

Northern Mine Research Society

Newsletter



Society established 1960

www.nmrs.org.uk

November 2014

www.nmrs.org.uk

Presidents Jottings

Many thanks to those of you who attended or sent in your apologies for our **Autumn meeting**. Again there were some new faces which we were pleased to see. Earlier in the year our Society was accused of doing very little to encourage younger members to continue with us. One member, having joined in his late teens many years ago has now restarted attending our meetings having kept up his membership ever since joining. Now with his family having flown the nest and his career sorted out he feels he has more time to devote to hobbies which were put on the back burner after college. I am sure this applies to many.

The book sales, prior to the usual excellent lunch, went down well. Ian Spensley brought along copies of his latest book "Mines and Mining in Wensleydale" Mike Gill donated many OS maps which were eagerly sort after and Sallie Bassham had brought along some A4 NMRS publications for us. After the business meeting we were able to enjoy the **presentations**. David Nicholls told us all about the Morecambe Bay Gas Fields, Graham Topping talked about Cliviger Coal Co., as an introduction to a NMRS field trip in 2015 and David Lewis' presentation was on visits to Welsh Mines circa 1975. Mike Gill also demonstrated the versatility of

"Mining in Cornwall and Devon" and the accompanying interactive CD. David Kitching showed photos of Hemingfield Colliery taken last weekend. Our thanks go to these members. Business reports will be available on our website in the members' area, accessed by your password. If you have forgotten it just follow the link to receive a new one.

Included in this, the last newsletter of the year, is the **membership renewal form for 2015**. It is of a great help to Malcolm if he can receive these as soon as possible. Due to the frugality of the way we run our Society we feel there is no need to increase membership fees for next year. All our expenses are kept to a minimum and our Committee members not only give of their time freely but often resources. A big thank you should go to them. There is also a blank membership form for you to pass on to an interested friend or even give as a gift. This is our latest attempt to increase membership after our bookmarks, recent flyers and the expansion of our website. No-one can accuse us of being complacent.

Also enclosed is a **Committee Nomination Form** for 2015 which needs to be sent to the Honorary Secretary at least 28 days before the actual AGM. The present Officers are

Editor

Rob Needham

Pike House, George Lane, Littledean, Glos.

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email:- rob.needham2@hotmail.co.uk

Would you please note that the deadline for inclusion with the February 2015 Newsletter is the 31st January 2015.

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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“ “	Len Morris

All Officers have indicated a willingness to continue in post. If you wish to help in some way to further our Society please contact either Mick or myself.

We would like to welcome the following **new members**

LIBRARY NEWS

Many thanks to all those who have given books and journals to the library recently. Tom Elliott has very generously given several boxes of “Transactions of the Institute of Mining Engineers” (which have not yet been catalogued), “International Mining and Minerals”, “The Mining Engineer” from the early 1990s, several useful reports on Cheshire salt mines and Snailbeach Reports from 1985 and 1988 – thank you to Richard Smith and his son for transporting all these - “Mole” from Forest of Dean has filled some of the 1989 to 1992 gaps in our run of “Mining Engineer” (thank you to Pete Jackson for transporting these), and Barbara Sutcliffe has donated the May 2014 “Down to

Matthew Hatton	Ripon
Keith Rimmer	Stockport
Ivor McCourt	Edinburgh

Also accompanying this Newsletter is **BM 98 Memoirs 2014**. If you would like further copies of this or other publications please contact me. Remember Christmas is coming up! As a **special offer** we are offering free postage on all orders received until December 15th. Another bonus is your 25% discount which is available to our members!

On behalf of the Committee members I would like to wish you all **Season’s Greetings** for Christmas and the New Year, thank you for your support in 2014 and remind you that the **2015 AGM** will again be held at Mealbank Hall, Ingleton **on Saturday April 11th**.

Barbara Sutcliffe

Earth”, five issues of “Meteorite” and four issues of “The Mineralogical Record”. At a recent conference, I bought for the library “Kingswood Coal” edited by the South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group, G.W.Hall’s “Metal Mining in Mid Wales 1822-1921” by Welsh Mines Society, and “Adventures in the Lead Trade by J.H.Rieuwerts. We have also acquired Volume 2 (1959) of “The Sorby Record” which includes articles by members of PDMHS, and some 1970’s copies of “Descent” and “The Speleologist” – re-reading those developments of famous systems, like Kingsdale, makes fascinating reading.

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

Plans of Iron Ore Mines in Cumbria.

The Society recently received a donation of 215, mainly original, plans of iron ore mines in the Furness and Egremont areas. They are of: Clints, Elliscales?, Florence, Goldmire, Jacktrees, Old Crossgates, Thwaite Flatt, Ullcoats and Wyndham mines.

In line with society policy, and with the donor’s permission, this material has been placed in the Whitehaven Record Office where it may be seen as part of its British Steel Corporation collection. The Accession number is H12354.

Mike Gill, Recorder **NMRS**

Visit Report

Nenthead Underground Meet – Saturday 9th August 2014

Initially, 5 members met at the car park on a dry and warmish morning which is rather unusual for Nenthead. We were informed by the leader that our plans had been changed to include a trip into Carrs Mine in the afternoon. So it was suggested that we do a quick

trip up to the whim chamber in Rampgill Mine to take in the morning.

Recently, there has been a good deal of work carried out in the level. The entrance passage which has always been a bit dodgy has been completely repaired and in places rebuilt. The strong wooden door has now been removed from the entrance of the chamber which leads into to the Brewery Shaft. It is now again possible to carefully look down this huge shaft from behind a chain suspended across the chamber wall.



In the afternoon 8 members joined our guide, Steve Holding from the Nenthead Mines Conservation Society, in order to explore Carrs Mine. This was of great interest to me because my last visit here was 29 years ago.

A lot of time and money has been, over the years, put into creating the show mine area. Dry gravel paths, extensive electrical lighting (now sadly corroded) and fixed ladders to the upper workings. We spent some time scurrying around the show mine area and what is unusual is the second entrance which opens out to the side of a small waterfall. At the foot of this waterfall one can see a level in very poor condition going into the hillside. Moving on, we climbed over a heavy wooden barrier at the end of the show mine into the mine proper, through some passages to reach an extended ladder that connected to the higher workings.



The upper workings are a series of flats which are very extensive with much gangue material stacked at the side of the passages, very much like the Wheel Flats area in Smallcleugh Mine. Up here are remains of rail tracks and points.

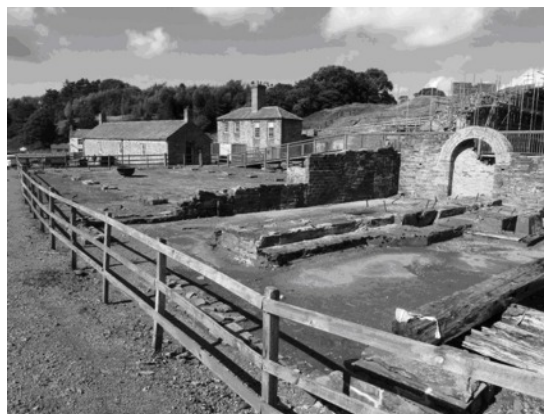


Of huge interest are areas of decorative flow stone running down some of the walls.

One particularly beautiful area is a small chamber where a little wooden ladder together with large areas of the wall is covered in multi-coloured formations. There were several small passages and chambers leading off the main flats to explore.



The team didn't have time to visit all the upper working as there was so much to see. Hopefully sometime in the future a return trip would be greatly appreciated. After returning to grass, some members of the team took the time to look around the remains of the smelt mill and ore processing floor. Much work has been put into renovating these areas including a very interesting and informative inside display called "From Mine to Market" illustrating how the ores were smelted and assayed at the Nenthead Mines.

