

CAT

The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust
Mining History Society



Caudale Slate Quarry

No. 130

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Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society

Newsletter No 130, February 2018

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Society Officers and Committee Members

Back cover

CATMHS AGM & Dinner, 9th December 2017

The AGM and Dinner was held once again at Rydal Hall, ancestral home of the le Fleming family, who owned (and still own) the mineral rights at Coniston. Twenty seven members attended the AGM, and the Committee was re-elected en-block, with the Webmaster, Chris Cowdery, as a co-opted member. A motion from the Treasurer to discontinue joint membership and to confirm the recent changes in subscription rates was passed unanimously.

The Chairman's Award was presented to Mark Simpson for his services as Newsletter Editor, Chairman and long serving committee member.

Thirty eight people attended the Dinner, held in the rather splendid Rydal Hall dining room. Once the raffle had been drawn and everyone had tidied up from what has become the traditional festivities, involving balloon missiles and peashooters, there was coffee, followed by a video/slide-show/quiz presented by Chris Cowdery, Jon Knowles and Mark Hatton.

On the following day 21 people attended the Hodge Close Meet. Snowmageddon never arrived and they enjoyed cold crisp weather on a walk around (and inside) the Hodge Close area. Festive mince pies and mulled wine sustained them on their explorations.



CATMHS Chairman's Report for 2017

Once again, I want to sincerely thank the committee and members of the society for their help and support during the year, without which it could not function.

The Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £450,000 (known as the Coniston Copper project) to carry out conservation work to the Coniston Copper Mines and Penny Rigg Mill at Tilberthwaite, as well as public involvement has continued apace this year and is due to be completed in March 2018. As the contingency fund has not been used the HLF are going to allow for additional work to be carried out. The conservation work is now focused now on the Penny Rigg Mill. The society has been heavily involved in the surveying work including an archaeological dig at Penny Rigg Mill that has been carried out by volunteers made up of members of the public under the supervision of professional archaeologists from Northern Archaeological Associates. Assistance has also been given to the volunteers who have been carrying out original archive research and this will result in a publication at the end of the project, as well as trail leaflets. Work has been carried out with Coniston Primary and Secondary Schools, using the project to assist with the school curriculum, which has included field trips. Advice has been given on how to enhance the existing guided walks to the Copper Mines and for the interpretation panels to be installed at various points at the mines.

Once again, a huge thank you should go to Ian Matheson and the contributors for continuing to produce a good quality newsletter which, even after 38 years since the first one was produced, it is remarkable how it seems to get better. I would just encourage any member to write an article no matter how small on what they have been doing.

The finances continue to be healthy and the membership is at its highest level ever, due to Mark Hatton and Facebook, which is demonstrated by the number of people turning up for meets and the photography by members is of exceptional quality. The Greenside trip in January has so many people wanting to go, that it will be split into two trips. This has led to a potential problem for the meet leader if they are on their own and something went wrong, which is the reason why a limit on numbers has been put on some meets. Colin Woollard, with assistance from John Aird and Mike Mitchell, has produced a comprehensive Meet Leadership Guide, which is not onerous, for meet leaders and potential ones providing advice on leading a meet.

The Eric Holland collection is close to being sorted and deposited in the right location, most has gone to the Armit with some items going into the appropriate County archive. Ian Matheson has also digested much of the collection and assisted by Mike Mitchell and Mark Simpson, they have done a huge amount of work.

The website has continued to be developed and enquires are being made to increase the capacity of it to allow more material to be placed on it which is also available to the public.

The Society has provided speakers to present talks to other societies and at various conferences, as well as carrying out a number of guided walks. It has also been involved in the public consultation regarding the proposal by the John Muir Trust to take a three-year lease of Glenridding Common at Ullswater from the land owner, the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA), which contains a number of mining remains. The society has assisted the Trust in drawing up its management plan and has been invited to show members of the trust the mining remains on the common at its AGM in 2018.

Assistance has been given in arranging training for members through professionals in Single Rope Technique (SRT) and a First Aid Course.

Dialogue continues with the various agencies through the Mines Forum, which is unique in this country, and advice has been given to other organisations on how to set one up.

Following advice from a solicitor specialising in Charity Law, the committee has been considering what is required to change the status of the Charity from being an Unincorporated Charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). At the moment if anything went wrong the trustees are personally liable and could be prosecuted, whereas under a CIO it is the Charity which is held responsible not the trustees. There is no change in the way the Charity operates, but it adds a layer of protection for the committee members.

Lastly, I would like to offer a vote of thanks to John Aird for continuing to organise the AGM and Dinner.

Warren Allison
Chairman

Newsletter Editor's Report

For the last edition I posted 53 newsletters to members and 5 to Cumbria libraries. A copy was deposited in our archive at the Armit Museum and Library. Electronic copies were sent to 105 members and also to NAMHO, CIHS, LDNPA and to the NW Evening Mail via Bill Myers.

I have been fortunate recently to have enough material to be able carry some over to subsequent issues. My thanks to all the contributors, but especially to Warren, who always phones shortly before each issue is due to make sure that I have enough material.

In time the Newsletter becomes a historic document. Newsletter No 1 was published in November 1981, and a complete set is kept in our archive and is also available on the CAT website. There are now 129 issues, reporting on CAT meets, activities and interests. In the first one that I produced, in September 2000 I wrote: "The Newsletter is about the members, so please send me news of your doings, however brief, and however unimportant they may seem to you. They *are* of interest to other members. It is especially important to keep up to date with reports of official meets and of developments and projects."

Most meet leaders take a lot of trouble to provide comprehensive reports, often including historical information and references to previous visits, but unfortunately the record of our official meets is not always complete. I urge *all* meet leaders to send me a report, or to arrange for one of the participants to do so. A lot of information and some very interesting photographs are posted on the CATMHS page of Facebook. Perhaps some of this could be put into a form suitable for the newsletter.

It would make the task of printing and posting the newsletter easier if I could have articles, reports and enclosures *at least* 2 weeks before the newsletter is due for posting, which is always the first day of the month of issue. February, May, August and November. I *can* cope with genuine last minute entries, like meet reports, but I can't begin to print the newsletter until I have laid out all the articles and have done the page numbering, and I can't begin to stuff the envelopes until I have all the enclosures. If only one item isn't available in time I finish up with a roomful of clutter that I can't clear, and my wife gets cross. Ian Matheson

Membership Secretary's Report

This has been a record year for membership, probably due to CATMHS use of social media, together with an innovative meets programme, both promoted by Mark Hatton. At the end of the membership year we had 161 members. We have rationalised the subscriptions. From a Basic membership fee of £10, members can opt to pay additional fees to cover the cost of BCA insurance and of printed and posted newsletters. Ian Matheson

Discontinuance of joint membership

A motion was passed at the 2017 AGM to discontinue joint membership from 1st January 2018. Joint members who were good financial standing on 1st January retain that status until 1st November. Otherwise, joint membership is not available and renewal will have to be via single status.

Meet Secretary's report

2017 has been a year full of CATMHS meets, all of which have been well attended. There have been 22 meets, 5 SRT training courses, 1 First Aid Course, 1 Photography Workshop and 1 Member's talk about the History of CATMHS exploration. The average attendance at each meet was 14, with over 300 places taken in total over the year.

As well as the old favourite sites in Cumbria such as Coniston Copper, Greenside, Goldscope, Roughtengill, Nenthead and The Wad Mine, we visited some less well known sites such as the Cobalt Mine, the Walna Scar Quarries, Grasmere, Greenburn, Grisedale, Castle Crag and Caudale. And we travelled beyond Cumbria with meets held in Swaledale, Alderley Edge and

Wales. Newlands Furnace also featured as did the annual Archeology Conference in Keswick. Meet grades have ranged from Easy to Expert and from blue sky to white knuckle days.

I would like to thank the Meet Leaders who put a lot of effort into organising, planning and delivering the meets then (very importantly) writing the report for the newsletter (and posting photos on Facebook). Alastair Cameron, Liz Withey, Nick Green, John Aird, Chris Cowdery, Peter Sandbach and Graham Derbyshire have all led meets this last year (and I've done a few as well ;0) We have adopted a quarterly Meets list format and Facebook has been a very effective way of communicating details of planned meets and signing people up. We have also implemented a Meet capacity after 24 people attended a meet at Silver Gill and got grid locked in a small hand chipped Elizabethan Level.

Looking forward, we are meeting at Hodge Close tomorrow (whatever the weather or hangover conditions) and have a variety of further meets and SRT training days planned for Q1 2018, including more Wales trips and Hudgillburn and one pot holing day in Gaping Gill - a trip that "sold out" quicker than the Peter Kay UK comedy tour.

If anyone would like to consider leading future meets, Colin has recently published a Meets Leader Guide on the website. This is a very valuable reference document for current and prospective Meet Leaders. I would really hope that in 2018 we can get a few more Meet Leaders involved and that some of our new members can come along on Meets. Finally, if anyone has any requests for future meets, please do let me know.

Mark Hatton

General Data Protection Regulations

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) come into effect on 25th May 2018. Designed to regulate the conduct of all organisations that record and store data (in any format both electronic and paper based systems are covered), the essence of the Regulations is that consent must be given for the collection of the data, the data must be held under secure conditions to prevent unauthorised access, the data must be used only for appropriate purposes for which consent has been given and at any time the supplier of the data may request the safe deletion of the data.

