



### Editor's Letter

As usual I must start with apologies for the later appearance of this newsletter and thank Don Borthwick for his significant contribution to its contents. Over the last six months I have been constrained by the amount of time required to wrap up a project planned to be completed by the end of January. Unforeseen events, the discovery of a hitherto unknown Roman fort at Calstock in the Tamar Valley during investigation of a potential medieval lead/silver smelting site, led to an extension to the completion date and a distinct rise in the level of interest in the work of the project. Don has provided most of the newsletter content but it has taken until now for me to assemble it for publication.

### NEW SECRETARY FOR NAMHO

In March we held a NAMHO council meeting at the Williamston Tunnels in Liverpool and in the course of that meeting recruited Nigel Dibben as a much needed successor to Sallie Bassham as Secretary to the association. Should you need to contact the officers please do so through Nigel at the postal address below (or by e-mail at [secretary@namho.org](mailto:secretary@namho.org)).

### NEPTUNE SAVES HISTORIC MINE

This was the headline in the Devon and Cornwall News published by the National Trust (England and Wales) and refers to their purchase of a section of cliff-top land on the south Cornwall coast, including Wheal Trewavas, using funds raised under the Neptune Coastline Campaign. The engine houses at Wheal Trewavas will be conserved and continued access to the surface features is ensured. A significant proportion of the coastline of England and Wales, particularly in the south-west, is now owned by the Trust including many prominent mining sites. National guidelines for the Trust on cave and mine exploration are being finalised, following discussion with NAMHO and the British Caving Association (BCA), which should provide a well defined arrangement for future access underground. The relatively undisturbed cliff-top coastal location for many of the mines on National Trust property can mean that there is considerable archaeological potential on those sites with early (prehistoric / pre-industrial) mining in the south-west of England a strong candidate for future investigation. Continued protection is welcome as will further investigation of the potential.

### SAD NEWS

Jean Tyler – RIP

Members who have had anything to do with mining in the Lake District are likely to have known Jean Tyler. And those of us who did know her are definitely the richer for that privilege.

The high esteem in which Jean was held was shown by the attendance at the funeral. The crematorium chapel was full to over-flowing and dozens of people were standing in the aisle and in an over-flow room. There must have been about 200 people present.

Perhaps one reason why so many people wished to pay tribute to an exceptional lady was her wonderful gift with people. Jean made everyone feel special. One day, I observed her working in the Keswick Mining Museum and dealing with a wide variety of customers coming in. She encouraged the children who tried her quiz and asked questions about the exhibits: she dealt with technical queries about mineral specimens: she was welcoming to visitors who wanted to buy pretty souvenirs: she was patient with tourists who came in with general questions about the area: she was patient with people like me who don't understand much about geology and wanted help with samples and locations. Jean remembered everyone and their interests; she would volunteer information about the places and processes in which you were interested and find exactly the right book or journal article for you. Once when I commented on this, she was typically self-effacing and just said that she was lucky in having been blessed with a good memory for names and people.

Jean died in December 2007. She had been diagnosed with a brain tumour earlier in the year and had had surgery and radiotherapy treatment. In hospital, she longed to return home and be able to look out on her beloved Lakeland fells.

After success in other careers – about which Jean was always modest and would say little – she and her husband Ian worked on setting up and running mining museums. The latest was in Keswick. Before that they had other museums – with books as well, of course - first in Caldbeck and then at Threlkeld. The tremendous amount of work put into these successful ventures was clear to every visitor. As well as Jean's extensive knowledge of mining, she clearly had shrewd business sense.

Jean was also a driving force behind the founding and continuing good work of MOLES (Mines of the Lakeland Exploration Society). Ian Tyler's books on mining in the Lake District are deservedly famous: they were joint projects, with Jean doing the illustrations and also much of the work editing the text. When in hospital, she longed to get home and work on another volume and had worked out how she could use her then limited physical abilities to best effect.

At the funeral, the local vicar described Jean as "a lady of style". Not just her eye for the fashions which suited her; but "stylish" in a wider sense in her approach to life. It seems she was pleased to have climbed Great Gable with her lipstick intact. I can envisage her at the summit – smart, stylish, good fun, a knowledgeable and generous companion, with time for others. We shall miss her.

(Sallie Bassham would like to thank everyone who has helped with this appreciation of Jean.)

#### GOOD NEWS

"Industrial archaeologist Peter Geddes receives an MBE in recognition of 25 years' work in local history projects.

One of his proudest achievements was overseeing the Snaefell Wheel project which was completed in 2006."

