

National Association of Mining History Organisations (NAMHO)

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Welcome to the International NAMHO Conference 2000

On behalf of the Cam Brea Mining Society and the Camborne School of Mines, NAMHO would like to welcome you to Cornwall, UK. Many of you will know that this is a county full of contrast, the bleak moorlands, dramatic cliffs, and wonderful beaches. All these areas have one thing in common - at one time or another some form of mining or quarrying has taken place there.

Whilst still more than two hundred engine house buildings stand in tribute to the metal mining engineers of the past, there are thousands of other 'hidden' relics in the form of calciners, mineral railways, leats, shafts, adits and a variety of iron bolts sticking out of hard lumps of granite. Yes, Cornwall probably still has more mining remains than anywhere else in the world.

At last mining history is seen to be something to be preserved where possible. World Heritage Site status is still in the pipeline for various mining areas and more mining structures are being considered for stabilisation than ever before. The beautiful time capsuled Tywarnhale valley near Porthtowan is the latest recipient of such work. The Camborne School of Mines is likely to have yet another 'new' home and when that happens it will be the fourth move in the School's long history. Recently and sadly, Europe's last tin mine at South Crofty at Camborne closed, probably for good.

However one looks at mining history in Cornwall, progress in preservation has been gathering momentum since the late 1980s and this is mainly as a result of the joint effort between enthusiastic voluntary groups and forward thinking local authorities that this is to continue. One can say the same thing about this year's conference - a joint effort has resulted in the first ever international event for NAMHO. There is a lot to hear, see and do at this year's conference.

Please enjoy yourself safely and be assured that there is something for everyone in the interesting County of Cornwall.

Lawrence Holmes Chairman of the Organising Committee

NAMHO CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Here in Cornwall we are now celebrating NAMHO's 21st year with, for us, something of an innovation - an International Conference. We made a bid in Mexico two years ago for this Conference to be the "official" 5th World Mining History Congress. We failed for doubtful reasons which have been discussed in a previous NAMHO Newsletter. There are those, however, who believe that this failure to gain recognition may have done us a favour. Our Conference is organised by amateur "enthusiasts" and has a good mix of active exploration, academic discussion, social activity and even an opportunity to do some "shopping".

Each NAMHO Conference is organised by different Member Organisations who have varying interests.

The NAMHO Conference in 2000 not only celebrates NAMHO reaching its "maturity" but also the new millennium. It is appropriate to hold it in Cornwall which is, arguably, the country's best known area for mining antiquities and associations. However, the mining historian should not only be interested in what is past, but also in what is happening now or likely to be happen in the future. The recent demise of tin mining in Cornwall certainly was not expected 21 years ago, but neither was the deep mines coal industry and, now it seems, opencast coal mining too. Some evidence of these industries has, fortunately, been preserved but other

extractive industries, such as the Midlands fireclay, the East Midlands ironstone and the Scottish oil shale industries, have gone almost unrecorded.

How many university and technical college mining departments are there left now? What about the then local professional "mining societies" and their annual "proceedings"? What about the trade union lodges? All these have played a very important part in mining history but little has been written to mark their passing. We welcome all of our delegates from far and near and particularly those who are attending for the first time. We trust that you will enjoy that is on offer and leave refreshed with enthusiasm to identify, record and conserve as much of our mining heritage as we can while it is still with us.

Dr Ivor J Brown NAMHO Chairman

140 YEARS OF MINERAL INDUSTRY EDUCATION AT THE CAMBORNE SCHOOL OF MINES

In 1829, early plans by John Taylor to develop mining education in Cornwall were laid out in his prospectus for a School of Mines to support the large Cornish copper and tin mining industries, which at the time produced about half of the world's copper and tin.

