



# NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 56

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Iontaobhas Oidhreacht Mianadóireachta na hEireann

Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland

## MHTI PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2012

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

**2012**

- 8 June, Friday *Copper Coast Geopark Workshop on animation of mining at Tankardstown Copper Coast Geopark Workshop on children of mining. Contact Joe Greene: 353 (0)87 7571392 E-mail: joegreeneml@gmail.com*
- 9-10 June Sat/Sun *Copper Coast Geopark Weekend on archaeology. Contact Joe Greene as above.*
- 23-24 June (**Changed date**) *Britannia Mine, Snowdonia (Welsh Mines Society)*
- 29 Jun -1 Jul Fri-Sun *NAMHO Annual Conference, Alderley Edge*
- 12 July, Thurs MHTI Board Meeting**
- 14-15 July, Sat/Sun Allihies. Leader Theo Dahlke [See inside for programme]**
- 7 August *Belfast Naturalists Field Club Tuesday "Stones and the City", a building stones walking tour from Belfast Harbour to the City Hall (Meet at Sinclair Seaman's Church at 7pm)  
[http://www.bnfc.org.uk/New\\_Site/Programme.html](http://www.bnfc.org.uk/New_Site/Programme.html)*
- 18-26 August *Heritage Week Events at Avoca, Glendalough, Bonmahon. Allihies Copper Mining Museum free on 26 August  
<http://www.heritageweek.ie/index.php/whats-on/event-search>*
- 13 Sep, Thurs MHTI Board Meeting**
- 15-16 Sept, Sat-Sun Metal mines of Donegal, Fieldtrip leader Alastair Lings**
- 21-24 Sept (**extended date**) *Forest of Dean, Gloucester (Welsh Mines Society)*
- 27 Oct, Saturday *Into the Earth: the archaeology of darkness conference Institute of Technology, Sligo. Includes mining talks  
<http://www.archaeologyofdarkness.com/>*
- 9 November, Friday MHTI Board Meeting**
- 10 November Sat *NAMHO Board Meeting, Shropshire*
- 2013**
- 16 March, Sat *NAMHO Council meeting, English Midlands*

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WWW.MHTI.COM

# MHTI MEMBERS' BUSINESS

We plan to issue the next Newsletter in mid-August. If you have any contributions, please contact the Editor before the 1st August. Thank you.

Contact **Matthew Parkes** for newsletter contributions 087-122 1967 or [mparkes@museum.ie](mailto:mparkes@museum.ie)

## Report: AGM for 2011

The Annual General Meeting for 2011 was held in the Lorimer Room at the Castlecomer Discovery Park on the 19th May.

Alastair Lings (Chairman) summarised the achievements in the year as four Newsletter (36 pages in total), one Journal (112 pages), and four fieldtrips. The fieldtrips were to Lough Dan, the peripheral mines of Avoca, Kingscourt Gypsum Mine and the mines of Cavan and Fermanagh, and finally to Ballycorus and Killiney Mines in November.

After the last fieldtrip an Extraordinary General Meeting was held, and a discussion took place on the future direction of MHTI. These deliberations were reported to members in Newsletter 55 (April 2012). During the year the Board has simplified membership and insurance categories, improved the membership database and created a page on Facebook. Alastair thanked Board members for their efforts during the year, and everyone who had helped with events or contributed to MHTI publications.

Nigel Monaghan (Company Secretary) tabled full audited accounts. Income during the year was €4700 which slightly exceeded an expenditure of €4400. At the end of the year MHTI had €18000 in the bank. At the elections Alastair, Nigel and Matthew Parkes were re-elected to the Board, and the appointment of Barry Flannery and Stephen Callaghan was ratified. Tasks for the Board during the coming year include providing a new website, and considering adoption of the Governance Code for voluntary organisations. If you would like a copy of the draft minutes of the AGM, please contact Nigel Monaghan (see back page).

## Bronze Age Mining in Allihies and the Beara Peninsula 14th to 15<sup>th</sup> July 2012

**This fieldtrip will examine the Bronze Age mining activities in the Beara Peninsula in West Cork.**

Bronze Age copper mines are known in four locations in Beara: Tooreen (CO090-012001), Canshanavoe (CO103-015), Crumpane (CO102-023) and Reentrusk (CO114-093).

All four mines are located in the mountainous interior of the peninsula, on sedimentary 'copper bed' exposures in the Old Red Sandstone geology. The mines at Crumpane and Canshanavoe have been radiocarbon dated to the Middle Bronze Age (O'Brien 2003), and are clearly part of a wider distribution of small scale copper mining across the west Cork peninsulas, dating to the period 1800-1400 BC. This type of mining is best known from workings on Mount Gabriel in the Mizen Peninsula (O'Brien 1994) (with permission from "Local worlds", William O'Brien, Cork: 2009).

We will also visit the Allihies Copper Mine Museum, the 19<sup>th</sup> century underground workings of Allihies Mountain Mine and Urhan Mine with its unique "horse train".

**Coordinator:** **If you are likely to attend contact:**  
Theo Dahlke [theo.dahlke@acmm.ie](mailto:theo.dahlke@acmm.ie)  
Curator, Allihies Copper Mine Museum  
ACMM office: 027 73218

*(A dinner on Saturday evening can be arranged in the museum's cafe, please make bookings by calling ACMM office.)*

Provisional Programme

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July

10:00 hrs. Meet at Allihies Copper Mine Museum

10.30 hrs. Reentrisk: Bronze Age mine

Reentrisk: Cod's Head "Volcano" intrusion

13.00 hrs. Urhan Mine: Horse train/ shore track and copper house, start of railway near mine, survey ditches

Urhan Mine: Entering the western adit, crossing the shaft, looking into the stopes

14:30 hrs Return to Allihies

15:00 hrs Mountain Mine (underground subject to permission from EMD)

17.00 hrs Return to museum

19.00 hrs Dinner

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> July

10:00 hrs Castletownbere, Supervalu car park

11:00 hrs Bronze Age mine, Canshanavoe

14:00 hrs Bronze Age mine, Tooreen, Tunnel Road

15:00 hrs Finish

**extra options:**

Puxley's mansion, Copper house, Droum

Bronze Age monuments, prehistoric settlements,

Ardgroom: stone circle, fulacht fia

Bronze Age Mine, Eyeries/ walk

18th century iron smelter, Tuosist

**Equipment:**

Members are requested to bring waterproofed clothing and hill walking boots or wellies. If going underground, helmets, lamps and overalls are recommended with underground insurance. Please bring a packed lunch.

