

**BOLD  
COLLIERY**

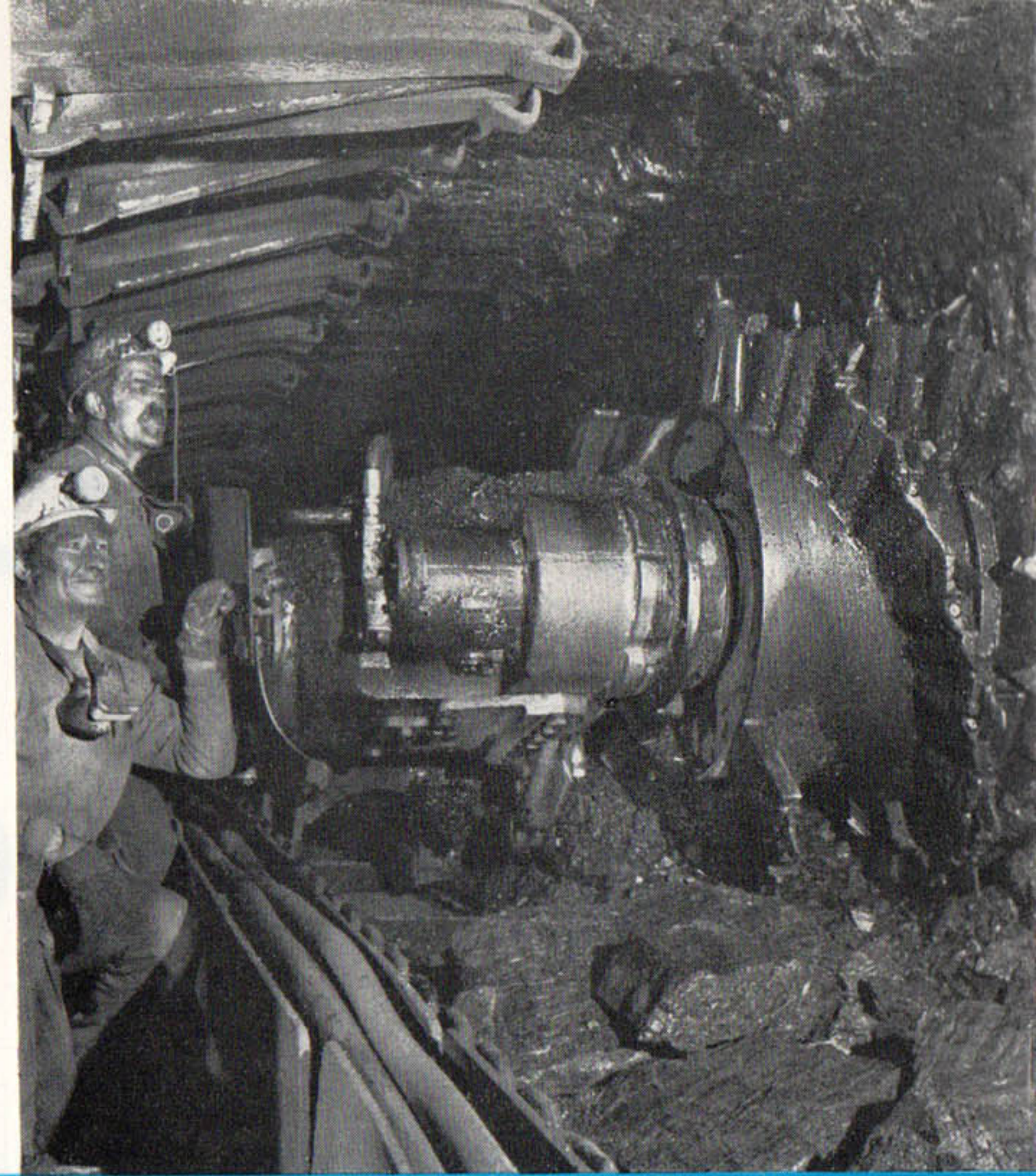
**Centenary Open Day**

**Saturday August 28th 1976**

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**NCB Western Area**





One hundred years in mining vividly portrayed in two photographs . . .  
(left) the pick 'n' shovel days of hand hewing, (right) a modern production face at Bold Colliery, producing more coal in a day than the miner with the pick could produce in a year.