<http://www.iomtoday.co.im/news/Three-receive-New-Year-honours.3626553.jp>

I hope the above link still works but those of you who know about the mines on the Isle of Man will be aware of Peter's sterling work on their conservation and interpretation. To see the Snaefell wheel conserved on site after its travels around Cornwall and mid-Wales is a real success, not just for Peter but for all those involved. Well done and well deserved.

Editor

## COAL MINING IN BRITAIN TODAY

The future for Britain's deep coal mines looks brighter now than it has for years, though UK Coal makes more money from selling off former colliery land than from mining and, over the next six years, plans to raise up to £800m by selling thousands of acres for housing and commercial development. This has been boosted in the Selby area, where the requirement to return some sites to agricultural use has been revoked. In August the government supported plans for the regeneration of Gascoigne Wood mine to create new office and distribution facilities.

The future of Kellingley Colliery, near Pontefract, was secured in August when planning permission to mine 3m tonnes of Silkstone coal was granted. In the short-term, this has saved 700 jobs and will give time to develop an area of Beeston seam, to the south and east of the current workings, as part of a £60m investment.

In the Doncaster area, UK Coal's Maltby Colliery was sold to Hargreaves Services for £30.1m (£21.5m for the colliery, plus the assumption of a pension deficit of £8.6m) in February. The mine will supply coking coal to the company's Monckton coking plant which, even with a 30% increase in international coke prices, is seeing strong demand from Scandinavian customers. The new owners will also benefit from a new contract to supply coal to Drax power station at prices reflecting those on World markets. The mine was scheduled to close in 2015, but its life has already been extended to 2017.

Richard Budge's Coal Power closed Hatfield Colliery in January 2004. Most of this mine's output had come from the High Hazel seam, which was practically exhausted, but it had large reserves of the Barnsley seam. In March 2006 Budge's new company, Powerfuel PLC, announced a deal in which Kuzbassrazrezugol (KRU), one of Russia's largest coal producers, acquired a 51% shareholding in Powerfuel. This is said to have cost KRU £36m, with more investment promised as the mine was redeveloped. Work began soon afterwards and coaling resumed in March 2007. Most of the surface plant will be replaced and there are plans for a clean power plant, which will need a further investment of £800m from KRU/Powerfuel. When the colliery is fully refurbished and production is at full capacity, probably by 2009, Hatfield could be producing around 2m tonnes/year.

Two of UK Coal's Doncaster area collieries have not fared so well, however. Rossington closed in March 2006 and is to be redeveloped, while Harworth closed in August 2006, because the company could not secure a sales contract to justify the investment needed to access further coal reserves, and is now on care and maintenance.

In Nottinghamshire, UK Coal is considering plans to invest up to £50m at Thoresby Colliery to extend its life by up to ten years. With reserves in the Parkgate seam exhausted, the colliery has re-entered the Deep Soft seam, some 830 metres below ground, where it hopes to open up 11m tonnes of reserves. Thoresby employs 500 people and produces coal for the Midlands power stations.

At Welbeck Colliery, which avoided closure in 2005, UK Coal is looking at developing new reserves which will extend the mine's life until 2011, producing coal for power stations and employing around 550 people.

In Warwickshire, Daw Mill, UK Coal's largest mine, was closed for a month following the death of miner in a roof fall in January. His was the third death there in less than a year. The first, in June 2006, was caused by a build-up of methane, and the second, in August 2006, was the result of an accident with machinery.

In Wales, Tower Colliery, near Hirwaun in Glamorganshire, has been run by its workers since 1995, but is expected to be exhausted in late 2007 or early 2008. Its workforce is expected to move to two mines which are developing near Blaengwrach in the Vale of Neath and these will also pick up Tower's principal market, the Aberthaw Power Station.

The former Pentreclwydau South Drift Mine, near Cwmgwrach, is being reopened under the name Unity Mine. This mine, which closed in 1998, has estimated reserves of up to 90m tonnes and is believed to be

capable of producing up to 1m tonnes/year of coal for the next 25 years. Its owner, Unity Power Plc is an amalgamation of Horizon Mining Ltd and Chian Resources Plc, an Australian-owned company. It is said that long-wall faces will be worked in the Six Feet seam and the drifts will be extended down to the Nine Feet seam.

In the same area, Energybuild Mining Ltd is developing Aberpergwm colliery to access to large anthracite reserves between the Neath and Dulais Valleys. This mine has an estimated 30 year life at its planned output of 440,000 saleable tonnes/year within the next three years, and 770,000 saleable tonnes/year within the next six years from the Eighteen Feet and Nine Feet seams.

