



Mining Heritage Society of Ireland

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 10
APRIL 1999
Cumann Oireacht na Mianadóireachta

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EDITORIAL

What is most relevant to say about the society at present is contained in the report of the AGM. This includes news of the Society's first publication, Cole's *Memoir*, a second under way "50 years of Irish Mining, 1950-200" and discussion about issuing a Journal.

Earlier Newsletters carried a variety of research items. Such, however has been the sheer volume of recent activity generating news about mining heritage that research items have been accumulating. Hitherto these had sometimes been used as fillers in the absence of news. Now, happily, there is plenty of news so the option of a journal is certainly worth considering. But that raises other questions -----!

MHSI PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 1999-2000

(**Bold print** indicates finalised programmes; further details will be sent to members of events in ordinary print; *italics* indicates non-MHSI activities)

1999

27th-28th March: *Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland, "Power to the People" conference in Ennis.*

22nd-25th April: *Minet conference in Linares, Spain.*

29th April- 3rd May: **Visit to the Isle of Man, visiting Laxey, Foxdale, Bradda Head and possibly other sites.**

1st May: "Swords Candles and Old Boots: The ghost of NAMHO '98" at 7.00 pm in Nenthead Village Hall, Alston, Cumbria. (Booking necessary)

7th May: *Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland, "Irish Mills and Milling", Enniskillin College of Agriculture, county Fermanagh.*

13-16th May: *Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland, Tour of Dublin and District.*

23th May: **The Bunmahon Initiative, Co. Waterford. "Copper Coast" launches.** (Further information page 6).

Early June: Field Meet in Donegal.

24th-27th September (not June as stated in Newsletter 9): *NAMHO conference in the Forest of Dean.*

9th - 10th October: Field Meet in Connemara visiting Sheffry and other local lead mines.

2nd-7th November: MINET conference (possible venue Silvermines)

2000

12th February: AGM of MHSI in GSI Beggars Bush:

MHSI

NEWS

REPORT AGM

Minutes of the 1998 AGM, Saturday 13th February 1999, Geological Survey of Ireland, Dublin.

Present: Nick Coy, Martin Critchley, John Davies, Errol Delaney, Ruth Delaney, Peter Eggleston, Loreto Farrell, Keith Geoghegan, Rob Goodbody, Gareth Ll. Jones, Tom Kelly, Nigel Monaghan, Mike Moore, Stephen Moreton, John Morris, Michelle Murray, Dave Naylor, Kevin O'Hagan, Matthew Parkes, Adrian Pearce, Joe Rynn, Eamonn de Stafort, Tom Sheedy, Edwin Thorpe, Charles Tyrrell, Richard Unitt.

Apologies: Ken Brown, Nigel Burns, Stuart Chester, Des Cowman, Pat Geoghegan, Paddy Geoghegan, Tara Geoghegan, Roger Gosling, Marie Merrigan, Norman Moles, Charles Morley, John and Susan Pyne, Mike Simms, Nick Southwick, Patrick Wyse Jackson.

Minutes of the 1997 AGM were adopted. Prop. Dave Naylor, Sec. E. de Stafort

Matters arising: The only item not elsewhere on the agenda was the proposed book project led by Dave Naylor, on personal recollections of recent (last 50 years) mining developments in Ireland. Dave Naylor gave an update of progress, and received full support of the meeting to proceed further.

Chairperson's report: 1998 was a further year of successful activities and development.

- Fieldmeets were held in Cornwall, Heritage Day events, Sligo-Leitrim, Tipperary-Clare.
- 3 Newsletters were produced despite the sometimes malevolent influence of Computheo.
- Meetings were held with the Archaeological and Architectural divisions of Dúchas to discuss and develop our relationship.
- Application was made for a Conservation Grant for the Tankardstown mine site*. Unfortunately a similar application for the Man Engine House at Allihies was thwarted over access permission problems.
- John Morris expressed the admiration, congratulations and support of the Society to the Geoghegan's for their persistence in opening Ireland's first tourist mine.
- The award of the £1.7million from Government/Industry to develop Shallee as the

National Mine Heritage Centre is one of the major developments of 1998. The achievement is a tribute to efforts of John Feehan and Martin Critchley in the late 1980's, carried through to this stage by Eamonn de Stafort, Tom Sheedy and Shannon Heritage.

- Publication of Cole's Memoir is a watershed for Society. Thanks to Patrick Wyse Jackson, Matthew Parkes and the Heritage Council.
- Finally, John personally thanked all those who had helped set up the Society and nurtured it. He thanked all who had served on committees, volunteered to run activities and supported the Society. *"We have come far in a short time and I have no doubt that the enthusiasm and commitment of so many will carry this Society forward to ever greater achievements. It has been a pleasure to serve as Chairperson and I wish every success to my successor."*

Secretary's Report:

- Our AGM last year was completed by a day trip to Glendasan where Rob Goodbody led us to the parts that other societies don't reach, except for the Shropshire CMC who later in May last year came back to explore them.
- Ron Callender delivered in interesting talk entitled Gold in the Hills on the 8th April, and showed some of his own photographic techniques for mine heritage photography.
- Late in April John Morris gave a presentation at a conference in the Ulster Museum on 'Tourism in Geological Landscapes'. He presented a brief overview of developments in Ireland at Glengowla, Shallee, and other areas, and showed some comparative examples on video from Canada, as examples of the potential.
- The Cornish trip at the end of May gave participants a much greater understanding of Cornish engine house technology.
- Thanks are due to those who led walks for Heritage Day: Nick Coy, Des Cowman, Rob Goodbody, Martin Critchley and Eamonn de Stafort.
- We had an excellent packed trip in Sligo and Leitrim led by Eamon Grennan, which has left us hungry for a return visit to Arigna, and Creevelea iron furnace shown to us by Pat Hughes.

