

# Northern Mine Research Society

## Newsletter



Society established 1960

[www.nmrs.org.uk](http://www.nmrs.org.uk)

February 2013

[www.nmrs.org.uk](http://www.nmrs.org.uk)

### SOCIETY NEWS

#### Presidents Jottings

A new year, a new NMRS Newsletter. We are very fortunate to have four regular, interesting Newsletters. Our website is evolving including more photos and we have a variety of meets arranged for the year – indoor meetings and both surface and underground meets. We just have one looming problem. Our secretary Ron Callender stands down at our AGM and we urgently need a replacement. Ron has done an excellent job and can't be thanked enough. He will be greatly missed but is more than willing to help anyone who is interested in taking on his mantle. Please consider this position and contact either Ron or myself for more details.

If you have paid your membership dues you will find your membership card enclosed. If it is not here please pay up! Details of meets and contacts are on the card as well as on our website. On the presumption our members who pay by standing order have already done so their membership cards are also enclosed. It is only when we receive bank statements we can check who has actually paid by this method and the cut off date for newsletter material was prior to this.

The first meeting of the year is our AGM on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April – a little later than usual due to Easter. A

return to Mealbank at Ingleton has enabled Bernard Bond to to organise another walk around the coalfields of the area – more details are elsewhere. This will follow the 12 o'clock lunch and AGM. Bookings are essential (a form is enclosed if you are without e-mail) to enable catering arrangements and should be made no later than **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April**. If you have never been to one of meetings please consider attending. We are a very friendly lot and we all have one interest in common – mining history. Another benefit is the usual selection of our good second hand copies available at very reasonable prices. If you are after a particular one please let me know (especially the out of print ones). Starting with this meeting **book sales** will commence at 11.30 before lunch and will close when lunch is served. Please bring you cheque books and or cash. Orders for new books can also be delivered to you at this meeting with an extra 10% discount ie 35% discount. These must be pre-ordered. I will be bringing along some of the sought after A4 publications, too. We extend a warm welcome to our recent **new members**

Michael Cooke –  
Clive Cornwall -

Burnley  
Aboyne

### Editor

**Please note my new email address. I cannot access any messages sent to my old email address.**

My apologies for any items that have been submitted and lost due to email address change.

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Would you please note that the deadline for inclusion with the May 2013 Newsletter is the 20th April 2013. Submissions are welcome 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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Martin Critchley – Wicklow Town  
Helen Gomersall family - Luddenden  
Michae Kipling - Horsham  
Peter McWilliam – Kirkby Stephen  
Wayne Martin – Stockton-on-Tees  
Judith Sutcliffe – Leeds  
Martin Tattersall -  
Richard Witt – Leeds

We were very sorry to hear of the death of one of our long time members, Mike Bayley. Elsewhere is an obituary kindly sent in by Roy Starkey, another member.

On the **publication front** our Society was very fortunate to receive a bequest of all Mike Bayley's NMRS Publications. So if you have any "wants" for our out of print publications please let me know. Why pay dealer's prices when you can receive your member's discount! If you have already sent me a list of requirements I will already have contacted you if any have become available. There is a list of available publications on our website, but as these are continually changing please contact me for availability and prices.

When I became interested in Mining History books I had great difficulty locating them, visiting book fairs, dealers, charity shops etc.

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## LIBRARY REPORT

Thank you to Lynn Willies for the kind donation of copies of Der Anschnitt Zeitschrift fur Kunst und Kulture im Berbau for 2002 to 2012 and for

Volume 43 (2) of Historical Metallurgy Journal.

### Sallie Bassham

Honorary Librarian

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## Membership Renewal for 2013

With this newsletter you should receive your membership card for this year. If there is not a membership card then this means that you have not renewed

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## Electronic Newsletters

As was reported in the last issue, we are now producing newsletters in PDF format that members will be able to view online or download to their computers. A number of members have expressed a wish to receive electronic versions to save the use of paper. If you are one who reads it and then throws it away, or if your bookshelves are groaning under the weight, then you may wish to opt out of receiving the paper version.

The electronic version in PDF format has an advantage over the paper one in that it is in colour, which is too expensive for us to print. It is also

Now websites help and we at NMRS would like to encourage more interest in mining history. Getting people to look at our website would help to stimulate interest in this and our publications and so it is my intention to have a periodic "special offer" page on the website. This should benefit not only members but retail and trade sales.

Also in this Newsletter you can read about our joint meeting with Yorkshire Geology Trust and Leeds Geological Association at the National Coal Mining Museum which sounds very interesting. I will be there with some of our new publications and Ron is making some display boards for us to help promote our Society. Book orders are welcome for delivery there too.

Finally – a reminder about the need for a volunteer secretary! Also if coming to the AGM please bring your cheque books and/or cash to enable you to obtain some bargains. Plus if you order something prior to the meeting I can bring it along to save on postage.

*Barbara Sutcliffe*

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for this year – please do so now as you will receive no further newsletter or publications from us.

## Apologies

Please accept my apologies, to all those who were concerned about your address on the renewal forms and the last newsletter. Thank you to those who made corrections to the renewal form. We do have your complete address, recently when running the mail merge for the labels, the computer decided not to print the 3rd address field – stupid machine! Hopefully this newsletter will be addressed correctly.

Malcolm Street

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normally on the website before the paper copy has left the printers. When the newsletter is published we will email you the link to its location and you can either read it or download it from there. When the member's area is up and running all the PDF copies will be stored there for future reference. Newsletters in this format are also useful as you will be able to search the text easily.

Opting out of the paper version will help us to reduce our costs, as well and help us to keep the membership subscription low; less printing and less postage to pay.

## Obituary – Mike Bayley

I first met Mike back in the late 1970s when I was helping to run the South Staffs Mineral and Gemstone Society in Wolverhampton. Mike with his wife Sue had recently moved south from Otley in Yorkshire to take up a post training computer maintenance engineers with Sperry Vickers in Birmingham, and was keen to get involved with the local 'mineral & Mining scene'. We became firm friends and collecting partners, and made many trips to various parts of the country over the following twenty years or so. Like many people with an interest in minerals, Mike's enthusiasm extended across a broad range of natural history topics including plants, cacti, butterflies, insects, and to photography, lapidary and stamps too. A life-long gardening enthusiast, Mike tended a number of greenhouses in his home in Edgbaston, and there was much of botanical interest in the wider garden, year-round. As is the case with many of his post-war generation, Mike had developed excellent practical skills and was confident in tackling almost any DIY or mechanical project. For a number of years we made a joint annual pilgrimage to Cornwall at Easter to join the Northern Mine Research Society for a week of mine exploration, sight-seeing and general outdoor or underground fun and games with stalwarts such as the late Harry Houghton and John McNeill. We managed to squeeze in quite a lot of mineralogical exploration and collecting into these weeks, fitted around the more structured mining history activities.

