

# Northern Mine Research Society

## Newsletter



### August 2009

#### Meets

Please contact the meet leader beforehand; please do not just turn up on the day.

**22 August.** Sleil Gill – Booze Moor, Arkengarthdale. 10.30am at Langthwaite car park (NZ 005 023). 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 [miles.johnson@yorkshiredales.org.uk](mailto:miles.johnson@yorkshiredales.org.uk) or by telephone on 01969 652361

**19 September.** The Clowders of Littondale: early lead mining landscapes in the Dales. This is a replacement excursion for the one which was cancelled in June because of bad weather. Yvonne Luke will lead a walk around Arncliffe Clowder, looking at the immensely varied surface remains of the early lead mining landscapes in this part of the Dales. Meet on Arncliffe Green (SE 931 718) at 10.00am. Bring a packed lunch and appropriate walking gear for the weather. The walk includes some steep terrain and is mostly off paths. There is little shelter on the tops and the meet will be cancelled if the weather is nasty. Please 'phone Yvonne (01943 602422) or you can email her and

leave your contact details if you would like to come. The walk should finish about 4pm.

([yvonne.luke@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:yvonne.luke@english-heritage.org.uk)),

#### Joint meet with PDMHS

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help with the biennial NMRS/PDMHS event to be held on 5 September. We start at 10am with tea/coffee at Linton Church and a guide to its mining connections. This will be followed by a variety of walks from Yarnbury with free packed lunch. See the May Newsletter for details of the walks and a booking form. It is essential to let Sallie know, by 14 August, if you are coming ([stassham@nildram.co.uk](mailto:stassham@nildram.co.uk) or 01524 24 1851).

#### Library News

Thank you to Graham Proudlove for A Guide to the Literature of Cave Science – Cave Studies Series 16 – which Graham edited; to Ivor Brown for copies of 2008 and 2009 copies of Mining Magazine, 2006 and 2007 copies of UK Coal NewScene and the April 2009 issue of GeoDrilling International and to Richard Smith for a copy of "The Lode of History", the

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Would you please note that the deadline for inclusion with the December Newsletter is the

**7th November, 2009**

Submissions are welcomed that would be of interest to members of the NMRS. These can be forwarded to me as text/disc by post or you can email or telephone. If you require anything returning, please ask. Photographs, plans and drawings are acceptable as long as they can be reproduced in black and white.

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proceedings of the 2007 Welsh Mines Society Conference.

Thank you also to Neil Rowley for photographs and other information about Boulby Potash Mine: unfortunately my antique computer cannot cope with the modern format, so there will be a delay before this information will be available.

Sallie Bassham

## Library List

Each new member is sent a copy of the Library List when they join and in my time as Membership Secretary this has been a 2005 version. I have now printed Sallie's latest edition (July 2009) and this is available to Members from my address on Page 1 or by email. An A5 hardcopy costs £1.50 including postage but the email copy is free.

David R Neal

## Meets for 2010

For the 2010 meets details to be printed on next year's membership card, I need to receive offers to lead surface or underground trips within the next month or so. All volunteers welcome! In particular, I have been asked for more coal mining meets and for an underground trip at Coniston copper mines – can anyone help with these?

If you would be interested in a trip down Boulby potash mine, please let me know and I will see if one can be arranged. It would probably be on a Tuesday or a Wednesday in April, starting at 10am.

Sallie Bassham 01524 241851.

sbassham@nildram.co.uk

## Rolf Max von Arx – RIP

We heard earlier this year of the death of Rolf von Arx at the age of 77. In recognition of his contribution to mining history, he was made an honorary member of NMRS. He wrote in German, so his work is not well known in this country. He wrote two, much praised, books and many journal papers.

Four years ago he was awarded a prize for his researches and writings. His family and one of his fellow researchers are working on a history of his research work and writings. He has left a large library and also a significant collection of miners' lamps: this collection will be given to an appropriate museum in his native Germany.

Rolf's widow writes that he was very interested in the work of NMRS and proud to be an honorary member. Our sympathies are with Sheila and the rest of the family.

## NMRS Website

We have a NEW WEBSITE that should be up and running by time you read this. More information will be available at the Autumn Meeting in October.

Attempts have been made to make it more modern and the site will be developed over the next few months to reflect our activities in the current climate.

Please let us know what you think about the site and whether there is anything that could be included or withdrawn? I am keen to use mining pictures to add some colour on some of the pages so please let me know what you've got. Thank you.

