

# Hands-on down below at South Crofty for students

FIRST-year students at Camborne School of Mines had their first mining experience during a field trip to Western United Mines' South Crofty site.

The 26 students were given guided tours of Pool's polymetallic mine, learning what to expect from working at a mine both above and below ground. They explored the old workings, some of which date back to Tudor times.

WUM safety officer and miner Robin Whale shared his extensive personal knowledge and invaluable advice about keeping safe underground, illustrating his points with personal stories and memories.

Robin brought Cornish mining's history alive before going on to describe how it compared to the new modern mine that was being worked on just an extra few feet below them. He said: "Mining is a lot safer than it used to be but the atmosphere is always potentially hazardous.

"You'll get lots of information from text books, but you must always be flexible and trust your in-

**By JULIAN RIDGE**

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stincts when you're underground." The tour also included a visit to WUM geologist Gareth Joseph, who said: "What we are doing now is an exploration project to see what is down there. The diamond drill is used to bring up samples of the rock core. The samples are kept in boxes and I analyse each sample and log all the data collected to build up a model of the ore body.

"The geology here is messed up but, we have the hand-held XRF (x-ray fluorescence) machine that breaks down and analyses the metals and materials in each sample in seconds, which makes the process easier and quicker.

"By the time we've finished we will have analysed thousands and thousands of metres of rock core and so far it's revealing even richer and more diverse deposits than we had predicted."

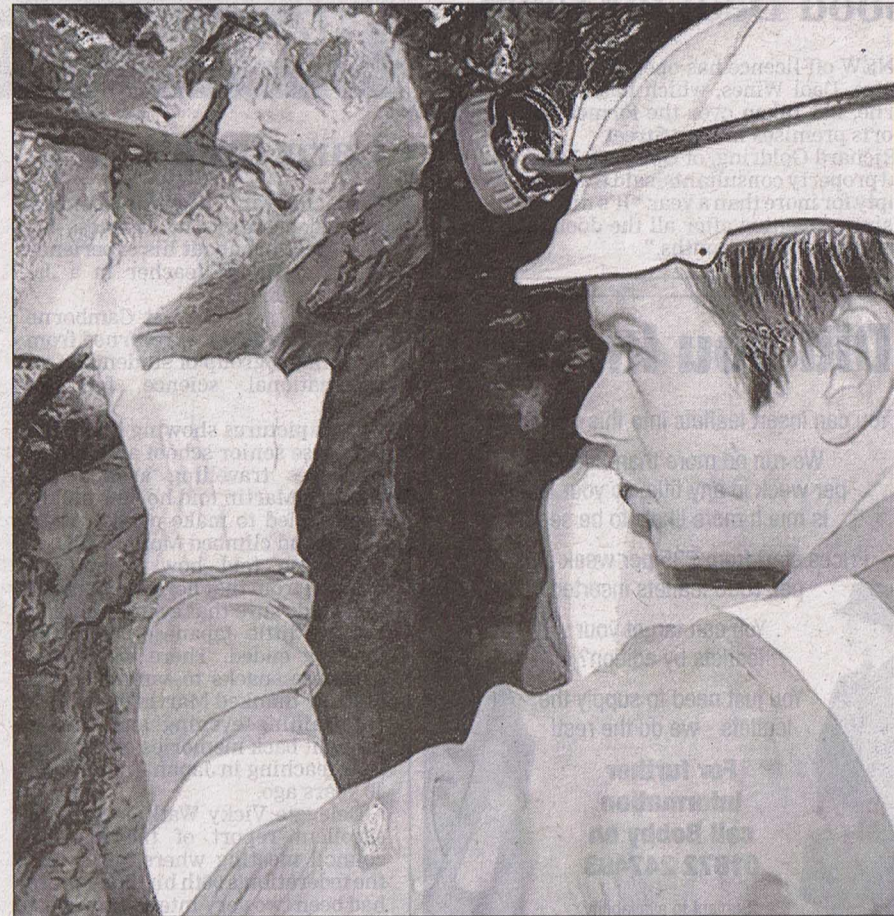
The tour of the surface buildings also included a preview of a huge 3D

model that is a virtual representation of the old and new underground workings that belong to the mine and lie beneath the Camborne, Pool, Redruth area.

The model, which is used to help plan future drilling, has already taken almost three years to create and is expected to be complete by Christmas.

CSM student Luke Goodden was extremely impressed with his visit to WUM. He said: "The mining industry is one of great opportunity and excitement. The visit to South Crofty was really good as it was certainly a reminder of how many opportunities we will have after graduating."

There are plans for the students to return next term to visit the new modern mine workings and see what their career future holds in store.



■ Luke Goodden looks at mineral deposits.