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The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust  
Mining History Society

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# Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society Newsletter No 83, May 2006.

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## News

### Changes to the Constitution

Eagle eyed website watchers will have noticed that changes to the Constitution have recently appeared “on line”. The main area of change has been driven by two things, firstly the need to define the different types of membership that the committee has had to introduce to resolve our difficulties in providing adequate Public Liability Insurance and secondly a belated recognition that current Child Protection legislation and practice had rendered the original document unworkable.

To cover the PLI needs the committee has introduced the concept of three types of membership, **basic** entitled to vote and to publications, **surface** as basic but with the additional right to attend surface meets and **underground** as basic but with the right to attend all meets. These latter two groups are required to have PLI cover as specified by the committee.

Readers will be only too aware of the major effect that Child Protection legislation and practice has had on all areas of life. Regrettably the committee has decided that due to the enormous amount of work that would be involved in producing policy guidelines and the practical difficulties of meeting such guidelines, it has been decided that individuals under the age of 18 may only become **basic** members.

The remaining changes remove the status of “provisional membership” which has not been applicable in recent years. These changes will have to be ratified by the AGM at the end of the year.

John R Aird  
Treasurer

### CATMHS website, CATMHS Health & Safety Policy.

Colin Woollard and Chris Cowdery have been working hard with matters concerning Health and Safety and have come up with something that we are probably ready to run with on the website.

Please take a look at the Health and Safety Policy Documents on the website. Go to **Activities**, then **Health and Safety, Risk...** where the Framework for Health, Safety & Environmental Care, which is a PDF document, can be downloaded.

On going to the **Members area** a user name and password are required. Entering these will enable Meet Leaders to download the Excel workbook which is called **logbook**, but is actually the workbook which contains the logbook, names and addresses pro forma, a risk assessment template, and a risk assessment illustration.

The Framework for Health, Safety and Environmental Care, How to Assess Risk, and Standard Meet Controls can also be downloaded from the members area as PDF documents.

The appropriate user name and password will all be available to meet leaders so that the log book can be filled in electronically on a pc on returning from their meet, and sent to the Meets Secretary, Jon Knowles, to be stored in his records.

### Newsletters past and present

All past newsletters have been scanned and are now stored electronically as “pdf” files. This allows the archive to be searched for a particular word or phrase and means that any particular article can be reprinted. At the moment further work is going on to provide a, hopefully, comprehensive index and

also to extend the project to include all the News Sheets and Bulletins. In the meantime if anyone does want to search for anything please get in touch.

John R Aird, Treasurer.

### **CATMHS Library and Archive**

The Armit Museum in Ambleside, struggling for financial viability, has had yet another re-organisation. It will now be known as The Armit Collection. The Museum section is to be open daily but the Library will in future be open only on Tuesdays and Fridays, and at other times by appointment. There will be a charge of £2.50 per day for library users, which does include admission to the museum. On the plus side, there will in future be a curator available to assist library users. Phone 015394 31212 for more information or visit [www.armitt.com](http://www.armitt.com)

### **A reprieve for the Newland Furnace Trust**

The AGM of the Newland Furnace Trust was held on Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006. Insurance costs have been threatening the future of the Newland Furnace Trust. The annual premium for Third Party liability and Employee Liability last year was £1344, rising to £1627 for the current year. These costs cannot be met by grants, and the long term future of the Trust is uncertain. The crippling cost of insurance may mean that current funds will run out after two or three years if no other source of income can be found.

However, as a consequence of the Heritage Open Day that took place in September an alternative and much cheaper cover has been obtained. Cover for that event was provided by the County through a company called RBPM, who have quoted a annual premium of £209.

The Trust's major project, the repair of the Charging House has now been completed. The work was made possible by a an 80% grant from English Heritage and donations from SLDC, CCC and the Manifold Trust. Temporary loans from CATMHS helped with cashflow as grants could only be paid on production of receipts for payment for work carried out.

This represents a major achievement by the Trust. However, remaining work in the Conservation Plan is estimated to cost a further £90,000. Much of this cost is for vital capping and drainage on the furnace top to conserve the work done below, which has also reached completion after more than fifteen years of work by members of the Trust. Discussions are taking place regarding funding for this project. If it can be achieved then the Nweland Furnace Trust will have achieved it's main aims, and the Furnace will have been preserved for all time.

IM

### **Diversification at Burlington Slate**

One of England's leading natural stone producers, Cumbria-based Burlington Slate Ltd., has announced its move into limestone production following its acquisition of the Baycliff quarry in neighbouring Ulverston. Home to two specific limestones — branded Cavendish and Caulfield — the quarry acquisition is a move that enables Burlington to provide an extended palette of natural stones that are native to Cumbria.

Serving to complement the company's existing five different colored stones that range from light and olive greens to silvers, blues, greys and blacks, the Baycliff limestone will form part of Burlington's architectural product

offerings, as well as falling within Burlington's Aggregates and Secondary Products Division.

"We are all understandably excited about the acquisition," said Managing Director Malcolm Hatch. "Not only are both types of limestone native to Baycliff quarry renowned for their technical properties, in particular how hard wearing they are, they have very tactile colourings and markings that complement our existing natural stones."

Extraction of the limestone materials by Burlington has already begun, and end-use products are in the process of being fabricated at the company's main production facility in Kirkby-in-Furness.

Initially, production of limestone products will centre on flooring, cladding, wall stone and crushed aggregates, the latter being used to satisfy demand within and around Cumbria. "By far, the biggest market for the two Baycliff limestones will be the architectural and specifier," said Hatch. "To this end, we are developing an initial range of floor tiles. We have already identified a demand for limestone flooring products amongst our existing client base, and this emanates not only from the U.K. but across the globe."

To satisfy expected demand, Burlington will initially launch floor tiles in both limestones and with a honed and flamed finish. Renowned for its hardness — making the limestone particularly suitable for heavily trafficked pedestrian areas — both Cavendish and Caulfield exhibit excellent all-round technical properties, lending the material suitable to both the interior and exterior environment, according to Burlington Slate.

### **A new book from Ian Tyler**

Ian Tyler's tenth book in the Lake District Mining Series, '*Goldscope and the Mines of Derwent Fells*' has just been published. The mining area covers the Newlands Valley to the south leading north to the Silica Mine at the head of Bassenthwaite, and reveals the history of Thornthwaite, Barrow, Yewthwaite, Stoneycroft, the Cobalt Mine, and the many small trials in this area. It begins with an introduction to medieval mining and then chronicles the coming of the German miners to Keswick under the stewardship of Daniel Hechstetter. The long history of Goldscope Mine is told in detail.

The book is soft-back, 300 pages, and contains over 150 photographs, plans and illustrations. The price is £18.99, or £22 mail order from Keswick Mining Museum, Otley Road, Keswick, CA12 5LE.

### **Mines Forum meeting, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006**

At Striding Edge Hostel, Greenside.

Representatives attending were:

CATMHS: Mark Simpson, John Brown, Ian Matheson

MOLES: Ian Tyler, Ian Hebson, Donald Angus, Stuart Creswell

COMRU: Mike Mitchell.

Alastair Cameron

The National Trust: Jamie Lund, Penny Webb, John Malley

LDNPA: Eleanor Kingston. John Hodgson was attending a World Heritage meeting.

Mike Mitchell raised the issues of lack of progress regarding permission from the National Trust to visit various sites, despite their acceptance of health and safety and risk assessment policies, which had required a huge amount of work to produce. It appears that the

National Trust and the LDNPA are getting a lot of information from the Mines Forum meetings but are not giving much to the societies in return.

Both CAT and MOLES reported a decline in membership, felt to be due to a perception that unattached individuals may have more freedom of action and that club membership has restricted access to sites that have been freely visited for many years. Since the last Forum meeting, at which a CAT proposal for conservation work at Goldscope had been turned down, the National Trust has refused permission for visits to Force Crag Mine. Ian Tyler reported that the MOLES project at Yewthwaite mine has been bogged down by paperwork for six years.

