

ECMHA NEWSLETTER

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www.eastcornwallmininghistoryassociation.org.uk

EAST CORNWALL MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

CHARITY NUMBER 1082887

At the AGM the Committee congratulated the editor on achieving her doctorate on completion of her thesis, *'Elizabethan and Jacobean Deer Parks in Kent.'* N.B. This has given your editor more time to produce a fuller newsletter than members have received in the last two years! Thank you for your patience!

FROM THE AGM OF 16 JULY 2011

The venue for the AGM was North Hooe Farmhouse, Bere Alston, in Devon, at the kind invitation of Penny Rowe. About 12 gathered for the AGM in the spacious galleried room (once a 2-floored barn, storing apples above and logs below) with long views of the Tamar beyond..



North Hooe Farmhouse, and view from room overlooking the Tamar valley. Chapel Farm on the Cornish side

The Secretary, Caroline Vulliamy, reported that additional earthing rods for the lightning conductor on the East Kit Hill mine stack had been installed, thanks to volunteers who had dug out the trenches, especially to Brian Spencer, our chairman, who also almost single-handedly back filled the trenches afterwards. Robert Waterhouse drew sections through the dig. The results are not known yet, but are likely to show flattening the ground to build the stack; making dumps of surplus stones or waste from the adjacent boiler house; then rebuilding the boiler house.



and boiler house at East Kit Hill mine

The next job will be re-pointing the stack. The wall is about one metre thick, but when a fire was lit inside the stack to remove a jackdaw's nest, the smoke leaked out sideways, rather than finding its way to the top. After the sharp winter frosts of 2010/2011 several pieces of mortar fell onto the grass. The most vulnerable section is the upper brickwork on the windward side, where the *The stack* mortar has worn away.

THE MINERS' COTTAGES, LUCKETT

Work on the cottages has progressed since last year. The grant we were awarded was aimed at improving the external environment and setting of the cottages – so the application included visual improvements, safety works and safe access for educational groups, viewing the cottages from outside. The windows and doors of the upper cottages have been restored and a gate installed from the road. Work on the windows of the lower cottage is in progress



View of the upper cottage looking uphill from the road

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

Safety fencing has been put round the mine shaft and various tree works have improved access. Educational material can now be displayed in a new shed in the woodland to the rear of the cottages. Education packs, a nature trail and other teaching aids have been prepared as part of the education element of the grant.

Future plans include the restoration of the lean-to privy and an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable the interior of the cottages to be restored.



Above left: the lean-to double-seated privy

Above right: Both cottages looking downhill from the road

TREASURER'S REPORT

The balance on 10 July 2010 was £8991.50p, and on 15 July 2011 was £983.52p (two payments from Countryside Stewardship are due). The Lottery Fund grant for the work outlined on p.2 was £8700. The additional work on the lightning conductor cost £661.53p. Insurance coverage costs £46.75p a month, but is going up next year. The policy is a combined business insurance which covers buildings, employers' (needed for any volunteers) and public liability, and cover for the trustees. Membership currently stands at 24 life members and 20 annual members.

NORTH HOOE MINE

Although Penny has amassed an impressive amount of information about the mine and the whole site, which has been surveyed by the Tamar Mining Group, documented evidence is scarce. North Hooe lay on the western of two silver and lead lodes, running N/S below the Tamar and Bere peninsula. Although no secure evidence has been found, it is likely that the mine dates back to the C16th. Modern mining began in the early C19th, and reached its peak in the 1840s. The mine probably closed down in the 1860s, when it was 100 fathoms deep. We viewed the engine house, the smithy, and evidence of early C20th unsuccessful attempts to drain the mine with a view to re-opening it. Unfortunately vegetation growth and poor light made photography difficult. However, we were lucky with the weather, which brightened up for our visit, after dismal rain all morning. The site was fascinating and we were privileged to be invited by Penny to view it - thank you, Penny.

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



Group in North Hooe engine house - left > right: Brian Spencer, Ainsley Cocks, Penny Rowe, Kim Tasker, Daphne Thomas, Chris Perrett, Caroline Vulliamy

Looking up the Tamar bending towards Cotehele, below the near tree-line is Drater Lake where one of two quays for North Hooe mine was sited.



AUTUMN 2011

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COMMITTEE MATTERS -

Members of the Committee are Brian Spencer (chairman), Caroline Vulliamy (secretary), Kim Tasker (treasurer) 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.



Cottages along road through Luccombe

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 left)
- 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**, contact the Chairman or editor (details on left) for guidance and send a copy of your letter to either so that a file of support letters can be compiled.

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2011/12 SUBSCRIPTION

NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME- NOT ONLY TO SHOW AN INTEREST AND BECOME INVOLVED, BUT ALSO IF YOU WISH TO BOOST REVENUE AND HELP US TO INDICATE LEVEL OF SUPPORT WHEN SEEKING OUTSIDE FUNDING.

A REMINDER IS ENCLOSED IF YOU HAVE NOT YET PAID £5 FOR 2011-2012. THE SUBSCRIPTION ROUGHLY RUNS FROM AGM TO AGM.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP IS £50.

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



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