

The visit to a gold mine *- The camp*



by
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The visit to a gold mine - The camp

Today, numerous of gold deposits are discovered at several locations in Greenland. The Nalunaq Gold Mine is the first gold mine in Greenland. The deposits were discovered in 1992 and the production started in 2004. In the underground mine the company used explosives and heavy machinery to mine an ore, which on average has about 16-25 gram of gold per tonne ore. The mine is still in operation, but has now been taken over by new owners.

When I visited The Nalunaq Gold Mine, the mine had approx. a hundred employees. The employees came from Canada, Greenland, Denmark and several other countries. Almost all the employees were men. The common language was English. The working day was 11 hours, and they worked every day except Sunday.

The camp is a hutment. Besides barracks for housing, administration and laboratory etc. they used containers and tents as shelter for the miners and guests who visit the camp. I lived during my stay

in a small container. The container was divided in two small rooms with a bath and toilet in the middle.

The miners had a long hard working day. The rhythm with long working days stimulates not to enjoy each other's company in the evening. Still they seemed to get on well together, and friendships emerged. Each gang holds together. Are there any disagreements it soon becomes them and us.

Being away from family and friends for weeks is a way of life that characterizes all enclave mining camps. The foreign staff had a stay of six weeks in the mine and then three weeks off. The locals from South Greenland had a break of three weeks in the mine and one week off.

Such a life can put anyone under pressure. But no soul boiled over into drunkenness, because there was a total alcohol ban in the mine. I felt that the individuals somehow remained anonymous in this mining camp. The miner's safety equipment and work clothes are like a uniform. The employees

could hardly take with them personal belongings into the camp.

The miners had limited opportunities to communicate with their family back home via e-mail and telephone. There were TVs in the rooms, which showed a couple of channels. There are in physical and mental sense far into this mine camp in the wilderness.

I did not get into the social life on the six days that I stayed in the camp. I hope nevertheless that this photo project can give a sense of the unique world that the miners are a part of in the Greenland wilderness. I remained a stranger who was welcomed. With this photo essay I want to thank for the kindness I met during my stay in Nalunaq Gold Mine in October 2006.



The camp, October 2006



Getting ready to a visit in the underground mine, October 2006



Three miners? No, three public servants in the safety equipment, October 2006



The transport to the entrance of the underground mine, October 2006



An explosion underground in the mountain, October 2006



The entrance to the underground mine, October 2006



The camp in front of the Kirkespir mountain, October 2006



A tent for the workers, October 2006



Inside the tent, October 2006



Another type of tent, October 2006



A barack, October 2006



A truck transports the ore to the harbour, October 2006



The ten kilometres long earth road to the harbour, October 2006



The earth road crosses a river, October 2006



The harbour, October 2006



The harbour, October 2006



Ready for the hurricanes of South Greenland, October 2006



Workers at the harbour, October 2006



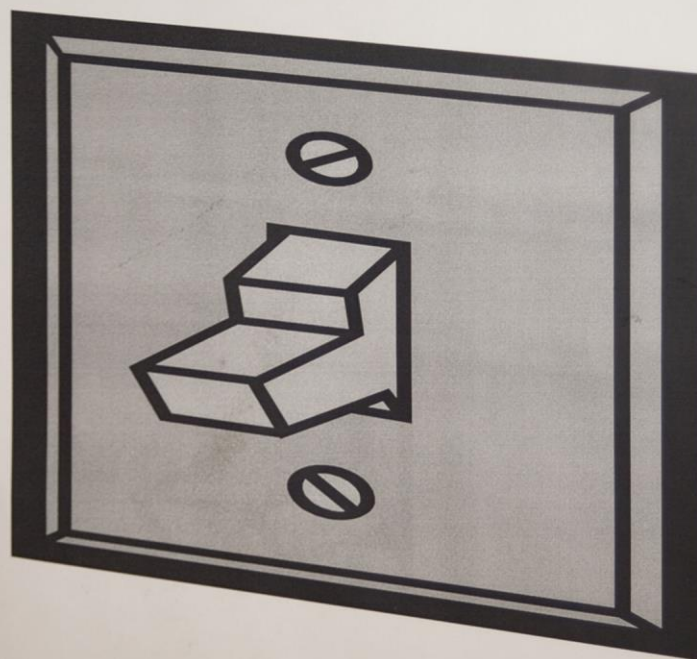
Heavy burdens, heavy machinery, October 2006



My home in the mine, October 2006



The canteen, October 2006



MINE SHUTDOWN SWITCH
(USE ONLY IF NECESSARY)

Sarcasm, October 2006



Prepared for transportation in the winter, October 2006



The Kirkespir mountain, October 2006



The camp view from the entrance of the underground mine, October 2006

Thumbnails

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COLOPHON

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