David R Neal

**Visit our Website**  
**[www.nmrs.org.uk](http://www.nmrs.org.uk)**

## NMRS Publication News

For those of you wanting to fill gaps in your BMs or acquire a spare copy the society has very good second-hand copies of the following publications for sale. Normal members' discounts available but please phone 01282 614615 to ascertain availability before sending on any cheques made payable to NMRS or you can email [mansemins@btopenworld.com](mailto:mansemins@btopenworld.com)

BM35 Goginan Mines £5

BM47 Mines of Alston Moor £6

BM49 Wharfedale Mines £6

BM51 Grinton Mines £5

BM53 Arkengarthdale Mines £6

BM54 Lead Mine Wagons £4

BM58 Coal Mines of E Lancs £6

BM59 Memoirs £5

BM65 Allandale, Tynedale & Derwent Lead Mines £6

Our latest BM Coal Mining in Morley is selling very well. The author, Jim Thorp, one of our members is doing a very good job in promoting it with interviews with the press in the area and even giving a talk to a local primary school where the children relished the gory bits!! A big thank you to Jim.

**Barbara Sutcliffe**  
**NMRS Publications**  
**The Old Manse**  
**93 Halifax Rd.,**  
**Nelson,**  
**Lancs, BB9 0EQ**

## Smallcleugh Mine Report

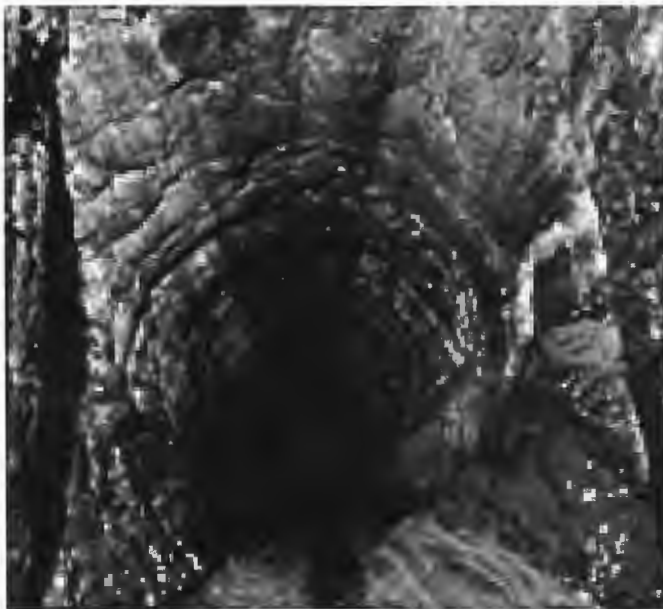
On Saturday, 16th May, 2009 we arrived at the Nenthead car park at 9.45am with grey skies and light rain. Two members, Gary Dennis and Peter Kirk who had travelled up from Devon to explore the mines, were already on site as they were staying in the nearby bunkhouse.

By 1015 most members had arrived and were changing into underground gear, all ten of us signed in at the cafe and set off for Smallcleugh level.



Team Photograph

Into the mine heading along the wet section to waterblast shaft and the junction with the main horse level.



Then on along the hard cross-cut for about 250m then down the muddy slope and into Smallcleugh flats. A short stop here for photo session, then on again taking the passage to the right until we reached a wooden ventilation door, the packed wall on the left of the level here is plastered to aid air flow.

On the other side of the door is the ramp leading up to Incline flats.

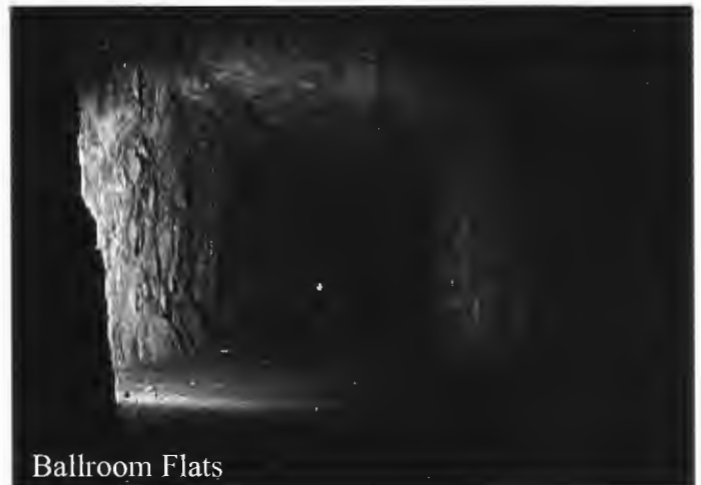
There are a number of wooden hoppers in very good condition in this part of the mine.

We then carried on to Gully back cross cut climbed up and then down again into a flat cross-cut then on to Wheel Flats so called because a set of very narrow tub wheels were found there, another picture session.



Wheel Flats

From the far end of Wheel flats we started the long crawl through Hetherington's X-cut to the first sun vein, everyone hot and tired after the crawl so a short stop, then short walk to junction leading to Ballroom flat, it was here in 1901 that Mr C. Harper clerk for Vieille Montagne Zinc Co and twenty eight members of the local Masonic lodge sat down to a dinner brought into the mine from a local Hotel.



