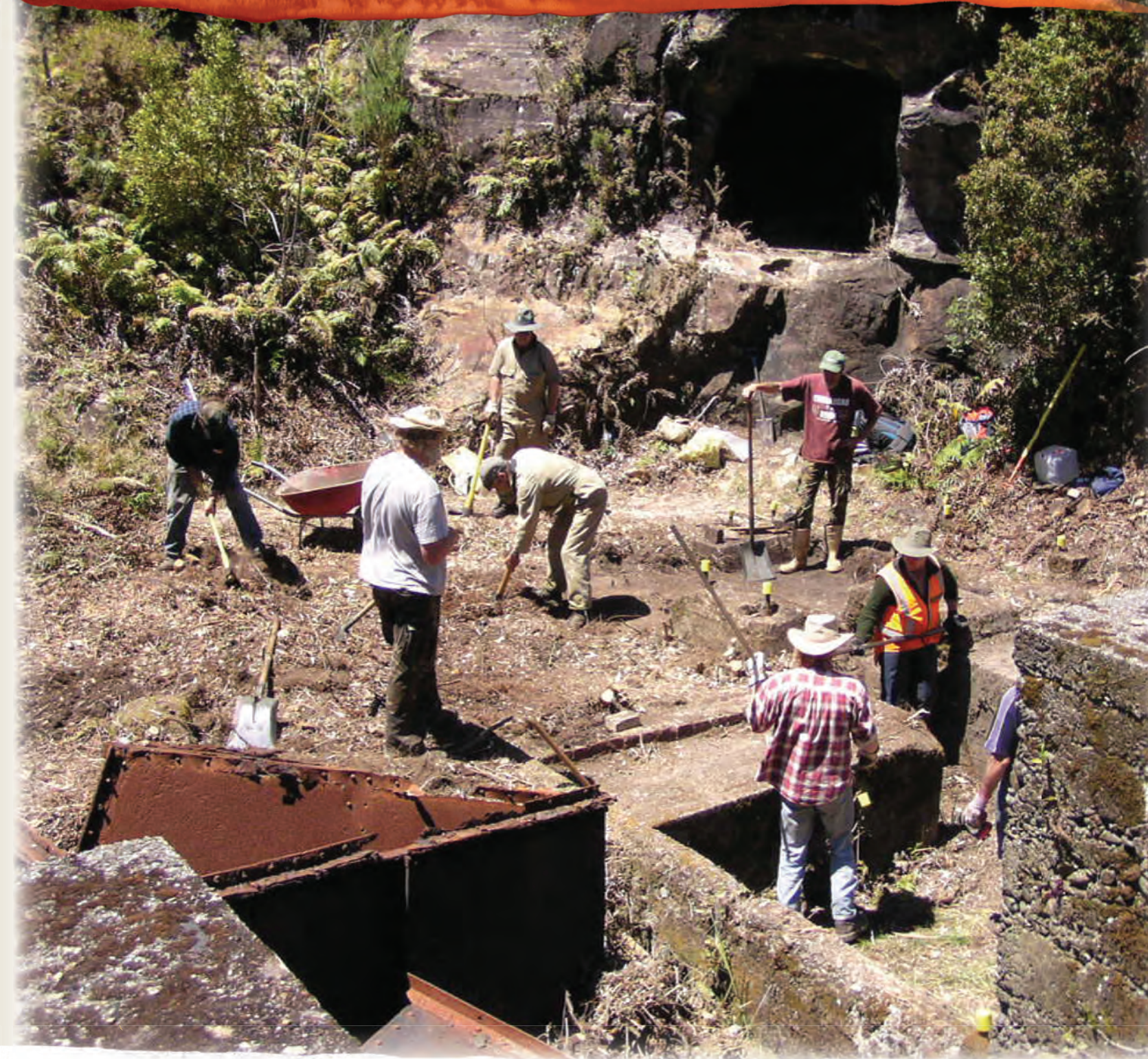


Blackball Coal Mine

Historic Site Assessment and Workplan

Jim Staton | West Coast *Tai Poutini* Conservancy



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Heritage recommendations

This plan provides management guidance on the conservation of the 1890 Blackball coal mine, as follows:

1. It summarises the high heritage significance of the site, with particular reference to the historic 1908 crib time strike and the continued existence of Blackball as a rare example of a historic mining town.
2. It specifies work that will conserve important heritage fabric at the site to assist its stabilisation and long-term preservation.
3. It suggests a partnership with the Blackball community that can support their cultural connection with this site and provide business opportunities by developing its potential to enhance visitor experience at Blackball

This site is one of several heritage places that collectively comprise the coal mining heritage of the Blackball area. Because the mine site is modest requiring modest heritage work, this plan is kept to modest proportions. If a more comprehensive Blackball Visitor Experience Plan was developed as a partnership, it would unlock much greater heritage benefits.

1.2 Blackball heritage

To maximise heritage and business benefits, this site should be managed in the wider Blackball heritage context. Blackball township was established to support coal mining in the local area, and its population peaked during the early 1950's when 188 men and three boys are recorded working in the mine. Three main coal mines operated:

1. Blackball Creek Coal Mining Company (BBCMC) at Blackball, 1890-1939. The entrance to this mine and associated structures are the subject of this report. Taken over by State Coal Mines 1941
2. Blackball Creek Coal Company (BCCC), also known as Balderstone & Party, at Blackball, 1939-1964. Also taken over by State Coal Mines 1941
3. Blackball Creek Coal Company at Roa, 3 km further up the valley (also known as the Paparoa mine), 1906-1971. Taken over by State Coal Mines 1946

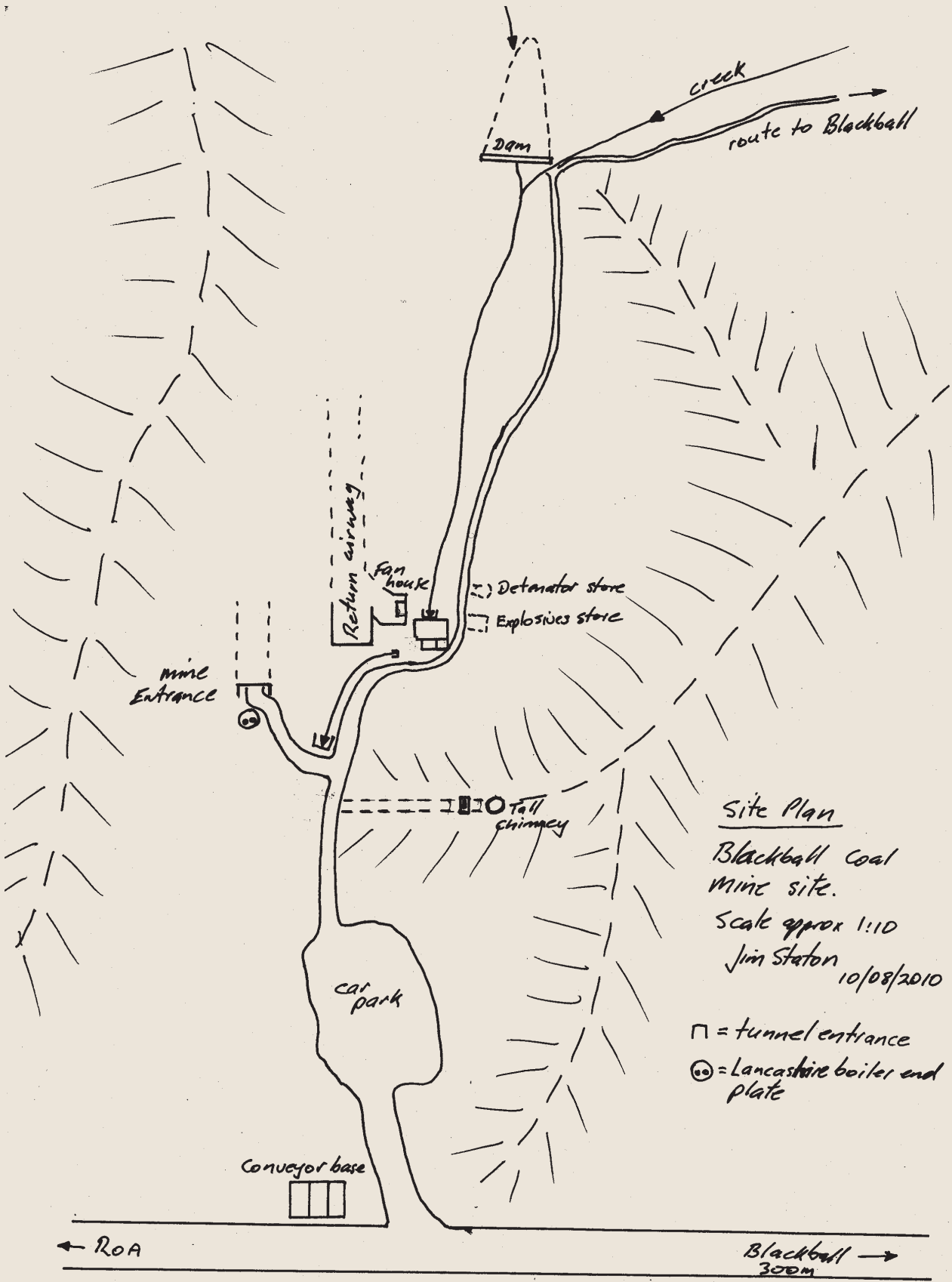
Coal was transported to the railway at Ngahere, 1893-1909, by an aerial cable way. It was superseded by a branch railway from Ngahere to Blackball that operated 1909-1966 which required a long multi-truss bridge over the Grey River. When the river was in flood, as it was several times, the line closed.

Heritage assessment summary

The heritage value of the Blackball Coal Mine is a sub-section of the heritage value of the town of Blackball, much of which survives to this day. In this larger dimension Blackball has economic, social and political significance regionally and even nationally. A number of valuable published sources are available on this topic, and are noted in Chapter 8.

The Statistics New Zealand 2006 Census registered 330 people living in Blackball.

Blackball Mine site plan



Site Plan
 Blackball coal
 mine site.
 Scale approx 1:10
 Jim Stator
 10/08/2010

□ = tunnel entrance
 ⊗ = Lancashire boiler end plate

The purpose of this work plan is to support a relatively small heritage investment to stabilise the remaining fabric of the mine structures and to encourage community involvement with the site. The amount of analysis and planning is thus minimised to suit that modest purpose. Heritage points, relative to the mine remains are these:

History

In terms of economic history the Blackball Coal Mine in its day was one of the major West Coast producers. However it does not have quite the production scale, or as high a history profile, as Brunner or Denniston, which today are the focus of heritage preservation. The Blackball union and social history are notable, but they are wider than just the mine site. They are dealt with in the cultural section below, since the Blackball community continues to relate to them.

Fabric

The infrastructure at the Blackball Coal mine was typical of the large scale mines of its time. Today it is much degraded and would not be rated high for integrity compared to some others. However, notable amongst the surviving fabric are the ventilation chimneys which tell a story of mine dangers and safety. There are two sets—one hidden back in the forest, not managed by the Department of Conservation, and the second set of two smoke type chimneys located near the mine and described in this report.

One strong feature of the heritage fabric at Blackball is that much of the town survives and retains a cultural identity link to its mining history. This connection is a quality lacking for Brunner or Denniston.

Culture

In the 1900s the Blackball miners were taking a leading role in New Zealand in the development of unionism and political representation. The 1908 crib strike is regarded as a defining event in New Zealand union history. Some of the union leaders were later involved in forming the Labour Party which eventually came to government in 1935, including former miners Webb and Semple as Members of Parliament.

The Blackball mine entrance is a powerful symbol of the workplace drudgery that spawned this activism. It is especially important since we can no longer go underground to the workplace itself. The chimneys and fans too, are strong testimony to the issue of inadequate mine safety that was so much a focus of union lobbying. A number of key buildings remain standing and in use in Blackball, such as the old hotel, humble miners homes, and a grand managers house. These are equal testament to these times. In 2008 Blackball hosted a commemoration of the crib time strike, and this history has become part of the present day culture of the town, and to some extent, the West Coast.

The Blackball mine is just a minutes easy walk from the road and so is accessible to visitors. Thus the mine can play a key role in developing local tourism in conjunction with local business and the community. DOC can help this by supporting locals to conserve this site, and hosting heritage training in the town.

Summary

The conservation of the Blackball mine site will enable the Blackball community to strengthen its mining heritage identity and develop authentic business opportunities based on that heritage.

2.0 History

2.1 Era from 1877 to 1937

Joseph Kilgour held prospecting rights over the Seven Mile and Blackball Creek areas from 1877. He employed a prospector, Mr Frazer, who found many coal seams in the locality.¹

Joseph Kilgour was a prominent Greymouth businessman, hotelier and property owner, known as ‘old Joe’ and famous for the jaunty angle of his white stovepipe hat. He engaged in many enterprises, including iron foundry, goldmining, sawmilling and the Kumara Tramway. He also served as Mayor in 1870. He died, aged 68, on 24 August 1898.²

In 1884 Messers Schofield and Halcrow independently placed messages in the *Grey River Argus* advising they had applied to prospect for coal over the areas adjacent to Kilgour’s prospecting area.³ The Black Ball Creek Coal Company (BCCCC) was registered on 14 January 1885 by promoters who consisted of six Christchurch businessmen.⁴ However, by 1886 all the leases were transferred to the Blackball Coal Company (BCC) – the directors were Wilson, Hill and Bishop, based in Christchurch.⁵

Due to lack of development the output clauses of the leases were suspended for two years by the Land Board,⁶ and it was not until 1889 that the stone drive was started and the coal seams (one 4 ft [1.2 m] overlaying a second seam 12 ft [3.7 m] thick) were reached in October 1890. Mr R. Schofield was appointed mine manager.⁷ Martin Moore was appointed mine engineer. The New Zealand Historic Places Trust website notes:

Martin Moore was born in 1858 in Australia and came to New Zealand with his parents at the age of ten. After being educated at Brunnerton, Moore worked at the Dispatch Foundry in Greymouth and then at the quartz mines in Reefton. In the early 1880s he worked at a number of Grey County coal mines before joining Blackball mine in 1890.

It doesn’t say if Martin Moore was the actual builder. It is unlikely as the Blackball Coal Company tendered out such work; the company engineer would have overseen the project, but not directly contributed labour. Mr Moore and his family had left Blackball by 24 April 1907 for the State Mines (Runanga or Dunollie).

In 1892 the company was restructured into the Black Ball Coal Mining Company of New Zealand Ltd (BBCMC) by British financiers with local directorship held in Christchurch. The objective was to serve British shipping interests with an independent coal supply. The shipping companies were the NZ Shipping Company, Shaw Savill and the Scottish Shire Line whose ships were engaged in the passenger and frozen meat trade between New Zealand and Great Britain.⁸

Few other coal mines in New Zealand had such British backing – Denniston had mainly Otago and Melbourne backers, and Brunner mostly West Coast and Canterbury, although initially a British company tried to finance the first Brunner coal mining venture but failed almost immediately.⁹

1 *Grey River Argus*, Volume XXXV, Issue 5971, 5 September 1887, p2

2 *Greymouth Street Names: A short history*. Compiled by Frances Buckley, Grey District Library 2003

3 *Grey River Argus*, 18 August 1884

4 *The Great ‘08: Blackball Coal Miners Strike*, Brian Wood, 2008, p13

5 AJHR 1888, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery. For full references to the AJHRs see section 9.1.1, p34

6 AJHR 1888, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery.

7 AJHR 1890, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery.

8 *The Great ‘08: Blackball Coal Miners Strike*, Brian Wood, 2008, p21

9 *Coal Gorge and the Brunner Suspension Bridge*, Brian Wood 2004



Blackball Coal Mining Company's engine house and workshops, Grey Valley 1902. ATL Collection, ½-044052-F, Bregmen photo.



