



Presidents Jottings

First of all a huge **thank you** to all the members of our Society. Our **AGM**, another successful event, brought home to me how successful we are and how much it is thanks to **YOU** who contribute so much. Report after report demonstrated our progress and I am so proud to be a part of it. Our membership continues to climb which is very pleasing in this day and age. This has been helped by our expanding website and our recent involvement with Facebook. Malcolm explained in his report that we are working towards a new, more modern website, which will relieve him of some of the work involved as other named members will be able to access changes. Sallie has arranged a variety of interesting and differing events on our meet card and elsewhere in this Newsletter you should find an addition to our programme. The Rogerley meet will be arranged when the Americans return to England and at that point I will contact names already on my list. Our finances continue to be sound and we were able to award worthwhile grants in 2014 to Exeter Press as a contribution to the publications "Mining in Cornwall"; Swaledale Museum for information boards; Friends of Hemingfield Colliery for security doors; and Lancashire Record Office towards purchasing the Hulton of Hulton Archives to save

it from being broken up. A new stream of income is now from the Publishing Licensing Society. As this income is from photocopying licenses it demonstrates how others find our Publications so useful for their own research.

Our elected Committee for 2015 comprises

President	Barbara Sutcliffe
Vice-President	Malcolm Street
Treasurer	Tim Cook
Secretary	Mick Cooke
Librarian	Sallie Bassham
Recorder	Mike Gill
Public Relations Officer	Rob Needham
Editor of Publications	Richard Smith
Committee members	Peter Pearson Len Morris

As in previous years some of our Committee members have other responsibilities such as Meetings organiser (Sallie), Webmaster (Malcolm), Publications Officer (myself), Newsletter Editor (Rob), Membership Secretary (Malcolm), and NAMHO representative (Sallie). We must thank all members of our Committee whose efforts result in the smooth running of our Society.

Editor

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

Contents

Library News	2
Visit Reports	3
Riches of the Earth	4
Hemingfield Colliery	4
Book Reviews	5
Forthcoming Events	6
News Items	7
Cononish Diary	10
Crystal Mountains	11
Gold in Switzerland	12
Eimco in Hapton Valley Colliery	14
Out in the Old Workings St Helens	15
Yorkshire Dales Mining Museum	17
Milwr Tunnel	18
Genuine news item or April fool?	19
Silbertal mineral museum	19

After the AGM Bernard Bond led another successful meet. A report of this should be elsewhere in this issue. Later that day Bernard was rushing off to visit family in France so we are very appreciative of him to give of his time. He had already collected the key for Mealbank the previous day and opened up for us so I think he deserved his holiday!

As mentioned previously **“Facebook”** is a new medium for us. Alastair Lings and Mike Gill continue to offer help, Mike Jackson has spread the word and Mike Hall, another member, kindly allows us to use relevant photos he places on his page. After the AGM I placed a short “post” on our page highlighting what we do and two days later I was amazed that 212 people had read it! It is all new to me and I realize not many of our members will be involved but if you are, please “like” and “share”. My idea is to share what NMRS does with others and also to “share” other news so we could over time become the place to look to for our shared interests. A one stop shop! Also hopefully we will gain more new members (at least two so far) and sell more publications.

We would like to **welcome the following new members** and hope they have a long association with us

Paul Rodrigues	- Consett
William Iley	- Wirral
Paul Sproat	- Whitley Bay
Archibald Paton	- Yorks
Sue Monk	- Leyburn
Edward Meadowcroft	- Lancaster
Mike Jackson	- Glastonbury
Ray Lawrence	- Oakdale, Blackwood

Summer is now ahead of us so please remember us when you are out and about, Malcolm is always interested in relevant photos for our website. Our **Autumn meeting in Gisburn is booked for Saturday October 24th**, details and booking will be in our August Newsletter, so hopefully some of you will gather material for short presentations at that meeting. Please note the maximum length for a presentation is 15 minutes!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank David Neale for his kind donation after he sold his mining books through our last newsletter prior to his downsizing.

Barbara Sutcliffe

From the Editor

My apologies for the late appearance of this issue of the newsletter. This is due to the failure of my PC and the resultant 2 weeks delay while it was repaired and then reloaded with the necessary software. As a result I have had to give up using Windows XP and have had to move to Windows 7.

LIBRARY NEWS

We continue to benefit from many generous donors. Thank you to you all. If I have not mentioned your gift, or have mis-attributed it to someone else; I apologise, please tell me about it and I will correct matters.

Thank you to Barbara Harrison for a number of maps and mine plans. The plans have been passed to Mike Gill for the Society's Records.

Thank you to Lynne Meyer for a box of books, including fascinating books on Wealden Iron and a 1959 Symposium Proceedings on “The Future of Non-Ferrous Mining in Great Britain and Ireland” and to John Seal who has donated “Archive” an excellent resource for mining historians – if you are interested in buying the copies which are duplicates of those already held by the library, please contact Barbara Sutcliffe. John has also given several BGS “Memoirs” and books on the Lake District and Wales. Thank you too to Rob Needham for transporting these boxes and saving us a fortune in carriage costs.

Thank you to Mike Mcleod for two boxes of books, and for bringing them down to Yorkshire from Scotland. These include several BGS Memoirs, David Kitching's book on Poynton, George Hall's “Metal Mines of South Wales”, books on Killhope and Ffestiniog, Carl Rogers' “To Be a Gypsum Miner” and books on coal mining in Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Lancashire. Mike has also given some NMRS publications which are already held by the library and, with Mike's blessing, these have been passed to Barbara to sell to Society members – please contact her if you have gaps in your collection.

Thank you to Dave Nicholls for several geology books, and to David Neal for books on the Lake District, on mines near Richmond, on John Taylor, “Rutley's Elements of Mineralogy” and books by Arthur Raistrick.

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

VISIT REPORTS

New Ingleton Granite Quarry (Hawes Road, Ingleton)

Following the AGM on 11th April at Mealbank, a group of 14 NMRS members gathered at the quarry entrance to walk the perimeter of the working quarry. Beginning in 1955, the quarry continues to deliver its much-needed product.



The aerial view was taken in 2008 when the quarry had reached a depth of 100 metres. Production now averages 1800 tons per shift.



This photograph shows the Primary Crusher. This covered area receives the initial much-needed sedimentary rock.



The group of NMRS members with guides gathered at the quarry entrance.

Bernard Bond

Constant Mary, Dunkirk Colliery and Woodend Coal Mining Museum

As the weather forecast had predicted, heavy rain shortened the walk on this years return visit to the Constant Mary Colliery on 28th March. As the photograph shows, the site is in excellent condition.



This drift coal mine was worked by a 12ft diameter waterwheel with a 7ft diameter cog wheel turning a 12ft winding drum. We followed a shortened walk to the River Calder and then viewed the still-standing engine house which had held an atmospheric type pumping engine of c1800. Many thanks to Richard Matthews who explained both the underground and surface features of the site.

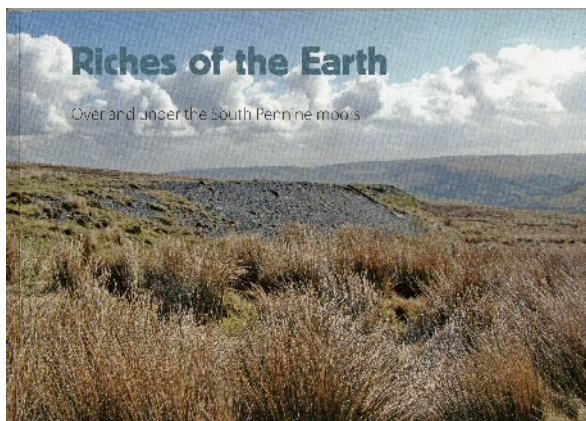


At the Woodend Museum further expansion of the building and the collection of artefacts was visible compared with our visit last year. The photograph shows (right) where an extension is to be built. This will be a research room, giving space for visitors to study papers and maps. Popular events now are the Miners and Family Weekends, which support the local history project. Thanks to Harry and Carole Johnson for hosting the visit and supplying refreshments. And thanks to the NMRS members who came along on a very wet day.

Note A small article has appeared in the Burnley newspapers which explains that plans have been submitted for a further extension of the existing building, refreshment area, basically to extend the showrooms. It reads : Decision to approve the plans is likely to be made in September.

