C A T

The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society

John Brown, barrowing spoil from Kernal Level, Coniston

No. 87 May 2007

Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society
Newsletter No 87, May 2007.

Contents:

Editorial
I've been complaining about the lack of reporting of CAT meets and field activities, so I was delighted to receive twenty pages of reports for the last newsletter, which gave me problems fitting it all in! Well done everyone, keep it up please.

Membership
We would like to welcome some new members:

David Young, from Barnard Castle, Co Durham. David is a member of Durham Dales mining Society and says that he is good at digging in bad ground. Might be useful at Coniston then! He is a brewery contractor. Hmm.

Anthony Holland and Wendy Brown, from Barrow in Furness. Anthony is a purchasing manager and is interested in underground photography. He says that he can locate and procure equipment at good rates, including the hire of industrial equipment.

Ian Davies, from Eccles, in Manchester. Ian is an ex history teacher and has some practical industrial archaeology experience.

Obituary
Dr Ian Goodall
It was with regret and surprise that I read in a report of the LDNPA Autumn Conference that Ian Goodall had died.

He led the team from the "Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England" who spent about two weeks compiling the survey of the Newland Furnace complex in 1997. This report, published by English Heritage in 2001, drew together the known history and produced excellent scale drawings and plans of the site and its buildings. These plans have been used by ourselves and our contractors as the starting point for all of the drawings required for our work since that date.

Ian was well known and respected for his work on many historical Lake District buildings including Sizergh Castle, near Kendal.

Ian valued the work we are attempting at Newland and whenever I met him was always eager to hear of our progress and add his encouragement. He will be greatly missed.

John Helme.

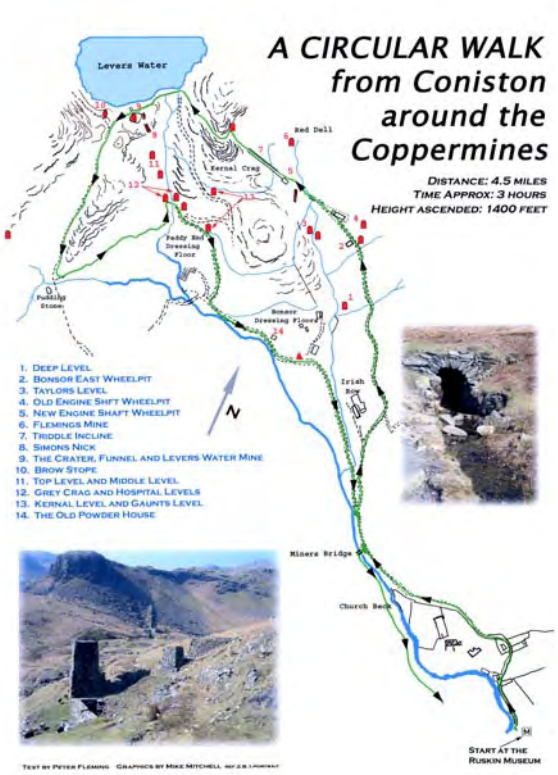
News
Newland Furnace
The AGM of the Newland Furnace Trust was held on 22nd February at the Hare & Hounds, Levens, followed by a committee meeting.

The Chairman reported on progress leading up to what is hoped will be the last major piece of work, the capping of the furnace stack. Its completion should ensure its longevity. English Heritage have approved the plan and have agreed to provide some funding for the work. Scaffolding has been erected inside the stack and casting of the smaller imitation fire bricks required to complete the furnace chimney stack has begun. CAT has offered to assist with the work if required.

Following a survey by Oxford Archaeology North, the stack will be built up approximately three feet higher and then capped with a membrane and slate paving. A linear drain would lead by pipe-work into the blowing chamber and thence to a soak-away in the wheel pit. Oxford Archaeology North are to be asked to carry out a photographic survey.

CATMS Library

As you will know, we recently moved the CATMHS Library and Archive to the Ruskin Museum at Coniston. Don Borthwick agreed to become our Librarian and Archivist, and was duly elected at the AGM. Since then Don and Sheila have made several visits in order to update the catalogue and reference new material. Don has found a way of updating the old electronic cardfile index to make it useable with current computer software. As with most archives we have over the years acquired material that people no longer want but don't want to throw away. Consequently there is material that is not really relevant to our interests and some duplication. Don intends to rationalize the collection, and perhaps hold a sale!



CATMHS Journal No 6

Following my request for articles for Journal Six of the Mine Explorer, I have been promised about 12 articles, which means that the project is viable and will go ahead. There is still room for additional contributions, so if there is something that you have been meaning to write about for years but not quite got round to, then please let me know, and do it now.

Coniston Trail Guide Project

In 1989 Peter Fleming produced a trail leaflet for the Coniston Coppermines Valley. Alastair Cameron added two more on Coniston and Tilberthwaite slate and Sam Murphy wrote a leaflet on the Greenside area. The Coniston leaflet sells about 500 copies each year, but the leaflets are now a bit dated and need modernising. We decided to start by revising the layout of the Coppermines version, and Mike Mitchell has spent a considerable amount of time re-drawing the trail map. His latest draft is shown here.

We are thinking of applying for grant aid to help with the printing costs, and a meeting was held with the LDNPA archaeologists to discuss the best way to do so.

John Hodgson pointed out at the start that any discussions would be coloured by the prospective LDNPA project for the whole of their area involving big funding. CATMHS would be invited to be partners, but he was reluctant to do anything on our behalf that might affect his own application.

Funding might be attracted if there was a free element to the publications. Publishing on the web might meet this requirement whilst at the same time allowing us to sell printed versions. The finished product would be on A3, and it is felt that people seeing it on the web would prefer to buy a printed copy rather than download and print out their own.

Mines Forum meeting, 2nd March 07

The meeting was hosted by CAT at the Ruskin Museum in Coniston. Present were:
Eleanor Kingston, LDNPA
Jamie Lund, National Trust
Penny Webb, National Trust
Mike Mitchell, COMRU
Alastair Cameron, Coniston Local History Group
Donald Angus, MOLES
Sheila Barker, CATMHS
Peter Fleming, CATMHS
Ian Matheson, CATMHS

Matters arising from the last meeting:
Moles had made a proposal to open and clear the Carrock mine adit of silt. Peter Fleming pointed out that he had proposed this to John Hodgson in 2004, and produced letters to that effect, but nothing had yet been done. Alastair Cameron suggested that if we prepared a work plan then it might help to get things started. Eleanor Kingston agreed, and asked for an outline plan to submit to English Heritage and to Dalemain Estates, who are the owners.

CATMHS are still awaiting news of the decision regarding their application to English Heritage for listing of Mandel's Office, at Coniston.

Nothing has been done regarding Silverband mine, which has recently been abandoned. It was reported that contractors were erecting safety fencing, but the main building had not been secured.

Donald Angus reported that MOLES had had a good look around Florence Mine a few weeks ago. He asked if pumping had stopped, but no one knew the answer. Sheila Barker added that CATMHS owned some artefacts on display in the museum which might need to be protected.

Roundup:
CATMHS.
Sheila Barker reported that the conservation work at Middlecleugh Mine at Nenthead was nearly finished; two more work days would be required. It was hoped that work on Kernal Level at Coniston would begin soon. CATMHS were required to give a month's notice before starting work. The issue of where to dispose of spoil had not yet been resolved. She reported that the CAT archive had been relocated to the Ruskin Museum, and that the Society were considering the purchase of GPS surveying and mapping instruments.
Ian Matheson reported that the results of the Geo-physical survey carried out at Coniston lat August should be available soon. The student involved had presented a paper on the project in London, and was required to complete his dissertation in March.
CAT are considering purchasing a GPS survey instrument for above ground surveying.

MOLES
Work at Yewthwaite mine was on-going. The dig had been taken in at the top without regard for drainage so that water had to be pumped out. There were two siphons in use.

Coniston Local History Group
Alastair Cameron reported on progress by the Oral History Group. A list had been compiled of the people to be interviewed, and these were put into one of three priority groups according to age. Groups A and B have been completed; group C, the under 65's is ongoing.

Work to survey the Coniston Old Man slate workings is going well. They are

using three GPS instruments and downloading the information into Excel to provide a graph. They are currently surveying Spion Kop (CAT had helped by recording the aerial flight) and when finished they will move on to so the Low Water Comb, then the trials near the summit and finally Cove Quarries.

On March 10th in conjunction with the Coniston MRT they hope to open up Low Bank Closehead and record it by survey and photography.

National Trust.
Jamie Lund reported:
The NT in partnership with Copeland Council have obtained a 99 year lease of the Whitehaven coast. They have applied for an English Heritage grant for consolidation work and a survey to be carried out by David Cranston.

Force Crag. EH are to return to survey the Upper Force workings and to re-visit the whole area. The work will be carried out in June and all will be digitised.

Stoneycroft Ghill. There is concern over safety regarding a mine entrance sometimes used for shelter by groups scrambling in the gill. They hope to block the entrance with timber and erect warning signs.

Myers Head. Year end funds are available. An interpretation panel is to be erected at Myers Head, using text from the English Heritage survey. (Public bodies funded annually often have unspent funds at the end of the financial year which they must spend before the next financial year or lose forever. If they fail to spend all of each years money then future funding may be reduced. Ed.)

Alderley Edge. The NT are working with Derbyshire Caving Club to combat erosion and carry out rescue archaeology.
Penny Webb reported:
Force Crag. A twelve month record of water flow issuing from the mine at various locations has been completed. There are big fluctuations that might cause pressure changes within the mine.

There is still concern over who would be liable if problems were to arise, and much to clarify. The NT are considering seeking advice from a mining specialist lawyer, depending upon costs. Peter Blezard had declined an offer to be a consultant.

The 1992 abandonment plan has been obtained from the mining record at Workington. Some machinery from the mine used between 1979 and 1982 had been taken to Bristol. This is to be rescued and returned to the site. It is currently in Wales awaiting conservation.

A management plan is to be prepared for the whole site. Open days at the mill will be held on 12 April, 19 May, 28 June, 26 July, 23 August and 6 October

Brandlehow mine. A shaft or stope has opened to the surface recently, close to a public footpath. Temporary fencing had been erected and a meeting is to take place to decide where the boundaries should be.

Yewthwaite. Donald Angus has done some repairs to the dressing floor. A work day is to be arranged after Easter. There is still concern regarding damage by motor bikes. The site cannot be locked because it is on a public bridleway. Signs are to be erected and it is hoped that they will

inform public opinion and discourage bikers.

LDNPA. Eleanor Kingston reported that the Lake District Historic Environment Strategy has been circulated for comment. MOLES and CATMHS should have copies. It can be consulted on the LDNPA website, www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/hes
Surveying at Paddy End will commence on the week of 12th March. Consolidation work is to be carried out in May after Scheduled Monument Consent has been obtained.

Any other Business. Peter Fleming asked if the NT intended to preserve the Langdale Axe Factory sites, and if so how. Jamie Lund replied that a management plan had been approved by the regional committee. It would identify key extraction sites and enable scheduling within a larger but lesser protected landscape. This is one of 25 pilot projects for English Heritage. There seems to be little threat to the sites as sheep numbers are reducing due to other factors, and outdoor activities have been self policing.

Eleneor Kingston asked whether there was any information regarding the silica works at Wythop, near Bassenthwaite. She was referred to Ian Tyler's Goldscope book.

Donald Angus reported on the Threlkeld Quarry complex. The mining museum is to re-open at Easter. The railway has been completed and the steam engine rebuilt and tested. Volunteers are needed to help.

Archaeology in the Lake District. The annual conference will again be held at Keswick Theatre, on 13th October. There followed a discussion as to how often the Mines Forum should meet. Twice a year was thought appropriate; the next meeting will be at Threlkeld Mining Museum on Friday 26th October.

IM

OAN Training day, Sunday 11th March

The Lake District National Park Authority has invited Oxford Archaeology North to tender for an archaeological survey of the Paddy End Dressing Floors, Coniston Copper Mines. The proposed programme is intended to provide for the conservation management of the landscape and archaeological resource.

It is recognised that CATMHS has considerable knowledge about the operation and history of the copper mines and that their experience would considerably contribute to the present survey. It is proposed to initiate a dialogue with the society and provide for the incorporation of their results into the present study.

The detail survey will be established by a combination of GPS techniques and total station survey. The spoil heaps and general topography will be recorded by GPS and the detail of the dressing floors and adits will be by total station. It is proposed that the survey programme incorporate a training element for members of CATMHS in the course of the field survey. Members of the society will be instructed in survey techniques and will be taught how to use the total station and GPS; they will be encouraged to take an active involvement in the present survey.

