

Peak District Mines Historical Society Ltd.



NEWSLETTER No 113

JANUARY 2005

SUMMARY OF DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2004/2005

If there is a cross in the box below, then you have not renewed your membership for the current year. Please renew now.

The current membership rates are:

Individual	£15.00
Joint	£17.00
Junior	£7.00
Family	£19.00
Institutional	£20.00

Subscriptions should be sent to: W J Taylor,
Membership Secretary, 18 Station Lane, Walton on Trent,
Swadlincote, DE12 8NA.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Thirtieth Annual General Meeting of the Peak District Mines Historical Society was held in the Pump Room at The Peak District Mining Museum, The Pavilion, Matlock Bath, Matlock, Derbyshire, on 27 November 2004.

The Directors' Report and the Accounts for the year ending 30 June 2004 were accepted.

Chairman's Report

I was honoured last year to be given the chance of being your chairman. I had hoped to come to this post through the usual route as deputy chairman, but officers for the Society are hard to come by and I was asked to step into the breach. I have always been a hands on sort of person, hence I am involved in a number of the Society projects, organise the Heritage Weekend, and attend as

many meets as I can. Taking on my present post seemed to be just an extension of this but it has turned out to be a lot busier than I expected.

At the start of the year the Society was facing a crisis. We had three important new officers to find, a secretary, a treasurer and a deputy chairman. Hopefully if all of the candidates for these posts are acceptable to this meeting we have managed to fill them. I must thank the retiring officers for the work they have done for us over many years. Dave Gough as treasurer, has worked very hard over the last six years and the finances have never been in safer hands. Thank you Dave. John Thorpe has continued to act as secretary, even though he actually retired from the post last year. Where would we have been without John?

Last but not least of the officers retiring this year is Alan Mutter. Over many years he has served the Society in the posts of Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Museum Management Committee Chairman, as well as organising many events, attending meetings etc. Lately he has developed an acting career, starring in his own play at the museum. Alan has decided that now he has reached his 80th year he should step back from some of his involvement at the head of the Society and take things a little easier. We all hope, however, that he remains active in the Society for many more years. PDMHS owes Alan a very great debt for the work he has done over the years, and I would like to thank him not only on behalf of the society but also myself, for the help and advice he has given me. I have now given our new officers a very hard act to follow, however, knowing them all I am sure they are up to the task in hand!

One more stalwart has decided to hang up his boots this year. This is Harry Parker, our long serving publicity officer. Age and infirmity is given as the reason but I think

that that is a poor excuse. He insists he is no longer up to the job and has handed the reins to me until I can twist some other poor unsuspecting soul's hand up their back. Anyway, a big thank you for a big man and all the best for the future.

Now what else has the Society been up to this year?

The Peak District Mining Museum held its 25th Anniversary Celebrations during the year; the event was an outstanding success. Other events held during the year included Alan Mutter's 80th birthday celebrations, the Barmote Court event and involvement in Lead Rakes Week.

Work at the museum did not involve any major new displays, but concentrated on the development to the existing displays.

Trading in Matlock Bath for the Museum continues to be difficult, with so many other attractions. I am confident, however, that with the efforts of volunteers and staff, the museum will continue to thrive and be a shop window for the Society.

Temple Mine has seen a large amount of activity to tidy up and improve the facilities offered. This has included new panning tanks and the water supply to them, re-profiling of the quarry floor etc. Most important was the replacement of the ore chute within the mine. The main helpers in this work have been Evelyn Dixon, Joe Bown, Peter Harvey, Mick Hepenstall and Ian Bunting.

At High Rake the excavations on the site of the Sims engine have reached new heights, or should that be depths, (at least 4 metres in the condenser pit) and with new discoveries all of the time, the bottom of the engine house has yet to be reached. The last two visits have involved re-pointing uncovered stonework. Work here takes place on the first Saturday of each month; visitors and helpers are always welcome. If you haven't seen this site yet, it is a must for any mine historian and the Society can be very proud of their work.

The Lead Mining Display at Crich continues to be developed, and I must thank my team for all of the hours they put in there.

A new Society project at an old site has started this year. We have taken over the running of Goodluck Mine in Via Gelia for Ron Anmer. Ron continues as owner, but we provide guides for tours around the mine. We are at present trying to organise working parties to tidy up the mine and record the artefacts kept there. Anyone interested in helping should contact Paul Chandler, or myself. I should add that the long term future of Goodluck Mine is uncertain and it is something we need to tackle as soon as possible.

A small team is still working at Old Millclose Mine but, like most of the projects, volunteers are hard to come by.

Work continues to be done at Magpie Cottage by a small group of volunteers. Redecoration has been started and routine maintenance carried out. A refurbished more

powerful generator has been installed. This generator was a gift from Leicestershire Museums Service. All of this hard work is slightly soured by the fact that the property has been broken into twice this year.

The Magpie Mine site continues to be popular with both visitors and members, and the Magpie Mine booklet continues to sell well.

Heritage weekend in September attracted over 200 visitors, although the weather wasn't quite up to scratch this year. Dave Webb's High Rake Video proved very popular at this event and the public were fascinated at what had been uncovered, and amazed by the PDMHS shaft descent. We will of course be taking part in 2005 and I need volunteers to help to run this event.

Magpie Mine was used for the "Lead Legacy" publication launch in May. PDMHS was also involved in the Lead Rakes Week which followed the launch of the publication, providing lecturers and speakers. A number of members have also appeared on daytime TV in Industrial Archaeological programmes.

All of our projects depend on volunteers to run them and new blood is always required. If you would like to help out, please contact the relevant project leader.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the project leaders and the volunteers for the hard work they have done over the last year.

The Society has also had a busy programme of meets, both underground and surface walks. These have been very varied and, in most cases, well attended. The organisers are to be commended for the time they give to planning these events.

Next year sees a repeat of the joint meeting with Northern Mines. It is being held at Caphouse Colliery on May 21 with NMRO as organisers.

To conclude, we are, after all these years, still a very active and vibrant society. To remain in this position we need to encourage new members to join us. Our membership seems to be holding up fairly well but we cannot afford to be complacent. We have a new membership/museum leaflet and we have to ensure that it is displayed in as many places as possible. Also we have to advertise ourselves more at events around the county and countrywide. We should be looking to try and increase the membership not retain the status quo.

It only remains for me to thank my fellow directors for their help and support this year, and also to thank the persons who have come forward to fill our very important posts, that in itself has made the chairman's post a much more pleasurable duty for the coming years.

