



Our mining culture
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cornish mining

newsletter of the Cornwall & West Devon Mining World Heritage Site

Spring 2009

The Mexican connection

'Windows on the past'
at the Royal Cornwall Museum

World Heritage Site
display at Heartlands

8th International Mining
History Congress

WHS cultural events

'HARD ROCK' AT GEEVOR TIN MINE



Cam Galver Mine, October 2008

WELCOME

A warm welcome to Cornish Mining, the newsletter of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site and the first to be made available in a printed form.

The Cornish Mining World Heritage Site covers ten separate Areas which together represent the best surviving of the internationally renowned metalliferous mining landscapes of Cornwall and west Devon. From St Just in the west to the Tamar Valley and Tavistock in the east, the World Heritage Site encompasses former mine sites, ancillary industries, transport networks, settlements, grand houses and smallholdings which are, together, the legacy of the region's world-changing industrial past.

Highlights in this edition include the completion of the exciting new museum at Geevor Mine in West Penwith, 'Hard Rock', which held its grand opening back in October. From here we shift our focus to the other side of the Atlantic and Mexico, where Cornish mineworkers spearheaded the rehabilitation of Hidalgo's silver mines during the 1820s. In July 2008 members of the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society travelled to the high Sierra Madre Oriental, and Pachuca and Real del Monte specifically, to explore the long-standing cultural links that exist between Cornwall and the State of Hidalgo.

Enjoy!

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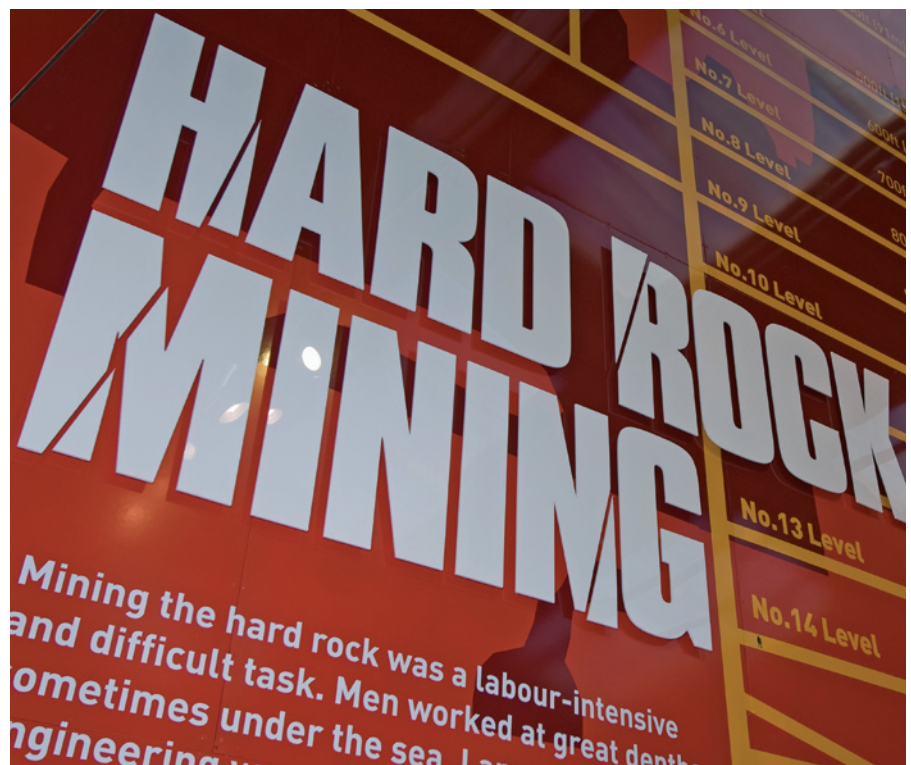
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Right: A careful combination of information panels and interactive displays convey the rich legacy of tin mining in Cornwall

Far right: A mannequin is positioned drilling an upper, whilst standing on a rearing fixed across the museum's recreated stope (an ore producing area underground)



Geevor was definitely a-buzz on the day with the museum display being extremely well-received by all

'HARD ROCK' AT GEEVOR TIN MINE

Following much hard work a multi-million pound site restoration and museum development project has been successfully completed at Geevor Tin Mine, Pendeen. Geevor Mine, a Scheduled Monument and part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, was one of the last metalliferous mines to operate in Cornwall, finally succumbing to the effects of eighties' tin crises in 1991.