Bernard Bond

Riches of the Earth



We have a few of these books available for £3.50 with free postage - originally £5 retail. With colour photos, maps and some old b&w photos the book covers Extraction in the South Pennines; Discoveries on Baildon Moor; Oxenhope Moor; Changing views on Todmorden Moor plus heritage trails. For a copy e-mail Barbara at mansemins@btopenworld.com

Barbara Sutcliffe

Spring Working Party weekend at Hemingfield Colliery, 21st-22nd March

Spring is in the air. After the eclipse this week, the changing seasons marked another weekend of progress on site at Hemingfield. Site director Glen led the way early on, with Nigel and Alan followed by Chris. After signing in, they all got stuck in levelling out the entrance area, removing stumps, recalcitrant shrubs and weedy roots wherever they appeared.



*Photo:-
Getting to
the root of
the problem*

With shovels and picks, hatchets, elbow grease and little help from a winch, the volunteers steadily removed the lumps, bumps and tripping hazards.

*Photo:-
Clearing
the way*



As prepared earlier in the week, Glen had set the example by removing several invasive trees which were threatening the boundary walls by Wath Rd.



Clearing the ground along the modern railings uncovered a glimpse of the past with a discarded tub rail.

*Photo:- A hint of
the industrial ar-
chaeology to be
found as the top
layers of mulch
and weeds and
rubble are
cleared away.*

NB The chair of Directors, Steve Grudgings will be leading a visit from members of the Northern Mine

Research Society in May at which we hope to discuss the site's archaeology in more detail.



*Photo:- A
semi-rural
urban
clearway*

After a brief pause to reflect

on recent progress in archival research, including establishing a timeline for the site's development from 1920-1947, the volunteers moved to the untamed wilderness at the rear lower terrace of the site where they were joined by Frank, near neighbour and staunch supporter of the pit.



*Photo:-
Cornish
beam en-
gine house*

Overlooking the railway canal basin, and the Elsecar branch of the Dearne and Dove canal proper, we stood under the old Cornish pumping engine house (now a private residence).

Stood here, next to the engine pit shaft, looking down the valley, you get a real sense of the history of the site: the hard hand (and animal) labour that went into sinking pits, digging the canal (and the reservoir to serve it); heaving the huge stonework into place, at the canalside and up by the engine houses which each required boiler houses and tall chimneys.

Sometimes it does amaze how everything squeezed into the footprint of the site and its neighbourhood. On with the clearance! The back of the lower terrace by the retaining wall overlooking the railway has



not had any attention for many years. Consequently trees, brambles and spiky weeds aplenty predominate. Alan and Nigel tooled up as "reapermen" to start to regain a toehold.

*Photo:-
Making
space*

Meanwhile whilst the heavy duty pruning continued, we were pleased to welcome a return visitor to the site in the form of photographer Ken Fisher.



*Photo:-
Snapped*

After reaping the brambles, it was all hands on the lower deck to clip, snip, chop, trim, fell and (inevitably) burn. Glen cracked on with a chainsaw,

whilst the rest cleared the ground and made a pile.

Hemingfield Colliery website

BOOK REVIEWS

Quarrying Industry in Wales – a history by Ian A Thomas, National Stone Centre

A large soft back A4 publication of 224pp, written in both Welsh and English and with lots of colour photos. The book is intended to illustrate, for a broad readership, the development of an industry, vital to all, but largely overlooked in a key producing area.

In my opinion the title is misleading as the book summarises the development of the "stone" industry and its trade in Wales from earliest times. It would be a shame if someone purchasing it was hoping to find out about slate and building stone as they are specifically excluded. This is pointed out inside the cover, but perhaps the title should have been more specific. It could be that the Publishers thought "The National Stone Centre" at the bottom of the cover page was an adequate clue!

The idea for the book was to stimulate a greater interest and awareness of stone in Wales, concentrating on commercial activity over the last two centuries. A general introduction is followed by more detail being given for each area of Wales. Each area, includes a map and follows a similar format to help if you are just interested in a specific area – geographic area; geological setting; history; and where to find out more with specific area interests.

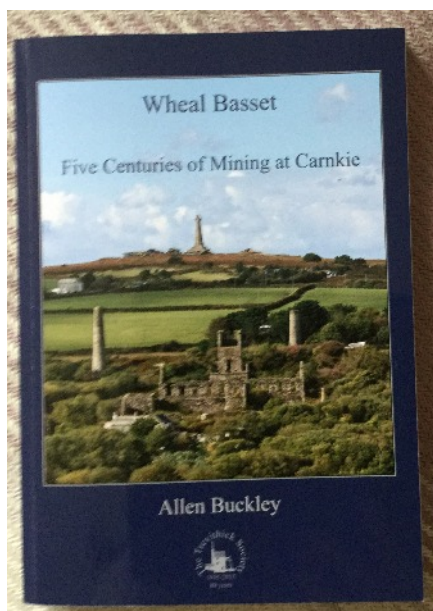
At the back of the book is a useful glossary of technical terms, followed by a location index with grid

references together with suggested reading and references.

Available from the National Stone Centre, priced at £19.50. www.nationalstonecentre.org.uk. However I cannot find it mentioned on their website.

Barbara Sutcliffe

Wheal Basset - Five Centuries of Mining at Carnkie by Allen Buckley, published by the Trevithick Society



The well known mining historian Allen Buckley has attempted, in this book, to remedy the lack of attention to the mines of the Great Flat Lode and in my opinion has fulfilled his aim.

Starting with local pre-history of the

area around Carnkie he continues to the sixteenth century description of miners, mine captains, tools and techniques. Further chapters move the reader on through the boom years of the nineteenth century and the activity of the Basset Mines Ltd. until 1918. Post closure surface activity and future plans (at the time) are covered. For those who enjoy facts and figures there are production figures and employment statistics as well as summaries of production and investment. The Carnkie Manuscripts have a chapter of their own and the gazetteer of the Great Flat Lode site along with location map and O.S. Grid references is useful addition.

The book is a very detailed and well researched one of the Carnkie area and includes photos, some in colour, and some which have not been seen previously. It certainly fulfils

the author's aim to fill a major gap in Cornwall's great mining heritage.

Barbara Sutcliffe

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

OUGS Geology Symposium 2015 – Invitation to Join

PANGAEA: LIFE & TIMES ON A SUPER-CONTINENT: A celebration of Britain's unique marine Permian strata.

The continental reorganisation that led to the Pangaea super-continent resulted in a diverse range of depositional environments and set the stage for the formation of some very special rocks. It was on part of an arid and predominantly desert land that marine incursions facilitated the development of local, specialised environments in which, at times, life thrived and where a unique series of rock strata were deposited. These rocks, preserved in the NE, reveal a fascinating record of the unfolding of these intriguing events.

The Northumbria branch of the Open University Geological Society (OUGS) **cordially invites you** to join us at Northumbria University for (all or part of) the weekend; 17- 19th July. Together with a series of fascinating and informative lectures, delegates will have the opportunity to survey some dramatic, and geologically significant coastal and inland locations. For continual updates, please see our Facebook page at **OUGSNewcastle2015**, or visit our web page: <http://ougs.org/symposium/2015>

Closing date for registration 19th June 2015

Event Details in Brief: A very informal affair, our weekend begins on Friday with socialising and an evening lecture. Saturday is our main lecture day, followed by, in the evening, a Gala dinner and Ceilidh. Sunday morning is devoted to field trips of which there are several to choose from; with transport via 30 seater air conditioned coaches (& picnic lunch). The trips are expert-led and run from 9am to 1.30pm. On Sunday afternoon we offer another lecture, and in the evening a general knowledge (fun) quiz in the bar. Delegates will also have the opportunity to purchase rock samples, other geological books / 'paraphernalia' and also to play Bridge. Poster displays will also be available, as will opportunities for microscopy sessions.

Should you choose to stay with us overnight, we offer en suite accommodation within the University's near by New Bridge Street facility, where we have 200 rooms pre-allocated. Accommodation is within walking distance of the University facilities, also close to Newcastle's vibrant town centre. Breakfast & lunch are served on campus.

OUGS Symposia are held every year in different university locations and attract delegates from all over the UK, with all levels of geological ability and expertise. Event booking forms can be found on our web site or on Facebook.

Any questions . . . please phone or text Steve Woodward on 07813 380780.

Please leave a message if I'm unavailable and I'll return your call as soon as I'm able

Ingleton Coalfield Exhibition

NMRS member Bernard Bond has been asked by the Ingleton Overground Underground Event 21st June, Sunday to organise an exhibition on Ingleton's Coalfield. It will be held at The i Centre, Ingleton (The Old Middle School) 10.00a.m. to 5.00p.m. Bernard reports that so far he has completed five display boards and soon should receive publicity sheets to distribute around the area. Barbara Sutcliffe will be supporting the exhibition with the NMRS sales stand.