Blackball Coal Mining Company's storage bins, 1909. Compare this photo with the one above, the two boiler chimneys situated on the ridge are now on site, so must have been built between 1902 and 1909, the boiler chimney on the right (also in the previous photo) appears to be out of use.

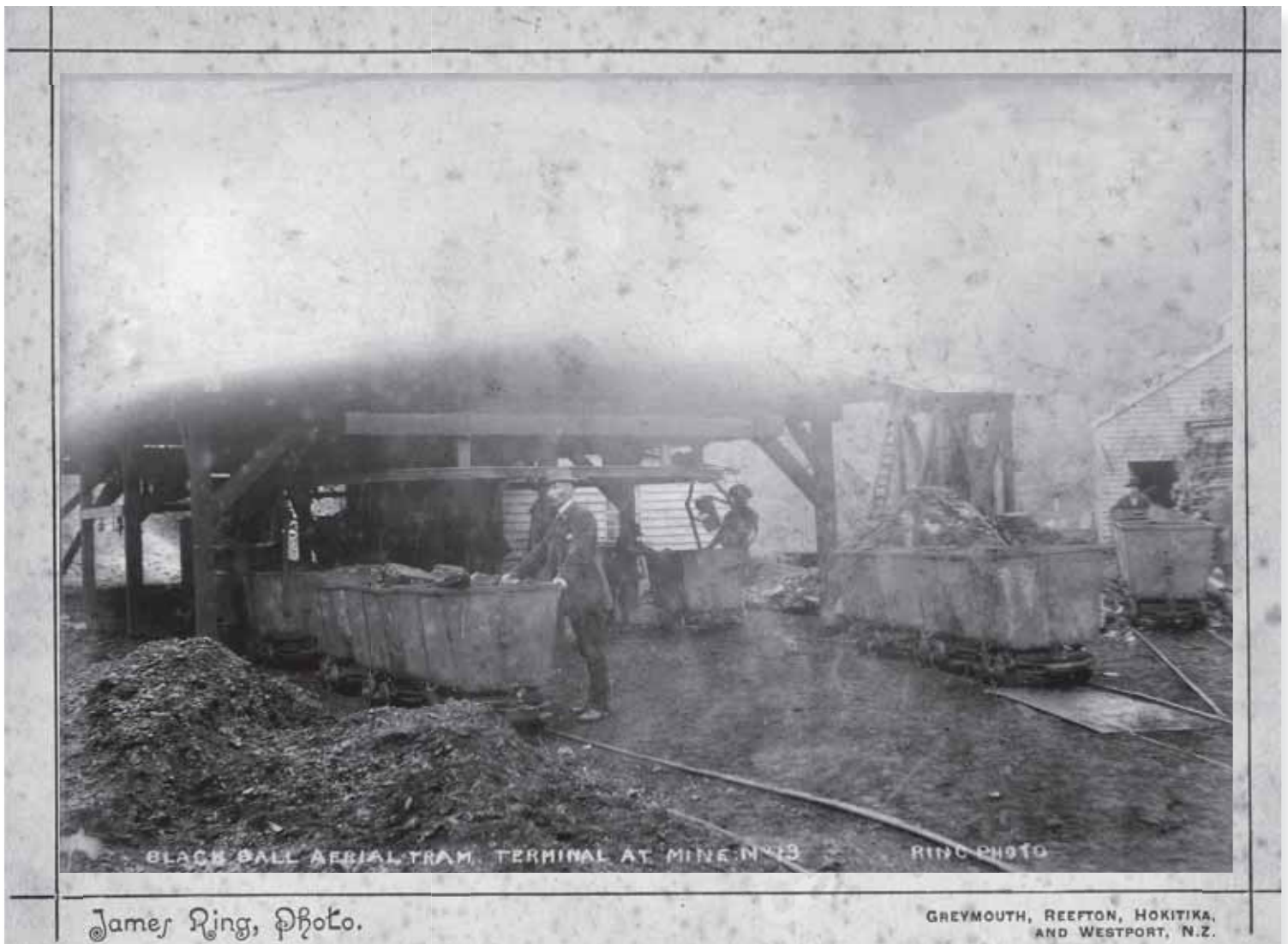
The James Ring photographs on these two pages are from the Christie Collection, courtesy Trevor Johnston, Atarau

- 10 AJHR 1892, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery
- 11 AJHR 1894, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery
- 12 AJHR 1898, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery
- 13 AJHR 1909, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery
- 14 AJHR 1894, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery
- 15 National Archives of NZ, CH9/350 Ngahere Blackball Railway, 1902/12. Letter on hand-over condition of the line, (NZ Government Railways District Engineer to Chief Engineer, Wellington)
- 16 AJHR 1909, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery; plus *Grey River Argus*; 7 December 1909, p1, 'railway trucks have been taking away coal from the new bins'

There was no railway line between Blackball and Ngahere and mine operations were suspended almost as soon as the BBCMC began operation.¹⁰ Eventually, as an interim measure, coal was transported via a 5.5 km long aerial ropeway which was completed in December 1893. The aerial ropeway ran through Blackball township, across the Grey River to Ngahere. It had a capacity of 400 tons in eight hours operating at four miles per hour (6.4 km/hour),¹¹ but by 1898 was down to 230 tons per eight hours and had to be completely overhauled.¹² The aerial ropeway delivered coal to the 500 ton Ngahere bins until November 1909 when the railway line from Ngahere to Blackball finally reached there.¹³

The operation of the aerial ropeway was unusual in that the mine tubs were transported on the ropeway minus their chassis which were left behind at the mine entrance terminal,¹⁴ to be reunited on the return from the Ngahere bins then back into the mine to get refilled.

The railway reached Ngahere from Brunner on 1 August 1889. Ngahere was the line's terminus until a further section to Ahaura was opened on 14 February 1900. The rail link from Ngahere to Blackball was approved by Government in 1901 with construction starting in 1902. By 1904 the bridge over the Grey River had been erected.¹⁵ The line to the Blackball railway yards was completed by 1909, but the builders, the Public Works Department, carted the company's coal to Ngahere until handing the line over to the New Zealand Government Railways (NZGR) on 1 August 1910.¹⁶



The line operated until a flood in 1966 destroyed the bridge across the Grey River.¹⁷

In 1906 the BBCMC opened up a second mine at Roa, the Paparoa Coal Mining Co, and the railway line was extended to Roa. This section of the line was also taken over by the NZGR on the 1st August 1910.¹⁸

During 1909 the BBCMC built coal storage bins in the Blackball railway yards with a capacity of 3000 tons.¹⁹ The remaining large concrete foundation next to Roa Road would have been constructed to take the conveyor system that transported the coal directly from inside the mine over the Roa Road into the bins.

Ventilation of the mine was initially achieved by a furnace at the base of a large chimney. As the coal measures were steeply inclined up inside the hill, essentially parallel with the surface, the heading drive was taken through to air on the north side of the back ridge to the first of three chimneys built in 1891.²⁰ This chimney, the round brick one set into a bluff stands some 10 m high from the base and is approximately 3 m in diameter. It was made of wood and rebuilt in brick in 1898 to a height of 35 ft (10.7 m).²¹ To increase airflow a shorter square chimney was built in 1895 on a coal outcrop on top of an adjacent bluff,²² this was increased in height in 1896. In 1897 a third chimney/furnace was built to take fumes away from the #3 dip section of the mine.²³

¹⁷ wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackball,_New_Zealand

¹⁸ National Archives of NZ, CH9/350 Ngahere Blackball Railway, 12080/22, letter noting conditions of taking over the line from the Blackball Coal Mining Company, (Chief Engineer, Wellington to NZ Government Railways District Engineer, Greymouth).

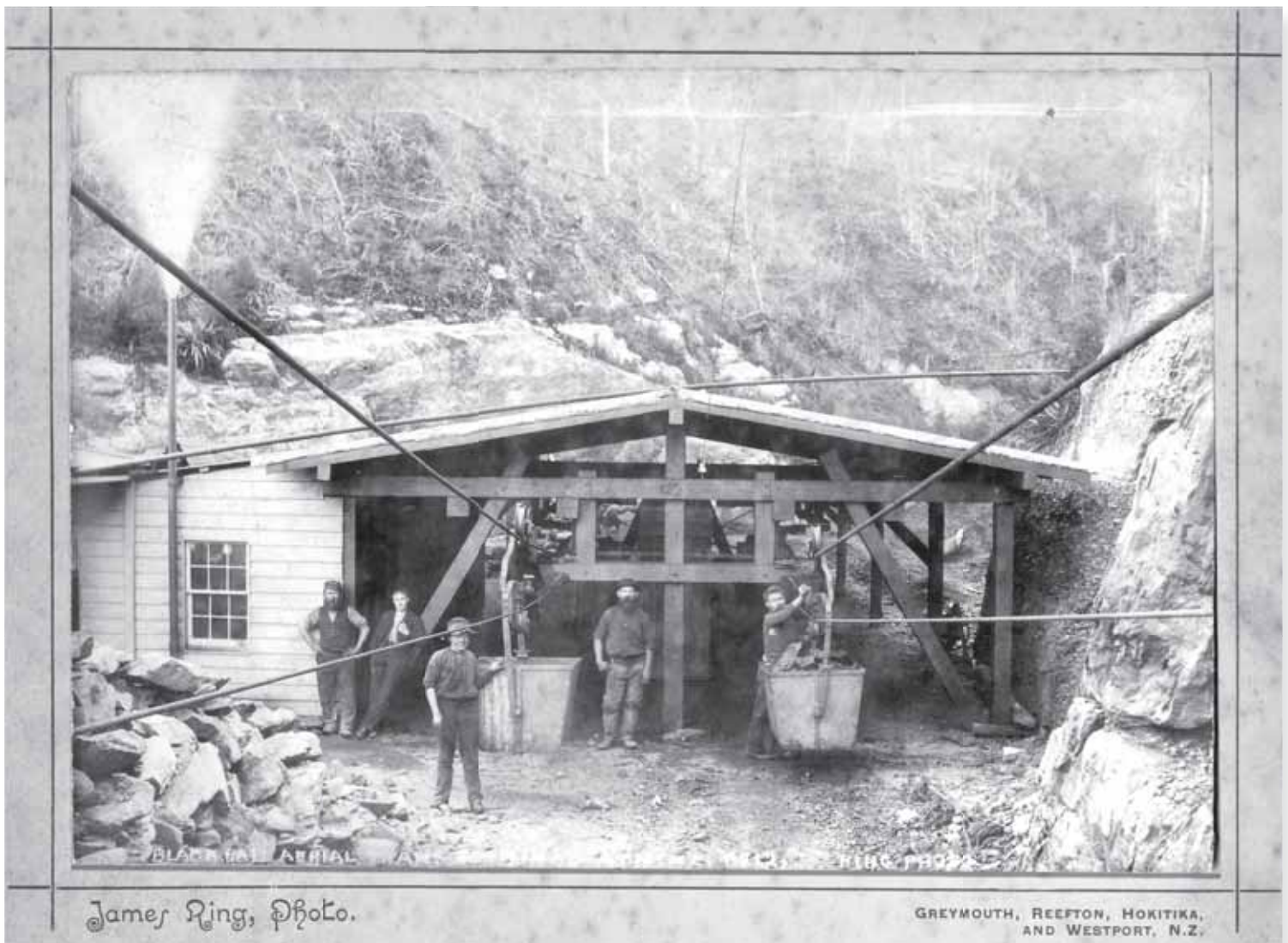
¹⁹ AJHR 1909, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

²⁰ AJHR 1892, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery, plus site inspections by Jim Staton since 1975

²¹ AJHR 1898, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

²² AJHR 1895, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery, plus site inspections by Jim Staton since 1975

²³ AJHR 1897, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery



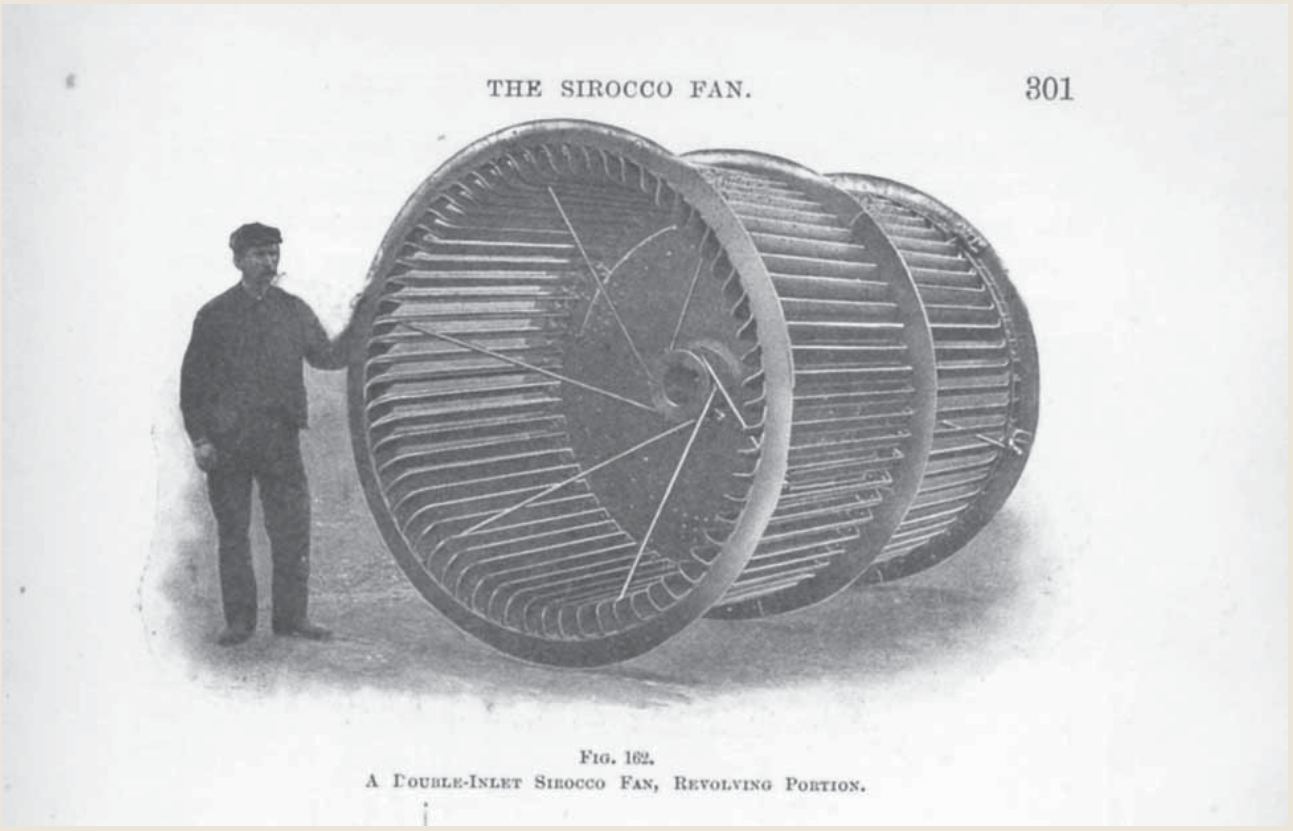
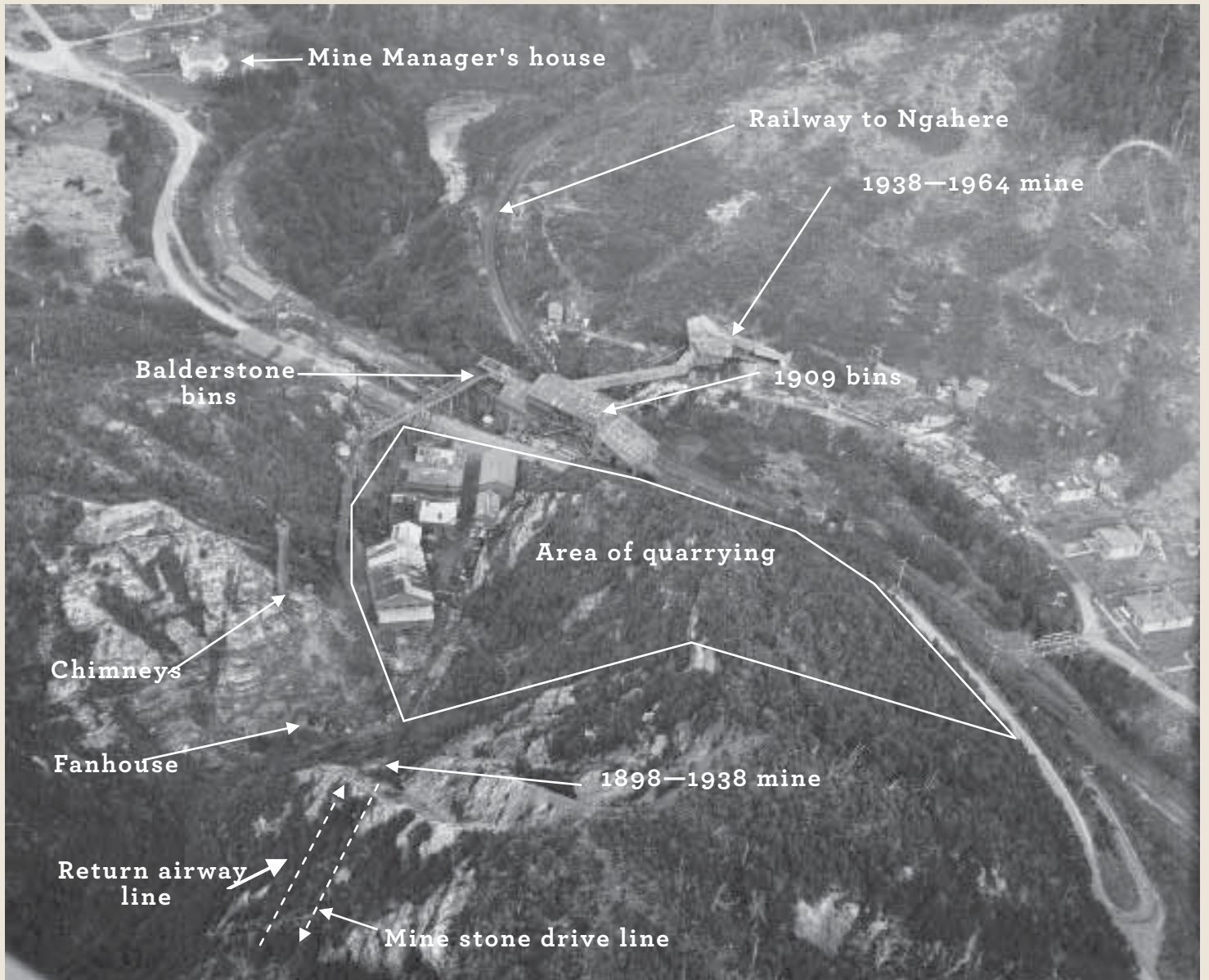


