

up to provide a new main return airway for the mine. Pumping is also a difficult problem due to rapid "silting up" of the sumps. It is proposed to improve standage in No. 2 Dip Panel and to install a 6 in. Rees-Roturbo pump powered by a 60 h.p. motor. During the Christmas holiday period a new aerial rope approximately eight miles in length was installed on the aerial ropeway. Sixty-eight men were employed underground and 28 on the surface.

Moynihan's Lease, Mangakara, Ohura (D. Moynihan (Deputy), Mine-manager).—Coal-winning and stripping of overburden is carried out at this opencast by sluicing methods with very good results. The coal-seam dips gently towards the storage bin at the head of the access road, thus enabling the coal to gravitate easily to this bin with the aid of water and fluming. Operations are retarded somewhat during dry weather periods, but nevertheless a good production has been obtained by 3 men.

Sunnyside Mine, Waitewhena (J. Wilson (Deputy), Mine-manager).—This mine commenced operations during the year. It is an underground mining proposition to work a 13 ft. seam of coal. The area, which is a Crown lease of some 23 acres, is situate approximately two miles from the Waitewhena Opencast Mine. Since operations began early in the year a good output has been obtained by 6 men.

Aria Colliery (R. Gillespie (Permit), Mine-manager).—Three men were employed developing a 13 ft. seam of coal lying between what appears to be two faults. During the year a new dip haulage way was put into operation direct from the surface. Development to the dip was stopped at the end of the year after the dip heading had encountered faulty conditions.

Stockman Colliery (H. W. Jones (Deputy), Mine-manager).—A small output was obtained by 2 men during the year. The output is transported by launch down the Mokau River. Lack of sufficient rainfall, resulting in insufficient water in the river for safe navigation, has impeded production.

Fougere's Opencast, Ohura (E. Maslin (Quarry Certificate), Mine-manager).—Coal-production was obtained by 4 men opencasting on two small sections of this area. Thickness of coal ranges from 3 ft. to 4 ft.

Waitewhena State Opencast (S. T. Smith (Deputy), Mine-manager).—A daily output of 160 tons to 170 tons was maintained throughout the year from No. 2 Area. The coal is 11 ft. thick. Most of the output was crushed until 4th May, when the screening plant at Waitewhena railway siding was completed. Eight to ten Motor-trucks carrying an average load of 5½ tons were employed in transportation of coal from the face to the railway siding. On 3rd August a crusher was incorporated at the screening plant and arrangements made to divert all coal over 4 in. size to the crusher. This was necessary as the demand for slack exceeded the house-coal demand. On 26th November arrangements were made to provide for domestic coal when this class was required. Stripping operations were satisfactory, although difficulties in disposing of overburden were encountered. Earthwork plant for stripping consists of five caterpillar D8 tractors and blades and four 12-cubic-yard carryalls operated by the Ministry of Works. One ¾-cubic-yard power shovel and one T.D. 14 tractor and blade is operated by the coal cartage contractor. Blasting of overburden was carried out during the year. Coal stripped ready for extraction on 31st December, 1948, totalled 20,000 tons. The total number of men employed was 35.

ROTOWARO RESCUE-STATION

A total of 70 men were on the rescue-station register at the end of the year, these including 13 men at Benneydale. Seven new men were trained during the year. Ten applications for assistance were received from the mine-managers of the following mines: Six applications were from Pukemiro Colliery, one from Mangapehi State Mine, and three from the Macdonald Mine. Once again the activities of the rescue brigades bear witness to the value of such an organization in the Waikato District as far as dealing with underground fires is concerned. In several instances also the Station Superintendent has rendered valued assistance in exploring workings previously advanced or sealed off whenever it was desired to recommence mining in such areas. All rescue apparatus, interior, and surroundings of the rescue-station have been kept in good order and repair.

HUNTLY SCHOOL OF MINES

Instruction commenced at the beginning of the year with Mr. C. Hunter as Director, who assumed this position rendered vacant by the decease of Mr. Gomersall. An average number of 39 students availed themselves of the expert tuition afforded them. Classes were held in Huntly, Rotowaro, and Ngaruawahia. Classes of three hours' duration were held as follows—Huntly: Monday, Wednesday, Friday; Rotowaro: Tuesdays; Ngaruawahia: Thursdays.

At the annual examinations for underviewers and firemen deputies 2 students obtained passes in the underviewers' section and 2 obtained partial passes. In the firemen deputies' section 9 students secured passes and 1 partial pass.

FATAL ACCIDENTS

I am very pleased to record that no fatal accidents occurred during the year.