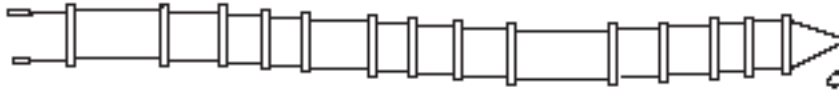




B E L O W !



Winter 1991

Quarterly Journal of the Shropshire Caving & Mining Club

Ladder Stolen

While on a visit to Giants Hole recently Alan Robinson’s brother, Derek, had his ladder stolen from the Garland Pitch. Luckily the party had been deeper into the system and had enough equipment with them to make up a complete set of SRT gear. After the “mountaineering” members of the party had negotiated the difficult free climb to the top of the pitch they were able to rescue the others. This time everyone successfully left the system, but next time....

It seems that this is not an isolated incident and presumably the thieves have a “market” for the ladders and ropes they steal, so beware of strangers bearing cheap gear - it may have cost some else a lot more than you know!

Coal Records

British coal production reached an new peak at the beginning of December. Output rose to 5.77 tons per man-shift with the Stilling Fleet Mine, Yorkshire setting 3 European records for coal face and daily production.

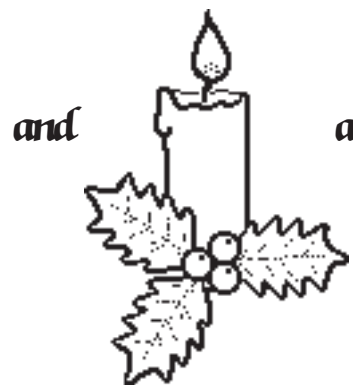
Ironically, since this record was set, and as I type these very words, the E.C. Energy Minister is expressing his concern over the closure of efficient British mines while inefficient German mines are kept open through subsidies. While the government is rejecting any E.C. funding of our mines, more pits are closing (see page 6) due to “losses”.

For the real price we are paying for “efficient” coal mines just drive around the Coalville area (Leicestershire), parts of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, South Wales, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the North East. and see the effects the pit closures have had on the local communities.

Disease Credit Card

At the December Club meeting, Mike Moore introduced a new plastic card (the same size as a credit card) produced by the NCA. The card gives the descriptions, symptoms, and tests for Weil’s disease, along with helpful medical advice. Mike hopes to make the cards available to all members in a few weeks time.

Happy Christmas



**Merry New Year
to all Club Members**

News Round-Up 1

Cave Corner

Peak Cavern Discoveries

Some 50 years after Peak Cavern was first entered nearly a mile of new passages have been discovered by a 3 man team.

About 1,000m into the system the team of Dave Nixon, Simon Cundy & Shaun Puckering found a small boulder choked passage with a drafting very strongly, after digging through the choke they found a 70m high aven. Climbing this using modern mountaineering techniques a horizontal development of over 1,200m was discovered.

Evidence has been found in the new passages of 18th Century mining exploration along with a chamber with "amazing" formations - which they have called "Heaven".

The new area is now being mapped and photographed and eventually it is hoped that the area will be accessible to all good cavers.

Pirates

Although "Pirate Cavers" (people who are using restricted cave systems without a permit) have been with us for some time. The wide-spread pirating of caves has been brought to the fore recently since an incident in the Lancaster - Ease Gill area where pirate cavers entered the system using the initials N.W.P.C. on the destination board at Bull Pot farm, but failed to remove their initials from the board when they left. This caused a lot of trouble for the rescue team in a futile search.

The Casterton Fell area is not only suffering from week-end pirates, but now it gets mid-week pirates - clubs entering the system without permit during the week.

If you want to visit the Lancaster - Ease Gill and Pippikin - Link Pots in mid-week then you should get a permit from: Davies & Bowering, 6-8 Main Street, Kirkby, Lonsdale.

New Handbook Edition

A new up-dated edition of the Derbyshire Caving Association Handbook is in preparation, although it may be some time before it is actually completed.

However if you are desperate to have the latest facts and already own a copy of "*Derbyshire Caving 87*", then you can get an update sheet (**free**) by sending a S.A.E. to: Mrs. J.Potts, Greenway, Hulland Ward, Derby DE6 3FE

"Legal Aspects of Access Underground" by P.T.Mellors

This short interesting A5 booklet has been written on behalf of the National Caving Association, with the aim of providing a guide to the legal rights and obligations of people who explore caves, pot-holes and disused mines, and of those people who control access to them. If you are interested in looking at this booklet there is a copy in the Club Library - or perhaps Mike Moore could order you one.

