NAMHO National Association of Mining History Organisations

Newsletter No. 83, March 2018

NAMHO 2018 AGM and Spring Council Meeting

The next NAMHO Council Meeting and AGM will take place on Saturday 24th March 2018 starting at 11am.

The venue will be The Pump Room, Peak District Lead Mining Museum, South Parade, Matlock Bath, DE4 3NR.

Meeting papers will be sent to nominated NAMHO Representatives before the meeting.

Subscription payments to NAMHO for 2018 were due on 1st January. Please ensure that your organisation has paid the subscription for 2018.

NAMHO Officers

Last year, the Association changed the rules so that any member of a constituent organisation may stand to be elected as a NAMHO Officer. This change was made because we find it hard to get new people to be NAMHO Officers. The idea is that we make the opportunity open to anyone from a member Society. The Officers are Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor.

All organisations need refreshing with new people and new ideas. I hope that someone reading this might be interested in standing for election. The roles are not generally onerous and time consuming. If you want to get more information or just talk about what is involved, please either email or phone me on secretary@namho.org / 01388 527532. With your permission, I will pass your contact details on to a current officer.

We also need a new representative on BCA Council. Steve Holding has been going to meetings on our behalf for quite some time. He would like to give up the role. Meetings take place about four times per year and recent meetings have been at Alvechurch near the M42 south of Birmingham. Anyone interested?

Peter Jackson, NAMHO Secretary

NAMHO Website

The NAMHO Members Section of our website contains a list of Mining History Societies, Mining Museums within NAMHO and Organisations Affiliated to NAMHO. Each Member's page shows the area of interest, activities, membership and contact details, as well as a link to their website and Facebook page where appropriate.

When was the last time that your organisation's details were checked? Perhaps this is a good time to review your entry and have it amended where appropriate. Check out the listings at:
https://www.namho.org/members.php

Any changes should be sent to Nigel Dibben, NAMHO webmaster via the Contacts page on the NAMHO website.

The website has recently been refreshed making the pages wider now that most people will have wider screens on their laptops, PCs and tablets, than when the site was created.

And don't forget that NAMHO is also on Facebook, so why not have a look and 'like'.
NAMHO on Facebook

Acknowledgements

I would like to convey my appreciation to all those that have contributed towards this edition of the NAMHO Newsletter. Items are credited to the contributor, unless written/supplied by myself as Editor.

Roy Meldrum, NAMHO Editor

NAMHO 2018 Conference

1st-3rd June 2018, Forest of Dean

You may have heard a rumour that the NAMHO Conference in 2019 is set to be "the Best Ever". For that to be true it is going to have to "go some" to improve on what is planned for this year's conference in the Forest of Dean.

The Forest of Dean is fabulous location for a visit and would be even if it didn't have the wealth of industrial heritage that it has. Mining has arguably been equally as responsible for the development of the landscape as the management of the forest itself. Iron and coal are the main minerals worked but there were also tin mines, stone quarries and even a gold mine. The conference provides ample opportunity to visit both surface and underground mining sites with 42 underground trips (not including the winch trips into Robin Hood Iron Mine for which access has been specially arranged) and four guided surface trips. A series of self-guided walks will also be available for those who fancy exploring on their own.

The lecture programme, not surprisingly, mainly focuses on the mining history of this location and particularly on some of its more unusual customs. For those who prefer a less "parochial" approach the talks also include recent research into broader topics and discoveries, with enough variety to meet most people's interests.

In addition to the customary lectures and visits a new feature this year is a video suite which will run parallel to the lecture programme showing mining related videos and dvds. There are also training activities that use the facilities at the venue which will complement the usual displays and stalls.

The Saturday evening event this year is to be a "Faddle" which is the local dialect word for a celebration – (probably originating from "fiddle-faddle - a bit of fun and nonsense"). At this there will be live music with a mining related theme and of course a bar. Instead of a hog roast there will be a boar roast; wild boar being another unusual feature of the Forest of Dean

At the end of the conference there is a special trip on the Forest of Dean Railway. This will be pulled by one of their steam locomotives and is at a discounted price for delegates. It will also include a stop to look at one of the former colliery sites that it passes. Since the preserved line conveniently terminates directly opposite the conference venue and should be running all weekend, delegates can go on that in their own time if they prefer. Similarly you might choose to go to one of the many local attraction; ones with mining context including Clearwell Caves, Hopewell Colliery and The Dean Heritage Centre.

If that is not enough!! As has been the case in recent years there are a number of after conference trips on the Monday including both ones in the forest and further afield in the underground stone quarries of Wiltshire and the Cotswolds.

Oh and by the way…… if you book to use the bunk house accommodation through the NAMHO conference website, this is not only immediately adjacent to conference site but is actually in a converted engine house that was formerly part of the iron foundry that the site occupies – Not many conferences can offer that. As I said next years will have to go some to beat it.
https://www.namho2018.info/

On behalf of the clubs arranging this year's conference (GSS, Hades CC, RFDCC, & SGMRG) I look forward to welcoming you all to the forest in June.

David Hardwick
Chair of NAMHO 2018 Organising Committee

Around the NAMHO Groups and Museum Members

New Year - New Challenges at Chatterley Whitfield

The start of an exciting New Year for Chatterley Whitfield Friends, we thought it would be an easy transition.....Think again.....It has been frustrating ...But it gets better.....