Ballroom Flats

We then followed the passage across Elliott's string and on to the Ballroom Flat everyone exploring this area especially young Andy Richards who climbed into every hole and passage he could find, very keen.

Others went on to the Longcleugh vein area where there is some fine roof arching.

Then back to Wheel flats, from here we took the Flat cross-cut to Luke Halls sump everyone edging round this large hole and then right into the collapsing horse level where you have to negotiate a crossing of a couple of meters on two rails with no floor underneath lots of fun.

Everyone safely past these obstacles and on again along the level, lots of water and past many sumps until we reached the whimsey sump where we stopped for photos.

Back through the wet section and out to daylight, we were now two short - they had stayed to take more pictures at the whimsey sump!

Eventually out they came, everyone safe and back to the Nenthead visitor centre cafe for tea and sandwiches. A most enjoyable day in very good company.

Ian Eeles.

## NMRS Poynton Collieries Meet

4<sup>th</sup> July 2009

Ten of us, including our leader David Kitching, met at the Nelson Pit Visitors Centre car park on a hot and sunny morning. The walk was split into a 'figure of eight' route. In the morning we looked at the middle area of mining remains and after lunch the lower (Southern) area. There was not enough time to visit the top Northern area. The Poynton Collieries were very extensive and there are many traces of mining remains all around the villages of Poynton, Adlington and Pott Shrigley. Nelson Pit was one of over 70 coalmines in the Poynton area. Coal extraction is recorded as early as 1589 and continued until closure of the last pit in 1935, due to the exhaustion of the main coal seams and the rising cost of pumping water from the pits.

### Morning Walk

We set off down the road to look at the remains of Quarry Pit engine bed passing on the way the tubway of Anson pit, which incidentally is now a small



Redeveloped Pump & Winch Houses at Lords Pit

private museum.

Nearby we passed the complete terrace of splendid white mine houses named 'Petre Bank' with their large gardens, big enough for the miners to grow lots of vegetables. Next stop of call was the pump and winch houses of Lord Pit which have now been converted into private residences.

Along to Towers Yard which was the main administration and workshops, storage areas, stables and offices for the estate. The Yard was established in 1835. There are a couple of colliery buildings left, but unfortunately the site has been redeveloped as a small housing estate. At this point the Princes Incline railway tramway runs up to a few pits and down to meet the main line at Poynton Station.



We walked up the tramway to Albert Pit, where four tramways meet to link up to Park Pits and Horsepasture Pit. Here we saw the fenced shaft and pit pond. Then finally we visited the remains at Canal Pit, which had quite a lot of stonework left.



### Lunch

You didn't need to bring sandwiches. There is the Boars Head Pub, and the Coffee Tavern with its pleasant shaded rear garden, both just across from the

Poynton disused railway line and the Trading Post on the towpath, which does a good cooked breakfast.

There was time to look at the display boards inside the Visitors Centre explaining the history of Coal Mining, Railways, and Canal transportation in the Poynton area.

### Afternoon Walk

Just up from the Nelson Pit Visitors Centre we stood on the Macclesfield Canal Bridge to look at the Vernon Wharf where coal was carried up to the canal from the nearby pits up to the 1930s.



The mount Vernon Wharf is on the left

The first stop was the Venture Pit with its altered engine house now turned into a private residence. There was still the impression of the shaft in the grass in the front of the photograph.



Venture Pit Engine House.

We then passed a series of early shaft workings (Adventure, Hedge and Red Pits). All that remained were the grass and earth depressions. We then walked along the Macclesfield Canal making a slight detour to visit the superb Newcomen Engine House of Redacre Pit. This building is virtually complete but the chimney in the corner of the wall was removed.

We rejoined the canal and walked down to Adlington Basin, where there were hundreds of boats



The front of Redacre Pit Engine House

moored up. It was like a marine version of a caravan site. Some owners were polishing the brass fittings and others washing their boats. We then crossed the disused railway line and visited the Pits of Kingfield and the Accommodation Pits. Passing the Waterloo Pit we noticed that the Coal Authority had a protective fence around it. They had just filled in a collapsed shaft.

On the way back to the car park we walked through the delightful Poynton Coppice which is classed as an ancient semi-natural wood because it has never been ploughed or used other than a woodland.

Many thanks to our meet leader David Kitching for showing us around the mining site. He is an authority on the area and has co-written a book called "Poynton A Coalmining Village" together with W.H. Shercliff and J.M. Ryan. If you are interested in finding out more about the Poynton Collieries visit David's excellent website at [www.brocross.com](http://www.brocross.com).

Richard Platt

## Cow Green Meet

2nd May, 2009

There was snow in Upper Teasdale in May; but not for our May meet at Cow Green and the fine, sunny weather meant that we were able to undertake the longer of the planned walks and visit the Green Hurth and Dubbysike mining sites, as well as look at features nearer the reservoir car park.