In 1859, the Royal Institute of Cornwall set up mining classes at Camborne, Pool, St Just and St Agnes, although there had been earlier mining classes in Truro. In 1876, the Basset building in Camborne was opened, soon followed in 1882 by the adjacent Camborne Science and Art School building; these formed the main teaching base of Camborne School of Mines (CSM) until the move to the 'new' buildings at Trevenson, Pool, and Redruth in 1975. In 1897, a lease was entered into with the Pendarves Estate for part of the South Condurrow mine which is still used today as one of CSM's underground facilities.

In 1909, the School of Metalliferous Mining (Cornwall) was formed at Camborne by the amalgamation of the Camborne, Redruth and Penzance Schools of Mines. This amalgamation led, in due course, to the world acknowledged Associateship of Camborne School of Mines (ACSM) being awarded and backdated to 1909. Even current bachelor graduate from Camborne are awarded the ACSM in addition to their degree.

In 1973, the School's Higher Diploma in Mineral Industries commenced as a two year programme to continue the theme to produce practically trained technician engineers for the mineral industry. More recently, this two year course became a HND course and was validated by the Technician Education Council (TEC); it is currently validated by TEC/Edexcel.

In the following year, 1974, the three year mining programme was revised and then validated by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) as a BSc in Mining Engineering. Since 1976, the engineering HND and Bachelor's programmes at Camborne have been accredited by The Institution of Mining and Metallurgy for IEng and CEng status respectively.

The provision of programmes in mineral industry related education developed considerably over the last 25 years with the introduction, in 1976, of a BSc in Minerals Engineering (now BEng). The first MSc course commenced in Mining Geology in 1980, followed by MScs in Mining and Minerals Engineering and undergraduate programmes in Mineral Surveying and Resource Management, Industrial Geology and in Environmental Science and Technology; all of these have been offered at Bachelor and HND levels.

Research developed at CSM from the mid 1970s with the first candidates for MPhil and PhD. Research activities were enhanced on moving into the 'new' buildings in 1975 and with the merger into the University of Exeter in 1993. Under the restructuring of the University of Exeter in 1998, Camborne retained its "school" title as Camborne School of Mines. Over the last two years CSM has rationalised its academic provisions under the general banner of Earth Resources Engineering and Applied Earth and Environmental Sciences. This has led

to the running down of the HND provisions since 1998 to allow the School to concentrate on undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the subject areas mentioned above.

A recent development of mining engineering degrees has been the introduction of a mine and quarry engineering degree. This programme has significant commonality with the mining degree but introduces modules specific to quarrying, surface mining and the extraction of industrial minerals.

Current changes include proposals for the MEng programmes in the main mining and minerals engineering areas.

Dr C V Phillips

GWENNAP (CORNWALL) PARISH COUNCIL BUYS FORMER MINE

The offer by Gwennap Parish Council to buy the site of the Wheal Maid site for £1 has been accepted by the owners Carnon Enterprises.

The council hope to acquire grant funding to help restore the 40-50 acre site and are meeting officers from the Cornwall County archaeology and planning departments shortly.

Buying the site meant that the council could preserve the heritage of the area and help to reinforce the Cornish Way and Mineral Tramways projects that run through the valley.

SHROPSHIRE MINES TRUST PROJECTS

The Shropshire Mines Trust has a number of ongoing projects. They are:

- a. South West Shropshire Project This was originally two separate projects but they have now been combined into one. Part of the work is to help preserve the surface and underground parts of Snailbeach Mine. The other includes various jobs associated with preserving our machinery and equipment
- b. Tankerville Project This involves preserving the buildings at Tankerville Mine and interpreting the area as an unmanned low key interpretation site. There are also plans to reconstitute the reservoir and make it hold water again.
- c. "Never on a Sunday" Project The team has been collecting taped memories from people in the Snailbeach and Stiperstones area. They have obtained a grant to produce a book, and possibly tapes of the collection.
- d. Bersham Colliery Project Preserving the surface buildings and other features of Bersham Colliery and interpreting them for the public.
- e. Blists Hill Museum Project This is a new project to preserve an early 20th century mining display at the museum
- f. Pump Sump Shaft Project This is a joint project with the Shropshire Caving & Mining Club. Permission has been granted to excavate a shaft which has been infilled to surface. It is believed that this shaft goes down to the Boat Level and the blockage in the level is caused by infill from this shaft.
- g. Hunthouse Mine Project This is the restoration of a hand-windlass which stood over the now collapsed No 9 shaft.