For those about to rock... guests enter the new museum

Cornwall County Council was to fortunately acquire the site in 1992 and, in doing so, save the buildings and the majority of the mine machinery from the all-too-eager scrap man. The bold decision to purchase Geevor enabled the mine to be retained as the community focus it had become whilst in operation. A pay-to-enter visitor attraction was envisaged to enable the public to experience the rich industrial and social heritage associated with Cornish tin mining. By 1993 Cornwall County Council had completed the various works required to make the site suitable for the public and the mine then opened for its first visitors under the management of the Trevithick Trust, a registered charity.

In 2001 Pendeen Community Heritage, also a registered charity, acquired the lease of the site and has, since that time, undertaken its management, maintained the museum, and developed site tours and educational

programmes for school groups. In time it became apparent that some of the buildings which comprise the mine had succumbed to the battering of the Atlantic winds and rain and that a programme of careful structural consolidation was required to secure and weatherproof parts of the site. Subsequently a project development team within Cornwall County Council was charged with the preparation of an application for Heritage Lottery Funding to consolidate the various structures, and to redevelop the former Top Fitting Shop of the mine into an all-new interactive museum facility with a particular focus on young people.

A development stage grant was subsequently secured from the HLF in early 2006 and in July the following year, it was announced that the full funding bid had been successful. Additional funds from Objective One, Cornwall County Council, Penwith District Council and The National

Top: November 2007 and site restoration works are well underway

Middle: The beginnings of the Hard Rock Museum within the former Top Fitting Shop, November 2007

Bottom: ... and completed, in October 2008



Mrs Winnie Sevier (front-right) touring the new museum after declaring it open to the public

Trust, together with the HLF grant, meant a total of £3.8 million was available for the various site works, with around £800,000 of this figure being dedicated for the new museum, appropriately named 'Hard Rock'. The museum was to pose a particularly difficult challenge for the architects and builders as the new facility had to be constructed within the shell of the Top Fitting Shop, without altering the fabric of the existing structure which, along with the remainder of the site, has nationally protected Scheduled Monument status. Nineteen mine buildings and structures were consolidated alongside this as part of the programme of works, including the conservation and re-roofing of one of the two Brunton type arsenic calciners. These, once a commonplace feature of mine dressing floors, are today especially rare with only a few surviving in this condition.

The 11th October 2008 was eventually chosen as the date for a grand opening ceremony to publicly celebrate the completion of the conservation programme and museum. The day saw an invited audience eager to witness the cutting of the ceremonial ribbon by Mrs Winnie Sevier, daughter of former Geevor Mine Manager Frederick Charles Cann who assumed the position around 1920. Winnie's close association with the mine does not stop with her father, however, as her husband, William Sevier, was to become Acting Manger and succeed Frederick in 1936.

Speeches of congratulations and thanks were made on the day by Roger Goulding, Heritage Lottery Fund South West Regional Committee member; Bill Lakin, Chair of Geevor Trustees; and Brian

Armstrong, building surveyor and contract administrator with Stratton & Holborow, Truro, who oversaw the design and delivery of this ambitious project. In addition to explaining his sometimes difficult but challenging role in the development, Brian was to start the museum off with a bang, quite literally. At the desired moment, he pushed the T-shaped plunger of a 'classic' explosives shot-firer, triggering a firework behind the audience which made a suitably impressive retort!

The audience were then duly invited into the museum to see, for many for the first time, the result of many months' careful design and construction work. Staged over two floors the museum introduces tin as an ore and industrial metal and

covers, in an engaging manner, the many stages of mining, crushing and refining, to produce the finished 'black' tin dioxide for sale.

Geevor was definitely a-buzz on the day with the museum display being extremely well-received by all.

The eye-catching design and carefully conceived interactive content is the product of a successful partnership between the staff of Geevor and those of Gendall Design, Falmouth. The World Heritage Site team warmly congratulates all those at Geevor and the many contractors and advisors involved in this prestigious development for producing an experience which is sure to be a huge hit with visitors of all ages. ■

For further background to the conservation work at Geevor please see Adam Sharpe's detailed article in the autumn 2007 Newsletter, available via the Cornish Mining website. The Geevor dedicated website can be found at: www.geevor.com



Geevor Victory Shaft headframe and winder house

THE MEXICAN

EXPLORING HISTORIC MINING LINKS WITH PACHUCA AND REAL DEL MONTE

Mina San Pedro la Ravia; situated just beyond the outskirts of Pachuca de Soto, this Cornish-design engine house was constructed in 1884 and may have housed an 85 inch cylinder pumping engine built by the Harvey's Foundry, Hayle, which is known to have been shipped to Mexico in the mid 1870s [Dr Sharron Schwartz, personal comment, 2008]