At an Extraordinary General Meeting held in January a new Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer and Committee Members were appointed and a new Constitution adopted. Plus Charitable Status being discussed and progressed with another EGM scheduled for March.

On 1st February this year, the CCTV on site became operative and all security removed and the gates locked. This initially gave the 'Friends' a problem as they no longer had unrestrictive access to the site. A new system was imposed by the City Council, which appears to be working. All access to the site now has to be approved and a Permit to Access agreed.

A big problem for the 'Friends', as they have just been given access to a new building just outside the perimeter fence, with all the artefacts, etc, still on site in the well establish Deployment Centre. With the co-operation of Stoke-on-Trent City Council a safe area has been made so we have access when needed.

So onto Building 29B, a blank canvas, as they say, the way forward. There is a BUZZ at Chatterley Whitfield, new executive team, new committee members which has brought about new ideas and the importance of networking and sourcing funding opportunities.
At the launch of the ABTEM guidelines at the Science Museum, new contacts were made, as Chatterley Whitfield is getting more publicity as the place in the 'Lloyds TV Advert'. So a lot of work at Chatterley Whitfield, initially with Building 29B, looking at developing a small museum, community resource centre and video/audio suite.

If anyone can help with access to funding opportunities, please get in touch.
membership@chatterleywhitfieldfriends.org.uk

Nigel Bowers, Secretary,
Chatterley Whitfield Friends

Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining Heritage Society

The following three reports on CATMHS activities were provided by Warren Allison, Chairman CATMHS

Coniston HLF Grant Update- Penny Rigg Mill

The contractors have moved on to Penny Rigg Mill, but appear to have now finished for winter. I had a look in early January and what a difference the mill is to what it was like when it was in a slow state of decline. Walls have been re-built; the old timbered lintels have been replaced and the work is a great credit to the contractors.

Research has also carried on in the archives and Ian Matheson and I met with the volunteers and Lisa Keys from Minerva Heritage to discuss what they had found and there will be a publication on the research they have done.

Various guided walks have also been discussed and these are in the process of being finalised.

This project is a testimony to the society and at the end will take Coniston Copper Mines off the Historic England "at risk register" and although Penny Rigg Mill is not scheduled (but it should be), it is certainly in a better state of repair than for many years.

The powder house has been partially rebuilt

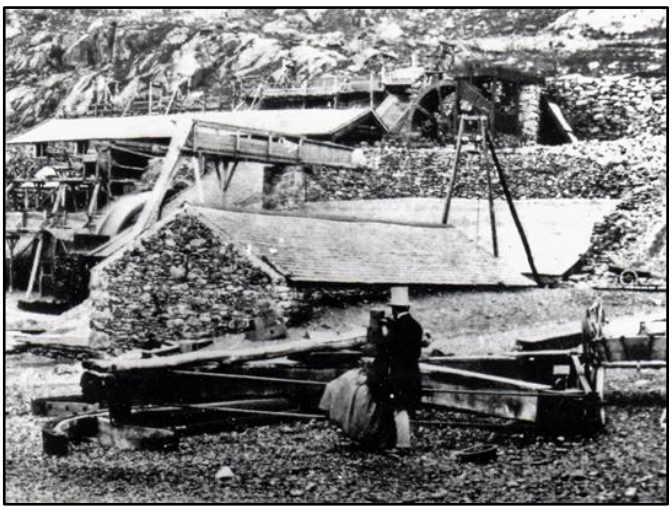
Coniston HLF Grant Update- Upper Bonsor Mill

The contractors have been working on consolidating the Upper Bonsor Mill, some of which has proved to be problematic and advice had to be sought from Historic England, however what has been done is superb. Archive research has continued and some of the work is quite outstanding which will make a huge contribution to the project.

Walls of the smithy have been consolidated

Ian Matheson and I have unearthed some new previously unseen photographs of the mines and Ian has been adding these to the collection of all known photographs. We have spent a considerable amount of time during the summer trying to date the photographs and find out who the photographer was. During September, we visited the site and have been able to identify the existing structures with those in the photographs. It is apparent that there several periods where the mill was re-built and re-organised.

This photograph of the upper mill (which has been previously published) could be one of the earliest known (circa 1860's). The building in the foreground has been re-built and the two people could be John Barratt (mine owner) and his wife. What is interesting is that many of the structures in the photograph still survive and the re-built tower is just above the building and appeared to carry a wagonway. The upper waterwheel is clearly visible and there is a bell at the back of the building. There appears to be a balance bob in front of the two people.



John Muir Trust and Glenridding Common

The Trust, which is based in Scotland, is taking a three-year lease on Glenridding Common, from the LDNPA, but this does not include the scheduled part of Greenside Mine. As part of the consultation process, CATMHS was asked to make comments on the proposal especially around the archaeological remains beyond Greenside including the leats, No 1 power station, Kepplecove and Brown Cove dams, the smithy in Brown Cove and the stone arched levels at the junction of Red Tarn and Glenridding Becks and at Brown Cove Mine.

The Trust is going to include the comments made in its management plan and Colin Woollard and I met with Pete Barron who used to be a LDNPA ranger and now works for the Trust in September on a breezy day to view some of the remains.

We walked from Greenside to Kepplecove Dam, which was an opportunity for Pete to explain the background to the proposal, what the Trust intended to do with regards to land management and protection of the archaeological remains.

