



PRESIDENTS JOTTINGS

First of all a thank you to all of you who attended our recent **A.G.M.** It was good to see some new faces and I hope they all enjoyed the event. The book sales proved popular as did the excellent buffet. Bernard Bond's walk which followed the AGM was well received and the literature he provided added extra interest. Thank you Bernard. There is a report of this walk further on in this Newsletter. Also Malcolm has already placed some photos on our website.

If any readers would like copies of the reports presented by Committee Members please send me a S.A. E. stating which ones you would like. As a synopsis we heard how our Society is going from strength to strength. We are now certainly embracing modern technology. Over our long history we have become renowned for our high quality detailed publications and now the strength of our website is becoming evident and is being used by more and more people. The amount of information on it is expanding on an almost daily basis. If you haven't looked at it recently and you are able to, please do so. Much is being done to enhance it from looking at past events, complete with photos, perusing future events and enjoying the member's area (ask

Malcolm for a password for this) Don't forget the area www.nmrs.org.uk/mines not yet linked to our website but still live. The Publication pages have also expanded, with all the out of print books available, current books (often with a look inside the actual book) and a facility to order online. We even have an e-book available with plans for more. The Newsletters, too, can be viewed online with colour photos which are not cost effective in the printed versions. All of these improvements are helping to draw new members into our Society.

Membership remains healthy as do our finances and grants have been awarded or are in the pipeline. Future Publications remain on target. Retail sales of our publications are on the increase though trade sales are a little slow, not helped by the closure of some of our outlets. When you are out and about and visit somewhere where you think our publications would go down well please let me know.

We realize that because of the geographical constraints only a few members can benefit from our meetings and our meets but our Publications and website benefit all. I would like to thank all the members of our Committee who work tirelessly on

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Would you please note that the deadline for inclusion with the August 2013 Newsletter is the 22nd July 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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your behalf and if YOU think you could help us continue to move forward please contact any of us.

The **elected Committee for 2013** consists of

President -	Barbara Sutcliffe
Vice-President -	Malcolm Street
Treasurer -	Tim Cook
Secretary -	Ron Callender
Librarian -	Sallie Bassham
Recorder -	Mike Gill
Public Relations Officer	Rob Needham
Editor of Publications	Richard Smith
Committee Member -	Peter Pearson

Please note that some of our members have other responsibilities, such as Meetings organiser (Sallie), Webmaster (Malcolm), Publications Officer (myself), Newsletter (Rob), Membership (Malcolm) and NAHMO representative (Sallie)

Since our last Newsletter I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members and hope they enjoy a long association with us.

John Amies- Leeds

John Byrne and Sara Knowles - York

Richard Jowett - Leyburn

Barry & Jackie Metcalfe - Barnard Castle

Nick O'Reilly - London

Darren Smith - Norwich

Ian Stephenson - Huddersfield

I had heard about an award one of our member's had achieved so I asked him about it – please read on page 4. Congratulations to Bernard Bond.

VISIT REPORT

Visit to Wilson Wood & Bull Ing Coal Mining areas, Ingleton

This visit took place following the recent A.G.M. at Mealbank, Ingleton on Saturday 20th April 2013. Primed with a very tasty selection of sandwiches and cakes an eager fleet of cars left Mealbank to begin the short walk to Wilson Wood area of Ingleton's coalfield. The starting point, Beech Terrace, originally miner's cottages built in 1874, was known locally as both Bracewell or Brick Row. The final name change came in 1952. The double garage area had been a shop selling basics to passing miners and also at this road junction to "The Winnings" the road was named Coal Pit Lane.



Photo:- Members viewing one of the bell pits

If you have any news please pass it on to me, we are always interested in what are members are involved in.

Regarding **Publications** our out of print ones and others are always popular so please consider "willing" them to us or passing them on to us if you are downsizing. We will pay carrier costs which are much less than the postal charges recently inflicted on us without much warning. This also applies to mining related books you may have. The first call on these would be our library, followed by sales to help contribute to our aims.

The planned **Rogerley meet** will not have a date until, hopefully, later this month but if you are interested please let me know. At the moment there are only two spare places but as not everyone might be able to make the date we are given when the Americans return to Weardale I am happy to set up a reserve list to fill any places which do become available.

Finally if this Newsletter is a little late it is because at the AGM we heard that BM95 might possibly be ready for late May. Obviously there is a great savings on postage if both the Newsletter and a publication can be sent out at the same time. Hopefully we have achieved that!

Barbara Sutcliffe

Our members viewed the mining exhibits filling the garage which fully covered the short walk. Bull Ing bell pits began in 1612 by Ingleton's Lord of the Manor, Anthony Bouch, and a further pit nearby was sunk by Leanard Wharton. A conflict began with Bouch's son Henry claiming all Manor digging rights, he then dug a second pit which flooded Wharton's pit and a full court case followed.



Photo:- Members viewing the Information Site Board, with to the rear Old Offices, Smithy and Shoeing Forge, in superb weather

Moving on we then viewed the nearby Wilson Wood Colliery site, sunk in 1854. A change of ownership came in 1872. It was bought by William Bracewell who intended to supply his Barnoldswick

Textile Mills. This area clearly shows its active past. In October 2003 it had suffered a mega shaft top collapse which added further interest. On our return to Beech Terrace, the home of Edmund Danson, colliery manager of Wilson Wood in 1874, we moved on to the site of the New Ingleton Colliery, 1912/40, on the main road, the A65. Pre-viewing was made easier by me now having been given the 1912 paper and cloth drawings of the site.

A thank you will be given to the land and building owners for again allowing Northern Mine members to visit these reminders of the coal mining her in Ingleton.

Bernie Bond

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Change to 11 May Meet

Unfortunately, it is not possible to visit Whitaside Mine on 11 May; instead the meet will be at Moulds Level. Starting at 10.30am at NGR NY 998 026 by a track branching left off the Low Row to Langthwaite road. Although Moulds is a long level, this is an easy, fairly dry trip. Contact meet leader, **Paul Dollery** (01937 580 579 or paul.dollery56@ntlworld.com) if you plan to come.