# A message from Alan Houghton

Colliery General Manager

**T**HE mining industry is now in top gear and coal today is more important to the nation than ever before.

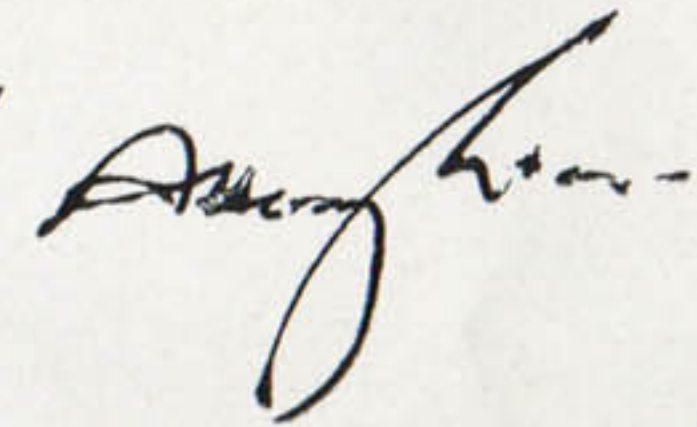
Bold Colliery, as well as being a major employer of manpower in this area, has an important role to play in meeting the National Coal Board's output and productivity targets. It is one of the biggest and most productive units in the North West coalfield, serving the adjoining power station and other local industries and domestic consumers.

Mining is a complex business involving many crafts and skills, a matter which I am sure will become evident to you during your visit to the colliery. Picks and shovels were the order of the day when Bold colliery first began production in the 1870's. Today, high powered machines

have taken much of the muscle work out of mining – and the miner has become a skilled technician, controlling machinery that has cost millions of pounds to install.

Today, you can have a brief look at modern mining. Have an interesting and enjoyable visit to Bold Colliery.

Sincerely,



General Manager.



Mr. Jim Dowd, NUM Branch Secretary (left);  
Mr. Alan Houghton, Colliery General Manager (centre);  
Mr. Tom Redmond, NACODS Branch Secretary (right).



## A brief history

**S**ITUATED in an area where coal has been mined for over 300 years, Bold Colliery has a history dating back 100 years.

No. 1 shaft had been sunk to a depth of 607 yards and No. 2 shaft to a depth of 200 yards when the machinery for raising the water was overwhelmed. The problem was later overcome, and the shafts sunk to a depth of 600 yards to the Florida seam from which coal was extracted in 1880. Ten years later, work began on sinking No. 3 shaft.

The Collins Green Colliery company worked the colliery successfully, extracting the Crombouke, Florida and Wigan



The pit-pony had a long history in British mines, many spending their lives underground hauling coal to the pit bottom to be wound up the shaft.

# of Bold Colliery

seams, until 1940 when the colliery closed. It was re-opened shortly afterwards by the Sutton Heath and Lea Green Collieries Ltd., and worked efficiently in the Yard seam – one of the upper seams – while work was progressing on the deepening of Nos. 1 and 3 shafts to a depth of 918 yards. Work was also done underground to develop the Rushy Park seam.

In 1946 – the year before the nationalisation of the coal industry – Bold Colliery employed 670 men and produced about 200,000 tons of coal. Productivity was less than 20 cwts per manshift.

Today, battery-powered locomotives do the job, hauling up to 100 tons of coal at a time.



## Modernisation

Following nationalisation of the coal industry in January 1947, the National Coal Board approved a major re-organisation project to make Bold one of the largest collieries in the North West. The £5m. scheme was carried out from 1948 to 1956, and included a complete reconstruction of the surface. A new coal preparation plant, power house, workshops, pithead baths, canteen, medical centre and administrative centre were built, together with a conveyor for the direct delivery of coal to the adjacent power station. Underground, a new pit bottom was constructed and twin horizon tunnels driven to open out new reserves of coal.