Arriving back at the car we agreed that the society would draft a brief document setting out what remains there are, information around the hydro-electric power station which made Greenside the first UK metal mine to have an underground electric locomotive and winding engine and we offered to assist in field trips to the mine and common next year when the Trust holds its AGM at Glenridding Public Hall.

The trust has now incorporated CATMHS's concerns into its management plan and has asked the society to lead a field trip to the mine at its AGM in May, which has been gratefully taken up.

Welsh Mines Preservation trust

Welsh Mines Preservation Trust members have been working closely with The Silver Mountain Experience /Llywernog Silver-Lead Mining Museum in recent months.

To launch the visitor attraction's 2018 season they are holding their first Heritage Weekend 24th-25th March 2018. Features running throughout the weekend include the Ore Jiggers working for the first time since the mining era and the Buddle & Jigger Waterwheels

turning in unison for the first time in decades (with thanks to members of the Welsh Mines Preservation Trust!) Plus underground guided tours, the Miner's Trail and a Mining Memorabilia stand with artefacts, documents and books brought in by local organisations and the community.
http://welshminestrust.org/llywernog-heritage-weekend/

Nenthead Mines Conservation Society

Nenthead Mines Conservation Society (NMCS) are preparing a Business Plan for a possible asset transfer of the Nenthead SAM from Cumbria County Council to the Society. The transfer might also include outlying land at Bloomsberry Level of Brownley Hill mine.

A local consultation event is planned to take place on Saturday 10th March 2018 at Nenthead Village Hall from 1300 to 1700hrs.

NMCS has replaced supports in Carrs Mine over the winter closure period. Current work includes removing timber affected by wet and dry rot in the Barracks building.

NMCS has been offered a set of jigs presently lying at Silverband Mine. We hope to arrange transport in the summer of 2018.

The Society has completed the sorting and cataloguing of historic and archaeology documents about the site, and surrounding areas. Mine plans and maps have also been catalogued. Current work is sorting and cataloguing photographs. Indexes to these documents will be published shortly at www.nentheadmines.com.

The Society rock and mineral collection has been sorted, catalogued and photographed. A selection of the best examples is viewable on the Society website.

Three modern waterwheels have been sold to Coniston Copper mines, Cumbria.

Peter Jackson, NMCS

Radstock Museum's New Virtual Reality Attraction

Have you ever wondered what it might have been like deep underground in the coalmines of Somerset? A new Virtual Reality (VR) attraction at Somerset Coalfield Life at Radstock Museum will take you on a ride down into the mines of Radstock and on a journey back in time through the mine tunnels in a brand new, unique and exciting experience.

Take your seat for the fully 3 dimensional trip, pop on the lightweight headset, which fits comfortably over glasses, you will find yourself in the cage (the lift) which took the miners down underground and then your decent begins…….!

You are now in the role of a miner clunking and bumping down the mineshaft in the cage dropping at a rate of 60 feet per second, taking you deep underground. Once down at the pit bottom, you find yourself travelling in a coal truck along rails on the underground roadway. Turn your head to look all around you and see the pit pony stables and miners eating their meagre lunches. Pass by miners cutting away at the coalface with picks and make way for a pit pony as it comes towards you pulling its load of coal to the bottom of the shaft.

A sudden rock fall in one of the coal seams off the roadway sends miners shouting and trying to escape with their lives and in another seam a group of miners has accidentally blasted through into an old, disused flooded mine tunnel and water rushes in leaving miners once again racing to escape.

This unique ride has been made to be as authentic as possible with some artistic license to make it exciting and workable. For example, in the Somerset Coalfield the actual coal seams were often only 2 feet high and miners would wriggle along the cramped seams to cut the coal - it would be impossible for the ride to replicate this as there would be no room for the viewer to see this happening- so the tunnels are bigger on the ride.

The VR ride is the ambitious work of two students: Georgina Hill and Barry Lewis from Bath College / Bath University in a collaboration with Radstock Museum. Georgina and Barry have developed and implemented the ride for the final project of their course, gaining them both a Foundation Degree in Applied Computing.

The final project required the students to draw on all the computing skills they had acquired during the course as well as to demonstrate skills in areas such as project management and collaborating with a third party and client.

The collaboration came about when Museum Chairman Dr Nick Hall and Amy Patterson, Careers & Employability Adviser at Bath College, were linked up by Julie Poll, a business connector. As Amy explains, "We began with the shared vision of inviting students to imagine ways in which the museum could become more interactive. We are delighted that the resulting collaboration between Radstock Museum and Bath College has been so successful, and together we've developed something unique to the region. The team at the museum has given our students a fantastic opportunity to apply their creativity and skills to this project and we thank them for their support throughout. Bath College considers the links we have with local businesses and communities to be incredibly important, as it helps those outside of the college to see how talented our students are, and in turn allows students to develop real work skills. We are very proud of what Barry and Georgina have achieved with the museum and we look forward seeing what else this partnership can do in the future"

Barry and Georgina discovered that they work so well as a team that they are already planning a new and improved 2nd generation of the ride where *you* the rider will be able to interact further by picking up implements and using them plus more! They are both continuing to the full Bachelor Degree currently.

