## Welcome to the Manx Mining Trail

Mining on the Isle of Man reached its peak profitability during the 19th Century, with 20% of all Zinc and 5% of all lead produced in British history attributed to the island. The mining history of the Isle of Man can be traced back to prehistoric times at Bradda Head, and the granting of mining rights by King Herald II of Norway to the monks of Furness Abbey.

As you embark on an immersive journey through the Manx Mining Trail prepare to explore its fascinating history. Witness the impressive remains of chimneys, engine houses, wheel casings, and audits, and visit the wellpreserved Great Laxey Mine, home to The Lady Isabella the world's largest working Water Wheel.

## **Cornelly Mine**

Worked exclusively by the Isle of Man Mining Company, Cornelly primarily mined lead ore from an East-West lode of encouraging productivity at shallow depths. The mine was first opened in 1837 and was worked until 1849 under the title 'Jones's Mine,' named after the Company's first Managing Director, William Jones.

The mineral lode at Cornelly was very steep, dipping South for the mine's first 80 fathoms. This meant that the distances between the shafts did not need to be great to expose the mineral vein – all three shafts were sunk within just 552 feet of each other. The shafts and intersecting levels can be seen on the 1875 plan of Jones' Mine, held at the Manx National Heritage archives (fig.1).

Initial developments at Cornelly involved the sinking of three shafts. The sinking of the most easterly 'Mountain shaft' began in 1837. Having encountered boggy ground, sinking efforts were ceased until 1840. A small beam engine was then used to sink the shaft and pump water from the damp









Cornelly Boiler Room and Engine House – the hub of operations at Cornelly mine. Schematic drawn by Peter Geddes MB

earth. In 1841, sinking into the granite below 'Mountain Shaft' posed a risk to developments. To increase drilling and pumping capacity, the company purchased a new bull engine from Cornishman James Sims. This engine was placed in the engine house, which was built around 1846. This is located adjacent to the squared brick chimney.

Work on a new engine shaft commenced in 1843, 480 feet west of the Mountain shaft, but was relocated 12 fathoms further west in 1846 for better access to the lode at greater depths. Despite being profitable, reaching 95 fathoms, it was believed that the lode became barren below 80 fathoms. Work was suspended in 1849. The machinery was removed to Old Flappy Mine in Foxdale due to the depletion of the Cornelly's shallow levels and the primitive mining techniques that prohibited forecasting of potential mineral wealth deeper into the mine.

Figure 2 shows the machinery in operation at Cornelly. The machine house (beneath the squared brick chimney)

contained the beam engine used to power the mill for crushing the ore raised from the shaft using crushing rollers. Ores would be taken into the mill, crushed, milled, and carted out for further processing in buddles to wash out gangue rock. The beam engine also later powered a set of stamps on the outside of the machine house to process ore-bearing rock. This engine was also used to power the winch, operating the winding mechanism to raise materials from the shaft, and was initially used as the mine's primary engine during the sinking of 'Mountain Shaft' before the engine shaft was relocated.

The new engine house, built in 1846, contained the engine purchased from James Sims with the new engine shaft partly inset. This diagram shows the inverted bull engine with the beam unusually lower and inside the engine house to pump water from the engine shaft. This more powerful engine became a necessity at greater depths to dewater the mine.

## Mineshafts are dangerous please KEEP OUT





