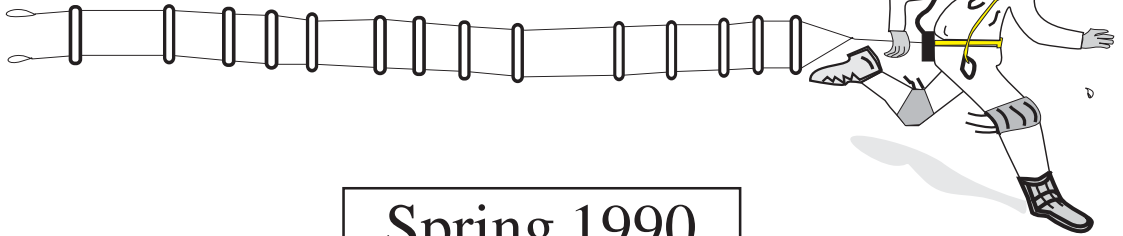


B E L O W !



Spring 1990

Quarterly Journal of the Shropshire Caving & Mining Club

Two

It seems strange to think that it was 2 years ago that the newsletter was first launched in this format. During this time the Club has increased its activity quite considerably, not just at home (Shropshire) but abroad (Wales) and almost all our full members are active. We now have a bipod, 2 stretchers (1) and mine communication and location equipment. Who know what the next 2 years will bring?

Is it Catching?

Caving seems to be going through its scare phases just like food, drink and health, what with Radon and now Leptospirosis (alias Weil's Disease), Cryptosporidiosis, histoplasmosis and rabies, it makes you wonder why we bother !

Luckily you are unlikely to encounter the last 2 in this country. Crypto, is caught by drinking farm contaminated water, while Weil's Disease comes from water contaminated by rats and enters the body through cuts and abrasions - several well known canoeists have caught it from rivers.

The tricky thing about both Crypto., and Weil's is they both give the victim flue like symptoms.

If you think you have caught Weil's Disease it is very important you have an Elisa Blood test, this is tested at a special unit at the Public Health Laboratory, County Hospital, Hereford.

The Sports Council for Wales have produced a leaflet on Weil's and the Cambrian Caving Council are proposing to produce a paper/ leaflet on all diseases cavers are likely to encounter.

X-Word Bugosis

On the subject of bugs, a gremlin attacked the crossword puzzle in the last issue, changing clue 42. It should read:-
"Something you can do with tackle bags or alternatively a line".

Kelvin

Penwylt

Owing to the abuse of the facilities the SWCC Committee have restricted the use of changing facilities and showers to members and guests at Penwylt. It is no longer available to day visitors.

Mike Moore

P8

Quite a few people are showing interest in the P8 trip in March. If anyone else fancies another weekend in Wales, Vicky and myself are quite keen.

Alan Robinson

Rescue Seminar

Trench Hall 3/12/89

Members Present: Edwin Thorpe, Mike Moore, Alan Robinson, Andrew Yapp, Kim Dempsey, Neal Rushton, Andy Harris, Peter Eggleston, Kelvin Lake, Chris Lucas, Martin Allen.

Due to the potential of bad weather this meeting was held in the gym at Trench. The main advantages to this were that it was warm and dry, and all the tackle could be laid out for inspection.

Neal and Alan guided everyone round the tackle explaining the "bag" code (basically any rope in a blue and white bag is a dynamic rope - although this seems to mean hawserlay rope), and the methods of marking for the different types of rope.

To conclude the morning session a brief practice at rigging was tried along with the checking of personal equipment.

As it was a leisurely sort of day we adjourned to the Elephant and Castle, Grinshill for lunch - the first trip I've ever been on that has stopped for lunch!!

Ordering our meals we sat down expectantly, luckily for some (myself included) the meals duly paid for, arrived. Unfortunately for the 2 Andies and Kim, after sitting there for 1½ hours their meals had still not arrived. To make matters worse the kitchen had stopped serving. After Mike "Diplomat" Moore had "words" with the Landlord, he reluctantly offered sandwiches or a re-fund, they took the money and some exercise.

Returning to Trench, Edwin provided refreshment for those who missed out, while Neal devised a strange scheme.

This scheme involved treating the empty paddling pool as a shaft, using the Land Rover as a belay on one side and 2 posts on the other.

Rigging one of Andy Harris's ropes across the "shaft", attempts were then made to tension it using a form of Spanish windlass.

Yours truly then made a fatal error - I volunteered to be the stretcher victim. After being strapped in, joggled outside and clipped to the rope - while I still lay on the floor, it was pointed out that I was **STILL** on the floor and not suspended on the rope.

Undaunted, Neal jumped in the Land Rover and drove off to "apply a bit of tension" to the rope.

10 metres later, I'm still on the floor and Andy's rope now resembles a piece of string!!

The moral of the story is:-

1. Never volunteer.
2. When passing over a shaft or winze the victim will have to be allowed to "fall" down the hole for some distance, otherwise the rope becomes over stressed.
3. Never lend Neal a rope for one of his schemes.
4. Never volunteer for one of Neals schemes.

Kelvin Lake

P.S. A quick calculation shows we probably stressed the rope to a third of its breaking load !!

P.P.S. Anyone want to buy a nice long rope, only used once?

Contact Andy Harris if interested.

News Round-Up 1

by Ivor Brown

Underground Heritage

M.Gill of NAMHO has circulated all member groups for suggestions of mines with underground features worthy of scheduling. This is a project for English Heritage. IJB has nominated Roberts Level, Clive Mine and Llany-mynech. It is presumed that the Club will also have sent in a list through Mike Moore.

Welsh Mining Society Visit

The Welsh Mining Society visited The Grits area on the 1st October 1989. They noted that the engine houses at the 3 mines are deteriorating rapidly. They asked if SCMC would assist them in restoration work at Ladywell Mine.