NEWS ITEMS

Further to the item on Ingleton Miners Tag 460 in the February Newsletter.

New Ingleton Colliery From 1917 - 1920 saw an increase in employment, reaching 500 men. In one week 2000 tons of coal was lifted. Shifts were 6a.m. to 2p.m., 2p.m. to 10p.m., and 10p.m. to 6a.m. Saturday's shift 6a.m. to 12 Noon. Wages in 1920 were Adults 15 shillings per week. Sometimes 10s. Cost of coal 18 shillings per ton. Cigarettes and Matches not allowed in the pit. A miners 1st job was to go to the lamp office for their lamp with check disc attached (see photograph in February newsletter), it was then known who had taken a lamp. The shaft had 2 wheels and 2 cages, one up and one down. Men were searched at the bottom for matches. Pay Day :- All earnings depended on amount of coal won !! Paid at piece rate, booked at one number, the whole being shared at so much per shift worked each week.

Bernard Bond

Company in court again after dangerous quarry blast

Date: 27 February 2015

A Somerset company has been fined after a quarry blast sent rocks of up to 15 kilos flying outside a danger zone toward employees and across a public road.

Falling rocks narrowly avoided hitting workers as they landed well outside the designated blast zone at Moons Hill Quarry, Stoke St Michael near Shepton Mallet on 7 February 2012. Rocks also fell onto a public highway, exposing road users to unacceptable danger.

Frome-based WCD Sleeman and Sons Ltd, who organised the blast, were prosecuted today (27 February) after an investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) identified serious control failings.

Bristol Crown Court heard that workers acting as sentries outside the danger area were aware of rocks flying above their heads and landing all around them immediately after the blast. Rocks also landed in the processing plant area of the quarry, which is on the other side of a public road.

HSE inspectors discovered that the blast had not been properly planned. Too much explosive was used in an area where the ground was already broken and measures put in place to reduce risks were inadequate.

WCD Sleeman and Sons Ltd, of Valley View, Vallis Park, Frome, was fined £30,000 and ordered to pay £20,000 in costs after pleading guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The court was told the firm was prosecuted by HSE after investigating a similar offence in Devon when they were fined £20,000 with £17,000 costs in July 2013 at Barnstaple Magistrates' Court.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Catherine Pickett said:

"This was a very serious incident, which put both members of the public and employees at serious risk of being hit by rocks and could easily have led to death or serious injury.

"Blasting operations at quarries are potentially very dangerous. The risks must be rigorously controlled by good explosives engineering practice and in accordance with legal requirements.

"Quarrying remains one of the most dangerous industries to work in with 3,250 injuries, including 27 fatalities, reported to HSE since 2000.

"This is not the first time WCD Sleeman and Sons have been prosecuted for similar offences that have put people at considerable risk and I hope they take more heed of the lessons to be learned.

"Proper planning and control is required at all times in the quarrying industry. The option of stopping and reevaluating the blasting operation for safety is always available to shotfirers, and in this case would have avoided danger."

HSE Bulletin

MINING & MINING HISTORY NEWS, February 2015 -13 May 2015

Heaton History Group, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
(25/02/2015)

Heaton History Group have been awarded a £8300 grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund to mark the bicentenary of the disaster at Heaton Main Colliery. The project will explore the lives of the mining community, create a heritage trail, and provide talks and information to local schools. In 1815 an inrush of water from old workings of the Desmond Colliery caused the deaths of 75 men and boys.

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/heritage-goes-local>

North of England Lead Mining Museum, Upper Weardale, Co. Durham (02/03/2015)

The museum at Killhope has received a grant of £81 327 from Arts Council England. Sarah Maxfield, of Arts Council England North, said: "Our museums resilience fund supports museums by enabling them to become more sustainable and robust, whatever their size, and helping them to offer improved experiences for both audiences and artists."

http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/11828142_Arts_council_cash_for_NE_museums_as_economic_impact_of_sector_is_revealed/

Sakdrisi Mine, Georgia (03/03/2015)

The Appeal Court in Tbilisi has upheld the verdict of the City Court, requiring the Minister of Culture to restore the heritage status of the worlds oldest underground gold mine at Sakdrisi. The archaeological site is threatened by modern mining company RMG Gold. The site has yielded thousands of hammerstones, and dates back 5400 years.

http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/3320_march_3_2015/3320_gvanca.html

Saddle Rock Mine, St Austell, Cornwall (06/03/2015)

The estate agents Webbers are advertising for sale at £375 000 the grade 2 listed engine house and ancillary buildings of Saddle Rock Mine. The mine was worked from 1872 until 1902, producing 53 tons of tin.

<http://www.westernmorningnews.co.uk/Poldark-era-sale/story-26130561-detail/story.html>

Rocks by Rail: the living ironstone museum, Cottesmore, Rutland (09/03/2015)

A new exhibition centre is being built at the Rocks by Rails museum, in part using materials donated by quarrying companies. Hanson has offered 20 tonnes of cement and aggregates from their local cement works at Ketton and quarry at Baston. Lafarge Tarmac have donated 40 tonnes of granite chippings from their Mountsorrel Quarry, and Cemex UK are providing surplus rail from the Barington Light railway.

<http://www.rocks-by-rail.org/blog/>

Neolithic variscite mines, Gava, Barcelona, Spain (14/03/2015)

The turquoise-coloured mineral variscite was mined at Gava as a semi-precious stone from 5300 to 4300 years ago, and traded 375 km northwards into France, and into Italy. Research has shown that one community "worked collectively to mine, manufacture and trade goods, with miners themselves benefiting from the fruits of their labors The variscite mines of Gav'a are the first evidence for a

mining community where the manual labor is not the occupation of an underclass."

<http://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/miners-iberia-5300-years-ago-had-high-social-status-and-rich-burials-002769>

Furnace Quarry, Inverary, Argyllshire (16/03/2015)

Breedon Aggregates has built a new shipping berth close to their Furnace Quarry on Loch Fyne. In the past over a million tonnes of crushed stone per year was shipped from the quarry using a timber pier.

<http://forargyll.com/2015/03/furnace-quarry-shipping-stone-again/>

Clashach Quarry, Hopeman, Morayshire (24/03/2015)

The Moray Council has granted planning permission to Tennants (Elgin) Ltd for an extension of quarrying until December 2031. The stone has been used in the memorial in Dunblane Cathedral for victims of the massacre, in the 9/11 Memorial in New York, for facing the National Museum of Scotland and for coping stones for the harbour wall at Weston-Super-Mare.

<http://www.northern-scot.co.uk/News/Moray-quarry-to-continue-extraction-24032015.htm>

Valentia Slate Ltd, Valentia Island, Co. Kerry (04/04/2015)

Due to their impending retirements, the joint owners of the company are offering to sell their business, with the rights to 130 acres of slate and processing equipment. The equipment includes a Fantini chain saw and a Pelligrini diamond saw. The present owners reopened the slate mine in 1998.

<http://www.naturalstonespecialist.com/currentissue/unlockednewsarticle.php?id=6903>

Hopewell Colliery, Coleford, Gloucestershire (05/04/2015)

The Colliery has reopened to visitors. Miner Rich Daniels said "We are hoping to raise the profile of the museum so it attracts not only visitors but school trips, college trips and university trips. Group bookings can be made by phoning 01594 810706.

<http://www.gloucestercitizen.co.uk/Forest-Dean-s-rich-mining-heritage-resoted/story-26285865-detail/story.html>

Drakelands Mine, Plymouth, Devon (24/04/2015)

During the first quarter of 2015 the company spent A\$24.4 million (£12.5 M) developing the Drakelands Mine. Construction work is now 85% completed, and on schedule. Work described in the quarterly Report includes:

- Structural steel erection is 97% complete and wall cladding of the processing plant buildings is well advanced.
- The majority of plant equipment has been installed within the processing plant buildings.
- Scheduled tree planting, stone wall and bat shelter construction activities were completed during the quarter.

Wolf's Managing Director, Russell Clark said: "This has been another successful quarter for Wolf. Commissioning at the Hemerdon Project has commenced, our staff have relocated from Plymouth to our completed administration office on site and we plan to be introducing ore into the plant in July 2015."