* This has since been granted -ED.

- John led a very successful trip to East Clare in October, with added dimensions of the Liscannor flags quarrying operations shown by Paddy Maher.
- As a result of the Web page and other sources we have had many contacts from different countries which we have assisted as much as possible with their research.
- One tool for this was reprinting of Cole's Memoir, for which the Heritage Council kindly provided a grant. Gerry Stanley helped with GSI's Historic Mine Records, and Patrick Wyse Jackson made a major contribution.
- Several people compiling heritage directories have been supplied with information on the Society.
- Martin Critchley spoke at a meeting in Galway of ISCAN (Irish Science Centres Assoc. Network) with the theme of mines and caves as 'Stories in Stone'.
- One key function was providing representation on mining heritage to statutory authorities. We submitted written and oral contributions to Wicklow County Council's draft development Plan. MHSI also made a submission to the National Heritage Plan of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, which was printed in Newsletter 9. One point of interest concerned the idea of landfill tax such as operates in Britain, whereby waste disposal operators can get tax credits for grants to approved environmental bodies. Another key idea was that MHSI wishes to act responsibly and legally, and requires development of codes of conduct.

Treasurer's Report: Martin presented the accounts and a 1999 budget (accompanying below). They were accepted by the meeting. Prop. Nigel Monaghan. Sec. E. de Stafort.

Editor's Report: Des Cowman, being unable to attend sent an email report which was read out. *"Newsletter 10 will be ready in about three weeks. As well as the usual assortment of mine heritage related oddments there will be an updated listing of members and the report of this meeting. If there are any opinions anybody wishes to air through the Newsletter's columns, post, or better still, e-mail them to the editor. Any constructive suggestions for improvement or any articles offered for future Newsletters will no doubt be gratefully received by whoever is destined to edit numbers 11, 12 and 13!"*

Meanwhile the marathon of the Mineral Statistics publication grinds along hitting a continuous series of "walls". Most of them arise from sheer busy-ness but also the difficulty in giving a priority to redoing rather tedious formatting which had electronically

evaporated due to sheer malevolence on the part of my previous computer. However, I am persevering."

Publications: Some discussion followed of the possibility and merits of publishing an **MHSI Journal**. Several opinions were expressed that the Newsletter carries articles that could easily be more suitable for a journal format. The possibility of publishing in existing journals such as the Irish Naturalists' Journal, or the Irish Journal of Earth Sciences were noted with benefits including distribution structures and long term durability. Ruth Delaney reported that the Industrial Heritage Association of Ireland have a similar dilemma and are looking at an arrangement with Wordwell, publishers of Archaeology Ireland etc.. Adrian Pearce reported the SCMC Journal is now self supporting and helps their funds, and he also offered to act as Journal Editor.

The **50 years of Irish Mining** book was discussed by Dave Naylor. It is intended to cover the historical aspects not covered by the IAEG volumes. Editor's will have a page or two of framework covering 5-10 year periods, with 'in your own words' style contributions from people involved. A 2000 publication is anticipated. Need is for some people to be visited with a tape recorder. If a substantial volume results we may be able to get supporting funds. The Heritage Council Publications Grants are one possible source. It is intended to gather a photo archive in the course of trawling for contributions. Nigel Monaghan pointed out the need for consideration of long term care of archives, which is an issue the Society must address. Other publications on stream for 1999 include the **Mineral Statistics** and the **Ecology of Old Mine Sites Proceedings** within the journal *Biology and Environment*.

1999 Committee: As the number of nominations matched the number of positions available, all those who stood for election are deemed elected. The Society formally records thanks to Billy O'Brien for all his contributions. Billy is a highly respected archaeologist and has many commitments - so we have been honoured that he has been prepared to help us so much and for agreeing to continue his input into the future. For 1999, we welcome Loreto Farrell to the Committee, and have no doubt that her experience and knowledge will be of immense benefit to the Society. The 1999 Committee is as follows:

Chairperson	Martin Critchley
Vice Chairperson	Nick Coy
Treasurer	John Morris
Editor	Des Cowman
Secretary	Matthew Parkes
Ordinary Members	Eamonn Grennan, John Hamilton, Loreto Farrell

John formally handed over the Chair to Martin at this point. Martin expressed thanks to John for initiating the Society following discussions in 1995 with SCMC and NAMHO. He then presented a book to John as a token of thanks.

Programme: The programme for 1999 was then outlined (see this newsletter for up to date details). It was noted that Mike Moore was co-ordinating chalet accommodation for the NAMHO Forest of Dean meeting on 24-27th September, which was highly recommended for MHSI members by SCMC.

Site Inventory: It was reported that progress had been difficult, and that as outlined in the newsletter a more hands on approach was being taken to overcome this. Ruth Delaney outlined the Heritage Council's approach to Industrial Heritage Inventory, and noted that two Bills are going through at present; one to make the National Inventory a statutory agency, and the other providing some architectural protection.

Silvermines: Eamon de Stafort reported on the situation in Silvermines where a National Mining Heritage Centre has been funded for development at Shallee. However, nearer the village, the Ballynoe barite pit has been proposed as a waste dumpsite. He concluded with a plea for the Society to oppose the dump proposal. Extensive discussion of the issue followed, including comparisons with Wicklow County Council's use of Ballymurtagh, with a general feeling that the Society had to concentrate on the heritage issues, to assist with informed decisions. Martin concluded that a working group on the issue would be drawn together, to make formal representations to the council on scientific heritage grounds.

Code of Practice: After a lunch break, discussion resumed of the need to develop Codes of Practice, following Billy O'Brien's input on the National Monuments Acts, and ensuing contacts with Dúchas. Mike Moore suggested that we simply adopt the NAMHO guidelines, with amendments for relevant Irish legislation. Ensuing discussion focussed on mineral collecting with Stephen Moreton being concerned that mineral collecting and dealing might be restricted. It was recognised generally that the

situation in the UK does not apply and mineral collectors must conform with Irish legislation and should not only get permission of landowners, but may need to get permission of Dúchas, or other state agencies.

