



## Introduction

“**Ysbryd y Mwynwyr - Spirit of the Miners**” was a heritage themed regeneration initiative focussing on the legacy of the former metal mining industry of Ceredigion.

The project was managed by Ceredigion County Council and ran between January 2005 and May 2008. It was funded by:

- The European Agricultural Grants & Guidance Fund (EAGGF) part of the EU Objective One programme
- The Local Regeneration Fund (LRF)
- The Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
- Private sector contributions

The project would not have been possible without the help of many organisations and individuals, to whom we are very grateful for their assistance.

This booklet has been produced to show what projects were carried out as part of the initiative and where they are located. For a more detailed account of the history of mining in Northern Ceredigion please see the project website

**[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)**





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## Historical context

Bronze Age Man, the Romans, the Cistercian monks of Strata Florida, the Royalist cause, local Gentry land owners, Welsh entrepreneurs, wealthy London financiers, Industrial speculators, Engineers from Cornwall, Derbyshire and Yorkshire, miners from Italy, Belgium and Germany – all have sought the mineral wealth of Ceredigion across the ages.

From 1750 onwards, lead mining activity increased significantly until it peaked in the mid Nineteenth Century and the industry played an important role in the development of the economy of Wales and Britain. Many of the miners moved on to pastures new after the fall in lead prices and the subsequent closures of the mines by the early Twentieth Century, however, there still remains evidence of this lost way of life: the physical remains of the old crusher houses and spoil tips; smithies; old miners' cottages; chapels and graveyards.

Stories that have been passed down from generation to generation are still remembered within the old mining communities.

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Mine sites are very dangerous places that must be treated with caution: -

For your own safety: never enter any tunnels or shafts.

Every mine site is owned by somebody so always find out who owns the land and ask permission before visiting a site.

If you walk along a public footpath near a mine, take care not to stray from it.

Most mine sites in Ceredigion have lain undisturbed for in excess of one hundred years and are sites of special scientific interest (SSSI's) and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM's) and are protected by law. Do not disturb tips, growing vegetation, walls and building remains, above all please do not use mine sites as rubbish dumps.

**By treating these sites with respect, we can all work together to preserve Ceredigion's unique Mining Heritage.**

## “Ar gof a chadw”

Applicant: Ysbyty Ystwyth  
community council

Grant Given: £1,415

Total Project Cost: £2,520

Project Outputs:

Collect and record local stories  
as a dvd.

Organise workshops to teach young  
people the skills of producing and  
editing dvd's.



This project has brought together the communities of New Row, Pontrhydygroes and Ysbyty Ystwyth to record the aural and visual history of the area.

The project has encouraged people to share knowledge, understanding and memories of the area's industrial heritage by researching their own local history and by coming together to produce a DVD of their work.



## Improvement of Pont Ceunant Engine House



Applicant: Welsh Mines  
Preservation Trust

Grant Given: £2,100

Total Project Cost: £3,244

Project Outputs:

Clearing the fly tipping.

Erect grille.

Interpretation panel.

Producing booklet on the site.

The Pont Ceunant generating station was used between 1898 and 1903. This hydropower-station was the first example of its kind to be erected in Wales and the ruin had become a target of fly tipping. The clearance pilot project was a partnership between numerous individuals and organisations coming together to remove and dispose of many years of rubbish and to consolidate and interpret the site. A grille was put in place to prevent further fly tipping and an interpretation panel tells the story of the building.

Please note this site is on private land but can be viewed from the side of the road between Pontrhydygroes and Abermagwr.



## “Cambrian Discovery Tours”

Applicant: Cambrian Discovery

Grant Given: £2,150

Total Project Cost: £4,776

Project Outputs:

Create a new business.



Cambrian Tours is a new business providing interpretive tours around the Ceredigion Uplands. Collecting visitors from the steam railway station at Devils Bridge or from their accommodation by minibus the tours combine local places and sites of interest with an interpretive dialogue.

Further information can be found at [www.cambriandiscovery.co.uk](http://www.cambriandiscovery.co.uk)



## RIGS Interpretation Project



Applicant: Central Wales  
RIGS group

Grant Given: £2,682

Total Project Cost: £5,161

Project Outputs:

To produce three interpretation panels at Cwmystwyth, Cwmsymlog and Cwm Rheidol.

