

NEWSLETTER - 2018

EAST CORNWALL MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

<http://mininghistoryeastcornwall.btck.co.uk>

CHARITY NUMBER 1082887

Notes from the AGM, held at Lockett Social Club, 14 July 2018

Committee matters

The Committee as follows:-

Caroline Vulliamy Chairman

Kim Tasker Treasurer

Penny Rowe Committee Meetings Secretary

Rosy Hanns was welcomed onto the Committee

Terry Faull will continue to manage the website

Susan Pittman will continue as Membership Secretary and Editor of the Newsletter -

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



The upper miners' cottage, 14 July 2018

REMINDER: **Work parties** will be held on the **second Tuesday of every month** from August onwards, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm, alternately at the cottages and East Kit Hill Mine site.

If you have brush cutters or hand tools, please bring them.

To find out more, and to book in, please contact Caroline Vulliamy on [01579 370411](tel:01579370411).

Success of Programme of Events for 2018 - More planned for 2019

This is the second year that ECMHA has run a series of events to raise the profile of the Association and, hopefully, to boost income, attract new members and encourage offers of help. Warm thanks are extended to Rick Stewart, the mining manager at Morwellham, who gave a fascinating talk last November; and this year to Dave Warne and Dr Peter Cloughton - the former who gave a slide-show with beautiful photos taken underground in mines in Devon & Cornwall, and the latter for the guided walk featuring Bere Alston's Medieval Silver Mines - both were very well received.

In 2019 there will a talk in February about current mining in Kelly Bray. A tour round South and North Hooe Mines is planned for for April 2019, and in May there will be a second

viewing of the S.C.A.T.S video 'The Price of Poison'. Keep an eye on the website for details of these and other events in the pipe-line. Possible future events are in the box below.

Walks / talks - Greenscombe, Deerpark and Gonamena – alluvial/eluvial workings; Wheal Brothers and Holmbush/Windsor mine sites; Wildlife on mines; Mining in Tavistock; Devon Great Consols; Tamar Canal; Glassmaking; Arsenic processing; Newquay (next to Morwellham); Gunnislake Clitters Mine; Danescombe Valley.

This August Stoke Parish Archive is making a short film about children in the mid C19th making their way to school, with shots planned of a child emerging from the lower cottage door. As this is currently boarded up, a push has been made to raise funds for the restoration of the doorway. A Jumble Sale was held on 2 June at which over £249 was raised.



The miners' cottages from the south, looking uphill from Luckett, 14 July 2018. See item above concerning the renovation of the lower door

Extract from newspaper of 11 February 1848

There is a small dilapidated cottage containing two rooms, one being immediately over the other, and occupied as the dormitory of the household. The dimensions of these rooms are thirteen feet by eleven, and the height of the sleeping apartment six feet eight inches. In this miserably confined space, with a window less than two feet square, are huddled together every night fifteen human beings; comprising three men and their wives, a young man the son of one of these couples, and a miscellaneous group of children of various ages completing the number.



The former school and school house, Luckett, affected by arsenic fumes in Victorian times, 14 July 2018,



Stack from arsenic flue of Luckett Mine above Deer Park Farm, Luckett, 2012, replacing earlier one lower downhill

Items from Treasurer's Report

Despite making a determined effort to put on more events to raise funds, expenditure continues to exceed income - the charity making a loss of £471.64 since the 2017 AGM. We are only afloat at present with a balance of £1,520.32 because part of Robert Waterhouse's fee for an archaeological report on the remains of floors in the lower cottage has yet to be claimed.

Income	£649.68	membership / fund raising
Expenditure	£1,121.32	insurance / Companies House Annual Return fee

Insurance and running costs require around £100 a month, so income is lagging even to cover these expenses. To achieve any restoration requires grants or generous donations, such as one received from the Old Cornwall Society, which will show up in the 2019 accounts.

Gift Aid is in the process of being applied for, but getting registered has proved more complicated than anticipated. There is also the hope that a Mid-Tier Stewardship application can be claimed, after a feasibility study has been completed.