Society Status: Martin then outlined preliminary thoughts about the status of the Society, in that we might continue as we are, or become a limited company or a Trust. The advantages of changing status might include recognition, access to funding and/or charitable status. For example the Irish Naturalists' Journal now have sponsorship as a limited company. Disadvantages include the cost of formation, audit costs, and regulation by articles of association and company law. A Trust was felt to be a better option by many. Martin noted that in 1999 we would need to get the issues clarified and present something to members before next years AGM.

MINET: This EU funded initiative led by the Trevithick Trust was outlined by John Morris. France, Italy, Spain, Ireland and Cornwall are involved with this effort to get official recognition for mine heritage as a cultural feature in Europe. The Geological Survey of Ireland is lead partner in Ireland, but MHSI and several institutional members are involved too.

TICCIH: Martin outlined The International Committee for the Conservation of Industrial Heritage, and recent possible Society involvement. Various other organisations were noted with funding opportunities through the EU Raphael Programme. A joint meeting with IHAI was suggested.

Castlecomer: Errol Delaney briefly outlined the efforts of the Castlecomer Demesne Company Ltd. to develop an interpretative centre based on the coal mining heritage and also the palaeontological interest. They have already raised £150,000 of a target of £400,000. There are also interesting social links with Pennsylvania communities such as Pottsville, where Irish miners emigrated from Castlecomer in 1830-50 period.

The meeting concluded with arrangements for the field meeting at Glenmalure on Sunday 14th February.

AGM: GLENMALURE FIELD EXCURSION

The fates were too strongly tempted - after such a glorious day for the AGM, it was no surprise that Sunday turned out to be "a grand, soft day". But neither that, nor potholes, deterred a group of 25 or so assembling at Barravore Ford to be shown around the remains of the Barravore Mine by the stalwarts from the Shropshire Caving and Mining Club. First trials at this site date from 1846, though its main operational phase occurred between 1865 - 1874. The visible remains include two water wheel powered crusher houses, leats, 7 adits and miners' roads, all described in some detail, particularly the crusher houses, in Nigel Burns and Stuart Chester's guide prepared in

1997. The New Crusher House is in remarkably good condition, the walls and gables relatively intact, despite some minor damage around rotten lintels, and even part of the first roof course above the wall plates is still partially in situ. The building is serviced from 2 levels, an upper level track from the nearby adits and another track at a lower level. Ore was fed into the roller crushers from the upper level, and drawn out at the lower level.

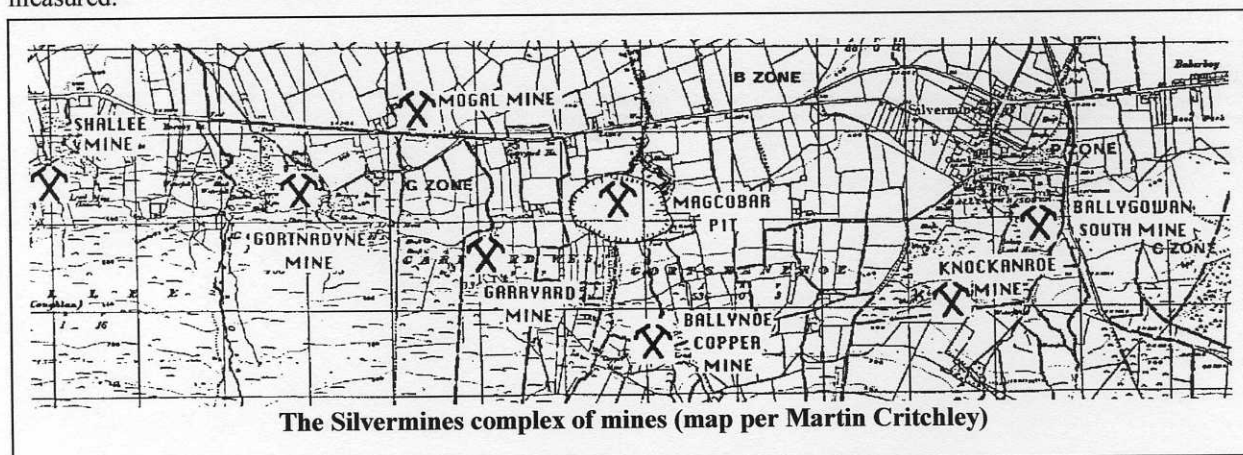
The Old Crusher House is in much poorer condition, with unsupported, partially collapsed walls and lintels, although the wheel pit is intact and very impressive. Despite the more ruinous condition of the building, the arrangement of the roller crusher tensioning apparatus can be deciphered from the position of holes in the north wall. Much discussion focussed upon conservation issues, not least the need to buttress the north wall door lintel which is in imminent danger of collapse, as well as dangers presented by clear felling the forest around both houses (clear felling has been virtually completed around the New Crusher House, while the forest around the Old Crusher House is presently untouched). Thought was also given to trying to encourage Coillte to conserve the mine remains, lay out paths and make them safely accessible to walkers. An effort was also made to record and document features for the mine site inventory, though rain sodden photocopy paper is not easy to write on!

And perhaps you are thinking we forgot it was Valentines Day? - not so the younger members who were intrigued by the amorous endeavours of hoards of frogs! For most of us the day ended pleasantly over a few pints in the Luganure Lodge, but for some, the day was hardly starting. Your new Chairperson, Martin, with Matthew as co-pilot, set off in his new, turbo-charged, low flying car to investigate reports of building work being carried out on the mine site at Luganure. Sure enough, beehive buildings were indeed being constructed - as a set for a film about St. Patrick apparently. No damage appeared to be done to the site and M&M made to leave - only for the wonder-car to breakdown, eventually to be carted back to Dublin, ignominiously, on a low loader.