Shropshire Mines Trust Newsletter

STANDEGE TUNNEL

The 3.75 ml Standedge Tunnel is being restored as part of a £30m canal restoration scheme. The tunnel is the longest canal tunnel in England and the highest at 645 ft above sea level. It took 16 years to construct and was opened in 1811.

LAST DAYS FOR THE LANCASHIRE MINING MUSEUM, BUILE HILL PARK, SALFORD

It has now been announced that this Museum will be closed due to "the necessity of making financial savings", yet at the same time opening the Lowry Centre and investing in the Main Art Gallery in the Museum Department. The Museum was the last survivor of a phase of mining museums in the 1950's whereby cellars of country houses already being used as museums were converted to "mine galleries". Other examples included the museums at Temple Newsam, Leeds and Bagshaw House, Batley. There was even a mock mine in the basement of the Science Museum, London at this time. The gallery at Buile Hall was opened in 1957, when Alan Frost, a geologist, was Director. NCB fitters from Walkden Yard Workshops had been employed to transform the cellar into a mock mine. Visitors stepped into a pit cage, doors were closed and the impression of travelling the shaft was gained (using revolving walls with stick-on bricks) which was quite acceptable until the passengers realised that they had seen the same bricks a few times! During the late 1960's, material was collected from such closing pits as Brackley, Sandhole and Mosely Common.

In 1969, the ground floor of the hall was partially converted into a "pit top" using the old drift top from Old Meadows Colliery at Bacup (Yorkshire). In 1971, the Museum had to close being declared structurally unsafe! By 1977, however, the building had been "listed", dry rot removed and the rest renovated and the Museum was reopened. During these years Frank Hacket and Rick Bradbury had been successive Directors. They were followed from 1974 by Geof Preece who proved equally enthusiastic in the development of mining as a theme and by this time the Museum specialised in this. Geof pushed out into the field of Industrial Archaeology, adding much more material relating to the coal industry's past. This led to the first floor being converted into the History of Coalmining Gallery which opened in 1980. Further enthusiastic efforts led to a guide book being produced and an archives and library section of the Second Floor. He also developed a collection of "mining art" which led to a further gallery being opened in 1984.

Geof Preece left Buile Hill in 1985 and Alan Davies, the present Director, was appointed. Alan had been an assistant keeper for a short term in the early 1980's, but at the time of his appointment was working on the coal face at a small mine near Wigan. He was an obvious choice. He had a degree in art and an interest in collecting. He had also worked in four collieries and had studied mining. With the decline of the mining industry thousands of mine plans and documents were rescued, thousands more photos were taken and numerous objects and drawings acquired. The upper floors have had to be refurbished to take them all and the remains of other earlier natural history collections had to be transferred elsewhere. Between 1989 and 1991, the Museum's mining library expanded greatly with the acquisition of the very important Wigan Mining College Collection and also that of the former Wigan Library Mining Reference Collection as well as other material from closing NCB/BC and private industry collections.

In 1994, in recognition of the Museum's vast regional collection which now surpassed all other local (and most regional) collections and its embrace of the whole coalfield, the decision was made to change the name to The Lancashire Mining Museum, Salford.

Without doubt the Museum has a fine collection which is very interestingly laid out and easily accessible. Its loss will be great to children and students who appreciate its "hands on" and "experience" style and to more serious visitors. These can park easily, carry out research comfortably and take breaks in the well maintained parkland which surrounds it. The writer, for one, will miss the Museum greatly.

Wigan Metro Borough has made a formal approach to Salford to take over the collection with a view to developing Astley Green Colliery as a new Lancashire Mining Museum. Most of the collection will go into store but will remain accessible.