The museum would very much like to continue the collaboration which has been so professionally conducted by the students and the College and has also been enormous fun! Particularly memorable is the time Georgina and Barry spent with Bryn Hawkins, a former Colliery Worker now in his 70s, who was adviser on the ride as to what you might expect to see and experience in the mine. Bryn enthusiastically put on the headset and was carried back to his mining days, thoroughly enjoying his experience but without needing to take a bath afterwards! It will be lovely for the museum volunteers to see visitors of all ages taking turns with the headsets and going off on such a fascinating and informative, yet fun, ride.

Somerset Coalfield Life at Radstock Museum would like to warmly congratulate Georgina Hill and Barry Lewis who graduated from Bath College/Bath University with Foundation Degrees in Applied Computing. We wish them the very best for the future.

Press Release, Radstock Museum

The official launch of the VR attraction took place on 7th February 2018 at the museum, with guests including local dignitaries, academics, museum staff, volunteers and partners and ex-miners. After the formalities, everyone was given the chance to try out the VR experience for themselves. Georgina and Barry are now working on a 2nd generation of the VR attraction.

The VR experience will be available to the public on weekends from 10th February 2018. The museum are looking to recruit more volunteers to help with supervising the public, so if you would like to get involved contact Miranda at development@radstockmuseum.co.uk.
For details of opening times-
http://radstockmuseum.co.uk/

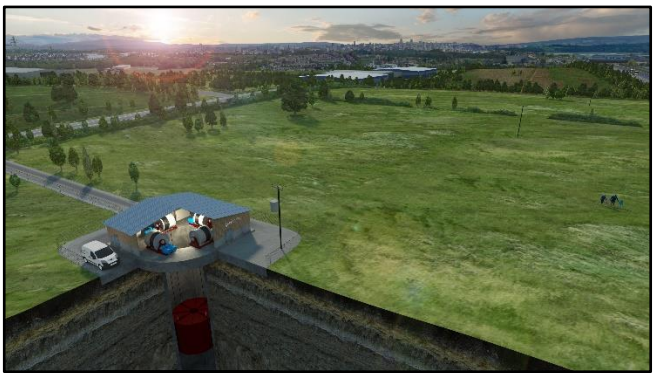
See How They Run at NCMM

As part of British Science Week the National Coal Mining Museum for England, near Wakefield, will be hosting their annual moving machinery day on Sunday 18th March 2018. Some of the machines running will including the Dosco Roadheader, Ace Coal Cutter and the Steam Winding Engine. There will also be special See How They Run underground tours (£4 per person charge) when you can see some of the underground machines working. Available to book on the day.
Full details at-
https://www.ncm.org.uk/whats-on/family-science-day-see-how-they-run

Disused mine shafts to become green energy stores of the future

Former mining communities across the country could find a new lease of life – with old mine shafts turned into hi-tech green energy stores.

This is the plan of energy start-up Gravitricity, which has just received a £650,000 grant from Innovate UK, the UK Government's innovation agency, for their plan to harness the power of gravity to store renewable energy. Their technology uses a massive weight suspended in mine shafts to capture green power, and then release it in seconds (pictured below).



If Gravitricity's plan succeeds, their technology could breathe new life into former mining communities, and with it jobs and economic activity. The UK funds will enable them to start building a scale demonstrator later this year, and find a site to install a full-scale prototype by 2020. They are now on the look-out for investors, including those who can bring mining experience to the team, and suitable shafts to trial their technology.
And once they have proven the technology in old mines, they then plan to sink new shafts to store energy wherever it is required. "As we rely more and more on renewable energy, there is an increasing need to find ways to store that energy – so we can produce quick bursts of power exactly when it is needed," explains company managing director Charlie Blair "So far there is a lot of focus on batteries, but our idea is quite different."

Gravitricity uses a heavy weight – up to 2000 tonnes – suspended in a deep shaft by cables attached to winches. "When there is excess electricity, for example on a windy day, the weight is winched to the top of the shaft ready to generate power. "This weight can then be released when required – in less than a second – and the winches become generators, producing either a large burst of electricity quickly, or releasing it more slowly depending on what is needed," Blair explains. "It's a simple case of 'What goes up, must come down,'" he says.

Unlike batteries, the Gravitricity system can operate for decades without any degradation or reduction in performance, Blair states. Of course the idea of using gravity to store energy is not new. Britain already relies on a number of pumped storage hydro schemes, such as Ben Cruachan, where water is pumped uphill to be released when required. "The difference is we don't need a mountain with a loch or lake at the top, and we can react much faster," says Blair. He says the biggest single cost is the hole, and that is why the start-up is developing their technology utilising existing mine shafts, both in the UK and also in South Africa.

As the technology advances, the cost of drilling will reduce significantly and will allow them to sink purpose-built shafts wherever they are required, the company claims. The start-up plans to build models from 1 to 20MW, and estimates each 'Gravitricity Energy Storage System' will last up to 50 years.
Later this year they will build and test a part-scale demonstrator, and they are currently short-listing a number of disused mine shafts for their first full-scale working prototype in 2019/20. www.gravitricity.com

Gravitricity Press Release (07/02/2018)

Charlie Blair, Gravitricity MD (Photographed above at Newtongrange, Lady Victoria Colliery) added the following information regarding the characteristics of the shafts they are potentially interested in for commercial projects:

- 300m+ deep. Ideally 700m

- Shaft in well-known and good condition (This is likely to mean concrete lined in any soft-rock shaft)
- Dry (At least for early projects. Flooded not a problem in itself but likely to mean the lining won't be sound.)
- At least 3m diameter, Ideally 5m+
- Grid connection (usually a given for any mine that closed recently) and reasonable space.
- Few or zero horizontal shafts except at bottom (At least for early projects.) Definitely none near the surface as civil works need to be installed
- Vertical
- Keen owners

For *early/demo* projects (before 2020) there could be possibilities to go with shallower/narrower shafts as long as the condition is good and well known. (We can't afford to spend lots of time and money investigating lots of shafts where we don't *know* that the condition is good). And in practice there'll need to be some industrial electricity user and/or renewable generator on site to make it worthwhile.

