

New Look "Below"

I hope you like the new look "Below", after 4 years of the old style it was felt that changes were required. By opting for a slightly smaller typeface and 3 column layout, more information can be presented on the same number of pages. This should reduce the risk of us exceeding the relevant postal rates! Each issue in future will also carry an issue number - to keep Adrian happy when cataloguing "Below" for the library.

For those members getting on, in years, who find the print a little *too* small, perhaps the Club could set-up an SMC "assisted magnifying glass" scheme - applications to Mike "Merchandising" Moore.

I still think we should stick to A4 format, rather than A5, so you won't be needing a microscope just yet!

The Price of Coal

Over the years British pits have slowly and painfully become safer places to work in and accidents such as the one at Wearmouth (see page 5) are thankfully quite rare. However with the trend by the Power Generators to favour cheap foreign coal, perhaps we should ask ourselves if it is as cheap as they say - particularly in light of the major explosion at a Turkish coal mine on March 3. At the time of writing, 97 men are known to have been killed and a least a further 274 are missing, more details on page 3.

The Bikers are Back

I see the "sport" or craze of cave biking has hit the headlines again, with a half page photograph and article in "The Independent on Sunday".

The article goes on to describe how tough and demanding it is for the riders on their £2,500 bikes (!) particularly in shafts (sic.) barely the width of a man. How they have to climb down cliff faces with the bikes over their shoulders to reach some entrances and that the biggest fear is the lights going out and being trapped in the dark.

Judging from the photograph, they seem to wear their normal cycling gear, with a petzl zoom strapped on their helmet.

While I don't begrudge them their, fun and no-doubt they are very competent riders, we all know how unpredictable old mine workings can be, and despite them saying "*we are reluctant to publicise the tin mine craze*", they

seem to be doing a very good job of publicising it!

How long will it be before we have to rescue some kid on a BMX from the depths of Snailbeach?

Derbyshire Bandits

After reporting the incident involving Alan's brother in the last issue of "Below" it has been brought to my attention that a couple of weeks before this, cavers in Carlsark Cavern had their ropes thrown down the 30ft. entrance pitch, several thousand pounds worth of climbing gear stolen from their car (parked by the electricity sub-station), and then the car was set alight!

The situation seems to be degenerating into total disregard for life. It appears we are getting to the point where every caving party needs its own security guard - or at least someone to ride "shotgun" on the surface!

The Return of Ivor Brown

After returning from his third visit to Java, Indonesia (in December 1991) complete with an overnight expedition to Bandung, to see volcanic activity around Tangkuban Paruku Mountain, Ivor Brown has celebrated his 40th year in mining by returning to his "roots".

He joined the mining industry on 5th July 1952 at Madeley Wood Colliery, but did most of his training in

Staffordshire. As from 13th January 1992 he takes up the post of Minerals Office for that County.

In the 1950's there were over 50 NCB pits in Shropshire and Staffordshire, now there is only 3.

However a Minerals Office covers much more than coal mines and other areas of the minerals industry are expanding e.g.: oils, aggregates and opencast sites.

Mendips 25-26/1/92

Late Friday night saw us (Vicky, Martyn Bicterston and myself) navigating our way across a fog bound Mendip countryside towards the Cerebus Caving Club hut at Oathill. All was quiet ... too quiet!

So off to a pub in Stowe St. Michael for a swift half (dozen) pint(s).

On our return to the hut, the true horror of our fate was revealed: A party from a private girls school was staying there for the weekend. Words escape me when I try to describe the living hell that had befallen us. Imagine St. Trinians without the comedy and you might just get close.

On first reflection, the thought of sharing a room with 20 school girls might not seem so onerous an ordeal. By 4am we were all screaming for mercy, from their continuous chatter - all in plummy-horse voices or trendy East End tones.

Anyway, having won possession of the kitchen table for breakfast, we set off to Burrington Combe with glazed

expressions. To cheer us up further, it pee-ed down with rain all day. Had a gallop around Sidcot Swallet, including discovering that there is only about 20' of passage beyond the duck - helmet off and a bit tight. Exiting was more interesting - especially the tight squeeze/climb back up Lobster Pot. A brief wet stop for lunch, then ever onwards.....

Pierre's was next on the agenda, a good crawly cave, with a fun rift slide to play on. Then a piercing scream rang through the cave what no Branston on the cheese butties? But no, it came from another group of cavers.

A young woman (early twenties) had fallen backwards from a 4-5' climb and landed on a boulder with the base of her back. When I arrived in the chamber - her group was huddled around her.

The group consisted of 2 leaders (?) in Troll overalls and half a dozen others in boiler-suits. The girl had moved herself from where she had fallen, but was in a great deal of pain. In fact, she had chipped her coccyx - but this was determined by an X-ray later.