FIG. 162.
A DOUBLE-INLET SIROCCO FAN, REVOLVING PORTION.



Page 6 top left: The Mechanical Equipment of Collieries, p301, CM Percy, 1905. Jim Staton Collection. Bottom left: Coal Mine at Blackball, West Coast. Whites Aviation Ltd., 15th June 1948. National Library Collection WA-13431-F

The ventilation system for a single 'heading' (opening up a drive to get to the other side of the ridge to create the airflow via a furnace/chimney) required air to be pumped into the mine entrance to the working face. When the chimney/furnace was working properly the natural action of thermo-siphoning would have drawn clean air up through the mine.

All three furnace ventilation chimneys were superseded in 1904 when a double-inlet Capell fan was installed.²⁴ As these chimneys are not within the Department's jurisdiction they are not included in the assessment part of this report; however, the first two chimneys are in very good condition, (see Appendix 2). The #3 Dip section chimney has not been found, described as being of iron pipe construction it remains elusive in heavy scrub forest where it is thought to be located.

There was no 'return airway' until the installation of the Capell fan, as the furnace air flow system was reversed by installing a fanhouse, which sucks air up via the mine entrance, through the workings then vented back out the return airway – hence the term return airway, this is the reason for the parallel tunnel system.²⁵ The chimney flues would have been blocked to achieve this forced airflow.

In 1920 a seven foot diameter double-inlet Sirocco fan was procured. The report noted that due to the very restricted fanhouse site considerable preparatory work would be required to install it. The fan was installed in 1921 (replacing the Capell fan) and this is the Sirocco fan that remains on site today.²⁶

Reading the reports and writings of the time it seems that ventilation issues gave the growing number of ardent unionists employed at the mine a platform on which to build up to the main event – the 1908 Cribtime strike.

2.2 The 1908 Crib Time Strike

This strike started within the depths of the mine itself and lasted eleven weeks. The basis for the strike was to gain a further 15 minutes break for lunch, (lunch was 15 minutes, and there were no morning or afternoon tea [smoko] breaks). There were other underlying reasons for the strike – requests for better ventilation for example, but it was also mixed with unionist and political ambitions of several miners.²⁷ The main instigator was Pat Hickey. Others involved were Paddy Webb, George Hunter, Walter Rogers, Harry Fitzgerald and David Pritchard. The union actions resulting from the strike action led to the formation of the Federation of Labour and eventually the formation of the political arm of the Labour Party.²⁸

The Federation of Labour

Following the Blackball coal miners' strike of February-March 1908, a conference of West Coast miners' unions met in Greymouth in August 1908 to form a New Zealand Federation of Miners. Robert Semple was elected president and Patrick Hickey secretary. The objects and preamble were copied largely from those of the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World, two radical American organisations. Affirming the class struggle, they were a direct challenge to the existing industrial arbitration legislation. In 1909 the Miners' Federation changed its name to New Zealand Federation of Labour. It became popularly known as the 'Red' Federation and its members as 'Red Feds'. Besides coal and gold miners, the

²⁴ AJHR 1904, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery.

²⁵ Pers comms, Mark Pizey, NZ Environment Manager and Geologist, Solid Energy, 26th June 2009.

²⁶ AJHR 1921, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

²⁷ For a clear understanding it is recommended to read the book: *The Great '08* (Blackball Coal Miners Strike), Brian Wood, 2008

²⁸ 'Making of a Home grown Revolutionary', unpublished paper by Peter Clayworth, Wellington, 2008. Presented at Blackball Cribtime Strike Centenary Celebrations 23 March 2008.

federation gained the affiliation of most waterside unions, as well as general labourers', shearers', and other, mainly unskilled, unions. By 1912 it united a quarter of New Zealand's organised workers. Its weekly journal, the *Maoriland Worker*, reached a circulation of 10,000 early in 1913.

The 'Red' Federation conducted a number of industrial disputes and, by aggressive action, was able to gain important concessions for its members. It suffered its first setback in the Auckland General Labourers' dispute of 1912, and was again defeated in the bitter Waihi gold miners' strike later that year.

In July 1913 the federation joined forces with several more moderate unions to become the United Federation of Labour. It suffered a crushing defeat in the nationwide waterfront strike of October 1913. Membership declined, but a skeleton organisation was kept in existence until 1920, to be succeeded by the New Zealand Alliance of Labour. The leaders of the 'Red' Federation, Semple, Webb, Fraser, Savage, Parry, and Armstrong, later entered Parliament and became members of the first Labour Government in 1935.²⁹

The Blackball mine was a big employer in the district. In July 1896 there were 88 men employed in two shifts underground plus an unrecorded number above ground. By November the number had dropped to 59,³⁰ probably due to the aerial ropeway not working to capacity at that time. Employment figures cited in the AJHRs fluctuated with the fortunes of the mine with the most being employed in the early 1950s when 188 men and three boys are recorded.³¹

2.3 Tribute Miners Strike

For most of 1931 the mine was closed due to another dispute, the Tribute Miners Strike.³²

In the late 1920s tensions between miners fighting to keep their jobs and mine managers struggling to stay in business began to emerge. At the same time co-operative mining or tributism surfaced. Tributism was a system whereby miners took responsibility for working a designated area and then sold the coal to the owner at an agreed price per ton. It was a scheme especially favoured by coal owners who were in financial trouble. Unionists voiced opposition to tributism, seeing it as undermining collective agreements miners had spent years agitating for, and also because often it led to unsafe working environments as coal was obtained as quickly and cheaply as possible.³³

BBCMC management decided to use tribute workers instead of waged miners to carry on mining in the then difficult economic times. This led to a prolonged dispute which worsened and split the Blackball township when local W. Balderstone set up a new company, the Blackball Creek Coal Company Ltd (BCCC), also known as Balderstone & Party to continue production from the seam by mining the abandoned coal pillars from the valley to the north, in Blackball Creek. Balderstone entered the old workings adjacent to the first old furnace chimney.³⁴

The strike was resolved with the BBCMC continuing to mine on the north side of the Roa Road with waged miners until indications of 'creep'

²⁹ [www.teara.govt.nz/Federation of Labour/](http://www.teara.govt.nz/Federation%20of%20Labour/) Herbert Otto Roth, University of Auckland.

³⁰ AJHR 1896, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

³¹ AJHR 1950, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery. Another reference in *NZ Truth*, 28th April 1917 where the results of a vote to return to work had 116 for and 85 against = 201 working at the mine, (the compulsory conscription strike).

³² AJHR 1931, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

³³ Breen, Jackie & Findlater, Amy 2011. *Charming Creek Tramway*. Richardson, L. 1995 *Coal, Class and Community*: 225-226

³⁴ AJHR 1931, Coal Mining, Blackball Creek Coal Co., Ltd.

combined with heating near the main rise closed the mine, and the last day of work was 6 December 1938.³⁵

Creep is where the roof of the mine starts to have both horizontal and vertical movement downhill relative to the slope of the seam. This phenomena was exacerbated in this particular mine with two steep parallel layers of coal being separated by a thin layer of rock. Heating is where localized coal remaining in the mine oxidizes creating heat which if not controlled will eventually spontaneously combust. Usually the remedy was to flood the affected area, leave for a period of time, pump out and resume mining. However, to flood the main rise of the Blackball mine was to flood the whole mine, which at this period in its life was uneconomic.³⁶

In 1932 a flume to carry BCCC coal two miles (3.2km) to the new bins (attached to the BBCMC bins, see aerial photo on page 8) was completed, capacity 600 tons.³⁷ This company continued to extract coal by splitting then cutting out pillars left in the upper section of the old mine workings until running out of available pillars, resulting in closure at the end of 1959.³⁸

2.4 Later developments, 1939 to 1964

During 1936 the Blackball Coal Mining Company had commenced drilling operations directly opposite the original mine in the Soldiers Creek area to assess whether the coal seam extended south west of Ford Creek.³⁹

New facilities were erected on the south side of Ford Creek, with the same railway yards and storage bins being utilized. (The aerial photo on page 8 shows Blackball Creek Coal Company's flume coming out of the BBCMC old return airway, curving to the left below the chimneys on the bare ridge over the road to their storage bin that was added to the Blackball township end of the original storage bins.)

On 7 July 1941 ownership of the Blackball mine was transferred to the Mines Department under the control of the State Coal-Mines Branch.

Conditions were very wet limiting production with approximately 1,000,000 gallons (4,546,000 litres) per day pumped out of the mine.⁴⁰ Production ceased in September 1964, and salvage of all machinery was completed by December.⁴¹

The Paparoa Mine at Roa was purchased by the State in 1947 and closed in 1971.⁴²

2.5 Quarrying and land transactions

The area was not used again until small scale quarrying began in the mid 1980s to provide rock for river protection works in the Grey Valley. Quarrying continued sporadically until the 1990s. Site inspections were made in the late 1980s as locals were worried that the quarry blasting could cause damage to the two chimneys. The inspection team, Paul McGahan and Jim Staton, advocated for historic resources in the immediate area of blasting. The overburden from these operations now covers the majority of the area where the mine buildings are located. (See aerial photo p8.)

The area around the mine site was transferred to the Department of Conservation on 16 June 2005. However, section 3c/797 that contains the later era bathhouse and its adjacent boiler were sold to a local, Mr Owen Anderson on 11 March 1975.^{43&44} (Mr Anderson has since passed away).

³⁵ AJHR 1938, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

³⁶ Pers comms, Mark Pizey, NZ Environment Manager and Geologist, Solid Energy. 26 June 2009.

³⁷ AJHR 1932, Coal Mining, Blackball Creek Coal Co., Ltd

³⁸ AJHR 1959, Coal Mining, Blackball Creek Colliery

³⁹ AJHR 1937, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

⁴⁰ AJHR 1941, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

⁴¹ AJHR 1964, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

⁴² Solid Energy web site - History section

⁴³ Title 3c/797, parcel 3767407 (created 29/08/1989), RS 5077, .7411 ha. Terraview title search

⁴⁴ Land titles and dates from the Terraview Land Title site search

2.6 Chronology

1877	Kilgour held prospecting rights over the Seven Mile and Blackball Creek areas
1884	Schofield and Halcrow applied to prospect for coal over the areas adjacent to Kilgours area
1885	The Blackball Creek Coal Company was registered
1886	All leases transferred to the Blackball Coal Company
1889	Stone drive started
1889	The railway reached Ngahere from Brunner
1890	Coal seams reached in October
1892	Restructured as the Blackball Coal Mining Company of New Zealand by British financiers
1892	Mine operations suspended due to the lack of a railway line between Blackball & Ngahere
1893	Aerial ropeway to Ngahere bins completed
1901	Ngahere to Blackball railway approved by Government
1902	Branch line to Blackball started
1903	Dynamo and electric plant erected at the mine, Capel fan ordered from England
1904	Bridge over the Grey River completed
1904	Return airway drive started
1904	Capel fan installed, (return airway structure built) superseding the furnace/chimney ventilation system
1906	The Blackball Coal Mining Company open up second mine at Roa, the Paparoa Coal Mining Company.
1908	Crib time strike
1909	Blackball railway yards and coal storage bins completed
1910	Railway line officially handed over to the NZ Government Railways
1911	New surface buildings - blacksmith, carpenter and engineering workshops erected ⁴⁵
1917	New bathhouse built ⁴⁶
1921	Sirocco fan installation started
1922	Sirocco fan put into use around October, replacing the Capel fan
1931	Tribute Miners Strike, Blackball Creek Coal Company Ltd formed.
1932	Blackball Creek Company builds trams, and bins in railway yards
1936	Blackball Coal Mining Company start drilling south of Ford Creek
1938	Blackball Coal Mining Company mine closes on the north side of Roa road
1939	Blackball Coal Mining Company start mining on the south side of Roa Road
1941	Ownership transfers to the Mines Department under the control of the State Coal Mines Branch
1964	Production ceased in September, mine closed
1975	Bathhouse section sold to Owen Anderson
1980's	Quarrying started adjacent to the earlier mine entrance
1987	Land surrounding the quarry becomes Conservation Stewardship land
1988/89	Site inspections of quarry area by DOC staff

⁴⁵ AJHR 1911, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery. Noted that previous to the installation all repair work had to be sent to Greymouth.