Snailbeach Survey

Lancaster University Archaeology Unit won the contract to survey the remains of Snailbeach Mine. Staff will be continuously employed for about 6 months.

Snailbeach Mine Water

IJB is carrying out a survey of the mine water supply arrangements at Snailbeach Mine (December 1989) and keeping an eye on the Lancaster Archaeologists.

Farlow Quarry

It was reported by Steetly Quarries that a large amount of lead ore (galena) has been found in the face at Farlow Quarry, Much Wenlock. Does this substantiate all the odd reports of lead mining in that area?

Ove Arup

Ove Arup have been asked to do further research into the Pennystone Ironstone Mines of Oakengates and the limestone workings near Steeraways Farm.

Coalbrookdale Lecture

Ivor Brown will be giving this annual IGMT lecture on the 27th April 1990 - subject "Women and Children in Shropshire Mines".

Germany Re-visited

IJB re-explored some caving areas, first visited in 1957, in Southern Germany during October 1989. See Page 8 for a more detailed report.

* * 25 Years Ago * *

From early Club Newsletters (edited in 1965 by IJB):-

Newsletter No.7 Jan '65:

Work started on salvaging the Rock Fireclay Mine. Ivor Brown and C.Lears photographically recorded the last production shift at the mine on 23rd December 1964.

The Club's Shrewsbury Museum contact, member John Hobbs, died aged 48. Ron James took his place.

Newsletter No.8 Feb '65:

Reported 9 expeditions during January; North Wales Mines (3), South Shropshire (3), Rock Fireclay Mine (2) including overnight on 29/30th January, Derbyshire (1).

Newsletter No.9 March '65:

Records attempts to haul out the steam winch at Glyn Ceiriog and the finding of a skeleton at Llanymynech.

Cwm Dwr Quarry Cave

Sunday 10/12/89

Members Present: Alan Robinson, Shean Bostock, Andy Harris, Mike Moore.

We decided to try Cwm Dwr Quarry Cave, with the reasoning that we could contemplate a through trip sometime in the future if we could get to know the route through Cwm Dwr to the Confluence i.e. in Cwm Dwr, via the Main Streamway and out through OFDII.

The Entrance Pipe

Cwm Dwr Quarry Cave has an entrance which consists of vertical egg shaped concrete liner pipes leading down to a chamber. Mike Moore, rather sensibly perhaps, declined to enter the system, on comparing his and the pipes respective girths - a wise choice as the rest of us were to find out!

The entrance chamber leads to a series of crawls following the route of a small stream. I was wearing knee pads and was still destroying my knees, so how Shean managed without pads I will never know!

Dim Dwr & Cwm Dwr Jama

The crawls end, after one or two short climbs down, in a small chamber where the very tight Dim Dwr crawls begin. These eventually open out (thankfully!!) via an 8 foot climb up through boulders into the Cwm Dwr Jama passage, a welcome space in which to breath- out and stretch cramped limbs. By turning left and climbing down, and then up, the large Jama passage can be followed to the boulder choke.

The boulder choke is an impressive pile of large and small boulders through which we were expecting to find a route. After varying amounts of thrutching (?), squeezing, crawling, pushing and pulling (and some cursing) we ended up exactly where we had started - the same side of the boulders.

Oh!, we thought.

Alan was determined to find the way on and after further attempts he managed to get through, seeing where we had gone wrong the first few times.

Big Shacks

We emerged into another large passage - the Big Shacks. By this point time was short so we had a quick glance around, noting the positions of the side passages for future reference and then headed back, exploring one or two crossing passages on the way. The formations encountered were of great size and beauty and well worth seeing.

Dim Dwr - the Return Crawl

Getting back into the Dim Dwr crawls was something of a feat in itself. I seemed to have to stand on my head in a pool of water before I could get anywhere near the right orientation to enter.

At this point Shean 'the kneepadless' seemed to have invented a new technique called baked bean assisted propulsion - if it didn't work for himself, it certainly made me move a bit faster! (*I am reliably informed that this technique is a tried a tested one, developed and refined since the dawn of Cave exploration, Ed.*)

If anything the tight crawls were worse on the way back, but they were managed and it was then a matter of climbing up 20 feet of vertical, smooth bored pipe to return to the smell of Welsh pollen and wet grass.

Andy Harris

Club Sales

Publication Stock Clearance

All publications must GO at ridiculous knock down prices!!

Account No.8 "Survey of Llanymynech Ogof, Roman Copper Mine" by D.R.Adams, 1970.
£2.00 (£2.50 non-members)

Account No.9 "Mines and Caves in the Area between Llanymynech and the Dee" by D.R.Adams, 1972.
£2.00 (£2.50 non-members).

Account No.12 "Survey of the Metal Mines of S.W. Shropshire", J.Heathcote, 1979.
£2.00 (£3.00 non-members).

Account No.13 "Lincoln Hill Limestone Mines" by I.J.Brown. £1.50 (£2.00 non-members).

The 1980 Journal - including a report on Huglith.
£1.00 (£1.50 non-members).

Videos

Clive Rescue Practice

Follows the SCMC's intrepid band of rescuers, as they boldly rescue where no man has been rescued before. Stare in amazement as the helpless victim crosses the Maypole Winze (90 feet straight down!) without flinching - well almost.

Complete with Library case and designer label for **£5.00 + £1.20 p & p.**

A Tour of Clive Copper Mine

Edwin Thorpe brings all his charm and talents to bear as he guides a "newcomer" to the mine around its assorted features. Coupled with dynamic computer graphics a brief insight into Clive Mine's development and history is possible, as Edwin explains (all without the aid of a script!!).

Complete with library case:
£9.50 + £1.20 p & p.



*Rescuers: We **have** to stop Leptospirosis getting in your wounds.*

Victim: But I've only cut my finger!

