

Some Scenes from the Eighth International Mining History Congress, Cornwall, UK

The Eighth International Mining History Congress occurred from 12 to 15 June 2009 at the Penventon Park Hotel in Redruth, Cornwall. Conference field trips included visits to mines in the St. Just mining district at the western end of Cornwall, and the King Edward Mine on Carn Brea. (Editor's photos.)



*The restored winding engine house
on the Michell's Shaft of the East
Pool Mine at Pool, between Redruth
and Camborne, Cornwall.*



The hoist house and headframe of the Geevor Mine, St. Just district, Cornwall. Mining has occurred in the district for many centuries, but the consolidated Geevor Tin Mines Ltd. was organized in 1911. The mine ultimately occupied an area of about three square miles to a depth of 2,100 feet. The Geevor closed in 1990 and is now a museum mine preserved as part of UNESCO's Cornish Mining World Heritage Site, established in 2006.



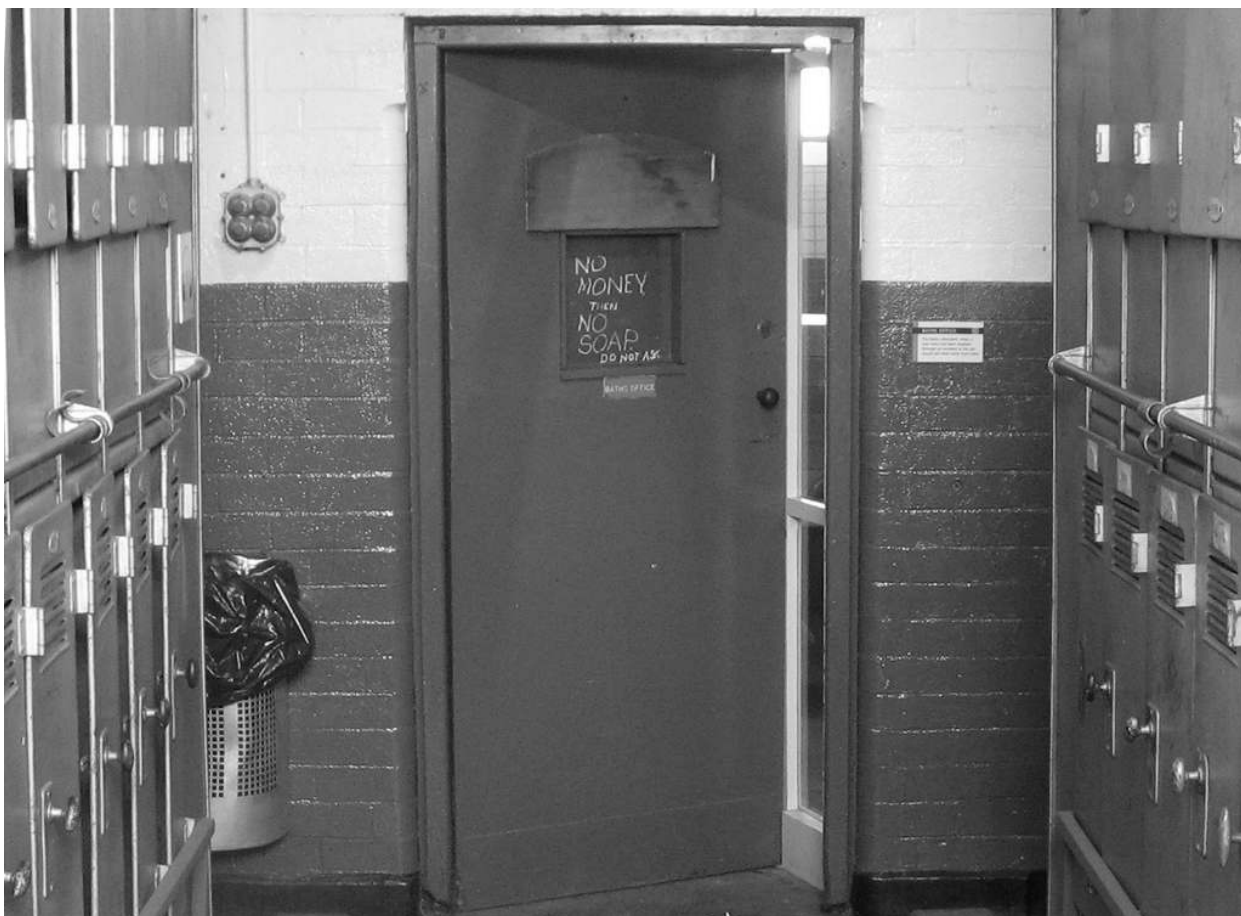
Remains of the compressor house at the Levant Mine, St. Just district. The building, built in 1901, originally contained a horizontal, triple-expansion compressor with an eighteen-foot, twenty-ton flywheel. That system was replaced by electric generators in 1919. The center chimney belonged to the stamps engine house, while the one at left was the calciner stack. Calcining furnaces roasted the Levant's tin ores to drive off arsenic, which was condensed and recovered for sale. The modern Levant dates from the 1820s, closed in 1930, and is presently owned by the National Trust. The white structure in the center distance is the Pendeen Lighthouse.



The Crowns Rocks engine houses of the Botallack Mine, perched on the edge of the Atlantic in the St. Just district, occupy one of the most picturesque mining sites on the planet. The lower building is a pump house constructed in 1835, and the upper one, erected in 1862, is the winding house for the Boscawen inclined shaft. The shaft, excavated from 1858 to 1862, extends out half a mile under the sea. Despite such extraordinary efforts, low metal prices and flooding ended the mine's productive life in 1895.



The abandoned Grenville New Stamps engine house on Carn Brea near Troon, Cornwall. The rich copper and tin lodes of Carn Brea, the eight-hundred-foot-high granite ridge rising to the south of Redruth and Camborne, made this one of the most important mining districts in the world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Built circa 1890 and finished operating about 1925, the Grenville housed an engine transferred from the nearby South Tolcarne Mine. The building is currently awaiting stabilization and is privately owned.



And on an unrelated note: In mining as in life, no money, no soap. In this case those words of wisdom appear on the office door in the bathhouse of the Caphouse Colliery at Overton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, England. The bathhouse opened in 1938 in a building that also contained the pay office and medical center. Caphouse Colliery operated from c. 1789 until 1985, and opened as the Yorkshire Mining Museum in 1988. It is now the National Coal Mining Museum for England.

