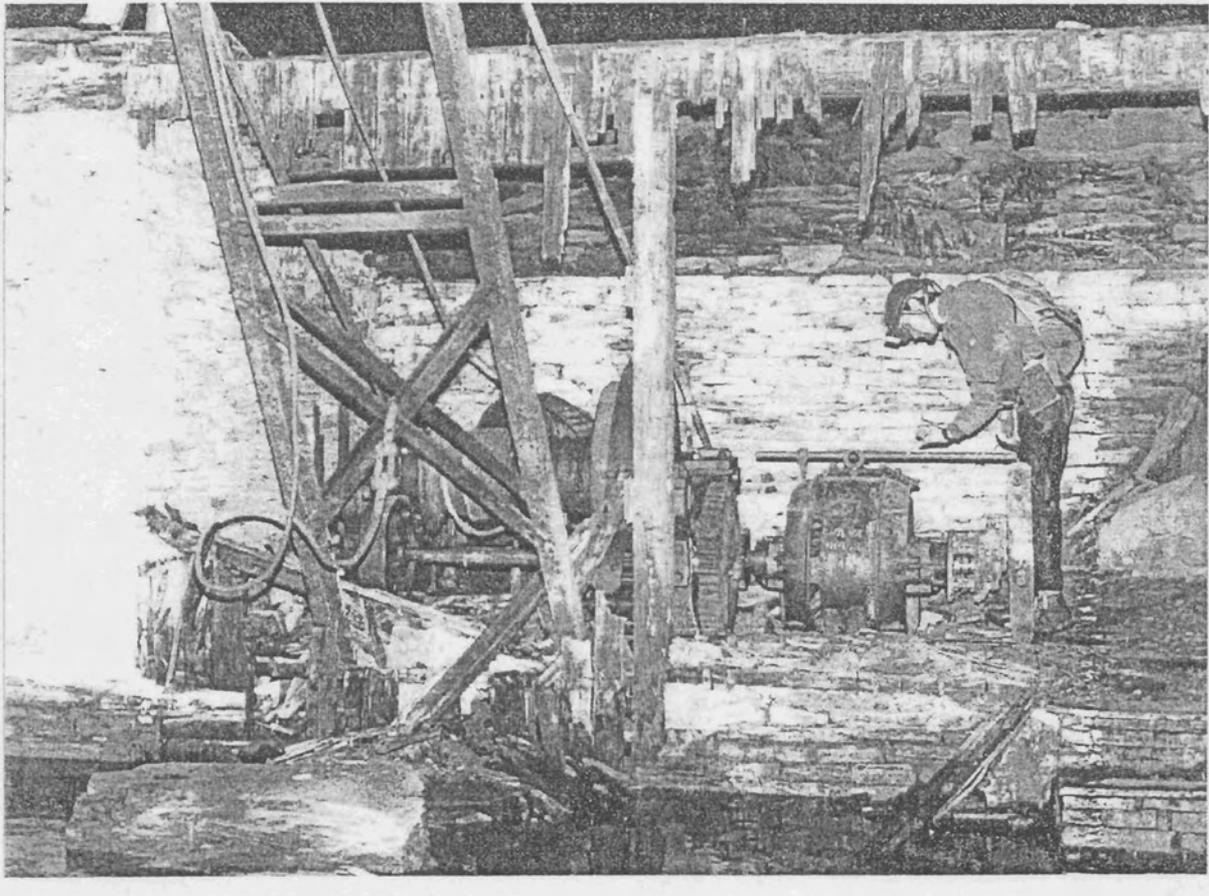


CAT

The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust
Mining History Society



Chamber 1 West Cwmorthin Slate Quarry

COMPILATION

This is now done by Ian Matheson please see back cover for contact details.

CONTENTS

Editorial	2
New Members	2
Boxing Day Meet	2
Millenium Meet	3
Doctor Descender	4
Book Reviews	5
Ups and Downs of Selling a Colliery	5
A Mine Explorers Diary	5
North Wales News	5
Reminder	5
Croesor	6
Competition	6
North Wales Meet	6
A Year of Discontent III	9
Minutes of Committee Meetings	12

EDITORIAL

As I at long last slam the poisoned editorial pen to the desk for the last time you can breath a sigh of relief that if you haven't been libelled by now you have probably got away with it.

After howls of protest I am pleased to confirm that Dr Descender will continue after a short summer recess - new editor permitting.

I hope you will encourage Ian Matheson as he takes on the role of editor and please keep him supplied with articles. Ian is about to learn that as well as taking on the responsibility of producing the Newsletter he will lose one of the pleasures of being a member of a club like CAT. If we are honest most people joins clubs for two reasons; to go on meets and receive a nice juicy newsletter every couple of months. When you are Newsletter editor you lose that bumper bundle of reports and scandal dropping through the letterbox. If this leaves with a pang of guilt how about writing a piece for the next newsletter - it doesn't hurt!

Due to the fact that we no longer have an incumbent and the fact that I have previously

managed to muddle though in the post I will be picking up the Meet Secretaries diary with immediate affect. So if you have any great ideas for Meets just give me a ring and let me know when you want to lead them.

Jon

NEW MEMBERS & ADDRESS CHANGES

We are pleased to welcome the following new members :-

Trevor Cooke and Janet Cresswall from Garrigill
B.Wilkinson from Frosterley
John Mills from Newcastle
Mr.W.Turner from Newcastle
Aubrey Best from Alston

We look forward to meeting you.

Mike Mitchell has moved and his new address is :-

5 Danes Crescent
Staveley
Kendal
LA8 9QJ

Phone 01539 821132

BOXING DAY MEET 26TH DECEMBER 1999

Ian Matheson	Clive Barrow
Peter Fleming	Dave Deane
Max Doble	Chris Jones
Joan Casson	Paul Timewell
Mark Scott	

Traditionally the Boxing Day Meet has been a dig at Conlston, and some important discoveries have resulted. Now that most of the Coniston Coppermine has been listed, surface digs are no longer appropriate, and anyway there is not much left to go at. This year it was decided to have an informal ramble, and not to have a designated Meet Leader.

About nine people met at the BMSC hut, and, after a while, set off in a leisurely way towards Low Water, where a new collapse in the Levers Water Mine crater had been reported. On the way there were pauses to examine and discuss the tops of Hospital and Paddy End shafts, the old mine tracks and waterways, and various holes, trials, and outcrops of copper ore. The crater between the original entrance to Levers Water Mine and the Funnel has recently become considerably wider and deeper, which proves that there are deeper workings beneath the Levers Water Mine Adit. It is thought that the collapse stems from the area of

Lake Stope which was recently explored by the survey team.

Lunch was taken in the shelter of some rocks beside Levers Water dam, and we were entertained by some energetic swimming by Chris Jones' dog, Oscar. The return was made via the Red Dell incline and the Old Engine Shaft launder tower. Stops were made to examine some of the mortar stones which have been discovered near the old Elizabethan workings, and to speculate on the age of the ruined buildings nearby.

