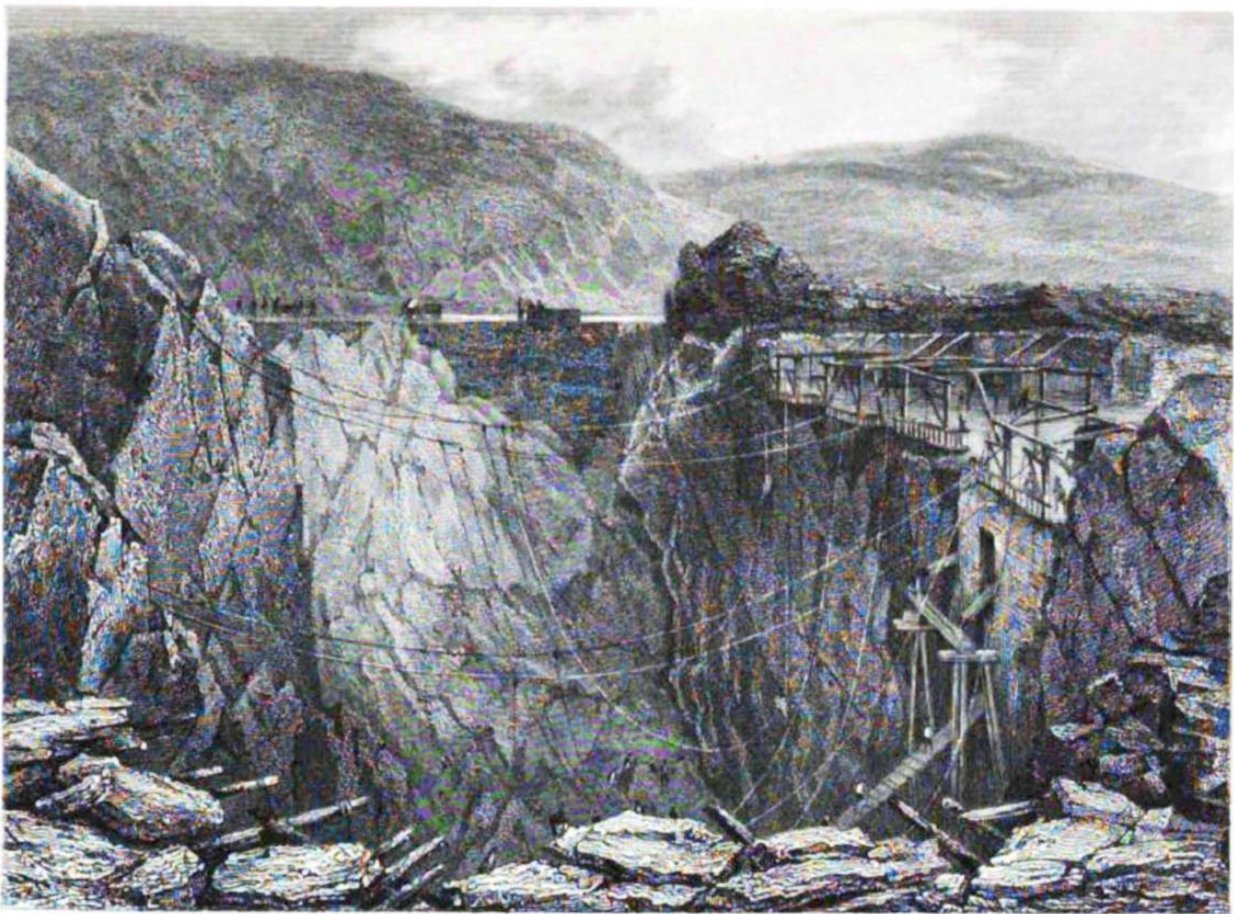


Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland

Newsletter

No. 76, June 2018

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SLATE QUARRY, KILLALOE

From George Wilkinson (1845) Practical geology and ancient architecture of Ireland. John Murray, London.

