



DIGGING DEEP: Jenny Humphris pictured at Oldwood Pit.

Get close to mining heritage

VISITORS have the chance to look around a former coal mine as part of an event to recognise the importance of South Gloucestershire's heritage.

Oldwood Pit in Rangeworthy, near Yate, was abandoned after it flooded at the end of the 19th Century.

The former mine manager's office is now home to Jenny Humphris, who runs her small-holding on the site and will welcome tour parties during the Heritage Open Days event.

Some members of the South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group will lead the tours every 30 minutes, taking in a pit entrance, known as an adit, pit head structures, a deep shaft and two pit head wheels.

There are even lemonade bottles that miners took with them down the mine to quench their thirst.

Mrs Humphris, 68, said: "I've

lived here since about 1992 and the building is very little altered. Since the mine closed it had been used for storage and was even used as a chicken house.

"At first I didn't know much about the site, but people asked if they could have a look and I decided to tag along to see what they were looking at. Steve Grudgings, of the mines group, also came along and found a shaft behind a bricked-up arch."

Chris Willmore, secretary of the group, said: "The history of the site will be explained. The tours are above ground but the site is uneven so sensible footwear is advisable."

With this year marking the 60th anniversary of Frog Lane Colliery in Coalpit Heath closing, there will also be information displayed about that site, together with copies of a book produced to mark the event. Oldwood will be open 2pm to 6pm on Saturday and 11am to 5pm on Sunday.