

The well known waterwheel has been restored and Peter Crew has a programme in hand to resurrect the flat-rods, angle-bob and pumps. This is a splendid project and we look forward to its completion.

10. NEW BOOKS AND PAPERS.

A). Burt and Waite Bibliography of the History of British Mining, 1988. Published by NAMHO and Exeter University. This includes books, articles and theses, also reprints, published since the war, and really is invaluable notwithstanding rather a lot of errors which editing should have eliminated, and the inclusion of certain titles such as Wharfedale Watermills and Elementary Education in Skipton, which makes one wonder, if mining bibliography extends this far, where does it end? Nevertheless these are minor criticisms and no respectable historians' shelves will be complete without this pioneer volume. Dr Burt has kindly offered reduced prices to WMS members.

B). G.W.Hall Gold Mines of Merioneth. Available from 17A Bridge St, Kington, Herefordshire, this long awaited complete revision costs £6.95 to WMS members, and with a full colour plate of Gwynfyndd gold, is worth every penny. There is much new information and hitherto unpublished photos. Will G.H. please now concentrate on reprinting Metal Mines of Southern Wales of which there is a desperate shortage, or rather, no supply at all.

C). Simon Hughes The Goginan Mine NMRS. This is on the new A5 format, on the whole preferable to A4, but rather too much has been squeezed onto the page, giving a cramped appearance. It is packed with information and must have taken much effort to compile. I only noticed one bad error, namely on page 19 where 'Cross section of Pencraigddu Mine, after Lewis Morris', is in fact a sketch of Cerig yr wyn! What a pity so little of Goginan remains, notwithstanding the sparing of two levels. (See later)

D). W.D.F.Smith The Great Orme Mines (Llandudno) This is at the printers and WMS is promised a copy to review.

E). Pickin and Timberlake, 'Stone Hammers and Firesetting: a Preliminary Experiment at Cwmystwyth'. Bulletin PDMHS Vol.10 No.3, 1988. This details actual experiments, and bearing in mind that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, points out a way to a much greater understanding of ancient technology. We look forward to more of this kind.

F). UK Journal of Mines and Minerals (Rockbottom). This goes from strength to strength, and £3 is not dear for a nicely produced volume with beautiful colour plates of minerals. No.5 includes papers by Simon Hughes on mining prospects in Mid-Wales, Roy Starkey on minerals in Skye, and one on minerals at Esgairhir, some being excessively rare and others only 0.1mm long. These I would not class as minerals at all, but times change. We did not have such powerful lens in the old days. Incidentally G.Hall and I recently found a magnificent slab of secondary azurite that could be seen 200yards away, at a lesser known mid Wales mine which has yet to be ransacked.

G). Stephen Hughes The Archaeology of the Montgomery Canal 1988, about £5. I make no apology for advertising this title, for it is a model of how such a book should be written. And the full colour picture of the canal near Abermule is the finest cover photo I have ever seen. This production does the author and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales much credit, and we look forward to similar works, preferably with some mining content.

H). David Bick The Old Metal Mines of Mid Wales, Part 3. This long out of print volume is being revised and will be in the press in a week or two. Vols 4 and 5 will be reprinted before long as a single volume.

I). NMRS memoirs 1988. Includes papers by Dick Bird on mining leats, D.B.Hollis on the Isle of Man, Mike Gill on Yorkshire lead mining pre 1900 and Richard Hower on trials near Ennerdale.

J). Lewis Morris and the Cardiganshire Mines. In conjunction with the National Library of Wales, I am involved in producing the publication of Morris's well known maps and plans, circa 1745, which are of great interest to historians and industrial archaeologists. Field notes and photos will be included, and the book should be on sale next year.

11. GOLD MINES.

The Cambrian News, 12.2.88 reported that Gwynfyndd yielded 1,000 oz in 1986. The mine is still active though its future is not very secure. At Clogau there have been proposals for an aerial ropeway to ferry visitors, much as at Matlock, though whether tourists rather than gold can make the place pay remains to be seen.

12. UNDERGROUND PHOTOGRAPHY.

Richard Hower has over 4000 photos of mines and quarries between 1979 and 1987, and 400 transparencies 1962-79. An index will be available shortly. Perhaps we can persuade Richard to show them at a future meet, though not all at once.