Iontaobhas Oidhreachta Mianadóireachta na hÉireann

MHTI Members' Business

Chairperson's message

by Matthew Parkes

This Newsletter is the first one issued since a lot of soul-searching and discussion in 2017 to consider the future purpose and shape of MHTI. Somewhat reluctantly, I agreed to become Chairman, in the absence of any other candidates, and symptomatic of the problems facing MHTI. An important task is to acknowledge the enormous contribution made by Alastair Lings as Chairperson 2010-2016, and Acting Chairperson for 2017, and to thank him for all his efforts, and in particular the extensive travel from Scotland for Board meetings and to organise field excursions. He continues to provide significant effort, with much of this newsletter content compiled by him.

The future of the MHTI

A detailed discussion was included in Newsletter 75 in the summer of 2017. These are the key points if you only read this page:

- MHTI will continue its existence on the basis of very limited activity
- Membership for 2018 and 2019 is being offered FREE to all past members
- We need to hear positively from you by the end of June to ensure you remain a member. If we do not hear from you we will not contact you again and your personal data will be erased, other than your name and years of membership for the purposes of archives and history of the MHTI

What you can expect in the future

- MHTI Board members will focus on delivering a working open access website (a draft version is being fine-tuned at present) that will be a significant resource for anyone researching Irish mining heritage or history
- MHTI will publish a journal this year containing papers from the NAMHO meeting in 2016, as promised to registrants from that meeting
- We hope to publish annual journals after that depending on submitted content, but these may be intermittent when there is insufficient material
- MHTI will aim to organise one joint meeting annually in co-operation with another industrial heritage or geological or local history group
- MHTI will issue some newsletters during each year, but they will only be by email (print your own) and will be of limited content, and maybe more in the style of a bulletin

What we won't have capacity to deliver

- We no longer offer the third party indemnity insurance scheme for underground or surface activities (however this is best arranged as a Direct Individual Member of the British Caving Association, or through the Speleological Union of Ireland)
- An active programme of fieldtrips, meetings and events

Resignation of Directors

In Newsletter 75 (Summer 2017) Martin Critchley and Sharron Schwartz announced their resignation as Directors of MHTI. Martin started as a Director of MHTI at its incorporation in 2000, and was Chairman from then until 2010. Previously he served as Treasurer of the Mining History Society of Ireland from its foundation in 1996, becoming Chairman in 1999. Sharron became a Director of MHTI in 2013, and Editor of the Newsletter and Journal. MHTI are very grateful to Martin and Sharron for their hard work over the years, and we wish them well for their new home and business venture.

Appointment of Director

MHTI are very pleased to announce that Theo Dahlke has joined the Board. Theo played an active part in developing the Allihies Copper Mine Museum. In 2010 and 2012 he organised successful visits by MHTI to the Allihies area. His interests include smelting and bronze-age copper mining.

Musical treat

For those who attended the NAMHO meeting in DCU in the summer of 2016, the conference meal included a fantastic performance by Andy Irvine of many of his mining themed songs. Two of those were actually written specially for the occasion. The good news is that both have surfaced as tracks on Andy's new album *Precious heroes*, recorded in Australia with Luke Plumb. CDs of the album can be purchased from Andy's website: www.andyirvine.com

MHTI on social media

For the latest mining heritage news please check our pages on Facebook and VKontakte:

<https://www.facebook.com/Mining-Heritage-Trust-of-Ireland-165987500136619/>

<https://vk.com/public146625610>

Dates for your diary

06-10 June: Mining History Association Annual Conference, South Dakota, USA.