Eleanor Kingston replied that the National Park archaeologists recognised the expertise and achievements of the societies and thought that the H&S documents should now enable us to move forward.

Mark Simpson said that reasons for refusal of permission should be given. An unqualified no is not good enough.

Jamie Lund said that the Health and Safety documents had been necessary. He had had deep reservations about what went on before. The present documents provide a framework on which to base site specific project plans and risk assessments. In the proposals he received he didn't get that and therefore could not give permission. He didn't want to be seen as a blockage. By the end of the meeting we should be able to agree dates to proceed on at least one project, but Force Crag is tricky.

He requested that all proposals should be submitted via the Secretary of the organisation concerned, as there could be requests from individuals that were not supported by their association.

Penny Webb added that even though health and safety policies were in place it did not automatically follow that we should get permission to do what ever we want.

Donald Angus agreed with the remarks made by MM and others, but expressed the view that the Mines Forum should not be disbanded. These meetings are the only way forward.

The meeting moved on to other matters.

### **Roundups:**

CATMS, MOLES, the NT and COMRU had nothing that wouldn't be covered by the agenda.

**Alastair Cameron** reported that an application has been re-submitted for a grant for equipment to record the slate industry at Coniston. There is a program for recording oral history in the village, getting ex slate workers to visit their old work sites.

Leaflets are to be prepared regarding the effect of tourism on the slate industry and on fell farming. An autumn conference is planned to debate problems, probably at Honister Quarry.

A GPS survey commenced in Spring 2005 to survey the slate workings and tracks in the Fleetwith area. Older tracks that had been identified were of particular interest. GPS, with an accuracy equivalent to a 12 figure grid reference (1cm sq), is now the best method of surveying, linked to arial surveys where they are available, as these show much detail that is not recorded on maps. Present day map publications are losing historic information. A study of pre O/S maps revealed little, as most of the information on them related to valley settlements.

## **LDNPA**

Eleanor Kingston repeated a request for the Historic Environment Strategy for a list of scheduled sites that were perceived to be at risk. It was pointed out that both CATMHS and MOLES have previously submitted a comprehensive list of all sites believed to be worthy of conservation. She asked for these to be revisited and hoped to set up a monitoring program.

The LDNPA have obtained a HLF grant of £170,000 to improve access to information at National Park offices. A program to put archaeological and historical information on the web site should start in May. Stuart Cresswell reported that similar material was now included on the Keswick Mining Museum website.

## **Yewthwaite mine.**

Donald Angus and Ian Tyler had visited the site. It would be necessary to remove some material in order to re-instate the cobbles of the dressing floor. They were concerned that farm traffic was causing damage. Continued use by vehicles would destroy the site beyond repair. Ian Hebson reported that about twenty tons of spoil had been taken during the past two weeks.

Jamie Lund would re-visit the site and take action to prevent further damage. He and Penny Webb had visited the site and talked to the locals. The right of way does not cross the dressing floor. They propose to place boulders to protect the site and to educate the commoners about its value. Yewthwaite is definitely a project the National Trust want to do. A date was agreed to meet at the mine to evaluate the work.

## **Force Crag**

John Malley said that the Trust had decided not to allow access to Force

Crag mine on the basis of two underground surveys that were carried out about sixteen years ago. He agreed to make the surveys available to CATMHS and MOLES for their considered opinion and a formal response. He would then review the decision.

The meeting discussed the condition of No 1 Level. Work at the entrance had been carried out without proper knowledge. The drainage pipes that were set in concrete would inevitably become blocked and access should have been provided to keep them clear. The roof in-bye was not adequately supported and unless action is taken to strengthen it then there was an imminent danger of collapse. That would cause the mine to flood up to No 3 Level, with a serious risk of environmental damage, as water backed up contaminated with heavy metals would and eventually break out, causing pollution to Bassenthwaite Lake and the river Derwent .

Ian Tyler suggested that the entrance to No 1 level should be cut open and gated, and that the roof should be supported with sleepers and the tunnel be reduced to half width. The mine will deteriorate and cause more problems if it doesn't receive maintenance. John Malley said that he didn't know the volume of water the mine might contain. The National Trust didn't have much information on the internal mine system; it was a piece of heritage that could be lost.

It was agreed that CATMHS and MOLES would report on the surveys by the end of February and a decision could be expected from the national trust by the end of March

## **AOB**

Ian Tyler reported that Sandbeds mine dressing floor was being used by what

seemed to be an approved motorcycle trail. Eleanor Kingston would enquire.

A tractor was reported removing spoil from Carrock

The University of Bournemouth are carrying out archaeological studies above Pave York mine at Seathwait, near Wetherlam.

John Malley wanted to visit the Borrowdale Wadd mine to investigate the effect of activities there by outdoor groups.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2.00 pm at Brockhole.

### Visit to the Lucy Tongue Level

After the meeting there was a site visit to Greenside mine, led by John Brown. Nine people took part, including Jamie Lund, John Malley and Penny Webb from the national trust and Eleanor Kingston from the National Park.



After going through health and safety procedures, implementing the practices of our new risk assessment policy, John conducted the group along the Lucy Tongue Level as far as the bottom of the ladderway that ascends to Glencoynedale, a distance of about a mile. The visitors were impressed by both the quality and the extent of the recent work undertaken to re-open the level and to stabilise the collapses. It was interesting to note the changes in construction at successive digs going in-bye as techniques were developed and refined.



On the way in, the Lucy Shaft, Willie Shaft and Switch Room, and the Smith Shaft engine room were all visited and photographed. Before setting off back the visitors, who had willingly volunteered to carry Mark Simpson's impressive amount of equipment a mile into the mine, were rewarded when he used all it to demonstrate photographic light painting . IM.

### Mines Forum meeting, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2006 at Brockhole

Representatives attending were:

CATMHS: Mark Simpson, Peter Fleming, Ian Matheson, Don Borthwick.

MOLES: Ian Tyler, Ian Hebson, Donald Angus, Stuart Creswell

COMRU: Mike Mitchell.

Alastair Cameron

The National Trust: Jamie Lund, Penny Webb, John Malley

LDNPA: John Hodgson

Mike Mitchell had to leave before the meeting commenced in order to attend a rescue call out

### Roundups:

CATMHS – Approval has been obtained to open Middleclough Level at Nenthead. Mark Simpson was expecting approval for work on Kernal Level at Coniston. CAT intend to carry out some

surveying and reference photography on the Paddy End Dressing Floors.

MOLES - Nothing that wouldn't be covered in the agenda

Alastair Cameron – There has been no development regarding scheduling the Coniston Old Man Slate Quarries above Low Water, including the old sled way.

National Trust – Jamie Lund reported that conservation work is to be carried out at Hartsop Hall Farm, near Brotherswater. Old fencing is to be replaced and extended in order to keep stock off the mill site, the leats and the spoil heaps.

LDNPA - John Hodgson would like comments regarding Scheduled Monuments at Risk, which have to be submitted by the end of April.

#### **Yewthwaite Crushing floor (NT)**

Work to address the erosion of the Yewthwaite Dressing floors has been scheduled for 30/31 May. Penny Web is to co-ordinate, using volunteers from the National Trust and MOLES. Donald Angus reported further recent damage.

#### **Yewthwaite Trustees Level (NT)**

The NT have approved Health & Safety arrangements for work on the Yewthwaite Trustees Level. MOLES had submitted dates for work, which is to start on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

#### **Force Crag mine (NT)**

John Malley had taken the responses from CATMHS, MOLES and Alastair Cameron regarding the future management of Force Crag mine to a meeting at The Hollens to discuss both the hydrology and the heritage aspects.