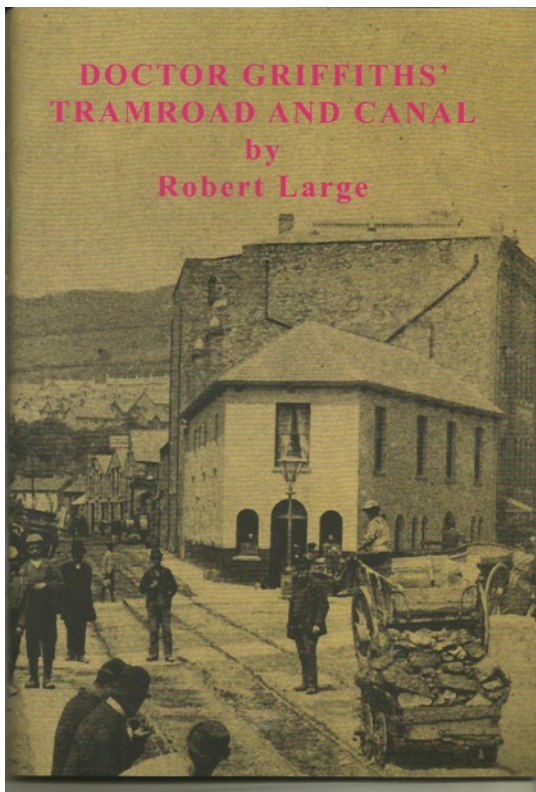


To finish off a perfect day, we went to the Barracks in the processing yard for tea and cake. I would like to thank our guide Steve Holding together with members of the Nenthead Mines Conservation Society for allowing us to visit Carrs Mine and for opening up their café and shop. I would also like to thank Mike Richards for providing all the photographs pertaining to Carrs, and last but not least I am indebted to our NMRS leader, Paul Dollery, who has once again given me the opportunity to produce another meet report.

Richard Platt

Book Reviews

DOCTOR GRIFFITH'S TRAMROAD AND CANAL by Robert Large. A dissertation in part fulfilment of the requirements of the Diploma in Continuing Education (Industrial Archaeology) University of Wales, Cardiff 1996 43 pp, SB. Copy in Pontypridd Reference Library



A two-fold difficulty exists in reviewing this thesis. It falls between coal mining and railway history. As no separate parliamentary authority was need for the construction of the tramroad, very few potential sources do not exist. Robert Large is therefore to be congratulated on the wealth of information he has uncovered.

In the early 19th century the products of the Rhondda Valley, coal, iron, tin, timber etc needed to be transported to the nearest port at Cardiff, hence the construction of the Glamorgan canal. Many smaller collieries also need to be connected to the Glamorgan canal. This is where Dr Richard Griffith steps in. He realised that a tramway was cheaper and quicker to contract than a canal. He is generally credited with the opening, at Gyfeillon in 1790, of the first coal level in the lower Rhondda valley.

The tramroad was built to a gauge of three feet and was constructed in the then-fashionable plateway manner, that is, the flangeless wheels of the trams were guided by the vertical component of the L-shaped tramway plates.

No account of Griffith's tramroad would be complete without mention of its extension to Dinas by Walter Coffin. Coffin realised that transport was required to get his coal to market. He decided to construct a tramroad of his own from his coal level at Dinas to connect with Griffith's tramroad at Gyfeillon. Coffin was often seen to be travelling on the tramroad, seated in a little tram, hardly more than a box with a seat which he had made himself.

With the closure of the Newbridge Rhondda colliery in 1876 the tramroad served only the Lan level and the Pwllgwaun colliery, neither of which had an al-

ternative means of shipping their output. In 1873 Dan Thomas had opened the Pwllgwaun colliery, known locally as Dan's Muck Hole due to the large amount of clay associated with the coal, which became the main source of traffic for the rest of its existence.

For over a quarter of a century the tramroad enjoyed a monopoly on the carriage of coal out of the lower Rhondda valley. The first and most serious, threat to this monopoly appeared in 1836 with the incorporation of the Taff Vale Railway Company, which was empowered to construct its main line from Cardiff to Merthyr Tydfil.

How often have we all come across remains of something related to Industrial Archaeology, and wondered about its history. Robert Large in this publication casts a fascinating light on a construction which was ahead of its time, and is a significant aid to our interpretation of the past.

Tony Oldham

A complete Guide to the Engine Houses of West Cornwall by Damian Nance & Kenneth Brown

Lightmoor Press ISBN 13:9781899889 85 3

There are plenty of books on West Country Mines but this one, specifically on engine houses, is quite impressive as an overview and intended for all those interested in these historically important structures and ideal for visitors to the County. The 104 pages provide a guide using both many contemporary colour photos and archival photographs. These are supplemented with brief descriptions of the engines the buildings once contained, simple interpretation of some of their key features, and short histories of the mines of which they were part. There are a total of 100 mines with engine houses covered in the main part of the book which, for ease, has been broken down into nine mining areas. Each is accompanied by a map showing the location of the engine houses being covered followed by individual details and photos. Either a grid reference or a brief description as to where the engine house is located is given. The introductory part of the book covers the nature of Cornish Engine houses, complete with drawings, a brief discussion on the minerals and geology of the area. At the end is quite an extensive glossary culminating in the actual lists of mines. The book provides an ideal starting point for the enthusiastic beginning his quest for knowledge. Although not pocket size it would be useful to have in the car, the size being 210x210mm

The book, a paperback, is priced at £18 plus £3.50 p&p if ordered direct from Black Dwarf Lightmoor, 120 Farmers Close, Witney, OX28 1NR

Barbara Sutcliffe

Mines and Miners of Wensleydale - An extensive history of Wensleydale's mining industry
by Ian Spensley

Softback, 330 pages. Price £15 plus £4 postage and packing in the UK. Available from the author, Mr I.M. Spensley, Aumonds Lear, Redmire, Leyburn, Yorkshire DL8 4EQ

Anyone looking at mining history in the Yorkshire Dales would have quickly spotted a large hole in the coverage in the Wensleydale area. Ian's excellent book has well and truly filled this lacuna. It is much more than a simple mining history, however. As well as looking at mining and quarrying, it gives an overview of upper Wensleydale's society and puts local developments and setbacks in a national context.

Although it has fewer large lead mines and smelt mills than neighbouring Dales, the longevity of the lead industry in Wensleydale is similar. The importance of coal mining to the local economy over the centuries is discussed, as is the growth of flagstone and limestone quarrying. The development of railways was crucial to the latter and fatal to the former and Ian reveals an interesting example of dubious, anti-competition practices by the railway companies.

Ian's formidable statistics on the length of time, and money, spent on researching the book will have other authors nodding sagely. However, I hope that these statistics do not deter other would-be writers and researchers because, while there are no Booker Prizes for mining history, the publication of his '*magnum opum*' will have given Ian well deserved satisfaction.

His book will certainly be of value to anyone with an interest in upper Wensleydale's historical economy. It is copiously illustrated with photographs and useful plans and sections of the workings being discussed. It is fully referenced, with indexes of 'subjects and places' and for 'people'.

Mike Gill

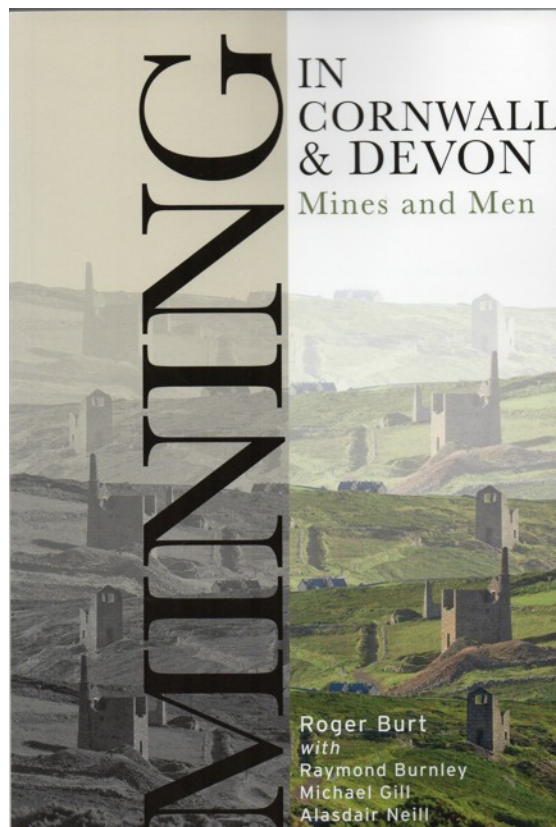
A Grey Past and a Blacker Future edited by Megan Waring has just been published, which may be of interest and is available from Meg@t-waring.demon.co.uk, A5 190p, 24 images, cost £9.50 & pp. Memoirs are in both Welsh and English and some mining reports are also included.

The author of the memoirs, Elias Jones was born in the Cardiganshire village of Pontrhydygroes in 1881 and started life as a lead miner at the age of 13. When the price of lead fell, he travelled to Glamorgan to find work in the coal mines returning home at harvest or lambing time. He was self educated, politically motivated and left several memoirs in Welsh that have been translated here. This compilation also includes newspaper articles about him and mining articles in his

possession. The reader will find him/herself back in an era where work was hard and badly paid. However, the humour of the miners can be seen and their interest in the wider world.