<https://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/index.htm>

Friday 29th June at 8.30pm: New book launch - *Coal in the blood* by Seamus Walsh

Castlecomer Community Hall. Launch by Dr. Michael Conway. Special guests: Castlecomer Male Voice Choir

All are welcome. <https://www.discoverypark.ie/book-launch-coal-in-the-blood/>

07 July: AGM and site visit to Natural History Museum Collections Centre SEE EVENTS SECTION

25 July - 01 September: Wolfhill Coalmine Project exhibition at Dunamais Art Centre, Portlaoise. (22 August, official opening and talk / tour) <https://www.facebook.com/wolfhillcoalmine/>

18-26 August: Heritage Week, <https://www.heritageweek.ie/>

25-26 August: Sliabh Aughty Furnace Festival, Woodford, Co. Galway. <http://www.furnaceproject.org/>

05 September: The building stones of Carrickfergus evening walk. <http://www.belfastgeologists.org.uk/>

07-13 October: Australasian Mining History Association Conference, Otago, New Zealand

<http://www.mininghistory.asn.au/>

23 October: Networking of Industrial Heritage Sites conference. <http://ihai.ie/>

18 November: UK Mines, Minerals and Miners: their impact on the prosecution of the First World War.

NAMHO seminar in Carnforth, Lancashire. <https://www.namho.org/index.php>

2019

05-09 June 2019: Mining History Association Annual Conference, Michigan, USA.

04-08 July 2019: NAMHO Conference, Llanafan, Ceredigion, Wales.

Please check with organisers of meetings before making any travel bookings in case of change of dates or arrangements. MHTI lists events in good faith but is not responsible for errors or changes made.

Events, notices and reports

Wolfhill Coalmine Project Exhibition, 25 July – 01 September 2018

The Wolfhill Coalmine project is a social history and art project collecting the memories and histories from the Wolfhill Mines, Co. Laois. The team aim to collect as many stories as possible from those who worked there and their families culminating in a collaborative exhibition of Photography, Art, Video and spoken word. The exhibition will be at the Dunamais Arts Centre, Church Street, Portlaoise, Co. Laois. For more information phone David on +353 87 942 3741. <https://www.facebook.com/wolfhillcoalmine/>

Tour of the National Museum of Ireland – Geological Collections, Saturday 7 July 2018

Joint visit of the MHTI, IGA and OUGS to the National Museum of Ireland geological collections at their new home in Swords, Co. Dublin. Dr Matthew Parkes, curator and Nigel Monaghan, former curator and now Keeper of Natural History will bring you on a guided tour of the collections that have been growing since 1792 when the first minerals were purchased. There are now hundreds of thousands of minerals, rocks and fossils in the collections, also a library and archive. Full details of rendezvous will be issued to those who have booked. Please make your bookings with Matthew Parkes (contact details on back page)

12-1pm, short orientation talk and first part of tour

1-2, lunch [tea/coffee, canteen space and microwave available – bring your own packed lunch]

2-3:30, rest of tour

3:30-4pm, AGM of MHTI (see below)

Annual General Meeting of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland

Notice is hereby given that an Annual General Meeting of the company will be held at the National Museum of Ireland - Collections Resource Centre, Balheary Road, Swords, Co. Dublin on Saturday 7th July 2018 at 3:30pm.

Nigel Monaghan, Company Secretary

Agenda

1. Minutes of the last AGM (27th May 2017)
2. Minutes of the EGM held on 9th September 2017
3. Chairman's Report
4. Annual Accounts
5. Election of Directors
6. Any other business.

Note

Alastair Lings and Matthew Parkes are retiring on rotation and seeking re-election. If you want to stand as a director, or are unable to attend the AGM and want a proxy form, please contact Nigel Monaghan (contact details on back page).