The data that all members will have to consent to provide is: -

- 1) Name both Surname and Given Name
- 2) Full Address including Post Code
- 3) Members who wish to receive electronic Newsletters will be required to provide an email address.
- 4) Members requiring Public Liability Insurance will have to detail their sex and year of birth, since these details are required by the insurance provider.
- 5) Members may choose to provide details of their telephone numbers, which will be recorded.
- 6) Membership of the CATMHS Facebook page will be recorded.

All of the above data are required in order for the Society to function.

None of the data will be disclosed without the specific consent of the data owner with the sole exception that members requiring Public Liability Insurance will be deemed to have given consent to the transfer to the BCA of Items 1-4 in order for the latter to provide insurance cover.

Security of data will be assured by only holding the data on two computers one controlled by the Membership Secretary and one by the Treasurer.

Meet Leaders and the Meets Secretary will be provided with lists consisting of Members Names along with their insured status i.e. Surface or Underground in order to facilitate the operation of the Meets program.

Any Member wishing to remove their data from the Society's records will be able to do so by communicating with the Membership Secretary and requesting removal, this will be done as soon as possible. As soon as the request is made then Membership of the Society ceases.

The above outlines the Society's response to the introduction of the GDPR and should be all that is necessary, but some modification may be required as the date of introduction approaches.

John R Aird, CATMHS Treasurer

New members.

Welcome to:

Roger Harris, from Kendal

David Hughes from Broughton in Furness

Rosemary Lord, from Ambleside. Rosemary has lots of background and qualification in history, heritage and conservation management. She is a member of CIHS and ex Mountain Rescue Team member

Craig Hannah, from Oldham, in Lancashire. A keen photographer and climber; worked in rope access industry for 30 years.

Newland Furnace

Further to the report in the November newsletter, Green Lane Archaeology have produced an Archaeological Evaluation of Newland Furnace. A copy has been received by CATMHS and will be added to our archive at the Armit Museum & Library.

On 6th January Newland Furnace Trust members met at the Furnace with Andrew Davidson, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments at Historic England to discuss what can be done next. He provisionally agreed that, subject to a formal application, the NFT could continue excavating the floor of the blowing chamber with limited professional supervision.

Obituary: Lindsay Greenbank, July 1941 to October 2017

Force Crag mine was the last working non-ferrous mine in the Lake District. Members of a certain (fine) vintage will have fond memories of visits to it during its last working years when it was run by the New Coledale Mining Company. The company was owned by Lindsay Greenbank, Mike [Michael-Mick] Sutcliffe and long term CAT members Peter Blezard and Anne Danson. Force Crag principally worked barytes in this period and finally closed in 1991.

Lindsay and Mick also owned and worked the Rogerley mine in Weardale which became the first commercial mine in this country to be exploited exclusively for mineral specimens. The mine was famed for the fine fluorspar examples it produced. Lindsay was probably best known as a mineral collector and dealer; his collection was recognised by the prestigious Mineralogical Record in their special publication 'Classic Minerals of Norther England', a copy of which can be found in our collection in the Armit library at Ambleside.

The Richard E Hewer Mining Collection.

A Record of Underground and Surface Mining Operations at the Cumbria Archive Centre, Lady Gillford House, Pettefill Road. Carlisle.

When moving to Shropshire Richard needed to find a safe haven for his photographic mining collection.

The National Coal Mining Museum at Caphouse willingly accepted his coal mining volumes. He was then left with 23 A4 spiral bound volumes. These contained his photographs, plans, sections and sketches of the mines he had visited and explored within the UK from the mid 1960's until about 2000. Some of the exploration was on his own or with colleagues and others with CATMHS, NMRS and Welsh Mines.

There is comprehensive index and cross references for the workings and a separate volume containing exploration details of a number of smaller workings and trials. Plans and sections paced out. There are four specific volumes that may be viewed only and not copied:-

- (1). A copy of Kelton and Knockmurton Mine exploration from 1989 to 2000.
- (2). Force Crag (some photos with Bill Shaw and his men).
- (3). Carrock Mine (with the miners).
- (4). Hartsop Hall Mine. The old photos and details particularly sensitive.

There are two volumes of negatives all indexed with a quality record of each photo.

Finally there are a few mining plans.

Having researched the Kelton and Knockmurton Mine records for his book at Carlisle Archives, he offered the collection to the Archives first and they immediately said yes, much to his surprise!

I do have a copy of all the items on my hard drive apart from the negatives, so if anyone would like information without having to fight through the necessary paperwork at the Archives please contact me first and I can inform them of the relevant information in the collection and what can or cannot be published. Bearing in mind the whole collection was initially intended to be a private one. Richard Hewer.

NAMHO

In November, I attended as CATMHS representative a meeting of the NAMHO council held in the Forest of Dean, which was a coal and iron mining area. One of the topics for discussion was around the arrangements for the NAMHO conference being held between the 1st and 3rd June 2018 at Parkend, near Lydney in the Forest of Dean.

In addition to lectures and field trips, a number of visits are being planned some of which are not normally available, including visits to three working coal mines, an iron mine above the coal measures, underground stone quarry and associated works, New Dun iron mine which was shut 10 days after the Second World War had ended, a winch trip of 212 feet at Robin Hood iron mine and the site of workings that are by far the largest example of firesetting to be identified in Britain.

Booking is through the NAMHO web site and it promises to be a very interesting weekend.

COMRU at Tilberthwaite Horse Crag Level

Following the joint display at Flookburgh Steam Gathering last summer, we agreed to take COMRU into the Horse Crag Level as part of an exercise to see if they could extract a person in a stretcher from the far end of the level through the pack wall, which is tight. Mark Hatton and I met with COMRU on the 22nd October on yet again, another very wet day at the car park where Paul Witheridge gave a briefing of what the exercise was about.



It was not long before we got to the end of the level where a volunteer was selected *COMRU members getting ready for the briefing* and cocooned into a wrap round stretcher and was taken out through the pack wall by a number of the team. While this was going on the remainder of the team and myself discussed how to do an underground dig and what equipment would be needed. This is an area that COMRU recognise they needed some advice, which we were pleased to part with using the knowledge built up over 25 years of digging. Even down to the little things like flattening the ends of the



scaffolding tubes outside which saves time doing it underground and makes it easier to drive through the muck pile, using small trugs (buckets) to shift the muck, making sure the pack wall being built behind the dig has a good base, so it does not collapse back in trapping the rescuers.

Once outside it was still raining, but COMRU decided to walk up the gill to Waterfall level. It had been an interesting and worthwhile day and one we will repeat at other sites. W.A.

The start of the extraction with the volunteer in the wrap round stretcher

Talk to Petteril Bank Primary School

The company I work for in Carlisle has for the past two years has become involved with two local organisations in the immediate area in which it operates, one of which is Petteril Bank Primary School. The school is classed by Ofsted as a good school, but has a higher than the national average of disadvantaged children. During the summer, I looked at the curriculum with one of the teachers and noticed that one of the classes had to learn about rocks and minerals, so I offered to put a presentation together on the subject.

On the 2nd November, it was with some trepidation that I went to teach the class for two hours, thinking how do I keep them entertained for that length of time. The presentation explained how volcanoes made the Lake District and the minerals veins in it, then using old photographs on mining in the area it went through how the minerals were mined and processed. The final part covered the lead ingots from Greenside Mine which were found on a ship called the Prince Albert which was sunk off the Charleston during the American Civil War, hence the name of the presentation- "From Volcanoes in Cumbria to America". Taking along the CATMHS banners I also explained what the society does in researching and exploring old mine workings

The children were very attentive for the whole two hours, asked many questions and thought we were very silly to explore old mines as it seemed to be very dangerous. The teacher suggested a field trip and I have spoken to the Nenthead Mines Conservation Society about taking the children underground in Carr's Mine, which they are pleased to do, and to Killhope Mining Museum to look at the surface remains, and this will hopefully take place after May.

Warren Allison

Completion of lease for Glenridding Common to the John Muir Trust

Regarding the Members decision to agree a lease for an initial period of three years to the John Muir Trust, the JMT have been working over recent months to conclude the necessary arrangements to enshrine the various commitments within a formal lease. This process is now complete and that the lease arrangements are now in place and operational.

In accordance with those proposals agreed with JMT Members, the lease will stand for a term of three years and reflects the comments and views of the various representations during the consultation period. As discussed within that consultation period we see the future as one of a partnership, working together with the John Muir Trust and all those who have an interest within the common to ensure its effective management.

The John Muir Trust will now assume operational responsibility for the Common and will be looking to work closely with the two commoners who graze the land, the Parish Council and other stakeholders who have an interest in caring for the land.

Dr Descender.

Dear Doctor Descender,

Recently when standing at the foot of a pitch waiting to ascend I was struck on the ankle by a rock dislodged from above, causing considerable contusions. When I later mentioned this to the person who was climbing ahead of me, I was told "Well you were standing in the wrong place!" Any thoughts?

Dear Injured Ankle

I fear you have just encountered the much more ruthless approach common in financial circles which dictates that the fate of individual is of little or no account when compared with the success of the whole enterprise. These are usually known as "mind over matter" concerns as in "we don't mind and you don't matter". On a practical note I would advise ensuring in future you remain some distance vertically above your colleague at all times.