Tony Waring

Mining in Cornwall & Devon. Mines and Men
Roger Burt with Raymond Burnley, Michael Gill & Alasdair Neill



The August NMRS Newsletter carried a flyer for this book with a discounted order form, prior to publication. It is now available.

Written by experts in their own field this book is very pleasant surprise, from the interesting, enticing cover to the contents set out in a well organised manner which is very readable. Our logo is in a prominent position facing the title page – we did make a grant towards the publication. The inter-active CD of a wide range of data relating to the production, employment, ownership and management of all mines in the Cornwall and Devon from circa 1800-2000 is very useful and is housed in its own plastic envelope attached to the back cover to prevent it getting lost. The CD rom has a number of search headings such as find by location of mines, which in turn has sub headings of mining locations and OS grid references. All of this is very easy to navigate and use.

The book should appeal to many from mining historians/archaeologists, geologists, mineralogists, engineers, and a wide range of local, landscape and family historians.

I was particularly interested in the biographical notes on Mine Managers drawn from George

Henwood's, "Memoirs of Mines and Miners" originally published in the Mining Journal. A comprehensive list of mine-related books and articles is there to help readers with an interest in particular mines wanting further information. The Mine name index refers you back to all the references in the book which again is very useful.

Another section which warrants a mention is that of the Duchy of Cornwall. Their annual returns have not been readily available before but in this book they have been processed and provide details of the Duchy's role as the largest owner in the South West, and of the modernisation and changing administration of the Stannaries.

The book and the CD together include an excellent wide range of original research from both archival and printed sources and provides a definitive source for the analysis and personnel of mining since the seventeenth century. I would certainly recommend it to our members as a very impressive book and CD.

Direct orders, still qualifying for the original discount ie £19.50 post free in mainland UK, are still applicable until the end of 2014, after which the publications price of £25 post free will apply. Orders should be sent to University of Exeter Press, Reed Hall, Streatham Drive, Exeter, EX4 4QR. I suggest you quote NMRS if you are not using the original form.

Barbara Sutcliffe

Work on Mining Sites in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

Robert White, senior historic environment officer, listed recent work on the following sites in a report to a meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Historic Environment Group. In Swaledale and Arkengarthdale, an unstable gable of the New Mill has been consolidated to prevent its collapse. The area of the New and Octagon Mills, including their flues, has been surveyed. The undermined section of wall on the culvert at Grinton smelt mill has been repaired. Consolidation is about to begin on the mine shop at Dolly Level, and is already underway at Sun Hush shop. Rutter's Shaft which carried the pressure pipe down to Sir Francis Level has been capped (leaving the pipe in place). In Wensleydale a rabbit proof fence has been erected around the Bolton Park Mine complex, as the first stage towards preventing further rabbit damage and the boundary wall repaired. Following the bursting of a small dam near Wet Grooves Mine, Eller Beck has begun eroding the spoil heap from Disherforce Level. The affected area is to be surveyed in detail and a scheme devised for preventing further erosion without moving the problem further downstream. In Wharfedale the Beever Mine – Cockbur areas, at Yarnbury, have been mapped in detail and consolidation work done at the former barytes plant. Some consolidation has been done around the Cupola mill and the lightening

conductor on the chimney repaired. Work is due to begin on a survey of the Bolton Gill Mine in Hebden Gill, and a survey of Red Scar Mine, at Grimwith, has been completed.

The society has contributed to the reports accompanying many of the above surveys.

Chert Quarrying

Swaledale and Arkengarthdale Archaeology Group (SWAAG) has recently surveyed the chert incline and Hungry Chert Quarries.

Protecting Underground Sites

John Barnatt, Senior Survey Archaeologist, Peak District National Park Authority has been asked by English Heritage to produce a report on 'The Subterranean Industrial Legacy: Significance, Designation and Management'. This takes NAMHO's 'Research Agenda for the Archaeology of the Extractive Industries' forward using Peak District Mines as a pilot, but sections covering the whole of England are included. People who contributed to NAMHO's work have commented on John's first draft.

Mike Gill

Development of an industrial heritage facility at the former limeworks in Threshfield Quarry, Grassington

North Craven is still a major area for the production of crushed limestone, from Swinden and Horton Quarries but, until the late 1960s, it was also a very significant producer of lime for industrial and agricultural purposes. At one time or another 19 large-scale commercially-operated limestone quarries were working, almost half of which were producing lime. Two – the Craven Limeworks at Langcliffe and Mealbank Quarry at Ingleton – had Hoffmann kilns; five – Horton, Craven, Giggleswick, Swinden and Threshfield – had steel shaft-kilns based on the Spencer patents of 1900. In the first half of the 20th century Spencer patent kilns were probably the most numerous type of lime kiln across the country. Lime burning in the North is now very uncommon and almost every quarry – still operational – long since demolished their kilns to allow for modern working methods of quarrying and stone crushing. Most limeworks erected the fully steel-clad, firebrick-lined version of the Spencer kiln but Threshfield turned to an alternative version, and I have been unable to locate any other limeworks which opted for this version. In all cases, Spencer kilns were soon dismantled and sold off for scrap leaving scant evidence of their former existence. At Horton, Giggleswick and Swinden no trace remains; at Craven the massive stone buttresses still stand but the kilns were taken down in the Second World War. At Threshfield, however, more evidence did survive mainly because modern quarrying extended away from the limeworks area.

The kilns were shut down by 1960 but the quarry was worked until 1998-99, leaving the old limeworks for nature to reclaim. The owners, then Tarmac, gave up the quarry and, one could say, gifted the entire site to a locally-formed Development Trust on a long lease. This Trust plans to develop the quarry in different ways: plans are still being discussed but could include re-wilding part of the upper quarry and arts-based attractions. Another Trust – the Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust – aims to develop a heritage facility within part of the older quarry and work on this has already begun.

The upper steel kiln shafts have long since gone but the massive upper and lower buttressing is still extant. Tree and scrub clearance has now revealed the full scale of this for the first time in 50 years.



Photo:- The upper kiln buttress

Two incline planes have been cleared of invasive growth and soil accumulation to reveal intact surfaces complete with original wooden sleepers, a heritage trail with an all-weather surface has been laid around the site, but the most impressive work has focussed on the area around the kiln draw hole openings.



Photo:- One of the drawholes before clearance

Clearance has laid bare a whole network of concrete-bedded tramway tracks and the foundations of a 'lost' building as well as the base for the gantry that supported the drum mechanism for the main tramway from kilns to railway sidings at Threshfield. Over 100 tonnes of rubble have been removed from the rock-cut



Photo:- Twin drawholes in one of the tunnels

draw hole tunnels – the design of which makes these kilns almost unique – to give access inside three of the four tunnels.



Photo:- Rail track in situ in one of the tunnels

Amazingly, everything inside is intact and one tunnel still retains its narrow-gauge rail track; all draw holes have their steel doors intact, electrics are still in place, and several artefacts were found including the first lime drawers' shovel I have ever seen in the flesh. The scale of it all is impressive and imposing and, for a lime kiln nerd like me, more than a little exciting.

The YDLRT has secured two grants to undertake these physical works and to develop a low-key heritage facility based around the new trail. Interpretation panels will be installed at key points, apps and website materials will be designed and published ... and over 100m of narrow-gauge line will be reinstalled on the inclines and at the kiln bases to try and bring the site alive. We are very grateful to Leeds Museums and Galleries for agreeing to the long-term loan of three Hudson side-tipping V-skips from Armley Mills of the type that used to bring limestone from the quarry to the kiln top. These will be set as fixed exhibits on the relevant incline and filled with stone.

We are also trying – thus far in vain – to source the type of rectangular wagons (or bogeys) that carried lime down to the sidings and coal back to the kilns so, if anyone reading this has any contacts where we might be able to source a few of these, please get in touch via the Section.

The hope is to have the basic heritage trail open to the public within the next few months.

Anyone interested in helping can contact David Johnson by email at d.johnson.50@btinternet.com or by telephone (evenings only) on 01729 822915

David Johnson, Trustee-Director, YDLRT

21st August 2014 Fears torrential rain 'will open up' 200ft sink-hole near Cowshill

A landowner fears a massive 200ft (60m) deep sink-hole which has opened up near his home will get bigger in heavy rain.

Torrential downpours are forecast later in County Durham and John Hensby, 71, said he had been warned the 110ft (35m) wide the hole would grow.

It opened up about 260ft (80m) from Mr Henby's house in Cowshill near Bishop Auckland, above an old lead mine.

Mr Henby said he was worried about sheep falling in. Durham County Council has closed a nearby footpath.

The retired salesman lives in a stone two-storey house built in the 1870s and owns 10 acres of former mining land.