After the initial dithering and waiting to see if she was recovering from the shock of the fall, it was decided to let her walk out with as much assistance as possible. We utilised our group (9 of us) as they all had caving experience (the other group were all novices, as was the casualty), to create a series of human "steps" on the small climb out of the chamber, filling the gaps through a short rift passage with bodies and a second series of shoulder "steps" out of the 15' entrance rift. The casualty was assisted to the front and rear by her group leaders to reduce the degree of effort required by her.

On exiting the cave, she was assisted to our van by Vicky for coffee and a quick fag before being taken to hospital. Before her departure, she said to Martyn "Just as well your group

knew what to do!!" Still, it is not for us to judge - just incase it's us next time.

Saturday night we all got plastered in the hope that blind drunkenness would soften the nightmare in gymslips. Alas it was not to be so. Sunday saw us on a quick splash down to Sump 1 in Swildon's Hole, but alas no volunteers to go through. Well, I wasn't wearing a wetsuit, I had a cold, two left wellies and it looked a bit grovelly. We emerged, very clean with the happy prospect of the 3 hour journey back through the fog.

Don't you just love caving. Why not sign up for the next jolly into the caves of Merrie England.

Alan Robinson

Moel Fferna Slate

Mines 19/1/92

Members present: Mike Moore, Cara Alison, Nick Southwick, Rob Southwick, plus guests: Mike Morris and Iwan Davies.

Our two guests were local landowners whose relatives had worked in the mine. Mike had visited the mine as a child and remembered the workshops when in full operation and had also been allowed underground to the main incline. He also recalled the purchase of 3 Bedford trucks that had replaced the horse drawn tubs and inclines to the A5. The trucks were paid for by the sale of the rails and winches from the inclines.

The trucks were also used for day trips to the seaside. Iwan also recognised names written on walls. The trip was particularly interesting as both guests had heard of some of the underground features and were able to confirm local interest in such things as the chalk drawings left on a wall by a visitor to the mine when it was working as proof of his visit.

All in all a most worthwhile day.

Mike Moore

Lancaster-Easegill

Permits are still required for ALL of the caves in this system. Please book permits in advance if you wish to visit any of these caves.

For mid-week permits (£10 per day, per party), please note the following change of address: T.G.Bowering, Hawkshead Farm, Halton Park. Tel: Halton-on-Lune 811361.

DO NOT forget to send an SAE when applying for permits.

OFD Permits

The permit secretary for OFD has moved to: Hennoyadd Villa, Hennoyadd Road, Abercrave, Swansea, SA9 1UR. Tel:0639-730331.

News Round-Up 1

Record Production

In the last issue of "Below" it was mentioned that British coal had set new European records for coalface and daily production (5.77 tonnes per manshift). In the week ending February 28, British Coal announced that miners had yet again broken the records by producing a record 6 tonnes of coal per manshift.

In the same week full page advertisements taken out in the "quality" papers, boast of British Coals environmental awards overall profits and skilled workforce.

End to "Clean Coal"

British coal is to close the Grimthorpe power station test centre in Yorkshire (with a loss of 90 jobs) after it successfully completed trials to develop "Clean Coal" technology.

The trials, started 12 years ago, to develop electricity generation techniques based on partially gasifying coal in a fluidised bed have achieved their objectives and shown that coal can be burnt cleanly to produce cheap electricity. However British Coal have insufficient funds to build and operate a full scale demonstration plant.

Flawed Jewel

British Coal have in the past few weeks announced a further 1,200 job losses at 4 Yorkshire pits. However this time the jobs are going at their "Jewel in the Crown" superpits. The Selby coalfield is to be abandoned 10 years ahead of schedule due to geological problems. This has reduced the expected lifespan from 25 years to 15!

To improve profitability the workforce of the Whitemoor Superpit, one of 5 in the complex, will be reduced by 300 to 195 as soon as possible. Manpower cuts at other mines include: 416 of the existing 1,610 jobs at Kellingley, 250 out of 900 at the Prince of Wales Colliery and at Sharlston 250 out of the current 700 jobs will go.

Selby, the now flawed "Jewel" has cost £1.4 billion to develop, a third more than was initially forecast. It has still to meet its target of 10 million tonnes of coal per year.

The Selby decision has shocked Union leaders, particularly since numerous older, still productive, mines have been closed on the grounds that Selby would replace them.

Turkish Pit Disaster

Reports in the National newspapers and television have just given details of a major methane explosion, which occurred at the northern Turkish coal mine of Kozlu on March 3rd.

The explosion was in the Inceharmani pit, 6 miles from the Black Sea town of Zonguldak. It is known that 97 men were killed and 48 injured at the time of the blast, but a further 274 are unaccounted for.

