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## Aberdare No. 1 Level

On 4th December four of us (Chris Stott, Jan Karvik, Mole plus self) met our guide, Chris Gibbs, at a snow-covered bus stop south of Pontypool for a visit to the Aberdare No. 1 level, an old iron mine under a disused reservoir (who decided to build a reservoir on top of extensive mine workings? - the reservoir was taken out of use because it leaked!). For those

interested I suggest a visit to <http://mines.webuda.com/> where there is a plan, description plus photographs of the mine. The mine was apparently started in the late 18th century and was worked for ironstone nodules in shale beds, and was completely different from any of the iron mines that I've seen in the Forest. We spent about 3 hours exploring this mine, so

decided to leave the second mine (the Wainfelin Tranch iron mine) for another time. If you like old mines, this one is well worth a visit. *More pictures inside – Ed*

**Robert Needham**



## Committee

Chairman  
Jan Karvik

Secretary  
Chris Stott

Treasurer  
Andy Clark

Librarian  
Nicola Bayley

Tackle Officer  
Dan Sandford

Newsletter Editor  
Malcolm White

Meets Secretary  
Dan Sandford

Ordinary member  
George Cheshire

FODCCAG Reps  
Dave Tuffley  
John Hine

Wet Sink Secretary  
Andy Clark

Otter Hole Secretary  
Nicola Bayley

## Editorial

Hello and welcome to the March Newsletter. As you can see I've revamped the newsletter a bit. I thought it was time for a change as the newsletter has looked more or less the same since the club was founded. If you don't like it then let me know and we can always go back to the old style.

We have a very full programme of upcoming socials and caving trips as

you can see.

Don't forget we are still looking for ideas for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the club. A journal has been proposed and at least one if not two parties. All these need people to help and/or to come up with alternatives.

## Diary Dates

Monday March 7<sup>th</sup>

Social: Montenegro 2009

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April

Social: Members All Interests Evening

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May

Social: Gouffre Berger 1962 followed by Berger through the Ages

Mar 9th – Wed night trip – Wigpool. Meet 7.45 at normal Wigpool place. Can a key holder please confirm they are going.

Mar 12th – Sat (or Sunday, if there is a preference) – Agen Allwedd. Please contact Dan Sandford for details.

Mar 19/20 – Weekend trip to Derbyshire – Joint with GSS. Contact Dan if you are keen to go.

Apr 6th – Wed night trip – Cab Sav & The Dropper. Meet 8.00 at Symonds Yat Car Park. Have a look at the latest digging progress in Cab Sav, and maybe rekindle interest in the Dropper?!

Apr 10th – Sat (or Sunday, if there is a preference) – Box Mine. Please contact Dan for details.

May 11th – Wed night trip – Wittington. Meet 8.00 at place to be confirmed.

Apr 31st / May 1st & May 7th – Otter Hole leaders trip. Please come along – we always need more potential leaders. Please contact Dan for details.

Jun 8th – Wed night trip – Westbury Brook Iron Mine. Meet 7.45 at normal place. Can a key holder please confirm they are going.

June 11th – Sat (or Sunday, if there is a preference) – Dan y Ogof. (can one of our leaders make themselves available?) Please contact Dan for details.

## News In Brief

### Nenthead Dates

21st April to 2nd May,  
Aug 12th to 21st,  
Oct 14th to 23rd.

All enquiries/bookings to  
John Hine

### Devil's Chapel Access

No news at present.  
awaiting an official letter  
from the Deputy Gaveler  
stating that all minerals  
within the 100 of St  
Briavels are vested in the  
Crown. This could be of  
use at other potential  
sites.

### FODCCAG BGM

Tues 22nd March at GCRG  
Depot, Cinderford, 7.30  
pm. - main item of  
business, after usual  
procedures is proposed  
new constitution.

**NAMHO**  
National Association  
of Mining History  
Organisations



I've been asked to write a few words about NAMHO especially for the newer members of the Club. RFDC has been a member of NAMHO since the mid 1980s. I have been the NAMHO treasurer for the last 7 years.

The National Association of Mining History Organisations, to give it its full name was formed in 1979 to act as the national body for mining history in the UK and Ireland. NAMHO membership is made up of societies, clubs and organisations it does not have individual membership. Members range from clubs such as us to national organisations such as English Heritage. Probably half the members of NAMHO are active underground explorers.

### NAMHO RESEARCH:

Archaeology of the Extractive  
Industries

### The Research Framework for the Archaeology of the Extractive Industries in England (Mining and Quarrying)

NAMHO has embarked on a project which will benefit mining history and help with the making of decisions about future archaeological research and the heritage of mining landscapes in England. Crucial to its success will be the support of NAMHO members, who it is hoped will wish to become involved.

Every year NAMHO holds a conference. Conferences are held all over the country organised by members in that area. A conference was held in the Forest in 1999. Conferences are a mix of a lecture programme and visits to above and below ground sites. This year's conference is in Shropshire at the Preston Montford Field Centre, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury on the 29<sup>th</sup> July to 1<sup>st</sup> Aug. There is an

extensive programme of underground trips to cater for all abilities from the very easy to trips involving SRT.