## Allihies Accommodation

### Hostels and Camping

**Allihies Village Hostel John 027 73107**

allihieshostel@eircom.net

The Strand (Campsite Only) - Anthony 027 73002

### Bed and Breakfast

Beach View - Irene Harrington 027 73105

Sea View - J T O'Sullivan 027 73004

Sea Haven Lodge - Eileen Irwin 027 73225

Tower View - Mary Healy 027 73223

Veronica's - Veronica 027 73072

Lily B&B - Lily O'Sullivan 027 73118

### Self-Catering Cottages

Allihies - J T O'Sullivan 027 73004

Coppermine Cottages - J. Slattery 86 233 7151

Allihies Holiday Cottages - Sheila Sheehan 027 73888

Strand View Holiday Homes - Eileen Harrington 87 908 2331

Beara Holiday Homes - Ann O'Sullivan 027 70219

## NAMHO Annual Conference 29th June to 1st July 2012

The 2012 NAMHO conference (<http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/>) is from 29th June to 1st July at **Quarry Bank Mill, near Wilmslow, Cheshire**. Activities will continue around Cheshire, Staffordshire and neighbouring counties during the following week.

Quarry Bank Mill is the water drive cotton mill founded by Samuel Greg in 1784. The estate includes the mill itself, housing for mill workers, apprentices and the proprietors.

The site is of interest in its own right with water driven machinery as well as a steam engine. On-site, there are two large lecture and display rooms together with bars and catering facilities. There is a large car park and we have been promised camping space from Friday through to Monday. There is plenty of other accommodation within easy reach including Premier Inns, bed and breakfast and all the hotels at Manchester

Airport. Transport links are good with easy air, bus, road and rail access.

The conference lecture programme will run on the Saturday and Sunday with a series of surface and underground trips from the Friday lunchtime until at least the Monday of the following week for those wishing to extend their stay. Some of the field trips may be re-run later in the week to allow attendance at lectures without missing underground trips. It is intended that there will be a set of conference proceedings. A conference dinner will be held on the Saturday evening.

The theme of the conference is '**Copper, lead, cobalt, salt, coal, fireclay, limestone – Cheshire's mining history**'. Cheshire may appear as a green and fertile county with cheese and milk as the major industries up to the end of the 19th century but, beneath the county, there are still massive reserves of salt which fostered the chemical industry in the north west of England. There are also metal ores in a form not worked to a great extent anywhere else in the UK. To support these industries, the county also provided coal from its eastern margin, limestone from the southeast as well as fireclay and ganister for furnace bricks. The conference will focus on the variety of minerals found in Cheshire and neighbouring Staffordshire as well as providing an opportunity for exploration of the Alderley Edge mines in particular.

Following the welcome evening on Friday, a full programme of lectures is planned on Saturday and Sunday with two parallel sessions in the afternoons. Detailed plans for speakers and talks are available on the website but any offers to speak or lead trips would be most welcome. There will be facilities for posters, club stands and trade stands at no additional cost. There will be an extensive programme of complementary surface and underground trips to lesser-known parts of Cheshire and North Staffordshire's mining history as well as some longer trips further afield. Underground trips will largely be at Alderley Edge and will range from simple walk-in mines to some serious through or round trips with SRT. Full information and booking details at <http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/>.

# EVENTS: NOTICES AND REPORTS

## Leinster Coalfield weekend visit Saturday 19 – Sunday 20 May 2012

On the Saturday morning 17 members and guests from the Slieveardagh Mining Museum met in the Jarrow Cafe at the Castlecomer Discovery Park.



After having a drink or a meal, our host Seamus Walsh outlined the weekends activities. First we headed off to the former Deerpark Colliery where Seamus worked from 1959, aged 14 years, until its closure in 1969. The entrance to the site is impressive with white painted walls, topped with a hedge and sporting a large sign giving a brief history of the mine.



The buildings are in a reasonable condition thanks to the care of the farmer. Seamus pointed out the baths, ambulance station, religious shrine, workshops, forge, magazine and winding engine house as we walked up to the entrance to the workings. At the bricked-up entrance he recited a poem to the delight of all present (see below).



We then returned to the cafe and were entertained by youngsters performing a traditional dance, based loosely on "dancing the culm". After an enjoyable lunch Willie-Joe Mealy gave us a more realistic, and excellent demonstration of dancing the culm, while bacon and sausages sizzled on a nearby culm-bumb fired brazier. We then toured the "Footprints in Coal" exhibition in the Visitor Centre, last visited by MHTI in April 2008, with members of the Irish Geological Association (See NL40, May 2008).





*All photos courtesy of John Hopkinson (above) except group photo by Stephen Callaghan.*

The group from Slieveardagh were keen for any ideas or help that MHTI could provide. Very fortunately Martin Critchley was able to deliver his splendid presentation on "Mining heritage and cultural tourism: case studies in the conservation and preservation of Irish mining sites." This was followed by a helpful discussion on how the two groups could co-operate.

After the discussion the Slieveardagh group departed and our AGM for 2011 was held (Reported elsewhere in the NL). In the evening we enjoyed an excellent meal at the Castlecomer Golf Club, set in its beautiful grounds. We finished the night at Bollard's Pub, in 'Comer, which dates back to 1840.

On the Sunday morning we again rendezvoused at the Jarrow Cafe, where we met our guides for the day, John Ryan and Patsy Egan. We were shown some of the more recent working for coal in the area, followed by a most interesting visit to Monegore Bog. After a very late lunch in the cafe we went our separate ways, still blessed with lovely weather.

We are very grateful to Seamus, Willie-Joe, John, Patsy, the Moneenroe Set Dancers and Ann Brennan, and to the Castlecomer Discovery Park for a most interesting and enjoyable weekend.



*Monegore Bog*

**The grave of the Deerpark mine.**

The water runs so free and clear now  
 From the grave of the Deerpark mine  
 Flowing down the Powley river  
 On its way to the Silvery Deen  
 The pit waters carries many stories  
 Of great miners and where they lay  
 Wedging and digging out the coal  
 Lying on their sides with candles and balls of clay  
 The water was a big threat to  
 When the mine was in full flow  
 For you'd never know the day or night  
 It would decide to have a go  
 There was many a serious accident  
 In the mine so far below  
 Broken bones and broken hearts  
 When loved ones failed to come home  
 Ned Kelly was the last to die here  
 And you know he was just a boy  
 I will not forget the doom and gloom  
 It will stay with me till the day I die  
 The Deerpark mine is gone now  
 But memories live forever  
 For the men who kept that fire aglow  
 I know we'll meet in Heaven  
 So here's to all those great mining men  
 Who worked the Comer coal  
 For why they went so far below  
 I guess we will never know.

By Seamus Walsh

# FEATURE: SOUTH AFRICA'S MINING INDUSTRY: A NEGLECTED HERITAGE

In April, Martin Critchley and Sharron Schwartz were speakers at the Ninth International Mining History Conference held in Johannesburg, where Martin's contribution on Irish Mining Heritage engendered much interest among delegates. The choice for the Congress seemed highly appropriate: mention mining and South Africa immediately springs to mind. It holds a prominent place in world mining history and the late nineteenth century exploitation of diamonds and gold, in Kimberley and the Witwatersrand respectively, has impacted enormously on the socioeconomic and political development of the richest, most advanced economy on the African continent, and indeed, on the world's economy.