RIGS means Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites; this project has produced three interpretation panels that set the complex geological context to the mining landscapes of the area.

The panels at Cwmystwyth, Cwmsymlog and Cwm Rheidol inform readers of how and when the minerals sought by the miners were formed and why they were important. Further information can be found at:

[www.geologywales.co.uk/central-wales-rigs/index.htm](http://www.geologywales.co.uk/central-wales-rigs/index.htm)



## Ysbyty Ystwyth Murals

Applicant: Ysbyty Ystwyth Parent  
Teacher Association

Grant Given: £3,005

Total Project Cost: £6,010

Project Outputs:

Create a set of community murals.



This project instigated by the PTA of Ysbyty Ystwyth primary school involved the communities of New Row, Pontrhydygroes and Ysbyty Ystwyth to record the history of the area on a series of visual textile panels. Assisted by local artist Pod Clare, groups and individuals were encouraged to create collages that reflected the historical way of life that led to the development of their communities

The murals can be seen in The Miners Arms in Pont-rhyd-y-groes.



## Restoration of Llywernog Powder Magazine



Applicant: Llywernog silver-lead  
mine museum

Grant Given: £3,451

Total Project Cost: £11,120

Project Outputs:

Restore the gunpowder magazine  
at the Llywernog silver-lead  
mine museum.

The Llywernog Silver-Lead Mine Museum near Ponterwyd is a unique reminder of life during the mining period. Situated on the site of an original mine the museum houses a remarkable collection of mining memorabilia and offers visitors the opportunity to go underground into a former working lead mine. One of the original and rare buildings on the site is an unusual “bee-hive” gunpowder store. This project jointly assisted by Cadw consolidated the fragile building for posterity.

[www.silverminetours.co.uk](http://www.silverminetours.co.uk)



[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

# “Metal Mining in Upland Ceredigion” booklet

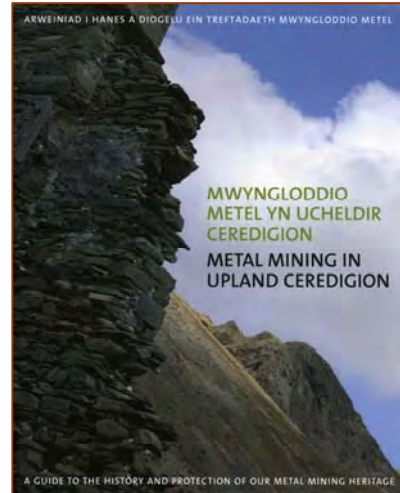
Applicant: Dyfed Archaeological Trust

Grant Given: £3,852

Total Project Cost: £6,336

Project Outputs:

To create an information booklet.



This booklet provides a general background to understanding and protecting Ceredigion's metal mining heritage. Based on the format of previous Cadw "caring for" booklets, it is highly illustrated with modern and historic photographs and documents.

The booklet introduces the industry, its history and includes sections on skills and technology as well as the social/cultural, economic, ecological and landscape impact. It aims to help safeguard the surviving physical remains by providing landowners with sources of further information and advice.



[www.acadat.com](http://www.acadat.com)

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8 Carmarthen Street,  
Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire,  
Wales, SA19 6AF

01558 823121

[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

## Bont Mural



Applicant: Pontrhydfendigaid school Parent Teacher Association

Grant Given: £3,890

Total Project Cost: £10,450

Project Outputs:

Collecting local stories.

Creating a mural to depict those stories.

Create a dvd.

This project involved the local children in Pontrhydfendigaid collecting stories about their area. A mural has then been created to depict these stories. The mural can be seen on the wall of a house in the centre of the village.

The project has been an opportunity to raise awareness of the history, traditions and heritage of the mining industry of the area and has been recorded on a DVD.



## Ceredigion Museum

Applicant: Ceredigion Museum

Grant Given: £4,547

Total Project Cost: £7,500

Project Outputs:

Upgrading the lead mining & sea faring display.



