

ECMHA NEWSLETTER

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Special points of interest:

- ECMHA AGM report
- NAMHO visit to Luckett
- Lightning strike danger unresolved
- Wheal Sheba visit
- Future plans

www.eastcornwallmininghistory
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EAST CORNWALL MINING
 HISTORY ASSOCIATION
 CHARITY NUMBER 1082887

FROM THE AGM OF 11 AUGUST 2007

This year the venue for the AGM was Luckett Social Club where 14 members convened after a delicious tea prepared by Simon Streatfield, which Kim Tasker helped to serve. The chairman, Brian Spencer, reported that he and the secretary, Caroline Vulliamy, had worked hard to prepare the Heritage Lottery Fund grant application, but had been disappointed to learn that the DEFRA grant that had been awarded excluded ECMHA from lottery funding, so other partners were now being sought. In the meantime, the Tamar Valley AONB Service grant had been renewed. Unfortunately neither grant could be spent until the whole amount of funding was in place—hence the frustration of the cottages being boarded up and deteriorating (a minor collapse of stonework involving a lintel occurring only a few days before the AGM). The Secretary pointed out that before restoration could begin the recording of archaeological and vernacular architecture would be needed. She would welcome volunteers to undertake such tasks as detailed photography, compiling of documentary evidence, and gentle excavation of the floor and surrounding areas; hopefully under the guidance of Plymouth and District Archaeological Society, this autumn or next spring.



View of the Lockett Social Club from 2 Rose Cottage. The club occupies the former Men's Institute founded in 1918

In June NAMHO (National Association of Mining History Organisations) met at Morwellham for its AGM. Numerous site visits, both on the surface and underground, were organised, including one led by ECMHA's secretary, Caroline Vulliamy, assisted by the chairman, Brian Spencer, and to East Kit Hill and the Luckett Valley. 19 people chose this all-day option, stopping for a Cornish pasty or soup with a roll, green salad and a drink, at Luckett Social Club.

VISIT TO WHEAL SHEBA 11 AUGUST 2007

Few British mining fields can claim such a rich and diverse metalliferous mining heritage as the Tamar Valley which has a well documented mining history dating back to at least 1290



New Mill with massive buttress which indicates the strength once needed inside the building to support ore processing equipment from at least the C16th.

A group of about 12, led by Caroline Vulliamy, met at New Mill in bright weather to continue the route taken on last year's walk along Sheba bottom, a narrow valley with a powerful stream running through. The Sheba mine workings are half a mile long, but less than one hundred yards wide.

Our first stop was at the dumps and mine shafts all fenced off for safety reasons now. In 1855 copper ore of 1140 tons, of £2588 value, was extracted from the mine, but this was not enough to be profitable and in 1858 it closed. A disgruntled shareholder wrote:

'The devil now may take the floors
Hingston geese had eat the ores.'

A revival in the 1860s also failed. We walked further up the valley to view the dam built in the 1940s to create a reservoir. The water left the reservoir through large culverts and from there went into leats which wound their way along the south side of the valley to New Great Consols where it was used in ore separating processing in a large modern treatment scheme.



Members inspecting the dam with its sluice gate on the right. They are looking upstream towards the reservoir, now largely overgrown with water-loving plants

Next we climbed to a higher slope of the valley and turned back towards New Mill, en route looking at a less well known shaft with the remains of a horse whim nearby.



Sheba stack dating from the 1860s when the mine was reopened. Brown and Acton call this an enigmatic structure with a part-built engine house near its west end

Sources: Brown & Acton, *Exploring Cornish Mines*, volume 5
F. Booker, *Industrial Archaeology of the Tamar Valley*

TREASURER'S REPORT

The balance carried forward from 8 July 2006 was £2857.48p. Total income of £1517.75 included £215.00 from subscriptions, £79.90 from donations, and a £1222.85 payment from the Rural Payments Agency. This payment is now back to around the normal amount, compared with last year's shortfall, largely because ECMHA has been able to claim for several visits to both sites. Total expenditure of £4030.16 included expenses for 2006 AGM, insurances for Trustees Indemnity, Buildings and Employer's and Public liabilities; Scott and Co.—Specification for the cottages; fencing work at East Kit Hill Mine; and administrative costs. The balance at 11 August 2007 was £345.07. ECMHA therefore made a loss of £2512.41 for the year. In view of the difficulty in being awarded grants members discussed possible ways of raising money. Several suggestions were made including producing a leaflet to encourage legacies; approaching local businesses; and administrative bodies; undertaking a web-search for charitable trusts sympathetic to ECMHA's aims; and holding a coffee morning

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- If you know a group who would like to visit the cottages and/or East Kit Hill Mine please make contact (Chairman's details on p.4)
- If you would like to make a donation or have any ideas about how to raise immediate income, again please make contact
- If you would like to help gain grants by sending a letter of support, here is some guidance -

*PLEASE HEAD THE LETTER 'TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN' SO THAT IT CAN BE USED IN ANY APPLICATIONS. *INCLUDE AN OPENING TO INDICATE YOUR GENERAL BACKGROUND AND THEN *STATE WHY YOU SUPPORT THE AIMS OF ECMHA - THESE AIMS INCLUDE *RESTORING THE COTTAGES AND EAST KIT HILL MINE; *MAKING THEM MORE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH PRE-BOOKED VISITS; AND *EDUCATIONAL WORK TO SHOW THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF MINING IN THE AREA..

Please send your letter to the Chairman or the Editor whose details appear on the back page so that a file of support letters can be compiled.

The Tamar Valley has been included in the UNESCO World

Heritage Site For the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape..

There are about 850 sites worldwide, a recent addition being a silver mine in Japan



Members of ECMHA on the Wheal Sheba walk. Left—in front Brian Spencer and Pam Dorrington. Right - studying plans of Wheal Sheba held by Caroline Vulliamy

AUTUMN 2007

COMMITTEE MATTERS -

Editor/Membership Secretary
Mrs Susan Pittman
27 Old Chapel Road
Crockenhill
Swanley
Kent BR8 8LL

Phone: 01322 669923

Chairman:
Brian Spencer
9 Crockers Row
Gunnislake PL18 9DG

Phone: 01822 834294
Email: brian.spencer@uwclub.net

www.eastcornwallmininghistoryassociation.org.uk

Members of the Committee are: Brian Spencer (Chairman), Caroline Vulliamy (Secretary), Kim Tasker (Treasurer), Marcia Randall and Deri Parsons.

The Committee is small, and might not always meet the quorum, so **other volunteers are urgently needed.** Please make contact if you would like to find out more or if you are willing to offer your services.

WEBSITE NEWS from Deri Parsons

www.eastcornwallmininghistoryassociation.org.uk

The site has had 961 hits and is linked to the Morwellham Quay and NAMHO sites. Amongst others It has also gained us our first member recruited via the internet.

2007/8 SUBSCRIPTION

A REMINDER IS ENCLOSED IF YOU HAVE NOT YET PAID £5 FOR 2007-2008. THE SUBSCRIPTION ROUGHLY RUNS FROM AGM TO AGM. LIFE MEMBERSHIP IS £50.

DONATIONS ARE ALSO WELCOME. PLEASE ASK FOR A GIFT AID FORM IF YOU ARE AN INCOME TAX PAYER BECAUSE IT MAKES THE GIFT GO FURTHER.

ECMHA

Since the damage reported to Broadgate chimney last year two more chimney stacks have been struck by lightning. We have tried hard to obtain grants towards installing a lightning conductor at East Kit Hill mine, but so far without success.



East Kit Hill Mine engine house and stack