His partner Sam Hillyard, 39, spotted the sink-hole on Thursday while she was out shooting rabbits.

There are concerns sheep could fall down the hole

Mr Hensby, who has lived in the former mine manager's house for six years, said: "We heard enormous rumblings hours before it opened up and then it appeared.

"I'm not worried about my house as it is on stable land - not actually on a mine.

'Sheep swallowed up'

"We don't think our lives are in mortal danger or anything like that, but all the local farmers have been warned as we don't want any sheep wandering over and getting swallowed up."

Mr Hensby believes the sink-hole is due to 19th-Century iron or lead mining, though he has been unable to find evidence of a shaft that may have collapsed.

He added: "The hole is stable at the moment, but we know there is torrential rain coming and the hole will get bigger - which is a real worry.

"Long-term what will happen to a hole so big - we will just have to wait and see."

BBC News

On the 21st August 2014 a large mine collapse/subsidence occurred at Cowshill, top end of Weardale. It appears to be somewhere near the intersection of the Burtree pasture and Sedling Veins. Mr Hensby who lives nearby and owns the land heard a loud rumbling

just before the hole opened up. Its size is approximately 110ft long by 40 ft wide and 50ft deep. At the bottom you can just see some of the old mine workings and what appears to be an old shaft. The foot path that runs nearby has been closed by Durham County Council.



Report and photos from Malcolm Charlton

Thanks also to member Mason Scarr who sent in a copy of the half page article on the collapse from the Northern Echo of 25th August.

NAMHO Conference 2014

This years conference was held at Bangor University. The University started life in 1884 as the University College of North Wales, funded by donations from quarrymen and other local people. The lectures were held in the Main Arts Building, most of which dates back to 1911 and is built of Cefn stone from Clwyd, and Precelly slate from Pembrokeshire. Accommodation was available about 10 minutes walk away, in the Ffriddoedd Halls of Residence, built in 2009.

The Conference was attended by 135 delegates, and organised by the AditNow Mining History Society with support from Nigel Dibben, Angela Gawthrop, Dave Linton and others.

The theme was "Mining technology: technical innovation in the extractive industries". There were 16 lectures covering subjects ranging from "Mechanisation on the coal face" to "Precipitation Pools on Mynydd Parys", dates ranging from "Prehistoric Mining Technology" to "Metalliferous Mineral Exploration in North Wales since 1964" and locations from Devon & Cornwall up to Tyndrum in Perthshire, with a good focus on Wales.

During the breaks between lectures delegates could visit the displays set up by researchers, clubs and organisations such as I.A. Recordings, Moore Books and Starless River.

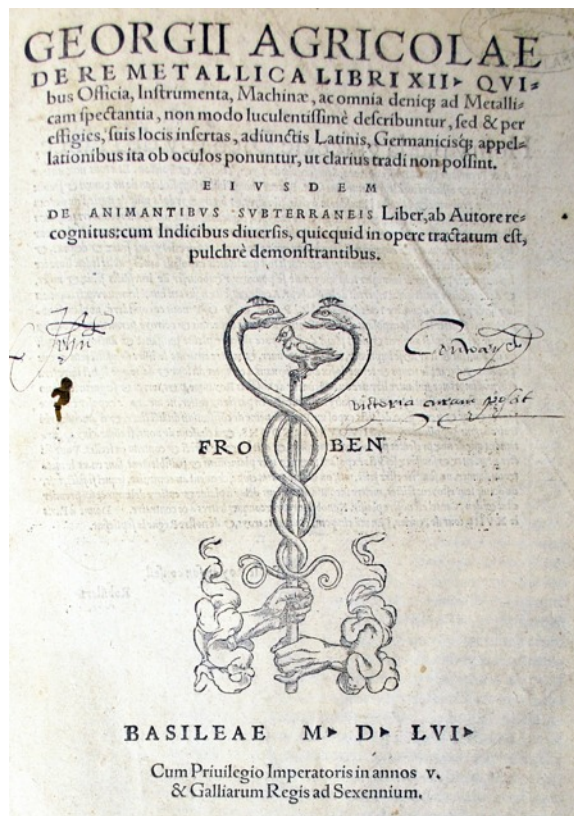
As an alternative to the lecture programme there were a variety of fieldtrips arranged within a 60 mile radius of the University. The 26 underground visits to 11 areas ranged from photographic visits, exploration using Single Rope Techniques, to the classic Mona – Parys Through-Trip which includes wading chest or neck-deep in water with an “interesting” chemistry and biology. Two surface tours were offered, along with seven Do-It-Yourself visits mainly to the local mining and quarrying visitor attractions.

I found the online booking system easy to use. The conference venue was readily accessible by public transport, with the accommodation nearby. Both the accommodation and the catering were excellent, provided by very friendly staff. The NAMHO Conference Pack and administration was first-rate. Unfortunately, I didn’t manage to join a fieldtrip, but the lectures were excellent, and I was very impressed by the depth and breadth of knowledge of the participants.

Top marks to the AditNow Mining History Society, their helpers, speakers, fieldtrip leaders, exhibitors, sponsors, landowners and the University for making this a most interesting and enjoyable conference. Thank you.

Alastair Lings
(Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland)

The Craft of the Miner: Agricola’s Masterpiece



National Coal Mining Museum for England until 18 January 2015

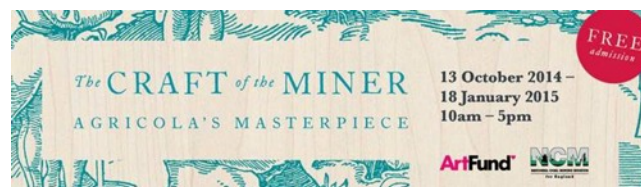
This fascinating exhibition opens up and reveals Georgius Agricola’s book *De Re Metallica*, published in 1556. An original volume was bought for the museum, with the assistance of the Art Fund, in 2010. The display concentrates on its author and the book itself, exploring why it was written and how it became such an important manual in mining history. In addition, the exhibition delves into mining manuals, self-help and training in mining methods up to the nineteenth century. Many items from the collection, including early texts from the library and mining tools will complement the complex story illustrated by the book, whose wonderful woodcut images show mining life in mediæval Germany.

The museum’s library is open to all and as well as holding *De Re Metallica* in its permanent collection has valuable information on coal mining in England, covering the historical, political, economic, social and geographical aspects of the industry. It also has some good sources for metal mining too. For example, it has extensive collections of the Mining Journal and the List of Mines/Mineral Statistics.

Museum open daily for 10am to 5pm. (Caphouse Colliery, New Road, Overton, Wakefield, WF4 4RH).

Mike Gill

Press release from the National Coal Mining Museum, NCMME September 2014



An exciting new interactive exhibition is set to open at The National Coal Mining Museum for England, exploring the influence of the mediæval mining manual

De Re Metallica

The Craft of the Miner, Agricola’s Masterpiece - 13 October 2014 – 18 January 2015

Official opening: Monday 13 October at 10.30am, National Coal Mining Museum for England

This exhibition features the first edition copy of the ancient mining manual *De Re Metallica* by Georgius Agricola, and concentrates on its author and the book itself, exploring why it was written and how it became such an important manual in mining history. **Roly Keating**, Chief Executive of

the British Library will open the exhibition on Monday 13 October.

Written over 450 years ago, *De Re Metallica*, was first published in 1556 in Basel, Switzerland and remained one of the most influential texts on mining for almost 200 years. The book, which is written for mining metal and minerals, is still relevant to the mining of coal and resonates as a 'masterpiece' in the industry.

The exhibition delves into mining manuals, self-help and training in mining methods up to the nineteenth century. Many items from the Museum's collection, including texts from the library and mining tools, alongside fun child-friendly activities such as jigsaws, drawing and colouring decorated (illuminated) letters, and playing a magnetic Latin word game all complement the woodcut images illustrating mining life in medieval Germany.

The book was bought for the Museum, with assistance of the Art Fund in 2010, and is permanently housed in the Museum Library. For the exhibition *De Re Metallica* will be joined by additional books on loan from the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds and Ripon Cathedral to complement and support the manual.

The Museum's free family learning activities for October half-term and Family Arts Festival 2014/Big Draw are inspired by the wonderful woodcut illustrations featured in *De Re Metallica*. Families are invited to find out how books were illustrated in the past, and then create their own relief print inspired by the objects from the Museum collection. For Halloween, families can work together to craft a spooky spell or poem, taking inspiration from a 'cauldron' of mining words and handling objects.

Printmaker, Dave Wilders will also be running a series of printmaking workshops for secondary schools in October and November.

