

CMA Website: www.cornishminers.com

Mike Davis continues to run the website for the CMA. He encourages all the membership to send him information which can be loaded onto the website. Mike's email is: cornishminer@homecall.co.uk

Many interested people have contacted the website and Mike reports some fascinating chats with miners and former miners there. Please, take advantage of Mike's Message Board and talk about the subject which turns so many people on – Cornish mining!

Don't forget to sign the Guestbook when you are there and browse through it to see comments and news from old workmates at home and abroad.

SWMT LTD is dedicated to providing specialist services to the mining and tunnelling industry; its expertise extends into general rock engineering. The company was formed in 1984. The senior directors have spent their working lives in the mining and construction industry, and maintain a close personal contact with all work undertaken. Since the company was founded it has undertaken work in all parts of the British Isles.

SWMT

South Western Mining & Tunnelling Ltd



Tel 01208 831293

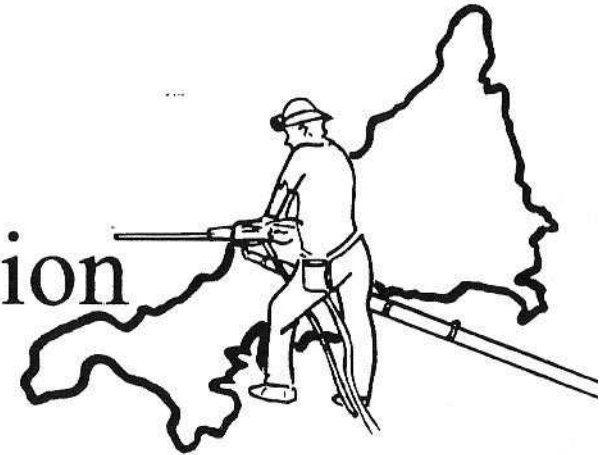
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Cornish Miners Association



**NEWSLETTER No.16
of the Cornish Miners Association**

August 2009

CORNISH MINERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER No.16

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

At this year's AGM it was once again time to elect a new Chairman, Allen Buckley having completed his two years. As there were no other nominees, I accepted the post for the next two years. On behalf of the Cornish Miners Association membership, I would like to thank Allen and all the other elected officers and committee members for their continued commitment to the CMA. We also are delighted to have Jimmy Clemence join as a new member of the committee.

Finally, I would like to welcome our new President, Leslie Matthews, who was overwhelmingly elected at the Annual General Meeting. We are all pleased and proud that he accepted the nomination.

Paul Bray CMA Chairman.

The **last Friday in every month** we meet in the lounge bar of Tyacks Hotel, Camborne, at 7.30pm. There is usually some of us still there by 10.30pm, so if you can't make it early on, there is usually someone to talk to about mining until late. The numbers have varied over the months from a handful to over a dozen, but all new ones are welcome and nothing can be better than having a drink with old workmates. If you've been in the past, come again! If you've never been, you're welcome! If you come regularly – it's your round!

The CMA has teamed up with the South Crofty Jewellery Collection. All paid up members of the Association can now enjoy a 10% discount on the complete range. Sales will be dealt with direct, but interested members will only get the discount after they have had their membership verified by the CMA. To do this either email cornishminer@homecall.co.uk, or phone 01872 573299.



Please note there is no discount on P&P, however orders can be collected from Wheal Jane Offices, Baldhu during office hours.

Associated Property Solutions Ltd

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Associated Property Solutions (APS) offers a wide range of services to anyone buying, selling or building property in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, including:

Site Investigations

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Contact: Derek Morgan, 07772 688 110

Membership

All well-wishers are encouraged to become associate members. Let us unite to remember the past, celebrate our friends and work mates who have gone, and look forward to a future for a great industry. *Fortun da than bal.*

MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS: Full members of the CMA must be people who have been employed in a metalliferous mine in Cornwall. **Associate Membership** is open to Mining Students and **anyone** who wishes to support the group, and participate in the various activities and functions that the CMA organises.

The CMA organises get-togethers for former and current employees of Cornwall's mines. Talks will also be given on all aspects of mining around Cornwall. The CMA will, when ever possible, produce a newsletter to inform members and associate members of forth coming events and to let them know what the CMA is currently doing. Local press will also carry details of any planned events, such as miner's re-unions, the AGM (for members) and talks (open to all).

The annual membership fee for the CMA is £5.00, with family membership available for £10.00 (one per household). This is payable on the 1st of April each year. OVERSEAS membership is £7.00 per year for a single person, or £12.00 for a family (one per household).

If you would like to join the CMA, please e-mail the Membership Secretary at:- **kpbray@talktalk.net** or call on **01209 218831**.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO PAY YOUR
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES**

LESLIE MATTHEWS

At the Annual General Meeting of the Cornish Miners Association Leslie Matthews was unanimously elected to be the new President of the Cornish Miners Association. Nobody has been held in higher esteem among the miners of his generation than Leslie, and all those who worked with him during his 44 years at South Crofty respected him as a miner with unparalleled understanding of all aspects of mining.