All items available from Mike Moore (see back page for address)

OFD II - Columns Weekend 8 to 10/12/89

Members Present: Mike Moore, Alan Robinson, Vicky Gamblin, Andy Harris, Shean Bostock.

After hours of negotiation to ensure enough accommodation at Penwylt, only 5 intrepid explorers deigned to join this trip - to which I must say I am **EXTREMELY** disappointed! The main aim of the weekend was to visit the Columns - which for industrial archaeologists were covered by industrial waste seeping through from the quarry lime kilns.

As usual we were welcomed with open arms by the SWCC who provided two guides to the Columns. They were vital for the labyrinth which as the name suggests is confusing for route finding, after a couple

of interesting traverses and a 50 foot free climb we eventually arrived at the gated entrance which was placed in an awkward slot immediately behind a sloping boulder. Various photo's were taken.

The party were then guided back to the arete and we then located another route to Salubrious Passage, to view the Trident and Judge formations, once again. The exit was made viewing Chasm Passage and through the Brickyard, this time without getting lost.

This being his first visit, Shean was heard to say the immortal words "Good here innit!!"

Mike Moore

In Search of Santa's Grotto Somewhere near Ribblehead

A roaring fire, a drink in one hand and yes another mince pie in the other. These are ideal conditions for the less adventurous caver to indulge in his favourite pastime - a browse through the guide book. Unfortunately the fire had just gone out, my glass was empty and that was the last mince pie!

Thus, on Boxing Day we were left with no choice, but to go caving. Vicky and myself, plus two, gingerly ventured outside and headed down to Ribblehead Viaduct.

The Thistle and Runscar Caves are formed around two parallel streamways, making up 7 or 8 short caves. These make ideal "novice" trips, with a number of through trips. They are not as prone to flooding, as many of the other caves around Ribblehead.

Greatly recommended is the exit from the lower Thistle Cave. This is achieved by lying on ones back in 9 inches of water and shuffling head first through a low tightish slot (not mentioned in guidebooks).

Two days later saw a gentle descent through Calf Holes to Browgill. Plenty of water, but not enough to discourage the usual groups of novices and curious rambles. A good chance to clean my drysuit in the waterfalls, leaving a reddish brown slick of OFD mud.

The final trip was to Sunset Hole on Inglebor-ough, which has a fine streamway, ending in a 50 foot pitch. From here on in the cave becomes more torturous, especially beyond the Corkscrew squeeze. The only drawback is the walk from the Hill Inn lay-by. It's far too long.

Alan Robinson.

Limni Copper and Sulphur Mines, Cyprus

After a long and busy season (finding a little cash left in the till), we decided to take a well earned holiday in Cyprus, - obviously paid for before the Club subscription!

Always being one for a bit of the local culture, the wife and I went to have a look at “The baths of Aphrodites” (Goddess of Love).

H’ mm I thought, but nothing happened. Anyway by sheer coincidence the guide book indicated mines nearby. Well after the Goddess of Love bit hadn’t worked, we did the next best thing and went to see what the mines were all about.

Driving through a small town called Polis at the west end of Cyprus, we came to the mine offices of “Limni Copper and Sulphur Mines”. Knocking on the door and shouting “anyone speak da Engleesh”, a voice beckoned us in.

“What’s all this about?”, I asked, which was greeted with suspicion, “It’s only that we operate a tourist attraction in the U.K., which is a copper mine, and we were just interested in what you do here”.

Immediately the managers eyes lit up, “Can you spare 15 minutes?”, he said, (he could speak the lingo). “I would like to introduce you, to the owners, we have consultants in from Geneva and we hope to turn the mine into a tourist attraction”.

“Say no more!”, says I.

Anyway to cut a long story short, after spending 2 hours there, which included a tour around a massive open cast site and remains of underground workings and treatment plant etc., we concluded with a long discussion with the owners and their consultants.

It appeared that the mine closed in the late 1970’s, the owners then being a British company.

The manager said that since closing they have had so many tourists asking if they can have a look around that he decided it was time that they tried to get a tourist project off the ground, (out of the ground?).

It took a bit of convincing them that we had only called on the off-chance and did not know the place even existed beforehand.

They pointed out calciners of Roman origin, which had only just been un-covered. Instructions had been given by the archaeologists not to disturb them until further diggings had taken place.

The manager and owners did not know what calciners were used for, (the English dictionary they had, did not have the word in it). We were able to suggest that they had probably been used to produce sulphur, and possibly they would find the flues to the calciners which should be encrusted with sulphur.

**Phil Amies,
Sygun Copper Mine**

Ordering Custom Made Oversuits . . .



Are you sure those measurements were inches and not centimetres, Neal ?

Schwabische Alb West Germany

In October 1989 I returned to the area of my first foreign “potholing” trip, the Schwabische Alb region of South Germany.

In 1957 the area was remote, cows could still be found pulling carts and puffing into a cows horn, hanging on string at the roadside, formed a primitive communication system. The roads were mainly dirt-tracks, the chief hazards were chickens, shoeless kids playing tick and groups of “happy wanderers”.

All this has now changed, this is the age of the commuter, the autobahn, the car and supposed prosperity. Thirty-two years later the deep pot-