The exhibition will be on display in the Museum's special exhibition space. The Museum Library holds *De Re Metallica* in its permanent collection and also valuable information on coal mining in England, **covering the historical, political, economic and geographical aspects of the industry.**

The exhibition is open during Museum opening hours and is free entry.

The Museum is free admission

Free car and coach parking

Opening hours: 10.00 am – 5.00 pm daily except for 24-26 December and 1 January

For press information, images and interview requests please contact Laura Barr at Bonner & Hindley: laura@bonnerandhindley.co.uk; 0113 243 4713

Mining and mining history news, July - October 2014

Proposed surface mine at Bryn Defaid, Llwd-coed, Mid Glamorgan (10/07/2014)

On the 24th April the Development Control Committee of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council approved plans for a new surface mine (Planning application 13/0421/10). Celtic Energy Ltd will extract 1.2 MT of coal over a five year period, employing 50 people. The development will generate about £500 000 for the benefit of the local community.

<http://www.coal.com/category/news/>

Greenburn Surface Mine, New Cumnock, Ayrshire (12/08/2014)

Kier Mining has been awarded two Scottish Green Apples for environmental work. They received a bronze award for a 500 metre long diversion of the River Nith, which will facilitate the mining of 1.2 MT of coal. The company received a gold award for the construction of a reduced-width bentonite wall between the new river and the surface mine.

<http://www.agg-net.com/news/two-scottish-green-apples-for-kier>

New Crofton Co-op Colliery, Crofton, West Yorkshire (21/08/2014)

On the 19th of June the Planning & Highways Committee of Wakefield Council were minded to approve the development of a new drift mine to extract 4.9 MT of coal (Planning application 13/03206/MIN). The mine will be owned and operated by a Co-operative, and hopes to employ 60 people.

<http://www.newcroftoncoopcolliery.co.uk/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-28889144>

Valentia Slate, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry (03/09/2014)

Valentia Slate Ltd has received another order from the Palace of Westminster, London. They will be supplying bar counter tops for the Pugin Room and Members Smoking Room. The first commercial production of slate on Valentia Island was in 1816. The slate was used in many prominent buildings and railway stations in London.

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

Drakelands Mine, Plymouth, Devon (10/09/2014)

The Annual Financial Report of Wolf Minerals Ltd mentions site preparation and construction activities. The Report states that "The original concrete processing plant built in World War 1 has gradually been demolished, with resident bats relocated and the resultant concrete being crushed for use as road base in the future". Work is underway with the new processing plant, with over 150 employees and contractors on site. An area has been cleared of topsoil for a mine waste facility (MWF), and construction of the main retaining wall has started.

<http://www.wolfminerals.com.au/home>

Markham Main Colliery, Armthorpe, South Yorkshire (11/09/2014)

Alkane Energy PLC are drilling at the former Markham Main Colliery to establish methane levels for a potential Coal Mine Methane (CMM) Power Station. The company have 18 power stations using CMM, with an installed capacity of 45 MW. The Colliery was developed from 1916, and finally closed in 1996.

<http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/business/business-news/alkane-is-restoring-life-to-region-s-coal-mines-1-6833515>

Hatfield Colliery, Stainforth, South Yorkshire (16/09/2014)

The National Union of Mineworkers is lending the Hatfield Colliery Employee Benefit Partnership £4 million for one year, on commercial terms. The money will be used to develop a new face, and safeguard the mine for a further 18 months. The Chairman of the Partnership, John Grogan, said "The National Union of Mineworkers has given us a future. It's hard for the deep mining sector to get money from banks." The first shaft at Hatfield Colliery was completed in 1916.

<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/sep/16/mining-union-4-million-loan-hatfield-colliery-num>

UK Coal (26/09/2014)

UK Coal has received a loan of £4 million from the Government, and £16 million from other sources, which will allow the company to manage the closure of Kellingley Colliery in North Yorkshire and Thoresby Colliery in Nottinghamshire. The collieries will shut in 2015 with the loss of 1300 jobs. Andrew Mackintosh, Communications Director, said "it was critical that we managed to avoid insolvency, and the immediate collapse of the business. We are very grateful for the support we have been given". Work started at Thoresby Colliery in 1925, and Kellingley Colliery has been in production in 1965.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-29373765>

York Potash Project, Sneaton, North Yorkshire (30/09/2014)

On the 30th September York Potash Ltd, a subsidiary of Sirius Minerals PLC submitted planning applications to North York Moors National Park and to Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council (Applications NYM/2014/0676/MEIA and R/2014/0627/FFM respectively). The proposal is for "The winning and working of polyhalite by underground methods including the construction of a minehead at Dove's Nest Farm involving access, maintenance and ventilation shafts, the landforming of associated spoil, the construction of buildings, access roads, car parking and helicopter landing site, attenuation ponds, landscaping, restoration and aftercare and associated works. In addition, the construction of an underground tunnel between Doves Nest Farm and land at Wilton that links to the mine below ground, comprising 1 no. shaft at Doves Nest Farm, 3no. intermediate access shaft sites, each with associated landforming of associated spoil, the construction of buildings, access roads and car parking, landscaping, restoration and aftercare, and the construction of a tunnel portal at Wilton comprising buildings, landforming of spoil and associated works." The tunnel will be 37.5 kilometres long, taking polyhalite, by conveyor to a Materials Handling Facility on Teeside.

<http://yorkpotash.co.uk/consultation/key-documents/>

Curraghinalt Gold Project, Gortin, Co.Tyrone (02/10/2014)

On the 2nd December 2013 Dalradian Resources received planning permission to extend the 1980s exploratory adit at Curraghinalt (Planning application K/2013/0072/F). They have appointed contractors for the surface and underground works. F.P. McCann Ltd will be constructing the surface operations area, water treatment plant, waste rock storage area, internal access roads and installing services. The underground contract has been awarded to QME Ltd and consists of "Preparation of the existing 700 metre adit, including scaling and removal of train tracks and timber supports; Additional development of approximately 1,000 metres; Construction of underground drill bays; Testing of appropriate mining techniques; and Removal of a large sample for metallurgical and other testing." Surface works have started at the site.

<http://www.dalradian.com/news-and-events/news-releases/default.aspx>

Navigation Colliery, Crumlin, Gwent (08/10/2014)

The Victorian Society has included the buildings of the Navigation Colliery on their list of the Top Ten Most Endangered Victorian and Edwardian Buildings in England & Wales 2014. The buildings are brick-built and Grade 2 listed. The Colliery was in production from 1911-1967.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-29546628> (1½ minute video clip)

Glensanda Quarry, Argyllshire (14/10/2014)

Aggregate Industries have completed a £30 million upgrade to their coastal superquarry. Pat Ward, the company's Chief Executive Officer said "Annual production capacity at present is in excess of nine million tonnes and the next step is to produce 15 million tonnes of granite globally as demand continues to increase. The quarry's new 30m high crusher house and reclaim tunnel will enable us to reduce the distance the dumpers have to travel to offload aggregate, speeding up the transportation process and allowing us to secure upwards of 500 jobs and their associated benefits for almost three decades." The quarry has been producing granite since 1986.

<http://www.agg-net.com/news/major-investment-unveiled-at-glensanda>

Other News

Tribute to Paul Deakin

The well known cave and mine photographer Paul Deakin died on the 3rd September, aged 69. He was a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, and a Chartered Mine Surveyor. He served as a Controller of the Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation from 1974 to 1978. He was an Honorary Member of the Derbyshire Caving Club, and the designated mine surveyor for the mines at Alderley Edge, Cheshire. He leaves a wife and two daughters.

Alastair Lings

Wolf Minerals Ltd

Quarterly Activities Report for the three months ending 30 September 2014

Specialty metals development company, Wolf Minerals Limited (ASX: WLF, AIM: WLFE) ("**Wolf**", "**the Company**") is pleased to provide the following update on the Hemerdon tungsten and tin project ("**the Project**") in Devon, UK, for the three month period to 30 September 2014.

Highlights for the September 2014 Quarter in relation to the Project include:

- ü Commenced drawdown of £75 million in senior debt facilities finance facilities.
- ü Construction remains on track and on budget.
- ü Development expenditure for of A\$61.7 million for the quarter.
- ü Geotechnical diamond drill program advanced.

Commenting on the September quarter performance, Wolf's Managing Director, Russell Clark said: "*This has been another highly successful quarter for Wolf. Completing the necessary conditions to commence draw down of the senior debt finance facilities was a major milestone and our ability to meet all the conditions, and continue to advance the development of the*

Project, is a testament to the Company and the strength of our management team."