Research Framework one day conference 18 May **- postponed**

The amount of work and time required to process and edit the vast amount of information for the Research Framework for the Archaeology of the Extractive Industries in England means that we are very unlikely to have the Resource Assessment and Research Agenda ready for publication in May. We have therefore decided to delay the launch until Autumn 2013 and **the one day conference planned for 18 May at the NCMME, Caphouse Colliery near Wakefield, has been postponed.**

The document, which will run to over 300 pages, will provide a comprehensive review of the history and archaeology for mining and quarrying in England. It is essential that a draft of the document be posted to the Research pages on the NAMHO web site at www.namho.org before publication to allow interested parties ample time to comment on the contents. Elements of the document in the form of early drafts for the Resources Assessment, divided into mineral and themed categories, are already on the web site. To avoid further delay it is important that comments on their validity are made at the earliest opportunity - please contact Dr Peter Cloughton P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk or Dr Phil Newman phil.newman@blueyonder.co.uk

Yorkshire Archaeological Society **150th anniversary events, 2013**

2013 is the YAS's 150th anniversary. Since 1863 we have been promoting the study of Yorkshire's past through talks, excursions, publications and access to library and archive collections. To celebrate our anniversary we have a special range of events this year. Find out more on our website www.yas.org.uk

Sun 12 May, 1pm

'Aspects of Industrial Leeds: A walk to discover more than 150 years of the industrial history of Leeds', Industrial History Section event led by Robert Vickers. Free. Limited to 20 places. Meet 1.00pm, at the Black Prince statue, City Square, Leeds. Book via industrialhistoryvicechair@yas.org.uk

Tue 14 May, 6.30pm

'Castle to Cottage: House and Home in East Yorkshire' by David Neave. Lecture organised in association with East Riding of Yorkshire Archives. 6.30pm, The Treasure House, Beverley £5. Book via Treasure House

Sat 22 Jun, 2pm

AGM followed by lecture on 'Augustus Pitt-Rivers and Yorkshire' by Dr Dan Hicks from the Excavating Pitt-Rivers project at Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, 2pm. Free. (AGM for members only). YAS, Clarendon, 23 Clarendon Road, Leeds, LS2 9NZ 2pm

Mon 8 July, 10am

Phil Abramson: 'Catterick Garrison – From Iron Age to Digital Age' Joint 150th/200th anniversary excursion with Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. YAS members only. Limited to 25 places. Coach pick-up 10am Scotch Corner.

Tue 9 July

'Family Stories': 150 years of discovery with the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. An exhibition of YAS archive and library collections. The Museum of North Craven Life, The Folly, Settle (until 3 Nov). Adults £2.50, concessions £2.00, children 16 and under, free. For events see <http://www.ncbpt.org.uk/folly/>

Sat 13 July, 2pm

'150 years of Genealogy' by Anthony Camp (former Director of the Society of Genealogists). Family History Section lecture. 2pm, YAS, Clarendon, 23 Clarendon Road, Leeds, LS2 9NZ 2pm

Sat 13 July, 2pm onwards

Launch of 'Family Stories' exhibition and talks by Prof Richard Hoyle on Richard Preston of The Folly

(2pm) and The Listers of Gisburn (7pm), Museum of North Craven Life, The Folly, Settle. £6 for each talk or £10 for both for YAS members. Book via The Folly 01729 822893 by 22 June

Search & Rescue Awards, 2013, The Black Sheep Brewery Visitors Centre, Masham

Presentation Night and Dinner, Friday, 1st March 2013

The evening began with a thank you from the hosts to the five Cave and Fell Rescue Teams present. It was expressed that the nights awards bore testimony to the commitment, dedication and bravery of the teams present.

The teams had travelled from Clapham, Cleveland, Scarborough and Ryedale, Swaledale and Upper Wharfedale. Given to each was a 'Team Award' certificate. At the year of joining the Burnley Caving Club the Clapham CRO was made up of four areas – Clapham, Ingleton, Burnley and Lancaster. I can remember on one weekend as many as 7 cave and fell rescues happened and so extra manpower was always available.

I was called to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award having been a member of Cave & Fell Rescue for 43 years. Individuals from the other four teams were also asked to step forward.

Bernard Bond

CONONISH DIARY

There is not a lot to report on events in Tyndrum and it is a fair guess that the need for money is taking the attention of Scotgold Resources. BBC News reported the company had received a loan of £1.2M ... but that was last November.

The company continues to be “very encouraged” and reports that results from exploratory digging are being considered by its mining consultants, Snowden. Anticipating recommendations, the current forecast is that mining will begin in the second quarter of this year ... an extension from the previous prophecy of “early in 2013”.



Photo:- The core shed, showing recent additions

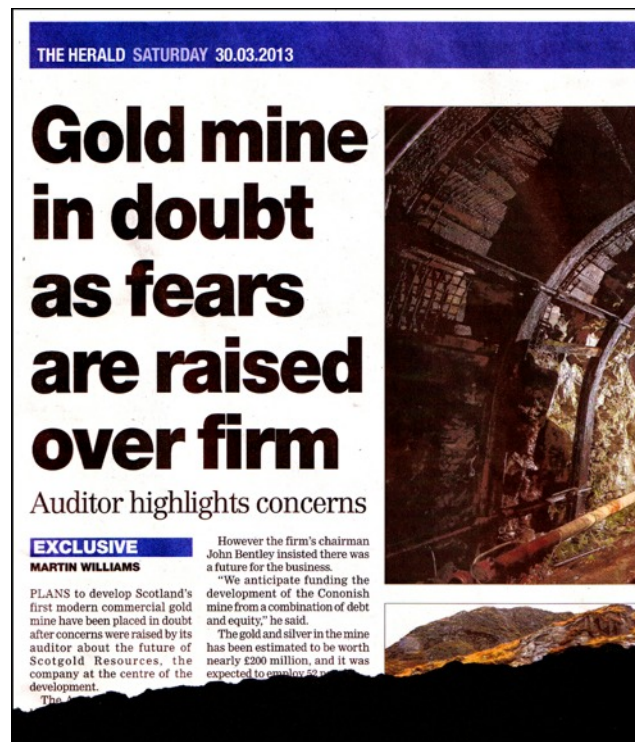
A special tour of the facilities was arranged for the shareholders last year and a film-clip is on the internet as “Tour of Cononish gold mine, Tyndrum”. For illumination, the cameraman relied on hand-held torches, which seldom keep still and this spoils the enjoyment, but the CEO’s commentary on the technicalities is very good.

Ron Callender

STOP PRESS CONONISH!

The alarming headline in a recent copy of the *Glasgow Herald* explains that, whilst everything seems secure on the mining front, Scotgold Resources has a bank debt of £1.26m that has to be paid off by the end of the year. With pre-tax losses of £1.68m for the last six months of 2012, there is an urgent need for more money.

