



**EAST CORNWALL MINING HISTORY  
ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER - 2021**

**CHARITY NUMBER 1082887**



View from lower Lockett looking up, i.e. southwards, towards Monks Cross and Kit Hill. The miners' cottages are on the right towards the top end of the stretch of road seen in this photograph. The detached house featured on the right is Duchy House, 23 June 2021.

**ECMHA AGM 27 JUNE 2021**

This year you should have received the annual report and accounts with voting paper well before the AGM, so a brief summary of the main points is all that is required here.

- All the voting papers returned were positive, confirming Caroline Vulliamy and Kim Tasker as Directors
- The report and accounts of 2020 were adopted
- The report and accounts of 2021 were accepted
- There was to be no change to the subscription rates

The results were announced at the Zoom meeting held on 27 June, followed by a PowerPoint presentation by Susan Pittman 'Exploring the Tamar, 1979-1984'.

## **ANNUAL REPORT for 2021 (Chairman, Caroline Vulliamy)**

It had been a difficult and different year with events and work parties suspended.

- A number of grants were applied for:
  - a) Heritage@RiskEmergencies grant - ECMHA qualified but failed to have funds allocated because the cut-off date for applications changed and ECMHA fell outside the new date.
  - b) Government Covid Grants amounting to £9000 had been received via Cornwall County Council.
- The host organisation carrying our website had ceased, so a new website was being planned. Grateful thanks were extended to Terry Faull who had designed and managed the old website for many years.
- Members would be informed of the new website address when it was up and running.
- It is hoped that a programme of events later this year and for 2022 will go ahead. Members will be informed of developments.

Added comments since the Report -

- Susan Pittman would continue as membership secretary and editor of the Newsletter. 27 Old Chapel Road, Crockenhill, Swanley, Kent BR8 8LL (01322 669923) - email on the communications you receive from me.
- An anonymous donor was thanked for money received via the Charities Aid Foundation.

## **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS - 2021**

In the past it has been difficult to balance income against expenditure, but thanks to the Covid grants ECMHA was in a better position than for several years.

The grants will cover expenses for the next two years, and be used to complete repairs to the toilet, pay for joinery work to the door, roof joist, floor and windows of the lower cottage, and to repair the front wall there.

Loss in 2020	£605.82
Balance at 31/8/2020	£302.21
Balance on 27/6/2021	£9100.10

A bottle found hidden in the rafters of the upper cottage. Research into this needs to be done. In 1839-1840 Thomas Franklyn was a wine and spirit merchant with outlets at 42 Fore Street and in Tavistock Street, Devonport. Perhaps A. Franklyn was related.



We had no AGM visit this year, but I did manage to get to Cornwall, and here are a few photographs I took of the area around Lockett.



Looking north from the north side of Kit Hill. Dartmoor in the far background on the right. The sun is shining on the fields of Deer Park Farm, with the arsenic stack of New Great Consols Mine, Lockett, picked out by the light, 22 June 2021.



Looking towards the summit of Kit Hill from the north at Sand Lane, Lockett. On the sky-line to the left is the stack of South Kit Hill Mine, which was worked from 1856 to 1884 for deposits of tin, copper, arsenic and wolfram. The quarry on the right dates from the 1880s. Stone was lowered on trucks down an inclined railway, 23 June 2021



The hedgerows were full of flowers. The foxgloves made an especially grand display. This is the stack of East Kit Hill mine. Because of Covid-19 the site was rather overgrown, and the buildings obscured by trees, 23 June 2021.



Cotehele Quay at low tide from the mouth of the stream to the south, which joins the Tamar. Ox-eyed daisies form the white mass on the hillside, 23 June 2021.

## **EXPLORING THE TAMAR 1976-1984**

I was pleased that some of you were able to join the Zoom presentation which I put together from the slides my husband, Ken, took in the early years, from 1976, of our discovery of the Tamar. In the holiday cottage was a copy of Frank Booker's *Industrial Archaeology of the Tamar Valley*, and I was hooked. Ken was a keen sailor and towed our dinghy down to Cornwall. He would work out tides and wind to reach various industrial sites I had picked out. Over the years we explored (with outboard motor only when necessary) the 30-mile stretch from Weirhead to Drake's Island. When weather or tide was unsuitable for sailing we visited the inland sites. I can safely say that there is scarcely a site mentioned by Frank Booker that I have not visited.