On one famous occasion we were staying at a campsite near Tavistock (run by a Mr. Rice as I recall, a gentleman not well-suited to acting in a tourist host capacity) and one afternoon Mr. Rice came round to our van and remonstrated with Sue about her having hung out some washing to dry (lowering the tone of the establishment!). We never returned to his campsite. As a result of a chance conversation with the proprietors of Skye Silver, Mike and Sue acted as summer 'care-takers' for a number of years at the jewellery shop at Colbost in the NW of Skye, with Mike taking the opportunity to get out and explore for zeolites during quieter periods. In late 1987 Mike and Sue decided to move from Birmingham to Astcote in Northants, but we still managed to meet up for occasional trips to Shropshire, Wales and further afield. Mike became thoroughly immersed in village life, organising events, producing a newsletter, and serving on the Parish Council, as well as being a leading member of the Gardening Club. He was also involved in organising the Entomological Livestock Group Spring Fair at Pattishall Village Hall for several years, and where he and Sue were the driving force in providing snacks and refreshments for visitors. Mike was taken ill in mid-October 2012 and sadly died on 25<sup>th</sup> November. His funeral was held

at Milton Malsor Crematorium on 4<sup>th</sup> December at which there was standing room only, with a strong congregation of well-wishers from his many friends in different walks of life. The Society was represented by Roy & Mary Starkey. Our condolences go to his wife Sue and daughter Louise. Mike had left instructions for his collection of NMRS publications to be returned to the Society for 'recycling' in aid of Society funds, and we are very grateful for his generosity in this regard.

## Roy Starkey

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### 2013 Meetings Programme

#### Saturday 20 April

Spring Meeting (AGM) Ingleton Scout Hut, Meal Bank, Yorkshire, SD 6949 7394. Buffet lunch (pre-booking essential) at 12 noon, followed by AGM and an afternoon surface walk, led by Bernard Bond, looking at Bull Ing and Wilson Wood Colliery sites. Bookings to Barbara Sutcliffe (01282 614615 or [mansemins@btopenworld.com](mailto:mansemins@btopenworld.com))

#### Saturday 27 April

Yorkshire Geological Society Day of lectures and displays at the National Coal Mining Museum for England. [www.yorksgeolsoc.org.uk](http://www.yorksgeolsoc.org.uk)

#### Saturday 11 May

Smithy Level, Whitaside Mine. Moderate underground. 10.30am at NGR SD 982 964 on the Askrigg/Grinton road. Leader: Paul Dollery (01937 580 579 or [paul.dollery56@ntlworld.com](mailto:paul.dollery56@ntlworld.com))

#### Saturday 1 June

Gunnarside Gill surface walk. 11am at Gunnarside car park NGR SD 95 98. Leader: Sallie Bassham (015 2424 1851 or [sbassham@nildram.co.uk](mailto:sbassham@nildram.co.uk))

#### 28 June to 1 July

NAMHO Conference, Aberystwyth.  
[www.namhoconference.org.uk](http://www.namhoconference.org.uk)

#### July - date to be confirm'd.

Rogerley Mine, Weardale. Easy underground: Maximum 12 people. Leader: Barbara Sutcliffe (01282 614 615 or [mansemins@btopenworld.com](mailto:mansemins@btopenworld.com).)

#### Sunday 21 July

Booze Wood, Langthwaite, Swaledale. Easy underground. 10-30am at Langthwaite car park NZ 00520 02344. Leaders: Mike and Andy Richards (01904 413845)

#### Saturday 10 August

Smallcleugh, Nenthead. Moderate underground

11am at Nenthead Heritage Centre car park, NY781 435. Leader: Paul Dollery (01937 580 579 or [paul.dollery56@ntlworld.com](mailto:paul.dollery56@ntlworld.com))

### **Saturday 14 September**

Trollers Gill and Burhill Mines. Surface walk with various bits of underground. Meet at NGR SE 063 620. Leader Malcolm Street (07923 441523 or [malcolm@nmrs.org.uk](mailto:malcolm@nmrs.org.uk))

### **Saturday 26 October**

Autumn Meeting at Gisburn Festival Hall SD8248. Buffet lunch (pre-booking essential) at 12 noon, followed by meeting and presentations. Bookings and presentation details to Barbara Sutcliffe (01282 614 615 or [mansemins@btopenworld.com](mailto:mansemins@btopenworld.com))

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### **Further details of walk to follow AGM**

Surface Meet. Bull Ing 1673/Wilson Wood Colliery 1842

Meeting and starting point of the walk will be from our home address: Beech Terrace, Tatterthorne Lane, the lane next to the Masons Arms, main A65 road. Further directions will be given on the day. Time of day has been taken in consideration for our visit to the area of Bull Ing, grid ref SD681716. Permission is given to visit the seven acre meadow, which shows quite an active search for coal in 1673, the area being one of the earliest dates for the coal-field.

**Bernie Bond**

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### **Further information on joint event with YGS at NCMME, Caphouse on 27th April**

#### **YORKSHIRE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY-**

Joint Meeting with West Yorkshire Geology Trust, Leeds Geological Association and Northern Mine Research Society to be held at National Coal Mining Museum, Caphouse Colliery Wakefield

Saturday 27 April 2013 10.00 am – 5.00 pm

#### **YORKSHIRE ROCK AND FOSSIL DAY 2013**

This follows a pattern established on two previous occasions, comprising a full day event aimed to attract all levels of interest in the natural environment, earth sciences and mineral extraction, including members of the general public, young people and those with serious interest in these topics.

#### Popular programme

The programme comprises a first half of the day (10.00 – 13.30) aimed at the general public, in which there will be a series of short talks on popular

aspects of geology, hands-on displays of fossils and rock and mineral specimens and guided surface walks. There will be the opportunity for members of the general public to bring specimens for identification.

#### Underground Visits

For members of the participating societies there will be two extended underground visits, involving a walk out of the Caphouse ventilation drift with opportunity to inspect underground exposures. The two visits will be for a maximum of 19 people. Timing: first visit at 10.30; second visit at 12.30. Arrangements will be made for those wishing to attend to register their interest and thus ensure that, on a first-come first-served basis, there will be the opportunity for all those interested to make the trip.

#### Yorkshire Geology Month

There will be a short presentation on the series of popular geological events, meetings and field trips which will take place through May. This is a collaboration of virtually all geological groups active in Yorkshire and adjacent areas, to provide a programme of activities of interest to members of the general public and any person with interest in the subject, or just interested in an outing in the fresh air; these events are open to all members of the public

#### Lecture programme

From 13.00 hrs there will be a lecture programme aimed at those with a more serious interest in local geology and mineral resources. This year, the overall topic is-  
“**Geology & Mineral Resources of Yorkshire – revisited**”

This programme aims to review the development of the exploitation of the mineral resources of Yorkshire, variously from the point of view of historical perspective, current activity and future prospects. The title reflects a landmark publication in 1974 by Yorkshire Geological Society- “The Geology & Mineral Resources of Yorkshire” editors D.H.Rayner and J.E.Hemingway. This provided a scientific overview of all principal mineral exploitation at that date and the present programme will include a review of important changes since then.

Reflecting that this year celebrates the 175<sup>th</sup> Session of the Yorkshire Geological Society, the keynote lecture, by John Goodchild, will review the record, practice and influence of the coal owners in and around the Wakefield area, who were instrumental in founding the Society in 1837 and were intimately involved in coal mining around Caphouse Colliery.

The programme will continue through the afternoon with two breaks for refreshments.



Lectures:

John Goodchild (Wakefield):

For Science, Patronage and Self-interest: the West Riding coal masters and the establishment of the Geological and Polytechnic Society of the West Riding of Yorkshire

Andrew Bloodworth (British Geological Survey):  
Past, present and future of the coal industry

Martin Roe (Meerstone Archaeology):  
Historical context of the mining of epigenetic minerals of the Yorkshire and Northern England ore-fields

Peter Woods (Consultant):  
The Potash Industry, an established industry with exciting new prospects

John Peate (Hanson):  
The Quarrying and Aggregates Industry of the North of England- constraints, good practice and future prospects

#### Professional displays

Adjacent to the lecture room will be an extensive display area in which presentational material has been invited from various of the extractive industry companies and from any groups or individuals involved in projects in geological, geoconservation, industrial archaeology or other aspects of the mineral resources industries of Northern England.