The outside toilet behind the cottages has been partially restored, but is awaiting its new door and further stabilisation of the structure. Excavation of the floor was carried out and recorded last year, 14 July 2018



East Kit Mine from zoomed photo taken from the road up to Kit Hill, September 2017

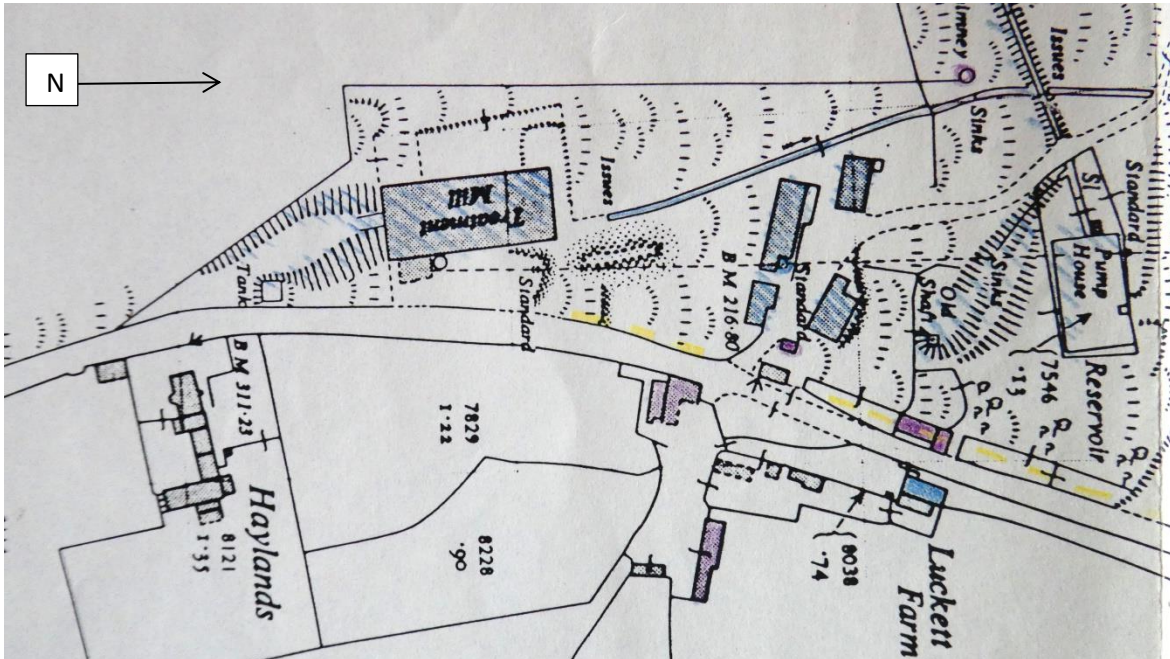


A short history walk of Lockett's development as a village was prepared for a walk in 2017. It included Rose Cottage, probably the house of mine manager c.1800, 20 July 2018

VISIT TO LUCKETT MINE - 14 July 2018

Ten of us went to explore the C20th mineral separation area of the mine which lay up the hill from Lockett beyond the miners' cottages. Five of the group were non-members, two of whom joined at the AGM. We visited three levels of remains, and spent useful time on the middle level doing some initial measuring and limited surveying, most of the remains being ivy-covered.

I must confess to be inadequately qualified to write intelligently on the remains we found, but at least this account will provide a photographic record that others with more knowledge of separation plants might make sense of.



C20th operations hatched blue. Map re-orientated to match the diagram below

Side elevation of C20th levels with higher levels to the left, kindly drawn by Dr Sue McClaughry

Stamps + Screens

Rake classifier
Ball Mill
Conditioning tank (?)