The slides are not of the sharpest quality now, but I will try to choose some of the better ones to give you a flavour of our exploits.



above: Steam whim house and Phillip's engine house (higher) at New Great Consols, Luccombe, August 1978. (Now without roofs). below: General view of the mine site from near the steam whim house looking south. The former school is to the left and the arsenic stack on the skyline, August 1978. (Both are now obscured at this viewpoint by the growth of vegetation.)





At Weirhead, Gunnislake. The furthest point of sailing up the Tamar and the end of the tidal river. Tideway 'Snowgoose' with Susan swimming off the Tamar Manure Navigation island, August 1984. The canal of 1808 formed a 3-mile link between Morwellham and Gunnislake and bypassed the fish weir. It was useful in transporting coal, bricks and granite, but dredging and clearing costs were high and the Company went into liquidation in the Second World War.



above: Morwellham copper quay in August 1977 when the dock (where the grass is) had not been cleared and only part of the rail track and bollards were obvious.

below: In the summer of 1983 the whole quay from higher ground shows the cleared dock, recreated tracks and an overhead wagon just visible on the elevated section. Areas of the original tiled floor had been uncovered. Piles of 'ore' had been deposited round the site to re-create the appearance of the Victorian quay.



The Gawton arsenic mine site was accessible in 1977. The stack was erected on high ground to avoid polluting the valley below where the arsenic works were situated. Its lean is a notable landmark. According to Frank Booker the cement on the south side dried before that on the north - hence the distortion. The flues are dramatically steep, 2 feet thick and 6 feet high, and are said to be the longest of their kind in the country. They are still encrusted with arsenic crystals. In 1870 the site employed 100 people. It closed in 1893.



Susan with Tideway at Calstock, August 1983. Calstock then had a museum, butterfly farm and several more shops. The rail viaduct dates from 1908.



left: The Boot Inn sign, Calstock, August 1977, with initials and date 1563 in granite below. In 1887 the publican was also a bootmaker.

below: The premises have now been divided into two. An elaborate sign bracket has replaced the 1970s one. The date stone is not now visible - perhaps obscured by the vegetation, 25 June 2021.



Sometimes during our explorations we came across unexpected events, and on two occasions had the camera ready to record these. Both led to invitations to special events at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich - not a long journey from our home in NW Kent.



above: The 'opening' of the Shamrock, 15 August 1979. This last Tamar sailing barge had been restored, after being abandoned on the mud in 1969. It was built at Calstock in 1899. Ken and I were sailing past and took the only photos from the Devon side.

below: In August 1983 we came across Professor Basil Greenhill and his colleague at Halton Quay. They were testing a replica Viking lake canoe on the river. They had excavated the original found in Scandinavia and had built the replica at his home in nearby Bothetheric.





The inlet at Halton Quay, summer 1983. Braunder on the sky-line. At the bottom of the field the roof of Little Braunder, once the fruit store for the market garden at Braunder, but converted into the holiday cottage where we stayed. Below that 'Maud's Cottage'. In the 1970s into the 1980s Maud Dawe lived here, the former pub of Halton Quay. The cottage was not linked to power or sewage utilities. The only water supply was a cold water tap outside. She used drift wood collected from the creek to fuel her range.



A magical moment at Halton Quay at 8.00 a.m. in the summer of 1983. For a few minutes at high tide the tidal current and the river current are balanced to create perfect calm. The salmon fishing boats are moored off Chapel Farm. The iron 'eye' of the lime kilns drew air into the fires at the base of the kilns nearby.

I will end with slides of Drake's Island, the other end of our voyages, and 15 miles by river from Halton Quay.



Ken Pittman at the helm of Tideway 'Snowgoose' with Drake's Island in the background, summer 1983. We were able to land without hindrance to explore the island, which had strategic fortifications, but also had been used down the ages as prison, refuge, religious centre and, at this time, an adventure training facility.



**Ideas for fund-raising and help at events would be much appreciated.  
Contact Kim Tasker: [kimtasker67@hotmail.com](mailto:kimtasker67@hotmail.com)**