⁴⁶ AJHR 1917, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery

1997	Site assessment with the Blackball Community Association
2000	Report on Safety Issues at the Blackball Mine by Chris Cochran, Conservation Architect.
2002	Stabilization report for the Fan House & Chimneys, Salmond-Reid Architects
2005	Quarry land transferred to DOC as Stewardship land
2007	Drainage debris cleared and fan cowling made safe, fanhouse silt removed, engine foundations cleared.
2007	Site made ready for 1908 Cribtime centennial celebrations, track cleared over to Blackball.
2008	Air return roof supports installed, grill placed in the drainage tunnel.
2009	Drainage tunnel grill stolen
2009	Base Line Inspection completed
2010	Heritage Assessment draft report completed
2012	Report printed

3.0 Historic Site Inspection Methodology

The methodology used to record the historic features of the Blackball Mine Site were as follows:

1. A metre distance wheel over the length of the site.
2. Individual features recorded with the metre distance wheel readings.
3. GPS readings taken to locate individual items and check against the metre wheel.
4. Notes taken about feature condition, all relics listed.
5. Digital images taken of some features as well as general shots of the site.
6. General measurements for the whole site, detailed plan measurements for the return airway, fanhouse structures and the conveyor foundation.

4.0 Fabric Description Overview

Apart from the conveyor foundation, the tall chimney and drainage tunnels, the majority of historic features at the site are in poor condition. The early return airway roof is on the verge of collapse as are parts of the fanhouse, 60% of the Sirocco fan has corroded away, and the dam collapsed. Nevertheless, there is enough to show how the surface workings of the mine fitted together and operated.

The area from Roa Road to within 10 m of the mine entrance has been filled with overburden from the adjacent 1980s quarrying operation.⁴⁷ Beyond the overburden the mine tunnel and return airway entrances, concrete foundations of the fan engine and water diversion tunnels remain intact. This part of the site is approximately 50 x 160 m in area. The main drainage tunnel then continues underground 250 m south to Ford Creek.

From the fan house engine foundations a track leads to the remains of a small timber dam 114 m further up the valley. The dam has breached and is in poor condition.

The creek is directed through three sections of diversion tunnels; the first tunnel starts adjacent to the top side of the Sirocco fanhouse and continues around under the concrete foundations. The original drainage tunnel is still sited under the remains of the base of the boilerhouse chimney flue in line with the return airway. The drainage that replaced it runs parallel on the opposite side of the access track. The creek is now directed around the front of the air return via a tunnel under the fanhouse engine shed foundations. A later tunnel runs back towards Ford Creek under the quarried part of the site, under the Roa Road and railway yards. See photo on page 22 for position of the drainage system in relation to the fanhouse.

In the bluff on the east side of the fan house two holes in the rock face show the location of the explosives and detonator magazines, the larger being the explosives magazine. Above on the eastern ridge are two chimneys, one rectangular and short in poor condition and one tall and round in very good condition. Remnants of the brick flue, concrete footings and iron fittings that connected the two chimneys to the boilerhouse run up the ridge to the chimneys. The area that encompasses the flue and chimneys is approximately 3 x 33 m in size.

There are remnants associated with the Blackball Mine on private or other lands. Among these remnants there are six aerial ropeway towers, including those in the cuttings on the terrace edge to the east of Blackball.

At Shantytown Heritage Park (www.shantytown.co.nz) the building housing the engineering workshop and locomotives was originally the powerhouse at the Blackball mine. Andy Mooney shifted it and reassembled it at Shantytown.⁴⁸

Other notable features associated with the Blackball Mine not on Conservation land are part of the railway yard site, the railway formation up from Ford Creek, the western end of the single span Howe truss bridge over Ford creek, the bath house and associated boiler and the three early mine ventilation chimneys and of course the mine manager's house which is now the Blackball Community Centre (see photo on page 32).

⁴⁷ Pers. com Pat Kennedy 2007 (then local business person, now of Motueka)

⁴⁸ Ian Tibbles, from a Paul McBride article, Gold Town, 40th Anniversary of Shantytown, p7 *Greymouth Star*, 22 January 2011

4.1 Recorded site features and work recommendations

Conveyor foundation

The main physical feature is the conveyor foundation located close to the edge of Roa Road. The foundation has been backfilled with overburden from the quarry and only the front face is totally visible. The foundation supported the conveyor drive mechanism and gantry that transported coal from the mine to the bins situated in the Blackball railway yards. Measuring 3.73 m across the face, 4.04 m deep across the top and 5.9 m high on the front face, the structure is tapered and the base and has been calculated to be 4.85 m across and the face is 5160 m deep at the base. Built in 1909 in conjunction with the storage bins this structure is in good condition, there are three beams and parts of two posts intact and several holding down bolts set into the top of the structure.

Between the conveyor foundation and the chimney flue remains (97m), the whole site is covered by quarry overburden. The lower level has mostly been cleared to form an access track and vehicle parking area. The top level is mostly overgrown in regenerating native forest and introduced weeds, including broom and gorse.

Left: Conveyor foundation, Blackball side view.
 Right: Rear view, Roa Road below, overburden from the quarry operation piled up behind the structure.
 JIM STATON, MARCH 2009

SITE INSPECTION — CONVEYOR FOUNDATION	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing concrete work is inherently sound ▪ It is not in any danger of collapse ▪ Visitors who venture onto this structure could easily injure themselves from falling off ▪ Iron strapping and timber remnants require treatment for long term viability ▪ Overburden and vegetation surround three sides of the structure 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Top cleared of detritus <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Maintain iron and timber remnants* ▪ Remove up to two metres of overburden from rear of structure to stop the public from climbing over the top of this structure ▪ Weeds sprayed on a regular basis 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Adds another 1 to 200 years to the life of the foundation ▪ Removes a public safety hazard ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project ▪ Conservation plan for whole site will include this feature. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil



Chimneys and flue remains

The setting of the two boiler chimneys on the sharp steep ridge to the north west of the conveyor foundation is iconically unique. There is only one other comparable tall brick chimney that is visible from a road in the region – the Tyneside Chimney located at the Brunner mine site on the south east side of the Grey River.

Boiler gases and smoke were directed to the chimneys by an inclined brick flue. The short chimney is 26.3 m and the tall chimney 33.1 m up the ridge (measurement taken from the rear of the boiler settings to the centre of each chimney).

I believe that the small chimney serviced the three early boilers, two installed in 1902 and one in 1903, but became redundant and was capped off when the tall chimney was built to accommodate the installation of the Adamson 52hp Lancashire boiler in mid 1908. My reasoning is that the first three boilers combined produced a maximum of 60hp, by adding another 52hp the draught required to make the four boilers operate efficiently may not have been sufficient using the short chimney. Plus reports at the time said that the mine was suffering from smoke from the short chimney drifting into the workings. If the above is correct then the tall chimney dates between mid 1907 and mid 1908.

Left: Rear of the smaller chimney, showing extent of repairs required to stabilize the structure. JIM STATON APRIL 2006

Right: View up the ridge to the two chimneys showing the line of the inclined flue. JIM STATON, MARCH 2009



The tall chimney is estimated to be 18 m tall (60ft) x 2.5 m (8ft) in diameter with a wall thickness at the base of 500 mm (1ft 8ins), the arch opening is 1.4 m high,⁴⁹ the exterior of the chimney tapers slightly but is stepped in with three internal reductions in diameter reducing the weight as the height increases.⁵⁰

The three other ventilation chimneys in Blackball Creek are also iconic but are surrounded by forest in steep country and difficult to get to. They are also outside the scope of this report.

Condition

Small chimney

The small red brick chimney is in poor condition, with 90% of the rear brickwork non-existent. There is a 300 x 400 mm hole under the cap on the east face as well as a slight twist in the top third of the structure. The cap is progressively collapsing into the centre of the hole, and gorse is growing out the top of the capping. The chimney is standing quite solidly on the ridge and is supported by wrought iron bands; one around the base above the incline flue line, and the other 300 mm below the cap.

The front of the base of the chimney requires repair work to the top of the arch to support the arch shape. If a new section of flue was built between the two chimneys then a secure grill would need to be placed in the front of the base. This grill could also be part of the strengthening support for the chimney; the wrought iron bands are in good condition and do not require immediate attention. Several railway irons and seven concrete flue support pillars line the flue location up to the chimneys; these are in good condition. At the bottom of the ridge there is one cast frame boiler setting still in place; it is the rear boiler flue outlet, approximately 50 cm square. On the south side of the frame there are the remnants of the lower end of the brick inclined flue, and part of the original drainage tunnel.

Any restoration work on the small chimney will be invasive as it is close to collapse. Once the lower portion of the chimney is completed the top seven courses of bricks will have to be removed to enable restoration of the cap. Major scaffolding from the base of the ridge will be required and approximately 2,400 Brunner or similar bricks sourced, transported up the ridge and positioned to complete this work.

A conservation plan which includes a scaffolding plan and structural engineering (bracing) plan should be developed; and, although not pre-1900, the HPT heritage architect should be consulted. A funding source must be secured before any such work is contemplated. It is a major undertaking but if not done the short chimney will collapse within a few years.

Tall chimney

The tall chimney is in sound condition at the base and appears so to the cap. The whole east side of the chimney can be easily viewed for nearly its total height from the clear ridge that rises steeply beside it a short distance away. The rungs that run up inside the chimney are in place and appear to be sound (but haven't been tested). The cap has one brick missing; it probably fell into the gully to the north and it is unlikely to have survived. It is not envisaged that the cap of the tall chimney will be repaired due to site difficulty for scaffolding and cost. The copper lightning rod is missing – presumed scrapped. It is not known where the bricks to build this chimney were sourced, although it is reasonable to assume they came from the Brunner brick kilns 24 km down the road.

⁴⁹ Report to the Department of Conservation on Safety Issues at the Blackball Mine (and other sites), p17, Chris Cochran, Conservation Architect, August 2000.

⁵⁰ Blackball State Mine Fanhouse and Chimneys, Stabilization Report and Recommendations. Peter Reed, Salmond Reed Architects Ltd, Auckland. July 2002.



Left: The chimneys in situ in 2001.
WILFRIED MAEHLMANN



Top: 1892 wooden chimney site, rebuilt in 1897 in brick. Below :second chimney base, built in 1895, extended in 1896—dark lines represent the original height.
JIM STATON COLOUR PRINTS



One of six remaining towers, in the cutting just east of Blackball.
GARY MCLENNAN, NGAHERE, SEP 2008



Further conservation considerations

Replication

Replicating the section of flue between the small and tall chimneys would ensure stabilization of the small chimney, and display the size of the flue, which must have been quite impressive when in operation.

New fabric

If the flue is replicated then it is necessary to install a secure locked grill on the down-hill side of the small chimney. This grill should be designed as a component part of the structure to assist the stability of the chimney.

SITE INSPECTION	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>CHIMNEY 1 - SMALL CHIMNEY Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many bricks have been removed from rear of chimney making it structurally unstable ▪ The upper portion of the chimney is in imminent danger of collapse so this work is urgent ▪ Visitors who stray from the path below could damage the chimney and injure themselves ▪ The remaining bricks are susceptible to theft ▪ Iron strapping requires treatment for long term viability ▪ The lower brickwork is inherently sound 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None is proposed <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain matching bricks* ▪ Recruit traditional bricklayer with strong work record ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Use lime mortar* ▪ Restore chimney to original form, based on what is seen, and copy the original style* ▪ Reconstruct the incline portion of the chimney flue between the two chimneys, this includes placing a grill in the base of the chimney* ▪ Create a file record of old & new brick work 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Chimney is made structurally stable ▪ Adds up to 200 years to the life of the chimney ▪ Inserting a portion of inclined flue will greatly enhance visitor experience of the site ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A complex project with major scaffolding required, logistical difficulties in transporting bricks, mortar and water to a tough site. ▪ Positive and in depth planning will negate much of the complexity. ▪ Placing a grill in the base of the small chimney could look out of character, however if painted black may not be all that noticeable from the track below.
<p>CHIMNEY 2 - TALL CHIMNEY Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing brickwork is inherently sound ▪ A few capping bricks have become loose, with at least one missing. Structurally stable ▪ Lightening rod missing. ▪ Internal ladder rungs still in position, not tested ▪ It is not in danger of collapse ▪ Visitors who stray from the path below could damage the chimney and injure themselves 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None is proposed other than to obtain matching capping bricks if practical to replace <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit traditional bricklayer with strong work record ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Use lime mortar* ▪ Restore chimney to original form, based on what is seen, and copy the original style* ▪ Create a file record of old & new brick work 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Chimney is made structurally stable ▪ Adds up to 200 years to the life of the chimney ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A more complex project with major scaffolding requirements, there will be increased logistical difficulties in transporting bricks, mortar and water to an even tougher site than above ▪ Positive and in depth planning combined with the correct choice of contractors will negate much of the complexity.

1904 Capell fanhouse remnants

Looking at the juxtaposition of the Sirocco fan and the outlet of the return airway, combined with the remains of an earlier concrete structure spanning the creek, it is clear that the Capell fan sat directly in front of the return airway opening. This is logical as it is in a direct line with the airway tunnel as opposed to the Sirocco fanhouse which is on an estimated 80 degree angle to the return airway tunnel (see photo p22). The foundations are in line with the return airway, blocks of concrete lie about between the inclined flue line to the chimneys and the return airway. It is not known when the Capell fan was removed or its housing destroyed, but it must have operated until the Sirocco fan was commissioned late September or early October 1922.⁵¹

Condition

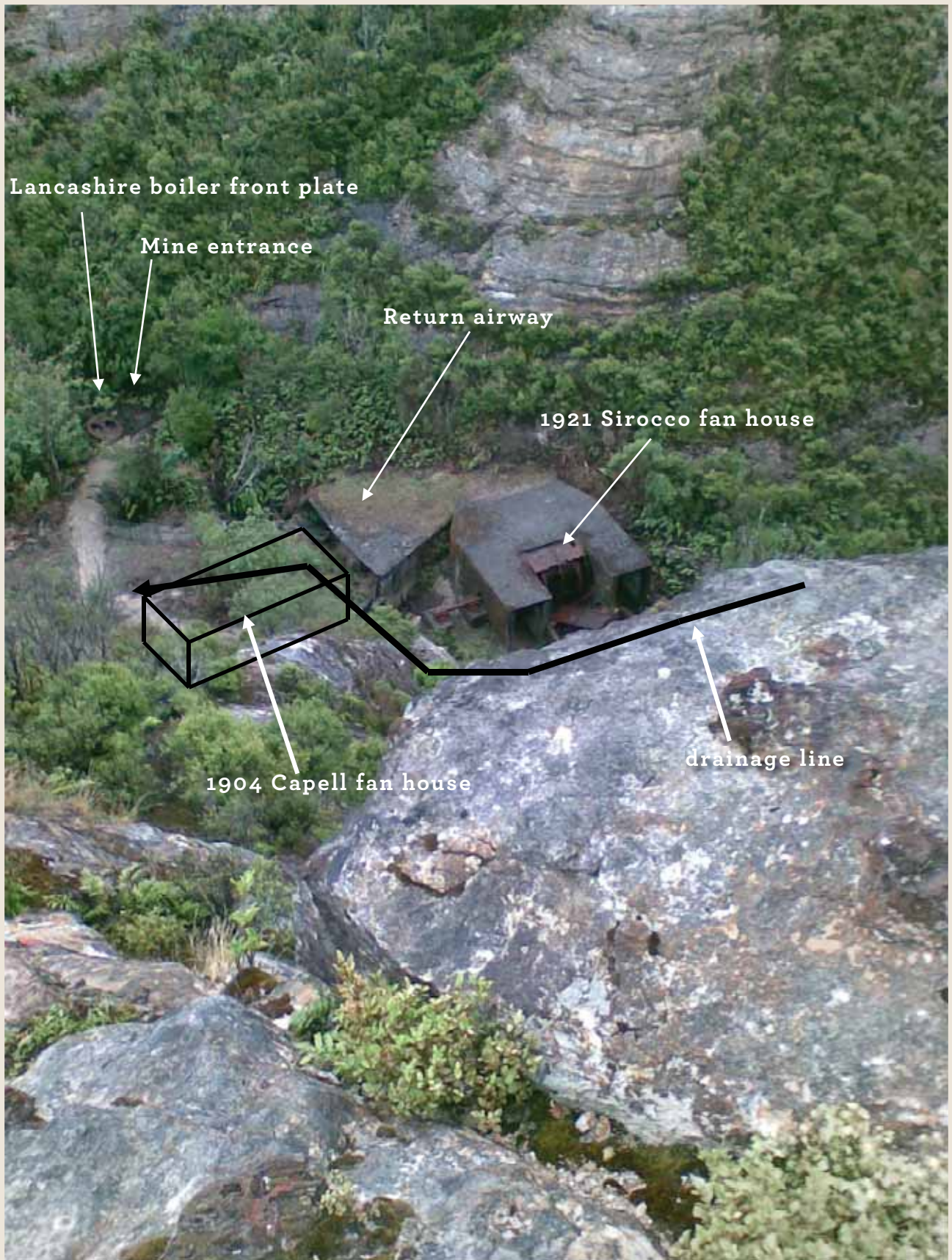
During removal of the Capell fan, the fan house foundations in front of the return airway entrance were severely damaged, and lie scattered in front of the return airway and in and around the drainage channel. Blocks of concrete from these foundations have been used as walls for the backfilled portion of the drainage channel, (see p27 for drainage tunnel description).

