

# CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST



A—STREAM. B—DITCH. C—MATTOCK. D—PIECES OF TURF. E—SEVEN-PRONGED FORK.  
F—IRON SHOVEL. G—TROUGH. H—ANOTHER TROUGH BELOW IT. I—SMALL WOODEN TROWEL.

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## MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

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## Society News :

*The Society would like to welcome*

ADAM GOURLAY	- New Member
GEOFF CRAM	- Rejoined

\* Thanks to Margaret Fleming for photocopying this newsletter



Boring a Blast-hole by three men

PLEASE FILL IN THIS SLIP REGARDING THE FUTURE STYLE OF  
THE A.G.M. PLEASE MARK 1 - 4 IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1) *Preceding the Annual Dinner*

1 [ 1 ]

2) *Replacing the November Wednesday Social Meeting*

[ 3 ]

3) *After the Nov/Dec Sunday Meet, say 6.30 pm  
at the Coniston Institute*

3 [ 2 ]

4) *On a Saturday afternoon or evening in November  
?? Venue*

[ 4 ]

RETURN TO :

Sheila Barker  
42 Cleater Street  
Dalton-in-Furness  
Cumbria, LA15 8RU

FROM :

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N.A.M.H.O. 91 CONFERENCE - 3rd to 6th May 1991 - Blaenau FfestiniogPROVISIONAL LECTURE AND SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Full titles and details will be given with the registration package.

Available from: Mrs H. (Boo) Vernon, 78 Oakenshaw Lane, Walton  
Wakefield, W. Yorks. WF2 6NH Tel. 0924 257017

SATURDAY 4th MAY 1991 At W.I. Hall, Blaenau Ffestiniog

- |                                                                                                                               |                                                         |                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 9:30 to 9:45                                                                                                                  | Introduction                                            | - L. Manley, Manager of<br>Llechwedd Tramways. |
| 9:45 to 10:30                                                                                                                 | Slate at Ffestiniog                                     | - I. Wynne Jones                               |
| 10:30 to 11:00                                                                                                                | Mining Companies (Gwynedd)                              | - J. Wilkinson                                 |
| COFFEE                                                                                                                        |                                                         |                                                |
| 11:15 to 12:00                                                                                                                | Snailbeach                                              | - I. Brown                                     |
| 12:00 to 12:15                                                                                                                | Underground in Snailbeach                               | - Shropshire Caving and<br>Mining Club         |
| (11:30 to 12:15 - Seminar at Llechwedd on "Old Mine Sites, what<br>should we do with them?" - George Hall)                    |                                                         |                                                |
| 12:15 to 1:00                                                                                                                 | Talargoch                                               | - J. Thorburn                                  |
| LUNCH (Shropshire Caving and Mining Club will show their video<br>"Underground at Snailbeach" at Llechwedd- about 20 minutes) |                                                         |                                                |
| 2:15 to 3:00                                                                                                                  | Gold Mining in Merioneth                                | - G. Hall                                      |
| 3:00 to 3:45                                                                                                                  | Bronze Age Mining on the<br>Great Orme                  | - A. Lewis                                     |
| TEA                                                                                                                           |                                                         |                                                |
| 4:00 to 5:00                                                                                                                  | Discussion: Future structure<br>and activities of NAMHO | - A. Pearce                                    |

SUNDAY 5th MAY 1991 at W.I. Hall, Blaenau Ffestiniog

- |                                                                                           |                                      |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 9:00 to 9:30                                                                              | Threikeld                            | - C. Lane.     |
| 9:30 to 10:00                                                                             | Early Mining in Eastern<br>Asia.     | - L. Willies   |
| 10:00 to 10:45                                                                            | Parys Mountain                       | - C. Leys      |
| COFFEE                                                                                    |                                      |                |
| 11:00 to 11:45                                                                            | Lead Mining and Smelting<br>in Clwyd | - C. Williams. |
| (11:30 to 12:15 - Seminar at Llechwedd on "Certificate in Mine<br>Exploration" - C. Lane) |                                      |                |
| 11:45 to 12:30                                                                            | Gold in the Hills                    | - R. Callender |
| 12:30 to 1:00                                                                             | Surrey Firestone and<br>Hearthstone  | - P. Burgess   |

LUNCH (Shropshire Caving and Mining Club will show their video  
"Underground at Snailbeach" at Llechwedd- about 20 minutes)

2:15 to 3:00	Levant	- N. Thomas
3:00 to 3:45	Berehaven Copper, Eire	- A. Williams

TEA

4:00 to 4:45	40 Years of Mining	- D. Bick
4:45 to 5:00	Closing Remarks	

(5:15 to 6:00 NAMHO Committee Meeting at Llechwedd)

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### THE SATURDAY NIGHT FUNCTION AT LLECHWEDD

4th May 1991

The Saturday Night Function will commence with a ride down the Llechwedd Incline into the slate caverns. Underground, delegates will walk along a route which will take them to the principal slate cavern. Prior to returning to the surface, delegates will have time to have soup and bread to the accompaniment of music provided by a local Folk Group.

On returning to the surface, delegates will return to the Plas at Llechwedd for a Buffet meal, and further entertainment from the Folk Group. A bar will be available at the Plas. The function will finish about 11:00 pm.

Delegates who book for the Saturday night function should wear warm clothing.

Specific riding times for the incline will be given with Function tickets. For reasons of efficiency, and to ensure that everyone gets underground, delegates will be asked to adhere to the riding times. Tickets will be issued on registration.

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MARK SIMPSON HAS OFFERED TRANSPORT  
TO THE CONFERENCE FOR SIX PEOPLE  
CONTACT HIM ON INGLETON 41920.

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+  
SOME OF THE FIELD TRIPS FOR THIS YEARS NANHO  
CONFERENCE

SATURDAY 4th MAY 1991

TRIP 3 - Llechwedd Slate Quarries. LEADER - Llechwedd Slate Mines.

Landrover trips around the working Llechwedd Quarries can be organised in the late afternoon by arrangement with the Llechwedd Staff. To be finalised.

TRIP 4 - Gold Panning.

It is possible that with the expertise available that it may be useful to arrange a demonstration of gold panning techniques. If you think that you may like to participate please circle 4 on the booking form.

SUNDAY 5th MAY 1991

TRIP 1 - Clogau Gold Mine

LEADER - G. Hall

Underground Trip with kind permission of the Owner. Probably also some time to visit some of the interesting surface remains in this locality.

TRIP 2 - Britannia Copper Mine, Snowdon. LEADER - Eric Gray-Thomas

Mainly a surface trip taking up most of the day. Park at the Pen-y-Pass car park. Good walk to mine via the Miners Track with spectacular scenery. Scramble over tips and explore the remains of the two mills, collect specimens. Wet level to visit. Short ladder climb for underground party. Packed Lunch and equipment needed for underground party. Return to cars via the PYG Track.

TRIP 3 - Great Orme Copper Mine. (A)

LEADER - Great Orme Exploration Society

Combined Surface and Underground Trip contrasting 18th and 19th Century workings with Bronze age workings. This entails some scrambling but no specialist equipment needed other than helmet and lamp.

Duration: Probably 2 to 2.5 hours.

Maximum No. TWELVE.

TRIP 4 - Llechwedd Slate Quarries. LEADER - Llechwedd Slate Mines.

Landrover trips around the working Llechwedd Quarries can be organised in the late afternoon by arrangement with the Llechwedd Staff. To be finalised.

MONDAY 6th MAY 1991

TRIP 1 - Mines in the Gwydyr Forest LEADERS - J. Bennett & R. Vernon  
(Near Bettws y Coed)

Surface field trip around the numerous lead mines in the Gwydyr Forest. Starting at Llanrwst Mine and following a circular route via Hafna, High Hafna, Pandora, Cyffty, and Gorlan. If time permits visits will be made to examine mines where hand dressing techniques took place. The surface remains are extensive ranging from tiered mills to simple crushing houses. Reference will be made to the conservation work being carried out.

Duration - All Day.

Maximum No. SIXTY.