Coniston HLF grant update

The contractors have moved on to Penny Rigg Mill, but appear to have now finished for winter. I had a look in early January and what a difference the mill is to what it was like when it was in a slow state of decline. Walls have been re-built; the old timbered lintels have been replaced and the work is a great credit to the contractors.



The powder house has been partially rebuilt



The collapse on the side of the waterwheel pit has been rebuilt



The capping stones on the top of the waterwheel pit have been replaced



A large part of the front wall of the mill had collapsed and has now been re-built



The walls below the jigging house were in a poor state of repair and have been rebuilt



Research has also carried on in the archives and Ian Matheson and I met with the volunteers and Lisa Keys from Minerva Heritage to discuss what they had found and there will be a publication on the research they have done.

Various guided walks have also been discussed and these are in the process of being finalised.

This project is a testimony to our Society, and at the end will take Coniston Copper Mines off the Historic England “at risk register”, and although Penny Rigg Mill is not scheduled (but it should be), it is certainly in a better state of repair than for many years.

Warren Allison.

Meets

Nenthead Weekend, August 12 & 13, 2017.

Nick Green (ML), Pete Jackson (ML), Charlie & Sue Fowler, Mark Hatton, Michael Pringle, David Heatherington, Carl Barrow, Oliver Trampert, Bettina Vieweg, Steve Sim, Nigel Addy.

Two days is not nearly enough time to even begin exploring the extensive lead & zinc mine workings at Nenthead, but we were lucky to have Nick Green and Pete Jackson as our guides this weekend as they know the place as well as anyone. We explored parts of Smallcleugh, Rampgill, Brownley Hill, Scaleburn and Hangingshaws. With a through trip via Prouds Sump for some. Everyone came away with a far greater appreciation of the size, history and variety of these mine workings. Nenthead truly is an amazing place with a lifetime of exploring available to those with the stamina and appetite.



Steve Sim in Scaleburn

Lunch break in Proud



Flats



*At the Horse
Whimsey in
Scaleburn*

Cobalt Mine and Stoneycroft Ghyll, 15th October.

Present : Mark Hatton (ML), Jason Attwood, Paige Craik, Julian Cruikshank, Bob Mayow, Stewart Brown, Kev Timmins, Derek Mitchell, Michael Pringle, James Eccles.

Perfect weather conditions and an enthusiastic group made this a very enjoyable visit to this delightful set of mine workings. The Cobalt Mine sits high up the valley from Stoneycroft Ghyll, in steep ground on the flanks of Causey Pike and overlooking Force Crag. This Cobalt Mine was infamous for being a disastrous financial red hole, with many thousands of pounds of shareholders' money lost. The shareholders were attracted (conned?) by promises of untold riches to be had from a thick vein of Cobalt, which at the time was a wonder metal commanding very high prices.



Climbing up the Incline with Force Crag Mine in the background



Whilst a lot of work was put in to build the infrastructure and drive the levels, it proved impossible to successfully smelt a useable cobalt product. As a result there was no income at all, somewhat short of the promised riches which at one time were expected to be “enough to pay off the National Debt”! The name Cobalt derives from the German word for Goblin. This name was given by medieval miners to the metal compound which appeared to replace valuable Copper but which was itself poisonous and of no value to them. One imagines the Shareholders in this Cobalt Mine also could relate to this being a place of Goblins, who swallowed their money and gave nothing in return.

Crossing Stoneycroft Ghyll

Today there are 3 open levels, along a steep incline carved across the face of the crags. The upper level is the most extensive and allows a short descent to a further sub-level. The rock is an interesting red colour with a friable quartz vein filling. Once these short levels had been explored our party returned to Stoneycroft. Here we explored the glassy slag heaps beside the old smelter site before examining the various workings in the Gill itself. There are several short hand chipped workings in the Gill. But the main work was done in the bed of the Gill itself and the channels which were dug to allow the whole of the watercourse to be diverted away from the working on the vein. We then braved the gorse to see the wheel pit to finish off a grand day out.



Descending to the Sub Level in the Cobalt Mine. Note the use of Electron Ladders.

Greenburn mine, 29th October.

Present : Mark Hatton (ML), Maureen Fleming, Keith Sykes, Jason Attwood, Paige Craik, Carl Barrow, Michael Oddie, Steve Sim, Martin Doherty, Alastair Cameron, Bob Mayow, Clare Harvey, Derek Mitchell, Michael Pringle & Robert Gurr



We were blessed with a bright chilly day with almost perfect visibility and not a cloud in the sky. Greenburn Valley in such conditions is a truly breath taking place to be and the Copper mine workings up here richly reward the effort to get here. Our group began by exploring the extensive mining remains in the valley floor. Here there is as complete a mine site as you could wish for, with everything neatly packed in to quite a small area and well enough preserved to make interpreting the site very easy.

Maureen Fleming leading the march up in to Greenburn with Little Langdale Tarn in the background.

The site includes 2 large wheel pits, crushing floors, winding shaft, offices, smithy, bothy, drying room, powder store and ore hopper. We then tackled the flanks of Wetherlam using the miners trod to reach Long Crag. The level here is extensive but apparently unproductive. Above Long Crag in extremely steep ground is a 17th or 18th Century working, including a small building, processing floor and a couple of short wet levels with flooded sumps. A delightful miners trod then crosses the face of Wetherlam, almost following the line of the Long Crag vein before reaching the Pave York vein. This vein was worked at 3 different horizons, each of which were explored. These levels are very interesting and include some nice ladders, a jack roll and candle stubs on the wall. We then followed the line of an incline back



Team Photo by the Wheelpit at Greenburn Mine.



down to the valley floor. All agreed that Greenburn is a rather special and precious place that deserves to be better known and should be better preserved.

A group shot outside Lower Pave York with the Langdale Pikes in the background.

Outdoor First Aid course, weekend of 11/12 November 2017

Present : Mark Hatton, Derek Mitchell, Michael Pringle, Jason Attwood, Paige Craik, Charlie Fowler, Sue Fowler, Kevin Timmins, Anthony Brooke, Clare Harvey, Rosemary Vidler, Nick Green, Martin Doherty

Mines & Quarries are potentially hazardous environments in which accidents can happen and help may be a long time to arrive. So the Committee decided that a First Aid Course for Members would be a sensible thing to put on. The instructor chosen to deliver the course was Simon Clooney and the venue was Ambleside Parish Centre.

Simon is a highly experienced First Aid instructor with bags of outdoor leadership experience (including a few mine trips). The 14 places available on the course were snapped up in no time at all, showing how keen people are to improve their first aid knowledge. Half of the course was delivered inside (warm, dry and comfy) and the other half outside (bitterly cold, damp and uncomfy). The very real lesson here was just how hard it is to keep an injured person warm when they are lying immobile on the ground.



Jason & Paige trying to resuscitate a dummy using CPR



Wrapping the Casualty up in Tin Foil ready for the Oven.

Many of us will need bigger back packs in future to accommodate the first aid kits, survival bags and spare layers that now seem so much more necessary.



Discussing what the cooking time should be.

Early days of CATMHS

During the weekend of the 11th and 12th November when the First Aid course, organised by Mark Hatton and supported by the Society, was being held at the Parish Rooms in Ambleside, Mike Mitchell held a presentation on the Saturday night showing photographs of the early days of CATMHS to an audience of some 23 members.

It was a fascinating, witty and thoroughly enjoyable talk. Mike described how the Society came into being with photos of the original members from some 38 years ago, who even now were instantly recognisable to those who knew them; fashion was certainly different then.

The early days of exploration was done on electron ladder, even the 300-foot Brewery Shaft at Nenthead; these were clearly hardened people, both women and men. Some of the tales of their exploits raised the hairs on the back of your neck, but they were already pushing the boundaries of exploration from the Lake District especially Coniston, to the Pennines and even into Ireland.



Mark Hatton about to introduce Mike's talk

On a personal level, I found it quite moving as it brought back so many happy memories from when I joined CATMHS for the first time, I think some 30 years ago, with a brief interlude in the middle of around five years before re-joining. Some of the people I knew well and are sadly no longer with us such as John Helme, Clive Barrow, Pete Fleming, Dave Blundell and Pete Blezard who I (and the digging team) owe so much to, especially when we re-opened the Lucy Level at Greenside Mine, and who is still sorely missed.

There were photographs of places seen for the first time since the miners left, and one which stuck in my mind was of lots of clog prints in the mud on the floor of a level in Coniston.

The presentation showing the exploration and what the Society has done from the early days (to the present) demonstrates why it has been held in such high regard by many organisations for a long time.