Ceredigion Museum is a popular attraction based in the former Coliseum theatre in Aberystwyth. The museum is modernising its displays and this project consists of an upgrading of the existing 25-year-old lead mining display to complement adjacent renewal of the sea-faring display.

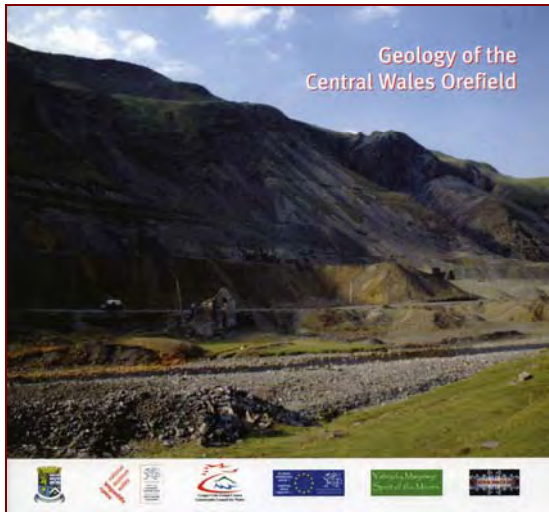
For further information visit:  
[www.ceredigion.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=197](http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=197)



COLISEUM, Terrace Road, Aberystwyth,  
Ceredigion, SY23 2AQ

01970 633088

## “Geology of the Central Wales Orefield” Booklet



Applicant: Central Wales  
RIGS group

Grant Given: £5,398

Total Project Cost: £10,826

Project Outputs:

To create a booklet on the geology  
of the Central Wales Orefield.

This was a second phase to the interpretation board project and again helps to give the geological context to the mining landscapes of the area. It is a complex subject but is presented in an accessible style and is well illustrated with full colour photographs.

The booklet was produced jointly by geologist John Mason, Prof. William Fitches (RIGS chairman) and by Bob Mason, geologist for the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW).

[www.geologywales.co.uk/central-wales-rigs/index.htm](http://www.geologywales.co.uk/central-wales-rigs/index.htm)



## Frongoch Script

Applicant: Boomerang Cyf.

Grant Given: £6,031

Total Project Cost: £14,000

Project Outputs:

To create:

    Tv drama script based on  
    the events at Frongoch mine.  
    Research article.



Independent TV company Boomerang commissioned Ceredigion born writer, Caryl Lewis, to produce a TV drama script based on one of the most intriguing stories of the county's lead mining industry.

The Welsh language script focuses on the events at the Frongoch Mine in 1901 when the arrival of Italian miners to the area allegedly led to industrial unrest and violence. The screenplay is based on true events at Frongoch, but includes a fictional element to aid storytelling.

It is hoped that the script will attract the attention of Welsh broadcasters bringing this story to life on the small screen.



[www.boomerang.co.uk](http://www.boomerang.co.uk)

[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

## “Spoilio”



Applicant:	Blaengar
Grant Given:	£6,644
Total Project Cost:	£9,723
Project Outputs:	

To develop various aspects of art.  
Undertake workshops at local schools.

Blaengar is a new arts organisation set up by a group of emerging artists around Aberystwyth aiming to run events and exhibitions for Contemporary inter-disciplinary artists in Mid Wales. Blaengar works in performance, installation, sculpture and new media.

Spolio was hosted at Llywernog Silver Lead Mines with individual pieces of work being displayed on Aberystwyth promenade and filmed at Cwmystwyth.

[www.blaengar.org](http://www.blaengar.org)



[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

## Rivers to the Sea - Harbour to the World

Applicant: Rivers to the Sea –  
Harbour to the World

Grant Given: £7,675

Total Project Cost: £10,475

Project Outputs:

To create two interpretive seats



This is an interpretive seating project that links the industrial history of Aberystwyth's hinterland with the harbour and the world. Before the coming of the railway the harbour was the most active area of Aberystwyth. Communication with the world was channelled through the harbour and there is now little that remains on site to reflect this past.

The Rivers to the Sea community group from Aberystwyth is interested in promoting and interpreting that history for visitors and locals by working with visual artists, performers and historians. One seat is located at Aberystwyth harbour, the other by the new cycleway on the disused railway line in Llanilar.



