**Ymarfer 1**

On Wednesday I went underground. I was looking for men, or rather the memory of men who had mined for gold in that Welsh hillside on and off for maybe 2000 years. The site at Dolaucothi is now owned by the National Trust who are making a marvellous job of rehabilitating the derelict workings and turning them into a most attractive visitors centre. A good place for industrial archaeologists of course but even to those of us who don’t know the first thing about industry it is a truly fascinating mine which almost certainly dates back to the Romans.

The history of such a mine can be problematical but the experts have got some of it sorted out and it is very satisfying to be taken below ground and have things explained down there in a world of colourful rocks and dripping water. Wearing your tin hat and your miner’s lamp you bend your back, say goodbye to the trees and the sunshine, and walk far inside the hill along a tunnel until you reach an interior hall where you can stand upright and be told the story of the gold. Then more tunnels and more talks until at last you clamber up rock steps and ladders and emerge blinking into the daylight.

There is a welcoming friendliness everywhere and it is especially refreshing to be guided round by enthusiastic young students who really do seem to want you to have a good day.