## Output

Re-organisation during the '50s led to substantial improvements in output and productivity. From a pit producing 262,000 tons of coal at an average productivity of 25 cwts per man in 1950, Bold expanded to produce over 700,000 tons of coal six years later at an average productivity of 36 cwts. Bold has maintained that level of output, but productivity at the colliery which now employs less than 1,500 men, has reached almost 50 cwts per manshift.

Tunnelling underground to open up new coal reserves is a major activity at a pit like Bold. Here, a boom-ripper is harnessed to a gathering arm-loader, making the driving of a vital new roadway a one-man operation.



# BOLD



# TODAY



## Underground Operations

**M**odern coal-getting equipment at Bold ensures that the colliery has the capacity to be the top producer in the North West. The five production faces in the Wigan Four Feet and Trencherbone seams are each equipped with high-powered shearers and hydraulic roof supports, while each year, more than 4,000 yards of new underground roadways are driven to exploit Bold's considerable reserves.

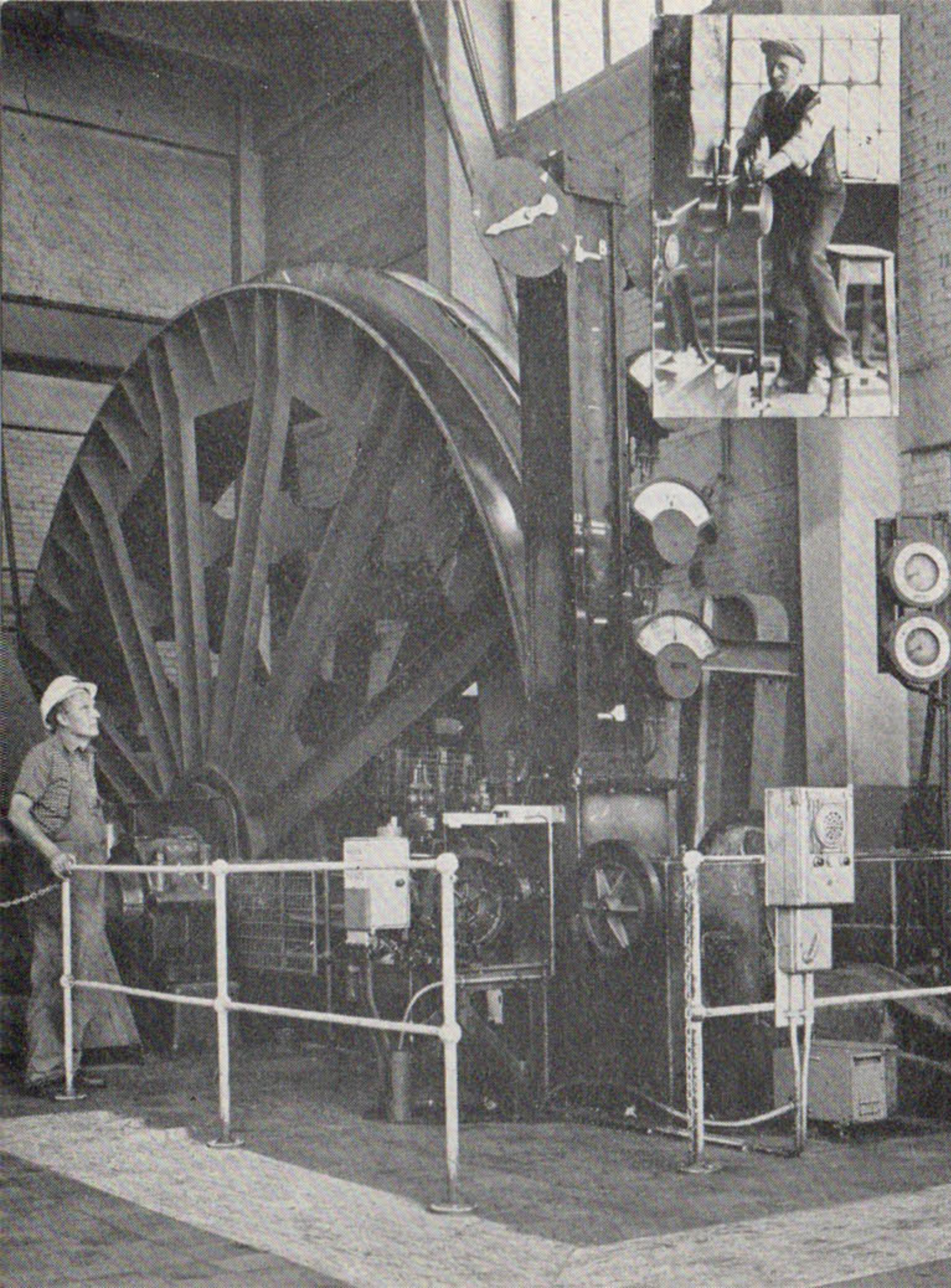
## Ventilation

**S**uccessful underground operations would be impossible without a satisfactory system of ventilation. At Bold, this is maintained by a 2,000 h.p. fan capable of a maximum duty of 600,000 cubic feet per minute at 16" water gauge. The fan, situated in No. 3 upcast shaft, extracts the foul air from the mine. Fresh air is drawn into the underground workings down Nos. 1 and 2 downcast shafts. The system is supported by a stand-by fan powered by twin 750 h.p. motors.

## Manpower

**B**old Colliery has been a major source of employment for men in the St. Helens and Wigan areas for the past 100 years. In the mid-'60s the colliery provided employment for nearly 2,000 men. Today, with improved mechanisation and electronic aids, the colliery employs just under 1,500 men. Transport is available for men travelling to and from the colliery on each shift.

# Surface



Steam-driven winding engines were phased out during the reconstruction of the colliery, being replaced by electric engines.

No. 1 shaft, 21 feet in diameter, and the main coal-winding unit, was originally equipped with a steam engine manufactured by the Worsley Mesnes Company in 1903. It is now serviced by two D.C. motors with a rating of 1,800 h.p. each. The concrete headgear of No. 1 shaft is unique in its design, an added feature being the covered rope section.

Nos. 2 and 3 shafts, each 16 feet in diameter, are served by electric winders having a 15 feet diameter cylindrical drum driven by 1,200 h.p. induction motors. The wooden headframe of No. 3 shaft was replaced in 1951 by a temporary steel headgear which has since been

Inset, Bold winding engine at the turn of the century, long since replaced by the massive electrically-powered units capable of lifting a nine-ton payload over 900 yards in less than two minutes.