For further information contact  
Shelagh Hourahane  
[shelagh.enviroart@virgin.net](mailto:shelagh.enviroart@virgin.net)

## “The Waterfalls Experience”



Applicant: Devils Bridge Falls

Grant Given: £11,080

Total Project Cost: £26,932

Project Outputs:

Improve amenities and interpretation at the Devils Bridge Falls attraction to improve visitor numbers.

Devil’s Bridge is located in the heart of the mining area and ‘The Devils Bridge Falls’ is one of the main attractions in the area and famous for its spectacular scenery and wealth of history including the 300ft spectacular waterfalls and three bridges. The attraction consists of a nature trail that sits amongst a site of special scientific interest and a national nature reserve.

The project involved improving the amenities at the site including the footpaths, construct gazebos to act as viewing points and providing audio and visual interpretation so that visitors can appreciate the geological, historical and botanical aspects that the attraction has to offer.

For further information contact  
Victoria Chism  
01974 890233



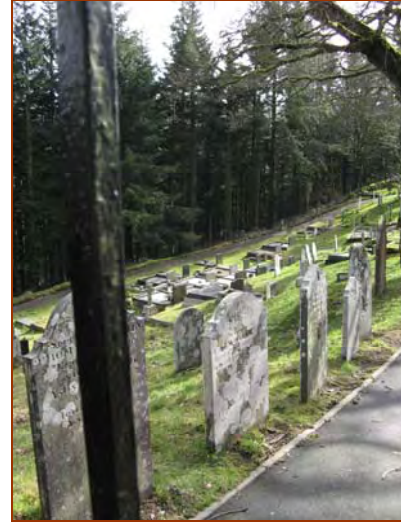
# “Beddrodau’r Gorffennol”

Applicant: Eglwys Newydd,  
Cwmystwyth

Grant Given: £12,468

Total Project Cost: £19,451

Project Outputs:  
Research the gravestones.  
Produce interpretation boards and  
a computerised system to display  
the results.



Hafod Church has a wealth of history and has strong links with the mining industry of the area. It is famous for the grave of the former owner of the Hafod Estate, Thomas Johnes and his daughter Mariamne as well as many miners who worked in the mines of Cwmystwyth – one of the most well known being James Raw, who came to the area as a mining engineer and whose family still live and farm in the area today.

This project has involved conducting research based on the church records of mining families in the Cwmystwyth area, initiating a survey of the Hafod churchyard and producing information boards and erecting a touch screen computerised system to display the records and information for the local community and the visitor.



[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

# Ceulanamaesmawr Heritage Walks

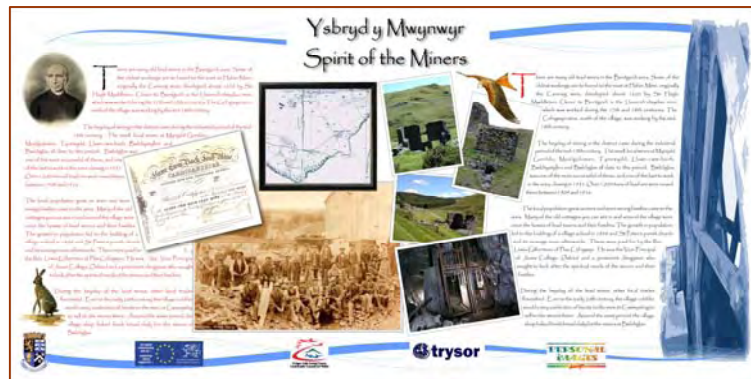


Applicant: Ecodyfi  
Grant Given: £13,368  
Total Project Cost: £21,868  
Project Outputs:  
Produce interpretation boards.  
Create a leaflet.  
Produce MP3 files that can be downloaded from the SOTM website.

The areas of Tal-y-bont, Tre Taliesin, Bontgoch, Tre'r Ddol and Furnace still have reminders of the former mining industry, once prevalent in the area. There has been mining and processing of metal ores in the hills around Tal-y-bont from Bronze Age & Roman times until the early Twentieth Century.