The remainder of the day was spent recovering a large anvil from the cellar at Lanehead, and delivering it to the John Ruskin Museum. The anvil, which weighs between four and five hundredweight, is believed to have been removed from the smithy in the Low Water Engine House about thirty years ago, and has been at Lanehead ever since. Moving it provided some entertainment. The final solution involved getting it onto a plank, moving it on rollers cut from old broom handles, using a turfer, which someone just happened to have in their vehicle, to winch it up a plank ramp on the steps, and pulling it into a trailer with Paul Timewell's Landrover. It is now outside the Ruskin Museum, where it is hoped it will form part of the mining display.

Ian Matheson
December 99

MILLENNIUM MEET SUNDAY 2ND JANUARY

Meet leaders Peter Fleming and Ian Matheson.

The turnout for this first meet of the millennium was very encouraging, and 19 individuals participated. The descent of Bonsor East Shaft is one of the most interesting in the Coniston Coppermine, as it passes through several eras of mining history and there is evidence of 17th, 18th, and 19th Century mining to be seen.

The earliest documented mining at Coniston was carried out by the Elizabethan miners at the very beginning of the 17th Century. They worked the Bonsor Vein by hand to a depth of about 180 feet, without the use of gunpowder, leaving characteristic pick marks as evidence. A good example of their work at Coniston is the Cobbler Level, at the foot of Red Dell Beck, which we did NOT visit, as it is waist deep in water, and the weather was cold. This level, now blocked, was almost certainly driven in order to drain the stopes above, of which the Bonsor East is a part. Until the connection was made all water running into the mine would have been laboriously hauled up to the surface in buckets. Numerous pick marks can be seen in the shaft, mainly on the hanging wall, but

the best example is on the foot wall about 180 feet down, where there is a neatly chiselled drainage gully which takes advantage of a fault line in the rock.

The Bonsor East is not an obvious shaft, rather part of an extensive stope, and it was probably not used as such until the 18th Century, when Charles Roe of Macclesfield erected a water wheel, drove a short adit, and used the earlier stopes for pumping and winding. In order to prevent the ingress of water, the head of the shaft does not come out to the surface at all, but ends in a chamber beneath the track leading up to Red Dell. Outside the old water leat and holding reservoir can be seen, together with quite well preserved remains of two water wheel pits. The chamber contains a cut out where there would probably have been a balance bob and rocking beam to convert the motion of the pump rods or chains from horizontal to vertical. At the top of the shaft there are two solid timbers with cut outs for bearing mounts, and deposits of old axle grease indicate that these probably carried some sort of winding wheel. There is evidence that its location had to be raised, for there are the remains of an earlier one three feet below it. A plank crosses the stope, and on the far side a passage leads into later workings.

Charles Roe eventually doubled the depth of the Elizabethan mine, working down to about 360 feet, and the earlier stope was widened in places. There is speculation that the incomplete Waterfall Adit, which begins beside the Miners Bridge half a mile away, was intended to drain the bottom of these workings. A nicely built masonry wall on the north side of the stope extends all the way down to Deep Level, and was probably constructed at this time. The remains of several wooden ladders are still pinned to the rock beside it. Grooves can be seen in the rock and some of the timbers where ropes or chains have rubbed. At the bottom of the descent in Deep Level is a pile of debris which has fallen out of the shaft in recent years.

After being abandoned for some time this area was used again in the 19th Century. Deep Level was driven in the 1830's, and, once it intersected the old stope, would have drained all the workings above, as indeed it still does. Later still the Old Engine Shaft was sunk to provide pumping and winding for the deepening mine, and the Bonsor East adit was extended to intersect this about 50 feet below the head of the shaft. It is thought that the waste from sinking the shaft as far as Deep Level was brought out here, and a tip of country rock outside supports this theory. The 19th Century pump rods, made of seven-inch square pitch pine imported from Canada, still hang in the shaft, supported by a rotting catch wing at the end of the Bonsor East Adit. A few years ago CATMHS

attached these rods to the side of the shaft with rock bolts and wire cables in the hope of preserving them when the catch wing inevitably collapses.

It is some time since anyone descended the shaft, so a few days before the meet Ian Matheson, Peter Fleming and Max Doble went up to check it out. 9 new bolts were put in using the COMRU petrol powered rock drill. Anchors were placed for two ropes down the shaft with three re-belays, and a lifeline was installed to protect the plank crossing leading to the pump rods. It is intended to leave this in place, though anyone using it does so at their own risk, and should take proper precautions.

There was lots of help available to ensure that the meet went smoothly. Whilst the pitch was prepared a number of people went to see the winding gear at the head of the Old Engine Shaft, and then crossed the plank in the Bonsor Stope to view the catchwing and pump rods directly below it. Although long and serious the Bonsor East Shaft is an easy angled absell, which lands on a pile of debris in Deep Level, from where one can walk out to day. If it were a bit straighter it could be done as a single pitch, but three re-belays are necessary in order to protect the rope from chafe. For safety's sake the head of the pitch and all three re-belays were permanently manned. Jim Roskell and Mike Mitchell came down last and did some filming for the new video, but the weather had changed, and by then the air quality was not good. After descending everyone congregated in Deep Level where Charles Roe's rising water main can be seen, and Peter Fleming led a group of those who were enthusiastic and slim enough along Willie Shaws 1950 extension to the North Cross Cut and through the LMQT dig into the inner reaches of Deep Level. They went as far as the edge of the big flooded stope beneath the New Engine Shaft, thus completing a tour at Conlston in the 21st century which included examples of mining from the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th!

Thanks to Max Doble for his assistance with rigging, to COMRU for the use of their drill, to Brian and Allstar Marshall for manning the re-belays, to Mark Simpson for carrying the ropes up, and to Mike Mitchell and Dave Bridge for pulling them out again.

Ian Matheson
January 2000

DOCTOR DESCENDER

Dear Doctor

I am alarmed that there is a fiend purporting to be me and is even leading a meet using my name on the meets list. Worst of all he claims to be an expert on Lindal Moor.

Anon

I quite agree that this sort of thing is definitely "not on" and this is clear evidence of the actions of the infamous Barker Gang. This notorious group of rogues were driven from Furness some years ago and were last heard of on the wilds of Alston Moor. The gang must be back in town - watch out!

Dear Doctor

As a medical man please advise me whether sheep are trained in SRT since it has been heard that one was seen trying recently.

Anon

I am sure that if sheep could absell people would flock to see it. However I have also heard a recent fleece of information from a report (in the next NL ??) by explorers in the Copper Mines that does mutton that this has been seen. The report seems to indicate that when they try they fail miserably and the whole process is a dead loss. It brings a whole new meaning to the phrase "hung up on the rope".

PS Petzl are modifying the instructions for the jammer to mention that sheep's blood may cause the mechanism to stick.