John Morris

INVENTORY AT SILVERMINES

We assembled in Silvermines Village on that Saturday 3rd March and lead by Eamon de Stafort in fine spring weather proceeded to take measurements of the winding engine immediately south at Ballygowan. From there we surveyed what was called a Zinc Oxide Furnace. While some evidence of this function survived, the building had clearly been reused later for storage. Beside it was an engine house whose function defied us. All was duly measured.



After lunch we looked at the remains of the shortlived Silvermines operation of the early 1950s. Thanks to Martin Critchley's hand-out we were able to make some sense of the footings for the Waelz Furnace there but as the rain suddenly cascaded down we tacitly decided that the remains here were not worth measuring. While in Ballygowan we went for a quick look at the nearby exposure of the Silvermines' fault.

Westwards then to Shallee where Martin decreed that we go underground and see for ourselves the 1980s workings that will soon be transformed into the National Mine Heritage Centre (see Eamon de Stafort's item below). We were all very glad to have seen the entire abandoned working in its "pristine" state and agreed that the exhibited parts will be most impressive. As dusk fell we did a quick tour of the surface remains. It was impossible to get close enough to the fine Cornish engine house on the site to measure it. It had been used as an ore storage bin in the 1980s!

A much diminished group on the Sunday morning set out to traverse the area between Ballygowan and Shallee including the Magcobar pit which American waste disposal experts wish to convert into a dump!

Des Cowman

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

BUNMAHON

Sunday May the 23th will see the launch of the The Bunmahon Initiative, comprising the multiple launches of -

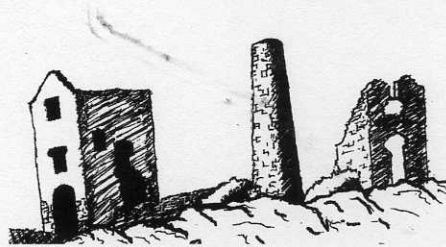
- ⇒ The new BUNMAHON MUSEUM AND RESOURCE CENTRE. Features include *"The Mining Experience"*
- ⇒ A PAMPHLET SERIES introducing the rocks and stones of the *Copper Coast* (Published by the Geological Survey of Ireland).
- ⇒ The first GEOLOGICAL GARDEN in these islands (Also ogham solar alignment).
- ⇒ A series of local WALKWAYS including *"The Copper Mining Trail"*.

All members of MHSI are invited. The draft programme is as follows -

10.30 Assemble at the Slip, Knockmahon (Stage Cove). Field Trip with Dr. John Morris for field trip to Knockmahon mines, its geological context and the newly discovered *"Pipes of Baidhb"* (Waterford's "Giants Causeway").

12.00, Noon, Meet at **Heritage and Resource Centre** for introduction by Mary Galvin and opening by (to be arranged).

13.00 Informal light lunch in **Hayes'** Bunmahon. Introduction to Pamphlets by Dr. John Morris (compiler) and launch by Dr. Peadar McArdle, director Geological Survey of Ireland.



Tankardstown which has been awarded a grant to conserve the engine houses. Pumping engine on left and remains of winding engine on right.

2.30 Reassemble at **Geological Garden**. *"Ogham stones in their lithic and mystical environment"* (to be arranged). *"The Geological Cells"* by Dr. John Morris.

4.15 Introduction to the *Copper Trail*: a walk to Tankardstown conducted by Des Cowman.

6.00 Reception at Bunmahon Lodge (£15 including wine). Address by (to be arranged) on **The Bunmahon Initiative**, its context and implications.

7.30 Symposium *Lithic Assemblages – practical, ritual and mystical significance*. Speakers Peadar McArdle, (to be arranged) and Turlough Cowman (designer of the ogham solar alignment). In Bunmahon Caravan Park.

The latest news from Bunmahon is that the Department of the Environment and Local Government has responded positively to a grant application for the conservation of Tankardstown engine houses. The cost estimated cost was £11,000 and the grant covers half of that. This will allow the engine houses to be both preserved and presented. Its wider significance is that it is the first time there has been a formal recognition by any government department of the need to conserve mining heritage.

MINET

The project was formally launched at a Conference held in Cornwall in late January and attended by representatives from each of the project partners. The state of development of mine heritage centres in each country was reviewed and a forward action plan agreed. This includes reciprocal visits to centres in each country, to Spain in April, to France and Italy in late July and to Ireland in November. The latter visit will also incorporate a two-day Mine Heritage Tourism Conference, building upon and developing the MHSI Workshop already noted in the Programme of Events in the last newsletter. Other "deliverables" include construction of a Web site, a multi-lingual network pamphlet, and development of

the concept such that it can be registered as an official cultural itinerary with the European Institute of Cultural Itineraries.

The first meeting of the Irish "Partner Group" to the project was held in conjunction with the MHSI AGM. This was attended by representatives from various Irish Centres (Glengowla, Avoca, Allihies, Arigna, Shallee) although other centres are also involved (Liscannor, Castlecomer, Bunmahon). The topic was also briefly described at the AGM. The next actions are preparation of an Irish Mine Heritage Centres Information pack to distribute to the MINET Project Group and to make arrangements for Irish representatives to visit Linares in Spain between 22nd and 25th April. It is anticipated that five members of MHSI will travel there. We will host a MINET conference between 2nd and 7th November.

PORTUGAL: "Parque Mineiro Cova dos Mouros", Algarve.