Election of Directors

Following the election to fill the vacant posts, the Directors of the Society for 2004/2005 are:-

Chairman

P Smith

71 St Norbert Drive,

	Kirk Hallam, ILKESTON DE7 4EF. Tel: 0115 9301169
Deputy Chairman Mrs M E Luff	The Coppins, Wash Lane, Ravenstone, COALVILLE, Liecestershire, LE6 2AZ Tel: 01530 810905
Hon Secretary N Nix	87 Windsor Road, BUXTON, SK17 7NR Tel: 01298 214110
Hon Treasurer K Adamson	123 Stocksway, Shepley, HUDDERSFIELD, HD8 8DN Tel: 01484 606877
Hon Editor Dr L Willies	"Hilderston", 174 Dale Road, Matlock Bath, MATLOCK, DE4 3PS Tel: 01629 584322
Hon Recorder R Paulson	"Holt House", Holt Lane, Lea, MATLOCK, DE4 5GQ Tel: 01629 534775
Ordinary Members Dr J Barnatt	21 The Front, Fairfield, BUXTON, SK17 7EQ Tel: 01298 77923
Dr I J Brown	95 Manygates Lane, Sandal, WAKEFIELD, WF2 7DL Tel: 01298 77923
Mrs E Dixon	21 Marlborough Drive, BELPER, DE45 1LB Tel: 01773 823020
D Webb	3 De Vere Gardens, Woodthorpe, NOTTINGHAM NG5 4PH Tel: 0115 8401109
D Williams	Clovelly Cottage, Lower Terrace Road, TIDESWELL, K17 8LX Tel: 01298 871909
A Wood	23 Leacroft Road, Winster, MATLOCK, DE4 2DL Tel: 01629 650162

ANNUAL DINNER

The Forty Fifth Annual Dinner of the Society was held at Temple Hotel, Matlock Bath on 27 November 2004.

The Chairman, Mr Paul Smith, proposed Toasts to "The Queen" and "The Lord of the Field". Andy Gillings proposed the toast to "The Society".

Lynn Willies, on behalf of Trevor Ford, presented the

Society Awards for 2004. They were:-

1. The Harold Sarjeant Award for Mines

Conservation was awarded to John Wilmott for his ongoing conservation work.

2. The Ford Award was not made this year. This was because the only PDMHS member who had work published in Mining History during the last year was Lynn Willies and he is prohibited from the award by virtue of his membership of the Awards Committee

There was no formal presentation after the Dinner.
Wes Taylor

KEITH ADAMSON - OUR NEW TREASURER

My background is psychiatric nursing and social work. I rose to the dizzy heights of Senior Manager in Rochdale Social Services before, to my great delight, getting early retirement three years ago in the inevitable management reorganisation. "Retirement" is a misnomer, since I now work independently, mainly in a developmental/project role within Social Services.

My wife and I now live near Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, where we have brought up our four children, but the old family home is at Little Longstone. Monsal Dale was my childhood playground. We always planned to explore the old Putwell Hill Mine with our bicycle lamps, but never got further than the entrance. However, we did climb Hobthirst Rocks with a washing line that Charlie Scidmore smuggled out of his father's coal-place. It is a wonder that I am still alive to be appointed your Treasurer of the Society.

I joined PDMHS about two years ago to participate in the underground trips. I am very grateful to people like Paul Chandler and Tony Wood who have been very tolerant of a complete amateur. It seemed important to give something back, hence my approach to our Chairman on reading the newsletter flyer about the vacancy for a Treasurer.

Members may wish to know that discussion has resulted in some changes regarding financial matters. Robin Hall, Museum Project Leader, will now be responsible for the Mining Museum bookkeeping. I will complete bookkeeping for the Society and have oversight of the accounts for both sectors.

I look forward to helping our Society in the future.
Keith Adamson.

NEW MEMBERS

The following were elected to membership of the Society at a recent Council Meeting:-

G Dobbs, Beverley
Mr & Mrs M Fereday, Newcastle under Lyme
Mr E Toyne & Family, Youlgrave
Mr D Amos & Family, Eastwood
S Wells, Belper
Mr & Mrs A Russell, Flagg
S J Nash, Brampton

J Piggot, Leek
F Ogden, Sheffield
B Cooper, Conset
A Cochrane, Buxton
P McGrory, High Peak
M & A Roberts, Chesterfield
P C Harrison, Castleton
Mr P & Miss B Harvey, Whatstandwell
A T McHale, Matlock
Leopard Unit Explorer Scouts, Chesterfield

SOCIETY MEETS

1. Arrocks Black Marble Mine, Ashford in the Water

Tuesday 1 February 2005

Leader: Paul Chandler

Easy/Moderate grade. Low crawl near entrance, otherwise walking size dry passages. Mine is quite different to the Rookery Wood Black Marble mine in that timber has been used to support the roof some of which, you might say, has seen better days. This meet is therefore not suitable for complete novice explorers. Even though this mine is only about half the size of the Rookery Wood mine, it is arguably the more interesting. Party size not limited.

Meet 7.30pm at parking area across the road from Ashford church.

2. Goodluck Mine, Via Gellia

Sunday 6 February 2005

Organiser: Paul Chandler

A 'Working Day' on this "New" (Old) Society Project. No technical expertise is required, just enthusiasm. Lifting objects, both light and heavy, will be involved so bring gloves. Personal lighting will need to be "hands free".

Society members are welcome to attend, either all day or for just part of the day. They are welcome to "Mix and Match", either a full day helping with the project or to assist with the project for half a day and exploring the mine for the other half. Members would of course be welcome just to take a self guided visit around the quite extensive mine workings. A boilersuit is ideal for this dry mine.

Bring packed lunch and drink, if you are stopping all day.

Note: Society members are welcome to borrow a caplamp, belt and helmet for a small hire fee. Please phone beforehand with your requirements, as no spare sets will be taken to the mine.

Meet 10.00am at the layby below mine spoil tip on the A5012 road in the Via Gellia (NGR SK269566).

3. Slide show illustrating "Exploring Caves" and "Derbyshire Lead Mines"

Tuesday 15 February 2005

Venue: Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath
Presenters: Paul Chandler and Tony Wood

The slide-show will be in two parts: "Exploring Caves" will visit caves and potholes in

Derbyshire, Yorkshire Dales, South Wales, Mendips and County Clare in Southern Ireland and will be presented by Paul Chandler. Tony Wood will then give a presentation of various Derbyshire Lead Mines.

Programme:

7.30pm - 8.15pm "Exploring Caves".

8.15pm - 8.30pm Interval - Drinks, tea, coffee etc will be available

8.30pm - 9.30pm "Derbyshire Lead Mines".