Whilst there is data available on shafts, it isn't always complete or correct. So maybe you mining historians and mine-explorers could help with information on suitable locations. Contact details are available via the Gravitricity website- www.gravitricity.com

HLF Consultation

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is consulting on its role, vision and funding priorities for the next five years.

A unique opportunity is now open for everyone who cares about the UK's extraordinary heritage to give their views on our plans for the future. The consultation runs until 22nd March 2018

For full details follow the link below, which also has a link to the ComRes consultation microsite at the bottom, where you can fill out the consultation.
https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/we-want-hear-you-hlfs-future-direction-and-funding

'Guidelines for the Care and Operation of Larger and Working Historic Objects'

The launch of the Association of British Transport & Engineering Museums (ABTEM) *Guidelines for the Care and Operation of Larger and Working Historic Objects* took place on 15th February 2018 at the Manchester Museum of Science & Industry. Two seminars were also run to publicise the guidelines, one at Aerospace Bristol in February, and the other at Kelham Island Museum Sheffield on 20th March 2018.

The new guidelines for museums, volunteer groups and private collectors with larger and working objects are the culmination of a four year project to update and complement standards first published by the former Museums & Galleries Commission in 1994 The guidelines cover stationary engines, industrial machinery, road vehicles, aircraft, railway vehicles, ships, boats and other working items.

The Guidelines are the result of considerable consultation and collaboration with the sector both through a scoping study undertaken by consultant Rob Shorland-Ball in 2015 and the work with others in the transport and industrial heritage world as the final document was produced by the International Railway Heritage Consultancy (IRHC) in 2017.

Information about the project, and also about seminars being run to publicise the new document can be found at http://www.abtemguidelines.org

The Guidelines are available in a number of formats:

A hard copy version produced in conjunction with the Collections Trust at a cost of £24.99 + postage. Copies can be ordered by visiting:
http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/product/guidelines-for-the-care-of-larger-and-working-historic-objects

There is also a 'Flipbook' format book that can be viewed free of charge at:
http://online.fliphtml5.com/wffb/bclk/

A free downloadable PDF file (6.6mb) is available from www.abtemguidelines.org

Mining and Heritage News

England

Will kestrel help save iconic headstocks?
A kestrel is set to fly over Clipstone Colliery this week as part of a survey to assess the pit's iconic headstocks.

The Clipstone Colliery Regeneration Group has commissioned Manchester-based Kestrel-Cam to fly one of its cutting-edge drones over the derelict winding towers after securing funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England.

The footage will be used as part of a structural review of the Grade II-listed headstocks, which Historic England says were the tallest structures of their type in Europe at the time they were built in the 1950s.
The full review will look to assess repair costs and explore options and feasibility studies for the regeneration of the pit-top area.

Louise Brennan, Historic England Planning Director in the East Midlands said: "Historic England is pleased to provide a grant to the Clipstone Colliery Regeneration Group for the drone-based survey of the headstocks. With this technology we will be able to take a closer look at this impressive grade II listed structure, which is vital to understand its condition and to inform future plans. We welcome CCRG's work and the backing they have received from the Heritage Lottery Fund to explore creative new uses and a role for the headstocks in the wider regeneration of Clipstone."
Jonathan Platt of Heritage Lottery Fund said: "Thanks to National Lottery Players, I am pleased that we have been able to support this important piece of work which will help to determine the future of the headstocks at Clipstone."

Rachel Staley Chair of CCRG, which is driving a 'Save Clipstone Colliery Headstocks' campaign, said: "I'd like to thank all of our supporters as we move forward to the next exciting phase of our campaign."
"I'd also like to thank all those people who play the lottery and therefore help fund worthwhile projects like ours around the country."

Clipstone Colliery closed in 2003 after 80 years of operation in the Nottinghamshire village. (16/12/2017)
Press release courtesy of Denise Barraclough

Update: CCRG have appointed award winning architect Maber to lead and prepare Options Appraisals. Next week we begin survey work with an initial air clearance test. Next will be topographical survey and measured surveys to produce drawings from which we can begin to plan possible use of the spaces. From this we can also produce a 3D model. Next will be the condition survey.

We are currently recruiting for an engagement consultant and a business planning consultant. Email address is clipstonecolliery@gmail.com. Bids need to be submitted by 28 February 2018. (08/02/2018)
Denise Barraclough, CCRG

Additional Listing of Snibston Colliery Buildings
With the closure and subsequent demolition of the Snibston Discovery Museum in 2015 there were concerns for the future of the Snibston Colliery site. Whilst the pit top buildings and structures were designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments in 1999, there were several important buildings, which form part of complete coal mining complex dating from the industry's peak production period, not included within the scheduling.