Bored with sun, sand, wine and golf? Ian Elliott (Dunsink Observatory), convenor of the recent ISCAN Workshop in Galway, might have a solution for you if you intend to visit the Algarve. While on holiday there last year, he visited the privately owned "Moorish Mine Park" listed in the title. The park, located in the Foupána Nature Reserve, about an hour's drive north of Faro, extends to some 625 acres and is centered around genuine remains of ancient copper mines dating from the Copper and Bronze Ages. A c. 1km walking tour, led by an English speaking guide, leads the visitor through a series of life size houses, artifacts and figures depicting mining and living conditions from the Stone Age through to the 1930s. While the houses and figures are all reproductions, the open cast pits and shafts are the genuine article.

Ian has provided us with a set of maps, flyers and articles about the Mine Park, so if you require extra information about opening dates, hours, costs, location etc, please contact MHSI Secretary Matthew Parkes for copies. Entrance cost is about IR£4/adult, £2/child and the park is open daily other than Mondays and between Nov. 2 - Dec 13th.

John Morris

ITEMS RECEIVED BY THE SOCIETY

I Stephen Moreton has donated offprints of three papers:

- Moreton, S. 1996. "The Alva Silver Mine, Silver Glen, Alva, Scotland". *The Mineralogical Record*, 27, 405-414.
- Moreton, S., Aspen, P., Green, D.I. and Ingram, S.M. 1998. "The silver and cobalt mineralisation near Alva, central region, Scotland". *Journal of the Russell Society*, 7 (1), 23-30.
- Moreton, S. 1999, "The Silvermines District, County Tipperary, Ireland", *The Mineralogical Record*, 30, 99-106

2 From Seamus Harte, initiator and director of Lady's Well Barytes Mine, per Tom Reilly. Documentation relating to this operation near Clonakilty, Co. Cork from 1954 to 1977. This comprises – 1954-'57, application forms and letters relating to the attempted reopening of the mine. There is also an amusing poem about the mine dated Christmas 1960 by James Harte.

- 1963-65, documentation relating to the period of transfer from the Lady's Well Company to Milchem Incorporated of Houston Texas. This includes some newspaper cuttings.
- 1969-'77, miscellaneous material relating to the Milchem phase of operations.
- A 1994 compilation by Seamus Harte of miscellaneous material relating to the mines including some photographs from Clonakilty.

FOR SALE BY MHSI

The following may be obtained from Dr. Matthew Parkes, Geological Survey of Ireland, Beggars Bush, Dublin 4. Price includes post and package and may be made in pounds Irish or sterling.

COLE, G.A.G., ***Memoir of Localities of Minerals of Economic Importance and Metalliferous Mines in Ireland.*** (£9.50).

WILLIAMS, A.R., ***The Berehaven Copper Mines.*** (£7.50).

NAMHO, ***Mining Heritage Guide.*** (£6)

MHSI, Backcopies of ***Newsletters.*** (£1 each)

3 From Des MacHale of UCC (with second copy per T. Reilly) of a project by Charles J. Harold dated 1997 *The Mineral Galena and its Occurrence in County Cork*. This relates to Ringabella mine in Cork harbour and includes –

- A mineralogy of the mine.
- A brief history of its operation.
- Some photocopied photographs. Added to these are additional photographs which Daphne Pochin Mould took and gave to the editor in the early 1990s.

4 From Alan Williams, ten copies of his book *The Berehaven Copper Mines* for sale, the proceeds going to MHSI. Thank you Alan!

VIEWS

NEWTOWNARDS LEAD MINES

Members may be interested to hear of developments at the Newtownards Lead Mines since the MHSI field visit in 1997. The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland have designated much of the site as an ASSI for geological and botanical reasons. The designated area includes the harmotome-bearing spoil at the North Engine Shaft, which is the source of the material described by Moles and Nawaz (1996) in vol. 15 of the Irish Journal of Earth Sciences. Unfortunately the site is threatened by further removal of spoil for use as fill in the adjoining golf course.

In the final phase of development of the site as 'Whitespots Country Park', the area around the windmill and South Engine Shaft has been "landscaped". Gravel paths and a layer of clay now obscure much of the former land surface, including the dressing floors and tram track foundation at the windmill. Large quarried boulders strategically placed around the site are intended to restrict the area used by motorbike scramblers. In placing the boulders, fresh spoil has been unearthed which is good for showing visitors the ore material. Interpretative boards have also been erected on boulders, but not surprisingly some of these have already been vandalised. The tailings impoundment area is south of the Country Park limit and has been used increasingly by motorbikes. Consequently, devegetation and erosion of the tailings has accelerated and this winter's heavy rains have washed more tailings into the privately-owned pasture South of the site.

Kirsty Kerr, an Environmental Engineering Masters student at Queen's University, did her research project on the tailings in 1998. In 30 samples from the site she found up to 22 weight percent lead carbonate (i.e. cerussite); most tailings samples have 12-15%, and most also contain calcite and dolomite. Her samples contain up to 12% illite and 4.5% montmorillonite. Ubiquitous in the samples are quartz, chlorite and feldspars. Sulphides (including galena) are conspicuously absent. She didn't find any obvious trends in mineralogy, lead content or grain size in vertical profiles or downslope traverses, except that samples from the topmost tailings area are relatively clay-rich. In 1999 I plan to complete the lab work (including analysis of the non-carbonate fraction for lead) and to write up the results for publication.

Norman Moles

RESPONSE FROM STEPHEN MORETON RE MINERAL COLLECTING

It seems that Adrian Pearce dislikes mineral collectors! I'll deal with his accusations in the order in which he makes them.

1. Trespassing mining historians have also caused antagonism. In fact, a well known mining history society's newsletter recently carried the admission that "Most of us explore mines where we know that the landowner is not keen on our being there". People who live in glasshouses...
2. As Ike Wilson pointed out, "Minerals underground can't be appreciated by people above", Besides, Adrian is exaggerating. I presume the Smallcleugh stope he refers to is Elliot's String, where sphalerite is still abundant, if now difficult to collect (e.g. at the backs of vugs or on very tough rock). With such occurrences there will always be some material left behind,
3. Most tales of explosives turn out to be bogus but even if a few are true; why blame everybody for the actions of a few cowboys?