# 5. NAMHO NEWS

## INSTITUTE OF MINING HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

A meeting was held at Ironbridge on 24-25th November 1990 to discuss the setting up of an organisation provisionally known as the Institute of Mining Studies. On the Saturday, short reports on current research were given by David Dixon, Paul Sowan and Lyn Willies. This was followed by seminars on :

Mining History as a Service to the Community - Adrian Pearce.  
Working with Consultants - Ivor Brown.  
Preserving Regional Terminology - Peter Burgess.  
Glynn Pits - Marilyn Palmer & Peter Neavesson.  
Hushing - David Cranstone.

On the Sunday, the formal meeting was held chaired by Adrian Pearce, who outlined the developments since the initial meeting and the current response from NAMHO. Lyn Willies detailed the recommendations of the Working Party and a general discussion followed on the aims and objectives of the proposed Institute. It was agreed that there was a need for an organisation to promote and set standards for mining history, site interpretation and restoration. It should cover a broad spread of interests and expertise and serve to bridge the gap between the professional and skilled amateur.

It was formally agreed to set up a separate organisation known as the Institute of Mining History & Archaeology (IMHA) and to seek to interface this with NAMHO during the latter's consideration of its future structure and role. It was further agreed to adopt a two tier structure of the IMHA, with membership open to all interested individuals and Fellow status granted to those demonstrating a minimum standard of competence in various aspects. All those attending the meeting were deemed to hold member status only, the matter of Fellow status would be left until an election procedure was determined. Temporary officers were elected as follows :

Chairman :	Roger Burt
Secretary/Treasurer :	Lyn Willies
Committee :	David Bick
	Alan Buckley
	David Cranstone
	Les Riley.

Anyone interested in joining  
the IMHA should contact the Secretary, Lyn Willies :

'Hilderston', Dale Rd, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire T. 0629-584322

## GREAT ORME BRONZE AGE WORKINGS

Work has commenced on clearing the site around Vivians Shaft on the Great Orme to construct a visitor's centre for Spring 1991. About 30,000 cubic metres of spoil has been removed and this has revealed a large opencast feature with several new mine entrances. About 5000 bones were recovered, including a human jaw which has been sent to Cardiff Dental School for forensic examination. Many of the bones show signs of wear at one or both ends and seem to have been used as chisels or gouges. Copper minerals have impregnated the bone surfaces imparting a green colour, whilst manganese has turned them black.

Of current interest is the research on the 2400 year old body of "Lindow Man" found in a Cheshire marsh. This was also found to have traces of copper carbonate and iron oxide in the superficial skin layer and it suggests that these were used as cosmetics. This may suggest yet another use for the copper ore mined on the Great Orme.

In addition, about 500 stone tools were found varying from 0.25Kg to 29Kg. It is not known if the latter was suspended from a framework or whether it belonged to a strong individual. All are beach-derived cobbles of hard igneous rocks, mainly hammer stones with occasional mortar and anvil stones. (GOES)

## CRITERIA FOR PRESERVATION

The original 2 reports have been split into 4, viz.

Coal	)	
Fireclay	)	Nigel Chapman
Iron	)	
Miscellaneous		Adrian Pearce.

The Coal report is finished and the Miscellaneous report has reached final draft stage. The latter is being circulated to nominated persons for comment and should be finished by February. One thing that has emerged is that the reports are a useful overview of mining in the UK. Thus, as well as being useful in determining the necessary criteria for scheduling applications, they may also be of use for reference purposes. It is intended that a copy of the final reports will be distributed to each NAMHD organisation for internal use.

## AIA COMPUTER SURVEY

The AIA is assisting in the development of a national database of industrial archaeology sites in Great Britain. For this, they will be heavily dependant upon local societies and individuals who may already have developed local or specialised databases on personal computers. They wish to compile a register of societies and individuals with access to PCs (whether or not they already have a database), together with details of hardware, software and information fields where appropriate. A questionnaire can be obtained from Dr Miles Oglethorpe, RCAHMS, 54, Melville St, Edinburgh EH3 7HF.



The use of correct local terminology was discussed at the recent IMHA seminar. Peter Burgess has submitted the following discussion paper and would be grateful if member organisations reproduced it to their members for discussion/comment.

Most readers would probably have no difficulty in explaining what a mine is, since they spend a significant amount of their time exploring and researching them. Most of the time, you would probably be right in calling the holes you explore "mines" but when they were being dug they were probably never called this. It would be a sad neglect of our responsibilities as mining historians to forget the terminology of our predecessors.

If we seek an "official" definition of a mine, we must look to the 1872 Metalliferous Mines Regulations Act, wherein we find that a mine is any subterranean artificial excavation exploited for minerals of one sort or another. Although grossly oversimplified, this is largely how we use the word at the end of the 20th century. The words "mine", "quarry", "pit", etc. are much older, however, than the artificial naming imposed on us by the 19th century legislators. It is important to recognise the 'true' meaning of the words we use, so we can better appreciate historical documents relating to mining sites and also restore part of our mining heritage - the terminology of times past.

How can we tell what a site should be called? Without documentary evidence or memories of retired miners, a few simple guidelines should help. The biggest mistake is to assume that a mine must be underground. The huge openwork at Parys Mountain is called a mine! Conversely, the active underground limestone workings in Derbyshire may NOT be mines - the clue is the mineral sought. Underground workings for non-ferrous metal ores may be safely termed as "mines". Underground workings for building stone and slate are not so simple since they were always referred to as "quarries"! A quarry is simply an excavation, surface or underground, from which squared stone was removed. The workings for Bath stone, Welsh slate, ragstone, firestone and flagstone are all underground quarries and not mines.

Old workings for coal, fireclay and bulk limestone were usually termed "pits" or "collieries" and not mines. However, materials such as chalk and sand do not seem to have been called any of these. The word "Denehole" (a chalk bellpit) was coined by Victorians AFTER such workings were being dug - what was the original name? The case of iron is a law unto itself. In the Weald, it was the iron ore itself that was known as "mine" and the extraction sites were called "minepits". In Dartmoor it was worked by "mines" and in Somerset and Wales by "pits".

The subject, as you can see, is a complex one. There are problems which defy a standardised terminology, viz.

- Using "mine" as an overall term means that old references to "quarries" may be overlooked as surface workings.
- Using the old terms for purist reasons may not always be correct since 20th century workings were probably called mines by the men who made them.
- Mining historians who move to other areas, or study them at a distance, may use terms with which they are familiar but these may be of local relevance only and not appropriate elsewhere.
- A site that was worked for several centuries may have begun life being called a "pit" by miners and ended up as a "mine".

It is up to the individual mining historian to decide what terminology to use but, whatever names are adopted, it is important to remember that the vocabulary of mineral extraction has been evolving for many centuries. To ignore what our predecessors used as their normal day-to-day language will only serve to confuse those that follow us, when they put our research efforts into the context of many centuries of British mining. The ideal would be to use the term that was in use at the time of working.

I have made no attempt to discuss the terminology of mine features, methods, tools, etc. There is considerable scope for studying different words and drawing up local/national glossaries. If you are studying 'mines' for which the terminology is well-known, make an effort to preserve the vocabulary because nobody else will.

### AIA FIELD VISITS

The AIA is introducing a new venture by arranging field visits to sites of industrial archaeological interest. The first one will be held between May 28th - June 2nd 1991 in the Bristol area and members of NAMHO organisations are entitled to attend. Of the week's programme, items of interest are

Wed - colliery sites around Midsomer Norton and Radstock.  
 Thu - Underground Quarry Museum, Corsham.  
 Fri - Redcliffe Caves (for the glass industry).  
 Sat - lead mining sites in the Mendips.  
 Sun - mining sites in Golden Valley.

The cost of the full week is £9.00 or £3.00 for a single day. Details from D.Alderton, 48, Quay St, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8EY (T. 0986-872343).