The invitation is extended to any interested society or group who wish to use this display opportunity to contact the Programme Secretary of the Yorkshire Geological Society-

John Knight: [jaknightuk@btinternet.com](mailto:jaknightuk@btinternet.com)

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### **CONONISH DIARY**

#### **Research by Nyree J Hill**

Nyree is a student at the University of Leicester who is working for a PhD in collaboration with Scotgold Resources. She undertakes eight weeks fieldwork in the summer and tackles the laboratory work on return to Leicester. Her aim is to examine new occurrences of gold in the Scottish Highlands and integrate her data with those already established at Cononish.

Eventually Nyree will develop a model for gold mineralisation in the Tyndrum area which will help in locating fresh deposits. By applying methods that include mapping, microscopy, stable isotopes and radiogenic dating, she is searching for new veins, knowing they may be mineralised or barren.

Her equipment is a hammer, a shovel, a lens, a compass clinometer and bags for samples to take back to University.



By microscopy, Nyree has been able to characterise the mineralogy that is associated with the known mineralisation at Cononish. However, with a research grant from NMRS, she has commissioned two expensive analyses, allow her to date molybdenite and thus determine the age of the veins in Glen Orchy with precision. There will also be acknowledgement to the society in Nyree's thesis, which is due to be ready for examination in 2013.

Ron Callender

#### **A visit to Cononish Gold Mine**

Nyree Hill will be running a two-day fieldtrip for a group of undergraduates to Cononish Gold Mine, near Tyndrum, Perthshire, in the spring 2013 and has agreed that five or six members of the society may join her.

At this stage the date of 27/28<sup>th</sup> April is provisional. To make matters worse, accommodation in the locality is difficult – because of the proximity of the West Highland Way.

However, if you are interested, please let me know and I will keep you posted on a one-to-one basis as plans materialise.

Ron Callender [finlaggan@hotmail.com](mailto:finlaggan@hotmail.com)

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### **REVIEWS**

**Swaledale. Where the Gods shed a tear. Geology and industrial archaeology, 2012**

**Swaledale**  
Where the Gods Shed a Tear:  
Geology and Industrial Archaeology



Edited by: Stephen Eastmead and Peter Denison-Edson

This publication is only available as an eBook, at cost from [Lulu.com](http://Lulu.com) of US\$7.54, which to a Luddite like me is frustrating but understandable given that it contains over 500 photographs, mostly in colour. To call it a book is perhaps stretching reality as it consists of images posted by SWAAG members, some with no captions, one photo to a screen page, with a brief gazetteer entry for each industrial or geological site. The images are of variable quality with the best and most interesting arguably being those taken underground in mines across Swaledale and Arkengarthdale. Topics include lead workings and surface remains, bale hills, chert workings, elling hearths, fossils and rock strata. There is some repetition of images and, despite the title, also some coverage of Wensleydale and Stainmore.

Three lime kilns are included (in brief) but, given that I have over 220 sites on my database for SWAAG's area within the National Park, they have a long way to go!

This may all sound critical but it is a very useful source, particularly of underground images, and after all it is promoted as a 'pictorial taste' of what the area has to offer. It is very much a work in progress and will be added to by members as time passes. For less than £5 it is well worth considering ... and it does have a link to the NMRS.

### **Gold Miner's Diary – A year in the life of Mr William Murray**

A revised 2<sup>nd</sup> edition written and privately published by Dr R.M. Callender, FRPS in January 2013

The name "William Murray" features in many of the documents held in the National Library of Scotland and by augmenting this reliable information with details taken from 19<sup>th</sup> century newspaper

reports, the author has been able to compile a fictional account relating to one adventurer who played an important part in the story of the "Sutherland gold diggings" in 1869.

Starting with a short history of the discovery of gold late in 1868 there are then factual details about William Murray of Aberdeen and how he eventually arrived in Sutherland.

Following this comes the diary starting on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 1869. For ease of reading the diary is in italic script and is interspersed with some factual statements which therefore stand out. Throughout the book numerous black and white reproductions of photos, illustrations and printed matter all add to the interest.

The book makes for easy reading and is written by a real gold enthusiast – Scottish gold in particular!

Priced at £5 plus 50p postage enquiries should be made to [finlaggan@hotmail.com](mailto:finlaggan@hotmail.com). Any members wanting copies and intending to come to our AGM can collect pre-ordered copies there to save on postage.

*Barbara Sutcliffe*

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## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales**

**A major new book from British Cave Research Association, Edited by Tony Waltham and David Lowe**

**Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales** will be published in March 2013 with a cover price of **£25**. There is a special introductory price of **£20** until 30 June 2013. Delivery in the UK is included in this price.

This book presents an overview of all aspects of the great cave systems and spectacular karst landforms in the limestone terrains of the Yorkshire Dales. Twenty authors, all experts in their own fields, have produced authoritative and up-to-date texts, which have been drawn together by two editors, each of whom has extensive experience of the Dales both above and below ground. This book is Volume One of a pair, and contains all the overview chapters. A companion Volume Two - to be published next year - will contain chapters describing all the larger and more important cave systems in each dale and fell across the region's karst.

This new book presents a comprehensive overview of all aspects of the caves and karst of the Yorkshire Dales. It is the long-awaited successor to Limestones and Caves of Northwest England, but is hugely expanded because so many more caves have since been discovered and there is so much new information available about both the underground and the surface features.

**It is essential reading for every serious caver who enjoys the great caves of the Dales.** Cave Scientists, too, will appreciate this book because it is more than just a statement on the karst landscapes and the caves

beneath. It brings together many aspects of the natural environment and the evolution of the Yorkshire Dales. Indeed, one chapter gives the first comprehensive review of the glacial history of the Dales. The book offers a comprehensive and authoritative description of both the karst and the caves. It describes these features of the Yorkshire Dales in sixteen chapters covering topics such as the geology, the history of the glaciations, the karst landforms, the limestone pavements, the origins of the caves, the karst hydrology, the cave bone deposits and the cave archaeology. It is aimed at anyone with a serious interest in the Dales, and that will include everyone from the academic geographers to the dedicated cave explorers.

The chapters, each written by specialists who really know the Dales are as follows.