SITE INSPECTION – CAPELL FANHOUSE	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The remains are three low walls and the return airway opening, other remains consist of broken blocks of concrete that have been discarded or used in the drainage system as wall packing. ▪ The iron relics, which may be from the Capell fan, laying in the drainage channel do not require treatment for long term viability 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspect the foundations for stability <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to manage this project. ▪ Ensures safety of the structure <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil

1904 Capel fan return airway opening, the fan itself was sited centrally in front of the opening, with air doors both sides of the fan. JIM STATON, MARCH 2008



⁵¹ AJHR 1922, Coal Mining, Blackball Colliery. The report notes that a fire broke out at 6.30pm on the 24 November (1922) “The Sirocco double-inlet fan was put into use a few weeks prior to the fire, and gave every satisfaction”. This suggests the Capell fan was still being used until late September or early October 1922.



View over the mine area, return airway and fanhouse from above the tall chimney on the ridge to the south east showing approximate line of the drainage channel and most probable site of the 1904 Capell fan house. JIM STATON, MARCH 2008

TENDERS.

TENDERS.

TENDERS are invited for driving drainage adit in sandstone rock. Approximate distance 560 ft. width 4ft height 5ft. Specifications can be seen at the Mine Office. Blackball where tenders close on APRIL 10th. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

BLACKBALL COAL COY.

The sandstone drainage tunnel to Ford Creek work was tendered early in 1915 in the *Grey River Argus*.

Sirocco fanhouse

The installation of the Sirocco fan structure was difficult owing to the restricted area behind the Capell fanhouse. This is the reason for the offset positioning of the Sirocco fanhouse and its drive equipment. The Sirocco fanhouse and return airway are of typical construction for a coal mining concrete structure — built to last the life of the mine.

Condition

The Sirocco fan and cowling have succumbed to corrosion losing up to 75% of their overall fabric. The venting steelwork has collapsed onto the ground in the front with all joints heavily corroded, and it is unlikely that it will be able to be put back in place without a major replication of the whole fan installation steelwork from the ground up. Everything apart from the rear portion of the fan, the fan shaft and associated bearing pedestals would have to be replicated from new if the whole structure was to be restored.

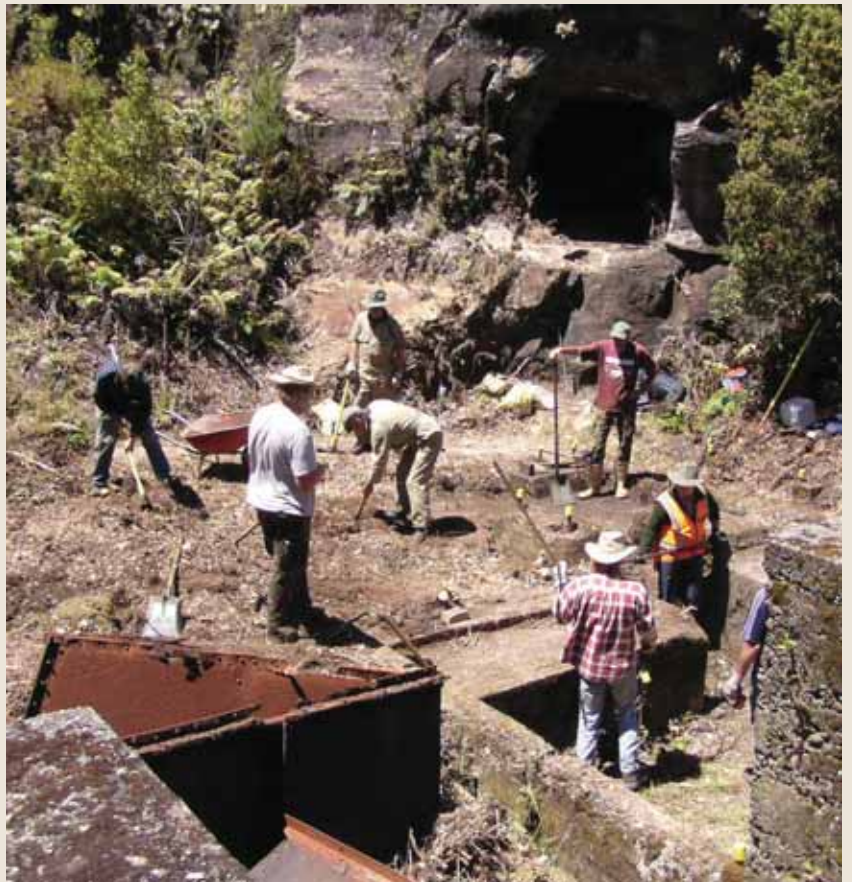
With such rampant corrosion all the sheet metal is rotten leaving the ribbing as the only major structural item with any cross sectional strength, but it also has excessive corrosion especially where it is in contact with concrete. Half the fan blades are non existent and the top cover sheet is in very poor condition.

SITE INSPECTION – SIROCCO FANHOUSE STRUCTURE AND MACHINERY FOUNDATION	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing concrete work is basically sound ▪ However, some joints require repair work for long term viability ▪ It is not in imminent danger of collapse so this work is not urgent ▪ Visitors who stray from the path could damage the fanhouse structure and/or injure themselves ▪ Iron reinforcing requires treatment for long term viability ▪ There are bolts sticking up out of the concrete ▪ Silt enters the fanhouse and machinery foundations at times of high flood level 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wall joints to be inspected and in-filled as required <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Restore fanhouse to original form, based on what is seen, and copy the original style* ▪ Create a file record of old & new work. 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Fanhouse is made structurally stable ▪ Adds up to 200 years to the life of the fanhouse ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil
<p>SIROCCO FAN Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The fan and its housing are 75% non existent due to corrosion ▪ Shaft and bearings structurally stable, but remains of fan not so ▪ The remaining fan is in danger of corrosive collapse ▪ Visitors who stray from the path could damage the remaining fan components ▪ The vent cowling has collapsed onto the ground, heavily corroded 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None is proposed. <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Restore to original form, based on what is seen, and copy the original style* ▪ Create a file record of old & new work. 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ It is made structurally stable ▪ Adds up to 200 years to the life of the fanhouse ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil



Below: Sirocco fan remains, JIM STATON, MARCH 2008

Above: 1904 Capel fan return airway opening. JIM STATON, MARCH 2008



Blackball community helping DOC staff clean up the fanhouse engine house foundations. Note the explosives store in cliff face. JIM STATON, DECEMBER 2007

The Sirocco fan drive engine and control room foundations are in good condition. Several bricks are lying around loose, with some smashed after being thrown against the fanhouse structure. The foundations have been cleared of vegetation with assistance from the Blackball community.

The fanhouse structure is in reasonable condition, no air doors remain and the concrete structure is eroding mainly where the fanhouse was introduced into the return airway wall in 1921. Until recently the drainage was ineffective causing water and silt to back-up. This has since been remedied and cleared.

Return airway

Photos on pages 21 and 24, show the 1904 Capel fan return airway opening, the fan itself was sited centrally in front of the opening, with air doors both sides of the fan, as per the Sirocco fan structure – so the two foundation walls on the left of the first photo are the alignment of the left hand air door, the fan sat to the right of the foundation supporting the roof bracing and in the second photo the broken remains of the other two foundation walls that made up the alignment of the right hand air door.

The photo on page 24 also shows some of the broken concrete that was around the site assumed to be from the Capel fanhouse structure. The roof of the air return is progressively collapsing, two sets of roof supports were placed on the Capel foundations in 2009, this is a temporary measure and further analysis of the issue is required (especially the stability of the foundation wall). Much of the silt build-up has since been removed and the drainage channel cleared of debris.

The roof is reinforced with mine rail with the foot showing and exposed to the elements. The roof is always damp due to run-off from the hill above. It is difficult to mitigate the effect of this run-off as there is hardly any soil to put a drain into and the rock face runs a long way up the hill providing a huge catchment. Such an extensive catchment will overflow any drain placed across the back of the return airway and fanhouse structures.

SITE INSPECTION – RETURN AIRWAY	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing concrete work is sound in the walls, but the roof is in danger of collapse ▪ The water-run-off from the hill above puts debris over the roof allowing plant growth to occur ▪ It is in imminent danger of collapse so remedial work is urgent ▪ Visitors who stray from the path could damage the roof by walking upon it and/or injure themselves by falling off, or causing the roof to collapse ▪ The iron remains are susceptible to theft and vandalism. 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employ a structural engineer to report on the Capel fanhouse foundations as to their suitability to support the return air way roof* <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Upgrade current temporary timber supports to engineers specifications* 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ The structures are made structurally stable ▪ Adds up to 200 years to the life of the return airway ▪ Will greatly enhance visitor experience of the site ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil

Mine entrance

The mine has been blocked off from the public by the addition of a grill as people were accessing the mine through the slot at the base of the block wall. The grill can be removed by the Mines Inspector as required. There is little left to show where the mine rail line ran due to the overburden of the quarry coming in very close to the mine entrance. On the new track into the entrance there is the end plate of the Lancashire boiler, a length of mine rail, and the chassis of a mine tub in very poor condition.

A 395mm long cast iron pipe ‘T’ junction, two spokes of a pulley wheel and a few other unidentifiable small chunks of metal also lie in the area. Close to the track there is the remains of a 450mm diameter mine trolley mounted turbine water pump, only the pump base frame and turbine end plate remain.

SITE INSPECTION – MINE ENTRANCE	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The mine walls and roof are sound, as is the concrete block wall that seals the entrance ▪ A new grill has been placed by DOC to stop public from entering via a low gap at the base of the block wall ▪ There is no danger of collapse ▪ Visitors who stray from the path could injure themselves ▪ The iron remnants are susceptible to theft ▪ Iron remnants require treatment for long term viability. 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stabilise the boiler end plate and pump remains <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain the track* ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Create a file record of work undertaken.. 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Adds many years to the life of the iron relics ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil



Mine entrance. JIM STATON, AUGUST 2008



Inside the fanhouse drainage tunnel. Top: looking towards the Capell fan foundations. Below: showing the diagonal brace that impedes some material. JOHN OLIVER

Drainage system

The restricted space available when the Sirocco fan was installed required the engineer to incorporate a tunnel to channel the creek beneath the fanhouse engine room foundations. The tunnel is 18 m long x 1.2 m wide x 1.6 m high and follows the bluff line through 90° around the fanhouse. It remains in good condition. There is a diagonal iron brace mid way through the tunnel.

The tunnel emerges just before the return airway entrance into an open drain which runs under the remaining foundation sections of the old Capell fanhouse; it then turns left after the return airway into the stacked stone wall culvert for some 12 m before departing the site through the main drainage tunnel. (See photo on p22 for approximate line through site.) This section was covered with timber beams, rock and remnants of concrete walls and infilled with debris from the mine.

The main drainage tunnel heads south towards Ford Creek. A gate was installed to allay public safety concerns and the drain cleared

back to the stone culvert. The gate has since been stolen.

This tunnel is of later construction as it is smooth concrete, not brick; it curves to the left rejoining the old brick tunnel before dipping steeply to go under Roa Road and the railway yards site. It then exits in the terrace above Ford Creek with a 13 m drop into the creek below. (See p2, site map, and page 23 for the advert calling for tenders to drive the drainage.) It appears that originally a brick drainage tunnel ran straight towards Ford Creek alongside the Capell fanhouse, under the inclined flue and the back of the boiler settings.

The bank from the creek up to the mine entrance is approximately 1.5 m. This height is often reached by the creek as it banks up on the corner in heavy rain. There are

the remains of a bund in line with the mine tunnel so the creek must have spilt over into the mine after the return airway structure was built in 1903/04. Seemingly, this 'new' section of drainage tunnel was also constructed in 1920/21, as the tunnel is of smooth concrete construction.

SITE INSPECTION – DRAINAGE CHANNEL AND TUNNELS	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex, and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing brick and concrete tunnels are inherently sound ▪ The in-fill between the later tunnel and the return airway was washed away by flooding and remains open. and in danger of collapse, monitoring is required ▪ The section across the front of the return airway is prone to subsidence, monitoring required ▪ Beams from the dam have become lodged in the tunnels ▪ Visitors could injure themselves 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None is proposed <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor the drainage system after each major rain event ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Clear drains and tunnels as required ▪ Create a file record of old & new work 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ Drains and tunnels monitored ▪ Adds up to 200 years to the life of the site ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil

DRAINAGE CHANNEL AND TUNNELS



Left: The diverted drainage culvert, view back towards the main tunnel. Built on stacked stone (RH side) then broken blocks of concrete (LH side) overlaid with 8x4" (100x200mm) beams, back-filled to ground level. (Washed out by severe flooding in December 2009). It is assumed that the concrete blocks came from the Capell fanhouse building as there is a lot of broken wall concrete in the immediate area.

JOHN OLIVER - LEFT AND RIGHT



Right: The stone stacked drainage culvert collapsed after a major rain event prior to the Crib-Time Centennial in 2008. The track to the mine entrance was rerouted and the drainage culvert unblocked to prevent flooding and silting of the return airway and fanhouse sites. (Jim Brooks inspecting flood erosion damage).



JOE WEDGWOOD, 2007

JIM STATON, 2008

View upstream off the track, remains of the dam, several timbers lay in the creekbed. JIM STATON, 2008

Dam

The dam supplied water to the mine boilers, for general site use and to the coal bins in the railway yards. Situated 100 m up the valley from the fanhouse structure its remnants consist of collapsed timber breastworks with beams lying in the creekbed along with associated bits of iron, rag bolts, wire rope and straps that presumably held the structure together.

The route to the lookout above Blackball turns off adjacent to the dam heading up a valley to the right of the photograph below.