The British Coal Corporation had begun developing this coal from its Aberpergwm and Treforgan mines, but they were closed in September and October 1985 respectively. Aberpergwm was reopened by E.H. Bennett & Co. Ltd in 1996 and was acquired by Energybuild in 2003. Some coal was worked whilst British Coal's access drifts were being located, drained and repaired.

Energybuild also works the nearby Nant y Mynydd opencast coal mine, which currently produces 2,000-3,000 tonnes/week, and the Group has identified several potential opencast sites for which it intends to seek planning permission in the next few years.

As already noted, the expected closure of Tower Colliery should increase demand for Energybuild's coal, as well as providing an experienced workforce and the opportunity to obtain mining equipment. Most of the group's output is likely to be sold to Aberthaw power station, which is designed to burn the low volatile anthracite being produced. The station is currently being fitted with Flue Gas Desulphurisation equipment to ensure its productive life until at least 2018. It is hoped to develop domestic and industrial markets for the remaining coal.

There are a further nine small coal mines, of which two, Eckington in Derbyshire, and Hay Royds in West Yorkshire, are moderate producers. Of the rest, four are in South Wales, two in the Forest of Dean, and one in Lancashire.

Mike Gill

#### CWMYSTWYTH

The Welsh Mines Preservation Trust (WMPT) has been in negotiation with the agents for Crown Estates over the last year or so regarding the possible acquisition of the Cwmystwyth Mine, in Ceredigion, mid Wales. The initial approach came from Crown Estates and included the possibility of some income from grazing rights on the land around the mine but there were restrictions on the use of that income, primarily in maintaining the closures erected on the mine entrances. There were, of course, the problems associated with acquiring not just the mine but the associated liabilities.

Graham Levins, secretary to the Trust, has stated –

*Following consideration the Trust Directors came to the conclusion that they could not afford to take the mine on. The cost of making the site safe, insuring the Trust against any liabilities arising from the site and those who might visit it exceeded what a small charity could undertake and would affect the ability of the Trust to continue with other projects in Wales, both from a financial and a manpower point of view.*

*The Trust's recent request for a further meeting has been declined. The only way forward that would be considered by the Crown's Agent was if a Trust could be formed to purchase and maintain the site. Discussions are continuing to consider the possibility whether a Trust could be formed by the local community, the mining history and exploration movement or official bodies in Wales (Minutes of the Ceredigion Mines Forum held at Ysbywyty Ystwyth, 19 April 2008).*

It is possible that the impasse can be resolved by the formation of a separate trust and that avenue is being explored by an interested party with strong links to mine exploration. In the meantime we, the WMPT and

the NAMHO conservation team, would request your continuing restraint on underground access by respecting the closures put in place by the Crown Estates. What we don't want is an excuse for the Crown Estates to make the closures more permanent than they already are, and the damage that will do to access and the underground archaeology.

#### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

##### ***The Scottish Gold Rush of 1869***

Callender, R. M. and Reeson, P. F.

Northern Mine Research Society Volume 84

£12 ISBN 978-0-901450-63-0

For those who choose to purchase directly from NMRS Publications the address has changed:

NMRS Publications

Barbara Sutcliffe

The Old Manse

93 Halifax Road

Nelson

Lancashire

BB9 0EQ

##### ***A Dangerous Place to Work! Women and Children of the Devon & Cornwall Mining Industries 1300 to 1970***

By Lynne Mayers

Blaize Bailey Books

Price £7.95. ISBN 978-0-9556896-0-4.

Thanks to Sallie Bassham for this information

##### ***Gold Miner's Diary***

As a schoolboy in wartime - Lanarkshire, lessons on the history of the Scottish crown jewels ignited Ron Callender's interest in gold discovery. Since then, he has visited many countries to study the great gold rushes of the world. In spite of inspiring tales from the Yukon, Australia and California, his first love remains the auspicious events that took place in the Strath of Kildonan, Sutherland, when a local man discovered gold in the gravels of the Kildonan Burn in 1868.

Over the past thirty years, Ron has assembled a portfolio of contemporary newspaper accounts, 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs, and books prints relating to the Kildonan gold rush. More recently, he has scrutinised the 19<sup>th</sup> century documents presented to the National Library of Scotland (by the Countess of Sutherland) and accumulated much background material relating to the men of the gold rush.

By concentrating his research on William Murray and by utilising all his source material, Ron has assembled *Gold Miner's Diary*, which is a 48- page (A5) illustrated account of one man's experiences during 1869.

Copies are available at a price of £4.50, (post free), from:

Dr R M Callender, 36 Broadlake, Willaston, NESTON, Cheshire, CH64 2XB

##### ***Cheltenham Stone: The Whittington Quarries,***

by Arthur J. Price.

Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club, 2007. 167pp, 124 illus. ISBN 1-90453008-07. £12.99.

This book takes a new look at the sources of freestone for the buildings of Regency and Victorian Cheltenham. While the Leckhampton quarries are well known, it now seems that other quarries were just as important. The book concentrates on underground quarrying at Dodwell Hill and Syreford around Whittington, a quiet village east of Cheltenham. Archive documents, personal reminiscences and the results of many years' fieldwork by the author above and below ground are presented with detailed maps, surveys, drawings and photographs. After describing the history of the quarries, quarrymen, stonemasons and builders, chapters cover underground fieldwork and the finds made, while an important final chapter discusses their interpretation. The many illustrations, several of which are in colour, include underground plans, scale drawings of artefacts, and photographs which show the evidence for underground quarrying

techniques as well as examples of finished buildings. Arthur Price's book is a valuable contribution to the subject and is fully referenced with a comprehensive index.

***North Devon Clay***

by Michael Messenger.

Twelveheads Press, 2007. 120pp, 168 illus. ISBN 9780906294659. hardback £21.00.

The remote deposits of ball clay in north Devon were exploited after 1881 when the 3-foot gauge Torrington & Marland Railway was built. Remarkably, the engineer was the internationally known J. B. Fell who used it to demonstrate his patented ideas on light railway construction, resulting in spectacular timber viaducts. An eclectic collection of locomotives worked this 6-mile line for over 40 years, and within the works until 1971. The much-delayed standard gauge North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway, from Torrington to Halwill Junction, eventually opened in 1925 with government backing to support agriculture and relieve unemployment. It was one of the last branch lines in Britain but immediately struggled against competition from road transport. This book describes the development and growth of both the ball clay industry, at Marland and Meeth, and of the railways that made the industry possible. Whilst the clay industry thrives, the railways have all been superseded and their full stories are recorded. First published in 1982, the book has been fully revised and expanded as a result of much additional research and information. Many new striking photographs are included, alongside maps, diagrams and scale drawings of the narrow gauge locomotives and rolling stock.

(From Industrial Archaeology News 144, 19)

***Madeley Wood Colliery, Halesfield and Kemberton Pits***

by Dr Ivor J. Brown

Shropshire Caving and Mining Club, Account 26 (2007)

A selection of articles covering the history of the Halesfield and Kemberton pits, from the early 1800s through amalgamation into the Madeley Wood Colliery (Madeley, Shropshire) and ultimate closure in July 1968. It also includes details of the families who owned and operated the mines along with some of the mining characters of the area. Illustrated with 55 black and white photographs and over 56 maps and drawings explaining locations, developments and techniques.

A4, card covers, 84 pages. ISBN: 978-09553019-3-3

Price £6 plus £1 p&p. Available from Madeley Library and online at: Moorebooks,

[www.moorebooks.co.uk](http://www.moorebooks.co.uk)

***The History of Limestone Mining in Church Aston & Lilleshall***

by David Adams

Shropshire Caving and Mining Club, Account 25 (2007)

This extensive account is a fully revised and updated re-edition of Club Account 7, published in 1970, and covers the history of mining in the Lilleshall and Church Aston area (near Newport, Shropshire) from its recorded beginnings in the 17th Century through to its demise in the 20th century. It also covers the associated development of local transport routes - notably the Donnington Wood Canal with its incline plane and numerous wharves.

Chapter 6 is a field guide, with 4 "guided" walks to lead visitors around some of the surviving remains of the area.

In addition to the numerous photographs, illustrations and maps, a couple of A3 fold-out plans are included to provide greater clarity when studying the underground workings.

A4, card covers, 245 pages, 123 B/w plates. ISBN: 978-09553019-1-9

Price: £20 plus £2 p&p. Available online at: Moorebooks, [www.moorebooks.co.uk](http://www.moorebooks.co.uk)

***Princes of the Working Valley: The day and night book of two Dolcoath mine captains 1822-23.***

Allen Buckley

Princes of the Working Valley is published by Truran, ISBN-13 978 185022 209 5. It has 136 pages, 16 illustrations and costs £9.99 and may be ordered on line from [ww.trurobookshop.co.uk](http://ww.trurobookshop.co.uk) – plus £1.50 p&p.

**Some books on the fringes of mining history** – Minerals, collecting minerals and mineral dealers can be controversial topics. For the old men working in specimen rich ground it could be an important additional source of income. Two new books cover the history of British mineral dealers and at long last an accessible appreciation of minerals from Northern England.