Northern Caving

Another recent addition to the Library is the Northern Caving Handbook, providing details of caves, access agreements, weather forecasts, emergency procedures etc.. within the Yorkshire Dales.

New Mag

The National Caving Association (NCA) have recently launched a new magazine aimed at cavers called "SpeleoScene". It contains a range of interesting articles and items of news and is worth browsing through. Copies will be passed on to Adrian for inclusion in the Club Library.

Any Spare Samples?

The University of Oxford is carrying out a research project to trace sources of metal used in manufacture of copper artefacts during the Bronze Age.

Lead Isotope and Trace Elemental analysis will be used to 'fingerprint' the metal composition of artefacts and link this with ore samples from potential mine sites. This technique has been successfully used abroad to trace the sources of metal and trade routes.

Whereas artefacts have already been analysed, it is now intended to compare these with as many potential mine sites as possible, hopefully revealing where the metal was mined during the Bronze Age.

To do this, the researchers need samples of copper and lead ore (preferably from several different locations in each mine). They can then build up a database from which the source of artefacts can be traced.

The implications of this for Shropshire are quite exciting - we can help to pin-point with certainty potential Bronze Age mining sites which would otherwise be difficult to prove.

The samples required are:

0.5g (peanut size) of copper ore (chalcopyrite, chalcocite, malachite, azurite, cuprite, etc.)

0.1g (pea size) of lead ore (galena).

Each sample should be identified with grid reference and whether from surface or underground. If members are willing to assist, can they let me have the samples and I will forward them.

Adrian Pearce

This Issue of "**Below**" has been sponsored by

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News Round-Up 2

by Ivor Brown

Snailbeach Work

Work has commenced on the conservation of the blacksmiths shop (next will be the compressor house, where roof beams have recently collapsed). Old photos have been collected and an archaeological examination made.

Attached to the shop is what is probably the oldest surviving part of Snailbeach mine surface layout - a lovely old steam engine house c1830 or even earlier (On c1900 photos it still appears to have been complete).

Mr. Tonks

Mr. E.S.Tonks, author of two editions of The Snailbeach District Railway has passed all his material over to Martin Davies of Harrogate - who is about to publish a third much enlarged book on the subject. Mr.Tonks (now well over 70) is still busy writing a 9 volume history of the East Midlands Ironstone Quarries and Railways.

Tankerville Rights

The Tankerville Estate is selling mineral rights over 11.5km² of land which has been worked for lead, zinc, barites and silver. Details are available from Wardell Armstrong's Cardiff Office.

Symon Opencast Site

Clay Colliery commenced work at this site near Horsehay, Telford in May 1991. The site will produce about 6,000 tonnes of coal per week for about 2 years.

Indonesia Re-visited

IJB has been on a further trip to Indonesia checking on exploration work in Borneo (who can miss coal seams up to 210ft. thick only feet from the surface). It involved a stay in a

native village hut without tap water or electricity and reached by chartered plane, speedboat (stuck on a mudbank for 6 hours in the blazing sun!) and foot.

Recuperated in Singapore with a trip to a Malaysian tin mine (open pit).

Jackfield Museum

Work continues on the Geology Museum at Jackfield, John Challen, curator is now installing the exhibits.

Collective Bargaining

IJB spent a week in November in Northern France, at Arras. He attended a conference to commemorate 100 years of collective bargaining ie: trade unions in mining in that part of France and gave a Paper on the Chartermaster system (see below).

In Paris he visited the School of Mines and particularly its Minerals Museum, set up by the Revolutionary Government in 1794 and still expanding (85,000 prize specimens).

The now closed Pas de Calais Coalfield (144,000 miners, 40 years ago) was toured and among others the Lewarde Mining Museum was visited (a former colliery, now a show mine).

Help Wanted

Information has been requested by:-

- a) Dr. T.D.Ford about radium at Snailbeach and Bog Mines as reported in The China Mail Newspaper, 14 Dec. 1945 (?!)
- b) Graham Peat, Ironbridge for photos taken underground in limestone mines.