### AROUND THE REGIONS

#### Cornwall

Carnon Consolidated have submitted proposals to turn the Wheal Jane Mine near Truro into a £35 million leisure, tourist and business complex. They claim that this is the only way that their other mine at South Crofty can be kept open and it allows for Wheal Jane to be re-worked at a future date if the price of tin rises sufficiently. Included in the proposals are mining trails and a trip 200ft underground. (CBMS)

The mining engineers, Wardell Armstrong, have been commissioned by the government to investigate ways of reclaiming the white china clay waste tips in Cornwall and Devon. Possibilities being considered are amenity and agricultural use. (NMRS)

#### Devon

Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit has won an AIA Fieldwork Award for recording work at the Gawton Mine and Arsenic Works. (AIA)

#### Gwent

Leicestershire Industrial History Society has also won an AIA Award for recording work at Glyn Pits, Pontypool. This was carried out with the aid of a Lloyds Bank Award for Independent Archaeology. (AIA)

Marine Colliery at Ebbw Vale is to be obliterated under a restoration scheme but it has been surveyed by RCAHMW. (AIA)

The site of the Gwaelod-y-Garth iron mine is threatened by quarrying but a public enquiry is to be held following claims of its archaeological importance. (AIA)

9.  
Kent

Kent Underground Research Group have recently gained access to an underground quarry for ragstone at Maidstone. This is an important find since there is only one other known accessible site in the UK. Surveying is in hand and it has been necessary to fit a vandal-proof gate since it is sited in a public park. There is a likelihood that access can be gained to further workings in both this system and adjacent sites. (KURG)

Norfolk

Wardell Armstrong are about to report after a £120,000 underground investigation into the chalk mines of Norwich. Several trial adits have been driven and a number of unknown chalk workings discovered. (NMRS)

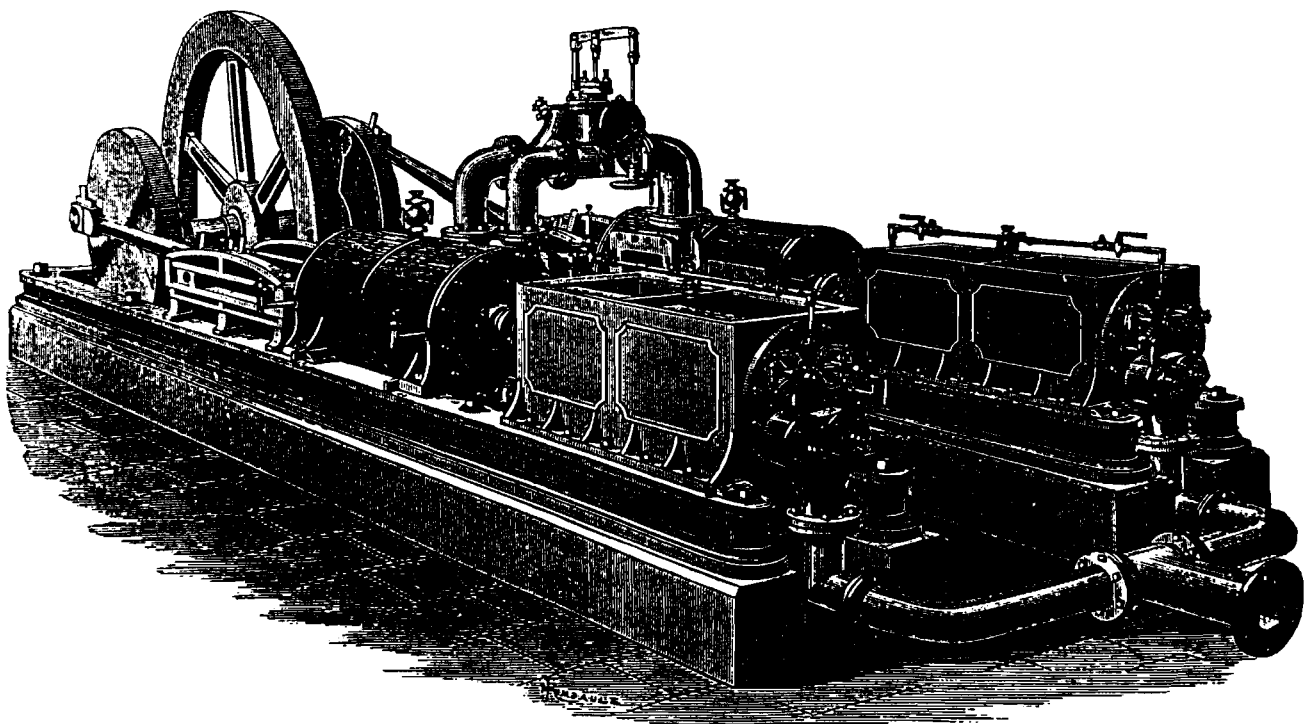
Surrey

Unit 2 Cave Research & Exploration has recently changed its name to Wealden Cave & Mine Society and it intends to seek charitable status.

## PAIR OF AIR COMPRESSORS

(AS MADE FOR THE RIO TINTO MINES IN SPAIN).

Air Cylinders 24 in. diameter, and Steam 20 in.;  
Stroke, 5 ft.



H. & Co. have a large number of Compressor Patterns on hand of various sizes, and, as they are constantly making Compressors, can deliver at short notice, and guarantee quality.

## BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

### Published by the Friends of Whitehaven Museum

**WHITEHAVEN — AN OUTLINE HISTORY** by Harry Fancy (1977) 25p (A5 x 8 pages). A condensed account of the development of Whitehaven from the earliest times which serves as a good general introduction at a very reasonable price.

**SICKNESS & POVERTY IN 19th CENTURY WHITEHAVEN** by Harry Fancy (1986) £3 (A4 x 50 pages). Originally based on a reprint of the Annual Report of the Whitehaven Dispensary, 1807, this 'archive pack' has been expanded to include reproductions of thirty five 19th century documents. These include maps, tables and newspaper cuttings relating to the hospitals and poor of Whitehaven.

**MAN AND INDUSTRY IN COPELAND** by John J. Martin (1985) (A4 x 9 pages). This introductory work outlines the development of industry in the area from earliest times to the rise of mining and its later decline. It includes illustrations and several useful tables of populations and production, plus a bibliography for anyone wanting to study the subject further. 50p

**WHITEHAVEN AND THE TOBACCO TRADE** by Nancy Eaglesham (1979) 50p (A5 x 16 pages). In 1745, Whitehaven was described as the "third, if not the second port in the kingdom in the tobacco way" and this booklet explains the trade and the reasons for Whitehaven's prominence and later decline. Contains illustrations and an old sketch map, c.1760.

**THE SALT TRADE OF WEST CUMBRIA** by John J. Martin (1985) (A4 x 8 pages). The production of salt from seawater was a minor but important industry in this area. With the aid of illustrations from William Brownrigg's treatise on "The Art of Making Common Salt", John Martin outlines the development of the art from medieval times. 30p

**"TO THE KINGS DECEIT"** by Ronald T. Gibben, edited by Harry Fancy (1983) £2.00 (A5 x 48 pages, illustrated with fold map). The author, a Customs and Excise Officer for 40 years, was uniquely qualified to write this "Study of Smuggling in the Solway". Every incident described is based on documentary evidence and his copious notes are deposited in the Cumbria Record Office at Carlisle. This is without question the most authentic account of smuggling in the area yet published.

**WHITEHAVEN'S LINKS WITH AMERICA** by Harry Fancy 30p (A4 x 8 pages). An introduction to some of the connections which indicate Whitehaven's past importance, including Paul Jones, George Washington, trade and the trans-atlantic cables.

**WHITEHAVEN BATHS ONE HUNDRED YEARS (1884-1984)** by Andrew Boyd (1984) £1 (A5 x 31 pages). A history of the baths from the original concept as a means of improving the sanitary conditions of the town to the design of the new swimming pool at Richmond. Contains illustrations and a fold out map of Whitehaven, dated 1790.

**TRACING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY** by Jene Protheroe-Beynon (1986) 50p (A4 x 6 pages). This book is a very useful starting point for anyone interested in genealogy. It explains methods of obtaining information and contains many addresses and book titles that could be of use.

**THE TONNAGE OF SHIPS** by Trevor Morgan (1987) 50p (A4 x 8 pages). The method of calculating the tonnage of ships has altered several times. Includes examples of some Whitehaven built ships. Trevor Morgan explains the difference between "Old" and "New" measure.

**CHILDREN OF THE PITS** by Ray Devlin (1988) (A5 x 62 pages). This book explains how coal mining used to be carried out and the involvement of children. It contains many illustrations, tables of accidents and children killed, a map showing the locations of local pits, a glossary of mining terms and a useful bibliography. £2.95

**HOMAGE TO THE HERDWICK** by Bill Rawling (1988) 50p (A4 x 14 pages). Bill Rawling, a Cumbrian hill farmer, is one of the leading experts on Cumbria's unique breed of sheep and explains the origins, nature and farming of the Herdwick. local sheep farming farms, and reprints of essays that 1879.

