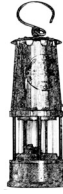

Durham Miners' Association

General Secretary:
Dave Hopper



President:
Dave Guy

Press Release May 17 2011

Bolivian Miners Exhibition Comes to Durham

Night... all day, every day
Mineros, Bolivia by Jean-Claude Wicky

The Durham Miners' Association is hosting the internationally renowned photographic exhibition *Mineros, Bolivia* in Durham from July 4 to July 18 2011. This will be an excellent chance for people in the local area and those visiting the Durham Miners' Gala on July 9 to discover what mining means to people in the high Andes, in the heart of South America, and how this relates to the struggles of miners across the world.

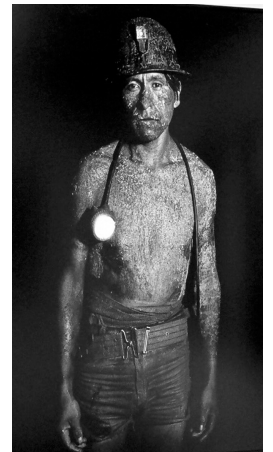


Stark black and white photographs convey the stifling darkness and heat as miners toil deep in the veins of the Andes Mountains. Elsewhere, groups of miners make the journey to work across a vast snow covered peak or scale an impossible rock face on a flimsy wire ladder. The striking collection of over 90 pictures was taken by Swiss photographer Jean-Claude Wicky over a period of 17 years, in which time he visited some 30 mines in Bolivia. His deep commitment to bringing the stories of Bolivian miners to the wider world meant he was given unique access to take intimate photographs of the miners at work, their rituals and moments of companionship as well as sensitive portraits of the miners' families and homes.

Mining is central to the history of Bolivia. The Spanish conquistadors used the indigenous people as slaves to extract vast quantities of silver, bankrolling Europe's economic development and leaving Bolivia destitute. Working conditions have not changed much since and many miners continue to work with little or no safety equipment and minimum basic labour standards. They are rewarded with subsistence level wages and their families remain desperately poor.

David Hopper, General Secretary of the Durham Miners said: 'Seeing these photos showing the working and living conditions of the Bolivian miners had a great effect on us. It's shocking to see that in the present day, miners on the other side of the world are facing struggles that we faced here generations ago.'

The exhibition will be held in the Durham Miners' Offices, Redhills and will be taken to venues across the country in Scotland, Yorkshire, South Wales and London. The exhibition has been made possible through the work of the Durham Miners' Association, the Bolivia Information Forum and Union Solidarity International and the collaboration of photographer Jean-Claude Wicky.



Mineros, Bolivia by Jean-Claude Wicky

July 4—July 18 2011

10am — 4pm

**The Miners Hall
Red Hill Durham
DH1 4BB**

For more information please contact: email: admin@durhamminers.co.uk Phone: 01913843515

Website: mineros-bolivia.com