1. **The Yorkshire Dales**, by Tony Waltham and David Lowe
2. **Geology of the limestones**, by Colin Waters and David Lowe
3. **Glaciation and Quaternary evolution**, by Wishart Mitchell
4. **Karst geomorphology**, by Tony Waltham
5. **Limestone pavements**, by Simon Webb
6. **Travertine and tufa**, by Allan Pentecost
7. **Cave geomorphology**, by Tony Waltham and Phil Murphy
8. **Geological influences on the caves**, by David Lowe
9. **Hydrogeology of the karst**, by John Gunn and Simon Bottrell
10. **Chronology of the caves**, by Alf Latham and Derek Ford
11. **Speleothems and palaeoclimates**, by Tim Atkinson and Phil Hopley
12. **Holocene environments**, by Margaret Atherden
13. **Cave biology**, by Graham Proudlove
14. **Bats in the caves**, by John Altringham and Anita Glover
15. **Cave palaeontology**, by Terry O'Connor and Tom Lord
16. **Cave archaeology**, by Tom Lord and John Howard

The book can be pre-ordered at <http://bcra.org.uk/bookshop/>

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## **MINING & MINING HISTORY NEWS**

### **Mining History News, September 2012 to January 2013**

#### **Aberpergwn Colliery, South Wales** (04/09/2012)

Low coal prices and the possible development of a wind farm has forced Walter Energy to scale back their development plans for Aberpergwn Colliery near Glynneath. Development of the wind farm

might sterilise the area for mining. Letters have been sent to staff at the Colliery warning of possible redundancies. It is feared that up to 90 jobs may be at risk.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-west-wales-19474837>

<http://walterenergy.com/operationscenter/canada/uk.html>

#### **Allerton Bywater, West Yorkshire** (08/09/2012)

A £30 000 cage-shaped memorial has been unveiled at Allerton Bywater to commemorate the 87 men and boys who died at the local colliery during its 117 year period of operation ending in 1992. The sculpture was designed by former miner Harry Malkin, and it depicts mining images on its four sides.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-19529857>

#### **Bersham Colliery, North Wales** (11/09/2012)

The North Wales Miners Association Trust has drawn up an agreement with Wrexham Council for access to the area around Bersham Colliery Engine House. The Trust held an open day at the engine house on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September.

<http://www.wrexham.com/news>

#### **Chalk mines stabilised, Reading, Berkshire** (12/09/2012)

A £4.3M scheme to stabilise collapsing chalk mines has been completed after 12 years. Subsidence affected houses in the Field Road and Coley Road areas of the town in 2000.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-19571302>

#### **Halton Lea Gate surface mine, Northumberland** (15/09/2012)

On the 7<sup>th</sup> August the Planning Inspectorate allowed an appeal by HM Project Developments Ltd, and granted planning permission for the extraction of 140 000 tons of coal close to the border between Northumberland and Cumbria. Local people have set up a fund to oppose the opencast mine, and have hired a leading human rights lawyer to fight their case.

There is a lot of information about the development on Northumberland County Councils website, especially on the following page: Planning>Halton Lea Gate Planning Inquiry>Core Documents > Section 1 - Application Documents > Environmental Statement - Appendices. The documents include reports from the Coal Authority and plans of disused mines.

<http://www.journallive.co.uk/topics/halton-lea-gate-opencast/>

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=14230>

#### **Parys Mountain, Anglesey, North Wales** (21/09/2012)



Bill Hooley, Chief Executive Officer of Anglesey Mining PLC says "Micon are finalising an updated resource for us, and we're not going to be discouraged with what they come up with for us...That'll come out within the next few weeks. And we're also doing a scoping study which hopefully should be out before the end of the year." In 2007 the resource was estimated at 7.76 MT at 2% copper, 2.9% lead and 4.9% zinc.

<http://minesite.com/pub/archives>

#### **Cerro Rico, Bolivia (02/10/2012)**

A three year study of the Cerro Rico (Rich Mountain) near Potosi has found that the 15 800 foot mountain is in danger of collapsing after 467 years of mining. It is estimated that there are 600 mines on the mountain with 65 miles of tunnels, and it is proposed to fill the abandoned shafts with concrete in a project costing in excess of \$300M. Around 16 000 miners work in 35 cooperatives on the mountain.

<http://www.mining.com/bolivias-silver-mountain-on-the-verge-of-collapse-92495/>

#### **Maltby Colliery, South Yorkshire (08/10/2012)**

Due to ongoing geological problems Hargreaves Services PLC issued redundancy notices to staff at Maltby Colliery in early October. Since then further geological reports have been considered and the company propose not to mine the problematic T125 panel, and to mothball the mine. The company will consider alternative proposals submitted before the end of November. The Colliery opened in 1908, and in 2007 was sold by UK Coal to Hargreaves Services for £21.5M.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-19342519>  
<http://www.hargreavesservices.co.uk/default.aspx>

#### **Mining remediation in Midlothian (10/10/2012)**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> October BAM Nuttall started a 26 week programme to stabilise abandoned mine workings ahead of the construction of the Borders Railway from Edinburgh south to Galashiels. The Project Director for Network Rail said "Along the route of the Borders Railway, we have carried out extensive ground investigations and identified the locations which require support before construction of the new railway."

Border Telegraph, 10/10/2012

#### **King Edward Mine, Cornwall (12/10/2012)**

The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded the King Edward Mine Museum £37 500. With match funding of £10 000 from Cornwall Council and £2477 from the Rural Development Programme, this will be used to improve hands-on activities for young people, and for surveys of the local flora, fauna and archaeological remains.

<http://www.thisisthewestcountry.co.uk/news/cornwall-news/>

#### **Proposed surface mine, Northumberland (12/10/2012)**

The Banks Group have submitted a planning application for a surface mine at Ferneybeds about eight miles north-west of Ashington. They hope to extract about 752 000 tonnes of coal from the site over a period of three years.

<http://www.banksgroup.co.uk/category/mining/>

#### **South Crofty Mine, Cornwall (24/10/2012)**

Celeste Copper Corporation plans to spend £7.8M over the next year at South Crofty Mine. The expenditure will include £1.1M on drilling and £2.6M on pumping.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-20054062>

#### **Former Mines Rescue Station, Wrexham, North Wales (24/10/2012)**

Plans have been submitted by JJ Developments Ltd to Wrexham County Borough Council to convert this Grade 2 listed building in to student accommodation. The North Wales Miners Association Trust are concerned that there are no plans to restore the drill hall and training gallery of this unique building. You can view applications P/2012/0740 and 0741 in the weekly list 22-28/10/2012 on the Councils website:

<http://planning.wrexham.gov.uk/Planning/lg/GFPlanningWelcome.page>

[http://northwalesminers.com/archive\\_files/MineNews%202012.pdf](http://northwalesminers.com/archive_files/MineNews%202012.pdf)

#### **Galmoy Mine, County Kilkenny (01/11/2012)**

Mining operations were originally planned to end in May 2009, but finally ceased in mid-October 2012. Mine closure and rehabilitation work will continue until the end of the year.

<http://www.mineralsireland.ie/Publications.htm> (Latest Industry News November 2012)

#### **Mine shaft collapse, Egremont, Cumbria (14/11/2012)**

An old mineshaft collapsed during site investigation work near Howbank Road, dragging the drill-rig in to an 80 foot deep hole. There were no reported injuries. Nearby subsidence in 2005 led to the demolition of nine bungalows. You can see a video of the event here:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2233447/Cumbria-shaft-collapse-leaves-75ft-wide-crater-gardens-forcing-families-flee-homes.html>

#### **Consultation on Cornish Mining World Heritage Site (16/11/2012)**

On behalf of the UK Government, the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site Partnership Board has issued a Draft Management Plan 2013-2018. The deadline for



comments and completed questionnaires is 14 January 2013.

<http://www.cornish-mining.org.uk/management-plan-consultation>

#### **Borth, Ceredigion, Wales (17/11/2012)**

Archaeologists have been examining the remains of three boats which have been exposed by erosion of a bank of the Afon Leri. The 20 metre long vessels were part of a fleet that carried slate from the Corris and Aberllefenni Quarries. When the railway came to the area, the boats became redundant and were sunk as channel markers in about 1868.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-mid-wales-20364674>

#### **South Crofty Mine, Pool, Cornwall (26/11/2012)**

Cornwall Council will be refurbishing the headframe of the New Cooks Kitchen Shaft and two engine houses at Chappels Shaft, as part of an agreement with Western United Mines. The first part of the regeneration project is the demolition of a redundant and dangerous conveyor. This will allow scaffolding to be erected around the headframe and grit blasting and painting to proceed.