13. LIZ PUGH ENTERPRISES.

A) Dyfngwm kibble (N/L18 item 6). On a miserable wet Saturday in July, Liz and entourage deposited 'the beloved kibble' (more holes than metal) into Simon Hughes van for an unknown destination - since revealed as Llywernog Museum.

B) L.P. is painting the miners cottage at Hafod Y Porth and wants to know its age and how many men and women slept there and what they wore. (Is this for a new Poldark series?)

C) WMS T - shirts. Will members who have yet to order please contact L.P. immediately.

D) L.P. abseiled 150 ft down a shaft at Ystrad Einon with Messers Slater and Richards and found it 'superb'.

14. MINES OF MAWDDWY RESEARCH GROUP

After its useful paper on Red Dragon, MOMRG has seemingly gone into remission, so here is a little task to get stuck into. There is in Ruthin Record Office a plan and details of 'Meryoneth Lead Mine', 1831 (Ref DDWY 5260). It was on the Bwlch Y Pawl Mountain and near a stream where the road from Dinas to Bala crossed by a bridge. Where is it, and what remains now? Ruthin P.O. also contains very valuable material in the Wynnstay papers on mines east of Machynlleth.

15. CLAYS 50 INCH ENGINEHOUSE, LLANGUNNOR.

This fine building has been demolished to make room for a caravan site. It was not listed or scheduled, and is a sad loss.

16. STEPASIDE IRONWORKS NEAR TENBY.

Grove Colliery, or part of it, has been turned by the council into an interpretation centre. This is a good example of what can be done, as the more enlightened authorities are aware.

17. PEMBROKESHIRE COPPER

Country Quest May 1988, had an article on copper workings around the coast, including Treginnis Mine which is claimed to have closed in 1883 after a fatal accident. Can anyone confirm this? (See item 25)

18. LEAD MINING AT LLANDEGLA (N.WALES)(N/L18 item34)

Chris Williams has kindly sent me a paper by Derrick Pratton the subject, taken from the Denbighshire Historical Society 1982 Vol 31 *inter alia*, it refers to the mine with the tottering stack as Maes Maelor, but according to the archives I have seen, a mine of this name existed a mile to the south-east, near Minera quarries. Can anyone throw light on this ?

19. DYFED MINES REPORT

I have been involved with Cloustone of Bristol in preparing a report on the old mines in the Cambrian Mountains for Dyfed County Council. Some 280 sites were identified, many being merely a trial level or shaft. The industrial archaeology and WMS interests have been represented, and it is expected that a more positive approach to the potential of the major sites will ensue. At any rate we may hope that the rubbish dump syndrome will henceforth be a thing of the past.

20. MINES IN THE OLD RED (N/L 18 item 39)

Mrs Frude has volunteered to try and locate this enigmatic 18th century copper mine near Erwood, and we await results with keen interest. In a similar context, David Dixon tells me of a 17th century copper mine on Coddon Hill in Devon, that has absolutely gone without trace; how these things can happen in upland sites that have in general not been much disturbed, is very strange. Perhaps we are looking for the wrong thing.

21. PANNING IN MID WALES

Trevor Chesters has found a flake of gold in the stream at Esgairmwyn, also a speck in the concentrates. The site also yielded much green ore, galena and cerussite. At the Bronze age site at Copa Hill Cwmystwyth, green lead ore was by far the most common mineral left in the pan on every attempt, with very little copper at all.

22. BRONZE AGE MINING - A NEW THEORY.

Stone hammer equals Bronze age, protagonists (I am one) would sleep easier if hammers at mainly lead mines could be more readily accounted for, as indeed, at Copa Hill. But silver /lead mines of great antiquity are known abroad, and it may well be they were worked for silver, not lead. Could this not apply at home ? I must confess the low silver content at Copa Hill etc is a problem - or were they working enriched secondary ores ? How much silver does Welsh secondary cerussite contain ?

David Gale (School of Archaeological Sciences, University of Bradford, BD7 1DP) is doing an M.Phil on stone hammers from UK mining sites, especially grooved types. If you have discovered, or know of, any finds he would be very pleased to hear of them.

23. M.P. SLATES UNSIGHTLY DUMP

Geraint Jenkins, Liberal MP for Ceredigion, has called for urgent action to prevent further dumping at Frongoch, as reported in a press, release of 8th June. He was horrified at the unsightly mess.

