953



Dr J O Myers 1925-2008

Jack Myers died in April this year. He taught in the mining department at Leeds University and was still remembered there with affection and esteem when we used to arrange visits to Gillfield level. Indeed, Jack's written guide to the level was still in use. He was highly regarded in the caving world and co-wrote "Underground Adventures" - one of the finest books on Yorkshire caves.

Although not a founder member of NMRS, his name appears in the minutes of the first General Meeting on 13 March 1960 when he was elected onto the Committee. He was active in mining history many years before that, as anyone who has looked at the plans in Clough's book on lead smelting mills may know. Jack's name appears as having helped with the surveying in the immediate post-war years. It was fascinating to hear him talk about those trips to smelt mill sites in times of post-war austerity, when few people had transport and fuel was difficult to obtain. Camera film was also in short supply and Jack described how he obtained X-ray film and cut it to fit in small cameras. He was meticulous at recording the exposure and timing of every photograph he took and must have had rare skills in being able to develop correctly the many different types of film he acquired.

Since he accompanied Robert Clough to Old Gang (he told me that the surveying there took half a day), I assume that he is one of the figures in the photograph of the Old Gang Peat House. Several of the photographs in the second edition of the smelt mill book are credited to Jack Myers and he was an excellent photographer. His standards were high and he was very reluctant to allow his less successful photos to appear in print, even though they showed details of buildings now long demolished and are uniquely helpful in working out building sequences and use.

I found Jack generous with his knowledge and his photographs, and he gave me prints from years ago of sites I was photographing; and he was always interested to see how places had changed - we had lively discussions when our interpretations differed. When I was slow to visit Pikedaw Mine to check something for him, he went up there himself in his electric wheel-

chair - it must have taken it to the limit of its battery power and rough terrain capabilities. Like everything else, he planned the trip with care and vindicated his theory.

When he lived in Austwick, Jack had some of his spectacular cave photographs framed on the walls. As with mining photographs, he could remember years later how he achieved such stunning effects. He continued to print photographs and claimed that he did not need black-out, as his home was so isolated that he could work safely on any moon-less night. Unfortunately Jack gave up photography when he moved to a nursing home in Steeton, to be closer to his sister.

Sallie Bassham

NMRS Publications News

For those of you wanting to fill gaps in your BMs the society has one or two copies of the following publications for sale. Normal members' discounts available but please phone (01282) 614615 or e-mail mansemins@btopenworld.com to ascertain availability before sending any cheques made out to NMRS.

- BM36 Kelton & Knockmurton Iron Mines £12
- BM44 Mines of Dartmoor & the Tamar Valley £12
- BM46 The Grassington Mines £12
- BM48 Memoirs 1993 £12
- BM50 Memoirs 1994 £12
- BM52 Great Orme Mines £12
- BM63 Memoirs 1999 £12

We also have quite a few copies of the following available (again members' discounts apply);

- The Mines of Cardiganshire (Metalliferous & Associated Minerals 1845-1913) £8

- The Mines of Shropshire & Montgomeryshire with Cheshire & Staffordshire (Metalliferous & Associated Minerals 1845-1913) £12

Barbara Sutcliffe

Treasurers Notes

One of the significant contributors to the NMRS finances, that does not cost any us a penny, is Gift Aid. As many of you may be aware the basic rate of tax was reduced for this tax year, whilst this is good for many of us personally, it has the unfortunate consequence that the amount charities can reclaim via Tax Aid reduces. As a transitional relief the chancellor has allowed charities to reclaim 28p in the pound until 2011, after when we will only be able to claim 25p in the pound though of course this could be withdrawn at any time especially if tax rates change again.

To give everyone some idea of the importance of Gift Aid to the NMRS, approximately 22% of our annual income (2008) comes from via Gift Aid rebate. As indicated above, this is likely to go down in the foreseeable future. At the same time we can only claim Gift Aid where we have a signed declaration from each member. Whilst the majority of our members do sign such a declaration, some do not. We fully appreciate that some of you cannot sign a claim as you do not pay UK tax, but we urge all those who can sign to do so it costs you nothing but helps the society significantly.

If you are unsure that you have a signed declaration in place, please ask David Neal, the membership secretary when you renew this year, or myself for a Gift Aid form. It is a simple form to fill in, but we must keep these on record, and show that we periodically check with members that they are still eligible to sign a Gift Aid form. All it requires is that you pay more

UK income or capital gains tax than we reclaim.

It was interesting to see how many of you include an additional donation with your membership renewal. We are grateful to all of you who do this as it helps the society to continue giving grants to the various projects we sponsor. As the annual membership fee has been held for a number of years to encourage as wide a membership as possible, these extra donations are gratefully received.