An Ore-some Task

Try your hand at these:

1. Find the names of 20 metal ores and associated minerals.

N	F	P	M	C	G	N	S	N	I	E	S	J	B	A	R	H	Q	E	T	I	S	U	R	R	E	C	B	N	Q	
X	E	S	F	M	X	E	T	I	H	P	R	O	M	O	R	Y	P	W	Z	S	F	P	O	V	U	U	E	A		
N	F	S	F	C	H	A	L	C	O	C	I	T	E	R	H	O	J	R	J	E	O	Z	H	Y	T	H	Y	S	L	
L	R	B	J	H	C	H	A	L	C	O	P	Y	R	I	T	E	A	N	T	I	Z	E	T	I	C	L	A	C	L	
N	A	H	T	O	A	M	I	C	A	E	C	E	O	U	S	H	A	E	M	A	T	I	T	E	C	P	A	E	O	
I	A	Z	U	R	I	T	E	U	F	D	K	V	T	X	Q	A	V	S	B	F	X	J	Z	G	C	S	M	S	C	
W	A	P	M	A	N	U	D	J	T	E	Q	P	L	I	O	G	V	T	H	A	J	K	N	S	X	Y	W	O		
Y	X	Q	Z	W	Q	T	E	N	O	R	I	P	T	E	B	M	S	S	M	J	A	C	O	F	I	J	N	D	Y	S
N	E	S	I	D	U	D	M	N	P	Z	Z	B	S	T	L	B	P	N	B	G	T	V	T	Y	A	E	G	B	Y	
M	W	F	W	O	O	C	Y	V	B	Q	F	A	X	H	L	G	N	S	P	C	Q	E	X	F	P	N	A	L	R	
F	C	S	E	T	I	R	E	L	A	H	P	S	S	E	N	J	M	Z	G	C	R	H	I	I	E	S	H	G	H	
O	L	K	C	P	D	M	J	E	N	D	X	S	N	Q	Y	A	W	C	V	I	D	F	K	H	W	B	L	W	C	
J	J	U	A	A	X	L	V	N	V	G	A	D	B	S	L	I	Z	M	T	D	A	G	X	D	X	Q	W	J	F	
I	O	Z	E	I	A	U	F	H	U	J	E	A	P	A	T	U	V	E	T	B	U	B	V	M	B	J	E	L	J	
G	D	F	O	T	N	H	F	S	A	I	R	M	C	H	I	G	L	C	O	M	P	E	I	X	V	I	P	X	J	
Z	H	Z	U	B	E	V	G	T	R	I	M	H	E	R	W	E	Z	R	E	K	M	Y	S	J	W	R	A	P	P	
T	B	Z	T	D	L	W	A	R	T	F	I	R	V	R	H	M	N	O	I	W	X	B	G	U	O	T	D	R	P	
G	B	O	M	I	A	J	A	E	C	T	I	L	S	Z	M	I	D	B	C	J	B	Z	V	V	P	L	G	S	W	
X	B	I	N	I	G	A	E	C	E	T	S	R	U	P	T	R	F	R	E	X	P	C	N	H	J	Y	K	R	F	
S	B	G	R	A	P	Q	M	V	E	H	U	N	Z	E	L	J	H	A	O	Q	Q	I	A	N	G	L	Y	B	E	
D	Q	U	T	B	C	M	R	W	B	I	K	V	R	E	C	V	G	Z	Y	I	X	E	S	Q	W	I	F	K	T	
H	X	A	M	D	D	T	H	E	X	N	H	E	W	S	X	Y	S	J	B	C	M	K	X	K	A	Z	Y	E	H	
C	A	I	O	D	T	M	K	Y	D	S	M	Q	B	L	V	K	H	E	Y	A	V	X	E	T	A	F	N	F	E	
F	F	D	L	N	S	O	F	H	V	I	N	F	M	A	P	N	X	T	T	V	I	R	S	V	E	N	D	N	G	
L	A	U	U	X	O	H	B	L	A	U	U	Y	H	E	W	O	J	I	S	G	L	C	M	Q	A	A	U	U	W	
N	O	D	P	X	L	V	M	U	J	O	U	X	I	E	U	A	T	L	A	Z	B	X	E	N	V	X	H	I	E	
R	K	Y	E	M	E	Y	K	R	I	I	D	X	S	R	W	E	G	O	R	A	N	S	I	M	O	M	K	A	V	
N	T	K	R	F	T	Z	K	N	X	X	Z	Q	N	R	T	S	L	S	P	I	R	T	S	X	Y	T	G	F	X	
H	E	S	E	R	I	G	H	N	M	N	N	K	U	S	B	B	K	B	D	N	E	I	D	W	Y	Z	K	K	J	
P	U	V	S	Y	P	X	K	X	K	Y	F	M	C	G	M	W	F	A	Y	E	M	F	W	O	N	F	Q	L	B	

