

Mining History Society of Ireland

Cumann Stair na Mianadóireachta

Newsletter

No. 3. December 1996

PROGRAMME 1997

[Dates prefixed with # are provisional. Further notification will be sent to members].

- **8th Feb.**: Annual General Meeting in Geological Survey Offices, Beggars Bush, Dublin 4 at 11.00 am (see enclosures with this Newsletter). A review of some of the activities of the Society will be given including keynote slide presentations by Rob Goodbody on Ballycorus and video presentation on Killarney by Peter Eggleston (hopefully!).
- **8th March.**: Field meet at Ahenny Slate Quarries, Co. Tipperary lead by Dr. John Colthurst. Meet 12 noon outside church at Ahenny village, off Kilkenny - Carrick on Suir road [S412292].
- **12th-13th April.**: Field Meet at Allihies Co. Cork with Mr. Alan Williams (subject to availability) and Dr. D. Tietzsch-Tyler. (Details later).
- **3rd-4th May.**: Weekend workshop in Old Glengowla, Oughterard, Co. Galway on (i) Surveying surface remains; (ii) Clearing mine workings. It is hoped that out of (i) techniques will be developed for surveying other mines and that (ii) will represent the commencement by members of the society in on-going work there. (Details later).
- **16th May.**: Field meet at Newtownards and Conlig mines, Co. Down with Dr. Norman Moles. (Lecture and site visit will precede the joint IAEG and IMM conference on *Gold in Ireland*.) Meet at 11.00 A.M. on Fri. 16th at the Somme Heritage Centre car park in Whitespots County Park on the Bangor road about 2 kms north of Newtownards [J 349 376]
- **# late May/June.**: Workshop in Avoca, Co. Wicklow on the interpretation of architectural details in Cornish engine houses with Mr Kenneth Brown.
- **11-14th July.**: NAHMO conference (site/underground visits, lectures, etc.) near Matlock in Derbyshire. Members of the MHSI are welcome to attend.
- **7th Sept.**: National Heritage Day. (Details will be notified).
- **# early Oct.**: Workshop on the ecology of mining sites (fauna and flora).
- **1st November (Sat.)**: Talk by Ron Callender - "Gold in the Hills".

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EDITORIAL

As is apparent from the adjoining programme the MHSI's second year in existence will have some practical dimensions. Following our workshop at Old Glengowla mine it is hoped to begin a survey of all mining sites in Ireland. Martin Critchley has drawn up a draft record sheet in *MS Access* so that information can be kept on a standardised database. Members will be contacted anon about surveying the mines that interest them.

This recording of sites should also reveal threats to surviving mine structures, waste tips etc.. Some of those threats are already too apparent as the letters on page four reveal.

Preparations are proceeding for a joint publication on the Mineral Statistics of Ireland in conjunction with the Northern Mines Research Society. More specific details will be given in the next *Newsletter* Items for that *Newsletter* are now invited. Looking forward to hearing from you!

DES COWMAN, "KNOCKANE", ANNESTOWN, CO. WATERFORD, Ph. 051 396157. E-MAIL dcowman@iol.ie

SOCIETY NEWS

LOGO

Your committee, after some deliberation, have decided on Nick Coy's amended design above as the logo of the society. The motif of windlass, shovels, picks and powder horn is based on the "Cronebane tokens" issued by the Associated Irish Mining Company who worked the eastern side of the Avoca Valley between 1797 and 1811. This will be used on letter headings and future Newsletters.

PRESENTED TO THE SOCIETY

1. Mike Moore of the Shropshire Caving and Mining Club, having watched our chairman John Morris videoing in the underground quarry at Valentia has kindly presented the Society with their Club's publication, *Underground Video Techniques* by Peter Eggleston (1996)!
2. A copy of *Northern Miner* (Toronto, 12th Sept. 1968) with anon article, "Mining surges ahead in Ireland: Production begins at Mogul's Silvermines Project", courtesy of Peter Powell.
3. A gift of surveying equipment per John Morris comprising a Fennel Kassel teodolite, a plane table, a tripod and ranging pole. These will be available to members conducting surveys of individual sites with tuition in their use to be given at the workshop in Old Glengowla.
4. Copy of *Tommy Turnbull - a miner's life* by Joe Robinson (Tups Books, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1996) per Judy Robinson. (See review below).

MHSI ON INTERNET.

The address for the time being is -

[HTTP://WWW.iol.ie/~dcowman/mhsi.htm](http://www.iol.ie/~dcowman/mhsi.htm) text.htm

MEMBERSHIP - Welcome to new members -

Sqn. Ldr. A.E. Birt.
The Wheelwright's,
Fornham All Saints,
Bury St. Edmunds,
Suffolk, IP28 6JS.

Ms. Eileen Bowen.
27 Royal Oak Drive,
Leegomery,
Telford,
Shropshire, TFI 4SS.

Mr. Michael Carragher &
family.
11 Ferndale,
Navan, co. Meath.