Signs of the mining industry are everywhere, in the form of modern and historic head gear and huge tailings dams, particularly around Johannesburg. Although diamond and gold production is now past its peak, South Africa is still the world's second largest gold producer, a key producer of rare earths and the world's third largest coal exporter. We had the opportunity to visit a working mine and were flown by private jet to visit the Sisheen iron ore mine, situated approximately 600 km west of Johannesburg in Northern Cape Province. Operating since 1947, it is currently being worked by a subsidiary of Anglo-American and is one of the seven largest open-pit mines in the world, working around the clock, twelve months a year, in 2010 producing 41.3 million tons of iron ore. Indeed, the South African mining sector employs around half a million people and in 2007 the industry accounted for 18% of its GDP.

Although there is a recognisable lack of literature detailing aspects of South Africa's mining history compared to other countries, it was still somewhat surprising to learn of the relative failure of this nation to acknowledge and celebrate the mining industry as part of its national heritage. This is reflected in the lack of mining specific interpretation centres or museums in the main mining centres, most notably in Johannesburg, the City of Gold, that developed from the 1880s solely on the back of hard rock mining. On a tour downtown in the historic mining district centred on Main Street, we saw examples of mining equipment, erected specially for the World Cup in 2010. Yet there is no significant landmark commemorating mining's specific role in the city's phenomenal development and no centre that explores the extraordinary rise of the Rand.

However, to give the impression that there is no mining heritage provision in the country is misleading. Close to the Township of Soweto, Gauteng Province, is Gold Reef City, a privately operated, pay as you enter theme park that receives around 1.5 million visitors a year. It is sited in the grounds of the former Crown Reef gold mines, first developed in 1897 and which once held the record (1916) for having South Africa's deepest shaft. Including conference facilities and a hotel, the immaculately maintained Gold Reef City was the venue for the Conference. Critics will argue that it is too Disneyesque, with its fairground rides, restaurants, casinos and souvenir shops set amid neatly manicured grounds in a replica nineteenth century mining town in the shadow of the headgear and winder of the No. 14 shaft. It is evident that this is a big, slick commercial operation and it thus avoids the kitsch atmosphere that sometimes afflicts mining heritage sites trying to capture the market beyond the industrial purist on a shoestring.

There is an underground tour (additional fee payable) and visitors are kitted out with helmet and lamp and descend by cage to the 220m level, formerly the top level of a mine that attained a depth of 3,293m. The tour features a demonstration of pneumatic drilling and visitors have a rare opportunity to stand on the reef itself. It ends with a demonstration of gold pouring. However, there is a total lack of on-site interpretation. The 'museum' was housed in one shed and contained some information about the mine's history and a very poor display about the social conditions endured by the miners. Our view of Gold Reef City is that it has been sanitised to satisfy the desires of an adventure seeking public. It does not set out to educate about South Africa's premier industry, as it encourages absolute passivity and amnesia. It is merely a family fun theme park that happens to be sited at a former mine where the social history of mining in particular appears to have been deliberately expunged.

Kimberley, in Northern Cape Province, is the only mining city in South Africa that actively celebrates its mining heritage, through 'Big Hole', a 50 million rand (5 million euro) De Beers Consolidated Mines-sponsored venue. This corporation was responsible for Big Hole, one of the largest hand-dug excavations on earth that attained a depth of 215 metres with a surface area of about 17 hectares and perimeter of 1.6 kilometres when it closed in 1914. Over 22 million tons of earth was excavated, yielding 3,000 kilograms (14,504,566 carats) of diamonds. The abandoned open pit rapidly became an attraction for visitors to the city.

Over the ensuing decades, relicts of Kimberley's early days, including banks, shops, churches, houses and taverns along with many contemporary artefacts, were rescued and organised into a formal social history museum and tourist attraction, albeit covering only the white and/or privileged sector of society. This was eventually up-graded as an open-air representation of early Kimberley, with streetscapes, dioramas and exhibits of mining technology and transport. A tram regularly leaves here to explore downtown Kimberley thus ensuring that the Big Hole site is integrated into the wider historic landscape as part of De Beers' urban regeneration ethos. A new heritage centre below a towering head gear was opened in 2006 with its theme 'diamonds and destiny' in order to attract additional tourists to an area stricken by high unemployment and where people are usually only passing through en route to elsewhere.

Visitors are first treated to a Hollywood-standard introductory film that covers the discovery of diamonds in the late 1860s and the rise of Kimberley through the eyes of two men, one a European travel writer, the other, a Zulu migrant worker. From the centre, a walkway leads to a cantilevered viewing platform over the roughly circular Big Hole, now flooded with turquoise water. The whole area is replete with symbolism, the platform being the exact size (30 x 30 Cape feet) of the old diamond claims and the steel framework supporting it is diamond shaped. The faux mine that was next on the itinerary is expertly constructed; although visitors enter a lift and feel they have descended into the very bowels of the earth, in actuality they have only been lowered a few metres from the surface. The workings have been created from shockcrete, roughened to resemble actual rock surfaces. Items of machinery were displayed in the tunnels alongside interpretation boards and a simulated explosion made for an interesting, if rather rushed visit. From the mine, visitors enter the interpretation centre that explains the unique geology of the region and how diamonds are formed. Here, a fully reconditioned nineteenth century pulsator is demonstrated and panels explain how the gem stones are cut and polished, valued and used. The guided tour ended with a visit inside a guarded vault to see the spectacular De Beers collection containing 3,500 real diamonds including the Eureka (the first diamond discovered in South Africa in 1866) and the 616 (the largest uncut diamond in the world, weighing 616 carats).

The interpretation centre was disappointing, the weakest aspect of the attraction. We felt it had fallen victim to the 'new museology' where the focus is on visitor 'experience' rather than solely artefacts, but that it had totally failed to pull this off. Surprisingly, for a centre that has had millions lavished on it, there was no state of the art 3-D exhibits, no audio-visual displays, but a muddled attempt to inform visitors largely via didactic panels offering minimal interaction. Big Hole seeks to represent one of the most visible manifestations of South Africa's industrial revolution.

Kimberley was the spark that ignited the so-called 'Scramble for Africa', shaped the history of a continent and it is therefore included on South Africa's Tentative List for World Heritage Site Status (WHS), as the Kimberley Mines and Associated Early Industries. Yet the centre, with its Euro-centric gaze, omits to address the socio-political ramifications of this extraordinary period of history, in the complex relationships between European and African, rich and poor, migrant and non-migrant. It appears De Beers played it safe and shied away from exploring a contentious labour history and has fallen back on portraying a positive image of Kimberley's development. Big Hole, a corporate enterprise, is currently a fun visitor attraction and not a museum that sets out to initiate debate.