***Robbing the Sparry garniture; A 200-Year History of British Mineral Dealers,***

by Michael P Cooper

Published 2007 by Mineralogical Record, Tucson, Arizona P/b of has 358pp (a very heavy book!) over 250 illustrations (portraits, labels, adverts, documents, and mineral specimens).

The book is available from [www.MineralRecord.com/book.asp](http://www.MineralRecord.com/book.asp) at a cost of \$49 plus postage.

***Minerals of Northern England***

R.F.Symes and B.Young

Minerals of Northern England examines the geology, mining, collecting and collectors of minerals throughout Cumbria (formerly Cumberland and Westmorland), Co. Durham, Yorkshire, Cleveland and Northumberland. Minerals of Northern England contains an extensive gallery of full and half page photographs of individual specimens held in the collections of the Natural History Museum and National Museums Scotland. Each specimen has been selected for their aesthetic appeal or for their scientific, historical or other interest and each photograph is accompanied by a brief mineralogical or historical explanation. A must for all mineralogists, professional and amateur mineral collectors and geologists.

Paperback: c228 pages colour and b/w illustrations throughout

Co-published with: The Natural History Museum, London

Publication date: 20 March 2008

ISBN 10: 1905267019 ISBN 13: 9781905267019

Dimensions: 275 x 215mm Price £30

***American Mining History***

The American Mining History Association presents an award for the best book published on (predominantly American) mining history in the previous 2 years. The award is named after Clark C. Spence who is one of the early leaders of American mining history scholarship. The award for the period 2005-2006 has gone to:

***The Rise of the Silver Queen, Georgetown, Colorado, 1859-1896***

by: Liston E. Leyendecker, Christine A. Bradley & Duane A. Smith

Published by the University Press of Colorado 0-87081-794-9

***Thomas F. Walsh, Progressive Businessman and Colorado Mining Tycoon***

by John Stewart

Published by the University Press of Colorado 978-0-87081-970-7

Thomas F. Walsh tells the story of one of the West's wealthiest Mining magnates—an Irish American prospector and lifelong philanthropist who struck it rich in Ouray County, Colorado.

**Even more on the Cornish abroad**

***Cornish in Michigan***

Russell M. Magnaghi

Michigan State University Press 978-0-87013-787-7

Several ethnic groups have come to Michigan from the British Isles. Each group of immigrants from this region—the Cornish, English, Irish, and Welsh—has played a significant role in American history. Historic records show that some early nineteenth-century Cornish immigrants were farmers and settled in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. However, the majority of early Cornish immigrants were miners, and much of their influence was felt in the Upper Peninsula of the state. Many of the underground miners from

Cornwall got their start in this region before they migrated to other mining regions throughout the United States.

Hard-working families came from throughout the peninsula of Cornwall, bringing their history, recipes, songs, religions, and other traditions to Michigan's northern mining country. This nineteenth-century migration brought them to new homes in Keweenaw County, Houghton County, Copper Harbor, Eagle Harbor, and Presque Isle. In the 1830s, newly arrived immigrants also settled in the lower parts of Michigan, in Macomb, Washtenaw, Lenawee, and Oakland counties. The automobile boom of the 1920s sent many of these immigrants and their children to Metro Detroit from the Upper Peninsula, where their traditions are perpetuated today.

(From the MHA Newsletter)

**From the journals of some of our constituent organisations –**

Peak District Mines Historical Society (PDMHS)

***Mining History* - Volume 16, No. 5 Summer 2007**

Table of Contents:

The Geological Setting of the Mineral Deposits at Brassington and Carsington, Derbyshire - Trevor D.

Ford and John A. Jones

Geophysical Survey at Magpie Mine, near Sheldon to Identify the Position of the 1840 Winding House and its Boiler House - John Barnatt and Robert Vernon

Early Exploration of Mines at Perryfoot, Derbyshire - Bernard Chandler

The History of Coalpithole Vein in Peak Forest and Chapel-en-le-Frith Liberties, Derbyshire 1705-1880 - Chris Heathcote

Addendum - Plans relating to "Ralph Greatorex (1622-75): A Forgotten Derbyshire Scientist and Mining Engineer" - published in *Mining History* 16-4

Northern Mines Research Society (NMRS)

***British Mining, Memoirs 2007 Vol 83***

Contents:

Post-medieval firesetting in British metal mines: the archaeological evidence - John Barnatt and Terry Worthington

Colliery intrushes and the disaster at the Moorcroft Colliery, Bradley, August 1 1813 - Barry Job

Gold in the Mawddach - John Bennett and Jeremy Wilkinson

A tenth century lead smelting site in West Allendale - Raymond A. Fairbairn

Mining in Mid - Argyll - Alexander G. Rankine

Towards a chronology for Britain's coal industry from 1854 onwards - Mike Gill

Expanding markets served by the principal West Riding Coalfield before c.1850 - John Goodchild