<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=32990>

#### **Chestatee River Diving Bell, Dahlonega, Georgia, USA (29/11/2012)**

Dahlonega was the site of the first major gold rush in the USA in 1829. In 1875 Philologus Loud brought a diving bell to the Chestatee River to extract gold from the river bed. Unfortunately its mother-ship sank in 1876 and the bell was abandoned. In 1981 the bell was recovered from the river, and it has now been restored and put on display in the towns Hancock Park. The bell, made of iron sheet, measures 14' x 6' x 8' and weighs 6 tons. It is believed that this is the last remaining bell of its type.

<http://dahlonega.org/index.php/dahlonega-blog/item/dahlonega-unveils-historic-diving-bell.html>

#### **Parys Mine, Anglesey (30/11/2012)**

Anglesey Mining PLC have announced an estimate of the mineral resource at Parys: 2.1 MT indicated at 0.58% copper, 2.18% lead and 4.11% zinc; and 4.1 MT inferred at 1.46% copper, 1.20% lead and 2.40% zinc. Bill Hooley, Chief Executive, said "we now have a clear target for a more substantive operation at Parys Mountain than previously contemplated." A scoping study is expected shortly.

<http://angleseymining.co.uk/news/?p=342>

#### **Penrhyn Quarry, Gwynedd (03/12/2012)**

Welsh Slate Ltd has received planning consent for an eight hectare extension to Penrhyn Quarry near

Bethesda, extending its operations for about 15 years.

The quarry has produced slate since the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-west-wales-20585299>

<http://www.welshslate.com/> (Planning and consent documents)

#### **Llan Colliery, Cardiff, South Wales (06/12/2012)**

Villagers in Gwaelod-y-Garth have made a plaque to commemorate the lives of the 16 men and boys who lost their lives in an explosion in the local colliery in 1875. A subsequent enquiry recommended that coal dust was watered down, to reduce the risk of explosion: a practice that continues to this day. Plans are being made to repair the arched brick entrance to the mine.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-20635238> (2 minute film clip)

#### **Glyn Rhonwy Quarry, Gwynedd (08/12/2012)**

Quarry Battery Company hopes to develop a £100M pumped storage hydro-electric scheme west of Llanberis. They plan to use the former Chwarel Fawr Quarry as the upper reservoir and the former Glyn Rhonwyn Quarry as the lower reservoir. The scheme could create 130 new jobs.

<http://www.quarrybatterycompany.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-west-wales-20597415>

#### **Maltby Colliery, South Yorkshire (17/12/2012)**

After consultation with employees and trades unions, Hargreaves Services PLC has decided to mothball the colliery. Coaling will finish and equipment will be recovered from the mine before the end of March. Existing reserves of coal fines will be processed. The management team are considering using methane from the mine to generate electricity.

<http://www.hargreavesservices.co.uk/rns%20feeds.aspx>

#### **Tara Mine, Co. Meath (05/01/2013)**

670 staff at the mine have been put on protective notice by the owners Boliden Tara. The company are trying to cut pay and conditions of service. A press release from the company (16/01/2013) announced the appointment of Ralph Rossouw as General Manager. Describing the mine, the company said "being a high-cost operation, Boliden Tara is focusing on improving its productivity and competitive position".

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2013/0105/361436-workers-at-tara-mines-put-on-protective-notice/>

[http://vp134.alertir.com/en/press-releases?p=press&afw\\_id=1265746&afw\\_lang=en](http://vp134.alertir.com/en/press-releases?p=press&afw_id=1265746&afw_lang=en)

#### **Aberpergwn Mine, South Wales (08/01/2012)**

Production has been halted at the colliery, and 290 people have lost their jobs. 20 staff will remain to carry out maintenance and development work.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-west-wales-20944454>

**Hesley Wood spoil heap, South Yorkshire** (09/01/2013)

Sheffield Council has approved plans by RecyCoal to recover 395 000 tonnes of coal from the spoil of the former Smithy Wood Colliery. 35 jobs will be created during the operation.

[http://www.recycoal.com/news/post/4406/title/recy\\_coal\\_receives\\_planning\\_approval\\_for\\_hesley\\_wood\\_spoil\\_heap](http://www.recycoal.com/news/post/4406/title/recy_coal_receives_planning_approval_for_hesley_wood_spoil_heap)

**Treffry Viaduct, Cornwall** (09/01/2013)

The Treffry Viaduct was built between 1839 and 1842 to carry china clay, copper, and granite on a tramway over the River Par. The viaduct is 89 feet high and 650 feet long with 10 arches. A specialist contractor will remove vegetation from the structure.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-20952648>

**Winsford Mine, Cheshire** (16/01/2013)

The Salt Union, owners of the Winsford Mine, are worried that methane from a nearby underground gas storage facility could seep into the mine and pose a danger to employees. The storage facility is being developed by Storengy just 800 metres from the mine. There are currently seven underground gas storage sites in the UK.

[http://www.winsfordguardian.co.uk/news/10164278.Cavern\\_plans\\_could\\_be\\_disastrous\\_warns\\_Salt\\_Union/](http://www.winsfordguardian.co.uk/news/10164278.Cavern_plans_could_be_disastrous_warns_Salt_Union/)

**Hemerdon Mine, Devon** (31/01/2013)

Wolf Minerals Ltd have secured a total funding package of £141M. They have just opened their UK headquarters in the Tamar Science Park, Plymouth, and have made senior management appointments. They will be looking for an Environment Manager and a Mine Manager in the coming months.

<http://www.wolfminerals.com.au/asx-announcements/quarterly-reports>

**Sirius Minerals PLC, North Yorkshire** (31/01/2013)

The company has submitted a planning application for a potash mine in the North York Moors National Park. The mine will be located south of Whitby, with potash transferred to Teeside by a 27 km long pipeline. It is expected that the National Park Authority will determine the application in May 2013. Full information will be made available on the Authority's website.

<http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/home>

**NEW BOOKS**

**A shaft full of shadows** (12/10/2012)

Dave Brennan and Eric Beckett, former miners at Maltby Main Colliery have produced this book listing 163 of the men and boys who died in the Colliery.

<http://www.dinningtontoday.co.uk/news/former-maltby-miners-dig-up-pit-s-history-1-5018129>

**A Gazetteer to the Metal Mines of Scotland** (10/11/2012)

The third edition of this most useful book was published in 1993, by the Wanlockhead Museum Trust. With a lot of new information available on the internet the author, J.G. Landless, is working on an update, hopefully completed in the spring, 2013. If you think any of the existing grid references are incorrect, please could you contact the author via the AditNow link below.