Meet 7.15pm for a prompt 7.30pm start.

4. Godfrey Hole, Wirksworth

Tuesday 1 March 2005

Organiser: Paul Chandler

As far as I am aware this is the first visit for the Society to this short natural cave. It was the scene of a small scale digging operation many years ago in which the diggers installed electric lighting and a sound system. The location of the cave is in a garden. Above the cave is a wooden hut, containing a trap door in the floor which leads directly into the cave. Thanks to Ian Bunting for arranging access.

This evening trip is graded easy. The party size is limited due to location, with eight places available.

To book your place and for further details, contact Paul Chandler (Organiser). Tel: 01246 220773.

5. Pretoria Chert Mine, Bakewell

Sunday 6 March 2005

Organiser: Paul Chandler

Easy grade oversuit or boilersuit trip. Access into mine is via a 15ft deep shaft, which will either be fitted with a rigid steel ladder or a flexible wire ladder. It has mostly large walking size passages, which are steeply inclined in places. The main purpose of this visit is to undertake a photographic study of the mine. There are some superb packwalls and artifacts. Most of the mine will be visited.

This is an excellent opportunity to practice your photographic skills, using either video or camera, in a stress free environment. Patient photographic models required. Bring a packed lunch and drink as we shall be underground for a few hours.

Party size limited to 10 persons due to sensitive location.

To book your place and for further details, contact Paul Chandler (Organiser). Tel: 01246 220773.

6. Slide show illustrating "Exploring Derbyshire Mines"

Tuesday 15 March 2005

Venue: Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath
Presenters: Paul Chandler

"Exploring Derbyshire Mines" will be a fascinating underground journey visiting a miscellany of mines worked for minerals as diverse as Blue John, Gritstone, Fluorspar, Calcite, Coal, Limestone etc, but not Lead.

Programme:

7.30pm - 8.15pm "Exploring Derbyshire Mines".

8.15pm - 8.30pm Interval - Drinks, tea, coffee etc will be available

8.30pm - 9.30pm "Exploring Derbyshire Mines" continued

Meet 7.15pm for a prompt 7.30pm start.

7. Snowdonia Walking Weekend, North Wales

Saturday/Sunday 2 - 3 April 2005 (Not Easter weekend)

Organiser: Paul Chandler

Provisional programme:

Saturday - 'Snowdon Summit via the Pyg Track and return via the Miners' Track, viewing mining remains en-route. If you don't fancy walking up Snowdon, use the train and walk down (Note that the train fare is quite expensive).

Sunday - 'Penmaemawr Area' looking at quarry workings, with spectacular sea views.

Note: The actual programme is dependent on the weather and will be decided at the weekend. Base possibly Llanberis. Accommodation B&B, although Youth Hostel available in Llanberis. Interested? Contact Paul Chandler (Weekend Organiser). Tel: 01246-220773.

Paul Chandler

FUTURE MEETS

Advance notice of meets with dates to be advised.

- 1 Brimstone Dyke Sough and Stoned Edge Cupola, Ashover
- 2 Yorkshire Dales Mines weekend
- 3 Pindale End Mine, Hope
- 4 Alderley Edge Copper Mines, Cheshire
- 5 Mining Heritage Walks, Derbyshire, These evening walks will probably start in April and finish in August. A number of new walks are planned
- 6 Cornwall Mines Meet
- 7 North Wales Mines and Caves
- 8 Other Derbyshire Mines

PDMHS MEETS CO-ORDINATOR

A more comprehensive "Meets Programme" can only be produced if Society members offer to Organise/Lead them. In Derbyshire and the Surrounding Counties there are many mines and caves that can be explored without tackle (eg ropes and ladders) or where you only require a handline. For mines and caves requiring tackle, please contact the Meets Co-ordinator for advice.

Underground Meets Leaders are welcome to contact the Meets Co-ordinator for suggestions of places to visit. Additionally, in most cases I will be able to supply a "survey" and the relevant access information.

I look forward to hearing from you. Members offering to organise/lead both underground and surface meets

should please contact Paul Chandler, PDMHS Meets Co-ordinator. Tel: 01246-220773.

PDMHS TRAINING CO-ORDINATOR For all types of training associated with Mine Exploration, contact Paul Chandler, PDMHS Training Co-ordinator. Tel: 01246-220773.

JOINT PDMHS/NMRS SEMINAR

The second Northern Mines Research Society and Peak District Mines Historical Society joint seminar is to be held on Saturday 21 May 2005 at the National Coal Mining Museum for England (Caphouse Colliery), at Wakefield. Once again, the theme is "*Work in Progress*" (in its broadest sense) and anyone who would like to give a 15-20 minute talk, with or without illustrations, should contact Dave Williams, Tel: 01298 871909 or Mike Gill, Tel: 01535 635388. A full range of audio-visual equipment, including video, is available.

All members/mining historians are cordially invited to participate in this event. It will feature a series of short presentations as well as an underground visit and a buffet lunch. There is ample parking and room for displays and publications will be provided. It is anticipated that the cost will be about £8.00.

Full details will be given in subsequent Newsletters. In the meantime, any further information is available from Paul Smith. Tel: 0115 9301169 or E-mail paulboswedden@aol.com

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

1. Annual Dinner

Following the discussions held at the 2004 Society AGM regarding decline in the number of members attending Society Dinner I, for one, am in favour of having an informal buffet, instead of the more formal dinner.

As a preference, I would prefer having the buffet in a local Derbyshire hotel or pub, rather than the Pump Room of the Mining Museum. Alcoholic drinks would be available for a start. I feel sure a buffet with plenty of choice could be provided for say £10 a head which would be substantially cheaper than the £18.50 paid for the dinner in 2004 and which, no doubt, will be nearer £20.00 in 2005. Sadly, unless either a cheaper buffet option is tried or a cheaper dinner venue is found, the numbers attending the Society dinner will reduce by a further one, myself.

Paul Chandler, Chesterfield

BORROWED PERSONAL CAVING EQUIPMENT

Paul Chandler has a red combined Petzl helmet and lamp which was borrowed from a Society Member on the Society meet on Sunday 5 September 2004. He does not have contact details for the member who loaned this equipment except that he thinks he lives in the Somercotes area of Derbyshire.

If this item is yours, please contact Paul Chandler,
Tel: 01246 220773, to arrange collection.

GOODLUCK MINE

A group of Society members have started work on tidying up the Goodluck Mine in Via Gelia. Currently this work is being done on Thursday evenings on an irregular basis. In the New Year it is hoped to regularise the work to two meetings a month.