2. Find the following 30 words in the smaller word square:

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| JACKROLLER | COMPRESSOR |
| TELLTALE | FEATHERS |
| TROMMEL | PITWORK |
| BUNTONS | STEMPLE |
| SHEARER | JIGGERS |
| BUDDLE | SOLLAR |
| STAMPS | YORKS |
| HUTCH | SLOPS |
| PROPS | DIAL |
| CRIB | BIT |
-
- BRACHIUM
 - ROLLEYS
 - TIPPLER
 - WHIMSEY
 - KIBBLE
 - STOWES
 - KIEVE
 - CORVE
 - PLUG
 - GIN

U	F	F	B	T	S	H	H	N	P	C	S	P	X	I	E	J	S	S	J
C	W	C	E	S	G	G	U	L	P	M	W	E	C	W	I	C	F	P	Q
S	Y	O	R	K	S	K	I	T	T	M	K	B	U	G	Q	O	P	O	E
U	T	X	K	U	S	C	Y	I	S	M	M	O	G	H	C	B	K	R	V
D	M	O	K	Z	A	A	P	R	C	F	R	E	F	R	V	Q	G	P	E
U	Q	D	W	N	F	P	S	R	O	C	R	V	I	H	T	L	K	F	I
E	E	I	L	E	L	E	O	M	Z	S	R	B	K	D	M	K	C	S	K
K	R	A	S	E	S	L	A	R	W	B	M	T	R	P	F	E	F	G	W
R	F	L	R	V	L	S	E	T	M	T	S	T	Z	I	R	O	K	T	J
O	R	D	U	E	E	R	N	U	H	L	J	I	S	H	I	F	M	A	B
W	K	O	Y	B	A	R	I	O	O	E	S	B	U	P	S	H	C	K	Y
T	E	S	S	E	Q	H	A	P	T	P	R	N	Q	U	Q	K	M	H	Y
I	X	D	H	S	C	A	S	L	M	N	F	S	A	W	R	K	E	C	E
P	C	S	O	A	E	H	E	A	L	W	U	E	Q	O	E	E	L	T	S
B	X	F	R	R	D	R	T	Z	K	O	L	B	L	P	S	L	P	U	M
G	M	B	X	B	K	S	P	G	B	D	S	L	M	T	P	B	M	H	I
E	L	A	T	L	L	E	T	M	D	U	E	X	N	L	Q	B	E	F	H
W	L	Y	B	Z	S	F	M	U	O	R	Y	U	D	N	C	I	T	X	W
T	R	O	M	M	E	L	B	X	A	C	M	Y	S	I	Z	K	S	J	Q
P	G	I	N	I	P	W	N	P	B	V	K	F	Z	E	V	R	O	C	Y

News Round-Up 3

by Kelvin Lake

Granville Colliery Fire

Work is to start soon on tackling an underground fire which has been smouldering for about two years in an old spoil heap on the former Granville Colliery site, Shropshire. The area is fenced at the moment and poses no threat to life or property.

Final Stage for Granville

The final phase of work at the former Granville Colliery, Donnington has been given the go-ahead by the Department of the Environment.

This should be completed in about 4 months and involves the treatment of the remaining 42 acres in the southern part of the Granville Country Park. The finished scheme will provide a circular footpath with view points and a bridle way.

Work is also underway on the canal basin by the Lodge Furnaces, (also within the Park) to re-puddle the canal so that it holds water.

Wrekin Council are keen to obtain further information about the Park's diverse history. Anyone with photographs, old maps or detailed personal knowledge (especially ex-miners), willing to share their knowledge for the benefit of future visitors, please contact: Ian Roberts, Countryside Management Officer, Granville Country Park, The Environmental Action Centre, Chapel Street, St. Georges, Telford, TF2 9JA. (0952) 616033

Horsehay Fossils

British Coal have found a collection of giant fossils at the Symon Opencast site, Horsehay, Telford. Large, heavy lumps of ironstone were found containing fossilised bark - about 310 million years old. Some of the bark samples are as up to 2 feet across and resemble the outside of a pineapple.