And a final thought on Gift Aid for any of you who are lucky(!?) enough to be higher rate tax payers. If you pay higher rate tax, one of three things can happen to the amount of tax payable on your donations between the standard rate and the higher rate. Firstly, if you do nothing then the government keeps this money. Secondly if you tick one box on your tax return you can get it back as a rebate. But most importantly from our point of view, you can donate the tax on all your charity donations between the standard rate and the higher rate to a single charity of your choice. This involves putting a charity code number on your tax return though of course HMRC do not make life easy as this is not the Charity Commission number, but a code of their own devising. NMRS currently does not have such a code, though I will be asking for one to be put in place. As there is no code currently obviously no one in NMRS has done this yet!

Many thanks for your indulgence in reading this dry accounts stuff, when you would all to prefer to be reading about our collective interest mining in all its forms!

Tim Cook

Middleton Park, Leeds

The Middleton Park Community Archaeological Project, on which Martin Roe was the Project Archaeologist, has been short-listed under this years British Archaeological Awards for Best Amateur/Independent Project. The winner will be announced at the awards ceremony at the British Museum on November 10th 2008.

The NMRS is credited for its support on the project's website.

Mike Gill

NAMHO News

English Heritage have asked NAMHO to produce a research framework for the extractive industries. A research framework has been deemed necessary to assess the developer-led archaeological work undertaken so far, to understand gaps in our understanding and to target research in the future. In conjunction with the study of the physical record, documentary evidence and history will also be consulted. The work is expected to take about three years, involving a national conference, regional seminars and consultation with NAMHO organisations, assisted by outside specialists. The 11-page document can be downloaded from www.namho.org and individuals can send questions, comments and offers of help to P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk.

It is anticipated that the work will be undertaken in three stages;

- Resource assessment what do we know about the archaeology?
- Defining an agenda what would we like to know?
- Developing a strategy how do we address the questions?

One of the key aspects will be the underground resource. As yet this is still

little understood and under-researched; it is also does not have statutory protection although this may be addressed in the new Heritage Bill. (Unfortunately the bill will probably not be included in the Queen's Speech in December due to the credit crisis and government's 'new priorities'.)

A list of topics and specialist areas of study is given on the website, but NAMHO admit that it is far from comprehensive, and would appreciate any help. If you do not have e-mail and wish to contribute, please write to;

The Secretary NAMHO
c/o Peak District Mining Museum
The Pavilion
Matlock Bath
Derbyshire
DE4 3NR.

Sallie Bassham and NAMHO

Keswick Mining Museum Open Day Sunday 8th March 2009

The open day in 2009 is our 'coming of age' 21 years at Keswick Mining Museum. In that time we have been sited in three different locations and written thirteen books on mining in the Lake District.

Ian Tyler's latest book *The Mines of the Caldbeck Fells* will be launched at the Open Day. This will be a limited edition hard back of approximately 300 pages with 200 photographs, many never before seen in print. It includes much new information, maps, plans and drawings, and will be as informative as our previous books.

The Open Day Programme will be;

10am Guided walk to Sandbeds Mine by Ian Tyler. Park at Calebrake.

12.30pm Museum 'Welcome Speech' by Ian Tyler.

12.45pm Book Launch 'Mines of the Caldbeck Fells'. Signed copies available.

Followed by Raffle and Free Buffet Lunch.

A free museum visit will be available to all from 1pm onwards.

This is an essential date for your diary! I look forward to seeing you there.

Ian Tyler

Membership Secretary

It won't be long now before you will be writing out that complicated Welsh address on an envelope, as you send me your cheque for the 2009 subs - and it's on that point I want to mention a few things.

First of all I have redesigned the form so that it prints out your name, address, telephone and email details as I have them on my spreadsheet. This will save you the need to fill in the form, leaving you to record any details that are incorrect or missing. This will make it easier for me to update the files.

In addition, I have recorded the last time you signed the Gift Aid declaration and if it is before 2003 have asked you to sign again and therefore keep things current for the Inland Revenue. For those of you who have not signed before, you are invited to do so and, at no cost to yourself, will give extra benefit to our Society.

Now, onto the subject of email. On the renewal form your email address is shown as per our records and if not, then you are invited to supply it if you wish. We have 49% of membership with an email address and would like to increase

this in the coming year. Why? Well, on occasions we have need to quickly consult with, or communicate information to membership, and emailing is a cost effective way of doing so. If anyone has strong feelings about using their email this way, then please feel free to delete your address from the Subscription Renewal Form otherwise we will make use of this medium to keep our membership up to date with the latest information. Thank you for your co-operation.

Finally, a few Members renew their subscriptions either by Direct Debit or Standing Order and we could extend this to others if there is a demand for it. Basically, you would be notified of the amount of subs to be paid in the December Newsletter and the payment taken on, say, 31st January following. If we go ahead with this then it will commence in 2010 so if you are interested please indicate on the Subscription Renewal Form. Thank you.

