



## Interim Newsletter June 2004

### Chairman's Introduction

At the last annual general meeting, held at Donisthorpe on 13 March, there were some changes in the officers of NAMHO. Mike Moore retired as chairman and I was elected to replace him, with Steve Holding as deputy. After ten years as treasurer, Roger Gosling has retired and is replaced by George Price. Sallie Basham was re-elected as secretary, Martin Roe as conservation officer, and Steve Holding will continue to represent NAMHO interests on the NCA, soon to be part of the British Caving Association (BCA).

This interim newsletter gives me the opportunity to express my thanks to the retiring officers, and those remaining in post, for all the work they have done for mining history interests. It also allows me to introduce myself and provide you with something of a 'mission statement' - where I'm coming from and where I feel NAMHO should be heading.

I'm Peter Claughton; I represent the Exmoor Mines Research Group on the NAMHO council and am a member of a number of its constituent groups. Like many of you, I came into mining history through caving / mine exploration. In the late 1960s I explored the mines of the southern Yorkshire Dales relating the surviving features to what had been written by Raistrick and others. But it wasn't until 1970, whilst serving with the RAF in north Devon, that a lack of published information drew me into primary research. A move to live in Pembrokeshire opened up new fields of interest but the product of my early research stayed with me, expanded to include areas as physically diverse as south Devon and the

Northern Pennines, providing an overview of silver mining which led to the award of a PhD. in Economic and Social History with the University of Exeter. My interests embrace both the history and archaeology of mining, I'm a member of the mining and quarrying section committee for the international industrial heritage group TICCIH, and include non-ferrous metal smelting, where I'm an active member of the Historical Metallurgy Society. I should also add that I run the 'mining-history' discussion list for JISC, the UK higher education communications provider. So I'm aware that mining history is a subject area of great diversity.

From whichever direction you approach *mining history*, and I use the term here in the broadest sense, you need at least a basic understanding of the many contributing factors. Any study of mining really starts with the geology / mineralisation. Understanding their origins, and the way that the miners perceived them, informs the historian on the way that minerals were worked. At the other end of the spectrum, if we don't consider how minerals were treated and used (the end product) we cannot start to understand the economic factors influencing mining. Similarly, the physical evidence, both above and below ground, can have a bearing on how we interpret the documentary evidence, and vice versa. Social and environmental factors, like the movement of miners, their housing, or the current condition of mine sites, can be influenced by many aspects mining and we are frequently asked to interpret these for particular interest groups, agencies or the public at large.

Thus we have a subject area involving elements of geology, history, archaeology, political geography, environmental science and education, all requiring the benefit of continued access to the mines. To my mind it is the role of NAMHO, through its constituent groups, to bring these diverse elements together to work effectively towards an understanding of *mining history*; stimulating effective research and its dissemination through publication and presentations. The annual conference provides an excellent forum for the latter and I hope to see many of you at Coniston in July. In the meantime, should you have any comments or questions, please do not

hesitate to contact me by post, using the address below, by telephone (+44 (0)1437 532578), or by e-mail <P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk>.

### **RESEARCH SEMINARS**

To stimulate research, and place a greater emphasis on a research based agenda, I am keen to see a regular programme of seminars organised by NAHMO. The seminars would be run during the winter months, some regional, some topic based. Provisionally, I'm looking to the south-west of England as the venue for a regional seminar during the winter of 2004/5. The Coal Authority can provide a venue for a seminar on coal and its archives at their Mansfield HQ, but a refurbishment of the offices means we cannot hold that until the winter of 2005/6. Any ideas on other potential venues and topics for discussion would be appreciated.

Peter Claughton (contact details as above)

### **THE NEWSLETTER**

This issue of the newsletter is in an interim format. We still do not have an editor and we are looking for volunteers - the opportunity to be the best informed mining historian in Britain and Ireland!! Could I please ask constituent societies to include all material from this newsletter in their group newsletters - it will be available in digital form on the NAMHO website at <http://www.namho.org> - and to highlight the need for a regular NAMHO newsletter editor.

### **BCA & INSURANCE PROVISION**

The Inaugural Special General Meeting of the British Caving Association (BCA) was held on 20 March 2004. It is intended that the BCA will progressively take responsibility from the National Caving Association (NCA), which in turn should wind itself up at the end of 2004/early 2005.