Ray Fairbairn had kindly produced booklets for everyone attending and we were able to refer to maps, look up details of geology and check dates and owners of mining companies. We started by walking to Green Hurth; puzzled over the non-alignment of pump rods with Swan's shaft, looked at stable and house sites, and pondered whether ash heaps signified domestic or industrial use. The dressing floors are magnificent, with much re-use of water and remains of wooden buddles. Wheel pit remains were compared

with an old photograph and the similarity with the Manx Lady Isabella noted.

We returned via the lonely powder house half-way between Green Hurth and Dubby Sike and looked at the many extraction mounds of Dubby Sike and its oval shaft with pump rods. Walking back along the track, we searched for evidence of a former mineral line and enthusiastically looked at every road drain for old, metal, mine pipes – most were modern ceramic. There was no time to visit the hushes and hush reservoir; but these and sites of boundary stones were indicated and those for whom this was a first visit to Cow Green are keen to visit again and see more.

Near the modern, vehicular access road, the Holmes dressing plant was built for late nineteenth and twentieth century barytes companies; reservoirs, engine beds and ropeway bases can be seen. This multi-period site has levels, open workings and tracks enough to provoke much lively discussion and what happened, when and why.

To the north-west, a short tramway route is clearly visible. It comes from Isabella level. Unfortunately, there was not time to visit this isolated mine with its reservoir and dressing sites. A building beside the tramway is similar in style to the previously seen powder house and Ray was able to identify the fastenings for, and remains of, its lightening conductor. The tramway does not continue to the road but only to a shaft on Hopkins vein: the ore was tipped down this shaft and thence to dressing floors.

We had a wonderful day, and are surprised that this extensive mining landscape is so little known and so rarely visited. Free booklets are available at the car park: these describe the local geology, and detail self-guided walks with explanations of some of the features – although there is more about gentians than about mine levels, or even heavy-metal tolerant plants.

Thank you very much to Ray Fairbairn for planning the day's routes, for preparing the booklets and for sharing his extensive knowledge of the area.

Sallie Bassham

## 2009 NAMHO Conference

I attended only the Monday meet of the NAMHO Conference; but PDMHS reports an excellent week-end with 190 delegates from UK, Europe and Australia. There were 22 underground trips and 11 surface walks with 50 delegates attending lectures at County Hall on the Saturday. If anyone was there on Saturday and Sunday, perhaps they would write for the next Newsletter about the trip, walk or lectures

they attended?

I spent a day at Ecton Hill copper and lead mines and we had an excellent guide in John Barnatt who has not only tramped the surface features, but surveyed them and read up the historical documents. He has also surveyed underground and showed us details it would have taken us years to discover without his help. We started with a walk up the hill past levels, pipe workings, a fine lime kiln, leats and processing sites: the latter were reminiscent of some Yorkshire sites with their careful planning because of the lack of level ground.

There is a Boulton and Watt engine house, remains of its two chimneys and a finely built balancing shaft show something of its use; and old photographs show a spiral balancing drum. After lunch we went down Clayton level and admired its underground engine house with white-washed walls, clear evidence for three boilers and remains of engine beds. The visit brought Robey and Porter's book to life; but I look forward to reading John's book on the area and his interpretations of the many interesting features. Thank you John for an excellent day.

Sallie Bassham

## NAMHO NEWS

### Part-time job opportunity in the archaeology of mining and quarrying

The National Association of Mining History Organisations (NAMHO) has submitted a bid for funding to carry out a comprehensive review of mining and quarrying archaeology in England with a view to producing a Research Framework for the Archaeology of the Extractive Industries. The first part of the project will run over two years during which period data will be collected, assessed and analysed to provide for a full understanding of current knowledge and to identify an agenda for future research. It is intended to use the services of a project officer, contracted on a part-time basis, to carry out that work.

Expressions of interest in the post should be sent to the Conservation Officer for NAMHO, Dr Peter Cloughton, e-mail: [P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk) or by post to NAMHO (Conservation) c/o Peak District Mining Museum, The Pavilion, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire DE4 3NR. Further details on the post will be provided once the funding bid has been approved.

**Visit our Website**  
**[www.nmrs.org.uk](http://www.nmrs.org.uk)**

## The End is Nigh!

Not for the first time, the Gwynfynydd Gold Mine is on its last legs and it is a sad day for Britain's reputation among the world's gold fraternities. Following a burst of activity in the 1980s, which included a very brave effort to create a tourist facility whilst the mine was producing gold, the mine is now abandoned to the forces of nature ... and possible vandalism.