The management remains calm and confident but estimates it will need £22m for mining to go ahead at Cononish. For his part, the auditor has warned that further finance is required to ensure the firm can repay the maturing bank debt. A statement declared that the financial conditions “indicate a material uncertainty that may cast significant doubt upon the company’s ability to continue as a going concern”.



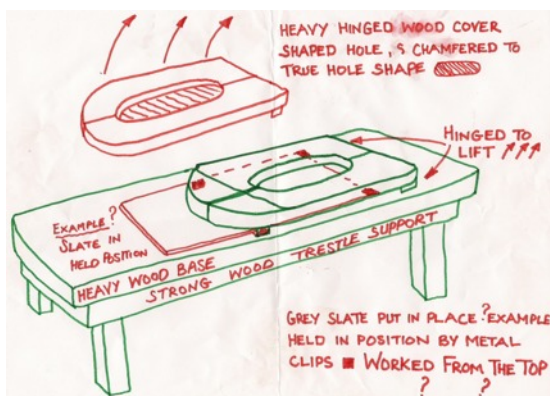
Glasgow Herald headlines

Scotgold has announced tentative plans to issue new stock or to sell some assets, and one bright spot is that recent explorations indicate an increase in the potential yields of gold and silver.

Ron Callender

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

What is this?



Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre, The Square, Swanage, Dorset need help with identifying this unknown wood bench and shaped lid. If you have any ideas please e-mail me, **Bernard Bond**, at janet@janetandbernie.plus.com
Suggestions will be passed on to the museum.

Excelsior rock drill

A fellow mining history researcher has come by documentation, including patent information and drawings, of a rock drill said to have been invented by Mr G F Wynne, one time engineer and company secretary of the Minera Lead Mines in North Wales. I assume the drill in question to be the Excelsior compressed air powered machine. I've seen references to this machine featured in Cornish drilling competitions, pitted against Holman and other machines prominent in the decades around 1890 - 1910, and also their use in the cuttings for the Panama Canal.

I would be grateful for any other information known to Members, particularly on ;

Who actually manufactured the Excelsior?

Where particularly and how extensively were they used?

As the percussive rockdrill of that period was of a fairly standard design, what unique feature did they have to occasion Mr Wynne taking out patent rights.

Dr Tom Elliott

Enquiry on Historical Details of Oakerthorpe and Pentrich Collieries

I am producing an account of the London Science Museums Pentrich Colliery Newcomen Engine based around additional unpublished materials from the museum, specifically the account of its sale and

movement to London, courtesy of Walker Bros of Wigan

The background to Francis Thompson, its builder, and details of the engine itself have been admirably covered by David Hulse's book - and it is not my intention to duplicate these. I would however be grateful for any information members may have on the following topics:

1. The history of Oakerthorpe Colliery, specifically relating to what prompted the decision to install Thomsons engine in 1791 and the reasons for its move from there to Pentrich in 1841, specifically the sources of this data.
2. The history of Pentrich Colliery, particularly what prompted the purchase of engine
3. Any details of the long serving Mr Haslam, the Pentrich Collieries owner or principal (resident at the Elms, Ripley)
4. Some background to Mr WT Anderson who photographed and reported so comprehensively on the engine (Notes on an Old Colliery Pumping Engine - Transactions of the Institute of Mining Engineers 1917 - I have the copy of his report). I seem to recall Anderson visited the colliery as part of its electrification programme (in addition to being a member of the Institute of Mining Engineers he was also a member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers and may have been involved with Rolls Royce at Derby)
5. Correspondence from 1893 suggests that the colliery also had a 20" winding engine with open topped cylinder - any information would be gratefully received
6. Any photographs of the Engine at Pentrich other than those that appeared in Andersons report

All contributions will be acknowledged, any expense reimbursed and all copyrights respected

Grudgings@btinternet.com

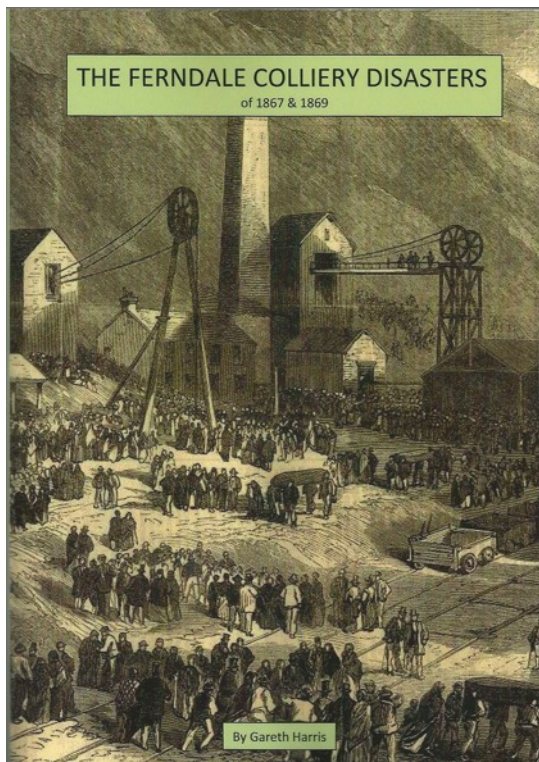
or by post to **Steve Grudgings**, 31 Laverstoke Lane, Laverstoke, Whitchurch Hants, RG28 7NY

BOOK REVIEWS

The Ferndale Colliery Disaster of 1867 and 1869 by Gareth Harris 2012 297 pp, illus. SB. Published by the author at Coalopolis Publishing, 9 Cefn Lane, Glyncoch, Pontypridd CF37 3BP. Price £13.99 ISBN 978-0-9564711-3-0

Ferndale is situated in the upper Rhondda Valley in South Wales. Before coal was discovered this was a quiet pastoral landscape. This book narrates, through newspaper reports of the time, the sad story of Blaenllechau Colliery, later named the Ferndale No 1 Pit where there were two explosions one in 1867 and one in 1869, resulting in the loss of 231 men and boys. It also describes the gallant rescue attempts and the two prolonged inquests that fol-

lowed harrowing visits by the inquest jury to the homes of the deceased to view the mutilated bodies and meet the distraught widows and orphans waiting to bury their loved ones.



The explosions could have been caused by a variety of circumstances, but two errors cannot be overlooked. The first was the criminal habit of some miners illegally opening their safety lamps, either to give more light, or to have a smoke. The second was inadequate ventilation. This was provided by a 'furnace' at the base of the up draft shaft. Ventilation fans did not appear until much later.

With the passing of each year the old miners that worked in the Ferndale Pits have decreased in number. Eventually all will succumb and their memories and recollections will die with them. This is why this book is so important. We must never forget the past.