The rescue operation is being hampered by fires still raging in the mines deep galleries (1,600ft. down) and temperatures of 500°C.

Miners leaders at the mine are blaming the accident on years of neglect of safety standards by the mining administration. Apparently on the day of the explosion the people responsible for monitoring methane levels in the mine did not turn up for work - something which happened quite frequently!

Dinas Silica Mines

It is rumoured that these mines are to be sealed up later this year because they are too dangerous for the public.

This has been tried before, resulting in an unstable entrance area, but generally the mines seem fairly stable. For the "normal" mine explorer there are several inclines and levels to explore, with various artefacts still in situ. In addition the mines are frequently used by cave divers - who find it an excellent site for training (some of the flooded levels still contain lines of trucks standing on the rails).

The mine is also to be used in August as the site for the RESCON '92 cave-diving session!

It would be another sad day for mine exploration if these mines were allowed to be permanently sealed.

Cornish Mining Heritage

Local councils, the Department of the Environment and the Kerrier Groundwork Trust have combined to convert a network of old tramroads and derelict copper and tin mine buildings in Cornwall's Kerrier district into a tourist attraction.

The aim of the project is to turn more than 60 miles of old tramways into a network of paths for walkers, cyclists and pony-trekkers, and to preserve almost 100 mine buildings, some more than 200 years old.

The area stretches from Portreath on the north Cornish coast to Devoran on the south coast, surrounding the towns of Redruth and Cambourne. It is hoped that the work will encourage tourism

ventures and new industries.

In the 18th. century, the area around these towns was one of the world's leading mining centres, pioneering the mining technology which underpinned the Industrial Revolution.

By the end of the 19th. century the industry had collapsed due to the fall in the price of metals and cheap foreign imports (sounds familiar!). As the industry collapsed over a third of the population left, yet the area still has one of the highest unemployment rates and one of the lowest average wages. The D.o.E. has contributed £2m to the project and an appeal for another £2m from the private sector has been launched.

News Round-up 2 by Ivor Brown

The Old Wind

Report No.21 of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Archaeological Unit gives details of "The Old Wind" Brierley Hill, Coalbrookdale including the shaft-tunnel system of the 1790's. The surface of the shaft area has been partially excavated and shafts located. The tunnel mouth 37m vertically below and 220m away has also been located. IJB has been invited to organise an exploratory trip through if possible. It is hoped to organise something with SCMC help, this coming summer.

The system was abandoned in 1794 and replaced by an incline (this too was replaced by another incline, hence the local name - "The Old Wind" (a "wind" being an inclined plane).

Other Unit Reports

A further report of the above Unit "Archaeology in Ironbridge 1981-5" describes among other mining antiquities the Rowton Farm (Broseley) handwinch (soon to be no more, Ed.), Tuckies pumping engine house and the Blists Hill Mine engine house foundations (the latter in particular is a first class example of the work possible on such a site - see figure 1

Ove Arup Card

The "house" Christmas card of Ove Arup Consultants for 1991 had an cut out picture of the Iron Bridge with Severn Trow and a mine headframe on a hill (presumably Lincoln Hill Limestone Mine).

Residents Reminisce

Madeley "Rest Room Review" Dec. 91 contains a series of interviews with old Madeley residents. Several discuss mining, George Jenks, for example was born in 1899, remembers his grandfather describing in great detail the Madeley mining disaster of 27th September 1864.

Will Newill, born 1898, remembers watching the women ironstone pickers

at work on the mound at Cuckoo Oak. And many more memories of mining times past.

Last Miners Bus

The last "miners bus" ran from Shropshire to the pits of Staffordshire in late 1991. It is said that the first "miners bus" started operating from Madeley to Kemberton Pit just after the first World War. A.L.Jones was apparently invalided home and the Madeley miners built him a shed in Bridle Terrace, Madeley, for a horse and cart. The cart was mainly for miners "free" coal deliveries but also miners transport at shift changes.

The business prospered and both a coal lorry and bus transport business flourished continuing into the late 1950's (A.L.Jones's coal lorry ran over IJB's parked bike in Kemberton pit yard in 1953 - he received £5 compensation!). The coaches were taken over by Elcocks who still run the business from the same site in Bridle Terrace, Madeley.

Gwydyr Forest Part 3

Part 3 of Mines of the Gwydyr Forest by John Bennett & Rob Vernon is now available, price £6.95. It covers the Parc Mine, Llanwrst and adjacent setts. Parc Mine was of course the last mine to work in the Gwydyr Forest (in the late 1950's) and much remained on site and accessible until fairly recently. If you would like a copy of this book, contact Mike Moore for a "Club" price - address back page.