Our next destination was Namaqualand in the far NW of the country, an arid region of gnarled granite hills abutting Namibia on the fringes of the Kalahari Desert, famed more for its abundant spring flowers than for its mining heritage. Yet this region witnessed the birth of South Africa's modern mining industry as well as the beginnings of its industrial society. Here, it was not gold or diamonds that were sought, but copper. The landscape is both formidable and fascinating and is of particular interest as it enjoys close links with Cornwall and west Devon from whence much of the technology and labour came to initially develop the mines. Like Kimberley, it is on South Africa's Tentative List for WHS Status, with the aim of inscribing it as part of a Cornish Mining Landscape Transnational WHS, a matter that will be considered by the UK government in due course.

The copper deposits of Namaqualand have long been exploited by the indigenous Nama and in the 1600s the Dutch tried to mine them. We visited Simon van der Stel's mine, designated a National Monument, on a barren hillside where the faint date – 1685 - can be seen on a rock outcrop bearing the tell tale blue and green stains of copper mineralisation above a sealed adit. However, logistical problems meant that the Dutch could not fully exploit these deposits and it was not until the mid-19th century, after the British took control of the Cape, that interest in the copper deposits of Namaqualand was rekindled. Commercial mining commenced in 1854 at the aptly named Blue Mine, today a cavernous gash bearing the lurid stains of secondary copper mineralisation on the hillside above the town of Springbok.

A mining boom followed and within a few years numerous mines were developed at O'Okiep, Concordia, Spektakel and later, Nababeep. Namaqualand quickly attracted the attention of many geologists, among them Irishman, Andrew Wyley, from the Geological Survey of Ireland, who produced two detailed and highly accurate parliamentary reports in 1856 and 1857. These beautifully illustrated reports may be accessed at the Cape Town Archive. Mining continued in the region almost continuously up to the

early 21st century when the last open cast and decline mines were closed.

Initially, ore and regulus (smelted locally in works either on or close to the mines) were transported by ox-wagon to Hondeklip Bay for shipment to Swansea. In the 1860s a 150 km-long narrow gauge railway was engineered by Cornishman, R.T. Hall, from the mines around O'Okiep to Port Nolloth. Initially worked by mules that were later replaced by locomotives, the railway that operated up until 1942 was a feat of Victorian engineering. Its raised track bed and various stone bridges may still be seen in the vicinity of the mines. Indeed, this whole area is an industrial archaeologist's paradise and we spent two days exploring the mines and settlements, encountering no access issues and were even afforded unfettered entry to the recently closed NababEEP mine site by the mining company. However, all of the old workings have been well and truly sealed, so there was no opportunity for underground exploration!

O'Okiep is of particular interest, home to the only in situ Cornish high pressure steam engine in the southern hemisphere. This 50-inch pumping engine, designed by John Hocking of Redruth and manufactured by Harvey's of Hayle, was set to work in 1883 by Cornish engineer, Edward Hodge. We were saddened to learn of the recent break-in that resulted in the theft of the Harvey's name plate and mutilation of the valve gear, prompting the mining company that owns the land to erect a protective concrete fence around the engine house, which, along with the adjacent 'smoke stack' is a National Monument. We were delighted to be given the key to the engine house, kept by the gentleman who runs the nearby hotel and were able to leisurely photograph and inspect the engine, which is in excellent overall condition.

Besides the industrial buildings such as the iconic O'Okiep engine house and the solidly built granite ore bins at Tweefontein Mine near Concordia, evidence of Cornish involvement is strongly stamped on this landscape. An old nonconformist chapel may be seen at O'Okiep and numerous small whitewashed cottages at Concordia, dating from the 1850s. The nomenclature of the early mines - Wheal Julia, Wheal Heath, Wheal Flat - further betray a Cornish presence, as do the cemeteries serving the former mining towns. At the Spektakel Mine, situated on a barren plain ringed by granite mountains where a sizeable community once flourished in the shadow of a Cornish pumping engine house, little now remains, save the flooded open cast that has destroyed the nineteenth century workings and a small cemetery containing three headstones enclosed by a rusting fence being slowly reclaimed by the desert. That at O'Okiep is dominated by Cornish memorials, many from the east of the Duchy and also west Devon, pointing to the existence of specific migration networks. But it is not just the Cornish who populated these mining settlements, and we were pleased to find a few Irish names among the

memorials. These included James Dixon of Dublin, born in 1833 who died at O'Okiep in 1916 and at the old cemetery on the hill above Springbok, a headstone to 56 year old John Regan of Ireland, who died in 1866 and is stated to have been 'one of the oldest settlers of the Namaqualand Mining Company'.

The O'Okiep Copper Mining Company's museum at NababEEP, opened in 1987, now sponsored by the Springbok Lodge and manned by curator, Karen Janecke, a charismatic and jovial German lady, charts the rise and decline of Namaqualand's mining history. Open three days a week, it contains many maps, mine plans, mineral specimens, photographs and artefacts including *Clara*, one of the locomotives that worked the O'Okiep to Port Nolloth Railway. It has received a fraction of the funding available to the other sites we had visited and its future is precarious given that it survives only due to the support of an elderly local businessman. It offered more than corporate history and information about machines and minerals, as it tried to engage with the social history, albeit it at a superficial level. There were lots of images of people at work, rest and play, but once again this was Euro-centric and there was a notable absence of coloureds or blacks, whose history has been omitted.

The Namaqualand mining landscape is superlative, but it has fallen victim to unsympathetic environmental remediation and has not escaped the attention of recyclers who have stripped everything of mercantile value from mine sites during the current economic recession. However, we understand that the provincial government has initiated a heritage survey of the route of the former railway and is planning to protect it through the provincial heritage resources authority. Plans are also afoot for surveys of the historic towns of Springbok, O'Okiep, Concordia, Hondeklip Bay, NababEEP and Port Nolloth, and for the documentation of the extant remains of copper mines at Springbok, O'Okiep, Tweefontein and Spektakel. If this area wishes to achieve WHS status, it will need to demonstrate the valorisation of the widely dispersed elements of its extant heritage and how these are to be managed, conserved and protected in the future. This will necessitate the engagement of all sectors of the community: black, white and coloured. This could present an excellent opportunity for a more balanced, authentic and realistic portrayal of the nation's mining heritage, as this part of Northern Cape Province promotes its industrial heritage in the future.

We did not have time this trip to visit the Barberton Greenstone Belt in the east of the country, an area containing the oldest well-preserved sequence of volcanic and sedimentary rocks on earth and which is also the site of the historic Sheba mine, South Africa's richest and oldest operating gold mine. Barberton is on the WHS Tentative List, as is the Pilgrim's Rest Reduction Works Industrial Heritage site in Mpumalanga Province. Founded in 1873, this was the first gold-related industrial plant in Africa; the well-



preserved adjoining town, now an open air museum, is a National Monument (1986). The small privately owned Kromdraai Mine, 30 km NW of Johannesburg, offers an underground guided tour and has an interpretation centre, while the Premier Cullinan diamond mine near Pretoria has a historic town component rather similar to that at Kimberley. Blaauwbank Mine near Sun City is a working mine that organises tours. As far as we know, there are no other specific mining heritage attractions in South Africa.