4. I was in Smallcleugh just days before reading Adrian's letter and had no difficulty negotiating the horse level, As for newspaper, most of it swiftly decays in the damp environment anyway.
5. Selling excess specimens enables even more people to get to see them than would be the case if they were simply left behind to rot.
6. If the Snailbeach tip was "seeded" with material from elsewhere then that, in itself, was an act of mineralogical vandalism, Such contamination casts doubts on the true provenance of specimens collected from the site,
7. Minerals on tips soon succumb to the weather - that's why digging through the surface weathered layer is necessary. Even deep within a tip sulphides and arsenides soon oxidise and disintegrate. I have seen many a tip ruined by the corrosive effects of rotting pyrite. Besides, many tips have already been churned up by reprocessing and rabbits which rather limits their interpretative potential and, given enough time, frost, plant roots and rain are just as destructive.
8. Adrian is showing his ignorance of mineralogy. As Ike pointed out, a perusal of the mineralogical literature would swiftly dispel notions of "pinhead" size crystals. Some of the discoveries I had in mind cover entire cliffs! Furthermore, even the "pinhead" specimens are of interest as they cast light on the chemistry of the supergene environment. This is not unimportant as the mobility and precipitation of heavy metals is of great relevance to the disposal of toxic wastes as well as to the mineralogist. The "pinheads" Adrian denigrates at can be just as meaningful to the chemist and mineralogist as worthless rotten wood is to him.

Having answered his criticisms here are some further points to consider:

- I). Many of the minerals new to science found in the British Isles in the last few decades were found by amateurs.
- II). Academics in museums and universities simply have not the time to visit all the sites. Many depend on competent collectors doing the fieldwork and collaborate with them to everybody's benefit.
- III). Every specimen in every museum has been collected, often by amateurs or by commercial dealers. Glengowla mine and Bunmahon Heritage Centre have both benefitted from donations by collectors. If Adrian had his way the specimens would be either left in the ground or abandoned to the weather.
- IV). He overlooks the enormous contributions to mining history made by even the commercial collectors he so despises. Much of the exploration in the Nenthead area has been by collectors and their discoveries range from a cache of immaculately preserved tools in Hudgillburn mine (left undisturbed and immediately notified to mining historians) to the only known intact, underground horse-whim in the Pennines, if not Britain. The importance of this last, astonishing discovery in Scaleburn mine cannot be denied, even by him.
- V) It is somewhat arrogant for the Adrians of this world to expect mineralogy to give way to mining history every time they imagine conflict of interests. What gives such people the right to declare that their discipline should override someone else's? Why should their hobby be allowed to hinder other people's research? Anyone declaring that collecting should be restricted at old mines is making a value judgement about whose subject is the more important. To help them make a more enlightened judgement I would point out that mineralogy gave birth to the sciences of crystallography and chemistry, gave us most of the elements of the periodic table and continues to provide education and enjoyment to thousands of amateur and professional rockhounds of all ages. In contrast, mining history has given us decrepit ruins, rusting scrap and rotten wood and, to many, remains an odd hobby for people in anoraks.
- VI). Many collectors join mining history societies, not to learn their secrets, but out of genuine interest. Mineralogy can be a route into mining history and so should be encouraged. That's how I became interested and the interest is sincere (in spite of my remarks!).

The benefits of mineral collecting vastly outweigh the occasional harm. Mining history societies should welcome collectors, their hobby does complement mining history and, whether Adrian likes it or not, is an interest already shared by many mining historians. Finally, before complaining again about removal of minerals from mines, anti-collectors like himself should consider that without the large-scale removal of minerals from the ground there would be no mines. Their function is the extraction of minerals!

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Moreton
Mineral collector since age 11 and proud of it.

SHALLEE MINE

A week is a long time in politics one often hears. In truth, ten years has not been a long time for the development of a mining heritage centre if we are to take the recent announcement by the Minister for Defence Michael Smith T.D., at Silvermines in September of last year as an example. There were rumblings of developing a heritage centre linked with mining in Silvermines as far back as 1982 when an internal paper was written for Shannonside Tourism shortly before the closure of the Mogul mine. Nevertheless it was not until 1989 that serious consideration was given to such a development. The energetic personnel based at Shannon Development's offices in Nenagh were

reminded by environmentalist John Feehan that 1989 was the 700th anniversary of recorded mining in Silvermines, and John wisely prompted the running of a seminar to mark the occasion. No doubt we have all attended seminars at various times and places and wondered what the result of such deliberations might achieve. If ever a seminar can be truly cited as providing a catalyst for a subsequent development, well then, the *Silvermines 700* seminar in June 1989 must be one. Members of MHSI will be interested to learn that several founder members of the society participated in the seminar: i.e., Martin Critchley, Des Cowman, Eamonn Grennan and Éamonn De Stafort to name but some. It was John Feehan himself who gave the opening lecture, which was chaired by that legend of mining in Ireland, Mr. Ted Russell, chairman of Silvermines Lead and Zinc Co. The then minister for Energy, Michael Smith T.D., officially opened the seminar. And so it was that almost ten years later the same minister visited Silvermines to announce government funding of one million pounds towards the development of a National Mining Heritage Centre at Shallee.