In July, the British Gold Panners Association held its annual meeting in the Coed y Brenin forest, with a day of goldwashing on the Saturday, and an evening of barbeque, so as to take in some history on the Sunday. We mustered at the new visitor centre near Ganllwyd, parked our cars by the banks of the Mawddach and walked "the gold road" to the Gwynfynydd Gold Mine.

En route, society worthy Eric Gray-Thomas helped me with the commentary by setting the 19th century narrative in context, so as to explain the 20th century economics of mining gold in the Welsh hills.

We turned a bend in the path and came on a scene of desolation. The engine shed was collapsing, the main entrance was sealed with a steel shutter and office doors were open to the elements. Inside was the detritus of the days of previous commerce - discarded postcards, jewel cases, brochures, key-rings, Wellington boots, hard hats, office stationery, and if you name it, it was there! The remains of a 3-dimensional plan of the mine in perplex lay abandoned, the racks for re-charging lamps stood forlorn, and one or two waterproof vests confirmed that men had once worked here

The main adit was secure but nearby, a forest footpath skirted the entrance which was used for the parties of tourists during its most recent heyday. The huge, heavy steel gate lay on the ground, notices warned visitors not to enter and water seeped through the roof. It looked dangerous and most of the gold panners gave it a wide berth.

Later in the afternoon, Eric and I compared notes. We agreed we might never visit the gold mine again; we preferred to remember it when it was a going concern, proving that there was gold in the hills.

R M Callender



## Call for Papers

The NMRS will celebrate its 50-year Anniversary in 2010 and will be holding a Jubilee Conference at Reeth on 1-3rd October 2010; this will also include field trips.

Papers for the conference are being sought on any aspect of mining, quarrying or associated processes (as covered by the scope of the Society). The normal length of papers will be 30 minutes but there will be an opportunity for shorter contributions of 15 minutes describing current work.

It is intended to publish the papers as a special edition of British Mining and contributors will be expected to provide full manuscripts during September 2010.

If you think you may wish to present a paper, short contribution or poster display please send a title and summary of about 200 words to:

Dr Richard Smith,  
New House, Spring Lane,  
Cold Ash, Thatcham,  
Berkshire. RG18 9PL

or preferably: [rsmith6@btinternet.com](mailto:rsmith6@btinternet.com)

## 9th annual Archaeology Day School

In April NMRS had a table at the ninth annual Archaeology Day School held at Grassington Town Hall. The day's programme consisted of seven different lectures with chances to peruse the stalls set up in the entrance-way before the start of the day and during the tea and lunch breaks. Rex and I had an opportunity to chat to the visitors who showed an interest in our NMRS publications, some of whom were already members. We were pleased with the sales we made and the day was certainly worthwhile. We need as many new outlets as possible for the sales of our books and if any of you are out and about this summer and visit somewhere that could be interested in stocking our publications please let me know the details and I will contact them.

Barbara Sutcliffe



Stand at Grassington Town Hall

## The new Ingleton Colliery screening plant.

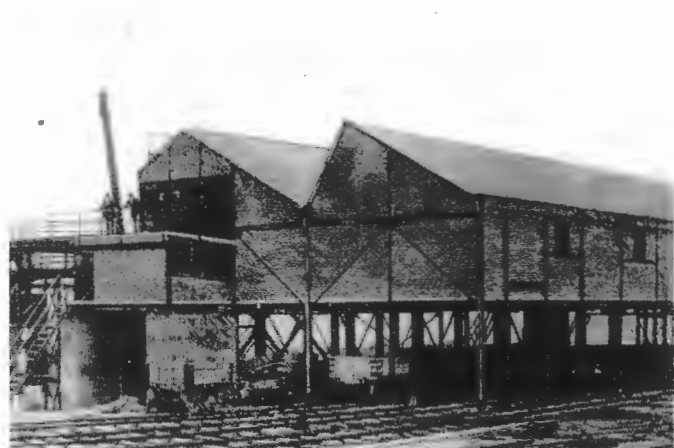
On the 24th March, 2009 I received a phone call to visit the (moved) land and spoil heaps beyond the New Village. For some time, small heaps have been dug out in the area by those interested in "mountain biking". On the west slope of the spoil heap, it would seem, the intention was to descend over a series of heaps and so uncovered the 10"x5" girders (see photograph 1). The fixed girder work rises at 10 degrees and the 1" steel hauling rope was still in place. The area being NGR SD688724.



**Screening Plant Ramp (25/04/2009).**

*The girders are 10" deep, 5" wide and at a 10 degree slope - support stantions and 1" hauling cable. Trackway for 2'0" gauge railway.*

On this visit, the residents with me pointed to the next open field area where they played, in their childhood, in a large red brick building. The uncovered girder work lines up with this field area, see Photograph 2.