Doc

Dear Doctor

Is it normal to show pictures of your scantily clad girlfriend to your mates (?) in the pub.

Lie in man

No but we won't complain.

BOOK REVIEWS

A firm called Tempus Publishing is producing a vast range of books in the "Images of England" series. A number will interest Mine Explorers, these are :-

Peak District Mining & Quarrying

Mining in Cornwall – Volume 1

Mining in Cornwall – Volume 2

These are all fair value at £9.99 for 128 pages. The books are of the photographs and detailed caption format. Whilst the Cornish books are expanded versions of Mining in Cornwall by Trounson the Peak District volume is completely new as far as I am aware.

Recommended.

Jon

UPS AND DOWNS OF SELLING A COLLIERY

RJB Mining, the owner of Ellington Colliery, the last deep mine in Northumberland, which is due to close in the spring, has agreed to sell the colliery to Giovanni Di Stefano, an Italian business man and politician.

Unfortunately for RJB Mining, Giovanni Di Stefano has been arrested in Rome. He is in custody pending extradition proceedings on a warrant for his arrest that had been issued by the Suffolk Police Fraud Squad in 1994.

Financial Times (29/11/99).

A MINE EXPLORERS DIARY

This is what your editor has been up to in the last few weeks with the emphasis on the humorous.

18th February. Start of 4 days in North Wales with Peter Hay. Further abortive explorations at Bryn Eglwys followed by a look at Abercwmelldaw. An interesting Upper Corris Quarry will need a strong team later in the year.

19th February. Anglesey searching out and finding the type locality for the mineral dickite!

20th February. Join Tim Oulton and Grosvenor Caving Club for a trip down the Mllwr tunnel – thoroughly recommended if you get the chance.

21st February. Gwydr Forest - interesting access developments but nothing can be said in print. But if you're person doing it keep up the good work.

9th March – Cwm Helsan and Glasdir. Surface visit to these interesting sites.

Jon

NORTH WALES NEWS

The sad news is the death of Dafydd Price on the 7th January this year. Although not a member of CAT and probably only known to about a dozen CAT members Dafydd was a real character. His life story if it could be written would make a fascinating book full of stories of his days at sea, the operation of small slate quarries and the demolition of many others. Always one for pulling people's legs he will be remembered by most of us as a brilliant raconteur in the bar at Plas Tan-y-bwch regaling us of his days evading the mine inspector or driving lorries with no brakes. He is well summed up by one attendee at his funeral who described it as "like his life a mixture of sadness and laughter".

Apart from the above little to report at the moment except that an additional North Wales weekend has been organised for the Autumn. The details are as follows :-

Corris Slate District Meet 21st & 22nd October

Saturday 21st October. Ty'n-y-berth Slate Quarry.

This working consists of a number of large chambers driven along a slate vein. A number have been opened up to day. An SRT descent of one chamber will hopefully give access to the rest of the mine although further internal descents are probably necessary. Grade EXP. Meet at the small parking area off the A487 in Corris Uchaf at 746088 at 10.00 am.

Sunday 22nd October Ratgoed Slate Quarry

When an Exploration meet was organised a few years ago the attendance was very low, however there are a number of newish members who now want to see what was found on that trip. The primary aim of the meet will be to descend to the sub-level between floors 7 and 8 although there will probably be time to visit other areas. An interesting site in a remote location. A through trip may be possible. Grade D/SRT. Meet at the car park 768092 in Aberllefenni at 10.00 am before driving on to the site.

Saturday evening will probably be spent at the Braich Goch Hotel in Corris.

Jon Knowles 01484 860662

REMINDER

She who must be obeyed reminds members that the Cashwell meet on the 11th June has had to be postponed and that in its place there will be a

meet at Hudgillburn. As well as the usual Hudgillburn activities (lifting rocks and taking the p\$%) there will also be a barbecue. Who or what will be barbecued remains to be seen but bring some food if you want to eat! The last items which were barbecued at Hudgillburn were my wellies on the pump and they were none too tasty.

Ed.

CROESOR

Sheila Barker spotted the following in the Telegraph on the 16th December 1999.

A 100 year old hydro-electric power station in North Wales has been rebuilt after years of disuse and is now ready to light up to 200 homes with green power.

The 500kW station, in the remote Croesor Valley, Snowdonia National Park, was originally built to serve the many (? - Ed) slate mines that burrowed into the mountains.

Rebuilt by National Power Hydro at a cost of over £1 million, Croesor now has a government contract under the NFFO (Non Fossil Fuel Obligation) scheme, which aims to encourage small scale renewable energy ventures.

Within the power station, pioneering Victorian engineer Moses Kellow originally installed a Pelton Wheel to extract energy from the water. This was shaped like an old-fashioned water wheel, but had buckets attached to the rim which were filled by a water stream. Vandallism and the passage of time meant that there was nothing left inside the listed stone generating house.

Engineers Gilbert Gilkes and Gordon Ltd of Kendal in the lake District built the first wheel for the station when it was new, and they were called upon to build a new Pelton Wheel to get things moving again.

Because of its situation in a National Park, rebuilding Croesor was particularly difficult: building materials had to be helicoptered in (for the pipeline and dam - Ed).

"These sorts of energy schemes, where we are exploiting the resources provided by nature, have got to be done sensitively," said John Baxendale of National Power Hydro. "If the project had not gone ahead, the dam would have sat there doing nothing for another 50 years."

"This is a lovely example of how traditional technology and traditional British engineering ability can contribute to what is now a burgeoning

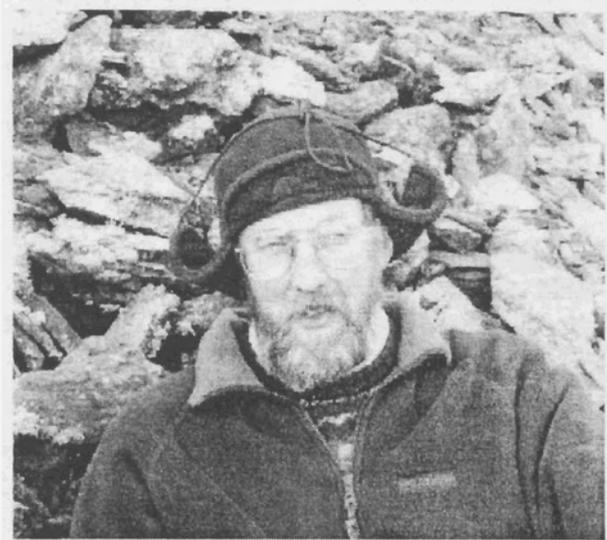
Industry for the future - renewable energy," said Ian Taylor, the renewable energy campaigner at Greenpeace.

(for comparison the original Kellow Installation was rated at 250kVa)

SPOT THE STRANGE HAT COMPETITION

To enter just put a cross where you think the strange hat is and mail to :-

Mark Simpson In a strange hat competition
Dept MS
Yorkshire



Only one entry per person.