Dr I J Brown

WORKING DEEP COAL MINES IN THE UK

The following appear to be the only ones left in Britain!

Northumberland Ellington - RJB Mining Ltd

Nottinghamshire Clipstone - RJB Mining Ltd Thorsby - RJB Mining Ltd Welbeck - RJB Mining Ltd

Scotland Longannet - Scottish Coal

South Wales Tower - workers' co-op

Warwickshire Daw Mill - RJB Mining Ltd

Yorkshire Harworth - RJB Mining Ltd Hatfield - workers co-op Kellingley - RJB Mining Ltd Maltby - RJB Mining Ltd Prince of Wales - RJB Mining Ltd Ricall - RJB Mining Ltd Rossington - RJB Mining Ltd North Selby/Stillingfleet - RJB Mining Ltd Thorne - RJB Mining Ltd Whistow - RJB Mining Ltd

At the time of writing, there are rumours of closure at several of the Yorkshire mines in the Selby Coalfield.

Shropshire Mines Trust Newsletter

MORE BRITISH MINING SITES INVITED TO JOIN MINET

Last year, a European network of mining heritage sites - MINET - was established. Initially only The Threvithick Trust represented Great Britain but two more British sites have been invited to join this group. They are Killhope Lead Mining Museum in Co Durham and the Dolaucothi Gold Mine in Wales.

Friends of Killhope Newsletter

ALLIHIES ENGINE HOUSE APPEAL

In the west of Ireland there is a famous area of copper mining called Allihies Mine. There were several engine houses at this mine and one is still complete but it is starting to deteriorate. The Mining Heritage Society of Ireland intends to renovate the engine house and is appealing for funds. Shropshire Mines Trust Newsletter

UNDERGROUND COAL MINING RETURNS

An unusual method of underground coalmining is being considered and may soon be operational in Britain. It is called the "trench & auger" method and involves cutting a "ditch" from the surface down to a coal seam, auguring parallel tunnels from its base into the coal seam.

A recent planning application showed a trench 20 metres deep and 2 kilometres long with parallel augured tunnels in the coal to a distance of 150 metres. It is claimed that this method is environmentally friendly, only disturbs small areas of land and produces no subsidence or waste. Below

ANOTHER CASE OF ROAD SUBSIDENCE IN WALSALL

On 14 January 2000 a car, containing a motorist and his daughter-in-law, fell into a hole which opened up as they parked at a McDonalds Resturant off Reedswood Way. The hole was about nine feet deep. The hole was probably associated with one of the many shallow limestone workings that were worked in the area.

ROOKHOPE OLD SMELT MILL (RISPEY)

As reported briefly in the last newsletter, the old smelt mill at Rookhope has been seriously damaged by an emergency operation to contain polluted minewater from the recently closed Frazer's Complex just upstream.

According to press reports, the Environment Agency had, in their haste, failed to check their own lists of protected ancient monuments before constructing lagoons to contain the minewater which was about to come out into Rookhope Burn. Apparently the agency had failed to consult the county archaeologist and had not responded to his telephoned attempts to intervene. Sadly it seems 60% of the site has been destroyed but it is hoped a full dig will be carried out to see what can be saved. The Agency agreed to continue work at the site from mid-February under the supervision of an archaeologist. They admitted mistakes were made "but we have made recommendations about procedures for teams in the Environment Agency which we hope will be taken up to ensure we always check before moving in".

While the Agency would be acting with the best of motives in an emergency, one can't help but wonder why they shouldn't have checked their lists in any case. Let us hope that if there is more to report on this sorry affair it is of a more positive nature.

We must remind readers that the site is a scheduled ancient monument on private land and obviously we should avoid further disturbance.

Friends of Killhope Newsletter

ROLLS-ROYCE WINS \$100M GOLD MINE POWER CONTRACTS

Randgold Resources of Jersey has awarded Rolls-Royce Power Ventures Limited (RRPV), the independent power project arm of Rolls-Royce plc, contracts to build and operate two diesel power stations.