"Construction activity at Hemerdon remains on track and excellent weather conditions have continued into the autumn months in the UK, contributing to significant progress being made. We continue to forecast an on time, on budget delivery of the Project, with first concentrate contracted for delivery in the third quarter of 2015."

Construction progress - on-site time lapse photography

The Company's web site has time lapse photography showing the progress of both the processing plant site and mine site which can be seen at:

<http://www.wolfminerals.com.au/hemerdon-tungsten-and-tin-project/live-stream> :

Project Construction Update

The construction of the Project was formally authorised to commence in February 2014 (refer ASX Announcement, 11 February 2014).

The Company is pleased to advise that, as at the end of the September 2014 quarter, construction is well underway and continues to progress on schedule, with the Project's Engineering-Procurement-Construction ("EPC") contractor, GR Engineering Services Limited (ASX:GNG) ("GRES"), currently expected to complete the plant and hand it over to Wolf in the third quarter of 2015.

The initial phase of construction activity at the Project, which involved site preparation for the new processing facility and the mine waste facility, has been completed as has construction of the access road into the site and the establishment of the contractors' offices, as advised in the June 2014 Quarterly Activities Report. By the end of the September 2014 quarter, significant further progress was made at the site including: Good progress on the Mine Waste Facility which is now 44% complete. This facility is one of the key components of the Project, designed to accommodate the waste from both the mine and the processing plant.

Structural concrete pours are 84% complete, with the scheduling of pours ensuring that critical path steel erection was not impeded.

Structural steel erection is underway and 11% complete.

Approximately 96% of the plant equipment has been delivered to site, allowing immediate installation as the foundations or supporting steelwork becomes available.

Administration, laboratory and amenities buildings have been delivered and installed and will be commissioned in early 2015.



Photo:- Processing plant site 30 September 2014



Photo:- Mine site 30 September 2014

Demolition of the pre-existing 1940's plant infrastructure was completed with the resultant concrete being crushed and recycled for use as road base.

Development of the open pit continued with the excavation waste used in the construction of the mine waste facility. There is no overburden removal required to access the orebody, as it is exposed at surface from previous operations.

60,000 tonnes of ore have been stockpiled at the mine, which will form the basis of initial feed to the processing plant. This ore was encountered during the mining of waste used for the construction of the Mine Waste Facility.

Recruitment of key professional staff has continued with the Company now having 35 employees working directly for Wolf Minerals (UK) Limited. In total there are currently over 300 people working at site.

Hydro-seeding of a number of areas around the site has taken place to encourage grass growth and reduce dust generation in windy conditions.

The total development expenditure for the September 2014 quarter was A\$61.7 million with the majority related to payments for construction progress to the EPC contractor and the mining contractor.

Commenting on the progress of construction, Wolf Managing Director, Russell Clark said:

"We are delighted with the level of activity and progress achieved to date at the Hemerdon Project site. The Company's project management team, our EPC contractor - GR Engineering Services, and our mining contractor - C A Blackwell, are working extremely well together. Construction remains on schedule for the Project to be completed on time and on budget in the third quarter of 2015. The next key steps will be completing the erection of structural steel and buildings at site, the commencement of electrical installations as well as the continued installation of the processing plant equipment and the construction of the mine waste facility and associated infrastructure. We look forward to reporting further updates on construction progress in due course."

Planned Upcoming Activities

In the December 2014 quarter, Wolf will continue to progress its operations at the Project, with an ongoing

focus on construction. Details of proposed activities include continuing:

Final (6th) geotechnical diamond drill hole to assess if steeper final pit walls are feasible and if so deliver increased ore reserves and mine life.

Structural steel erection, and progressing mechanical equipment installation.

Construction of the mine waste facility.

Recruitment of operations personnel.

Extensive tree-planting program with over 40,000 trees to be planted by June 2015

From the Wolf Minerals Ltd website

LATEST NEWS – FRIENDS OF HEMINGFIELD COLLIERY

Lots has happened since the last newsletter so I will try to keep it short!



Hemingfield Colliery Pumping Shaft Banksmans Controls -Image by David Kitching

We have had a superb turnout at our working parties (six so far), the nature of the site and the good weather have helped but nonetheless we have been delighted that so many people have come to help! What is even more pleasing is that everyone seems to have found a specialised area that they can focus on. Main points are as follows:

- NMRS Committee have kindly confirmed a grant for security doors on both buildings, a real boon for us all. So a big thank you to the NMRS Committee and Members for this, installation should be complete before Xmas
- The on site finds and discoveries are too long to list here, but some highlights include the original banksman's control box, the location and size (24") of the original cylinder (Thanks to Nigel Chapman and Alan Hill), a semi circular cast iron plate that looks to be part of the original 1860s Biram Fan, a quarter skid plate for tubs etc.

- The archival research has been lead by Chris Jones and already has produced all sorts of discoveries, including the original specifications for the Biram Fans as well as some very detailed descriptions of the end of coaling in 1920
- Alan Hill has kindly shared copies of his slides of the site from the late 1970s showing both cages in situ as well as records of building that have been demolished
- We have a group of Sheffield University Architecture Students working with us until November on developing ideas and plans for the site – in addition to being a nice bunch of folks they have produced some excellent work already – look at <http://thehemingfieldcolliery.wordpress.com>
- In terms of progress on site, we have now cleared most of the vegetation and started to get back into the undergrowth and small trees and slowly the site is starting to look tidier. Our initial focus was to make the site safe, removing hazards. We have now cleaned and reclaimed more than 1000 original handmade bricks, essential for when reconstruction starts.
- In addition to approval of the NMRS grant, we are hopeful of securing funding for the repair of at least one of the two buildings before too long.



Hemingfield Colliery Winding Engine-Image by David Kitching

Do come and join us, we are working hard and determined to be friendly, inclusive and non-hierarchical. Facilities on site are non-existent so until that is resolved it's very much a "self service" environment. There is both heavy and light work to suit your inclinations and after Xmas we expect to be starting some formalised Archaeological Investigation and Recording which will bring a whole new dimension of understanding of this unique site – the last complete undisturbed C 19 collier site (a controversial claim I know)

Working party dates for 2014 are 29/30 November and 20/21 December. During 2015 we plan to be on site roughly every second weekend – see below for dates until June – it's a good idea to check with us before travelling a long way but there will always be someone there!

Use our Facebook page to get in touch with Christine Cameron, our Director of Volunteering

January	3 & 4	17 & 18
February	31 Jan & 1 Feb	21 & 22
March	7 & 8	21 & 22
April	4 & 5	18 & 19
June	2 & 3	16 & 17
		30 & 31



Hemingfield Colliery Winding Engine-Image by David Kitching

Steve Grudgings

Woodend Mining Museum

There was a Miner's Reunion held at the Woodend Mining Museum Sunday 14th September 2014 11.00a.m. to 4.00p.m.



Lamp sheds more light on expanding museum

The museum, owned by Harry and Carole Johnson, has now received further artifacts including a locally made Davy lamp. Made by Mr Alan Pringle of Darwen, it measures 10ft high by 4ft wide. On Alan's precision lamp construction is a plaque honouring Sir Humphry Davy, 1st baronet, 1778-1829. Davy came



from Penzance where it had originally been intended that this lamp would go but changes brought this wonderful piece of mining history to the Woodend Museum. With the Reedley Colliery site nearby, the lamp is to be illuminated. A thank you must be given to Harry and Carole for their continuing energetic drive to record the Burnley coalfield and to ask everyone to give their support. The NMRS is to re-visit the expanding museum on 28th March 2015.

Bernard Bond

Aim-listed miner raises £400,800 to carry on gold prospecting in Ireland

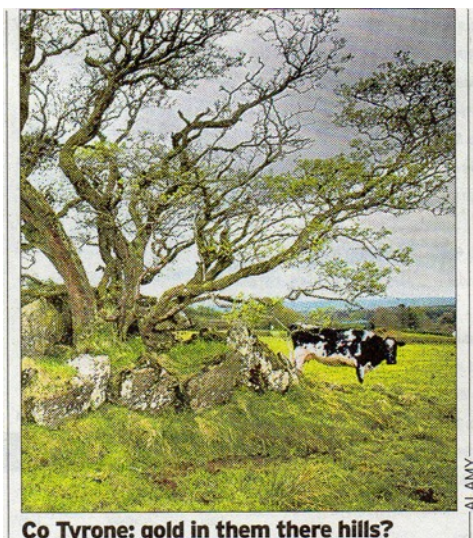
An Irish mining company has raised £400,800 from investors to keep looking for gold and zinc deposits in the Emerald Isle.