<http://www.wolfminerals.com.au/irm/content/default.aspx>

Lisheen Mine, Thurles, Co. Tipperary (05/05/2015)

Lisheen mine is closing, with the production of lead and zinc concentrates finishing at the end of September, and backfilling operations due for completion by mid February 2016. Vedanta Resources PLC are inviting organisations to express their interest in assisting with the closure of the mine, and sale of equipment.

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

Curraghinalt Gold Project, Gortin, Co. Tyrone (06/05/2015)

Major Drilling Group International Inc has been contracted to implement a 20 000 metre program of infill drilling. About 15 000 m of this drilling will be from underground, where three drill rigs will be used. Another three rigs will drill 5 000 m from the surface. Drilling commenced on the 26th March. By the 31st March three drill bays had been constructed underground, of the eleven bays planned.

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

Avoca Mines, Co. Wicklow (07/05/2015)

On the 6th of February the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources applied to Wicklow County Council for planning permission for "safety works to replace existing degraded caps on two mine shaft openings, known as 'Whelan's Shaft' and 'Air Shaft'", in Ballymurtagh townland, West Avoca. The County Council have requested further information from the developer. Planning application 15119.

On the 7th of May the Minister applied for permission for "Engineering and Public Health & Safety works on a site at East Avoca Mines in the townlands of Tigroney West and Cronebane" The proposals include "stabilisation, safety and drainage

works at the '850 Adit'... restoration and stabilisation works to the "Ore Bins" and the adjacent crib wall to address existing structural and safety issues...minor protection works to the exposed portal of the "Upper Flat Rod Tunnel"... stabilization and re-grading of the spoil heaps and embankments, capping of the spoil heaps and landscaping works". Planning application 15473.

<http://193.178.30.218/WicklownPlan/SearchTypes.aspx?sitemap=2>

York Potash Project (08/05/2015)

On the 23rd April, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council resolved to grant planning permission to Sirius Minerals Ltd for the York Potash Mine and mineral transport system. An identical "straddling application" is due for consideration by the North York Moor National Park Authority on the 30th June.

On the 30th April the company received approval from the Borough Council for its materials handling facility on Teeside, subject to a section 106 agreement. The Planning Inspectorate is considering the company's application for harbour facilities.

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

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Mining the past – shaping our lives (DVD)

This DVD is one of the outcomes of an Age UK North Staffordshire project to bring together former miners, their families and carers to share their memories. The DVD costs £13 including post & packing. To buy a copy phone 01782 286209.

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/northstaffs/news--campaigns/newproject-for-age-uk-north-staffords-hire/>

Here today, gone tomorrow.: an industrial and social history of the south-west Durham Coalfield

This book by fourth-generation miner Brian Turner records the history of his family, other miners and the pits in the coalfield. It includes 161 photographs and runs to 257 pages. The book is available for £17.50 from ELI Press, 121 Low Etherley, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 0HA.

http://www.wearvalleyadvertiser.co.uk/news/11868276.Former_Chilton_miner_s_trip_down_memory_lane_with_book_on_County_Durham_s_pits/

A building stones guide to Central Manchester

Peter del Strother and Jennifer Rhodes have edited a new edition of the guide, published by the Manchester Geological Association. The spiral-bound publication covers four walks through the City Centre, and includes foldout maps. The Guide is available for £6, +

£2.50 post & packing. To buy a copy contact lgga.info@gmail.com
<http://www.naturalstonespecialist.com/currentissue/unlockednewsarticle.php?id=6943>

Alastair Lings

A news item in The Glasgow Herald in April reported a revival in the prospects for Scotgold Resources, so Ron Callender has restarted his Cononish Diary.

Cononish Diary : The story continues

“There’s life in the old dog yet,” said my snout in Glasgow when *The Glasgow Herald* ran stories on the ever-changing fortunes of Scotland’s gold mine. Early this year, Scotgold Resources announced the results of an independent estimate of the mineral resource (MRE) and the share price doubled (to 1.32p !). According to the MRE, there are 248,000 ounces of gold at Cononish and a new board promises to revise the development plan.

Another *Glasgow Herald* account disclosed a board-room shake-up last October. A new chairman replaced John Bentley, and Richard Gray took over from the long-serving Chris Sangster as the chief executive. The company now intends to dedicate the next eighteen months to construction work, and Richard Gray has already predicted, “We will be pouring gold at the end of the first quarter of 2017.”

A recent interview with Richard Gray revealed he had more than 25 years’ experience in Africa as a gold mine operator and project manager. He also admitted that he was “reasonably financially literate” and is pleased that the results from 3D mapping of the orebody now permits the company to describe the volume and grade of gold as “measured” ... rather than “indicated”.

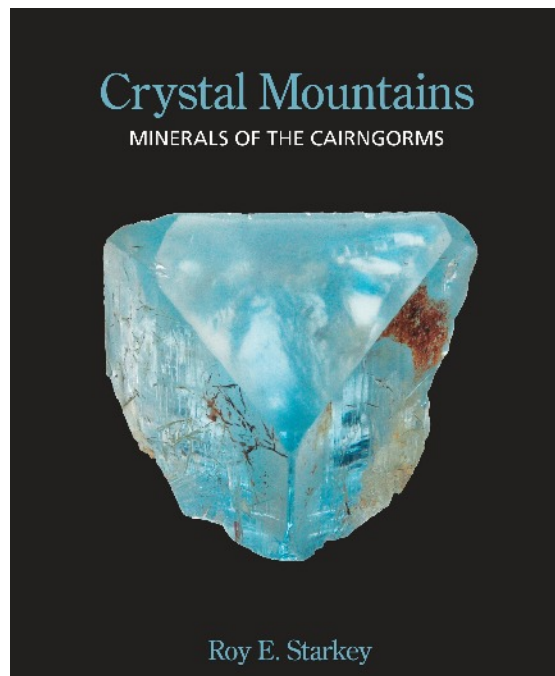
Raising finance will remain a priority for the mine and in acknowledging the good work by Chris Sangster, (who won over the many objections raised by the national park’s planning committees), Richard Gray confirmed Chris had been retained on a consultancy basis to tackle the essential and much-needed technical work.

Ron Callender

Note:- The Glasgow Herald article gave as his CV:- Richard Gray is a graduate in Mining Engineering from Imperial College’s Royal School of Mines and also holds an MBA from the graduate business school at Cape Town University. His association with gold began with Gencor in 1983

in South Africa, becoming operations director for Gencor International Gold in 1996. He moved to Golden Star Resources in 1999, then to what is now Avocet mining, based in London, in 2009, stepping down in 2013. He joined Scotgold Resources in October 2014.

New book reveals the story of Scotland’s National Gem



A new book by long-time NMRS member Roy Starkey tells the story of Scotland’s National Gem, and the “cairngorm miners” who toiled to find specimens for supply to the lapidary trade in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Photo:- Cairngorm viewed across Loch Avon (out of sight) from above Shelterstone Crag (Copyright Roy Starkey)

The Cairngorms is an area of dramatic and rugged scenery, recognised formally by its designation in September 2003 as the UK’s largest, and most northerly National Park. It is home to five out of six of Britain’s highest mountains and the Queen’s summer residence at Balmoral. The area has given its name to

Scotland's most famous gemstone, the distinctive, smoky amber-coloured cairngorm quartz, a term recognised globally by the jewellery trade, and which has for centuries adorned traditional Highland dress.

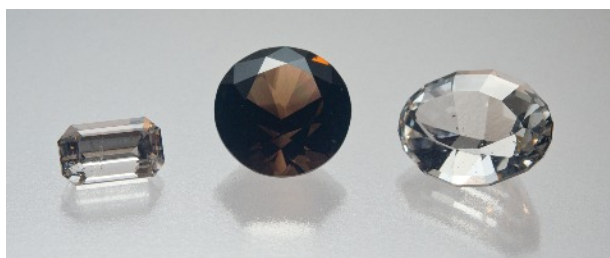


Photo:- Faceted topaz (left and right) and smoky quartz (centre) - Braemar Castle - Copyright Roy Starkey

Cairngorm quartz, has been found in very large crystals and crystal groups (up to 20 kg in weight) and the value of these as mineral specimens, rather than gemstones has long been recognised. Much of the quartz is, too dark (morion) to be used as gem cutting material, and the lapidary trade resorted to heat treatment of dark specimens, in the 1700s and 1800s, in an effort to improve their colour and commercial value. If this was successful, such specimens were commonly sold as citrine.