**T.R. CRAMPTON AND HIS PATENT LOCOMOTIVES** by Harry Fancy (1984) 50p (A5 x 6 pages). Crampton enabled locomotives with the same power as those operating on the famous Great Western broad gauge railway to operate on standard track. The first examples were constructed at Lowca near Whitehaven. Although his engines enjoyed little success in Britain, they became extremely successful on the continent, and many of his invention influenced locomotive design all over the world. Although designed to accompany a print of Crampton's locomotive "London" the leaflet is available separately.

## INFORMATION SHEETS — 10p EACH

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHITEHAVEN HARBOUR** by Harry Fancy, Curator (1982). Plan showing the names of the piers and their dates of construction.

**THE WHITEHAVEN SEWERAGE SYSTEM** by Roger Fisher (1985). Following outbreaks of contagious diseases, the provision of pure water supplies and improved sanitation were essential to the town. This leaflet deals with the vital aspect of local history which is generally ignored.

**ASSAULT AND BATTERIES** by Harry Fancy (1985). An outline of Whitehaven's fortifications in the 18th and 19th centuries.

**MR CHRISTIAN IN WEST CUMBERLAND** by Camilla Hampshire (1986). Famous for his part in the Mutiny on the "Bounty", John Christian was a Cumbrian of Manx descent.

**THE ROBERTS SMOKE HOOD** edited by Harry Fancy (1986). Contemporary descriptions of a device invented by a local miner which allows the wearer to enter a room filled with smoke, an early form of breathing apparatus for mines rescue work.

**HAIG PIT, WHITEHAVEN** by Harry Fancy (1982, revised 1987). Outline of the history of the last deep pit in the Cumbrian coalfield, which closed in 1986.

**NAUTICAL SAYINGS** by Harry Fancy (1982). Common sayings whose nautical origins are often forgotten.

**NAUTICAL SUPERSTITIONS** by Harry Fancy (1982). Sailors were, and many still are, very superstitious: this leaflet explains some of their beliefs.

**WHITEHAVEN POTTERY** by Harry Fancy (1982). Few people outside the area realise that Whitehaven once possessed several potteries, one of which was fairly extensive, employing 150 workers.

**SHIPBUILDERS OF WHITEHAVEN** by Harry Fancy (1982). A concise check-list of shipbuilders, their active periods and number of vessels built.

**PIONEERS OF COAL MINING AT WHITEHAVEN** by Harry Fancy (1982). Although the Cumbrian coalfield is relatively small, Whitehaven made a remarkable contribution to mining technology, particularly in the field of safety.

**WHITEHAVEN AND RUM BUTTER** by Emily Redmond (1982). Rum Butter and Brandy Butter are traditional Cumbrian dishes; Mrs. Emily Redmond argues that this delicious concoction probably originates in or around Whitehaven, which imported large quantities of spirits.

**THE CLAY TOBACCO PIPE INDUSTRY IN WEST CUMBRIA** by William Fletcher (1982). Whitehaven was one of the leading ports for the tobacco trade and several pipe manufacturers set up kilns in the region.

**COMMERCIAL FISHING FROM WHITEHAVEN** by Rosemary Galer (1983). Although fishing was an important occupation from the earliest times in this area, little is known of its early history. Miss Galer outlines the recent decline of the industry.

**BUSES IN THE WHITEHAVEN AREA** by Harry Postlethwaite (1983). A devoted "bus enthusiast", Harry Postlethwaite traces the development of this vital means of transport in the area.

**"THE ST. BEES MAN"** by John Todd (1983). John Todd who was closely involved with the excavation, outlines the significance of this remarkable archeological find. The shrouds from the body dating from around 1300 A.D. are displayed in Whitehaven Museum.

**CAPTAIN JOSEPH HUDDART**, by Eric Hill (1984) 25p. (A4 x 4 pages). Huddart, who was born at Allonby in 1740 or 1741, was a quite outstanding local personality. After several years as master of a vessel he had designed and built himself, he investigated the resistance of water to the hulls of model ships, became an expert on the design of docks, invented improvements in the manufacture of ropes, became a leading hydrographer and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He died and was buried in London in 1816.

## MUSEUM REPRINTS

**A VISIT TO WILKINSON'S POTTERY, WHITEHAVEN 1851** 50p (A4 x 9 pages). This is a reprint in a new format of one of a fascinating series of articles entitled "Old John and I" which appeared in the Whitehaven Herald and vividly describes a tour of Whitehaven Pottery and the processes carried out there. Also included are press cuttings, maps and pottery marks.

**HODGSON'S REMINISCENCES, SUPERSTITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF WHITEHAVEN (1853)** 50p (A4 x 8 pages). Written by 'Putty' Joe Hodgson, a fascinating character of the last century, this complete reprint in a new format is one of his publications and tells how various festivals were celebrated in the town, and describes the town's facilities at that date, along with other accounts and also a few of Hodgson's poems.

**HODGSON'S GUIDE TO PORT HAMILTON AND FLESWICK BEACH** (undated, c. 1850-60) 35p (A4 x 5 pages). A new format reprint of a small booklet produced by 'Putty' Joe early last century. It is a tour guide of the coast just south of Whitehaven, originally intended for townspeople taking a day out to visit such curiosities as the 'Castle' and 'Museum', but also includes a period account of the coastline, Paul Jones and his poem "Port Hamilton".

**BI-CENTENARY OF WHITEHAVEN MISSION (1906/1989)** 50p (A5 x 20 pages). This booklet was originally produced for the bi-centenary of the Catholic Mission, but this facsimile reprint was produced for the centenary of the Quay Street Chapel. It gives the history of Catholics and the mission in Whitehaven with a list of priests since 1706.

**1932 SALE CATALOGUE OF TOWER BREWERY, WHITEHAVEN** 50p (A5 x 12 pages). Reprint in reduced format. Gives details of 27 lots, which consist of West Cumbrian public houses and associated properties.

**1925 SALE CATALOGUE OF DALZELL'S LICENSED PREMISES** 50p (A5 x 31 pages). Reprint in reduced format. Includes descriptions of 27 lots, most of which were public houses of Whitehaven and the surrounding area. Details include barratage and sale price.

**AN ACCOUNT OF THE COAL MINES NEAR WHITEHAVEN (1801)** £1.50 (A4 x 18 pages). This is a complete reprint in a new format taken from Dr. Dixon's biography of Vm. Brownrigg, which contained this account of mining in the area. Contains numerous tables of mine depths and strata, plus a long poem by Dr. Dalton.

**THE EVE OF THE GOLDEN WEDDING** by John Graham (1910) 30p (A4 x 6 pages). A complete text reprint in a revised format of a graphic account of a family affected by the 1910 Wellington Pit Disaster, originally printed as a pamphlet shortly after the disaster.

### REPRINTS OF CONTEMPORARY PRESS ACCOUNTS OF MINING DISASTERS

Wellington Pit	1910	137 men killed	(A4 x 12 pages)	50p
Haig Pit	1922	39 " "	(A4 x 11 pages)	50p
Haig Pit	1927 & 28	17 " "	(A4 x 29 pages)	1.00
Haig Pit	1931	27 " "	(A4 x 28 pages)	1.00
Lowca Pit	1946	15 " "	(A4 x 5 pages)	50p
William Pit	1947	104 " "	(A4 x 5 pages)	50p

These are copies of cuttings taken from newspapers at the time and often include press photographs and diagrams of the mine, plus lists of those killed.

**JOHN PAUL JONES' ATTACK ON WHITEHAVEN** Reprint (1976) from Lloyds Evening Post (1778) single sheet (A3) 20p.

**JOHN PAUL JONES — THE RAID ON WHITEHAVEN** Single Sheet (A3). Companion piece to the above. Reprinted (1987) from "The Cumberland Magazine, April 1778" 20p.