The NT has been taking water flow measurements from 0 Level since mid February, finding that they do not seem

to correlate with rainfall, and has met with Wardell Armstrong on site with a view to a long term solution. At this time there is no understanding of what is happening inside the mine. In time the condition of the mine can only get worse. However, the NT can find no way in which it could allow access to the mine in order to determine and monitor the situation due to the liabilities that such permission would incur.

The National Trust do recognise the value of the mine as a heritage asset, but the current priority in planning is the water issue.

Ian Tyler pointed out that if no 3 Level was allowed to become sealed or the drainage altered, then water which drains from the higher workings would be forced down internally to No2 and no 1 levels. It is essential therefore that the drainage of no3 level be assured.

John Malley reiterated that changes have occurred since the 1997 reports were made, that there was an increased awareness of the value of the mine, and that Trust is determined to get the problems sorted urgently. It is hard to see how they can do so without taking on the responsibilities of allowing access to the mine and of carrying out work to ensure proper drainage. It is a matter of balancing legal liabilities with moral responsibilities.

#### **AOB**

Damage caused at Carrock mine by a farmer had been brought to the attention of English Heritage.

Brian Young retired from the BGS in March.

At the next meeting in August issues at Roughton Ghyll, Myers Head and Carrock will be discussed.

IM.

### **Mandall's Office at Coniston**

In 1990 the weighbridge outside Mandall's slate office on the Coniston Railway Station site was 'landscaped' In order to protect the office itself, now the last remaining structure associated with the mining and quarrying industry for which the Coniston railway was built, CATMHS rented the building and set about repairing it. We have had it ever since, paying a rent of £50 per year and using it as a store for ropes and other equipment. Now the station yard is to be re-developed for affordable housing, and Mandall's Office is again under threat.



As a first step towards its preservation the CATMHS Committee are applying to English Heritage to have it listed. The following is an extract from our application:

### **Mandalls Office, Old Station Site, Coniston, Cumbria.**

Map reference: **SD 329900 975000**

... the Society wishes to initiate the process to "list" the above property to ensure it's future survival. I enclose a copy of the Society's constitution to make clear our concern for the preservation of this building. The Society does have a direct interest in the property having been responsible for the building's restoration and having held the tenancy of the building since 1990, but even if this were not

the case the Society considers the building sufficiently important to require protection.

The building was constructed at Coniston railway station in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the office of "Mandalls Slate Co Ltd" to administer the dispatch of slate from the quarries on the Old Man by rail. By this time the copper mines on the Old Man were in serious decline, leaving only the quarries and agriculture as employers in the local area. Whilst Cumbrian quarrying was never on the scale of the Welsh industry, many prominent buildings in London are roofed from this source along with enormous numbers of dwellings in the north west of England.

It is now the only original building existing on the station site and may well be the only intact building remaining from the whole quarrying industry, despite these buildings appearing robust once the roof becomes damaged water rapidly penetrates the walls and frost heave reduces the structure to a pile of stones. This has been the fate of almost all the buildings at the quarries. The building is complemented by the footpath running along outside, which is traditionally constructed of split slate set on edge to provide a suitable surface for horses.

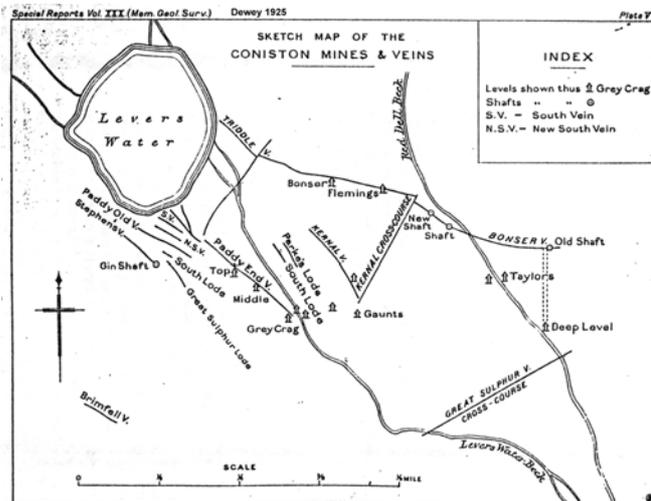
Apart from being a perfect example of a Victorian Lake District stone building the two parts at ninety degrees are built from completely different stone, the larger lower part being built of Ordovician green-grey slate from Coniston while the rear portion is constructed from much softer Silurian grey-black slate from the Torver area.

John R Aird  
Treasurer, CATMHS.



Bowden's plan seems to be the best one to illustrate the working (you'll see Kernal Level is named Top Level here). Dewey and Eastwood's plan of 1925 shows Kernal vein in relation to the other veins in the area.

Dave Bridge



Eastwood's plan of 1925

At the last AGM Mark Simpson proposed a project to re-open Kernal Level. Mark contacted LDNPA archaeologist Eleanor Kingston for advice on how to apply for permission, and made a submission:

**Aims and Objectives of the dig**

This is a little known area of the Coniston Coppermines complex and what data that is known to exist is in this document. It is proposed to open up the existing level entrance which should take us straight into the vein.

Quite when the level was last open is not known for certain so there is a good chance that the workings have not been entered since the area was last worked. Once past the fall in the level the workings behind will be surveyed and recorded. Plans and sections will be produced of the standard of the Coniston Survey and referenced photographs will be taken on each step

of the proceedings. Any artefacts found, to be recorded and reported to the LDNP Archeologists. Storage to be agreed.

However, it is appreciated that on entering the workings that exploration may not be viable.

**Working Methods**

All work will be carried out in accordance with the CATMHS Health and Safety Documentation. A gate will be put on the Level entrance and all dig materials kept inside the level.

The fall is 7.0m inside the portal where the old roof timbers have decayed and it is proposed to use recognised mining techniques to insert new roof timbers between the stone arching and the rock face. Spoil generated will be deposited at first instance by the level entrance so that it can be examined for artefacts, and then either put back over the level or carted off site.

As the level is by a public footpath site security is important and extra measures may have to be contemplated apart from installing a gate. The site should remain to external appearance as it is now.

Mark Simpson

The Kernal Vein has been relatively little explored. There are some infilled holes on the surface just beneath Kernal Crag that are believed to be of Elizabethan origin. Several years ago LMQT had a serious attempt to get into the vein by digging in Gaunt's Level, but did not succeed. It is possible to get into the vein via Courtney's Cross cut and down South Shaft, another LMQT dig, and along Deep Level. After climbing a long

rubble slope one must wriggle through a small hole to get into the Kernal Vein. It is an unstable area and if there were a collapse that blocked the hole there would be no way out.

Kernal Level is the stone arched adit right beside the Levers Water track at NGR 32846 49894, and seems to be the best hope of entering the vein. A study carried out by a student called David Allen in 1964 states that it became blocked in 1963. At the present time the arching is in generally good condition, but has failed about seven meters in-by.

IM

A site meeting was arranged for 3<sup>rd</sup> February between Mark, Eleanor Kingston, LDNPA archaeologist, and English Heritage Inspector Andrew Davison. Dave Bridge and Ian Matheson also attended.

The meeting was very positive and it seems likely that permission will be forthcoming once all the details have been agreed.



*Outside Kernal Level. Eleanor Kingston, LDNPA; Mark Simpson; Andrew Davidson, English Heritage; Dave Bridge.*

John Brown then produced a Method Statement for an evaluation dig in Kernal Level, Coniston, Cumbria. I understand that a subsequent meeting took place involving English Nature and locations for disposing of the spoil were agreed. At the time of writing we still need permission from the landowner. Once this has been obtained it seems that the project can go ahead. Well done Mark!