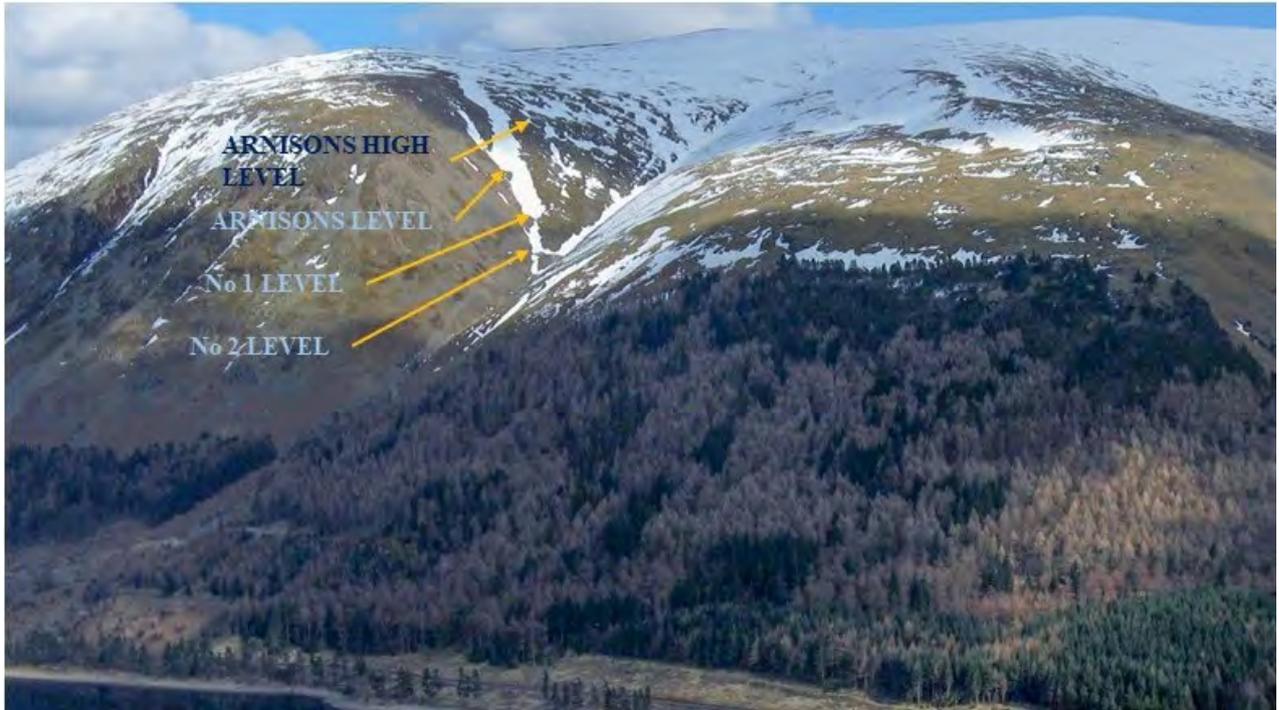
A wonderful talk which was enjoyed by everyone there.

Warren Allison

Wythburn Mine, 18th November 2017.

John Aird (ML), John Ashby, Carl Barrow, Mark Hatton, David Heatherington, Michael Oddie, Kevin Timmins

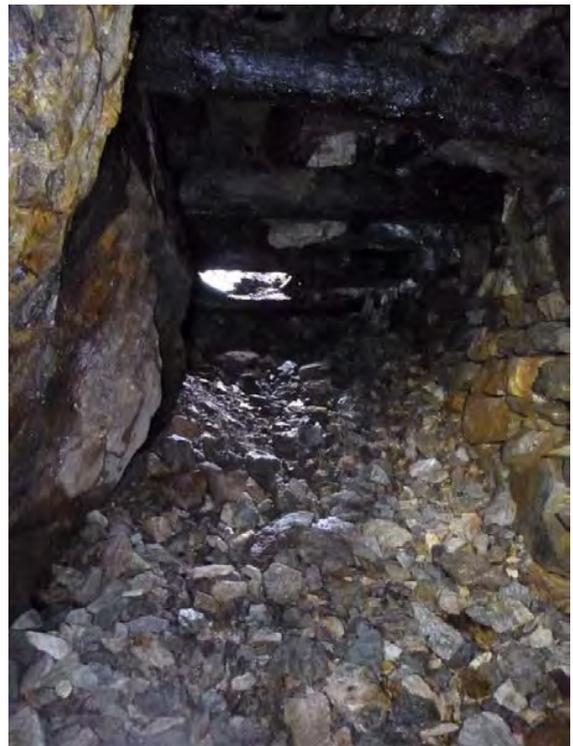
Just as an introduction, should you be contemplating a visit to this mine and the date lies between mid- October and May, then make sure to drive round to the west side of Thirlmere and look up at the view shown in the photo below. If there is any snow in the gully in which the adits lie, then simply abandon the enterprise.



Yes, I'm sure you've read Alen McFadzean's blog recounting the exploits back in 1981 when they excavated the entrances through the snow and installed the oil drums they'd hauled up on Boxing Day. The thing is they were real men and we're not, scrabbling around in a metre of snow trying to find an entrance that it's almost impossible to locate on a balmy summer's day is a soul-destroying enterprise and believe me I know because I've attempted it, in fact I've attempted it twice each time with the same negative results!



None of the above applied to this meet. Assembling at the Wythburn Church car park the initial walk through the woods was pleasant but no real preparation for the brutal climb up the south side of the beck paralleling the much degraded incline. However good time was made up to the blocked No 2 level and then on to No 1 level where the entrance was uncovered and opened for later use. As can be seen the small dustbin is a snug fit made more interesting by being inclined at 45 degrees to the horizontal and having on the inside end another drum at much the same angle meaning the feet have precious little to get a grip on. This was all in the future as the party climbed up to Arnisons Level, where the Meet Leader's worry that he would not be able to find the entrance had to be addressed. Luckily the team opted for the correct one of two vaguely possible locations.

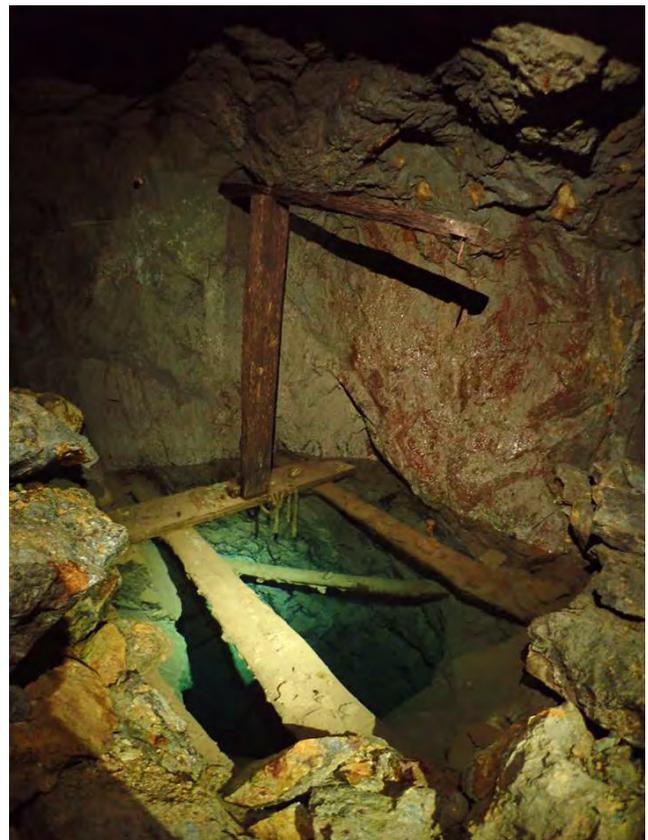


When opened, the entrance was found to be much changed from the Meet Leaders recollections; on the left above, Mr Hetherington demonstrates the correct entry technique, while on the right the amount of material that has washed in through the large rocks that covered the opening is clearly evident.

Once inside the party split up to explore Ar-nisons horizon, along with stopes, tools, tub, and the jack roll stope. The largest part of the mines production came from the stopes above this level in the area where two veins intersected. As can be seen from the mine section on the next page, all this ore was transferred down ore passes to No 2 level from where it was trammed out to the head of the incline for transfer down to the mill.

The Meet Leader rigged the pitches down the No 1 ore pass and the majority of the party abseiled down the 190 feet to Level 1. The upper pitch about 30 feet is a fairly dry free hang but the remaining 160 feet is the descent of a steeply inclined foot wall with a fair amount of water spray.

Unsurprisingly on being told that the descent to Level 2 was much wetter than the one they had just undertaken all bar two of the party opted to explore the level including the signature of "*Thomas Nixon, City*" and then exit via the dustbin.

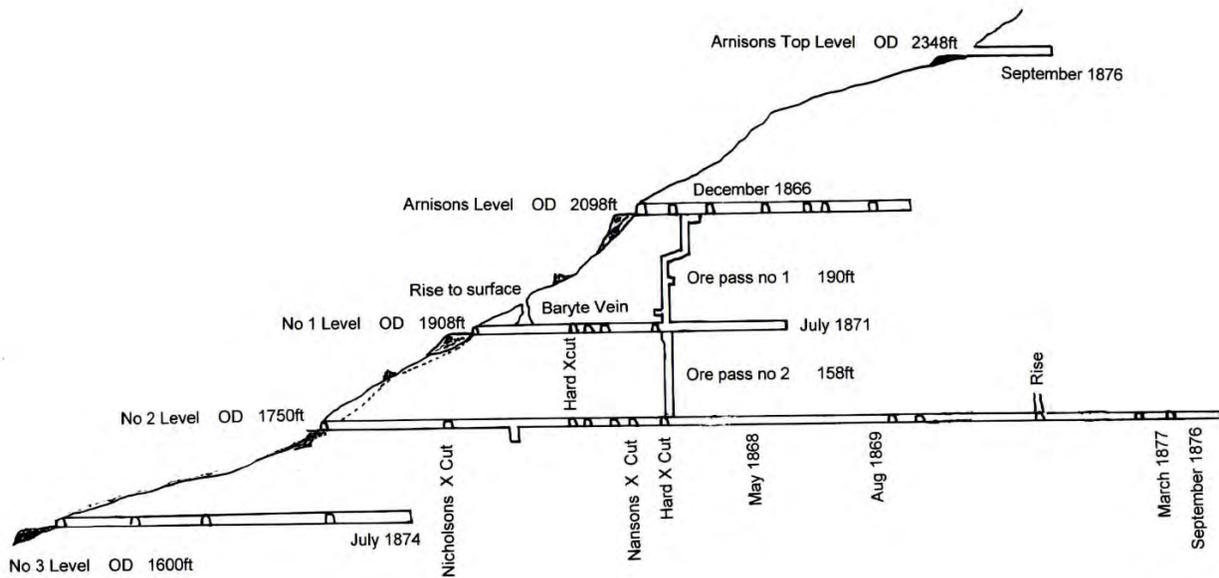


Meanwhile, David Heatherington volunteered to rig the descent to Level 2, and he and John Ashby set off down. To the Meet Leader's surprise everyone managed to exit successfully, and Michael Oddie even came back to report and remained until the return of the No 2 level party (they did confirm that it was very wet, but had seen the wheelbarrow in the side drive off the stope).