The survey will be carried out during March 2007. The training will be led by Jamie Quartermain of Oxford Archaeology North and is planned for Sunday 11th March.

Paddy End Survey

The survey was carried out by Carl Taylor during the week beginning March12th. On the first day, he did all the photography. Mike Mitchell and Ian Matheson went the next day to see how he was progressing. The weather was not so good, and in the morning there were insufficient satellites in view to enable GPS surveying, and no mobile phone signal. As we left Carl was going back up to have another attempt. If that failed then he intended to carry on using total station provided that the weather brightened up .

Dave Bridge visited during the week and Mike went again on the Friday. He was impressed with the work already carried out which was displayed graphically on the laptop. Carl said that he had about three days more work to do, but the following Tuesday he was not on site. Presumably the field work had been completed. According to the specification a further 20 days office work will be required to prepare the report.

Purchase of GPS Survey equipment.

CAT is currently investigating the possibility of purchasing a user friendly GPS survey instrument. We believe that there are numerous mining related sites that are worth detailed recording, and hope that some of our members would be interested in participating. Modern GPS mapping instruments enable the ordinary person with a minimum of training to do this to an accuracy better than one meter, merely by walking over the site. It was resolved at the last committee meeting that a decision be deferred until we had received the training outlined above. After considering the alternatives and some hard negotiation it was finally decided that we purchase an ex demo MobileMapper CE with appropriate software and licenses.

OAN survey training.

This took place at the BMSC cottage in Coppermines Valley. It was led by Jamie Quartermaine with Carl Taylor assisting. Mark Simpson, Sheila Barker, Don Borthwick, Mark Scott, Mike Mitchell, Clive Barrow, Dave Bridge, Alan Westall and Ian Matheson attended. J. Quartermaine gave an outline of the capabilities of Total Station and GPS survey instruments, with a comparison of their respective advantages and limitations.

Total Station is a very accurate optical system but it is time consuming to operate; a baseline must be set up for each set of readings using known positions. Fair weather is desirable so that sightings may be taken. Providing that datum points are permanently marked readings can be replicated.

Carl Taylor, Jamie Quartermain and Mark Simpson with the Leica 1200 differential GPS.

GPS systems are very quick and easy to use, but rely upon satellite visibility and corrections by mobile phone signals. Geo stationary satellites are positioned about the earth's equator and so have a low inclination from the UK. Mobile satellites are not always visible, though their paths can be predicted. Weather conditions do not affect them, tree cover and mountain shadow do. The changing satellite

patterns mean that time corrections have to be applied to readings. Apparently post processing can take care of most problems. Food for thought!

The training finished with practical demonstrations of both systems. The GPS was used to try to settle a long running argument about which way the leat runs between Paddy End and Red Dell Beck. It was concluded that it may have been used to carry water in either direction!

News from NAMHO

Green light for Allen Mill heritage project

A multi-million pound business development in the Allen Valleys is set to go ahead after organisers received a crucial Government grant. The team behind the redevelopment of the Allen Smelt Mill, on the banks of the AlIen near Thornley Gate, got the news that their application for a £172,000 DEFRA grant had been approved. The project is being pushed forward by Charlotte Bacon, whose father Christopher Bacon - a, local craft printer - bought, the derelict former mill site in 2005, with the aim of developing it as a retail business complex and heritage visitor attraction.

When completed, in five years time, the site will feature craft workshops, a restaurant, heritage attractions – including the organizers hope, a working waterwheel – several independent retailers and an eco-spa.
Excerpt from the Hexham Courant Friday, October 20, 2006

Research in Cumbria

A Guide to Cumbrian Historical Sources by Michael Winstanley and Rob David

ISBN No.: 1-86220-177-3

Cumbria is fortunate to have a wide and varied range of archives available to the historian. This book introduces the new (and not so new) researcher to the extensive range of archive sources relating to Cumbria and, for the first time, brings them together in a directory of the main publicly accessible collections held in record offices, libraries, museums and other organisations. It also includes descriptions of those sources to be found in neighbouring counties and an introductory guide to online resources and catalogues.

Cost £8.95 plus £1.00 p&p. Send cheque (made out to Lancaster University) to: Centre for North-West Regional Studies, Fylde College, Lancaster University, LA1 4YF
www.lancs.ac.uk/users/cnwrs/
christine.wilkinson@lancaster.ac.uk

An omission to the guide is the archives of the Alston Moor Historical Society, see their web site at:
www.alstonhistory.org.uk

South West England

Quite the most significant event of recent months has been the designation of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Area as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

June 2006 saw the announcement that Geevor tin mine had received £3.8m from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Objective One. The grants are for conservation of the listed buildings on site, a new museum and improved visitor access. A previous application, which included the reopening of modern underground workings, was rejected. The project must be completed by September 2008 and contractors were swiftly appointed. This summer also saw the relocation and restoration of the water-driven Locke's stamps from Nancledra, which

were erected at the entrance to Geevor in 1983. Water will be provided so that they can be demonstrated to visitors.

At King Edward Mine, near Camborne, volunteers have completed restoration of a Holman Bros horizontal twin drum steam hoist. It came new to King Edward in 1907, but in 1942 went to the Castle-an-Dinas wolfram mine in central Cornwall. It remained there when the mine closed in 1957 and was put on show at Poldark Mine near Helston in the 1970s. From there it was bought by the Trevithick Society in 2001 and returned to King Edward Mine where it now sits on its original loadings and runs on compressed air. The 50-inch Harvey's pumping engine of 1863 at Goonvean clay pit near St. Austell, which last worked in 1956, remains threatened by a partially collapsed shaft and future clay workings. Built for a mine at St. Agnes and brought to Goonvean in 1910, there have been a number of proposals to secure the future of this Grade 11* engine and house on a new site but so far all have come to naught.

Still with mining, work began in the summer at Wheal Peevor near Redruth to conserve this important site and provide public access. Wheal Peevor is unique in that all three engine houses, for pumping, winding and stamping, survive and thus demonstrate the classic layout of a Cornish mine. Some £800,000 is being spent here.

Not everyone shares such regard for the remains of the mining industry. The government's regeneration agency in Cambome and Redruth has long been ambivalent about attempts to restart South Crofty mine. In March 2006 it was reported that they had capped a shaft at Pool which Crofty's owners claimed was essential to their future plans. In June came news from abroad that arsonists had destroyed a 9 metre high statue of a Cornish miner at Kapunda, South Australia. On a happier note the unpaid custodian of the famous Cornish miners' cemetery at Real del Monte, Mexico, Don Chenche, was awarded an honorary OBE in the last Honours List. He has tended the cemetery for over 50 years.

Kerrier District Council has been awarded £250,000 to develop its 'Heartlands at Pool' project. This £33 million scheme would include a World Heritage Site Gateway Centre based at the old Robinson's Shaft of South Crofty Mine. Robinson's Shaft is no longer an active part of the mine and the buildings, which have suffered vandalism and arson, now belong to the Council. Also on the site is the famous 80-inch pumping engine, owned by the National Trust, preserved in grease and inaccessible for many years. Even allowing for the benefits and interest generated by World Heritage status, the projected centre is less than a mile from the existing Cornish Mines and Engines site at East Pool, developed by the Trevithick Trust and run by the National Trust. One has to ask whether there will be sufficient numbers to support both sites as well as nearby King Edward Mine and Tolgus Tin, or Geevor and Levant further afield.

In August work began on the £6 million Tamar Valley Heritage Project designed to open up more of the valley to the public. The first phase based around Morwellham includes a network of paths between Morwellham and its sister port of Newquay, restoration of part of the mineral tramway serving the port and, later on, circular trails through Blanchdown Wood, Gulworthy to open up the site of the Devon Great Consols Mine.

G.Thorne, Industrial Archaeology News, November 2006

By kind permission of the AIA

Return of a Yorkshire Colliery

A huge investment is planned to reopen Hatfield Colliery in South Yorkshire, which was closed in 2004. There are now only seven large deep mines left in Britain, in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, the West Midlands and South Wales.

Note in the AIA Industrial Archaeology News 139 Winter 2006

BBC News 21 Aug 2006 added: Producing 10 million tonnes of coal annually, £37 million of modern machinery, "As a standalone company Hatfield Colliery has a good future; it has good reserves, and is in an area with several coal power stations nearby."

David Bick — a celebration
'The Bickfest'

In celebration of the late David Bick's distinguished, highly individual, and influential contribution to British mining history, the Welsh Mines Society is arranging a two-day meeting on September 29th and 30th, 2007.

On the Saturday there will be a one-day indoor conference at the Mellington Hall Hotel, Church Stoke, Powys, SY15 6HX. On the Sunday there will be a walk, led by members of the Society, to the Bryntail and Pen-y-Clun mines, near Llanidloes

The title of the conference will be: ***'The Lode of History'***.

Comprehensive details are given on the Welsh Mines web site at www.welsgmines.org

Further enquiries may be made to:

G.W.Hall, 'Abilene', Sheet Road, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1LR

Telephone (day or evening) and fax (no e-mail): 01584 877 521.

Something for everyone

Memoirs 2006. British Mining, No. 80.

Further aspects of Old Flockton Collieries, near Wakefield by John Goodchild

A Yorkshire colliery at work: the North Gawber and Woolley collieries, 1896 to 1915 by John Goodchild

Tapping drowned workings: Thornley and Wheatley Hill Collieries by Nigel A. Chapman

The Cwmystwyth Mines, Ceredigion, Wales, UK: a revision of lode geometry from new surface geological mapping by David M.D. James

Lode geometry in the Plynlimon and Van Domes, Central Wales, UK: the relative importance of strike swing and re1ay linkage by David M.D. James

The Louisa Mine Revisited by Ron M. Callender

Radiocarbon dating of early lead smelting sites by Richard Smith

Foredale Quarry, Helwith Bridge, a historical and archaeological survey by David S. Johnson

ISSN 0308-2199 Price ?

Life as a Lead Smelter

The Life and Times of Thomas Dixon 1805 – 1871 Lead Ore Smelter, Early Railwayman, and much more besides

Stafford M. Linsley

Wagtail Press November 2006

ISBN 0-9538443-6-6 £17.50 P&P £2.50 from the publisher.

During the early 19th century Thomas Dixon, of Dukesfield Hall near Hexham, in Northumberland, recorded his family life, working days and leisure time in his diaries. His words give us a fascinating insight into his world; his life as a family man, lead ore smelter early railway enthusiast, church and chapel goer, gardener, singer, musician and later as Station Master at Hexham Railway Station, Stafford Linsley s extensive research gives us an in depth background to Thomas Dixon s life and times.

Publisher Wagtail Press, Gairsheild, Steel, Hexham, Northumberland NE47 0HS www.wagtailpress.co.uk

ENGLISH HERITAGE

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2 April 2007

Dear Mr Aird,

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest

MANDALLS OFFICE, OLD STATION SITE, CONISTON, SOUTH LAKELAND, CUMBRIA

I am writing further to our previous correspondence about the application to list the above building.

The Secretary of State, after consulting English Heritage, the Government's statutory adviser, has decided not to add the above building to the list. The reasons are as follows:

A small single-storey office building and adjacent slate-pitched path constructed in the latter half of the C19 to administer and assist the dispatch of slate from the Coniston slate quarries by train from Coniston railway station.

The building is of a very simple design with little in the way of architectural elaboration both internally or externally, whilst the path is of a construction found elsewhere on the paths and roads serving the local slate quarries.

Although both the building and the path are of undoubted local historic importance due to their association with the Coniston slate industry, neither feature possesses sufficient architectural or historic interest in a national context to justify a listing recommendation.

If you consider that the decision has been wrongly made you may write to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport within 28 days of the date of this letter to request that the Secretary of State review the decision. An example of a decision made wrongly would be where there was a factual error or an irregularity in the process which affected the outcome. You may also ask the Secretary of State to review the decision if you have any significant evidence relating to the special architectural or historic interest of the building which was not previously considered. Further details of the review criteria and process are contained in the annex to this letter.

I have enclosed a copy of our adviser's report for your information.

Meets:

Greenside, 25th March 2007 .
John Aird (ML), John Ashby, John Brown, Mike Mitchell (**AI**)*, Roger Ramsden (**CR**)*, Peter Sedgewicke, Mark Simpson, Colin and Andrew Woolard. Providing support at the start and end along with interesting historical photos, Warren Alison.