At present the work is moving a large amount of scrap materials from just inside the entrance and clearing the rails in order that we can use mine wagons to move debris from further inside the mine. We are also starting to photograph and record all of the artifacts in the mine for future reference and in order to check their provenance.

Anyone interested in joining the group and help improve the access, appearance and knowledge of Goodluck Mine should contact Paul Smith. Tel: 0115 9301169 or E-mail paulboswedden@aol.com or Paul Chandler, tel: 01246 220773.

VISIT TO MILLTOWN QUARRY - 25 September 2004

Fourteen members arrived at Milltown Quarry on a very wet Saturday morning to be greeted by the manager, Mike Repton, of Aggregate Industries Ltd.

The quarry is in a rather remote area near Ashover, adjoining the site of Fallgate Halt on the disused Ashover Light Railway (which worked from the 1920s to the 1950s) and the site of Stars Wood Fluorspar Mine (worked originally for lead in the 19thC and fluorspar in the 20thC up to 1986). The Clay Cross Company commenced operations on these sites about 150 years ago. In 1974 the company was taken over by RMC followed by the Bewater Group in 1985 and Aggregate Industries in 2000.

The writer first visited the site on 28 June 1964 when it was owned by Clay Cross and was principally working fluorspar with some lead, barytes and limestone. He noted:

"Hasland Shaft - headframe present but not worked, adit alongside about 100 yd long with recent stoping, machinery intact. Stars Wood inclined drift with electric haulage, 8-cwt tubs on rope, much timbering, candles on ledges but some carbide lamps, compressed air picks and blasting, roadways about 5ft x 3ft. Cabins and processing plant on surface (described by W.J.Houston in the Quarry Managers' Journal April 1964, pages 149-153). Nearby at Overton Mine, recent steel headframe, not worked at present, two steel-arched drifts adjoining, now collapsed".

At this time there was a 20in. narrow gauge railway around the works, part of which was along the old Light Railway line, with two diesel locos and several 9-ton double bogie trucks. The official lists of mines shows that, at its peak in 1925, the mines employed 48 persons, 18 underground, 30 on the surface which included the mill and some outcropping of mineral. By the 1950s the respective numbers were 8 underground and 25 on the surface.

The manager explained that the old mine had closed by 1970 but the mill itself was replaced in the early 1970s to treat outcropping material and material brought in by tributaries. For about 6 months, in the mid 1980s, a new adit was being constructed but all ceased in 1986.

The old fluorspar-working Clay Cross Company ceased to quarry limestone in 1946 but work later restarted and this has been the sole purpose of the site since 1986. Most of the old buildings have been removed and now the chief features remaining from earlier times are some buildings, the Railway Halt building, a large fluorspar washing bowl and the limestone quarries.

The present quarry, as visited on 25 September, is a standard 3-bench hillside working with a narrow strip carrying a public footpath between it and an earlier quarry alongside. The equipment on the site is wholly operated by contractors, these being specialists for drilling and blasting (about once per month), contractors using hydraulic shovels for loading and carrying broken material to the preparation plant and operation of the preparation plant.

The preparation plant consists of primary and secondary crushers (jaw and rotary respectively), both on separate mobile units fitted in tandem and with two 3-way separating screens, also in tandem. The classified material is removed from the separate heaps by loading shovels and contractors' wagons either to store or offsite. Aggregate Industries, the operator of the quarry, only employs three men itself on-site, the manager, a weighbridge clerk and one other.

During the visit members found some interesting rocks and fossils (mainly corals) and old levels could be seen in the face. One level had a metal rail protruding and old wooden supports scattered about just below it.

At the close of the visit, the party reached the top of the quarry face and returned down the path dividing the quarries. This was lined with wire supported on metal-tube posts made by the old Clay Cross Co. It also crossed two wooden bridges over open vein workings.

Finally, the party passed near the collapsed adit of Stars Wood Mine and then returned to the cars having given our thanks to the manager.

The small Ashover ore-field is well worth a further visit but Milltown Quarry itself is due to close by the end of 2004. During 2005 stocks will be removed and a final blast will form banks of material against the face for safety reasons.

Ivor Brown

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2004

Although the weather for the weekend of the 11 - 12 September was a little indifferent, the Heritage Open Days event held at Magpie mine was again a great success. Magpie Mine when the weather is not good is an inhospitable venue for a surface tour. It was therefore a pleasant surprise that so many members of the public visited us. This year we had the added attraction of Dave

Webb's video of the High Rake excavation on show, giving the story so far of one of the major projects of the Society. This attracted large audiences, and appreciative comments about the work of the Society in preserving Derbyshire's Heritage. Alan Mutter must know the High Rake story from end to end as the video was set up in the Smithy along with the Museum stall.

Some 204 visitors took the opportunity of guided tours over the site of one of the country's best lead mining relics. Refreshments were on hand, the hot tea and coffee being particularly welcome, and the museum stall provided the opportunity for the public to buy a souvenir of their day at Magpie Mine. Special thanks are due to Alan who manned the stall for both days.

Guests certainly seemed to enjoy our Field Centre and many compliments were received. It is to be hoped that this event inspired at least a few of them into a greater interest in the history of lead mining in Derbyshire and maybe into joining the Society.

The short straw this year was drawn by the car parking attendants, who had to stand at the end of the drive in the cold and wet conditions, to make sure everyone parked in an orderly fashion. My special thanks go to them. At least we at the cottage were either walking to keep warm (guides) or working in the warmth of the cottage, (museum stall, serving tea and coffee), or greeting guests.

The Open Days at Magpie mine rely on volunteers for all aspects of running the event. They work as guides, serve refreshments, staff the Museum stall and control the car-parking etc. Thanks are due to all who took part this year, the Society appreciates the time given by all of our helpers.

Next year's event is already in the planning stage and anyone who would like to join us as a volunteer, in any capacity, can contact me, Paul Smith, 71 St Norbert Drive, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 4EF. Tel: 0115 9301169, or e-mail Paulboswedden@aol.com, stating a preference for the type of job you would like.

Paul Smith

BOOK REVIEWS

1. "The Great Laxey Mine" by Andrew Scarffe. Published by Manx Heritage Foundation, Douglas, Isle of Man. Hardback, 357 x 260mm, xviii + 232pp, 2004. ISBN0 9547 180 2 X Cost £19.99.

Built 150 years ago to drain the Great Laxey Mine on the Isle of Man, the Laxey Wheel or 'Lady Isabella' is certainly the largest working waterwheel in the world, and is probably one of the oldest as well. Anders Jespersen, the Danish water mill enthusiast, marked its centenary in 1954 by publishing his book describing the story of the Wheel. Now, fifty years on, the Manx Heritage Foundation has published a new book to coincide with the Wheel's 150th Anniversary celebrations.