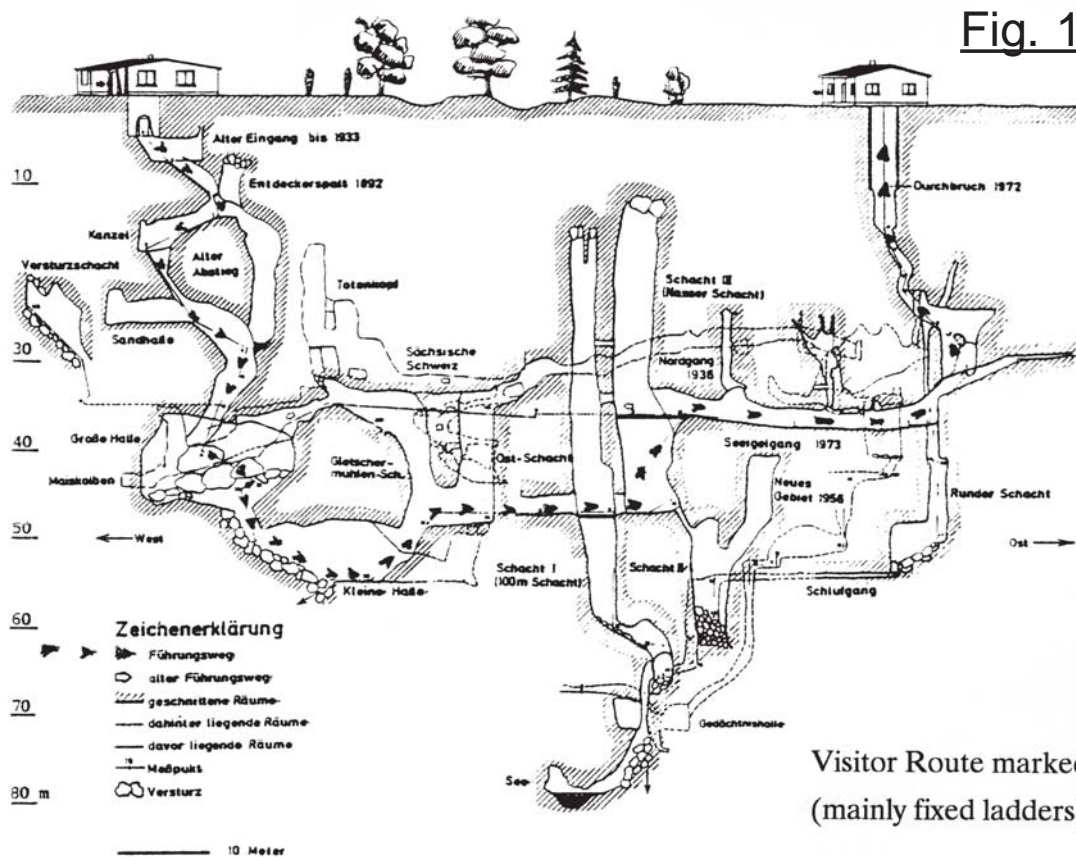
holes are still there, about 20 are now show-caves and accessible to the general public. Most are vertical, often shaft-like, in dolomite limestone.

In 1957 entry was very casual now it is highly organised. The pothole visited in 1989 was run by a caving club, who allowed the paying public (with their dogs) to go down to 150ft. using steep, fixed, iron ladders with stagings about every 20 feet maximum.

A quite exciting trip for most visitors and one unthinkable in Britain.

Ivor Brown

Section of Laichinger Tiefenhöhle



Pim Hill Copper Mine

28/12/89 & 21/1/90

Members Present 28/12/89: Mike Moore, Shean Bostock, Neal Rushton

21/1/90: Shean Bostock, Peter Eggleston, Mike Moore, Steve Rodenhurst, Kelvin Lake, Edwin Thorpe.

There is little written about Pim Hill, just a couple of miles from Clive and what there is, is vague about existing remains. Various people have investigated the site over the years, however they generally refer to the 2 northern shafts and the entrance to the cross-cut adit (driven in the 1860's, to intersect the main ore body), as being filled and the southern shaft, leading to a small stope, as partially filled. Attempts to locate the adit entrance apparently failing.

At the suggestion of Shean, who had gained permission from the landowner, it was decided to have an "in-depth" site inspection.

The initial visit in December, located the southern shaft. Although on the surface, apart from obvious surface "trenching" along the vein, and a small quarry, there was little to see.

Standing on the edge of the shaft the ground is definitely "springy"! It was felt that with careful gardening, access to a small rubbish filled slope could be obtained.

Thus a larger party returned to the site in late January. Pete descended on ladders about 40 feet into the shaft, that appeared to angle off under the quarry face, reaching a crouching height level, partially filled with what was later identified as chicken guano (only after Pete and Mike had spent an interesting hour digging/rolling/playing in it!).

As the level headed West, to the side of the hill an examination of the surface revealed a patch of soft ground as a possible adit entrance. By now it was lunch time, and concern was being expressed by the intrepid diggers about the "soft earth", and the

numerous tins of highly toxic agri-chemicals plastered with dire warnings, the dig was abandoned. Other routes off the shaft, were assumed blocked by the rubbish.

While this dig had been going on Steve "the Mole" Rodenhurst had been doing his own dig in a likely spot, near the foot of the hill. After reaching a depth of 5 feet he struck a strongly drafting entrance to an adit!! Who needs divining rods or electronic devices when there is a Rodenhurst around!

After testing the hole by stuffing Mike down it and finding he didn't get stuck, we eventually gained access to a spacious standing height level, in red sandstone with nice pick marks on the walls (See Fig.2).

This went 30m East into the hill to a crossroads, the southern branch being a blind heading about 12m long, northwards, the heading was blocked after 12m by the chicken guano spreading out from the direction of the shaft; it was only at this point that the substance was identified by the Country members of the party! Eastwards, the level continued to a sand filled shaft, just like Clive, with a potential dig around it. This shaft appears to be out in the field, rather than in the surface trenching area.