SITE INSPECTION – THE DAM	WORK RECOMMENDATION Items marked * will require a work specification before work proceeds	HERITAGE IMPACT OF WORK Is this project complex ... and is a conservation plan required?
<p>Condition diagnosis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The existing timberwork is not sound ▪ It is structurally unstable ▪ The remains are in imminent danger of collapse ▪ Visitors who stray from the path could damage the dam and/or injure themselves ▪ The remains are susceptible to being swept down the creek into the drainage tunnels ▪ The remaining beams require treatment for long term viability 	<p>Remedial work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stabilize the remaining dam structure ▪ Treatment of selected beams <p>Upgrade work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make workplace safe* ▪ Select suitable beams to treat ▪ Measure up site and retain as much of the dam as is practical* ▪ Create a file record of old & new work. 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The work involves no loss of heritage fabric ▪ The dam remains are made stable ▪ Adds life to the dam remnants ▪ Well within DOC Area Office capability to complete this project. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil

5.0 This site is representative of the following industries

Coal Mining

The Blackball coal mine site has one of the last remaining Sirocco fans left intact and in situ, in New Zealand.⁵² The three ventilation chimneys are a rare collection as the last known of their type to be in such good condition and still standing. As it is adjacent to Blackball township the mine is one of the more accessible and easily visited early coal mining sites in New Zealand. However it is not one of the oldest – Brunner pre-dates it by at least 20 years, and Denniston by ten. The Mokihinui Mine and the Koranui are also older.

Land Transport

The Government of the day agreed that the Blackball branch line should be built for the Blackball Coal Co. This was basically achieved through Premier Richard Seddon using Vogel era tactics to promote industry.⁵³

Vogel was proposing, by calling in 1870 for loans of £10 million over 10 years, to make the central government the chief agency of development. Initially the money was to be devoted to railway construction in the South Island (here, already, decent roads existed), to roads in the North Island (these, as well as opening country to settlement, would bring civilising influences to bear upon the Maoris), and to assisted immigration.⁵⁴

The arrangement was unusual because the Public Works Department (PWD) carted coal for the company across the uncompleted line until it was handed over to the then NZ Government Railways. The line also provided access to convey a 15 ton Lancashire boiler on a U_b wagon, hauled by horses up the line as far as Irvine's, at the base of the Blackball terrace, in June 1908. The Resident Engineer of the Public Works Department gave Mr Ashley, District Traffic Manager Greymouth, assurance that the line had sufficient ballast to safely carry the load.⁵⁵

Maritime Transport

The Blackball Coal Company had its own fleet of colliers operating out of Greymouth. 'The Blackball Shipping Line' also chartered ships to and from the Union Steamship Company (USC), ships included:

<i>Dingadee</i>	built 1883, purchased in 1890 from Australasian United S.N. Co., 1900 sold to Blackball Coal Co., Christchurch. 640 tons
<i>Ngahere</i>	(1); built 1908, 1922 chartered to the Union SS Co., 1924 wrecked at Greymouth. 1,090 tons
<i>Ngakuta</i>	(1); built 1913, 1922 chartered to the Union SS Co., purchased by the Union SS Co. in 1942, scrapped in 1952. 1,775 tons
<i>Ngatoro</i>	(1); built 1910, 1922 chartered to the Union SS Co., purchased by Union SS Co., in 1942, sold to Madrigal Shipping Co., Manila 1949, renamed <i>Aeolus</i> . 1,140 tons
<i>Pareora</i>	(1) 355 tons ⁵⁶

⁵² There is a complete example at Coalbrookdale, Denniston, which is the largest remaining example. No other larger types are known by the writer.

⁵³ *The Great '08* (Blackball Coal Miners Strike), Brian Wood, 2008, pages 39&40

⁵⁴ The Vogel Era, Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand

⁵⁵ National Archives of NZ, CH9/350 Ngahere Blackball Railway, 350/37, letter advising of intention to shift the boiler by the Blackball Coal Mining Co., District Traffic Manager to District Engineer NZR Greymouth. (Irvine had a hotel on the flat below Blackball township near the road junction of the turn-off to Blackball).

⁵⁶ *The Great '08* (Blackball Coal Miners Strike), Brian Wood, 2008, page 32

Pareora (2); built 1896 as the Breeze, 1900 purchased from Canterbury SS Co., NZ 1901 chartered to Blackball Coal Co., Christchurch until 1911. 650 tons⁵⁷

Oreti built 1877, 1888 purchased from J. Kilgour, 1897 sold to Wellington, 218 tons⁵⁸

Hesketh wrecked on the Greymouth River bar October 1899⁵⁹

The list is by no means complete as the company also had a number of coaling hulks, usually old sailing ships that masts and all other fittings had been removed. They were strategically placed in major ports to have bulk fuel available and make loading it into steam ships easier.

Timber Industry

The Blackball mine, in common with all other coal mines around the West Coast, had a peripheral association with the timber industry, via support industries such as the mine sawmill and timber cutters who supplied round timber.

Many independent timber cutters were contracted to supply red beech props, caps, laths and wedges for the internal timbering of the mine. Red beech was favoured as it 'talked' to the miners, i.e. it never split or collapsed without giving off a warning creak.

There are reports of New Zealand State Coal Mines sawmills as early as 1907, and two in 1911 in the Blackball area, their locations are currently unknown.⁶⁰

State Mines operated their own sawmill on the Roa Road, New Zealand Forest Service Registration number 123, holding cutting rights over the Soldiers Creek catchment southwest of Blackball. This sawmill supplied the mine's sawn requirements from 1940 through to when the mine closed in 1964,⁶¹ and continued to supply the Roa mine until 1968, when that mine, and the sawmill closed down.

⁵⁷ www.theshipslist.com The number applies to the fact that two or more ships were identified by the same name, usually when the preceding so named ship sank or otherwise met its fate.

⁵⁸ *The Great '08* (Blackball Coal Miners Strike), Brian Wood, 2008, page 32

⁵⁹ West Coast sawmilling history records are held in the Greymouth DOC office.

⁶⁰ Dave Page, Sawmills of the West Coast, p23, internal New Zealand Forest Service report, unpublished, 1980

⁶¹ West Coast sawmilling history records are held in the Greymouth DOC office.



Formerly Blackball Hilton Hotel
WILFRIED MAEHLMANN, DECEMBER 2001



Blackball Community Centre, originally the
Blackball Coal Mine Manager's house.
WILFRIED MAEHLMANN, DECEMBER 2001

6.0 Threats and actions

6.1 Loss of information and purpose

The loss of information and purpose are threats to the historic and cultural significance of the Blackball mine site. The loss of the actual site would result in the local community, union movement, the Labour Party political base, and visiting public no longer being able to engage with this heritage in a meaningful way.

6.1.1 Loss of information

Actions:

- Undertake further research on coal mining in the Blackball area.
- Maintain the fabric that remains, along with the structures and pathways
- Clear the drainage and tunnels
- Prepare work specifications for each component of the work
- Monitor of site regularly
- Include the site in the regular historic site maintenance plan for the Area

6.1.2 Loss of purpose

Actions:

- Attend the Blackball Community Association meetings
- Ensure a DOC presence at Blackball community initiatives
- Involve the Blackball residents in development work around the site
- Place an interpretation panel in the Blackball Museum of Working Class History Trust memorial/interpretation shelter showing the lay-out of the mine and directions to the site
- Explore the publication of self guiding brochures so the public can walk/drive from the interpretation shelter to the mine site
- Maintain the site to a high standard ensuring public safety and site integrity

6.2 Natural

The most devastating natural event that would destroy the iconic status of this site is an earthquake. The smaller chimney would almost certainly collapse, the taller chimney may survive a strong earthquake (both have withstood many earthquakes in the past and appear very sound), the fanhouse and return airway may remain intact but could suffer damage.

The narrow, steep sided valley has very little in the way of forest or scrub cover which lends itself to high water run-off in heavy rain. Drainage around the site is constricted by the size and shape of the drainage tunnel which sometimes floods the track and into the mine entrance area.

Actions:

- Drainage channels and tunnel entrances to be checked after every heavy rainfall event, to ensure the drainage is kept clear of debris
- All structures to be inspected after an earthquake or aftershock.
- Place signage warning the public of safety issues after a damaging event, and when remedial work has been completed to make the site safe.

6.3 Management

Management can be the biggest threat to the physical, historical and cultural values of the site. Inappropriate use of weed eaters, chainsaws and even hand tools can damage the structural and intrinsic values of a site. Any construction of recreational or visitor facilities or the upgrade of current walkways, fences etc should be discussed and carried out in conjunction with the Programme Manager Historic - Greymouth Area in the first instance, or if not available the TSO Historic, West Coast Conservancy office in Hokitika.

Actions:

- Weed eater cords not to touch concrete structures.
- Work specifications to be written up for each component of work as required, be it maintenance, weedeating or reconstruction of major structures and/or relics.

6.4 Visitor impacts

Visitor impacts can be, and are currently a threat to the physical fabric of the mine site, and to the infrastructure put in place to safeguard the public from harm via vandalism and theft.

As heritage and visitor infrastructure at the site is at the basic bones stage there remains little else that can be damaged without huge effort. To place high quality interpretation panels on site would be an expensive option given the likely damage to them in the medium to long term. It is recommended to put one cheaper alloy panel at the mine site; and to work with the Blackball Community Association to erect a high quality panel in the township which illustrates directions to the mine and briefly describes its history and political influences.

7.0 Management Options

1. Add the dam site to the actively managed historic site list - that is to include scheduled track maintenance work into AMIS.
2. Work closely with the Blackball Community Association and the Blackball History Group to achieve desired outcomes.
3. Seek funding to reconstruct the small chimney and inclined flue.
4. Include all the 'equipments' (relics) in the annual Blackball Mine site historic maintenance plans.

Discussion and recommendations

Management recommendations

1. To continue to be managed and actively conserved for the historic values in conjunction with the local community who support such work.
2. To take on board the recommended work scheduled for each remaining structure as outlined in section 4.1 and include these recommendations into the DOC Greymouth Area Historic yearly work plan.
3. To provide interpretation on site and in Blackball describing the cultural connection and covering the mine's history and its links to the union movement and the Labour Party.
4. To carry out the following urgent remedial work, (in priority order):
 1. Maintain the drainage of the valley
 2. Fully support and repair where practical the return airway roof
 3. Repair the fanhouse structure
 4. Restore the sirocco fan and vent system
 5. Restore the short chimney - put forward a business case for funding.

The remainder of the site work is included in the regular maintenance schedule of the Greymouth Area Office work programme, which includes working in conjunction, where practical, with members of the Blackball History Group and Museum of Working Class People, to upgrade the dam track to a short visitor walk experience.

An initial survey to continue the dam walk up and over the ridge back to Blackball, creating a loop walk, has proven to be impractical due to the rugged, slippery and steep nature of the terrain. If in the future a route is found, a feasibility study would be required before such work could be scheduled into the work programme. This option would require considerable input from the local community.

Work Vision Statements

1. Budget for Conservation Plans for the fanhouse and smaller of the chimneys.
2. Restoration of the smaller chimney
3. Repair the walls and roof of the return airway/fanhouse structure
4. Provide site and township interpretation
5. If practical improve the visitor access track through the site and over to Blackball in conjunction with the local community.

8.0 Bibliography

8.1 Sources

Apart from the on site measurements and photographs this report has primarily been a paper researched document, with additional information from departmental files, internet sites and the writer's personal knowledge off the site and of Blackball Township.

8.1.1 Documents

Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR), Mining Section 1888–1964. Researched by Anne Hutchison, Hokitika.

Original copies of the AJHRs, 1882 to 1920, are held in the West Coast Historical Museum in Hokitika. Paper copies from 1921 to 1964 are held in the Department of Conservation, Hokitika archives, no section or page reference was available from this source.

- Sawmills of the West Coast. Page, Dave 1980. New Zealand Forest Service internal report, Hokitika, unpublished, p23
- Clayworth, Peter 2008: Part extracts from an unpublished paper by Peter Clayworth, ex DOC Historian of Wellington. Pat Hickey - the Making of a Home grown Revolutionary, talk delivered at the Blackball Cribtime Strike Centenary Celebrations 23rd March 2008.
- DOCDM 136117, Blackball Great Unrest. Clayworth, Peter 2008: Taken as part extracts from an unpublished paper by Peter Clayworth, ex DOC Historian, Wellington.
- Information from the www.blackballmuseum.org.nz
- New Zealand Historic Places Trust www.historic.org.nz, Registered Sites page
- Various coal mining technical books from Jim Staton's private collection
- The Great '08 (Blackball Coal Miners Strike), Brian Wood, 2008
- Sawmilling history records held in the Greymouth DOC office
- Information from www.theshipslist.com
- National Archives of New Zealand www.archives.govt.nz
- Solid Energy www.coalnz.com - History section
- *Grey River Argus* from the www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz site
- Wikipedia www.wikipedia.org
- Boiler and air receiver details from Peter Kerr's boiler research, Jim Staton collection
- All of the above are documented in the footnotes.

Recommended reading: Clayworth's original article on the context for the Blackball 1908 strike, DOCDM-136117, a good précis of the situation which also discusses foreign ownership. Also Len Richardson's publications; 'Coal, Class and Community', and 'Miners and Militants'

8.1.2 Oral

- Mark Pizey, 2009, New Zealand Environment Manager and Geologist, Solid Energy.
- Pat Kennedy 2007, then local Blackball business person with family ties to the coal mine.

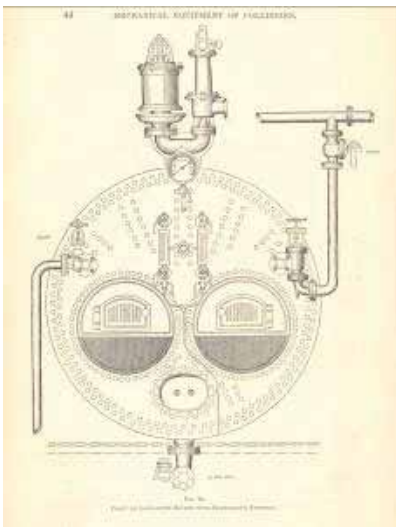
- 8.1.3 Old photos**
- Alexander Turnbull Library Collection
 - Department of Conservation Collection, Hokitika
- 8.1.4 Old plans**
- The Great '08 (Blackball Coal Miners Strike), Brian Wood, 2008 – referred to only
 - Paper copy of the underground workings – source unconfirmed, Greymouth DOC office.
- 8.1.5 Site investigations**
- Report to the Department of Conservation on Safety Issues at the Blackball Mine, p17, Chris Cochran, Conservation Architect, August 2000.
 - Blackball State Mine Fanhouse and Chimneys, Stabilization Report and Recommendations. Peter Reed, Salmond Reed Architects Ltd, Auckland. July 2002
 - Land titles and dates from the Terraview Land Title site search
 - Site visits by DOC staff over a number of years, reports on file at the Greymouth and Hokitika offices
 - Base Line Inspection by the writer as a basis for this report, March 2009.
- 8.1.6 Photographic record**
- Colour prints, digital records and transparencies held in Hokitika and the Greymouth office taken over a number of years. Black and white photographs held at History House Greymouth, Alexander Turnbull Library Wellington, Archives New Zealand and the West Coast Historical Museum Hokitika.
- 8.1.7 Sources known to exist but not consulted**
- History House in Greymouth, Archives New Zealand and the West Coast Historical Museum in Hokitika.
 - Len Richardson's two publications; 'Coal, Class and Community', and 'Miners and Militants'
- 8.1.8 Sources known to not exist**
- Original plans of the structures at the site and site plans
- 8.1.9 Apparent gaps in known sources**
- Miners who worked at the site
 - Original plans of the structures at the site and site plans
- 8.1.10 Essential information gaps resulting from above**
- Original plans would have assisted with the site lay-out as much of the site is covered with overburden from the quarrying operations. Plans would also have clearly defined the Capell fanhouse and boiler settings, individual structural plans of the various buildings, chimneys and fanhouses would give a better understanding of the operating nature of this coal mine.
- 8.2 Current DOC management file numbers**
- HHA-11-01-08-01 Blackball - Chimneys
- HHA-11-01-08-02 Blackball – Return Air Vent & Fan Chamber