'The Great Laxey Mine' by Andrew Scarffe is a comprehensive history, not just of the Wheel, but of the whole mining venture at Laxey. The author has drawn on countless hours of research into the mining companies' record books, contemporary newspaper reports, and numerous other sources. As with so many mining operations, the Great Laxey story includes forecasts of massive dividends for the shareholders, arguments over wages and conditions, accusations of mismanagement, and of course, the ever-present risk of flooding. The Lady Isabella was not the only large waterwheel installed to drain the Great Laxey Mine, but it is by far the most famous.

The book, of course, includes a the history of the Wheel, adding further details to Jespersen's description and bringing the story up to date. For instance, by referring to the documentary evidence, Scarffe demonstrates that the 'Wigan claim' (that the wheel was built in Wigan and transported complete – all 72-foot diameter of it! – to the Island) is quite false. He confirms that some castings were made in Liverpool, other parts were sourced locally on the Island, whilst the pumps probably came from Glasgow. However, the records also show that in 1864, an 80hp steam engine was bought from Coupes of Wigan - perhaps this was the start of the dubious claim.

Another claim that is not so easily explained is that the wheel was capable of pumping 250 gallons of water per minute from 200 fathoms. Apart from suggesting that the *Manx Sun* newspaper had misinterpreted the description of four pumps each capable of pumping 60 gallons per minute, the author wisely avoids getting bogged down in calculations based on dubious assumptions.

The Lady Isabella has undergone numerous repairs and renovations over the years - one wonders how much remains of the original 1854 construction – and the book describes no less than three 're-opening' ceremonies in the last fifty years.

Many mining history books concentrate on the physical and engineering features of the mines, since it is these that remain long after the miners have left. It is therefore refreshing to see an account of the workforce, including miners, labourers, marines, fillers, knockabouts, timbermen, shaftsmen, mechanics and enginemen underground, and a similar wide range of jobs in the surface workshops and on the washing floors. Scarffe describes the monthly setting of 'bargains', illustrated by pages from the miners' pass-books. Social and welfare matters are not neglected: there are descriptions of the Mines' Club and various Friendly Societies, the workers' housing, schools, Co-operative Societies, and the Working Men's Institute. Whilst the organisations may be defunct, many of the associated buildings still exist in Laxey village.

Biographies of the main characters in the mine's history are included, one of the most dominant being George William Dumbell. He was a lawyer, a member of the House of Keys, (the Manx parliament,) Chairman of the

Great Laxey Mining Company, and a partner in the Dumbell Son and Howard Bank.

The book adopts a 'coffee table' style, the text being interspersed with over 300 illustrations, including etchings, engravings, sketches, photographs, maps and diagrams spanning more than 150 years of history. Some of the old pictures and photographs are familiar, having already been reproduced in other publications, but many more have been hidden in the archives or private collections and are now published for the first time. Computer techniques have been used to ensure these old pictures retain all their original sharpness and avoid the fuzziness associated with repeated copying. Serious researchers need not be put off by the informal style, as the text is fully referenced. There are over 500 specific references, supported by an extensive bibliography.

It is disappointing to find several places in the book where individual words or complete lines of text seem to have got lost, somewhere between the author's original draft and the final printed page. Presumably, with the need to have the book ready for the Wheel's 150th Anniversary celebrations, the proof-reading was rather hurried and failed to pick up these omissions.

Scarffe's book does not compete with or replace Jespersen's: the two are complimentary. Scarffe has the advantage of an extra fifty years of history, and he brings the story right up to date. The authors have different viewpoints: Jespersen sourced his information mainly from an on-site survey, whilst Scarffe has concentrated on the written record. Jespersen's book contains a detailed mathematical and engineering analysis of the waterwheel; Scarffe brings to life the people who made it all work. And the price? Jespersen's book cost just £1 in 1954, (equivalent to about £17 in today's money,) for 96 pages in black and white: Scarffe gives you nearly 250 pages in full colour for under £20.

The book is obviously a 'must have' for anyone interested in the Isle of Man, but since the management and organisation that Andrew Scarffe describes could probably have been found at large 19th- and early 20th-century mining ventures almost anywhere in the UK, (or indeed, anywhere in the world,) 'The Great Laxey Mine' deserves a much wider readership.

Andy Gillings

2. "Collieries in the North Staffordshire Coalfield" by Paul Deakin, FRPS. 2004. Landmark Publishing Ltd, Ashbourne Hall, Cokayne Avenue, Ashbourne, Derbyshire. 160 pages. ISBN 1 84306 138 4. Cost £19.95.

This is a welcome addition to the Landmark Collectors Library of mining history books. It is a photographic atlas of some 30 North Staffordshire collieries providing a record of a vanished industry in nearly 300 photos. Both surface and underground views are included, together with a few opencast sites. Many of the photos are in colour and demonstrate the author's mastery

of photography in difficult conditions.

The photographs are well chosen to illustrate the working methods, haulage, ventilation systems, and miners' lives underground. They were taken largely in two periods, the 1950's and the 1980-1990's, with a handful of early pictures of special events. Whilst most are by the author, other contributors include Bob Metcalfe and Albert Baines-Davies. Captions include some details of the collieries' life and history. Shaft depths are given for most sites but few details are given of which seams were worked.

Whilst the book does not set out to be a history of the Potteries coalfield, an introductory chapter on the lay-out of the coalfield, with an area map, would have improved the book. The last few pages are present-day views of the sites where collieries were working, some less than 10 years ago. Now housing estates, industrial estates, leisure or agricultural land, they demonstrate how quickly all traces of a once dominant industry can be erased from the landscape.

Dr Trevor D Ford

3. "The Forgotten Mines of Sheffield" by Ray Battye. (2004). Available from the Author, 78 Towngate Road, Sheffield S35 0AR, at £12 including Postage.

Arising out of a University thesis, this book examines the rise and decline of ganister and pot clay mining and processing and its impact upon settlements and the landscape of western Sheffield (Stocksbridge, Oughtibridge, Wadsley, Loxley, Stannington, Ecclesall Woods and Totley). Important from the 18th to the mid-late 20th century, the industry was one of the major factors in the location of the Sheffield steel industry – which otherwise may have been placed in almost any coalfield area. This is thus a very welcome addition to our knowledge.