Anyone who has undertaken the trip through Greenside, down from the Glencoynedale adit via the ladderways to the Lucy Tongue level, will recall the very large boulder insecurely wedged in the inclined shaft on the final pitch of the descent. A number of years ago an RSJ was bolted in above and a network of steel cable suspended from it was wrapped round the boulder. When the pitch was rigged for the trips CATMHS ran for NAMHO 2004, it was observed that the cable network had deteriorated fairly seriously and it was obvious that further stabilisation was required. The two lowest ladder sections had been removed (the lowest many years ago by Peter Fleming, who in his inimitable style simply allowed it to collapse beneath his weight, falling flat on his back into the water below, luckily without injury). This meant that access was only available from above, although the rope rigged for NAMHO 2004 remained in place. The intention was to provide a large enough party to split in two, the porters to carry all the gear in via Lucy Tongue level and a descent party to carry down with them enough rope for the pitch to rig a pullthrough.

Two prior attempts at this work had failed, the first when the descent party arrived at Glencoynedale adit to find that they did not have the correct key for the gate, a fact that is not obvious until one has got to the gate by which time the remarkably cold water has flowed over the top of ones Wellingtons, rendering the walk back down to the Lucy Tongue entrance and on in to give the porters the good news very tedious. The second attempt had to be called off due to the amount of snow on the ground.

This time all went well John Ashby, John Brown and the ML carried a 140m rope up to the top, while the rest of the party carried everything else in. Good progress was made down the ladderways to the staging with the signal hammer, the pullthrough rigged and the trio abseiled down to the boulder. Communication was established with the lower party and two large load lashing straps and a length of stainless steel wire rope hauled up from below. The straps and wire rope were passed round under the boulder and over the RSJ and tensioned, although all of the rigging party had some doubts about the security of the RSJ, they argued that in fact even if the bolting was dubious the beam was jammed in the shaft!

The Meet Leader, checking out the completed job. (Photo John Brown.)

At this point overconfidence intervened with the decision to lower all four bags and the drill box on one rope: - the rope on which the party was subsequently to descend. Needless to say, they became hung up rendering the descent line inoperative and requiring Johns Ashby and Brown to

maintain tension on the line in order to prevent the possible very rapid descent of the load. The ML descended the rope rigged for NAHMO, with trepidation and taking great care to check its condition as he went. It was fortunate that the point on his descent where progress became impossible, due to this rope also becoming entangled with the bags, was very slightly above the location of a severe cut in the Namho rope (right through the sheath!). His extremely agitated efforts (the only thing to do was panic!) finally resulted in the bags freeing themselves, allowing him to transfer to the "official" descent line. Matters became more normal at this stage and the descent party all arrived at Lucy Tongue level without further difficulty.

Apart from the fact that it was impossible to pull the 140m rope through (the faint and distant murmur from Dr Descender of "Losers" was ignored), the meet was virtually over. The Woolards who had distinguished them selves by arriving with a vehicle full of enormous boulders ("SSSI what SSSI? They're for the rockery"), now came into their own in carrying most of the heavy equipment that had been used in the pre-Namho 2004 dig out to day. Everybody else carried all the rest of the gear.

Apart from pointing out the obvious fact, that ropes left in situ are always liable to damage from falling debris and that climbing up the same is not a sensible way of discovering their condition, it only remains to thank everyone for their help in finally achieving a successful result to this long running project especially John Brown, whose photographic evidence should be available shortly.

***(AI)** Almost Immersed, the flooded Lucy shaft exerted a powerful attraction.
***(CR)** Cracked Rib prior to the meet so only involved in "minor" exploration in the stopes. Good Grief!

Kernal Level, Coniston
Site meting:
On Friday, 30th March, a site meeting at Kernal Level, Coniston took place with Dr. Rachel Ansell and Sue Evans from Natural England, Eleanor Kingston from LDNP and Peter Blezard, Peter Fleming, Ian Matheson, Mike Mitchell, Mark Simpson and myself from CATMHS. I can say that the meeting was very useful, with Mike having support from Peter Fleming and others in applying pressure to allow us to use a part of the original tip from Kernal Level for tipping the spoil. It was pointed out to them that part of the tip had been robbed in the nineteen seventies by United Utilities who used material from it to carry out improvements to the Levers Water road. Incidentally they did not realize that the tip that we were looking at was indeed the tip for Kernal Level! There is no vegetation on this proposed site and would be very suitable. Photographs were taken and I think that they will grant us permission to use this area.

Mike Mitchell, Sue Adams, Peter Fleming, Rachel Ansell, Eleanor Kingston & John Brown at Kernal Level adit.

Eleanor Kingston would prefer the minimum amount of disturbance to the ground between the track and the portal to maintain its present appearance despite an appeal by Pete Blezard for permission to dig it out to the sole, but we have had to come to a compromise and agree to only dig out a graded channel on the track side of the large boulder, suitable for gaining access with a wheelbarrow. Upon completing the project we would reinstate this. In reality there should not be too much material coming out this way (famous last words).

Dr. Ansell found at least two bats hibernating in the level in crevices in the arching just in front of the collapse. She thought that these may have come out of hibernation by the 15th April and will monitor them. It would not be the end of the world to have to wait another week or so. I gave her the drawing of the proposed 'bat friendly' gate and she seemed quite happy with it. I have no doubt that we will be receiving some conditions in writing in the next couple of days.

John Brown.

Further to this meeting Dr Ansell arranged for Andrew Gardner of the Cumbria Bat Society to check the status of the bats. They hibernate for the winter, and it was expected that they would soon leave, not to return until the autumn. On the evenng of 12th April Ian Matheson met Andrew Gardner at the Barrow Mountaineering Ski Club Cottage in Copper Mines Valley prior to visiting Kernal Level. This is part of his report:

'I inspected the arched roof and walls of a tunnel approximately 1.5m high which extend some 15m into the mountain. There is an apparent collapse at the rear of the tunnel. Dr Rachel Ansell of Natural England found two bats hibernating in the tunnel at the end of March 2007 and there are records of hibernating Daubenton's *(Myotis daubentonii)* bats in the tunnel from approximately 12 years ago. There is a noticeable temperature drop towards the rear of the tunnel which also appears damp. This is an excellent site for hibernating bats and we are not surprised that they have been found in such a site.

I fully inspected the walls and roof of the tunnel on the 12th April 2007 but could find no evidence of current use of the site by bats. I judge it likely that the bats seen by Dr Ansell have now moved to their summer roosts, likely in the valley bottom, following the end of the hibernation period with the current warm weather. Use by bats of this tunnel is now unlikely to occur until late September when this site may be used for swarming, prior to hibernation from November through to March in the following year.

I understand it your group's intention to remove the collapsed material in the tunnel, reopen the shaft and that a bat friendly grill is to be used to secure the site and prevent unauthorised access in the future. Opening the mine is likely to provide additional hibernation sites for bats, the use of a bat friendly grill will ensure access to the mine by bats is possible but prevent possible disturbance to them from unauthorised or inexperienced people.

We judge that if work is carried out between 13th April 2007 and 1st September 2007 a disturbance to bats or their injury or killing is on balance unlikely. We would recommend that if work is planned to continue beyond 1st September 2007 then a swarming survey should be undertaken and a Natural England EPS license may be required. There is a risk of disturbing,

injuring or killing bats in the period 1st September to 31st March in the following year if work is to continue during this period.

John Brown replied:
'I have spoken to both Eleanor Kingston, LDNP, and Sue Evans, Natural England, and they are happy for us to do the fencing work and the preparatory work in the entrance. This will give us enough to be getting on with this weekend. (April 15th) We will adhere to the recommendations as set out in your letter and will await the official "go" from Natural England, hopefully next week, before starting any of the work to remove the collapse material.'

On Sunday 15th April John Brown, Pete Blezard, Colin & Andrew Woolard and Peter Singleton, assisted by Mike Mitchell, Clive Barrow and Ian Matheson went to Coniston to begin the preparatory work. A fence was erected around the site of the collapse and measurements were taken for the installation of a gate inside the adit.

Establishing one of the corner posts.

We would have liked to drive a scaffold pole through the collapse in order to guage its extent, but as formal permission had not yet been obtained we were unable to do so. It was a glorious spring day, and a pair of peregrines were flying above, from their nest on Kernal Crag.

Sue Evans from Natural England will go to Kernal Level next Saturday just to satisfy herself that the bats have gone for the summer. Hopefully we can then start on the collapse without further hindrance.

Messrs Brown & Blezard carrying materials up to the site.

Sunday 22nd April
In complete contrast from last week this was a very wet and misty day. A barrow-way was made out of the adit, and some material was then removed from the sole of the level.

Hauling the barrow up the ramp. A condition of our permission is not to change the levels around the entrance!

In order to evaluate the extent of the collapse a scaffold pole and a drill steel were driven through the material. They seemed to go into a void after about six feet. This gave rise to some optimism. If the collapse were to be much longer than that it would be impossible to

reach it from the surface in order to restore the arching, as the ground rises too steeply.

The scaffold pole can be seen protruding from the blockage.

Another pole was driven from the lowest point of the surface crater to reach the front of the collapse in the adit, which established a depth of about ten feet.

Probing the surface in order to determine the depth to the roof of the adit.

Finally measurements were taken in order to install the supports for the gate in the adit. We have to provide a gate that will allow the bats free access whilst keeping the general public out.

Small Mining Artefact Competition

An excellent days visit to Braich Goch quarry at Corris, last October involving a through route yielded the small artifact pictured below (removed in contravention of the CATMHS policy*).

Readers are invited to let the editor know exactly what it is and how it was used. A small prize will be awarded for the most accurate answer, probably involving a Sunday out with the John Brown working team on a day specially selected for the appalling weather and lack of shelter. (Any one foolish enough to suggest the object is a ruler will be compelled to accept the prize without the option)

The author's name may give some assistance with the identification.

*(In the event of an outcry about this breach of rules the artifact will be returned to the exact spot from which it was removed)

William Bickford

The answer will be printed in the next Newsletter. Ed.

Middlecleugh second diary report.

Sunday 7th January
JB, PB, SB, PS, AW & CW
Our aim today was to lay some drains into the newly landscaped ground above the level. The temporary drain seemed to have been doing its job since we installed it last week. A more permanent drain was dug across the level on the portal side of the landscaping and this would take water from another drain that was to intercept water running off the ground above the level. This ground was still very soft as a result of this water running into it. The site was cleaned up and all tools and surplus material were removed. PS off to Australia to get warmed up!

Sunday 14th January 2007
JB, DB, AW & CW
We are back! It is probably a good idea to get this job finished and not run off to do other things. We said that we would come back in the summer when the weather is much more pleasant, but in reality we would probably become so engrossed in the next project that it could be another year! So we started

stripping the soil off the ground above and around the first metre from the face of the portal. Once we had removed the bulk of the soil we pushed the tub into the level in preparation for catching the top of the arch. This was done and a full tub of stone was wheeled out, saving us the trouble of picking the stone up off the floor. The right hand wall was taken down and the ground underneath was exposed and this was found to be soft and unstable. This was dug out and levelled before starting to lay the stone back in and the first few stones were put in and the start of rebuilding began.

Sunday 28th January 2007
JB, PB, AW & CW

Work continued to rebuild the right hand wall and the left hand wall was taken down and the foundations prepared.

Sunday 11th February
JB, AW & CW, SB
We met at Smallcleugh Mine entrance to view the portal, we were curious to see how they had done their arching. JB and CW went to look at Hodgson's High Level portal and building. We noticed that the inner level had been lined with concrete. This had been done during the working life of the mine and was done by Veille Montagne. Back at Middlecleugh we made a good start on rebuilding the left hand wall. Some of our good stone that we had collected from the stone yard had been used by the builders working on the mine shop. This is our fault for putting the stone alongside the building. We were not to know that we were coming back to finish off the portal and we would have left the stone nearer the mine had we known. The weather was much kinder to us today;

it was cold but very bright and sunny with not too much wind. SB made a site visit towards the end of the day to see how we were getting on.

Sunday 18th February
PB, JB, AW & CW
We continued rebuilding the left hand wall and AW stripped more overburden off the top of the arching ready for next week. PB took away six hand picked stones which were suitable for sawing into keystones. We had a visit by Clive Barrow, Ian Matheson, Mike Mitchell and some members of COMRU.

Sunday 25th February
JB, PB, AW, CW.

The new Former, made out of rolled angle section with 50mm x 50mm tanilized timber inserts, was delivered. This was mounted onto the tub, rolled into position and then with the use of acrows, jacked up into place. Later the rails were fitted to the walls to support this when the acrows were removed. PB brought the 6 key stones back which he had had sawn. It is amazing how this stone had been transformed. They needed hand dressing before they could be placed into their rightful place.

John Brown.

Sunday 4th March
JB, AW & CW.
The arching work was completed.

Sunday 11th March
JB, PB, AW & CW
The former was removed, spoil put back on top of the arching, turf replaced and the whole site landscaped and tidied.

