

## New Members

Welcome to Simon and Judith Ganecki who have become full members, and to Mrs P.Davis who's a new associate.

## Tracks & Trucks

Two more railway tracks may have been found at Snailbeach.

A coal truck from Hanwood colliery has been found by Stuart Tomlins.

## Additions to the Library

A number of publications have been added to the club library since the last issue of 'Below' these include:

Cave and Karst Science (BCRA) Vol. 24 No.2 Aug. 1997

Cave and Karst Science (BCRA) Vol. 24 No.3 Dec. 1997

Caves & Caving (BCRA) Issue 78, Winter '97, Issue 79, Spring '98

North Wales C.C. Newsletter:  
No.240 Oct. 1997, No. 241 Nov. 1997,  
No. 242 Dec. 1997, No. 243 Jan. 1998,  
No. 244 Feb. 1998

North Wales C.C. Expedition Report,  
Summer 1997 (covers Ireland -  
Doolin River Cave, Pollnagree,  
Aillwee Show Cave, Pollballiny)

Subterranea Britannica, Newsletter  
No.19, 1997

Mining History Society of Ireland  
Newsletter No.6 December 1997.

Markham Colliery Accident, official  
report - donated by Ivor Brown.

Bulletin Bibliographique Speleologique  
- Speleological Abstracts 35,  
produced by the International  
Union of Speleology (UIS) and the  
Swiss Academy of Sciences. It  
comes with a CD-ROM holding the  
Abstracts from No.28 (1989) to 35  
(1996), plus a catalogue of the Swiss  
Speleological Library and the Index  
to Stalactite.

**Stone Chat** (Journal of Norfolk Mineral  
& Lapidary Society), Winter 1997,  
Vol. 18 No.2 and Spring 1998, Vol. 18  
No.3.

Northern Mines Journals (complete set  
of 57), Plymouth Mines & Minerals  
(1959 on) purchased for library.

## Annual Dinner

To be held on Saturday 10th October  
1998 at Tern Hill Hall Hotel,  
accommodation available at venue or  
locally, more details in a later issue.

## MHSI Address

The Mining History Society of Ireland  
of got a new web address it is now:  
<http://www.era.ie/mhsi>

Regulation 'Ranger'  
uniform, being modelled  
by 'Ranger Nick'

Plucky Nick (bearded, 38-  
40-36) was heard to  
comment: "While the new  
outfit is very flattering, I  
feel the lack of a lamp  
bracket may seriously  
hinder my role within the  
Snailbeach environment"

## Pies

The supply of miners whinberry pies at  
the Stiperstones Inn is holding up well  
this year and the quality has never been  
better!

*Ivor Brown*

## New E-mail Address

Club members with access to the  
Internet might like to make a note of  
Dave Adam's new E-mail address:  
[davidadams.cartographer@btinternet.com](mailto:davidadams.cartographer@btinternet.com)  
While we are on the subject:

## Top Secret

Hush-hush sources have reliably  
informed 'Below' that plucky founder  
member David Adams (60), married  
Anne Covey just before Christmas.  
Congratulations and best wishes to  
both of you.

## Home on the Range

Nick Southwick is settling into his  
position as the Ranger for Snailbeach,  
and has recently been photographed in  
his new volunteer ranger outfit:



# News Round-Up 1

by Ivor Brown

## South Shropshire

Conservation work on South Shropshire metal mines continues, Contractors are working on the Interpretation Study for the Snailbeach Project, the scaffold on Ladywell and White Grit have been removed, but both look as if there is more work to be done on lower parts of the engine houses. Bids have been made for a contract on safety works at Roman Gravels.

## C.Le Neve Foster

In 1884 C.Le Neve Foster, Mines Inspector, recorded the following accident:

*Feb. 28 at Roman Gravels, Richard Tomlins, age 31, miner, injured, fall of a rock from the side of his stope, leg badly cut, off work 3 weeks.*

Was this a relative of a certain Club member?

## Texas & Mexico

In November 1997 IJB visited several mining areas of South Texas and North Mexico.

- a) Thurber was a prosperous coal mining town of 10,000 people before the 1920's. Now it is a ghost town of 8 inhabitants. These are trying to develop a major coalmining museum. The wooden miners Church, and a typical miners cottage have been returned and rebuilt on the site. A major break-through is that a petrol company has just built a filling station in the form of the original coal preparation plant - the prize exhibit so far. A chimney and a few walls remain of the original site.
- b) Oil killed the coal industry in these parts (and gas). Now state-of-the-art museums are being set-up (as well as a few conventional ones) as a memorial to the early days. A large modern 'museum of oil' is at Midland. It includes rigs up to 150ft. high, full scale demonstrations of blow-outs and rig-fires and much, much, more. Smaller ones are at Kilgore, Ranger, Luling and Iraan.

- c) Derelict mercury mines (cinnabar ore) in ghost towns are the main tourist attractions at Terlingua and Mariscal (both on the Mexican border and over 100 miles from the nearest American Freeway).

Numerous relics covering the period 1900-1950 survive, in many cases they are just as they were when abandoned - except for the slow desert-type decay.

- d) A small payment to a Mexican with a punt enables an illegal crossing to be made of the Rio Grande (about River Severn size) and the hire of another Mexican and a couple of horses takes one to the reduced, near derelict former silver mining town of Boguillas, Mexico. The 'main' street is lined with half-a-dozen stalls selling amazing minerals and antiques (many from the mines, 'almost new' carbide lamps at £5 to £10!).

The biggest mine closed about 40 years ago - it had a 6 mile ropeway to take the ore from Mexico into the USA. Small mines still continue, or so it is said. Return was by a similar route (horse and punt), but with care, because this is 'lion', bear and bandit country.

## Victoria County History

The Victoria County History Group based at Shirehall are under threat, the County Council have decided that they cannot afford to support them any more. For some years now this small group have been revising the 'Histories' done about 1900. The Club has assisted each mining area volume and when published they are real 'mines' of mining information, see Telford and Stiperstones area issues.

## For Sale

A cottage cut into a sandstone cliff in a SSSI near Wolverly in Worcestershire (available from the Wyre Forest District Council).

Also a small Constables House with Lock-up in Shropshire (tel: John Stokes 01939-232471, nearest offer £20,000)

## Info Wanted

Only 2 'miners VCs' are known to have been awarded for rescue work in Shropshire mines. More accurately these are called 'Edward Medals' and were awarded to R.E.Paddock and J.T.Chidley for services at the Bulthy Mine incident in 1921.

Does anyone know the present whereabouts of these medals or of any other Shropshire awards?

Information to IJB please.

## Stiperstones Head

The 1997 'Madeley Rest Room Review' contains a good photo of J.W.Moore, Headmaster of Stiperstones School 1875-1900 (built in 1872 the school was funded mainly by the Perkins Beach Mining Company and its miners).

The accompanying article by Elsie Griffiths gives a vivid picture of the times. For example in the schools first year a fever spread through the area, three of Mrs. Griffiths grandmothers children died as did every young child in the district, bar one, Asenath Hotchkiss, and she was forever after a deaf mute. Those were the days!

## Flue

A small party (Lock, Brown and Martin) spent some time recently trying to sort out the boiler flue arrangements at the Snailbeach Cornish Engine, it seems that the winding engine boilers were connected to the flue chimney, but that the Cornish Engine boilers themselves didn't. Although there is a ridge up to the chimney where the flue could be expected.

An old photo shows however a second chimney at the end of the boiler house - even this though might only have been for the period before the main chimney was constructed.

The remainder of the time was spent sorting out measurements for beam length, back door width and the location and type of actual boilers (see item on page xx of this issue).



# Rescue Reports

## Dog Rescue

Wednesday 3rd Dec. 1997

Called out to rescue a dog that had fallen down Powis Shaft, Cliffdale Mine (NGR: SO302977).

The dog is believed to have fallen at about 10.30am. The Fire Service was on scene from approximately 1pm with the RSPCA. Assistance of MCRO was requested, with Neal Rushton and Steve Holding attending.

Neal abseiled down the shaft, with the Fire Service providing surface cover and knowing that Steve was on the way. The dog was persuaded to get in a tackle bag and was hauled up on Fire Service rope - apparently none the worse for the incident.

The dog was located on the rubbish filling the shaft about 20 feet down. Soundness of the fill was not tested. Powis shaft is one of three shafts associated with the mine and is actually located in Wales.

Fire Officer in control: Andy Bates.

Incident ended around 4.45pm

*Steve Holding*

## Rock Mine

7th November 1997

**Members present:** Ben Shaw, Eileen Bowen, Steve Holding, and Mike Worsfold.

Bolts were driven in the firm rock approximately 15' down and Ben abseiled the single free hanging pitch to the bottom level at an estimates depth of 220'.

Ben reported that the shaft was very similar to the description in Account No.22. In particular there are three accessible levels on the way down and three open levels at the base - none were explored on this occasion.

### Note:

As the shaft is free hanging for a considerable depth, even a small stone

## Meeting with Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service

Steve Holding, Alan Robinson and Neal Rushton on behalf of MCRO/SCMC attended the meeting with the Fire and Rescue Service Policy Group.

The Chief Fire Officer had been previously supplied with a briefing note that summarised what MCRO was, the situation with respect to Shropshire and the equipment available. Two members of the service had also attended the recent rescue practice at Clive Mine and had obviously reported back favourably on our competence.

We provided more information on MCRO and what we considered to be the likelihood of any future incidents. Particular emphasis was placed on the use of SRT and how this may be very different to standard fire service practice. It was clarified that the Fire & Rescue Service had found the provision of a line rescue team to be not cost effective and had previously abandoned that approach; they are considering developing a limited capability but did not see themselves in any competition with ourselves.

It was noted that any call-out of MCRO would be via the Police, but they felt that it might often be at their suggestions. There are six "Incident Control Officers" who travel separately

from the lip could do considerable damage and care is required. However the bolts have been left in place and the shaft can now be re-rigged quickly (and quietly!).

*Steve Holding*

## Rock Mine

4th January 1998

**Members present:** Ben Shaw, Steve Holding, Neal Rushton, Eileen Bowen, Andy Yapp, and Alan Robinson.

Alan and Ben descended to bottom level and surveyed the small amount of passage that was open.

to any major incident and it was felt that these were the persons who should be most familiar with what we can provide.

It was agreed that the Chief Fire Officer would prepare a fresh "Working Order" to clarify how Incident Control Officers should interact with ourselves - the draft would be sent to Steve Holding for checking.

It was also agreed that an underground familiarisation trip would be organised for Fire Officers in the spring. It is suggested that there be a weekend organised with access to the Forty Yard Level at Snailbeach - those interested could descend through the mine to the Forty Yard level and exit on the winch. This would be a good opportunity for less experienced SCMC members, and possibly SMT members. It may be arranged to coincide with a visit from KURG.

There was a brief discussion on future plans for the Fire & Rescue Service to purchase cross country vehicles with potential to carry heavy gear to remote locations. The possibility of a "National" rescue practice was noted and an offer was made to put MCRO in touch with line rescue groups for the fire service in neighbouring counties.

*Steve Holding*

Also explored level part way up (with chain hanging down) - contains a few tools.

No railway track present, 1ft. diameter iron pipe going down into the water at shaft bottom.

The CB radios were used for communication, the shaft top is particularly dangerous - so are the neighbours!

Ben Shaw

### Note:

A more complete report on this trip and the survey of Rock Mine can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this issue.



# Rock Mine

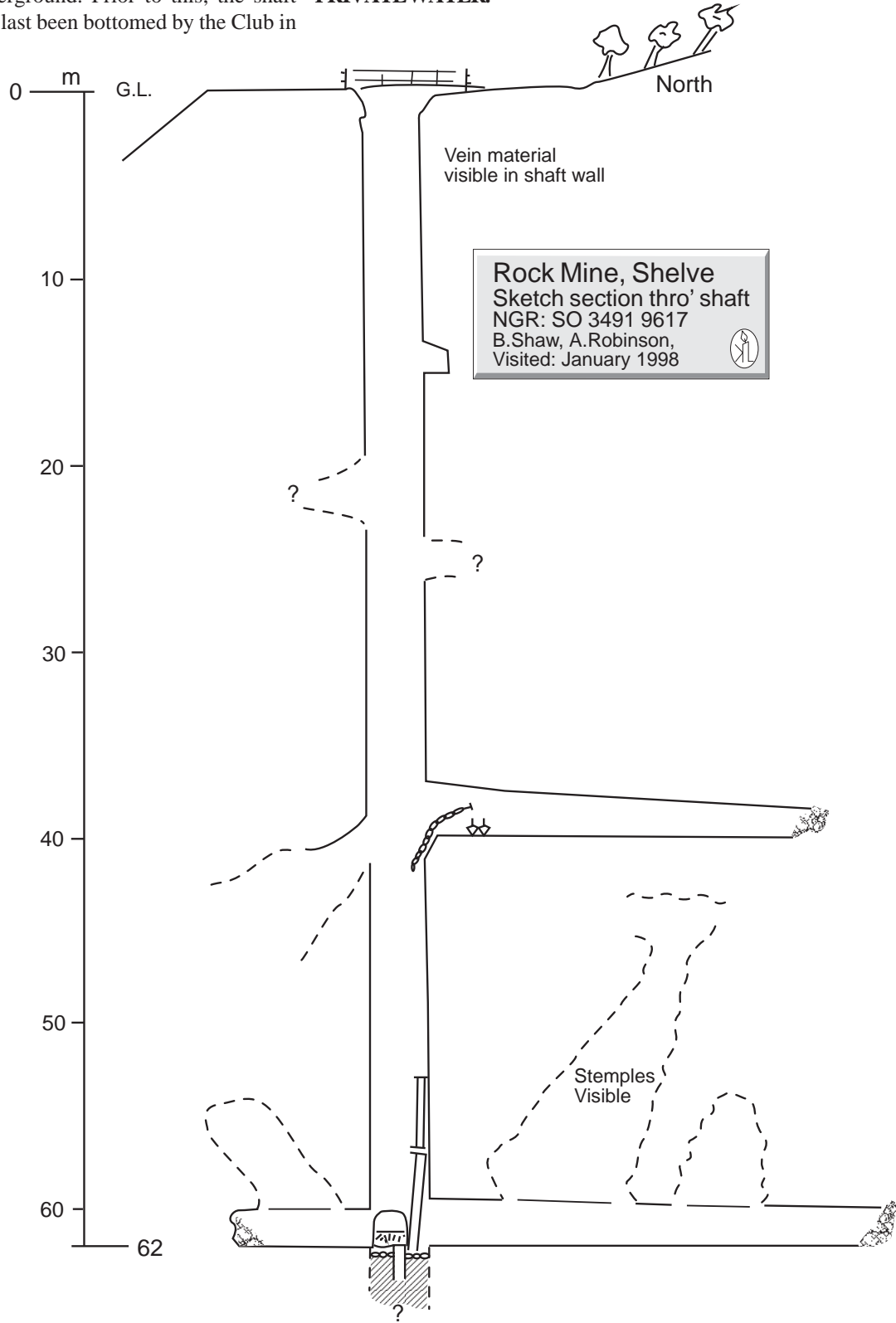
## January 4th 1998

The driving rains and gales that greeted 1998, provided a fine backdrop to a recent visit and descent of the main shaft at Rock Mine. However, Neal R, Eileen, Steve H, Andy Yapp and myself were persuaded by Ben Shaw with the promise of lost treasure and/or miles of passage to be found to venture underground. Prior to this, the shaft had last been bottomed by the Club in

1978, presumably on ladders, but no exploration of the levels took place.

The top of the shaft consisted of loose, weathered rock coning into a square shaft about 3 metres across. This was surrounded by a dilapidated post and wire fence and a sign announcing **PRIVATE WATER.**

Ben had made a visit to the shaft at the end of last year in which he had successfully descended it after bolting a good Y-hang rebelay in the competent rock just over the lip of the shaft. On this occasion he did not make any exploration of the levels or stope. He was keen that a proper, supported



# Rock Mine continued...

exploration and survey of the accessible mine should take place.

## Recent Trip

Eventually after some deliberation, Ben rigged and descended, only to reappear a little later to let us know that the rope was 3 metres too short for a 60+ metre pitch. Fortunately it was the bottom bit that was missing. I swapped places with Ben and re-rigged the pitch with a slightly longer rope. By this time the others had built themselves a cosy shelter, so Ben was volunteered again!

It was also noted on his previous visit that communication from the shaft to surface was almost impossible, so we decided to rig a 'leaky' feed radio set up. This worked quite well with our base station at the surface and Ben and myself having mobile hand held (but not dropped!) units whilst on the rope.

The shaft is very impressive and allows a free hanging descent of over 60 metres to a partially backfilled/flooded bottom. It is uncertain as to whether this is merely a sump or if the shaft continues deeper. The accompanying survey gives some idea of the short levels we could access and the visible remains. A fuller report will follow, perhaps in next years Journal.

Published information on the mine is somewhat limited and often reiterated from earlier accounts or bulletins. I intend to do a bit more background research in the near future.

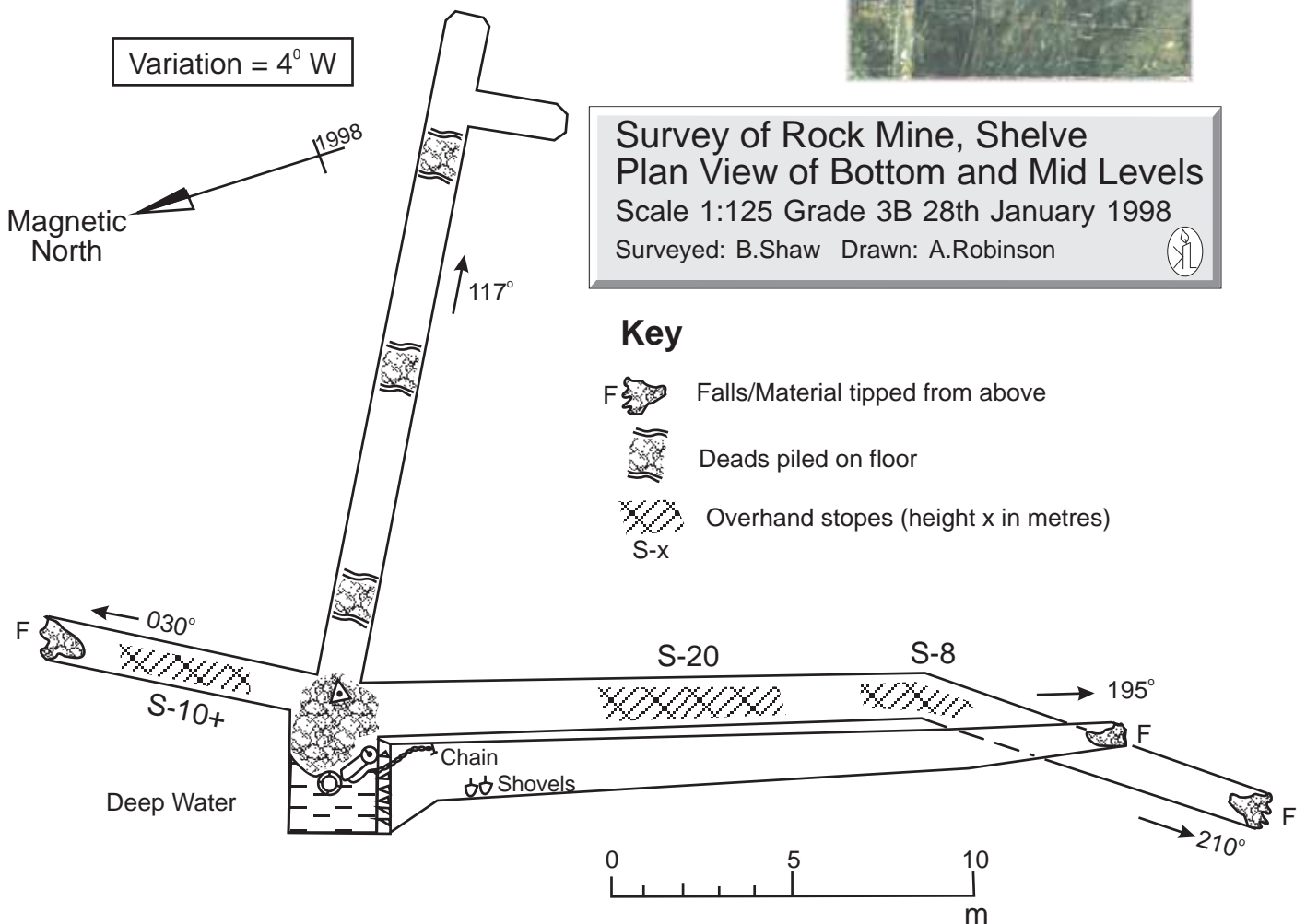
However, we do know that there were published production returns for both lead and barytes, although these figures were often included with neighbouring mines.

The mine was also known as Rockhouse and Leeds Rock House or South Bog and was in the ownership of the Shropshire Lead Mines Ltd, Minsterley. The length of operation extended from the 1850's to 1945, but there were many periods when it was idle or just the tips were being worked.

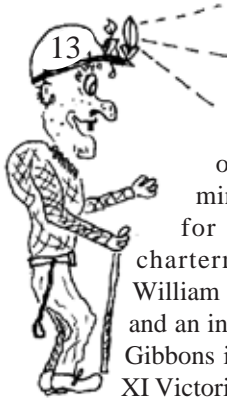
If anybody has any further background on the site, I would be interested to know more!

*Alan Robinson*

Ben making a 'wet' exit from Rock Mine:



# John Gibbons (? -1811) 18thC Mining Capitalist?

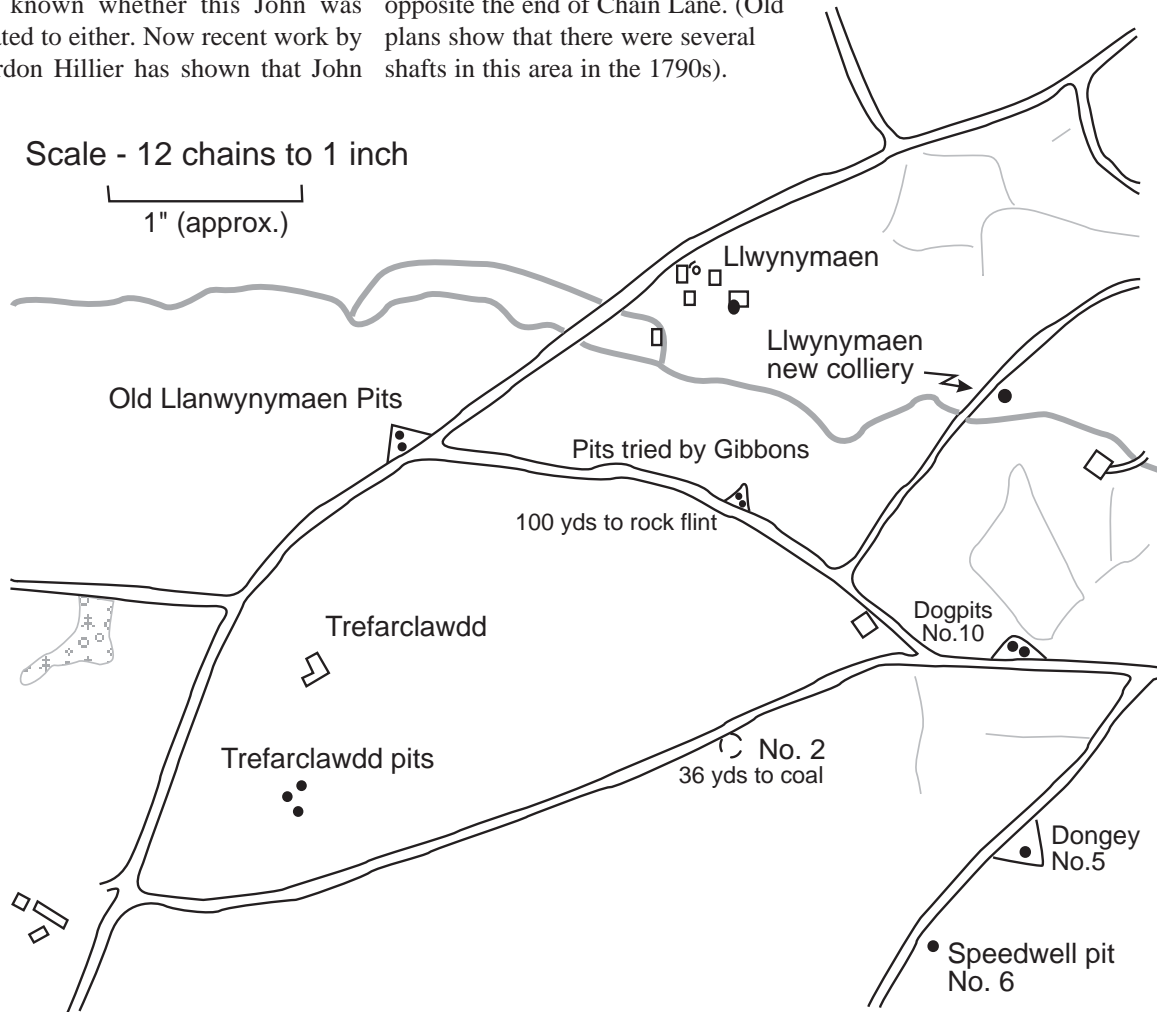


'Gibbons', is a name that crops up in several periods of Shropshire mining, there was, for example, a chartermaster named William Gibbons in 1753 and an industrialist named Gibbons in 1817 (see Vol. XI Victoria County History pages 115 and 120) but until recently little was known of anyone of this name. Thanks to the recent purchase of a small private accounts book and the publication of an article based on it by John Goodchild much more is now known of one John Gibbons with important mining connections. While his status in mining was similar to the two Gibbons mentioned above it was not known whether this John was related to either. Now recent work by Gordon Hillier has shown that John

was the son of William who had interests in both Dawley and Oswestry. John Gibbons, (who John Goodchild has written about in *Memoirs of the Northern Mines Research Society* 1991, *British Mining* Vol. 43 pages 63 - 75) seems to have had close ties with both Swinton, Staffordshire and Oswestry, Shropshire. He had a son born in Swinton about 1769 but had been made a Freeman of Oswestry by 1776 and was Mayor in 1789.

The colliery was sold by Gibbons & Co. at John's death in 1811 but continued to work into the 1840s. A partner in the Gibbons Company appears to have been the Vicar of Oswestry, Rev. Turner. In 1797 John was also a partner in the '**Gronwen Engine**' possibly a water pumping wheel used for draining the local mines. (Information in possession of G.Hillier makes this most likely and there are still some remains of this 'coal-mill,.)

From 1787 John took an active part in the development of the Morda Coalfield, Oswestry and in 1798 he and his partners had 140 colliers at work in **Llwynymaen Colliery** (twice as many as worked in the rival **Trefarclawdd Colliery**). Their first pit is said to have been sunk on the west side of Trefonen Road nearly opposite the end of Chain Lane. (Old plans show that there were several shafts in this area in the 1790s).



**Part of a "Plan of the Coal Country near Oswestry"**  
taken for Thos. N.Parker Esq 1831, showing *pits tried by Gibbons*  
Traced from: MS 2868/bundle 1.26 (SR0) by Gordon Hillier



# John Gibbons - Mining Capitalist? continued ...

T. Jones of Bersham and pulley blocks from the Coalbrookdale Company who also supplied the 'Sawney Engine' (or was this really the "Sweeney Engine"?) This was perhaps a second-hand steam engine, it was purchased in 1806. The Llwynymaen Colliery seems to have been a very profitable operation.

John Gibbons also had coal mining interests at Chirk and Ewlow and at Mostyn in Flintshire and he is recorded as buying an engine from John Wilkinson in 1795 possibly for one of these. John was also involved in the mining of calamine, an ore of zinc. This was worked somewhere to the west of Oswestry at shallow depth. - is it possible that these could have been the 'bell-pits' on Moelwydd, south west of Oswestry? The lessors of the fields from which it was taken are mentioned, one was Sir Watkins. In addition some lead ore was got from these fields and in 1794 John was working Lord Powys' mines. Shafts of fourteen and a half yard, twelve yard, ten yard, six yard and four yard depth had been sunk.

In 1793 Gibbons bought a half share of a mine in Meadowtown, to the south of Oswestry. This was probably in the Stiperstones range. He also had interests in mines in Wales such as 'Eigergeled' and 'Pen Cerrig'.

From about 1800 Gibbons was involved in working local limestone quarries, such as those at Treflach Wood, not far from his main colliery but although the new local canal must have been of vital importance to the transport of his produce he does not appear to have had a financial interest in it.

Elsewhere in Shropshire Gibbons seems to have had an interest in two paper mills near Shifnal and an estate at Dawley. This estate appears to have had extensive and long-term coal mining reserves but as yet little or nothing is known of these.

Gibbons lived in a house in Oswestry called 'The Poplars' in Willow Street, Oswestry, now occupied by a firm of solicitors. He had three children, the one son born in Staffordshire and at

least one daughter. John was heavily involved in the life of his adopted town and was a member of its Council until his death in 1811.

The writer is greatly indebted to John Goodchild for his research into the life of one of Shropshire's lesser known entrepreneurs and to Gordon Hillier, who quite independently, had been working on Gibbons' activities. The information is reproduced here with their kind permission, in the hope that others will take up the known information and dig deeper into the history of this poorly known area of Shropshire mining and its mining characters.

John Goodchild has stated that he is prepared to share his information with anyone who takes up this challenge. Tel. Wakefield: 01924-298929, Gordon, of course, is a Club Member and his address is available in the Club's list.

*Ivor Brown*

## Egg-ended Boilers at Snailbeach Mine by Ivor Brown

Egg-ended boilers were used for both steam raising and as air receivers at Snailbeach Mine, Captain Waters listed eight in 1884:-

*at New Shaft Cornish Pumping Engines:*

*Two "egg-ended" boilers 30ft. long, 4ft. dia.*

*at 'Vertical 22in cylinder Winding Engine':*

*Two "egg-ended" boilers 30ft. long, 6ft. dia. and 28ft. long, 6ft. dia.*

*near the "Compressor Engines" (powered by Cornish boilers)*

*Three "egg-ended" boilers or air receivers 30ft. long, 6ft. dia.*

*and 26ft. long, 4ft. dia.*

*and 24ft. long, 4ft. 10in. dia.*

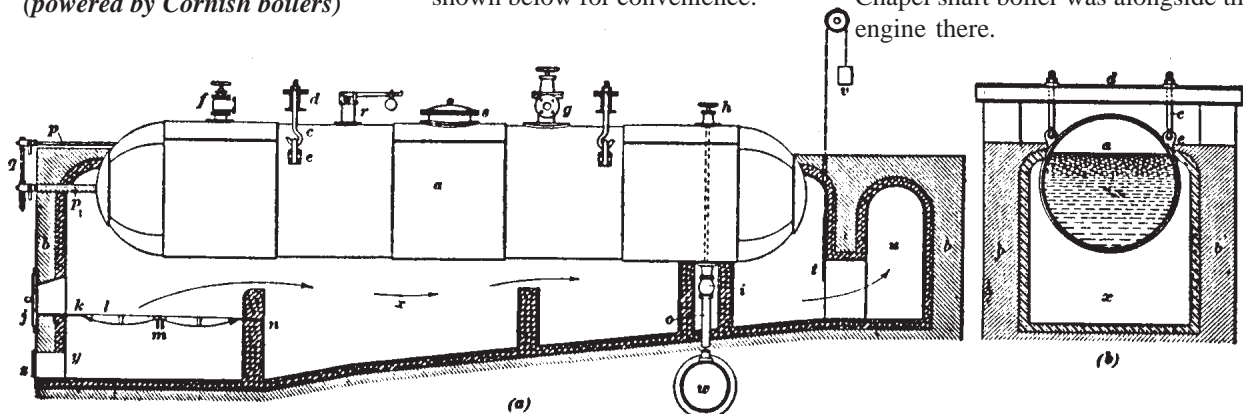
*at Chapel Shaft:*

*One "egg-ended" boiler 28ft. long, 6ft. dia.*

After a considerable search a good diagrammatic layout of an egg-ended boiler has been found in the Instruction Paper of the International Correspondence School 1907, it is shown below for convenience.

Now that some sites have been cleared a little imagination can restore the boilers to their correct positions. Both houses have been cleared at the Resting Hill site (what a hot steamy complex this would have been!). The cleared boiler site by the Compressor House held 3 Cornish boilers (30ft. long x 7ft. dia.), while the egg-ended 'air receivers' were in the uncleared area on the other side of the house in front of the mines 'compressed-air' shaft.

Chapel shaft boiler was alongside the engine there.



# An old shaft at Knowbury, Clee Hill

## The Site

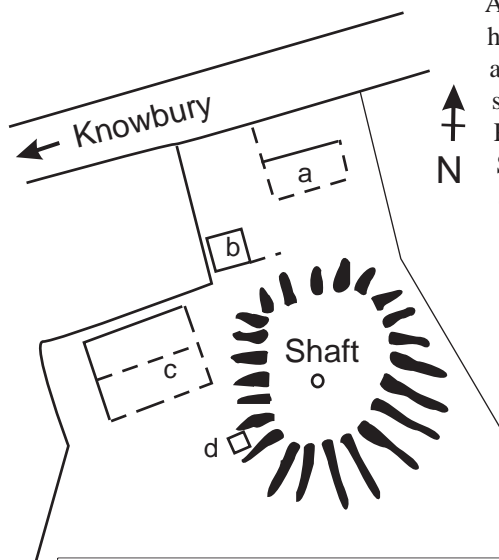
The shaft is located on top of a flat-topped spoil tip (NGR: SO 5895 7465), perhaps 30 to 40 feet in diameter. At the north end, the spoil tip is about 10 feet above ground level, but the ground falls steeply away to the south and east so here it appears to be much higher. It contains much coal waste.

The shaft is covered with a brick dome. The keystones in the very top of the dome are 'removable' - which allowed Peter Eggleston and Kelvin Lake to lower the MineCam through.



Crown of the broken open shaft cap.

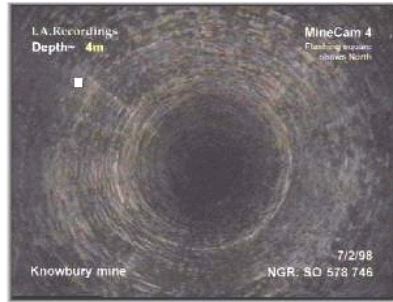
The brick lined shaft is approximately 2.5m (8ft.) in diameter and is in good condition in the upper sections. However about 20m down on the north side of the shaft a portion of the brickwork has collapsed leaving a void in the shaft wall. At 58m a large collapse from all round the shaft wall has occurred.



Sketch map of the shaft site  
at Knowbury  
by David Poyner, Feb. 1998



Leaving a void with the shaft in natural rock. Just below this at 60m the shaft is completely blocked.



View directly down the shaft about 4m depth

There are the remains of several buildings on the site, although the remains are somewhat obscured by the undergrowth. At **a** (see sketch map), there is a low brick wall, about 3 feet thick and 17 feet long, and foundations of a building extend south of this. Some of the bricks have been vitrified by heat, and at the time of the visit it was agreed this could have been the footings for a boiler. There is also indistinct traces of a wall extending north.

At **b**, there is a concrete base, about 10 feet square, faced with bricks, with possible foundations extending eastwards. This roughly aligns with the shaft, and may have been part of the engine house.

At **c** two walls stand about 4 feet high, and define a building about 15 feet square, perhaps subdivided down the middle. Perhaps this was an office. South of this no foundations are visible, but there would have been space for a winding engine, if building **b** had some other function. There is also what seems to be a shallow brick inspection pit at the base of the spoil tip, perhaps for drains.

## History

Mining in Knowbury has a long history, and the first Ordnance Survey map published in 1831 shows shafts in the immediate vicinity of the site. Traces of the spoil tips from these can still be seen. However, the first large scale OS map surveyed in 1881 shows the area of our shaft as just a small field. The 1902 re-survey marks an old shaft, with no buildings. The shaft was close to a brickyard owned by Edwin Askey, who is said to have got coal from two mines, *Windsor* and *Penny Pits*, adjacent to his brickyard.

An important figure in Knowbury at this time was John Pearson, a mining engineer of Ludlow who had been involved in the local collieries for many years. In 1895 he obtained a new mineral lease for the Knowbury area, and that year the Dept of Mines "List of Mines" shows a new mine being sunk at Knowbury. This may be our shaft. It is said two shafts were sunk, but one was soon abandoned due to faulting. A public company, the Knowbury Colliery Co., was registered in 1899 with Pearson as promotor and Askey as a director



Base of shaft, showing blockage and end of brickwork.

Wedge shaped bricks from 'crown' of 'beehive' cap:





(Public Record Office, BT31/8686/63393). Although this was wound up in 1902, Knowbury continues to feature in the Lists of Mines until 1907, when an abandonment plan was also lodged. It is not clear why the OS map shows the site as derelict in 1902; an abandonment plan from 1901 from Knowbury does exist, but this is catalogued as the **old Penny Pit**. The 1902 OS map unhelpfully shows no working colliery in the whole of Knowbury.

The evidence from the size of the spoil tip and buildings suggests that some work actually took place at our shaft. It seems reasonable to suggest that it was sunk in 1895 by John Pearson, with the primary aim of supplying coal for Askey's brickworks. The precise date of abandonment seems unclear. Inspection of the abandonment plans held by the Coal Authority Mining Records Dept might solve this problem. If anyone has seen these, please let me know!

## Footnotes.

- 1) There was an attempt to reopen a mine in Knowbury in 1911-12, but this does not seem to have come to very much.
- 2) About 20 years ago my father spoke to a Mr Jones, then from Alveley, who had worked at a pit in Knowbury as a youth, pushing trams from the face to the pit bottom. His description of the site of the colliery seems to be closer to the Knowbury brickyard, in an area of substantial coal tips and with a prominent shaft depression, but only ever shown by the OS as an area of rough pasture. More confusion; please let me know if anybody has further thoughts!

Thanks to Edwin Thorpe, Chris Eyres and Peter Hewitt for discussions about this site.

*David Poyner*

**Shaft pictures:** Freeze frames from I.A. Recordings MineCam footage.

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## Asfordby Colliery Sunday 12th October 1997

**Members present:** Stuart Tomlins, Mike Moore, John Blair, and Steve Rodenhurst.

Asfordby Colliery, Melton Mowbray, Leics. is operated by RJB Mining. The trip was arranged so that pictures and video of the pit could be taken of the pit while underground operations were still in progress and all surface machinery still in use.

We toured all of the surface installations and were even taken on to the roof of the Downcast Koepe winding tower for a birds eye view of the site!

At the time of our visit coaling had ceased and salvage of machinery from underground was taking place, before the shafts were infilled.

Asfordby is/was the newest colliery in Britain, but has been closed! All the machinery is brand new and the whole place is extremely clean and tidy.

We were told that only the winding towers and fanhouse will be demolished, the rest will be converted for other industrial usage.

As a point of interest Asfordby was designed so that all its production left the site by rail.

*Stuart Tomlins*

## Metal Prices

As South Crofty Mine has suffered from the drop in the price of tin (forcing it to close on the 6th of March this year), so has the Philippines metal producers.

The prices of tin, copper, silver and gold have dropped significantly in recent months, causing a big drop in revenue for the Philippines Government.

The drop in gold prices is also having an adverse effect on mining jobs in South Africa with several new gold mine development being shelved.

## Mexico

The British Speleological Expedition to Cuetzalan has made major breakthroughs in Mexico. Sima Castor and Sima Grande have now been connected, Naciementa Tepetzala has been pushed 500m beyond Pink Comb Chamber and a new cave has been opened up - with 2Km of passages leading through stream passages the size of Peak Cavern's to a 50m lake.

The expedition has also been the first one to transmit data back from the field to the internet. In cooperation with the Cambourne School of Mines the expedition site has been publishing the first virtual cave walkthrough, with a 3D survey linked to digital images from every survey station.

This is also the first time a cave expedition has carried its own staellite transceiver in the field with a direct link to the internet and the digital telephone system. This will allow not only the transfer of data, and its processing into up-to-the-minute surveys, but also personal communication with the team.

For all the latest news on the expedition it is available at Caving Online:

<http://www.caves.org.uk>

*Dave Mycroft  
UK Team*

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## Gaping Gill

The Bradford Pothole Club will be running the next winch meet from the Whitsun Bank Holiday weekend 23 May to the 29 May. It is very popular, so if you go along expect long delays - particularly if its a fine weekend!

For more up-to-date details about the Meet, have a look at their web site on:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/biffo15north/homepage.htm>

Enter the address as one long line - due to space I've had to split it here.

*Kelvin*



## Brora Coal

In a remote part of Scotland there is a small coalfield not in the usual Coal Measures, that of Brora. It seems from a recent book (Coal Mining in Brora 1529-1974, by JO Owen) that there were connections with Shropshire.

In 1814 it is said that the workings were on the "Shropshire Plan" ie: longwall, and in 1873 they bought a pump from the Lilleshall Company. Later in 1873 the Chief Mining Engineer at Lilleshall was asked to inspect and report on their workings. It is said that he took with him several miners who stayed and set-up a small colony there.

## 30 Years Ago

The Shropshire Pits were closing:

**Madeley Wood:** July 1967

**Ifton:** November 1968

**Highley:** January 1969

Have there or are there likely to be an commemorative events?

**Granville** closed nearly 20 years ago  
- August 26th 1979.

## Blenkinsopp

RJB's Blenkinsopp Colliery near Haltwhistle, Northumberland has been sold to its management. They hope to produce about 20,000 tons of coal per year and employ about 100 men.

The mine was purchased by Budge in 1990, and was a precursor to the later reopening of 3 collieries followed by the purchase of 16 more, making 20 in all. RJB have now reduced their 20 deep mines to 16.

## Parys Mountain

The Welsh Mines Trust has been busy during 1997. Preservation work has started on the Pearl Enginehouse at Parys Mountain in Anglesey and it is hoped to do the same at Penrhos Enginehouse at Brymbo by the end of the year.

Future work may include preservation of the Nant Mine chimney and enginehouse in Denbighshire and formation of a car trail to visit mining remains in North Wales.

## Closure Reasons

Time has been spent wondering why so many Shropshire coal mines closed immediately after Nationalisation in 1947. The 1950 Inspector of Mines Report gives the answer - in that year 9 mines closed in the West Midlands area, of these "7 were small mines in Shropshire which were requisitioned for opencast working", presumably by the Ministry of Fuel & Power.

## Colliery Closures

The article on Colliery Closures by David Coxhill (**Annual Journal No.5**) gives figures which in themselves do not give the conclusions claimed ie: that neither political party can claim to have favoured the coal industry more than the other (there is also an '8%' omitted in the first decade but like the other figures this is immaterial to the claim).

However using Davids figures for closures it can be calculated that 439 mines were closed under Labour and 672 under Conservatives, but since the Conservatives were in office for 33 years, against 15 for Labour, the Conservatives only closed 20 pits on average per year, against 29 for Labour. But to people in the industry it is not mine closures that matter (some are merged, some expand, some new ones open) it is jobs lost that really bites. Using figures based on Davids, but substituting jobs lost between 1947 and 1994, 465,630 jobs were lost under Conservatives and only 244,341 under Labour. However taking into account the Conservatives 33 years against Labours 15, this becomes 14,110 per year under Conservatives and 16,289 per year under Labour. If anything the coal industry seems to do better under Conservative control.

The position in Shropshire also points to this. Taking the five 'large' nationalised collieries in 1947 (Granville, Grange, Madeley, Ifton and Highley) the number of miners increased first by nearly 1,000 from 2,814 in 1948 to 3,785 in 1958. It then fell dramatically, 4 pits closed under Labour and only 1 pit (Granville) closed

under Conservatives. In very round figures about 2,500 jobs were lost under Labour and about 1,000 under Conservatives.

A copy of the calculations is available (price £3 to be donated to charity) or, subject to editorial discretion it will appear in the next Journal.

## Arithmetic Questions

Managers exam, 1901, SCMC Journal No.5, six candidates (plus I.J. Brown) tackled these problems. Of the six, four multiplied by 2 unnecessarily in Question 1, one multiplied by 60 unnecessarily in Question 2 and one forgot to multiply by 8 in Question 3. Otherwise all would have had correct method and answer. One, Barry Job, had correct methods and answers and the prize has been dispatched. Congratulations to everyone who had a go: Barry J (winner), Ken L, David P, Paul T, Richard L and Alan T (all tied for second place although some were tidier than others). Here's to the next one!

A copy of the specimen answers is available (price £3 to be donated to charity) or, subject to editorial discretion it will appear in the next Journal.

## Deputy Found

A strange coincidence has occurred between two items in the Annual Journal No.5. David Poyner has found a connection between the person who passed the Undermanagers Examination in 1901 and the deputy prosecuted under the Special Rules (pages 41 & 37 Journal No.5). They appear to be one and the same person, namely George Ferriday.

Mr. Ferriday seems to have passed the exam in 1901 and afterwards became the undermanager at a pit in Pendlebury, South Staffs. For some unknown reason he then became a deputy again at Billingsley, Shropshire. The incident for which he was prosecuted occurred some 6 months later, where he went after Billingsley is not yet known.



# Books, Videos, Places & Events

## The Cleobury Mortimer & Ditton Priors Light Railway

by **M.R.C.Price**, Oakwood Press. New revised third edition 1995, price ú6.95. A5 size, soft covers, 88 pages, about 100 photos, figures and maps.

First published in 1963 (with only 27 pages) this Railway has proved of such interest that the book is in its third 'enlarged' edition. It is not only of interest for its railway but also the mineral workings served on the Clee Hills.

The summit of Abdon Clee was connected to the line by an incline over a mile long, while that of Titterstone Clee by a ropeway of about 3 miles long.

The Dhustone quarries on Abdon Clee and the railway were worked by sister companies, quite separate but several of the Directors were on both boards.

Work commenced on the railway, incline and quarry in 1907, but another connection proposed to link with Billingsley Colliery was not built. For some years the railway and its two connected quarries were a success but in the mid 1930's first the ropeway closed then the incline and by 1938 all mineral traffic had ceased. The line itself was however to find a new life with the military, but this closed in 1965.

This is an interesting book and is well illustrated but is more concerned with the rails than the minerals. It does, unusually, recommend that readers who are interested in the quarries should study a competitors book (Oxford Publishing 1980, same title, by W. Smith and K. Beddoes). Despite this it is well worth having.

## Footnote

"To report on the present condition of the Incline" was the principal assignment of the reviewer's Venture Scout expedition in November 1955.

The expedition was drawn up by District Commissioner Dr. J. Metcalfe, to be a self-sufficiency 25-mile overnight journey "through remote country". It was then, few cars and even fewer buses, and everything needed was carried in an ex-army kitbag on a wood and metal ribbed scrubbing (skiffle) board strapped to ones back. The incline itself was found to be virtually complete, part overgrown, but most equipment had been removed to help the war effort.

*Ivor Brown*

## New Publications

**Beaudesert Mining Feature Survey** (near Cannock, Staffs) published by Staffordshire County Council Planning Department.

A very comprehensive report on ancient surface diggings as determined by an archaeological survey carried out January to March 1993.

About 30 pages plus a folder of plans. No price given (see David Coxhill for details).

**Bricks and Brickmaking** by Martin Hammond, £2.95, published by Shirebooks, 1997 (a reprint of the 1990 book).

It contains over 32 pages and 43 illustrations and describes the history of brickmaking.

Shropshire is well represented with a fine drawing of the old Donnington Brickworks umbrella Hoffman kiln.

*Ivor Brown*



## Mining Videos (available from the Club)



If you are interested in doing a bit of armchair mine exploration the following videos, produced by I.A. Recordings with help from Club members, may be of interest to you.

### **A Tour of Clive Copper Mine** £14.95

A comprehensive guided tour of Clive, with Edwin Thorpe acting the 'experienced' expert and Kelvin Lake the 'novice'. The tour covers both the upper and lower levels, plus the Northern stope (the access to which is now a bit dodgy).

### **Clive Rescue Practice**, £9.95

An action packed 'head banging' record of a Club rescue practice, featuring the 'infamous' maypole winze traverse!

### **Snailbeach**, £14.95

The rise and fall of Snailbeach, once renowned as the "richest per acre of ground in Europe", is traced in this production through the use of historic photographs, animated plans and sections, and unique underground video footage.

### **Collections from the Archives**

The following tapes contain almost all the footage recorded at the given mine, and are intended as a resource base, not a finished production:

C.15: Dudley Tunnel '88 to '89, £14.10

C.18: Donisthorpe Colliery, £11.75

C.20a: Snailbeach - Final Frontier,  
£9.87

C.23: Bagworth Colliery, £11.75

C.28: Morse's Level, £9.87

C.29: SCMC in Cornwall, £16.45

C.32: SCMC in Ireland, £14.10

### **Latest releases:**

C.35: Old Glengowla Lead Mine, Ireland  
An underground trip down to water level in this recently drained mine, full of amazing minerals and curious artefacts. £9.87



# BCRA Regional Meeting

## North Wales - Saturday 15th May 1998

The North Wales Caving Club are pleased to act as hosts of a BCRA regional meeting in North Wales on Saturday 15th May 1998, at the Royal International Eisteddfod Pavilion, Llangollen. Members of the BCRA's Cave Surveying Group will be present, and the event will also coincide with a weekend field meeting of the BCRA's Cave Radio Group.

The programme will include:

- \* Trade stands
- \* Tea, coffee, beer and sandwiches available all day.
- \* Talks. We expect to include the following ..
  - The Limestone of North Wales
  - Mineralisation in North Wales
  - The Mines of Anglesey and Snowdonia
  - Black Arts - Finding Underground Voids the High Tech Way
  - Pre-Roman Copper Mining on the Great Orme
  - Using Local Archives to Locate Caves and Mines
  - Access Agreements - What is the Land-owner Thinking?
  - Cave surveying software for the home computer (plus computer demo with freeware/shareware to take away)
  - Radio communications in caves
  - Cave gadgets - lighting, computers, surveying ...
- \* There is plentiful camping, bunkhouse, B&B and hotel accommodation in the vicinity
- \* Field trips and visits will be organised for the Sunday.

North Wales is one of the least well-known caving areas in the UK, but has some significant caves and great potential. There are two main areas of Limestone (both Carboniferous) in North Wales - one runs south east from the coast at Llandudno to Ruthin, the other from Prestatyn to Oswestry.

There are very many small caves in North Wales, but the principal ones are found in the Alyn Valley near Loggerheads where **Ogof Hesp Alyn** extends for well over a mile. Further to the south and east, on Esclusham Mountain, three separate sections of

the extensive **Ogof Llyn Parc** system are accessed through mine workings; this cave is a SSSI.

The whole of North Wales has been extensively mined. Slate mines are common, most famously at Blaenau Ffestiniog, but there has been considerable extraction of lead and zinc, and there are pre-Roman copper mines on the Great Orme.

The opportunities for underground exploration in North Wales are almost unlimited.

The BCRA, in addition to organising the national caving conference and science symposia, has a programme of informal regional meetings around the country. The BCRA has a number of special interest groups and it encourages these to get involved with regional meetings. The Speleo-history Group was on hand at the Mendip meeting; this time, members of the Cave Radio Group and the Cave Surveying Group will be present to talk about their gadgets. Those who are particularly interested in electronics in caving can join CREG, who will be undertaking field experiments on Saturday and Sunday.

## Admission Charges & Further Information

Admission to the Saturday Meeting will be £2.00 in advance or £3.00 on the door. (Cheques payable to North Wales Caving Club). Tickets and further information are available from:

Simon Dennis, Secretary NWCC,  
Kemmel, Storeton Lane,  
BARNSTON,  
Wirral, L61 1BX  
Telephone: 0151 648 6578  
or  
Adrian Farrel, Ty Du, Abbey Road,  
LLANGOLLEN, LL20 8EB  
E-mail af@datcon.co.uk.

For information about the Cave Radio Group's field meeting, write to:

Richard Rushton, 77 Hirstwood Road,  
ShIPLEY, West Yorkshire, BD18 4BY.  
Telephone 01274 580041  
E-mail richard@yabon.demon.co.uk

(CREG's meeting begins of the Friday evening. Accommodation & meals are provided. There will be an informal programme of technical talks on the Saturday evening at a location to be announced. Field experiments will take place on Saturday and Sunday).

*David Gibson*

## BCRA Conference "Hidden Earth 98"

### Advanced notice:

The 1998 BCRA conference will take place on the weekend of **19-20th September**.

The venue will be the **Floral Hall, Southport**, in the north-west of England.

Planning is at a very early stage at the moment, but it is expected that there will be field trips on the Friday afternoon and the usual programme of events over the weekend, including trade and club stands, talks, discussion groups, SRT races and, of course, the photographic, video and art competitions.

The annual conference takes a lot of organising, and offers of help would be welcome.

You can contact:  
Pete Cousins: 01543-25179  
or  
David Gibson: **e-mail:**  
gibson@micosolv.demon.co.uk

Further details of the conference will be available soon.

*David Gibson*



# Letters and Correspondence

## Tom Vaughan

Having just had time to read 'Below' issue No. 96.1 thoroughly, having only been able to skip through it when it arrived some time ago, I note that it contains a notice of the death of T.E.(Tom) Vaughan - a former associate member. Tom Vaughan was the resident engineer for Shropshire County Council on the Albrighton Bypass, while supervising the works, sitting in his cabin he found he had time on his hands and being interested in mining and in contact with the late Mr. Henry Jones of Oswestry Library, he borrowed and copied the full set of South Shropshire Mine Plans which eventually became the subject of our account No. 10.

He was introduced to the Club by Henry Jones and became a great help, leading us to the Slate Mines at Glyn Ceriog and other places. He also had considerable knowledge of Snailbeach and once was able to challenge Joe Roberts and prove that he was not the actual owner of the site.

Once, outside the Day Level there was a cast iron placque which read 'Snailbeach Mining Company 1832'. This mysteriously disappeared but one night Tom invited a number of us into his house at Shrewsbury and urged us to take coffee with him. The coffee table was extremely heavy and turned out to be the missing placque, which he said he had acquired for safe keeping.

Tom, who was also Clerk of Works on the construction of the Telford Bridge in Shrewsbury was employed by Scott, Wilson Kirkpatrick & Partners and his next contract took him to Scotland, where unfortunately we lost track of him.

One wonders what happened to the placque because questions have recently been asked and the time is coming when perhaps it or an exact replica should be replaced in its original position. Does anyone know where it is now?

Regards,

David Adams

## Clee Hill Mines

### Watshill Colliery Collapse

Last year there was a shaft collapse at the Watshill Colliery (NGR: S061257685). This has created a crater about 20 feet deep, revealing brick foundations of surface buildings and perhaps traces of the shaft itself cut into the rock.

### Catherton Colliery

Further north at Catherton Colliery (SO61007735) the turf has been removed from an area by the spoil tips. This has revealed a scatter of bricks, bits of metal, and part of a 20inch gauge tramway formed from bridge-rail, still in situ.

David Poyner

## PhD Help Wanted

I am looking at how certain elements behave, particularly the rare earth elements, under conditions associated with acid mine drainage. I have already sampled surface adits from Cornwall, West Wales and the Pennine coal fields. I am now looking for suitable sites hosted in Derbyshire limestone and the North Pennine Ore Field. In particular I am hoping to take some samples from inside mines, where effects of oxidation will be less pronounced and pH will be below 4. If anyone can offer suggestions of mines or would be willing to help with my sampling then I would be very pleased to hear from them. I can be contacted at:

Richard White  
IGES, Llandinam Building  
University of Wales Aberystwyth  
SY23 3DB

Tel: 01970-622602 (work)

01970-627996 (home)

*e-mail:* raw93@aber.ac.uk

Also do you have any contacts that may be able to help with underground sampling in Cornwall?

Many Thanks

Richard

## George Wall

My Greatgrandfather George Wall, husband of Eliza Denstone, was a coalminer in 1870 when his son George Wall was born. They lived on Hockley Bank, Brosely in the County of Salop. Does your club take any interest in the life and times of the miners?

Is anything known about their lives? Do you have any knowledge of a mine in 1870 in the area of Hockley Bank Brosely where my G'Grandfather could have been employed?

Any attempt to answer any of the above will be greatly appreciated.

Margaret mavor  
mmavor@ibm.net

## Silver in the Weston

### Lead Mines -

Quite by chance I came across an article in the Mining Journal, 21 Aug 1852 p. 399, referring to the discovery of silver in Cross's Level -

*'23 samples were taken by Mr Readwin from the spoil bank of the level ..... three yielded severally 2ozs, 16.5ozs and 40ozs of silver to the ton of spar - facts amply sufficient to warrant prosecution of further researches.'*

According to Dines (West Shropshire Mining Region, Bull. Geol. Survey GB., No. 14 (1958) p. 13) 'The mine was worked essentially for barytes' commencing in 1881, although the Mineral Statistics indicate barytes production by at least 1860. Yet the mine clearly had an earlier history as a potential lead and silver producer.

Can anyone tell me if silver was produced in any quantity and if there is evidence for early (pre 18th/19th century) workings at the mine?

Forgive me if I am duplicating effort as, given the relative proximity of the lead/silver refining site at Brompton/Pentrehyng, the possibility of mining in the period of Roman occupation may have already been considered.

Peter Cloughton,

Blaenpant Morfil, Rosebush,  
Clynderwen, Pembs. SA66 7RE

*e-mail:* P.F.Cloughton@exeter.ac.uk



# Thought of the year: Personal, Safety Abroad

## The Luxor Massacre, Monday 17 November. 1997

With so much attention being quite rightfully paid to safety equipment when going underground and locking your cars to prevent them getting stolen, it is important not to forget personal safety when travelling to foreign destinations. This has been highlighted in dramatic fashion by the escape of David Coxill during the recent Luxor massacre.

David, who at special request from Club Members, has again visited the sites of Ancient Egypt between 9 - 22 November, 1997 to do some preliminary fieldwork for a future club publication entitled "The Mines of the Pharaohs". Although initially somewhat reluctant to do so, for the benefit of his friends in the club, David has agreed to talk about his involvement during that day of slaughter. He certainly seems to have developed a new, more assertive personality!



Getting up at 3.30 am to visit the west bank of Luxor, he left his boat, the Royal Rhapsody, his party arrived at the Valley of the Kings at 7.30 am. Only one other coach had arrived before hand, so he had beaten the flock of tourists that would normally have descended to the greatest archaeological site of the world a few hours later.

The tour party was guided through the tombs of Rameses VI and Rameses III. David and a few of his friends were then allowed to independently visit the tomb of the famous Tutmosis III at the end of a cliff wadi. This involved walking up steel steps for 70m along a steep gradient to the entrance of the tomb, then going down 70m in steps

cut into the Theban Limestone into the tomb. David knocked his head on the limestone roof during the descent and to his amazement everybody asked him if he wanted an aspirin. It did not hurt at all but that was only the start of his luck that day. Remember he was not wearing a helmet and we all know how often he hits his head against the roof when he wears a helmet exploring abandoned mines!

Little known to him, but while inside the tomb of this famous 18th Dynasty Pharaoh, called the Napoleon of Ancient Egypt for winning 17 military campaigns without any losses, another "military" style confrontation was imminent where everybody was the loser, tourist, locals and the world. Whilst studying the unfinished, graphic drawings in the burial chamber, six terrorists were walking approximately directly above him on the hillside paths that descended into el-Deir el-Bahari valley that contains the mortuary temple of Queen Hapshepsut, stepmother of Tutmosis III.

This is a very exposed site with a long path from the coach park to the temple with no cover. The intervening hillside is the physical barrier between the Valley of the Kings and el-Deir el-Bahari. David had wanted to walk up these hill tracks to get a better view of the tombs, but looking at his watch he realised that he had not the time and went back to the coach for 9.15 am. That was another piece of luck for if he had, he would almost certainly have come directly into contact with the terrorists dressed in the clothes of the tourist police. That meeting was delayed a short time, but not postponed.

Whilst getting into his coach at the Valley of the Kings, the 6 terrorists, belonging to the Islamic fundamentalist group al-Jamna al-Islamiyya, not waiting for their 24 colleagues to arrive, walked into the coach park of Queen Hatshepsut's temple. Using assault guns they quickly killed the two tourist policemen on guard, but not without one of them being wounded in the leg. Fearing his capture, the other five killed him.

Tourists ran towards the perceived safety of the temple where they were mercilessly gunned down by the terrorists, killing 58 in total. Some people were saved by being thrown by their guides into a trench and were fortunately overlooked by the murderers. A lot of these deaths occurred at the base of the right hand side of the temple complex, as well as the open ground. When he eventually was allowed to visit the temple two days later, plain clothed security guards prevented you going in this section of the temple. The temple in that area was partially damaged by bullet marks.

Back at the Valley of the Kings, David's coach left travelling towards Queen Hatshepsut's temple. Suddenly Arabs started to wave their hands and so they stopped. Obviously something was wrong. They were told that there were riots and fighting between the police and local people who were being evicted from their houses so that tombs by the Valley of the Nobles could be opened up. It actually turned out that local people in Luxor, outraged on hearing the news, without arms, had charged the terrorists who were forced to hijack a bus to escape. Unfortunately two local Arabs were killed in the process, bringing the death total to 63.

David's coach then proceeded to drive slowly along the highway, with some of the blinds drawn down. At about 10am David's coach was overtaken on the left by a green bus. This had the title "Isis" (the wife Goddess of Osiris, Lord of the Underworld and mother of Horus, the divine earth bound representative of Osiris, represented by the living Pharaoh himself). Through a broken window on its right hand side, a fiery eyed, dark coloured man in his 20 to 30s, leaned out and threw a large piece of alabaster at his coach. David thinks he was aiming for the centre of the window, which probably would have fractured but instead, hit the base of the window, which held and the mineral instantly broke up. At this stage there could be no doubt whatsoever that something was very wrong.



# Thought of the year: Personal, Safety Abroad

## The Luxor Massacre, Monday 17 November. 1997

A short while later (it seemed quite a while but was probably only tens of seconds), four gunshots were heard, the target being the bus. One of them hit the window next to David's head, but fortunately the angle of contact was so obtuse (wide angle) that the bullet deviated off the window, making that familiar high velocity bullet contact noise. When asked what would have happened if they shot at him when they threw the alabaster rock, he declined to comment.

By this time the forces of light had begun to assemble. A motorcyclist, who must have been a security official, drove on the right to the driver's window, warning him not to go further. That motorcyclist, having delivered his message, only just managed to survive hitting a parked car on the right hand side of the road. The hijacked bus then did a three-point turn and drove past them again, this time not shooting. David believes his bus did not come under further fire because some blinds were down, fooling the terrorists into thinking the bus was only partially full. At the time he thought they must have run out of ammunition, but a later gun fight with tourist police reserves from Luxor clearly shows this was not the case.

At about this time a jeep with armed tourist police drove down to the right of the bus just off the highway. Not being able to tell friend from foe, David quickly grabbed two blinds and ducked. He says this was to provide some semblance of protection against a possible petrol bomb attack like that which killed 18 German tourists outside the Cairo Museum two months previously. Fortunately this was a false alarm!

David's coach also then did a 3 point turn and stupidly in his view followed the tourist coach. A plain clothed official was standing in the centre of the highway pointing a revolver at the terrorist coach. From then on David's coach eventually got back safely to his boat at about 11.30 am. He was amazed at the genuine sincerity of local Arab people over what had happened.

Apparently their standard of spoken English is excellent and moral conduct far superior to what we in the West can claim today, even if their retail sales tactics are over zealous and they want a tip for everything!

It so transpired that after his clash with the terrorists they headed back to el-Deir el-Bahari to make an attempted escape through the hills. Tourist police arriving on the scene had a prolonged gunfight and killed them in the high ground to the left of Queen Hatshepsut's temple. The total death toll came to 68, with many more injured.

The Egyptian people are deeply ashamed of what has happened and fully appreciate that thousands of jobs in the tourist industry could be affected by this incident. David seems to think that the massacre took place so soon after the petrol bomb attack in Cairo in September because people had just ignored it. The terrorists were determined to make themselves noticed. In that but nothing else they have succeeded.

The Arabs genuinely like British people, more so than some of our European counterparts. You can have open, free conversations with them. You can be sure they are genuine in what they say. While complimenting British people in many ways, they do regret that so many of their artefacts are in foreign museums on "permanent loan", and find it difficult to come to terms with the West's low moral lifestyle (which we suspect David does as well) and resent Franco-British-Israeli aggression during the Suez Crisis during which Anthony Eden suffered a mental breakdown.

There is nothing in the Holy Koran that justifies murder any more than in the Judaeo-Christian Bible. Remember all three religions worship the same God and about 10% of Egyptians are members of the Coptic Church, the official Christian Church in Egypt, based on the gospels of St. Mark, rather than ours on St. Paul. There are a few fundamentalist who have killed

tourists, just as we in Britain have the IRA, that have not been eradicated by us, despite having a very professional army which is the envy of the entire world. Nobody stops coming to Britain because of these attacks.

Yet serious questions have to be asked about only having two tourist police guards in an exposed, major tourist site. There has been criticism that guards in the Valley of the Kings heard the shooting and did nothing. David regards this as nonsense since he did not hear any bullets when he was outside the entrance to Tutmosis III tomb, the nearest to the main incident site. The truth is that there were too many guards doing nothing on the east bank in Luxor, just as the security chiefs are safely located to the north at Cairo. The trouble normally is in Middle Egypt between Memphis and Luxor, where more fundamentalist Muslims live. Basically the security chiefs are having too easy a life and the Egyptian President has said as much. In a country where having been an Army Officer appears to be a prerequisite to being anybody in any profession, this seems a disappointingly state of affairs. David thinks there will be a rapid self-appraisal in security in Egypt.

David does not want to give recommendations on how people should look after themselves abroad. He thinks that by telling Club Members of his experiences (his lips apparently are as tight as a clamp when approached on the subject by people who are not his friends), they can reflect on their own arrangements in an objective manner. This is as true for those of you have recently visited Spain, New Zealand and Germany on mine/caving exploration visits as it is for David whose interests cover a wide range of natural phenomenon.

We wish him well and remind him it's about time he got on with writing the club Memoir on the Coalbrookdale Mining Legacy he has promised for the last two years. David did nod in acknowledgement to that comment.



## The Mines and Tunnels of the Ironbridge Gorge Part 3 “From Bedlam to The Lloyds”

Stand on the centre of the new Free Bridge (nicknamed the ‘Batman’ bridge by local children!) and look to the Madeley bank - or climb higher up the Broseley bank for a wider view. Both banks are truly on historic mining ground. The 17th Century mines beneath Broseley bank (described in SCMC Annual Journal No.3 1995) are repeated on the Madeley side.

Sir Basil Brooke (1576-1646) of Madeley Court was Lord of the Manor of Madeley (1598-1646), his family having purchased the rights at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. (Brooke’s statue is on the outside window ledge at Madeley Parish Church and the iron lintel over the furnace hole at Coalbrookdale Museum site bears his initials and the date 1645). His mines beneath the Madeley bank were said to be the most productive in Shropshire producing over 30,000 tons of coal per year. He is also credited by some as being the developer of the now international ‘Shropshire’ longwall method of working.

Understandably these mines attracted the attentions of the Parliamentarians for not only were they rich but Brooke was a Royalist and a Catholic. In 1645 the mines fell to the Parliamentarians who let them to Richard Foley and then to Edward Cludde. By the time Cludde took them over they had fallen into decay and he set about restoring them to their former greatness. By 1650 attempts were being made to sort out their values and ownership and interesting information is provided by the evidence given about the mines and miners.

Brooke’s had worked at least four insetts (or adits) using master “grubbers” (grubbe= miner in German), normally two partners at each insett with their own workmen:

Oliver Crompton was a grubber, he had worked 40 years in the pits, 20 years in his present one, which was 1000 yards long. It had a main road, all supported by timber. This had cost £50 in workmanship and £250 in timber, with additional cost for drainage work.

Previously the short term tenants had allowed the mine to deteriorate.

Robert Lewis, master grubber, said his pit had a pump which could force water 400 yards.

E.Lewis worked in a pit known as the 3rd Insett, it was 700 yards long and £450 was spent in workmen’s wages in 1649 (at which time a miner would get £15-17 per year, so probably he employed 30-40 workers).

J.Davies worked the 4th Insett, it had a pump to force water and was 400 yards long.

There was a mention also of other insetts - see References for further information on the insetts. It would also be interesting to know what type of pump was available at the time to force water 400 yards! (*for more on the Cluddes see footnote*).

By 1700 the whole of the Madeley bank at this point was pock-marked with adits - laterally along the seam outcrops and vertically in the different seams of ironstone, coal and clay. VIP’s came to view them: Francis Brokesby in 1711 said here “there were considerable coal mines into which they deemed not to descend as in other places into pits, but go in at the side of the hill into which there are long passages both straight forward and from there on each side” (the longwall system ?). The coal was “thrust by men” out of “long underground passages even to the boats which lie in the Severn” (from Leland, 1768 Itinary VI). In 1773 John Fletcher, the saintly vicar of Madeley, described a trip into a “sloping pit” (a drift) which was “supposed to be near a mile under the ground” (Wesleys Life of Fletcher, 1786).

By the 1790’s these adits were connected to the surface by deep shafts higher up the hill. Plumptre describes a trip in about 1790 through “Bedlam” Mine, which might have been the Crawstone or (later) Styches Pit, since the distances given are similar (357ft. down to the Little Flint Coal in 1909). He was let down 300ft. using a windlass,

“went along a level some way by iron-roads (tramway tunnels), very dirty and stooping, got into a carriage and went to end”. In all 1200ft. of level of which he rode 480ft. He was then given a choice, to walk out through the adit - or to go up the shaft again. He chose the later (See ‘Below’ 92.3 page 4 for full details).

From the 1750’s control of the mines had passed to the Madeley Wood Company partnership. This was formed in 1756, the same year that Richard Reynolds arrived in the area, and consisted of twelve local notables including a Brooke and several master colliers. The partnership built the Bedlam Furnaces in 1757 and acquired the mineral rights for coal and ironstone in the Madeley Parish. In 1776 Bedlam was purchased by Abraham Darby II of the Coalbrookdale Company, but after their split with the Reynolds family Bedlam and its mines passed to the Reynolds and then the Anstices. By 1844 the Anstices had moved the works from Bedlam towards Blists Hill and Shifnal.

Plans and leases of this particular area for the early 19thC. show the position of some of the shafts with their names, but by 1847, the date of the Tithe Map, only one colliery, a Water Pit and a Clay Mine are shown to be operational on the lower slopes (W.W.Smythe had however painted a productive mine here in the early 1840’s - see Below 97.1). While all adit working seems to have ceased at the time Bedlam closed, some of the tunnels were still in use for bringing coal and clay to the brickworks and river wharfage. (see Plan).

Over the last 150 years the Gorge hillside has been subject to landslips and flow-slides, many properties have become unstable or physically destroyed, particularly in the 1930’s and again more recently.

Even the mine adits have been crushed and lost, and shaft tops have collapsed, with evidence that the shafts themselves have been sheared - their tops being moved nearer the river. Some of the brickwork from the surface





# The Mines and Tunnels of the Ironbridge Gorge Part 3 continued ...

structures remains, but probably not in its original position and until recently "beehive" shaft coverings could be found. Amazingly several squatter-type cottages remain in place (one with a distinctive lean caused by movement) and others on the unvegetated ironstone tip above the New Bridge. One of these has since the late 1700's been the "family" home of the Browns.

No adits or tunnels have been located in this particular area, probably because they are all well covered by a thick layer of detritus. Several shafts tops are still identifiable by their earth collars or brickwork, but whether in their original position or not is debatable. The general location of the known named pits is shown on the plans, notes on these

and Stone Pit, Styches (Crawstone or 'Stone') Pit and the Lloyds pits, with the Tar Tunnel will be given later.

## References

Unless quoted in text:

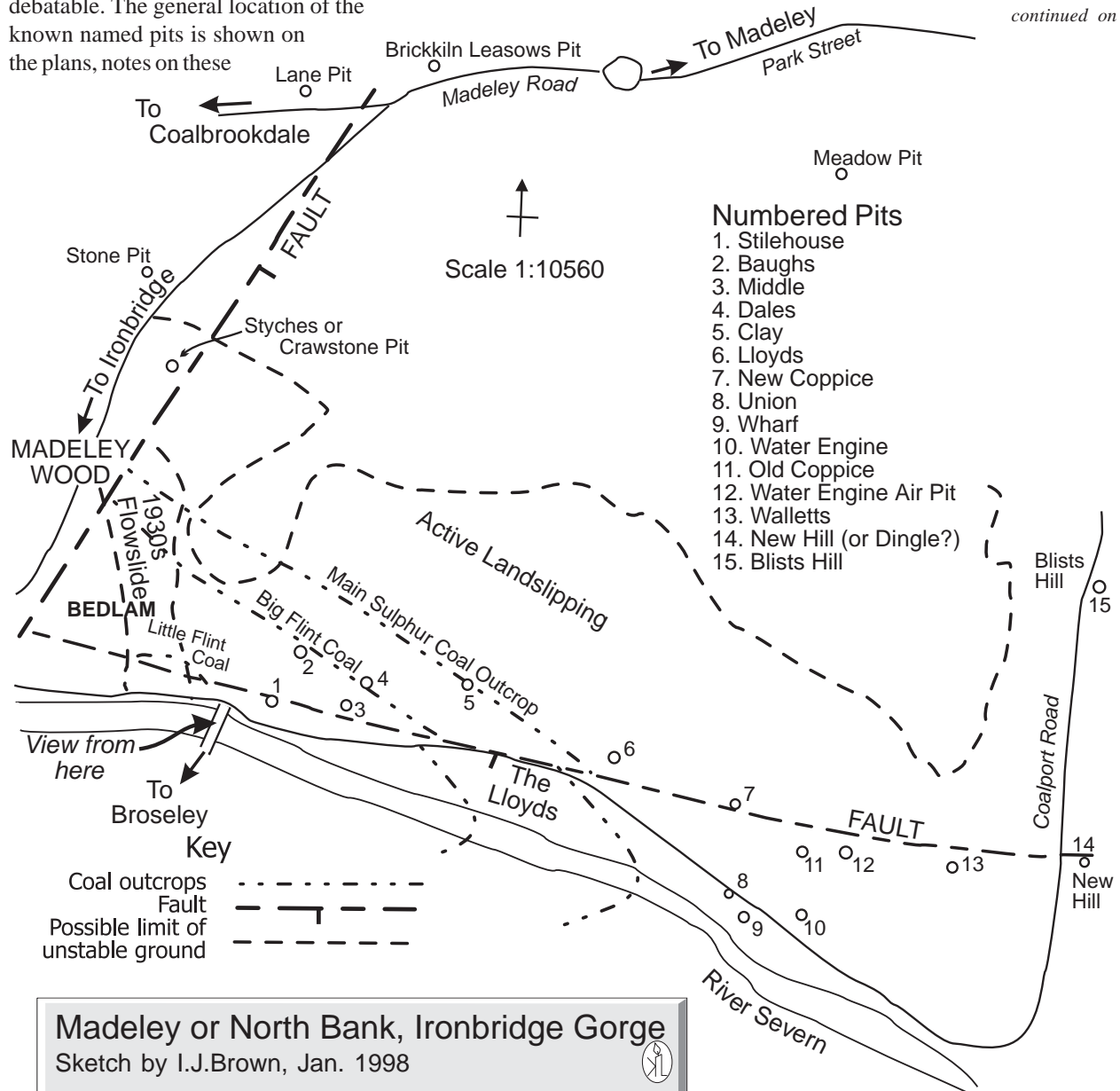
1. Wanklyn MDG, "Industrial Development in the Ironbridge Gorge before Abraham Darby" in West Midland Studies, Vol. 15, 1982.
2. O'Riordan C. "Sequestration and Social Upheaval, Madeley Shropshire", paper submitted to SCMC, later published in West Midlands Studies, Vol.18, 1985.
3. Baugh GC, "A History of Shropshire", Victoria County

History Vol.XI, Telford 1985.

## Footnote 1 - The Cluddes

By 1649 the workings here were in the control of Edward Cludde. The Cluddes came from Cluddley near Wellington and feature in later mining incidents. It was a Cludde, who with Edward Pemberton raised a force of 1500, principally Wellington trades people, against local miners during a riot in 1756. Ten miners were taken prisoner, two were hanged. It was another Cludde who gave the order to shoot local miners during the Cinderhill riots of 1821. Two miners were fatally wounded, another executed and seven jailed. Distant relatives of

*continued on page 19...*



## Snailbeach, Roberts Level (big stope) 1/2/98

**Members Present:** Mike Worsfold, Eileen Bowen, and James Goddard  
Examined big stope to bottom of sheep shaft and found 18 Lesser Horseshoe bats. Climbed new ladder and explored accessible workings up there, but only found 1 bat.

Has anyone been down the big hole here?

### Note:

Tested radios donated by M.Goddard. They were OK between the steel landings and bottom of Sheep Shaft. I think the cable conductor is in situ through the stope.

## Burgam - 14/12/97

**Members present:** Mike Worsfold, Eileen Bowen, James Goddard and A.McLeish.

The keys for the upper gated workings were obtained from John Pocket, who is now resident here. Eight Lesser Horseshoe bats and one Myotis (?) were found. Entered all the lower adits near the road and found 2 Lesser Horseshoe and 2 Myotis bats.

### Question:

Has anyone been down the gap where the upper and lower sub-levels are joined by a rise?

## Rorrington - 25/1/98

**Members present:** Mike Worsfold, Eileen Bowen.

Mike abseiled into top shaft to first chamber. Two Myotis bats found here. Surveyed No.2 and No.1 adits - 1 long eared and 1 Lesser Horseshoe bat found. No.3 adit is run in, but there are signs of animal use. No.4 adit had 20 Lesser Horseshoe bats. There are signs of forced entry past the wire grille on this adit. Forgot the keys to Deep Adit, but examined the lock - OK.

### Question:

Inward draught in right hand branch of No.2 adit, past the fall with timbers. Downward draught at bottom of top working. Do they connect?

## What is it?

A NAMHO Field Meet is an event held in alternate years to the Mining History Conference. It is hosted by a NAMHO member organisation(s) and takes place over a weekend. There are underground and surface trips to suit all abilities and sometimes other activities as well, such as seminars. There is usually an informal get-together on the Saturday evening at a local pub, sometimes with a slide show or other entertainment.

## Where is it?

The 1998 Field Meet is being held in Nenthead, Cumbria.

## When is it?

The Field Meet will be held over a weekend on 15-17th May 1998.

## Who is hosting it?

It will be hosted by Friends of Killhope and North Pennine Heritage Trust.

## What is happening?

The weekend will be based at Nenthead Village Hall with the following activities:-

### Surface Field Trips

- Cowshill & Coptcleugh, Weardale
- Allenheads Mine & Village
- Mining in the Rookhope Valley
- Rotherhope Fell Mine
- Nent Valley - mining & geology.

### Underground Trips

- Brownley Hill Mine
- Rampgill Mine - horse gin
- Killhope Mine
- Brewery Shaft - winch trip
- Tyne Bottom Mine
- Capelcleugh to Rampgill Mine - through trip
- Smallcleugh Mine
- Barhaugh Coal Pit
- Rotherhope Fell Mine
- Frazer's Hush Mine.

### Saturday Evening Event

There will be a social gathering in the Village Hall with a meal, bar and informal slide show. Price of the meal is £5.00.

## Where can I stay?

### Camping

Details of campsites can be obtained from the organisers. A number of touring caravans can be parked in the yard at the back of the Nenthead Mines Centre. Note if camping that Nenthead is at an altitude of 1,400ft and it can be very cold. Snow is not unknown in May!

### Bed & Breakfast

Details of local Bed & Breakfast places can be obtained from the organisers.

### Hotel

Details of local hotels can be obtained from the organisers.

### Where can I eat?

The village pubs (Miners Arms and Crown) and the cafe at the Nenthead Mines Centre will be open for meals. Groceries will be available from the village shop or from Alston (4 miles).

### What will it cost?

There is a fixed fee of £5.00 for each person attending.

BCRA liability insurance is essential for all persons attending over the weekend. Attendees who are not already covered by their club will be required to pay £2.00 for honorary club membership which will give them cover. (*Note: All FULL SCMC members are covered.*)

### How can I get more info?

Further information on the 1998 Field Meet can be obtained by writing to:-

Sheila Barker  
The Rise  
Alston  
Cumbria CA9 3DB

Or watch the website:

[wkweb4.cableinet.co.uk/  
adrian.pearce/NAMOMEET.HTM](http://wkweb4.cableinet.co.uk/adrian.pearce/NAMOMEET.HTM)

?

What are SCMC members doing? Are we booking accommodation en masse?

Adrian



## UK Caving:

### “Virtual foyer”

If you have had difficulty in remembering some of the obscure web site addresses for UK caving groups, help is now at hand. David Gibson has created a simple web site at <[www.caves.org.uk](http://www.caves.org.uk)>. From here, you can click on links to other UK organisations, such as the NCA and BCRA, as well as groups such as Speleo-Art and magazines such as Underground Photographer. This will help both ‘surfers’ (who now dont have to remember complicated addresses) and the organisations, which might get more ‘hits’ as a result. Organisations can also take advantage of the simpler address, because David invites them to quote it as an entry point to their own site. The address is, in fact, similar to that of the USA-based caving body, the NSS, which is at <[www.caves.org](http://www.caves.org)>.

David calls his site a ‘virtual foyer’ or ‘cyber-foyer’, the dictionary definition of a foyer being “an entrance hall or open space ...”. His site is intended to be just that - it is an entry point to caving web-sites. The site itself is mainly empty - all the information it points to is elsewhere. David is not intending to build up a large site himself at this address - nor even a large list of pointers. “The point about a foyer,” David says, “is that it only has a few doors leading off.” For more information about the foyer, including guidelines on how to get listed, please visit the site.

David stresses that he has set this site up independently of any organisation and that he is not suggesting that it should be viewed differently to any other caving web site. It’s a facility you can use or ignore, as you wish.

*David Gibson*

## Coal Mine Books

We were looking at the SCMC site and found it very interesting. Your members might be interested in taking a look at our coal mining book listings at

[http://www.scry.com/ayer/coalmine/  
title00.htm](http://www.scry.com/ayer/coalmine/title00.htm)



## New ‘Mining’ Proposals

### 1) Mining-history e-mail discussion list - a proposal.

The Mining-History list is intended for the discussion of all aspects of mining and associated activity, including ore preparation, on-site smelting, transport systems, social conditions, etc., related to British and Irish sites. As such it will be inter-disciplinary in its approach, bringing together economic historians, local historians, archaeologists, archaeometalurgists, geographers, - in fact all those with an interest in mining; academic, professional and amateur alike.

If you have any views on the proposal, if you would support such a list if went ahead and would like notification, or would like more information, please contact:

Peter Cloughton at  
[P.F.Cloughton@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:P.F.Cloughton@exeter.ac.uk)

### 2) A New Mining History Website

*Mining History Information*, created and run by Peter Cloughton at the University of Exeter.

You can access the site by using the URL:

[http://www.ex.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/mhinf/  
contents.htm](http://www.ex.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/mhinf/contents.htm)

The site is currently bias towards Wales and South-West England, reflecting the author’s research interests, but also incorporates mining history related information for Britain and Ireland as a whole.

Details of the prposed Mining-History e-mail discussion list will be found on the website and these will be updated as the list develops.

A ‘Notice Board’ page will shortly be added to the website. If you have any mining history matter which would benefit from exposure on the World Wide Web please pass the details to Peter.

You can send your details by e-mail to:

[P.F.Cloughton@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:P.F.Cloughton@exeter.ac.uk)

or (for those with no connection to the Internet) by post to:

Blaenpant Morfil, Rosebush,  
Clynderwen,  
Pembrokeshire SA66 7RE.

In the latter case a text file on disc would be preferred (including a 1st class stamp will ensure your disc is returned).

*Peter*

Mining History Pages:

[http://www.exeter.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/  
mhinf/](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/~pfclaugh/mhinf/)

## The Mines and Tunnels of the Ironbridge Gorge Part 3, continued ...from page 17

the Cluddes still live in the area - for details see Victoria County History Vol.XI, 1985 index.

### Footnote 2 -

#### Imperial Clay Mine

The engraved stone marked Imperial Clay Mines referred to in Part 2 of this series does not seem to have been found. Local residents have reported that it was lost recently when the wall was demolished by a car and then

rebuilt. On a nearby gatepost there was a capstone marked “P.Cook, Madeley Wood”. There was a brickmaker here in early 1800’s (see Directory 1828) called R.Cook - was this the person who made both stones and his inscribed name has become worn?

*Ivor Brown*

# Trips to Wales January 1998

## Henfwdch &

### Pont-rhyd-y-groes

#### Sunday 18th January

Members present: Roy Fellows, Eileen Bowen, Mike Worsfold, Ian Davies and Steve Holding.

In the morning, we all turned up on time in this desolate location and proceeded in; thankful that Roy's New Year effort had dropped the water level to something quite acceptable. Through a typically sound dig due to Roy, to an open chamber with good barrow and plenty of clog prints.

In the afternoon, we all drove over to Pont-rhyd-y-groes and the long walk along Level Fawr.

In the first significant branch to the right, we ascended a very thin rope belay to a questionable wood/pile of rocks. Near the top was a nice intact truck. Eileen and Mike left after this bit, while the rest of us continued further in - up the step which was carrying a lot of water (I cannot remember what was up there, I was too concerned at the return down from the step - not as bad as I feared, but I was not happy!).

#### Note:

The trip was much wetter than usual.

*Steve Holding*

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## Trip Leaders & Reports

You may have noticed an increase in the number of trip reports in this issue of Below, this is due to the increased use of the Trip Report forms.

One of the aims of the Club is to record or write up details of its explorations, so anyone you leads a trip should ideally complete a Trip Report form - available from John Priest.

Copies of the completed reports are filed in the Club Library, but they are also available for inclusion into Below.

This way members on trips in the future have at least got a reference for a site so

## Cwmystwyth

### Saturday 18th January

**Members present:** Steve Holding, John Skipper, Terasa Oakley, Ian Davies, Ben Shaw and Francis Turner.

Having noted how wet Taylor's Adit is, the whole group switched their attention first to Cross Roads Adit. Checked out most of the level - left Ben and Francis rigging a way up to higher workings while the rest had a trip in to Level Fawr.

#### Level Fawr

"Tourist" Trip into Level Fawr - up the fixed ladder, look around upper workings, descending via ore chute. Looked at intermediate level with compressor pipe.

Met up with Ben and Francis to return to Taylor's Adit - waist deep water for a considerable distance. Branch on left, with wheel above level, leads to top of ore chute and ladderway with compressor pipe.

Main level carries on a long way, much of it still in waist deep water - eventually blind, but draughting and carrying ventilation tubing. Branch on right with simple barrier and "bad air" warning - no effect on meter and the level was pushed to just beyond a substantial barrier and significant "bad air" sign - did not push on through the water.

#### Note:

The oxygen meter was behaving in a questionable manner during this trip but the atmospheric pressure was high and there was no indication of actual bad air.

*Steve Holding*

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we can monitor any changes.

If you do go on a trip and fill in a report form, why not add a rough sketch of the workings you explored on the back of the report.

The rough sketches can be re-drawn on the computer for 'Below' - and hopefully allow us to build up more complete records of sites as passages are

## Cwmystwyth

### Saturday 31st January

**Members present:** Steve Holding, Eileen Bowen, Mike Worsfold, Ian Davies and Ben Shaw.

All ventured into the wet Taylor's Adit and progresses straight to the top of the ore chute. Mike and Eileen went exploring the level while the route down was rigged.

Mike and Eileen were carrying a Safety Lamp but noted the size of the flame decreasing and returned to the route down, where the ventilation was good.

While Ben and Ian put in a bolt for further safety, Steve descended via the climbing route, following the compressor pipe. All then followed on down to reach the significant level.

The level is presumed to be Level Fawr. To the East, the level was blind and the roof very questionable. To the West, there are various branches but the main level, carrying the compressor pipe ends in a substantial fall.

Part way along the level, there is a hole apparently into the top of a lower stope. This carries most of the draft and the water, giving a wet pitch. A 'Y' hang was rigged off the compressor pipe and a rail, backed up to a substantial stemple. Ben descended, placing a bolt re-belay after 30' and was followed by Mike. The pitch down was wet and the level reached was also very wet, they concluded that it would be too cold if everyone came down the pitch and came back up, leaving further exploration for a later trip with wet suits.

The compressor pipe used for one part of the 'Y' hang was flexing badly but all attempts to place a bolt failed.

*Steve Holding*

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discovered. *Master plans* for sites can also be built-up, indicating known hazards, which may be of use for rescue call-outs or practices.

*Kelvin*



## Trips to Perkins Level by Steve Holding

### Thursday 15th January

**Members present:** Ben Shaw, Steve Holding and Ian Davies.

The entrance to the level was very wet. CB's tried out - work in entrance to Perkins Level where the ventilation cable is in place, no use once corrugated roofing entered. Worked OK between platform below Perkins Level and the intermediate level using old cable.

### Thursday 29th January

**Members present:** Ben Shaw and Steve Holding.

The entrance to the level was still very wet. The main point of the trip was to further practice self-rescue techniques - this was the first time we got it right straight away!

Examined the stope on the "Left-hand branch" for setting up training routes - this included placing a ladder up the stope. The area seemed to have plenty of potential.

### Thursday 5th February

**Members present:** Ben Shaw and Steve Holding.

The entrance to the level was still very wet. The main point of the trip was to survey between the dig on the intermediate level and what is believed to be the top of the ore chute being undercut.

The compass bearings at the top are likely to be questionable due to the large amount of metal present. The survey points were:

- 1a. The top of the depression believed to be above the dig;
1. Bolt closest to the fixed ladder;
2. Lower bolt at the reblay (actually an estimated 1 metre away from the wall);
3. Lower deviation bolt (again an estimated 1 metre away from the wall);
4. Top of the entrance into the intermediate level;
- 5 to 8 Along the intermediate level (7 being closest to the junction);
9. The entrance to the dig.

#### Note:

The dig is a dangerous area - keep away. It would also be sensible to keep clear of the depression on the platform below Perkins Level.

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## New Account on the Coalbrookdale Coalfield

David Coxill has at last started to write the above account based on his on site experiences since the mid 1970s, detailed searches of many original reference sources which he undertook mainly in the 1980s, interviews with many now deceased people and his own in-depth knowledge of the coalfield's geology.

Although he accidentally lost many of his original notes 3 years ago, this is not putting him off writing what he calls a user friendly account for club members.

The book will be fully referenced but he is keen that this will not be a mere reproduction of recent works. References will therefore rarely refer to modern writers, with the exception of the Coalbrookdale Institute whose

recent publications contain a lot of information from sources David has never seen. In this way the reader can decide whether he accepts David's interpretations, those of other writers or formulate their own.

The best way forward is for writers to study the original sources so that any mistakes are not reproduced by modern authors repeatedly quoting each other.

Apart from modern original sources which are also welcomed, David is interesting in borrowing works that predate the 20th century so that they can be included in the book.

If you have anything that you think will be of use to him, his address can be obtained from the Club Members list.

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## Opencast Opposed

Plans by RJB Mining to extract 650,000 tonnes of coal from a new opencast mine on land near the Dawley Road in Lawley, Telford are being opposed by locals and Wrekin Council Planning Officials.

A decision will be made on the application by the end of March 1998.

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## Moscow Coal

The Russian government is planning to abolish Rosugol, the state owned coal holding company, and speed up the restructuring of the country's vast coal industry.

Problems in the industry have left thousands of miners unpaid for several months - despite a loan of £295m from the World Bank.



## Mineral Spot

*Calamine - Zinc Silicate*

Also known as: *Hemimorphite*

$[Zn_4Si_2O_7(OH)_2 \cdot H_2O]$

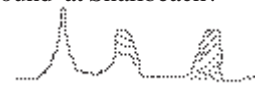
A secondary silicate that forms as small brownish lustrous crystals and occurs in areas where sphalerite has been oxidised in the presence of siliceous solutions.

It has a high water content that can be driven off when heated - unlike willemite ( $Zn_2SiO_4$ ).

This ore of zinc is commonly associated with Smithsonite (Zinc Carbonate) and lead-zinc deposits. To add confusion to the issue, in Britain Smithsonite used to be known as calamine, while in America the silicate was called calamine. Not to be confused with the pink zinc and ferric oxide lotion also called calamine!

Deposits of Hemimorphite can be found in many lead mining areas - a well known site is Galconda Mine, Brassington as well as caverns around Matlock Bath.

Has it been found at Snailbeach?



## Club Officers

**President: Alan Taylor**

**Training Officer:**

**Alan Moseley**

**Chairman: Neal Rushton**

**Conservation Officer:**

**Nick Southwick**

**Vice Chair: Tom West**

**Bat Officer: Mike Worsfold**

**Assistant Secretary: Vacant**

**Secretary: John Priest**

*scmc.secretary@factree.org.uk*

**Rescue Officer:**

*Role undertaken by the Rescue Wardens: Neal Rushton, Steve Holding, Alan Robinson, Andy Yapp*

**Treasurer: Bob Taylor**

**CCC/CNCC Rep: Ben Shaw**

**Tackle Officer & NAMHO: Steve Holding**

**'Below' Editor: Kelvin Lake**

*e-mail: scmc@factree.org.uk*

## Diary Dates '98

For organised Club trips please refer to the Monthly Meets lists.

**25-26th April:** GPF 3rd European Caving Expedition Symposium. Peak District.

**15-16th May:** BCRA Regional Meeting Royal International Eisteddford Pavillion, Llangollen. Talk on Saturday, trips on Sunday, see page 12 for more details.

**15-17th May:** NAMHO Fieldmeet, Nenthead, hosted by North Pennine Heritage Trust and Friends of Killhope. See page 18 for more details.

**23-29th May:** Winch Meet, Gaping Gill, organised by Bradford Pothole Club, for details see their web site - address on page 9.

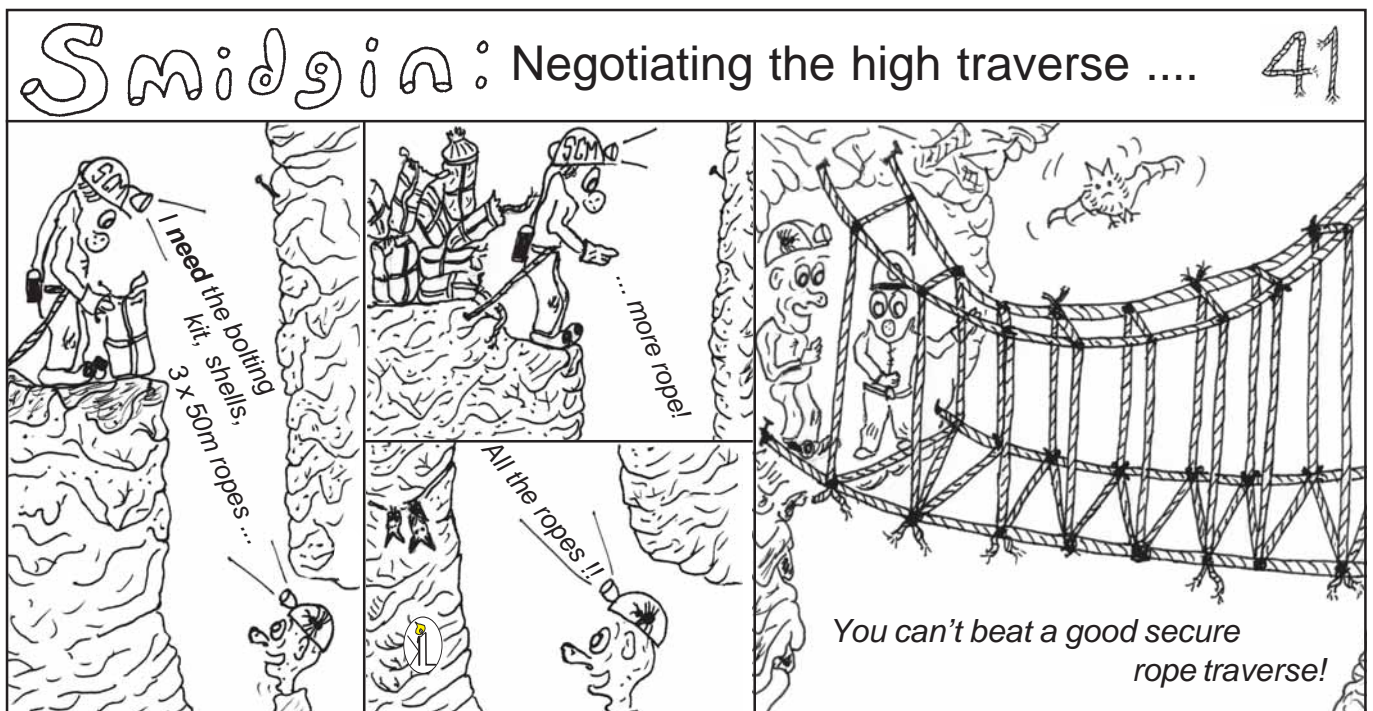
**12-14th June:** British Cave Rescue Council Biennial Conference, Ingleborough Hall, Clapham, North Yorkshire.

E-mail: [info@managerie.co.uk](mailto:info@managerie.co.uk)

**3-5th July:** Cavers Fair, Priddy, Mendip

**19-20th Sept.:** BCRA Conference "Hidden Earth 98", Floral Hall, Southport, see page 12 for details.

**1999:** NAMHO Conference, will be held in the Forest of Dean.



Catch us on the World Wide Web. Club activities & the labyrinth: <http://www.shropshirecmc.org.uk/>