**Screening Plant (15/01/1916)**

*Photo from the Lancaster Guardian by the late Gordon Barker. The Screening Plant cost £11,000, employed 300 people and produced 1500 tons per week. Off to the left hand side is the 2'0" gauge railway to the tunnel.*

Further reference to the *Dalesman* (October 1974 page 289) "Industrial Ingleton" reads: "*The narrow gauge line ran under the road on an endless rope haulage systems to the screens on the other side to the top of the spoil heap. The empties were sent down free of the rope and a young boy had to put in iron sprags on the wheels to stop them before going under the road tunnel, a most dangerous practise*". (Notes taken from local memories 1922).



**View of the Screening Plant (15/01/1916)**

*Photo from the Lancaster Guardian by the late Gordon Barker*

Additional reference to the *British Mining* (No. 76, page 109 Fig 18), gives the colliery line layout of the New Ingleton Colliery. I entered the 12 foot wide tunnel in March 1996 (see BM76 page 98) The final removal of this tunnel took place in June 2008 with road drainage work with the Craven-Highways Dept. Refer to Photograph 3: a footpath can be seen and is still with us, the girderwork uncovered is in the 3rd/4 stantion area, on the left hand side, where the footpath reaches the ramp.

Addendum: Gordon Barker passed away on the 9th February, 2009 - he was a great help to me. His family being of the *Old Ingleton Colliery* and, of course, *Barker Bricks*.

Bernie Bond

## Can you Help?

From a letter sent to Bernie Bond (08/04/2009).

"I wish to acquire a miner's lamp check from the former New Ingleton Colliery Company".



Please respond to:-  
Peter Wall  
5 Cherry Grove  
Norton  
Stourbridge  
DY8 3YL

Tele:- 01384 376458  
peterwall1@btinternet.com

## From the Archives

Northern Cavern & Mine Research Society Newsletter  
January 1974

Full Member Subscription £2.00

The Editor writes *"I hold my hand up and admit it is my own fault that only two newsletters were produced in 1973, the introduction of the three shift working day at Rolls Royce has knocked my spare time sideways, however the three day working week is giving a welcome breather. Thank you Ted"*  
(Edward Heath, the then Prime Minister)

## News from Scotland

The Editor writes again *"The clash of dates, Cornwall Trip v Barjarg prevented us from taking a hand in the rescue of the Waterwheel at the stone mine of Barjarg, first proposed in 1971, the full story is told in the Newsletter of the Glasgow Speleological Society as follows:-*

*The rescue of the old waterwheel from the Barjarg Mine, Dumfriesshire was first mentioned in our last N/L, the story can now be further unfolded. About a year ago it was felt that something should be done to get the waterwheel pump and the hand pump which was near it, out of this 19th Cent. Limestone mine.*

*An approach was made to the Dumfries Museum, who were unable to take relics, our waterwheel member, Alan Stoyel, then arranged that they would go to the Scottish Society for the Preservation of Historical Machinery, who were busy collecting material for an Industrial Museum.*

*Arrangements were made with the owners of the mine, and on the 17th June, seven members, supported by wives, gazed in some dismay at the half ton of hardware, which they had to get out of the mine onto the road, where it would be collected the next day.*

*Alan's enthusiasm dispelled forebodings, and after the pump had been cut away, the wheel was heaved on end and rolled along the old tramtrack. By mid-day heroic efforts had got it up the slope to the mine entrance, and after a break to make up for dehydration, the wheel was manhandled through, an inch at a time. Once outside the party was at least in daylight, and with a 'yo - heave ho' the wheel was slowly rolled through ¼ mile of dense brushwood and marsh to the road.*

*All then collapsed, until revived by sips of beer, (there was only one can left) they were then reminded that, there were still two muckle pumps .... to bring to grass! All was however accomplished, and the waterwheel and pumps are now stored near Anniesland.*

*This was probably one of the most worthwhile tasks the Society has been engaged in for some time."*

I am not sure who the Editor was other than his initials are D.P. and wonder whether this was Derrick Platt?

Were you one of the "Magnificent Seven" involved with this project? Is the waterwheel still in existence? Please write to or email the Editor with your memories of this event.

David R Neal

## Vacancies

Lynne Johnson has been our champion Newsletter Editor since the February 2008 issue but has given notice that she will not seek re-election to the post at the AGM in March 2010.

So, I have come on board to help Lynne out until a successor can be found. I am currently the Membership Secretary and Webmaster but would not wish to hold three positions!

**Therefore we have TWO vacancies, one for the Newsletter Editor and one for the Membership Secretary.**

Please take a moment and think about whether you could take on one of these jobs and help the Society to accomplish its aims. It will require some of your time (as much as you can give), a bit of hair to pull out when the situation demands it and, of course, to be thick skinned.

So, if you have got what it takes and can take what it gives then please telephone me on 01974 821213 for an initial chat. The appointments will be subject to the approval of the Committee.

Below I have shown the computer skills needed for these positions as well as some other salient points.