### **Proposed visit to mines on Wetherlam**

Eleanor Kingston is keen to take a look at some old copper workings on the north side of Wetherlam, just below the summit. We thought we would go up in May sometime. Anyone who would be interested in joining in should contact Alastair Cameron, phone 0780 144 1386, email [a.d.cameron@virgin.net](mailto:a.d.cameron@virgin.net)

### **Coniston Local history Group**

LHI funding for the Industrial Archaeological project at Coniston has been approved. They will be getting their application in total. If anyone in CAT may be interested to help in the survey of the remains at The Old Man Quarries they should contact Alastair Cameron and he will explain what is involved.

(I understand that the grant is for surveying equipment to be used to carry out a survey of Coniston Old Man Slate Quarries above Low Water, including the old sled way. The Coniston Local History Group are trying to get this area scheduled – Ed.)

## A Good Day Out.

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

The plan was to walk, with a friend the Coniston fells from Dow Crag to Wetherlam. A heavy snowfall on the



Saturday night put an end to that idea. The snow at my house in Marton was deep and unconsolidated, hard work. It would probably be much worse at Coniston.

Plan B. Have a walk in to the mines, doesn't snow underground.

The road to Coniston had been cleared of snow but the 'guardian of the Coppermines Valley' had erected a sign near the Black Bull saying that the valley was closed. Ignoring this we walked in snow a foot deep the BMSC Cottage. The plan was to visit three mines; Deep Level Adit, Hospital Level – Grey Crag Level and Levers Water Mine.

Crossing Red Dell Beck to Deep Level Adit was interesting. Snow had banked up on either side of the beck to a depth of 1.5 metres and the beck was in full flood. We eventually got across. The entrance was clear of snow, but the draught entering the level was bitterly cold; this only eased when we reached the Bonsor Vein. I often wonder how much more debris will fall from above when I enter this part of the mine. There must still be lots up there,

supported by old timber and friction. We then moved on to the Old Engine Shaft and the 'cross cut'.

On the way back to the flooded shaft, where large blocks of rocks have slid from the walls I showed my friend a small piece of the turquoise secondary mineralisation that is common in these mines. About 2 metres from the floor I pulled off a bit of what I thought was a rusty piece of iron stuck to the wall. In fact it was a tallow candle, 11cm long and 1cm diameter. It is now in the Ruskin Museum.

We returned to the BMSC Cottage to a welcome cup of tea and toast. The candle was lit and flickered briefly.

A rucksack was packed with rope and harnesses and we set off for Hospital Level and Levers Water Mine. Hard going in the deep soft snow but we eventually got there, to be met by a wall of icicles blocking the entrance to Hospital Level. A good kicking and it was clear. The draught was even colder and stronger than that at Deep Level. Ice covered the water inside the mine. As we reached the clay area water dripping from above had formed a wall of icicles which reached the floor. These were cleared and I looked for the hand line on the right wall. Only a short



length was showing; things had changed. It was very hard to see what had changed. There had obviously been a collapse from the roof. Timbers, unstable boulders, condensation and ice blocked any further investigation. I used the excuse of my friend's inexperience to make a rapid retreat. It was her first trip underground after all. I was relieved to get out of the mine and into bright sunshine.

We then traversed the fell side to the top of South Shaft. Relatively warm air and wisps of condensation were issuing from the top of the shaft like smoke signals.

There was no chance of descending to Levers Water Mine. Unstable snow filled the Crater, large blocks of rock which had fallen from the walls were slowly sliding down; snow had all but blocked the entrance to the mine.

We returned to the Cottage by way of the system of water leats which lead to Red Dell. Looking up Triddle Incline belches of condensation could be seen issuing from Triddle Shaft at 10 second intervals. The bitterly cold wind that had greeted us earlier in the day when we entered Deep Level Adit had transformed itself into a warm breeze as we walked into the top of the Old Engine Shaft.

Time to go home. We called for a bar meal at a local eating house in Lowick. The barman looked at our attire and made the comment that only fools would go out on the hills in such conditions. Takes all sorts I suppose.

Our day ended at Dalton Castle. Furness Geological Society had arranged a lecture on soft bodied fossils deposited in warm shallow seas. Fossilised jellyfish? They do exist. A good day out.

Mark Scott.

### **Rock Fall in Hospital Level**

Mark reported his findings to the committee meeting held at the BMSC cottage the following Monday. By this time others had seen the collapse, and it was decided to ask John Brown to investigate and decide what was required to put things right.



*Site of the fall*

Hospital Level was driven in the 1860's, quite late on in the life of the Victorian mine. The drive failed to locate anything but a poor string of quartz, but a left hand branch ran into a rich section of the Paddy End Vein. After passing through the Great Open, Hospital Level joins the adjacent and much earlier Grey Crag Level, the entrance of which has long been run in. Hospital Level is the only entrance to the mine at that horizon; it gives access to the whole of Grey Crag Level and some interesting geology and archaeology. It is the egress for the Paddy End Through Trip, and would facilitate any rescue which might be required from the Paddy End workings below Levers Water. CATMHS has already carried out some major works on Grey Crag Level to stabilise and make safe the area at the bottom of the Through Trip in-by from Paddy End Shaft and the Horse Gin Chamber. About 100 meters from the

entrance the level passes through a belt of boulder clay. It is here that the collapse has occurred. The area has always been wet and drafty, and is often festooned in icicles in cold weather.

After visiting the site John Brown sent an email to committee members:

**Subject: Urgent repairs at Hospital Level**

The digging team has now sourced the materials for the urgent repairs at Hospital Level. These comprise, telegraph poles, railway sleepers, crash barriers and spreader timbers.

It is our intention, subject to committee approval, to start collecting these items and taking them to Hospital Level this coming Sunday. I apologise for the short notice, but we have just managed to locate some of these items and negotiate the best possible deal. It is important that we collect most of the items this weekend as the team will not be complete to carry out this task the following weekend.



*Delivering the materials*

On Sunday the digging team collected these materials from Troutbeck and they were hauled up to the mine on trailers by the Landrovers of Colin Woolard and Ian Matheson.



*Andrew Woolard & Pete Singleton sliding timbers into the mine*

Mark Scott attended, but, on a glorious sunny spring day, the heavy work was done by Messrs John Brown, Colin and Andrew Woolard, Pete Singleton and Pete Blezard.



*John Brown floating a prop along the adit*

The motorway crash barriers which will form the roof were used to construct a sled-way as far as the flooded section of the adit. The materials were then floated along almost to the point of use.

The length of the proposed 'Cut and Cover' is about 12 metres, and it is anticipated that about twelve visits will be required to complete the task.

## The Day the Earth Moved

Jeff Wilkinson

Over the years people who live in the Furness area have become well used to hearing stories of large holes and subsidence suddenly appearing in the landscape. Two of the most well known are the disappearance of a railway engine near Lowfield Bridge and more recently a hole that appeared in the pitch at Lindal Green Cricket Club. The whole area has had a tremendous amount of Iron Ore extraction over many, many years. Unfortunately the accepted method of removal tended to be; excavate the huge ore body then move on to somewhere else and let the highly unstable void collapse when the pressures underground become too much.

In April 2006 I received a phone call from Ray Wilson, who is a member of the Westmorland Geological Society. He said that a farmer friend had noticed that a small hole (but no depression) appeared in one of his grassy fields. Although now a long time spectator as far as things underground are concerned my curiosity got the better of me this time and I agreed to go and have a look.

As we drove on the road between Little Urswick and Lindal I could see the usual evidence of mine activity in the fields; spoil heaps, depressions in the ground etc., however when we turned into the large field where the hole was supposed to be I was amazed to see a perfectly flat and almost manicured grass cover. No signs of mining activity whatsoever. Although I had been told what to expect, when I carefully peered into the void I was still stunned at what I saw. The entry hole of about 3 feet was completely under-stoped and the diameter underneath was around **15 feet!** It was an almost perfect circular shape and had a depth of approximately **25 feet.**



*Damn those moles!*



The initial thought was that it must have been a shaft that had collapsed lower down. This was probably arrived at partly by the very round appearance of the hole that gave it a man made look but it soon became apparent that this was not the case. Ray had a mine plan of the Urswick area which had workings and shafts all over the place but nothing at all in the vicinity of the field. Also the lack of any mining evidence kept niggling at me. We came to the conclusion that there must have been one of these huge ore deposits beneath the field which had been excavated and later collapsed. For whatever reason, possibly a geological weakness, a small section of the Limestone strata failed and the whole section of loose material above collapsed with it. This event probably happened a long time ago and the most frightening thing is that the hole has been there lurking for years. The one foot or so of hard turf soil cover did not collapse in and has been hiding this gaping hole for years. Heavy farm vehicles have been passing over it oblivious to the potential danger. The stuff of nightmares methinks!