Before we flew back to Dublin, we were invited to the Botswana Tourist Agency in Gaborone to discuss methods of promoting mining heritage tourism there. Botswana currently has no mining heritage sites, but a large copper-nickel mine in the east of the country, Selibe-Phikwe that employs steam locomotives, is due to close with all the resultant socio-economic problems that ramify from rapid de-industrialisation. We discussed ways in which Ireland and other countries have deployed mining heritage tourism to meet the challenges of de-industrialisation and post-industrialisation.

South Africa has no mining heritage sites inscribed on the WHS list and there is no government sponsored or designated national mining museum. With a mere handful of mining heritage attractions, South Africa languishes far behind other leading mining nations in the promotion of its industrial heritage. One might question the political will to advance a mining heritage agenda, given that this young nation has more pressing concerns: crime prevention, improved security, provision of housing and better public services. However, as mining has played such a fundamental role in shaping the modern South Africa, any initiative that promotes the country's mining heritage can only be of benefit to a society that needs to confront and come to terms with its troubled past. The Post-Apartheid Rainbow Nation must embrace its mining industry as an integral part of its national heritage and collective identity.

*Schwartz and Critchley, June 2012.*



*One of the huge dumper trucks at the Sisheen iron mine, Northern Cape Province*



*Big Hole Kimberley, from the cantilevered platform*



*The 50-inch Cornish high pressure steam pumping engine, O'Okiep, Namaqualand*



*Martin having fun with a Zulu entertainer at Gold Reef City. No 14. head frame of the old Crown Reef Mines in the background*

## NEWS: IRISH NEWS/ISSUES/BOOKS

### Allihies Copper Mine Museum, County Cork, 19/04/2012

The Heritage Council has offered ACMM a grant of €8000 for a survey of the local mining and heritage landscape. The project will initially define the boundaries of the landscape, and liaise with landowners. This will be followed by survey work and production of a GIS map of mining related features.

<http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/>

### Derryginagh Barite Project, 26/04/2012

Sunrise Resources PLC have reviewed the results of recent drilling around the former Derryginagh Mine in County Cork. They believe that a preliminary economic evaluation of the project is justified. They expect to award a contract for a scoping study shortly.

<http://www.sunriseresourcesplc.com/news.html>

### Derryginagh Mine, County Cork, 30/05/2012

Work has now commenced on a technical and economic scoping study for the Derryginagh barite project. The study will be carried out by Nicholas Hardie, who has managed a number of mining operations in the UK and served as Inspector of Mines and Quarries for the Health and Safety Authority in Ireland. The scoping study should be completed towards the end of the year.

<http://www.sunriseresourcesplc.com/about.html>

### Allihies Copper Mine Museum, County Cork, 10/06/2012

In 2011 members of The Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA) from the UK visited the museum during their annual conference in Cork. On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June Mark Sissons, Chairman of AIA, presented the museum with the Associations prestigious President's Prize and Initiative Award, in recognition of their work to recognise, research, preserve and celebrate the mining heritage of the area. The association decided it deserved their two awards collapsed into one: 'Best site visited 2011' and 'A challenging task taken on in an innovative manner'. The presentation was recently celebrated in the museum with local and visiting friends and supporters.



### Presentation of an inscribed silver tankard to the Copper Coast Geopark by John Morris and Karen Többe



The inscriptions on the curvature of the tankard are difficult to read and impossible to photograph.

The inscription on the tankard reads "*Presented to Charles H. Bingham Esq. by (followed by the five names below) as a mark of their respect and esteem for his great ability, decision of character, and gentlemanly deportment in meeting every difficulty amongst the miners at Knockmahon, Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 1860*". Above this, enigmatically, is a flying dragon (phoenix?) with a crown hovering above it. Equally strange are the initials following the names of the five – D.B. Franks R.A.(?); D.C. Jennings S.J.; J.H. Studdart S.J.; H.C. Redmond (?) S.J.; J.H. Frith S.J..

One reason for the original strike at Knockmahon mines was the introduction of a company truck shop, according to local Resident Magistrate (R.M.), D.B. Franks. He was sympathetic to the miners referring to them as "quiet, industrious, hard-working labourers". He refers disparagingly to "the director's agent" who escalated matters by instigating a lock-out, closing the

mine to starve the workers. A local paper provides a name - C.H. Bingham and refers to him telegraphing Dublin for more police reinforcements.

Six directors came to Waterford from Dublin in relation to the strike, according to another local paper. These included company secretary Heron, a Bewley (which Quaker family were founder members of MCI) and Sir Robert Kane (author of *The Industrial Resources of Ireland*). None of the six directors are among the names inscribed on the tankard and none of them were directors of the Mining Company of Ireland. For that company, secretary Heron wrote two letters from Dobbyn's Hotel in Waterford advocating the lock-out and sent copies to Dublin Castle. Moreover, at the next Half-AGM the directors were reportedly cheered by shareholders for the stance they had taken against the miners.

Was Franks R.A. (R.M? – the florid Gothic script leaves uncertainties) foremost to the S.J.s (Jesuits?) listed below him? The tankard bears nothing to associate it with the Mining Company of Ireland. The wording on the tankard having praised Bingham refers to “him meeting every difficulty among the Miners” – not every difficulty for the company. The signatory Franks must be the same Resident Magistrate whose letters to Dublin castle supported the miners. The local paper may have got Bingham wrong and that he was instrumental in helping the miners supported by the others.

But what was the logo on top and what were the suffixed SJs? It is difficult to see four Jesuits coming from outside to support the miners without comment. And why “celebrate” thus what was a defeat? Nevertheless, thanks to John Morris and Karen Többe, the Copper Coast has a lovely tankard to display, but a very incomplete story about what it represents.

(N.A. CSORP mss 17349, 17283 & 17309 – reports of D.B. Franks: Waterford News, 20th July 1860; Waterford Mail 20th July 1860; MCI report in Freemans Journal 4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1861).  
Des Cowman

### **Notes on 20<sup>th</sup> century Ballymurtagh in response to Des Cowman's article in MHTI Journal 11.**

Via Gallia are mentioned during WWI. They manufactured camouflage paint using ochre as an ingredient. Page 31 states that the Electrolytic Copper Co. Ltd. commissioned Henry S. Mackay to carry out exploration work at Avoca starting in 1917. I have a copy of his report dated 24th April, 1920. It concerns Connary and Cronbane in East Avoca. It mentions Ballygahan and Ballymurtagh but only in passing.

I also have a prospectus of The Irish Chemical & Metallurgical Co., capital £3,000,000. Electrolytic Copper, Mackay and the East Avoca mines feature. It proposed the establishment of metallurgical and chemical works at Arklow. It is splendid rubbish that makes an enjoyable read. The CRO has no record of a company of that name.

In 1929 R.E. Palmer reported on exploration work by the British (non-ferrous) Mining Corp. in East Avoca and recommended 'the cutting of further expenditure and the abandonment of the property.' The exploration work covered the same ground as that of Mackay.