Leslie was born into a family that had been tin and copper miners for generations. His grandfather, Charlie, worked at Tresavean and Poldory mines, before coming to South Crofty to work, and Leslie's father, Leslie senior, started work underground at the mine in 1934, when he was just 16 years old. Leslie senior became a shiftboss in the early 1960s, ending his career as a highly respected mine captain. Leslie worked with his father from when he started at the mine, when he was 16 in 1952. They worked together on 290, 310 and 315fm levels, mostly on development, using the old Climax bar-and-arm machines. When stoping they used the light-weight ^{Peg-Leg} ~~Hydromax~~ stoper. In 1955, when Leslie went into the RAF to do his National Service, he and his father had just started the New Cooks North crosscut on 290fm level from No.4 Lode. Leslie's younger brother Kennie took over from him, and when he returned from the RAF, nearly 3 years later, Kennie and Leslie senior were just approaching the No.12 Lode – they had been on the same drive for all that time! Thereafter, they drove the crosscut as a 3 man contract, toiling with the old bar-and-arm machine. Kennie was followed to the mine by the youngest Matthews brother, Clarence. Unlike his older brothers, Clarence spent his first years as a fitter at the

mine, before transferring to the mining side and following the family tradition.

In 1968 Leslie had a serious accident, and when he returned to Crofty the following year, he was made a shiftboss. Leslie took charge of several different levels underground, working at different times on day shift and night shift. He remained a shiftboss at the old mine for 27 years and when he retired a host of his friends and former workmates came together to celebrate a mining career which few could hope to equal. All members of the Cornish Miners Association will be proud to have Leslie Matthews as their President and we hope he will occupy the position for many years to come.

EDITORIAL

The year 2009 has been a successful one for the CMA so far. Trevithick Day, despite the weather, was well-attended and many books were sold and new and old members greeted. Paul Bray, Geoff Sullivan and Jimmy Clemence proved very able salesmen and we all had some fascinating conversations with people from all over the globe. This year we had a stall at the King Edward Mine Open Day, and once again many interested people discussed mining past and present with us. Peter Hughes spent all day talking to the public and selling books. It was a good day all round with many interesting things on display, not least the museum itself – which must be unique! Murdock Day was also a great success, with many former miners and members of the public calling at the stall.

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Other sources, such as the Camborne Churchwardens Accounts have also been used. The main source material for the tinbounds has been Additional Manuscript 24746 (Brit.Lib.), supplemented by SC2 (PRO). The archives in the Cornwall Record Office, the Morab Library and the Royal Institution of Cornwall library have also been extensively used in this research.

During the last 30 years the author has consulted and been advised by many Cornish historians working in several different fields of research. Their contributions have been acknowledged in the book, as their expertise has frequently proved invaluable in locating a site or interpreting some obscure fact about Cornish history.

It is exciting to look at the names of tinnerns who worked in St Just, Camborne or Redruth 500 years ago and realise that the same families were working at Geevor, Wheal Pendarves, South Crofty and Wheal Jane at the end of the 20th century. In some cases those ancient mines were still being worked, albeit under different names.

Published by Penhellick Publication. Many maps, drawings and photographs. 201 pages. Retails at £12.99 and distributed by Tor Mark Press. Obtainable in all good book shops. **Special offer** to members of the Cornish Miners Association, who can obtain a copy for £10 (ring 01209 218779).

Derek Morgan

Book review

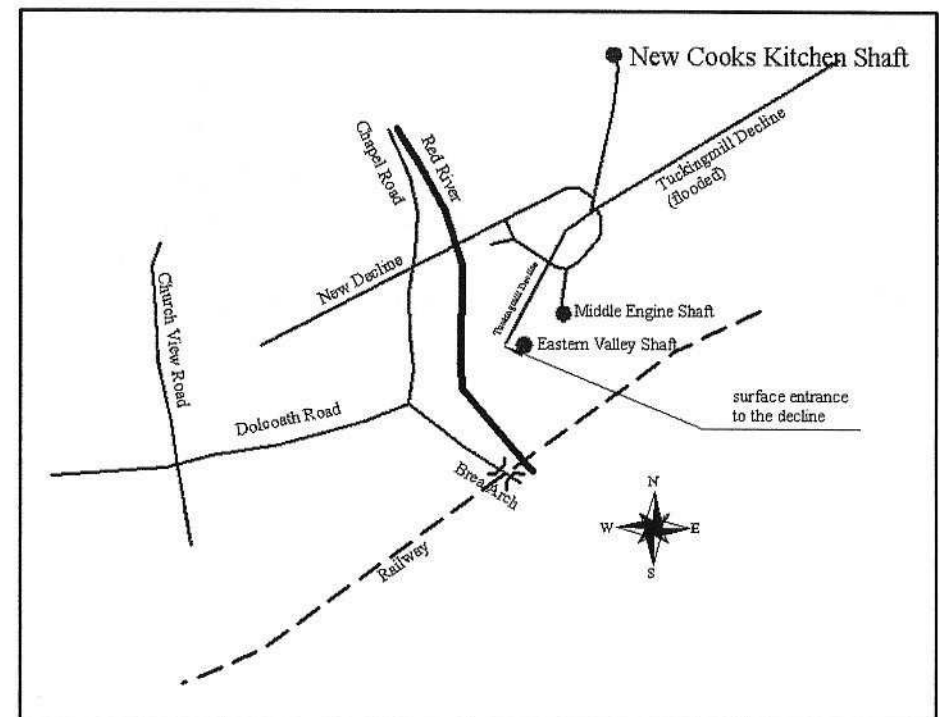
THE TUDOR TIN INDUSTRY by Allen Buckley. Published by Penhellick Publications.