David R Neal

### Newsletter Editor

The position will require the following:-

- Broadband access
- Some expertise with Desktop Publishing Software
- Some photo scanning/manipulation required
- The ability to achieve deadlines
- Four Issues per year

### Membership Secretary

This position requires the following:-

- Broadband Access
- Expertise with Word and Excel
- Reports for Meetings
- Nearby Bank & Post Office

**www.nmrs.org.uk**

## Treasurer's Notes

In my AGM report I brought up the possibility that we should consider increasing membership fees for 2010, and that this would be reviewed in time for a resolution to be discussed at the Autumn meeting. This would be the first increase in membership fees since 1994, which seems to me an extremely good run. These notes are intended to give some background to the proposal, and then my recommendation.

As I highlighted in my AGM report the main impact on NMRS of the global recession is a significant reduction in interest rates. Over the last few years due to the financial planning of previous Treasurers we have earned well over £1000 per year from interest. My current estimate is that we may only earn around £150 this year. This reduction equates to around £2 per member as a proportion of the annual fees.

A similar situation exists with Gift Aid – we have received a useful sum in recent years from this source, and we must once again thank all those members who sign up for this scheme. The government has previously announced a reduction from 28p to 25p in the pound, though with a transition scheme in place until 2011. This reduction equates to around 25p per member as a proportion of the annual fees.

In recent history the general aim has been to fund the everyday running costs of the society from membership fees and then use any surplus, interest and gift aid payments towards our grants scheme for projects etc. As all these sources of finance reduce it could be argued that we could cut back on grants etc., and allow depletion of reserves. However, for good governance we must balance the conflicting demands of keeping a reasonable level of reserves against fulfilling our charitable aims of carrying out and publishing high quality research.

It is likely that with various one-off projects in our 50th Anniversary year in 2010 there will be a reduction in our reserves. In the last Newsletter we published a reminder about the grant scheme with the aim of making further grants this year.

As well as reductions in two of our sources of income, we have had increases in most of our costs since the last membership rate increase. For instance postage has increased nearly 60p per member per year since then, which actually is not too bad as it is over a 15 year period. A worse example is the Newsletter printing costs which have increased nearly 40p per member over just 2 years (though it has to be admitted that this cost does fluctuate depending on the number and size of Newsletters per year, but this is a reasonable estimate of the increase). Using inflation indices from the Bank of England and UK Statistics suggests that £15 in 1994 is now equivalent to £22.36 – though it does depend on exactly which inflation index is taken!

The downside of a rate increase is a possible loss of membership numbers, especially with the current situation, so whatever increase is recommended we should aim to keep the subs at as good a value as possible. One measure of this is to compare against other similar organisations – for instance PDMHS is currently £19/year, and several other research based organisations I am a member of, are in the £20/year range.

Taking all this on board I would propose an increase of just £2 to take the annual fee to £17/year, with overseas members increasing to £20/year. Family members would remain at £0.50.

This proposal will be put to the Autumn meeting, where attendees can comment and vote. In the meantime feel free to send me any comments or questions at [NMRS@stallis.co.uk](mailto:NMRS@stallis.co.uk) (with "NMRS Question" as the subject) and I'll try my best to answer.

Tim Cook

## The Mine Explorer – Volume 6, 2008.

Although it appears infrequently, one awaits the latest issue of the Cumbria Amenity Trust's journal with anticipation. It has a good mix of 'exploration' and mining history, but is broad enough to include a paper on yellow earth worms, which live in spoil contaminated with arsenic at Carrock. Volume 6 has plenty on Cumbrian topics, but also covers links with Cardiganshire, slate working at Penrhyn, Bideford Black, and gets as far as gold mines in Tierra del Fuego! We learn that CAT members have recovered the remains of Britain's earliest surviving underground railway from Emanuel stolne\* in Silver Gill, where it was used by Elizabethan miners.

Another paper, reflecting the area's reserves of iron ore, describes the changes in traffic through Ulverston harbour between 1862 and 1946. The paper on producing a decent 3D survey of the complex workings at Paddy End, Coniston copper mine demonstrates the inventiveness, determination and masochism which makes surveyors people to avoid. Nevertheless, they all like the results and can always spot the one minor detail which you've missed off!

In all then, this issue of *The Mine Explorer* is well illustrated with photo's and diagrams and has a good mix of topics and writing styles. So, at 210 pages this volume is well worth the £9.95 (plus £1.50 pp) asked for it. Cheques payable to Cumbria Amenity Trust, c/o The Rise, Alston, Cumbria, CA9 3DB

\* The modern German word for adit is 'stollen', but there are historical variants and the Elizabethan miners (in the English Lake District) seem to prefer 'stolne'.