CONNECTION



Left: The former Cornish Methodist Chapel in Pachuca, established by Francisco Rule in 1901

Right: 'Pastes' in Pachuca



The historic centre of Pachuca de Soto is marked by El Reloj Monumental, the Monumental Clock. Completed in 1910, its chiming bells were cast by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry which also produced Big Ben for London's Great Clock of Westminster; seen here with restoration scaffolding in place



The Real del Monte townscape with Mina Delores and its Cornish-design engine house, centre

In July 2008 members of the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society made the long journey to the lofty city of Pachuca de Soto, some 2,400 metres above sea level and 95 kilometres north-east of Mexico City

Their aim was to re-enact the historic journey of the British-led 'Transport Party', from 1825-1826, which delivered Cornish mining technology to the then-defunct silver mines in and around the settlements of Pachuca and Real del Monte. This was to represent the first use of British Industrial Revolution technology in Mexico.

Nearly 200 years later and Pachuca is a major city with a population of some 300,000, set within the State of Hidalgo which has a total land area of over five times that of Cornwall. Though Pachuca and its near-neighbour Real del Monte have changed significantly since the nineteenth century, both settlements retain distinctive aspects of their architecture, culture and cuisine which give testament to the influence of the many Cornish who lived, worked and raised families there during the 1900s and early twentieth century.

The coming of the British: English capital with Cornish technology and labour

The area of Pachuca and Real del Monte has a history of silver production which dates from at least the sixteenth century when mineral lodes were first successfully exploited on a large scale by Spanish colonials then ruling New Spain. It was Pachuca which reputedly saw the first use of the all-important patio process in Mexican silver ore dressing, as introduced by Bartolomé de Medina, an influential mine operator, in the mid 1550s. The war of independence from 1810 and 1821 changed the political makeup of the country completely however, deposing the Spanish rulers and instigating the First Mexican Empire (1822-1823) and later the United Mexican States, following the signing of the republican constitution in 1824. The resultant change in the political landscape was to open Mexican silver reserves to the wider world, and British commercial interests particularly, attracting surplus capital then available through the industry-driven expansion of the British Empire. The long war of Mexican independence had, however, left the once great Spanish-owned silver mines in a

state of complete disrepair. Adits and underground levels (tunnels) had collapsed or run-in and many of the principal mine shafts had become inaccessible, with their mine buildings in ruin or overgrown.

John Taylor (1779–1863), the Norwich-born industrialist and engineer, had, by this time however, created an 'empire' of his own in Britain based on metalliferous mining. Taylor, from a young man, had readily embraced the technology delivered by the Industrial Revolution and set about developing a number of major mining enterprises to win the industrial metals, principally copper and tin, which were by then in great, and growing, demand. Taylor was to own and manage metal mines in Wales, the north of England, the north of Ireland, and a number of the

most significant copper producers in Cornwall and west Devon, in addition to acquiring extensive interests overseas. By 1819 Taylor controlled the extremely productive Consolidated Mines of Gwennap, amongst others in Cornwall, and it was from here and the surrounding areas that many of the first mineworkers were to be recruited to work for silver in Mexico.

Taylor constituted the British Real del Monte Company early in 1824, following which a 'pathfinder' party, headed by former soldier James Vetch, set sail in March from Liverpool to Mexico via New York and Tampico. Their primary tasks were to survey the mines, report on their condition and to undertake the not-inconsiderable work of repairing and consolidating the many buildings, shafts, adits

As the group travelled around, the true significance of the Cornish cultural influence became apparent



Mina Acosta, Real del Monte; this site, now a visitor centre, retains evidence of Spanish colonial, British (Cornish), and later North American periods of operation



Casa del Conde Rule; constructed in 1890 and formerly the residence of Francisco (Frank) Rule of Camborne (known locally as El Rey de la Plata – The Silver King) who achieved prominence as the foremost mining entrepreneur in the region during the latter half of the nineteenth century



The Loreto Mine and mill complex overlooking Pachuca de Soto; this was the last major ore processing mill to operate in the area. Nearby is the location where the patio silver amalgamation process is reputed to have first been introduced into Latin America (c.1557). For this, argentiferous ores were mixed with mercury to achieve the required separation of the valuable silver. This method remained in use until the introduction of the cyanide process at the beginning of the twentieth century when the US Smelting Refining and Mining Company acquired the Cia. de Real del Monte y Pachuca



and mine levels, in advance of the main party which would be arriving the following spring. At the earliest stage the decision had been taken to employ Cornish steam engine technology to firstly dewater the mines, which had been long abandoned and were flooded and otherwise dilapidated, and to then enable the sinking of new and existing shafts and adits to allow access to the argentiferous (silver-bearing) lodes in depth.