Lynn Willies

THE BUSTARVIEJO MINE, SPAIN

Luis Jorda writes from Madrid to inform us of a project involving a small silver mine near Madrid. He and colleagues are developing the site for wider access since, despite the huge Spanish mining heritage, very few tourist mines have been developed, though there have been mine-related major developments at Rio Tinto, Linareas, Las Medulas and in Galicia. He wishes to share information about the project, in the hope it will encourage and lead to contacts with other similarly interested groups.

He writes:

The Bustarviejo silver mine was mainly worked for silver in the 18th century. It is in the Sierra de Guadarrama, a 2000 metres high mountain range about 70 km from Madrid. It stopped working in the mid 19th century and the underground features remained unexamined until 1978 when a small company tried to develop the lode. The lode

was found to be exhausted and the company gave up four months later and so the adit and shafts were again covered and again forgotten.

Since September 2000 a small multi-disciplinary team has been working on the exploration of the mine, including mining engineers, geologists, historians, caving and climbing experts. Currently the mine is being surveyed and sampled, with the aim of producing a study of the whole mine, and of developing a portion as a restoration project to make it available for ordinary tourists. The exploration phase, requiring the installation of tens of fixed anchors in difficult areas for rope access is virtually complete and has enabled placing of Nikon Total Station positions.

Remains found include wood-lined shafts, galleries and worked-out lodes from the 16th and 17th century, together with an 18th century adit and mining equipment.

The team would like to contact others outside Spain with similar experience.

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Lynn Willies

PEAK DISTRICT MINES – OBSERVATIONS AND DISCOVERIES – PART 13

1. Firesetting: Long Tor Grotto, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire SK 2968 5861

Here, another example of firesetting using coal has been identified. The main accessible stope on Key Vein, entered via the Long Tor Grotto adit entrance at river level, was once part of the Long Tor Cavern showmine open to the public around 1900. The high stope has steps ascending westwards from the level and at the end, immediately before it is choked with deads, it is possible to ascend through small, steeply hading vein workings driven with powder. A short climb in the roof leads to small powder-driven levels in the vein leading both east and west. At its end, the western level has broken into a small, narrow, fireset level following the vein. This has heat-altered roof and sides, and is extensively sooted. It is accessible for several metres but the western end is currently blocked with a wall of deads, although a narrow continuation above is visible.

Present: John Barnatt, Dave Ottewell, Dave Webb and others.

2. Goldsitch Moss Colliery, Quarnford, Staffordshire

In Part 6 of these Notes a sough leading to the Goldsitch Moss coal mines was reported. During a recent visit a further sough shaft mound was identified (SK 0038 6610). This lies in the same narrow small valley as the sough tail and was missed on the previous visit due to the tree cover. It fills one side of the valley bottom a short distance upstream from the tail and may have been used as an access point to the sough during its creation rather than

being primarily for ventilation. Set into the hillock side there are the ruins of a coe with a small chimney flue at one end.

Inspection of those parts of the colliery that are now within Access Land (centred SK 010 652) revealed a complex sequence of mining, with shaft hillocks of different dates and sizes. The later ones tend to be large and are connected by access causeways across wet ground.

Present: John Barnatt, Chris Heathcote, Phil Shaw, Dave Williams.

3. Intake Dale Mine, Shuttle Rake, Hazlebadge, Derbyshire SK 162 797

Taking advantage of the new Access Land provision, this site was assessed. Where Shuttle Rake and a branch vein to the north cross Intake Dale the hillocks are relatively well preserved. Above the valley on the south side, there is a small walled enclosure amongst the hillocks which appears to surround a now-backfilled shaft. There is a gin circle cut into the rock, on the southern steep dale side, to create a flat platform offset from the opencut of the vein, which here is less than a metre wide. Between the two there is a small, crudely-built, drywalled enclosure which may surround the site of the engine shaft rather than being a coe. However, Jim Rieuwerts remembers a shaft below at 'valley bottom level' which has now gone; the gin circle platform has been partly-removed in this direction, making it difficult to assess which of the two was the shaft directly associated with the gin engine. The rock-cut gin platform is one of the best identified examples of its type, only surpassed in the precipitousness of its site by that at Apes Tor at Ecton. Running down the lower valley sides from this mine, the valley bottom is flanked for some distance by several drystone-retained packs of deads. Their disposition gives the impression that there was an old access road following the valley base that miners were obliged to keep clear; thus, waste had to be stacked to the sides rather than blocking the base of the valley where the vein crossed it.

Present: John Barnatt, Chris Heathcote, Phil Shaw.

4. Damage to Important Sites (Old Seedlow Mine, Highfields/Bindcliff Mines, Carsington Pasture Mines).

Unfortunately, during our various inspections of mines this year, four sites listed in the recent Lead Legacy report as of regional/national importance (but not Scheduled) have been found to have recent damage. Old Seedlow Mine on White Rake east of Wardlow (SK 187 748) has been slowly deteriorating for several years as the farmer has filled hollows with farm waste. However, the degradation has accelerated recently following the land changing hands. Shortly before our last visit a drystone wall, that is thought to have once flanked a gin circle (near the ruined coe), had been removed; some of the nearby processing ponds were no longer apparent. Negotiations with the new landowner have failed to secure a

conservation agreement and the future of the site currently seems bleak. At the Bindcliff Mines a large hillock in the fields immediately above the daleside has been robbed to provide stone for the rebuilding of an adjacent field wall (SK 1148 5385), while at the nearby Highfields Mine (SK 1189 5363) the large ruined coe has been demolished to near ground level, while a nearby hillock has also been damaged. Negotiations to prevent further damage are ongoing. At Carsington Pasture, the eastern half of the Pasture (centred SK 248 541), where there are numerous hillocks and other mine remains, has been subject to extensive damage. Unbeknown to PDMHS officers, and apparently without consultation with national conservation agencies, early this summer the site was used for the National Landrover Trials; the result is that a large number of hollows and hillocks now have deep wheel ruts across them. In addition, one ruined coe was robbed slightly to fill a hollow and another site had a wall clipped, doing minor damage. While as far as we know this was a one-off event, it is planned to contact the site owner/tenant to discuss the importance of the site from a conservation perspective and the desirability of safeguarding it.

If you have information on any of the sites noted or would like to contribute to future issues of this series of notes, please contact: Chris Heathcote, 15 Links Road, Chapel en le Frith, High Peak, Derbys SK23 9TX (01298 814822) or John Barnatt, 21 The Front, Fairfield, Buxton, Derbys, SK17 7EQ (01298 77923), (e-mail john.barnatt@btinternet.com).