Turkish Accident

While the Turkish coal industry is in the news with a major disaster, a serious incident has also occurred in an old mine near Sirnak, South-east Turkey.

A team of 12 mine explorers had illegally entered an old mine where they were hit by a serious roof fall, killing 9 members of the party.

Hollow Norwich

Old Lime & Chalk

While a lot of work has gone on in Shropshire (and Telford in particular) in finding and filling old mine workings other areas have not been so lucky.

A recent report was passed to "Below" about a house in Norwich. Initially a hole opened up in the road in front of the house - found to be connected to a 12ft. high 9 ft. wide tunnel running towards the house. It was then discovered that the surrounding houses had been built on the edge of 35 feet of uncontrollable infill on the site of a former chalk quarry.

Other shafts were also located in and around the houses and filled with concrete. However this did not stop the house mentioned above suddenly sinking into yet another shaft beneath.

There seem to be a number of housing estates in Norwich which are prone to subsidence caused by old lime and chalk workings. As a result insurance companies have increased the premiums on Norwich properties due to the inherent risk posed by the labyrinth of tunnels running under parts of the city and surrounding area.

So if you are thinking of moving to Norwich - keep your helmet and lamp handy!

Leadhills Drainage

Concern is being expressed at Leadhills, Lanarkshire, where a blockage in the Gripps drainage level is causing water to build up to quite a head. This level is reputed to drain 8km of levels and has a normal flow of 25 million litres per day. While there is still some flow it is considerably reduced.

Water has already started issuing from the fill in Horse level some 34 metres vertically above Gripps, and the possibility of a "blow out" does exist somewhere in the system as the head increases.

OFD Neals First Cave 25/1/92

Members present: Neal Rushton, Andy Harris, Cara Alison, Tom West, Stuart Tomlins, Mike Moore, Steve Holding.

As expected a phone call on 24/1/92 from Neal (Steve wouldn't take my £5 bet that Neal would ring) was Gavin really poorly or was Neal hoping to find some way out?

Saturday Gavin was better, so Neal had no excuse, although he insisted that he would only go where I went (not a good idea - refer to the Gaping Gill trip report in the Summer '91 issue of "Below"). All the way to Wales Neal tried to cough and splutter and sound generally unwell, however I assured him on a previous visit when I had lost my voice I suffered a miraculous recovery in the same cave.

We arrived and Shark Industries moved in for the kill, seeing affluent mid-Wales cavers just waiting to try on Furry Jackets and buy gear.

Having cleaned them out and having little choice, Neal was forced to change and then realised that he would have to walk to the entrance. His last hope was that the lock would be frozen, alas this was not the case and he spent 4 hours on a circular trip admiring the cave sites such as the Chasm, Gnome Passage, Selenite, Bagpipe Chamber, Cross Rift, Moonlight Chamber and of course The Trident and The Judge. He passed little comment other than to prove he really was unwell, however he did seem very keen to look down Maypole inlet, a future visit?

Mike Moore

Ceriog Slate Mines 2/2/92

Members present: Mike Moore, Steve Holding, Cara Alison, Nick Southwick and Rob Southwick.

The purpose of this visit was for photographic purposes and an attempt to get behind the wall in the far quarry. There were some very nice ice formations and some artefacts still in place. The way into the far quarry is in a letterbox type entrance under a very cold stream.

An attempt to dislodge a couple of bricks in the wall proved impossible as the mortar was far stronger than the slate. Steve and Cara tried wading in the water filled passage beneath this but found it to be too deep and cold. A future trip with a Maypole or ladder is required.

Mike Moore

Underground Train Crash

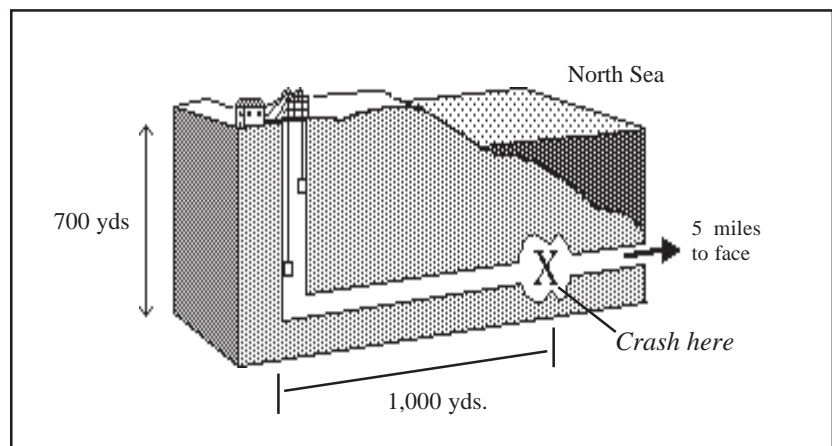
Two miners were killed and 6 injured when a diesel loco pulling 8 carriages, in a low tunnel, was derailed at the Wearmouth Colliery, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear.