The pitches having been de-rigged the ropes were pushed out through the dustbin and the indefatigable Hetherington and the Meet Leader prusicked up to Arnisons level to de-rig. John Ashby (whose exit via the bin really was surprising) kindly came back up and assisted with rope hauling and bag packing. Once outside it was apparent that a bitter wind had sprung up, so no time was wasted in closing up both of the level entrances and setting off down to the car park.

Wythburn Mine Section



Both Level 2 and 3 entrances are lost in scree, Level 3's location being impossible to determine due to erosion of the beck side.

Very special thanks go to Roger Ramsden for assisting with his encyclopaedic knowledge of the area, his excavation of the collapsed No 1 entrance and to Tony Holland for his bolting of the pitches and carrying the dustbin up to the site.

References: -

“Wythburn Mine and the Lead Miners of Helvellyn” *Alen McFadzean*

“Thirlmere Mines and the Drowning of the Valley” *Ian Tyler*

becausetheyrethere.com/2010/12/23/helvellyn-with-ghosts-part-1-wythburn-mine/ *Alen McFadzean blog*

Photographs courtesy of members of the meet.

CAUDALE QUARRY 19th November 2017

John Aird (ML), John Ashby, Carl Barrow, Mark Hatton, David Hetherington, Michael Oddie, Kevin Timmins.

Another day but the same team, shown at the top of the ventilation shaft at Caudale Quarry with Brotherswater in the background. Only John Ashby (below) is missing from the

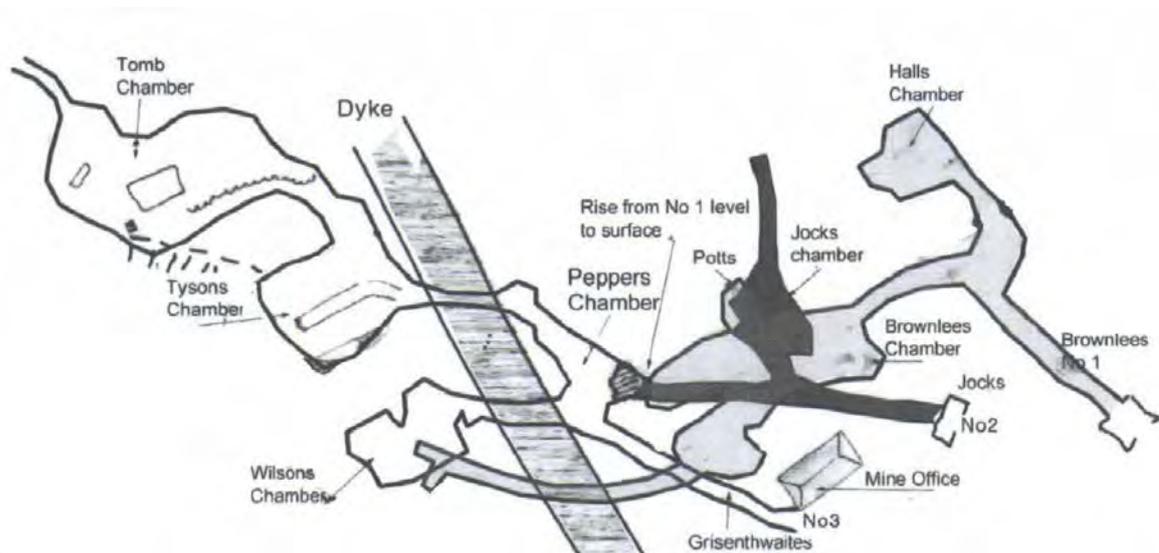


group. Just like the previous day the approach to Caudale is steep and unrelenting; luckily the weather was

kind, temperature a little above freezing and no wind. Walking up the ridge quickly teaches one just how skilled the carters must have been to control their horses and the sledges loaded with 15cwt of presumably very tightly packed slates on the way down.



CAUDALE QUARRY PLAN



Our heroes are standing immediately beside the top of “Rise from No 1 level to surface”, from where the descent to Brownlees No 1 is approximately 30 metres, Jocks No 2 is 10 metres higher and Grisenthwaites No 3 10 metres higher still. All the adits are run in so the only access is via the rise to surface. This has a substantial welded pipe grill over the top which provides ideal anchorages for the SRT descent.



An unfortunately positioned sharp rock edge some few metres down requires substantial rope protection provided by a bag with a neoprene lining, allowing direct descent to Brownlees by the whole party. W T Shaw, whose meticulously accurate plan is above, clearly ran the quarry to a high standard; apart from the cone of debris thrown down the rise, the quarry floor is clear of practically all rubbish. Presumably left in a state that would permit immediate resumption of operations once the economic climate improved, closure occurring in 1933.

Access to Jocks No 2 requires an energetic and able person to traverse across from the edge of Grisenthwaites, the bolts are in place but not the hangers and previous experience suggests this rigging can take a considerable amount of time. So despite having David Hetherington ready and willing to undertake the task it was decided to use his talents by getting him to climb out and onto Grisenthwaites taking the end of the rope with him so that he could assist the rest of the party to do the same.

Brownlees and Jocks date from the start of the 20th Century as does Wilsons chamber on Grisenthwaites. Tysons and Tomb chambers date from early Victorian times and were worked in a completely different way. As the chambers were worked upwards slate was dressed in-situ and the waste rock left on the floor, meaning that the quarrymen remained within easy reach of the



all the slate output had to be carried off the heap of waste where it had been reived; evidence that this occurred is obvious in Tomb chamber, where slide-ways run down at both ends. Since there is a loading platform with rails running up to it at the blocked level at the far end of the chamber, slate must have gone out to the western quarry on the other side of the ridge.

roof of the chamber, allowing further extraction. This process has been carried out to such an extent that were Tomb chamber to be emptied the roof would be some eighty feet above the floor.

Very fine roundheaded slates were produced being particularly noted for the very pronounced colours and patterns within the rock. Obviously, this method of working meant that



As an indicator of the accuracy of WT Shaw's plan the approximately 300mm thick pillar, shown left, is the feature shown in Tomb chamber approaching the western exit.



Once the delights of Grisenthwaites level had been exhausted it was time to head back to the surface. Mr Heatherington had been worth his weight in gold assisting persons up to Grisenthwaites, as can be seen on the Newsletter cover, but really came in to his own when it was a case of gently allowing folk to swing over to prus-sick up to the surface.

Once on the surface, quick removal of the SRT gear and a gentle stroll down to the vehicles brought an end to a very enjoyable day. Thanks to everyone who attended, a great group, and special thanks to David Hetherington for his help and skill.

Reference

"Caudale Slate Quarry" Mark Simpson "The Mine Explorer Volume V" Page 85 (Has copies of the W T Shaw plans and is still available from the CATMHS website)

CATMHS Newsletter 110 February 2013

CATMHS Newsletter 115 May 2014

Photographs courtesy of members of the meet.

Rhyd Alyn mine - Saturday 25th November.

Chris Cowdery (ML), Jon Knowles, John Aird, Steve Brown

The group met on a snowy November morning at the Cilcain Bridge parking area. After donning suitable gear, everybody made their way to the entrance to the Rhyd Alyn mine. This mine is on the bank of the River Alyn just downstream of the more famous Hesp Alyn cave. Hesp Alyn is one of the longest caves in North Wales, and was a resurgence for the River Alyn until the whole area was drained by the Milwr Tunnel being driven at sea level below the area. The ML had arranged access to the mine (which is usually locked).

Rhyd Alyn mine is a typical Victorian Lead Mine. It is accessed from an adit driven into the side of the Alyn Gorge just above the level of the River Alyn. After approximately 100m, the adit strikes the Rhyd Alyn Vein, which is extensively stoped. According to reference [1], the mine was opened in 1876 and worked possibly as late as 1906 in conjunction with South Llyn-y-Pandy mine.