The heading of the section on the 20th century omits pyrite and on p.33, referring to the State company that “*apparently* mined pyrite between 1942 and 1947.’ This suggests that there is some doubt in Des’ mind about the mining of pyrite at that time - during the Emergency period. Rest assured it did take place, was important, and the pyrite came from the Ballymurtagh mine in particular.

I am delighted that my father William H Wilson gets a mention. However anyone who digs out his 1956 IMM paper in the hope that it will shed light on how Mogul came to lease the Avoca mines is in for a disappointment. It was in February 1955 that the Irish government in the shape of Mianrai Teoranta invited expressions of interest in the Avoca mines. The advertisement generated much interest but that is as far as it went with one exception. Only Mogul was prepared to lease the mines and that was conditional on the government amending the tax rules to bring them into line with Canadian practice. There was no auction, no competition, no tendering, and Mogul paid nothing for the lease of the Avoca mines along with Mianrai Teoranta's Avoca assets. It was supposed to recompense, out of profits, the State's post 1947 expenditure at Avoca, £540,000 in round figures but as there were no profits.....

The date of the transition from Mianrai Teoranta to Mogul was 1 October 1955 but for some months after that date ex-MT personnel carried on with diamond drilling and assay of cores following a previously determined programme.

Des’ figure of £2.5 million in round figures for the State's support of St. Patrick's Copper Mines agrees very well with the amount announced by the Minister of Industry and Commerce in the Dail 30 October 1963 of £2,346,743.

On 9 May 1984 the Minister stated that £12.73 million was provided as State aid to Avoca Mines Limited but he also stated it was 'for Avoca Mines in the course of its lifetime.' Assuming this, we have in round figures: £0.54 million for MT, £2.4 for SPCM and £9.79 million for Avoca Mines Ltd. In short Avoca Mines Ltd., just like SPCM, did not mine profitably at Avoca. In the way it was worked the 'ore' was too low a grade

to make a profit. As always the price of copper was an important factor.

My information is that the mines were not abandoned in 1964 after a period of care and maintenance. Sometime in early 1964 tenders were invited for the purchase of the State's interest in the mines and on 16 September 1966 an option, exercisable for 30 months, was granted to an international consortium. On 19 March 1969 it exercised that option and production re-started in 1971 by Discovery Mines of Canada/Avoca Mines Ltd. I do not know what sum was paid; I expect it is stated in the lease. During the period of the option the consortium carried out exploration work and the pumps must have been in operation. Jim Platt arrived for the testing stage in 1969 and remained as manager. Colin Wilson

## Slieve Ardagh Mining Heritage Group

**Editor's note: MHTI are very pleased to have made contact with an active community group in Slieve Ardagh, who are concerned with their local coal mining heritage. Margaret O'Brien is now an Area Rep for MHTI (contact details on back page) and she has sent us this letter/report. The Directors of MHTI will respond as best we can, but any ideas or offers of help from members can go direct to Margaret or through any of the Directors.**

The School built in The Commons by The Mining Company of Ireland in 1877 has been restored and is now used as a community centre.

One of the uses of the Old School is to provide a gathering place for ex-miners and their families. We aim to have a gathering about once every three months. So far we had an evening where we showed a dvd put together by Wally Mackey of images from the time of the mines and the men who worked in them. Many ex-miners came along, and met up.



From this the next gathering we had an evening where the men brought artifacts and stories with them. We had a photographer there to record the evening. The evening also celebrated the launch of the Slieveardagh Mining Museum with the lighting of a carbide lamp. The Keating family who ran Gurteen and Lickfinn mines have donated equipment and maps. Ex-miners have also loaned photographs and artifacts.



Local interest in the mines is on-going. In March a group walked a short length of one of the old workings. This group is knowledgeable about and interested in visiting and researching more of the abandoned mines. We are aware of the importance of the stories and memories but feel that there are probably ways and methods of gathering information and histories, artifacts and researching the history of mining in Slieveardagh that as yet we are unaware or ignorant of. The Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland visited Slieveardagh in April 2007. Phelim Lally led the group including John Morris and Martin Critchley. Some of the group suggested that there are many ways we could record the history of mining in the area.

We believe that the group of ex miners who meet in the recently restored Old School also have much to offer anyone interested in mining in Slieveardagh in the 20th Century. We would be very grateful for any ideas or help that members of the Mining Heritage Trust might be willing to offer us.

We can be contacted by email at [oldschoolcommons@gmail.com](mailto:oldschoolcommons@gmail.com) or by post to Old School, The Commons, Thurles, Co Tipperary.

## Snippets from History: Thomas Oswin, an eminent copper prospector

Thomas Oswin is credited with opening 'rich mines and battery works in Ireland and was operating a copper battery near Dublin' in 1709 (Rees, p660).

In the Spring of that year he was commissioned Deputy Mineral Master for Ireland by the Governours, Assistants and Society of the City of London for Mineral and Battery Works. In 1713 the form of a commission to the Mineral Master Generals deputies was published. In a long preamble it describes the legal basis of the claims of the Society, and ends with an indemnity for any lawful acts carried out during the commission. The scope of the commission was as follows:

*'Now know ye, That I the said Moses Stringer, Mineral Master General, to the said Society, with their well liking and Approbation, have made, ordain, constitute and appoint, Tho. Oswin, Citizen of London, Deputy Mineral Master, with full Power in the Name of the said Society, to Survey all the said Societies Works, in the Kingdom of Ireland, and all the Parts, Places and Confines thereunto belonging, (that is to say) all Mines and Minerals and Works of Gold, Silver, Copper, Lead, Tin and Iron, Alum and Copperas, and all other Mines and Minerals: giving, and by these Presents granting to his said Agent and Deputy Mineral Master, full power and .authority in Lawful manner, to enter into any of the said Mines and Works, in any Part of the said Kingdom, or Confines thereof, to Survey the same, and to inform the said Moses Stringer, Mineral Master General, where and what quantities of Ore is digg'd or taken up, and what quantity of each sort, how and where the same is Manufactured, and by what Tools, Engines or Instruments, and how many there are in every County, and in what Town, Place or Parish, particularly of the Iron Battery-Works and likewise who are, or pretend to be the Undertakers, and by whom their Works are carried on, and by whose or what authority they found, cast and make Vessels and other Utensils, and by whose authority every and each of such Slitting-Mills and other Engines are made, and by whose authority and powers Latten, or fine Brass is made or cast near Dublin, or elsewhere in the Kingdom of Ireland, whether any Person or Persons claim any Propriety of the Works, of any other than the Owners and Occupiers of the same. And further the said Mineral Master, and Society, do grant full power to Tho. Oswin, their Deputy, to open any new Mine, in any part of the said Kingdom, or Confines, where he is satisfied*

*there are any of the said Minerals or, the Calamine Stone, &c.'* (Stringer, p284-5)

Later in 1709 Oswin returned to England to develop a copper vein 'green and gritty, marked with purplish and black earth, containing gold, one yard wide' at Threapwood in Shropshire (Rees, p661). Rushton (no date) describes an 'eminent copper prospector from Ireland who had mentioned this one yard wide vein of copper "green and gritty", containing gold, which was proposed for development by Roger Atcherley in 1711.' It is clear that the 'eminent copper prospector' was Thomas Oswin. Oswin's lease of minerals at Threapwood was taken over by John Payne (Rushton).