Irish News

Hidden Heritage Award (12/04/2018)

The Mining Heritage Hillwalk in Co. Wicklow in August 2017 was shortlisted for the Heritage Councils Hidden Heritage Award. The event was organised by Glenmalure PURE Mile/Adopt a Monument Group and Glens of Lead. It explored the hidden social and industrial heritage linked to the mining industry in the valleys of Glendasan, Glendalough, and Glenmalure. The group hope to establish this route as a way-marked Mining Heritage Trail in the future. <https://www.heritageweek.ie/news/national-heritage-award-winners-announced>

Obituary: Dave Fitzgerald 1928 – 2018

On 30th May 2018, Dave Fitzgerald, former Manager at the Tynagh Lead–Zinc Mine in County Galway died peacefully at his daughter’s home in Dublin. Dave was born in County Kerry in 1928, the son of a railway engineer. After his early education, during which he excelled in a number of sporting activities, he graduated as a mining engineer from the Camborne School of Mines in Cornwall. One of his earliest jobs was in a chromium mine in Pakistan, and over the following years he worked in a number of mines in Asia, Canada and South America.

By the early sixties he was working in the St John D’el Rey Gold Mine in Brazil when he got a call from Ireland asking him to join the development team on the first major Lead-Zinc-Copper-Silver deposit in Ireland in the 20th century. The mine was at Tynagh in east County Galway which had only recently been discovered by Irish Base Metals Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Northgate Exploration. He returned to Ireland and worked as Mine Manager at Tynagh throughout its operating life, up to its final closure in 1982.

Always a keen sportsman, he played rugby with Corinthians but sailing was his greatest passion. With Dave Whitehead and other members of the Tynagh staff, who were often referred to as “the Canadians” by locals in the early days of the mine, he formed a sailing club on Loughrea Lake, the first of its kind on those waters. Over the following years his sailing adventures took him around the Irish coast and as far as the Med.

He had a strong and successful management style at Tynagh, probably one of the most successful and profitable Irish mines of the 20th century. He had a wicked sense of humour, a passion for the industry, and a list of fascinating stories from the early days of mine exploration in Ireland. One of his most extraordinary stories concerned the underground exploration of the Allihies Mine in the early sixties, in which he was involved. After the mine had been dewatered, his description of descending the 1500 foot, twisting, narrow and inclined engine shaft in an open iron skip was hair raising and hilarious.

We were fortunate that he was able to attend the 50th anniversary celebration of the opening of Tynagh at the Loughrea Hotel in January 2016, where he met many of his old working colleagues and associates for the last time. Dave passed away on 30th May 2018, just four months after celebrating his 90th birthday. This was just six months after the death of the Tynagh Mine geologist Dave Whitehead, his longtime friend, work and sailing colleague. Dave Fitzgerald was one of the last of that unique group of men who were a formative part of the revival of Irish mining in the 20th century. He was larger than life in many respects and will be greatly missed by those who knew him. Our sympathies go to his three daughters Grainne, Trish and Kathy. Ar dheis De go raibh a anam. Vince Bevan

Curraghinalt Project, Gortin, Co. Tyrone (27/11/2017)

Dalradian Resources has submitted a planning application (LA10/2017/1249/F) for the building of an underground mine and associated infrastructure at the Curraghinalt gold deposit. The application runs to over 10 000 pages.

The President and Chief Executive Officer of the company, Patrick F.N. Anderson said "This is an exciting day for Dalradian and for Northern Ireland. It is the culmination of seven years of exploration, engineering and environmental work on the Curraghinalt deposit and financings that have raised more than C\$260 million (£150M) for our work in Northern Ireland. We have transformed the project from a small, early-stage deposit to one of the best gold projects on the planet. Building and operating a mine at the Curraghinalt deposit will create at least 350 permanent direct jobs and is expected to give a US\$1 billion boost to the local economy over the 25-year life of mine in the planning application".