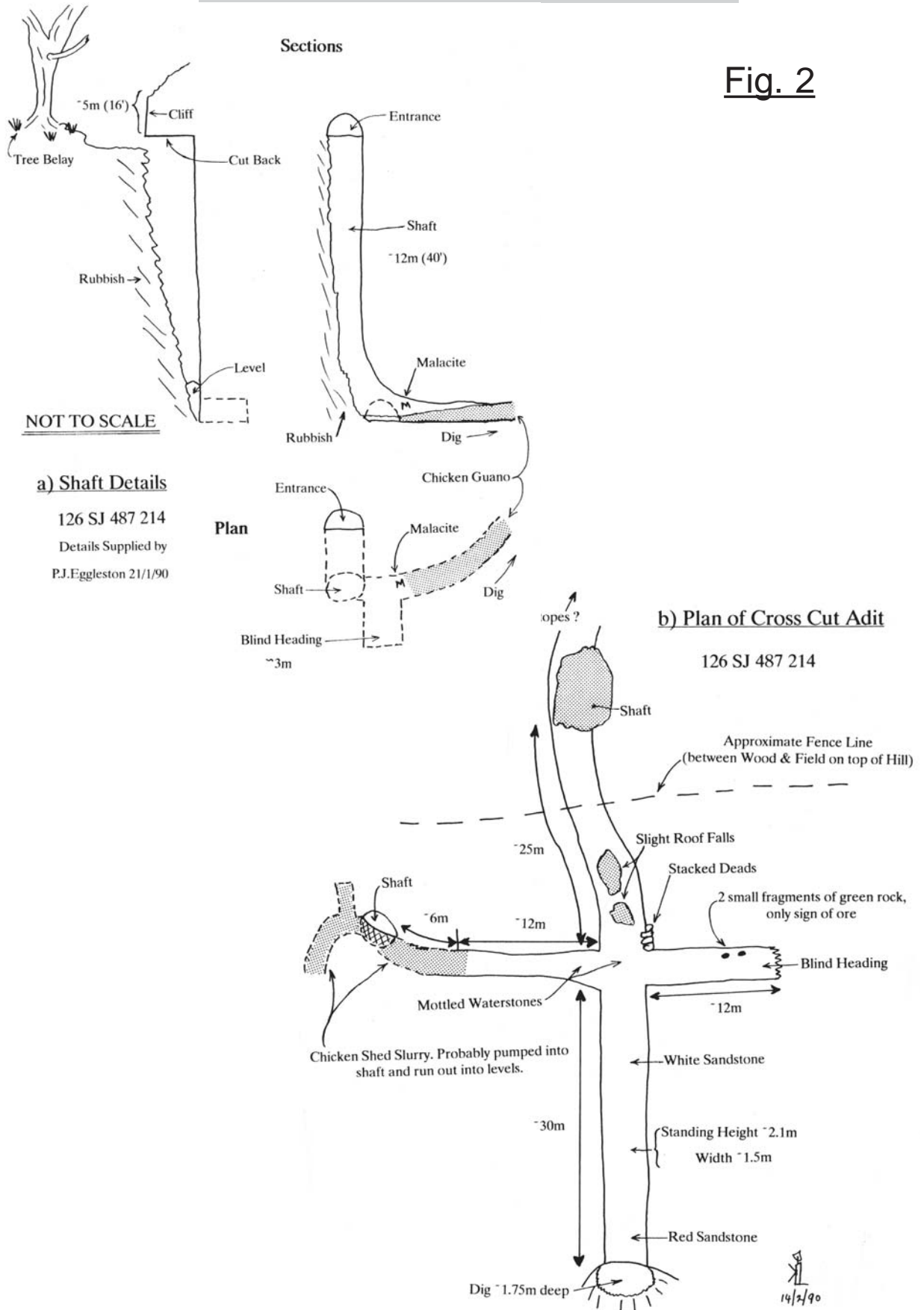
The rock at the crossroads, was very fractured, waterstones of some sort, rather than sandstone. Bats were noticed in the broken rocks, later identified by Shean as Long Eared and Horseshoe Bats (The Bat group have been notified and taken in to inspect them), but how did they get there?

Thanks to Pim Hill Organic Farm for letting us use their car park.

Mike Moore
Kelvin Lake

Sketch of Pim Hill Copper Mine

Fig. 2



Snailbeach Weekend

13 & 14/1/90

Members Present Sat. am: Alan Robinson, Andy Yapp, Kim Dempsey, Shean Bostock, Tom West, Kelvin Lake.

Sat pm: Mike Moore, Andy Harris, Steve Holding, Malcom Newton, Neal Rushton.

Sun: All Saturdays team plus: Peter Eggleston, Vicky Gamblin, Steve Rodenhurst, Edwin Thorpe, Ken Lock, Ivor Brown and prospective members Jayne Horton and Graham.

Saturday

Under the impression we were having a blitz on the site (including the bipod), I was a little surprised to find only 5 others there on Saturday morning. Undaunted, everyone popped down the “sheep” shaft to start bolting the descent from the tramming level, leaving me on the surface manning the radio and cringing from the wind on an otherwise beautiful day.

Unfortunately the bolting didn't progress too well as the bolter broke after the first hole.

Mike, Andy H., Steve H. and Malcom turned up after 1pm and stood around expectantly awaiting the imminent arrival of the bipod.

Eventually (about 3pm) we were rewarded by the sight of a Land Rover bouncing up the track towards us.

After a little ‘Umning and ‘Arring the bipod was assembled and rigged over the hole near the top of the hill. Shean at this point had just reached the surface from the “sheep” shaft, but despite assurances from the Mike that it was as safe as houses, he refused to be the first to hang on it. Pointing out that the Chairman should lead by example, Mike changed his tune, the bipod suddenly becoming the most dangerous device known to Person-kind, and what with his pulled eyelash there was NO WAY Mike was going to be first!

To stop all the arguing, I volunteered (breaking all the rules concerning Neals schemes!), and was swung out over the hole - it was great, the air rising up from the stope was really warm - I could have done with it earlier!

After the successful first test the bipod was made safe and left in position for the morning.

Andy Yapp promised to try and fix the bolter over night, ready for the Sunday blitz - I gather he ended up building a new one !!

Sunday

There seemed to be an endless stream of people arriving, in fact by midday we had 19 people on site, 14 of them underground, down the “sheep” shaft!! - What did they do down there all day ?