John Brown

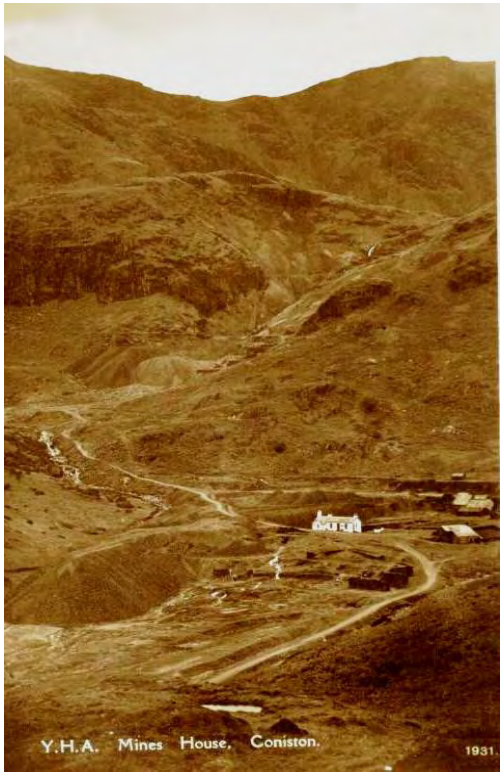
Editors Note:
We are delighted to see the completion of this project, for several reasons. It has been a major work, carried out to a very high standard that will enhance the reputation of our Society and facilitate future projects. It is a credit to all concerned. The team have already started the next one, Kernal Level, at Coniston.

IM.

Old photos of Coniston Coppermine

At the Lake District Archaeology Conference at the Theatre on the Lake in Keswick last November, Warren Allison showed us a glass slide and two postcard photos of Coniston Copper mines that he had found and purchased on the internet. Here they are

This shows the mine office, now Coppermines Youth Hostel, with the dressing floors and machinery below. Note it is labelled Coniston Coal mines! It is interesting to compare the slide with the remains present today. What is the heap of white material in the foreground?



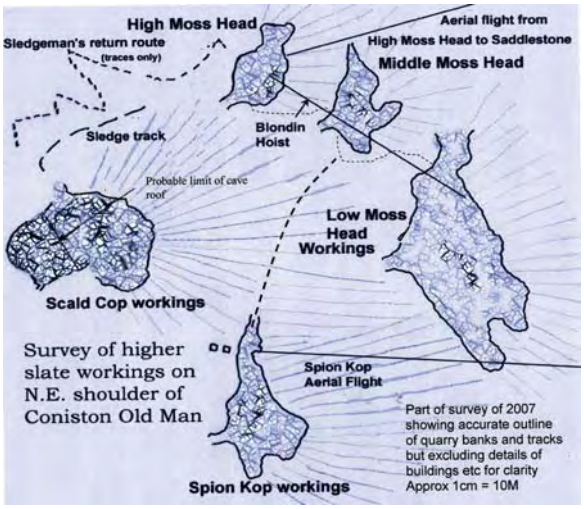
This is a later picture – the buildings seen above are now in ruins, but those of the upper dressing floor are still intact. Is 1931 the date or the reference number ?

Below is a classic photo taken from the track. The mine office is described as a youth hostel. What is the ruined building on the right, and who are the two people on bikes? Can anyone date these photos?

There are quite a few photos of Coniston Mines in existence. It would be worthwhile to make a digital collection for our archive. If anyone is able to contribute and is willing to send them to me I will ensure that they are included and that credit is given.

Old Man Days.

On the afternoon of Tuesday 27th March Maureen Fleming and I clattered down the Quarry Road from the Coniston Old Man slate workings. We were feeling very pleased with ourselves as we had just completed the survey of the North East shoulder of the Old Man, and this marked a major stage in the Lottery-funded project to survey the whole of the industrial archaeological remains on the mountain. Only the Low Water workings and a few bits and pieces remained to be completed before we then descend from the summit to the other side to survey the ancient Cove Quarries and finish the project.



The project started in July 2006 and we had often wondered whether we had made a big mistake in starting at the bottom and working upwards. We spent many warm sunny days wandering around Stubthwaite looking at old potash pits and possible Bronze Age sites. By the start of Autumn we were surveying Low Bank and we had reached Saddlestone by December. We now had to face the cold and wet period of the year at the higher quarries as we got closer to the summit.

However, to a certain extent the winter has been kind to us. We have had several cold but sunny days when the GPS's have worked a treat and surveys have been completed in just a few hours. The finest day this winter must have been Christmas Day when a magnificent Broken Spectre entertained those who made the summit of the Old Man, the only reported sighting of the Broken on the mountain during the whole of last year.

But we have had a few bad days as well. One particular one which I won't forget for a long time was during our survey of Fisher Bank. The rain was relentless, driven by a strong northerly wind. It was also extremely cold. Electronic instruments don't like the rain and the cold any more than we do. Low cloud and driving rain seriously affects their accuracy and the tiny controls are not easy to operate with sodden mits on. By the time we had completed the survey all the equipment was soaked and to make matters worse my trusty Berghaus Gortex had started to leak badly. By the end of the session I was completely wet through and I stumbled down-track with spectacles covered with rain and clothing under my waterproofs completely sodden.

The next time we went out the instruments had dinky little plastic covers and I had a brand new Paramo jacket, which I should have bought years ago.

First edition O/S map, 1856.

Over the months we have developed some quite sophisticated techniques for

surveying and handling the data. The surveys are carried out partly using the track-log features on the GPSs and partly by recording locations with waypoints. We use three Magellan units and the theory is that if we replicate the readings and then average them out the errors will be reduced accordingly. It is a long time since I did statistics at college but I am sure the theory is sound. Dave Sewart gave it a guarded approval but warned that it depends on where the errors come from. In some locations we find that the GPS's are virtually useless. On a recent survey on the shore of Low Water Tarn we were not able to use the results at all. At this point the western and southern areas of the heavens are not visible and this is where most of the satellites are located.

Second edition O/S map, 1912.

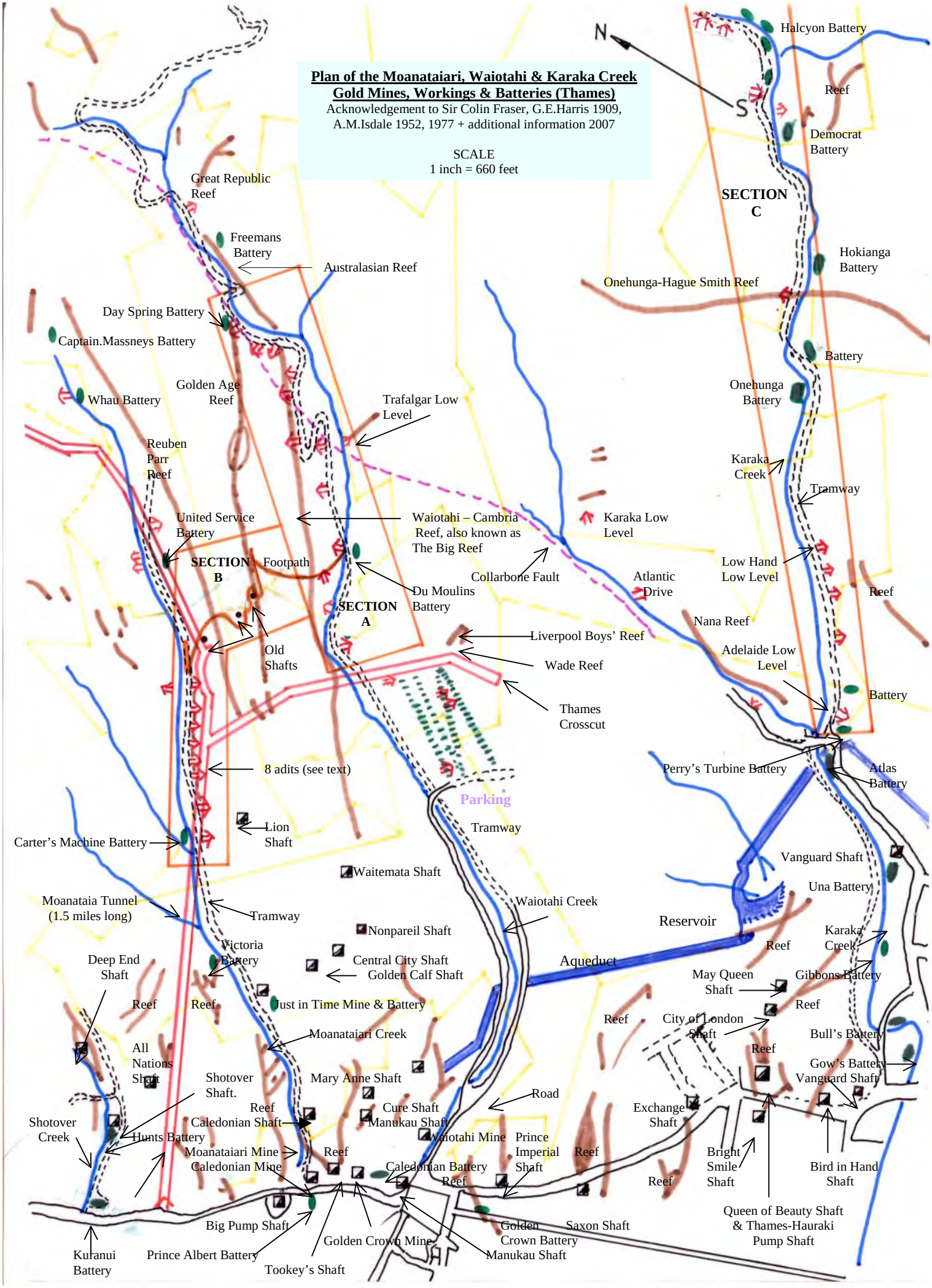
At the end of each survey we input data as 10 figure grid references from the Magellans into an Excel spreadsheet, average the replicates, and then plot the co-ordinates out as a scatter-graph, taking care to make sure the axis are to the same scale. At the start of the project we were doing this by hand which took several hours in an evening, and usually meant that I fell asleep over the lap-top. Fortunately a generous chap in Coniston offered me some software of 'unknown origin' which did it all automatically in a matter of seconds. All I had to do was plug the three Magellans into the USB ports on the computer and go and make a cup of tea by which time the download and plotting was complete. Absolutely brilliant!!

The results of the surveys will take some time to review. But one thing is certain. By far the most interesting site on the whole of the mountain is the ancient Scald Cop workings. They are quite clearly many centuries earlier than any other site around and are very likely to be the place where Roman slate working took place and also post Conquest activity. This site has also an extremely interesting more recent history. We know that it was being worked in the Middle Ages as a cave working, similar to Rydal Cave on Loughrigg. Like many cave workings the roof collapsed at some point and, although at the moment we have no idea of the date that happened, the position of the roof can be estimated reasonably accurately. The massive blocks that once formed the roof can still be seen lying on top of the discarded slate chippings on what was once the working-floor.

A few years ago we took two retired quarrymen up to Scald Cop. Both of them had spent part of their careers on the Old Man, at Moss Head and Spion Kop, but had never bothered to walk up to Scald Cop. The site fascinated them and they realised it was very different to any other. Donald Kelly in particular was interested in the way the tips had been established. It was as if the waste material had been stacked on the tip by hand rather than tipped over from the top.

The survey is only part of the overall project. We have now completed dozens of interviews, recording the lives and times of quarrying families in the village. But that's another story!

A Cameron.