Tony Oldham

Peerless Powell Duffryn of the South Wales Coalfield by Leslie M Shore 2012 240 pages. 275x215mm. Printed on gloss art paper with colour laminated board covers. - £24.99 ISBN 13 978 1899889 67 9 Lightmoor Press, Lydney, Glos. Mike Moore can supply.

This work is the first complete history of how Powell Duffryn became Britain's foremost coal company. It is a remarkable aspect of the nation's mining heritage. After 1935, Powell Duffryn Associated Collieries employed over 30,000 miners,

operated around sixty collieries, and produced nearly forty per cent of the South Wales Coalfield's output.

Sir George Elliot founded Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Company in 1864 by raising capital to buy steam coal collieries from the sons of Thomas Powell. PD then mined coal that was the first choice in quality for fuelling steam ships. Sir George ran the company in a style that gave rise to controversy amongst the company's shareholders. The workers were also not impressed. They said PD stood for Poverty and Danger.

Providently, in 1883 Elliot put Edmund Mills Hann, a County Durham mining engineer, in charge of the company's collieries. Hann helped steer the company away from the edge of bankruptcy by harnessing engineering to ensure that the company's collieries in the Cynon and Rhymney Valleys became models of efficiency. Progress was impeded at times by industrial conflict and natural disasters. Nevertheless, by 1914, PD was a byword for Welsh steam coal around the globe. Then, in 1935, Edmund Lawrence Hann led the merger of PD with Welsh Associated Collieries to create the most powerful company in British coal mining.

By 1945 Powell Duffryn Associated Collieries became the largest private sector coal company in the history of British Mining., employing over 35,000 men in sixty collieries, and raising about 40% of the South Wales Coalfields output.

A superb and detailed monograph on Britain's leading coal producer.

Tony Oldham



Stanbury Hill Project Flyer for new book on archaeological investigation of a rock art site

(See illustration on previous page)

Would any member like to send in further details or a review?

ENVIRONMENT ONE, GOLDMINERS ONE

As a country, Finland did not do too well during the Second World War. However, there was a cheerful announcement in 1945 when gold was discovered in the Lemmenjoki river of Northern Lapland. The welcome news coincided with an economy struggling from the effects of war, and attracted many people who reasoned there would be enough for everyone in the vast area of Lapland. Men and a few women with nothing to lose made their way to Rovaniemi on the Arctic Circle, which had been razed by the departing German army. Once these adventurers had equipped themselves for life in the wilderness, they raced along the forest paths and Finland's many lakes and rivers (using boats and canoes manhandled from Rovaniemi), to reach the gold fields and stake their claims.



Miners register their claims and pay an annual fee, which is determined by the amount of land they take. Government regulations demand the display of a notice of ownership, complete with a map showing the extent of the claim.

Gold discovery was not new to Finland. There had been an important strike on the Ivalo River in 1869, and the government quickly installed an outpost to monitor the swarms of prospectors who arrived

from Russia and Finland. Early in the 20th century, mining companies made serious attempts to use machinery to recover gold at over four hundred claims spread around the Laanila district. The hostile weather and the remoteness swallowed the finance and the attempts were fruitless.

The 1945 gold rush was different. Many of the personalities found fulfilment and prosperity in their new life style. The technicalities were simple; a flexible pipe ducted water into a sluice box and the prospector used a shovel to heave gravel into the box. At the end of the day, he cleaned up his 'take' by washing the trapped gravels. Over the years, important claims were retained in families and bequeathed to relations who were already familiar with the life-style and knew what it offered. Very often when a claim was available for purchase, it would be secured by people who were anxious to combine their urban life with some weeks in the wilderness. (In other words, it was the Finnish equivalent of a holiday cottage in Cornwall !)



At the end of each day, Yrho would clean his take by gently blowing away the gravel but retaining his gold.

The upshot is that gold prospecting has continued in the Lemmenjoki district for nearly seventy years and the professionals have brought heavy machinery onto their claims to seek out the gold that defied the previ-



ous generations. There is a union for negotiating agreements and conditions with the government and not only is this area of the wilderness a popular destination for prospectors, many holiday makers and visitors take the chance – if offered - to look for gold.



Through the author's interpreter, Kimmo (left), Heino explained how he had transported his mechanical shovel to the wilderness and that he used it to scrape off the permafrost to reveal gold-rich gravels.

It is no surprise that the period of seventy years has generated many stories, anecdotes and legends, and the once-wild rivers and forests have been tamed to a great extent. Unfortunately for the miners, the Finnish government believes that prospecting is damaging the environment and there is an urgent need to preserve nature. A new Mining Act came into force in July 2011 declaring that mechanised mining will end by 2020, and a further two years must be devoted to landscaping. Protests and arguments failed to win concessions, and a unique community of people has had to acknowledge that the end is in sight.

In a country famous for paper production, the gold miners hit on an ingenious way to express their feelings and deliver a riposte. They published a book.



It is called *Golden Days*, and is “a contemporary description from the Lemmenjoki gold fields”. Design and layout are bold, with hundreds of colour pictures; they do not dwell on the good old

days, but document the current way of life and the perpetual battle with the climate.



Double-page spreads show the best of the northern lights, the acclaimed nuggets, the vast landscapes, the beautiful snow scenes, the resident reindeer, the rushing streams, the prospectors, the all-terrain vehicles, the digging machines, the wives and the children. Numerous gold claims are featured and their owners are introduced in words and photographs. Open a page at random and the layout attracts, intrigues and fascinates. There is little doubt the book has filled a niche in mining history and is a triumph for the participants who devised the idea.



Along with his sister, Jouko Korhonen inherited his uncle's claim. Using machinery, Jouko operates a huge sluice box so as to reprocess auriferous gravel that was overlooked by Yrho. At the end of each day, he stops the machines and assesses his fortune.

On a personal note, the British Council gave me the chance to study gold mining in Lapland in 1984; my report conveyed a general understanding of the history and current events. More recently, my wife Margaret and I accepted an invitation to stay with Pirjo Muotka-jarvi and Jouko at their Jäkälä-Aytsi gold claim in the

summer of 2002. At first hand, we had the opportunity to 'see for ourselves' and enjoyed producing our own picture story, but sadly, we understand why prospecting with machines has to cease and acknowledge that good things have to come to an end.