The projects, for Randgold's Morila and Syama gold mines in Mali, will use seven Rolls-Royce Allen 5012 diesel generating sets which have been specially developed for the power industry. The contracts are worth \$100 million over a 10 year period. Last year Rolls-Royce won a similar size contract with Ashanti Goldfields in Tanzania.

Roger Gosling

THE NOOK, LILLESHELL, SHROPSHIRE

It was stated in a previous edition of the NAMHO Newsletter that NAMHO had lodged a formal objection to the proposal to demolish the row of former Barrack houses at The Nook.

Unfortunately, planning permission was given to demolish the buildings. A condition of the consent was that the building be recorded prior to and during demolition.

GREENSIDE LEAD MINE EXHIBITION 2000

This event will be held at Glenridding Village Hall in Patterdale, Cumbria, from Saturday 29th July for two weeks.

The mine was worked almost continuously for over a century before finally closing in 1961.

The exhibition will cover the history of the mine using old documents, newspaper reports, plans, paintings, mineral specimens and approximately 400 photographs. Running concurrently with this will be a photographic history of life in the village of Glenridding, and surrounding Patterdale, where many of the miners lived. It will include many new photographs and documents, amongst which is an archive of colour prints from the 1950's showing scenes both above and below ground, which have never been displayed before.

There will also be a small model display of old mining machinery and a separate display showing the reopening of the Lucy Level.

The exhibition will probably be the largest on any single metal mine in the North of England and has been set-up by John Hodgkins and Warren Allison with help from the Lake District National Park and many ex miners. This will probably be the last chance to see this unique display.

BOOK REVIEWS

1. "Rhosydd - A Personal View" by Jean Napier. Published (1999) by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, Llanrwst. 55pp, softback, ISBN 0 86381470 0, Cost £8.95. This book consists of 29 modern black and white photographs, plus one archive photograph of a group of quarrymen. There is also a location plan of the mine. Most of the photographs are captioned by extracts from the Poem "Old Boys of Rhosydd" which was written in 1930 by Richard Owen. The location of the photographic sites are listed at the back of the book but no technical details are given.

The section titled "A Little Bit of History" is very small and is restricted to a brief account of the life of the miners and nothing about the mine itself.

The book is an excellent example of a photographer's portfolio of artistic pictures but is of limited use to a mining historian.

Wes Taylor

2. "The Slate Regions of North and Mid Wales and their Railways" by Alun John Richards. Published (1999) by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, Llanrwst. 279pp, 27 photos, 2 diagrams, 21 maps and 1 sketch, softback, ISBN 0 86381 5552 9. Cost £7.50.

This book is primarily a reference book of the slate workings in North and Mid Wales with added details of the railways which were associated with specific quarries or regions. There are descriptions, complete with National Grid references, of 627 slate quarries. The workings described range from large well known quarries, eg Penrhyn, to small trial excavations.

The area is split into 17 regions. For each region there is a general description and a description on how the slate was transported from the quarries. Each quarry in the region is then listed with a description of the quarry and details of the current remains on each.

The book also contains an Index of all of the quarries (by name, grid reference and region), a Selected Published Bibliography (71 references) and a Glossary of Terms (65 words).

The amount of detail in the book is unbelievable. To obtain this detail it is obvious that every site has been visited and studied. It is Alun Richards' tenacity and attention to detail which has made this book possible. To me, this is the "bible" of slate quarrying in North and Mid Wales.

Wes Taylor

BERSHAM COLLIERY TRUST

Shropshire Mines Trust is liaising with the Wrexham County Borough Council over plans to preserve the remains of Bersham Colliery. On site there is still one of the headgears (which has just been sandblasted and painted) plus an engine house still containing the electric winder. An area of land around is dotted with various artefacts including the winder from the Point of Ayr Colliery and a complete set of face chocks and a coal cutter.