Plan of the Moanataiari, Waiotahi & Karaka Creek Gold Mines, Workings & Batteries (Thames)
Acknowledgement to Sir Colin Fraser, G.E.Harris 1909, A.M.Isdale 1952, 1977 + additional information 2007
SCALE
1 inch = 660 feet
N
S
Halcyon Battery
Reef
Democrat Battery
SECTION C
Great Republic Reef
Freemans Battery
Australasian Reef
Hokianga Battery
Onehunga-Hague Smith Reef
Day Spring Battery
Captain.Massneys Battery
Battery
Golden Age Reef
Whau Battery
Trafalgar Low Level
Onehunga Battery
Reuben Parr Reef
Karaka Creek
Tramway
United Service Battery
Waiotahi – Cambria Reef, also known as The Big Reef
Karaka Low Level
SECTION B
Footpath
Collarbone Fault
Atlantic Drive
Low Hand Low Level
Reef
Du Moulins Battery
SECTION A
Nana Reef
Liverpool Boys' Reef
Old Shafts
Adelaide Low Level
Wade Reef
Battery
Thames Crosscut
8 adits (see text)
Perry's Turbine Battery
Atlas Battery
Parking
Lion Shaft
Tramway
Carter's Machine Battery
Vanguard Shaft
Waitemata Shaft
Una Battery
Moanataia Tunnel (1.5 miles long)
Tramway
Waiotahi Creek
Reservoir
Nonpareil Shaft
Karaka Creek
Victoria Battery
Reef
Deep End Shaft
Central City Shaft
Golden Calf Shaft
Aqueduct
May Queen Shaft
Gibbons Battery
Reef
Reef
Just in Time Mine & Battery
Reef
City of London Shaft
Reef
Bull's Battery
Moanataiari Creek
All Nations Shaft
Reef
Gow's Battery
Vanguard Shaft
Shotover Shaft.
Mary Anne Shaft
Road
Reef
Cure Shaft
Exchange Shaft
Shotover Creek
Caledonian Shaft
Manukau Shaft
Hunts Battery
Waiotahi Mine
Prince Imperial Shaft
Reef
Moanataiari Mine
Caledonian Mine
Reef
Bright Smile Shaft
Bird in Hand Shaft
Caledonian Battery
Reef
Reef
Queen of Beauty Shaft & Thames-Hauraki Pump Shaft
Big Pump Shaft
Golden Crown Battery
Saxon Shaft
Golden Crown Mine
Manukau Shaft
Kuranui Battery
Prince Albert Battery
Tookey's Shaft

The Gold Mines of Thames, New Zealand - a closer look

By R. E. Hewer

Please refer to Newsletter No 84 for further information.

The author, gold panning in Karaki Creek.

Eileen and I returned to Auckland, New Zealand in February of this year to continue working for their Ministry of Health, so whilst Eileen was busy at work; I thought I might concentrate my researches on the Moanataiari, Waiotahi, Karaka Creeks and goldfields around the town of Thames (because it's easy to drive there!) The town is situated along the shore of the Thames estuary and the main road passes through the town continuing northwards, hugging the base of the rising hills. The many trips have been reduced into three sections in order to avoid repetition. I am indebted to Auckland Public Library for assistance in tracing a number of original mining claim maps and photos of the area.

History.

The local Maoris were already aware that gold existed in the creeks but were unwilling to grant leases for fear that the influx of miners would destroy their land and culture. However, the Maoris were their own worse enemy, (during the Maoris wars) raiding adjacent settlements, attacking the villages and burning the surrounding land. As a result many of the reef outcrops became exposed and prospectors were quick to inspect the quartz reefs for signs of mineralisation.

After three years of negotiations the Maoris officially allowed the prospectors to search a small area of land on the north side of present day Thames. Under the terms each prospector could peg out one third of a square acre. If a party of three men pegged out claims they had the right to one square acre and so on. In the early days Thames was known as Grahamtown and Tookey's Town. The old photographs reveal a thriving town in the midst of which head frames and trestles can be seen jostling with each other for position.

To the northern side of Thames, where most of the major mines were located, a large flat area of land pushes out into the estuary. Now a very pleasant picnic area, this site is the remains of the tailing and waste dumps. Photos show trestles coming from several directions

Thames Goldfield showing the trestle tramways.

Aukland Public Library Collection

carrying the watery fines that were dumped and then transported into the estuary by the high tides. As a result of all the activity the estuary is now much shallower than it was during the 1870s. At one period, because of the great loss of gold due to the fineness of the metal and inefficient recovery methods (up to 70% loss) a dredger was employed,

dredging across and into the face of the tailings.

Exploration

There are three hazards in NZ, the flora, the fauna and the wife! I had very carefully packed my mining bag at home with my requirements but obviously you can't take everything and that's where the local 'Warehouse' DIY store came in handy. All will be revealed.

See Section 'A' Plan. We decide to travel to the Coromandel Peninsular at the first weekend, calling at Thames. I wanted to probe the Waiotahi Creek a little further and attempt to obtain some improved photos of the transverse carriage I had located last year. We drove out of Thames and up the hill beyond the war memorial and parked by the entrance to the old overgrown tramway. The weather was scorching, making my mining bag feel even heavier, and as we trekked up the tramway I spotted a huge adit behind the thorn bushes, close to very active beehives. I made a note to visit it later. We continued a short distance up the incline when Eileen said " Is it far?"

What? "Oh no, just a hundred yards or so." I replied, inwardly groaning. It must be half a mile to the path that joined the tramway. *Don't tell her!*

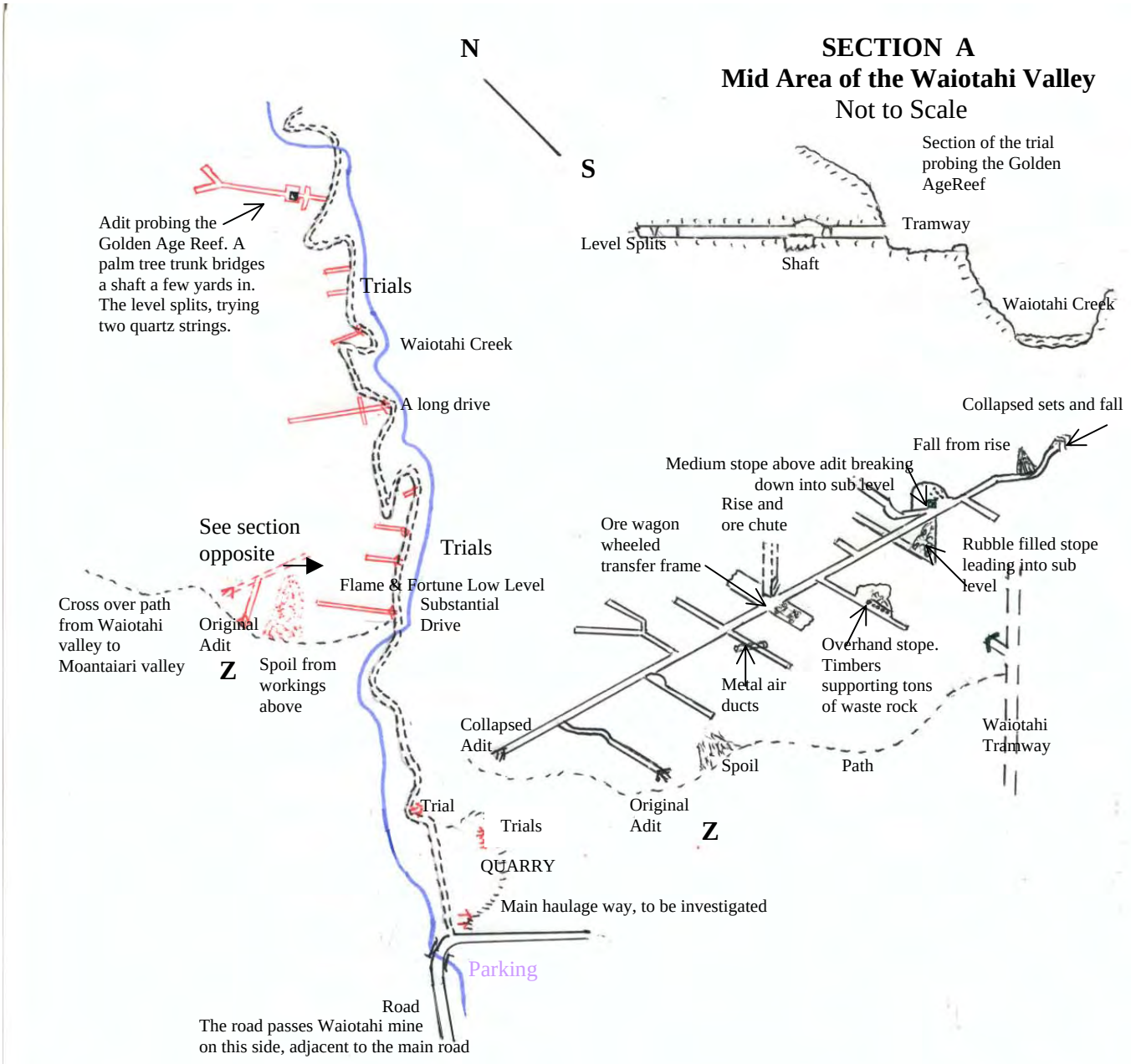
Just then a diversion occurred when a huge black flying beetle careered straight passed me and embedded itself in Eileen's chest (lucky fellow, I've been trying to do that for years!) It was at that time that two square miles of the valley became aware that the Hewers' had arrived; no need for stealth now!

"Get it off." She kept shouting However, the beetle, not wishing to be involved in the fracas, took off at the speed of light.

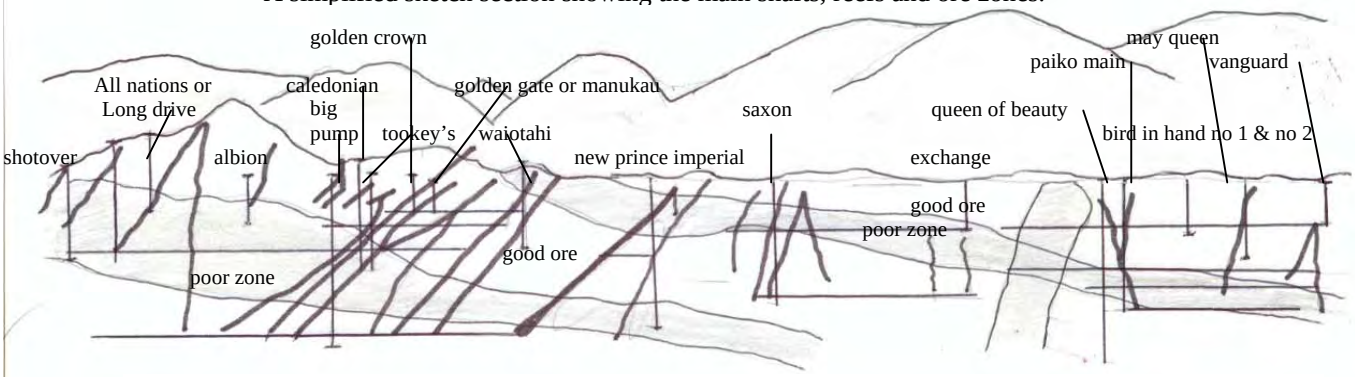
Whilst Eileen recovered from her encounter, I recollected the names of the claims adjacent to the track. 'Red Jacket, Green Jacket, Nightingale, Royal George, Balmoral, Batchelor and so on. Somewhere in the undergrowth were other trials and drives. Above the first bend after the quarry, a level pierced the rock face for 70 feet to a forehead. Shortly afterwards we crossed the creek where I think Du Moulins Battery was sited. The area had certainly been opened out, but nothing remains. There had been some very severe floods in July of 2006 that had caused many landslips and widened the courses of several creeks.

We had arrived at the indistinct path that crossed over the shoulder that separated the Waiotahi and Moanatairari valleys. The path was well and truly overgrown. Many of the bushes sported sharp thorns or long serrated thin rubbery leaves. The path steadily climbed and we emerged into an open space where the base of a large spoil heap from above had settled to one side. This spoil was close to the workings I inspected last year and I was convinced that there must be a higher adit just above the dense bush edging at the top of the spoil. Now for the tricky bit. I opened my bag and pulled out 150 feet of climbing rope." Where did you get that?" Eileen enquired sharply. "Brought it from home." "Do you mean to say that you've carried that for 12,000 miles?" "Well, not me personally." I replied as I removed a pair of bright blue boots sporting yellow stars, a hacksaw, a pair of cotton gloves, a one million candle power torch and an 'anti-Weta suit! "The plane carried a few items, the rest I bought at" ….wait for it…. yes, "The Warehouse." Eileen was not pleased. I didn't bother mentioning the 70 – 300mm camera lens I had purchased the day before!

I borrowed Eileen's fell boots (another mistake) and free climbed up the steep spoil heap. I arrived at the lip and using my hacksaw did a bit of trimming. I



A simplified sketch section showing the main shafts, reefs and ore zones.



Acknowledgement to Auckland Public Library. Alexander Turnbull Collection. A Simplified Drawing of James Parks Map 1897.

And Alexander Turnbull Collection, Wellington Library New Zealand

managed to make a hole through the undergrowth. I tied one end of the rope to guide me back and burst through to find that the plateau was only five feet wide and the spoil heap ascended another hundred feet or so. Stakes driven into the rubble at regular intervals indicated a demarcation line. I set off up the slope, it was getting dangerous, and I could only use thorn bushes for assistance. When I reached the top I was met by an impenetrable forest, there was no way through. I returned disheartened to Eileen and we had lunch.