A small team remained on the surface helping Neal on and off the bipod as he descended about 40m down the higher hole. At this depth he reached the top of a steep slope down into a stope, with the odd lump of rock dropping from the roof nearby.

Unfortunately foggy conditions prevented him from seeing anything.

Before exploring further, he wanted to put in some bolts to re-belay the SRT rope. Thus the message “Neal wants pitons” was sent from Neal by radio to surface, then shouted across the field to Steve Holding, who shouted it down the “sheep” shaft to Andy H. etc.. until it arrived at the rock bolters below the tramming level as “Neals having kittens!” (thanks Kim). Needless to say he didn't get the pitons.

After Neals return to surface some trials were made with the low power CB radios to determine their range and other factors that might help. Basically it

Snailbeach Weekend Continued ...

would seem a continuous electrical contact from surface to underground is ideal and a twin core cable might be better - one core acting like the inner of a bit of coaxial cable, the other taking the part of the outer shielding. Using a single core cable, the tunnel wall appears to be treated as the outer, thus the signal is more attenuated.

Wet rock is also a factor, we got better results in Clive than at Snailbeach. Pete is planning some more experiments to verify a few theories that he has got.

On the whole a successful weekend, it's a pity the descent of the bipod was not made on the Saturday,

then the bolting would have been done and an exploration team sent down the "bipod stope".

One point that did arise was the loss of contact with the "tail-enders", who were still bolting when everyone else had left the mine. If something had happened to them, because of the weather those waiting on the surface were getting cold very quickly and would have needed some form of hot sustenance before mounting a rescue or search.

Perhaps the Club could invest in a small stove or primus, plus a few packets of soup.

Kelvin Lake

News Round-Up 2 by Kelvin Lake

School Wins

Hadley Junior School, Telford has recently won first prize in the 5-11's Schools Education Competition run by Chatterley Whitfield Mining Museum, between September 1988 and June 1989. A variety of media were used by the pupils to interpret aspects of the story of coal.

National Mining Museum

While talking about Chatterley Whitfield, members may not be aware that the National Mining Museum has recently been moved from Lound Hall to Chatterley Whitfield. Generous financial assistance from Stoke-on-Trent City Council has ensured the National Collection will be removed and displayed properly at its new site.

I hope this means we can now discount rumours about the closure of Chatterley Whitfield, due to financial problems.

Coed-y-Cerrig Bats

The Cambrian Caving Council report that Gwent Bat Group are claiming exclusive access rights, negotiated with the absent Landowner, to the Coed-y-Cerrig caves near Abergavenny. The presence of bats at these little known red sandstone caves (only 20m in length), was reported to the Bat Group, resulting in a vendetta against the caver who reported them! If visiting the area, you should be aware of this anti-caver attitude of the Gwent Bat Group.

Help Wanted

John Goodchild of 12, Shakespeare Avenue, Normanton, Yorks, WF61EA is interested in any information about John Gibbons of Oswestry, who died in 1811. He was a banker and mining entrepreneur. John is after information specifically about:-
Pen Cerrig Mines,
Llwynymean Coal Mines,
Calamine Mines near Oswestry,
a mine at Meadow Town,
Evelith Mill,
Dolobran Forge and Prescott Forge.

SCMC Bipod Fact Sheet

Bipod Kit - Purchased November 1989

Scaffold Poles: 1 x 16', 2 x 18', 2 x 2', 1 x 4'
Wire Tethers: 2 long, 2 short
Maillon Rapides: 6 x 10mm Deltas
U-shaped Stakes: 2
Angle Iron Stakes: 3
Swivel Connectors: 8
Plus: 3 dynamic ropes and 1 SRT rope.

Setting Up - Estimated time to first descent 1½ hours.

The two 18' poles are connected with a swivel 1' below the ends. The poles are spread at their base and the 16' pole secured to these approximately 18" from the feet ends and approximately 1' from each end of the 16' pole. The two 2' poles are secured to the base of the 18' poles approximately 1" above the bottom. The 4' pole is secured approximately 18" below the top joint, to the long 18' poles.

A short tether is wrapped around the 18' poles and over the swivel joining them at the top. Both ends of the tether are connected to a long tether. This is repeated for the other tethers.

The steel stakes are placed approximately 40' apart equidistant either side of the bipod, to its rear, and closer to the bipod than the wire permits.

The other stake is placed opposite the bipod on the far side of the shaft (see C on Fig.3).

Two dynamic ropes are connected to the top of the bipod and one taken over the shaft to the single stake (C on Fig.3).

Rope or tape slings are fastened around the top of the bipod at the same place as the swivel and off the upper cross bar. An SRT rope is fastened to both using a Maillon Rapides.

A Dynamic safety rope is secured to this maillon and taken back to a safe position on the access side of the shaft.

The bipod is raised into position and an assessment of the angle of reach determined. If the tethers are too short, then the stakes are too far out, this should not happen (see earlier).

The tethers are wound around the stakes until the correct angle is obtained and both tethers are equally tensioned. The dynamic rope is secured across the shaft to the far stake.

The bipod should now be stable.

The U-shaped Stakes are fastened over the outside of the feet, outside the joints with the long poles. These prevent the feet sliding in any direction.

If any hoisting is necessary a pulley must be hung from additional tapes fastened as afore mentioned. All lifting **MUST** be done from the opposite side of the shaft to the stakes A and B and the wire tethers.

Use

The securing stake (C) across the shaft provides a belay off which a dynamic rope is released in a controlled fashion as the bipod is pulled upright using the other dynamic rope.

The person to descend is secured to the safety rope and attaches themselves to the SRT rope, as high as possible, ready to descend while the bipod is still vertical.

When ready the bipod is lowered until the tethers are tight and the controlling rope across the shaft secured. While the person is being swung out the bipod **MUST** be held in check by the second dynamic rope. When the bipod is in its final position this rope can act as a third belay.

SCMC Bipod Fact Sheet Continued ...