Connemara Mining Company is digging for gold in areas around the Wicklow-Wexford border, just south of Dublin, in partnership with Canadian miner Hendricks Resources.

The investment will boost the company's dwindling cash reserves, which stood at just £29,000 at the end of June after the company made a loss of £110,000 in the first six months of the year.

It also came a day after the company's chairman, John Teeling, a well-known Irish entrepreneur, complained of the 'very difficult' environment for raising funds.

He also accused investors of pulling together in a 'buyer's strike' against small exploration companies.



Co Tyrone: gold in them there hills?

'One has to believe that investors at current prices will do very well when the cycle turns and explorers, once again, become fashionable', he said.

Gold exploration in Ireland dates back to the 1760s when small quantities of the yellow metal were discovered in streams and rivers in Wicklow, and has drawn plenty of scepticism in the past.

But a major geological survey across the whole island, which concluded last year, confirmed the existence of gold deposits, though it is not yet known how difficult this would be to extract.

The most promising gold mine on the island is Curriahault in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. It is operated by Toronto-listed company Dalradian.

The Monaghan-Fermanagh border, on the seam between north and south, is also considered a prospective area.

Connemara also holds licences to explore for zinc, and is looking for the industrial metal in four parts of the country. In two of these it is the junior partner with major zinc producer Teck.

In 2007 it made a 'significant' zinc discovery in Stonepark, Limerick, and has unearthed more of the metal since. It is also searching for zinc on the border of Cavan and Meath, in Tipperary and at another mine near Stonepark.

Connemara, which is listed on London's Aim index, raised the extra cash by issuing 20,040,000 ordinary shares priced at 2p. The new shares will be worth £0.01 each when they start trading on Aim later this month.

Mr Teeling and finance boss James Finn each bought 1,250,000 new shares, bringing their total holdings to more than 5 million shares each. Connemara said it would use the net proceeds to 'fund further work on the portfolio of exploration projects in Ireland and pay ongoing corporate costs.'

from the Daily Telegraph 19 September 2014

Which all sounds very optimistic, until you re-read Ron Callendar's Cononish Diary in the February 2014 newsletter, and then reflect on the Market section in the Daily Telegraph, 3 November 2014:-

Gold prices slumped last week to a four year low, but do not expect a turnaround in fortunes any time soon with analysts now predicting that a level of \$1000 (£625) per ounce could present the next point of resistance for the precious metal.

On Friday, gold capped off a bad week of trading slumping to \$1,163 per ounce The game of 'hunt the price range' has started all over again, and while we may have some days of limited buying, the selling is likely to continue until at least \$1,154. If gold can't even rally when a central bank boosts its asset purchase, then the picture is bleak indeed, with a stronger dollar resulting in further losses towards \$1,000 in time.

Prince backs down from selling building restored by public

By Gordon Rayner, Chief Reporter

The Prince of Wales has withdrawn a Cornish engine house and 45 acres of land from sale after an angry reaction from local people who raised thousands of pounds to restore it.



The Engine House and land have been withdrawn from sale

The Prince's Duchy of Cornwall estate had put the land and the Victorian building up for auction with an estimate of £40,000 - £50,000, after North Cornwall district council decided not to renew a lease on the land, which is popular with walkers.

The Prince was accused of trying to 'reap the rewards' of the publicly-funded restoration project and, with a potential public-relations disaster on his hands, decided to cancel the auction.

The future of the building and the land remains unclear, however, because the Duchy is still keen to gain

an income from the plot. It is in talks with the parish council.

The Prince of Wales Engine House, near Tintagel, originally housed a beam engine, which hauled slate and pumped water at a quarry in Trebarwith Valley.

The building fell into disrepair, and in 1972, local residents raised almost £8,000 to shore it up, with the permission of the Duchy.

Mary Dyer, chairman of Tintagel parish council, said: 'The local people put their hard-earned money into it, and the Duchy is set to reap the rewards. That, in anyone's book, is not fair.'

'The people who put the money in, that is who it belongs to. It annoyed local people when a 'for sale' sign went up.'

Mavis Lugg, who was secretary of the Prince of Wales Engine House Society in the Seventies, said: 'The Duchy of Cornwall didn't give a penny to help us, and now they want to make money out of it.'

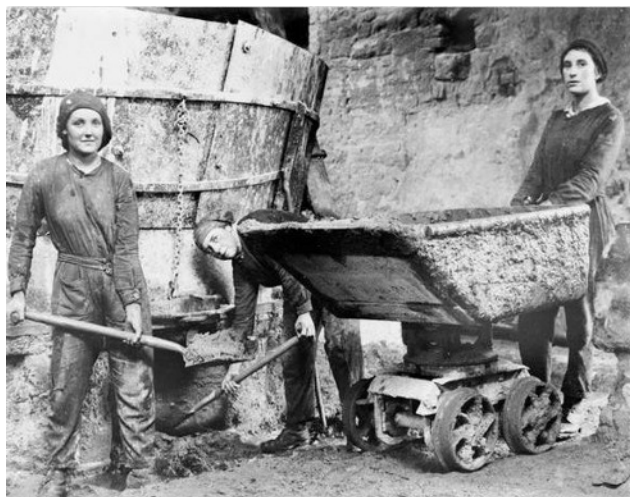
A spokesman for the Duchy said: 'We want to come to a more amicable resolution on the future of the site.'

From the Daily Telegraph 18 October 2014

Progress on recent requests for information

1. Kelly mine wagon

Brian Brett of the Kelly Mine Preservation Society has located a set of photographs of women at work during the First World War that shows a wagon identical to the steel-bodied all-round tippers at the Kelly mine in use at a silica brickworks in South Wales.



Brick workers pose with shovels and a wheeled skip for conveying clay for silica brickmaking. South Wales, 1914. © IWM (Q 28439)

The photograph reproduced above can be found at:

<http://digventures.com/2014/08/20/20-striking-photos-of-women-at-work-in-ww1/>

www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205288803

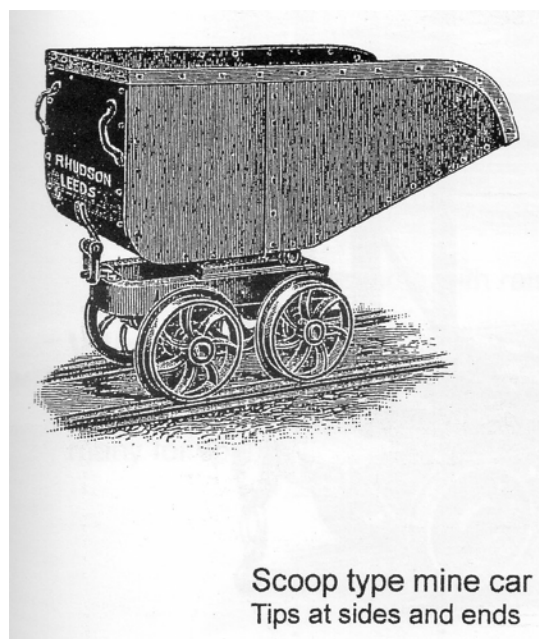
There are several photos taken by George P Lewis and held by the Imperial War Museum as part of a Ministry

of Information official First World War collection titled *The Employment of Women in Britain 1914-1918*. However there is nothing to identify the location except for the description 'silica brickworks, South Wales' and the date of 1914 against each photo must surely be incorrect. Employment of women in a brickworks would not have occurred until later in the war. From the photos it would appear that the track gauge is less than 2ft, probably 18" as at the Kelly Mine.

One further clue as to the possible origin of the wagons is to be found in a catalogue issued by the French firm of Decauville in 1916. This contained drawings of similar wagons.



The nearest comparable wagon from a UK manufacturer is a Hudson colliery tub, which could tip at sides or ends:-



Scoop type mine car
Tips at sides and ends

In summary, there appear to have been several all-round tipper wagons of 18" gauge, probably made by a European light railway equipment manufacturer that were used in Devon at the Kelly mine (post WW1 when owned by the Ferrubron Manufacturing Company), at the Golden Dagger tin mine (c1926-7, when worked by Torr Trust Ltd), and possibly at another micaceous haemetite mine (from which the wagons were moved to the Golden Dagger mine), plus a silica brickworks in south Wales (during WW1).

Can anyone help identify the source of any of these interesting wagons?