An investigation into the legend of a mining disaster in Arkengarthdale - Alan Mills

Exhibition design: a plain man's guide - R.M. Callender

***The Journal of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland (MHTI)***

Vol 7

Editorial by Matthew Parkes

Geological setting of the lead-bearing veins in the Glendalough-Glendasan district, County Wicklow - Peadar McArdle

A history of Zn-Pb-Ag mining at Abbeytown, Co. Sligo - John Kelly

The mineralogy of the Wicklow lead mines - Stephen Moreton and David I. Green

Galway's mining heritage: interactive maps on the Web - Ronan Hennessy and Martin Feely

The Mining Company of Ireland and the collieries of Slieveardagh, County Tipperary - Des Cowman

The Mining Company of Ireland's operations at Glendasan-Glendalough 1825-1895 - Des Cowman

Photographs of Irish mines from the archives of the Royal Institution of Cornwall - Diane Hodnett



### **Coming shortly – Cumbria and elsewhere**

Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society (CATMHS)

#### ***The Mine Explorer – Volume 6***

Contents:

Rail Inclines in Cumbria - Peter Holmes

A Few Memories of Coal Mining in Cumbria - Ron Calvin RM

Relics of Migration from Cumbria into Cardiganshire - Simon Hughes

The Knotts of Rydal and Coniston - Ian Matheson

Structural Conservation of Cumbrian Metal Mines - Colin and Andrew Woollard

The Reopening and Exploration of Kernal Level - John Brown

The Geology of the Kernal Level Workings - Dave Bridge

Paddy End Underground Survey Revisited - Mark Simpson

German Mines of Caldbeck and the Discovery of the Earliest Primitive Railway - Warren Allison

Yellow Earthworms, Arsenic and Mine-spoil - Caroline Langden

Ulverston Harbour Records, 1862-1946 - Peter Sandbach

Middlecleugh Mine, Nenthead - Sheila Barker

The Penrhyn Slate Quarry Underground Features - Jon Knowles

Bideford Black - Brian Cubbon

The Gold Mines of Tierra del Fuego - Dave Bridge

A Discussion and Observations of Support Methods Encountered in Old Workings - Richard Hewer

### NENTHEAD MINES

The North Pennines Heritage Trust have published the following –

#### **Access arrangements for Independent Mine Explorers -**

1. The Scheduled Ancient Monument site at Nenthead includes several mine entrances, including Caplecleugh, Rampgill, Carrs, Smallcleugh, Hodgson's Low, Hodgson's High, Firestone, Thompson's and Middlecleugh Levels and Brewery and Hangingshaw Engine shafts. Access to these mine entrances is over land owned by or leased to the Trust, and all visitors should check in at the Visitor Centre or Office before entering the site.
2. When the visitor centre is closed we can be contacted during office hours via the Trust office in the Rampgill Mine yard.
3. NPHT members can access the Nenthead site free of charge. We ask for a contribution of £1.00 per person from other mine explorers, which helps with the cost of maintenance and signage etc.
4. Middlecleugh, Thompson's and Hodgson's High Levels will be locked for the time being, until the Trust completes archaeological surveys of these areas. If you are interested in helping with this work, please contact the Trust.
5. The Trust has installed electrical equipment in the Brewery Shaft. Because of this, access to the shaft is NOT allowed, except with the special permission of the Trust.
6. All visitors must comply with Health and Safety requirements. The Trust expects that visitors will have third party liability insurance equivalent to that offered by the British Caving Association.
7. Members of any group must obey all Health and Safety warnings, follow any instructions on NPHT notices and comply with the directions of NPHT employees and Directors.
8. Vehicles should be parked in the Visitor Centre car park. If you need to transport heavy / bulky equipment, contact us to arrange for vehicle access to the site.
9. We maintain an incident log for the mines. If, in the course of your exploration you discover any new areas of potential danger, incipient collapse etc, that you feel

others should know about, please let us know. The log will be kept in the Shop during the 'open season' and in the Trust Offices during the winter, for explorers to refer to.