The Office Block, which contains the Lamp Room, Control Room and Medical Centre, the Powder Magazine and the Locomotive Shed have now been given Grade II listing. With the proposed encroachment of new housing on the colliery site, this gives members of the Coalville Heritage Society hope that public access will return again and the possibility of developing a heritage centre. (20/02/2018)
https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/move-protects-future-old-snibston-1234803

North Pennines

The following news from the North Pennines was provided by Peter Jackson

Groverake Mine, Rookhope

The UK Coal Authority have commissioned a structural survey of the headframe. This will happen during week commencing 26th February 2018.

Barneycraig Mine, Carrshield, West Allendale

The North Pennines AONB are facilitating the conservation, repair and rebuild of the mine shop at Barneycraig. This is a SAM and Historic England and the HLF are contributing towards the costs.

Snow and rain are presently delaying the work (February 2018). It is planned to convert part of the structure into a Camping Barn.

Allen Lead Smelt Mill, Allendale Town

Conservation work is largely complete on the remains of the furnaces and flues. A volunteer group has been working on the rehabilitation of the tunnel feeding the waterwheel. There are proposals to install a new waterwheel in the mill waterwheel case.

Interpretation panels have been developed and are likely to be in production shortly. As well as the mill site, there will be panels interpreting the remains of the 6.5 km flues and chimneys.

Allenheads Washing Floor remains

The North Pennines AONB have managed conservation work on the bouse teams, washing floor and surrounding structures, which include a SAM.

An interpretation panel has also been developed with significant input from North Pennines mining historians.

Nentsberry Haggs Mine, Nenthead

The Environment Agency have recently consulted on proposals for a mine water treatment scheme for the outflow from this mine. The probable location is around NGR NY 75059 46605. The proposals are that water will be piped from the mine to the treatment site.

Oresome Project

The North Pennines AONB are in the final months of a mine project, funded principally by the HLF. Volunteer teams have reported on the condition and remains of mine sites at Pike Law, Brandon Walls, Cashwell, Slatesyke, Nenthead, Greenlaws Middle Level, Slitt and Middlehope, Coldberry and Redgroves, and Browngill and Whitesyke. Geological and ecological surveys have also been completed at each site.

It is hoped that the results of this work will assist Historic England to review the threats to many mine SAM sites in the area.

Alston Moor Historical Society

The Society has arranged for its archive to be accessible via a room in Alston Town hall. Room rental costs for one year have been paid by the Alston Parish Council. The archive contains local mining history documents.

Dukesfield Smelters and Carriers Project

The Dukesfield Project team have continued to transcribe and publish original documents relating to mining in the North Pennines. These documents are published on-line at https://www.dukesfield.org.uk/research/dukesfield-documents/

Cornwall

Poldark Mine appointed Field Station for Camborne School of Mines

The Camborne School of Mines (CSM) is an institute that is very much respected throughout the world. It was founded in 1888 and merged with Exeter University in 1993. The school relocated to the Tremough Campus at Penryn just under 8 miles from Poldark Demesne.

In May 2017 CSM lost the use of its underground field station near Camborne due to the site being sold, putting an end to underground mining research and annual student mining induction courses that commenced there in the 1960s, when the Test Mine was owned & run by Holman Brothers, Camborne.

We are delighted to report that the ancient Wheal Roots Tin Mine here at the Poldark Demesne has just been appointed as a new field station for the CSM. This followed some months of planning which started last year.

This association adds emphasis to our educational aspirations and will enable the mine to be surveyed with up to date equipment, mapping, geophysical and geological surveys. (20/01/2018)
Poldark Mine on Facebook

Wales

First Female Mining Craft Apprentice at Big Pit
As we all know today marks 100 years since women where given the right to vote, and we are so pleased at Big Pit to introduce to you our first female Mining Craft Apprentice - Emma Long.

Our first two apprentices, Ben Monro and Dai Powell have been working hard and learning fast for the last six months as Mining Crafts Apprentcies. Now, with additional financial support from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund, Big Pit has been able to take on Emma and Lee Thomas as two more new apprentices.

Emma said "I am so pleased to be working at Big Pit and feel so privileged to be given the opportunity to be the first female mining apprentice!"

Emma and Lee will complete vocational training, gain hands-on experience of working alongside members of the maintenance team and also become part-time members of the local Mines Rescue Team. Following an initial training period of six months, the Mining Craft Apprentices will become Underground Guides. (06/02/2018)
https://www.facebook.com/bigpitmuseum/

Possible New Future for Tower Colliery
Ten years after the closure of Tower Colliery near Hirwaun in the Cynon Valley, Tyrone O'Sullivan, the Chairman of Tower Colliery, is "very optimistic" about the "much-needed" development of the site coming to fruition.

Tower was the last deep coal mine in operating in Wales and in 1995 British Coal decided to close the pit on the grounds of it being uneconomical to operate. However, the workers had other ideas and using their redundancy money bought the pit. The colliery continued operate as the only mine in Britain owned by the workers themselves until 2008 when all available reserves were exhausted. This wasn't the end of Tower's story though, with six million tonnes of coal available near to the surface, opencast mining began on the 400 acre site. In March 2017 Aberthaw Power Station in Barry, the main buyer of Tower's coal, announced that it would no longer burn Welsh or British coal.