**JOHN PAUL JONES, PIRATE** (A4 x 5 pages). Reprint 1987 of the 19th century pamphlet 40p

## SHIPBUILDING CHECKLISTS

**SHIPBUILDING CHECKLISTS OF WHITEHAVEN, WORKINGTON AND MARYPORT** These three volumes are the most comprehensive lists of locally built ships and are the result of extensive research by many workers. The sources include local newspapers, various shipping lists and Lloyd's Registers. Details of tonnage and dates given, where possible.

**SHIPBUILDING AT MARYPORT (1989)** £1.50 (A5 x 27 pages)

**SHIPBUILDING AT WHITEHAVEN (1984)** £1.20 (A4 x 56 pages)

**SHIPBUILDING AT WORKINGTON (& HARRINGTON) (1985)** £1.20 (A4 x 40 pages)

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11.

# SOLILOQUY

## OR THE ART OF INTERLOCUTORY SELF INTERCOURSE

There I was filing negatives away in their album, busy but bored, viewing the occasional neg against the light .....

'That would make an interesting photo piece for a newsletter article,' thinks I.

"Narrrr," says my alter ego, "To do that you'd have to pick up a pen and write about it, composing articles and all that yuck besides, who then would believe that you're too busy digging and that to write about whats been happening."

My conscience again....

' But there's so much to write about, what about Logan,? what about Magpie ?, the Sisis?, the day level dig?, you know there s been a lot happening since your last contribution, tell them about it, do it ....'

" But, But ...."

And as my apathy waned under the scrutiny of my enthusiastic co - ego, as the ennui slipped from my shoulders as if from the relief of some horrendous burden, so then did the spirit arise within and suddenly the prospect of " all that bleeding roughing out, struggling for words, cutting and arranging photos, getting them bromided, typing...Arrgh... I hate typing ...." ('carefull Anton or you'll invoke that apathetic apology again ') seemed somehow not so bad.

" I know, I'll think about it when i've finished stowing these negs."

' Well,... only if you promise.'

" Sure... Okay... well perhaps..."

Later on ...

" Not bad shots these, must be the ones we took last christmas when we were in Wales."

' Yes, here's one of Manod ... look at those underground structures ..... fascinating. Oh look, there's one of that coffin we found there.'

" Yeah I remember feeling the chill of superstition when we found that sitting there in the darkness.... brrrrgh..."

' Well, how about an article using some of these shots, perhaps make it a bit of a photo spectacular, not too much writing just a bit of blurb about what we did and .....

..... and here I am, pen in hand, amazed at how that snivelling creep has got my enthusiasm going by his devious connivings. In fact so eager am I now that the old pen is twitching and bucking like a possessed thing, its like the dowser who understands not the force which driveth his rod yet resigns himself to its agency, knowing not whither it may lead nor what will spring forth.....

...OH NO!...ITS

## WHAT WE DONE DURING THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

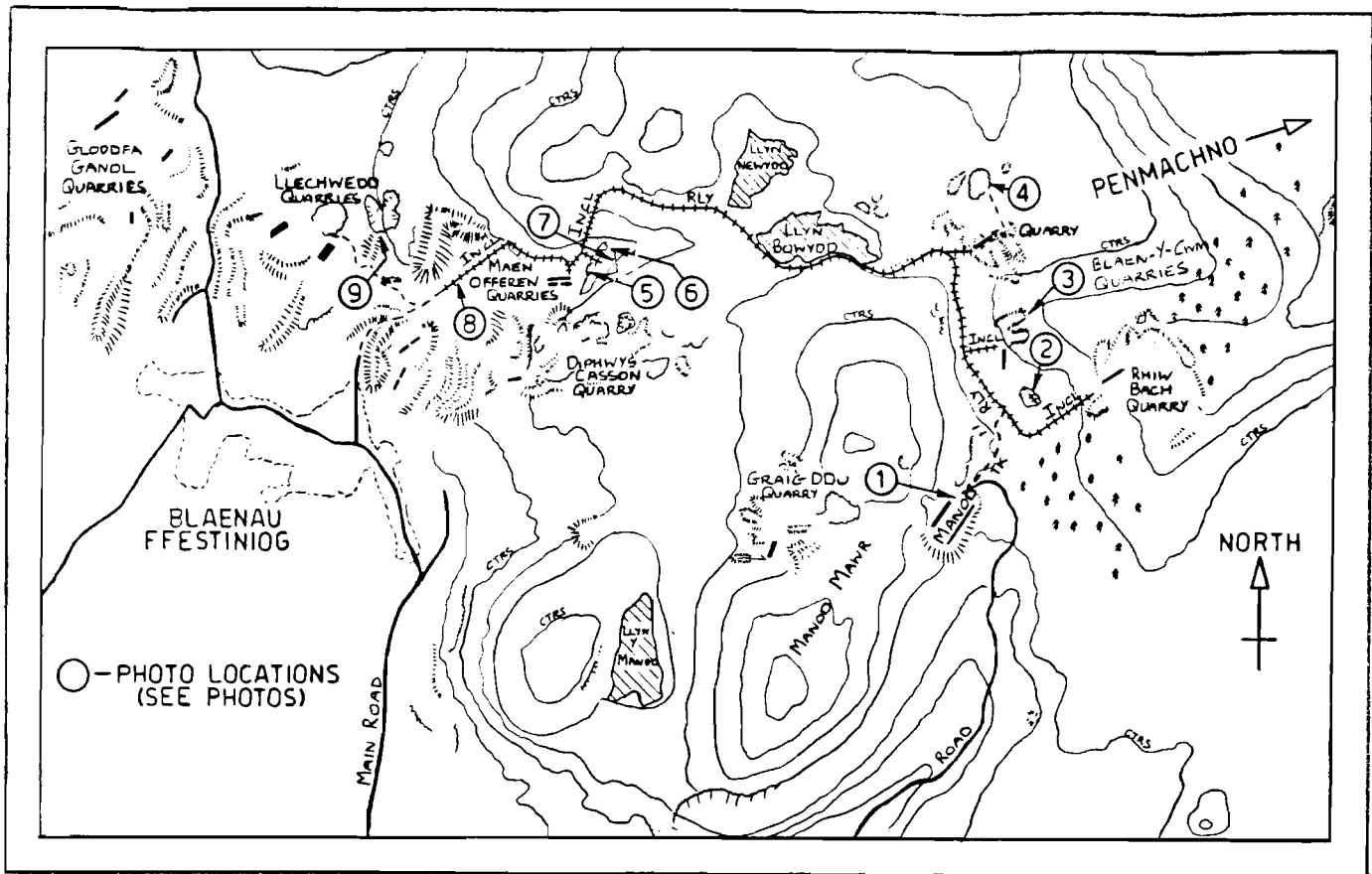
BY ANTON AGED 13 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

That's Christmas 89 - 90 by the way.

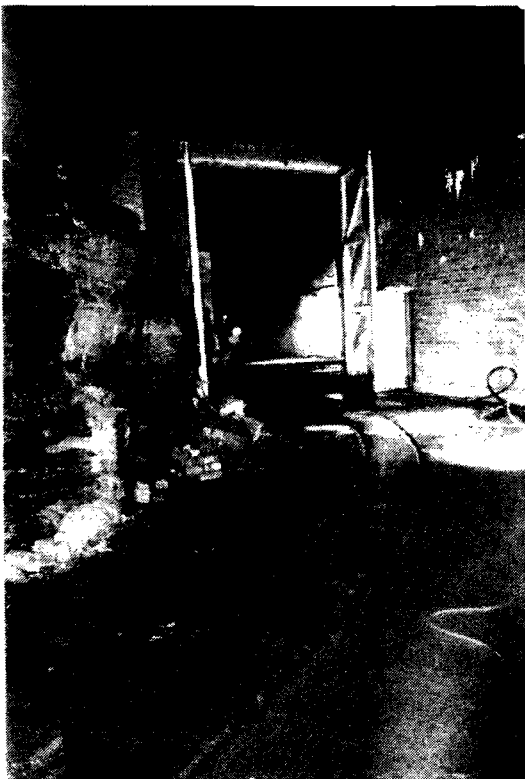
Looking at those negatives now I wonder why the heck I had'nt written a little article at the time about the stuff we looked at .... apathy I suppose ... but here it is now, hope it's of interest.

We'd gone down to Sheila's parents at Dolgellau for Christmas and after a couple of days of gorging and greetings I began to wonder if I hadn't lost the use of my legs ... you know how it is ... and partly to test this out and partly to avoid yet another film with a seasonal flavour we opted for a few days of physical activity.