Ray was keen to enter the abyss, possibly by a ladder, but needed someone accustomed to the underground world and my interest had now reached such a peak that I knew I was going to have to start searching for all that shiny, clanging hardware and dust down the over-suit! The next few days were spent formulating a game plan and assembling equipment. On April 19<sup>th</sup> which was a beautiful sunny evening we meet at the farm and loaded the gear into the trailer for the tractor ride to the site. The first job was to remove a section of turf which was drastically under-stoped by about four feet. I used a saw for this but it was only partially successful due to the amount of small stones within the soil so I reverted to brute force and a Matlock pick axe.



The tractor was positioned to provide the perfect solid belay (assuming the ground under it was solid of course). Gear checks done and it was all systems go to abseil over the edge. Once clear of the lip I had a good view of the surroundings. The whole of Cumbria is heavily affected by the glaciations and the evidence for this could be clearly seen as I descended. The soil level of a few feet was replaced by glacial drift material. Seen in section this was quite impressive. Small pebble sized rocks gave way to larger cobble sized pieces, all smooth, rounded and tightly held in a now red stained clay type matrix. I removed a few pieces from the matrix and when I examined them

*Vertically split limestone at the base of the hole* later through a hand lenses it was clear that some of them were of volcanic origin. This means that they have been tumbled, rolled and carried along within the glaciers all the way from the Lake District to here, a journey of at least 18 miles.

At about three quarters depth the drift material stopped and was replaced with loose debris which was lying on top of a Limestone sequence. The stresses involved were clear to see here. At first sight I would have said that what I was looking at was columnar jointing in volcanic rocks but of course there was no volcanic activity here so it couldn't be that. The answer may be that the pressure and stresses was such that the Limestone was literally torn apart in a vertical direction.

Although it was not possible to confirm, it looked as if some of the Limestone had the classic features of slickenside activity. In hindsight I really should have tried to remove a piece to look at later but the whole area was just so chaotic and unstable that at the time I thought it wise to leave well alone. The floor was covered in soft fine soil. You would assume that if the 4 to 6 feet of this overburden was removed you would get down to a chaotic jumble of rocks. This was also too risky to attempt. We were a captive audience. The depth of the excavated ore is probably well over 100 feet below and it is quite possible that large sections of the Limestone under the fields are still heavily under-stoped and just waiting for the right conditions to collapse. Not a good scenario for the farmer trying to carry out his job.



*Looking up to the surface*

Thanks go to farmer Peter Stables, for allowing us to explore the hole.

### **Meet Reports:**

The Force Crag meet for 19<sup>th</sup> March had to be cancelled as the National Trust, who own the mine, refused permission. It was re-scheduled to Greenside Mine, but that also had to be cancelled due to snow!

### **Brimfell Levels, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2006**

John Aird (ML), Maureen Fleming, Roger Ramsden and Mark Simpson  
On reconnaissance: Peter Blezard John Brown, Mark Scott, Colin Woolard.

February weather is renowned for its awfulness but this was a wonderful exception dawning cloudless and still with a hard frost. Gathering at the BMSC the group was surprised by the arrival of Mark Scott who was the forerunner of the hard men on their way to check out a new project. The high quality of the Society's information network can be judged from his amazement that we were there a week early!



The group set out first to view Brandy Crag quarry from the lowest floor before exiting from the western side of the approach road towards Low Water Beck and the remains of the pipeline that supplied compressed air from the compressor at the main Bonsor mill site (previously used to supply Blue quarries) to first John "Willie" Shaw's adit on Brimfell and subsequently extended to supply Mandalls Old Man

quarries. Following the pipe upwards along the beck just short of the Pudding Stone the tee piece and valve for the Brimfell branch were located.

From here a short walk leads to the lowest of the works "Brim Fell Level", 270 feet of initially stone arched adit, hand drilled and blasted with absolutely no trace of ore at all; the vein at the forehead being insignificant and barren. No information on the date of the work has been found but the high quality of the stonework and driving suggests the discipline and organisation of the Taylor/Barratt era.

Next comes what is referred to as "John Dixon's Work" further up hill and at the base of the crags, reputedly dating back to the very early German period. In two parts; the old men had sunk a stope directly on the Brim Fell vein using hand tools while the adit below was driven at the expense of Charles Edwin Day in 1908. (Day must rank among the most spectacularly unsuccessful investors in mining in the Coniston fells). Probably driven by John "Willie" Shaw, the adit is most unconventional being "S" shaped in plan and while minute signs of ore are visible in the stope none can be seen in the level. An interesting mineral sample was found as the group crossed the spoil from the level on departure, of which more later.

The last of these three levels is much higher up the vein, a fact that became painfully clear during the climb in the by now quite warm sunshine. The entrance from which upturned rails protrude commands the most wonderful view down the valley and across the lake. Just beyond the entrance are the remains of the stone base of the corrugated iron hut that was "Willie" Shaw's shelter and smithy. Driven between 1929 and 1933, initially drilled and blasted by hand for 48 feet, after

which the airline that was followed earlier in the meet was installed, and a rock drill brought into action. All this work was financed by Oscar Gnosspelius (“Uncle Jim” in Arthur Ransome’s books) and partners. Within the 330 feet of adit are the base of the tipping mine tub, the support leg



*Base of the tipping mine tub*

for the drill, and on the floor not merely the rails but also the water feed line to suppress the drill dust, supposedly the first use of this life-saving technology in the Lake District. Given that Shaw was 55 when he commenced working at this site and everything had to be brought up the route followed from the Pudding Stone he must have been a man of iron! (His part time assistant earned the princely sum of 5p/hour). Eventually by 1933 the lack of any payable ore led to the abandonment of the project, with Gnosspelius financing Shaw’s move to Horse Crag Quarry in Tilberthwaite to work slate until his retirement in 1938.

From here the group descended the scree and at the base of the crag moved north to successfully locate an unnamed level at 2800.9870 along with attendant ruined hut. Forewarned about the mud filled sump in the floor no attempt was made to enter but the vein could be seen clearly above the entrance. Lunch was taken here in idyllic sunshine.

Finally the shoulder of Brim Fell was crossed leaving the sun behind and with frost underfoot the long climb was made up to Brim Fell End mine. This was John Willie Shaw’s first effort on behalf of Gnosspelius in 1928 and involves a straight adit 66 feet long; hand drilled and mucked out by wheelbarrow. Needless to say no ore of any value is evident.

Without in any way impugning Shaw’s ability as a miner or honesty, one is forced to the view that so long as the finance was available he was perfectly happy to keep on driving adits forward, even though his practical experience must have told him that the chance of making any form of successful strike was negligible. “Who am I to tell the backers news they don’t want to hear”. The total expenditure on these five works combined with that on Top Level Extension and Brim Fell Cross cut from Grey Crag Level must have amounted to one of the largest losses of capital in the whole Cumbrian ore field.

The return to the BMSC coincided with that of the reconnaissance party, Mark Scott kindly brewing up for everyone. And the mineral sample, well, our tame mining engineer, mineralogist and part time scrap dealer/totter pronounced it to be a “metallic ore”! Subsequent research suggests it is Arsenopyrite or Mispickel (FeAsS)

John Aird.