The manrider travelling at 15mph ran off the rails while taking 70 men on the 4am shift the 5 miles out under the North Sea to the coalface.

The dead and injured were in the first carriage of the train which was apparently hurled into the tunnel roof and crushed by the momentum of the following cars.

Rescue teams had to use hand operated cutting equipment and hydraulic jacks to free trapped men, for fear of explosions.

Wearmouth colliery was opened 165 years ago and is one of the few successful pits in the dwindling North-East coalfield. It produces around 1 million tonnes of coal a year with a workforce half that of the mid- 1980's when it employed 2,000 men.



E.C. Daft Directive

The E.C. in their wisdom have recently produced a draft directive on the liability of suppliers of "services". Basically the implication is that anyone helping in a rescue operation can be held legally liable for their actions.

This directive does not apply to statutory rescue services, only to volunteer groups, so it will apply to us in any cave rescue, although the government say they intend to "clarify the position" with Brussels!

Pembroke Power Station

This power station is planning to switch to the oil based fuel Orimulsion. The main worry of this change is that this particular oil produces more pollution than any other fuel!

To actually neutralise the acidic flue gases more limestone will be needed than is used for the current coal desulphurisation process, putting more pressure on limestone quarrying.

Isn't progress wonderful.

Trip Report 7/12/91

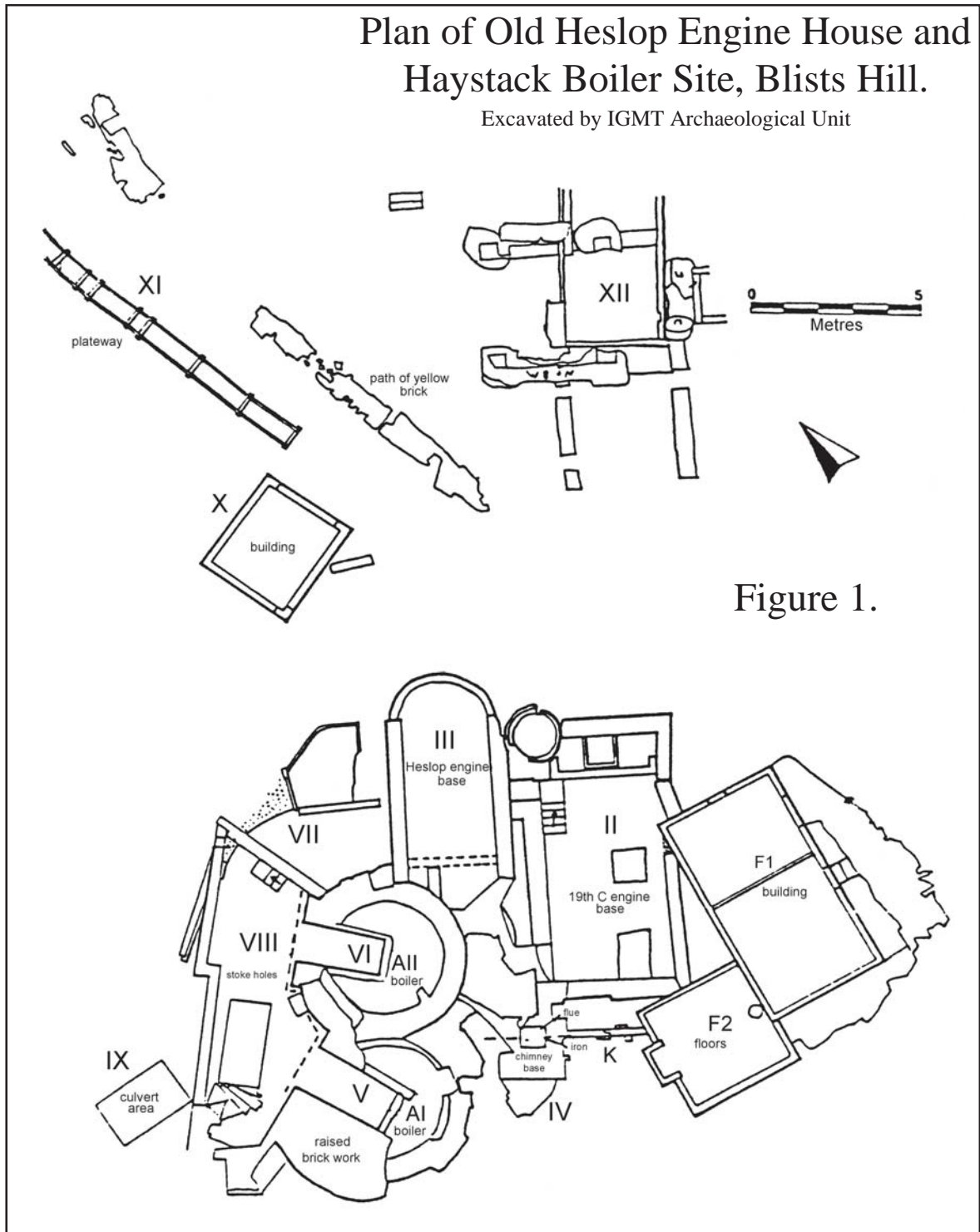
An unknown mine, near Betws-y-Coed, was visited by Mike Moore, Nick Southwick, Nick's brother Rob, friend John and myself.