Ron Callender

The book **Golden Days – A Contemporary Description from the Lemmenjoki Gold Fields in Finnish Lapland** may be ordered from Anu Törmä via email anu@torma-arrala.fi
tel. +358-400 868503

Cost: 45 € + postage costs

The book is also on facebook:
[facebook.com/onnenhippuja](https://www.facebook.com/onnenhippuja)

This unique documentary publication is now available also in English

NEWS ITEMS



Mike Gill sent in these two photographs from the Yorkshire Post of 14th and 21st February, taken by Chris Lawton. They show the effects of a slip from the waste tip at Hatfield Colliery by the Doncaster to Scunthorpe main railway line. According to the April 2013 issue of The Railway Magazine, on February 9th the driver of a train reported a 'rough ride' past the site. Then the track shifted dramatically over the night of 10th/11th February. Repairs to the track are not possible until the spoil has been

removed. Latest reports indicate that 1½million tons of spoil has to be stabilised before the railway tracks can be repaired and the cost in terms of lost business is already in the 'tens of millions'. The line is not expected to re-open until September.

Update on Claughton Manor Brick Works, Caton, Lancaster

April, 2013. As reported in a previous newsletter, site maintenance continues in and around the factory and yard areas. I have been told by locals, passing by the site on the A683 Hornby to Lancaster, that ropeways/cables have been running with maintenance to the stanchions.

Bernard Bond

Great Orme Exploration Society Ltd

In 1985 a small and somewhat diverse group of local mine explorers founded the Great Orme Exploration Society. The express intention was to study, investigate, and promote the history of 'Llandudno's Mountain', with a particular emphasis on the old mine workings. It was felt that this should be done from a 'conservation' standpoint with the intention of creating a greater awareness, among residents and visitors alike, of the rich and fascinating heritage of the Great Orme.

<http://www.goes.org.uk/>

Stephen J Lea

GOES Treasurer / Director

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Email stephen.lea005@btinternet.com

BEAMISH, The Living Museum of the North
Beamish
County Durham
DH9 0RG

Telephone: 0191 370 4000

Email: museum@beamish.org.uk

Website: www.beamish.org.uk

Set in 300 acres of beautiful County Durham countryside, Beamish vividly portrays life in North East England in Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian times. Buildings from throughout the region have been brought to Beamish, rebuilt and furnished as they once were. Costumed staff welcome visitors and demonstrate the past way of life.

Pockerley Old Hall and Waggonway are set in the early 1800s, Home Farm illustrates rural life in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Town and Pit Village show life in the region when the Great Northern Coalfield was at its peak of production.

Guided tours are given underground at the Mahogany drift mine, in the company of ex-miners. This mine first opened in the 1850s and worked intermittently during the 19th century. It was re-opened in 1921 to serve Chophill Colliery and closed again in the 1950s. The Museum re-opened a short section in the late 1970s so that visitors can see the coal seam and feel what miners' working conditions were like in the early 1900s.

Across the Colliery Yard is the heapstead and screens building from Ravensworth Park Drift Mine. In the adjacent stone engine house is a working steam winding engine built in 1855 and the sole survivor of a type once common in the North East.

Beamish is open all year, daily in summer and Tuesday to Thursday, Saturday & Sunday in winter.

Go-ahead for gas to be stored in Cheshire caves

An arm of French energy giant GDF Suez has won permission to store gas in caverns under Cheshire, despite safety concerns from Britain's oldest working mine. Storengy, the GDF subsidiary, has won final approval from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to store up to 400 million cubic metres of pressurised natural gas close to the Winsford rock salt mine. The HSE said Storengy had taken 'sufficient safety and environmental precautions', but the mine's owner, Salt Union, said it remained concerned about the move.

Daily Telegraph, 20 February 2013

British coal industry goes up in flames as fire shuts biggest pit

Almost half a mile below the Warwickshire countryside, an inferno rages with no sign of stopping. A fortnight since the heat underground sparked a blaze at Daw Mill, Britain's biggest coal pit, management warn the fire could burn for months to come, even though they have shut down ventilation to starve it of oxygen.

How long before the deep mine can be made safe for evacuated workers to return - and breathe - is anyone's guess. As a result, its operator, UK Coal, the largest still working in Britain, yesterday called time, closing the pit and putting 650 miners out of a job.

Kevin McCullough, the chief executive, did not sugar-coat the impact.

'This has been a terrible week, not just for the company and its employees, but also for the energy security of the country, as it brings an end to 47 years of coal production at Daw Mill,' he said. 'This ferocious fire has dealt a blow to everythi-

ng we tried to achieve over the last 12 months - in just 10 days'.

For, while the closure of what was long the group's worst-performing mine was already planned for 2014, its eruption into flames with £100m worth of equipment still underground has thrown the company's delicate survival plan into turmoil.

Fresh out of a last-ditch restructuring, UK Coal is now locked in talks with the Government in the hope that the taxpayer will help secure the future of its remaining deep mines - Kellingley and Thoresby - along with six open-cast operations.

'The hardest blow of all, really, is that having worked so hard we were only weeks away from having another (Daw Mill mine) face ready to go,' says spokesman Andrew Mackintosh. 'This fire absolutely hit at the worst time.'

On a broader level, the mine's premature end represents a potentially fatal blow for an industry already facing a host of problems above ground; insiders admit that green energy policies mean it is seeing out its twilight years here. But UK Coal, the sector leader, hoped to achieve a 'managed landing rather than a catastrophic insolvency', in the words of chairman Jonson Cox.

That would have been no easy task even before the fire. UK producers have been battling to compete with low-cost supplies from around the world, including the US where the shale gas bonanza has sent coal producers scurrying to Europe to find new business.

Daily Telegraph, 8 March 2013

SWAAG/NMRS Joint excavation at Fremington



NMRS members Alan Mills and Richard Smith are working with the Swaledale & Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group on a possible project to excavate a lead bale site at Fremington. Four bale sites are marked on the Marrick map of 1592 (Marrick Abbey papers, Leeds University Library, Brotherton Collection) but these appear to have been destroyed and most of the slag taken away. Further down the scarp

and towards the tree line a fairly compact bale site with copious amounts of slag and some charcoal was found by Tim Laurie this year. It appears to be on a downward route from the Copperthwaite Vein to Marrick Abbey. A preliminary survey was carried out by SWAAG/NMRS members in April and a project is now being planned to carry out an excavation possibly during the summer of this year. It is hoped to have one or more open days for NMRS members if this takes place and details of these will be posted on the NMRS website.