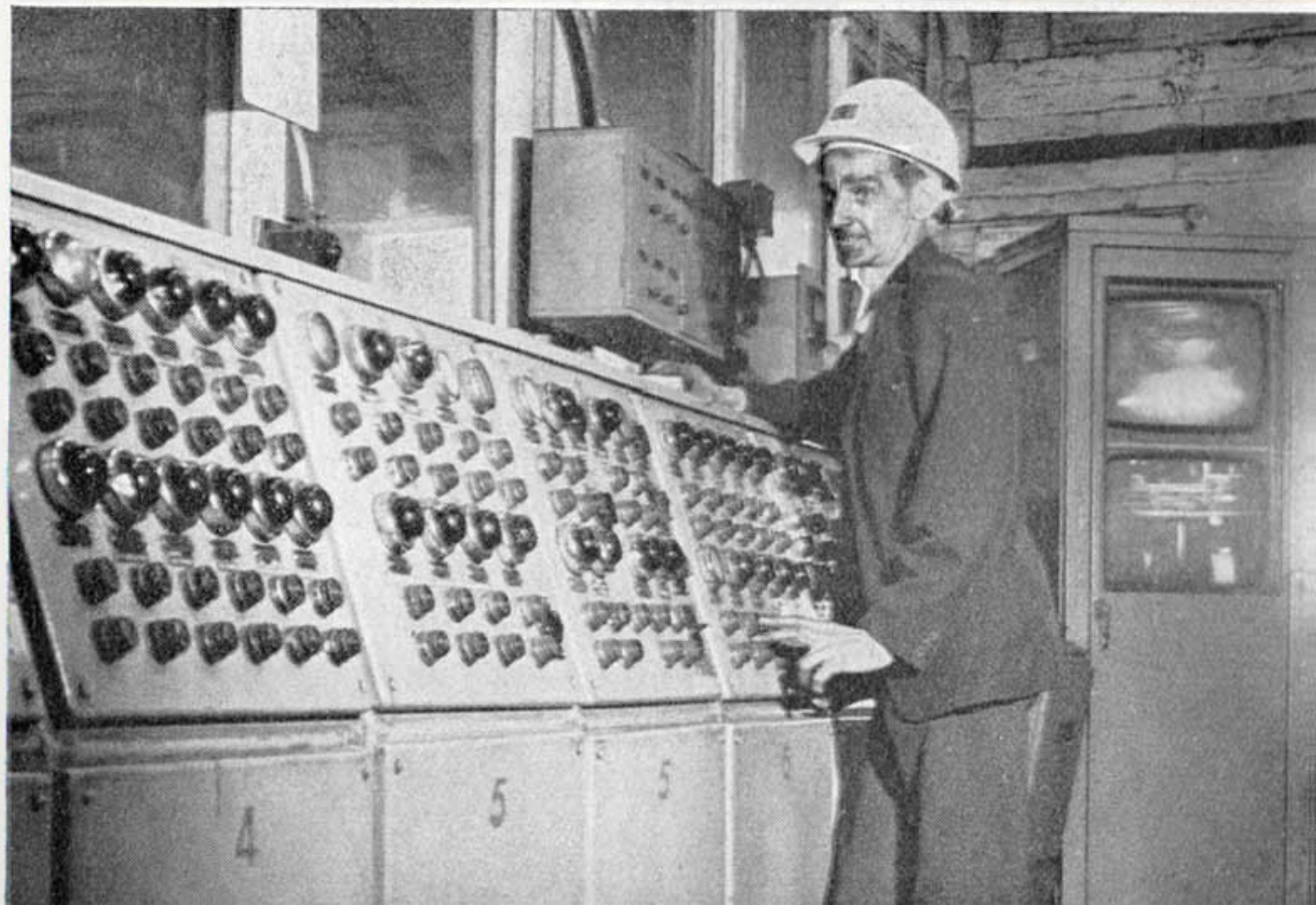
# Operations

replaced by a reinforced concrete unit incorporating an airlock.

It is important that coal is correctly prepared for the various markets . . . therefore nearly all coalmines have been equipped with sophisticated coal treatment facilities. The arduous task of sorting coal by hand has been replaced by automated systems which wash and grade coal to the customers' requirements.

Bold Colliery has two principle markets for its output. Small sized fuel is supplied to the CEGB. The bulk of the output goes directly to the adjoining power station by conveyor, but Bold also supplies the giant Fiddlers' Ferry power station. The colliery also provides a large quantity of domestic coal, with private merchants operating from the colliery landsale area.

Television scanners are a part of the push-button world of coal preparation at Bold colliery, up to 300 tons of coal an hour being washed, graded and blended for the market. Years ago, teams of men and women did the job by hand.