<http://www.aditnow.co.uk/community/viewtopic.aspx?t=7463>

**Anon, 2012. United Stone Firms Ltd.** Forest of Dean Stone Firms, Gloucestershire. 30 x 24cm, 146pp.

In 1911, United Stone Firms produced a brochure for the International Building Trades Exhibition in London. The brochure covered their operations mainly in south-west England but also in Ireland and Wales. The brochure mainly comprised photographs of their quarries, mines, workshops and ships as well as buildings, bridges and barracks built using their stone. In 2012 the brochure was republished by Forest of Dean Stone Firms Ltd. It is available as a limited edition (numbered) hardback (£55 including P&P) or softcover (£35), from the company: 01594 562304, info(at)fodstone.co.uk. A beautiful book. <http://www.naturalstonespecialist.com/currentissue/unlockednewsarticle.php?id=5826>

**The Alderley Edge Mines.** , C.J., and Dibben, N.J., 2013. This is an updated edition of the book written by Chris Carlon in 1979. It includes colour photographs, new plans of the mines, and information on the bronze-age and roman workings. Available for £12 (+£2.50 P&P) from nigel(at)dibben.org.uk or via <http://www.dibben.org.uk/main/index.php>

**Paraffin Young and Friends.** Leitch, Mary, 2012. Alan Fyfe, Edinburgh.

It contains 11 chapters in 111 pages with 16 black and white illustrations. There are references, a bibliography, a list of places to visit and an index. It costs £7.50 and P&P £1.50.

A biography of James Young (1811-1883) written by his great great granddaughter based on family papers, diaries and contemporary publications. Young developed Scotland's first oil industry starting by extracting oils from candle (=candle) coal in West Lothian and then developing the oil shales of the area. At its peak

3.3 MT of oil shale were mined annually, and 40000 people were employed in 120 refineries.

### **Journal of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland, No.12 (2012)**

The latest issue of 106 pages includes a wide range of articles, and some beautiful colour illustrations. It contains the following articles:

The Duhalla Coalfield, Co. Cork: a preliminary history;

The lead ore dressing floors at Glendalough and Glendasan, County Wicklow 1825-1923: a history, survey and interpretation of extant remains;

The slate quarrying industry on Sherkin Island, Co. Cork;

Creggan and the history of the silver-lead mines of The Marches of Armagh and Monaghan;

Mining heritage and tourism in South Australia and Victoria: observations and impressions.

The full cover price of the MHTI Journal 12 is €15 (+P&P) since it is a larger than usual journal with many colour pages. Whilst we have kept it at 10 euro for 11 years we have had to increase this year to reflect production costs. The Journal is available from Matthew Parkes, [mparkes@museum.ie](mailto:mparkes@museum.ie) or +353 87 122 1967.

### **Euromines Newsletter 2 -Regional Development, Mining and Tourism (December 2012)**

This newsletter includes short articles on mining heritage sites in Cyprus, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and the Czech Republic. According to the Editorial "there are more examples of mines (both closed and operational) which are open to tourism than examples where eco-tourism co-exists alongside large scale industrial or agricultural development".

<http://www.euromines.org/newsletter-2-regional-development-mining-tourism>

### **NEW FILMS**

#### **Collieries of Northumberland and Durham 2 (29/10/2012)**

Sixtownships Community History Group has released a second DVD on the Collieries of Northumberland and Durham, covering mines from County Durham northwards, nearly to Berwick upon Tweed. Duration 45 minutes. Price £5.99 excluding VAT and P&P. The Group has a range of coal mining films available at: <http://www.sixtownships.org.uk/>

#### **Goodluck Mine: a living legacy (DVD)**

This DVD examines the heritage of Goodluck Mine near Matlock Bath in Derbyshire, with surface and underground footage. The 55 minute DVD is available for £14.95 (+£1.50 P&P) from David Webb [davidwebb12\(at\)ntlworld.com](http://davidwebb12(at)ntlworld.com), or via

<http://www.goodluckmine.org.uk/index.html> . The mine is open to the public on the first Sunday each month.

### **DIARY DATES**

#### **22-25 April 2013**

Mining for Copper: Environment, Culture and Copper in Antiquity. Conference on 22-25 April 2013 at Timna, Israel. [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iams/iams-events-publication/timna\\_conference\\_2013](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/iams/iams-events-publication/timna_conference_2013)

#### **14-16 June 2013**

Historical Metallurgy Society 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference. This international conference in London has four themes: origins of metallurgy; innovation and change; society and metalworkers; and the future of historical and archaeological metallurgy. More details are available at <http://hist-met.org/index.html> or from Eleanor Blakelock:

[Eleanor.Blakelock@archaeomaterials.co.uk](mailto:Eleanor.Blakelock@archaeomaterials.co.uk)

#### **28 September-5 October, 2013**

19<sup>th</sup> Australian Mining History Association Annual Conference

<http://www.mininghistory.asn.au/conference/>

#### **17-19 October 2013**

"The forgotten state of industry: irish industrial landscapes and heritage in a global context". Conference hosted by Glens of Lead at the Glendalough Hotel, County Wicklow, Ireland. More details will be available on the Glens of Lead Facebook Page and their website [www.glensoflead.com](http://www.glensoflead.com) (being developed).

### **Alastair Lings**

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#### **Hexham Courant, Friday January 11 2013 "£200m Proposal for Mining Revival"**

A redundant mine could reopen as part of a possible £200m investment.

Exploratory drilling is underway at Nenthead to assess the scale of the deposits of lead and zinc at the former Rampgill mine.

Mining company Minco said if the scheme went ahead it would create around 300 jobs.

Cumbria County Council and the North Pennines AONB Partnership have already indicated their support.

Nenthead parish councillor Tony Pennell said villagers would welcome the return of mining to the area.

'This development is very much deeper than any mines previously used - three or four times deeper.' Coun. Pennell reported. 'It is not opencast mining.

It's not going to lay waste to another area. It is going to be a long way down and isn't going to affect the area except for hopefully providing some local jobs.

I think people appreciate in Nenthead that we've been mined for years. Yes there is subsidence here and there, but the effects of digging that far down are not much greater than the natural movements of the earth here anyway.'

He said developers had plans for only one entrance into the mine which would handle all traffic, with access from the main road.

The potential operations would see a revival of an industry which was once a lifeline for Nenthead, which was purpose-built during the height of the lead mining bonanza in the 19th century. "

**Sallie Bassham**

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### **Cumberland & Westmorland Herald, 28 November 2012**

Residents of the Nenthead area, on Alston Moor, gave a warm welcome to representatives of a company which hopes to develop a lead and zinc mine in the vicinity which would provide highly paid long term jobs for up to 500 workers.

An attentive audience of around 75 people gathered at Nenthead village hall on Monday to hear from and question three senior figures from mineral exploration and development company Minco plc, which is based in Ireland and has mining interests there and in several other countries, including Mexico and Canada.

The Meeting heard that an initial exploratory borehole above Nenthead had already reached a depth of about 350 metres in three weeks, with two more boreholes planned nearby. A maximum total of eight might eventually be drilled, depending on what the early ones reveal.

In the chair was local resident Dick Phillips, who joked that rather more people were present than at most Nenthead ward meetings, before introducing Minco directors Rowan Maule and Peter McParland and also the firm's chief geologist, Peter Tyler.

Mr. Tyler explained that about \$1 million was being spent on exploratory boreholes drilled to a depth of up to 600 metres in search of mineral deposits which would justify launching a commercial mining operation.

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### **Recent Work on Yorkshire Monastic Landscapes**

**A weekend conference sponsored by the Medieval Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society in association with the 2012 YAS Excursion Programme to be held at the headquarters of the YAS (Saturday) and Penhill, Wensleydale (Sunday) on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 April 2013**

This weekend will explore some of the results of recent work on monastic landscapes in Yorkshire. Themes will include monastic documentation, what a monastic landscape is, the variation between the

landscapes created by different orders (from precinct to wider estate) and an appreciation of the importance of extensive, detailed and accurate field survey. The Sunday field trip will visit the earthworks of the best preserved Templar preceptory in northern England, dissolved by 1312.

