



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 50

DECEMBER 2010

Iontaobhas Oidhreachta Mianadóireachta na hEireann

Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland

MHTI PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2011

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

PROVISIONAL:

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| 13 Jan, Thurs | MHTI Board Meeting |
| 10 March, Thurs | MHTI Board Meeting |
| <i>14th March, Monday</i> | <i>Lecture: Tunnelling in Ireland, Past & Present</i> |
| <i>Dr Trevor Orr (TCD Civil Engineering), 19.30 Lecture Theatre, 22 Clyde Road, Dublin 4</i> | |
| <i>The AGM and general meeting of NAMHO, 12th March 2011 at Alderley Edge in Cheshire.</i> | |
| 12 May, Thurs | MHTI Board Meeting |
| 14-15 May | MHTI AGM, Dublin + Fieldtrip to Lough Dan |
| June Date TBC | Fieldtrip: The peripheral mines of Avoca, Des Cowman |
| 14 July, Thurs | MHTI Board Meeting |
| 15 July, Friday | Fieldtrip (Kingscourt Gypsum Mine, including underground- TBC) |
| 16-17 July, Sat-Sun | Fieldtrip (Monaghan/Armagh mines, John Morris |
| johnmorris(at)iol.ie) | |
| <i>NAMHO 2011 Shrewsbury, UK. 29th July – 1st August 2011</i> | |
| http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/2011/ | |
| 20-28 August, Heritage Week (If groups in Cork, Waterford and Wicklow will be running events we will probably run a meeting in the Benbulbin or Connaught Coalfield area) | |
| 8 Sept, Thurs | MHTI Board Meeting |
| 10-11 Sept, | Fieldtrip (Cavan and Fermanagh, Alastair Lings) |
| 10 Nov, Thurs | MHTI Board Meeting |
| 12 Nov | NAMHO Council, Cleveland, UK + informal field trips |

EDITORIAL

Is 50 a number to celebrate over 49 or 51? People seem to like celebrating round numbers like 100 or a 100, so perhaps we should regard 50 as a bit of a milestone in this newsletter series. It is accompanying Journal 10, also a bit of a milestone in itself. The journal has continued steadily from the first edition, 10 years ago, albeit a little late each year, but it has continued. It builds gradually into a valuable resource of mining history and heritage information. The topical and geographical spread of contributions is ever expanding, with plenty of room for more.

We have had it printed by Leinster Leader, now operating as Naas Printing Limited, since it began, and they have always delivered a quality product for us. Now with new machines, they can provide the same quality at a cheaper price, making some savings in our annual budget. So to celebrate, please look at the invoice enclosed with your copy of the journal and pay for 2011 membership as soon as possible. We need clarity on members for the prompt payment of the BCA insurance scheme, and thank you for your continued support and membership.

Matthew

Contact Matthew Parkes for information 087-122 1967 or mparkes@museum.ie

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WWW.MHTI.COM

2011 subscriptions

The Board is currently looking at rationalizing some membership categories to be more transparent, and we hope to reduce the membership fees in future. For 2011, the rates remain the same as in previous years, and an invoice is attached with your copy of the journal (and as an email attachment with this newsletter).

For the smooth operation of the insurance scheme, we would ask you to return your membership fees as soon as possible after receiving this. We must advise you that your membership fee includes the element specifically to pay for public liability insurance through the BCA scheme. Until you receive your card, you are not insured, unless we have advised you of cover being in place for meetings or trips early in the year.

Unfortunately despite our best efforts, weather and circumstances have delayed the 2010 journal from its target date of November, so we hope you can help us by responding promptly with your 2011 subs.

News from Castlecomer

<http://www.discoverypark.ie/index.html>

See the Castlecomer Discovery park website to sign up for occasional newsletters with details of events. Please note the main Footprints in the Coal exhibition will be closed for brief periods during some of these events at Christmas.

Area Contacts

It was decided to establish a system of Area Contacts. "These would be local activists who would be a point of information about their mining region, a champion for MHTI in their district and a source of information from their local network that could feed into the Newsletter."

If you have a keen interest in your local area, or want to provide local assistance in organising MHTI events, or want to act as the "eyes and ears" of the MHTI, please get in touch with any director. (For Matthew Parkes, see Editorial. For Alastair Lings, e-mail: alastairlings@yahoo.co.uk
Home: (Scotland +44) 01896 757861
Mobile: +44 7763 850087

Heritage Week 2011

This week is from 20th to 28th August in 2011. Please let us know if you are organizing any mining related events such as guided walks, open days, talks, films, music, art exhibitions etc so that we can publicise them to our members and to the wider community.