<https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index.htm>

Knocknacran Quarry, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan (12/02/2018)

Gyproc is investing €8 million in developing its quarry at Knocknacran, which supplies gypsum to a nearby factory in Kingscourt for the manufacture of plaster and plasterboard. The development will continue until June, and create 44 temporary jobs. Gypsum was first recorded in the area in 1807 and has been worked intermittently from the 1830's. <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/construction/irish-plasterboard-maker-invests-8m-in-quarry-development-1.3388532>

Galmoy Mine, Co. Kilkenny (19/04/2018)

Shanoon Resources Ltd have applied to Kilkenny County Council to reopen Galmoy Mine, which shut in 2012 with the loss of about 200 jobs. It's hoped that 50 new jobs will be created. More information is available in the planning application, number 18229. <https://kclr96fm.com/planning-permission-now-lodged-for-the-reopening-of-galmoy-mines/>

New mine safety regulations (30/05/2018)

On the 30 April The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Mines) Regulations 2018 came into force in the Republic. The Regulations were officially launched at Tara Mine on the 30 May by Pat Breen TD, a Minister at the Department for Business, Enterprise and Innovation.

Minister Breen said "*I am very pleased to officially launch these new regulations with miners and mine management present. This is an important moment for all of the mining industry. In revoking and replacing the old legislation, some of which dated back to the 1960s, we have delivered a modern, simplified and consolidated statutory instrument that will make compliance much easier*".

Pat Griffin, Senior Inspector of Mines and Quarries with the Health and Safety Authority added "*Safety and health standards at the Irish underground mining industry have generally improved over time with significant*

reductions in lost time accidents. We believe that these consolidated regulations will simplify compliance for existing and indeed future prospective mining operations".

<https://dbe.gov.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2018/May/30052018a.html>

Abbeytown and Lugawarry Mines, Ballysodare, Co. Sligo (21/12/2017)

Erris Resources are planning a drilling programme near the former Abbeytown Mine. The drilling will target mineralisation below the former mine, and extensions of known mineralisation, to depths of between 150 and 200 metres. Initially the program is for 2000 m of drilling, which may be increased by an extra 7200 m. A smaller program of drilling is proposed near the former Lugawarry Mine. Abbeytown Mine was worked intermittently between 1747 and 1961, producing zinc, lead and silver. Lugawarry Mine was worked for lead from 1747 until about 1837. <https://www.errisresources.com/news>

Tullybuck Mine, Clontibret, Co. Monaghan (12/02/2018)

Drilling by Conroy Gold And Natural Resources near Clontibret, Co. Monaghan, will test the extent of high grade gold lodes indicated by channel samples in the historic Tullybuck antimony mine. Antimony was discovered in the area in 1774.

The mines in the adjacent townlands of Tullybuck and Lisglassan were probably worked in the early 1800s, and again in 1826-1827 by the Mining Company of Ireland. The final period of mining was in 1917. Conroy have been exploring for gold in the area since 1996. <http://www.conroygoldandnaturalresources.com/>



One of the drill rigs at Tullybuck, Clontibret, Co. Monaghan on 15/05/2018

Report of an Inter-Agency Group on the Silvermines Area of County Tipperary (17/05/2018)

An inter-agency group (IAG) was convened by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) in May 2017 following the detection of elevated lead levels in milk in three dairy herds from the Silvermines Area of Co Tipperary, an historic mining area with a natural abundance of heavy metals in the environment.

The remit of the IAG was to consider previous work undertaken within the Silvermines Area and to review and update the active management measures to be taken to safeguard the food-chain and to protect human health and animal health and welfare.

The IAG comprised representatives from DAFM, the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Health Services Executive, Teagasc and Tipperary County Council.

The group published its report on 16 May 2018. The IAG has concluded that the Silvermines area is a safe place in which to grow up, live, work and produce food. However it is important that farmers, the local community and relevant agencies continue to implement active management measures on an on-going basis. The IAG has made 18 recommendations relating to the assessment, management and communication of risk - broadly recommending the same active management measures as were recommended by a previous IAG in 2000, reflecting the fact that the risk has not substantially changed but the recommended measures have been updated and enhanced to reflect the latest regulatory standards and scientific risk assessment information.