More Pit Closures

After the latest round of pit closures British Coal is now employing fewer than 50,000 miners, compared to 200,000 at the end of March 1985, and the year long pit strike.

The latest pits to go are:

Murton Colliery, County Durham closed on Friday 29 th. November with the loss of 900 jobs.

Thurcroft Colliery, near Rotherham closed on Friday 6th December with a loss of 660 jobs. The mine closed due to geological problems combined with a loss of £9.6 million.

Next year **Allerton Bywater Colliery**, West Yorkshire is due to close, as well as **Hatfield**, South Yorks, (employing 437 men) if it does not show a profit.

For Sale

"A delightful residence with planning consent for conversion to a three bedroom house. Includes an extensive and deep cellar".

There are not many people who would allow a lead and silver mine to be sunk within 150 yards of their house. Yet in 1828 the 2nd Viscount Exmouth sank a shaft (Wheal Exmouth) adjacent to a manor house on his country estate of Cannonteign near Exeter. By 1853 the mine was so deep that a pumping and "winding" engine house was built - but only on the understanding that it was made "interesting" - with decorative stonework and dressed granite quoins. Closed in 1874 the buildings were abandoned and have gradually fallen into decay.

Knight, Frank & Rutley have now put the ruined shell on the market for the present Viscount, together with 4 acres of beechwood and a lot of stone - suitable for restoring the buildings, for £50,000

Corris Rescue Practice

1/12/91

This, the first, Mid Wales Team practice was attended by:

several members of Mid Wales C.R.O.
several members of West Brecon C.R.O.
2 members from North Wales C.R.O.
Representatives from the Territorial Army
9 members of SCMC and/or M.C.R.O.
(including Steve Holding, Alan Robinson, Andy Harris, Stuart Tomlinson, Cara Alison and Neal Rushton.)

40 people attended the practice in all !

The numbers present necessitated a change in the planned scenario, but the harder task included removing a casualty, with a broken upper arm and additional shoulder injury, from the base of a chamber up an inclined side wall to a level.

No controllers or wardens were appointed and everyone was left to their own devices. Initially this caused a delay, until Bob of South Wales, Simon Hughes, Alan Robinson, Steve Holding and myself started to get things moving.

I would have chosen to use a stretcher but a parachute harness was selected by South Wales, a long delay ensued whilst this was sent down and belays for the life-line and haul-line were established using Accrow-props. A first aid kit was also requested, which took a long time arriving - even though communication to

the South Wales Land Rover using a "molephone" was established.

Confusion also existed over choice of life lining rope. South Wales favour static rope, while we would not even consider it. There also appears to be an unwillingness to rely on 8mm bolts for hauling belays.

The casualty was eventually hauled up the pitch using his sit harness as the parachute harness was too small !

Points to Note:

1. South Wales C.R.O. have tags on bags identifying their contents.
2. **NO** sheet rope protectors were available.
3. **NO** environmental monitoring was in use - except for our O.D.M. used surreptitiously until the conclusion.
4. Lack of overall control.
5. Increased appreciation of the magnitude of the problem posed by mine rescue amongst all cavers present.

Overall, a good exercise well supported by M.C.R.O. and we as a Shropshire Team are not half as bad as we may think.

Neal Rushton

News Round-Up 4 by Kelvin Lake

Mammoth Find

Workmen at the world's largest open cast gypsum mine, in Nova Scotia, Eastern Canada, have unearthed the skeleton of a Masterdon - an ice age woolly mammoth.

The animal was trapped in a sinkhole 30,000 years ago and starved to death. So far parts of its hip, skull, tusks and teeth have been found.

New Mining Museum

The Birkhill Fireclay mine, Bo'ness has now been opened for visitors. The mine which closed in 1980 has been developed as a tourist attraction by the Bo'ness Heritage Trust in conjunction with the Scottish Railway Preservation Society (who have restored the steam railway line to the mine site).

Conferences & Field Meets for 1992

International Conference Bath/ Bristol 1992

Subterranean Britannica are holding an International Conference at the Bath College of Higher Education (Newton Park, Bath) on 7th - 11th August 1992.

Sixty places have been booked for delegates. Accommodation costs (per person, from dinner Friday evening to Tuesday morning) £125 (inc. VAT). This figure does **NOT** include Conference administration fee and coach/mini-bus hire.