## Sport and Leisure

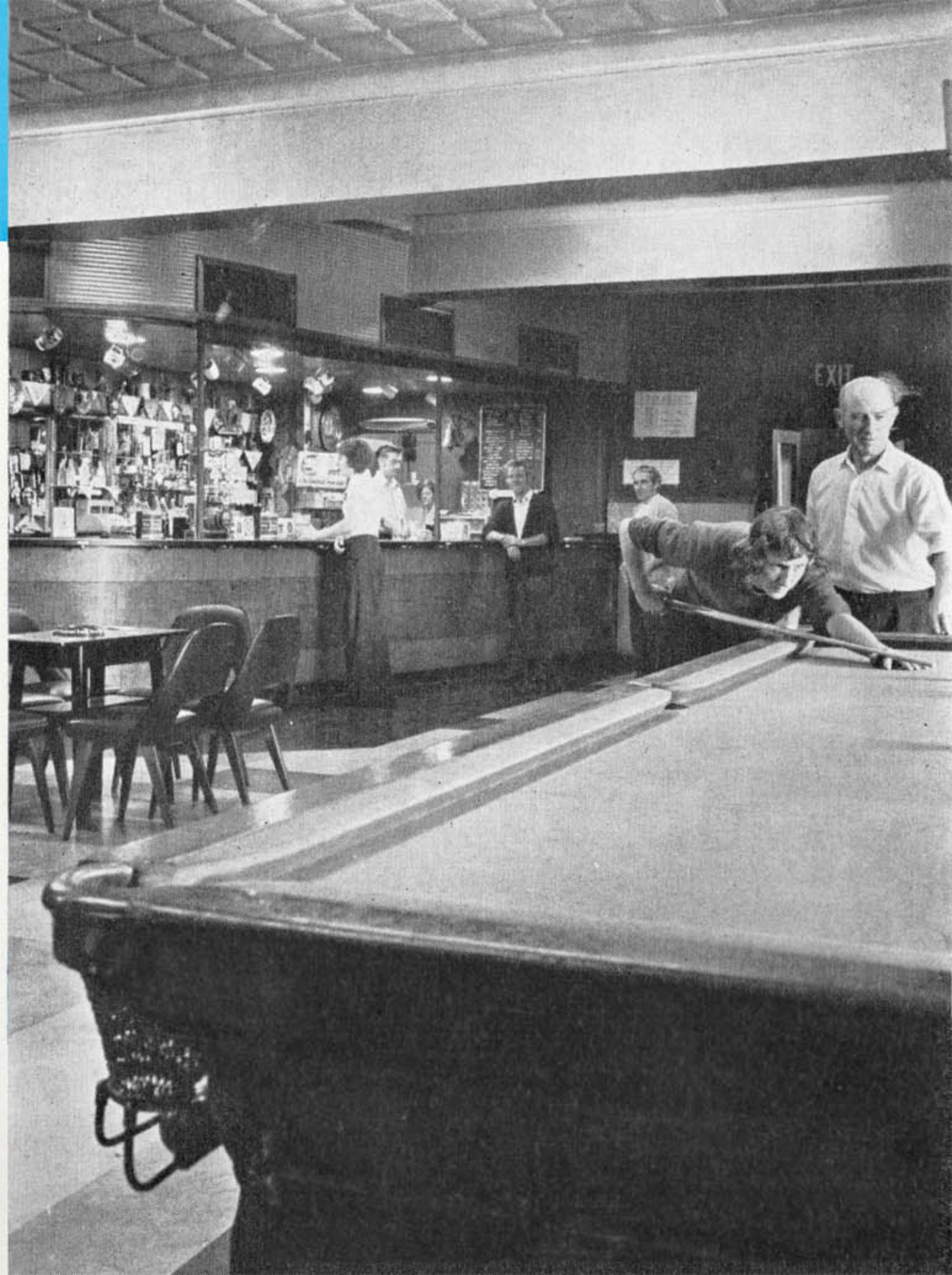
The mining industry has always been noted for helping its workforce to enjoy their leisure time.

Bold's welfare scheme is a good example of the type of amenity available to the miner, and the club's popularity is self-evident to any visitor, particularly at the weekend when entertainment is always provided.