There is much confusion in early literature about 'cairngorm' and "Cairngorm stones", between quartz (silicon dioxide) and topaz (a silicate mineral containing aluminium and fluorine). Brown or yellow quartz crystals were commonly described as 'topaz', perhaps because they might have been considered to be more valuable. Similarly, the mineral beryl (a beryllium aluminium silicate), was sometimes described as 'emerald', an optimistic description, which would not hold sway today.



Photo:- Smoky quartz crystal - Loch - Copyright Roy Starkey

Roy's book *Crystal Mountains – Minerals of the Cairngorms* unravels the story of the cairngorm, exploring the long tradition of hunting for 'Cairngorm stones', which saw individuals, and whole families, driven to search the moun-

tains with a zeal akin to the lust for gold. Demand from the lapidary and jewellery trade was such that the supply of authentic local material could not keep up, and inevitably, imported material began to be passed-off as Scottish. It is now very difficult, if not impossible, to be certain of the provenance of cut stones and those mounted in jewellery.

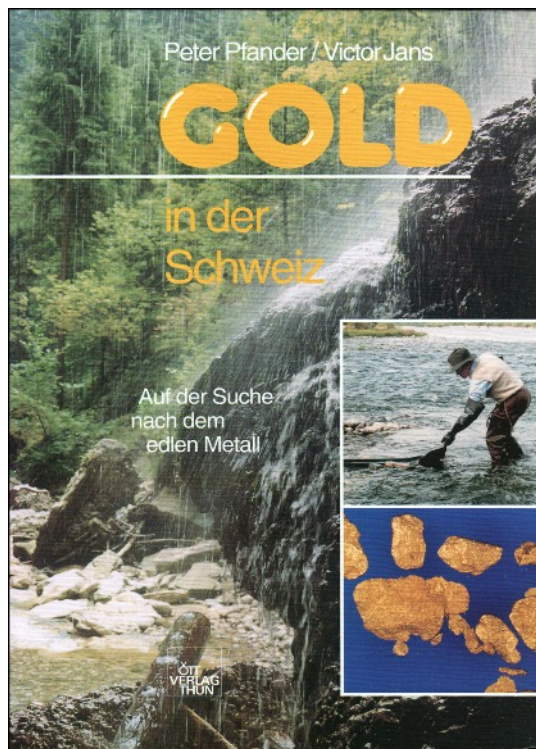
The book traces the history of the cairngorm (and the associated topaz and beryl crystals which are found in the region, although of much less common occurrence than quartz), and also presents a very readable account of the geology and occurrence of the gem minerals, including an easily understood explanation of the cause of colour in smoky quartz. Lavishly illustrated with images of the stunning Cairngorm scenery, mineral specimens and gemstones, *Crystal Mountains* provides a comprehensive coverage of the subject.

The fascination of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert with Scotland's national gem, and the surviving legacy of their specimens, are explored using the Queen's personal journals and contemporary newspaper accounts, together with images of specimens from the collection at Balmoral Castle and Osborne House. A supply chain is traced from 'The Diggers' who sought raw material, through mineral dealers, lapidaries, seal engravers and jewellers who all earned a living trading 'Cairngorm stones'. The principal centres for the Scottish lapidary trade appear to have been Edinburgh and Aberdeen, but with several notable businesses also prospering in Inverness, and others in Dundee, Perth and Stirling. The story culminates in the Great Exhibition of 1851, which provided a shop window to the World for Scottish goods, including natural cairngorm crystals, and the jewellery and other artefacts fashioned from them.

The days of the 'diggers' and 'cairngorm miners' are long gone, but there may still be forgotten treasures scattered in attics and trinket boxes across the area, just awaiting discovery by the next generation. Queen Victoria's mountains attract thousands of visitors each year, and the links with Balmoral remain as strong as ever. Scottish pebble jewellery is now a highly collectible commodity, and an authentic Scottish cairngorm brooch would undoubtedly still make a most acceptable gift.

Crystal Mountains – Minerals of the Cairngorms is a meticulously researched and authoritative account of Cairngorm gemstones and associated minerals. The book, 184 large format pages (276×218 mm) soft-back, is available direct from the publisher www.britishmineralogy.com priced at £25 plus p&p.

Roy Starkey



The best book about the occurrence of gold in Switzerland is *Gold in der Schweiz*, written by Victor Jans and Peter Pfander. In spite of the German text, the two authors include a summary in English, which helps to understand the gist of many chapters. I was fortunate in meeting both men at gold panning championships some years ago, from which we formed a strong friendship. When Peter Pfander offered to introduce me to his favourite gold-bearing river, the plan was simple ... to meet him beneath the clock of a remote railway station one Saturday morning in the canton Lucerne.

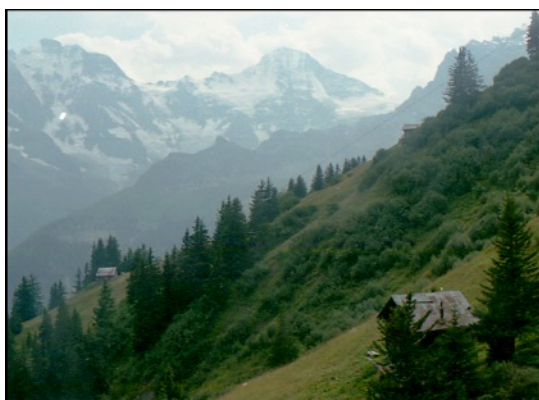


Photo:-A General view of the Napf area

To my relief, Peter materialised as the clock struck nine in the deserted village of Bramboden and he took charge as we assembled clothes and equipment. There was a short walk around the **edge** of a field (to comply with Swiss law) and we then took a winding path to a river valley, which was strewn with boulders bordering the river that runs through the Napf area.



Photo:- General view of the boulder-strewn river

Peter showed me how to create a hole by removing four or five boulders and thus reveal damp, dark gravel, which was potentially gold bearing. After scooping gravel into a gold pan, it was necessary to make a short walk over the boulders to the river and start the washing sequence. As a general rule, the outcome was usually few grains of the yellow metal.



Photo:- The author pauses after adapting to the new way of working

The weather was warm and during the morning, other gold enthusiasts appeared. Rudi Steiner and Denise had come to test the first production models of a gold pan, which Rudi had designed. Once Rudi had used his new pan, he was anxious for Peter Pfander to make a candid evaluation. Peter approved and it was not long before others took the opportunity to assess the design. (Later I learned the Swiss team intended to use Rudi's design in the World Goldpanning Championships.)



Photo:- Rudi watches Peter as he evaluates the new design of gold pan

Victor Jans arrived after a bout of training in the Swiss army and soon proved to be an efficient gold

panner. As the day wore on, he spoke enthusiastically about aspects of gold discovery in the area and offered to take me to a gold mine. Torn between panning by the river and exploring, I suggested we do so the next morning.



Photo:- SGV badge awarded to the author

This gave him time to summarise aspects of Switzerland's history – Celtic gold coins had been recovered nearby, and the Romans are thought to have come to the Napf, but written records confirm a monastery paid the demanded “*denarius aureus*” (gold coins) to Rome in the form of gold dust.

The Lucerne region hosted professional prospectors, called “golders”, from the 14th to the 19th centuries when the state preserved the right to purchase the precious metal for the production of coinage.



Photo:- Margaret Callender competes in the Bi-annual Swiss Championships, Willisau

The alluvial gold of the Napf is thought to have originated in the Alps and has been transported as detritus over millions of years. Retaining a brilliant yellow hue, Napf gold occurs as flakes, and prospectors seldom find nuggets. The author of a doctoral thesis, writing in 1967, said, “... over a three year period, I recovered some 52 grammes of

gold. If one compares the yield with the difficulties, and the energy and the perseverance required, it is a meagre result.” Her thesis concluded on a happy note when she recommended that the Napf area was ideal for amateur prospectors who wanted to combine an enthusiasm for gold panning with outdoor adventure.



Photo:- On the Mawdach in North Wales, Roland Brunner precariously operates his sluice box

In recent years, the Swiss gold panners have formed a very active association (SGV) which hosts monthly meetings, regular excursions and organises championships, which circulate around the French, German and Italian-speaking parts of the country. A small group came to Britain on a reciprocal basis a few years later and, following a good-natured challenge, we provided five British rivers during five days of panning. In doing so, we proved that not all gold was in Swiss banks.