(contd .....



MAP OF BLAENAU FFESTINIOG AND ENVIRONS



Manods a funny old place, you drive up this drizzly valley passing the occasional spoil tip on either flank then all of a sudden you're up above the cloud base and down to 10 feet visibility, you park within 50 feet of the quarry yet still need a compass to find it sort of thing. On a clear day the valley is dominated by the enormous slate tip which landmarks the place, the starkness of its aspect being but a veneer over the older duller material beneath.

photo - " Welcome to Manod, on my left Ladies and Gentlemen you will see the Crown Jewels whilst to my right hangs The Laughing Cavalier." Alsatian by courtesy of Securicor.  
Photo loc 1.

(contd ....)

A level to the rear of the Manod quarry shops lets into the lower workings and from this an underground incline on your right leads up to a vent grill housing and an access door to the storage 'blocks'.

It is alleged that this is where the national treasures were stored in times of national strife ( WW 2 ? ) and certainly considerable importance must have been attached to their contents for each of the blocks is equipped with its own independant heating and ventilation plant, and electrical service switch-gear is in abundance. The lower storage block is served by rails from the main level and secured by massive wooden doors.



photo - The storage blocks are arranged over two levels within the closeheads.  
Photo loc 1.

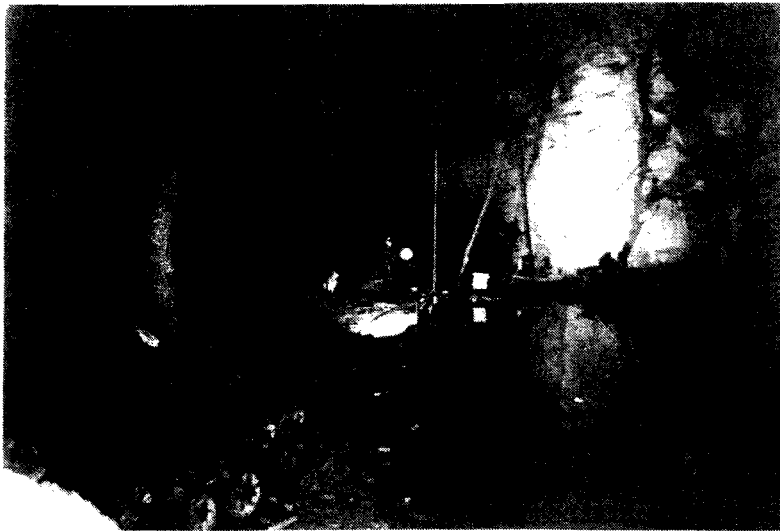


photo - View over a portion of the lower block.  
Photo loc 1.

(contd ....)

\* \* \* \* \*

Percy PP says : A pitprop in time saves mine.



Mining remains are fairly abundant elsewhere within Manod with bogies, shearlegs, railed inclines etc to be seen about the place.

Later on the same day we spent some hours fruitlessly looking for the underground engine which I thought I'd read about somewhere to the East of Manod Quarry. In this direction the little quarry of Blaen-y-Cwm is to be found with its superb example of a masonry built incline (see photo).



photo - Blaen-y-Cwm incline.  
Photo loc 2.

The quarries of Rhiw Bach, Blaen-y-Cwm and Maen Offeren were linked by a narrow gauge railway (or was it a horse tramway ?) and a following day was spent traversing this route. It makes a fascinating walk with remains to be seen on either hand. Anyone in the area with a non mining spouse should get themselves dropped off at Manod and traverse this route whilst your other half drives round to pick you up after you have descended through Maen Offeren quarries to Blaenau Ffestiniog (see map).

(contd .... )

\* \* \* \* \*

Sammy Stemple says - A pitprop is just a stemple with its brains sucked out. 40



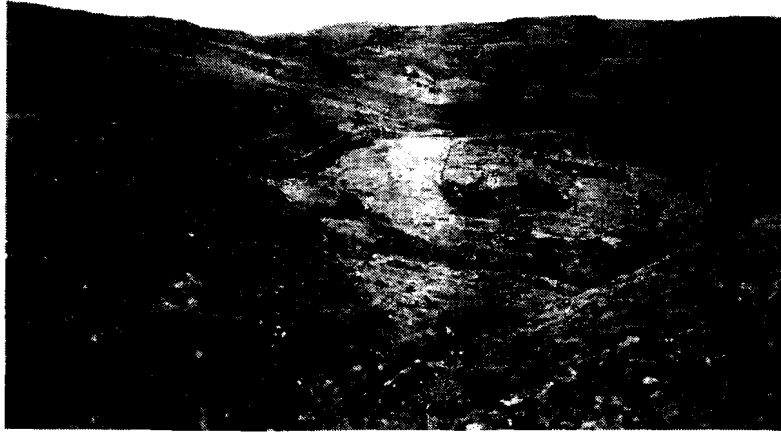


photo - View over Blaen-y-Cwm quarry buildings with quarry loc 4 in distance.  
This photo loc 3.



photo - View into quarry.  
Photo loc 4.

The railway goes right around the back of Manod Mawr to the top of an external incline which descends several hundred feet to the top Maen Offeren quarry site. Here there are extensive slate sheds (working I presume) and the continuing tramway system which by traverses and inclines once carried slates all the way down to the Ffestiniog railway in the town below.

(contd.... )

\* \* \* \* \*



From this incline top and viewing slightly to your left across the site there stands an island of rock behind which is a smallish quarry. It is here that discovered the head of an obviously working incline which descends into the depths of the mountain. Our trespass became apparent upon this find, though we took a few photos before exiting the system of levels which brought us here. (see photos)

photos - Views of incline and incline head, note 4 man incline car.  
Photo loc 5.



Triple railed !

Close by is a snug little air winch house with the little twin cylinder double acting winch engine still inside (see photo) and across the way is the round bore level (see photo). Presumably the machine cutter that forms this is in the nature of a hole saw - a sort of circular saw - and my theory is that the cylindrical slate cores thus formed are removed to the shops for riving into 1/2 " thick slabs, green baize is then stuck to one side and the product is then sold locally as giant tea coasters....!

(contd ... )



photo - Air winch, note broken right  
hand cylinder in foreground.  
Photo loc 7.



photo - Round bore  
level.  
Photo loc 6.

(contd .... )

\* \* \* \* \*

A further couple of days were spent looking around the lower Maen Offeren site and the top of Llechwedd which is nearby to the West.



photo - Abandoned bogie train at foot of incline at the lower Maen Offeren site.  
Photo loc 8.



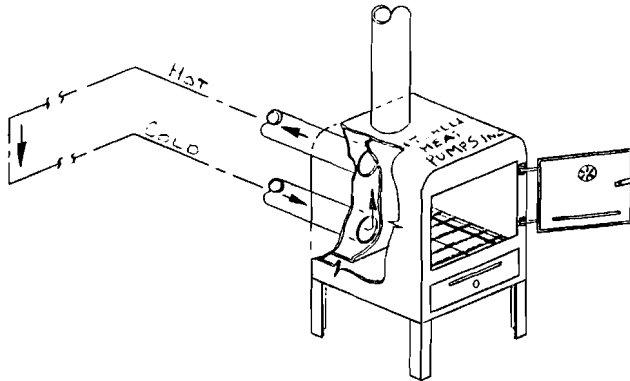
photo - Narrow gauge powder waggon, still in use this one is.  
Photo loc 9.

Llechwedd is one heck of a site, look at the map and it extends from somewhere between photo locs 8 and 9 Westwards right down to the road - thats about  $2/3$  of a mile - and the place is worth a day of its own accord (a foot - path bounds the site to the North)

(contd .... )

\* \* \* \* \*

Now, I could probably go on reproducing photos till this N/Letter is full, however a stop must be called somewhere for I swear I can hear the Treasurer muttering about Bromide costs and the like. Just before I go though, there's one little feature I'd like to present for your interest ... "coz arve niver sin the like 'afore Guv"...



Immediately to the West of and in close proximity to the powder wagon (loc 9) lies an open quarry through which an abandoned double line incline descends into the hillside below. To the rear of the drum house is built a little miners drying room which contains a contrivance of such cunning simplicity that mention it I must .... a thermo syphon heater system .... see sketch.