**Contact numbers are:**

Visitor centre 01434 382726 (April – October)

01434 382037 (November – March)

Trust office 01434 382294

Fax 01434 382294

E mail [mines@npht.com](mailto:mines@npht.com)

*North Pennines Heritage Trust, Nenthead Mines, Nenthead, Alston, Cumbria, CA9 3PD*

*Company number 2241272 Charity number 700701*

#### THE COAL MINING COLLECTIONS GROUP

At the March Council meeting there was some discussion on the relative level of involvement by coal mining interests in NAMHO. As was pointed out to the meeting, much of the interest in mines represented by NAMHO arises from mine exploration and the exploration of coal mines is strictly off limits without clearance from the Coal Authority, so it is something of a minority activity. There are, nevertheless, groups within the association which have a particular interest in the history and archaeology of coal mining - South Gloucestershire Mines Research, the British Coal Utilisation Research Association and our latest member, the Ogmere Vale Local History Society, plus, of course, the Coal Authority itself.

Ivor Brown is a member of one such group, the Coal Mining Collections Group, which represents a range of museums with interests in coal mining – including the St Aidan's Dragline group. For more details contact Ivor – 95 Manygates Lane, Sandal, Wakefield WF2 7DL; e-mail <[ivorj@brown92.fsbusiness.co.uk](mailto:ivorj@brown92.fsbusiness.co.uk)>

#### THE MARINE BILL AND ACCESS TO THE ENGLISH COAST

We seem to have had some success with our representations on the provisions for access to the English coast. The draft Marine Bill, Section 4.12 (<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm73/7351/7351.pdf>), states that owner's liability will be removed from 'non-natural', ie. man made, features in addition to natural features -

*4.12 The coast is a dangerous environment, but we believe that the public can and do make use of it safely and sensibly and should be allowed to make their own judgement on the level of risk they wish to undertake. General information on safety is important, and the public need to be made aware of any unusual or hidden risks, but we believe they should take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of any children or others for whom they are responsible. The legislation therefore removes occupiers liability in respect of any natural feature, as for other CROW access land, **but in addition removes occupiers liability in respect of any non-natural feature.** In both cases this is subject to the occupier not having acted intentionally or recklessly in respect of a known danger. The legislation will also clarify that NE owes no duty of care when preparing proposals for a long-distance route as part of the English coastal route, or in connection with any failure to exercise their power to erect signs warning of particular hazards or to exclude or restrict access to any area of coastal margin. The legislation will similarly clarify that the Secretary of State owes no duty of care when approving proposals for a long-distance route as part of the English coastal route. (The highlighting is mine and HE means Natural England)*

An amendment will be made to the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act but it appears that the additional reduced liability will only apply to coastal land. What is needed is for that amendment to be applied across the board and include the uplands, and Wales. I have therefore made the following further representation to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee in the UK Parliament who are considering all aspects of the Marine Bill -

*It has been a cause for concern that land-owners and occupiers would seek to reduce their perceived liability by destroying such features which were not protected under the Archaeological Areas Act, 1979. Even our most 'natural' areas of these islands have been heavily modified by man and, if the earthworks and structures which mark their activity were removed, we would be left with an empty landscape. Whilst we are considering here the coastal landscapes of England, and proposed amendments connected with the introduction of the Marine Bill, our concerns over damage to the historic environment extend to all parts of both England and Wales already made more accessible by the CROW Act, 2000.*

*We would therefore recommend that action is taken to apply the extension of reduced liability, outlined above, to all areas covered by the existing CROW Act, ie. the upland areas of England and Wales.*

Peter Cloughton – Conservation Officer

### MINING SITES UNDER THREAT

The threat to abandoned mining sites comes in a multitude of forms – there are the officially sanctioned threats, environmental remediation, closure on safety grounds, ‘landscaping’ to fit in with some un-natural concept of what constitutes eyesore, inappropriate re-use, and there are the usual ‘unofficial’, often illegal, threats resulting from a concept that mines are unwanted, uncared for, derelict pieces of land on which you can dump rubbish and use your off-road vehicle.

In Wales over the last few years there has been a change in attitude, certainly in Ceredigion, where European Union Objective One money has been used to promote mining heritage as a resource for tourism with the Ysbyrd y Mwynwry (Spirit of The Miners) project. Success in using abandoned mines as an asset is, however, linked to retaining them as viable features in the landscape. Re-use can be very useful in retaining structures and it is possible to put closures on mine entrances without them restricting access or becoming visually intrusive. But, for most upland mine sites where re-use is not viable, the mines are perhaps best left to crumble gracefully into the landscape. Consolidation of some structures is sometimes appropriate but we have to remember that they will possibly survive out of context with their surroundings.