By early April 1825 the main party had assembled in London after having set sail from Falmouth to great public fanfare. Four ships were chartered for the venture, which were to carry, in addition to the workforce, an estimated 1,500 tons of mining machinery including nine Cornish-design steam engines and a wide variety of mining stores and supplies. The ships, the Melpomene, the General Phipps, the Courier, and the Sarah were initially due to dock at the port-town of Vera Cruz, on the Mexican Gulf coast, and unload in



Panteón de los Ingleses, the English Cemetery, where many Cornish are interred. Members of the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society visit in July 2008

preparation for the long trek inland to the mines. A Spanish contingent was still garrisoned at San Juan de Ulúa, an island fortress just offshore, however, which forced the party to drop anchor a little way to the south alongside the broad, flat, beaches of Mocambo. The coastline here made it far from ideal as a point to unload cargo but this was made all the worse during late April/early May by the persistent norte (north) winds which blew onshore

making any landing treacherous. The party were compelled to use a fleet of lighters to transfer the machinery from ship to shore but the constant winds capsized some, spilling their cargo into the rolling surf. This was to be the first of many challenges placed before the party before they would reach their final destination, some 400 kilometres (250 miles) and one year away.

Both the Society and World Heritage Site team very much wish to build on this cultural exchange and hope that the trip will be the first of many such visits between Cornwall and Mexico



Top: Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society members Ronnie and Vanessa Moyle, left, and right, Les Merton, Vanessa, and Osman Rifaat at the Panteón de los Ingleses.

Bottom: The plaque unveiled inside the cemetery on 11 July 2008, commemorating the rich cultural links that exist between Cornwall and this former mining town

The main obstacle to be overcome, once ashore, was to be how to transport the prodigious amounts of machinery and supplies inland; while a road capable of heavy loads existed to take the party some of the way inland, much of the journey would be through inhospitable terrain. 150 former War Department wagons had been brought out from England for the task, and the machinery had been so designed as to enable the transport of many small loads, but the lack of usable roads had to be tackled. To counter this, a group of Mexican labourers were to travel ahead of the main party clearing the way and making good the route.

Before the group could leave the beaches however, the humid climate and local diseases were to take an unexpected toll on the Europeans who were unused to the climatic conditions and ailments common to the area. Indeed 15 were to finish their long journey on or around the Mocambo beaches after succumbing to the *vomito*, a similar disease to

Yellow Fever. What was to follow was also to be a year of almost unremitting endurance during which animals, men and equipment were lost, taken by disease or injury or, as in at least one instance, literally to be swept away by torrential floods.

The journey, to be become known as the 'Great Trek', was eventually to end in early May 1826 when the party finally delivered the long-awaited machinery and supplies to the town of Real del Monte, to a reception including fireworks, the ringing of church bells and the massed cheers of locals. Those who took part were to witness a unique event: the coming of steam technology to Mexico and the prospect of increased security through renewed mining employment.

Over the following quarter century the British Real del Monte Company management applied British capital and Cornish technology and labour which was to profoundly influence the eventual fortunes of silver mining in the area. The company

Cornish connections exist with mining fields on all the inhabitable continents



The sign for the El Minero restaurant, Real del Monte, marking the rehabilitation of the local silver mines by the British from 1824

was to be beset by many managerial problems, however, which would severely limit its ultimate profitability. Over the coming decades issues including the suitability of a European workforce to the climatic conditions, the differing approaches of the Mexican mineworkers to that of their overseas cousins, and the difficulties of managing and operating a series of mines - the head office for which was some 9,000 kilometres (5,500 miles) away in London - were to take their toll. In time these factors, in combination with others such as a reliable and affordable supply of mercury, essential for the patio refining process, were to force the company into dissolution. Despite the enormous efforts undertaken by the managers and mineworkers to increase productivity and achieve profitability, the company was to be finally reconstituted in the spring of 1849, with accumulated losses in Mexico of some \$5 million, after 25 years trading. This was to be far from the end of silver mining in this part of Mexico, however, as the company was to be immediately transferred to Mexican shareholders who were to apply locally-controlled management but continue using Cornish technology and working practices alongside the well-established patio process. A sizable Cornish workforce remained under the new ownership - around 350 Cornish were living in Pachuca by the late 1870s - which were to contribute to the eventual success of the Mexican Real del Monte Company. By the late 1920s an estimated 17,000 tonnes (c.600 million ounces) of silver had been produced in the region, establishing Pachuca as the foremost centre for world silver production. Hidalgo continued to be an important source of silver up until the 1990s when world market conditions and the dwindling nature of the ore bodies eventually forced closure on the few mines remaining. During the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth, the Cornish presence was to profoundly influence not only the nature of mining in Pachuca and Real del Monte, but also the culture