For more details contact:
Mrs. Sylvia P. Beamon, MA,
Conference Organiser,
Subterranean Britannica, 2 Morton Street,
Royston, SG8 7AZ, England.

'92 International Cave Rescue

The South Wales Cave Rescue Organisation will be host to the 1992 International Cave Rescue Conference at the SWCC Hostel at Penwyllt, South Wales from 23rd. to 30th

August 1992.

Assistance is welcome from individuals and other rescue organisations, as are ideas and suggestions. A particular requirement is for cavers with linguistic skills to help with translation.

If there is any way in which you can help, please contact:

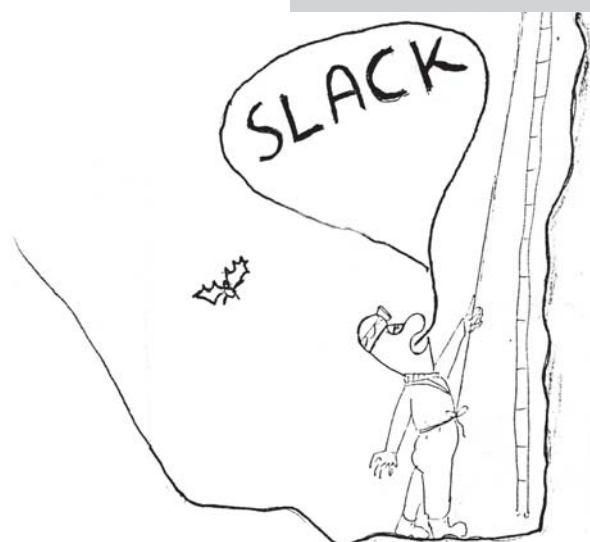
B. Jopling, 31 Holbeche Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 7LL,
(Tel: 021 378 1936)

NAMHO Field Meet 1992, 27-28th June

As the Club are hosting this event could members please try and keep the weekend free, we will need as many people as possible to help with the various workshops, trips etc. that we are organising.

If you can only be available for half a day, that's fine, any help you can give will be welcome.

Cartoons from the Archives



D. Stevenson 1970



BOOKS

Recent Publications by Ivor

Brown include:

1. Stumpy Brown of the Lloyds & Madeley Wood, Shropshire Magazine Nov.91. (a copy is available in the Club Library).
2. The Lloyds, Ironbridge, Shropshire. Aspects of a 19th Century mining community. Industrial Archaeology Review Vol. XIV No.1 Autumn 1991. (Copies available from IJB at £4 each).
3. The Chartermaster System of Mine Management in Shropshire in the 19th. Century. Proceedings of the Colleeque (Arras) Cent ans de Conventions Collectives. Nov. 1991.

British Mining Vol.43

The NMRS Memoirs "British Mining", Vol.43 1991 contains an article on John Gibbons of Oswestry 18/19th Century mining and industrial entrepreneur. He was involved in the Oswestry and Coalbrookdale Coalfields, The Stiperstones, Limestone Quarries, Evelith Mill near Shifnal as well as calamine and leadmining in Wales.

Other articles of particular interest are "Swallow Holes and Mine Drainage in the Forest of Dean", "The Castell & Nant y Creiau Mines" and "They did it Yesterday" - covers underground exploration trips made by James Puttrel of Sheffield one of the mountaineering and caving pioneers in the 1890's-1900's.



Video Tapes

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 £9.95.

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 and matching label, a vital present for someone who hasn't got everything. £14.95

Snailbeach

This tapes needs no introduction, since it's launch it has proved very popular, particularly with the inhabitants of Snailbeach - I can't think why !!

Providing a "potted" history of the development of Snailbeach Mine, it features unique underground footage of Club explorations, and is superbly supported by Peter Eggleston's computer graphics. Price: £14.95.

Snailbeach - The Final

Frontier

This **compilation** tape (as shown at the 1990 Annual Dinner) follows the exploration of Snailbeach by Club members down as far as "Robert's Level". Price: £9.95

**All tapes available through the Club (Via Mike Moore) or direct from:
I.A.Recordings, P.O.Box 476, Telford, Shropshire, TF7 4RB**

Club Officers

President :

Alan Taylor

Chairman:

Alan Robinson

Vice Chairman :

Malcolm Newton

Secretary :

Steve Holding

Treasurer :

Bob Taylor

Membership Services Officer:

Mike Moore

Tackle & Rescue Officer:

Neal Rushton

'Below' Editor :

Kelvin Lake