It had always been planned that BCA would take over the provision of insurance, previously organised by the British Cave Research Association (BCRA) but problems developed late last year with the whole question of insurance provision. As most will know, a rather different insurance package was eventually agreed and has been implemented

from the start of the year. The cover provided by the new BCA scheme is very similar to that previously provided by BCRA.

Although some member clubs/groups have been slow to take up the insurance, the latest reports are that the take up is now reasonably good and unless there is a substantial increase in the premiums, the scheme appears to be sustainable and should run in 2005. If the premiums in 2004 give a surplus that establishes a fund to cover any excess payments, operation and possibly fees in 2005 will be more favourable – there is the intention to have dialogue with users to refine operation of the scheme.

Under the BCA scheme, there are two main levels of subscription for individuals. A fee of £18.00 gives full caver insurance and individual 'credit card' type membership cards should be provided shortly. In order for the activities of a club to be covered by the insurance, all individual members will need to have taken out either the full caver insurance or the non-caver insurance at £6.00 per head. This means that individuals who are members of a number of clubs continue to make multiple payments but they only need to take out the full caver insurance via one club. There are different payments for individuals who go cave diving or use explosives. Also clubs pay additional premiums if they own huts or if they control access to sites. The scheme can still be used to provide land owner liability certificates for any land owner with cave/mine access on their land that needs reassurance (they have cover regardless of previous of the certificates).

The BCA insurance was intended to replace both the insurance provided by BCRA and the insurance provided by the Derbyshire Caving Association (DCA). With the problems that developed with the BCRA cover in late 2003, it was decided to continue the DCA scheme for 2003/4 but it seems probable that the DCA scheme will close at the end of September 2004 and individuals who depend on this insurance may need to switch to the BCA insurance for the last quarter of 2004.

Steve Holding - NAMHO Rep to NCA/BCA

## CONSERVATION

### Bats Underground

The Bat Conservation Trust are currently drafting a conservation code for users of underground spaces (caves, mines, etc) and have set up an underground sites working group consisting of representatives from interested groups including NAMHO. I would like to gather information about any problems or issues that NAMHO may have experienced in relation to bats. For example does the presence of bats help protect sites or does it cause problems with access?

Contributions by email to roe\_martin@hotmail.com or via normal mail to 1 Ashleigh Street, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 6QZ.

Martin Roe - NAMHO Conservation Officer

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### NAMHO 2004

The 2004 NAMHO Conference will be held on 24 – 26 July 2004 at the John Ruskin School at Coniston in the Lake District. It is being organised by the Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society.

The theme of the Conference will be “The Extraactive Industries of Cumbria”. The full programme of events (lectures, underground and surface trips, and the Saturday night Social Event) has been published. This programme, together with booking forms, is now available from the Conference Secretary, Sheila Barker, The Rise, ALSTON, Cumbria, CA9 3DB. E-Mail: sheila.barker@cybermoor.org.uk or at <http://www.catmhs.co.uk> or [www.namho.org](http://www.namho.org)

An accommodation list is available on the above web sites.

### Industry, Ingenuity & Endeavour:

The story of The Lady Isabella and the Great Laxey Mine - an exhibition prepared by Manx National Heritage, with the assistance of the Laxey Mines Research Group, at the **Manx Museum**, Douglas, Isle of Man, April until 27 September.

25/26th September, Laxey, Isle of Man - a celebration to mark the 150th anniversary of the Lady Isabella, Great Laxey, wheel. More details when available - or check the Manx National Heritage website at <http://www.mhn.gov.im>

### NAMHO 2005 - Mines, quarries, tunnels - south-east and beyond

**8-10th July 2005**, Juniper Hall Field Centre, near Dorking - organised by the Wealden Cave and Mine Society with the assistance of the Chelsea Speleological Society, Kent Underground Research Group, and Subterranea Britannica - see the enclosed flyer.

### European Mining History.

As part of the NAMHO 2005 conference is intended to hold a seminar on **European Mining History**. The venue, close to cross channel links and major regional airports, provides an ideal opportunity to bring together mining historians from across Europe.

The seminar on '**The Common Aspects of European Mining History**' would include perhaps six papers on aspects of mining history which are not confined by national borders and reflect a common interest in mining be it for metals, coal or stone. There will be the opportunity to network and establish working relationships with other mining historians from across the continent.