Archaeological Research Seminar / Workshops

As a part of the Research Framework project looking at the archaeology of the extractive industries - mining and quarrying - there will be a series of seminar / workshops around England to examine the various specialist themes within the project. The first on the subject of **bulk minerals (stone and aggregates)** and was held on 26 November at the National Stone Centre near Wirksworth in Derbyshire. Full details are available from Ian Thomas at the National Stone Centre, tel: 01629 824833, e-mail: ian@nationalstonecentre.org.uk

On Saturday 19 February, at the National Coal Mining Museum for England, Caphouse Colliery, near Wakefield there will be a further seminar looking at the archaeology of **coal, clay and ironstone**. The event will give participants the opportunity to discuss their work, to learn what others are doing and exchange ideas. For example, over the last few years a number of mining history interest groups have been investigating early steam engine sites associated with the coal industry. The work they are doing has the potential to expand our knowledge of early developments in pumping techniques. Sharing the results can help interpret the findings, adding value to the work and drive research forward. If you are involved in similar work on coal, clay or iron mining, then make sure you attend.

Other seminars on lead, tin, copper and slate working are also planned for the Winter of 2011 at venues in the South-West, Cumbria and Derbyshire. Details will be circulated widely and posted to the Research pages at the National Association of Mining History Organisations' website - www.namho.org

For more details contact Peter Cloughton - p.f.cloughton@exeter.ac.uk - or Phil Newman - projectofficer@namho.org

Archive day 29th Nov 2010

Despite the snowy weather on the day, which made it impossible for several people to attend, we still had an excellent turnout of 19 people in all, and considered a wide range of aspects of the collected archival material that the MHTI has accumulated. My special thanks go to all the speakers including Damien Burke (Irish Jesuit Archive), Phelim Lally (Geological Survey of Ireland), Nigel Monaghan (National Museum of Ireland), Des Cowman (MHTI), Mary Clark (Dublin City Archivist), Helen Hewson (National Archives), John Morris (GSI/MHTI/Copper Coast Geopark) and Tom Quinlan (National Archives). Further developments on this topic will be covered in the next newsletter, as an MHTI collections policy and strategy is developed for consideration by members.

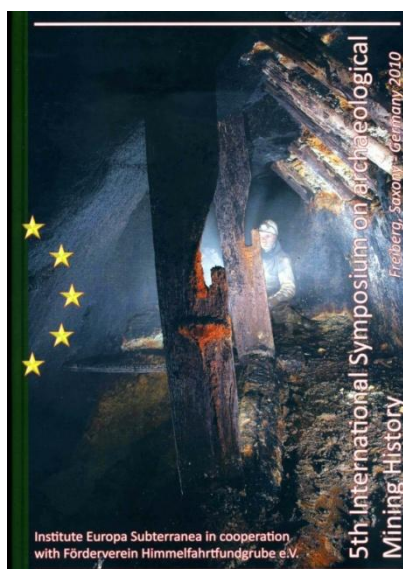
NCB Collection Vol 1: Portrait of a Miner

From intense drama-documentaries and humorous safety films to cine-magazines and instructional films, this unique collection of work from the National Coal Board Film Unit offers insight into the domestic, community and working life of miners and their families and testifies to the incredible effect that coal mining has had on British life. (UK, 1947-1978, various directors, 368 minutes)

http://filmstore.bfi.org.uk/acatalog/info_13726.html

It is available for £18.99 at the current rate of VAT.
Alastair Lings

Mining Archaeology book



We have recently received the above book on exchange from the Instituta Europa Subterranea. It is a very fine production with a lot of interesting and well illustrated papers. If you wish to borrow it contact Matthew Parkes (see editorial). If any are still available (most copies are for Symposium participants or pre-ordered) you may be able to get one from:

publicatiebureau.ies@gmail.com

Institute Europa Subterranea

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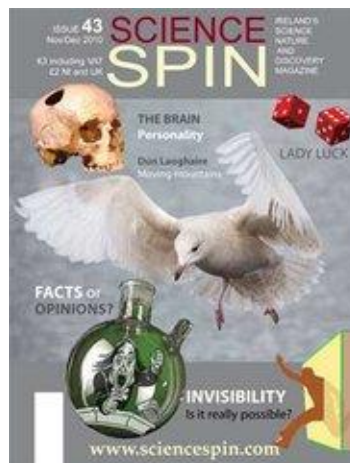
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Science Spin Moving Mountains

Issue 43 of Science Spin contains an article "Moving Mountains" (p8-11) by Tom Kennedy, about the quarrying and construction of Dun Laoghaire Harbour. It's based on a book by Rob Goodbody called "The Metals" published by Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.



<http://www.sciencespin.com/>

Book Review: Barytes Mining in Benbulbin.

Published by the author Gerry Foley, 2009. This 48 page, A5 size book bears a striking photograph of Ben Bulbin on the front cover, and is illustrated throughout with photos and diagrams. There is much of interest in the book especially on the four barytes mills and the various transport arrangements including a 250 metre long wooden tube, three generations of aerial ropeway and two linked narrow gauge railways.

There are some excellent photos in the book, but some of the illustrations are confusing or unnecessary. For example the main photo on p43 has a photo of a dump truck superimposed on it; and the three maps on p34 & p35 (facing) are oriented in three different directions.