One interesting dilemma has recently come to my notice, the re-use of the Gwynfynydd Gold Mine in north Wales. A planning application has been submitted for redevelopment of the mine as holiday accommodation. The plan is for 'Eco' type lodges, construction of reception and community building, a ‘viewing shelter’, along with change of use of former mine building into public information/interpretation building, the formation of car parking including landscaping and upgrading of existing tracks and public footpaths. The application tries to tick all the right boxes by including provision for hydro-electric power generation and the use of heat pumps to extract energy from the mine drainage water but, when you get down to the fine detail, the re-use of the site, its ‘sanitation’ for visitor access and the restriction on public access will significantly degrade the value of the mining heritage. My thanks to Dave Linton (Welsh Mines Society) for bringing this to my attention; it will be interesting to see how Snowdonia National Park treat the application.

Peter Cloughton – Conservation Officer

## FUTURE CONFERENCES

2009 should be something of a bumper year - on consecutive weekends in June there will be the possibility of wall to wall mining history and archaeology.

**8th International Mining History Congress** – 12-15 June 2009, based on the Penventon Park Hotel, Redruth, Cornwall, and organised under the auspices of the University of Exeter in Cornwall and Geevor Mining Museum – details <http://www.huss.ex.ac.uk/history/imhc/index.php>

### **NAMHO 2009 Conference, Matlock** – 19-22 June 2009 – **Call for papers**

The 2009 National Association of Mining History Organisations Conference will be held at Matlock on the weekend of 19-22 June. Celebrate the 50th anniversary of one of our founder organisations – the Peak District Mines Historical Society – and our own 30th anniversary. There will be the usual wide range of surface and underground field visits (at all grades of difficulty) extending from Friday to Monday, and a lecture programme on the Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday. Contributions to the lecture programme are now invited: the main theme will be mining landscapes, especially underground, and contributions concerning overseas mining, in particular those relating to British ventures or technical linkages will also be welcome. Papers will be published in *Mining History* and written drafts should be available at the conference.

Lecture programme: contact Lynn Willies as soon as possible at [lynnwillies@Hotmail.com](mailto:lynnwillies@Hotmail.com)

Preliminary Conference Programme booking details will be available from November 2008 contact Robin Hall at: [www.peakmines.co.uk](http://www.peakmines.co.uk)

## FUTURE COUNCIL MEETINGS

NAMHO Council Meeting Saturday Nov. 15th 2008 has been arranged at the National Coal Mining Museum for England, Caphouse Colliery, Wakefield commencing at 10:30 am prompt. Tea and coffee will be available from 10:00 am (when the Museum opens).

The meeting should finish at 1:00 pm and lunches will be available in the canteen.

A number of guided tours are available from 2:00 pm.

1. Surface only, covering the exhibition areas at Caphouse Pit, a narrow gauge rail trip to Hope Pit, and tours of Hope Pit exhibition areas including the water treatment sites.
2. Underground tours, both the normal public tour and a more arduous one including the new development areas underground (as available at the time) and the Drift out of the mine (concrete steps at about 1 in 4 for 300 yards).

Pre-booking is advisable for the latter trip as places are limited, contact Dr I.J. Brown tel. no. 01924 257137 (Representatives of member organisations will be given priority).

All the usual facilities will be available for visitors accompanying representatives including free tours underground during the day (10:00 am to 5:00 pm).

Further information can be obtained from the museum (tel. no. 01924 848806).

## THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER

Probably after the next Council meeting in November, earlier if the need arises. Send your contributions to – [P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk) or [don.borthwick@cybermoor.org.uk](mailto:don.borthwick@cybermoor.org.uk) . Alternatively, use the postal address below, marked for the attention of the Newsletter Editor.

Postscript to the NAMHO Newsletter, July 2008

## **Snailbeach Lead Mine, Shropshire**

Mike Gill of NMRS reviewed this publication

As part of its efforts to raise funding for further restoration work at Tankerville mine, the Shropshire Mines Trust has published a new book on Snailbeach, one of Britain's largest lead and barytes mines. As said in the preface, this book was "purposely designed to be read by someone with only a general interest", but it is far better than that. The sections on the geology, history, working and living conditions of the miners are very accessible and extremely well illustrated, with photo's, sketches and maps. There are also sections covering the disaster at George's Shaft, the Snailbeach District Railway, the mine's wildlife, a glossary and a descriptive tour of the surface and underground. For the more devoted reader, there is a useful bibliography.

Because the book is printed on a higher quality paper than is often used for similar works, the photographs are reproduced at a quality which does them justice. Despite this the book is very reasonably priced.

172 pages, 112 photos, 28 illustrations and 3 maps. Just the right size to slip in your pocket as a field guide.

Retail Price : £9.00 (+ p&p)

ISBN : 978-0-9556081-2-4

Sales are being handled by [www.moorebooks.co.uk](http://www.moorebooks.co.uk) Mike Moore (as Chair of SMT), 53 Vineyard Drive, Newport, Shropshire, TF10 7DF. 01952-405105