24. VOLUNTEERS TO RESTORE SITES

There have been rumblings that the WMS is not seen to be doing enough for preservation. If so, it is more a lack of opportunity than lack of will insofar as actual physical restoration is concerned. Often a major problem is to gain the Landowners permission. There are hopes that certain local authorities may be willing to provide an umbrella under which such volunteer work could be channelled and organized, and this could have great potential.

25. PEMBROKESHIRE

Peter Cloughton has suggested a visit there (possibly a weekend) to see copper, slate and anthracite workings.

26. NAMHO CONFERENCE 1991

The WMS has volunteered to host this important function, and help would be welcome.

27. A DECADE OF THE WMS.

Our first official meeting was at Dylife in 1979, and our tenth anniversary will be at Llanrwst. We are hoping to have a guest speaker and a little jollification to mark the occasion.

For the record, here is a list of the sites visited.

June 1978	Dylife (pre-WMS meet)	May 1984	Beddgelert
June 1979	"	Sept. 1984	Glyn Ceriog
June 1980	Cwmystwyth	June 1985	Dylife-Dyfnwgwm
Sept. 1980	Llangynog	Sept. 1985	Glogfawr
June 1981	Llanrwst	June 1986	Parys Mountain
Sept. 1981	Van	Sept. 1986	Red Dragon
June 1982	Mold area	June 1987	Dolgellau
Sept. 1982	Frongoch	Sept. 1987	Bryn Eglwys Quarry
May 1983	Dolgellau	June 1988	Devils Bridge
Sept. 1983	Dolaucothi	Sept. 1988	Minera

Lowest attendance-18. Highest-over 50 on several occasions. It will be noted that only one trip has been made south of the Devils Bridge area. Particular vacuums are the Rhayader mines and South Wales generally. Something must be done about this.

28. DOROTHEA ENGINEHOUSE, NANTLLE.

According to information received the timber shear-legs at the site have been cut down. Has anyone any information as to this act of vandalism to a listed building ?

29. CWMYSTWYTH MILL.

Peter Challis has acquired a very fine watercolour of this structure, which by all accounts may soon be demolished.

30. CARMARTHEN SMELT MILL

According to the NMRS newsletter May 1986, this was sited just upstream from the Towy bridge in Carmarthen, c1781, mainly to smelt 'local' ores it ceased before 1810. (For full detail see Carmarthen Record Office, Casdor 2739)

31. INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY WEEKENDS IN THE FOREST OF DEAN. April 14/16, June 2/4 1989.

I am running this residential course with slide shows and field trip's to iron mines (underground), active small coalmines, ironworks etc, etc, and would be pleased to supply details (0531 820650)

32. NEWS FROM G.W.HALL.

George has now removed across the road to 17a Bridge St., Kington. His old printing blocks for the pictures in his exceedingly scarce 'Metal Mines of Southern Wales', and the first edition of 'Gold Mines of Merioneth' are for sale. As to the drawings in GMM second edition, and other similar drawings, please apply to the artist, Cedric Titcombe, phone 0452 830496

33. WMS FIELD TRIPS.

Whilst on field trips there have been occasions when members have wandered off from the main party and 'done their own thing' regardless of NAMHO Codes of Practice concerning safety etc. Will members please pay particular attention to this matter in the future.

34. MINING HISTORY SEMINAR, Keele, 12-13 Nov. 1988

We have again to thank Dr Burt for bringing together amateurs and academic historians, not however (with a few notable exceptions) that there appears to be much common ground or intermingling of spirits between them. The approach is so very different, and I sometimes wonder if academics are not wholly out of touch with the real world. Who else could devote an hour's lecture simply to tell his audience that when metal prices rise, it leads to an increase in prospecting? Several papers were by WMS members including Marilyn Palmer and Alan Williams. Overall an enjoyable event, and we look forward to the next.

35 - 50 MID WALES LETTER FROM SIMON HUGHES.

35. Development work at Llywernog Mine includes clearing out the adit as far as the stopes, and erection of the compressor house, reconstruction of a small reservoir, stone facing the wheelpits, reconstruction of a cottage, and partial excavation of Poole's Rake. (Is Rake an appropriate term in Wales? DEB)

36. The Van Mine is being re-examined yet again with a view to re-processing the dumps to provide the finance to delineate reserves of zinc blende left *in situ*.