Appendix 1

Boilers and air receivers used at Blackball:

BOILERS REGISTER NUMBER	BUILT BY	RATING PLUS DETAILS
701	AW Smith, Glasgow	20hp Lancashire type, driving a 12” cylinder and a small engine at Blackball. Transferred to Nelson South register #3977. Inspected 22 Feb 1902, Blackball Coal Company.
3977		Inspected 26 Jan 1903 through to 18 Mar 1916, 70lb/sq” (70 pounds per square inch). 1916 was last entry - ‘condemned and out of use’.
3978	Anderson, Christchurch	20hp Cornish type, driving various cylinders, inspected 26 Jan 1903 through to 5 June 1926 when noted as fair order = last entry. The 1908 entry noted ‘hauling coal on dip’, 1909 noted ‘on coal bins and dynamo’, the 1912 entry noted that ‘pressure reduced while connected to (boiler) 3977’.
3890	Anderson, Christchurch	20hp Cornish type, coalmining, driving a 12” cylinder and a small engine. Inspected 22 Feb 1902 through to 10 May 1920 when noted ‘fair order, no certificate until sold’, idle 1924/25. The 9 Nov 1908 entry noted ‘on aerial tram’, and idle for the 1909 inspection, (after the aerial tramline finished?) the March 1912 entry notes ‘pressure reduced while connected with 3977’, the April 1913 entry notes ‘disconnected from 3977’.
8708	Adamson, England	52hp Lancashire type, builders # 6622, driving turbines. ‘at 30 June 1930 connected with 8792 and 8800, June 1931 idle, August 1931 heating bath house, then idle through to 1940 - used as a hot water tank’ was last entry. There is no reference to the start date, however it is assumed by the writer that it is the one referred to as the 15 ton Lancashire boiler on an Ub wagon, hauled by horses up the line in June of 1908, as it also fits into the official pressurized vessel number sequence.
8792	Adamson, England	48hp Lancashire type, builders #7185, mining - driving 2 x 15” (two 15 inch cylinders), 1 x 14.5”, 1 x 8” cylinders. In 1922 ‘connected with 8708 & 8800’, was idle 1931 to 1934; 1935 powering compressed air and mining. Idle 1936; 1937 plant leased by Grey Electric Power Co., to boost supply. Coupled to 8800. Idle 1938 when regarded as scrapped.
8800	Adamson, England	48hp Lancashire type, mining, inspected 6 July 1914, (driving) cylinders 2 x 10”, 1 x 14.5”, 1 x 8”, 1 x 9” & 12” (compound engine). The March 1916 entry notes that the boiler ‘was driving 1 x 13 & 21” (compound), 2 x 7 & 11” (compounds), 2 x 13”, 1 x 14.5”, 1 x 12”, 1 x 8”, 2 x 4.5” cylinders’. The 1923 entry notes ‘connected with 8708 & 8792’. The 1928 entry notes ‘connected with 8708 between 6 July 1928 & 2 June 1929’. The 1930 entry notes ‘connected with 8708 & 8792’. Idle 1931 to June 1938, but by December 1938 used as a standby for pumping purposes only. In July 1939 the boiler was leased to the Grey Power Board to boost supply (presumably for the Blackball colliery). The June 1940 inspection notes it was used to drive 1 x 13.25” & 1 x 20.75” cylinders for pumping. By the inspection July 1941 it was idle again, then in October 1941 it was used as ‘emergency only’ for the pump house, then idle to 1943 when it was transferred to the Dobson coal mine and used as an air receiver until that mine closed in 1969.

AIR RECEIVERS	BUILT BY	RATING PLUS DETAILS
17562	Dispatch Foundry Ltd, Greymouth	26 cu ft, made in 1924 for Walker & Party 10 Mile Creek, there until 1934. To Murchison until 1937, Blackball Coal Mines by 20 June 1938, for sale and to Koiterangi by August 1939.
20708	A&G Price, Thames	67 cu ft, made in 1929 for the Public Works Department, to Blackball Coal Mines Propriety Ltd 1933, used between 1933 and 1939. ⁶²



Right: Front view drawing of a Lancashire boiler, showing the two fire tube doors, as opposed to a Cornish boiler that has only one. The Lancashire type were more economical as they provided more steam per equivalent weight of water. *THE MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT OF COLLIERIES*, P44, CM PERCY, 1905. JIM STATON PRIVATE COLLECTION.

Both air receivers were used at the old mine. It is assumed that a more modern compressed air plant was erected on the new mine site on the south side of Ford Creek c1938.

An article found while searching the National Library Papers Past database alludes to the difficulties in getting the boiler from Greymouth to the mine site:

Mr Robert Crawford, with a jinker and 14 horses, plus pulleys and wire ropes, successfully negotiated the Grey River bywash, roads etc with a boiler weighing 11 tons for the Blackball Coal Mine. Those that saw the work done describe it as a masterpiece of driving and engineering.⁶³

This boiler appears to be #3978 as it fits into the inspection time scale and horse power of the boiler.



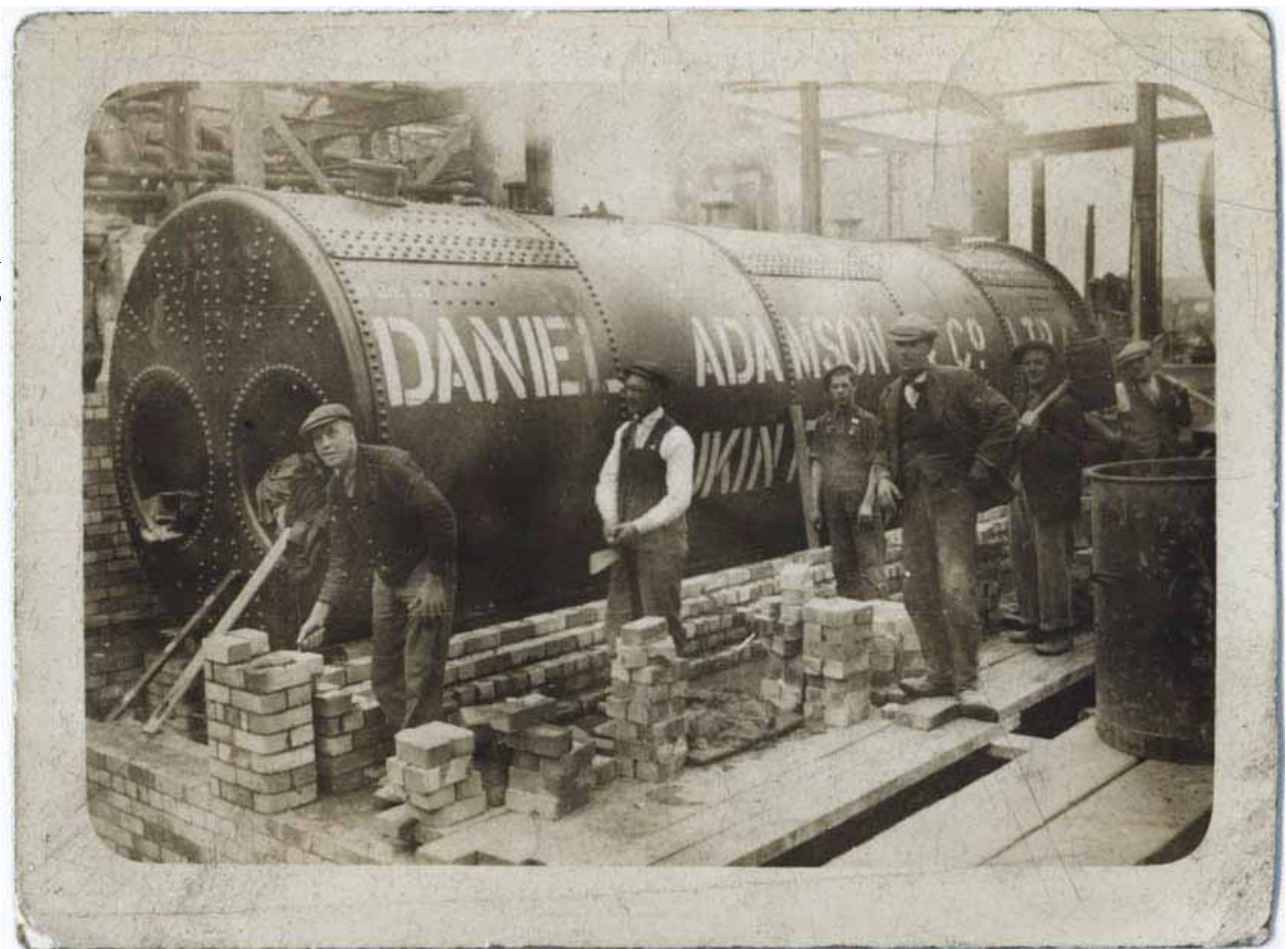
A Lancashire boiler endplate is all that remains of the boilers. As it is smaller than the usual 8' diameter for such a boiler it is believed to be the remains of 701/3977, the 20hp AW Smith of Glasgow boiler, first inspected at Blackball on the 22 February 1902.

JIM STATON, MARCH 2009

⁶² Boiler and air receiver details from Peter Kerr's boiler research, Jim Staton private collection.

⁶³ *Grey River Argus*, 18th July 1902, p2

Cornish boiler of the same vintage (c.1900) at Preservation Inlet: McIntyre's Mill Boiler, Cromarty. KEN BRADLEY, 2009, SOUTHLAND CONSERVANCY.



Workers installing a Lancashire steam engine boiler 1900, England. Apart from the writing on the boiler this scene could easily have been taken at the Blackball Coal Mine, it is typical of Lancashire boiler installation. LANCASHIRE BOILER, WIKIMEDIA

Appendix 2

Flyer for the Blackball Centennial

2008 sees the centenary of the 1908 Blackball crib-time strike, an event that led to the formation of the first national unions and the first Trade Union Federation. This was one of the triggers for the formation of a national Labour Movement and the complex birth of the New Zealand Labour Party. We will commemorate the event in Blackball, during Easter, 2008 (March 21-24), with a series of events which will attract a national gathering.

Programme for 2008 Celebration of 1908 Blackball Strike, Easter 2008 (March 21-24). Registrations: Friday 21st, 6.00pm onwards and 9.00am-10.30am, Saturday 22nd at Blackball Working Men's Club.

A dinner at the Blackball Working Men's Club (Friday night, March 21) with poems from Jeffrey Paparoa Holman, after dinner speeches, songs, and launching of book, this event aimed at old timers.

Market plus a parade through Blackball with floats from unions and schools, to be followed by a family afternoon- which will include some choir items - Saturday 10.30am onwards (parade at 12 noon).

A community theatre production, Rain, Love and Coalsmoke to play Thursday and Saturday night at the Regent Theatre in Greymouth. On the Saturday night the play will be preceded by a buffet meal and a concert with union choirs.

On Sunday, a seminar on the theme of Labourism 1908 - 1935 and Labourism now. Speakers include Eric Beardsley, Peter Clayworth, Mark Derby, Laila Harré, Melanie Nolan and Len Richardson. (A history tour of Blackball will also be available.)

For planning purposes we need to know approximate numbers. A deposit of \$20 to assist us with cash flow would be appreciated.

Further information:

Paul Maunder (03 732 4010). Or visit
www.blackballmuseum.org.nz

Names of the 1908 strikers

Algie C. jun., Algie Colin C, sen., Allen James, Anderson Alb, Anderson Albert, Anderson James, Anderson W, Auld Thomas, Barnhill A, Barrow Joe, Bowers James, Bradden E, Brady James, Brady P, Brady William, Brearton Edward, Broady Patrick, Bromilow William, Brown T, Buchanan Henry, Cairner Thomas, Cairns T, Carson James, Chilvers Thomas, Coadwell John, Coadwell John, jun., Colquhoun R, Cornish John Critchley Herbert, Cruickshank Alexander, Dawson Peter, Dempsey William, Duggan J, Duggan John J, Earp James, Finch Harry, Fitzeven E, Fleming A, Fleming Robert, Fletcher A, Fox H, Fox Henry John, Glasson Ralph, Goldsmith J, Green F, Grigg J, Grindle Albert, Grindle George, Grindle Henry, Guthberlet W, Hall Mathew, Harris Joseph, Harris Robert, Harvey J, Hay James, Hickey P.H, Higgs William, Hilton Thomas, Hopkins James, Hunter George, Jackson John, Jamieson A, Jamieson Henry, Jones J.W, Jones John, Keil William, Kells William, Kerins Thomas, Kernick Henry, Kerr George, Kerr James, Kerr T. jun., Kerr T. sen., Kerr Thomas, Kerr W,

Kerr Walter, Le Huray William J, Leitch Alexander, jun., Leitch Andrew, Leitch Jacko, Leitch James, Leitch John, Leitch John, jun., Leitch John, sen., Leitch Robert, Leitch Taff, Leitch Thomas, Sen., Leitch William, Lingren Olaf, Lloyd John, Long Brinsley, Long Clifton, Martin Joseph, McAuley Hugh, McDonald Alexander, McIntosh C, McIntrye Frederick, McIntyre Samuel, Mckenzie G, McKinnon Donald, Meadowcroft Herbert, Meadowcroft Walter, Meecham John, Milligan Thomas, Moore T, Mori S, Murnan William, Murphy Horace, Neilson Charles, Neilson Henry, Neilson William, Nuttal Andrew, Nuttal James, Outram Frank, Outram James, Phipps E, Phipps J, Pritchard David K, Pryde Hector, Reid James, Rhodes B. jun., Rhodes Israel, Rhodes W, Richards Joseph, Rodgers W, Rogers Richard, Rugg Andrew, Rundle J, Ryan George, Ryan Thomas, Scoble John, Scoble William, Smith Robert, Smith William, Snedden J, Snedden James, Snedden Thomas, Sommerville W, Stackzner Henry, Steele H, Steele R, Stenhouse John, Stephens J, Stephens Richard, Stephens Thomas, Stewart J, Svenson A, Taylor D, Taylor Sydney, Thomas C, Thorpe William, Walker George, Walker S, Walker William, Wallace W, Webb Patrick, West George, Whick Richard, White James. Jun., White R, Williams John, Williamson Peter W, Wilson James, Wilson R, Wootten Albert, Wootten Charles.

Grey River Argus , 3 April 1915, Page 1Appendix 3

Appendix 3

1908: *Grey River Argus* lambasting the union movement for the Blackball Cribtime Strike action

POSITION UNCHANGED

Strike matters at Blackball are unchanged and yesterday a large number of men were at the races. Hon A. R. Gudness visited Blackball yesterday and had several interviews with the executive of the Union, but the men state they are determined to hold out until half an hour crib time is allowed.

13 March 1908

DEADLOCK STILL CONTINUES

Negotiations for settlement ceased.

The miners' action unpopular no general strike feared

There is a deadlock in connection with affairs at Blackball both sides being determined not to give way. The Blackball miners held a meeting yesterday and decided to still continue, on strike.

Mr James Isdell, agent for the Labour Department, has reported the state of affairs to the Minister of Labour, whose reply is awaited for. It is understood that if the matter is not settled before the end of the week the Government will take some decided action. There is a growing feeling among the miners on the Coast that the men at Blackball acted foolishly in striking, and that they should have stuck to the terms of the agreement made with the manager before the Court decision was given.

At the State Coal mine there is no fear of a strike. The men hold that they will have nothing to do with the matter, as it does not affect them. One miner stated, yesterday that he was earning good wages, and the conditions under which he was working were good. He had a wife and family and he was not going out on strike to please a few agitators who were here to-day and away to-morrow. At Tyneside the miners are even more pronounced against a strike, and will not hold a meeting to consider the matter. The feeling is much easier in town as to the fear of a general strike, and business men applaud the action of the State and Tyneside miners in refusing to spread trouble broadcast to upholster a few discontented agitators.