Please circulate details to your contacts outside Britain and Ireland - details will shortly be available in major European languages on [www.exeter.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/mhinf/europe.htm](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/mhinf/europe.htm) If you are interested in attending please contact me, **Peter Cloughton**, Blaenpant Morfil, Clynderwen, Pembrokeshire, Wales UK, SA66 7RE, <[P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk)>, at the earliest opportunity. The language for the conference will be English but we hope to provide facilities for presentations in other languages within the seminar.

## **International Mining History Congress**

### **2006**

To be held in Belgium, Aug./Sept. 2006 - firm date and details in a future newsletter.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

As some of you will already know, the Welsh Mines Society and the Welsh Mines Preservation Trust are working with the Environment Agency in Wales as part of the latter's Metal Mine Strategy; assessing the impact on water quality from non-ferrous metal mining and what, if any, remedial action is required. The Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland (MHTI) are similarly engaged with the bodies responsible for environmental issues both in the republic and in the north of Ireland. Such contacts are important if we are to monitor the potential threat to mining sites from environmental clean-up initiatives. At a local level we would encourage societies to engage with the authorities responsible for administering the register of contaminated land. The Northern Mine Research Society has commented on proposal by Richmondshire District Council in respect of contaminated land as a consequence of which the Yorkshire Dales National Park Archaeologist is now a member of the council's working party and in a position to monitor the impact on mining archaeology. If you do get involved at this or any other level, please keep NAMHO informed - see the item below regarding representation on national and regional bodies.

Following on the recent Post-Mining Regeneration Consultative Workshop held at the Eden Project, in Cornwall, on 20 January 2004, <<http://www.edenproject.com/postmining/default.asp>> concern has been expressed regarding the intention to include abandoned, 'legacy', mines in regeneration plans with little or no regard for the historic landscape / heritage value of the mines.

Martin Critchley of MHTI also draws our attention to the European Union proposed directive on the management of waste from the extractive industries (COM(2003) 319 final). The directive, as it stood in March, confines itself to active mines but the original version of the draft directive contained articles about inventories and clean-

up of abandoned mines (working paper 2002). These have been dropped from the latest version (June 2003), but there are several amendments which might add these back.

The process was that the EU Parliament Environment sub-committee would vote on the draft on the 15th March; followed by discussion and vote in the EU Parliament on 1st April. The Council of Ministers (Environment Ministers and not Mining Ministers) will discuss the draft directive at a meeting in June (to be held in Ireland as Ireland holds the presidency of the EU from 1st Jan to 31st June). So the situation may have changed by the time you receive this newsletter. Any EU directive on cleaning up abandoned mine sites could change the current inclusive approach being adopted by the environment agencies in Wales and Ireland.

## **REPRESENTATION ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL BODIES**

Is your group / society represented on any regional or national bodies - for example, do you send a representative to the regional industrial archaeology panel ?

NAMHO needs to represent mining history interests in a number of areas, particularly on environmental and conservation issues, and in most cases this is best done by local and regional groups. If you are represented on regional and national bodies, please let us know and provide us with feedback so we can co-ordinate a response to issues affecting mining history.

## **COAL AUTHORITY: ACCESS TO MINERAL HERITAGE, COLLIERY ABANDONMENT PLANS AND PHOTOGRAPH LIBRARY**

The Access to Mineral Heritage website is operational and can be accessed at [www.mineral.org.uk](http://www.mineral.org.uk) At present it focuses on collections in Scotland and the North West of England, but it will continue to be added to over the coming years. The AMH team is working in partnership with collection owners and only publishes information with owners approval. Further enhancements to the website will also take place. The next phase of work will focus on individual item level

descriptions. Your views on the site would be appreciated.

Nearer to home the Authority now has electronically copied some 33,500 abandonment plans which can be viewed at the Authority's Mining Heritage Centre at Mansfield. The Authority has also had the NCB/British Coal photographic collection held by The National Archive at Kew electronically copied. Some 22,000 photographs can now be viewed on six dedicated PC screens at Mansfield. This collection continues to be added to and ultimately up to 60,000 NCB/BCC photographs will be able to be viewed. Photographers from outside British Coal are also expressing an interest in having their collections incorporated into this collection with acknowledgements.