Once the bipod is in place and the stability checked, the person can remove their safety rope and descend.

Returning

When the person returns, they **MUST** climb as high as possible before being swung in by the people at the surface.

The stake over the shaft (C) is used as a controlling belay, while the second dynamic rope is used for hauling. This time the climber can be swung through

the vertical until their feet touch the ground -in a safe position. The bipod at this point will be held solely by the rope across the shaft to stake C.

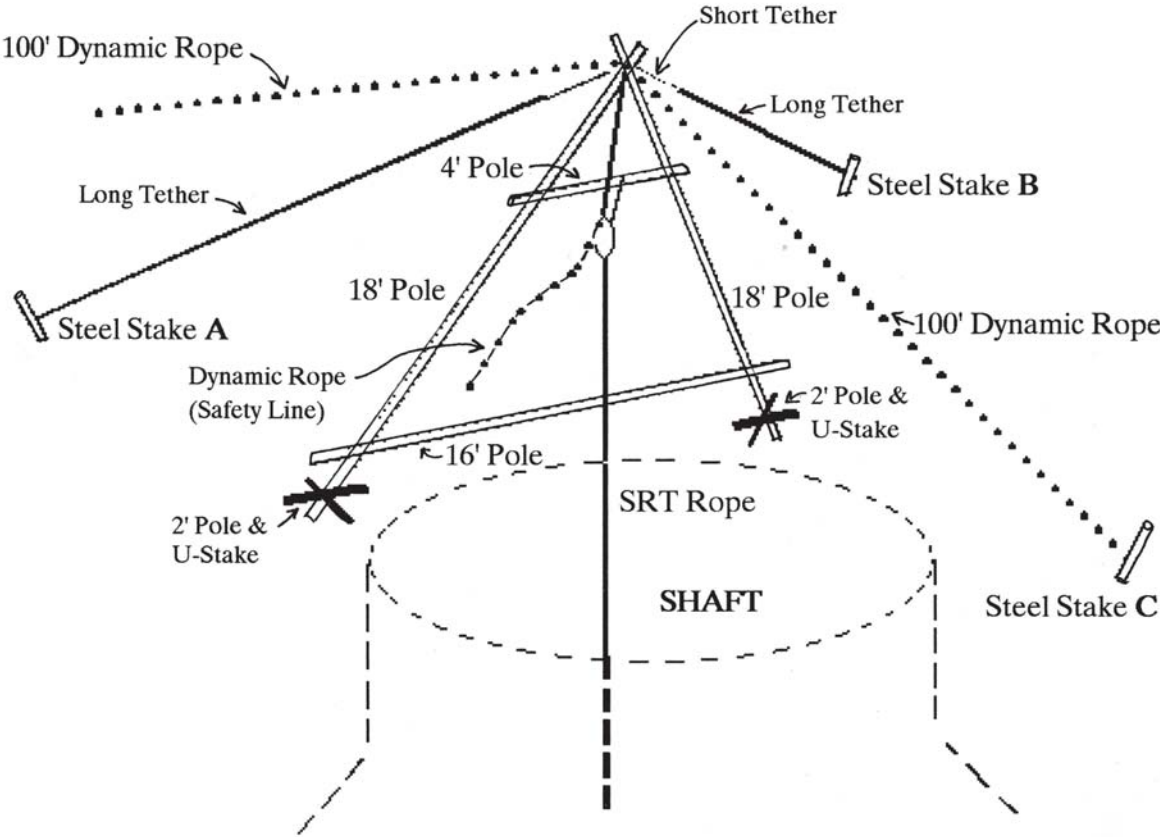
If a stretcher is lifted it must be lowered until its base touches the floor.

It is vital that as many people as possible can use this equipment efficiently and safely.

Neal Rushton

Sketch of Bipod Construction

Fig. 3



SCMC Bipod Fact Sheet

Electronic Divining

During lunch, Edwin and Pete arrived to try out Pete's newly built "MineFinder" underground location device on Grotto Hill.

The system is in two parts; an E.L.F. (Extra Low Frequency - not little green people!) beacon transmitter which is taken underground, and a direction finding receiver which is carried around on the surface to locate the strongest signal. Both use loop aerials and the prototype receiver is contained in an old tobacco tin.

The idea is to be able to quickly relate underground locations to surface features, such as finding the surface positions of the filled shaft in Pim Hill level and the capped shafts at Clive.

The first exercise on Grotto Hill was location-finding. Edwin took the transmitter underground and left it in one of the passages. Alan, using the receiver, had to locate the point on the surface directly above the hidden transmitter. First, the direction of the strongest signal was found from two points far enough apart to triangulate the approximate site. Moving to that area, Alan walked up and down until he found a very strong signal. Then by finding nulls (minimum signal levels) parallel to the ground in two orthogonal directions he was sure he had nailed it.

All this time Edwin had been saying that we were nowhere near the right spot! Confused, Alan and

Peter went underground to find the transmitter. Sure enough it was right where Alan had said, which proves that you can build something into a tobacco tin that has a better sense of direction than Edwin - even though he can identify every pub in Shropshire from 3,000 feet up, in an aeroplane!

The next test was to find the maximum range. The signal seemed to pass through about 30m (98ft.) of rock with no problem, the signal was not much stronger over the same distance through air, which should be true at this frequency (2J/2 kHz). The next thickness of rock available was 75m (240ft.) and no signal at all was detected, so the range is between 30 and 75m, probably about 50 metres (160ft.).

The tests were not made any easier by the strong winds which kept blowing the floppy aerials about, but the headphones are great for keeping your ears warm. We had some odd looks while we were waving our equipment around. According to Shean, badgerbaiters use electronic location devices too, so next time you see a group of shabby, disreputable louts with spades, lights, radio location apparatus and a dog, go up to them and ask: "Are you all 'baiters?'" Their reply should leave you in no doubt.

