

BOOK REVIEW

Mining in Zimbabwe – From the 6th to the 21st Centuries

Edited by Martin Prendergast and John Hollaway

A truly remarkable book, outlining how Zimbabwe's professionals and entrepreneurs have developed their mining industry over the past 100 years. The book covers Zimbabwe's diverse mineral sectors – gold, coal, asbestos, chrome, copper, tin, iron and steel, nickel, diamonds, platinum group metals, industrial minerals, and minor minerals and metals – in the context of history, geology, exploration, historical and current mining methods, mineral processing, mine infrastructure, and production data. Each section, authored by experts in their sectors, is supported by photographs and illustrations that leave the reader well informed of this once-powerful industry.

The book covers the small, medium, and large mines, both past and present, in Zimbabwe. The reader is taken to the smaller hydrothermal underground gold mines near Bulawayo, the Shabani asbestos mine, the large mechanized coal mines in Hwange, the iron ore mines and steel mill of Redcliff, modern day underground platinum mines on the Great Dyke, the Empress nickel mine, the chrome mines of Gweru, to the tin mine of Kamative, and the chaotic and short-lived diamond mines of Marange.

Insights into the personalities of mining men in Zimbabwe, such as 'Tiny' Rowland, Norman Levin, Major John Hilton, and Kurt Kuhn, among, many others, bring additional life to the narrative.

One is drawn into, and astounded by, Zimbabwe's natural resources and the mines and mining-related infrastructure built meticulously by past mining professionals in the country. This book is a showcase of how mining was used for the greater benefit of society in terms of infrastructure, education, and skills development.

A great guide for any country intent on developing its mining industry, but also an illustration of the demise of a mining industry, when mineral policies, commodity cycles, and resource depletion work against it.

Although historical in its narration, this book can be used as a reference for the next generation of mining professionals when developing new mining projects in Zimbabwe or resurrecting old mines on the foundations laid by mining professionals of the past. It demonstrates that Zimbabwe, with all the strategic commodities required for future technologies, technical skills, and relatively intact infrastructure built by past mining generations, has many key ingredients to become yet again a successful mining country.

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Mining Engineer

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THE CHAMBER OF MINES



OF ZIMBABWE