Along with their mining skills and technology the Cornish also brought their cultural traditions

of the communities into which they came. Along with their mining skills and technology the Cornish also brought their cultural traditions. Non-conformist Protestant belief was transferred, manifested today in purpose-built Methodist chapels in Pachuca and Real del Monte, and also through a walled Protestant cemetery overlooking the latter. Architectural styles were also influenced: the pitched-roof, so common in Britain, was hitherto unknown in Mexico, and local cuisine: the Cornish pasty meal, or 'pastes' as it became known, is now ubiquitous with, it is said, more being made and sold in Hidalgo daily than in the whole of Cornwall.

Celebrating the cultural links

In early 2006 the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society was established in Wendron to unite existing support for Cornish-Mexican cultural links and also to raise awareness generally,

both within Cornwall and Mexico. A key early objective of the Society was the re-enactment of the 'Great Trek', to follow the route of the original Transport Party inland from the Gulf Coast and Vera Cruz. Alongside this was the desire to arrange a formal twinning between Pachuca and Camborne, the town from which many migrant mineworkers came, and Real del Monte and Redruth, thus encompassing the epicentre of metalliferous mining in Cornwall. Fortunately the Society was to develop the solid support of individuals and organisations in Mexico who were to play an essential role in arranging of the trip, the transport and accommodation required, and also liaising with municipal and state government offices.

Following a period of detailed negotiations between the town councils of Camborne and Redruth



A model of a Cornish beam pumping engine within the visitor centre at Mina Acosta, Real del Monte

and their counterparts in Mexico, the Society achieved the go-ahead to twin the towns of Redruth and Real del Monte, and to initiate a formal friendship agreement between Camborne and Pachuca. This achievement was greeted with great pleasure and not a little relief by the Society's Chair, Richard Williams – Manager of Poldark Mine, who has striven towards this personal goal for many years.

The date for the trip was finally set for 1st to 15th July involving flights between London to Mexico City via Toronto. After many hours of travelling, the group arrived tired but very pleased to finally be on Mexican soil. An overnight stay in the city was followed by a coach trip north and east to Pachuca De Soto, the first stop on a full and varied itinerary.

Over the following days the group were welcomed and entertained by a great many individuals and organisations all eager to meet the travellers from Cornwall and exchange stories. Foremost within the programme of events were the reception by the British Ambassador to Mexico, Giles Paxman, the ratification of the friendship agreement between Pachuca and Camborne, and the official twinning ceremony to link Real del Monte with

Redruth. Memorial inscriptions were also unveiled at Vera Cruz, the port city where the Cornish first arrived, and at the Panteón de los Ingleses, the Protestant English cemetery, overlooking Real del Monte where many hundreds of Cornish are interred.

All were extremely impressed by the warmth and generosity of their reception and the friendliness of everyone who turned out to greet them. Some members have ancestral links with Hidalgo and spent time seeking out descendants, dwellings or workplaces relating to these. Most found the trip emotionally 'charged' and particularly that to the cemetery. As the group travelled around, the true significance of the Cornish cultural influence became apparent. The Cornish-design engine houses, the chapels, the memorials and, not least, the pastes, are all profound symbols of Cornwall, and to experience them over 5,000 miles from home will be something to remember always.

The World Heritage Site

One of the distinctive aspects of the Cornish Mining WHS is the degree to which activities here during the period of inscription, 1700-1914, influenced hard-rock mining around the globe. Cornish connections exist with mining

The Cornish-design engine houses, the chapels, the memorials and, not least, the pastes, are all profound symbols of Cornwall

fields on all the inhabitable continents, thought to total in excess of 175 individual sites. The fostering of cultural links with these global sites is one of the adopted policies contained within the WHS Management Plan (2005-2010), which sets out to encourage such global linkages where possible.