This project aims to raise awareness of the mining heritage of the area by providing information to local people and visitors on walking routes and the local area via interpretation boards, a leaflet and downloadable mp3 files that can be accessed before visitors come to the area. Further information can be found at:

[www.ysbryd-y-mwynwyr.org.uk/ceulanproject.php](http://www.ysbryd-y-mwynwyr.org.uk/ceulanproject.php)



[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

## Strata Florida Mines & Metals Project

Applicant: University of  
Wales Lampeter

Grant Given: £18,372

Total Project Cost: £89,442

Project Outputs:

Undertake excavation & survey  
programme at Bron y Berllan  
mine (near Strata Florida).

Organise a demonstration of  
ancient metal-working techniques.



In 2006 two aspects of work were undertaken under the heading of the Strata Florida Mines & Metals project. The first included an excavation programme into ancient mining at a mine site near Bronyberllan Farm. The project served as a volunteer and student training exercise. The second element included a four day demonstration of ancient metal working techniques given by a group of sculptors called Umha Aois. The site was visited by schools and local residents who were able learn more about the historic role of mining in the landscape.



[www.lamp.ac.uk](http://www.lamp.ac.uk)

[www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk](http://www.spirit-of-the-miners.org.uk)

## Walks Development Programme



Applicant: Ceredigion County Council

Grant Given: £37,980

Total Project Cost: £76,000

Project Outputs:

Develop strategic walking route.  
Create walking instructions and maps of the routes.

Northern Ceredigion is well-known for its spectacular scenery but the landscape hides a dramatic story of a past industrial age. Even today one can still see remnants of the lost way of life – evidenced by the remains of old buildings and spoil tips. Two linear routes have been developed linking Devil's Bridge and Pont-rhyd-y-groes and on to Pontrhydfendigaid. A further 4 circular routes have been developed around Bontgoch, Cwmsymlog, Devil's Bridge and Talybont.

All of these settlements have strong links with the former mining industry. Maps of all the routes are available at:  
[tourism.ceredigion.gov.uk/saesneg/index.htm](http://tourism.ceredigion.gov.uk/saesneg/index.htm).



## Consolidation of Cwmsymlog mine Chimney

Applicant: Trefeurig Community Council

Grant Given: £41,087

Total Project Cost: £82,174

Project Outputs:

Consolidate chimney  
Provide interpretation panels



Cwmsylog, described in 1744 by the mining engineer Lewis Morris as  
“The richest in lead & silver of any in his Majesty's dominions.”

The site boasts the only accessible mine chimney in the county and after years of campaigning Trefeurig community council successfully received funding from Spirit of the Miners and Cadw to fund its consolidation. The story of the chimney and the valley is now told via interpretation panels with information provided on the various interesting aspects including its unique botany, geology and history.



## Pontrhydygroes Wheel



Applicant: Plynlimon Heritage Trust

Grant Given: £56,213

Total Project Cost: £75,713

Project Outputs:

Reinstate water wheel  
Provide interpretation

Pontrhydygroes is a village that still has a remarkable visible mining heritage in the form of a count house, miners bridge and the Miners Arms Inn.

This project has reinstated a 24ft diameter water wheel which now stands in the exact spot where, in the 1850's, a 26ft wheel drove stamps which pulverised the ore.

The wheel is a monument to those that worked at the mines.

## Other project activities

An informative **website** has been developed that includes a timeline of mining events in the area. The bilingual site has a wealth of information on the history, geology, plants and wildlife of the mines. Let Iwan the miner, guide you through the site!



**Heritage weekends** have become annual events in the calendar and have given local people and visitors alike the opportunity to re-trace the steps of the old Cardiganshire miners and visit sites with members of the Welsh Mines Preservation. The Trust has also undertaken volunteering work to clear rubbish and vegetation at sites such as Cwmsymlog and Bronfloyd.

An event organised by the project in June 2006 included a weekend of **experimental archaeology demonstrations** including ancient mining and smelting techniques. Workshops were held showing how to make Bronze Age hammers and bellows.



For information on current events please see  
[www.mike.munro.cwc.net/mining/wmpt/wmpt\\_fm.htm](http://www.mike.munro.cwc.net/mining/wmpt/wmpt_fm.htm)