### References:

- Rees, W., 1968. Industry before the Industrial Revolution. University of Wales Press, Cardiff. 2 volumes, 698pp.
- Rushton, N., no date. Clive Copper Mine. Shropshire Caving and Mining Club. Available at: <http://www.aditnow.co.uk/documents/Clive-Copper-Mine-2/Clive-Mine.pdf>
- Stringer, M., 1713. Opera Mineralia Explicata: or, the mineral kingdom, within the dominions of Great Britain display'd. Jonas Brown, London. 308pp. Available via: <http://books.google.co.uk/books>

By Alastair Lings

## Re Query into tunnel at Wicklow gold works

The tunnel at Ballyvalley into Croghaun mountain is mentioned in an article in the latest issue of our Journal: Schwartz, S.P. and Critchley, M.F. 2011." Philip Henry Argall (1854-1922): the remarkable life and career of a Cornish-Irish mining manager, engineer and metallurgist", *Journal of the Mining Heritage Society of Ireland* 11: 47-64

The tunnel was drilled in 1801 in the hopes of finding the bedrock source of the alluvial gold in the sediments around the Goldmines River. No bedrock source was established. There is more detail in the 1888 publication by the Geological Survey of Ireland which you can view online at <http://www.geologicalmaps.net/IrishHistMapsDownload/B02083.pdf> (page 24-25) and in a recent book available from booksellers of the Geological Survey at <http://www.gsi.ie/GSIShop/Product.aspx?Productid=334&Catid=3> called Gold frenzy, The Story of Wicklow's Gold by Peadar McArdle, Albertine Kennedy Publishing, Mayo, 2011 (€20) which you may find in your local library.

Nigel Monaghan

## OTHER NEWS

### Washington Miners Heritage Memorial, 04/06/2012

On Saturday 31 March a memorial depicting a miner with his wife and son was unveiled in Washington, Tyne & Wear. Sometime early on the following Tuesday, thieves sawed through part of one of the metal statues in an attempted theft. Northumbria Police are appealing for information.

<http://www.journallive.co.uk/>

### UNESCO listing sought for Ore Mountains, 06/04/2012

The Czech Culture Ministry has recommended that the Montanregion Krushnohori project in cooperation with the German state of Saxony tries to join the list of UNESCO world cultural heritage sites. The area includes exceptional landscape and mining history localities. Detailed documentation will be completed by Autumn 2013, and passed to Germany for submission to UNESCO.

<http://praguemonitor.com/2012/04/06/czech-german-ore-mountain-mining-localities-seek-unesco-listing>

### Hanging flume, Colorado, 14/04/2012

In the late 1880s a 10 mile long hanging flume was constructed to provide water for gold-washing equipment near Uravan, Colorado. It took 25 men three years to build, and ran along the sheer sides of the gorges above the Dolores and San Miguel rivers. Over the years wood from the flume has been robbed. Recently a 48' long section of the 6' wide by 4' deep flume was restored using modern roped-access techniques. Better road-signage is planned, along with two books and a video about this amazing structure.

[http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci\\_20393944/121-year-old-western-colorado-mining-flume-clings](http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_20393944/121-year-old-western-colorado-mining-flume-clings)

### Gold Mines of Wales, 18/04/2012

A report by Snowden Mining Consultants for Gold Mines of Wales (GMOW) says there could be gold worth £125 million in the Dolgellau area. Ed McDermott of GMOW claims "There could be another Clogau. If that were the case, we could be looking at significant gold production." GMOW have an option from the Crown estate to explore for gold over an area of 120 km<sup>2</sup>. They hope to start exploration drilling within six months.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-west-wales-17756325>

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

### Lake District mineral collection, 25/04/2012

The Bill Shaw mineral collection has been bought from Keswick Mining Museum by Kendal Museum, with the help of private donors, and grants from Arts Council England and Hanson Heidelberg Cement. Kendal Museum, in Cumbria, is open Wednesday to Saturday 10:30am to 5pm.

<http://www.thewestmorlandgazette.co.uk/news/>

### UK Coal PLC, 27/04/2012

The latest Annual Report gives the coal production of Daw Mill (2.1 million tonnes), Kellingley (2.3 MT), and Thoresby Colliery (1.3 MT), with a further 1.8 MT from five surface mines. Haworth Colliery remains mothballed but a decision on its future will be taken in 2012.

<http://www.ukcoal.com/investors/reports-and-presentations>

### Alkane Energy PLC, 30/04/2012

Alkane has 13 power stations using coal mine methane (CMM) to generate 41 MW of electricity. They will open two new sites in 2012, at Pontycwmmer in South Wales and at Gedling in Nottinghamshire.

<http://www.alkane.co.uk/ourcompany/alkane-news>

### Sirius Minerals PLC, 30/04/2012

A detailed scoping study of the York Potash Project has confirmed its technical and economic viability. The company want to start mining polyhalite in North Yorkshire from early 2017, at an initial rate of 5 million tonnes/year. The next stage for the company is to carryout feasibility studies.

<http://siriusminerals.com/index.html>

### Rosia Montana, Romania, 03/05/2012

A "transparent review" of the Rosia Montana gold project in Romania has been ordered by the countrys prime minister-designate. Since 1999 Gabriel Resources has spent \$500 million on exploring one of the largest gold deposits in Europe, containing 314 tonnes. Proposed openpit mining would remove the tops of four mountains and require the demolition of three villages in Transylvania.

Mining in the area dates back to the first century AD. Most of the underground development was during the period of the Austria-Hungarian Empire, 1700s-1918. According to UNESCO the area contains "a unique

archaeological complex of Roman mine galleries.” Gabriel Resources proposes to spend \$35 million on rescue archaeology in the area of the roman workings.

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

<http://www.gabrielresources.com/site/projects.aspx>

### **Into the Mouth of Hell, 03/05/2012**

The Segedunum Roman Fort and Museum in Wallsend, Tyne & Wear, is hosting an exhibition on mining disasters until the 9<sup>th</sup> September. The museum is next to the site of Wallsend Colliery where 102 miners were killed in 1835. Other disasters represented in the exhibition are Hartley Pit (204 lives, 1865), John Pit, Felling (92 lives, 1812) and Heaton Main Colliery (75 lives, 1815).

<http://www.journallive.co.uk/>

<http://www.twmuseums.org.uk/segedunum/>

### **Wheal Martyn Museum, Cornwall, 20/03/2012**

The UK's only china clay museum has received a grant of £48 000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and additional funding from the Clay Country Local Action Group. The museum will improve its displays and recruit a part-time curator and part-time education officer.

