

NEWSLETTER - 2017

EAST CORNWALL MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

<http://mininghistoryeastcornwall.btck.co.uk>
CHARITY NUMBER 1082887

Notes from the AGM, held at Calstock Hall, 9 September 2017

Committee matters

The Committee as follows:-

Caroline Vulliamy	Chairman
Kim Tasker	Treasurer
Penny Rowe	Committee Meetings Secretary

(Unfortunately Terry Faull has resigned due to other commitments, but it is hoped he will continue to manage the website)



Mural by Ian Pethers on end wall of Calstock Town Hall from postcard of 1900

Susan Pittman will continue as Membership Secretary and Editor of the Newsletter.
27 Old Chapel Road, Crockenhill, Swanley, Kent BR8 8LL (01322 669923)

More Committee members would be welcome, and it is vital more join the Committee, so please make contact if you are interested.

Success of Programme of Events for 2017 - More planned for 2018

This year ECMHA ran a series of events to mark the 10th Anniversary of the World Heritage Site (2016). The talks and walks were greatly enjoyed, and attracted new members as well. It was agreed at the AGM that another programme be drawn up for 2018.

To whet your appetite:-

Possible talks might include - C20th Mining in the World Heritage Site: Devon Great Consols:

Tamar Canal: Glassmaking: Arsenic processing.

Possible Walks - Bere Alston mine and leat: Tamar Canal: Newquay (next Morwellham):

Gunnislake Clitters Mine: Danescombe Valley.



The miners' cottages, Lucket.
Both photos taken on 7 September 2017.



Zoomed East Kit Hill mine from the layby on the Gunnislake road near the lane to Harrowbarrow.



(1) Derwent Dawes checking the privy as it is being winched upright, Spring 2017. (2) As seen on 7 September 2017. The corrugated tin will be restored, a new door fitted, and a seat made to match the original, which has rotted away. Slate floor slabs were revealed after excavation. (3) View of cottages from the cleared garden with Brian Spencer's bench. The bank on the left is the ancient Kerrybullock Park boundary. This shows how the cottages were squeezed in outside the park.

Notes from the Treasurer

Income - Total £1,565.00

- **Income from membership** - 47 members (20 Life members) - £125.
- **Donations** - £691 - including an anonymous donation of £500.
- (N.B. £1000 credit from Helping Hands for Heritage remains in the account until Robert Waterhouse submits his final report.)
- **AONB** - donated £500 towards the restoration of the cottages.

Expenditure - Total £1,303.98

- **Trustees indemnity insurance; Companies House annual return; Buildings, Employer's Liability and Public Liability Insurance; Web filing fee.**

BALANCE AT 23 JULY 2016: £1,730.85

BALANCE AT 8 SEPTEMBER 2017: £1,991.87

- Although, on paper, the charity has £261.02 more than last year, the balance has been distorted by the donation of £1,000 yet to be claimed by the consultant.
- £100 per month is required to cover day-to-day running costs, and to date this has only been raised through emergency donations.

**• *This is unsustainable -
the future of the Association remains precarious.***

ACTION PLAN TO INCREASE INCOME

- * **SUBSCRIPTIONS TO BE RAISED TO £8 (£80 life membership) FROM JANUARY 2018.**
This is the first rise since ECMHA was founded. It was decided at the AGM that subscriptions were to run from 1 January (rather than from AGM to AGM). Subscriptions collected recently from established members will still cover next year, with the new system for them beginning in January 2019. New members, who joined earlier in 2017, will be contacted in December for 2018 subscriptions.
- * **GIFT AID TO BE CLAIMED** - This was considered to be a priority.
- * **GRANT SEEKING**- Another priority. Hopeful sources are -
CoOp - to cover vegetation management (up to £2,500).
SITA - covers a wider remit and ECMHA's recent activity will help towards qualification.
- * **PUBLICITY AND NEW MEMBERS DRIVE** - A programme of events for 2018 and presence at local events are being planned.



Summit of Kit Hill. Stack of East Kit Hill mine lower right, 7 September 2017

WALK ALONG CALSTOCK QUAYS - 9 September 2017 led by Stephen Docksey



Stephen led us from the car park behind Calstock Hall along the lower road to Danescombe House. This walk was packed with history, which Stephen graphically outlined to us. To give a chronological history of the development of Calstock, and in particular its rich industrial heritage, is beyond the remit of this newsletter. I have, therefore, decided to pick out certain aspects to highlight, to give readers a flavour of this fascinating place.

Stephen Docksey (in visibility jacket) talking to the group by the former garage. All photos taken on 9 September 2017 unless otherwise stated.



Part of Calstock's lime kiln legacy. Lime countered acid soil. Most kilns date from 1770-1830, with lime trade peaking from 1810-1850. (1) Calstock Quay, lime kilns with dwelling house and store. (2) Kiln incorporated into incline railway support. (3) Lime kiln now with allotment around. (4) On same site, railway carriage built in Swindon in 1879.