DAFM has already implemented measures to enhance food safety - providing information and advisory support to the farming community and food processors and ensuring that appropriate food safety monitoring measures are in place

https://www.fsai.ie/news_centre_silvermines_17052018.html

Publications

Dissenting Spirit: Thomas Weaver, Geologist and Mining Engineer

Peadar McArdle, 2018, The Liffey Press, paperback, 300pages, €19.95/£17.95, ISBN 9780995792746

Before he was thirty, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Thomas Weaver was an accomplished engineer and geologist who was successfully managing Avoca's main copper mine in County Wicklow and had brought order to the nearby gold workings.

He had no ordinary upbringing in Gloucester, where George III had visited his father's factory, and he was sent to study at Freiberg in distant Saxony. Now known as a strict if considerate manager to his Irish workforce, he also participated in suppressing the 1798 Rebellion in Wicklow. He was subsequently active in the mining industry in both Ireland and Mexico. In parallel, he carried out geological mapping in these countries as well as in Great Britain and North America.

He was an engaging personality, someone who would partake as enthusiastically in a local ploughing contest as in a scholarly debate in London. His story sheds light on industrial and social conditions in pre-Famine

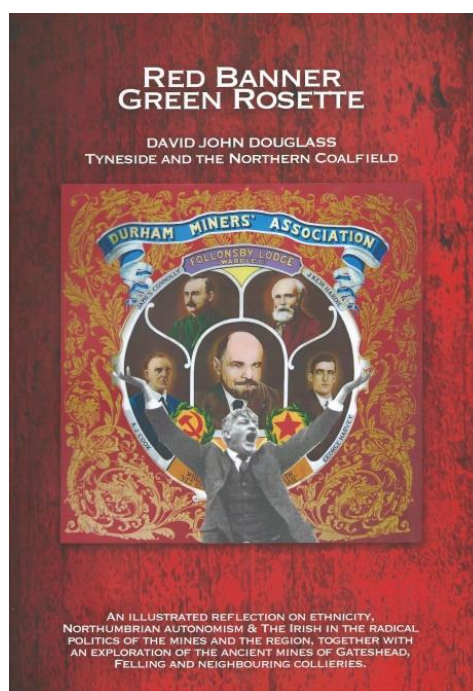
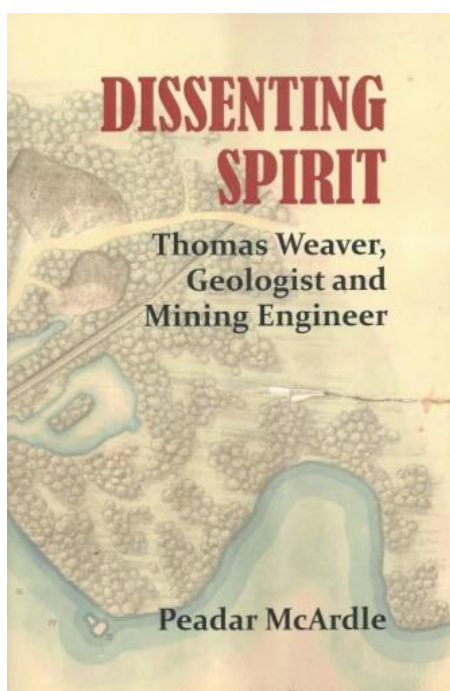
Ireland and elsewhere. It is a story worth telling. He was active at a time when geology was coming of age as a scientific discipline. Science is described as a journey without destination, where theories are constantly challenged and remain valid only until they are undermined by new evidence. Yet, as the current climate change debate shows, there can be an alarming intolerance for the very dissent that should be critical to validating its conclusions. This proved to be the case in Weaver's lifetime, for he also took issue with emerging new mindsets and was eventually marginalized as a result.