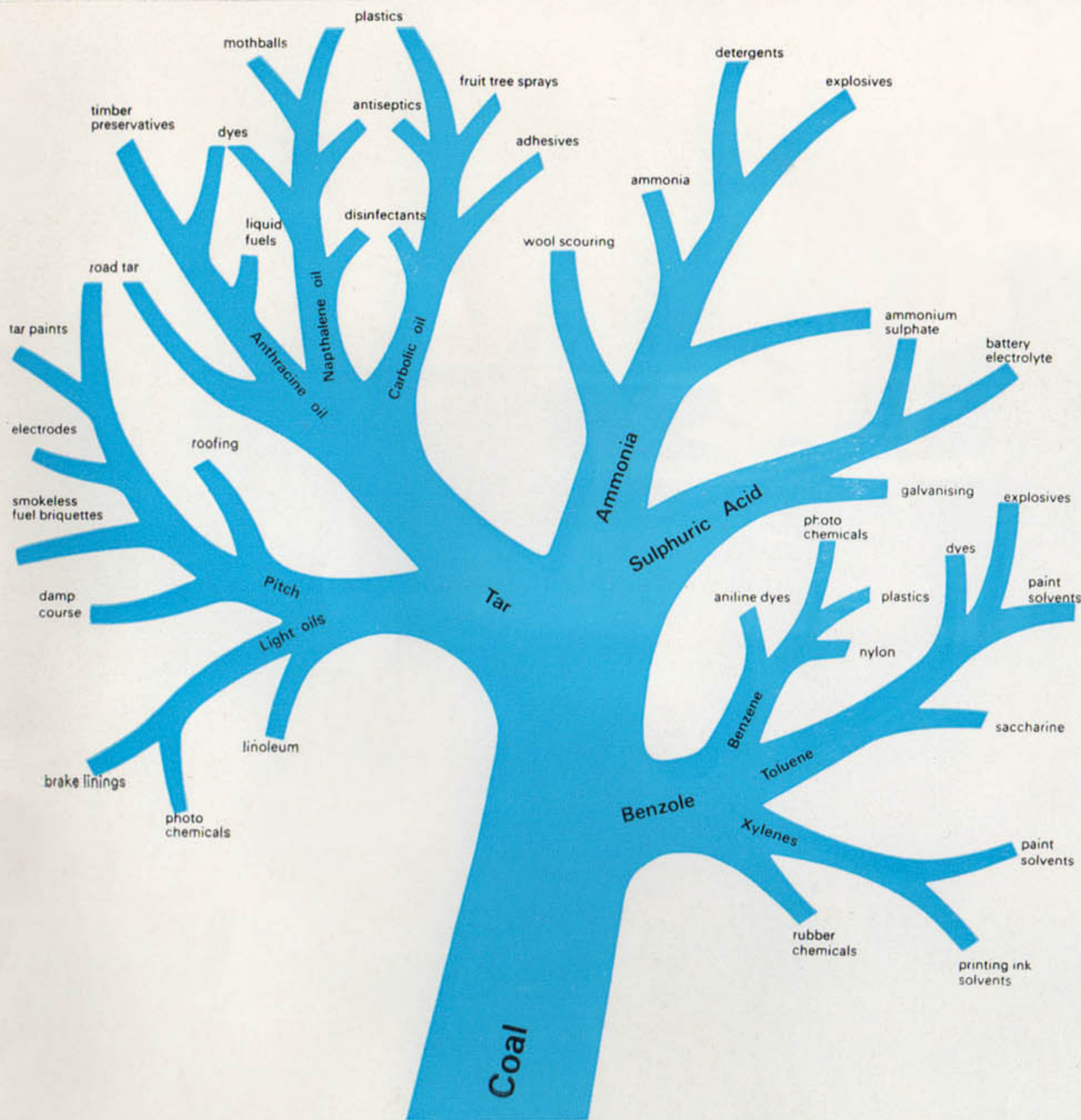
The facilities at Bold Miners' Welfare Institute are not just for the miner himself. The premises, just a stone's throw from the colliery, consist of a ballroom, concert room, lounge, several bars and substantial sport and recreational areas, are there to be enjoyed by the whole family.

Organisations also flourish to cater for specialist interests – the most prominent at Bold being the well-orchestrated Brass Band, recognised and appreciated throughout the North West.