NORTH WALES MEET 15TH & 16TH APRIL

John Ashby
Steve Brown
Chris Cowdry
John & Mrs Aldr
Bill & Michael Patten
Mark Simpson
Ken Geddes (part time)
Jon Knowles Meet Leader

Those people who had read the newsletter before phoning the meet leader realised that the order in which the two trips would be undertaken would depend on the weather whilst those people who remember the weather in the early part of that week will not be surprised that I spent some time working on a "plan B" however in the end the weather was kind to us.

Those people who came on last years surface meet will remember the vast open slopes of Lillwedd Mine. Flogging up the path to the mine in the glorious sunshine I regretted putting my PVC oversuit on at the bottom although I was glad that

Mark had picked up the 80m rope only to see him soon pass it on to Michael Patten who did a sterling job of carrying it.

Arriving at the mine site we quickly explored the only open level which is blocked by loose material at the point where it opens out into the stope. Moving uphill we reached the open stope and were alarmed at the way loose material would cascade down a funnel into the stope when people were on the scree above.

After much messing about and putting in a bolt we eventually had a safe hang although the curving nature of the stope meant that it would never be ideal. About this time we were joined by Ashby who had slept in – probably with his palm top computer !

Mark descended the pitch first and the rest of the SRT brigade soon followed whilst those who weren't going down went off to visit the rest of the site.

Descending into a Mine where you have no idea what you will find is always interesting as you dream of underground waterwheels or magnificent minerals. Unfortunately neither were to be found on this trip. The pitch drops straight down the stope to land on a pile of fallen material. Moving inbye a small chamber is seen on the left in this chamber there was clear evidence that the water sometimes gets 6' deep. The stope continues with a winze in the floor and then enters an area where a large quantity of water cascades from above and the stope rises out of sight of our lamps. Further inbye the stope ends and after another 50 yards the level is blind. Outbye the stope drops down to what we assume is nearly adit level before being blocked by loose material

The ascent back to day was enlivened by Mark complaining about his guts although in reality this could be far from amusing if your directly beneath somebody ! Back on the surface this "problem" was soon put right by going behind a rock purportedly for a sleep !!

The evening was spent in Cobdens Hotel in Capel Curg where the food is to be recommended.

Sunday dawned dry and bright and the group headed off to the Cwmorthin Slate Mine at Tab-y-grisiau near Blaenau Ffestiniog. The last official CAT meet to this mine was in 1993 although the ML has been to the site more times than he can remember in the intervening years.

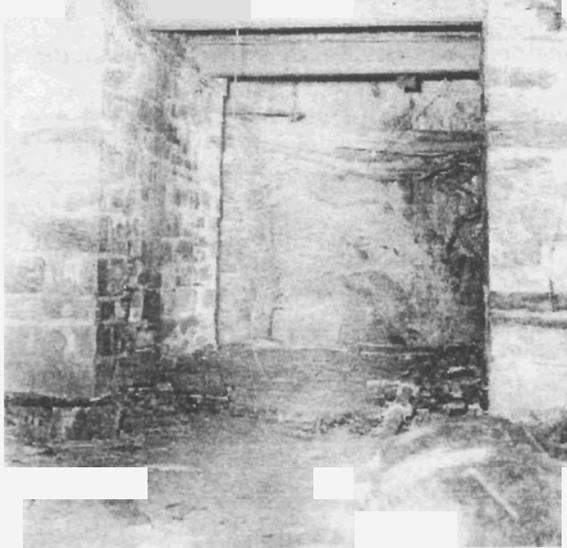
It is believed that Cwmorthin was first worked commercially worked by the Casson family who are better known for working the Diffwys Casson

Quarry in Blaenau Ffestiniog itself (Ref.1). Whilst the Cassons left Cwmorthin to concentrate on Diphwys others including the Devonian Alan Searle worked there over the years gradually developing the workings (Ref.2). Interestingly Searle was also involved at Lllwedd and other Mines & Quarries including Sygun, Hafod-y-Llan and Braich-yr-oen and one can only marvel at the energy of people like Searle endeavouring to manage these workings most of them being in high and all of them being in very wet locations.

Cwmorthin consists of a number of slate veins the only two worked on any significant basis being the back vein and the old vein. The group entered the mine via the lake level in the back vein and then passed through to the old vein and descended to floor D to see the remaining wooden bridges. Without digressing into a full explanation of slate quarrying techniques these bridges enabled railed communication to be maintained along a level even when the floor had been worked away by the chamber below. Cwmorthin is the only Mine where there are a number of bridges which are easily accessible. In addition there is what I believe to be a unique join of two bridges in mid air.

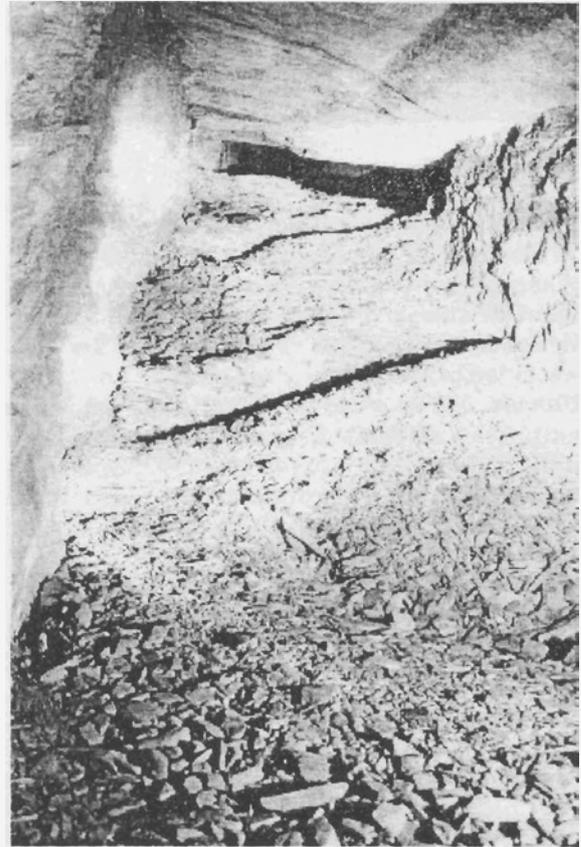


Ascending back up the old vein incline the route continued along Floor A before descending chamber 8 east via its slate staircase. Continuing along floor C the obstacle course was passed before descending the inclined shaft to the Compressor chamber on Oakeley DE. Oakeley was the name of the vast adjoining Mine which is now gradually being untopped by McAlpines as their Quarry enlarges. Oakeley and Cwmorthin had a number of connections and from 1900 Oakeley owned the Cwmorthin workings.



Lunch was taken at the head of the Chamber 34 incline in Oakeley which has its winder in situ

before descending to Floor G to see the Caban an Catwalk. After this the meet leader gave a temporary impression of getting lost before eventually finding the chamber 33 walkway.