Dr R M Callender, FRPS

23rd April 2015

Authors note:

1. The book by Jans & Pfander features well-illustrated accounts of other regions of Switzerland having a gold history. It is NOT available on Amazon but the website of the SGV provides details.
2. A confession ! I always thought the river's name was the Napf, but it might have been the Fontanne. Victor Jans asserts that the name Fontanne is derived from the Roman word for “fountain”. Napf is the name of a well-known mountain that dominates the valley and generalisations often use the phrase “the Napf area.”

Sirius a step closer to £1.5bn potash mine

By Andrew Critchlow

Sirius Minerals has moved a step closer to its long-awaited £1.5bn project to build a giant potash mine under the North Yorks Moors National Park.

Ahead of its key permitting meeting on June 30th, planning officers have notified Sirius that it is likely to make an “open recommendation”, rather than a positive or negative one, to the members of the Park

Authority. The decision should raise the likelihood of the company receiving final approval to begin work at the site near Redcar.

Sirius requires a majority of the 19 planning committee members in order to make a determination in its favour.

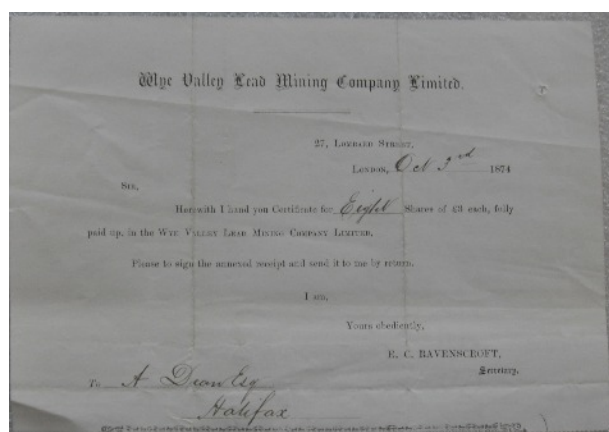
“We are very pleased to be heading towards a decision by the members and have confidence in the strength of our planning case, the huge levels of support for the application and the many wide ranging economic benefits that the project will deliver to the local area and to the country at large,” said Sirius chief executive Chris Fraser.

The Daily Telegraph reported on Sunday that Sirius was poised to tap the City for \$1bn of finance for the project, which could create thousands of new jobs in the local area and reduce the UK’s trade deficit by as much as 4pc. Potash is already being produced in the area by ICLO Fertilizers, which runs a large site previously operated by Cleveland Potash. ICL is planning to build a processing plant in the area that will treat the polyhalite that it mines. Canada and Russia dominate global potash production through companies such as Potash Corp of Saskatchewan and Uralkali, which operates in Russia’s Ural mountains. Other major players include BHP Billiton and K+S Group of Germany. Five years ago, BHP had a \$40bn bid to buy PotashCorp blocked by the Canadian government.

Daily Telegraph 15 May 2015

Wye Valley Lead Mining Company

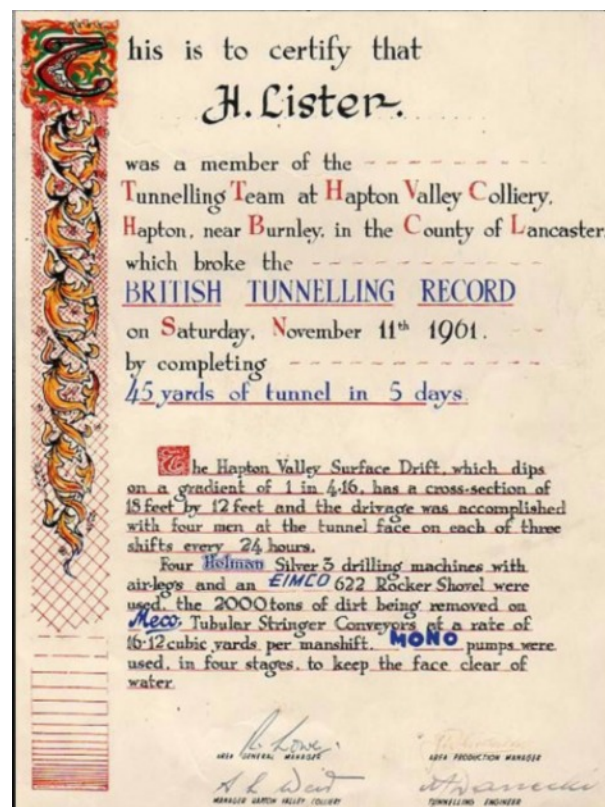
John Saunders of Past & Present Books, in the



Forest of Dean, showed me this receipt for eight £3 shares in the Wye Valley Lead Mining Co Ltd, with the question did I know where it was as it seemed very unlikely that it was anything to do with the local stretch of the river. Part 4 of David Bick’s The Old Metal Mines of Mid-Wales indicates that the company, active from 1874 to 1879, was the third of five that worked the Nantygwrdd mine between 1863 and 1885.

Rob Needham

Eimco 622 in Hapton Valley Colliery, Burnley



Knowing of my request for information on Eimco rocker shovels, Graham Topping sent me this interesting certificate. The Eimco 622 is a tracked version, which was apparently used in many NCB collieries (drawing of Eimco 621 is the closest I can find to a 622).

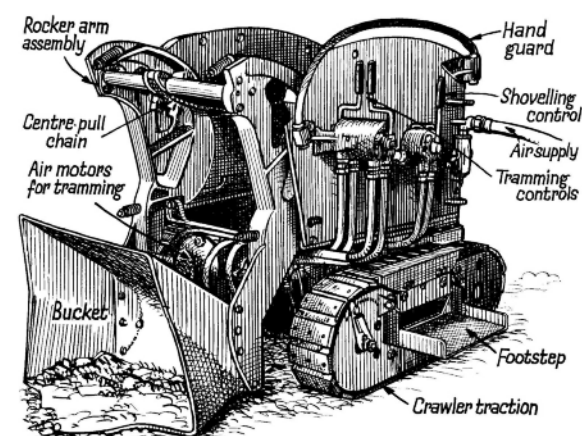


FIG. 18. Eimco 621 crawler-mounted shovel.

Does anyone know what the current British Tunneling Record is and who holds it? I can’t imagine that the record quoted in the certificate still stands.

Rob Needham

At the recent AGM Bernard Bond suggested having a Nostlgia section in the newsletter. Here is the first entry that I've received.

OUT IN THE OLD WORKINGS ST. HEL- ENS

Jubits Lane entrance to former Sutton Manor Colliery site. (2015)



I was recently visiting St. Helens Lancashire and while I was driving down Jubits Lane en route to see the "dream" I came across these colliery entrance gates. I couldn't resist a photograph of them as the last time I saw them was in 1976. This was when I spent 2 weeks of my 16 weeks basic training program with the National Coal Board. The first shaft at Sutton Manor was sunk in 1906 to a depth of 582mts. The second shaft was sunk in 1912 to a depth of 710mts. In the mid 1960s there was about 1500 men worked there and it was producing around 600000 tons of coal per year. It was closed in 1990 on uneconomic grounds while still having significant reserves of coal remaining.

Clock Face Colliery Head Gear Wheel. (2015)



About one mile down the road toward the vil-
lage of "Clock Face" at the entrance to Buff

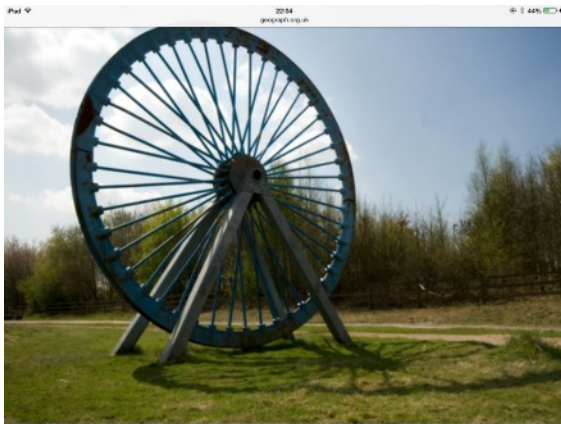
Quarry. Another piece of mining archeology from the former "Clock Face Colliery" one of the main head gear wheels. It's about 1.6 meters in diameter and looks to be made of wrought iron or cast iron. The bearing blocks look original. It looks far grander stood on top of its head gear as the picture below shows. It's interesting to note that even after it was closed they used it as an underground reservoir. We visited the site on several occasions during my training period to check on the pumps and security.