The Cornish Mining World Heritage Site was approached by the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society early in 2008 who wished to raise awareness of their ambitions and link with like-minded partners. The WHS team were delighted to be able to support the aims of the Society and make a donation which will assist in the production of educational material for use in schools and by the wider public. A booklet is currently being authored by Dr Sharron Schwartz - the foremost academic in Cornish mining migration and the Society's Education Officer - for this, which will cover the history of mining links between Cornwall and Mexico, and the experiences of those who undertook this momentous trip. This is to be packaged with a short DVD film of the visit, to be produced and edited by two students from Camborne and Redruth schools who accompanied the members on their journey.

To Cornwall

Following the resounding success of the visit, officials from Mexico very much wanted to undertake a return trip to Cornwall and see at first hand the towns with which they had forged formal links. The opportunity for this arose at the end of November when, Omar Fayad Meneses (Mayor of Pachuca), Aunard de la Rocha (Director of Tourism Promotion, State of Hidalgo), and other state and



Mina Corteza, Pachuca – another of the four distinctly Cornish engine houses that survive largely intact in and around Pachuca and Real del Monte

municipal officials flew into Britain to be accompanied to Cornwall by Aida Velasco, Second Secretary to the Embassy of Mexico, London. During their packed three-day visit, which included civic receptions by Kerrier District Council and the town councils of both Camborne and Redruth, the delegation were also met by the Chair of Cornwall County Council, Cllr. Doris Ansari; the Council's Historic Environment Service Manager, Nicholas Johnson; and members of the World Heritage Site team. The delegation were also given the opportunity to visit the Heartlands Project at Robinson's Shaft, South Crofty Mine, where a major multi-million pound heritage parkland regeneration scheme is currently in preparation, with the Robinson's Shaft-head complex as its focus.

Both the Society and World Heritage Site team very much wish to build on this cultural exchange and hope that the trip will be the first of many such visits between Cornwall and Mexico. The Society's members are already looking forward to the next visit from their Latin American cousins which is tentatively planned for spring 2009.

The recent exchanges are also timely as moves are currently afoot to pursue official transnational World Heritage

Site linkages through UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. It is hoped that in the coming years locations around the world which have strong Cornish Mining connections can be included in one transnational Site, focused on the worldwide dissemination of Cornish Mining technology, labour, and related culture. Pachuca and Real del Monte will hopefully, in time, be candidates for this along with locations in South Australia and South Africa.

The World Heritage Site team congratulates the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society for all their efforts and for organising and hosting this important exchange. For information about the Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society and mining links between Cornwall and Mexico, please log-on to: <http://www.cornish-mexico.org/>

Further reading:

Todd, A. C. (1977) *The Search for Silver – Cornish Miners in Mexico, 1824-1947*. Reprinted: 2000, Cornish Hillside Publications, St Austell

Randall, R. W. (1972) *Real del Monte – A British Mining Venture in Mexico*. Austin, Texas, and London: University of Texas Press



Omar Fayad Meneses, Mayor of Pachuca, viewing the recent consolidation work undertaken by Kerrier District Council at Wheal Peevor with (left to right), Elizabeth Hoskins (Vice Chair, Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society), Richard Williams (Chair, Cornish-Mexican Cultural Society) and Cllr. Loveday Jenkin



Omar inspecting a model of the proposed Heartlands scheme at Pool with, from left to right, Kirsty Davies (Heartlands Community Project Manager), Cllr. Walter Sanger (Chairman of Kerrier District Council), Cllr. Loveday Jenkin (Leisure, Arts and Culture Portfolio Holder, Kerrier District Council), and Robert Grose (Head of Service - Regeneration, Kerrier District Council)



Omar receives a framed commemorative print, contrasting engine houses in Mexico and Cornwall, from Cllr. Doris Ansari, Chair of Cornwall County Council, October 2008 Photo: © Celine Smith



Some of the sites likely to be included in the programme of Congress field trips: Levant Mine, St Just in Penwith...

8TH INTERNATIONAL MINING HISTORY CONGRESS

The 8th International Mining History Congress will be held in Redruth in 2009, at the centre of the once large and highly influential copper and tin mining industry of Cornwall and west Devon.



... and Carn Galver Mine, Rosemergy

This Congress follows on previous meetings, the first of which was held in Australia in 1985, to be followed by Germany in 1989, the United States in 1994, Mexico in 1998, Greece in 2000, Japan in 2003, and India in 2007. The Cornish Mining World Heritage Site is delighted to be supporting this prestigious event which promises to be a truly international gathering.

The meeting will start with a plenary session on the evening of Friday, 12th June, and will conclude at lunchtime on Monday, 15th June, with continuous paper sessions on Saturday and Sunday, 13th and 14th June. A pre-session event will include field trips to mining and related sites across Cornwall and west Devon and arrangements will be made to conduct delegates to another conference,

organised by the British National Association of Mining History Organisations (NAMHO) in Matlock, Derbyshire the following weekend, 19th to 21st June.