Now with the involvement of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Council it is envisaged that new opportunities will be created on the site with the possible development of hundreds of new homes and a cultural centre and museum. (20/01/2018)
https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/10-years-after-tower-colliery-14181958

EU Funding for Bridgend Geothermal Project
Bridgend County Borough Council has been awarded £6.5million from the European Union to develop a geothermal energy project at the former Caerau Colliery near Maesteg. The aim is to use the naturally heated mine water to heat nearby homes and a school by using heat pump technology and a network of pipes.

The British Geological Survey are currently undertaking a feasibility study to determine water temperatures and volumes. It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2020, attracting further investment in the area and help to address fuel poverty by cutting energy. Additional funding for the project will come from the UK Government and the Borough Council, with the potential to be rolled out to the rest of Wales. (20/01/2018)
https://www.edie.net/news/8/Welsh-coal-mine-set-for-geothermal-transformation-following--9-4m-fund/

Scotland

The following news from Scotland was provided by Alastair Lings, MHTI

Monktonhall Colliery, Dalkeith, Midlothian
The Innovation Manager at The Coal Authority, Jeremy Crooks reports "The Coal Authority is currently working with Midlothian Council, Scotland, on the use of an abandoned mine shaft as a heat storage vessel of some 12,000cum being charged from surplus heat from an Energy from Waste Plant currently under construction. Stored heat will feed into a district heating scheme providing operational and energy savings to the scheme and plant operator". (09/02/2018)
https://utilityweek.co.uk/coal-mines-energy-storage/

Spireslack Surface Coal Mine, Muirkirk, East Ayrshire

Spireslack Mine was abandoned by Scottish Coal in 2013, leaving a 1 km long void, large overburden mounds and dereliction. Now Banks Mining are using the same team of 15 people who restored the adjacent Ponesk Mine to partially restore Spireslack Mine including re-profiling an estimated 1.2 MT of rock and soil. The work should be largely completed by the summer of 2018. Important geological features will be retained. (01/12/2017)
https://www.banksgroup.co.uk/2017/12/01/banks-mining-starts-work-restoring-spireslack-surface-coal-mine/

Spireslack Surface Coal Mine, Photograph courtesy of Alastair Lings

Ireland

The following news from Ireland was provided by Alastair Lings, MHTI

Abbeytown and Lugawarry Mines, Ballysodare, Co. Sligo

Erris Resources are planning a drilling programme near the former Abbeytown Mine. The drilling will target mineralisation below the former mine, and extensions of known mineralisation, to depths of between 150 and 200 metres. Initially the program is for 2000 m of drilling, which may be increased by an extra 7200 m. A smaller program of drilling is proposed near the former Lugawarry Mine. Abbeytown Mine was worked intermittently between 1747 and 1961, producing zinc, lead and silver. Lugawarry Mine was worked for lead from 1747 until about 1837. (21/12/2017)
https://www.errisresources.com/news

Curraghinalt Project, Gortin, Co. Tyrone

Dalradian Resources has submitted a planning application (LA10/2017/1249/F) for the building of an underground mine and associated infrastructure at the Curraghinalt gold deposit. The application runs to over 10 000 pages.
The President and Chief Executive Officer of the company, Patrick F.N. Anderson said "This is an exciting day for Dalradian and for Northern Ireland. It is the culmination of seven years of exploration, engineering and environmental work on the Curraghinalt deposit and financings that have raised more than C$260 million (£150M) for our work in Northern Ireland. We have transformed the project from a small, early-stage deposit to one of the best gold projects on the planet. Building and operating a mine at the Curraghinalt deposit will create at least 350 permanent direct jobs and is expected to give a US$1 billion boost to the local economy over the 25-year life of mine in the planning application". (27/11/2017)
https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index.htm

Knocknacran Quarry, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan

Gyproc is investing €8 million in developing its quarry at Knocknacran, which supplies gypsum to a nearby factory in Kingscourt for the manufacture of plaster and plasterboard . The development will continue until June, and create 44 temporary jobs. Gypsum was first recorded in the area in 1807 and has been worked intermittently from the 1830's. (12/02/2018)
https://www.irishtimes.com/business/construction/irish-plasterboard-maker-invests-8m-in-quarry-development-1.3388532

Tullybuck Mine, Clontibret, Co. Monaghan

Drilling by Conroy Gold And Natural Resources near Clontibret, Co. Monaghan, will test the extent of high grade gold lodes indicated by channel samples in the historic Tullybuck antimony mine. Antimony was discovered in the area in 1774.

The mines in the adjacent townlands of Tullybuck and Lisglassan were probably worked in the early 1800s, and again in 1826-1827 by the Mining Company of Ireland. The final period of mining was in 1917. Conroy have been exploring for gold in the area since 1996. (12/02/2018)
http://www.conroygoldandnaturalresources.com/

Publications

New Coalfields New Housing: Reviewing the achievements of The Industrial Housing Association

Helen Hay & Dave Fordham, Fedj El Adoum Publishing, paperback, 140 pages, 100 illustrations, 21x29.7cm, £8.00, ISBN**:** 978-0956286475

Within 35 former mining villages throughout England and Wales, can be found architecturally identical housing constructed in the 1920s by an organisation known as The Industrial Housing Association. This organisation was formed to address the urgent need for the provision of housing, particularly in the new coalfields of South Yorkshire, East Midlands and South Wales. By taking advantage of loans and grants from the Government's Public Works Board and adopting the recommendations of the 1918 Tudor Walters Report, the Industrial Housing Association provided 12,000 houses for miners and their families. Nearly 100 years later, with the cessation of deep mined coal in the United Kingdom, these colliery estates remain as an example of what can be achieved by co-operation between public and private sectors in addressing a shortage of affordable housing, a problem that is still of considerable relevance today.