Information Board at former Clock Face Col-
liery site. (2015)



I then moved on to the former Bold Colliery site which was about 3 miles away which is now a industrial park. However on the New Bold Green there is this head gear wheel and guess what - my Iphone was flat, so I have down loaded this photograph. This wheel is about 2.5mts in diameter and I think that the blue paint is to original specification. This mine was in production for over 100 yrs with a short closure in the nineteen thirties. In 1965 it was reputed to be the most advanced mine in the country. It never recovered from the miners strike and finally closed in 1986 on uneco-
nomic grounds. It brought back memories of the 4 weeks I spent at Bold during my training period and I renewed my relationship with it once again. There is something about head gear wheels that stirs up past memories, per-

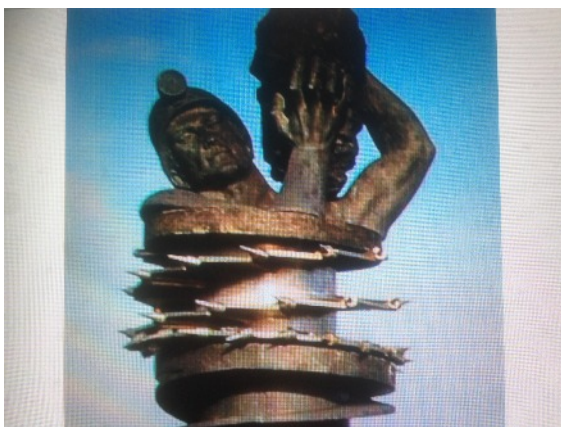
haps that's why they are very often used in this type of context.



The Blue wheel - Bold colliery. (2010 Cara Donovan)



This mining statue is on the roundabout outside the YMCA in St. Helens. I was billeted there in the 1970s but don't recall seeing it then. (2015)



The Mr Anderton statue - inventor of the power shearer and loader used in coal mines all over the world. He lived in Newton le Willows most of his life until his death at the age of 89. This is situated on the roundabout near

the Tesco in St. Helens town centre (2015)

This is an indestructible ventilation fan from the former Sutton Manor Colliery St. Helens. This was the auxiliary fan and is a superb exhibit.



My visit was originally to see the "Dream" a modern sculpture on the former Sutton Manor colliery site but you guessed it we never got to see it. However a very enjoyable day ensued it's surprising what heritage is still around to be seen.

Graham Topping

Please send me further contributions for this section.

Rob Needham

DailyTelegraph 27April2015

A small Scottish hamlet in the highlands of Aberdeenshire could become Britain's Klondike, after a mining company claimed it was sitting on a thick seam of gold. GreenOre Gold has a licence from the Crown Estate to explore the hills around the village of Towie, where the company believes that there could be more than 3m ounces of the precious metal within easy reach. However, before any aspiring prospectors gather their gold pans and shovels to head up to the highlands, take a look at the plummeting price of the commodity.

Gold closed last week at a four-week low of around \$1,175 per ounce, as traders pondered whether the US Federal Reserve will hold off until the summer before it makes the long awaited step of increasing borrowing rates in the world's largest economy.

Investors tend to buy gold in times of uncertainty as a safe haven against financial risks which expose other assets such as equities. However, traders appear to be betting that the recent rally in equity markets, supported by low oil prices, will continue throughout 2015 despite the risks.

Rob Needham

Forest of Dean miners token



A small news item in the Forest of Dean & Wye Valley Review of 17 April 2015 reported that a token had been dug up in his garden by a Mr Sheppard of Allaston Road, Lydney. The token is engraved with 'Forest of Dean Miners Association' and 'No 16 Lodge No 103'.

Rob Needham

In the May 2015 issue of the news journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society there is a news item from Mike Swift which caught my attention:-

Joseph Morton Ltd, Mytholmes Brick Works, Halifax

This works closed in the mid-1950s and the site was subsequently cleared and used for housing. However, a section of track still survives across Break Neck, a lane off Halifax Old Road. It originally led from a drift mine, through a paved yard where clay was stacked to weather, crossed Halifax Old Road diagonally on its bridge over Shibden Beck, then ascended an incline into the works. (More information follows on the 2ft gauge plateway rail system).

Can anyone supply any information on the drift mine?

Rob Needham

Yorkshire Dales Mining Museum

Unfortunately this mining museum, at Earby in the Old Grammar School will be closing at the end of June. Based in one of the oldest and most interesting buildings in Earby dating from 1594 it has suffered from a lack of footfall, mostly due to its position – off the beaten track and not in a well known beauty spot. A museum has been in existence since 1971 when it was opened to house the relics of mining collected over the previous twenty years by donations and by members of Earby Mines Research Group.



At present there is a comprehensive range of exhibits covering the mining dressing and smelting of lead in the Yorkshire Dales. The mystery of "Buckden Bill" is looked into as well as some fine photographs, old and new. Fully illustrated storyboards and numerous artefacts help complete the picture. At the moment the museum is open on Sundays between 11am – 5pm though there is a possibility of visits at other times by phoning Richard Matthew on 01282 771544.



The good news is that the Dales Countryside Museum

in Hawes should be acquiring the majority of the exhibits. However in the meantime if you are in the Earby area please go and look at this hidden gem. Admission prices are adult £2.50, Senior £2 and family £6. The post code is BB18 6QF.

Barbara Sutcliffe

Milwr Tunnel

The entry in the Meets Programme for 2015 caught my eye as I was putting together the February newsletter.

Sunday 12th July 2015 Milwr Tunnel

Meet at 10.45 a.m. in the lay-by outside the gates of the Hendre quarry. Leaving Rhydymwyn on the A541, heading toward Denbigh, the quarry entrance is the first turning on the right after the bowling club. Turn left at the small island and the lay-by is on the right just before the gates. The nearest post-code is CH7 5QD. Expect to be underground for around 6-7 hours, so bring a packed lunch. SRT gear is not needed, there is no deep water and only a couple of easy crawls.

The trip will take in the limestone workings, the Milwr tunnel and the lake in Powell's lode cavern. There will be a 400ft descent to tunnel level, mostly on fixed ladders, a 4 mile round trip to the lake and then ascent back up the ladders to the surface. Visitors must have load-bearing belts, cows-tails and Petzel shunt, or equivalent, to enable them to self-lifeline on the steeper ladders. Note that the ladderway in Olwyn Goch shaft is no longer used, the current entrance is a new route opened up by GCC over the past few years.

There is a limit of 6 visitors and all visitors must have BCA insurance.

Leader is George Harvey (01352 781 406 or fr30@dial.pipex.com)

Apart from sounding interesting but beyond my abilities, mention of the Olwyn Goch shaft triggered a memory of reading that equipment from the shaft had been moved to Dolaucothi on closure. And amongst the equipment moved was an Eimco rocker shovel. So a few weeks ago I re-visited Dolaucothi. The rocker shovel was on display in the open air, looking rather the worse for wear. Particularly as it had apparently been overhauled, tested and painted in the University workshops in Cardiff before going on display at Dolaucothi. Closer examination found the makers plate still legible. This showed that it had been manufactured by the Eimco Corporation in Salt Lake City and its serial number was 627. By the late 1960s nearly 30,000 rocker shovels had been manufactured. So this was an early one, possibly as early as 1940 (production having started in 1938). Which means that it is

apparently the oldest surviving in preservation. Note that on the plate it is referred to as an Eimco-Finlay Loader', which confirms that it is an early model as 'Finlay' was soon dropped.



But in The Milwr Tunnel, by Cris Ebbs (published 1993), it says that 'The limestone workings west of Olwyn Goch also contain up to 40 mine cars together with several Eimco shovels.' Which is what got me really excited. Were these rocker shovels as old as the one at Dolaucothi? The only way of answering this would be to find out whether they still had makers plates and if so are the details on the plate(s) still legible. So please would someone going on the trip in July (1) count how many rocker shovels are still present in the old workings, (2) see which one(s) still have makers plates, and (3) take photographs of any remaining makers plates?

From 1953 rocker shovels were made in the UK for the Eimco subsidiary based in Gateshead by Logan Engineering until c1978. After then, it is thought that shovels supplied to UK mines are imported, but apparently fitted with Eimco (GB) plates. These are large cast plates, totally unlike the US plates.



This plate was on the rocker shovel photographed outside the Rogerley mine during last years NMRS visit.

The only photograph of a shovel in the old limestone workings is one by Nick Catford on the Subterranea Britannica website and appears to show an Eimco (GB) cast makers plate.

Rob Needham

Genuine news item or April fool?

An obituary from the Daily Telegraph, early April 2015 (I forgot to note the date)

Gary Dahl, who has died (on March 23, 2015) aged 78, came up with the idea of collectable “pet rocks” and sold more than a million in five months, thus proving, in his words, that there is such a thing as “an economy for stupid”.