West Briton Newspaper 31 August 1849

This town presents the appearance of having been visited by a snow-storm, the outside of the houses being all lime-washed and the streets covered an inch deep with hot lime give one the idea of a town given over to the plague. Several deaths from cholera have occurred.



In summer Calstock could be smelt from a distance. Streets were ankle deep in filth. In 1854 after a Sanitary Report Calstock was cleaned up - drains connected and sewers laid. A policeman was appointed.

Industrial Archaeology of the Tamar Valley by Frank Booker (Newton Abbot 1967)

Calstock's mid C19th Population

1841	2553
1851	4356
1861	7090

Street scene from near junction with New Road looking down towards one side of the Tamar Inn.

Western Daily Mercury 8 May 1872

Opening of the East Cornwall Mineral Line

For the last twenty years more than 200 tons of stuff has been carried up and down the river daily, and Calstock is the port at which it is shipped. Hitherto down dreadful roads, Calstock has acquired a half-mile frontage from Cotehele Woods to Calstock with powers to run into ore floors beyond. The Admiralty has allowed a quay wall to be built. The line along the front is worked by horse power. A new line supersedes the incline of a quarter of a century before, with locomotives from the top of the incline serving 156 trucks each capable of carrying five tons.



Remains of the former ore floors behind Calstock Hall, with the mineral rail track marked out with bricks. Copper ore was weighed and sampled here before being transported down river.

East Cornwall Mineral Railway (commenced in 1863) linked Calstock with Callington (Kelly Bray) and connected a number of mines, an arsenic refinery, granite quarries and brick, tile and fireclay works via an incline-plane to nearly 0.5 km of quays at Calstock. Here the mining village and port developed as a huddle of terraced roads and houses, whose layout was constrained by the steep topography.

Nomination of Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape for inclusion in the World Heritage List (Cornwall County Council 2004)



The bridge over New Road taking the incline railway to the quays, on the left.



The site at the top of the incline railway track. The gradient of the incline was 1:6, dropping 100 yards in 800 yards, 12 September 2017.



1



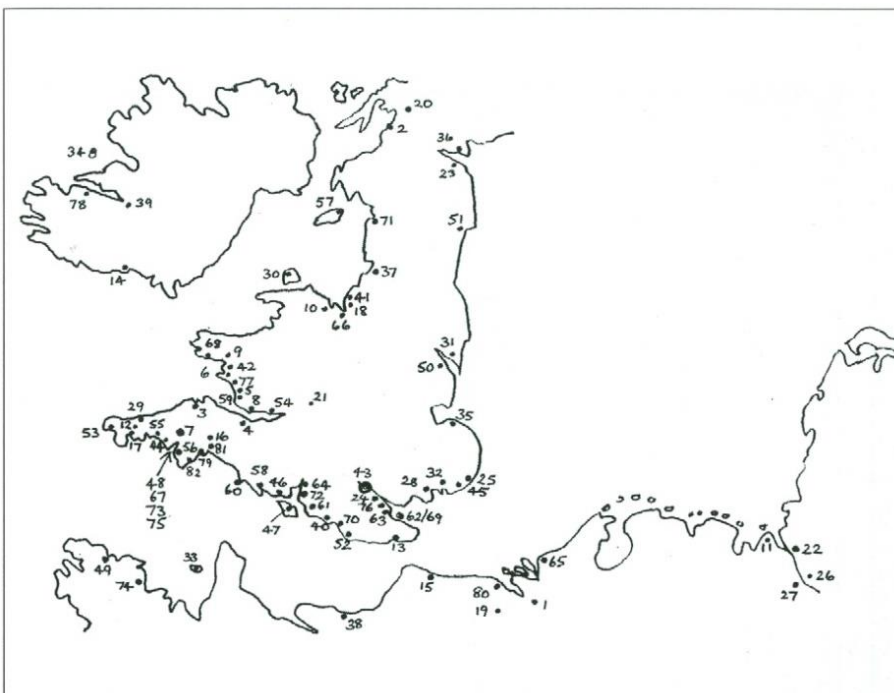
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(1) Off Calstock Quays early C20th, near Danescombe and looking downstream towards Cotehele, two 2-masted and one 3-masted schooners face upstream at high tide. (2) Kelly House and Kelly Cottage, formerly wheat and flour warehouses.

The parishes of Gunnislake, Calstock and St. Dominic provide an example of rural ship owning and seafaring of a type common in the Baltic region, especially in Finland and Sweden, but rarely in Britain. The pattern was one of the farmer/ market gardener/seafarer with a family working a small farm or garden also owning shares in a coasting smack and sailing her in season.