The mine was entered via a flooded level through neck deep water/mud. The timbers near this entrance were rather dubious, but the unpleasant entrance lead to a remarkable mine.

Although the timbers near the entrance were questionable, there was a considerable amount of excellent timbering throughout the rest of the mine. Once the water was exited, the level lead to an extensively timbered area which appeared to be protecting this main working area from anything falling in the substantial stopes above. Exploration of this level involved

passing rows of ore-chutes, though care was required with respect to false flooring. In many places it was possible to see over the wooden roof of the level and up into the higher stopes. After exploring this level, an in-situ ladder of approximately 60' was ascended.

At the top of this ladder one direction lead to the top of the aptly named *continued on p.9*

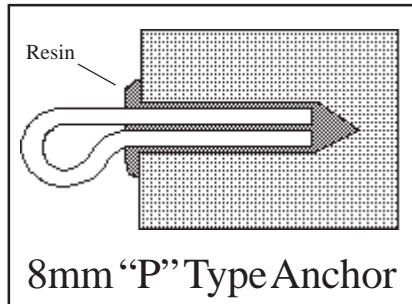


“P” Type Anchors

The “P” type bent stainless steel rod hanger fixed with a waterproof resin is now the recommended type of anchor for use at pitch-heads in caves.

Some discussion has taken place at Club meetings about switching to resin fixed anchors, for long term use in certain sites used by the Club, particularly in light of the fact that they do not stress the surrounding rock.

To fit the above hangers a hole 18mm



diameter and 75mm deep is needed, however there is some talk of introducing a 5.5mm rod hanger with an 8-9mm diameter sleeve to take the

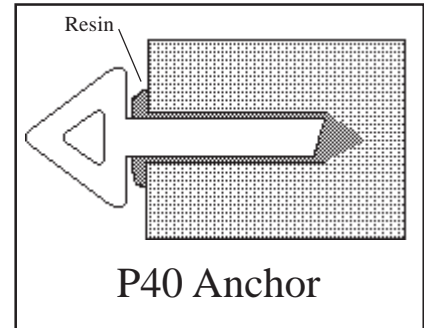
rope. If the smaller rod can be used then it will only require a 12mm diameter hole.

The hanger is fixed by Hilti C50 resin squirted into the hole by a gun with a mixing nozzle. There are other methods of hanger fixing using resin capsules, which might well be more practical for underground use, however it is not clear if capsules can be used with the “P” type anchors. The CNCC has arranged a discount scheme for C50 resin with Hilti, where the Club orders through the CNCC, reimbursing then for the cost of the resin. Alternatively the anchors can be obtained in bulk from D.M.M. for £2.50 each, including resin.

There are other types of anchors available, of particular interest is the stainless steel Petzl P40 Triangular Eye Anchor, this can be fixed by resin capsules, and needs a 15mm dia. 100mm deep hole. The hanger does need initial proof testing, then a re-test

every 10 years.

If the Club does opt for resin bonded



anchors, we need to keep accurate records, about where and when they were installed. A few failure signs to look out for with resin bonded anchors are:

- a) the resin surface breaking away from the rock - indicating a poor bond or possible internal fracture.
- b) looseness of the hanger in the hole
- c) the rock surrounding the hanger starting to fracture.

Loco Mining

On October 22, 1892, near Ulverston, Lancashire, The Furness Railway 0-6-0 loco No. 115, disappeared! A victim of haematite mining subsidence. The engine apparently was travelling along, when a large 200 ft. deep chasm opened up in front of it. The hole which spanned 5 sets of tracks swallowed both the engine and the tender. The tender was subsequently recovered, but the engine was buried in-situ.

This engine is considered unique in that it is the only known survivor of all the locos written off due to accidents. Now railway enthusiasts are planning to “rescue” the engine, by tunnelling through the side of the embankment in which it lies. They believe that it will still be in the same condition it was in, 100 years ago because “of the absence of oxygen to foster corrosion”.