#### **Saturday 6 April**

- 9.30 Registration and tea/coffee
- 10.00 Introduction: what distinguishes a monastic landscape? Stephen Moorhouse
- 10.30 The monastic records of Fountains Abbey  
Mike Spence
- 11.30 Tea/coffee
- 12.00 A new earthwork survey of the precinct of Byland Abbey Marcus Jecock
- 1.00 Lunch
- 2.00 The Landscape of Bolton Priory and its hinterland Stephen Moorhouse
- 3.00 Tea/coffee
- 3.30 The preceptory estate of the Knights Templar at Penhill, Wensleydale, c1160-1312  
Stephen Moorhouse
- 4.30 Discussion, Summing up and close

#### **Sunday 7 April**

Meet at Temple Farm, Swinithwaite, for 10.15. Sunday will take the form of a field trip to examine the extensive earthwork remains of the best preserved Templar preceptory landscape in the north of England. Its landscape has remained under grass since it was abandoned in 1312. The entire built landscape of this extensive preceptory has been surveyed. Combined with the detailed documentation from the dissolution period of the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, a remarkable and detailed story of the development and demise of this extensive but low ranking preceptory has emerged. The morning will be devoted to the earlier part of the curia (abandoned before 1202) north of the A684 and the afternoon to the later curia (created by 1202) to the south of Temple Farm, around the water mill and exposed stone chapel.

A buffet lunch will be provided at the Berrys Café at Swinithwaite Hall. A select menu of hot soup and sandwiches will be available on the Saturday, so that orders can be ready for the café on the Sunday morning with minimum delay at lunchtime (at c12 noon). Stout walking shoes/boots are recommended, particularly in the afternoon, where access is by an un-surfaced gently upward sloping track.

For further details please contact Stephen Moorhouse 01924 475618. Cheques should be made payable to the Medieval Section of the YAS and should be sent to Stephen Moorhouse, Deighton House, 8 Deighton Lane, Healey, BATLEY, West Yorkshire WF17 8BJ. The fee includes refreshments on the Saturday.



Fees: Saturday only £15, Sunday only £12, both days £25

Please note: This conference is the one advertised last year to be held on 6 and 7 October 2012. It had to be postponed at short notice due to the organiser sustaining a break in a crucial bone in his left foot!

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## THE ORIGINAL 16 TO 1 GOLD MINE AT ALLEGHANY

Some years ago, I was invited to California to help with the promotion of the world gold panning championships, which were being held in the gold discovery park at Coloma, in the heart of the gold rush country. As a treat, my host Rosanne arranged some trips into the history of the 1849 gold rush. Best of all was the visit to the Original 16 to 1 gold mine (often called OSTO), situated high in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

We left Highway 49 and for an hour, Rosanne's car climbed up the mountainside, with the road deteriorating in conjunction with a shortage of signs indicating Alleghany. The village (population 58 at the last census) was deserted but by trial and error, we found the mine and joined the CEO, Mike Miller, for his welcome and initial briefing.



*The shift supervisor joined his miners to check progress and agree the rest of the day's work*

He had already agreed to a special tour on condition that I took a photograph using my technique of painted light, which I had developed in the mines of North Wales. In practice, an exposure of four to five minutes is given whilst a hand lamp that illuminates the scene is kept on the move; the result is a correctly exposed picture rendered in soft (but not flat!) lighting.

We kitted up, shouldered the photographic equipment and climbed onto a railway wagon which took us half a mile into the main adit. The train paused so that Rosanne and I could transfer to buckets (referred to as manskips), while we were warned that our buckets would hurtle downwards for three

or four minutes. Descending vertically, I have to say you travel a great distance in three minutes and later I found out that we travelled 2,900 feet.

The tour started in traditional fashion ... a long walk along one of the 28 miles of dark passageways, with Mike Miller pointing out features of the mine's operations since 1896. Gold production has always been high and the name of the mine derives from an arbitrary system of evaluating the ratio of gold to silver, which the United States adopted in 1782 ... but discarded ninety years later.

We arrived at a huge open space carved out of the solid rock and Mike explained this was called The Ballroom, which he thought "would make a good photograph." I agreed with him but, as we scanned the dark vastness with our torches, I realised this interior was about fifty times bigger than anything I had ever tried to photograph around Dolgellau.



*In the Ballroom there was an opportunity to photograph the veins of gold in the rock*

Using my native wit, I selected viewpoints that might not need too much illumination and using fast colour film, I made two exposures of five and ten minutes. I was stumped, because there was not much more I could have done. Ten days later, to my immense relief, I had a set of decent results, and ordered two enlargements, which I posted to Mike Miller.

Our tour continued and because we were with the CEO, we were allowed to descend 243 steps of steel laddering which was positioned to provide access to the recently discovered rich seams of gold. It was quiet because the miners were having lunch and receiving instructions for their next session. But when they re-started, the noise was deafening as a bucket was dragged along the level and drills shattered the rock face. I took a few hurried snapshots and realised we had to repeat our tracks in reverse to reach daylight.



*Lunch break over, the miners operated shovels and drills but agreed to a few photographs in spite of the din*

Back in the warm sunshine, I was exhausted and told Rosanne that I had serious doubts about the success of the photographs, but she just laughed at my anxiety. I could see the funny side when I thought of my feeble hand lamp attempting to illuminate a space the size of York Minster. Sitting at the entrance, covered in mud, dust and perspiration, we just laughed and laughed until a passing miner offered to take our photograph.

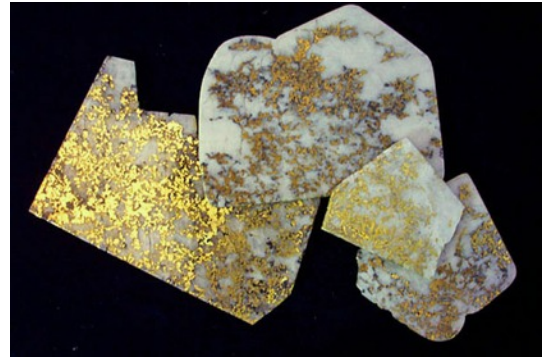
The mine still prospers, but had a serious tussle with the federal Mine Safety & Health Administration about reports on water quality (relating to the settling ponds of an abandoned mill). But at the championships in 1998, I met up with Mike Miller who had brought “The Whopper” with him.



*The entrance to the 16 to 1 gold mine, Alleghany*

Its story provides a happy ending. One day in May 1997, the miners removed 500 ounces of gold but that amount had doubled by the end of the week. More gold followed; Glen Knapp was drilling in a flurry of what he called “cornflakes”; he paused and saw “a big chunk of gold” concealed in the quartz. Weighing eighteen pounds, the Whopper contains 141 ounces of gold and joins a family of other great finds, which include the “Mini-whopper” (17 Troy

ounces) and on sale at forty thousand dollars, and the “Dragon” (6.5 Troy ounces) at fifty thousand dollars.



*Slices of gold-bearing quartz from the 16 to 1 mine which are sold in a shop/museum in Alleghany ... when it is open!*

Until I win the lottery, I will have to be content with my photographs of the occasion.

### **Ron Callender**

**Note:** View the mines website for fascinating stories on history, discoveries & court cases.

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### **From the NAMHO Newsletter, December 2012**

#### **Nenthead Mines Conservation Society and Nenthead Mines**

The society (NMCS) has continued discussions with the Land Agent for Cumbria County Council, who are the owners of the Nenthead Mines site. Society members have a voluntary care-taking role of the buildings and landscape. Work has included weed control and minor repairs.