Although several geophysics surveys using magnetic and resistivity techniques have been carried out on Swaledale bale sites, none have been correlated with an excavation. Indeed few excavations of bale sites have been made (Derbyshire, Wales) and only one of these has involved geophysics. No excavations have been carried out on Dales bale sites to date and the chances are that much of this bale was destroyed in trying to remove the last traces of lead. But we won't know that until we dig. It is probable that lead was smelted here on an open fire, perhaps enclosed by a low sandstone wall. However, other technologies were known to have been used during the medieval period and there are documentary accounts pointing to the use of small bellows-blown or induced draught furnaces, either for smelting lead ore or treating slags from traditional bales.

It is intended that the excavation will be made under the supervision of a professional archaeologist and that the age of the site will be established by radio-carbon or archaeomagnetic dating.

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact **Richard Smith** at rsmith6@btinternet.com

Bannerdale Plumbago Mine

How often do I quote someone else's work without checking it? If I don't make it clear that I am making a direct quote, is there a risk that a repeated fact is assumed to be a confirmed fact.

The NAMHO Research Framework (often mentioned in these Newsletters) considered plumbago. "Everyone", of course, knows about the plumbago mines near Seathwaite; and the displays about them in the Keswick Pencil Museum are well worth seeing. I have always had a greater interest in smaller, more-difficult-to-find, mines. I reckon "everyone" can find a mine which has a large, unvegetated tip; but, to me, there is a greater pleasure in locating a small, run-in level which contained so little of any mineral that there is no lasting effect on the surrounding vegetation. So, over recent months, I have been trying to find the Bannerdale

plumbago mine remains as described by Hewer (1) and Ziemba (2)

I haven't checked their references; but have noticed that later writers also claim confidently that the plumbago level is 25 feet long. So, on my first two visits, in snow, I assumed that I had not found the correct different level. Although I was at NY 336 293, my level was about 18 strides (2 feet long), giving a total length of 36 feet.

Hewer's paper includes useful sketches of the locations of all the Bannerdale Crag mines and of the graphite level. So, in May 2013, when the ice and snow had melted, I returned. Obviously, the remains must have been in better condition in 1984; but I would still query some of the interpretations.

Firstly, the level length. Measured with a joiners' rule, it is still 12 yards long. I had assumed that all the other writers had checked the length before writing their articles, as it is not clear that they are quoting an earlier source. (Do I ever mislead others in this way?)

There is indeed a path going south from the level entrance, where it is more than 2 yards wide: yet it narrows to a boot's width very soon. Also, what appear from a distance to be a zig-zag path cannot be discerned on the ground. Perhaps the path is only wide near the level because it is a platform from which waste was thrown down hill?

There is no longer "graphite detectable ... on the south wall of the level". The only black material there is lichen. However, where dripping water has kept the ground free of vegetation, it is possible to pick up black lumps with which one can write on paper – but it needs a better mineralogist than I am, to say whether it is graphite/plumbago. Hewer also claims that stonework to the north side of the level is the base of a "small 6 foot square hut". A hut with external dimensions of 6 foot by 6 foot would indeed be small whatever the thickness of the walls. Perhaps this deserves another look?

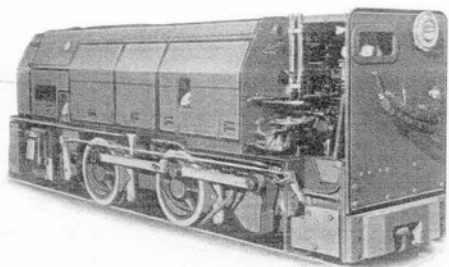
I would value the opinions of others on this site. I am not going to suggest that it be the focus of a Northern Mine meet. There can be few who would respond positively to the suggestion of 3 hours wet walking to and from a level 12 yards long. So I propose a "Not-a-NMRS-Meet", and invite anyone who would be interested in a visit to Bannerdale to contact me, to arrange a date to visit and help me interpret the site. There are the nearby Bannerdale lead mines to see, and the energetic could also investigate other mining sites, or climb the crags.

Sallie Bassham (sbassham@nildram.co.uk or 015 2424 1851)

- (1) Hewer, R.E., Bannerdale Lead Mine, British Mining 25, 1984, pp 26-30.
- (2) Ziembra, T.G.P., Mineral Veins in Bannerdale Crags, British Mining 1, 1975, pp 41-49.

Princess Royal Pit, Forest of Dean

Over the last year I have been involved in efforts to revive the project to build a narrow gauge railway between Drybrook and the Lea Bailey Level in the Forest of Dean. A previous attempt was abandoned due to problems with theft and vandalism. One of the reasons that I decided to get involved was the large quantity of equipment rusting away after the earlier attempt. Most of it had apparently come from collieries in Yorkshire and the North East. The equipment included ten underground flameproof locomotives, five different types of manriding wagons, several assorted wagons (flat wagons, tubs, cable-carriers, rail-carriers) as well as three lorry-loads of rails from the surface track layout of a closed colliery. So far the small group of volunteers have managed to get one flameproof Hunslet diesel loco working and are clearing vegetation and catching up on a backlog of maintenance around the entrance of the Lea Bailey Level (which is gated, but has track laid for a couple of hundred yards until a roof-fall blocks any further progress - we use the first few yards of the level as the shed in which to keep the mines loco and a few wagons).



Hudswell Clarke loco as built

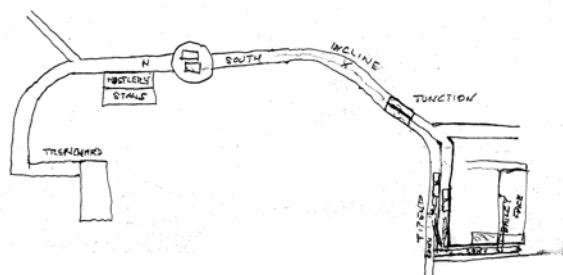


Hudswell Clarke loco awaiting restoration

The next loco that the group want to get working is a Hudswell Clarke 0-4-0DMF (diesel mechanical flameproof = Buxton-certificated for use underground in gassy coal mines), which just happens to

be identical to the two locos that used to work down in Princess Royal pit from when they were supplied new in 1953 until the pit closed in 1962.

On closure the locos were driven into a heading which was then bricked up (why bother?). Then the cables were cut, dropping the cages in the shaft which was then filled in. So the locos were lost forever, as it was a wet pit and will be flooded underground. To get some idea of the use made of the locos I wrote a letter to the two local papers, to try and find any miners who might have memories of working in Princess Royal. I was pleased to get four responses, and since then I have visited three of the miners. The sketch of the underground layout was produced by one of those miners, Doug James of Lydney.