Apart from these minor niggles I was inspired by the book, and I am sure that it will appeal to local people and visitors to the area, and will help readers appreciate their mining heritage. Copies are available from geraldfoley@eircom.net for 10 Euro including P&P. Alastair Lings

The Metal Mines of West Cork by Diane Hodnett

Some copies of this book are still available to members at the bargain price of €18 or £16 (postage is €3.00 in Ireland). Note: this price is a special offer to members, it will cost you at least 25 euro in bookshops]

MOURNE MOUNTAINS VISIT MACHINERY REMAINS AT CARR'S FACE QUARRY

On 17th October 2010 Alastair Lings led a small MHTI group on a gentle 16 km stroll into the Mourne Mountains, starting from the Bloody Bridge car park 4 km South of Newcastle, County Down. Our first point of call was to Carr's Face Quarry at Grid Reference J367262 on the North slopes of Chimney Rock Mountain. The granite quarried is believed to have been used in the construction of The Mourne Wall. This note describes the machinery remains at or near this quarry.

The King Post and jib of a large Scotch derrick were lying, connected, on the floor, with the two timber back stays still attached to the King Post, but sawn off at what would have been their lower ends. Thus the method of anchoring (or weighting) the back stays was not obvious. The King Post had both the hoist drum and the derricking (or luffing) drum intact. Power for the derrick was by hand. The handle for the hoist drum was large enough for two persons to use, and operated through a 12:37 gear reduction, followed by a 12:75 reduction. The steel cable from the hoist drum was laid alongside the 8.5m (28 feet) jib, but not reeved through the pulley at the jib's upper end. Instead, it was led for some tens of metres down the incline; it was not clear why. The luffing drum, of cycloidal profile, had no cable attached, and the luffing cable had been severed at its attachment point near the top of the jib.

A large winch was in evidence on the quarry floor; it may have been used to drag blocks of granite to within reach of the derrick.

From the NW corner of the quarry floor a 3-rail incline (clearly shown on the 1:25000 Mourne Country map) went obliquely down the hillside for 420m. The remains of a brake wheel were visible near the top of the incline (about 7 or 8 m back from the "crimp") but it was not clear if it had been originally at a height (as was normal practice in North Wales slate quarries), or was originally installed at ground level (or in a shallow pit). The twin sheave for the incline haulage ropes at the crimp perhaps indicates that the brake wheel was in a shallow pit. The 3 rails became four approaching the half-way mark, so that the two trolleys could pass. Using 3 rails rather than 4 for most of the incline would save not only the cost of the fourth rail, but save on sleeper costs and mean that a narrower ledge cut from the hillside would suffice.

There were remains of a smaller derrick at the foot of the incline, used presumably to unload the granite on to some other form of transport. Also present in the long grass was one tram or trolley. It was very substantially built, mainly of timber, and a further search of the hillside may reveal its twin.

A full survey using a GPS device, a tape and a chain could be rewarding. One puzzle is the absence of any rollers on the wooden sleepers of the incline, nor were there any signs that any had been attached. Only a single cable wear mark on one sleeper was spotted by this author.



Carr's Face Quarry



King Post and jib of derrick



Alastair Lings on the winch



Upper end of 4-rail passing loop



Incline brake drum remains



Head of derrick's 28-foot jib



Twin sheaves at head of incline



Derailed tram



Looking down the 3-rail incline

"crimp" : the top of an incline where the rails are sharply bent to become horizontal

John Hopkinson 29 October 2010
(e-mail johncarnforth@yahoo.co.uk)

Lachtmurragha Mine

This mine got a brief mention in NL31 (Martin Bundy, Cornish Miner in Ireland). During August 2010 a small group of MHTI members attempted to descend the 300 metre cliff of Glink on the spectacular North Mayo coast (F 949 428). The first 200 m of descent was on steep (45 degree) grass and heather down to the remains of a path. Further access was prevented by very loose cliffs. The vein was seen but no workings were visible. Another attempt to get to the mine, by sea, may be made in early August. For more info please contact Alastair Lings. Photos by Brian Jones.



Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

PRONI's Balmoral Avenue site is closed to facilitate their move to new premises at Titanic Quarter, Belfast, which will open on 30 March 2011. <http://www.proni.gov.uk/>

Patrick Leahy's Maps of the Barony of Slieveardagh 1818 and of the Killenaule Coal District 1824

A paper on the above topic, originally published in 2008, but only recently coming to my attention, is in the Tipperary Historical Journal. The paper by Arnold Horner of UCD's Geography Department goes into great detail, thoroughly researched and well illustrated, about two important historical maps. A wealth of mining data is presented on the maps and explored in this paper. Whilst it would have been desirable to have had this paper in our own journal, the fact that it is published is an excellent development and a copy of the journal may be borrowed by members from Matthew Parkes (see editorial).