Mike Gill

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

It is not everyday, or every organisation that can celebrate fifty years of progress and achievement but the Northern Mine Research Society will do so next year. With this in mind, Mike Gill prompted me to think about "an identity". That is, a logo that marks the occasion. With the elements of the number fifty, the north, research and mines, the permutations are probably never-ending, but Mike drafted a very good starting point, which I passed on to a professional designer in exchange for one copy of BM84.

The designer took his computer system and Mike's draft and set to work. He churned out over thirty variants and, together, we boiled them down to about six possibles, which permuted colours and type-face. After a preview at the AGM in March, we were able to discard some more designs and concentrate on one design in two versions and two colours (monochrome and a tasteful blue)... making four in all!

An important feature is the society's life-span, and for the year preceding the anniversary and the year after, we have included a line showing the dates. During the anniversary, however, the dates will vanish, only to re-appear on any paperwork issued during 2011. Here is the monochrome version.



Anyone with a genuine need to use the society's logo should contact me and receive a copy of what used to be called "camera-ready artwork" but passes now as a compact disk.

Ron Callender

## Autumn Meeting

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2009

This year's Autumn Meeting will be held in the meeting room of the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes (SD876898) and there will be a buffet from 12 noon, which is to be followed by a business meeting and presentations by members.

In the past, Mike Gill has kindly assisted members who wish to convert their material to PowerPoint and he has again agreed to provide this service. Mike can be contacted at [oldgang@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:oldgang@tiscali.co.uk).

To ensure the catering arrangements are up to our usual standard, it is essential for those members who intend to be present to complete the booking form, which is included with this newsletter.

The Dales Countryside Museum is housed in the former Hawes Railway station and is accessible from the A684 in Wensleydale. Please note that the museum charges £3.20 for more than two hours car parking, although parking is also possible on the road east from the museum to Leyburn.

The agenda for the formal part of the meeting is as follows:

- The minutes of the March 2009 AGM
- ~~Matters arising~~
- ~~Reports from the committee members~~
- Proposal on annual subscriptions from the Treasurer
- Any other business

Copies of the March 2009 AGM minutes will be available at the meeting.

Dr R M Callender

## LED

A week before Easter I visited, with a few friends, the Smallcleugh Mine at Nenthead. It has been nearly twenty years since I last explored this mine and time had caught up with me as I could only make Wheel Flats rather than the Ballroom as intended.

My original Oldham battery had pretty much died with barely two hours of light left so I purchased a new battery from **Caving Supplies** and thought I would come right up to date by investing in a LED replacement for the head-set.

Not being sure of what to expect, I ventured into the mine and found the LED was absolutely fantastic with so much more light than the old filament bulb.

In addition to the three times more light (150 lumens compared to 48 for a standard 3 watt Oldham bulb) it lasted a full 35 hours before needing to be re-charged.

The installation is very straight forward but can be a bit fiddly if you have large hands, taking about 10 minutes to do. This adaptation to LED is very worthwhile at £65.00 including postage and one that I can thoroughly recommend.

I have no connection whatsoever with this product but further details can be found at:-

[mineexplorer.org.uk](http://mineexplorer.org.uk)

or the manufacturer [technicalconcepts.org.uk](http://technicalconcepts.org.uk)

David R Neal

## Collaboration with English Heritage

At our March AGM, Neil Redfern of English Heritage (EH) spoke about the management of important mining sites like Grassington Moor. He was asked how members of NMRS could work with EH on some of issues affecting industrial sites, particularly in upland areas. Neil has made two suggestions.

Firstly, he would be glad to hear of any damage being done to scheduled sites. We are also asked to notify Robert White at the National Park of any damage to all sites, scheduled or non scheduled. This is something which seems ideally suited to NMRS members who understand mining sites and visit those in remote areas, and so will be aware of damage earlier than anyone else. It is understood that people may not wish to give their details but if we are serious about taking forward investigations into damage cases then EH will want clear evidence and

possibly witness statements.

I appreciate that some people would be happy to look out for damage, but do not want any personal involvement with EH. To start with, I am willing to act as co-ordinator and send in information anonymously; but I would be delighted if anyone else would like to liaise with EH - please let me know.

It is important that other mining sites do not suffer as Grassington Moor has done so please look out for any damage and report it direct to either Neil [neil.redfern@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:neil.redfern@english-heritage.org.uk) or to me. Although Neil can receive photos as attachments I cannot; so please post photographs to me at the address on your membership card.

Neil's second suggestion is that we help in providing information to land managers and owners about sites in their care and some of the management issues affecting them. This might be in the form of a small booklet and gazetteer of key sites, and could include sections on recognising industrial features and how to avoid damaging them. We would probably need to include Robert White and possibly Linda Smith (NYCC) in discussions about a proposed land managers' booklet. The important aspect is the gazetteer with a clear indication of where and what the sensitive sites are.

If anyone would be interested in working on this, either on their own or with a group of people, please get in touch.

Sallie Bassham

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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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