The idea came to Dahl, a down-on-his-luck California advertising copywriter, while he was having a drink with friends in April 1975. The talk turned to pets and the expense and bother of looking after them. Dahl joked that he had avoided all the hassle by adopting a pet rock.

Convinced that he had hit on a clever marketing wheeze, he spent the next two weeks writing a spoof 36-page training manual for a pet rock, containing advice on such matters as house-training, feeding and obedience, and visited his local builders’ merchants where he bought three tons of grey beach stones, which sold for one cent apiece.

He introduced the “Pet Rocks”, packaged in cardboard carrying cases with straw, breathing holes and manuals, at a gift show in San Francisco in August, and by October he was selling 10,000 a day at \$3.95 each. By the end of the year Dahl had sold 1.3 million, making \$1 on each, and had become an instant millionaire. By Christmas a majority of American daily newspapers had run Pet Rock stories. “I had one phone to each ear”, he recalled. “I taught my PR guy to impersonate me so he could also answer my calls.”

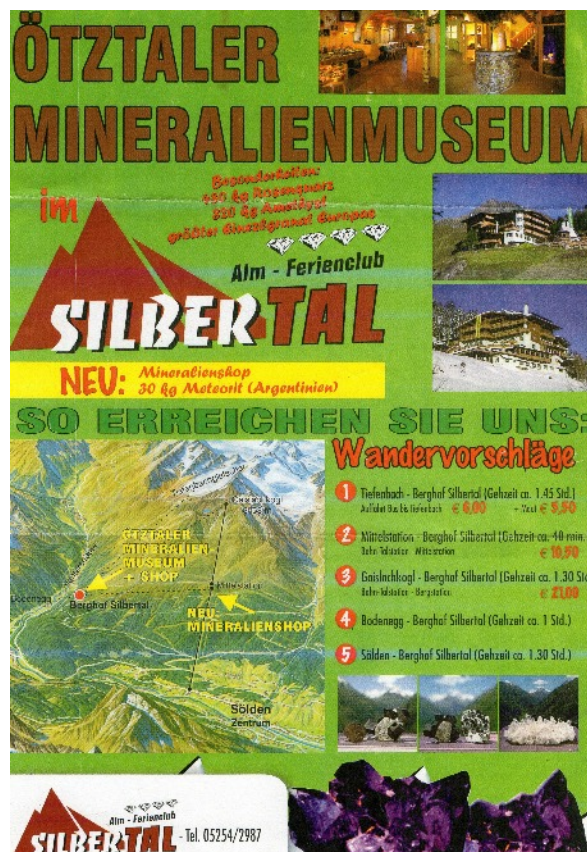
But by February 1976 Pet Rock boom had turned to Pet Rock bust. Dahl had to compensate two former friends who had helped to finance the Pet Rock start-up and announced that he was giving his inventory of 100,000 boxed rocks to needy children. He spent the next few decades trying to repeat the success of Pet Rocks. He came up with The Original Sand Breeding Kit, and Red China Dirt, which encouraged them to help smuggle mainland China into the United States, one cubic centimetre at a time. Neither was commercially successful.

I still can’t make up my mind as to whether or not this is a genuine obituary

Rob Needham

Silbertal Mineral Museum

Bernard Bond sent leaflets from his walking holiday in the Austrian Tirol thinking they might be of interest to members.



As my German is not up to producing a translation, I resorted to Google and the internet, which thankfully produced the following translation in response to my search for Silbertal mineral museum:-

Filthy Rich without crushing

Visit our Museum of Minerals in The New Holiday Club Silbertal
The biggest Constantly exposed mineral exhibition with video documentation in West Austria

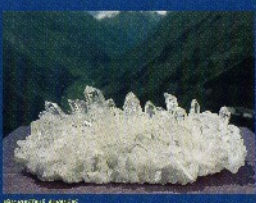
Unbelievable Exhibits:
Europeans biggest single garnet
820 kg big amethyst geode
350 kg big sodalite ...

Playground
We care for your physical well-being the whole day

Inquiries:
Ferienclub Silbertal
Gaislach. 7 A-6450 Sölden
Tel: 0 52 54/29 87th Fax: -31 44
Email: info@almhuetten.net

The other two leaflets sent by Bernard are overleaf

Eines seiner besten Sammlerstücke - der größte Einzelgranat Europas (Fundort Granatenkogel) (Bild unten) - können Sie derzeit im Berggasthof Silbertal bewundern. Jeden Montag bietet sich Mineralienliebhabern die Gelegenheit, Ausstellungsstücke zu erwerben und die Bekanntschaft mit unserem Granaten Yeti persönlich zu machen. Sie erhalten dort Auskünfte aus erster Hand, und haben die Chance, interessante Dinge über die Geheimnisse rund um die Ötztaler Granaten, in Erfahrung zu bringen.



PRACHTSTÜCKE AUS DER
ÖTZTALGRANATEN

50 ERREICHEN SIE UNS



ÖTZTAL SÖLDEN

NAHERE AUSKUNFTE:
TÜROCK 0 52 54 / 21 87
H. MANTONBERG
TM 0 52 54 / 22 72
EISECK 00 49 / 52 54 / 21 87

**WIR FREUEN UNS
AUF IHREN BESUCH!**

**MINERALIENSCHAU IM
SILBERTAL**

AUSSTELLUNGSZEIT:
ANFANG JULI
BIS MITTE SEPTEMBER




Final note from the Editor

That's it for this issue. My apologies if it appears a bit disorganised, but I'm still recovering from my computer failure.

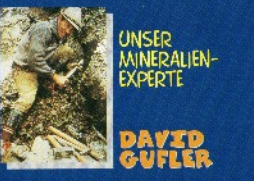
Let me know what you think of the newsletter, what you would like to see in it, and what you don't want to see in it. Or even better send me one or more contributions. An interesting news item, or something from a holiday, an item for the Nostalgia section, a publication found, an old postcard, or photograph.

After all, the more you send in, the less of my rambling thoughts you'll have to put up with.

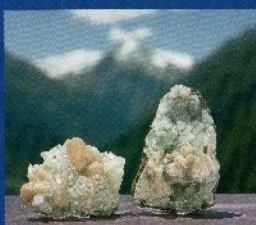
Rob Needham

UNSER MINERALIEN-EXPERTE
DAVID GUFLE

... Etwas oberhalb der Kehre beginnt sich eine Silhouette aus der Dunkelheit herauszuschälen, ihr Umriss wird immer deutlicher. Die Gestalt kommt auf das Auto zu. Plötzlich springt ein Kind aufgeregt vom Rücksitz hoch und schreit: „DAS ISTCH DA YETI!“ Die Frau nickt zustimmend und stellt lächelnd fest: „JO: DER GRANATEN YETI, DER OPA.“



Dreißig Jahre sind vergangen, seit Granaten Yeti, David Gufle, seine Leidenschaft für die Welt der Mineralien entdeckte. Was am Anfang noch ein Hobby war, machte er sich binnen kürzester Zeit zu seinem Lebensinhalt. Mit Hammer und Meißel ausgestattet, peilt er zielstrebig den Fuß der Granatenkogelwand - eine international bekannte Granatenfundstelle in der Nähe von Obergurgl an.



„Die Schönsten sitzen direkt auf dem Quarzband, der Glimmer hält sie ein und ist butterweich, wenn er bergfrisch ist. Man kann die Kristalle mit dem Fingernagel - oder besser mit dem Messer - freikratzen - eine wahre Freude!“



Hundert Tagestouren warten jedes Jahr auf ihn. Hundert glückliche Fundtage, an denen er im Schnitt 30 kg der roten Prachtstücke, vorgeklopft und grob gereinigt ins Tal zurückkehrt. Der Söldner Granatensammler ist ein Strahler vom alten Schlag, auch wenn er manchmal den zarten Fels verflucht, geht er unbeirrt - sich seines Status als Lokalmarken-tador bewußt - seinem Treiben nach.

Seine hart erkämpften Schmuckstücke und unzählige andere Mineralien zieren derzeit die Silbertalalm. Die in unseren Vitrinen zur Schau gestellten Ausstellungsstücke, machen unser Haus zu einem Museum - Ein Besuch, der sich lohnt!

Neben mit Granaten gespickten Gesteinsstufen, findet man Mineralien aus aller Welt, die der Granaten Yeti auf diversen Mineralienbörsen eintauschen konnte.

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