The perimeter of the room is equipped with iron racks upon which wet articles of clothing - boots etc would be placed, and below the racks runs the water

pipe loop fed by the boiler unit. The hot water in the back boiler rises and feeds the top line whilst the cold water descends and returns via the lower loop line .... simple Huh !

There it is then, Blaenau Ffestiniog to my mind ranks as slate Mecca of the British Isles and makes an excellent choice for this years NAMHO conference.

PS - All quarries referred to are strictly in fact slate mines, underground extraction predominating in this area.

\* \* \* \* \*

## NENTHEAD '91'

Earlier in the year while discussing the Nenthead weekend, Ian Matheson raised the question of accommodation, "are there any plans to stay at Cherry Tree Cottage?". Well for the benefit of new members a word or two of explanation. Cherry Tree Cottage is the first house on the right as you enter Nenthead on the Weardale road (A689) and is run by a lady called Helen Sherlock (who also has the village store).

In the 'good old days', there was a lot of CAT interest in the Nenthead area, you then had to book early to ensure a bed at Helen's. Then there was a period when interest waned, numbers dwindled, & decisions as to whether people were going for the full weekend were made later and later. Our former status as honoured guests soured a bit. The decision had to be taken to make everyone responsible for their own accommodation (camping local hostelry etc).

This has generally worked out OK, but with some loss to the social side and the camaraderie of these weekends.

The questions are these:-

Are you going to Nenthead for the June meet?

Would you like to stay at Cherry Tree Cottage?

Helen may not want us back, I know she was disappointed the way things fizzled out. I will approach her to see if we can stay there again **only if enough people will commit themselves sufficiently in advance.**

What is on offer in terms of activities? The long promised Caplecleugh - Rampgill through trip with Peter Fleming seems pretty certain for the Sunday. This is a superb trip, though long & very wet, see Newsletters 18 & 27 for more details. (An easier alternative will probably also be available).

For the Saturday I would like to do the Smallcleugh / Proud's sump to Carr's level trip but for the moment nothing has been decided, has anyone any suggestions?

## JOURNAL NUMBER 4

As you will have noted earlier in this Newsletter there have been some changes in committee and other 'honorary' CATMHS posts following the AGM. After establishing and producing 3 very successful journals Chris Jones is taking a well deserved rest from this responsibility. Don Borthwick now has the great 'honour' of taking on the task (protestations of "I would gladly accept a committee post but unfortunately I live too far away." does not work with this post.)

It is hoped to publish 'Mine Explorer' - number 4 early in 1992 so get writing! I have offers of some interesting articles from what may be termed the stalwarts of our journal, but contributions are sought from anyone with something to add to the general fund of published data. Contributions long or short articles have ranged from 1 to 'y' pages in preceding journals.

## Pary's Mountain.

Newsletter number 27 p5 noted that a trail leaflet had been produced Pary's mine site on Anglesey. Unfortunately this does not seem to be the case. After a visit last summer to this very important site, steps were taken to obtain a copy of the leaflet. It appears that

publication has 'fallen through'. The site is 'sort of' accessible, some way-marking arrows seem to indicate an approved path on part of the site, 'keep out' signs steer you away from some of the more interesting areas. The mine that broke the Bristol smelters stranglehold on the copper trade deserves more recognition.

## Books galore.

Publishers of books with a mining / underground bias have been busy of late, with some interesting items to tug at the purse strings. Firstly the long awaited new edition of Dunham part 1 or Geology of Northern Pennine Orefield Vol 1 Tyne to Stainmore is now on sale. It is published in soft covers (like V2 Stainmore to Craven) with additional illustrations, the eight figure grid references for mines will be very much welcomed. A price of £32 puts it very much into a specialist / academic categorisation, if you are interested in the Northern Pennine Orefield then it is an essential part of the literature.

Another important book on the Northern Pennines is 'Life & Work of the Northern Lead Miner' by Raistrick & Roberts, originally published jointly by Northern Mines & Beamish Museum. The first limited edition has become scarce and much sought after, the good news is that it is now back in print by courtesy of Alan Sutton at a price of £15. Basically it comprises of 200 photographs supported by interesting and authoritative captions. Geographically the area covered is that of Dunham's 1 & 2 plus Cumbria, there are some good Greenside pictures.

If you aspire to taking taking photographs underground & think that everything is against your success, then read 'To Photograph Darkness: The History of Underground & Flash Photography' by Chris Howes. Chris is a superb cave photographer an author of 'Cave Photography: A Practical Guide'. (See CDJ's review newsletter in a previous Newsletter.). Consider large heavy cameras, slow film, magnesium powder as a light source, one picture and wait a day or more for the smoke to clear! perhaps one should complain less & try harder. Published by Alan Sutton at £25, it is printed on good quality paper in hard covers. Mainly covering cave photography (with early chapters on the Paris catacombs and some sewers), one chapter looks at photography in mines.

Also from Alan Sutton is 'Weardale in Old Photographs' collected by June Crosby. Mining, quarrying and related industries have quite a strong showing taking 19 out of the 150 pages. Useful if your interests extend a little outside of Cumbria.

For those of who's interests are less parochial and more statistical, there is an addition to Roger Burt's mineral statistics. This new volume covering Shropshire & Montgomeryshire with Cheshire & Staffordshire, is as usual published by the University of Exeter Press & costs £7-95.

Finally, books in David Bick's five volume series on the Old Metal Mines of Mid Wales first published in 1974-78 gradually went out of print. Steps are being taken to ensure their continued availability, parts 4 & 5 (Montgomeryshire, Aberdovey, Dinas, Mawddwy & Llangynog) are available now as a single volume priced at £5-50 published by Pound House, Newent, Glos. Parts 1 & 2 are promised as a single volume also a part 6 entitled 'A Miscellany'.

# M E E T S

BONSOR EAST SHAFT, JAN 4TH 1991.

Dave Bridge and Ian Matheson.

Bonsor East Shaft is much older than the Victorian workings which comprise most of the mining remains at Coniston. It was sunk on the Bonsor Vein to a depth of about 60 fathoms around 1760 by Charles Roe of Macclesfield, the first 180 feet passing through the old Elizabethan workings known as the Low Work. It passes through Deep Level, which it pre dates by some 65 years, and the rising water pipe which can be seen protruding from the floor at the first intersection rises up this shaft. In 1825 when Deep Level was being driven 270 feet below to intersect the then flooded stopes, a new pump and wheel was erected to drain Charles Roe's old workings. Ten years later a cross cut was driven from the head of Bonsor East Shaft to facilitate the removal of rock from the sinking of the Old Engine Shaft. As far as I know Bonsor East has not been descended since I joined CAT in 1983, and it has the reputation of being unstable and rather dangerous. Its fascinating history and the fact that it is so little known have long made it a must on my list of things to do at Coniston, but finding someone else willing to do it has proved difficult.

The head of the shaft is located in an underground chamber just below the track which goes to the Old Engine Shaft Wheel pit. Outside are the remains of the 19th Century wheel and associated buildings. Inside a plank crosses the stope to the Old Engine Shaft Cross Cut, and close by a pair of substantial timbers covered with rocks also bridge the gap. A search revealed two bolts put in by Mike Mitchell years ago, and which were still in good condition. We backed them up with two more, and then spent some time clearing stone and debris from the head of the pitch to make it safe. Now the time had come I was less enthusiastic about the place, but Dave volunteered to go first. He seemed a bit apologetic about going first, but there was no need, I was quite happy about it!

There is no shaft as such, just a cleared way through the stope. The rock is clean and about ten degrees from vertical. About eighty feet down a hanging rebelay was necessary, requiring the placement of another bolt. As soon as this was done I abseiled down to it whilst Dave continued on. Fifty feet lower another bolt was needed for a deviation on the hanging wall. Below this Dave went out of my view, but we could still talk to each other. About this time we heard the voice of Alistair Lings, who was staying at the BMSC cottage, but we couldn't decide whether he was at the top or the bottom, and he didn't hear our replies. Dave decided that yet another bolt was needed, and so, as I was getting cold I decided to prussick back up. As we were not sure how far down we were, we agreed that I should walk down to Deep Level and try to contact Dave from there. On my arrival we found that he was in fact only about twenty feet above Deep Level. Now it was Dave's turn to walk out to day, whilst I prussicked up to strip out all the gear.