Mr. Andrew Cassells.
2 Osborne drive,
Bangor,
Co. down BT20 3DH

Mr. S. Chester.
234 Wollaton Road,
Nottingham NG8 1HA.

Mr. Gerard Clear.
Boyne Road.,
Navan, Co. Meath.

Mr. N.N. Davin.
"Aswan"
36 Glenwood,
Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

Stephen Dowds
8 Cremore Crescent
Dublin 11
Phone: 01 8341717
Interests: various, including
Mountcharles sandstone
mines, Co. Donegal.

Mr. Fred Hammond.
75 Locksley Park,
Belfast BT10 OAS.

Mr. Alastair Lings
Kingsgate House,
Wittersham, Tenterden,
Kent. TN30 7NS

Mr. Patrick Long.
Monaghan County Museum,
Monaghan.

Mr. Tony Lowes & family.
Allihies,
Beara,
Co. Cork.

Ms. Rowena Magdan.
Greenfoot Barn,
Low Bentham,
via Lancaster. LA27EQ.

Mr. Redmond Morley.
c/o tara Mines,
Knockumber Rd.,
Navan, Co. Meath.

Mr Matt Murphy,
Sherkin Island,
Co. Cork.

Dr. William Nolan.
24 Kennington Rd.,
Templeogue, Dublin 6W.

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Peart.
Bridge House'
Straffan, Co. Kildare.

Mr. Brian Walker.
Tara Mines Engineering Dept..
Navan, Co. Meath.

Ms Tara Walsh.
Willow Tree Cottage,
Porridgetown East'
Oughterard, Co. Galway.

Mr. Richard Watson.
Marble Arch Caves,
Florencecourt,
Co. Fermanagh. BT91 1EW.

Mr. Terry Whitaker.
Greenfoot Barn,
Low Bentham,
via Lancaster. LA2 7EQ.

Christopher J Williams
65 Stancliffe Avenue
Marford, Wrexham
LL12 8LN. Wales.
Phone: (01978) 852601

Change of address

Nick Southwick.
2 Prospect Cottages,
Snailbeach,
Nr. Minsterley,
Shropshire. SY5 0LR
Telephone (01743) 790189

Address correction:

Mr & Mrs Dermot Mooney
24 Ailesbury Grove
Dundrum, Dublin 16

Apologies to:

Mr C.J William's (correctly of) 65 Strancliffe Avenue, Marford, Wrexham, LL12 8LN. (The address given in Newsletter I was that of his bank!).

Ph. 01978 - 852601.

Interests: Metal mining in Wales, especially the north-east. Retired County Archivist of Clwyd. Publications include -*Metal Mines of North Wales* (1980); *Industry in Clwyd* (1986); *The Lead Mines of the Alyn Valley* (1987); *Great Orme Mines* (1995)

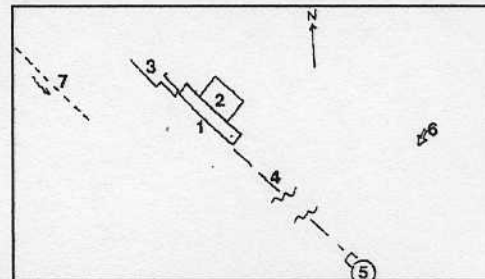
ARISING FROM NEWSLETTER II: LETTERS.

VAN DIEMENS LAND MINE BUILDINGS

- (i) Mr. Nigel Barnes of Ard Mhoin, Ballyogan, Barefield, Ennis, Co. Clare advances the following "Ashlar construction was used for the founds of machinery --. Each of the square cavities (called "crow holes") will be just large enough for a man lying on his back with a spanner. A vertical hole will be found descending into the top of each cavity into which the holding-down bolt for the engine would have been introduced. From inside the crow hole a washer and nut were screwed onto the lower threaded end of each bolt"

Mr. Barnes suggests that discarded chisels were used for tightening the nuts providing the origin of the name "crow bar".

- (ii) The **Mining Company of Ireland's** bi-annual reports indicated that they spend £2084 on an incline railway there between June 1869 and December 1870. Alternatively, could the holes in the picture have held cables for lowering and hauling wagons from the mine down to the dressing floor? If so, how would the winding mechanism have worked? [Ed.]



- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Water Wheel | 2. Crusher house |
| 3. Balance bob | 4. Flat rods |
| 5. Shaft | 6. Adit |
| | 7. Leat |

- (iii) Peter Clayton has surveyed Van Diemen's Land and interprets them as shown in the adjoining sketch plan. He would therefore consider the building illustrated in Newsletter II as being a water-driven crusher house

CORNISH ENGINE HOUSES - KILBRICKEN, COUNTY CLARE

Mr Barnes comments on Kenneth Brown's listing for Kilbricken stating that his own measurement of the main engine house there was 48 inches rather than 50. He points to the poor construction of this engine house particularly the load bearing bob-wall supporting the beam This was too thin and constructed of rubble stone which is strange considering the abundance of local limestone. Not surprisingly it has collapsed.