The Authority opened its virtual library for viewing the photographs on 1 June 2004. The six screens available are initially being offered to members of the public with 1½ hour slots. The opening times are as follows:

Monday - Friday

9.00 - 10.30am  
10.45 - 12.15pm  
1.30 - 3.00pm  
3.15 - 4.45pm

Screens must be booked in advance by contacting the Mining Heritage Centre on 01623 638233 or 01623 638235. Booking to view the abandonment plans can also be made on these numbers.

It is proposed ultimately to make both collections available to view over the internet, but only when the majority of people have access to sufficiently powerful PC's with broadband.

### **BOOK REVIEWS**

**Griselda Carr, *Pit Women; Coal Communities in Northern England in the Early Twentieth Century*, (Merlin Press, London, 2001), 174 pp., paperback, ISBN 0-85036-495-7. Price £12.95**

This is unfortunately rather a belated review. The book turned up on my desk at a rather busy period well over a year ago and, whilst I read it as a welcome diversion from what I was doing at the time, it was not until now that I had time to put my thoughts on the book into some form of order.

Given what little I know of the publisher, reinforced by the flyers enclosed with the review copy, I fully expected this book to follow a left wing agenda but it does not. Carr's approach to the role of women in mining communities is realistic as it portrays the struggle to maintain a better standard of life in an increasingly fragile coal using economy.

In the first half of the 20th century mining communities around the deep collieries of Yorkshire and the north-east of England were dedicated pit villages. Serving one or more collieries, they were inhabited virtually entirely by miners and associated workers occupying houses rented from or provided free by the colliery. Much of the housing stock and infrastructure, dating from the mid 19th century, was inadequate although new villages were being built in Yorkshire to serve the new deeper pits in the 1920s and 30s. Outside the family group, social activity for miners centred on the male only clubs; for the women there was chapel, the neighbours and little else. However, with a large family to look after, there was scant time available for socialising, particularly with husbands and sons working on different shifts. Carr provides us with a well written account of the women's struggle to manage their life within such a physically restricted environment.

The book begins with a brief history of the developments affecting the coal industry in the early 20th century but the author clearly finds herself more at ease with the social rather than the economic aspects of mining. She makes good use of the statistical evidence to back up her arguments for the poor living conditions / high birth rate and the high infant mortality amongst coal mining families. Central to the women's role, child bearing and rearing are seen for what they were - security of income. A miner's family were at their economic peak once the male children were in employment but unmarried. Yet there was little thought

given to saving for the later, less affluent period. Miners on the whole did not look far into the future, they lived for the present, adopting a fatalistic attitude to work practices which greatly increased the risk of accidents. Success in mining prior to large scale mechanisation relied on strength and team work within small partnerships. Social activity brought the men together, through the clubs, but it was major events - accidents and strikes - which brought the whole community, including the women, together. It was at such times that the women came to the forefront in supporting the family and the community. Carr finds similarities, and contrasts, between the role of women in the early 20th century and that during the miners strike of 1984-5. No more so than in their treatment of 'black leg' labour, although there is little mention of the wives of those who chose to work. Political and social activists amongst the women were evidently few and formal organisation to forward the cause of women in the mining communities generally short-lived. Not surprising given the lack of what we today would call leisure time - any long term commitment to the cause would mean turning her back on the community and it is not surprising that the activists were, for the most, middle class rather than miner's wives.

Carr has used her personal and family experience, combine with the historical evidence, to provide us with hard hitting but realistic account of the life of women in the half century running up the nationalisation of the coal industry. Certainly worth reading.

Peter Cloughton

Three books on the South Yorkshire Coalfield, all published in 2001/02. 'The South Yorkshire Coalfield' by Alan Hill; 'South Yorkshire Collieries' by John Goodchild and 'South Yorkshire Pits' by Warwick Taylor. All have soft covers, are about the same size, ('South Yorkshire Coalfield' is thicker and slightly larger), and all have a sepia coloured picture on the front but the contents are surprisingly quite different. They need to be considered separately.