**References:**

- “Coniston Copper”, Eric Holland.
- “Coniston Copper Mines A Field Guide”, Eric Holland.
- “Mining in the Lake Counties”, W T Shaw.
- CATMHS Newsletter 42 Page 9, “The Mines Of Slater Bob”.
- CATMHS Newsletter 67 Page 9, “Boxing Day Meet”.

## Rachel Wood Revisited

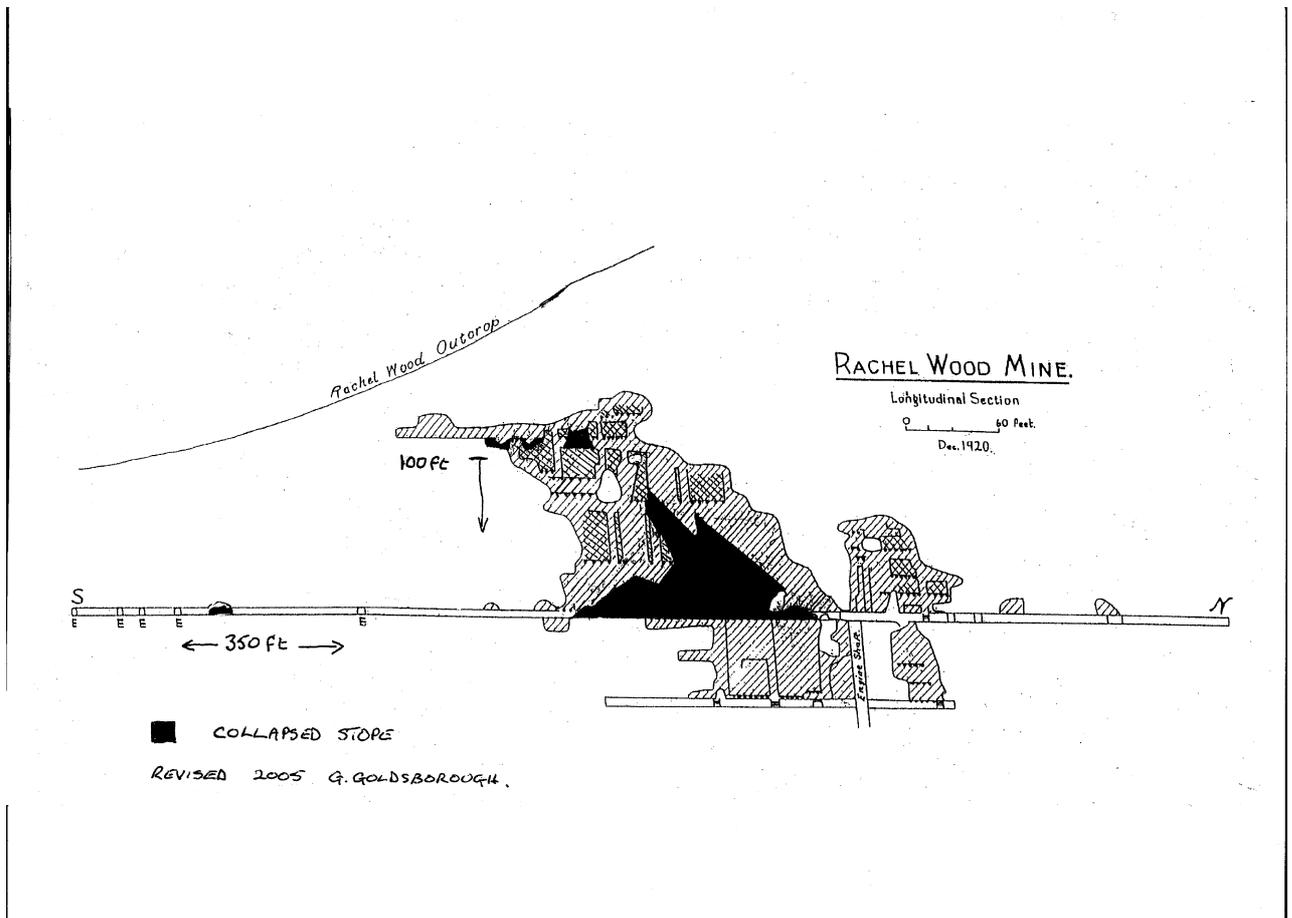
Present: Gerry Goldsborough, Roger Ramsden, Dave Bridge.

Mid June 2005; after a look round the old workings of Thornthwaite Mine we applied to the Forestry Commission for the key to Rachel Wood crosscut to assess the condition of the mine, first visited in the 1960's. After visits to Peil Wyke Office, phone calls to Grizedale office, validation of insurance, duplicate paperwork, a permit was issued and we got the key. On the Friday night we did a quick survey and decided to try for the mapped but unseen left hand level.

We returned on Saturday with two homemade 12 ft. ladders which could be bolted together to give us a 24 ft. climb. The first pitch, climbed previously, led to a rubble slope (old shovel) which ascended to a ridge remnant of part of a floor; a short abseil took us to a second rubble slope which led to a vertical unstable wall, part of a man-way probably.



Gerry to lasso a compressed air pipe high up which was used to haul, push, pull the now joined-up 24 ft. ladder into place. On this new floor there was a rise and two boarded over man-ways, in-bye led to a fairly new collapse



Using one ladder a bolt was placed to allow

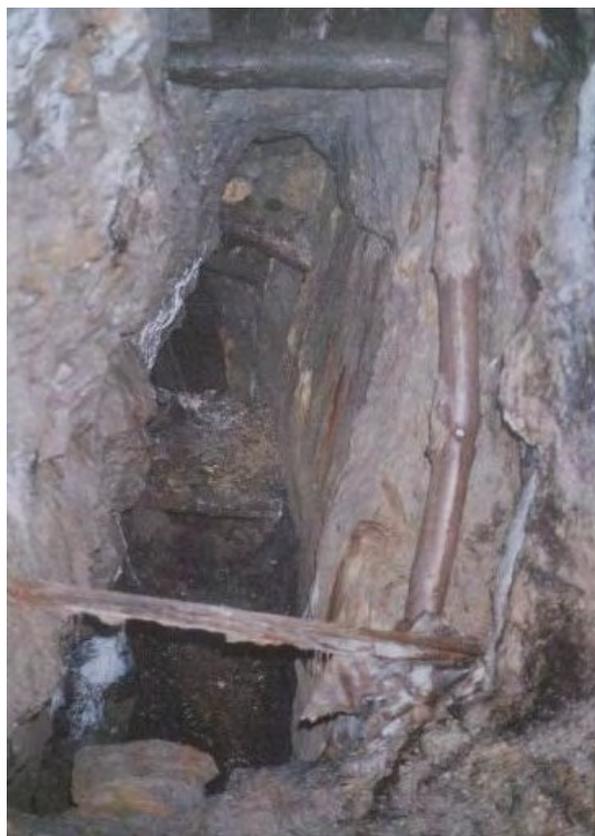
from above. On the first descent of the least

man-ways, in-bye led to a fairly new collapse from above. On the first descent of the least dangerous looking man-way we landed on a sub-floor which was collapsing onto our line of descent but with no gear left we retreated for the night.

We went back on Sunday with Dave to assist. We returned to the man-way and descended with a deviation reached a huge rubble mound, which we slid down to squeeze through a hole to regain the level on the adit horizon. The level continued as plan (see J. Adams page 53) with a sump in the floor, which was very heavily timbered, maybe a planned engine shaft; the forehead was reached after squeezing through a nasty collapse half way along. There were lots of square toed clog prints, det. boxes and a nice green bottle full of oil. 'Jennings Bros Ltd., Mineral Water Manufactures, Cockermouth.'