If you are interested in helping or funding the rescue then contact “Steam Railway” magazine.

Coal Records Alert

An emergency meeting has been called by NAMHO, the AIA, and the Council for British Archaeology to alert the Government to the problem of Coal Industry records. As the industry is undergoing rapid contraction, a joint D.o.E. and British coal policy is in operation, to demolish and level all colliery sites within 2 years of closure. In addition all pit records (save a few required by law) are being destroyed, as being of no interest or value!

The aim of this meeting is to discuss the problem and to stimulate conservation practices and policies. It is therefore aimed at planning, conservation, and tourism officers, local authority archaeologists and other interested persons.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th May 1992, at the Tickled Trout Hotel, Preston. A charge of £25.00 per head (inc. lunch) will be made. For further details contact: Mike Gill, 38 Main St. Sutton-in-Craven, Keighley, Yorks, BD20 7HD. Tel: 0535-635388

Gold Riots

If you think that mine closures are a British problem you might like to know that about 100 miners and riot police have clashed recently in Southern France, over the possible closure of Salsigne gold mine (claimed to be Western Europe's last gold mine). The miners dumped stones at the regional government headquarters as part of the protest.



Aurichalcite

Basic Zinc Carbonate, also known as Hydrozincite. A secondary mineral formed by the action of carbonated water on Zinc ores. Usually found as massive, earthy crusts. In areas of water flow, can easily be deposited to form stalactites. Common chemical formula: $(ZnCu)_5(CO_3)_2(OH)_6$



Clive Mine Rescue Practice - 8/2/92

This practice was deliberately aimed at members of the Midlands Cave Rescue Organisation with the primary objective of promoting co-operation and understanding between the different member groups and individuals, and generally allowing everyone to get to know each other in a "working" situation.

Following a call out test for Shropshire team members and meeting on site with the Birmingham and Dudley groups, there were 26 people in attendance.

The scenario was basically a search for potentially 3 persons, 1 male, 2 female, although the possibility of others was not ruled out.

Upon arrival each rescuer was quizzed about their own capabilities, with details being recorded on a "log" sheet. This made the task of dividing people up into teams a lot easier. During the rescue the "state-of-play" was recorded on a magnetic board, showing the positions of first aiders, search teams, radio bases and victims when located.

The search of the mine was conducted by 4 groups, each group having a first aider and someone familiar with the mine. Non-SRT capable people were organised to search the upper workings, then assigned to hauling and pitch rigging.

The victims were eventually found in the lower levels, beyond the long rocky crawl, having sustained a probable fall down an unstable (hypothetical) winze.

The injuries identified were:-

Man - Back injury. Unconscious, suffering from the effects of hypothermia and alcohol!

Girl 1 - Broken lower left leg & superficial cuts, hypothermia

Girl 2 - Deep head wound. Unconscious, said by friend to be diabetic.

After due consultation evacuation using

three stretchers was decided upon.

Both Adrian (the scenario "setter") and Neal have compiled detailed reports upon the days activity. The following is an amalgamated, abridged version of the two reports, if you would like to see the detailed reports, please contact them.

The Main Points

1. It was ensured that a first aider was with each search team, but at one point the Underground Warden on the lower level was the only first aider. This should not happen, since he/she needs to concentrate on assessing the problem and the removal arrangements.

2. The injuries and number of victims initially overwhelmed the first aider on the lower level.

3. Mike (with the broken back) felt that diagnosis was slow, and that people did not do enough to comfort the casualties. Also their injuries were discussed within earshot and they were continually referred to as "victims", rather than by name - perhaps we should write their names on their foreheads!

4. Communication was good in the first part of the mine, but as the cable did not reach as far as the casualties there was a problem in getting detailed instructions from the "scene" to the surface and other teams along the route. Although extra cable was available it was felt that to use it would stretch the human resources too much, obviously in a real situation there would be no question about deploying it.

5. It was found that moving 3 stretchers over a boulder strewn floor in a level only 0.6m high on average was too much for the 9 people present. All 3 stretchers used were different which meant that each one had to be treated differently, this lack of familiarity led to delay. Of the 3, it was felt that the plastic

(Sked?) stretcher was very good for negotiating low crawls, and ran up the shaft walls very easily, the casualty found it quite comfortable.

6. Environmental monitoring was in use through-out the rescue, the necessity for this was proved when a drop of 2.5% in the oxygen level was detected in the level around the victims. However, this fact was **NOT** relayed back to surface control. All important **REAL** factors such as this must be reported back to Control as soon as possible.

In fact contact with some groups was lost for quite a long time, runners should be employed to maintain links between each group and the nearest radio base station.