1. **The South Yorkshire Coalfield – a history and development by Alan Hill is soft covered, 17cm by 25cm and is published by**

**Tempus 2001 (ISBN 07524 1747 9) at £17.99.** It has 256 pages, with about 15 maps and 55 b&w photos; in all there are 12 chapters (of varying length, No. 4 is less than one page while No. 6 is nearly 50 pages), in addition there is a glossary, bibliography and index. The first 5 chapters, (54 pages) tend to deal with the history of the industry and the various mining companies while the remainder of the book deals with the individual mines described in the order of their period sinking before 1850, 1851-1875 and so on. In the first part the author has tackled a massive subject and some aspects have a very hit and miss coverage – Technology for example is a one paragraph discussion of the number of Markham steam engines used. The discussion on the individual mining companies is much more complete and very interesting. It is the remainder of the book that makes for the greatest value, about 120 collieries are treated to one or more pages of description with often a photograph or map. But there must have been thousands of other smaller mines which do not have a mention. This part of the book is a well researched and fascinating coverage of the mines that worked, and are remembered (of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century). It is useful to all who have an interest in the mines that made many of the villages and that hit the news both through the financial and environmental impact, the disasters and the strikes associated with them. The reviewer, who was first involved in Yorkshire Mining nearly 40 years ago, examined the information on his local mine, Dinnington, closely; there are two pages including a post-closure photo, and the coverage of most of the major phases from 1900 to 1991 was good. This book is well worth having.

2. **South Yorkshire Collieries by John Goodchild is soft covered 16.5 cm by 23.5 cm and is published by Tempus, 2001 (ISBN 0-7524-2148-4) at £10.99.** It has 128 pages and about 200 illustrations, mainly old photos but also parts of printed matter and charts. It is a companion to an earlier volume in the 'Images of England' series on "The West Yorkshire Coalfield". There are 4 chapters, headed 'Introduction'. 'Before the Railway Age', 'The Railway Age' and 'At and around Doncaster'. Unfortunately there is no index but the author explains that he has

chosen to illustrate only some of the collieries in South Yorkshire of which he has images and which give an insight into a particular aspect of the coalfield. The 'images' given are almost wholly pre-1920 but are most valuable because they are often unusual views, little known and often previously unpublished. The captions vary in length, some are comprehensive containing detail of great value but many are short. Some collieries are given many pages, for example Elsecar (13), Wharnccliffe (6), Monckton (8), and Yorkshire Main (11) while others have few or none. For example, Dinnington, the first that the reviewer became familiar with is not mentioned. The book's strength is that it does cover a period that other books on the subject ignore and uses illustration either not easily accessible or unknown to others. The topics covered are wide ranging, from open-casting to disasters, canal traffic to mineral railways, and from owners' mansions to workers' housing. There is also a good range of technical illustrations including coke-works, coal preparation plants and general colliery views including a few underground.

**3. South Yorkshire Pits by Warwick Taylor is soft covered 15.5 cm by 23.5 cm and is published by Wharnccliffe Books, 2001 (ISBN 1-903425-84-3) at £9.99.** It has 160 pages and about 80 photos (mostly post-nationalisation), 25 maps and, unusually, about a dozen 'old' penny sized photos of individual colliery tokens, or tallies used by the miners for identification purposes. The first 54 pages (7 chapters) deal with a number of random historical aspects, the 1842 Royal Commission, outlines of three mining companies, a canal, the railways and trade unions. Most of the next 100 pages (4 chapters) deal with more recently worked collieries on an (NCB) area basis. Much of the information is taken from recent papers and NCB publications. There is an interesting 'foreword' by Lord Mason, a glossary (with some odd definitions – see 'Ripping' and 'Warwick' for example), and an oddly titled Chapter 11, 'Manpower and seams worked statistics', which gives only the number of men employed underground and surface for 1910, 1927, 1945 and 1972, with a general list of seams known to have been worked in individual pits at those dates (taken presumably from the Annual directories).

Chapter 12 is a list of colliery owners and their pits in the early 1900's, Chapter 13 is a list of multi-fatality accidents (over 3 persons) their dates and causes in Yorkshire pits generally, and there is also a very short bibliography and an index. The most useful part of this book is the ready access it gives to general information on the mines that have operated within living memory. Over 70 mines are dealt with, each entry usually having at least one photo and most having a full page (with text) or more. Dinnington Colliery, for example tested by the reviewer has 1½ pages including a photo of the mine in 1909 and another, undated but obviously more recent, and half a page of text. There is a mention of the dates of sinking (with depth), mechanisation during the 1940's and the re-organisations of the 1960's and of the 1970's. The final comment (it appears also with most of the other mine descriptions) that no accidents "are recorded" is not correct. Many miners lost their lives or were injured during the 90 year life of this mine – indeed the Mines Inspectorate records show that, for example, over 15 miners died at Dinnington, between 1905 and 1911.