Prussicking is much better than abseiling because you have much more time to look at things, and I had no need to hurry. Just above the point

where Dave had placed his last bolt are some square timbers, part of the original shaft, still in place, showing grooves where the winding rope had rubbed. These probably carried guide wheels for the rope. Numerous neat square stemple hitches show where fittings and floors used to be. Iron spikes to which ladders were attached rise at intervals to the right, occasionally with bits of ladder attached to them. A third of the way up a large area of the footwall is entirely hand picked, and a neat drainage gully has been chiseled across the face. This must surely be part of the old Elizabethan workings, which reached a depth of 180 feet below the surface. Further up the walls are less regular, and there are shot holes where presumably Charles Roe and Co widened the old stope. To the right, beyond the ladderway, the whole height of the stope has been stacked with deads which once were sealed in with stonework. Much of this has slipped away, exposing the impacted rubble, which looks none too stable. Approaching the head of the shaft from below the timbers which bridge it can be seen more clearly. They were arranged in two pairs, one pair three feet above the other, although one of the lower pair is missing. They are in fact the bearing supports for the winding wheel, and are daubed with gobs of grease and show radial grooves where the wheel rubbed. Probably the lower pair gave insufficient ground clearance for the winding rope and the upper pair were put in to raise the wheel and alleviate the problem. Both sets have cut outs on their upper surfaces where the wheel bearings were mounted. A search in the debris in the shaft head chamber revealed some bits of iron, one of which looked like part of the wheel rim. A few days later a guide wheel was discovered in Deep Level at the foot of the Bonsor East Shaft, and this has been removed for safekeeping.

Well pleased with our exploration we finished the day by going through the LMQT dig in the North Cross Cut and traversing the walkway through the flooded stopes to the foot of the New Engine Shaft, in order to make sure that all was well for the CAT meet the following Sunday.

Ian Matheson.



## NEW ENGINE SHAFT THROUGH TRIP, JAN 6TH 1991.

**Meet Leaders:** Ian Matheson, Mike Mitchell, Chris Jones.

**Burnley Caving Club:** Jack Nadin (also a CAT member), Steve Taylor, Dennis Wood, John Fairhurst, Katherine Clooney, Paul Hartley, John Birch, Peter Hartley, Andrea Hartley.

**CATMHS Members:** Alistair Cameron, Dave Bridge, Mark Simpson, Paul Timewell. Peter Fleming, Sheila Barker, and Angela Wilson arrived later but did not participate. Pete Blezzard and Ann Danson spent the day at the Middle Level dig.

On the face of it a turnout of twenty one individuals is quite respectable, but this is probably the most interesting, sporting and varied through trip in the Coniston Mining field. The combined efforts of CAT and LMQT have achieved access to previously unvisited parts of the mine, and produced a classic descent and traverse. It was disappointing therefore that CAT members were outnumbered by the Burnley Caving Club, and indeed, apart from the joint meet leaders, only three CAT members completed the through trip. So where were you all?

The weather was fine but windy, and a bit cold for those waiting their turn at the surface. Once below ground conditions were very comfortable. The descent of the New Engine shaft involves three pitches, the first of which involves a pendule of twenty feet to a stemple after a sixty foot descent. Mike Mitchell did this first; everyone following had the advantage of a pull from below to make the pendule much easier! In fact this first pitch had to be re-rigged due to the discovery by Mike of some damage to the rope which had been done previously but not reported. After this short delay things went very smoothly, and everyone continued down the second pitch. A second small delay occurred at the head of the last pitch as the bolts could not be found. One was located, and Mike descended to the bottom whilst Ian put in another bolt to improve the layout. Chris Jones and Paul Timewell were waiting at the bottom, having come in via Deep Level to rig and supervise the deep water traverse.

From the foot of the New Engine Shaft Deep Level continues into the mine. A spur, the South Cross Cut, driven through solid rock, goes for about two hundred yards towards Paddy End before terminating in a blank forehead. Who drove this, when and why? Were they hoping to intersect some undiscovered rich vein? Was it intended as an alternative tramping route from the Paddy End and Kernal Crag workings to replace the Great Cross Course which had become too unreliable and expensive to maintain? Whatever its purpose it failed, and the fine and spacious rock tunnel is a monument to the work of those who drove it and the lost fortunes of those who financed it.

The main drive of Deep Level continues towards the Great Cross Course, passing an old manway down which, twenty feet below, can be seen the surface of the water a thousand feet deep. A little further on there is a waterfall beside which is an ore chute, blocked when discovered, but which was dug open by CAT and LMQT to gain access to the ground beyond. Shortly after this is the Great Cross Course itself, a nasty clayey claustrophobic place, with poor shaley rock, frequent collapses and chest deep water. Few people have ventured along it, and today no one added to their number. Having seen what there was to see the majority of the group were escorted out by Chris via the LMQT walkway and dig, whilst Mike and Ian ascended the ropes to strip out the gear. Everyone was out of the mine by 3.30 pm. On the way out a sheave wheel was recovered from the foot of the 18th Century Bonsor East Shaft, and this was taken to Mandell's Office for safe keeping.

## BORROWDALE MEET 27.1.91

## Present:

D. Blundell  
D. Bridge  
M. Dobie  
C. Jones  
P. Fleming  
P. Merrin  
A. Gourlay  
A. Wilson

B Mitchell  
M. Mitchell  
M. Scott  
A. Sibbald  
P. Timewell  
T. Tucker  
A. Thomas

15 members met at the roadside at Seatoller on a cold morning hoping for an entertaining day out. The sun failed to show itself throughout but the mist cleared occasionally revealing glimpses of the snow covered tops.

Mitchell astounded the masses by setting off on one of his famous 'bee-lines' to the upper levels by walking back down Borrowdale and taking half the group with him. Poor unsuspecting fools we thought as we made our way up to the farm. Of course when we next saw Mike he was sitting, relaxed on the spoilheap outside the entrance to Gilberts Level, smiling wryly as we huffed and puffed up the spoil heap and collapsed in heaps around him. He then set off on another bee-line the moment we sat down.

On reaching the Grand Pipe it was decided (by Pete Fleming) to split into two groups, those who felt fit or were unfamiliar with the higher workings, departing higher still with Mitchells cheery reassurance that only two short pitches would bring us down to their horizon again and only 25m of rope would be needed.

Paul, Barbara, Pete, Max, Adam, Mark and myself spent an enjoyable hour exploring the small rises and flats off the upper levels before deciding to go down. Unsure of the depth I abseiled on a single length of rope and there was only about 10 ft. of rope left at the bottom which made it impossible to use the rope doubled for a that or the next pitch which looked a similar distance. I should have known Mike's wry smile meant something as we set off with the short rope.

Returning to the Grand Pipe we explored Fairey's Stage looking for the bottom of the pitch I had seen from above then returned to daylight before Adam and I descended to Gilberts Level where the rest of the team could be heard in Dixons Pipe some 80 ft above.

The rest of the party had descended the Grand Pipe (with a rope they knew would be long enough) to the old Mans Satgewith the hope of securing a large block near the bottom in Dixons Pipe. All the way through they were horrified by the rather

horrendous rigging which other groups using the through trip had put in place. Bolts had been placed to maximise the rub points. Obviously this was no good for a group which included Anton so better bolts were placed using Mr Rosch's apparatus. Much hilarity ensued when the newly elected membership secretary made slow progress drilling a hole when it was noticed that he had the drill rotating backwards!

Further down Paul Witheridges effort at bolting towards an as yet unexplored passage was noted. Also at the top of the last pitch a boulder was secured and another measured up for a stemple. All went well until as the party abseiled down the last (wet) pitch they noticed the real horror, a poised boulder as big as a sheep (and not as soft) just below the start. This must be the one they came to secure... Later many plans were formulated to deal with it.

Andy Sibbald distinguished himself a second time by abseiling back up the rope and walking backwards down the fell before reversing his car back along Borrowdale to Keswick. Election to the committee was too much for him. Those who attended the meet enjoyed a good day out except for one member who got seperated from his car keys and spent a cold hour or so but thats another story...