The Merchant Schooners by Basil Greenhill (London 1988)

Figure B Map showing the *Mountblairy's* Ports of Call, 1905-1916
(Ports are numbered alphabetically, see figure C for key)



Calstock schooner *Mountblairy* sailed between 82 ports from 1905-1916 carrying 142 ship-loads. Over half of the 26 products carried were coal, old iron and clay. Less regular cargoes were nitrate, granite, slate, brick, cotton seed oil, salt, pitch, and kelp.
Mate's Logbook for *Mountblairy*, 1905-1916, by Susan Pittman (Tamar no. 23, 2001)

Calstock was well placed on a deep, wide, straight stretch of the river in the heart of the farming and industrial country in the days when bulk transport was by water. Of 193 identified vessels in late Victorian/Edwardian times, 53 were based at Plymouth with Calstock following with 32.

From *The Shipping and Trade of the River Tamar*, parts I & II, by Ian D. Merry (National Maritime Museum, 1980)

With so much movement of traffic, trade and commercial activity the hospitality business thrived.



Calstock's Hotels & Inns

1. Calstock Square. The Tamar Inn (formerly Boatsman's Arms) is C18th and was once used for manorial meetings.
2. Steam Packet Hotel was the principal venue for music and dancing.
3. Commercial Hotel ceased business by 1st World War.
4. Danescombe House ceased to be a hotel a few years ago. Began as Ashburton Hotel in 1859.

It has often been said that the coming of the railways killed trade on the Tamar. Like all generalisations this is only partly true. The gradual replacement of the horse by the internal combustion engine was of greater significance.

From The Shipping and Trade of the River Tamar, parts I & II, by Ian D. Merry (National Maritime Museum, 1980)

The Bere Alston & Calstock Light railway was authorised to redevelop a narrow gauge mineral line to be served by a wharf at Calstock Quay. The line also made connection with the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction Railway at Bere Alston. The completed line over Calstock viaduct opened on 2 March 1908. The viaduct is listed Grade II*. The foundations had taken 2¼ years to complete. The bedrock was shallow on the Devon side, but by the 9th pillar the bedrock was 120 feet down, so the foundation for that took 9 months.



- (1) 12 spans of 60 feet, make it look impressively slender and elegant.
- (2) The top of the footings of the pillars are visible at low tide.
- (3) The use of concrete blocks by the designers, Galbraith & Church, was innovative. Until 1934 an unusual feature was a wagon lift on a siding alongside the viaduct which enabled wagons to continue to reach the wharf below.
- (4) A train crossing as we watched.

www.transporttrust.com & Industrial Archaeology of the Tamar Valley by Frank Booker (Newton Abbot 1967)

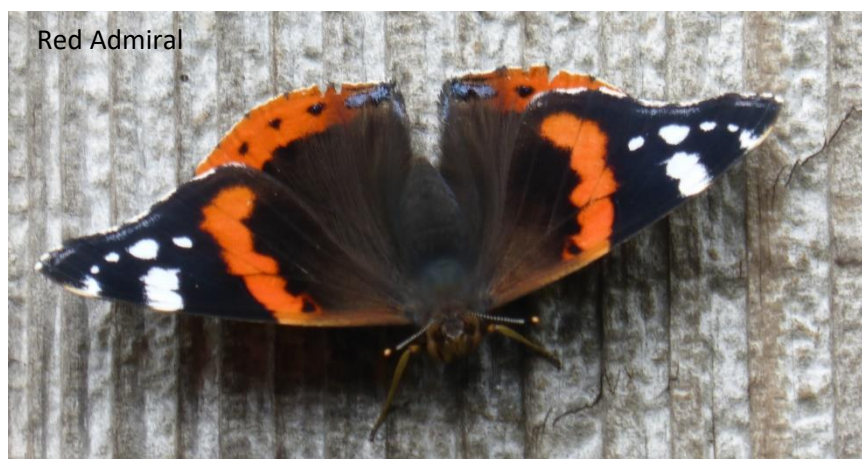
New publication by a member - **CALSTOCK SHOPS & SHOPKEEPERS** by **JILL LANE**, £10 from Calstock Parish Archive - www.calstockhistory.org.uk
 This tells of the shops from the C19th and into the C20th when Calstock was a bustling town, serving not only its own inhabitants and those of nearby settlements, but also the pleasure boats coming up for a day trip from Plymouth. The stories of shop-keeping families are also covered.



(1) Bickle's corner - now Lishe's Tearooms - building late C18th cottages with C19th shop fronts inserted. (2) Looking down Fore Street with last shop 'The Village Stores' (Londis) up for sale. (3) New venture, a mobile shop, Calstock Village Shop 'Bear Necessities' opened a few days before our AGM. We wish it well.



Our thanks to Stephen Docksey for the fascinating tour along the lower part of Calstock. His research brought an added dimension to what we were seeing - and the weather was perfect. Any errors are mine. There were several aspects I have not touched upon, such as the ferry and boat building on the Devon side, but there is just not the space!



Red Admiral