It is hoped that an independent, but parallel part of this year's Congress will be a seminar for invited early-career researchers in mining history. This seminar aims to provide a formal platform for the transfer of knowledge and expertise and to integrate the new generation of mining historians more fully into research networks of established scholars in the field.

For further information concerning the Congress and the link to the electronic booking form, please log-on to: www.cornishmining.org.uk ■

Thought to have been painted by the artist 'W. P.', this work captures well the range of surface mining activities of a nineteenth century mine



Possibly an earlier work by the same artist, this composition features a similar grouping of buildings and people, and utilises an broadly equivalent colour pallet

This detail from the, possibly, earlier work appears to depict barrows of copper ore being weighed after dressing (processing) by bal maidens



WINDOWS ON THE PAST

Early in 2008 the Royal Institution of Cornwall (RIC) and Royal Cornwall Museum acquired an historic oil painting depicting a nineteenth century Cornish mining scene through a bequest from a local family.

The work, which measures around 90 cm by 60 cm, shows a group of buildings and a large number of people involved in activities around a mine count house (office). Little is known regarding its provenance except the probable initials of the artist, 'W P', and that it was most likely painted during the early to mid-1900s (see top-left).

A close inspection reveals that there are some notable similarities between this and another nineteenth century work, also held by the RIC, simply known as 'A Cornish mining scene' (see bottom-left). In this, a similarly large number of people are shown about their daily tasks, seemingly engaged in the buying and selling of copper ore within a walled mine yard adjacent to a broadly similar count house. In the foreground bal maids can also be seen, some dressed in their distinctive 'gooks', worn to protect the head. A number of the bal maids are engaged in ore dressing with some bringing barrows of copper ore to a large set of balance-scales for weighing, as part of the ore ticketing, or sale. Both works depict doles (piles) of copper ore which have been readied for auctioning.

Composed in this manner, both scenes interestingly display a certain degree of artistic license. Ore dressing (processing) is shown as taking place immediately alongside auction or Setting Day activities, which would have been highly unlikely. Ore dressing would usually have been done within the confines of a mine's dedicated dressing floor areas, set aside for this activity. Both paintings



This detailed view shows an elevated timber launder (centre left and right) carrying water from the engine shaft where it has just been pumped; the artist must have observed that such launders often leaked and has incorporated this into the composition

reflect well the general layout and range of activities of a Cornish mine of the period however. The first work in particular depicts water leaking from an overhead timber launder, adjacent to a pumping engine house and shaft, which is a detail of operation particularly well observed. The initials of the artist 'W P' also appear in the foreground, on the side of a small bucket or basket.

Lucinda Middleton, the museum's Curator of Art, feels that similarities in the paintings' composition, the colour palettes used and the form of the brush strokes probably indicates that these were painted by the same artist, though possibly some years apart. Lucinda said "the newly acquired work displays a greater attention to detail than the other, possibly suggesting that this is the work of a more mature artist who had gained experience through several years of painting."

The World Heritage Site team and the RIC would very much like to know

more about these historically valuable works and would be very grateful if readers can supply information relating to the likely locations of the sites depicted or details of the artist/s. If you are able to help, please get in contact with the World Heritage Site team and we will gladly forward your details. Please contact Karen Willows on: 01872 322586, or kwillows@cornwall.gov.uk

Thanks are expressed to Lucinda Middleton and her colleagues at the RIC for very kindly making the paintings available for this article. ■

For further information concerning the Royal Institution of Cornwall and the Royal Cornwall Museum, please contact: www.royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk



The Robinson's Shaft engine house and winder headframe at the centre of the Heartlands development

The launch of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site hoardings at Paddington Station in November 2006; an estimated 32 million commuters were exposed to this impressive display during its 15 month installation (Lucia Grigg © Cornwall County Council)

HEARTLANDS

WORLD HERITAGE SITE DISPLAY

The Heartlands park regeneration project at Pool is set to display a number of the giant promotional hoardings created for the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site.

Originally commissioned to celebrate the inscription of World Heritage Site status in 2006, the series of six themed hoardings, the largest of which measure 4 metres by 4 metres, were unveiled at Platform 8, Paddington Station, in November of that year. Four of these themed displays are due to be erected as a temporary exhibition at Heartlands shortly.