GENERALLY it is understood that when the company are next approached on the matter they will refuse to re-instate the seven dismissed men or to grant 20 minutes crib time. The Denniston Miners Union has voted £50 from their funds to assist the Blackball. Union.

It is time for plain-speaking, and the Arbitration Court is merely voicing public opinion in demanding that the leaders of organised Labour shall face the 'situation fairly and squarely. — Exchange. ,

The Blackball miners were unreasonable, and although the mine manager might have handled them with more judgment, there was no sound excuse for their conduct. Their grievance was manufactured for them by agitators, and the men and the company have had to bear the brunt of it. — The Dominion.

We fear, says an exchange, that the lesson of the Blackball strike will be wasted upon the agitator section of the Labour leaders, who, for their own Purposes, apparently are seeking to harden up the rank and file of their party for the coming elections by fomenting a spirit of discontent.

17 March 1908

Grey River Argus & Blackball News

PUBLISHED DAILY SATURDAY, MARCH 21 1908

Looking at the position of the Blackball strikers as dispassionately as is possible, we are strongly of the opinion that the Strike must shortly collapse, even without intervention of any kind.

A crisis has arisen that must convey its own lesson so plainly that even the most obtuse of the young enthusiasts who have assumed control of the miners affair, at Blackball cannot help but realise what must happen. The one chance that they had of giving vitality to the strike movement was in securing outside sympathy and support. Both were extended to them at first when full information was wanting, which was of itself a piece of indiscretion.

The Unions who took the side of the strikers at once so gushingly must regret, now they did not act as the Auckland Trades and Labour Council did, who want to fortify themselves by written correspondence to enable them to judge the merits of the case. It is a case that as all the facts have found publicity from one end of the colony to the other, any sympathy felt for the misguided men at first has veered round.

The Home Bush Miners Union express a cold regret that the Blackball men did not submit their grievance to the proper court provided for them. The Otago Trades and Labour Council could not see its way to advise

affiliated unions to grant assistance to the Blackball miners. It is doubtful if any stronger hint could be given that it is time to throw up the sponge. Coming nearer home, Mr Pritchard's advocacy before the Wharf Labourers' Union was a dismal failure. His case was too weak to be bolstered up by all his enthusiasm. Any sympathy felt was for the women and children only; it was quite apparent that none was felt for the men.

The initial mistake of the whole affair was in trying to dictate to the company over crib time. A custom mutually arranged, and that had worked harmoniously for nine years, was at once upset without consulting the other party to the transaction; but giddy youth had possession of the fickle Union helm and insisted upon steering its own course. By disorganising the method of working the mine, a reduction of hands was necessary, and the notice was duly given. The mode in which it was done was a tactical mistake, but on reflection one does not look for the nuances of diplomacy from a working miner. He was labouring under a good deal of irritation, most probably. He had had a good deal to put up with since certain hands were taken on. They dispelled the old serenity maintained for many years by eternally preaching on all possible occasions a new-fangled doctrine of which these self-constituted expounders knew very little. They unsettled the workers' minds and interfered with the proper working of the mine.

If Mr Leitch showed temper over the affair, that of course was a mistake, but there is not the least room for doubt that he was sorely provoked, because he is a thorough miner and a past master at his work. Still, he acted strictly within his right. It is to be said, to his credit, and allowing that he is quite indifferent as to what opinions a miner may hold, and although he received timely warning that certain miners who would apply for work belong to the undesirable class, he took them on. His liberality and confidence have met with a rather poor return. After his recent experience it is a question whether he would disregard a warning a second time. Nor could he be much blamed if he acted on such advice in the future by passing on agitators in quest of work. The "gift of the gab" to a discontented spirit without adequate mental balance is as great an affliction to human kind as any that flew out of Pandora's box.

Nothing could well be more unfortunate for the Blackball miners than their first, serious step after the strike in sending out two emissaries on a collecting expedition North and South. The appeal for sympathy and assistance on behalf of women and children to enable able-bodied men to lie idle with well-paid work in abundance in front of them is a serious reflection on their manhood and moral principle. Men are to be pitied who are so dense as to be unable to see, not only the absurdity of the position but its profound humiliation. That is a kind of degradation that we never expected British or colonial miners would fall to.

Mr McKellar, the secretary of the company at Christchurch, has arrived to enquire into the position. But neither he nor any one else is likely to change the situation unless the miners become amenable to reason. But their erraticism is such a constant in their affairs that the probabilities of the situation have to be reckoned up by other means.

The Blackball miners have certainly done no good for themselves nor for others. But they have perpetrated an injury on their own cause—that is, they have done something to prejudice Unionism with the general public, whose word is always the last and most valuable on all questions, but more especially on all matters of a social bearing.

Everything goes to show the forbearance of the management in affording reasonable facilities for a settlement. The men can put in no very reasonable plea for a compromise. But, a sufficiently good basis to rest negotiations on is the offer of twenty minutes for crib, which still stands. But we should like to know why the miners do not appeal to the secret ballot to get at the real opinion of those who are workers, not mere talkers. And what on earth has Fitzgerald, who is not a miner at all, to do with the matter? He is on the ground and is constantly haranguing them to keep up the discontent.

THAT QUARTER HOUR CRIB.

(To the Editor.)

Sir, — I am surprised at the hullabaloo that has been raised by the Blackball miners over the hardship of being allowed only a quarter hour for crib time. Apart from the hard fact that it was the miners who fixed that time to suit themselves, how many town workers can be said to get more?

One hour is allowed for dinner, and during that "time the worker has to wash, go to his home (perhaps a long way off), get his meal, and get back to work. Still further, how many workmen there are, who in order to get Saturday afternoon off, can take only half an hour in the middle of the day and get to work at 7.36 instead of 8 a.m. No one has ever heard of either complaining that their digestion and general health suffered in consequence, though, the coal miners, poor delicate fellows have had medical advice that the practice was dangerous to both. Perhaps ordinary town dwellers are less refined in their tastes and delicate in their constitutions than the gentlemanly strikers. It would be interesting to know how many working men take more than a quarter of an hour over their mid-day meal; and it is usually a meal, not a 'snack', such as a coal miner regards his few mouthfuls. Besides, he is more or less in a state of perspiration when crib-time arrives, and, as he must not smoke, he wants to get to work again as quickly as he can and avoid an unpleasant chill. That is all I want to say at present, though I could say a good deal more to show that there is a lot of make-believe about this miserable strike.— I am, etc. MINER
11 April 1908

THE STRIKE. THE BONE OF CONTENTION.

(To the Editor.)

Sir, — How comes it that Mr Rogers, secretary of the Blackball Union, is so glib in pretending to furnish information in some aspects of the dispute between the miners and the company, while in respect to others he is as dumb as an oyster? He is determined that the miners shall get half an hour's crib time, but he is careful to say nothing of the fact that some six months before the Union was established, when crib time was half an hour, a deputation of miners waited on the manager and pointed out what a convenience it would be to them, and an advantage to the working of the mine, if the time was reduced to fifteen minutes. The management concurred and the desired change was made. The

position was then that the shift that went on at six in the morning had a quarter of an hour's crib time at 10, and finished their day's work at 2.15. This allowed the relieving shift to meet the day shift and exchange notes. That shift would thus be enabled to get home by eleven at night instead of at midnight, as was the case with half an hour crib-time. Surely, in common fairness, when the least they could do was to inform the management that a change was desired, instead of going on the bounce and dictating to the management by saying "We must have half an hour for crib no matter how the working of the mine is affected." The whole thing, in my opinion, was a put up job to stop the mine and precipitate a great strike in the interests of Socialism. At any rate, it is not very likely that any of them will want to go to work so long as the other Unions are willing to pay them for doing nothing. If the mine were shut down the Blackball miners would soon be in the same position as the carpenters who struck at the Stockton-Westport mine, who had to travel. — I am, etc., one who knows.
20 April 2008

THE STRIKE. MEN REFUSE TERMS. THE COMPANY'S OFFER. STRIKE PAY.

There was great hopes of a settlement of the Blackball strike on Saturday when a conference was held between the President and secretary of the Union Hon A. R. Guinness, and the mine manager. It had leaked out that the company were prepared to grant the half hour crib time, and from all appearances nothing remained to keep the men out on strike.

At the conference the manager stated that he was prepared to grant the miners half an hour crib time provided the mine was worked on the same conditions as before the strike.

The Union representatives agreed to accept the manager's terms as far as the half-hour crib time was concerned, but refused to allow the truckers to work ten hours. They would however, allow two of the truckers who had responsible positions, to put in the extra time, but wanted the miners to do the rest of the trucking. This the manager would not agree to as it meant reducing the output of the mine, and running a risk of accident owing to allowing men to undertake work they were unaccustomed to.

The manager's conditions were put before a meeting of the Union, and it was decided by 64 to 3 not to accept them, and remain out on strike. The decision was arrived at by open

voting. It is alleged that Hickey gave the miners to understand that they would get just as good support on the trucker question as on the crib time. The only point in dispute was the half hour crib time, and now that this is settled the men advance the plea of the truckers.

The truckers, before the strike, were anxious to work the overtime, as they received time and a half for it, but now the Union will not allow them to do so.

Since the strike commenced between 30 and 40 miners have left Blackball for fresh fields, consequently the strike fund is only divided amongst those remaining. It is stated that the sum of £8 10s finds its way into one home weekly. The father gets £1 10s, mother 10s, four sons (strikers) £1 10s each, and two children 5s each. One miner gives it out that he is saving money out of his strike pay.
28 April 1908

THE GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION. FINE MUST BE PAID. MEN STILL IGNORE THE MATTER. THE TYNESIDE MINERS. A SERIOUS OUTLOOK. WILL THEY STRIKE?

Another stage was reached in connection with the Blackball strike yesterday, and the Government have now taken the matter in hand. They have given notice to the Labour Department to collect the fine from the Union.

Yesterday the Labour Department, submitted certain proposals to the Union in the hope of effecting a settlement, but they were rejected. The men are determined, to stand firm on the demand for half an hour crib, and will not accept any compromise. The manager is equally firm, so that any chance of a settlement is remote. The miners were not surprised at the action of the Government in deciding to collect the fine, but they have decided to stand firm and not pay it. The position is considered critical.

THE TYNESIDE MINERS.

The Tyneside miners will meet at two o'clock this afternoon to consider a communication from the Blackball miners asking the men to come out on strike.

There is a very uneasy feeling in Brunner, and the probability is that a decision to strike will result. It is pleasing to learn that the old miners, those who have a stake in the place, are strongly opposed to a strike, and doing their utmost to prevent the

calamity. It is stated that if a resolution to strike is carried, the old miners will resign from the Union and resume work. The result, of to-day's deliberation will be keenly awaited.

The Wharf Labourers Union will meet to-morrow at two o'clock to consider a letter from the Blackball miners asking the wharf labourers to come out on strike. As the majority of the members are level-headed men, no trouble of a strike is anticipated.
29 April 1908

HON MR MILLAR'S VIEWS. ACT WANTS AMENDING. WELLINGTON, May 12.

In reference to the Blackball settlement the Hon. J. A. Millar is informed that in consequence of the Tyneside mine being flooded the Blackball Company had decided to work two shifts. This at once disposed of the troublesome point of truckers overtime. The half hour crib time had already been conceded. Mr Millar presumes the company will be able to employ all the men from Tyneside and the fifty or sixty miners who remained at Blackball till the end of the dispute. Altogether the strikers numbered 156, but the majority went away from the district.

"The strike has shown that the law in regard to aiding and abetting wants amendment," said the Minister to a Times representative. Any Union wishing to have the right, to strike can cancel its registration under the Arbitration Act, and register under the Trades Union Act, but by registering under the Arbitration Act they voluntarily surrender the right to strike.

It was clearly the intention of the Act when passed that no Union registered under it should devote any part of its funds towards support of its members on strike; therefore this is a parody on the whole thing, that while the Union is debarred from so using its funds, another Union can supply funds to maintain the strikers.

13 May 1908

The all-powerful figure of a Blackball miner with his helmet, pick-axe and bowyangs (ties around trouser legs) towers over Prime Minister Joseph Ward (kneeling, centre front). The success of the 1908 Blackball miners' strike encouraged the individual miners' unions to form a strong nationwide federation. This was joined by other unions such as the watersiders and labourers, and became the New Zealand Federation of Labour, known as the 'Red Fed'. For some years the Red Fed unions were able to negotiate significant improvements to their working conditions, creating resentment among other sections of society.

ATL OBSERVER CARTOON FROM TE ARA



The strike that finally ended New Zealand's reputation as the 'country without strikes' broke out in 1908 in the West Coast mining town of Blackball. In the Blackball mine, miners had only 15 minutes to eat their 'crib' or lunch – and their manager wanted to increase the working day to 10 hours. The union decided to challenge the arbitration system by striking for a longer crib time and an eight-hour day. In February 1908 one of the union leaders, Pat Hickey, refused to finish his pie at lunchtime when the manager told him his 15 minutes were up. Hickey and six of his supporters were fired. The rest of the Blackball Miners Union went on strike in protest.

Can't pay, won't pay

During the 1908 Blackball strike, the Arbitration Court held a hearing in nearby Greymouth and fined the Blackball miners 75 pounds. When the men refused to pay, their personal possessions were seized and auctioned to raise money for the fine. The striking miners then warned local people not to bid for the goods, so the auction raised pennies instead of pounds.

For three months the miners resisted every effort to force them back to work. Finally the mining company gave in, gave the sacked men their jobs back and agreed to their demands. This was a massive blow to the arbitration system, and had an impact on unions all around the country. The various local miners' unions joined with other unions in a national Federation of Labour, nicknamed the 'Red Feds' by their critics, which insisted on negotiating directly with employers, with considerable success.

From Labour Party Minister: Trevor Mallard

23 March 2008

Workers to get more protections in workplace

The government is to boost protections for vulnerable workers and breastfeeding mothers by putting minimum meal and rest break requirements into the law, along with a code of practice to promote breastfeeding in the workplace.

Labour Minister Trevor Mallard announced the changes today, marking the centenary commemorations of the 1908 Blackball miners strike over meal breaks – a historic event that gave birth to the Labour Party. He also announced plans to allow shift workers to transfer their public holidays. The changes will be to the Employment Relations Act and Holiday Act.

"It may surprise many people that no statutory requirement for meal and rest breaks exists – but minimum entitlements to rest and meal breaks during a working period is already in the vast majority of collective agreements. However, anecdotal evidence has suggested some sectors – the service and manufacturing sectors in particular and sectors where there are a lot of vulnerable workers – may be providing less than optimal breaks.

"Most New Zealanders would have thought that these sorts of minimum entitlements are already part of the statutes – and while most workers do enjoy these protections, the Labour-led government is making sure that there is absolutely no doubt that these basic entitlements must be provided for."

Cabinet Minister Maryan Street announced the changes on behalf of Trevor Mallard in her speech at the centenary commemorations for the 1908 Blackball strike where 166 miners took strike action – demanding and eventually achieving a 30-minute lunch break.

"It is fitting that we announce these legislative changes today as we all commemorate and pay tribute to the 166 miners – whose courageous and ground-breaking actions triggered the birth of the modern Labour Party," Maryan Street said.

Trevor Mallard said the changes were further proof of the Labour-led government's strong commitments to workers, and families – at a time when National has voted against and opposed initiatives such as paid parental leave, Working for Families, 20 hours free early childhood education, and annual increases to the minimum wage.

Timing: These three proposed changes to legislation will be introduced this year.

- Trevor Mallard
- Labour

<http://beehive.govt.nz/release/workers+get+more+protections+workplace>