It was time to enter the old cross cut that led to the main drive and the transverse carriage. The level was a little muddy; I climbed up into the main drive (Newsletter No 84) and made my way along the level to the carriage. I left my equipment and moved up to where the stope cut down into a sub level. I was aware that I could get down but not back up. Next time I will do it.

I returned to the carriage and set up my camera, tripod and slave unit. After a few trials I started to get good results. The ground was muddy but not over wet. All was going well, when I picked up a slight humming sound, like a microlite. Suddenly it dawned on me; something big was flying my way. My cap lamp didn't reveal anything but the power torch did. Three huge insects were flying in V formation right for my cap lamp. Did I hear the theme tune of 633 squadron? They were twenty feet away and I couldn't escape. Yes folks; I went into panic mode, foreign island, foreign big bugs, and no escape. I grabbed some mud and threw it, missed and I fell into what was now mud slurry. I grabbed a portion of railway sleeper, it disintegrated in my hands. Quickly I turned off the cap lamp and torch, a buzz, then silence. Where were they? Another buzz, nearer. I switched on the torch and two very nasty looking hornet looking insects dived at the face. "Gotcha!" I screamed as I hurled balls of mud at them…"Where is the last one?" I could hear it doing circuits and bumps, my fear glands were working overtime and it sensed them. I grabbed the torch, wiped the mud off it, shoved as much equipment in my pockets as I could and beat a retreat, carrying the tripod, camera and trailing control behind. I jumped down into the old level and gasping for breath, hurled myself out onto the path by the side of Eileen.

"Oh my God! Just look at the state of you. Can't you ever keep clean? You're bright orange all over, even you hair." I should have gone back in.
"Not quite. I've got bright red blood trickling down my arm." I retorted. "I've been chased by insects, this big" I held my arms out wide. Indeed, I was bright orange, stained with Jarosite. As it dried it turned cream, it made me look anaemic! Then Eileen saw her boots. "Don't worry I'll get the mud off in the creek." I quickly added.
She did a Miss Piggy and stormed off. However, she recovered and forgave me; unfortunately the creek was dry! Such is life !!

The rest of the day was easier; we walked slowly up the tramway and inspected the numerous trials together. The first just by the meeting of the path and tramway called the 'Flame and Fortune Low Level' was long drive that pierced the 'Waiotahi Cambria Reef without developing the workings. The next three levels were short drives. The following one had a cross cut both ways without results. The next three were trials. The last working pushed forward to a Y branch ending at two quartz strings. Nearer the entrance a five feet by eight foot wide shaft probed the 'Golden Age Reef.' A palm tree trunk bridged the shaft. At this point I decided to retire. I met Eileen and we walked

down the track until I found a pool in the creek to wash.
Once again my thoughts were with the miners who toiled in the workings, living in hope. Workings such as 'Alexandra, worked by 4 men, Anglo Maori, worked by 6 men; Candle Light, worked by 6 men; Freeman's Bay; Great Eastern, worked by 5 men; Mount Victoria; North West; to mention only a few. Every trial had a name. We drove back down the valley passing a flat-grassed area on our right hand side that was the site of the Waiotahi Mine and shaft, all filled in and forgotten. The mine was operational from 1870s until 1914 when the pump station closed (see later). The rich lode was discovered in 1904. In total the mine produced 253,000 ounces of bullion. Driving is not comfortable sitting on a black bin bag, like a naughty child!
(Trials source, Thames Miners Guide 18866-69)

We moved on to Coromandel staying at Driving Creek with a relative of Charles Ring who was the first to discover gold in the area in 1852. The manager's office at the gold mine site is still functioning albeit as a guest cottage. Our cottage was superb, complete with a hot tub; that turned yellow! Dave allowed me to pan in the creek with success; mind you I was wearing my blue boots with yellow stars at the time! A couple of grains appeared in the pan, I was a happy man.

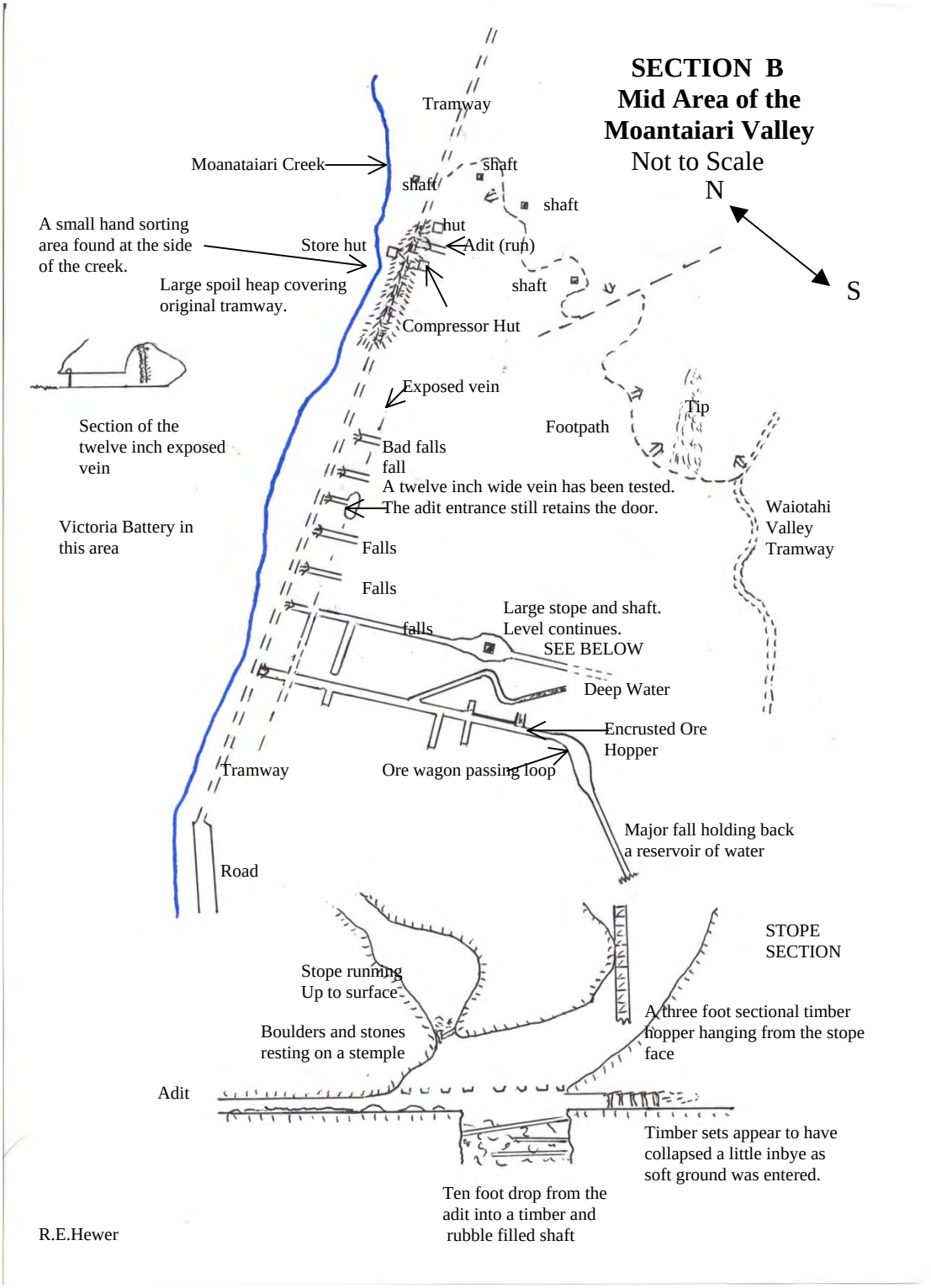
I paid a visit to Coromandel Mining Museum where I met the curator who was a retired mining engineer and he liked to explore the old workings. We exchanged experiences and he guided me to areas worthy of exploration.

Please refer to plan *section B* overleaf.. Eileen flew out early in the morning from Auckland to Wellington so I took the opportunity to drive up to Thames again. It was a hot, steamy day. I made my way back up the Waiotahi tramway to the infamous path. Passing the scene of my previous exploits, I climbed over the ridge of Messenger Hill, and set off down the other side, descending the twisting track into the Moantaiari valley, passing the various workings mentioned in Newsletter No 84.

I reached the first set of newer workings with the three huts. The small metal water reservoir still had MDPE tubing attached to the valves, suggesting this was worked in the early 1960s. I then climbed over the tip and dropped into the dry Moantaiari Creek. I noticed a chute and, upon closer inspection, I decided that the area, complete with a wooden bench, was a hand-bucking site where the best ore was recovered before being despatched for dressing. The adit had run in but was diggable!

I continued down the valley. The numerous levels were still in the same state as last year. I was keen to push the last two levels, now that I had my blue boots with yellow stars with me. The last level beckoned, I put on my anti-weta suit (black plastic cagoule) the theory being that when the Cave Wetas jump on me their tiny claws won't be able to grip the nylon material (you may smirk, but oh yes it works). I ploughed through the bright red ochre, it wasn't quite welly depth, and I probed ahead. There was no escape if there were any sumps.

A smaller and older level veered off southeastwards before heading south, back to the south east and then entered three feet of red slurry. That was over welly depth so I retired (next time, wet suit!). It's not that I fear deep water, it's just I don't want to remain a bright orange colour for two months or so! I returned to the main adit and worked my way in bye, passing two crosscuts, and then to a large well encrusted ore


SECTION B
Mid Area of the
Moantaiari Valley
Not to Scale
N
S
Tramway
Moanataiari Creek
shaft
shaft
shaft
A small hand sorting
area found at the side
of the creek.
Store hut
hut
Adit (run)
Large spoil heap covering
original tramway.
shaft
Compressor Hut
Exposed vein
Section of the
twelve inch exposed
vein
Footpath
Tip
Bad falls
fall
A twelve inch wide vein has been tested.
The adit entrance still retains the door.
Waiotahi
Valley
Tramway
Victoria Battery in
this area
Falls
Falls
Large stope and shaft.
Level continues.
SEE BELOW
falls
Deep Water
Encrusted Ore
Hopper
Tramway
Ore wagon passing loop
Major fall holding back
a reservoir of water
Road
STOPE
SECTION
Stope running
Up to surface
A three foot sectional timber
hopper hanging from the stope
face
Boulders and stones
resting on a stemple
Adit
Timber sets appear to have
collapsed a little inbye as
soft ground was entered.
Ten foot drop from the
adit into a timber and
rubble filled shaft
R.E.Hewer

chute on the left hand wall. I could hear the sound of running water; the water level deepened as I entered a passing loop. The level ran straight to a major fall from the roof, a fast flowing spring of water was jetting out from the base; needless to say I didn't hang around. At least I had got as far as I could go.

I returned to the valley and moved up to the next level. I'd been here before and had not pushed on after the onslaught of the Wetas. (Actually they are quite harmless extremely large brown grasshoppers, Cave Wetas are truly large and they do jump, about three feet a time. Very unnerving when they land on you). My anti Weta suit was working well.

I worked my way through a very smelly entrance of rotting plant life. After wading through a hundred feet of water the adit dried out and it was a case of climbing through several severe falls before the level opened out into a huge stope. Ahead of me a ten foot square shaft dropped about fifteen feet to a collapse of timber, rocks and rubble. There were substantial notches set at regular intervals in both sides of the adit wall. These ran over the shaft area, it would appear that originally a heavily timbered brattice work was in place.

The vast stope extended upwards and back over the adit (out bye). Ahead and upwards a squared box hopper came out of the stope and hung in the void. Beyond the shaft the adit continued, heavy timber sets supported tons of rock and rubble, two or three had given way; that was as far as I could see. The hanging and standing walls were spalling large flakes of rock. I returned to the adit portal to see a huge centipede some ten inches long and half an inch wide crawling up the side of the adit where I'd been leaning. I left discreetly.

I searched fruitlessly for the Victoria Battery, the site of which should have been on the opposite side of the Creek. It was operated by the Kuranui Company on Barry's Claim, close to Shotover Creek who had purchased it from Clark & Kersteman for £2500 and started in 1868; the battery had 12 stamps, 4 in each box. Hot water was supplied to the tables as this was thought to improve the flow characteristics of recovery. The battery was then sold to Kuranui Battery where the stamps were increased to 14 heads each weighing 6cwts with a 10 inch lift, operating at 52 strokes per minute. Power was supplied by an 18hp steam engine. Kuranui battery employed 10 men. (Source Thames Miners Guide 1866-69).