Apparently the coal was dug from the Bailey Face (bottom right hand corner of diagram), loaded onto a conveyor, which took it to a tipper where it was loaded into drams. The loco then took these for about half a mile to a junction, where the drams were then taken up an incline by a haulage some 600 yards to the shaft. There the drams were loaded into the double-deck cage to be hauled to the surface. So the two locos spent their ten year life taking turns to haul the loaded drams for half a mile and back with the empties. There was no other use made of them. It was interesting to talk to the former miners, and brought home to me how time is running out to hear their memories, the youngest (two ex-Bevin boys) being now well on in their 70s and the oldest 90 years old. One frustration is that one of the two regular loco drivers is still apparently alive and his name is Don (surname unknown), but I don't know how to contact him as he has recently moved and now lives with his daughter, name unknown.

As is, hopefully, obvious from the two illustrations there is some way to go before we get the loco working again!

Further information on Princess Royal can be found at

<http://www.lightmoor.co.uk/forestcoal/CoalPrincessRoyal.html>

Rob Needham

NEWS

Proposed surface mine, Co. Durham

(Winter 2012-13)

Hargreaves Services are hoping to develop a surface mine near West Rainton in Co. Durham. They hope to extract 500 000 t of coal over a 2-3 year period. The proposal may create 40 jobs.

<http://www.hargreavesservices.co.uk/uploads/movingmountainissue19.pdf>

Princes of Wales Colliery, Pontefract, West Yorkshire

(Winter 2012-13)

In 2009 UK Coal received permission to recover up to 1 Mt of coal fines from the spoil of this former colliery which shut in 2002. The company are now working with Hargreaves Surface Mining Ltd on a planning application to almost double output from the scheme.

<http://www.hargreavesservices.co.uk/uploads/movingmountainissue19.pdf>

Western Carbons Ltd, South Wales

(11/02/2013)

In 2012 Western Carbons submitted a planning application for an exploratory driveage and associated works to investigate a coal seam. A recent landslide has prompted people to object to the development, and eight protestors demonstrated outside the offices of Neath Port Talbot Council. The Council are still considering the application, number P2012/0759.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-west-wales-21409439>

<https://planning.npt.gov.uk/welcome.asp>

Northern United Colliery, Gloucestershire

(12/02/2013)

The Homes and Communities Agency are redeveloping the site of the former Northern United Colliery at Cinderford in the Forest of Dean. The project will create 11 000m² of work-space. The colliery shut in 1965.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-21428461>

Loch Fitty, Fife (12/02/2013)

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency has approved Scottish Coals application to drain Loch Fitty. The company wants to extend the existing St Ninians Surface Mine to extract 3.4 Mt of coal over a period of six years, from below the loch. The development is expected to safeguard 89 jobs and create another 52 jobs.

http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/news/2013/sepa_grants_licence_for_loch_f.aspx

Hatfield Colliery, South Yorkshire

(14/02/2013)

A massive collapse of a spoil heap at Hatfield Colliery has bucked neighbouring railway lines, disrupting services between Doncaster, Scunthorpe and Cleethorpes. About 1000 000m³ of spoil will need to be moved to stabilise the area. Network Rail hope to have rail services restored by July and the track repaired by September. Hatfield Colliery is managed by Hargreaves Services PLC for its owner ING.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-21453502> (1 minute video)

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/news/2013/apr/Stabilising-the-ground-at-Hatfield-colliery-above-the-railway-at-Stainforth-continues/>

Daw Mill Colliery, Warwickshire

(07/03/2013)

On 22 February a major fire broke out at the colliery, the largest experienced in a UK mine in more than 30 years. UK Coal Mine Holdings have closed the mine, bringing to an end its 47 years of production. The mine employed 650 people, 400 underground.

http://www.ukcoal.com/latest-news/news/Daw_Mill_update

Diglake Colliery, Staffordshire (07/03/2013)

UK Coal hopes to develop a surface mine near Bignall End, producing 450 000 t of coal from an 80 hectare site over a period of 2½ years. In 1895 about 80 miners died at Diglake Colliery and most of the bodies were never recovered. The proposed open-cast will be only 20m deep, with the site of the disaster some 145m below that. The development may create up to 60 jobs.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-stoke-staffordshire-21693859>

Bryn Village, Afan Valley, South Wales

(11/03/2013)

Bryn Residents Action Group and Bryn Historical Society have been awarded a £4600 grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The groups will work with the Bryn Primary School to research the local coal and iron ore mines, and the metal industry. They have set up a website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/bryncoal/home>

<http://www.thisissouthwales.co.uk/Grant-offers-chance-dig-mining-history/story-18381182-detail/story.html#axzz2SB7Hba5o>

Wheal Watkins Mine, City of Burnside, South Australia (18/03/2013)

Burnside Historical Society want Burnside Council to fund a third study into restoring access to the old Wheal Watkins Mine in Glen Osmond. The mine was the first metal mine in Australia, producing silver and lead from 1843-1851. Tours of the mine started in 1986, but the mine was closed by a rock-fall in 2005.

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/burnside-historical-society-push-to-have-glen-osmonds-wheal-watkins-mine-opened-to-the-public/story-e6frea83-1226599643931>

Dalradian Gold Ltd, Co. Tyrone (19/03/2013)

Dalradian are planning to extend the exploration tunnel at their Curraghinalt deposit near Gortin. The tunnel was driven in the 1980s by Dublin based Ennex International. Figure 1 in the Environmental Monitoring Plan gives the best overview in planning application K/2013/0072/F http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/PublicAccess/zd/zdApplication/application_searchform.aspx <http://www.dalradian.com/investor-centre/news-releases/>

Alkane Energy PLC (25/03/2013)

The company are now the largest Coal Mine Methane (CMM) operator in the UK following its acquisition of Greenpark, operating across 16 sites with a licence area of 800 km². Last year it developed a new site at Gedling Colliery in Nottinghamshire and recommissioned a site at Askern Colliery in South Yorkshire. During 2013 the company plans to develop a new CMM site at Pontycymer in South Wales. Further information is in the company's Annual Report.

<http://www.alkane.co.uk/>

Proposed surface mine, Midlothian

(02/04/2013)

Scottish Coal has applied for planning permission to develop a surface mine at Cauldhall Moor, east of Penicuik in Midlothian. The company want to extract 10 Mt of coal and 100 000 t of fireclay over a 10 year period. The development could create 230 new jobs. Planning application reference 13/00105/DPP

http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1210/planning_and_the_environment

<http://www.agg-net.com/news/cauldhall-surface-mine-proposal>

Bingham Canyon Mine, Utah, USA

(10/04/2013)

A major slide affected the north wall of the open-pit copper mine on 10 April. The event had been anticipated and no people were injured, although about 10% of the shovels and haul trucks have sustained damage. Using laser scanners the weight of the displaced rock is estimated at 165 million tons.