Thanks to Hawkstone Park Hotel for giving us permission to visit the Mine/Grotto site.

Peter Eggleston

Wixhill Copper Mine Sunday 4/2/90

Alan, Edwin and Peter made a detour from Hawkstone to investigate possible remains at Wixhill.

A padlocked man-access shaft used as a well, and a fenced run-in shaft were clearly visible in a field beside the road. Further up the hill, over a fence, a pair of short trial levels (about 10m long) entered the hillside, with evidence of another shaft near the

entrance. The eastern level was partially blocked but it was visible through a small "head-sized" hole from the parallel western level. There was some mineralisation, but no evidence of copper. The hand dressed levels were of a similar size and shape to the one found at Pim Hill.

Peter Eggleston

Lilleshall Walk

Sunday 7/1/90

About 15 members and guests assembled at Church Aston for a walk around the area under the expert guidance of Dave Adams. Despite a bitterly cold wind the party set off in high heels spirits.

The Pitchcroft Mine site was visited first, including the old miners route across the railway to the Last Inn. Substantial limekiln remains and the 3 Pitchcroft Shafts aroused considerable interest, particularly "Dog" shaft (?) with a tramway tunnel (to the nearby canal basin) entering the side of the shaft about 30 feet down, and the possibility of plateway rails still in situ.

Following the canal the party made their way towards the Red House (for lunch), examining the route of the new by-pass and another mine site (by the main Newport-Donnington Road). A fence built of the same grill work as covered the Pitchcroft Shafts was spotted on the boundary of 2 mine "setts", near the site of the old railway bridge.

The afternoon walk was a race against the gathering gloom. Partially retracing our steps to pass a row of miners barracks (now converted into one long house), we moved on to visit the remains of 5 very

large lime kilns, an interesting flooded quarry (with a grilled adit), plus another smaller quarry converted into a driveway - complete with Victorian bandstand, over a mine shaft, and "tasteful" street lighting "globes"!

Continuing on to the site of Jackie Parr's Hole, past assorted quarry workers houses, we were treated to the sight of Dave Adams dancing about a flat featureless field, demonstrating divining and claiming not many weeks before Mike Moore and himself had been underground at this very spot!

The day was rounded off by a walk along the towpath of the Donnington Wood Canal to the site of the Lilleshall Incline Plane (a place I have wanted to visit for some years). At the foot of the incline the tunnel portal of the old shaft and tunnel system is still visible, has anyone attempted to explore it in recent years? Dave and Mr. Davies (Blogg) had left their cars near the top of the incline and successfully crammed all 15 of us into the 2 vehicles - 9 + a jack russell into Dave's!!!

A very good walk, perhaps we could incorporate a walk guide into the re-launched Club guide on the area.

Desulphurisation

The government has announced that it intends to abandon an agreement to fit £2 billion worth of sulphur dioxide filters to coal-fired power stations, because it fears the huge cost will hit electricity privatisation.

This decision will probably mean the loss of more coal mines and an increase in the import of "cheap" low sulphur coal. Although with the changes in Eastern Europe and their need for currency it won't stay cheap for long!

It does mean a breathing space for some limestone areas which were to be effected by the increase in quarrying, resulting in the loss of some cave sites.

This announcement does not mean Desul-phurisation is dead - National Power is still fitting desulphurisers to Drax Power Station in Yorkshire. PowerGen also plans them for the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station, Nottinghamshire - both of these stations are likely to obtain their limestone from Derbyshire.

Huglith Rescue

Sunday 11/2/90

Members Present: Neal Rushton, Steve Holding, Peter Eggleston, Tom West, Malcom Newton, Roland Gibson, Andy Yapp, Alan Robinson, Kelvin Lake, Dave Adams plus Terry Middleton and Alan Bennett from Stafford Speleo.

The purpose of this practice was to experiment with hauling a stretcher up the main stope at Huglith.

Peter went down first to lay an aerial wire, which we have left in place (next time we visit we'll clip it to the hanging wall out of the way). Neal and Malcom (the victim) following him down.

Four ropes were used altogether, the main SRT rope, a stretcher hauling rope, stretcher lifeline and the black SRT rope down as far as the bends at the top of the stope.

Terry Middleton used the black SRT rope to wait at the bends to help ease the hauling rope (by using a chest jammer on a tape sling) and the stretcher round the corners.

Using a pulley the hauling point for the stretcher was raised above the heads of the haulers (at the mouth of the surface level) to give room for removing the stretcher, Roland lifelined the stretcher from above. Due to the heavy rain it was hard to tell if it was wetter on the surface or underground - it was probably cleaner on the surface!

The hauling went well and took about 45 - 60 minutes, although the victim needed reviving from the cold at the end!

Successful use was made of the radios for general communication - until the underground set (and its replacement) filled with water.

Whistle codes were used by Terry halfway down the stope to communicate with the hauling team - although it was possible to talk to him from the shaft lip, to get instructions on hauling distances.

I.A. Recordings

Videos

The following video productions are available on VHS or Beta formats :-

Hand Made Bricks - £ 12.95

Hand Rolling of Steel - £12.95

Hand Made Padlocks - £12.95

Hame Making - £12.95

A Crooked Ditch -£14.95

(A History of the development of the BCN)

Telford's Last Canal - £14.95

(A History of construction of the Shropshire Union Canal)

The New Dudley Tunnel - £14.95

(The construction of the 1984 Dudley Tunnel)

The following Compilation tapes (no commentary) may also be of interest to members:-

Shaft Capping at Muxton Bridge - £9.95

(Includes the excavated Lodge Furnaces)

A 7 min. Tour of Sygun Copper Mine - £4.00

Intended to "wet" your appetite before you visit the Mine - a trip **NOT** to be missed.

For more details about these and other I.A.R. videos contact:-

**I.A. Recordings, P.O.Box 476,
Telford, TF8 7R**

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