Dissenting Spirit: Thomas Weaver, Geologist and Mining Engineer

Peadar McArdle, The Liffey Press, paperback, 300pages, €19.95/£17.95, ISBN 9780995792746

Before he was thirty, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Thomas Weaver was an accomplished engineer and geologist who was successfully managing Avoca's main copper mine in County Wicklow and had brought order to the nearby gold workings.

He had no ordinary upbringing in Gloucester, where George III had visited his father's factory, and he was sent to study at Freiberg in distant Saxony. Now known as a strict if considerate manager to his Irish workforce, he also participated in suppressing the 1798 Rebellion in Wicklow. He was subsequently active in the mining industry in both Ireland and Mexico. In parallel, he carried out geological mapping in these countries as well as in Great Britain and North America.

He was an engaging personality, someone who would partake as enthusiastically in a local ploughing contest as in a scholarly debate in London. His story sheds light on industrial and social conditions in pre-Famine Ireland and elsewhere. It is a story worth telling. He was active at a time when geology was coming of age as a scientific discipline. Science is described as a journey without destination, where theories are constantly challenged and remain valid only until they are undermined by new evidence. Yet, as the current climate change debate shows, there can be an alarming intolerance for the very dissent that should be critical to validating its conclusions. This proved to be the case in Weaver's lifetime, for he also took issue with emerging new mindsets and was eventually marginalized as a result.

This book will appeal to anyone interested in the science and industry of the early nineteenth century, as well as for students of the philosophy and history of science. http://www.theliffeypress.com/

Boots All My Life

Mick Drury, Cannock Chase Mining Historical Society, £14.00 plus p&p

This book was the one that started the CCMHS way back in 2002. It was the reason that the group of men later to become the authors of the Cannock Chase Mining Historical Society, met in the first place. When Mick Drury called that fateful meeting at the Museum of Cannock Chase to discuss his dream of putting down on paper his work history from the time he started work at Littleton Colliery in 1951 to his leaving there in 1989. It has taken him 16 years of on and off writing and lots of pushing and prodding to eventually get to publishing.

It is a fascinating read from start to finish and I was impressed to say the least on reading the manuscript. The society had no problem at all agreeing to publish this 200-page volume. It was originally to be his memoirs to leave to his family as a record for them. It was never intended to be put into the public domain for everyone to enjoy. However after many hours hard work and with failing health and encouragement by a few people Mick has realised his ambition from 2002, it's here for all to read "Boots all my life".

Available by contacting Alan Dean on: westcannock@talktalk.net or enquiries@ccmhs.co.uk.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

16th September 2107- 2nd June 2018: The Life of a Coal Miner, an exhibition at Mansfield Museum, Leeming Street, Mansfield, NG18 1NG.

14th-16th March 2018: Bronze age tin – geological sources, production, and distribution of tin in bronze age Eurasia, Mannheim, Germany http://www.cez-archaeometrie.de/?lang=en

28th March-1st April 2018: 40th Annual Intercollegiate Mining Games, hosted by the Camborne School of Mines, Cornwall.
http://www.csmimg.com/csm-2018-mining-games

7th-8th April 2018: AIA Practical Weekend- Derbyshire Mining, Matlock, Derbyshire. The weekend will be based in Matlock / Matlock Bath and will include specially organised, expert led visits to local mining landscapes. http://industrial-archaeology.org/events-diary/

13th-15th April 2018: European Mining Heritage Meeting, Beringen, Flanders, Belguim. This meeting will bring together from all over Europe associations and volunteers who care for the safeguarding of the heritage of mines and quarries. It is part of the EFAITH framework for the European Year oc Cultural Heritage

Call for Papers and Registration Forms available at:
http://www.miningheritage.org/

10th– 13th May 2018: 13th International Symposium on Archaeological Mining History, Kelmis / Plombieres, Belgium. http://europa-subterranea.eu/

19th May 2018: East Midlands Industrial Archaeology Conference- '*Coal fuelled electricity generation'.* This conference will look at the history of electricity generation in the Trent Valley.
http://www.derbyshireas.org.uk/Events.html

1st-3rd June 2018: NAMHO Conference 2018- *Mines, Mining and Miners of the Forest of Dean: "A law unto themselves"*, Dean Field Studies Centre, Parkend near Lydney, Gloucestershire.
https://www.namho2018.info/

6th–10th June 2018: Mining History Association Annual Conference, South Dakota, USA.
https://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/index.htm

25th– 26th August 2018: Sliabh Aughty Furnace Festival, Woodford, Co. Galway.
http://www.furnaceproject.org/

6th-9th and 13th-16th September 2018: Heritage Open Days (England) https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/

4th-8th July 2019: NAMHO Conference 2019- *Geology and Underground Exploration*, Llanafan, Ceredigion.

Copy Date for the next Newsletter is **10th May**, with publication due June 2018.

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