Kennecott Utah Copper have resumed limited mining operations and sent the first new ore to the concentrator. The open pit is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile deep. In its 109 year history the mine has produced 19 million tons of copper.

<http://www.kennecott.com/slideupdates/first-new-ore-mined-and-delivered-concentrator>

Proposed surface mine, Northumberland,

12/04/2013

Northumberland County Council has granted planning permission for the proposed Ferneybeds Surface Mine. Banks Mining will extract 752 000 t of coal over a three year period creating 40 jobs. The company also hopes to extend their surface mines at Shotton (SE Northumberland) and Brenkley Lane (Newcastle).

<http://www.banksgroup.co.uk/news/>

Scottish Coal (19/04/2013)

The Court of Session in Edinburgh has appointed accountancy firm KPMG as liquidator of Scottish Coal. The company operated six surface mines in East Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and Fife. 590 people have lost their jobs.

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

Marine Minerals Ltd, Cornwall (25/04/2013)

Marine Minerals is aiming to recover tin from the seabed off the coast of North Cornwall. It carried out survey work in February to establish the tin content of sediments between St Ives and Perranporth. The company has now started a year-long, £500 000 study which will form part of an Environmental Impact Assessment to accompany a future licence application.

<http://marine-minerals.com/latestnews.html>

Wolf Minerals Ltd, Plymouth, Devon

(29/04/2013)

GR Engineering Services have been conditionally awarded a £75M contract to design construct and commission a tungsten & tin mineral processing plant and associated infrastructure. Wolf are recruiting a Process Plant Manager initially to assist in the development of the plant.

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

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Mine Water Treatment Schemes – Code of Practice

Jointly written and published by the Planning Officers Society & The Coal Authority, 2012. This 18 page publication aims to develop the relationship between planners and the Authority in regards to treatment schemes.

<http://coal.decc.gov.uk/publications/DirectoryListing.aspx?tags=61>

Merrick, Barry, 2013. Discovery to production: a mining history of Mount Isa Mines 1923-1931. ISBN 9781922109729 (hardback).

Smith, K. & Yellowley, T., 2013. Remembering the miners – lest we forget. Tup books. 176 photographs. Available from <http://durhamminers.org/Shop.html> for £9.50 + £1.50 P&P.
<http://www.journallive.co.uk/lifestyle-news/newcastle-features/2013/02/25/mining-a-rich-seam-of-history-61634-32872244/>

EVENTS

15-16 June 2013, Mining Gala at Apedale Heritage Centre, Staffordshire. Currently 10 mining organisations are taking part including the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation, Mines Rescue Service and Winsford Salt Mine.
<http://www.apedale.co.uk/index.php/gala>

Various dates, The Gathering Ireland 2013. Search this website for mining events
<http://www.thegatheringireland.com/>

17-25 August 2013, Heritage Week (Ireland). Search this website for mining events
<http://www.heritageweek.ie/>

Alastair Lings

FROM THE NAMHO MARCH 2013 NEWSLETTER

NAMHO conference 2013, Aberystwyth, 28th June – 1st July

The full web site for the National Association of Mining History Organisation (NAMHO) conference **Mining Legacies** at Aberystwyth University, 28 June to 1 July 2013, is now up and running. You can access it through www.namhoconference.org.uk

Bat White Nose Syndrome

This is just a reminder, that White Nose Syndrome (WNS) is a fatal disease to bats and is still a real risk to both bats and our caving in the UK. In North America it has decimated populations of bats which seem to succumb during winter. It has now been shown that the fungus *Geomyces destructans*, which causes WNS, can live in cave soil for months, even after bat populations have been wiped out.

It remains very important that everyone visiting caves does everything possible not to introduce this fungus accidentally from caves abroad, either from USA **or** from mainland Europe, where the fungus has also been detected. It is possible that bats in Mainland Europe *may* have some immunity to WNS. The fungus has not been detected here in the UK; if found it is likely to impact significantly on caving activities as well as having a devastating impact on bats.

If entering any cave / mine outside UK, please ensure that ALL kit, including boots, overalls, gloves, belt, helmet, lights, kit bags and ropes, etc., are carefully washed and cleaned, preferably **prior** to returning to the UK. All kit should also be sprayed with a disinfectant containing a fungicide before further use. Some suitable products are listed on the Frequently Asked Questions on the Bat Conservation Trust web page:

http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/faq.html#_Toc269809096

If anyone sees a suspect bat, dead or alive, with white fungus around the nose or face, in the UK during its hibernation:

- REPORT urgently details of location to the Bat Conservation Trust and to their Local Bat Group.
- Wash and decontaminate all clothing and kit used prior to **any** further caving.
- Ask your local Caving Club to circulate their members so further visits to that site are postponed until a sample can be taken, and the 'all clear' given. Hopefully by taking care, our Islands will be kept clear from this devastating disease.

If you require further information, please contact the Bat Conservation Trust enquiries@bats.org.uk or telephone 0845 1300 228. (31/12/2012)

David Priddis

Chairman, Gloucestershire Bat Group

Renewed calls for the demolition of Clipstone Colliery

Sherwood MP Mark Spencer is calling for the demolition of the headstocks and winding engine house at the former Clipstone Colliery in Nottinghamshire. An application to demolish all the colliery buildings was submitted in 2003 when the colliery finally closed. Although the majority of the site has been cleared ready for redevelopment, the fate of the Grade II listed headstocks and associated winding engine house is still pending consideration by the planning committee. English Heritage recognises the importance of the structures as an early example of the Koepe winding system. (14/12/2012)
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-20724827>

AND FINALLY, TO FILL THE LAST PAGE, AN APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

Amongst the equipment we have found in a shed at the Lea Bailey Level in the Forest of Dean is this



On it are two plates, the upper one of which (see column to right) is inscribed '50hp coal cutter'. I have no idea where it has come from or how old it is. Can anyone tell me anything more about it? In particular, is it worth preserving or is it just a piece of junk, and what is its history likely to have been?



That's it for now. I hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter. Whether you do or not, please let me know and send me any articles, photographs or news items that you think might be of interest to other members.

Rob Needham

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Data Protection Act

Members are reminded that the NMRS maintains a list of their names and addresses solely for the purposes 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 have been notified or after it has been determined that an overdue subscription has not been paid for several months.

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