I slowly made my way back up the tramway in the area where old photos show the rail tracks climbing the hill and an aerial ropeway running across at right angles, named as a 'flying fox'. There are several old adits dotted in the forest many of which were operated by small groups of miners such as: - Ballarat, 4 men following leads; Clyde, reef 8 feet wide; Duchess of Kent 5 men; Khyber Pass, 9 men very extensive working; Rhodes and Carters Battery, 7 men. 4 head stamps, 44 strokes per minute by a 5hp engine. (Thames Miners Guide 1866-69). I would expect to see concrete foundations but the undergrowth had covered the battery sites. Once again I attempted to cut my way through the upper tramway without success. Again levelled areas suggested that workings were nearby but the forest won.

GPS would have been a boon for positional identification. I am not certain that the eight levels inspected are drawn in the correct position on the master map. They could be a little higher up the valley. I would think that the levels were probing the Reuben Parr

Reef. That being so then the levels may be a hundred feet out of position. E & EO.

Just by chance I came across a typed manuscript, dated 1937, by William Nichol describing his childhood days sixty years before. There are many stories but one is worth mentioning. As a child he used to wander up the Moanataiari valley looking for minerals on the tips, he would wait until an ore wagon off loaded the rocks and he would sift amongst the rubble pulling out the heavier stones. These contained gold missed by the miners. Having collected a bagful he would return home and his father washed the samples. Those that contained gold he was paid a penny each for. His father would then crush and treat the samples in his hut in the garden. One day William picked up a large stone about four inches in diameter, it was 90% gold. He needed two hands to hold it. William took it back and his father gave him one shilling and six pence. The sample was sold to a mineral collector!

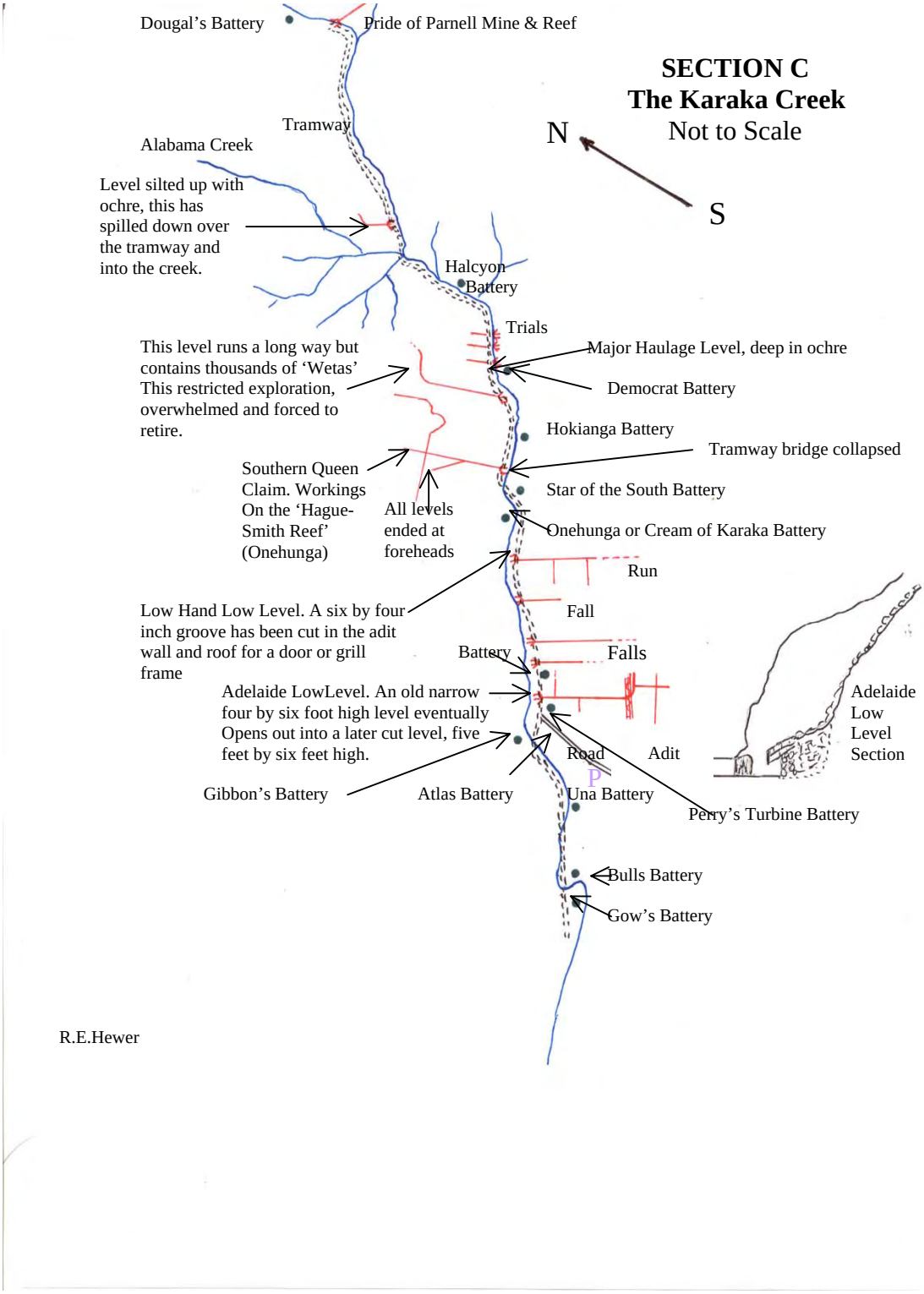
For the third trip, (See SECTION C) I moved three quarters of a mile southeast to Karaka Creek. The parking area is in a residential district and numerous old battery sites have become the platforms for some very nice homes! Once again it was a scorching day, my object was to follow the tramway to Dougal's Battery where most of the battery was accessible and the furthest point I could reach that day. I will describe the way up to Dougal's Battery first and then investigate the levels on my way back to the car. No wellies this time, too heavy, too far. It was going to be a long day.

A signboard immediately warned me that because of the floods in July 2006 several sections of the tramway had been washed away and detours would be needed to walk the track; great! As soon as I started on the track I came upon the site of Perry's Turbine Battery, the area is now a concrete run off with a garage and one or two stone buildings further up the slope. A house below the track overlooks a mini gorge.

The tramway hugged the flank of Karaka Mountain and climbed at a shallow incline. I passed several levels and the Una battery site. The bridge over Karaka Creek had long gone and it was necessary to climb down the steep bank to cross the creek (only possible in dry weather). The tramway then deteriorated into morass, it was tricky and sticky getting through, and this was followed by several one hundred foot climbs to circumnavigate major surface slumps as a result of the floods.

A rest period. A good time to try some gold panning. The black sand was there but I needed to dig deeper, I didn't pan anything. I then reach Alabama Creek that flowed into Karaka Creek; this was now changing to huge deep pools and house size boulders. I bet there's gold in the deep pools! After another third of a mile I came to a large shoulder jutting out into the creek. The tramway appeared to stop and a track led to the left up a steep valley. The Karaka Creek appeared to be flowing from this valley too but on hindsight I think I was wrong and that Karaka Creek did carry on beyond the shoulder.

I followed the steep track for a considerable distance without seeing any signs of Dougal's Battery. I'm convinced I was on the correct path mainly because on my return (grumbling loudly to myself- remember I'm an old gimmer!) I found the main adit for 'The Pride of Parnell' Mine. The collapsed entrance retained deep water. If I was going to get wet, now was the time to do it. I slithered down the slope in my anti Weta Suit and into


Dougal's Battery
Pride of Parnell Mine & Reef
SECTION C
The Karaka Creek
Not to Scale
N
S
Tramway
Alabama Creek
Level silted up with ochre, this has spilled down over the tramway and into the creek.
Halcyon Battery
Trials
This level runs a long way but contains thousands of 'Wetas' This restricted exploration, overwhelmed and forced to retire.
Major Haulage Level, deep in ochre
Democrat Battery
Hokianga Battery
Tramway bridge collapsed
Southern Queen Claim. Workings On the 'Hague-Smith Reef' (Onehunga)
All levels ended at foreheads
Star of the South Battery
Onehunga or Cream of Karaka Battery
Run
Low Hand Low Level. A six by four inch groove has been cut in the adit wall and roof for a door or grill frame
Fall
Battery
Falls
Adelaide LowLevel. An old narrow four by six foot high level eventually Opens out into a later cut level, five feet by six feet high.
Adelaide Low Level Section
Road
Adit
Gibbon's Battery
Atlas Battery
Una Battery
Perry's Turbine Battery
Bulls Battery
Gow's Battery
R.E.Hewer

waist deep water, the most appalling odour of bad eggs rose up to greet me. I ploughed on for about a hundred feet before meeting a fall from a rise that had blocked the level. I clawed and scrambled my way back, grabbing a thick tree trunk, which snapped in half and sent me slithering back into the foul water. I managed to keep the camera high out of the water, now I was wet to the chest and very smelly.

Having escaped from the adit I just had to go for a wash, even the flies were avoiding me! After a quarter of an hour, I didn't smell so bad so I set off back. Just before Alabama Creek I observed a level in the banking; soil and vegetation had dropped down in front of the entrance and dammed a large volume of water and ochre. The red stained water had run across the tramway and into the creek, suggesting that the level was long and drained substantial workings.

Further on, lay the site of the Halcyon Battery (to be investigated next time) followed by several short levels and the site of the Democrat Battery. The next level invited me in; it was wet at the entrance. The large level continued towards the north before turning northeast. I looked around, the level continued but the walls were thick with Wetas, they were clicking away, ready to pounce, I lost my nerve and shot back towards the adit mouth shedding sliding Wetas as I went. The old heart was pounding again.

After a short distance I found a level that followed the Hague Smith Reef. This level moved forward to an angled branch and then to a cross cut both ways following the reef. The levels were heavily backfilled but where had the waste come from? Why not dump it outside into the creek? There weren't any rises or sumps.

After crossing the creek again I came to Low Hand Low Level, cut into the side of Karaka Mountain. Just inside the entrance a deep groove ran around the adit to provide securing for a frame and door or gate. The level headed southeast with two cross cuts to a fall. Three other levels pushed to falls too.

I then came to the last level before Perry's Turbine Battery. This level was called Adelaide Low Level. For the first fifty feet the four-foot wide by six foot high level looked quite old, it was hand picked (as were most of the levels) but then it widened into a five foot wide by six foot high haulage level. The level continued to a sweeping bend where it cut through a twelve-inch quartz vein. To the right a collapsed ore hopper built into a dry stone wall supported a rising column of deads that climbed high into a long narrow stope. In wet weather a stream of ochre water must pour down the boulders staining them orange. The stope looked to carry on into higher workings. The level, after the bend, pushed on to two crosscuts, left and right. All this area was heavily back filled with neatly stacked deads in the form of walls and smaller rubbish filled in the middle.

The metalliferous vein contained copper staining and little gold specks! So, it was back to the car. The smell of rotting vegetation surrounded me and the ochre stains were turning cream. I sat on a plastic bag with the windows open and made my way home. Eileen's boots were orange again!

Two days before we were due to depart I thought I would have one more trip to view the workings along the road at Thames and Shotover Creek, where gold was first discovered. The walk up the track to Shotover led to a tennis court sized clearing, heavily covered in undergrowth. Just above the clearing a path led down to a sunken fifteen-foot

diameter circle. This was the site of the Shotover shaft. On the far side, neatly cutting through the rocky face of the valley side a large leat headed gently down the valley side. Apart from that there was nothing. No sign of Hunt's Battery either.

I continued up the steep track and came across a second small shaft (Deep Lead Shaft, the one I fell in, No 84 Newsletter) and the trial. Much higher up and where the ground flattened out another leat was visible on the right hand side emerging from near the top of the valley side. I was now in the vicinity of the Deep Lead Reef but there was no evidence of the workings. I returned to the main road and by heading back towards the Golden Crown Mine I came across the sign for the main adit and access tunnel for a number of mines. Moanataiari Tunnel was driven for 1.5 miles with a major branch turning right under Messenger Hill (towards Waiotahi Creek); it took 30 years to drive. I couldn't see the entrance until I looked some forty feet up the hill and I felt that the tunnel was there. Climbing up the banking I came to a rock face and below me down a slippery slope was the entrance. Not having any equipment with me, exploration will have to wait for next time.

The Caledonian mine site is exposed as two small flat plateaus. It was here that Thames' greatest discovery of gold occurred. 10 tons of gold was produced in 1871 and between 1867 and 1890 over £1,000,000 of bullion had been recovered. A run of gold bearing ground led from the neighbouring Manukau Mine through the Golden Crown into the Caledonian set where it widened into a fabulously rich bunch. The Caledonian Mine produced between 1 and 2 tons of gold in 1 month.

The only evidence of Tookey's shaft is the rising tramway from the shaft base. The shaft was 417 feet deep.