Looking up from the start of the prussic back up, the sight was rather worrying as the walls of three man-ways were hanging unsupported with all the filling between them gone and was actually the rubble we were standing on. Back at the top of the rope the rise was climbed to a rather nasty level, which after few yards was collapsing into the floor below, three man-way tops led to a delicate move past some ladders to a rock floored level with a small rise at the forehead. Here was a small



dam and a wooden trough feeding water back to the last ladder way and a very unusual stool with only one leg



After a careful retreat we removed the ladders but left fixed ropes except for the long pitch down the stope. I think this part of the mine will not be long before collapsing totally, anyone wishing to view should obtain permission but be advised to take care and take a change of underwear.

Roger Ramsden  
Photos Dave Bridge

**Robert Fell**  
1875-1938  
Miner, Quarryman and Farmer



Mary and Robert Fell lived at Holme Ground Farm in Tilberthwaite after moving from Tilberthwaite Farm.

Shown below involved in an essential autumn and winter task, Robert was at



the time this photograph was taken farming at Holme Ground and also working at Tunnel Hole quarry. His death occurred as the result of a blasting accident in the quarry, as related in "Slate from Coniston" by A. D. Cameron. It is known that Robert worked at both Hodbarrow iron ore mine and at what are now Burlington quarries at Kirkby. Hopefully further

research will produce more information and with luck photographs of his working life.

The above photographs are reproduced by kind permission of John Marsh from "The Lake Counties at Work" ISBN 0-7509-0888-2

William Bickford

### **Visit to the Rio Tinto Mines**

On a wet Sunday morning in January we boarded a service bus, number 202, in the Seville bus station. The destination board on the front read 'Minas del Riotinto'. Just over an hour later the bus had left the motorway and was trundling through a weird, red lunar landscape and eventually pulled into its terminus in the small town of Rio Tinto. Until four years ago this was the site of one of the largest mining operations in the world. They say that the remains of the Rio Tinto mine cover over 400 square kilometres and the mine is one of a very few man made structures that is visible from outer space.



*The Rio Tinto complex*

The history of the mine reflects very much the history of the Andalusia province in general. There is virtually 5000 years of continuous production

here. The first mining seems to have taken place well before the Phoenicians period. The ores worked include copper, iron and silver-bearing ores. Later, the Romans expanded the mines extensively and worked them for 300 years but, with the demise of the Holy Roman Empire, the mines were not worked again with any enthusiasm until the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Then, in 1875, the big expansion started to take place when the British-controlled Rio Tinto Company was formed and took over operations. The British managers and engineers developed the mines rapidly and with great determination. This resulted in many conflicts with local Spanish communities, which came to a head in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century when the engineers made plans to work rich ore-bearing ground beneath the local village. After evicting and re-housing the inhabitants in a new settlement some way away they completely cleared and dynamited the village (including a baroque church and the bull-ring).

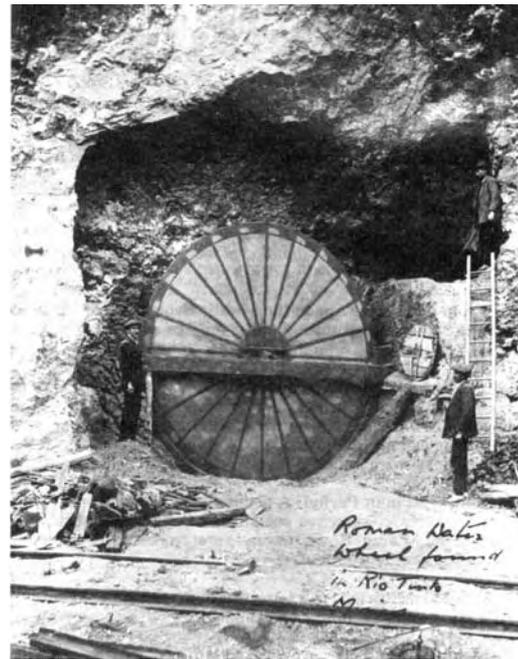
Having arrived in Rio Tinto, and after a late breakfast of coffee and toast, we set off for the Rio Tinto Mining Museum to learn more about the history and to book a tour of part of the mine. The museum, situated in the old mine hospital built by the British company, consists of 14 separate halls which were once the hospital wards. It covers the complete history of the mine from Phoenician times to the present day. The museum is open throughout the year and the team from the local mining history society are very well informed. One of them, a young chap called Saul, realised our specialised interest and bundled us into a mini-bus to drive us the few kilometres through the drizzle to their own show site at Pozo Alfredo. Up to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century most mining was underground but more recently terraced oval basins have been the main source of minerals. The Pozo Alfredo basin is over 1000ft deep and we were able to

walk along the tunnel once used by steam locomotives hauling long trains out of the basin. This was quite a place



*Cora Atalya Pit*

and we could see the much older tunnels driven by the Roman miners opening out onto the face above us.



*Roman Water Wheel found in Rio Tinto Mine*

To view the rest of the mine site we decided to take the mine train which runs for about 25 kilometres through the scarred and wrecked landscape of Rio Tinto. On either side of the route are the remains of countless ore processing

sheds. The guts of old steam locomotives lie rusting all around. In all the British brought 140 steam engines over from Britain, some of which still survive. The British also built a railway from Rio Tinto all the



way to the coast, and constructed an enormous pier out from the shore. Our mine train stopped on occasions and we got off to view various features. By now it was raining steadily so, on our return, we made for the village centre, had a cup of tea in a bar and then caught the bus back to Seville.

The operation of the Rio Tinto Mines by the British sadly brought out the worst in British colonialism. The Company built a small enclave of houses for their managers and engineers surrounded by a village green. No Spaniards were allowed inside the enclave without permission. When the war memorial was erected after the Great War, in honour of those at Rio Tinto who had perished, only British names were included.

The Rio Tinto Mine museum has already won countless awards and is supported in full by the Andalucian

authorities. A huge amount of work has already been done and more is planned. The authorities clearly have the foresight to realise that this could become one of the biggest tourist attractions in Spain. As well as developing the heritage aspect they have already started to reclaim thousand of hectares of the barren red landscape by planting trees. At the moment nothing lives there except for herds of black pig and wild dogs.

Tourism is still in its infancy and, for British visitors, you definitely need to understand some Spanish and, preferably have your own transport. If you go in January, be prepared for Lakeland-type weather.



*Rio Tinto locomotive*

The mining company that currently still holds the lease has put part of the site on care and maintenance so that, if there was a significant rise in the price of copper, production could re-start fairly quickly with minimum re-investment.

Alastair Cameron.

A few years ago Chris Jones organised a week of mine exploring in Spain. Is it time for another? IM.

## CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston, starting at 2.30pm.

### Agenda.

- |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Apologies for absence        | 2 Minutes of the last meeting        |
| 3 Matters arising              | 4 Secretary's Report                 |
| 5 Treasurer's Report           | 6 Proposed Amendment to Constitution |
| 7 Amendment to H&S/RA docs     | 8 Membership Secretary's Report      |
| 9 Meet Secretary's Report      | 10 Newsletter                        |
| 11 Publications                | 12 Library                           |
| 13 Coniston Coppermines        | 14 Hudgillburn                       |
| 15 Mines Forum meeting         | 16 CATMHS website                    |
| 17 date and venue next meeting | 18 Any other business                |

**Present** J. Aird (JA), S. Barker (SB), I. Matheson (IM), D. Bridge (DB), J. Brown (JB), P. Fleming (PF), M. Mitchell (MM) & M. Scott (MSc).

The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm. 8 members attended.

Membership Secretary J. Knowles & members S. Dickinson & C. Woolard also attended.

As the Chairman was absent; the meeting was chaired by I. Matheson.