7. There was insufficient Karabiners and other steel work for hauling rigs, particularly at the top of the Maypole Shaft. If you have **ANY** Club krabs or tapes mixed up with your own kit, please return them to Neal as soon as possible.

8. The rescue victims were genuinely beginning to suffer from exposure by the time they were brought out and they say that a space blanket alone is insufficient.

9. Finally many rescuers were hungry and thirsty, while a permanent supply of hot soup was kept going by Dave Adams on the surface, there was no means of "piping" the soup underground.

In conclusion a great deal of effort was put in by all concerned and allowing for the problems highlighted the objective of getting members to work together was definitely achieved.

All in all a very good practice and excellent experience for all.

*Adrian Pearce,
Neal Rushton,
Kelvin Lake*

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 Mine

Edwin Thorpe brings all his charm and talents to bear as he guides a "newcomer", to this threatened 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 designer 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 (including library case & label).

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 (including library case): £9.95



**All tapes available
through the Club
Via Mike Moore
(address on back page)**

or direct from:

**I.A.Recordings,
P.O.Box 476, Telford,
Shropshire, TF7 4RB**

Wheal Jane Calamity

I think it would be hard for any Club members NOT to have heard of the pollution incident caused by the flooding of Wheal Jane near Truro, Cornwall, particularly after all the media coverage including whole TV programmes dedicated to it. To give a "brief" summary of the story so far:-

Wheal Jane Tin Mine closed in March 1991, despite requests from the owners for government assistance to maintain the pumps, no help was forthcoming, so they abandoned the mine and removed the pumps (special ones made to cope with the very acidic water).

The water gradually built up over a number of months, seeping out into the Fal Estuary and nearby Mylor and Restronguet creeks.

On Monday 13th January a huge surge estimated to be 10 million gallons of highly contaminated water burst through stopping in an old drainage adit causing the major pollution alert.

The mine, reputed to be the wettest in the world, is still discharging millions of gallons a day. Tests on the water

indicate levels of cadmium 100 times the E.C. accepted standard, and Zinc in some samples over 9 times the E.C. limits. Other metals in the the water include iron, copper and arsenic. The main problem has been the adverse chemical reaction caused when the mine water came in contact with sea water, generating a strange murky froth.

The National Rivers Authority face a multi-million pound bill to deal with the problem which is affecting boreholes, oysters and bathers - surfers have even taken to wearing gas masks!

Attempts to pump the mine water into old settlement lagoons and the tailings dam for treatment with lime and coagulants to neutralise and filter the water before it is released have only been partially successful. The lagoons can only hold about half a million gallons, the pumps cannot cope with the acidity of the water and the mine is still discharging over 2 million gallons of water a day.

I think we will all hear a lot more of Wheal Jane and its legacy in the months/ years to come!

Trip 7/12/91 cont..

Cathedral Chamber. Means were found to by-pass the chamber and explore on the far side; in this direction a collapsed adit was discovered and light was seen coming in from open stopping. The other direction from the top of the ladder gave access to large worked passageways, with various potential routes to upper levels.

Descending a series of short ladders to the lower levels. A classically timbered and very picturesque level was reached. The minerals in this mine obviously give rise to fast form stals. An even more spectacular short level was reached by climbing a couple of in-situ ladders. Near the end of the level, a large, wet ore-chute was abseiled down by "yours truly", but the large portal entrance was found to be gated and the very wet ore-chute had to be prussiked up using lowered equipment and an old hawserlaid rope!

Although access to this mine is difficult, it is relatively extensive, and full of interesting artefacts. There are clearly parts of the mine still to be accessed.

Steve Holding

Club Officers

President :

Alan Taylor

Treasurer :

Bob Taylor

Chairman:

Alan Robinson

Membership Services
Officer:

Mike Moore

Vice Chairman :

Malcolm Newton

Tackle & Rescue Officer :

Neal Rushton

Secretary :

Steve Holding

'Below' Editor :

Kelvin Lake

Diary Dates 1992

4 April: Subterranea Britannica Day Conference, Royal School of Mines, Imperial College, London, SW7.

13 May: Emergency coal industry records meeting. Tickled Trout Hotel, Preston.

27-28 June: NAMHO Field Meet, hosted by SCMC, based at Madeley Court. Help needed by members from Friday night through to Monday.

7-11 August: Subterranea Britannica International Conference, Bath College of H.E., Newton Park, Bath.

23-30 August: 1992 International Cave Rescue Conference at the SWCC Hostel, Penwyllt, South Wales.

17 October: Club Annual Dinner, Wroxeter Hotel, Wroxeter. 7.30pm start. Guest speaker: Ron Callender. Cost per head:- £14.00,

1993

23-26 April: NAMHO '93 Conference, Douglas, Isle of Man.