37. Mining is to recommence at Parys Mountain by Anglesey Mining plc. The first phase will be sinking a new shaft which will take about two years to reach an orebody containing 6.04% zinc, 1.49% copper, 3.3% lead with small quantities of silver and gold. The second phase will develop the mine and

mill with a production potential of 400,000 tons per annum, and will cost a further £13.9M.

38. Gwynfynydd Mine is still working though at a much reduced rate. Five men are employed and mine three days and take two days to process the ore. Present production is in the region of 20 tonnes of ore per week from which is recovered about 6oz of gold. The main problems are the costs of disposing the development rock, also production can only continue after sinking a 200 metre deep shaft. It therefore seems likely/that unless a co-financier can be found the venture will close at Christmas.

39. Developments are planned for Bwlchglas Mine, for the occasional production of mineral specimens from the backs of old slopes.

40. Frongoch Mine continues to crumble. There is no sign of movement by the Interested parties, due to ownership disputes and encroachments upon the site over many years.

41. Goginan Mine has been substantially landscaped and is now far prettier than it has been for many years. The 26 Fm adit and incline are to be preserved, though gated. (Is prettiness an appropriate criterion? DEB)

42. The Ceredigion mines group still alive? If so, please inform Simon Hughes.

The North Ceredigion mines society and the UCW Aberystwyth Caving Club continue to have regular meets and have turned out some excellent work.

43. Cowarch. I (S.H.) was recently fortunate enough to acquire a cost sheet and report for October 1844. This will be deposited with the N.L.W..

44. Dylife. Tom Price of Cwm Sebon has acquired about half a dozen brief letters and reports, also two reports of Bacheiddon and Rhoswydol, all about 1860.

44. Cwmystwyth. The mill has to be dismantled as the cost of restoration is prohibitive. Negotiations are in hand to reconstruct the pieces at Llywernog though on a slightly scaled down form. There is sufficient timber in the remains to completely reconstruct 4 of the 6 bays but the height will have to be reduced from 50ft to 45. (There is much argument as to the wisdom of this scheme. Liz Pugh is dead against it - DEB).

45. Gold in Scotland and Ireland. With improvements in technology the cut off grade for auriferous deposits has dropped significantly. What was marginal ore has now become viable and prompted some 40 companies to undertake serious exploration work. The scale of interest can be judged by the fact that the Irish state granted 23 gold exploration licences in May alone. Gold exploration is also buoyant in Scotland. Ennex have revealed that their Cononish property contains over half a million tonnes of ore at 0.22 troy ounces per tonne. Riofinex, the exploration arm of RTZ are currently examining Ayrshire.

Wales has not been forgotten, particularly as the rock types which host gold mineralisation in Ireland and Scotland occur in Wales too. Initial work has shown substantial tonneages of 0.03 ozs/tonne grade ore with

smaller deposits of 0.25 ozs/tonne grade ore. The continuity of grades and tonneages have yet to be established.

46. A report of Tantalite at Eaglebrook was recorded but has not been checked. This mineral is very rare (and valuable) and should not occur in mid Wales. (Who says so-DEB?) It is possible that salting of the tips is responsible.

47. Substantial grades of Cobalt/Nickel have been found on two prospects in mid Wales but as yet no details of quantity are available.

48. The NLW have copied all my (S.H.) transparencies relating to Welsh mines from 1967 to 1983 on B/W negative film. The 750 or so scenes are catalogued and indexed with contact prints and are available through the Dept. of Maps and Prints. It may be possible to similarly copy and catalogue my collection of colour and B/W prints in due course.

49. The Ordnance Survey have produced a new series of 1:25K maps (2½"=1m) covering mid Wales. 'Pathfinder' 927, 947 and 968 are particularly useful, also 'Outside Leisure' map No. 27 for the Machynlleth area and No. 18 for the Dolgellau/Bala region.

50. The British Geological survey have published their 1:50,000 map No. 163 which covers the area from Aberdovey to Aberystwyth and as far east as Plynlimon. This map is very detailed in a fairly clear and concise fashion with some accompanying text and explanations at £7.00. Stocks of the Mineral Reconnaissance Map of the Central Wales Mining Field at 1:100,000 are still available at £4.00 and complement existing data without shedding any new information on the area. The latter is very useful and shows nine locations, lodes and basic geological divisions.