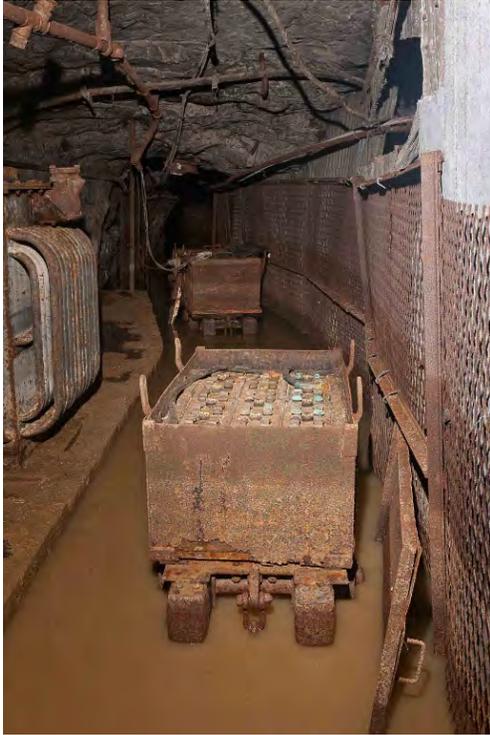
The trip followed the stope eastwards and downwards, descending 35 ladders and a vertical distance of approximately 150m until the horizon of the Milwr Tunnel was reached. The Milwr Tunnel reached this area in the mid 1930's, dewatering the mine and allowing previously unattainable lead to be extracted. A number of interesting artefacts were observed en-route, for example a number of jack-rolls, pails and extensive air-piping.

The mine also had an earlier dewatering level, being the furthest reach of the 1818 Halkyn Deep Level which runs south for 5 miles from a point between Flint and Halkyn.

The group then entered the Milwr Tunnel along lode 561 (Rhyd Alyn or South Llyn Y Pandy Vein). The Milwr Tunnel needs no introduction, it being the 10 mile long sea-level drainage tunnel driven from Bagillt on the Dee Estuary in a generally southerly direction, to finish underneath the village of Cadole near the Loggerheads Country Park. It dewatered a number of mines, exposed many lead veins at depth, and had the side effect of causing St. Winifredes Well at Holywell to dry up and the River Alyn to become dry for most of the year.

The plan for this trip was to head north along the Milwr Tunnel to explore the limestone workings near the Olwyn Goch shaft. This is a walk of approximately 2 miles. The first mile is relatively straightforward, however once lode 576 (Llyn Y Pandy) is passed, a large volume of water enters as this is where the drainage from the River Alyn enters the system via unexplored natural cavities.

The second mile is much harder, wading in knee deep water. A break was taken at the water abstraction point for 'The Valley Works', a top secret chemical weapons factory in the village of Rhydymwyn. All that remains is some large pipework in a chamber. From this point, the water became slightly deeper for the final slog down to the Olwyn Goch shaft. This shaft rises 470 feet to the surface. It is approximately 12ft x 12ft, with staging and twenty four ladders on one side. However, access to surface from here is no longer possible because the staging in the shaft is failing, and more importantly, the landowner does not permit access.



From here, a crosscut leads into the limestone workings. In 1939, Pilkingtons of St. Helens became interested in the limestone made accessible by the Olwyn Goch shaft. During the peak, 80,000 tonnes per annum were raised. These operations have left a number of vast chambers. Furthermore, a couple of Eimco Loaders are still extant with their waggons behind.



After a brief exploration of part of the limestone workings, and some time spent undertaking photography, the group returned to day via a long slog against the water up the Milwr Tunnel and then Rhyd Alyn Mine. The trip was uneventful apart from Captain Aird suffering a bout of cramp. This changes his usual eloquent and affable demeanour into something one is more likely to find on a building site and causes much amusement to those present (apart from Capt. Aird of course)

Further reading

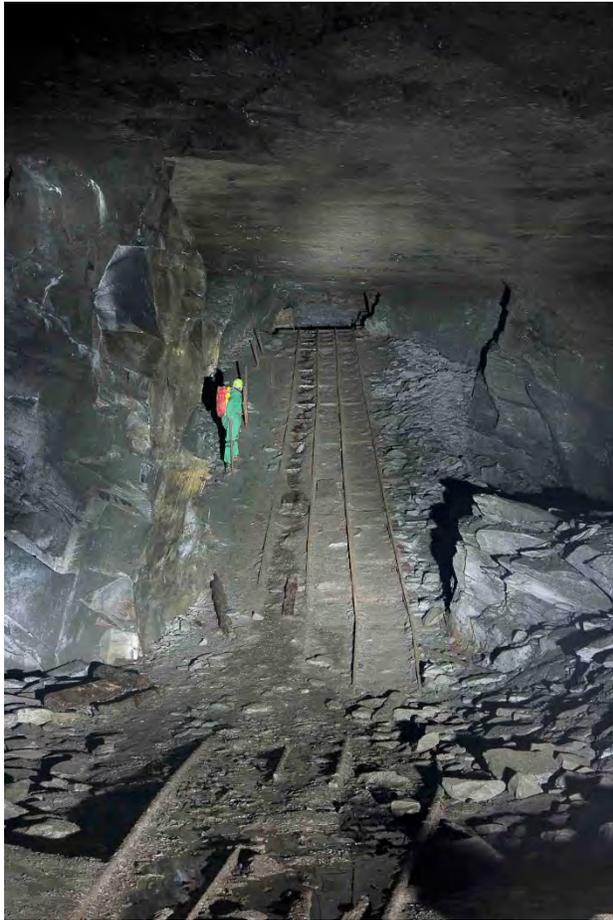
[1] The Mines of Flintshire and Denbighshire - Burt, Waite and Burnley.
The Milwr Tunnel, Bagillt to Loggerheads. Cris Ebbs (new 2nd Edition)

Penarth Slate Quarry - Sunday 26th November

Chris Cowdery (ML), Jon Knowles, John Aird, Steve Brown.

Sunday's trip was planned to be altogether more relaxing by visiting the Penarth Slate Quarry which is located on the southern side of the River Dee between Llangollen and Corwen. The ML had a survey he found in Rhosydd about 15 years previously, supplemented by additional information from Jon Knowles.

According to [2], Penarth was first worked in 1868 when the railway arrived, but undoubtedly it predates this. Because of its remoteness, there are a large number of ruined buildings and the remains of a fine incline with sheave wheel still in situ. The shockingly poor quality of the slate was apparent when looking at the material lying around. The one remaining entrance is found in the large open quarry to the west of the site, and enters on the middle of 3 floors. The dip of the slate is very slight, very much like Moel Fferna which is a couple of miles across the hill to the East.



There is an internal double tracked incline which ascends from the Middle Floor floor to a small chamber on the Top Level. It has the appearance of the start of something great as there is no justification for the size of the incline on the basis of the ground it gives access to.

The underground workings are divided into two sections by an area of ground with a fault traversing across, being termed the West Vein and the East Vein (although they are the same vein geologically speaking). Both areas of the mine are worked in very large chambers gently dipping to the North. The working method is slightly random, with relatively small amounts of pillar left to support the roof, so the mine could prove challenging to navigate.

A full exploration was undertaken, with the only notable artefacts being the incline mentioned previously, and a number of hand winches which the author has not seen in any other quarries. Perhaps they were unique to Penarth.⁷

This mine is perfect for novices, and has a couple of optional technical sections, one being a hand-line descent (or ascent), and the second being an SRT pitch with re-belay descending between the Middle and Lower floors through a hole in the floor. Is heavily trafficked.



[2] A Gazetteer of the Welsh Slate Industry - Alun John Richards.

Hodge Close “Friends & Family” meet, Dec 10th, after the AGM

Present: Mark Hatton (ML), Michael Oddie & Dawn Oddie, Chris Cowdery & Joanne Cowdery, Dave Donkin & Irene Donkin, Charlie & Sue Fowler, Maureen Fleming, Keith Sykes, Michael Pringle, Derek Mitchell, Stuart ? Alastair Cameron, Liz Withey, Robert & Angus Gurr, Clare Harvey, Stephe Cove, Dave ?

The forecast deep snow never arrived so the access road up to Hodge Close remained open (with care), allowing 21 Members and Family to meet up. A bright but bitterly cold day meant we were all keen to start the walk as soon as possible. The cunning plan was to do 3 separate loops from the Car Parking area, returning to the cars at the end of each loop for sustenance and to adjust the number of clothing layers as the temperature crept up to a balmy 4 degrees.

The first loop was a circuit of the Hodge Close Quarry edge, then a Southerly route up towards Holme Fell. The aim of this section was to warm everyone up on a climb and to take a look at the mysterious small building with a single piece roof beside the very old workings on the outcropping slate. The age and purpose of this structure was debated but no conclusion reached. And then we descended to the Reservoirs and impressive Dam Walls which were constructed to provide a reliable head of water for the machinery in the Quarry. A great deal of work went in to construct these reservoirs, showing how important water was to the Quarries below. Returning to the cars from this first loop we partook of warm Mulled Wine and Mince Pies .



Suitably refreshed, the second loop then set off to the west taking in Peat Field and Klondyke. These workings are far less well known than Hodge Close, but sport some very impressive

Matty Spedding tunnels and Quarry faces. We then moved on to the Calf How Complex, looked down on the Railway in the Woods and visited the Rave Cave (seeing the remains of the legendary Raves that took place in here in the 1980's).

Looping back to the vehicles again, some prepared for the underground section of the meet. This involves a rather tight squeeze and wet walk along a level into the Wyth Bank Complex. This is a very interesting maze of tunnels and closeheads which require some care to navigate and judgment about where to turn back. Returning to day a rather beautiful Roe Deer Skull was found at the entrance (mainly because its sharp antlers got stuck in someone's rear end as they started to navigate the tight section).



