

# Mining at The Bog



## Underground wealth

The Bog Mine is one of the oldest mines in the Stiperstones area. Commercial mining started here in the 1730s. Miners laboriously dug out tunnels along the veins of ore using picks and shovels. This was the start of almost 200 years of lead mining at The Bog, with several small mines operating between here and Snailbeach.



During the 1870s the Stiperstones area was one of Britain's main sources of lead. It was a highly prized metal, used for roofing and plumbing as well as paints and bullets.

*The miners' work was gruelling and dangerous. A hard, wide-brimmed hat with a candle held in place with a 'gob of clay', were their only protection and source of light as they worked deep below ground.*

## Tunnels and engines

Three main vertical shafts, Weston's, Bunting's and Engine, were sunk to reach the mineral veins at The Bog. Horizontal tunnels or 'levels' were dug out from the shafts, as the lead ore was cut out and brought to the surface for processing.

Water was a constant problem in the mines, and the various mine owners spent enormous sums of money on machinery to pump water out of the mine and, at the same time, draw fresh air into it. Water from the mines was drained away via the Boat Level, an underground tunnel which emerged further downhill, near Stiperstones village.

## Boom & bust

Although the veins were rich in lead ore, mining was not continuous; leases changed hands frequently and companies went bankrupt. Lead mining stopped at The Bog in the 1880s, but the mines were re-opened in the early 1900s to extract barytes, a mineral found with the lead ore. German prisoners of war constructed an overhead aerial ropeway to carry the barytes down to Malehurst near Minsterley for processing. It was used in paint, paper, medicines and the chemical industry. However, mining for barytes at The Bog soon became uneconomic and production finally ceased in 1922.