**1 Apologies for absence from:** - M. Simpson (MS), & A. Wilson (AW).

### 2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 14th November had been previously circulated to members. **An amendment was made to Item 13, so that it now reads; JB Proposed that the Health & Safety/Risk Assessment documents accepted by the National Trust & the LDNPA archaeologist at the last MFM, were for use on their property only. Seconded by JA, all were in favour.**

This amendment completed it was **PROPOSED** by JA and **SECONDED** by PF that the minutes be signed by the acting chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

### 3 matters arising

- 3.1 Item 9 SB had contacted Goodman Baylis re faults on the cover of SFC, but not had a satisfactory answer; she would try again.
- 3.2 Item 11 - JA had visited Mandall's; the building will need some attention shortly. Work on the cliff face had been completed. IM reported on a meeting he had attended at Coniston. Planning permission had been given for 5 affordable houses on the site but a developer had not been found to date. CATMHS's lease on Mandall's had lapsed, although the rent had been paid every year. After discussion it was decided that we would make an offer to the Planning Board (the owners) to buy the building, action JA.
- 3.3 Item 11- Post mine mineralisation in Levers Water mine - PF put forward the idea that the loss of colour was due to the diminished leaching of copper from the ground above. He still thought it was worth trying covering the gate to cut down the flow of air – action JB.
- 3.4 Item 16.4 SB asked when work could start at Middlecleugh Mine, as SMC would have to be applied for. JB thought March would be OK.

### 4 Secretary's Report

Received since last meeting:

- 4.1 **LDNPA** – Nil
- 4.2 **NAMHO** – After attending the National Trust underground access meeting, they have decided to set up a 'contact group' (see Steve Holding article in NAMHO NL) who would represent all the NAMHO mining history groups in negotiations with official bodies. SB would be attending the next council meeting in March and would report back.
- 4.3 **BCA** - have received cards.
- 4.4 **Letter** from Robert Baxter of the Whitehaven Record Office, asking us to support them in a bid for funding to catalogue their collection of documents donated to them in 1997 by British Steel. I sent a support letter to the Head of The National Archives at Kew, for which Whitehaven sent their thanks.

## 5 Treasurer's Report

JA presented his report and the balance sheet covering the period from 14th November to 16<sup>th</sup> January. Income from subscriptions had been 1814.00. Thanks were expressed to Angela Wilson for running the raffle, which paid for expenses at the Annual Dinner. Wire rope purchased was to support the boulder in Greenside Mine. Part of the BCA insurance premium had been paid (outstanding £819.50). The green cards had been sent out. Cost of the insurance to individual members had been reduced. JA would put an article in the NL explaining this. He had sent our annual report to the Charity Commission.

The current a/c stood at 1329.54 and the Scottish Widow a/c at 11000. 00.

## 6 Amendment to the Consitution

It was felt that we should amend clause 3 of our constitution, regarding under 18's joining CATMHS. JA would research the guidelines. In the mean time, children may only to join as basic members (cannot go on meeta).

## 7 H&S Document & risk assessment forms

Present documents to apply to conservation meets carried out on National Trust and LDNPA properties. Colin Woolard (CW) had been developing documents for general society use. He gave a presentation of draft documents, which were discussed and adapted for easy use. CW will further develop the documents.

## 8 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported that 30 members had not renewed to date (they would receive one more newsletter), 68 had paid.

## 9 Meets Report

The Boxing Day meet to Ulpha Copper Mine had been well attended and enjoyed. PF suggested that we (with the landowners permission) should clear scrub from the gin circle. The NT had refused permission to drive up to Force Crag Mine for the forthcoming meet.

## 10 Newsletter

The next NL will go out at the end of February, IM already has 22 pages and hopes to get a paper on Silver Gill. He has not received several meet reports.

## 11 Publications

The LDNPA are going to close their information centers, this is not good news, as they have been a good outlet for CAT book sales. Hill's had taken 20 more copies of 'Slate from Coniston'. JA had attempted to deliver books to PR Books but they asked to be contacted before Easter.

## 12 Library

SB reminded the committee that she still had about 50 books donated by Alen McFadzean for the library. PF would approach the John Ruskin Museum regarding the possibility of us keeping our collection at the museum.

## 13 Coniston Coppermines

Steve Dickinson explained his idea for the 'Coniston Mining Origins Project' that he would like us to carry out. It was discussed at length, SB to send Committee member's a copy of Steve's paper and put this subject on the next agenda as a separate item.

Prof. Meredith application for funding for the Simon's Nick project was not successful, but he will still be able to come to Coniston, as a proposed trip to Scotland has been cancelled. The project will take place 22nd May to 2nd June.

The gate at Levers Water Mine had been re-locked, a large boulder and debris removed from the portal, this area will have to be checked regularly.

## 14 Hudgillburn Mine

Work had been done on the ladderway.

An email from member Dr S Morton requesting permission to collect mineral samples from the mine was discussed. SB to contact him for more details, a decision will be made at next meeting.

## 15 Mines Forum meeting

The next meeting will be on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006, 10.30am at Greenside camping barn, with an afternoon visit to Lucy Level. SB to contact Eleanor to check who was going on afternoon trip.

## 16 CAT website

Chris Cowdery has set up the new website for the society and was doing a great job. IM had sent the application form. The Secretary and Membership/Newsletter Editor could be contacted

from the website but without their email addresses being available. Suggestions were made more links. Pictures of projects were required.

### 17 Date and venue of next Meeting

To be held on 20th March 2006 at the BMSC Hut Coniston at 6.30 pm.

### 18 Any Other Business

16.1 PF asked if we thought the annual Dinner had been a success, the general consensus was yes, it was agreed to book the same for this year.

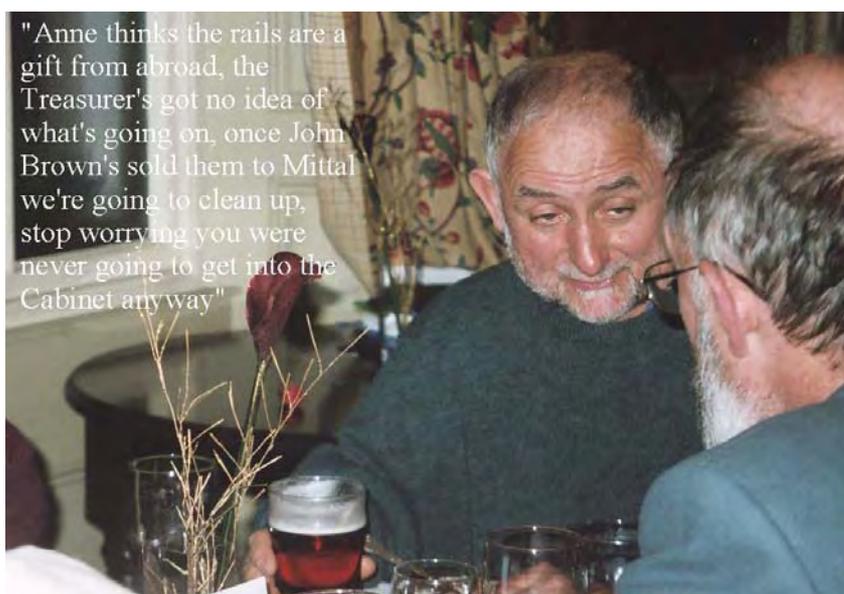
16.2 MS reported that work had started on the collapsed (formerly mine drainage) drainage tunnel at Martin.

16.3 SB reported the NPHT had started work on the survey and conservation of the area around Hodgson's High Level at Nenthead.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

SB 18/01/06

Chairman



Members who read their Newsletters properly will no doubt have noticed a small item buried in the Treasurers report in the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November last year – “A quantity of old rail had been purchased at a cost of £1000.” This was a bargain offer that we couldn't refuse, and they were to be transported by dubious means to Ravenstonedale, where Mr Blezard was to store them until such time as a good use was found for them. I understand that negotiations are taking place to sell some of them off at a profit (for the Society). They are currently lying in a yard in Kendal.

# CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

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**Vice President:** Major J.W.B. Hext

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Mike Mitchell      Mark Scott      Mark Simpson  
Angela Wilson