Cumbria County Council has agreed to continue previous work to apply for High Level stewardship of the Nenthead Mines site. The application has been produced by the Staff Unit of the North Pennines AONB Partnership. NMCS is involved in discussions about the detail of the plans. This may generate funds to start repairs to collapsing river walls and to regenerate the woodland in Dowgang Burn.

The Environment Agency is about to start work on surveying the dumps and river banks on site in order to establish the amount of movement of dressing floor material into the watercourses. The River Nent has the greatest amount of zinc pollution of any English river, although most of the pollution is thought to originate from water discharged from Rampgill Level and Caplecleugh Low Level.



NMCS now has 87 members and is considering applying for grant funding in order to achieve the objectives of the Society. Following a members meeting at Nenthead on 21st October 2012, the NMCS committee have also concluded that a programme of events should be arranged in 2013 and would welcome offers of help with a programme - see the society website at [www.nentheadmines.com](http://www.nentheadmines.com). (30/11/2012)

*Peter Jackson, Chair, NMCS*

### **Alston Moor Mining News**

Minco Plc. is drilling for zinc ore bodies in the ground to the north of Nenthead. The target area is in the Melmerby Scar Limestone between Rampgill Vein and Brownley Hill Vein. The first hole is immediately to the north of the Nenthead to Coalcleugh road, approximately 200 metres north of the Rampgill Underground shaft location.

The company was represented at a local open meeting on 26th November. Apart from giving information that is in the press release, it was suggested that a mine would take at least five years to reach development stage, (assuming that economic ore bodies are discovered) and that the entrance would most likely be in an existing abandoned quarry or mine site, not necessarily adjacent to Nenthead.

Some of the executives and officers of Minco appear to be also associated with the Parys Project of Anglesey Mining plc. News reports suggest that there is likely to be a shortage of zinc in the next few years and that the prices are likely to rise. (30/11/2012)

<http://www.minco.ie/projects/North%20Pennine%20Project.html>

<http://www.cwherald.com/comment/comment/new-future-for-mining?-20121106399838.htm>

(06/11/2012)

*Peter Jackson*

### **Plans for King Edward Mine**

Cornwall Council is considering a major development plan for King Edward Mine. The aim is to increase visitor numbers and improve the site's financial stability. It includes the 'sensitive adaptation of redundant buildings'. £1.3 million will be spent to redevelop the former Count House and Carpenters' Shop as workshop spaces. The Assay Office will become a cafe at a cost of £250,000 and another £1.1 million will be spent on refurbishing the Boiler House and main Museum buildings. Funding for the project is being explored. The King Edward site has 17 Grade Two \* listed buildings and is a key component of the World Heritage site

This exciting announcement came at the end of a very successful season at the mine, the high point of which was the hosting of the World Mining Student Games, held in the UK for the first time.

*The above article courtesy of Graham Thorne (INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS 163, Bulletin of the Association of Industrial Archaeology)*

## **LATE NEWS**

### **Underwater Mine Axed**

UK-listed Nautilus Minerals has been forced to shelve plans to build the world's first underwater gold mine. The miner, which wanted to extract the precious metal from the Pacific Ocean seabed, has clashed with its partner, the government of Papua New Guinea, over the cost of the \$4m-a-week project. Nautilus, part-owned by Anglo-American, has now laid off staff and could move the mine elsewhere.

**Daily Telegraph 2 January 2013**

### **UN bans mine in industrial heritage area**

A United Nations body has called for an immediate halt to work in reopening a 400 year old tin mine that has reserves worth more than £1.5 billion.

Unesco said it was not consulted properly before planning consent was granted at South Crofty mine near Camborne, Cornwall.

The mine sits in the Cornwall and West Devon Mining World Heritage Site. Unesco, the UN's cultural body, awarded the area heritage status in 2006 for its contribution to the Industrial Revolution. It has the power to remove the listing.

Managers at South Crofty, which closed in 1998 and has evidence of mining dating to 1592, said the call was 'hard to fathom'. Alan Shoemith, the chief executive of Celeste Copper Corporation, said: 'The heritage they're protecting is former mining landscape. What we build will be the heritage of the future.'

**Daily Telegraph 6 November 2012**

### **Plans to mine under Yorkshire national park**

A mine a mile deep will be dug beneath unspoilt Yorkshire moorland under plans to exploit the largest deposits of potash in the world.

A mineral company has submitted a planning application for the mine, which would stretch 30 miles underground from a site near Whitby in the North York Moors National Park.

Sirius Minerals claims that the York Potash Project would be unobtrusive and create more than 1,000 jobs.

The 1,500 metre mine, near the village of Sneaton, would allow the firm to access an estimated 1.3

billion tons of polyhalite, from which potash is produced.

Geologists believe that the seam below the Yorkshire coastline is the world's biggest and best quality supply of the prized mineral, which is used in fertilisers.

The mine would tunnel outwards and pump the polyhalite about 30 miles north to Teesside, where it would be processed. Initial designs showed that the isolated site, in an existing commercial forestry, would be heavily screened by trees.

Chris Fraser, the managing director and chief executive of Sirius Minerals, said: 'We believe that we have both put forward a robust planning case and set a new benchmark for sensitive design in the mining industry.'

The company said a consultation found that 91% of local people supported the proposals. The park authority said the application should be available to view on its website next week, with a decision expected in May.

**Daily Telegraph 1 February 2013**

### **Coal mine manager charged over deaths**

The manager of a colliery where four miners died has been charged with four counts of manslaughter, police said.

Charles Breslin, Philip Hill, Garry Jenkins, and David Powell died at the Gleision Mine near Pontardawe, south Wales, in 2011. The pit manager, Malcolm Fyfield, 57, has been charged with four counts of gross negligence manslaughter. The company which owns the colliery, MNS Mining Ltd, has also been summonsed to answer four counts of corporate manslaughter.

**Daily Telegraph 19 January 2013**

### **Amateur prospector uncovers £200,000 gold nugget**

Daily Telegraph 18 January 2013

An amateur prospector hunting for gold in Australia has astonished experts after stumbling across an 11lb nugget worth some £200,000.

The Y-shaped nugget, weighing 177 ounces (5.5kg) was buried two feet beneath the ground near the town of Ballarat in Victoria. Local experts said that they could not recall any nugget even approaching that size being discovered in the area before.

The prospector, who has not been named, was using a hand-held metal detector. 'I have been a prospector for two decades, and cannot remember the last time a nugget over 100 ounces (2.8kg) has been found locally,' Cordell Kent, owner of the Ballarat Mining Exchange Gold Shop, told Australian media.

'If you are silly enough to melt it down, it would be worth just under AUS\$300,000 on market value but as a nugget at this size and shape it' worth significantly more than that.

'It's extremely significant as a mineral specimen. We are 162 years into a gold rush and Ballarat is still producing nuggets – it's unheard of.'

The area in which the nugget was found has been searched many times in the past, but Mr. Kent said that the prospector's metal detector was modern and powerful, meaning that he could search deeper underground than previous gold-hunters.

Mr. Kent said that the biggest nugget the prospector had previously discovered was worth AUS\$1,000 (£660). 'A finding like this gives people hope,' he told the Ballarat Courier.

'I've got no doubt there will be a lot of people who will be very enthusiastic about the goldfields again. There's nothing like digging up money, it's good fun.'

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