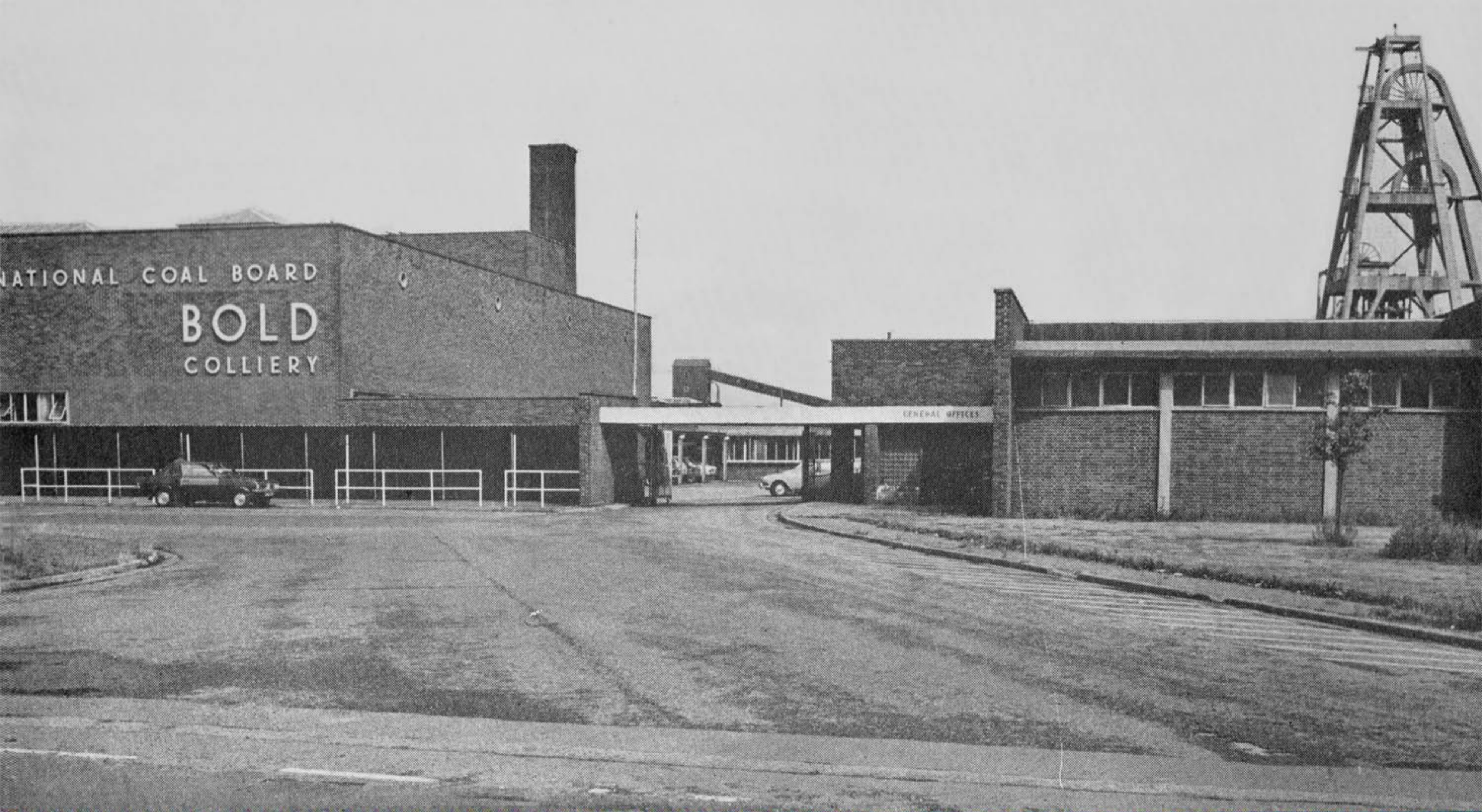
The facilities at Bold Miners Institute ensure you are never 'snookered' for something to do in your leisure time.



# Coal by-products



The 'tree' shows the many different uses of coal by-products — ranging from making paints to nylon and aspirin.



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