2. Eimco rocker shovel

Thanks to Colin Hindle I now have a copy of the Eimco 12B and 21 operating instructions. This was a great help when we had the Eimco 12B working at the open day at Lea Bailey on 20 September with a hired compressor. Unfortunately only the shovel worked, not the air motor powering the wheels. A telephone call to a contract miner/tunneller who has his own working Eimco has given me a good idea how to sort out the air motor, so I'm hopeful that it will be working before the end of the year. I've managed to contact John Hill, who worked for Eimco (GB) from 1970 until he retired in 2003 when he was the general manager at Gateshead. As a result I now have a much better understanding of how the rocker shovel works and of who produced it.

But, as ever, each answer generates another question. I gather that most Eimco rocker shovels supplied in the UK were not made by Eimco (GB) but were either (initially) imported from the US or (later) made by Logan Engineering in Dundee (formerly Logan Mining Machinery Co). However, I have not been able to locate any records from either Eimco (GB) or Logan giving details of units made.



Photo:- Eimco 12B working at Lea Bailey, 20 Sept

Can anyone help with any information about the Logan company (business subsequently incorporated into The Low & Bonar Group Ltd).

Rob Needham

Northern United colliery site in the Forest of Dean



Further to my brief mention of the still-standing pit-head baths at the Northern United site (seen in photo on 29 May 2014) in the August newsletter, the saga of the proposed development of the site continues to generate controversy in the Forest.

Of mining interest are:-

1. The fate of the pithead baths
2. The proposal to develop an old mining area with many old mine shafts and adits
3. The effects of the development on free mining rights (I have heard it suggested that there is going to be some exchange of land and that will involve extinguishing free mining rights on land being handed over by the Forestry Commission. The article seems to confirm those suspicions.)

Two letters from The Forester newspaper, 13 August 2014

Coal Authority has a duty to respond

Let me firstly clear up the myth regarding 'sink holes' and the attempt of the HCA to claim that there is no danger and that they only occur where limestone and soluble bedrock are present.

Sink holes is a very loose description of the result of surface collapse, from what can be various and many influences and, in the case of the Northern Quarter, from sinking shafts or actual mine working subsidence. To say that there is no danger present with over 150 known mine entrances on this site, not to mention the ones that have not been recorded, is totally irresponsible and potentially dangerous.

What is more frightening is the eager response of those pro Northern Quarter supporters who so eagerly claim that the site is safe without having adequate knowledge of the prevailing site conditions or the risks they generate.

I would suggest that the vice-president of Cinderford Regeneration Board, Mr Tim Holder, obtains a copy of the Coal Authority's letter dated 8 July 2014, ad-

dressed to the Forest of Dean Planning Department case officer, and give careful thought to its contents. Let me reproduce a few paragraphs from the Coal Authority's letter:

'As a statutory consultee, the Coal Authority has a duty to respond to planning applications and development plans in order to protect the public and the environment in mining areas.

'The application site falls within the defined development high risk area; therefore within the application site and surrounding area there are coal mining features and hazards which need to be considered in relation to the determination of this planning application.

'This masterplan appears to locate dwellings over the position of recorded mine entries within the site and does not appear to have been informed by the submitted Coal Mining Risk Assessment (March 2014) which states that no structure should be constructed directly over a mine even if treated. Building over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry (shaft or adit) can be dangerous and has the potential for significant risks to both the developer and the occupiers if not undertaken appropriately.

'Although this is an outline planning application with all matters reserved except access, the Coal Authority has been consulted on the revised overall illustrative masterplan. The Coal Authority therefore objects to the layout as proposed as it is considered that the applicant has not demonstrated that the application site is, or can be made, safe, stable and suitable for development as required by paragraphs 120-121 of the NPPF.

'Under the Coal Industry Act 1994 any intrusive activities, including initial site investigation boreholes and/or any subsequent treatment of coal mine workings/coal mine entrances for ground stability purposes require the prior written permission of the Coal Authority. Failure to obtain permission will result in trespass, with the potential of court action.

'In formulating this response the Coal Authority has taken full account of the professional conclusions reached by the competent person who prepared the Coal Mining Risk Assessment or similar report.'

This is a damning letter and makes the HCA statement even more ludicrous and the council in a situation of non-compliance with laws affecting this site.

With the planning, legal and administrative staff serving the council I just cannot believe that no one knew of this situation and it opens many cans of worms and a public engineering and financial enquiry is absolutely urgent and very necessary.

With over 100 unauthorised boreholes put down by the council and its agents and the tapping of methane gas and possibly toxic fluid discharging I would imagine prosecution is most likely, but just consider who will be paying for this folly?

I am endeavouring to ascertain the formula for obtaining the 'influencing' distance around shafts and adits which would reflect on the depth of the shaft but with

over 150 known shafts on site it would probably sterilise the entire site. New Bowson is around 400 feet deep so just imagine a 25 yard radius, for example, around this shaft and linked by other nearby mines. Similarly the opencast site, while removing all shafts and workings within its excavation zone, is believed to have left shafts below its base working level when it finished production. This could generate another sterilised site.

It has been reported that all of the £14.7 million grant given by the Coal Board has been spent, and this is without one shovel of material being moved towards any project. It is understandable however why the council is reluctant to give details of the expenditure on the Northern Quarter when asked.

Two years ago I publicly expressed my grave concerns over proposals for this site. If my warnings had been heeded the Forest would be many, many millions of pounds better off today. With the Coal Authority letter referred to above, can anyone imagine mortgages being made available even to those who could afford the extra structure costs likely for these dwellings, and the same applies to insurance premiums?

P A Morgan, Retired mine surveyor

Alarm bells ringing

It was reported recently that the Coal Authority has written to the FoDDC expressing 'substantive concern' at the safety of their Northern Quarter development plans. The letter has serious implications for the council and adds to the demonstration of how grossly inappropriate the Northern Quarter site is for development. One question we really need to be looking at now is how such an unsuitable location ever came to be chosen in the first place?

It is positioned within the boundaries of the Statutory Forest; the use of which, for major developments, contravenes guidance issued by the Independent Panel on Forestry. It has been described as one of the most important areas for wildlife in all of Gloucestershire. It spans over 150 known mine shafts. It would urbanise one of the Forest's prettiest lakes. It involves the environmentally insane plan to 'move' a perfectly good college from one place to another. And it's also highly questionable that much of the site is even eligible for development since, in 1992, the council signed an agreement to maintain public access to the Linear Park for 30 years.

Any one of these things should have set alarm bells ringing at the outset, but the council has now spent almost £15 million relentlessly pursuing a project they have yet to even attain planning permission for. How much will all this cost and will we, the public, ever have the opportunity to say enough is enough?

Alan Powell, The Fountain Inn, Parkend

And an article in the Forest of Dean & Wye Valley Review newspaper for 12 September 2014

Calls to protect mines

The director of Forest Clays Ltd has called for the Deputy Gaveler to protect their rights of the gales at Cinderford Northern Quarter.

Stephen Wight operates the Churchway and Mount Pleasant Gales, which are affected by the proposed development and are within the Hundred of St Briavels and held under the Dean Forest Mines Act 1838.

His request to Daniel Howell was sent by email in response to the Northern Quarter planning application. He said: 'On behalf of Forest Clays Ltd, galees of the Churchway and Mount Pleasant Gales affected by the Cinderford Northern Quarter development, we request your protection as Deputy Gaveler of our rights to all these gales within the Hundred of St Briavels and held under the Dean Forest Mines Act.'

The *Review* did approach the deputy gaveler for a comment.

Meanwhile, last Tuesday 6ft tall fences were erected around Steam Mills Lake to move great crested newts to allow clearance of land associated with the proposed development.

The work is being carried out by EcoVigour Ltd, on behalf of the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA), who have moved the newts to a nearby area.

In an email to the Forest Deputy Surveyor, Kevin Stannard, the secretary of the Dean Forest Voice (DFV), Keith Morgan, said: 'I am contacting you on behalf of DFV. It has come to the attention of members that the area surrounding the Steam Mills Lake has been fenced off and gated.'

'As you will be aware this area is subject to a public access agreement. If this is a mistake on someone's part, can we request the immediate removal of these barriers?'

Mr Stannard said: 'A temporary fence has been erected to allow specific works to be carried out by contractors working for the HCA. The fence will be removed by HCA's contractors as soon as these works are completed. This temporary exclusion of the public from work sites is standard practice for forestry operations and has no bearing on long-term public access to the site.' The HCA says the new movement is taking place in accordance with a European Protected Species licence granted by Natural England, and because it isn't development activity planning permission is not needed to carry out the work.

An HCA spokesman said: 'We have a team of experts working with us to ensure that the work complies with the necessary standards and would like to thank local residents for their understanding about this work.'

The application will be heard before the district council on Wednesday, September 24.



Photo:- View of part of Northern United site before recent demolition of some buildings showing several stores and workshops

Rob Needham

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