NAHMO has a very good web site ([namho.org](http://namho.org)) where further details can be found. For conference details and how to book go to [nahmoconference.org.uk](http://nahmoconference.org.uk). I also have some copies of the NAMHO Heritage Guide booklet if anyone who has not got one wants one. E-mail or give me a call:

**George Price.**  
[east.lodge@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:east.lodge@yahoo.co.uk)

or 01531 821743

## Aberdare No.1 Level



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*"it doesn't matter if you're overweight or ride a motorbike so long as you don't go caving."*

## Insurance

No not BCA Insurance, life insurance!

As you're all probably aware by now, we moved house just before Christmas and as we now have a bigger mortgage we had to increase our life insurance. We also decided to get what is known as Critical Illness insurance just in case one of us has a heart attack or something equally debilitating, and this is where the fun started.

One company turned me down on the grounds that I'm overweight and have arthritis (in my left index finger!) and because I go caving. So I tried elsewhere. The chap from Money Supermarket seemed very helpful and it seems my weight isn't a

problem to them. What did push up the premium was the number of caving trips that I might do in a year. Apparently the cut off point is 20 trips per annum, more than that and you are considered an increased risk.

Now I remember reading a book about caving a few years ago and it quoted statistics from the Cave Rescue Council which read something like (these figures are from memory) "Your average weekend caver will be involved in an incident requiring rescue once in every 140 years and in a serious incident (i.e. injury or death) once in every 1000 years."

So I asked him why caving was considered to

be such a risk and why nothing was asked about my commuting 15,000 miles a year on a motorbike. He couldn't tell me.

So the practical advice from all this is, it doesn't matter if you're overweight or ride a motorbike so long as you don't go caving more than 20 times a year. In other words don't keep a record of how many trips you do.

**Malcolm White**

## NAMHO 2011

Our NAMHO rep., George Price, has asked me to mention that.....

NAMHO 2011 will be held on the 29<sup>th</sup> July – 1<sup>st</sup> August at Shrewsbury.

Visit <http://www.namhoconference.org.uk/> for more information and booking forms.

The conference will be held at Preston Montford Field Centre, Montford Bridge, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY4 1DX. There is a full programme of talks and trips (both surface and underground). Some trips are full already so don't delay! Some trips include SRT and there is a weight limit on one trip which is winch lowered.

## Request for Information

I've just received notification that the 5th International Conference on Early Railways will take place in Caernarfon over the period 7th to 10th June 2012. I'm thinking of putting together a paper to present and I've already thought of a title - Rutways in Cotswold and Bath Stone Mines. All I need now is the material for the paper! I have seen rutways in Windrush and Box mines and Arthur Price notes the existence of some in the Cheltenham (Whittington) Mines. I saw no sign of any in either Bixslade or Blakeney Stone Mines. However, do any of the Newsletter readers know of any or has any information on any rutways either in Forest mines or in any stone mines anywhere. To show what I am interested here is a photo of the rutway in Windrush plus another showing a rutway on a beach in Cornwall (Prussia Cove) probably mining-related.

**Robert Needham**

[robert.needham@live.co.uk](mailto:robert.needham@live.co.uk)

01594 823487



Windrush Mine Rutway



Prussia Cove

## Molerbike converted to a Digging Machine at Moseley Green



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*Just because you're called Mole doesn't mean everything will go underground!*

The aftermath of Mole's trip to the Xmas party.

Newsletter Correspondence

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.rfdcc.org.uk](http://www.rfdcc.org.uk)

## Committee Meeting Minutes

Royal Forest of Dean Caving Club Minutes of Committee Meeting 17 Jan 2011

Present

Nicky Bayley  
Chris Stott  
Jan Karvik *Chairman*  
George Cheshire  
Dan Sandford

Apologies Andy Clark, Malcolm White  
John Hine in attendance

- Minutes of the last meeting were read & approved
- Devils Chapel access discussions are on-going, initial meeting held, report requested from John Hine after next meeting
- Whittington Stone Mine, key location, should be taken off the online handbook. Dan keeps the key & that should be noted online
- Wigpool locks, keys being replaced, no further action required
- Deposit account, need to take this out of the current names & put into the RFDCC name Andy & Chris to action
- Bank signature list, we need to add names, Jan & Nicky
- Surveying kit, Nicky has this.
- Surveying kit, agreed to purchase Disto from Dave Dixon for £75
- Equipment, now transferred to Dan
- Oakwood Deep, signage not yet sorted out
- Otter phone line, this has not been sorted out. Nicky to contact Dave Applin to resolve. Position to be reviewed a month after the Otter leaders meet
- Discussion re 50<sup>th</sup> celebrations –  
lots of enthusiasm for a journal,  
Mole will enquire about possible dates for an evening do at Clearwell caves  
Week end series of events, caving, canoeing etc to be considered
- Reminders to be sent for Cave rescue, first Sunday of each quarter, March at the Depot
- Printer issue resolved, Malcolm has been supplied with a second hand printer
- Montenegro expedition – request from Paul Taylor - £50 granted
- Membership list on Yahoo, is everyone happy?, need to follow up at next meeting to make sure everyone is happy
- Wet Sink signs – need to be replaced

No further matters, the meeting closed