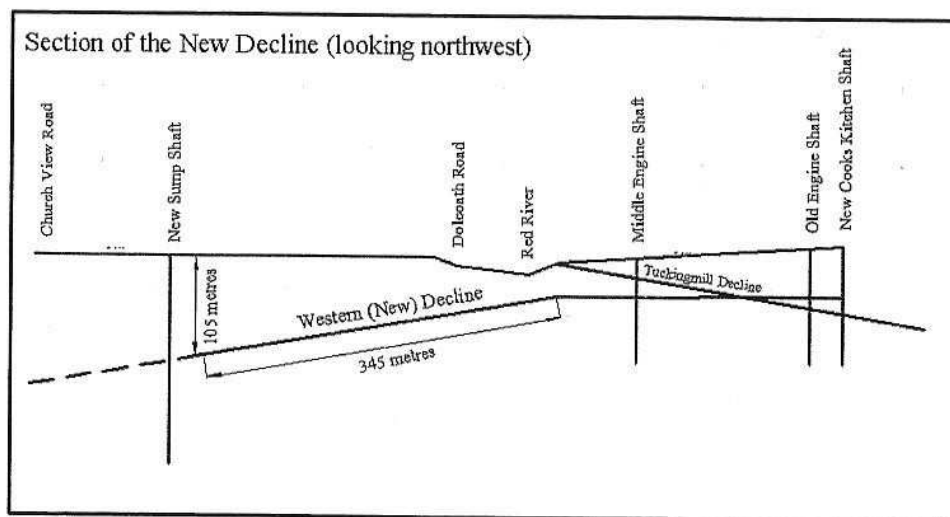
The Tudor Tin Industry is the latest mining book by Cornwall premier mining historian. It is concerned with exhaustively identifying the hundreds of tin mines and tin streams which operated in the stannary of Penwith & Kerrier. The names and locations of these tinworks, together with the names of the tanners involved, are principally what the book is all about. The tanners lists for Kerrier and Penwith, dating from the 1530s and from the reign of Elizabeth I, contain over 2,070 names of tanners. Nearly 200 Tudor tin mines and tin streams have been identified and located. The actual tinbound registrations for the years 1497 to 1520, contain the names of over 320 tanners who were involved in working these mines and streams. Scores of other tanners from other sources are also identified in the book. These same names from 500 years ago are still to be found amongst the local people today such as Angove, Basset, Clement, Davy, Eva and Hoskyn.

The author has carefully cross-referenced the hundreds of names in the tinbound registrations with an impressive list of original source material, including: the 16th century Military Survey & Loan books (1522), the Subsidy Rolls (1524 & 1543), the Benevolence Rolls (1545) and the Tanners Muster Rolls (1530s).

PROGRESS AT GREAT WESTERN MINES (SOUTH CROFTY)

As many of you will know, the present owners of South Crofty are engaged in sinking a decline shaft from the Tuckingmill Decline Shaft, west, under the Red River, toward Camborne. The accompanying plan and section shows the extent to which this has been progressed. The tunnel, measuring 17 feet by 15 feet (5x4½m), was driven to within a short distance to the east of the Red River, where it became a one-in-six decline shaft. Thereafter the shaft has been sunk on a line between the principal workings of Dolcoath, to the south, and the identified working of the Entrals and Roskears, to the north. From the plan and section it can be seen that the decline shaft has been driven nearly 350m to





the west, and its end is some 105m below the surface. The miners are working on three shifts, and restricting their blasting to the hours when there will be least disturbance to householders in the vicinity. The drilling rigs and scoop trams being used are very large and quite sophisticated, enabling progress to be fairly rapid. The miners are also using a 'state-of-the-art' diamond drill rig, which is exploring the ground on the either side of the incline shaft, for payable lodes.

Over 50 workers are currently employed at the mine, with about 26 being underground and the rest on surface as fitters, electricians, administrators, etc. At the mine there are a dozen former South Crofty men, eight former Geevor men and three who worked at Wheal Jane. The workforce is a mixture of experienced men and those who are being trained from scratch.

With the current price of tin rising once again, and the backing of the multi-million pound raw material commodity dealers, hopes for the future of the mine remain high. We wish them well.

New Statue of a Cornish Miner

A new statue celebrating the miners of St Just and Pendeen is to be erected in St Just. This is much more like it – far better, we think, than the strange Jackanory figure in Redruth!

The statue has been designed by Colin Caffell and was chosen by the local people. The original idea for a statue is credited to former Mayor Kenny Trembath. For more details you can visit www.stjustdistricttrust.co.uk.