Passing along "lefel ffrench" the Cwmorthln back vein was entered. Passing swiftly through the thigh deep water at the bottom of the Incline, chamber 1 west was entered. This contains the complete remains of an electric Incline winder together with a number of waggons filled with interesting equipment which the scrap men left behind.

Returning to the Incline and dry land the Lake Level was attained using either the Incline or the stairway depending upon peoples tastes.

On leaving the mine we had a little time to spare so most of the group climbed up on to the headland above the mine. This overlooks the Oakeley Quarry and the whole of Blaenau Ffestinlog and superb views of the whole district and all its quarries can be obtained.

A further North Wales meet will take place latter in the year.

Jon

References

1. Cwmorthin Slate Quarry by Graham Isherwood. Revised edition by Adit Publications 1995. Available from Jon Knowles.
2. The Old Copper Mines of Snowdonia by David Bick.

A YEAR OF DISCONTENT III

4 May 1872

Final settlement of the Weardale miners strike
On Monday last, the deputation of Weardale miners had an interview with Mr Beaumont's lead agent Mr Cain, in order to arrange the details, as Mr Beaumont wished in connection with the resolution passed at the mass meeting on the 20th ult., and so bring the three week's strike to a satisfactory settlement. In the evening, the whole of the 34 delegates who represent the workmen of the mines known as Pasture Grove, Kilhope, Grove Rake, Boltsburn, Stanhope Burn, Green Laws, Slitt &c. met at the committee room, St John's Chapel, to consider the arrangements made by the head agent and the deputation of eight of their number. On these arrangements being laid before them, they were heartily approved of, and all was consequently settled up in a satisfactory manner. The strike of Weardale miners is thus now finally closed. Before the committee rose, a hearty vote of thanks was given to the press for the full and impartial manner which the proprietors have reported the proceedings in which the miners have been engaged. The miners took their bargains at the W B office, at Newhouses, on Thursday and yesterday, and work will be resumed on Monday. Hitherto the wage men, or those who work for wages at the W B Lead mines have been receiving subsistence money monthly like the pickmen, and lifting the balance at the half yearly pays. In future these workmen will be paid off once a month.

The attempt by the management to get rid of the "lent" money system at this time did not succeed, but, the Weardale bargain books show a change to the method of paying subsistence to the miners beginning with the bargains let on the 1st April 1875. In these it was said that the "money to be advanced according to quantity of ore raised". This new wording did not apply to all bargains, but only those that were to work "old ground," or poor ground.

"1st April 1875 Slitt"

"Thomas Furnail 2prs agree to raise ore in old ground east of Slitt shaft @ 50/- per blng - Money to be advanced according to quantity of ore raised - till 30th June 1875."

"1st April 1875 Greenlaws"

"Mark Nattras 4prs agree to raise ore in their old ground at 50/- per blng - Money to be advanced according to quantity of ore raised."

"1st April Boltsburn"

"Tho. Middleton 4prs agree to rise 1 fathom in Pattinson sill at £6 contract and raise ore at 50/- per blng - money to be advanced according to the quantity of ore raised."

This system continued through 1876 becoming more common by 1877, and in 1878 out of 107 bargains 69 were of this type.

In 1879 the bargains let on the 27th August show yet a further change, and all bargains were let according to ore raised, but also on a percent basis; the miners were "to be paid 80 percent monthly on this contract and the balances at the half yearly pay in July 1880."

"27 August 1879 Burtree pasture"

"Jos. Thompson 4 partners agree to raise ore in 6 fathoms of ground in Nich James length at 75s per ton of ore till the 31 December 1879 to be paid 80 per cent monthly on this contract and the balance at the half yearly pay in July 1880."

This method continued up to the closure of the mines by the Beaumont Company.

"6 January 1883 Grove Rake"

"Thompson Robinson 4 prs agree to raise ore in their old ground @ 90/- per ton of ore as directed or till 31st March 1883 to be paid 80 per cent monthly on this contract and the balance at the half yearly pay in December 1883."

This would mean that a miner who did not raise any ore would have received no subsistence, it is little wonder that the miners were so opposed to it.

11 May 1872

The Teesdale Lead Mines

Another interview has taken place between the delegates of the lead miners and Mr R W Bainbridge, the superintendent of the Lead Company's Works, which occupied four hours. a fortnight ago a petition was presented asking for an advance in the subsistence money from 44s to 54s per month, which the men considered very reasonable. The request not being granted, a discussion followed, in which the superintendent reminded the men of other privileges they enjoy - namely, a doctor free, and schooling at a nominal charge. The men contended that these were no greater than those of coal miners who pay a doctor 6d per fortnight, house rent and coals free, 6d per fortnight cartage of coals, 2½d per week average for two children at school, amounting to £2 7s 8d per annum. Compare these charges with the lead Company, namely, doctor free; school (2) 8s; house rent £3 10s; coals £3 5s; total £7 3s; a comparison putting, the men think, their privileges into the shade. Another cause of complaint was

the way in which bargains are let. Suppose a partnership, by extra hours and hard labour, earn a few shillings more per week, the men complain that at the end of the quarter their prices may be lowered, and this encouragement is given to what the Company mean to destroy idleness. What the men want seems to be to have a fair remunerative price per bing, and then for the masters to allow the men to earn as much as will support their families. They think that if the ordinary work of the miners bring profit to the Company, the extraordinary work must do much more so. Notwithstanding the powerful reasoning of the delegates on these and other points Mr Bainbridge still stood strongly opposed to the petition. Urging another weeks' consideration, the delegates kindly requested the Lead Company, through Mr Bainbridge, to give the petition their most earnest consideration, and to sympathise with the men in their difficulty, stating that if the men did not get their request granted they intended to get up another petition which would contain a rate of wages, the basis of which would range higher than at present; that other classes would be in all probability embraced; and that if the men were obliged to leave the Company's works, the latter would be unlikely to get another lot of men to do the work at similar rates.

25 May 1872

Threatened renewal of the strike in Weardale
Not withstanding the settlement that was recently come to between Mr Beaumont and his workmen, when all grievances were supposed to have been removed we are informed that there are still about 100 men off work in Weardale. During the first two days when the bargains were taken, all went on smoothly the prices being considered by the men generally fair, and those who had taken these bargains resumed work at once. Unfortunately, during the two last bargain days, the prices offered to the miners were not nearly so good, and they were consequently refused. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst the men on this account, as they fancy that it has been a scheme on the part of the agent to get part to commence work, and so dissolve the unity which has hitherto existed. There is another point which has also been freely commented upon, viz, that those set to work at first are composed entirely of men who have votes, whilst those who are likely to be debarred from another month's subsistence money, are nearly all non-electors, and belong as a rule, to the poorer class of miners, who can worst afford to do without subsistence money. There more fortunate brethren, however are likely to resist this sort of treatment very bitterly. Already, meetings have been held in different mines, and a mass meeting is intended to be held shortly, and

unless some satisfactory arrangement come to, another strike is likely to occur. The men who have not yet resumed work say that according to the scale of prices offered, they could not earn 10s per week; numbers are still continuing to leave the district.