The Golden Crown Mine produced $241,000 worth of bullion. Now it is a visitor centre. (See Newsletter 84) It was closed for maintenance.

Golden Crown Mine, 1870's. (Aukland Public Library Photographic Collection.)

Finally I drove over to the far side of town, southeast, where I visited the Queen of Beauty Mine. The Queen of Beauty Mine and Thames-Hauraki Pump shaft was one of the earlier mines of the Thames Goldfield, work started in 1867. The Queen of Beauty did not come into it's own until the 1870s just when the other mines were getting passed their best. Around 1896 it was decided to put in some big pumps and take the shaft down to the1000 feet level.

The Thames Haukuri Pump and Queen of Beauty Shaft. Aukland Public Library Collection

During the next few years tunnelling was extended at the 1,000-foot mark, however, the level cut through feeders of water at 300 lbs per sq inch. It should have been called 'The Grave of the Thames Goldfield'. The pump ceased working in 1914. The water level rose and drowned all the connecting mines.
(information from the site notice boards etc).

The building housing the pumps is truly magnificent. Part of it is now a glass works, who supply the key and leave you to it! The interior is at it was, less the prime movers and boilers. Outside, the heads of the two giant pumps project through debris at the shaft head. The link plates are missing but otherwise intact. There is a working model of the pumps and` steam cylinders inside. The whole set up is awesome. Many photos surround the wall and a booklet gives a technical description of the pumps. I wish that the shaft head could have been cleared so that one could see the feat of engineering in the construction of the pumps.

Thames Hauraki Pump Head.(Photo R Hewer)

Finally I visited Thames School of Mines where I met John Isdale whose father was the curator for over 50 years. We had a lot to discuss regarding the local mines. He guided me in the right direction and passed on valuable information. For example, was I aware that the locals still did a bit of quiet gold mining? Had I seen any stacked deads in the old workings and couldn't work out why they were there? Had I seen any fresh markings in old working He at last provided me with a map that showed all the modern tracks transposed onto the old workings, of course I purchased a copy but I was due to come home the next day. Such is life!

The blue boots with yellow stars…….I left them in NZ!
We'll be back shortly, so watch this space for more adventures.

References:

Thames School of Mines
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Auckland Public Library Photographic Collection
Auckland Public Library Rare Maps and Books.
William Nichol. The Thames Today and as it opened 60 years ago.
The Thames Miners Guide. Geological Reports 1866-69
Mine Site Notice Boards. Department of Conservation
Thames Gold Mines. Map redrawn by A. Isdale.
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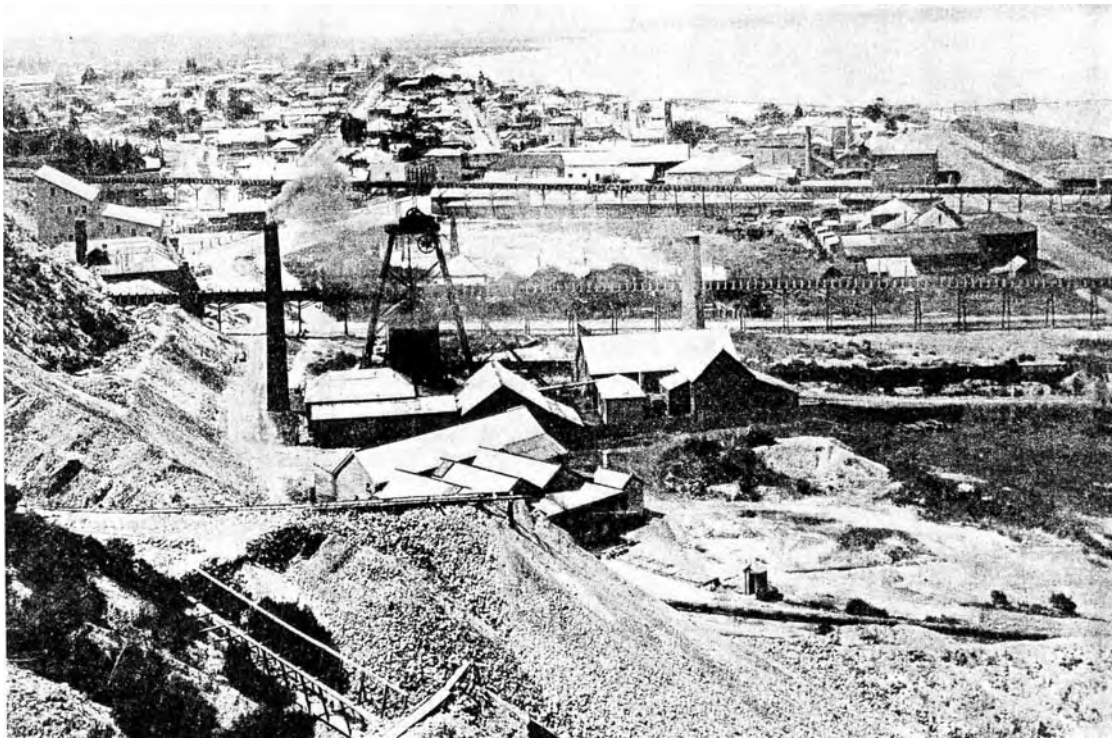
Alexander Turnbull Collection. Wellington Library NZ

R.E.Hewer. 2007



ThamesTtownship,, Jan 19th 1905, old big pump in the foreground.. Note the trestles running to the estuaty. All the spoil heaps, trestles and mines have gone , apart from Golden Crown Mine. Photo; Auckland Public library Photographic Collection.

Thames Township,in 2007. Photo Richard Hewer.

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 29th January 2006 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston, starting at 6.30pm.

Agenda.

1	Apologies for absence	2	Minutes of the last meeting
3	Matters arising	4	Secretary's Report
5	Treasurer's Report	6	Membership Sec. & Newsletter Reports
7	Meet Secretary's Report	8	Publications
9	Library	10	Coniston Coppermines
11	Hudgillburn	12	Middlecleugh
13	Mines Forum meeting	14	CATMHS website
15	Date and venue next meeting	16	Any other business

Present M. Simpson (MS), J. Aird (JA), S. Barker (SB), I. Matheson (IM), D. Borthwick (DB), D.G. Bridge (DGB), J. Brown (JB), P. Fleming (PF), M.Mitchell (MM), M. Scott (MSc) & A. Wilson (AW).
The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm. 10 committee members attended.

1 Apologies for absence from: All present.

2 Minutes of the last meeting
The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 20h November had been previously circulated to members**.**
It was **PROPOSED** by MS and **SECONDED** by JB that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising
3.1 Item 3.1 Mandall's-JA reported that English Heritage had made a decision regarding the 'Listing' of Mandall's office, but still had to pass the information on to us.
3.2 Item 10 MM asked if anybody would like a copy of his UCL CD.
3.3 Item 13 2006 AGM. It was decided that DB should be co-opted on to the committee. **PROPOSED** by MS **SECONDED** by SB, all were in agreement

4 Secretary's Report
Received since last meeting
4.1 LDNPA – request for applications from members to join the Access forum.
4.2 NAMHO – The 2007 NAMHO AGM will be held in the Village Hall in Threlkeld on 10th March at 11am. See NAMHO website for details of the 2007 Conference in Devon.
4.3 BCA – Insurance cards had been distributed, but contained mistakes. JA was in contact with them to rectify this. JA drew our attention to available space on the BCA website. It was agreed that we should advertise club activities on the site.
4.4 CIHS Conference 21st April at St. Martins Collage, Ambleside, NL and programme available.
4.5 History dept. Lancaster University are looking into the feasibility of producing a new Victoria County History for Cumbria and Lancashire and are looking for people to participate in research etc.

5 Treasurer's Report
JA had circulated the balance sheet to committee members, covering the period from 21tst November to 29th January. There had been significant income from: subscriptions, donations & publications. With expenditure mainly on the conservation of Middlecleugh Mine and the newsletter. JA was making a list of CAT assets to send to the Charity Commission. He asked if all members of the committee had read the C.C. Trustees Annual report.
The current a/c stood at 1871.86 and the Scottish Widow a/c at 15500.00.

6 Membership Secretary's Report & Newsletter
IM reported that 67 members had renewed to date. The newsletter went out recently with a final reminder to members that had not renewed their subs. He noted that the membership was dropping every year (28 had not renewed). New postal charges had actually made postage of NL a bit cheaper! New member - Phil Conway-Jones from Holly How YH A in Coniston.

7 Meets Report
JA reported a successful meet at Coniston on the previous day, although attendance had been low.
PF felt we should be more diligent in offering support to member's projects; a meet to see R Quirk's model of Rita Pit, in the spring was suggested.
A visit to Threlkeld Quarry was also suggested, and MSc suggested a trip to see a quarrying related exhibition coming up at the Dock Museum at Barrow. SB to inform the Meets Sec.
JB had been asked to take a group of non-members into Greenside Mine (hopefully he could encourage some to join CAT). JA would enquire about insurance for the group.

8 Publications

IM reported that it had been requested at the AGM that we produce Journal No.6. IM was willing to be the editor and Dave Sewart had offered to assist as with No.5. IM would put out a request for articles and aim to produce the journal next spring. He also offered to do an article on the Knott family. The re-writing of the History of Coniston was discussed. MS suggested as a first step we should gather all available information together into a record of Historical Sources database, which could be produced as a PDF file and put in the CAT archive. DGB IM MS & PF had all collected a lot of information and DGB & DB agreed to start the procedure.

Alastair Cameron had suggested that a publication 'Scrambles and Exploration in the Coniston Mines', about past CAT exploration might be a good seller to the general public, MS to pursue this idea. MS would look at old newsletters for suitable past articles.

9 Library

DB had started to catalogue the books/articles given to the collection by Alen McFadzean. Methods of record keeping was discussed, DB would contact Celia Hancock regarding the old Cardfile and explore new database software. IM had acquired two keys for the filing cabinet, one to be kept at the JRM.

10 Coniston Mines & Quarries

Jamie Quartermain of LUAU had contacted CAT to say they would be carrying out the archaeological survey of the **Paddy End Mill** and dressing floor for the LDNPA. The specification includes instructing CAT members in surveying techniques. A meeting has been arranged with MS to discuss details.

Kernal Level dig should be able to start at end of February. Digging team will go and access the method of work. IM reported there had been a rock fall in Paddy End Shaft and JA reported that the LMQT dig, South Shaft to Deep level had run in significantly.

PF, IM and MS had attended a meeting at **Holly How, YHA Hostel** to discuss the process of setting up Slate and Copper Mining education packages (linked to Key Stage Studies) for use at Holly How (YHA Coniston). They had asked if someone from the society is able to give occasional talks/slideshows to students.

11 Hudgillburn Mine

SB had contacted Jon Knowles regarding maintenance meets, he would put HGB on the next meets list.

12 Middlecleugh Mine

JB reported that work was continuing well at Middlecleugh Mine; walling of the gap in the arching had been completed and the surface re-instated, complete with drainage pipes. The stonework at the portal needed replacing and would take three days to complete. The jack would have to be retrieved from Greenside Mine to support the level roof during the repair. A bill to be sent to NPHT for 200ft of rail at £1.50 per foot.

12 Mines Forum meeting

The next meeting will be 2nd March, at JRM Coniston, to be followed by a walk around the Coppermines Valley, PF had booked the venue. SB, PF & IM to attend.

13 CAT Website – Nothing to report.

14 Date and venue of next Meeting

This to be held on 26th March 2007, at the BMSC Hut Coniston at 6.30 pm.

15 Any Other Business

15.1 MS had demonstrated how to survey line, area and point features with a high quality GPS. It was discussed whether we should buy similar equipment for CAT survey work. It was decided that we would attend the training days with LUAU, making a decision after we have had the experience of using their equipment.

15.2 Helping the Newland Trust make firebricks was discussed at the AGM, JB to find out about fast setting additive. Their AGM is on 22nd Feb.

15.3 DGB discovered he had 2 sets of RCHME plans of Coniston, the spare set to go to the CAT Archive.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

SB 30/01/07 Chairman

Mystery picture.
I received the following detailed response to my query regarding Richard Quirk's mystery picture, printed in the last Newsletter:

The 'mystery picture' is Lindal ore sidings, and the photographer is standing at about SD 253758 and looking north-east. I suggest that the distant headgear directly in line with Hoad Monument is Pennington Pit. The twin-gabled building with chimney in the right foreground is the gasworks, the small building with chimney in centre middle distance is the weigh cabin. The ore mill is just out of the picture to the left, unless that's part of it just visible, but I think the building on the left is probably part of Bank Terrace.

Best regards
Peter Holmes

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY