

Library Additions

A number of publications have been received and are to be added to the Club Library:

Norfolk Mineral & Lapidary

Society: Stone Chat Volume 22, No. 1, Autumn 2001.

North Wales C.C. Newsletter:

No. 274, Jan/Feb/March 2001 (Peter Appleton has now taken over as Editor of the newsletter following Adrian Farrel's move to the USA), No. 275, April/May/June 2001.

Plymouth Caving Group Newsletter and Journal: No. 138, September 2001.

Includes interesting trip reports to Matienzo (Spain - those who were at 'Hidden Earth' will have seen the display stand on this large and 'growing' cave site), Combe Martin & Grit Down silver mines.

Journal 8

Now that Journal No. 7 has been published, work has started on the next Journal (one article has already been received). If you have any items that you think would suite a Club Journal please let me have them - they don't have to be huge items, half or single page items are more than welcome. I am hoping to include more pictures in the next issue (now the printing technology I'm using has improved!

It has been decided that the word "Annual" be dropped from the Journal title, so it will be simply called "Journal 8".

Kelvin

New Members

David Humphreys and Chris Andrews had their second reading at the October Club meeting and are now eligible to become full members.

Club Subs.

At the AGM in October members voted to keep the subscription charges the same as last year, with a slight increase in Day membership. Rates are now (still):

Full: £14 Joint/Family: £20
Junior: £8 Day: £4

Committee Changes

There were a few changes to Club Officers at the AGM: Neal Rushton stood down as Chairman, Steve Holding was elected to take his place (Neal is now the Rescue Officer).

John Priest also stood down as Secretary, and Mike Davies was elected to the post (his first committee job for the Club).

A vote of thanks was passed to acknowledge all the hard work that Neal and John have put in over the past few years on behalf of the Club.

It was also noted that Bob Taylor has been the Club Treasurer for 20 years - congratulations Bob (well he thinks its 20 years, but he's lost count!). Contrary to rumours, his recent hair loss was due to a rampaging barber, not the stress of keeping the books.

The only other post to change was that of Training Officer, Ian Davies has now taken on this role.

Bat Grills

A recent inspection of the grill fitted over the entrance to the Hinkshay or Strichley tramway tunnel last December, has found that it is still intact. Other than the loss of one bolt, no attempt appears to have been made to break into it.

Unfortunately this is not the case on Benthall Edge, where a concerted attack has been made on the grill, by someone very determined to break in. Quite why they should be so desperate to get into the level is anyone's guess.

Snailbeach Boulder

Following a concerted effort by members, the boulder at the top of the sand slope and just below the bridge in Perkins level has now been pinned and concreted securely into place.

The concreting operation went a lot more smoothly than was predicted, (they even had time to finish early and go to the Stiperstones Inn !!) and apart from a little tidying up (anyone want some spare bags of cement?) the job is finished.

Congratulations are due to everyone involved in the operation for the excellent job they have done. Well done everyone, and special thanks to Mike Worsfold for his organisational skills - no bats were harmed or concreted into the walls during the course of the weekend. On top of all that, the final costs were under budget!



News Round-Up 1

by Ivor Brown

Mine Visits

Beginning with this issue of 'Below', is a new series of reports by 'visitors to the South Shropshire Mines'. The first one, on page 6 describes a visit of the Dudley & Midland Geological and Scientific Society and Field Club in 1877.

Wartime Pamphlet

In 1942 the Geophysical Survey published a 'Wartime Pamphlet' on the occurrences of phosphate (chiefly for use as a fertiliser) in the UK. Shropshire apparently has several 'occurrences' the most promising being at Comley (near Church Stretton) within beds of limestone and sandy shale and around Ludlow in the Siltstones known as the Bone Beds. The occurrences do not appear to have worked as they were poor in quality, samples of the rocks gave about 5% as phosphates.

Dawley Coal

'RJB Newscenes' for April (now renamed UK Coal Newscene) describes how RJB Mining hoped to win 675,000 tonnes of coal from the 55 hectare Dawley Road Site (45 jobs for 30 months) and how at a Public Inquiry the Planning Inspector recommended that it should go ahead, but the Secretary of State rejected it. It adds that RJB are considering seeking a 'judicial review' of the situation.

Dale End Incline

It is known that there was an incline (similar to the one adjoining the Crawstone Ironstone Mine, Ironbridge) at Dale End, opposite the former Coalbrookdale High School. About 1800 it was receiving limestone from Lincoln Hill Mine just around the hill, and other materials, by a tramway from Horsehay. All this material was dropped down the incline to the tramroad from the Coalbrookdale Works to the River wharfage.

The writer has spent some time

recently looking for evidence of the incline - there are a couple of ginnels or passages, present along a possible line, one has a well alongside it in a brick alcove - on Paradise Road. The search continues.

Coalbrookdale Walk

Exactly 200 years ago an anonymous writer produced a draft walking tour of Coalbrookdale, which was published by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in the 1960's. To commemorate its writing, two 'walks' along the route described have recently been made and considerable evidence of the mines, mills and forges described can still be identified. It is intended to repeat the 'mining section' around Woodside and Lincoln Hill shortly - all readers are welcome. For details contact the writer (01924-257137).

Brickworks

Two 'brickworks' are now operational again in the Gorge, on the Blists Hill Museum Site and at Maws Craft Centre. The first is on a site closed in the 1940's, the latter in buildings formerly Maws Tile Factories. Both are well worth a visit.



Above: Two experimental brick 'clamps' being fired at Maws Tileworks, May 2001, by A.J.Mugridge.

Picture: Kelvin Lake - I.A.Recordings

Clay Book

The recent publication "The Broseley Heavy Clay Industry" by A.J.Mugridge is a useful general survey of the brickworks of the Ironbridge Gorge area, particularly on the Broseley side of the river Severn. It is not without errors though - for example the Bedlam Brickworks (given as White Brickworks) is shown on the map provided on the opposite side of the river, as is the Broseley Wood Tileries and in the text two Madeley Hill and the large Woodlands Brickworks (see 'Below' 99.3) seem to have been combined into one 'Madeley Wood Tileries'.

Worth a Visit

The Standedge Tunnel (opened in 1811) on the Huddersfield Canal is now open again. It is the longest (nearly 3¼ miles [5.2km] long), highest (645ft. aod), deepest below surface (over 630ft.) canal tunnel in Britain. It has cost nearly thirty million pounds to bring back into use. The opening of the tunnel means the canal is now fully navigable for the first time since 1944 (the last commercial cargo through the tunnel was in November 1921).

Funding for the project has come from the Millennium Commission Project (£15m), English Partnerships (£13m) and other agencies.

Boats are not allowed to pass through the tunnel on their own, they are formed into 'trains' with an electric tug towing the 'train' through at set times for a fee (at present) of £35 (boat crews are not allowed to stay on their craft). If you fancy an electric boat ride through the tunnel telephone 01484-844-298.

Wrockwardine Canal Incline

The 200 year old tunnel beneath this incline has recently been reopened and explored. Although marked as 'subway' on old OS Maps, it is believed to have been a pre-existing railway or tramway tunnel.



Metal Mining in Alsace-Lorraine, France



the river Lièpvre.

Again in this area the local authorities and caving club have created a 'Miners trail' which takes you round the woods to several mine entrances, surface trenching and the site of a large dressing floor. This dressing floor (Carreau Samson) would have seen a number of activities taking place with a large number of people working here.

In the last issue of 'Below' (pages 16 to 19) a brief look was taken at the silver-lead and cobalt mines around the Neuenberg area of Saint Marie-aux-Mines, in the Alsace region of France. While the Neuenberg area was the most prolific mining area of Saint Marie, there were other silver and lead mines in a small village a couple of miles to the north in Saint Croix-aux-Mines along the valley of

The mine administrator (le "Verweser"), various miners (le "Huttmann" - the Chief Miner, les "rompeurs de myne", les "chareurs de myne", les décombreurs, les tireurs d'eau etc.), carpenters (le charpentier), a blacksmith (le forgeron) and 2 assistants, various cartiers (le charettier) bringing charcoal to the site and removing ore, "concasseur" (men and women who

broke up the larger rocks, sorters (le trieur) responsible for sorting the ore from the waste, and le "laveur" who appear to have been employed washing the sorted ore.

The area of Carreau Samson has seen a lot of archaeological activity, with digs around the dressing floor and the rebuilding of the portal to the drainage and main tramming level running into the hillside from the floors. It was customary for mines in this area to have a "maison de la mine" sited near to the main entrance. It was from here that the picks or "pointerolles", plus other items were issued to the miners. The 'houses' appear in several drawings dating from the early 16th Century. During excavations at Samson, the foundations of such a house (measuring 4m x 3m) were discovered near the portal.



Left: Scene at a mine entrance in Lorraine c1530. Note the hut, rails and piles of pick-heads (pointerolles). [from Gross, 1530]

Above: Rebuilt portal at Carreau Samson
Below, right: Remains of a building (possibly the forge) on the samson dressing floor.
Below left: Archaeological warning sign by the Samson dressing floor.



Pictures: Peter Eggleston-I.A.Recordings, [Video grabs]



Metal Mining in Alsace-Lorraine, France



Above: View into 'Samson 7' looking north at timbered section.
Left: View into same level looking south, with planks over a winze just inside the entrance.
Pictures: Sue Blattner

As you follow the trail, several gated levels can be seen, but most only go a few metres and were not very productive. One of the levels is interesting ("Samson 7") in that it has been broken out into a cutting, but the level has been driven North-South parallel to the side of the hill, a few metres in, and just inside the entrance to the south is a winze to lower workings.

Right: View into La Torche Stolle - driven using firesetting. Note the irregular alignment of the level.

Below: Detail of the end of the heading.

Pictures: Peter Eggleston-I.A.Recordings



The workings on this side of St. Marie were exploited by the Germans from about 1450 onwards, from 1486 the Duke of Lorraine (René II) encouraged the development of the mines in this region. Silver mining reached its peak in 1523 when in that year 1,563 kg of silver were mined. However, by 1551 the mines were largely worked out and the mines of St. Croix were abandoned.

Les Hautes Mynes - Le Thillot

As the silver and lead mines in the Vosges mountains around St. Marie began to close around the 1550's, the miners turned their attention further south to the area known as Le Thillot, in the upper Moselle valleys. In the next few years over 20 mines were opened up in this area (in the Ballon des Vosges Regional Natural Park there are over 2000 known



mining sites!), with a smelting mill being built at Saint-Maurice in 1560.

However, this was a short lived silver boom and was well past its peak by 1580. During the search for silver, large deposits of copper were discovered and in this area it was these which saved the day. From the 1560's onwards large numbers of

copper mines were opened up in the Le Thillot area (on the northern flank of the Tête du Midi), virtually all were named after Saints e.g.: Saint Phillip, Saint Barbara, Saint Francis etc..

At Le Thillot, there were three main copper mines:
Charles of Lorraine, which became Saint Charles. It was worked from



Metal Mining in Alsace-Lorraine, France

1561 to 1761 and today over 400m of the workings are still accessible.

Henry of Lorraine or Saint Henry, located close to Saint Charles, this mine appears to have worked from the 1580's through to the 18th Century.

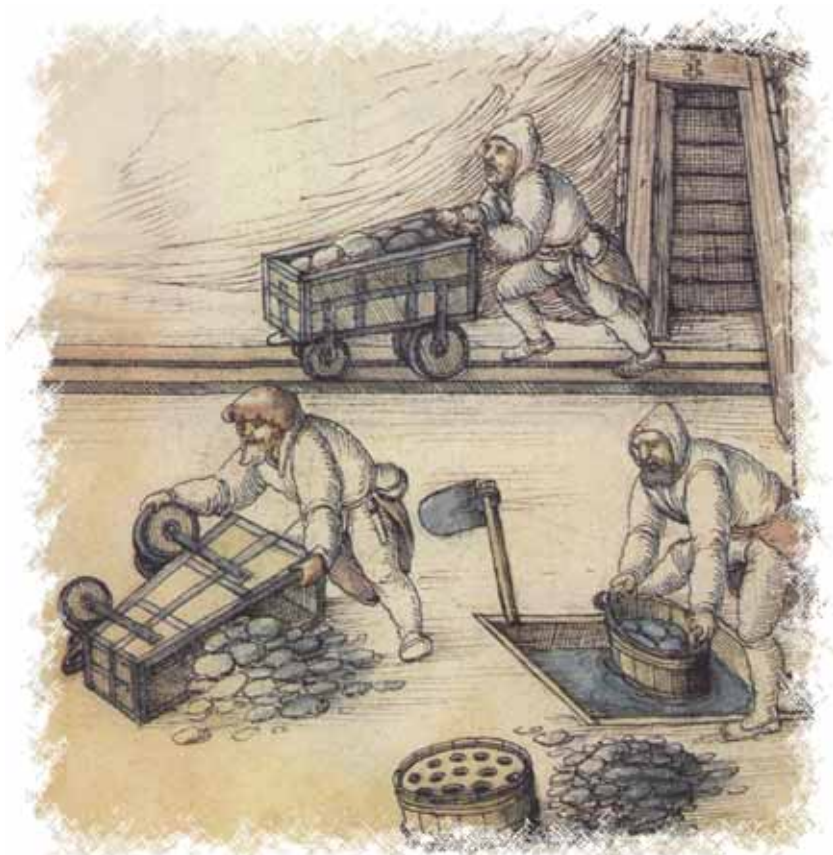
Saint Nicholas. This mine worked from 1596 to 1702.

As a result of the scale of mining activity in this region the landscape has been considerably altered. Luckily the mining landscape at Le Thillot has now been preserved (by the local authorities in association with Society for the Study and Conservation of Ancient Mines [SESAM]) and several levels opened up to allow access for the public. You are free to explore most of the short galleries (helmets are provided by the entrance to several).

One of these short galleries (**La Torche Stolle**) is a blind heading driven a few metres into the hillside in an attempt to intersect a nearby shaft. Due to the hardness of the rock, fire setting along with picks and hammers was used (in some of the levels it took the miners a year to cut just 2 metres of tunnel). The level exhibits a classic fire set profile, with an oval shape, and irregular line and floor.

Another of the short levels (Stolle), **St. Thomas Mine**, is only 20m long, but shows a more advanced working technique. It was driven to connect with a shaft along the vein, in the 17th Century using gunpowder. The remnants of the hand cut shot-holes can still be seen in the tunnel walls.

Access to the more extensive **Saint Charles Mine** is controlled and trips led by a guide. The mine is on several levels, and each stolle (adit) is classified by its depth (presumably below surface). The deepest stolle is St. Charles Stolle (60m deep), it was driven in the 18th century and used to remove water and materials. The entrance to this level was actually started in the 16th century and had to



Above: Chareurs de Mine - note the sorting and washing of ore near the portal. Drawing by Heinrich Gross, 1530.

be driven for 150m before it reached the vein. Other levels into this mine can be found higher up the hillside (St. Charles Stolle, 44m deep, 32m deep and 17m deep - the latter being the earliest level and the entrance is now blocked.). All were connected underground by winzes and stopes.

The tour into 60m Stolle is quite interesting and in several places there are signs of copper leaching from the stacked deads, although in the easily accessible sections there is not much evidence of the copper veins.

In this area, like in St. Marie, they put great emphasis on the preservation of the mines and on the archaeological nature of the sites (extensive digs have been carried out on Le Thillot during the past 20 years) as a result all mineral collecting is banned. If you want to see some of the mining artifacts discovered in the mines during these digs they are on display in the

museum "Les Hautes-Mynes" in Le Thillot. The museum also houses some interesting reconstructions of mining equipment and working models, in addition the mining cartoons and video are very well done!

Note

Due to the proximity of Germany several French mining terms used in this area are very similar to the German versions, for example Stollen - the German for level, cross-cut or gallery appears as Stolle in French in this area.

More Info

For more information on Le Thillot and the mining trail contact:

Les Hautes-Mynes,
Place de la Gare - F. 88160 Le Thillot

Telephone and fax: 03 29 25 03 33

Kelvin



19th C. Visitors to the South West Shropshire Mines, No.1

Contributed by I.J.Brown

DUDLEY AND MIDLAND GEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY AND FIELD CLUB

STIPERSTONES AND MINSTERLEY MEETING 1877

In spite of a threatening sky a party of about fifty members and their friends, including many ladies, assembled from Stourbridge, Dudley, Birmingham and Wolverhampton, being conveyed by special railway carriages to Minsterley. Under the able guidance of Messers. Philip and Parry - members of the Caradoc Club - they traversed a considerable distance of beautiful country, in carriages specially provided, the most distant point being the remarkable and striking rocky eminence at the summit of the Stiperstones.

The view was magnificent, the somewhat stormy sky, with gleams of sunshine, giving great charm and variety to the scene, while the refreshing breeze made the toilsome ascent less fatiguing than in hot sunshine. On the way there they visited the Snailbeach Lead Mines and Captain Coates explained the various processes for getting out the ore; and on the way back they called at the smelting works and saw the finishing process of casting the lead into pigs. The botanists of the party were well satisfied with finding the characteristic plants of the district. Returning to Minsterley, and after an excellent meal at the Miner's Arms, a capital collection of local fossils was shewn by Mr. Philip; and Mr. Parry led the way to a quarry where such numerous and interesting fossils and rock specimens were secured as tempted all to linger to the last moment. The pleasure and value of the day was greatly increased by having the aid of guides with such thorough knowledge of the local geology, and with hearty thanks to them the party separated.

The following gentlemen were present:- Chas. Cochrane, Esq, president: the Revs. John Jones, E.H.L. Not, and J.H. Thompson; and Messers. Bland, Bolton, Buncher, Evers, Freer, Fisher, T.Fisher, Fleeming, Jones, King, Latham, Mathews, Marten, Marsh, Nayler, Pearce, Raymond, Rabone, Shepherd, Stone, Taylor, Thursfield & Wilkinson.

"Salopian & West Midland", Monthly Illustrated Journal, August 1877

‘Black December’

Spare a thought for the old Shropshire mining families - December was a particularly bad month for accidents. Mining disasters* in the Coalbrookdale Coalfield, Shropshire 1850 to present occurring in the month of December included:

Date	Mine/location		Incident Type
1851 Dec. 6:	Ketley,	3 killed,	shaft incident
1856 Dec. 3:	Davies Pit, Jackfield,	4 killed,	shaft incident
1858 Dec. 14: (?)	Lilleshall (Aston),	3 killed,	fall of rock
1862 Dec. 29:	Dark Lane,	12 killed,	shaft incident
1862 Dec. 12:	Lilleshall,	3 killed,	fall of rock
1872 Dec. 12:	Springwell, Dawley,	8 killed,	shaft incident
1902 Dec. 19:	Rock Pit, Dawley,	3 killed,	shaft incident
1910 Dec. 4:	Kemberton Pit, Madeley,	7 killed,	shaft incident

Notes

- 1 - ‘disaster’ is defined as 3 or more persons killed or died from injuries within 1 year and 1 day.
- 2 - Includes ironstone (stone-miners), clay and limestone miners from mines within the coalfield whose deaths weren't officially reported until the 1870's.
- 3 - None of these incidents are included in the published NCB ‘list of disasters’ (possibly because no official Inquiry Report was required) - a few have not been found in the Mines Inspector's lists either!

Of 19 recorded disasters within my knowledge - 8 occurred in the month of December - leading to much superstition regarding working in that month within the Coalfields.

Ivor Brown



The Halesfield Pits, Madeley, Shropshire (Part 1)

by Ivor Brown

There are two pairs of shafts at the former Madeley Wood Company's mine near the settlement of Cuckoo Oak, east of the Dawley to Bridgnorth road (about SJ 704 051). The pits were called Old Hales and New Hales, the suffix 'field' may, in this case have come from an early field name in this area -although it was the normal practice of the local mining companies to divide their groups of pits into smaller groups called 'fields'. Each would have its own field engineer, field carpenter etc. to look after the winding engines, pumps and shaft gear although the pits themselves would be under the control of a contractor called the chartermaster.

Old Hales Pit was an early mine in this part of the coalfield. John Randall in his History of Madeley 1880 states:

“In consequence of the mines being exhausted on the Madeley Wood side of the field he (William Anstice, 1781-1850) had new shafts sunk to the east, the first of importance being Hills Lane Pits, then Halesfield Pits followed the mines having been proved on that side”.

Old Hales Pit is not shown on the 1833 OS Map but is shown with a small waste tip on the 1847 Tithe Map so most probably dates from the late 1830s.

The Tithe Map shows the mine as 'The Hales Pits' connected to the nearby canal, 250 yards away, by an inclined plane. It seems likely that New Hales Pit was opened during the period of expansion after 1860.

The associated mine, Kemberton Pit, about 1000yds away was opened in 1864. The pairs of shafts at Old Hales and New Hales are about 40yds apart, and at about 150yds north another mine, Madeley Court Company's No. 16 & 17 Shafts or Guests Pit, was opened at about the same time.(see Map)

The geological section at the shafts of Halesfield Pit is described by M.W.T. Scott in the Proceedings of the Geological Society 1861 and this shows the major coal seams to be:

Table 1

Coal	Thickness	Depth
Top Coal	5ft. 4in.	213yd.
Half Yard Coal	1ft. 6in.	214yd.
Double Coal.	1ft. 6in	215 yd.
Yard Coal	1ft. 8in.	216 yd.
Stinking Coal	1ft. 0in	232 yd.
Big Flint coal,	trace only	246yd.
Clunch Coal	2ft. 3in.	259yd.
Two Feet Coal	2ft. 0in	262 yd.
Best Coal	1ft. 4in	269 yd.
Randle Coal	2ft. 8in.	270 yd.
Clod Coal	1ft. 0in.	271 yd.
Little Flint Coal	2ft. 4in.	278 yd.

There was also at least one good ironstone seam present, the Pennystone, which was 5ft. thick at about the 250 yard depth, in Scotts section. The ironstone was found as nodules in a mainly shale matrix and the whole 5ft. was brought to surface, laid out to weather and women and girls would be employed to remove the ironstone nodules. About one ton of nodules would be picked from ten tons of shale hence the large waste heaps of the area.

Accidents

Throughout their life the Halesfield pits were noted for their dangers, including explosions of methane, accumulations of asphyxiating gas, large amounts of water, smouldering fires and bumps or extensive falls of rock. A few examples of these follow, each indicating also the manner of working and the conditions at the mine.

In December 1856 four persons were injured by an explosion of firedamp, their waistcoats 'were burnt to cinders'. The previous week, in the same place, four boys were burnt in a similar incident.

In January 1857 a blower of gas was discovered, the workmen and horses were quickly got out of the mine and shortly after an explosion occurred. This blew over the mine's engineer

who was standing at the shaft top and it wrecked the iron trolley used to cover the shaft and which weighed 3 tons. A later incident raised a cloud of coal dust 'over the yard', this was caused by gas coming into contact with a 'smouldering sulphurous' underground fire. Other similar incidents have caused death to men and horses.

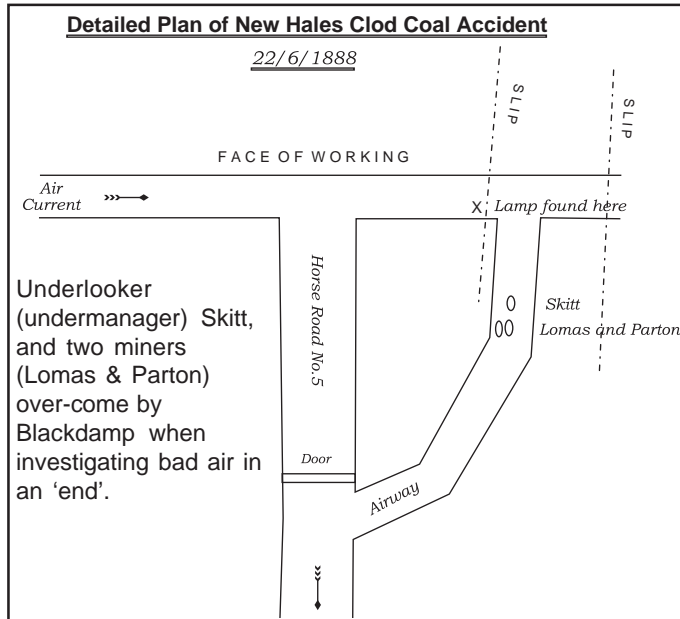
Candles were used for illumination at this time. The main haulage tunnels seemed to have had candles fixed at strategic points. In 1868 13 year old Thomas Parker was taking a dan (low truck) along a tunnel and reached a point 'where the candle box is kept' and where a lighted candle usually burns but 'found that it had blown out'. Without light he started to descend a slope and his dan 'went with ever increasing speed' until he met another coming in the opposite direction. The collision resulted in his death.

In 1888 three miners died after entering a section of working full of 'black damp' which caused asphyxiation (for details see 'Below' issue No.98.2, page 7) and in 1891 there was an explosion which seriously injured one man and hurt several others. This led to the use of candles for illumination being prohibited and all men had to use safety lamps thereafter.



The Halesfield Pits, Madeley, Shropshire (Part 1)

continued....



Underlooker (undermanager) Skitt, and two miners (Lomas & Parton) over-come by Blackdamp when investigating bad air in an 'end'.

Roof falls were another problem. For example, two men died in separate incidents in 1864 and another two in 1865. The local newspaper at the time reported a 'bump', a heavy fall of coal which narrowly missed a number of men. Several letters to the press then followed referring to this and other 'peculiar' occurrences.

New Hales Pits seem to have been quite active in the 1870s and both pairs of shafts are indicated on the OS Maps of the 80s. Each new map shows a larger spoil heap than the last. Both 'New' and 'Old' Hales were operated by a different contractor (chartermaster), Tom Rowe, then Thomas William and Bryce Rowe, at Old Hales and John Fletcher at New Hales; the nearby Madeley Court Company '16 & 17' pit was operated by Francis Guest.

The 1881 Census shows Fletcher, aged 35, to be an 'Iron Mine Master' employing 50 men and 14 girls, the

girls would, of course, be picking ironstone (see 'Below' issue 2001.2, pages 10-11 for more on John Fletcher). The Fletchers, Rowses and Guests were 'chartermaster families' - where son followed father into mining and they frequently inter-married.

Old miners have told the writer that, underground, the miners worked literally side by side, so close in fact that the miners in one mine could knock messages to their mates in another by striking the tunnelside with a pick.

The 1890s and closure of Old Hales

In 1891 the Mines Inspectorate carried out a survey of their mines which showed the details in table 2.

The actual depths of the shafts vary in different reports but the lowest worked seam was Little Flint Coal at 834 ft so any depth below this was

'sumpage' i.e. for water control. They may have been the deepened as required for water storage.

All the pits were at the same surface level (about 380 ft. AOD). Kemberton was initially connected to Halesfield by over a thousand yards of tramway, the Hales Pits were connected to the canal by an inclined tramway falling 50 ft. over about 200 ft., then level for 200 ft. Guests Pit was connected by its own tramway to the nearby Madeley Court Furnace until closure in 1902.

From 1894 full details of the numbers employed (underground and on the surface) are available.

1894	u/g	Surface
New Hales	47	39
Old Hales	66	31

1895	u/g	Surface
New Hales	17	23
Old Hales	114	52

1896	u/g	Surface
New Hales	47	34
Old Hales	82	29

From this year the numbers are combined, in 1897 Halesfield Mine employed 73 underground with 43 on the surface of whom about 30 were females picking ironstone at the tips.

About this time a more modern steam winding engine was put in at New Hales Pit but the old steam engine was retained at Old Hales. The shafts were then being used for winding ironstone, coal, water and men.

Harry Micklewright (1882-1979) has written in his memoirs, published in SCMC Journal No.5 of this time. As a

Table 2

Pit	Seams Worked	Shaft Details	Ventilation
Old Hales Coal Pit	Top Coal, Big Flint Coal	9 ft dia. 825 ft. deep	furnace
Old Hales Stone Pit	Pennystone Ironstone	8 ft dia. 825 ft. deep	
New Hales Coal Pit	Little Flint Coal	8 ft dia. 825 ft. deep	furnace
New Hales Stone Pit	Pennystone Ironstone	8½ ft. dia. 747 ft deep	
Madeley Court 16 & 17 (Two shafts)	Pennystone Ironstone	8 ft dia. 867 It deep	furnace

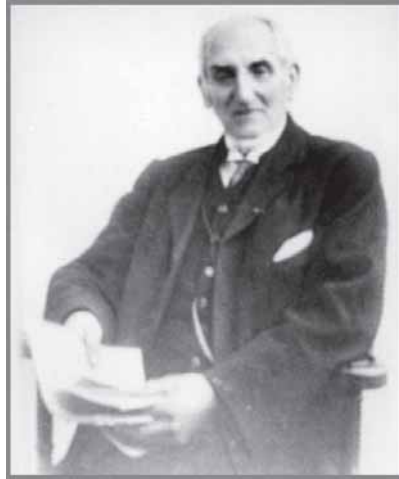


The Halesfield Pits, Madeley, Shropshire (Part 1)

continued....

boy in the early 1890s he accompanied his cousin Annie (Fletcher) when she took a midday meal for her father, John, (the chartermaster, mentioned earlier) and brother William (in charge of ironstone pickers at Halesfield), from Madeley Court street they traveled down Court Lane, past the Court House, the old windmill, the Court Furnaces (where they could see molten iron “being tapped into the sow and pigs”. Then over the canal, past Perkses (possibly an error, Leonard Perks was a chartermaster at a pit on the other side of the canal near Court Furnaces), then up the lane to Rowe’s Pit (Chartermaster Rowe was Micklewright’s ‘Uncle Harry’’s brother in law’). Here he was, “just a little scared by the huge boiler which once blew up” (it killed the engineman W. Brownfield, on February 26th. 1873).

He then reached “the incline with its double row of ironstone wagons attached to an endless chain which rattles over wooden pulleys, the full trucks to the canal wharf pulling the empty ones on the return journey”.



Above: Chartermaster John Fletcher, of Halesfield Mine

He adds, “it is fun to ride on an empty, jump off, overtake the next, and so on until we reach the top”.

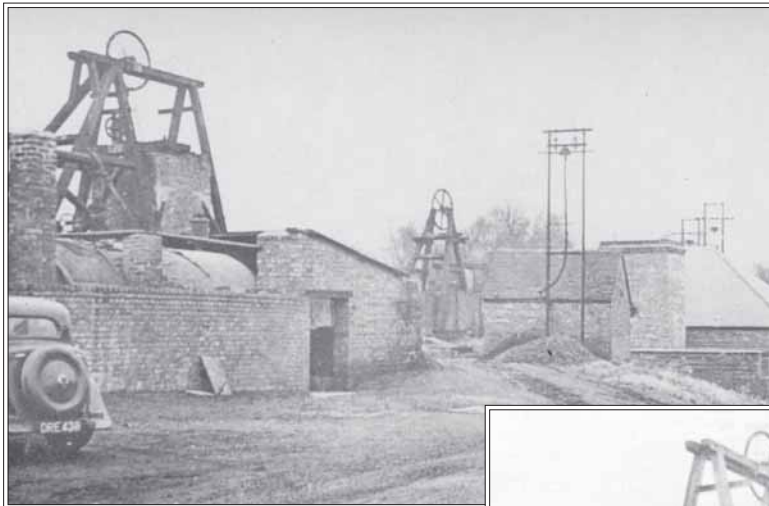
Between Kemberton and Halesfield they would find Cousin Will superintending the women chipping off the clay from the ironstone on the pit bank, and then “Uncle, who is sure to take me to look at the brand new engine, so superior to the Newcomen one”. For a time they would “watch the trucks of coal

coming up one of the pit shafts and tubs of water at the other”. He surmised that there must be three shafts, for ironstone, coal and water and obviously did not realise that there were four.

After 1900 - from Ironstone to Coal

By 1900 the Halesfield pits were under the control of a ‘manager’ rather than chartermaster and working came under the manager at Kemberton Pit. Although each pit was ventilated separately there could have been an underground connection for water between the mines, although they were separated by a geological fault, about 40 yd downthrow to Kemberton. Halesfield was known as a wet pit with water getting through from the shallower Madeley mines and care had to be taken to ensure the deeper Kemberton was not flooded.

A further problem was that the mines of the Madeley Court Company were now closing down. These mines, opened between 1840 and 1880, had



Left: Halesfield Mine, c1946. Showing 2 headframes. In foreground on the left are the Lancashire boilers, on the right is the ‘new’ fan drift and evasée chimney.

Picture: Ivor J. Brown

Right: Halesfield Mine, c1946. Upcast shaft in foreground with chimney for the Lancashire boilers and the horizontal steam winding engine-house behind.

Picture: Tom Harper-Jean Hardman



The Halesfield Pits, Madeley, Shropshire (Part 1)

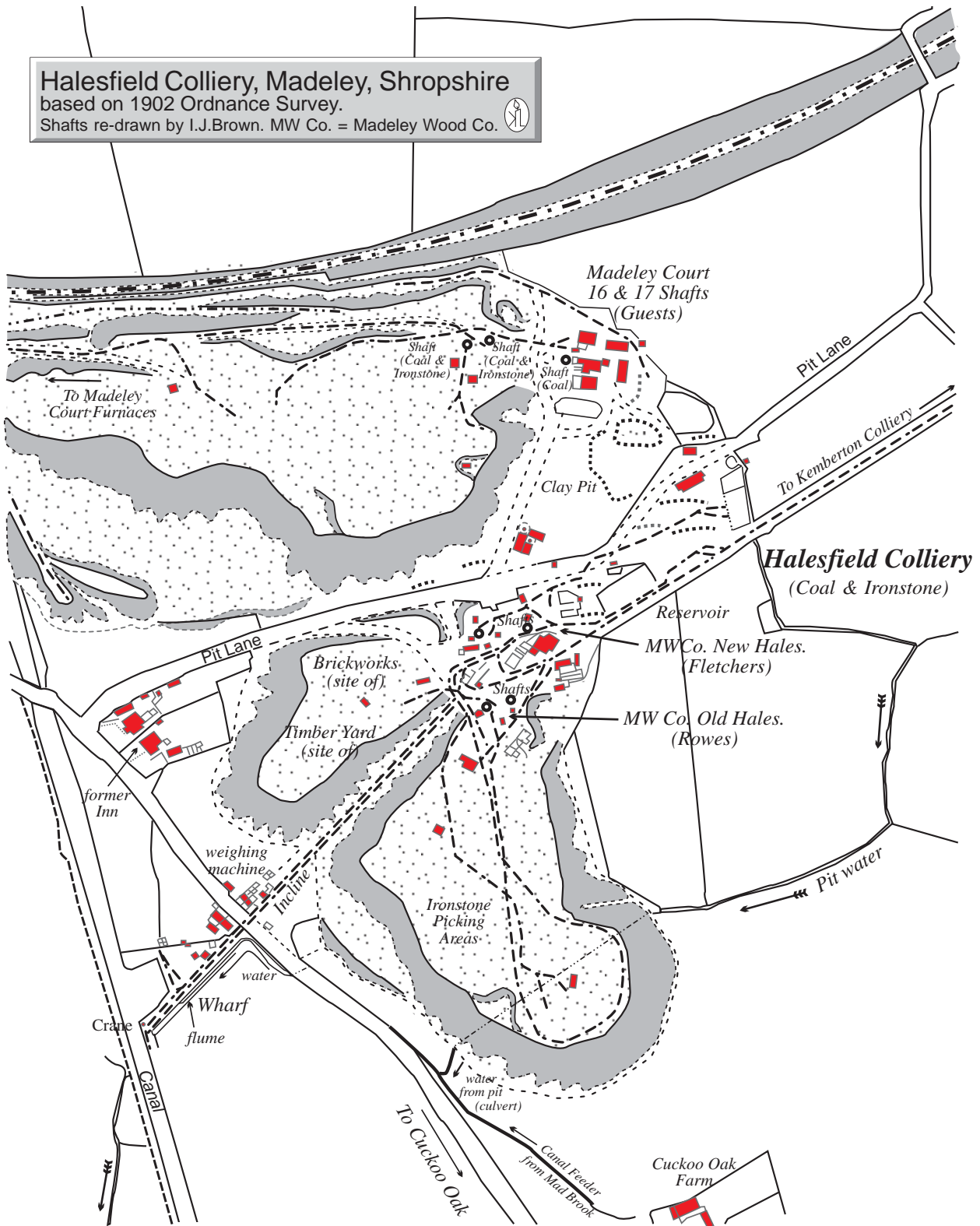
continued...

been drained mainly by a central Water Engine near the Court Furnaces. Guests Pit, the pit nearest to Halesfield was now working coal and had three shafts, the third being a shallower shaft to catch top water (to reduce the need to pump from depth). This was a common practice locally - it was also useful as this

clean top water could be used for steam raising water in the boilers.

As early as 1893 the Madeley Wood Company had reached an agreement with the Court Company to contribute to the cost of raising water at the latter's "Water Pit" for Guests Pits were at least 42 ft. deeper than

Halesfield at this time and they were on the downthrow side of the Halesfield fault. After the Court Company ceased ironstone operations in 1902 the Madeley Wood Company leased the Water Pit, Guests Pit and Engines in order to maintain drainage. It also leased some of the 'Flint Coal Seam' at a



The Halesfield Pits, Madeley, Shropshire (Part 1)

continued

rent of £60 per acre and coal production continued for a few years.

By 1916 the Madeley Wood Company had deepened the shafts and installed two 'Rees Roturbo' pumps at Halesfield, the former Court pits were all closed and the old Guests Pit 'Newcomen type' beam engine was scrapped.

Joe Hardman, who was a winding-engineman at the Madeley Wood Company's pits for over 50 years (starting in 1911) told the writer that the old beam engine at Old Hales was of 6ft. stroke and raised water in a tank until about 1912. Electricity was then coming into use for raising water both underground and at surface.

In 1911 a 'motorman' named Griffiths was electrocuted underground at Halesfield. The Inspectors report says that a strand of wire from a haulage rope came into contact with electric cables which had been in use for twelve years, (i.e. since 1899). This must have been one of the earliest electrical systems in local mines.

The power was generated at Kemberton Pit and was used at 425 volts DC underground at Halesfield for haulage and pumping.

In 1909 both the Hales Pits were still being ventilated separately by furnaces but the number employed was falling. In 1908 the total employed at Halesfield was 91 with 22

on surface, in 1910 54 below and 33 on surface and in this year mineral was only wound from New Hales. This was Little Flint Coal from 831ft in the downcast and Pennystone Ironstone from 741ft in the upcast shaft.

In 1912 the Company closed its Blists Hill Furnaces, ironstone working ceased at Halesfield but coaling continued for a few more years. The incline to the canal was scrapped (and its route became the conduit for pumped water), canal traffic ceased but Halesfield Pit continued to play its part in the local mining scene.

Part Two continues the story in the next issue of 'Below'.

Flame Safety Lamps - First Usage

About three years ago, as part of a local history course based on the Sunderland area, I completed a project into the development of the miners safety lamp. The following notes on the first uses of the lamp may be of interest to members.

It seems to be generally assumed that the Davy lamp was first used in some of the fiery pits of the north in 1816, to try and put some dates on this:

The first Davy lamps, made by **John Newman**, are recorded as having arrived in the north on 8th January 1816 and experiments were carried out on the following day at the blower at Hebburn Colliery by Rev John Hodgson and the viewer, Matthias Dunn. Apparently the experiments were successful and were repeated on 17th January by Hodgson, Dunn and the viewer John Buddle.

Matthias Dunn however claims to have tested the lamps in some of the most flammable parts of Hebburn Colliery on 1st January 1816.

In the autumn of 1816 Davy accompanied Buddle into some of the fiery mines of the north to see his

lamp in actual use. So it seems safe to assume that the lamps began to be commercially used in the early part of 1816.

However safety lamps invented by **Dr William Reid Clanny** (Clanny lamps) were being used in pits owned by Lady Frances Anne Vane Tempest (later Lord Londonderry's pits) before Davy visited the north in 1815. Hetton Colliery in particular, favoured the use of the Clanny lamp.

The introduction of the safety lamp designed by George Stephenson should also be remembered when considering Davy's work.

Portable electric hand lamps are believed to have been first introduced about the middle of the 19th century but the first ones were of crude design and gave little advantage over the oil lamp.

The 1886 report of The Royal Commission on Accidents in Mines examined a number of portable lamps and reported that considerable progress had been made.

Alan Vickers

Coal Authority?

In recent years we have had the Ministry of Fuel and Power, the National Coal Board, British Coal and now the Coal Authority responsible for the coal industry.

In 1872 when the "Coal Mines Act" was passed "to consolidate and amend the law relating to the regulation and inspection of coal mine and certain other mines" it talks about "Her Majesty's Secretary's of State" and "Secretary of State".

Does anyone have any idea which Secretary of State would have been responsible for the coal industry?

Would it have been the Home Secretary, or was there a specific Secretary in charge of coal mines? To whom to the Mines Inspectors report?

Answers on a postcard or e-mail to the editor or Alan Robinson, would be much appreciated.

[The 1872 Coal Mines Act mainly relates to the requirement to deposit abandonment plans with "the Secretary of State"]

Kelvin



The Search for El Dorado Americans in Weardale

In the heyday of the lead ore and fluorspar mining industry there were more than 80 mines dotted around a North-East valley. Today there is just one - run by a team of American experts in search of their *El Dorado*.

The passion of American mining experts for a rare mineral has led to the survival of the last fluorspar mine in the North Pennines.

From the tiny mine, perched 60ft up a cliff-face in a derelict quarry, the Americans are extracting tons of the quartz-like mineral once vital to Britain's steel industry.

Ninety-nine per cent of the fluorspar is washed and polished then shipped out to the US to be sold mainly in gift shops throughout the country.

One per cent of the mineral, which changes colour from green to blue when exposed to daylight, is snapped up by collectors.

One piece of this mineral - the size of a man's fist - can fetch up to £1,000.

"This is the only place in the world where this kind of fluorspar can be found - it is absolutely unique," said geological engineer Cal Graeber, from San Diego, California.

He and his three partners "inherited" the mine - at a secret location in Weardale, County Durham - from two Cumbrian cavers and mineral collectors Lyndsey Greenbank and Mick Sutcliffe.

The two men discovered it during one of their searches for rare minerals and began working it more than 20 years ago. While on holiday with his wife Mr Graeber met the two cavers, who showed them their mine. When they retired, he and his UK Mining Ventures company took it over.

The Americans lease the mine from a local land owner and have to pay the Church of England for mining rights. Through its centuries-old association with the Prince Bishops, the church

still retains mining rights in many parts of Weardale.

So far the Americans have invested "hundreds of thousands", in their Weardale venture, but hope to break even soon.

Only a handful of Americans work on the extraction of the fluorspar, which is then transported to a washing plant before being crated and sent off to the US.

Rise and fall of the Fluorspar Industry

Fluorspar (CaF₂) became Weardale's most important and abundant mineral with the demise of the lead mining industry in the mid 1800s.

It was extensively used as flux in steel-making and was also used to make Teflon and hydrofluoric acid.

But with the closure of giant steel-making plants, such as Consett in 1980, and cheaper imports from countries such as China, the mines in Weardale started to close. Only a handful remained by the 1950s, although the large fluorspar processing plant at west Blackdene survived until the 1980s.

Fluorspar, like lead before it, was mined in primitive conditions. Typical of the mines of the 1800s was the Barbary, where the mineral was washed by lads then handpicked to be crudely separated into different grades. Women were also employed at the mines, washing and sorting the fluorspar after it had been mined.

*abstracted from:
The Northern Echo,
Tuesday 21st August 2001
Submitted by Alan Vickers*

ResCon 03 - International Cave Rescue Congress



This International Cave Rescue Congress is to be held in South Wales, from July 21 to July 27 2003, under the joint auspices of the BCRA and The South Wales Cave Rescue Organisation and organised by the West Brecon Cave Rescue Team.

The event will be held at the South Wales Caving Club, Penwyllt, Abercave, Swansea, South Wales.

The Director is Brian Jopling ('Jopo')
jopo@freenetname.co.uk
Secretary Gary Evans
GaryEvs@compuserve.com

The Objectives of ResCon03 are:

- * To bring together cave rescue teams and individuals interested in all aspects of cave rescue for a one week practical symposium.

Aims:

To promote the exchange of techniques and equipment between cave rescuers from many different caving areas and to build upon the valuable experiences of RESCON92 and The First European Cave Rescue Congress, Germany 1999.

Delegates will be expected to partake in underground workshops and be encouraged to demonstrate their own techniques and equipment. Some techniques and equipment will be more easily demonstrated on the surface and full facilities will be provided.

Costs will be kept to a minimum and grant aid will be sought from national bodies.

Pre and Post congress sport caving camps will be organised in all major UK caving areas so delegates can combine a caving holiday with RESCON03.

If you are interested in this event and would like to be added to the circular list please send your email address to Jopo.



Sunderland Museum Mining Exhibits

The museum was re-opened to the public on Saturday 21st July 2001, following a lengthy closure for extensive refurbishment and alterations, together with the construction of the adjacent Winter Gardens. There are a number of galleries in the museum, one of which is the **Coal Gallery** containing the following:

A small video viewing area, where you can see what it was like to work down the pit as portrayed by three young boys going through their gruelling days whilst working as trapper boys and putters.

A model of a Durham pit head, on loan from The Science Museum, London. The model was given by John Wales, the Viewer of Hetton Coal Co, to the predecessors of the Science Museum, London in 1858. It was first exhibited in 1851 at the Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace and at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. The model is built to a scale of 1:24 and the identity of its builder is not known.

Various miner's tools.

Tools used in rope splicing.

A collection of miner's lamps:

Watson Safety lamp (Stephenson [Geordie] type), 1815–1840;
Mills Safety Lamp (Davy type), 1840–1880;
Naked-flame Spout Lamp, 1860s–1900s;
Protector Safety Lamp of about 1936;
Mills Safety lamp (Clanny type), about 1890;
Stanley Disaster Miniature Safety Lamp;
Oldham type 'G' Electric Cap Lamp, battery and pulp helmet, 1960s;
Patterson B7 Safety Lamp (Marsaut type), about 1920;
Mills Safety Lamp (Marsaut type), 1890s;
Davy Safety Lamp, 1820–1860;
Protector Safety Lamp (Mueseler type), about 1860;

'Tin Can Davy' Safety Lamp, 1830–1850;
Scotch Gauze type Safety Lamp of about 1850;
Spedding Mill, 1760.

Also in this section there is on display:

Fleuss Oxygen Diving Lamp, 1880;
Self rescuer;
An Edward Medal, presented in 1949;
Two Ambulance Medals.
A collection of mining disaster glass produced following disasters at Wingate, Murton, Seaham, West Stanley, Usworth, Brandon, Hetton and Elemore collieries.

A selection of dust sampling equipment.

A selection of ventilation measuring equipment.

By products of the mining industry – brick making.

A replica of a pit-head medical centre.

A large piece of coal, first exhibited at the North East Coast Exhibition in 1929.

A wall mounted map of the County Durham coalfield, produced by Andrew Reid & Co, dated 1932 and showing the royalties of collieries, railroads and ports of shipment of coal. This map can be illuminated to show coal mines which were operational in periods from 1796 to 1996.

A small collection of mining books.

Some miniaturised replicas of mining banners, and one full size banner.

In connection with the miner's home life and hobbies there is a mock up of the kitchen and living-room of a miner's cottage, a number of items connected with pigeon keeping and a selection of brass band instruments.

A mock-up of the front of a boarded

up miner's cottage is on view, where an eviction has taken place, with a few essential items loaded up on a hand cart standing outside the cottage in Silksworth, Co Durham, reminding us of the notorious evictions there.

In the adjacent **Time Machine Gallery** there is provision for a painting of Dr William Reid Clanny, the Sunderland GP, who invented the first miner's safety lamp. Clanny is shown holding his fifth miner's lamp in his hand. (The painting is currently not on display however.)

The **Lost Worlds Gallery**, on the first floor of the museum, has on display a fossilised tree trunk, approximately eight feet high. This was found in North Biddick Colliery in 1840.

In the same gallery there is a large block of quartz and a quantity of samples of North Pennine minerals from Weardale and Teasdale.

Alan Vickers

Footballers Honour Miners

A pit head wheel, donated by Herrington Industrial Services who are based at Southwick in Sunderland and restored by Armitage Engineering of Washinton, was unveiled at Sunderland AFC's **Stadium of Light** on Saturday 18th August 2001.

The wheel was originally made by Thompson & Southwick of Tamworth, West Midlands and carries a plaque paying homage to Wearmouth Colliery and all its workers.

It has been erected on the site so as to act as a permanent reminder to football fans that the Stadium of Light stands on the site of the former Wearmouth Colliery.

Alan Vickers



George Barnett, 1908-2001, Geophysicist and Prospector

George, of Lea Cross Geophysical Services, near Hanwood died recently aged 92. He was, at the time still working, supervising the sinking of an exploratory borehole in Scotland.

G.W.T. Barnett, sometimes known as 'Guts win through', was born in India, where his father was an engineer on the railways, on December 13th 1908.

After preparatory school, he went to Oundle, and then, at his father's insistence, took a degree in civil engineering at Glasgow University. From there he spent several years working for the L.N.E.R., chiefly on bridge design, but, probably inspired by many visits to Leadhills while at Glasgow, and a student spell at Gasswater mine, he was always more interested in geology and prospecting than bridges, and joined the Anglo Iranian Oil Company (later to be B.P.) in 1935. With them he worked in Iran, where he was one of the pioneers of modern geophysical prospecting, demonstrating the value of both seismic and gravimetric data in predicting oil-bearing structures. Fluent in Farsi, during the 1939-45 war he served in Iran as a captain in the Indian Army. After the war he returned to B.P., working not only in the middle east and Papua New Guinea, but in this country, where research convinced him that important gas and oil fields would be found under the North Sea.

Leaving B.P. after twenty-five years with the company, he set up the Lea Cross Geophysical Company at Hanwood in 1959, and for the next thirty years carried out geophysical work for many companies, not only prospecting for minerals, (mostly in Western Europe and the Middle East) but also contracts for the National Coal Board and water authorities.

After the late 1980's Lea Cross took on less work for others, but concentrated on its own research for valuable mineral deposits in the British Isles. It seems fitting that his long life finally ended while he was working on one of

his own prospects. There, on July 25th, he suffered a sudden aneurism, and died in a few minutes. He is buried at St. Lukes Church, Snailbeach.

Believing that the search for minerals is not only essential to human civilisation, but is a pursuit worthy of man, he was never known to go anywhere without his geological hammer. Admittedly not much interested in trivia, and impatient of foolishness, he was a man of the utmost rectitude, who abhorred laziness, and was never idle, and, in my experience of him, George Barnett lived a worthwhile life, and truly deserved, not only admiration, but sincere affection.

He is survived by his second wife, Helen, and two sons and a daughter from his first marriage.

G.W.Hall

Additional Note

I first met George after reading an article in the April 1963 issue of "Mining Magazine", describing the setting up of the purpose built Geophysical Laboratories of the Lea Cross Company near the Shrewsbury-Minsterley Road. The article mentioned that the Company tried out its equipment locally, before using it in distant countries and this had produced interesting results.

During the 1980's both George and I served as 'Hon. Advisors' within a group set up by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. This led to several periods of cooperation on such jobs as the production of a new geological/mining map of the Gorge, although

this was quickly superceded by an Official BGS issue. The possibility of re-working Snailbeach Tips for zinc and other minerals and its conflict with the reclamation proposals was also considered.

While working on one of these projects in the mid 1980's we were having lunch together at George's home when the following memorable event occurred: Soon after sitting down a car full of uniformed police officers screeched to a halt outside the door. One officer was heard going around the back, another to the front and two came to the door. George opened the door and was taken outside, the fourth officer came in and asked the writer to stay where he was. He would not give a reason or say what was going on. After about 10 worrying minutes the police left and George returned. He explained that a special alarm system connected the house to the police station. Some foreign oil prospectors had recently raided his laboratories for information and it was thought they would try his house next. The alarm had gone off for some unexplained reason and the police suspected that someone (IJB) was holding George against his will. George had had to give the necessary assurances before the police would leave.

So even in the 1980's the real dramas of the mining world were still being played out within sight of the great Snailbeach mining area. George will be remembered.

Ivor Brown

Below: Lea Cross Geophysical Lab., Hanwood. 7th Oct. 2001, I.J.Brown



Geevor Mine, New Management

A new organisation has taken over the management of Geevor Mine and museum in Pendeen, West Cornwall.

Pendeen Community Heritage (PCH) has been granted the management of the site by Cornwall County Council.

The trustees of PCH are people from the locality who are passionately concerned with the future of the mine site and are seeking to increase the number of visitors to the site and hence the area. The chairman of the trustees, Bill Lakin, is a mining historian.

PCH itself was born in February 2001, so it has been some task to get an organisation up and running in that time. Importantly, all current employees on the site have been retained and the plan is to increase

employment as resources permit.

Geevor closed as a working mine in 1990. The site has been left with all the equipment of mining and is a superb resource. Considerable effort is being expended in making this worthy of the area's hoped for World Heritage Site status. Plans include the greater realisation of the educational and research potential of the site.

A website has been built:
www.geeovor.com

and is under continual development.

There is a great potential for contribution of knowledge to the effort so assistance from any speciality will be welcomed.

John Colby

Welsh Metal Mine Strategy

The Environment Agency in Wales has produced a list of 50 metal mines on which they wish to carry out priority remedial work to reduce water-borne pollution. They are seeking information before developing a **Welsh Metal Mine Strategy**.

A response on the proposals has been requested from the Welsh Mines Society, which I am co-ordinating. Unfortunately, with a deadline for submissions of 12th October, there has been insufficient time to circulate the list through normal channels. Would anyone with interests in Welsh metal mines please examine the list (on the next page) and contact me if you feel able to provide detailed information on the surviving structures and earthworks, access to underground features and the potential for sub-surface archaeological evidence, for any of the mines listed.

Peter Cloughton

Tel.01437532578

Fax.01437532921

E-mail: P.F.Claughton@exeter.ac.uk

Note - the grid references in the list have been provided by the Environment Agency and should be treated with caution; a number of them are quite wide of the mark in identifying the mine.

Help Wanted

Caleb Bell

Caleb Bell was an important figure (during the 1700's) in lead mining of the North-East Wales area it seems. But can anyone suggest where I might find any details concerning the man and his endeavours in North Wales?

Also, is there a 'potted history' of the London Lead Company anywhere? Any advice would be much appreciated.

Cris Ebbs

E-mail: cris.ebbs@btopenworld.com

Club Account 20 - Reference Help

In the Club Account No. 20, "Metalliferous Mines of Shropshire, Volume 1 - Gazetteer", many of the mines have SCMC library references in the form 'AM2', 'AM4', 'AM8' and 'AM9'.

To what do these refer?

Mike Shaw

South Crofty Reopens

South Crofty tin mine recently had a re-opening ceremony when **Baseresult Ltd** dug open the decline from surface, with the intention of reworking the mine using this as the prime means of access.

They stated that it was their intention to pump the mine dry again, to reach the lower workings (!). Let's hope they have done their home-work on the control of polluted water, as they will have plenty of ochorous water to deal with if they do this.

DCA Insurance

The Derbyshire Caving Association's insurance scheme has been approved by the brokers Perkins Slade. In addition Chatsworth Estates and the peak District National Park have accepted the insurance as evidence of public liability.

Insurance through DCA costs £2.20 per club member and is open to any NCA member club or individual. For more details look on the web at:

www.theDCA.org.uk

or send an SAe to Pete Mellors, Fairview, Station Road, Edingley, Newark, Notts. NG22 8BX

Cave Research Index

A searchable version of the BCRA Science Index has been added to the BCRA web site. The index covers the contents of the BCRA's scientific publications (most of which are in the Club library), plus the William Pengelly CST publications and UBSS Proceedings (first 20 volumes so far).

Pete Cousins and Graham Mullan have done most of the indexing, while Pete and Derek Cousins have produced the web pages and search engine. Check out the web index on:

www.bcra.org.uk/pub/sci-index.html



Environment Agency Wales

Top 50 Metal Mine Priority List (September 2001)

Mine Name	Mine Grid Reference	Mine Reference Number	District
1 ABBEYCONSOLS	SN7440066300	M0423	Ceredigion
2 ABERDAUNANT	SN9060086500	M1275	Powys
3 ALLTYCRIB	SN6480089400	M0350	Ceredigion
4 BOG	SN7390081400	M0536	Ceredigion
5 BRONFLOYD	SN6590083500	M0387	Ceredigion
6 BRYNYRAFR	SN7450087900	M0508	Ceredigion
7 BWLCHGWYN	SN7380078700	M0452	Ceredigion
8 CAEGYNON	SN7180078400	M0454	Ceredigion
9 CASTELL	SN7780081500	M0515	Ceredigion
10 CWMRHEIDOL	SN7300078300	M0457	Ceredigion
11 CWMSYMLOG	SN6980083700	M0364	Ceredigion
12 CWMYSTWYTH	SN8020074600	M0570	Ceredigion
13 CYSTANOG	SN4400020000	M0745	Carms.
14 DAREN	SN6750082800	M0363	Ceredigion
15 DOLAUCOTHI(OGFAU)	SN6630040300	M0689	Carms.
16 DYFNGWM	SN8500093100	M1274	Powys
17 DYLFIE	SN8590094000	M1220	Powys
18 ESGAIRFFRAITH	SN7420091200	M0561	Ceredigion
19 ESGAIRLLE	SN7910082700	M0521	Ceredigion
20 ESGAIRMWYNOLD	SN7550069200	M0432	Ceredigion
21 FRONGOCH	SN7220074400	M0463	Ceredigion
22 GEIRIONYDDMINE	SH7620061100	M1341	Conwy
23 GLOGFAWR	SN7470070600	M0468	Ceredigion
24 GOGINAN	SN6900081700	M0368	Ceredigion
25 GRAIGGOCH	SN7050074100	M0469	Ceredigion
26 GROGWYNION	SN7150072200	M0470	Ceredigion
27 GWYNFYNYDD	SH7360028200	M1088	Gwynedd
28 HAFAN	SN7300088000	M0524	Ceredigion
29 HENFWLCH	SN7370088300	M0525	Ceredigion
30 LEVELFAWR	SN7390072200	M0608	Ceredigion
31 LLANFAIR	SN6270051200	M0663	Ceredigion
32 LLANFYRNACH	SN2250031700	M0708	Pembs.
33 LLWYNTEIFY	SN7410078900	M0472	Ceredigion
34 LLYWERNOG	SN7330081000	M0606	Ceredigion
35 LOGAULAS	SN7400074600	M0473	Ceredigion
36 MYNYDDGORDDU	SN6680086100	M0377	Ceredigion
37 NANTMINERA	SJ2840050200	M0323	Wrexham
38 NANTYCREIAU	SN7900080200	M0530	Ceredigion
39 NANTYMWYN	SN7840044600	M0673	Carms.
40 PARC	SH7870060200	M0869	Conwy
41 PARYS	SH4400090200	M0808	Anglesey
42 PENRHIW	SN7370078600	M0488	Ceredigion
43 PENYCEFN	SN6550085600	M0380	Ceredigion
44 POWELL'S	SN7290080800	M0535	Ceredigion
45 RHEIDOL UNITED (GWAITHGOCH & ERWTOMAU)	SN7110078400	M0494	Ceredigion
46 TEMPLE	SN7490079300	M0497	Ceredigion
47 TRELOGANWEST	SJ1110080300	M0177	Flintshire
48 TY'N-Y-FRON	SN7240078500	M0499	Ceredigion
49 WEMYSS	SN7160074200	M0501	Ceredigion
50 YSTUMTUEN	SN7320078800	M0505	Ceredigion



The Future of British Caving

The document with this portentous title that was produced following a meeting in January was discussed at the NCA AGM in June. Little feedback had been received from the membership about it but the AGM was in broad agreement with the approach that had been taken in January and wished to arrange for further work to be carried out.

Some work, on the financial aspects of the NCA and BCRA has already been carried out by Jon Roberts, the Treasurer of the CSCC and he will continue with this. However, it was agreed that discussions need to be held on how we tackle the other "function areas" that were listed at the January meeting. These are:

1. Policy and resources (central functions that should be self-evident).
2. Meetings (including the organisation of the annual conference and the Cavers' Fair).

3. Publishing and Library (how information and news are disseminated to cavers and what resources we can provide for archiving and library functions).
4. Administration, Insurance and Legal (what services do cavers want under these headings and who should provide them).
5. Technical and Training (currently the roles of two of the NCA's committees - the AGM had already agreed to take a long hard look at the funding of the current training scheme).
6. Conservation and Access (fundamental issues for all cavers: who should provide information, at what level should policy be made, etc?).

To these were added two more:

7. Cave Science and Research (how can we support these areas, what

relationships should be have with the academic institutions?).

8. International (how we relate to cavers and caving organisations in other countries and to supra-national bodies).

It would be virtually impossible to set up and run meetings on all these areas so it has been agreed that, in order to encourage as much debate and input as we can that we should set up eight email discussion lists, one for each of the above topics.

Cavers who are interested in any (or all!) of these eight topics may join in the discussion by simply logging on to the NCA web site and following the links.

These discussions are open to ALL who wish to join them them. If you have something to say about the future of Caving the NCA wants to hear from you.

Lancaster Hole Survey & Guide: Part 1

The first part of the new Ease Gill Caverns survey was published on the 18th. September. Cost £5 + £1 post + packing.

Send your orders for the plan to:

RRCPC
7 Broadacre, Caton,
Lancaster, LA29NF

If you want the survey sent in a roll the is an extra charge for postage and packing (at cost).

Cheques should be made payable to:-

RRCPC

or they can be collected from Bull Pot Farm at weekends.

Andy Hall

See the Red Rose website at:
www.rrcpc.org.uk

Metal Mines of the Elan Estate

Members might be interested in a recent publication put together by the Elan Estate/Welsh Water with the above title. This is a 16 page A5 booklet drawing heavily on information and ground surveys completed by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in 1994/1997.

It gives a brief historical outline of each mine followed by a present day site description, with sketch copies of CPAT surveys. There is a central location map for all of the mines.

Visits to these mines are encouraged and access is available to all of them.

Cwm Elan is particularly well preserved and on a visit some 12 years ago there were a number of surface buildings, including a crusher house and miners housing surviving on the site. All the sites are in very scenic locations (Shelley was a regular visitor to the area) - why not follow in his footsteps and visit over a long weekend ?

To get hold of copies contact the Elan Valley Visitor Centre
Tel: 01597-810898

Cost is £1.50. (They will post booklets with added p&p)

Mole Site

Club members are familiar with Mole's activities at Nenthead and his superb collection of miners lamps that he kindly brings along as working table-centre pieces for the Club Dinners.

You may be interested to learn that he has now branched out onto the Internet and set up a web site:

www.grottag.fsworld.co.uk



Books & Events

Collieries of South Wales Part 1

By John Cornwell, HB 255pages - this volume has been long awaited and the publisher has gone out of his way to produce a high quality book. There are 275 black and white surface and underground photos of various collieries. This one of the best books I have seen and includes text details of the 39 collieries.

John used special underground lighting and cameras to capture rare underground features at the coal faces and significant underground features and operations. The book provides a superb Industrial and Social record. Everything is included from pit ponies to maps and should be a best seller, purchasers should not be put off by the price tag it is well worth every penny of £22.50

Needless to say I have of copies in stock and will accept Visa and Access payments!

Mike Moore

The Collieries of Somerset & Bristol

By John Cornwell.
Produced as a follow up to his book on the Collieries of South Wales this book was due out at the end of September 2001. Price £14.95

The book will include 80 photographs of previously unrecorded scenes of surface and underground taken at 13 pits post Nationalisation in 1947. the underground photos were taken by Nigel Booth between 1960-1961.

The collieries featured include , Bromley, nr Pensford; Braysdown, Radstock; Camerton, Charmborough; Coal Pit Heath, Glos; Harry Stoke, Stoke Gifford; Kilmersdon, Radstock; New Rock / Mendip, Stratton on Foss; Norton Hill, Midsomer Norton; Marsh Lane Drift, Farrington Gurney; Old Mills, Paulton; Pensford; Writhlington, Radstock.

Mike Moore

New Beamish Book

A book cataloguing a North-East's museum's close links with the mining industry was launched at the beginning of July.

Mining - The Beamish Collection, features the mining memorabilia brought to the County Durham museum over the years.

The 130-page book is the brainchild of **Aidan Doyle**, a researcher and lecturer at the University of Northumbria who wanted a reference book for his students.

Published by the University, the book includes sections on some of the museum's biggest exhibits, such as a winding engine house, and a large waddle fan, which was used to

blow air into the mine shaft.

It also features details of archives, documents, memorials and banners from the museum's collection.

A spokesman for Beamish said "We have a wonderful collection of mining objects and documents, but maybe not many people knew about it."

"This book contains a lot of information about the objects and the people who used them. The book has a lot of humanity in it."

The book, which includes a foreward by researcher Bill Lancaster, is available from the museum bookshop, prices £9.99.