1 June 1872

Nenthead miners meeting

A meeting of the lead miners of the district was held in the Band room, at Nenthead on Thursday week, for the purpose of deliberating upon the action to be taken in order to secure better remuneration for their labour. The meeting resulted in the formation of a committee of twenty and out of that number a select committee of eight were delegated to confer with the resident agent J D Millican Esq of Nenthead house. The first conference took place on Friday night at the offices, the delegates being very courteously received by Mr Millican, who expressed himself warmly attached to the workmen, and nothing would be lacking on his part to advance their welfare. The result of this interview were communicated to the miners at another meeting held on Tuesday night last. Six delegates from Garrigill attended this meeting and informed them that the Garrigill miners had resolved to stand by the conclusions arrived at by their Nenthead brethren. The meeting however could arrive at no resolution, and it was left to the committee assisted by the Garrigill committee to arrange matters as they deemed best. Our correspondent suggests that the committee should seek an interview with R W Bainbridge Esq the superintendent of the works as that gentleman controls the rate at which the bargains are let. The attitude of the Nenthead and Garrigill men does not foreshadow a strike to which they are greatly opposed.

The markets have gone up and other companies are advancing 50s and 72s under the same royalty, which has lowered the duty on the ore but the men do not participate in the boon. The men adds our correspondent must be united in their efforts to secure a greater amount of lent money and £1 per week on which to base their bargains. At present the standing wage is 15s 9d; surely they should have advanced the odd 3d. The miners should have the same privileges as those obtained by their brethren in Teesdale.

1 June 1872

Lock out of the Teesdale Lead Miners

Great mass meeting of the men at Middleton
Middleton in Teesdale was the scene of much excitement on Saturday, on the occasion of a great mass meeting of the men in the employ of the London Lead Company. The men as most of

our readers will be aware, have recently been agitating for an increase of "lent" money, and like their brethren in Weardale they succeeded after some difficulty, in obtaining it, but they had only been at work a short time on the new arrangement when the washer-boys sent in a petition for an advance in wages, and as the masters refused to make any concession, the lads turned out on strike on Wednesday last. At the quarterly bargains on Friday, it was intimated that those miners having either sons or brothers employed as lead washers, and out on strike, would not be allowed to take their usual places until the boys resumed work. This, as a matter of course, created immense excitement, and it was decided by the men to hold a mass meeting with reference to this and a few other matters on the following day. The town during the night was placarded with numerous squibs, and on Saturday morning, long before the time arranged for holding the meeting at Middleton, the village was thronged with miners from the outlying districts. The meeting was held in the open air, and on the temporary platform the two delegates took their places shortly after twelve o'clock. Mr Wm Parkin occupied the chair and in opening the proceedings narrated the result of the interview the miners had had with the superintendent, Mr Bainbridge, which ended in a letter being read at an interview on the 15th May, to the effect that their request of 54s was granted by the Company, and for which a vote of thanks forwarded. They likewise returned a vote of thanks to the superintendent for consenting to advance them money earned over and above the 54s when earned. There was now a new feature in the movement. After the struggle had partly subsided and the men were going to try on awhile with the advance of subsistence money, although not satisfied with the basis for bargains, the washer boys came out on strike for an advance of wages, and Mr Bainbridge had locked the men out, as there was no one to wash the produce of the mines. The following is a copy of the notice which had been posted in the office:- "Agreeing with a remark made by one of the company's miners, that the washer boys have at present as much ready money as is practical hereafter, a very well conducted and industrious party will have his monthly subsistence money advanced 1s per week beyond his present year's wage, leaving his present year's wage ready to be fixed in the autumn as usual; the 'back' 1s per week from the beginning of this year's ore dressing will be paid on the 29th of June.-signed, R W Bainbridge, Middleton House." They would all understand the purport of that notice, and as there were several speakers to follow, and several resolutions to submit to the meeting, he would not detain them farther.

The meeting was then addressed by Messrs R Hutchinson, Isaac Parkin, Jacob Nixon, Ezra

Lowes, William Dawson, Joseph Richardson, John Watson, George Armstrong, and John Scott, the tone of their remarks being to the effect that notwithstanding they were locked out in consequence of the strike of the washer boys, they should support the boys, their demand being reasonable.

The following resolutions were then passed:-

1. That the London lead Company's miners in Middleton in Teesdale, being locked out in consequence of the washers strike for advance of wages, and not being permitted to work unless the boys resume their employment, we consider ourselves disconnected with the Company's works, and that if we go to work again it must be on new conditions.

2. That if we go to work again we have 54s lent money per month, and £1 per week as the basis.

3. That a protection committee be formed to look after the interests of the workmen.

4. That the starting of the boys wages be 10d instead of 8d at 12 years of age, and to be raised at not less than 3d per day per year, and to be paid off as Mr Bainbridge had suggested.

In the course of some conversation which followed, it was decided that Mr Birch, the head governor, should be requested to come down from London, and that the delegates have an interview with him in reference to the present state of affairs.

The meeting then separated.

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 13th September 1999 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

Agenda.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Apologies for absence | 2 Minutes of the last meeting |
| 3 Matters arising | 4 Secretary's Report |
| 5 Treasurer's Report | 6 Membership Secretary's Report |
| 7 Meets Secretary's Report | 8 Hudgillburn Mine |
| 9 Newlands Furnace | 10 Coniston Coppermines Site |
| 11 Video Film Project | 12 Publications |
| 13 AGM and Annual Dinner | 14 Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 15 Any other business | |

Present D. Bridge (DB), S. Barker (SB), I. Matheson (IM), P. Fleming (PF)
and A. Wilson. 5 members in total.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from M. Scott (MSc) and M. Simpson (MS).

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 12th July had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by PF and SECONDED by AW that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 **Item 10** SB had received a letter from the Nat Park re the fence around Simon's Nick. They said the responsibility lay with the landowner (Rydal Estates).
- 3.2 **Item 3.3** DB reported on the Mandall's workmeet, a large amount of brambles were removed from the outside of the building and rubbish removed from the inside. It was decided that DB would pick up the artefacts and take them to the next committee meeting to be identified before asking the John Ruskin Museum to store them.
- 3.3 **Item 7** (Force Crag mine) DB had contacted JD who had referred him to the appropriate contact. B. Young had also been contacted regarding a recent BGS survey, which had considered the stability of the scree slope above the mine, water build up in the mine and water quality. He would be willing to endorse the project and agreed with us that the project should go ahead. SB to write to the National Trust as a first step. Force Crag Mine is now a RIGGS site and is likely to become a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received:

- 4.1 Copy of the LDNP Management Plan which has now been adopted and sets out the NPA's 'Vision of the Future'.

