

We had a wide ranging and varied meeting at the Witham in June with a talk about the iron industry in the North East in the 19th century before rapidly moving on to the present day and the use of AI in putting together a geology presentation. The meeting concluded with a look at box of rock samples from the Pennines.

In the first half, Bob Tuddenham gave the first of two talks on the Iron Industry in the NE. This first talk briefly covered the unique properties of iron before looking at the rapid development of the industry in Durham and the North Pennines and the geology of the two sources of iron ore which had started the industry in the 19th century. More iron than lead ore was taken out of Weardale over a period of some eighty years and there are numerous interesting artefacts and geological sites relating to this mining and quarrying activity including the extensive trackbed of a railway on the high moor above Stanhope. The second talk will cover the iron mining in the Cleveland Hills and the development of the iron industry on Teesside.

Les Knight has been looking at the use of two free AI systems and if they could put together a presentation for a talk. He asked for a presentation on 'The North Pennine Orefield: A Geological Overview. In a matter of seconds, impressive presentations were produced. There were no visuals but most of the content was relevant and well structured. However, there were a few significant factual errors and the presentations were at a rather basic level without detailed geology. It was agreed that these AI tools could be useful in providing a starting point for a presentation.

Finally, Trevor Morse had brought along a rockbox of thirty different rocks and minerals from the area that had been used for a project with primary schools. There were many excellent specimens which once again illustrated the remarkable geology of the North of England.

Our next meeting is at The Witham on Monday morning July 24th at 10 am. All are welcome