The hoardings individually highlight key themes relating to the history of Cornish Mining which many members of the public may be unaware of, including the introduction of the Camellia to Britain by Cornish plant collectors using mining wealth, and the invention of the first practical steam road vehicle in Cornwall, the forerunner of modern locomotives.

The juxtaposition of mining scenes in Cornwall and west Devon with unusual graphics highlighting the above and other themes are designed to be thought provoking: why are these seemingly unconnected features shown together? What is the link between a Cornish-design engine house and an intercity train? Many thoughts similar to this must have occurred in the minds of the estimated 32 million commuters who passed through Paddington during its fifteen month installation, from November 2006 to February 2008.

Kirsty Davies, Heartlands Community Project Manager, said that: "The Heartlands

team are very pleased to have the Cornish Mining hoardings at the Robinson's Shaft site as they will help raise awareness of the significance of Cornish Mining and the World Heritage Site in the area, and highlight the mining heritage aspect of the Heartlands Project."

A £22.3 million Big Lottery grant was won by the Heartlands Project team in November 2007, against stiff national opposition, which will enable the creation of an innovative recreational park which will span the former Robinson's Shaft complex and connect Station Road in the east with Dudnace Lane in the west. The park will celebrate the culture and mining heritage of Cornwall and, when completed, the Robinson's Shaft site will be one of three Key Centres across Cornwall and west Devon which will interpret the full significance of Cornish Mining World Heritage. It will also provide exciting new facilities for exercise, general recreation, public art and performance.

The hoardings are due to go on display at the Robinson's Shaft site in March and promise to be an eye-catching feature of Pool while the Heartlands Project is under construction.

For more information about the role of Heartlands and the innovative park design, please log-on to: www.theheartlandsproject.org.uk



Two of the themed displays due to be erected at Heartlands: the compressor house chimney at Levant Mine St Just, with a camellia bloom, and an Intercity train emerging from a Cornish engine house. Mining wealth helped establish the camellia and many other, now common, garden species in the UK, and the portable high-pressure steam engine developed in Cornwall, through the influence of mining, led to the modern locomotive

WORLD HERITAGE SITE CULTURAL EVENTS



AUDIOVOICE

The audiovoice series of choral workshops continues into 2009 with further events planned for late winter/early spring. Conceived to foster the Cornish tradition of choral singing, a varied programme of events has been staged over the past year, including performances by Mtiebi, a group of male singers and dancers from Georgia, and also the Pearl of Africa Choir, made up of talented children from disadvantaged backgrounds in Uganda. At each audiovoice workshop, participants work and sing with professional musicians in a whole range of ways over a period of two days.

February Half Term sees the English Touring Opera performing at Godolphin House, near Helston,

a National Trust property with an important medieval garden set within an estate with more than 400 recorded archaeological features.

audiovoice is a Cornwall Arts Centre Trust project, funded by Cornish Mining World Heritage and Youth Music, with additional support from The National Trust. It is devised and delivered by Carn to Cove, in partnership with the Cornwall County Council Music Service, Plymouth Music Action Zone, and Cornwall Youth Music Action Zone (CYMAZ). Places on the audiovoice workshops are free to children but are limited, so those interested in taking part are encouraged to book early to avoid disappointment. All bookings are on a first come first served basis.

For further details, please contact Cornwall Arts Centre Trust - email: admin@actcornwall.org.uk, tel: (01209) 313200. For more information about Godolphin House, please see: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

audiovoice workshop events in 2008: clockwise, Cornwall Songwriters at Botallack Mine, Mtiebi, and the Pearl of Africa Children's Choir (© Cornwall Arts Centre Trust)

LATEST

Dates for further performances of Cornish Lads have just been announced so please see the Events, activities and visiting page on the Cornish Mining website for details: www.cornishmining.org.uk/activities/activities.htm

Also remember to check the website regularly for news of upcoming events across the World Heritage Site.

www.cornishmining.org.uk

out now

'Mine & Yours'

the activity guide to the **Cornish Mining World Heritage Site**



Our mining culture shaped your world

Come and experience the UK's largest World Heritage Site - the mines, towns and villages, ports, harbours and mineral railways which together comprise our world-class landscapes, internationally significant for mining and a culture which changed the world. See why these historic landscapes are on a par with Stonehenge and the Great Wall of China.

Where can I experience Cornish Mining?

The World Heritage Site has many exciting attractions across Cornwall and west Devon which provide high quality visitor experiences consistent with World Heritage status. Find out about all these, where to go and what to do, in "Mine and Yours", available in bookshops now. Details available via the website.

www.cornishmining.com/mineandyoures