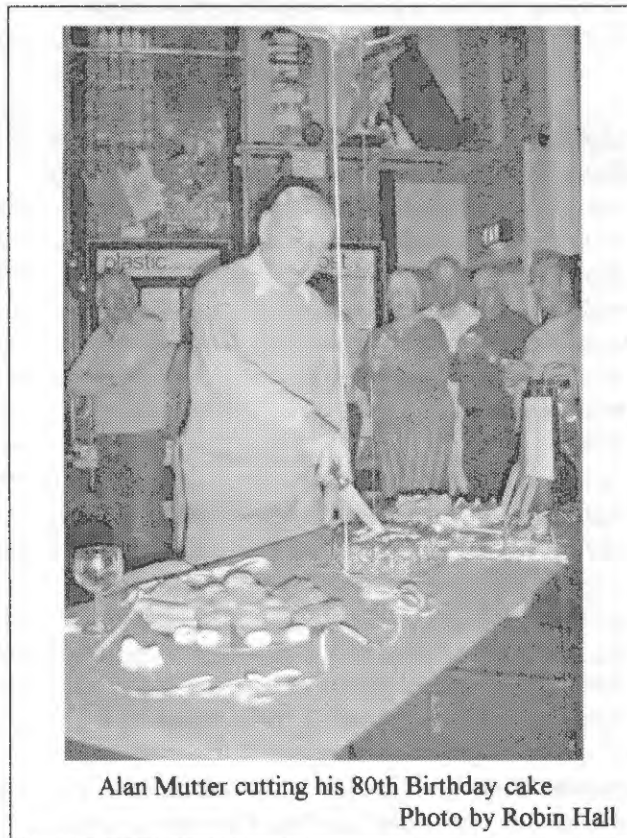
NEWS FROM THE PEAK DISTRICT MINING MUSEUM

The beginning of the year saw the completion of a new display illustrating the geological chronology of the earth incorporating appropriate rock specimens. The display was the product of much hard work by volunteer Briony Harvey, a final year geology student at the University of Liverpool. Briony has since graduated and is now engaged in postgraduate research at Cardiff Congratulations Briony!

May saw two important events take place. The 25th anniversary of the Museum and the publication of the "Lead Legacy: The Prospects for the Peak District's Lead Mining Heritage". The Lead Legacy project was an initiative of the Peak District National Park Authority in partnership with English Heritage and English Nature. The report emphasises the steady loss of sites throughout the Peak District so that only about a quarter of what once existed now survives in reasonable condition. It is also a blueprint for the future 'so that this unique and irreplaceable heritage is not lost forever'. The event hosted a number of themed talks/displays by representatives of the three organisations. That the museum was chosen by the Park Authority to host this event, serves to acknowledge the role of the Society in research and site conservation. Later in the month the Museum's anniversary was celebrated with

an afternoon of talks and entertainment well attended by many members. A full report of the proceedings appeared in the July newsletter.

Alan Mutter celebrated his 80th birthday at the end of September, so to mark this auspicious occasion a social evening was held in the Pump Room on Monday 27 September as a thank you for the unstinting service Alan has given to the Society and the Museum over many years.



Alan Mutter cutting his 80th Birthday cake
Photo by Robin Hall

Finally, the Museum's travelling exhibit has been to several venues during October. On 2 October Robin Hall and Ian Bunting were at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Hanley, Stoke on Trent. This was an activity day for children that was being held in conjunction with the series of BBC films 'Natural History of Britain' presented by Alan Titchmarsh. On 30 October, Robin took the display to the Scarsdale Local History Fair organised by Derbyshire County Council's Library Service in conjunction with the Derbyshire Victoria County History Trust. As last year, this event was held at Arkwright Town near Chesterfield. Both of these events are excellent showcases for the work of both the Society and the Museum.

Stuart Band

VISIT TO HANGING FLATS MINE AND HORSESHOEDALE MINE

A party of nine members met on 5 September 2004 at Stoney Middleton on a fine sunny morning. For one person it was a special day, a return to a mine last visited almost to the day 40 years ago. The writer's notebook records; 4 September 1964, Hanging Flats Fluorspar Mine, J Elliot operator. Mine adit in coe, 5 yd from road on right beyond

Furness Quarry. Loading platform in front, shaft at rear on hillside about 50 yd. Not working. Informed that two men worked here until short time ago when one left, he felt new equipment was required. Rail track visible, about 18in gauge, about 10cwt capacity, side-tip wagons. Much candle fat around. Informed that mine was on Glebe Mines lease. Later information indicated that the mine had reopened and was operated with more modern equipment (compressed air, larger tubs etc.) under J.Garlick but closed about 1969.

On 5 September 2004, members saw that only ruins of the coe and loading platform remained with a large hole behind in thick vegetation. At the bottom of the hole was a narrow horizontal slit just sufficient for all but one member of the party to slide into! Inside the passage opened out to a walking height. 1960s type steel rails of about 22 gauge were still in place as was the compressed air pipe and water suppression hose suspended from the roadside by metal clips and bent steel drill rods. After about 50yd the road split. To the left there were the remains of a collapsed timber-framed "mine tunnel" with numerous large boulders of polystyrene left over from a "Peak Practice" TV film set. Beyond this the tunnel continued a further 80yd until a fall was reached. Several side passages or chutes had also collapsed but much ironwork remained including a possibly recent flat metal trolley.

To the right of the junction a tunnel continued for about 50yd to a fall. Near the junction was a "rise" offset from the passage with a 10ft iron ladder leading to a wooden platform but it seemed that there was no way on. Nearer the end there was the remains of a metal side-tipping wagon and a square shaft in the floor about 30ft deep, which was formed in part of full size railway sleepers. There was also the remains of a possible 3 or 4 wire guide system and at the top, part of a metal winch. Alongside this were the remains of an old metal milk churn!

One member, Brian Webb, descended the shaft and reported that it had a solid bottom. There was a passage about 3ft high, 4ft wide leading off but it was blind after 20ft. In the shaft wall 4ft above the passage there was another passage which was shorter and appeared to end at a back-filled shaft filled with boulders.