The whole Hodge Close area is one which repays some detailed searching around. There is much more to see here than many visitors ever realise and some real mysteries and secrets. One question that we debated was “where does the water go”. The water level in Hodge Close itself remains constant. But that water level seems well below the lowest known / visible outflow point and at about the horizon of the valley floor. So there must be a level down there somewhere, but where is it, and where does it come out to day. My guess is that it runs through the Wyth Bank Complex, but I haven't yet been able to prove this route. Can anyone shed any light on this?

Many thanks to everyone who took part in the meet.

Exploring the Caldbeck Mines

Living not far from Caldbeck, the famous mines around Dale Beck have become something of a regular outing for me, often accompanied by Amber and Hazel, my tireless Hungarian Vizslas. The beauty of the valley and the fells, coupled with their remoteness and rich history draw me back time and time again. Feeling rather privileged to explore these mines in different seasons, I thought it would be nice to share some of my experiences with CATMHS members in the form of a brief tour.

My intention is to provide a series of route maps, with accompanying pictures, over the course of several newsletters - assuming the editor allows! In this edition, we'll explore the first route taking in Ingray Gill, Short Grain, Harestones and Mexico East Shallow Level. An overview of the route is shown on the following page.

Starting from the small hamlet of Fellside at a height of 960ft, the old mine road curves away up a moderate slope to the right of the gate. Walking along the track for half a mile brings you to Ingray Gill (Image A), which feeds down into Dale Beck to the west. The ghyll climbs up quite steeply to the east between Fellside Brow and Hay Knott, heading up towards Deer Hills, with the head of the stream at 1300ft.

Half way up the ghyll an obvious spoil heap gives away the presence of a level dating from around 1870 on the north side of the stream, Ingray Gill North (NY30703670). Its twin on the south bank is now lost to time. The entrance to the north level is still open, although the adit is now quite overgrown with tall grasses and moss, effectively choking the natural drainage of water from the level and making any entry into the level a rather wet one (Image B(i)).

A large chunk of quartz forms a lintel at the entrance to the level (Image B(ii)), which seems quite stable but would make a nasty mess if it comes down one day. If you choose to enter the level now you will spend the rest of the day rather wet, as the water rapidly becomes waist deep and is very soft underfoot. I'd recommend not entering the level now, but return for a look on your way home at the end of the walk if you don't mind getting wet. As a word of caution, the rock is more shattered and less stable in these parts.

As you exit the top of the ghyll, turn to your right and head south-south-west, climbing up to 1470ft between Deer Hills and Hay Knott where a reservoir appears on your left. The view opens up on a nice day as you leave the reservoir behind (Image C), with Hay Gill rising from the west and bifurcating into Short and Long Grain tributaries. Away to the west beyond the Dale Beck valley rises Brae Fell with the deep cut Ramps Gill to the right and the scars of the hushes drawing the eye further south towards the Brae Fell mine.

Descending towards the junction of Short and Long Grain, turn left and climb up Short Grain for about a quarter of a mile to find Short Grain Low Level at the foot of a small waterfall, at NY31303585. The stone-lined adit is still in good condition (Image D(i)), but the mouth of the entrance itself is now almost fully choked with collapsed material. The ground around here doesn't seem very stable, with most of the levels around Low Pike and High Pike being collapsed. Clearing away some of the collapsed material around the entrance, the level is seen to dip for 10 feet and then ends in a collapse (Image D(ii)). This isn't somewhere I feel comfortable going inside.

A - Looking east up Ingray Gill from the Dale Beck mine road



B (i) - The entrance to Ingray North Level



B (ii) - Looking inside Ingray North Level



D (i) - Short Grain Low Level adit



D (ii) - Inside Short Grain Low Level, a short collapse in unstable ground



C - Looking south towards Birk Fell showing Hay Gill, Short and Long Grain ghylls, with Birk Fell (middle), Brae Fell (rear right) and High Pike (rear left)



F - Looking north from the Umber Mine at Harestones, note the green spoil heaps below the blocked adit



E - The collapsed entrance and dressing floor of Short Grain Mid Level



Another quarter of a mile up the ghyll, the remains of Short Grain mid-level can be seen, with a dressing floor and spoil heap outside a collapsed entrance (Image E). Although this was explored by MOLES in 1995, this 1860 mine isn't accessible now.

Climbing up to the head of the ghyll, you join the main fell walking route rising up from Potts Gill. It's about a mile from here to the head of Long Grain along the main path. Just after you leave the top of Short Grain and commence upon the path, you can take a small diversion to another closed level on the west flank of High Pike, nominally the Short Grain Top Level. The size of the spoil heap indicates a good level, but it's not accessible.

Once the head of Long Grain ghyll is reached, the route turns directly west and leaves the main path. Skirting just below Harestones, a region of large broken boulders, another mine site can be seen about a quarter of a mile to the west in the peaty upland of Birk Moss. This is the site of the Umber/China Clay mine (NY31153465) up above Todd Gill (Image F). This mine was worked briefly from 1883 to 1885, and subsequently from 1890 to 1894 by a combination of open cast cuts and at least one level, all closed now.

Heading south-west from the Umber mine towards Iron Crag, a short descent to the hillside between Clints Gill and Todd Gill brings us to Mexico East Shallow Level, marked by a large spoil heap. This marked G on the map, 3 miles from the start.

The level is open and is worth a look inside as it intersects the tail end of the North Roughton Gill lode. The water depth is usually knee deep at most and soon becomes dry as the level rises. The colours in this level are beautiful, ranging from deep red pigments to blue-white clays, with plenty of quartz visible in the walls and roof. There are some interesting supergene minerals of lead and zinc, visible in the vein, such as pyromorphite which was the primary phosphate of lead that encouraged the early exploration of the mine. The following pictures give a flavour of the beauty inside this level.



The cross-cut entrance to Mexico East Shallow Level



The end of the Mexico East Shallow Level,



A stunning mix of colours in the wall of the level



Fine white chalky clay mixing with red umber



A nice display of pyromorphite mixed in with the quartz vein



Very small blade-shaped yellow crystals on a quartz matrix, about 2mm in height

From this point on, the route descends down Todd Gill to the valley floor and you can choose to cross Dale Beck to walk along the large mine road, or hug the western flank of Peteraw on the eastern side of the river as you head back towards the car at Fellside. I prefer the smaller path, which rises gently as you draw near to the bottom of Birk Gill providing an excellent view of the Brae Fell hushes and mine spoil heaps to the west.



The Brae Fell mine, with its large spoil heaps and distinctive hushes

It's worth saying that the valleys and hills are quite remote and although they are beautiful in all sorts of weathers and seasons, the visitor should always go prepared - hot tea or a hip flask with a wee dram are recommended! Although this route is only just over 5.6 miles in length, it includes a climb and descent of about 1000ft over sometimes rough and slippery terrain. I would allow a full morning or afternoon for this visit, perhaps more if you want to spend an hour or so underground taking pictures.

Jeremy Hunt.

Wad mine

The Wad mine is an intriguing place and although a great deal has been written about it, I believe much is still unknown. Colin Woolard has visited the Dorset Record Office and looked through the Bank's archive held there, photographed a huge amount of information and then transcribed, it including obtaining copies of plans. In the November 2017 newsletter, he wrote an article on the Wad mine titled "William Wakerley's narrative of the Black Lead Mines in the Low Wadhole Close in 1769 which he transcribed from the original document.

Colin kindly sent me his latest transcript of "*This History of the Black Led Mine was compiled by me, Henry Banks in 1771*" held at the Dorset Record Office reference D-BWK/M/A/4 and I have started to compare parts of it with Ian Tyler's book "*Seathwaite Wad and The Mines of the Borrowdale Valley*".

There are two sections which are of interest:

Ian writes as follows on page 89:

The Upper Wadhols were again worked with vigour during 1735 and had been extended, now consisting of at least five or six shafts, some of which were drained by short adits. The most adventurous of these was a level just above a wall or hedge on the north side of the upper reaches of Waadhole Gill. The level entrance was stone walled, with a small hut for the storage of tools and to afford the miners a little protection from the weather. Here, the level was being driven on through hard rock to gain what would be later known as Gortons and Woodmans Pipes which had been worked earlier from surface. Two brothers called Gorton were driving the level, which was eventually named for them, and they were ably assisted by a local miner by the name of Hugh Workman. The driving forward of Gortons level was basically a straight forward mining operation, and the three men were all experienced and used to the privations. It is therefore somewhat surprising, that after working at the mine after a short time and whilst driving the level, they suddenly decided to down tools and quit. It could have been the atrocious weather, the rude conditions or the stark remoteness of the area of course, or even intimidation by the locals, there is no way of knowing. Records show however, that it was only the smooth talking of the mine bosses which brought them round and so work continued. It has been suggested that the Gorton family hailed from Gunnerside, and that they also been involved in with the Tilberthwaite copper mine back in 1717.

From Colin's transcription of John Bank's history of the mine (reference D-BWK/M/A/4) is the following, which I think relates to what Ian wrote, but gives a different impression of what happened:

Memorandum John Braithwaite, late of Seathwaite, 1735 or 1736 Gorton's level

Informed William Wakerley, that either in the year 1735 or 1736, the High Wadmine had been opened by the proprietors, and that his Father, Robert Braithwaite, was at that time Steward to Mr Bankes, and Superintended the works for Mr Banks during the opening.