They intend to secure funding to enable them to implement a programme of conservation on priority sites. These will include Greenside, Coniston Copper mines, Force Crag and mines in the Caldbeck Fells. They also intend to develop a programme of surveys of neglected areas such as Irton Fell. In chapter 12 there is an invitation to organisations to contribute to these projects, funding could also be available to develop new projects. Related issues included public safety from the poor structural stability of some underground workings and pollution from contaminated mine workings e.g. Church Beck and Carrock Fell Mine.

SB had read an article in the Northern Mines NL which said:

A new initiative to stabilise unsafe mines, the land Stabilisation Programme, was launched in March, by the Regions and Regeneration Minister, Richard Caborn. The programme will be administered by English Partnerships who will make finance available to local and Nat Park A's to stabilise zones which have been left in a hazardous condition by non-coal mine workings.

It was felt this could be a threat to our mining heritage, or on the other hand it could provide funding for the Force Crag project.

- 4.2 Letter from the Cumbria Oral History Project, they have secured Millennium funding for their project. They would like to seek our active involvement in the project. They are having a meeting at Penrith Library on Sat 25th September. Grants of up to £1000 will be available for projects. SB to contact the Archivist and A.D. Cameron (ADC) regarding any CATMHS recordings.
- 4.3 Letter from Haig Pit Restoration Group, they were about to open the engine house and invited us to have a display. DB took the display boards and set them up.
- 5 Treasurer's Report**
MS had been unable to attend the meeting but had sent a report via DB which included:
- 1) The balance (on 17th Aug.) in the current account was £1900.
 - 2) Payments out since the last meeting inc. £232 for 2000 trail leaflets and £547 for 150 'Slate from Honister'.
 - 3) There had been an income of £343 plus a £254 tax refund.
 - 4) This years figures to date were income £2700 and expenditure £2400.
- SB to post cheques received for book sales etc.. to MS.
- 6 Membership Secretary's Report**
IM reported that this was a quiet time of year for membership, he had received a couple of inquires, one of which had joined by return. IM had only had one inquirer for his weekend meet in October.
The next newsletter was expected shortly, the meets list, AGM minutes, annual dinner menu and booking form and the membership renewal form were all to go out with the newsletter.
- 7 Meets Secretary's Report**
The winter meets list was discussed and venues decided on, IM would pass the suggestions on to J. Davies. The winter meets list must be ready to go out with the newsletter.
- 8 Hudgillburn Mine**
SB reported there would be a break in the work at the forehead till the end of October. The survey had continued and work tidying the portal area took place on the July Meet.
- 9 Newlands Furnace**
No developments.
- 10 Coniston Coppermines site**
DB had received a request from the John Ruskin Museum for more information on the Coppermines for their IT Display. They wish to extend the coverage of the mines and the history of Coniston Village. A meeting will be set up with the museum to discuss the material required.
The Paddy End survey was discussed, DB suggested the results should be recorded on a ZIP disc or CD-ROM and sent to B. Young and D. Millward at BGS for comments.
PF reported there had been no progress made with the Coniston archaeological project.
- 11 Video film project**
No progress.
- 12 Publications**
There were only a few copies of 'Slate from Coniston left to sell. IM suggested we should ask ADC to arrange for a reprint, to be ready for next April, all agreed. Action SB.
150 copies of 'Slate from Honister' had been photocopied. PF had got a new supply of the Trail Leaflets.
A decision must be made soon on whether to make an application to the 'Millennium Festival Award' for the re-printing of 'Beneath the lakeland fells' (this could not be done at this meeting as there was not a quorum). ADC had drawn up a summery of the changes required and of expected costs. The application has to be in by June 2000 and the money spent before the end of that year.

13 AGM and Annual Dinner

To be held on Saturday 11th December, the committee to propose a motion to reduce the size of the committee, as the widening geographical spread of the membership makes it very difficult to achieve a quorum at meetings.

Dave Carlisle will perform his monologue after the dinner, SB to book accommodation for Dave and his wife.

14 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

This was arranged for 7.30 p.m. on Monday 15th November 1999 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston.

15 Any other business-None

15.1 SB reported on the Cumbria C.C.'s remedial work at the Nenthead Tailings Dams. The 2nd phase has been given the go ahead. They plan to stabilise the river channel at Brownley Hill Mine to prevent it undermining the tailings dam. There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.45 p.m.

SB 16/09/99

Chairman

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 17th January 2000 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

Agenda.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1 Apologies for absence | 2 Minutes of the last meeting |
| 3 Matters arising | 4 Secretary's Report |
| 5 Treasurer's Report | 6 Membership Secretary's Report |
| 7 Meets Secretary's Report | 8 Hudgillburn Mine |
| 9 Newlands Furnace | 10 Coniston Coppermines Site |
| 11 Video Film Project | 12 Publications |
| 13 CAT's 21st Birthday | 14 Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 15 Any other business | |

Present D. Bridge (DB), S. Barker (SB), I. Matheson (IM), P. Fleming (PF), M. Mitchell (MM), M. Scott (MSc), & A. Wilson. 7 members in total.
The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from M. Simpson (MS). Member J. Wilkinson also attended the meeting at the invitation of the chairman.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 15th November had been previously circulated to members. PF wished item 10 to be amended to read 17th/18th & 19th centuries (not 16th). This amendment being made, it was PROPOSED by DB and SECONDED by PF that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 Item 7 AGM. Ways of improving the quality of photographs in the newsletter had been discussed at the AGM. DB will contact J. Knowles on this matter.
- 3.2 Item 3.1 DB had found a reference to a survey of the Force Crag Mine done by RCHM. SB to write for details.
- 3.3 Item 10 DB had contacted J. Moore, the matter was in hand, it was expected that a charge for scanning would have to be made.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received:

- 1) Information on NAMHO 2000.
- 2) Speleo Scene and the Cumbria Local History Fed Bulletin.
- 3) From LDNPA:
 - A) Copy of their new Draft Corporate plan. This explains the work they intend to do and their priorities in 2000/01 and how they intend to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.
 - B) Copy of their Strategic Review for the next 5 years "Looking Ahead" this will provide more background to the key policies and objectives that they are working towards in the Corporate Plan. There was a card to fill in, which I returned.

SB had not received an answer from Helen Mann (Property Manager) for the National Trust having requested permission for CATMHS to re-open No 0 Level, Force Crag Mine.

5 Treasurer's Report

MS had been unable to attend the meeting, but had sent a report to the chairman which included:

- 1) The balance (on 17th December) in the current account was £2248 and in the Building Soc. £3854.
- 2) As the Society was about to hopefully publish two books and a CD ROM, the treasurer stated that he did not want the funds to drop below £1000. If later in the year the balance went down to £500 he would have to ask members for short term interest free loans, till we start to get returns from sales.

6 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported that 88 members had renewed their subs and 33 had not. Members who had not renewed would get a reminder with the next (their last) newsletter.