see p.7

Primary flotation + table classifiers

5 sets gravity separation

* 5 sets gravity separation plus mill

see p.8-9

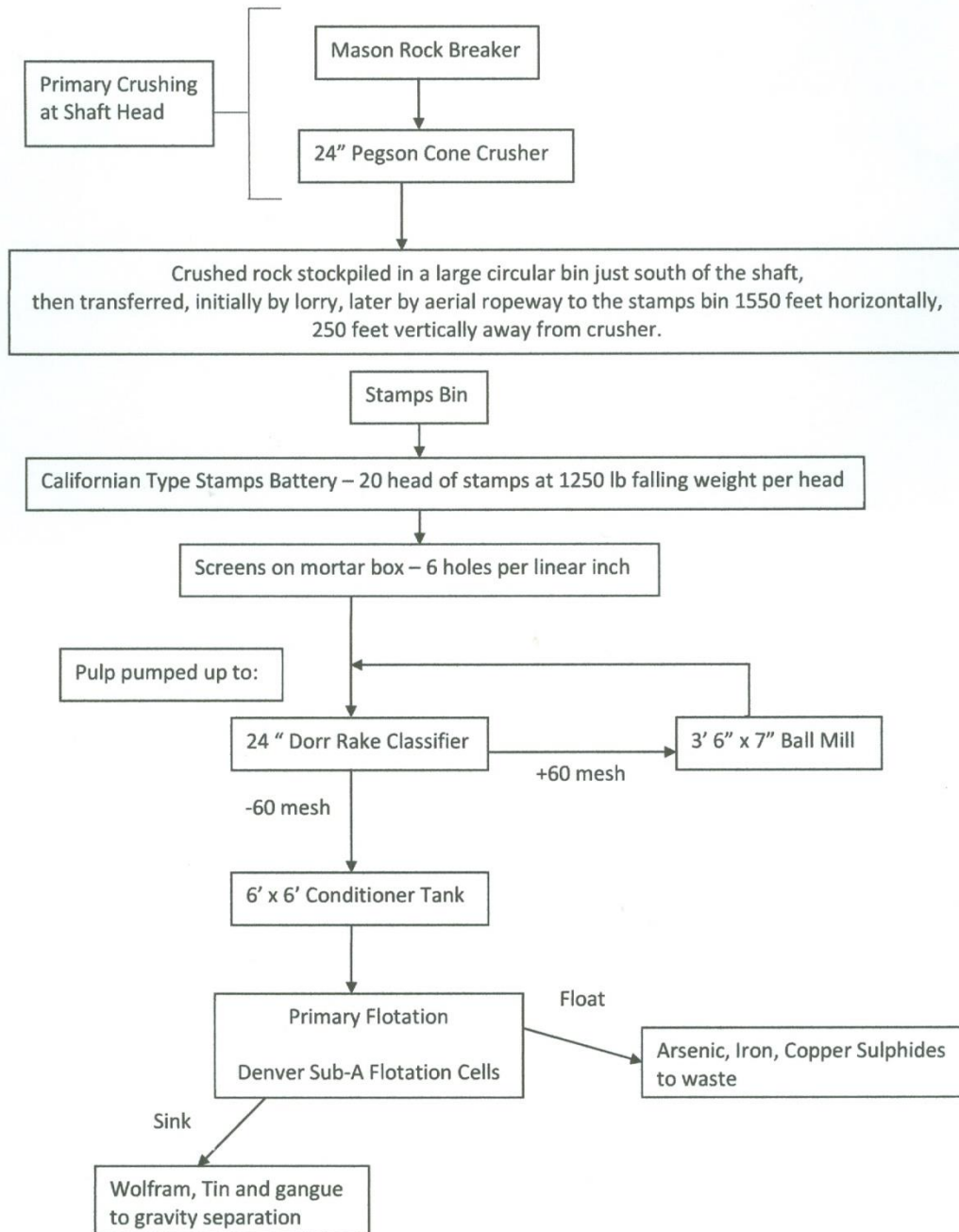
Batch Flotation

* level extensively measured 14 July 2018. Ivy covered stonework was probably foundations for separation tables.

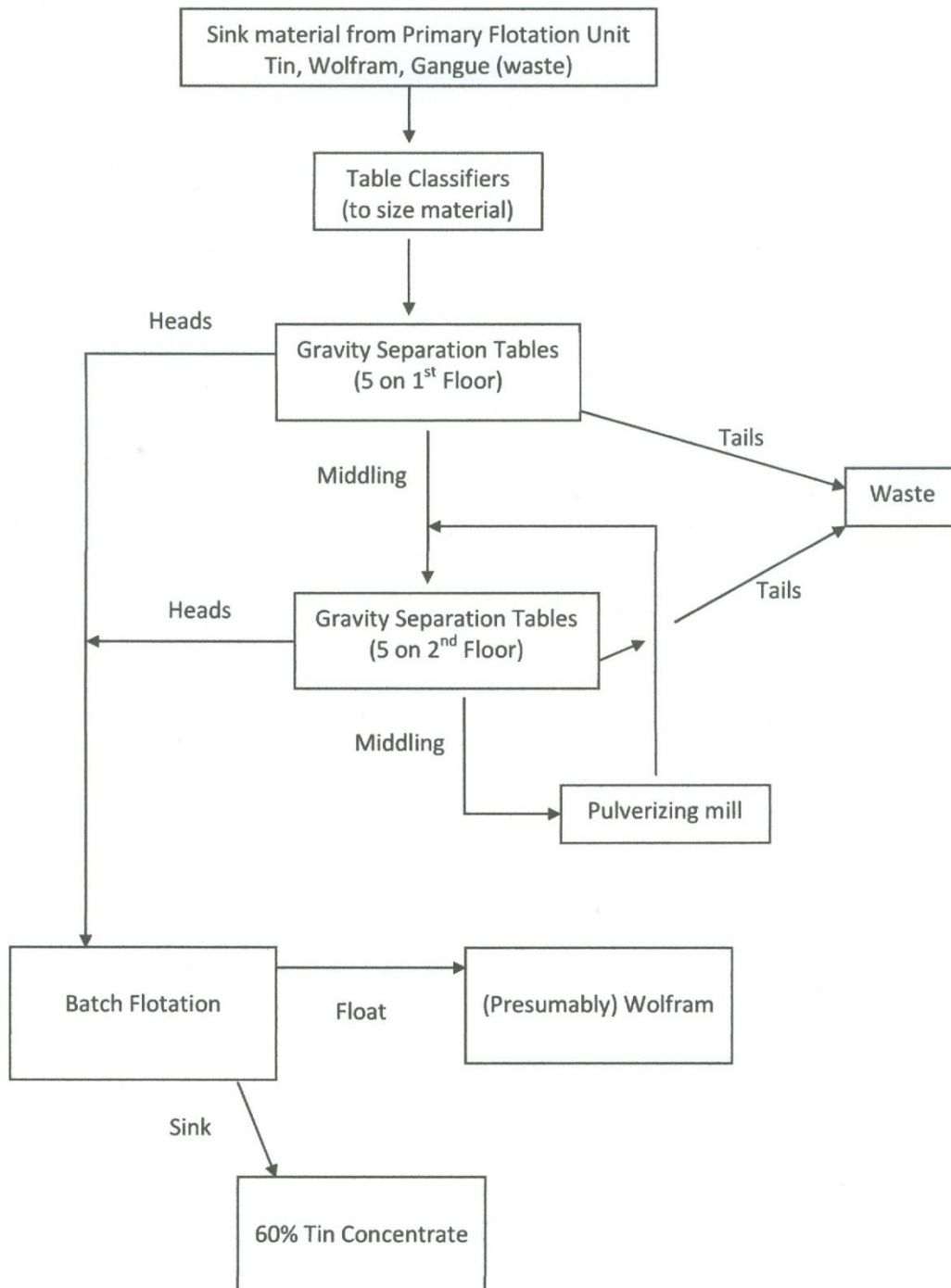
see p.10

This diagram (1 of 2) was produced by Sue McClaughry PhD, who joined us on the visit, from material supplied by the Cornwall Record Office. How to link this with what is on the ground will require much more investigation.

New Consols Mine, Lockett – Outline Milling Operation (1)



New Consols Mine, Lockett – Outline Milling Operation (2)



On the upper level were the remains of the supports for the aerial ropeway built in 1949 to connect to Phillip's shaft across the valley. This replaced the original mode of transportation of ore to the mill by four 5-ton lorries, which also brought spoil from other local mine sites for reprocessing. A primary crushing plant near the shaft head reduced the ore to a quarter of an inch before it entered the mill. The aerial ropeway transported the ore to the stamps bin 1550 feet horizontally, 250 feet vertically from the crusher.



The support of the aerial ropeway, 14 July 2018

On this same level was a tank, marked on the map on p.4, with pipe leading down to a lower level.



View across the 1st floor of gravity separation tables, largely obscured by vegetation and new tree growth, 14 July 2018



above: View of the tank from the upper level, perhaps the conditioning tank for the primary flotation system, 14 July 2018



A lower level, which probably contained the second floor of five sets of gravity separation tables and a mill, was less covered with vegetation, because some clearance had been carried out by Butterfly Conservation to provide a possible flight path for the rare Heath Fritillary butterfly between Greenscombe and Deer Park Woods. This meant that some of the bases of machinery and various structures were a little easier to see.



Group measuring, investigating one of the gravity separation platforms, 14 July 2018



Sue and Patrick McClaughry about to measure the back wall of the second level we visited. It measured approximately 22 metres, 14 July 2018



right: The back retaining wall, with pipe exits two-thirds of the way up along its length. At the centre a buttress-like channel bringing water from above, with oblong outlet at the bottom. Lined up with the 'buttress' and in the foreground with ferns were two deep slots, 14 July 2018

above: One in a row of 5 trough-like settling tanks through which could be seen a channel carrying the water to the level below, 14 July 2018



left: Malcolm Gould (I) and Simon Streatfield measuring a wheel imbedded into the ground just outside the former mill building with the gravity separation tables.

below: The outside of the wheel rim made up of small sections of wood held together with iron fixings, 14 July 2018



The lowest level we visited was even more difficult to interpret, but everything on the higher terraces would have been occupied by the batch flotation units.

Lower of 3 levels visited, seen from the level above, 14 July 2018



above: General view across lowest of 3 levels visited, rear wall retains middle level with 2nd floor of gravity separation tables

left: A trough structure in the lowest of 3 levels visited, 14 July 2018

Mines and Miners of Cornwall Book XV: Calstock, Callington and Cornwall by A.K. Hamilton Jenkin, published 1969.

The mine was restarted in 1946, plant was purchased second hand, and in poor condition. There were constant setbacks, failure of pumps etc., the engine shaft was finally unwatered to 90 fathoms. Milling commenced in 1949; mainly due to the condition of the stamps, recovery was poor, an average of 10 lbs of black tin per ton. It was impossible to raise more capital, and it was abandoned in December 1952.

Unnamed newspaper, early September 1949:

Another Cornish tin mine in production again

The New Consols Mine at Lockett was opened yesterday by Sir Clive Burn, secretary of the Duchy of Cornwall. The new mill, set into operation yesterday can deal with over 30,000 tons of ore a year, and has Californian stamps to crush the ore. Tube mills, flotation cells, shaking tables, and magnetic separation are all electrically-driven. It has not been possible to equip the mill with an entirely new plant, and some second-hand equipment had to be used.

It has not yet been decided what minerals will be recovered as by-products.

An overhead ropeway will feed the mill, and a primary crushing plant near the shaft head reduces the ore to a quarter of an inch before it enters the mill.

To augment power, a hydro-electric scheme has been installed - two turbines are fed with water from a leat and drive three alternators.

Unnamed newspaper, December 1952

Tin mining to end at Lockett. nearly 70 miners will lose jobs.

The excavation of alluvial wolfram will continue and the mill will continue to crush and separate wolfram from this source and from Trebartha Wolfram Mine, North Hill. Nearly half of the mine's labour force is to be laid off, but it is to be hoped that a few men may later be employed at Trebartha where the production of wolfram is to be expanded as the mine is developed.

The closure was blamed on the reluctance of finance houses to put up the large sum of money required on the Government's penal taxation. New Consols Mine, which was reopened in 1947, has produced thousands of tons of tin ore in the past five years.

In 1946 a more spirited operation started under the name New Consols. Phillip's Shaft was unwatered by electric pumps, but not without difficulty. Power was provided by two oil engines but the secondhand equipment was prone to breakdowns. A mill, consisting largely or entirely of equipment, which had been used for wartime tin recovery at Prince of Wales Mine, Harrowbarrow, was set up beside the road leading down into the village from the south. At first four 5-ton lorries were used to take the ore to the mill, but in 1949 the mill was connected to Phillips' Shaft by an aerial ropeway across the valley. After a struggle the shaft was finally unwatered but underground prospects proved disappointing so the bulk of the operations consisted of treating the burrows for tin and arsenic. About 180 men employed there 1950-51. Results from this working totalled 170 tons of tin concentrate and 2 tons of wolfram.

In the Spring of 2017 the first phase of a wildlife survey of Lockett and the mine site was undertaken. On the weekend after the AGM members of the Launceston Area Parishes Wildlife Group and friends converged on Lockett to undertake the second phase. It began on the Saturday evening with moth and bat surveys, and continued through a boiling hot Sunday looking for plants, insects, mammals, fungi, lichens, etc. The results will be published in due course.



Meanwhile, here is one of the Broad-Leaved Helleborines, a native terrestrial orchid, found on our visit on 14 July 2018. The plants were tagged so that they could be properly recorded during the ecological survey.

Finally, Simon's novel way of transporting delicious scones he had made to Lockett Social Club for our cream tea! Sorry I failed to take picture of the food itself!