The intervening years saw the commissioning of several studies and reports and the usual ups and downs associated with any development of such magnitude. Currently the funding of £2m is in place and planning permission to develop the centre on a 40-acre site kindly donated by Ennex and Silvermines plc is being sought from North Tipperary Co. Council. The site is situated two miles west of Silvermines village in the ancient barony of Arra and Owney, in the parish of Ballinahinch. Happily for mining enthusiasts there is a poignant link with 19th century mining by the presence of a well-preserved engine house. Stopes of much earlier times are also in evidence on the mountainside. The site is ideal for such a development and offers a plethora of mining ingredients on an accessible site. Indeed the whole mining catchment area stretching from Shallee eastwards to the village of Silvermines two miles away is a satellite mining university in itself. No doubt the big attraction at Shallee will be the underground caverns worked from 1950 to closure in early 1958. Happily for the developers these are conveniently accessible and offer generous headroom throughout. A splendid feature is the cathedral cavern, which dominates the entrance at quarry No 1. Here one gets a dramatic introduction to mining underground and the massive sandstone pillars left by the miners of the 1950s provide a great spectacle.

Visitors will enter the mine by foot at this 260ft. level and traverse westwards to view the various openings and artefacts within the mine. Although the storyline is not yet firmed up, lighting and interpretation will form a major part of the underground tour, which is expected to take about half an hour. The educational aspect of the tour will be paramount, as this is a vital market segment for the success of the development.

Surface Trail:

Almost of equal importance will be the development of a surface trail, which will extend to flora and fauna. Statistics tell us that 40% of visitors to mining sites do not venture underground, so the development of a surface mining trail will also accommodate those not anxious to go underground. The site has excellent potential for an exciting surface trail, which will span several centuries of mining. The site also offers picturesque views of North Tipperary and east Clare. The gorse is profuse and its rich yellow colour for much of the year, coupled with a range of bright wild flowers provide a kaleidoscopic effect that creates a startling site. The environment here is forever changing, dependent on weather conditions, and the rock colour can change dramatically after one shower of rain. The site, when developed, will retain all its character of mining and will also offer hands on experience for "junior" miners. Equipment from other mining sites will be sought and placed in situ. In this respect mining interests from far and near will have an opportunity to contribute to the development and be happy that all contributions of materials and artefacts are contributing to the popularising and fuller understanding of mining over the centuries.

Development:

Shannon Heritage and Banquets, a full subsidiary of Shannon Development, is developing the centre. It is the first such development based on mining heritage by a company that has wide experience in developing, marketing and operating visitor centres throughout the Shannon Region. Well-established visitor attractions within the region include Bunratty Castle and Folk Park, Knappogue Castle, Craggaunowen Castle, all in Co. Clare, King Johns Castle, Limerick City and Lough Gur in Co. Limerick. It will also be the company's first development in North Tipperary. The advantages of having the national mining heritage centre linked with other successful attractive visitor centres is important and means that as part of the company's group marketing strategy Shallee will feature in all the home and overseas marketing promotions, resulting in huge exposure for the product.

Local Benefits:

The development of the centre has been widely welcomed, in particular by the locals who view it as a major boost for the tourism potential of the area. That it is the most indigenous tourism development ever to come to Tipperary is without question and if one were to write a script for the selection of an appropriate mining site for such a development, well then it would undoubtedly be Shallee. The spin off will be endless and provide an impetus for further significant tourism development in the area. Situated on the gateway to the lovely Sliabh Felim mountains, which themselves offer an impressive collection of megalithic tombs that give credence to earlier bronze-age mining

in the area, this development will provide a welcome boost for further tourism activity in North Tipperary especially. Its adjacency to Nenagh and Limerick and its convenient access from the N7 positions it well for high visitor numbers. Termed as a Millennium Project by Minister Smith, it has been a long time coming, but well worth the wait.

Éamonn De Stafort MA.

REVIEWS

Grenville A.J. Cole, *Memoir of Localities of Minerals of Economic Importance and Metalliferous Mines in Ireland* (MHSL 1998 reissue; price £8 to members).

The republication by the Mining Heritage Society of Ireland of Grenville A.J. Cole's seminal study on the mines of Ireland is a commendable achievement. Cole's "MEMOIR" is an erudite review and analysis of the mineral deposits of economic value in Ireland at the turn of the century. Given that this work was commissioned by the British government around 1916, its subsequent publication in 1922 by the new Cumann na nGaedheal government was courageous and prescient. Since its original publication, Cole's "Memoir" has become an invaluable reference book for geologists, industrial historians and those interested in mining heritage in general. Indeed, the cornucopia of information therein merits interest from economic historians also.

What makes this particular publication so attractive is Cole's engaging literary style, making what could easily have been a tedious chore into an enjoyable literary experience. Supplementing the original text is a series of modern photographs of what presently remains of those mining endeavours. These relics, which dot the Irish landscape from Donegal to Waterford, are reminders of Ireland's diverse mining activities during the nineteenth century. More importantly, they are perhaps the only remaining physical testament to the long-forgotten transient mining communities that toiled, often in deplorable conditions, in the extraction of copper, lead, iron and other minerals.

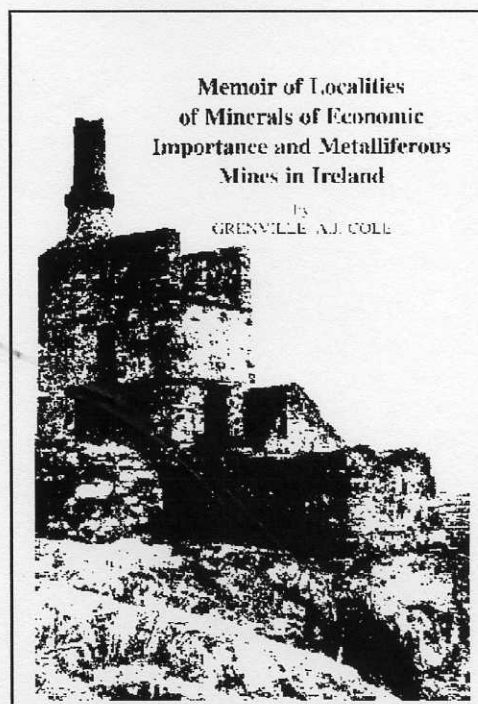
This publication is a timely and welcome reminder of the diverse and complex nature of Ireland's nineteenth century socio-economic infrastructure. As such, it is a significant addition to our ability to understand this aspect of our heritage.

John M. Hearne

Social Approaches to an Industrial Past: Archaeology and Anthropology of Mining, edited by A. Bernard Knapp, Vincent C. Pigott and Euginia W. Herbert (Routledge, 1998). Selling Agents, Oxbow Books, Park End Place, Oxford, OX1 1HN.

However fascinating the title, at £55st (close to £70Ir) your editor decided not to purchase this 306 page book from the Oxbow's *Book News* listing. If any of our members have access to a copy perhaps they might review it or summarise it for *Newsletter* 11. Oxbow's précis of it is as follows –

A collection of papers addressing the social context of mining communities, focussing on the people rather than on the process of mining. The essays span a period of over 4,500 years and are international in focus. They use archaeological, ethnographic and ethnohistorical records to extract a human history from a context – which is essentially transitory, exploring themes such as gender, power and labour exploitation, imperialism and colonialism, and production and technology. Contributors include Stephen Shennan, Robert M. Ehnrenreich, Ian Shaw, Carol Mayer and Susan Lawrence.



Taking Stock of Ireland's Industrial Heritage (Proceedings of a conference held at Tailors Hall, Dublin, 30th November 1996: Industrial Heritage Society of Ireland, 1998).

This 44-page booklet contains a great deal of information. Who would have thought, for instance that there are an estimated hundred thousand industrial heritage sites in Ireland. In county Cork sixteen mining complexes have been identified. The articles cover mainly Dublin, Cork, Kilkenny and Northern Ireland. The main focus throughout is on the methodology of surveying sites.

Cornish Engine Web sites

How do Cornish Engines work? A video on this topic is available from MHSI. However, I suspect that it still perplexes many of us notwithstanding the Society trip to Cornwall last year learn a little more about the innards of these beasts. Indeed, an explanation aimed at helping Jill and Joe Public understand the machines is still largely unavailable. Musings upon this at the AGM has resulted in Peter Eggleston bringing to our attention two web sites, which present animated cartoons showing how they work.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/dibnah>

The first, aimed fair and square at Joe/Jill Public, is on the Fred Dibnah page presented by the BBC. Fred's love of anything steam driven is well known to anyone who has ever watched his TV programmes, and on this page two steam engine animations are presented, with more to come. The Cornish Beam Engine is covered in a full colour, fully animated diagram which clearly shows the sequence of power strokes and associated opening and closing of equilibrium and condenser valves etc. For the bravehearts, there is a digital jigsaw which allows you to construct a machine by identifying each component in its correct sequence. Get it right and Fred gives you the thumbs up; get it wrong - well, I'll let you find out for yourselves! Its a great site, well laid out and easily intelligible by the uninitiated.

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/6914/seffe.htm>

You would certainly be forgiven for wondering how a web site with Athens and the Acropolis in its title could possibly have anything to do with Cornish Engines. But how wrong you would be - because, sure enough, it does indeed contain yet another animated presentation. This is, however, a little bit more technical, as is the accompanying text. However, it nicely complements the first site - providing that little bit more detail which might give you sufficient confidence to delve into the specialist literature.

Both these sites provide an excellent introduction to what is a very technical topic. Indeed, for those intending to travel to the Kew Steam Museum in September for the re-scheduled tour by Ken Brown, a little preparatory homework on these sites would be time extremely well spent. Our thanks to Peter Eggleston for bringing both web sites to our attention.

John Morris

www.iarecordings.org

Peter Eggleston writes, "*We have a new 'feature' page on our website which deals with Glengowla lead mine. To see it, go to our home page www.iarecordings.org, click on 'Features...' or 'Feature Pages' and then click on 'Glengowla Lead Mine'.*"

Membership List 1999

MINING HERITAGE SOCIETY OF IRELAND

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	1998	1997
INCOME		
Subscriptions	£1,380.95	£1,257.61
Corporate	£0.00	£0.00
Workshop Fees	£18.00	£441.00
Book Sales	£5.50	£52.66
Donations+Misc	£0.00	£16.00
Bank Interest	£1.47	£0.00
Total Income	£1,405.92	£1,767.27
EXPENDITURE		
Insurance (98-99)	£249.59	£232.14
Postage & Stationary	£540.50	£389.26
Speakers Expenses	£45.00	£99.75
NAMHO book	£0.00	£92.79
Bank Fees	£31.49	£29.88
Workshop Expenses	£0.00	£226.12
Subs.	£41.98	
Total Expenditure	£908.56	£1,069.94
Surplus for the year	£497.36	£697.33

Martin Critchley 12th Feb. 1999
Treasurer, MHSl

BALANCE SHEET

	1988	1997
CURRENT ASSETS		
AIB Current A/C	£ 375.59	£ 1,398.07
AIB Deposit A/C	£ 1,901.47	
Sundry debtors	£ 0.00	£ 56.63
Cash in Hand	£ 0.00	£ 11.00
Stock (NAMHO books)	£ 50.00	£ 55.00
	£ 2,327.06	£ 2,327.06
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Sundry Creditors	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
Pre-payments for 1999	£ 500.00	£ 175.00
	£ 500.00	£ 175.00
NETT ASSETS		
	£ 1,827.06	£ 1,827.06
FINANCED BY		
Balance at 1/1/98	£ 1,279.70	£ 593.37
Surplus for year	£ 497.36	£ 697.33
Stock (NAMHO books)	£ 50.00	£ 55.00
	£ 1,827.06	£ 1,827.06