7 Meets Secretary's Report

The venues for the summer evening meets were decided. SB to contact the Newsletter Editor and ask him to put them in the NL. The summer meets list to be discussed at the March Committee meeting, put on agenda.

DB had made arrangements for the BNFL visit in Feb., but would now be unable to attend, he would send the details to SB.

8 Hudgillburn Mine

SB reported that since the work had re-started at the beginning of November, members had attended the dig almost every Sunday. A lot of materials had been carried into the mine and the work was going well.

9 Newlands Furnace

The Newlands Furnace Trust are holding their AGM on the 25th Jan. at the King's Arms Hotel, Ulverston. The committee had met 3 times last year, to address the various problems.

Urgent repairs were required to the roof of the charging floor, which was in a dangerous state. They have been successfully fund-raising for this work and are moving towards the sum required. Full report to go in next newsletter. The consolidation work in the furnace itself is continuing.

10 Coniston Coppermines site

Member Jeff Wilkinson gave an update on the progress at the John Ruskin Museum. He wished to convey thanks from Vicky Slowe and all those involved with the Museum, for CATMHS's involvement in providing information and display items. The setting up of a study room at the museum was explained. He hoped that the new CAT CD-ROM would be ready for use by the beginning of the season, and suggested we provided a stand to display the CD and also the CAT information leaflet. DB had several members slides to add to the CD and would complete the work by March. The cost of production and sale price was discussed. It was decided that DB would produce the first 50 himself as a pilot scheme. Retail price £9.99.

DB thanked Jeff for attending and PF added his thanks to the Museum for the good publicity they had given us.

PF reported that the National Park had funds to renovate Miner's bridge at Coniston.

11 Video film project

Outdoor photography had been started. MM reported that the production of the video was on course. He had documented the script/story boards in great detail. We now needed to get on with the photography, he would contact J. Roskill. DB thanked MM for the tremendous amount of work he had done.

12 Publications

AD Cameron had contacted DB with a quote for the printing of 'Slate from Honister'. It was PROPOSED by DB and SECONDED by IM, that we have 1000 copies printed at a cost of £2,094, all were in favour.

PF reported that the application for the 'Millennium Festival Award' for the re-printing of 'Lakelands Mining Heritage, the last 5000 years' had been sent off.

13 CAT's 21st Birthday Celebration

SB had booked accommodation at Rydal Hall for the weekend. A booking form (designed and printed by K. Beer) would be included in the next newsletter. The contents of the programme were discussed and it was decided to go to Greenside on the Sunday as it would be suitable for all abilities.

14 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

This was arranged for 7.30 p.m. on Monday 13th March 2000 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston.

15 Any other business-None.

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 17th March 2000 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

Agenda.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Apologies for absence | 2 Minutes of the last meeting |
| 3 Matters arising | 4 Secretary's Report |
| 5 Treasurer's Report | 6 Membership Secretary's Report |
| 7 Meets Secretary's Report_summer meets list | 8 Hudgillburn Mine |
| 9 Newlands Furnace | 10 Coniston Coppermines Site |
| 11 Video Film Project | 12 Publications |
| 13 CAT's 21st Birthday | 14 Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 15 Any other business | |

Present D. Bridge (DB), S. Barker (SB), I. Matheson (IM),
P. Fleming (PF), M. Mitchell (MM) & A. Wilson (AW).
6 members in total.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from M. Simpson (MS) and M. Scott (MSc).

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 17th January had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by MM and SECONDED by DB that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 Item 3.2 SB had obtained a copy of the survey of the Force Crag Mine done by RCHM, cost £15. PF would deliver it to the CAT library.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received:

- 1) Information on the NAMHO AGM and Council Meeting.
- 2) Speleo Scene.

SB had not received an answer from Helen Mann (Property Manager) for the National Trust regarding Force Crag Mine, so had tried to contact her by phone. Ms Mann was on holiday, but the person spoken to did not seem hopeful that our request would be granted, as the NT's policy was to allow no access to the mines on their property.

5 Treasurer's Report

MS had been unable to attend the meeting, but had sent a report to the chairman which included an up-to-date balance sheet, which was circulated to the committee. The total income up to 3rd March was 2846.87 and the expenditure was 1410.59.

- 1) DB suggested we should send a donation to the Haig Pit Project at Whitehaven, as they were having difficulties. DB PROPOSED that we should make a donation of £50 to the Haig Pit Project at Whitehaven. SECONDED by MM, all were in favour. Action SB.

6 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported that 100 members had renewed their subs and 12 had not. Members who had not renewed would get a final reminder with the next (their last) Bulletin.

7 Meets Secretary's Report

DB reported that the BNFL and Haig Pit visit in Feb. had been a great success. The venues for the summer meets list were decided. SB to send typed list to IM.

8 Hudgillburn Mine

SB reported that 20 members had attended the last HGB meet. A variety of jobs were carried out. The fence was moved to make the area smaller and a new gate was fitted. The removal of the rails from the mine entrance was started. Bolting of the rise at the western end of the

North Vein was started. The Sun Vein dig moved forward, a set of legs and a headtree were put in place. MM offered to construct a ladder for the rise into the Cavern.

9 Newlands Furnace

Nothing to report.

10 Coniston Coppermines

MS is researching the history of the Coniston mines as part of the survey. He had got permission to look at the Bill Shaw archive at the Carlisle Record Office.

DB is continuing to work on the new CAT CD-ROM and expects it to be completed by the end of March. He will confere with PF and MM on slides required. MM reported that the new collapse at Levers Water was now about 8 feet deeper.

11 Video film project

Outdoor photography had been delayed by abismal weather conditions.

12 Publications

PF reported that the application for the 'Millennium Festival Award' for the re-printing of 'Lakelands Mining Heritage, the last 500 years' had been acknowledged by the Millennium Commissioners. He expected a reply shortly, if this happened before the next meeting, we would have to call a special meeting to discuss the subject. He had sold 300 copies of the Trail leaflets to the Coniston TIC.

AD Cameron had sent an email which included:

He had nearley completed the work needed on 'Slate from Honister'. He would be liasing with David Sewart regarding the printing and hopes it will be ready for Easter.

He would like the committee to organise who would be selling the book and where. This was discussed. An edition of the Bulletin would be sent out shortly.

13 CAT's 21st Birthday Celebration

SB asked if members would book their places on the Rydal Hall weekend as the Society had paid the deposit. It was decided to ask Ronnie Calvin to speak at the event.

14 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

This would be held on the 5th May 2000 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston.

15 Any other business

15.1 PF reported on an article in a local newspaper regarding Burlington Slate Ltd's intention to in-fill one of their old quarries. It was decided we should take a photographic record before this happens. Action PF.

15.2 DB reported that English Heritage were going to survey Saltom Pit, Whitehaven and hopefully carry out conservation work.

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

HONORARY PRESIDENT Lord Egremont

VICE PRESIDENT Major Hext

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