The remaining part of the old colliery is now an industrial estate but the tall waste tip still exists as a landmark. Agreement has been reached to lease the small area of the winder etc from the Council and that a separate Trust be set up to manage this part of the site. Initial meetings have been held on site with council officials and several ex-miners, the latter being willing to serve as Trustees. The council still has to carry out some work on site before they can hand it over, including making the surrounding area safe by laying and grading a gravel surface.

Once the Trust has taken over a lease, work can start on cleaning out and refurbishing the engine house so it can be opened to the public. This will be done in several phases but it is hoped that it will be in a fit enough state to be opened to the public during the Heritage Open Days in September. There are other plans for the site including re-erecting a headgear on the other shaft and installing the Point of Ayr winding engine and to simulate winding this shaft. A number of the large artefacts from the Shropshire Mines Trust stock, like trucks, engines etc will be taken over to Bersham to be displayed.

Shropshire Mines Trust Newsletter

CWMYSTWYTH MINE - PROPOSED SAFETY WORK

It is reported that Ceredigion County Council has applied for planning permission to carry out safety work on a large number of mine openings at the Cwmystwyth Mine. It is intended to carry out work on 15 openings close to the county road (including Level Fawr), plus the mill tailrace, which will block or severely restrict access.

It is apparent that Ceredigion, or their contractors, have based their application on out of date information. They have not taken in to account the extension to the Scheduled Ancient Monument area that was granted in December 1997. Instead of 6 of the 18 sites of intended work being within the Scheduled Ancient Monument area, as stated in the application, they are all within that area and consent will be required in each case.

Objections to the proposed work would appear to be in the following areas - lack of justification for the work; lack of any proposal for preliminary archaeological survey or monitoring of intended work; and the visual impact of the closures. Some aspects of the work, particularly the removal of rubbish from the site, are, however, to be applauded.

Welsh Mines Society Newsletter

HAIG PIT No 4 WINDING ENGINE

Work on this engine is nearly complete. Apart from painting the driver's position, there is only rust removal to complete.

Following a successful pressure test on the engine, receiver and pipe work, approval has been given to run the engine for the public. The engine is now powered by compressed air.

Haig Pit Restoration Group Newsletter

DETECTION OF ABANDONED MINESHAFTS AND MINE WASTE

The British Geological Survey (BGS) has been awarded a major contract to improve the detectability of hazards associated with abandoned mines, including buried shafts, and minewaste contaminants such as acid mine waters, heavy metals, coal residues, cyanides and toxic gases. The information will benefit the construction and engineering industries, planning authorities and environmental protection agencies.

Contaminated and unstable ground is not just a threat to health and safety but also has a blighting influence on property values, planning and economic regeneration. Rapid, high-density scanning of the shallow

subsurface will improve confidence that the land is fit for purpose and arbitrary protection zones could be reduced accordingly.

The contract is part of the joint EPSRC/NERC URGENT programme to develop a new non-invasive geophysical mapping technique for use in the built environment. The award is worth £220k and will run for a period of 3 years.

Paul Sowan

AUTHORS STILL WANTED!!

Tempus Publishing are still looking for potential authors for the mining books in their Images of England series. The publishers are being more successful in finding authors that we are from within NAMHO.

It is in NAMHO's interest to find such authors as we get a fee from Tempus and additional publicity in the books. The fact that NAMHO has recommended a publisher does NOT affect the financial arrangements that are made between Tempus and the author.

Details of these publications and the associated agreements were discussed at a recent Council Meeting and published in the Newsletter. Anyone wanting further details should contact me. Wes Taylor - Hon Secretary & Editor

MEMBER ORGANISATION WEB SITES

It is proposed to publish a list of Member Organisations Web Sites. These web sites will be published in the Newsletter and on the NAMHO web site. The details will also be made available to other mining history sites.

If you want to publicise details of your organisation and activities using this facility, please send me your site address. The list will be updated on a regular basis.

Wes Taylor - Hon Secretary & Editor

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