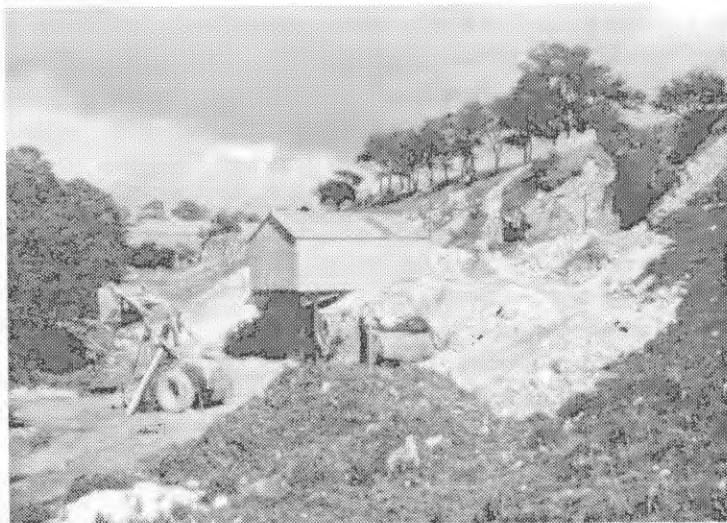
After returning to the surface, the writer pointed out that on the opposite side of the main road nearer to Furness Quarry, he had photographed another small working fluorspar mine in the late 1960s. Two men were at work using a wooden hand winch to haul small tubs up an inclined shaft to the roadside. He believes that this mine

was "Hazard" or "Furness" Mine. If anyone has more information on this please contact the editor.

The party then moved on to Horseshoedale Mine at Chelmorton. This mine was also last visited and photographed by the writer nearly 40 years ago. His notebook records that on 3 September 1967 the mine was being worked for calcite by Derbyshire Calcite Ltd of Biggin, Buxton. It was an old lead mine worked again in the 1950s using shovels, rails and tubs but in 1966 it was re-opened on a much larger scale. It was just off a public footpath in a side valley about 150yds from Dale Grange Farm.

The notes state that there was a small trial adit alongside a large adit entrance about 10ft by 10ft but just inside the height rose about 60ft with old workings, shafts and timber supports visible at the top. There were no side passages apparent throughout the 100yd length open that was open.

The most outstanding feature was an unusual "arch", a section of unwanted rock traversing the middle of the widened tunnel, leaving about 10ft track on each side. Shot-holes were being drilled in the face by compressed air drills, wedge cut fashion, using chisel bits and fragmented material was being loaded and hauled out by agricultural type shovel loader. Electric lighting was in use in passageway and at the face.



Horseshoe Dale Mine in 1964

Photo by Ivor Brown

At the surface the output was hand picked on a chute and loaded direct into a lorry. There were two galvanised steel buildings, one containing the chute, the other a diesel generator and an air compressor. Around the buildings were some old elevators and some "Hurricane" and "Tropic" lamps in a shed with a newspaper dated 31 August 1967! Nearby were some disused steel rails and steel tubs similar to those at the Topley Head Calcite Mine workings nearby. (Has anyone any more information on this mine?).

During the 2004 visit the workings at Horseshoedale Mine were seen to be much as described above except that all of the buildings and plant had been removed. Significantly, a lower level had been formed in the mine about 12ft high but separated by about 4ft thickness of solid material. On the left hand side this was connected to the upper floor by a series of 3ft diameter holes about 10ft apart. A sketch of the workings appeared in the PDMHS Bulletin "Mining History", Volume 15, No 1, Summer 2002 page 31.

On approaching the adit it was found that the old tip and the ground in front of the adit had been excavated leaving a large hole so the top level used in the 1960s could not now be entered directly. The farmer said that material had been removed after the mine closed during the 1970s for roadstone. The passageways had obviously been used by tyred vehicles. The whole mine was most spacious and the "arch" was very impressive. The older, higher level was reached by means of a 10ft high ladder, rope and rock scramble at the end of the series of chutes. Some compressed air pipes, power cables with lamps and timber and steel bars littered the main passageway. This passage was muddy in parts and had a pool at the inner end. Research has since shown that the mine is not on the 1970 Mines Inspection List so it probably ceased underground production about 1969.

The writer would like to thank the owners of the mines for all their help in making these visits possible and for making a 40 year old ambition of the writer come to fruition. Also special thanks to Paul Chandler for his excellent organisation. Those who did not attend this day's meeting missed a real treat.

Ivor Brown

THE MUSEUM THAT HAS MOVED

The Threlkeld Mining Museum has moved to a more prestigious site in the centre of Keswick.

Further information from: Keswick Mining Museum, Otley House, Otley Road, Keswick, CA12 5LE. Tel: 017687 80055 or 01228 561883

NAMHO 2005

This will take place on the weekend of 8-10 July 2005. It is being organised jointly by members of the Wealden Cave and Mine Society, Kent Underground Research Group, Subterranea Britannica and Chelsea Speleological Society.

The weekend will be based at the residential Juniper Hall Field Study Centre near Dorking with nearby campsite accommodation available

Full details of the weekend, together with costs and booking forms, can be found at: www.namho2005.wcms.org.uk. This information is also available from Robin Albert, 13 Beaufort Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 9DQ.

HANYBECCA ADITS AND SHAFTS, HASSOP COMMON

Ten members attended this day long meet. With the majority being under 50, perhaps it should have been re-styled as a PDMHS 'youth meet'!

The first target was the full exploration of the Harrybecca adits (see *Bulletin* vol.6(2), 96-99, 1975) which was achieved with the help of some well-placed handlines and even a piece of garden fencing acting as an impromptu ladder! The adits are an interesting mix of older workings, including an impressive fireset stope (not on John Pickin's original survey), and larger chambers worked for fluorspar in the 1940s-1950s by G E Bacon and Sons, This was a Youlgreave-based company which was active in post-war spar extraction at a range of Peak District sites. Recent collapses in the No 1 adit confirmed the wisdom of entering by the top (No 3) adit. Several members made a through trip via the previously unreported (and constricted) exit at the base of the fireset stope.

After lunch, whilst Paul Chandler led a surface inspection of the nearby Brightside Mine, part of the team barred off sleepers and rigged the Harrybecca climbing shaft. Most of the group then made a 25ft ladder descent down a well ginged shaft into a maze of workings ranging east-west. Time did not allow for full exploration but the link through to the deep engine shaft was found although the shaft itself awaits a descent. A hazy memory, recently culled from John Pickin, suggests it may lead to a sough-like passage. Ongoing exploration and survey at the adits and shafts, will hopefully shed more light on this interesting site. Our thanks are due to Henry Stephenson, owner of the Hassop Estate, for permitting access.

Andy Tickle

COPY FOR THE APRIL 2005 EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER

The deadline for material for the next edition of the Newsletter is **5 March 2004**. Copy, articles, photographs, letters etc should be sent to:-

Wes Taylor, 18 Station Lane, Walton on Trent, SWADLINCOTE, Derbys, DE12 8NA.

Tel:- (01283) 713315.

E-Mail:- wes@wtaylor44.fsnet.co.uk

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Society: www.pdmhs.com

Museum: www.peakmines.co.uk

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