Alan Vickers.

Bull Pot Farm

Bull Pot Farm is open again for business. For info on booking accomodation please contact me or look on our website.

At the September Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club committee meeting we decided to re-open the farm to members and guests.

It must be pointed out though that the local farmers have expressed grave concerns, and we must therefore be seen to be acting responsibly in any activity that we undertake. As you would expect the RRCPC would take very seriously any attempt to cave in areas where access is not permitted, by people staying at Bull Pot Farm. Several bio security measures will apply. People visiting Bullpot Farm should note:

There is NO access to the Fell-side or Caves on either Casterton or Leck Fells. This includes the path to Bull Pot of the Witches.

At long last some of the Dales is open! Ingleborough, Whernside, Kingsdale, Chapel le Dale, some of

Dentdale, and a strip South of Hawes running down to the Wharfe valley. Though everything South East of Clapham to Horton and that side of Pen-y-Ghent are still SHUT. You're still liable to a £5000 fine if caught on closed areas. You have been warned!

For latest info contact Steve Round at Bernies Cafe. There are maps on the wall in the Cafe. Tel: 015242 41802
Email: steve.round@virgin.net

For more info see our website.

Andy Hall

www.walton-le-dale.demon.co.uk

See Red Rose website at:
www.rrcpc.org.uk

**1st International Mining
Memorabilia Fair**
(1re Bourse Internationale
sur le Thme de la Mine)
November 11th, 2001 Grenay, France
Exchange, Exhibition, Sales

For more info visit their web site:
www.mineur.fr.st
gencaron@club-internet.fr



Books, Videos and Events

Underground Wales

Martyn Farr, HB 95 pages.

Many of you who attended the Club Dinner at the beginning of October will have already availed yourself of a copy of this book direct from the author, following his interesting and entertaining talk. If you were not at the dinner (why not?), Martyn has written several books on caving, and is known worldwide for his Cave Diving Exploits in addition to being a skilled Underground Photographer.

Do not reject this book as another "rope swingers biography" it is not. Martyn has a love of all things subterranean and his enthusiasm shows in his words. I am a fan of Martyn's books all are good to read, and this one is no exception.

Featured are many well-known and lesser-known Mines and Caves in Wales (including Sygun) each with Grid references and access details.

The book is broken down into subject headings Limestone, Coal, Gold, Iron Lead and Zinc, Stone Workings and finally Dinorwig Power Station. Martyn cleverly explains how the mines are worked, use historical information to full effect. Colour photography is used throughout, which is no mean feat in the large slate and silica mine chambers. The photo on the front cover, of various levels in Olwyn Goch Mine at Hendre North Wales, is a unique shot and helps to explain the vastness and complexity of these workings.

The book is a delight to read and for anyone interested in Welsh Mines or Caves the book it is a must. I would be amazed if anyone disagrees with me!

Produced by Gomer £12.95 available from all good stockists including yours truly.

Mike Moore

WWW.moorebooks.co.uk
E-mail: Mike@moorebooks.co.uk

The Wheal of Hope, South Crofty & Cornish Tin Mining

By James Crowden and George Wright, (paper back 96 pages), plus thirty five superb black and white photos taken by Wright including surface, underground and people each accompanied by a poem written by Crowden. This is supplemented by twenty four pages of notes about the mine and working conditions.

I am not enthused by poems normally however these capture the very moods, hopes and enthusiasm of the miners and their environment during the last months of the mine. In a different way the book provides an insight into the life of the Mine.

Price £9.95

Mike Moore



Mining Videos

all available from the Club at a discount,
see Alan Robinson



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 has completely changed).

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.

Glengowla, £6.95

A tour around this amazing mineral rich lead mine in Ireland, complete with commentary and diagrams.

[12 mins.]

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
- C.37: Dudley Tunnel - Wrens Nest East Mine, a rare trip into the workings during stabilisation works. £9.87
- C.41: Hem Heath Winders**, £9.87
- C.42 The SCMC at Onslow Park** - a record of the 1998 Club and Trust display. £9.87
- C.44 Nenthead Lead Mines** - surface, plus Smallcleugh, Rampgill Horse, Capleclough Levels & Carrs Level, £9.87
- C.45 Twelve Mines of Ireland** - made for the first AGM of the MHSI it contains excerpts of C.32 with **added commentary**. £11.75
- C.46 Astley Green Colliery - shot during the 1999 engine rally at the Museum site (including views of the huge winding engine) £9.87
- C.48 Draglines - features the moving of "Oddball" at St. Aidans Opencast site, plus bigger draglines at work in the North East of England. £14.10
- C.49 Annesley-Bentinck Colliery - tour of surface, washery & rail loading bunker. £9.87

For more details about videos contact:

I.A. Recordings, PO Box 476, Telford, TF8 7RH

e-mail: info@iarecordings.org or visit their web site at:
www.iarecordings.org



Club Officers

President: Alan Taylor

Training Officer: Ian Davies

Chairman: Steve Holding

First Aid Officer:

Alan Moseley

Librarian: Alan Robinson

Vice Chair & Assistant

Secretary: Eileen Bowen

Conservation Officer:

John Martin

Secretary: Mike Davies

scmc.secretary@factree.org.uk

Bat Officer: Mike Worsfold

Treasurer: Bob Taylor

Rescue Officer:

Neal Rushton

Tackle Officer: Andy Harris

'Below' Editor: Kelvin Lake

e-mail: scmc@factree.org.uk

Diary Dates

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

11th Nov: 1st International Mining Memorabilia Fair, Grenay, France.

23-31st Dec: 1st Mexican Congress of Speleology, Veracruz, Mexico

2002

31st Jan: Ghar Parau Foundation grants application deadline.

9th Feb: Lecture, Caves of Llangattock, Crickhowell (free entry)

9th Mar: BCRA Science Symposium, Leeds.

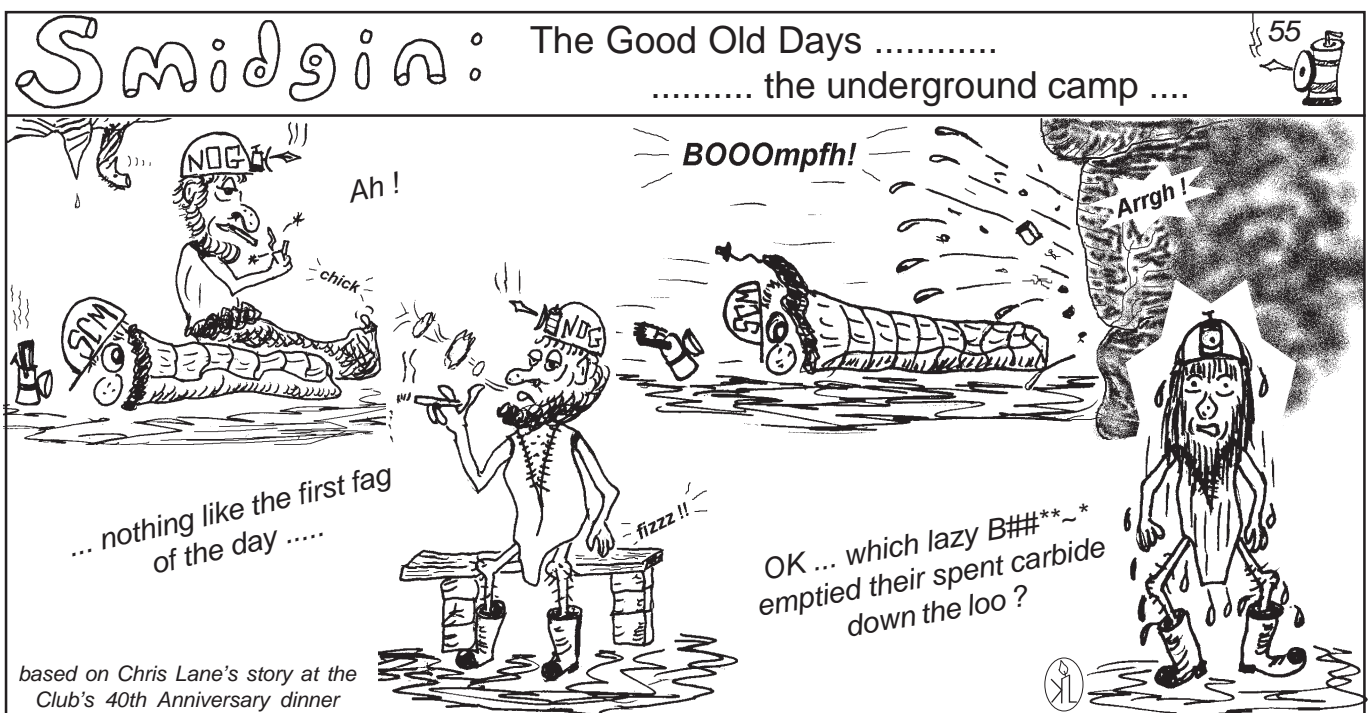
15th Mar: Nunwick Lecture: Underground Britain, 7pm University of Hull, by Paul Deakin. (free entry)

27th Apr. -1st May: Alcadi 2002: 6th International Symposium on the History of Speleology, Gorizia, Italy.

5th - 8th July: Application of Water Power in Mining, University of Wales, Aberystwyth. Hosted by Welsh Mines Society and NAMHO.

10th July - 10th Aug: World Caves Expo, Samcheok, Korea.

21st Sept: Speleoart Exhibition, Dudley Art Gallery and Museum



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