There is neither the overlap nor duplicity of pictures that might be expected with three books on such a closely related topic, each book has its own strengths. The two Tempus books have the greater feel for authenticity for the historian, but the Wharnccliffe book may be of most interest to the general reader.

Ivor J. Brown

**Fluorspar in the North Pennines, Edited by R. A. Fairbain, ISBN 0951893939, Friends of Killhope £8.50**

In October 2001 the Friends of Killhope held a day school entitled 'The fluorspar industry of the North Pennines- a retrospective view'. This pocket-sized book of 131 pages comprising six chapters sandwiched between short pre- and post-scripts (both written by Forbes) proceeds directly from that day. The six authors are well-known and respected in their fields and they and the contents of the book are comprehensively eclectic. The high standard of authorship expected from these people is achieved.

There are three short chapters, all less than ten pages, on the geology and origin of fluorspar (Young), fluorspar collectors and mineral dealers (Hacker) and the relationship between British Steel and North Pennine fluorspar mining (Graham). Rick Smith has a fifteen page overview of the rise and fall of fluorspar mining in the North Pennines, Paul Younger a longer chapter (approximately 25 pages) on the mining history of Frazer's Grove Mine but the longest chapter by far, approximately 55 pages and nearly a third of the volume is by Almond and gives in abundant detail the various beneficiation techniques employed in the orefield. It is difficult to fault the contents of these chapters and together they manage to both be highly informative and to humanise the industry, so that it seems the voices of the mineworkers, which of course include some of the authors, are never far away. There are plenty of photographs, drawings, diagrams, references, quotations, even poems and anecdotal asides to give shading to the main tone of the book.

It is a cheap book (less than ten pounds for a conference volume!) and a very specialised one (although plugging a hole in a niche market) and sadly some production values reflect the price for example many of the photographs have been reproduced darkly making some of the detail difficult to discern. But it is the editing or rather the lack of a proper final proofing that does most damage. In addition to the (few) and expected typographical errors pages 48 and 49 are transposed and the long chapter is riddled with extra hyphens disrupting many polysyllabic words so constantly breaking-up the concentration that is needed to read and absorb this fact-filled chapter. This lack of proofing reflects poorly on the editor and production team, the Friends of Killhope and, of course, unfairly on the authors. It is a great pity.

The book cannot be described as light-reading (it is too full of facts) but as a specialist resource or read more quickly as a technical-social history it deserves to have a wide audience. Laporte Chemicals paid for my Ph.D (fluorspar in the South Pennines) and I have written on the mineralisation of the North Pennines for decades and so believed that I was well-acquainted with Pennine fluorspar but almost everything in the book was new to

me. Only now do I understand the context to the ups and downs of Pennine fluorspar mining something I watched from the sidelines and assumed to be due to internal problems- not so.

The Friends of Killhope are to be congratulated on publishing the book and will hopefully have the courage to go on to produce similar, but better proofed, volumes.

Rob Ixer

#### NAMHO Council

Meeting to be held at Killhope, Co. Durham, 13 November 2004.

A Council meeting will be held at Coniston, as part of the conference, but there will only be limited time available. We will deal with urgent matters and allow time for an input from conference delegates. The next full business meeting will therefore be at Killhope on Saturday 13 November.

The Friends of Killhope have offered to provide sandwiches and tea/coffee, and assist with finding accommodation. To gauge numbers, **could representatives please contact the NAMHO Secretary, Sallie Bassham, if they intend to be at the meeting.**

#### NEXT NEWSLETTER

I actually had more material available for this newsletter but, given the requirement to fill pages in multiples of four, some had to be left out. One of those was a long article by Simon Hughes on 'Some recent work on ancient mining in mid Wales' which appeared in the Welsh Mines Preservation Trust Newsletter, April 2004. Simon explores the possibility that the anvil stones identified near Talybont are evidence for early working of the lead deposits at Erglodd. It is this sort of material which justifies wider circulation and there must be more in the newsletters of our constituent organisations.

The next issue of the Interim Newsletter will be in the autumn - deadline for material is the end of September. Please contribute to ensure a wide circulation on all mining history related topics.

Peter Claughton - Editor (temporary)