This book will appeal to anyone interested in the science and industry of the early nineteenth century, as well as for students of the philosophy and history of science. <http://www.theliffeypress.com/>

Red banner – green rosette

David John Douglass, 2017, Follonsby (Wardley) Miners Lodge, Community Heritage Association, softcover, 234 pages, £15, ISBN 978-1-873976-72-2. Available from the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, 0191 232 2201.

An illustrated reflection on ethnicity, northumbrian autonomism & the irish in the radical politics of the mines and the region, together with an exploration of the ancient mines of Gateshead, Felling and neighbouring collieries. Includes 16 detailed maps showing the location of 252 pits.



NMRS Mines Database

The (UK) Northern Mine Research Society has published a database of mining information compiled by the late Alasdair Neill. Mike Gill converted the format of over 6,000 pages of text. The database contains 76 676 entries and is fully searchable. 1656 entries relate to Ireland, and include references to the Mining Journal, Mineral Statistics and Mines Inspectors Reports. <https://www.nmrs.org.uk/mines-database/>

Women at the metal mines of the UK and Ireland database

Lynne Mayer has researched the employment of women in the mining industry of south-west England. As part of her work she has gathered information on over 3000 women at mines outwith that area, including 67 from Ireland. The information is available on her website. If you can add to the data please contact her by e-mail at balmaidens(at)gmail.com <http://www.balmaiden.co.uk/MetalMines.htm>

EastWest Mapping

EastWest Mapping has published three new maps of County Wicklow at 1:25000 scale. The Wicklow South sheet covers Goldmines River and the major workings of the Avoca Mines. The detail is impressive, including the depiction of Weaver's trenches 1802 at the head of Goldmines River. The other sheets cover Lugnaquilla & Glendalough, and Wicklow South-East. Folded paper €12.50, folded encapsulated €19.50. <https://www.eastwestmapping.ie/>

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(More geology and less history than the authors' article in Journal No.11)

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Prior-Wandesforde, R.C., 1975. Coal mining in the Castlecomer area: a short account. Carloviana, Vol.2 (New Series), No.24, p33-34, 38. (Journal of the Old Carlow Society) <http://carlowhistorical.com/archives/>

If you come across any articles or books on Irish mining and quarrying that are not listed in the bibliography in Journal No.9, or on Facebook, please let the Editor know.

Other news

PhD opportunity

Aberystwyth University in Wales have a PhD opportunity to study "Metal mining in SW Ireland: the geochemical record from peat and lacustrine archives". The project aims to discover the onset, duration and intensity of mining in the area from the Bronze Age through to the nineteenth century. Methods employed will include XRF scanning of sediment cores in parallel with ICP-MS analyses of the relevant metal elements. Applications for a PhD position can be made at any time, but applications for Aberystwyth PhD studentship funding have a deadline around March 1st.

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/dges/prospective/postgraduate/phd-opportunities/physical-geography-earth-science/>

Monktonhall Colliery, Dalkeith, Scotland (09/02/2018)

The Innovation Manager at The Coal Authority, Jeremy Crooks reports "The Coal Authority is currently working with Midlothian Council, Scotland, on the use of an abandoned mine shaft as a heat storage vessel of some 12,000cum being charged from surplus heat from an Energy from Waste Plant currently under construction. Stored heat will feed into a district heating scheme providing operational and energy savings to the scheme and plant operator". <https://utilityweek.co.uk/coal-mines-energy-storage/>

Ontario Mine Rescue Provincial Competition, 06-07 June 2018

Tara Mine is competing in the 69th annual competition, at the Young-Davidson Mine in Matachewan near Kirkland Lake. Tara, which originally based its emergency response program on Ontario Mine Rescue, has visited Ontario and the Provincial Competition several times in the past 20 years, most recently at the 2016 International Mines Rescue Competition in Sudbury.

<https://wawa-news.com/index.php/2018/05/30/top-mine-rescue-teams-to-compete-in-matachewan/>

MHTI CONTACT DETAILS

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