

**15<sup>th</sup> July 1983**  
**Marchon Anhydrite Mine**

12 Members turned up in Whitehaven to view this unique “Mine in Mothballs”! Members were conveyed down some 400’ on an incline railway, unfortunately in ropy repair as it was only ever used to transport 1 man to check the pumps every now and again.

At the bottom members disembarked from the train and entered a strange world of 15’square passages laid out on a grid system comprising some 35 miles of passage. They were shown all aspects of the operation. The up shaft conveyor belt, the huge underground crushing plant. Strangely the company (Albright and Wilson) brought nothing out when they closed the mine in 1976 and it looks very much as it did when the last shift walked out.

All tractors and drilling rigs are still in place some will even start.

Spread out through the mine are various shops such as tyres, drills, fitters, electricians and mechanics, these too are as they where when the mine closed. Members were shown the 400’ deep shaft under Sandwith Village put in to increase ventilation, near it is the immense fan and motors.

The overwhelming feeling which you get walking around the mine is the quietness as though it’s only a tea break and at any minute a bell will sound and everything will start up.

The future of the mine is uncertain and what will happen to the system is also unknown. At present the mine costs some £130,000 p.a. to keep going.

An excellent day and our thanks are due to The Mine Manager, Mr Telfer and his 3 staff.

Christopher D. Jones