<http://www.wheal-martyn.com/>

### **South Crofty Mine, Cornwall, 11/05/2012**

Agreement has been reached with Cornwall Council for the former surface mine buildings at Dudnace Lane to be demolished. This will make way for a new mill building, miners' dry, workshops and offices next to the Tuckingmill Decline. Western United Mines hope to start production in early 2015, employing over 200 people.

<http://www.westernunitedmines.com/home>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-18069157> (2.5 minute video, includes shots of Hemerdon)

### **Leadhills Library, South Lanarkshire, 14/05/2012**

Leadhills Library was set up by miners in November 1741. It was the first subscription library in the UK and it was visited by William and Dorothy Wordsworth. The library includes a museum of local heritage. The building urgently needs rewiring and investment in environmental controls to reduce humidity.

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/editors-choice/2012/05/14/miners-library-in-leadhills-founded-in-1741-is-still-functioning-86908-23859055/>

### **Tower Colliery, South Wales, 22/05/2012**

Tower Colliery shut in 2008 and was the last deep mine in Wales. Work has started at the site to develop an 80 hectare surface mine which will extract six million tonnes of coal over a six year period. The site will employ 140 people.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-18156830> (1.5 minute video)

### **Royal Television Society award, 25/05/2012**

An explosion at the Universal Colliery in Senghenydd in 1913 killed 439 people and it was the worst disaster in British history. A 15 minute documentary on the disaster produced by students at the University of Wales (Newport) has won the RTS prize for Undergraduate Entertainment. The film called “The mourning of the valley” can be seen on YouTube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bgc--gT6xPA>

### **East Pit, Amman Valley and Margam Mine, Port Talbot, South Wales, 28/05/2012**

Celtic Energy and Oak Regeneration have appointed SLR Consulting to manage the restoration of two surface mining sites. The East Pit site will become an international tourism and leisure destination, and the former Margam site will become an eco-village.

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

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

### **Maltby Colliery, South Yorkshire, 28/05/2012**

Unusual geological conditions have been encountered in developing a new production panel, with increased inflows of water, oil, gas and other hydrocarbons in the tailgate section. Further development on the tailgate has been abandoned, and the new face will be developed at a safe point. There is likely to be a gap in production of 12 to 16 weeks, costing the company (Hargreaves Services PLC) between £12m and £16m. Gerry Huitson, Production Division Director, said "This is a very unusual situation and to our knowledge this has never happened before in Maltby's long 100 year history. No one on the mining team, including our independent expert geologist with 32 years experience at many different UK mines, has come across these conditions before. We will revise the mining plans to avoid this locality and it is highly unlikely that these conditions will be found again in any subsequent panels."

<http://www.hargreavesservices.co.uk/default.aspx>

## The Coal Authority, 28/05/2012

The Coal Authority are looking for a new Chair Person to start work in March 2013, for an initial four year period. The salary is £27 000 for about five days work per month. Closing date 29/06/2012.

<http://coal.decc.gov.uk/>

## Mine search and rescue dog, 01/06/2012

Alpha Natural Resources Inc. in the USA has a Dutch Shepherd dog trained to search underground and surface mines. The dog is equipped with an infrared camera and a gas detector, and wears a protective vest. Two year old Ginny can leap over six-foot from a standing start, and detect a scent up to a mile away. Kevin Crutchfield, Alphas Chief Executive, said the dog was a “tremendous new asset for mine search and rescue, both for our company and the industry.”

<http://www.alphanr.com/Pages/Default.aspx>

## Late News – Keswick Mining Museum collections to go for auction

Sadly as no buyer was found for the Museum as a going concern the collections are now to be auctioned.

## New books

### Still the sea rolls on: the Hartley Pit calamity of 1862.

Keith Armstrong and Peter Dixon have compiled and edited poems, stories, drawings and photographs contributed by local people. The book is published by the Northern Voices Community Project with assistance from North Tyneside Council, and is available for £7.99 from the North of England Institute of Mining & Mechanical Engineers.

### Spinning the wheel of fortune

Adam Luke has written a history of the Durham Coalfield. For every sale a donation will be made to the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation. The book is available for £4.99 at: <http://trimdontimes.co.uk/>

## MHTI CONTACT DETAILS

**Registered Address : c/o Natural History Museum, Merrion Street, Dublin 2, Ireland**

Registered in Ireland as Company 340387. Charity No: CHY14503

**Chairman (matters of policy) : Alastair Lings**, [alastairlings@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alastairlings@yahoo.co.uk) , home phone +44 1896 757861, mobile / +44 7763 850087

**Secretary (corporate matters, membership) : Nigel Monaghan**, c/o Natural History Museum, Merrion Street, Dublin 2, Ireland, email: [nmonaghan@museum.ie](mailto:nmonaghan@museum.ie), mobile 087 7985570

**Editor (Newsletter, Journal) : Matthew Parkes**, [mparkes@museum.ie](mailto:mparkes@museum.ie), mobile 087- 1221967

Treasurer (accounts, membership): vacant – contact Nigel Monaghan

**Bibliographer (new entries): Des Cowman** : 051-396157, [descowman@gmail.com](mailto:descowman@gmail.com), “Knockane”, Annestown, Co. Waterford

### Area Contacts:

**Sligo : Mick Carragher**, mobile 086-3665423, [michaelcarragher11@eircom.net](mailto:michaelcarragher11@eircom.net)

**Galway & Clare : Barry Flannery**, mobile 087-2930737, [barryflannery@gmail.com](mailto:barryflannery@gmail.com)

**Avoca & 20thC mines/exploration : Nick Coy**, homephone 045 866400, mobile 086 3706731

[nickcoy@eircom.net](mailto:nickcoy@eircom.net), 16 Lakeside Park Naas Co Kildare. For Guided walks around Avoca contact me as above .

**Castlecomer : Seamus Walsh**, [swalshminer@eircom.net](mailto:swalshminer@eircom.net), 14 Maryville, Castlecomer Co. Kilkenny, 056-4441504 mobile 087-9619793

**Waterford & Wexford : Des Cowman**, see above

**Allihies : Theo Dahlke**, ACMM Allihies Copper Mine Museum, 027-73218, [theo.dahlke@acmm.ie](mailto:theo.dahlke@acmm.ie)

**Wicklow mines (Glendalough etc) and Silvermines : Martin Critchley**, 01-8733117, 086-8146956,

[mrcritchley@era.ie](mailto:mrcritchley@era.ie)

**Slieve Ardagh** : Margaret O’Brien, Kyle, The Commons, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, [muinteoirtipperary@gmail.com](mailto:muinteoirtipperary@gmail.com) or through the group at [oldschoolcommons@gmail.com](mailto:oldschoolcommons@gmail.com)

[COUNTRY CODE FOR IRELAND IS +353, AND THE FIRST ZERO OF AREA/MOBILE CODE IS OMITTED]