David R Neal



SAVE OUR MINING HERITAGE!

Grassington Moor mining landscape is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, but it is being damaged. Mechanical excavators have been used to remove spoil heap material and use it to re-surface trackways. Drains have been cut with machines. Building waste and topsoil have been dumped upon it. The archaeological record and the landscape is being destroyed and has been over many years. This is a Criminal Offence and NMRS want it to stop.

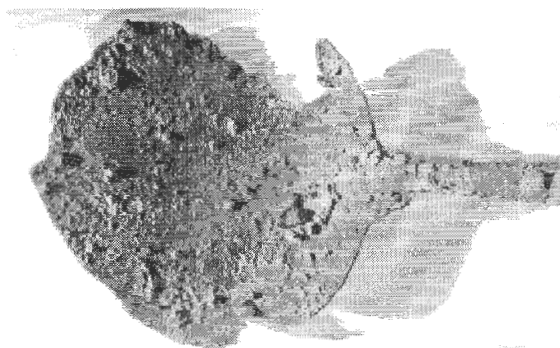
We need your help! English Heritage have so far only issued a proverbial 'slap on the wrist'; writing letters and talking to the perpetrator. A management plan may be drawn up, to allow the removal of some of the spoil to mend the trackways, as in other mining areas in the Yorkshire Dales. This, however, is sanctioned destruction of our heritage.

We ask you to join us in writing to English Heritage, to ask exactly how they are going to assess the damage, how they are going to stop the ongoing damage and what measures have they taken previously? Please send your letters to;

**Dr Simon Thurley
English Heritage
1 Waterhouse Square
138-142 Holborn
LONDON
EC1N 2ST**

Thank you.





The Coking Shovel

On the 22nd August, Janet and I finished off a good weather day by taking our dog, Holly, once around the area of Wilson Wood Colliery. Meeting up with the owner and residents at this point, we were presented with the coking shovel by the owner. (See above.) It had been found in the beck directly below the first mining scree and brick kiln. Had it been used in making the bricks?

Wilson Wood Colliery had been bought by William Bracewell in 1872. The local fireclay fed the brick kiln, and many were made for Bracewell's various enterprises. (He owned many mills in Barnoldswick, and was the largest single-handed cotton spinner and manufacturer on the Manchester Cotton Exchange.) Bracewell turned around the Colliery's fortunes, from a drowned mine to a very productive one. But he needed manpower, and our terraced row was built from Bracewell bricks for the miners. Until 1952 the cottages were known locally as Brick Row or Bracewell Terrace, when they became Beech Terrace. Janet's last word as we waved goodbye to the owner was 'MORE JUNK'!

Bernard Bond (with thanks to Mr R. Baines for the shovel).

References:

Lancaster Guardian, 13th December 1873; *Ingleton Coalfield*, 2005, J. Bentley, B.R. Bond & M.C. Gill, British Mining No.76.

Website Review

The Bevin Boys

(<http://www.wartimememories.co.uk/bevinboys.html>)

The Bevin Boys were conscripted during World War II to work in the collieries, while Britain was struggling to maintain self-sufficiency in coal. They were named after Ernest Bevin who, as the Minister for Labour and National Service, enlisted more than 48,000 men to go down the coal mines. Training lasted for between four days and four weeks - with the latter apparently being the exception. Although, they had no choice in the matter, some uninformed people thought that they had taken the easy option in not joining up with the troops. Consequently their effort was not recognised until 2007, when a commemorative badge was produced.

This website brings their story to life, with many personal memories of life working in the pits during wartime. Anyone can contribute to the website - so if you know anyone who was a Bevin Boy - please encourage them to add their memories.

Book Review

The Scottish Gold Rush of 1869, 2008, R.M. Callendar and P.F. Reeson

Yes one of our own! I thought everyone might like to read part of the glowing review written in *The Scots Magazine*.

"Not content with simply transcribing large chunks of contemporary journalists' accounts, the authors have researched almost every imaginable aspect of this fascinating episode in Highland history. There are chapters on the gold rush as it developed monthly and those who became involved. This is a remarkable, readable feast, worthy of the King of Metals."

With thanks to Neil Dyson.

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.

Lynne Johnson, The Croft, Hardraw, Hawes, North Yorkshire, DL8 3LZ
lynne.johnson99@googlemail.com

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of its correspondents and are not necessarily agreed with or shared by the Northern Mine Research Society, its Officers or the Newsletter Editor. The accuracy of statements made in articles submitted for publication will not normally be checked for validity by the Newsletter Editor. The responsibility for the contents of articles submitted by individual members, or groups, remains with the authors and cannot be accepted by the Society, its Officers, or the Newsletter Editor.

Visit our Website www.nmrs.co.uk

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.

The Northern Mine Research Society is a
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Its number is 326704