51. SMYTH'S WATERCOLOURS.

Sir Warrington W Smyth (1817-90) FRS, was one of the best known mining authors and geologists of the nineteenth century. He was also a talented watercolour artist and a collection of his work, including several mining scenes, were recently auctioned in Penzance. The Cornish scenes stayed in Cornwall but those of Wales, Ireland, Shropshire and France went to Palace Books in Caernarfon. The National Library of Wales purchased all the Welsh scenes. Several have been reproduced as limited prints: those depicting Parys mine, Goginan mine and Hendre mine are well worth buying at £6.50 each. Quite by chance we recently discovered that the originals for the remaining areas were on sale at Palace Books, Caernarfon. I went there with Alun Williams and we bought several relating to Irish copper mines (Knochmahon and Trigoney), an Irish slate mine (Valentia) and one of Bradda Head mine in the Isle of Man. We were too late for a very fine underground view of Ecton copper mine, which was bought by a local man.

52. TIN IN WALES (N/L 18 item 4)

Peter Claughton has explained the reference to this, it being the discovery of cassiterite in deep boring samples at Nant, Llangunnor in the 1950s. Query: since according to the geologists tin should not occur in Wales, was the sample salted? Or are the experts wrong?

53. ABERYSTWYTH CAVING CLUB

The ACC is now 21 years old and a history of the club will be published in a special edition of the club Journal next spring. Will ex-members, especially from the early years please contact the editor Rob Jones, 16 Westminster Drive, CYNCOED, CARDIFF if they are able to contribute with reminiscences etc.

54. INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGIST WANTED URGENTLY

There is expected to be a salaried vacancy for a 9-12 month period beginning early next year, for full-time excavating and recording finds and structures as they are revealed during reclamation and landscaping at the Minera mines, Wrexham. The experience should be very interesting and valuable. Further details from David Bick.

53. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due for contributions from Chris Williams, Rob Jones, Trevor Chesters, Eric Grey-Thomas, George Hall, Simon Timberlake, Liz Pugh, Andy Lewis, John Bennett, Rob Vernon, Peter Claughton, Peter Challis, David Dixon, Richard Hewer, Alun Williams, Simon Hughes and Roger Shambrook. Certain items have had to be drastically pruned due to the growing length of the N/L and problems associated with production and increasing membership. We are especially indebted to David Roe for producing and distributing this edition in view of his move to Plymouth and the great pressures of work in his new job. We wish him every success.

A merry Xmas to all our members and friends
David Bick (Editor), Pound House, Newent, Glos. (0531 820650)
November 1988

54. NAMHO NEWS

A. Code of Practise for mine exploration. A copy of the code should be enclosed with the N/L. This code should be considered standard practice for all WMS meetings and also your personal trips.

B. Bats Underground. The law for the protection of bats has been successfully used to stop old mine shafts and levels from being filled in. This leaflet sets out the reasons for bat protection and the relevance to underground sites. Access restrictions will be limited to only a very small number of sites and even then access will be allowed at certain times of the year. Love or hate bats, they are certainly helping to safeguard our mining heritage. Any bat sightings underground will be gratefully received by the NCC and should be sent to your NAMHO rep..

C. Ove Arup Contract. Ove Arup have a government contract to make a general review of all mine sites in the UK. People to vet the resulting 10Km square maps they produce are required. Anyone wishing to take part please write to your NAMHO rep. enclosing a map of the area you feel expert enough to vet.

D. Grosvenor Caving Club. This group has recently joined NAMHO and they are based in NE Wales with a particular interest in mines.

E. Third Party Insurance. Details of the third party insurance that NAMHO provide for WMS members are available.

Any queries on the above write to the WMS NAMHO rep. Alun Williams, 5 Longshaw Common, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7JD. Enclose an SAE!

STOP PRESS

ELENITH MINING COMPANY HAS AN OPEN FOR AN OUT OF WORK (YOUNG) GRADUATE WITH MINERAL PROCESSING QUALIFICATIONS AT ESGAIRMWYN, CEREDIGION. APPLY TO GEO. HALL.

Would members check the membership expiry date on the address label (on the envelope that they have just thrown away) and remember that £2 per year sent to David Roe (made payable to Welsh Mines Society) is required should the date be 31.12.88 or before.