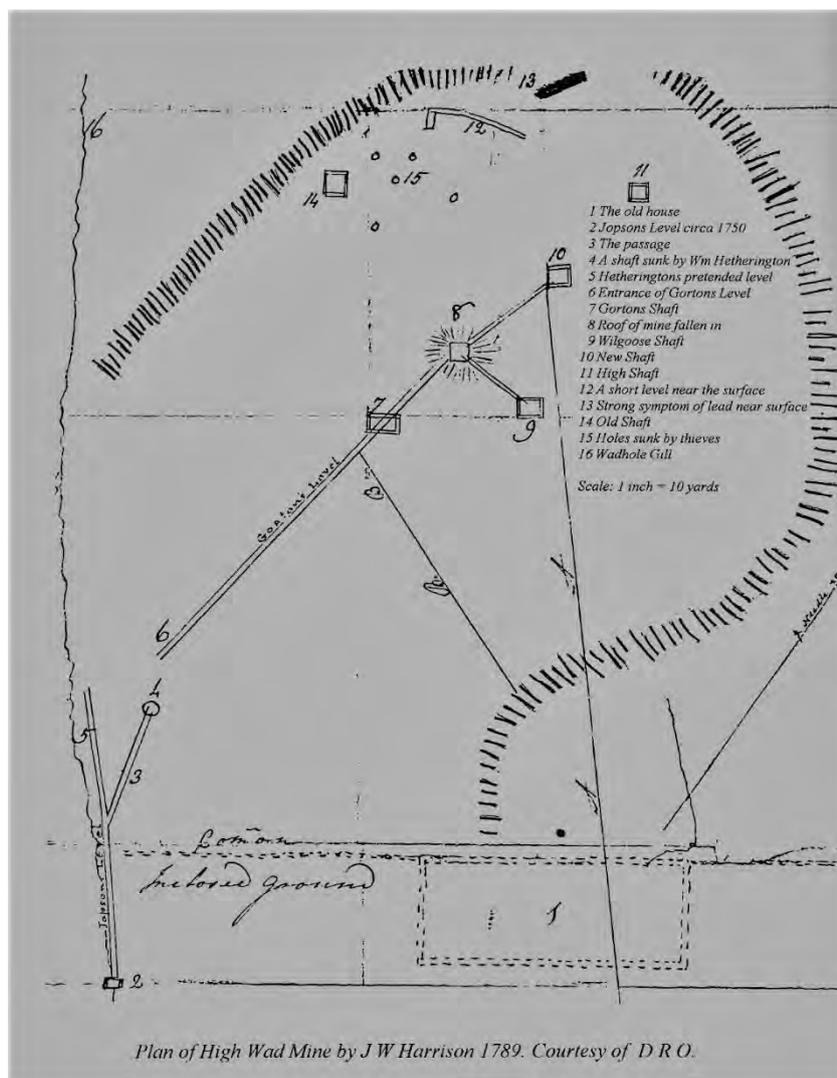
Hugh Workman & some others, whose names he has forgotten, wrought at the said mine for some considerable time without getting any, or but a little Black Lead.

The Proprietors then dismissed Hugh Workman, and the other workmen; and afterwards Articled and Agreed with two brothers, whose names were Gorton's, to work the said mine for 3 months, and the Proprietors of the Mine were to Pay to them for every ton of Black Lead raised by them within the three months, Ten pounds (£10) and that the two Gorton's began to work at the High Wadmine, in or near the same place where Hugh Workman and others had been working that Summer. That is in the same level, for then it had no particular name, nor

was there any other level at the High Wadmine. Nor is there now any other, than that some old level, lengthened and extended by the two Gorton's; and from that time called Gorton's Level. They continued to work there for 8 to 10 weeks without getting almost any or but very little lead and told Robert Braithwaite, then Steward, at whose house they boarded during their working at the mine, that they did not intend to continue working any longer. But, being encouraged and persuaded by the said Steward and others, try a little longer they did so; and within the remaining un-expired time of the three months, they got about four & half of lead out of the High Wadmine. They having fulfilled their agreement and the limited time for the work being expired, the Proprietors again employed Hugh Workman & others to get such pieces of Lead as might have been left by the Gorton's Loose and naked and easy to become or gotten which they did; and afterwards closed and secured the Mine.

The two accounts differ, but you can only use the information that you have to hand at the time; however it is now possible with the incredible work that Colin has done at the Dorset Record Office and his meticulous transcribing. I believe there is much to do to interpret what has been previously written and use this information to re-evaluate the Wad mine.

Using the plan below from page 120 in Ian's book (below) to help orientate the various working mentioned to the ground which the second section relates:



1735 or 1736, 5 or 6 tons of Black Lead got from the High Wadmine

At this opening there were between 5 & 6 tons of Black Lead gotten, which John Braithwaite says was out of the Level now called Gorton's Level; and that Shaft which has and before then had a communication with the said Levels and some Lead was got out of a fresh cut made by or rather a continuation of or lengthening of the Old level by the two Gorton's for a few yards, bearing westwards from the foot of the Old Shaft; which Cut is supposed to have a communication with another Shaft, which lies north west from the mouth of the Level. Besides these two Shafts (to the foot of one of which Gorton's Level runs and John Braithwaite believes it also runs to the foot of the other Shafts). There are two or three other Shafts at the said High Wadmine, in all 4 or 5, and that there are at the High Wadmine some holes which have been dug at different times 4, 5 or 6 yards deep, by some Rogues in order to get lead, & rob the Proprietors and that they all lie north, or a little bearing to the west, of the mouth of Gorton's Level; and that they all are so near together, that those shafts west, of the mouth of Gorton's Level; and that they are all so near together, that those shafts which have not a communications with each other, might with ease be made to communicate.

This information was given by John Braithwaite, Nov 16th, 1771, to William Wakerley.

Colin and I met with Jamie Lund, the National Trust archaeologist in November with some of the information that Colin has diligently transcribed and we all agreed that the Wad mine should be revisited with this "new" information and try to relate it to the surface and underground workings, which the Trust would support.

Warren Allison

British Newspaper Archive

In the May 2017 newsletter, I reported on a few newspaper articles obtained from the British Newspaper Archive web site and I have transcribed a few more below. It is a superb source of information and can provide much information previously unknown and is worth spending the time looking on the web site.

Newcastle Courtant, Friday, April 15th 1853

FOR PRIVATE SALE.

TWO SHARES in CASHWELL LEAD MINE, Annandale

New engines have been recently erected in this mine, with every prospect of it being highly productive and lucrative

For further particulars apply to Mr. James Pentland, auctioneer, St John's Lane, Newcastle.

Derby Mercury, 8th May 1873

TO BE SOLD

On the twelfth day of June next, at the Old Angel Inn, Macclesfield, in the County of Cheshire. ONE FOURTH PART of the MINES called CONISTONE, in the North of Lancashire, (in three different lots), under lease from Sir Michael Fleming, for the terms of Twenty-six Years, bearing date the 31st January 1778.

N.B. A very extensive well-wrought Level is made to loofe, the several Veins of these Mines at a considerable Depth; they are now in full Work and likely to prove lasting and profitable.

The Carlisle Patriot, January 7th, 1854

MINING SHARES FOR SALE

TO be SOLD by AUCTION, on FRIDAY the 27th January 1854 at MRS WESTMORLAND'S, ANGEL INN, PRNRITH, at 6 o'clock in the evening for ready money 18 64th shares in MIRES HEAD LEAD AND COPPER MINE.

The above mine is situated in Hartsop, Patterdale held under the Earl of Lonsdale, as Lord of the Manor, and promises to be very productive of Metal, bearing a portion of Lead and Copper Ores.

Specimens of the Ore may be seen at MRS WESTMORLAND'S, ANGEL INN, PRNRITH, or at MESSERS LANCASTER and LITTLE AT PATTERNDALE, who will show the Mine and give all particulars.

CALVERT VARETY, Auctioneer

The Carlisle Journal, July 23rd 1858

VALUABLE DISCOVERY OF LEAD ORE- A valuable vein of lead ore has been discovered traversing Wanthwaite Crag in the royalty of R. Marshall Esq, of Keswick: The vein was first observed to be productive of lead ore by Messrs. Bennett and Howe and subject to examination of Mr. Henry Jones, of Alston under who's direction a level has been commenced in the vein which is now producing a considerable quantity of lead ore, a portion which is rich in silver, technically termed argentiferous galena. The geological character of the rocks constituting the formation of Wanthwaite Crag are particularly favourable for the production of metalliferous substances, and the general characteristics of the vein already noticed in union with the valuable intersections, and the facilities afforded by the configuration of the mountain for working the veins effectively to an almost impenetrable depth without the assistance of elaborate machinery, altogether unite in the conformation of it becoming one of the greatest mining locations in the Lake District.

The Westmorland Gazette and Kendal Advertiser, October 3rd 1858

WYTHBURN - The Helvellyn lead mine is now working with every prospect of remunerating the enterprise of its shareholders. Fine specimens of ore and its *adjutants* are daily produced and of the finest quality. It is well worth the notice and enquiry of capitalists, and promises before long to become a second *gold scope*, not to the lawyers but the shareholders.

The Carlisle Journal, June 8th, 1860

FATEL ACCIDENT AT CALDBECK - At Saturday last as John Lamb, a miner was persuing his ordinary vocation at the lead mines at Roughtongill, a quantity of *debris* fell upon him, and he was so much injured that he died on the following Monday.

Warren Allison

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